

LIBRARY EDITION
VOLUME XXVII - XXIX

FORS CLAVIGERA
Letters to the Workmen and
Labourers of Great Britain

FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTERS TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS OF GREAT BRITAIN

VOLUME I

CONTAINING

LETTERS 1–36

1871, 1872, 1873

BY

JOHN RUSKIN

LONDON

GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD
NEW YORK: LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

1907

THE COMPLETE
WORKS OF
JOHN RUSKIN

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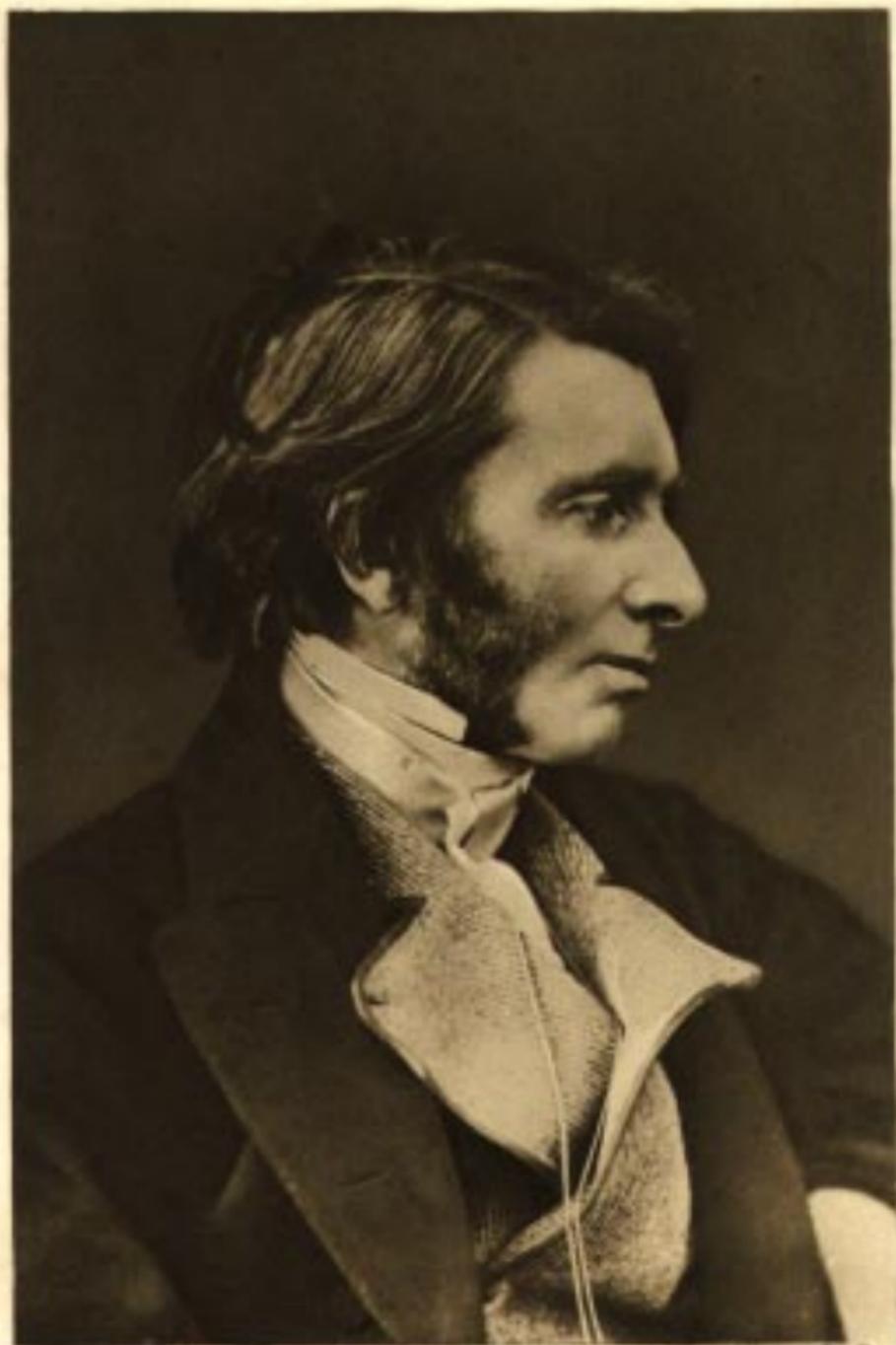


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John Ruskin
(1876)

LIBRARY EDITION

THE WORKS OF

JOHN RUSKIN

EDITED BY

E. T. COOK

AND

ALEXANDER WEDDERBURN



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Note.—The sketches given on Plate A have previously appeared in W. G. Collingwood's *Ruskin Relics*, 1903; the sketch of Savoy (by half-tone process) on p. 113; that of Spain on p. 112.

INTRODUCTION TO VOL. XXVII¹

THIS volume and the two which follow it contain the book, published in monthly parts, which Ruskin called *Fors Clavigera: Letters to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain*. The three next succeeding volumes of this edition contain writings which grew out of *Fors Clavigera*. Volume XXX. gives various Reports, Papers, and Catalogues referring to the "Guild of St. George," the association which was announced and explained in *Fors*. Volumes XXXI. and XXXII. contain *Bibliotheca Pastorum* and allied publications which Ruskin prepared in connexion with "St. George's Schools." The six volumes (XXVII.–XXXII.) are thus closely connected in purpose.

Of the Letters forming *Fors Clavigera*, eighty-seven were published at regular monthly intervals from January 1871 to the time of Ruskin's serious illness in February and March 1878. The remaining Letters (88–96) were published at irregular intervals from 1880 to 1884. With the exception of the last eight Letters, *Fors Clavigera* thus takes us no further in the story of Ruskin's life and work than the point already reached—namely, his breakdown in the spring of 1878 (Vol. XXV. pp. xxv.–xxviii.). The chronological arrangement of the volumes in this edition brings out very clearly the accumulation of work piled upon work under which Ruskin's health gave way. In Volumes XX., XXII., and XXIII. we have read the lectures which he delivered, or prepared, for the Professorship at Oxford. Volume XXI. has shown the work he did in connexion with his classes and Drawing School there. In Volumes XXIII. (in part) and XXIV. are contained the Guide-books to Florence and Venice, the preparation of which he conceived to be included among his duties as a Professor of the Fine Arts.² The teaching of art was, however, to Ruskin the teaching of everything,³ and in Volumes XXV. and XXVI. we have the studies in Birds, Flowers, Rocks and Stones by which he supplemented and illustrated his lessons in the laws of natural beauty. We now pass to six

¹ The Introduction to the present volume applies to *Fors Clavigera* generally; the Introductions to Vol. XXVIII. and Vol. XXIX. notice a few matters which specially refer to those volumes respectively.

² See the Preface to *Mornings in Florence*, Vol. XXIII. p. 293.

³ See *Fors*, Letter 76, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 86).

XXVII.

b

volumes, all belonging (for the most part) to the same years of Ruskin's life, in which he addressed himself to the task of criticism, and of essays towards reconstruction, in politics, sociology, and education. Such were the labours which he imposed upon himself during what may be called his Oxford decade (1870–1878). The work was done, moreover, to the accompaniment of acute personal distress. Who can wonder that at the end Ruskin succumbed beneath the strain? "You know, without my telling it," wrote Sir John Simon to Professor Norton, "the utterly spendthrift way in which (with imagination less and less controlled by judgment) he has for these last years been at work with a dozen different irons in the fire—each enough to engage one average man's mind. And his emotions all the while as hard-worked as his intellect—they always blowing the bellows for its furnace. As I see what he has done, I wonder he has not broken down long ago."¹

The impulse to the political and social work, of which *Fors Clavigera* was the outcome, came principally from a characteristic of Ruskin, already mentioned.² Unpractical as he is commonly called, and as in the vulgar sense he certainly was, Ruskin was strongly possessed by the instinct and passion for practice. His master, Carlyle, was content to storm and preach and rail, and disciples who went to sit at his feet often came away, filled, it may be, with divine rage, but no wiser, for any positive directions, than they went. Ruskin's desire was to do things, and to set others to doing them. "The day has come," he says, "for me to cease speaking, and begin doing, as best I may."³ The plans which ultimately took shape in *Fors* had, as he says (p. 146), long been in his mind—certainly since 1867, as is shown by an entry in his diary already quoted.⁴ Starting as a critic of painting, he had arrived at the conclusion that art, to be really fine, must be the representation of beautiful realities and be pursued in a spirit of delight. Proceeding as a critic of architecture, he had found this art to be the reflection of national character, and the secret of Gothic to consist in the happy life of the workman. The next step was, to one of his ardent temperament, clear and simple. He was not content to live in a world of the imagination; he strove to realise the conditions of the good and beautiful in the actual world—to build the Tabernacle of God among men.⁵

¹ *Letters of John Ruskin to Charles Eliot Norton*, vol. ii. p. 147.

² See Vol. XII. p. lxxx., and Vol. XVI. pp. xxi.–xxii.

³ Letter 58, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 426).

⁴ See Vol. XIX. p. xxiv.

⁵ See *Deucalion*, Vol. XXVI. p. 195.

Hence the teacher of art became necessarily also a social reformer. It was not that he wanted to be such, or that he felt himself in any way peculiarly qualified for the part. It was simply that he could not help it. The writing of *Fors Clavigera* and the starting of various attempts at practical reform in connexion with it were not of choice, but of necessity. They were a payment of ransom. "I simply cannot paint, nor read, nor look at minerals, nor do anything else that I like . . . because of the misery that I know of." He had to clear himself "from all sense of responsibility for this material distress," by doing what he could to point a way to the cure of it. "I began the writing of *Fors*," he says, "as a byework to quiet my conscience, that I might be happy in what I supposed to be my own proper life of art-teaching."¹

The actual form which was assumed by Ruskin's payment of ransom may best be described and understood in connexion with the title of the book. What does "Fors Clavigera" mean?² What is the "Fortune with the Nail" which presided over the book? "My own conception of it," he tells us, "was first got from Horace³—from the description of Fortune drawn by the poet in the 35th Ode of the first book:—

"With solemn face and firm, in awful state
Before thee stalks inexorable Fate,
And grasps empaling nails, and wedges dread,
The hook tormentous, and the melted lead."⁴

The conception had fastened itself, some years before, in Ruskin's mind. In a book containing notes upon Horace's *Odes*, made during his sojourn at Mornex in 1861–1863, he describes the design upon a bronze mirror-case, in some museum, which illustrates the poet's idea of Fate. The design is founded upon the last fates of Meleager, whose slaying of his mother's brothers was to work his own undoing. The designer tells the story by "the figure (as Ruskin notes) of the death-goddess Atropos, who is on the point of driving a nail fast home with a hammer, the symbol of unalterably determined, or fixed, fate." There is a reference to Horace's figure of Fortune in a chapter of

¹ Letter 1, §§ 2, 3 (below, p. 13); and Letter 61, § 3 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 485).

² The title sometimes received curious transmutations from Mr. Allen's customers, such as "Clara Fogio," "Faws Cavongera." The correspondent who ordered "Fors Clavevinegar" was probably a wag. Ruskin was pleased when a letter from Austria, addressed only to "Fors Clavigero, Kent," was duly delivered by the Post Office.

³ Letter 43, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 106).

⁴ Translation by Dr. Philip Francis, 1747. The "clavos trabales" which Fortune carries in her hand are "spikes to fasten beams," and the "spikes of necessity" had passed into a proverb among the Romans (Cicero, *Verres*, 5, 12).

Munera Pulveris written at Mornex, where Ruskin speaks of “the fixed majesty of Necessitas with her iron nails,” and in a note appended to the passage in 1872¹ he describes it as “a mere memorandum for the future work which I am now completing in *Fors Clavigera*.” It is to the Etruscan mirror-case that Ruskin refers in a letter to his friend, Mr. Walter Severn, who had asked him in March 1875 what “Fors Clavigera” meant:—

“The Fors is fortune, who is to the Life of men what Atropos is to their death, Unrepentant,—first represented, I believe, by the Etruscans as fastening a nail into a beam with a hammer (Jael to the Sisera of lost opportunity). My purpose is to show, in the lives of men, how their Fortune appoints things irreversibly, while yet they are accurately rewarded for effort and punished for cowardice and folly.”²

But the title would not be Ruskin’s unless it meant many things in one. He fixed on the title “Fors,” he tells us, as being “the best part of three good English words—Force, Fortitude, and Fortune.”³ It was to include, in his references to it, the force which enables a wise and strong man to do good work, whether he lives or dies; the fortitude, which enables him to bear necessary pain in doing it; and the fortune which is his appointed fate. It is characteristic of the play of fancy in Ruskin’s titles that each word in the title has three meanings in his mind. *Fors* stands for Force, Fortitude, and Fortune. *Clavigera* means that it bears either the club, the key, or the nail. Thus the Three “Forses” are Force with the club—the wise and strong man armed; Fortitude with the key—the patience which is portress at the gate of Art and Promise; and Fortune with the nail—“the fixed power of Necessity with her iron nails.” Each aspect of “Fors” was associated with a particular hero. The first, with the strength of Hercules, or of deed; the second, with that of Ulysses, or of patience; the third, with that of Lycurgus, or of law (p. 28). It is to these three meanings—Courage, Patience, Fortune (p. 270 *n.*)—that Ruskin refers in many passages, where he speaks of “the first,” “the second,” or “the third Fors.” In cases of difficulty, he says, it is the Second Fors who will teach us. “Bring the First with you, and the Third will help us” (p. 291). So, again, the “Second Fors” is said to be “faithfully observant of copyright and other dues.”⁴ The “Third

¹ Vol. XVII. p. 223 *n.*

² *The Life and Letters of Joseph Severn*, by Walter Sharp, 1892, p. 219.

³ Letter 2, § 2 (p. 28).

⁴ Vol. XXVIII. p. 499.

Fors” is constantly spoken of as the chance¹ which, in things large or small, governs a man’s life; and especially in connexion with the casual arrangement of topics in the book. “I rather like,” he says, “the Third Fors to take the order of them into her hands, out of mine;”² and “by help of the Third Fors, again and again in the course of these letters, the thing to my purpose has been brought before me just when I needed it.”³

Later on in the book, however, Ruskin often abandons this identification of the three “Forses” with Courage, Patience, and Fortune.⁴ Taking Fors in his third sense, he subdivides the orderings of Chance or Fortune to correspond with the Three Fates of the Greeks—Clotho, as he explains elsewhere,⁵ being the fate which has power over the clue, thread, or connecting energy—that is, the conduct of life; Lachesis, the fate which ordains the chances that warp it; and Atropos, the inflexible, who cuts the thread for ever. These three Fates are spoken of in several places as the first, second, or third Fors, and the reader who does not bear in mind this alternative numbering of them will be somewhat confused. At times, however, the two ideas seem to mingle. Thus when he says that “the Second Fors” had ordained to place the Walkley Museum on the top of a high and steep hill,⁶ he means primarily that such was the chance ordained by Lachesis; but he plays also on the idea of Patience, as tutress of the Arts: for, in the words of the poet, “knowledge is a steep that few may climb.” But generally, in the latter part of the book, the Second, or the Third, Fors means simply the second, or the third, Fate. When a piece of work is broken off, it is to the ordinance of “Atropos, the Third Fors” that he attributes it.⁷ Here the identification of the Third Fors with the Fate which cuts the thread is clear; an identification which he emphasises elsewhere by coupling this form of “Fors Clavigera,” of Fate carrying a nail, with the name of Jael.⁸ Yet sometimes, again, Atropos as a typical Fate is spoken of as Fortune

¹ Below, pp. 447, 467, 564, 620, 621. “If the reader cares to know what I mean by ‘Fors,’ ” he says elsewhere, “let him read the page carefully”—the page recounting the chances which affected Scott’s early life (*Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 14 n.).

² Below, p. 323. Compare pp. 315, 328, 382, 553; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 254, 335.

³ Below, pp. 360, 489, 543, 662; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 90, 288.

⁴ This point is implied in a note by Ruskin at p. 291, below.

⁵ *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 394).

⁶ Vol. XXVIII. p. 451.

⁷ Vol. XXVIII. p. 443. Compare *ibid.*, p. 486.

⁸ As above, in the letter to Mr. Walter Severn; and see Vol. XXVIII. p. 696 (and the title of Letter 69); and Vol. XXIX. p. 379.

(the Third Fors in his first system) generally, without any special reference to one or other of the Fates. It is Atropos, for instance, who, in ordering the succession of his subjects, “manages matters like the daintiest and watchfullest housewife”; and “Atropos, the Third Fors,” his “careful and prudent mistress,” who so makes things chance as to divide the better his political and artistic work.¹ Thus, then, the Second Fors sometimes means Patience, and sometimes the Chance which ordains the lot of men. The Third Fors sometimes means Chance or Fortune generally, and sometimes the third Fate, which cuts off the thread of life. Yet this Atropos, as we have just seen, means sometimes the fortune of life; and in the letter to Mr. Walter Severn the Fortune of *Fors* “is to the Life of men what Atropos is to their death.” These crossings and interlacings in Ruskin’s meanings, intricate even as the warp and woof in the web of fate, are very characteristic of him.

There are other meanings within meanings in the title which are worth noting as giving us a clue to the purposes and character of the book. The title, in its principal meaning was intended, he tells us, to be translated “Fortune, the Nail-bearer.” Its object was to tell the reader how to make his fortune or to mar it—to make one’s fortune being to rule his appointed fate to the best ends of which it is capable.² The book was thus to be a treatise on the Laws of Work. But also a treatise on the Laws of Life. For Fortune is a nail-bearer; “or in the full idea, nail-and-hammer bearing, driving the iron home with hammer-stroke, so that nothing shall be moved.”³ In one sense, each man is the architect of his own fortune; but in another, he is the sport of fate—the inheritor, for good or evil, of what former generations have thought and done and been. Of nations, as of men, it is true that

“Our deeds still follow with us from afar,
And what we have been makes us what we are.”

Hence, another object of *Fors Clavigera* was to trace in art and history the power of the hidden Fors, or Destiny.⁴ In tracing this power, the book itself was to be a nail-bearer. It was “to fasten in sure place the truths it had to teach”; and also to nail down, as on the barn-door, “the extreme follies of which it had to give warning.”⁵

¹ Vol. XXVIII. pp. 551, 443. See also *ibid.*, pp. 488 *n.*, 504, 553.

² Below, p. 28.

³ Below, p. 231.

⁴ Below, pp. 46, 232.

⁵ Vol. XXIX. pp. 14, 199, 379.

Here, then, we are promised a Treatise on Universal History, and a Compendium of the faults and follies of the age.

The scheme, it is seen, was to be extensive. But it was not to be a system. "By the adoption of the title 'Fors,' I meant (among other meanings)," says the author, "to indicate the desultory and accidental character of the work."¹ It was to discuss any matter which *chanced* to interest him. The reader was always to remember that "Fors is a *letter*, written as a letter should be written, frankly, and as the mood or topic chances."² The "Letters" were addressed "To the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain," but this was an address which Ruskin did not intend in the ordinary sense of the words. He wrote for all "fellow-workmen" with him, all labourers in the vineyard; including, as he explained, "masters, pastors, and princes" no less than the rank and file.³

A book thus motived and entitled was likely at the outset to be a book by itself. There is no other book in the world quite like it, and there are few books by any great writer about which different men have formed such different opinions. To the periodical press at the time the monthly instalments of *Fors Clavigera* were for the most part mere occasions for abuse or carping criticism. To the *Spectator*,⁴ for instance, *Fors* seemed full of "watery and rambling verbiage" and "very silly and violent language." The hostile point of view was put by a living poet to whom all Ruskin's later writings seemed mere "studies in reviling and abusing."⁵ To Carlyle, on the other hand, there was "nothing going on among us as notable to me as those fierce lightning-bolts Ruskin is desperately pouring into the black world of Anarchy all around him."⁶ Nor is it only to readers approaching the book from Carlyle's sympathetic standpoint, that *Fors Clavigera* has seemed a notable production. "*Fors*," says Mr. Frederic Harrison, "is the typical work of the man John Ruskin, apart from his special studies and teaching in the arts. . . . It is Ruskin's *Hamlet*, and also his *Apocalypse*. . . . It flows on in one fascinating *causerie*, as it might fall from the lips of a perfect master in

¹ Letter 85, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 315).

² Letter 81, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 197).

³ See below, pp. 448–449, and Vol. XXIX. p. 400.

⁴ October 7, 1871.

⁵ See William Watson's *Wordsworth's Grave and Other Poems*, 1890, p. 42 ("To John of Brantwood: after reading a Letter in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, February 15, 1886").

⁶ *Correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson*, vol. ii. p. 352. (The letter is given below, p. lxxxvii.)

the art of familiar conversation.”¹ On the question of style there can hardly, I think, among the judicious, be two opinions. The book is written entirely in Ruskin’s later manner. The “purple patches” have gone; and, though occasionally there are fine descriptive passages,² Ruskin now set himself deliberately to eschew ornament. He was tired of being called “a fine writer,” when the readers, who thus acclaimed him, felt themselves free therefor to heed not a word he said.³ He cultivated accordingly greater directness of speech; saying, as he puts it, “Sir, your house is on fire,” instead of “Sir, the abode in which you probably passed the delightful days of your youth is in a state of inflammation.”⁴ *Fors*, besides showing other characteristics presently to be noticed, is, in point of style, a masterpiece of sustained vivacity and directness. “All the diction is fused,” as an able critic has said, “in the fiery life.”⁵

With regard to the substance of *Fors Clavigera*, wherever the truth may lie between opposing opinions, there are several considerations which are essential to forming a sound judgment of the book or to reading it aright. In the first place it is pre-eminently a personal book. In *Fors Clavigera*, more even than in any other of his works, Ruskin writes without reserve, with *abandon*, with utter self-revelation; here, therefore, even more than elsewhere, it is necessary to make full allowance for the personal equation, and to remember the circumstances and conditions in which the book was written. Take, for instance, the “biting, growling, grumbling” which stung Mr. Watson into protest. The note of petulance is unquestionably strong in *Fors Clavigera*, and one could string together a selection of passages which would seem to show Ruskin as entirely hopeless and helpless in presence of the problems of modern life. Carlyle said of the population of these islands that it was twenty-seven millions, mostly fools.⁶ The pupil outdid his master, and apostrophises us in one place as “You fools everywhere” (p. 86). Our political ideals he dismisses as “the mad dog’s creed of modernism.”⁷ Of our political methods he says that he never had given, and never meant to give a vote in his life (p. 544 *n.*). The House of Parliament is at best but “a mouldering toy”;⁸ and

¹ *John Ruskin* (“English Men of Letters” Series), 1902, pp. 182–184.

² See, for instance, the description of the Val di Nievole (below, p. 306), and that of Tweed and Ettrick in flood (Vol. XXIX. p. 461).

³ Letter 58, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 425).

⁴ Letter 23, § 8 (below, p. 400).

⁵ Mrs. Meynell’s *John Ruskin*, p. 283.

⁶ See Vol. XII. p. 342.

⁷ Letter 67, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 649).

⁸ *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 451).

the Press, nothing but so many “square leagues of dirtily printed falsehood.” As for the People, we may spell it with the biggest of capital Ps, but Ruskin calls it a “mob of money-begotten traitors.” We shall not gain any stay of execution by pleading our religion, for “a knave’s religion,” he has told us in advance, “is the rottenest thing about him.” As for modern literature, if plentiful, it is “pestilential”; and “modern science only ceases to be tiresome by becoming loathsome.”¹ And so forth, and so forth. It might seem idle to take seriously a prophet who thus lightly draws an indictment against a nation, against a whole phase of civilisation.

One has to remember, however, not only the frank want of reserve which Ruskin permitted himself in this book, but also the circumstances in which he came to write it. *Fors Clavigera* was, as we have seen, a work by the way; a payment of ransom in order to win, if it might be, peace of mind for other things. Now the man who makes any one subject the study of his life’s endeavour can afford to work and wait in patience. But though Ruskin had pondered long and deeply, his writing of these political Letters was, as it were, the expedition of a man in a hurry. “I want,” he had said, “to disburthen my heart of the witness I have to bear, in order that I may be free to go back to my garden lawns, and paint birds and flowers there.”² He appointed himself, as it were, his own Special Commissioner, charged to go and come back—bringing the millennium with him. And when it did not come—when so many of the actual conditions were unfavourable to it—terrible was the vexation of his soul. What caused his breakdown under the strain of his work, was, he says, not the quantity of the work itself, but the feeling that nothing came of it—a humiliation “resisted necessarily by a dangerous and lonely pride.”³

The economist and the political philosopher are apt, again, to take general views, and, so far as human weaknesses permit, to approach questions without personal prejudice. But Ruskin wrote hotly, on the spur of the moment, under the immediate influence of external circumstances. “Never was a soul,” says his friend, Professor Norton, “more open and accessible to immediate impressions, never one that responded with more sensitiveness or more instant sympathy to the appeals of nature or of man. It was like an Æolian harp, its strings

¹ Letters 67, 62 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 646, 515); *Time and Tide*, § 33 (Vol. XVII. p. 348); Letters 94 and 51 (Vol. XXIX. p. 480 *n.*, and Vol. XXVIII. p. 278).

² *Time and Tide*, § 69 (Vol. XVII. p. 377).

³ Letter 88, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. p. 386).

quivering musically in serene days under the touch of the soft air; but, as the clouds gathered and the winds rose, vibrating in the blast with a tension that might break the sounding-board itself."¹ Never was a soul more accessible to immediate impressions—and hence never was there a writer whose words at any given place more require to be studied in relation to his point of view at the moment: "While I am looking at a sunset," he once said, "I forget the sunrise; but the next morning sunrise makes me forget the sunset."² In *Fors Clavigera*, written with the frankness of a diary or a familiar letter, every passing mood leaves its impress on the printed page, and Ruskin's extreme, and even morbid, sensitiveness colours the book throughout. "One seems almost," says Leslie Stephen, "to be listening to the cries of a man of genius, placed in a pillory to be pelted by a thick-skinned mob, and urged by a sense of his helplessness to utter the bitterest taunts that he can invent."³ Like most criticisms of Ruskin which are wellfounded, this is one which he has himself anticipated. He speaks of "the bitterness with which he feels the separation between himself and the people round him."⁴ He is so "alone in his thoughts and ways" that he wonders sometimes whether it is he, or the world, that is mad.⁵ The more he felt himself out of touch with the world round him, the greater licence did he allow to his pen. He wrote "imprudently, and even incontinently, because he could not for the moment hold his tongue about what vexed or interested him."⁶ Also, he wrote without any of the arts of old parliamentary hands in qualifying their statements or leaving open their lines of retreat. Such ways were "inscrutable" to him; and for "qualification of statement" he had "neither time nor need."⁷

To give full licence to his pen meant with Ruskin not only to write with loaded emphasis, but to give rein to playful fancy and to work an abundant vein of irony and paradox. He has noted the inscrutable law by which the teaching of great men is often obscured by some strain of perversity; and "the strange habit of wise humanity to speak in enigmas only, so that the highest truths and

¹ Preface to the American "Brantwood" Edition of *Crown of Wild Olive*, p. ix.

² Preface to the American "Brantwood" Edition of *Aratra Pentelici*, p. vii.

³ "Mr. Ruskin's Recent Writings," in *Fraser's Magazine*, June 1874, vol. 9, N.S., p. 689.

⁴ Letter 45, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 146). Compare Letter 76, § 16 (Vol. XXIX. p. 98).

⁵ Letter 48, § 5 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 206).

⁶ Letter 88, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 384).

⁷ Letters 87 and 81 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 364, 206).

usefullest laws must be hunted for through whole picture galleries of dreams, which to the vulgar seem dreams only.”¹ And similarly, “Be sure,” he says elsewhere, “if the author is worth anything you will not get at his meaning all at once—nay, that at his whole meaning you will not for a long time arrive in any wise. Not that he does not say what he means, and in strong words, too; but he cannot say it all; and what is more strange, *will* not, but in a hidden way, and in parables, in order that he may be sure you want it.”² The words are peculiarly appropriate to his own *Fors Clavigera*, in which, one cannot doubt, he took a certain pleasure in provoking, stimulating, teasing, and even perplexing his readers. In one place he compares the clergy to candle-grease,³ and in a succeeding Letter he insists to remonstrant correspondents that he meant his words quite literally. This correspondence, he wrote to a personal friend, “tickled” him.⁴ To Mr. Allen, he wrote, of another Letter, “I’m very glad you enjoy the January *Fors*. I was rather tickled with it myself.”⁵ He expected all his friends to read the Letters, and to be duly shocked by them. Thus Rawdon Brown seems to have been a little startled by Letter 73, with its suggestion of Doges of Sheffield, and so forth. Ruskin’s reply was that his “Papa” (as in familiar letters he used to call the old friend from whom he had learnt so much) might have found much worse things to be shocked at in an earlier Letter.⁶ “I’m greatly wondering,” he wrote again to his publisher (January 20, 1877), “what people will say to next *Fors*. This January one seems to have

¹ *Munera Pulveris*, § 87 (Vol. XVII. p. 208).

² *Sesame and Lilies*, § 13 (Vol. XVIII. p. 63).

³ Letter 51, § 24 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 292).

⁴ *Stray Letters from Professor Ruskin to a London Bibliopole* (F. S. Ellis), privately printed 1892, p. 25.

⁵ January 1875.

⁶ At Letter 60, p. 349 (of the original edition), in the copy of *Fors* in St. Mark’s Library at Venice, Brown has inserted the following autograph letter:—

“MY DEAR PAPA,—It seems to me that Papas ought to be more interested in their son’s books. You always expect me to read Mr. Cheney’s; but surely you don’t read my letters, though twelve in the year are many, yet they are so full of mischief I should have thought you would have looked after them before now. The two pages, 349, 350, of December ’75 are far worse than this January. I return a volume I’ve had by me too long;—please, may I look at that book of Mr. Cheney’s on the Mariegole?

“Ever your grateful Figlio.

“Please, the next time Toni comes, will you tell him to insist on having the money for those copies of Mariegole.”

The reference in the postscript is to copies of the laws of some of the Venetian guilds from which Ruskin quoted in *Fors* (see Vol. XXIX. pp. 38, 42).

waked them up a bit at Sheffield"; and to the same correspondent, a week later, "You'll see a wonderful lot of things exploding in people's eyes soon about our work. *Fors* of February ought to be a choker." Ruskin in this book was often letting off squibs to explode in the path of dull respectability. But that was not all. To his habit of speaking in riddling words, one must add the foible, which grew upon him with the growth of years and of a surrounding circle of admirers waiting upon his every utterance, of laying down the law on every conceivable subject. The result of all this was to expose *Fors Clavigera* in equal measure to the contempt of the scoffers and the misunderstanding of the devout. While some casual readers (such as the hasty reviewers of a periodical press) were content to turn away from the whole thing as futile, others, whose discretion was not equal to their devotion, were wont to mistake dreams for realities, and ironical paradoxes for practical injunctions. A certain quality of humour, and tact for discrimination, are necessary for the right reading of Ruskin. I have been told a story (for the complete authenticity of which, however, I cannot vouch) of a devoted disciple who, pondering in his mind the Master's diatribes against railways, came to the conclusion that even to send a letter by the post was to parley with the Evil One. He spent accordingly a large part of an innocent life in tramping about the country delivering letters in person upon his friends. At last he reached Brantwood. He departed thence a sadder, but not, I fear, a wiser man; for when Ruskin gently told him that he was a fool, and pointed to his own practice, which was to abuse railways, but meanwhile to use them,¹ the disciple's comment was that "it was grievous to discover that the Master himself was no true Ruskinian."

One other characteristic of *Fors Clavigera* must be noticed; for though it is extremely obvious at the most hasty glance, there are some aspects of it which reveal themselves only to a diligent reader. The book is wildly discursive. It ranges at will from Monmouth to Macedon, from China to Peru, from Giotto to goose-pie. No one has chaffed the book in this matter more piquantly than Ruskin himself. "I can well conceive," he says, "how irritating it must be to any one chancing to take special interest in any one part of my subject, to find me, or lose me, wandering away from it for a year or two."² His "eddies of thought" turned him, he confesses, "into apparently irrelevant, and certainly unprogressive inlets"; and in discoursing on

¹ See Letter 49, § 15 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 247).

² Letter 50, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 254).

the course of true love in the Waverley Novels, he had to exercise some self-restraint in not proceeding to show the connexion of this topic with “railways, joint-stock banks, the landed interest, the parliamentary interest, grouse shooting, lawn tennis, monthly magazines, spring fashions, and Christmas cards.”¹ He often knows not where to begin, by reason of “the thousand things flitting in my mind, like sea-birds for which there are no sands to settle upon.”² Nothing settles itself down in *Fors Clavigera* for long at a time, and this is a characteristic which annoys some readers. “What puzzles me,” wrote James Russell Lowell, “and sometimes bores me in Gladstone is that he takes as much interest in one thing as another, and is as diffusively emphatic about it.”³ Many persons, without admitting the boredom in either case, must recognise that what Lowell said of Gladstone’s conversation is true of Ruskin’s printed talk in *Fors Clavigera*. “Don’t read me *wiggling* books,” said Leslie Stephen in the nursery to his mother. “He liked to have a great deal on one subject, and to have it in regular order.”⁴ That, perhaps, was one reason why he found *Fors Clavigera* little to his taste, for it is eminently a book that “wiggles.” It may indeed, in one aspect of it, be called a Commonplace Book, in which the author jots down his thoughts, impressions, fancies, as the “Fors” of the day dictated. But this is by no means the whole truth about the discursiveness of *Fors Clavigera*. It lends to the book a compensating charm, and the discursiveness is found, on a close reading, to be not inconsistent with real unity of purpose and drift. On the former point, Mr. Frederic Harrison’s characterisation seems to me (so far as it reaches) very true:—

“*Fors* (he says) produces on us the effect of some strange electrical disturbance in the heavens, which we watch with wonder and admiration, constantly struck by some unexpected flash, from whence coming, whither going, we know not, but always beautiful and profoundly impressive. . . . It is written in a style of which there is no other example in the language—a style of measured *abandon*, of surrender to any fancy, whim, association of the passing moment. Nothing so utterly inconsequent, so rambling, so heterogeneous exists in print. And yet, the connotations of ideas are so fantastic, and the transitions so original, that the effect of the whole is charming as well as exciting.”⁵

¹ Letter 91, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 445).

² Letter 60, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 460).

³ *Letters of James Russell Lowell*, edited by C. E. Norton, 1894, vol. ii. p. 321.

⁴ *Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen*, by F. W. Maitland, 1906, p. 25.

⁵ *John Ruskin*, 1902, pp. 183, 184.

But there is something more than fantasy and originality in the heterogeneous contents of *Fors Clavigera*. The studies which it contains are indeed miscellaneous; yet, as Ruskin claims, and as we shall persently see, they fit as pieces of mosaic into a designed whole. The piece is a *fantasia*, but not without a certain form of its own.

I have dwelt the more fully upon certain characteristics of Ruskin, which are particularly noticeable in *Fors Clavigera*—his impatience, his sensitiveness, his love of irony and paradox, his discursiveness—because they lead up to a point which has governed the manner in which the book is presented in this complete edition. If a work, so heterogeneous and often so obscure, is to be read so as to reach the author's real meaning, it must be read as a whole. No writer suffers so much as Ruskin from being read in extracts only, though the reading of extracts, if judiciously selected, may indeed be profitable; and among Ruskin's books, there is none which is so much liable as *Fors Clavigera* to be misunderstood by partial reading. It is not altogether surprising, for instance, to learn that Ruskin's expressed desire to destroy the New Town of Edinburgh proved a stone of stumbling to some readers.¹ It was very easy to make fun out of the book by separating passages from their context, and informing the public that according to the Slade Professor "art is absolutely dependent on solving the question, Why have little girls large shoes;" that he proposed to found an ideal community in order to teach "the use of sugar-tongs"; or that his panacea for the condition-of-England question was found in making nests for eagles.² To understand Ruskin's purpose aright, it is necessary to read the whole of the Letters; and, as he says, "if any patient or candid person cares to understand the book, and master its contents, he may do so with less pains than would be required for the reading of any ordinary philosophical treatise on equally important subjects."³

The object of the methods here adopted in editing *Fors Clavigera* is to facilitate such careful reading of the book as a whole.

In the first place, the date of each Letter has now for the first time been included in the headlines—a very simple matter, yet one of some importance, for in the case of a diary and a commonplace book (and *Fors Clavigera* is in some sort both of these things) it is essential to remember the dates of the entries.

¹ Vol. XXVIII. p. 532.

² Letters 37, 25, 48, 75 (below, p. 448; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 14, 210; Vol. XXIX. p. 71).

³ Letter 67, § 15 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 650).

Next, an abstract of the contents of the several Letters has been supplied, as an introduction to each of the eight volumes¹ into which the book was originally divided. An attempt has been made in these abstracts to bring out the train of thought, and to indicate the nature of the transition from topic to topic. Notes by Ruskin himself have occasionally been available in the preparation of these abstracts. Thus in the case of Letters 1–7, words and phrases from his summary in Letter 43 have been incorporated, and, in some other cases, summarising notes from Ruskin's own copy of the book have been used.

Sometimes Ruskin referred on to discussions or explanations, which, in fact, he omitted to give. Where possible, editorial notes have been appended to supply the omission. Thus, in the present volume, he makes a great point in many places of what he was going to tell his readers about Lycurgus and black broth; but he never tells it, and the necessary reference has therefore now been given (p. 503 *n.*). So, again, he refers repeatedly to a certain tradition about "Alice of Salisbury"; he begins to tell it, but breaks off in the middle, to pass to another topic, and does not resume. The thread is now taken up in a note (p. 571 *n.*).

Explanatory notes are somewhat more frequent in *Fors Clavigera* than in earlier volumes of the edition. This is in accordance with Ruskin's wish. In his own copy of the book he repeatedly writes against passages "Needs a note." The book needs a good many notes for two reasons. One is the large number of topical and transient allusions which it contains. The other is the nature of the style in which it is written. Mr. Frederic Harrison says that

"in all the two thousand pages of *Fors*, dealing with things as miscellaneous and diverse as the words in the Standard Dictionary of the English language, it would be hard to find a single sentence which was not quite clear to the most ordinary reader. He might not understand all the allusions, poetic and historical references, the epigrams and the sarcasm, but he would perfectly understand the meaning of the words. The sentences are as clear, simple, direct as those of Swift, but without the coarseness and grittiness of the fierce Dean. *Fors* runs on with an easy mother-speech such as Bunyan, Defoe, Swift, or Goldsmith, never surpassed; but at the same time with a grace and witchery of fancy that the sardonic Dean of St. Patrick's would have scorned to show."²

¹ See below, pp. 5, 223, 441; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 5, 227, 473; Vol. XXIX. pp. 5, 307.

² *John Ruskin*, in the "English Men of Letters" Series, p. 184.

This is admirably said, but Ruskin himself would somewhat have qualified it. "I tried always in *Fors*," he says, "to say things, if I could, a little piquantly"; and "whether I succeeded in writing piquantly, or not, I certainly often wrote obscurely." So he said in *Præterita*;¹ and in re-reading *Fors* at the same time, he constantly wrote in the margin that such and such a passage was "obscure."² "People could not generally see the drift," he notes in one place; "it is all too fine-run and the mocking too quiet."³ Where Ruskin marked in his copy that such and such a passage was intended literally, or on the contrary that it was otherwise to be taken, his notes have been transcribed.⁴ The editors have not taken upon themselves to say on their own account "*N.B.—This is ironical.*" The irony is for the most part obvious enough; and the book is meant to be read, as Ruskin says, by readers who "use their own wits."⁵ But pains have been taken to explain the references and allusions. The meaning of the words may be intelligible enough without such explanations; but not the full meaning of the sentences.

Again, the three volumes which now contain *Fors Clavigera*, have been all treated together, and cross-references copiously supplied. It is only by this means that the author's full purpose and consistent scheme can be illustrated, or even that the meaning of particular passages can become really intelligible. *Fors* is a very long book. It contains about 650,000 words (or about four times as many as an old three-volume novel). Though it was written in parts and at intervals, Ruskin not only keeps hold of a main thread throughout, but he is constantly picking up, at a later stage, allusions, persons, incidents which he first introduced earlier in the journey. Except to a reader who tackles the book consecutively and is blessed with a very retentive memory, *Fors Clavigera* must remain somewhat puzzling without abundant cross-references. One of Ruskin's literary tricks is worth noting in this connexion. Carlyle was a humourist in types; he invents his Teufelsdröckh, his Bobus of Houndsditch, his Smelfungus. Ruskin, like Matthew Arnold, seizes upon particular individuals, actual incidents, chance phrases, drops them and takes them up again, plays with them, worries them, turns them inside out, and introduces them in many an out-of-the-way connexion. It may be doubted whether many readers

¹ See i. ch. ii. § 55.

² See, for instance, below, p. 496.

³ This note is below, at p. 544. Compare p. 606 *n.*

⁴ See, for instance, below, p. 606; and Vol. XXVIII. p. 350 *n.*

⁵ Letter 40, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 62).

of *Fors Clavigera* would recognise at sight, meeting them on chance pages, the gospel of the Ho's, Mr. Lyttel, Mr. Tipple, and Mr. M'Cosh, the ninety-two newspapers, the permutations in Chillianwallah, the preacher of "carnivorous" economy, or even "the greatest thinker in England."

Finally, Ruskin's Index to the book has been completed, and printed at the end of it.¹ In thus presenting *Fors Clavigera*, the editors have sought to carry out Ruskin's intention of incorporating the Letters "as a single work" in the consecutive series of his works;² while in the present Introduction my object has been to resolve the perplexity, at which Ruskin does not wonder, on the part even of his "most studious friends," to make out "what the contents of *Fors* really are, broken up as these materials have been into a mere moraine of separate and seemingly jointless stones."³

Looking, then, at the contents of *Fors Clavigera* as a whole, what do we find that it contains? The contents may be grouped, I think, under six descriptions of the book. (1) It is a Miscellany. (2) It is a treatise on Social Economy in the form of a criticism of the nineteenth century. (3) It is an essay in social reconstruction, or a study in Utopia; in which connexion it becomes (in its later numbers) the monthly organ of a Society, the St. George's Guild. (4) It is an Essay on the Principles of Education. (5) It is a book of Personal Confessions. (6) And, finally, it is a Confession of Faith. In the following pages *Fors Clavigera* will be considered, successively, in these different aspects.

(1)

First, then, *Fors Clavigera* is a Miscellany—a collection of studies *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*. It may be helpful, if only by way of rough index, to bring some of these scattered studies together. A considerable proportion of the total bulk of *Fors Clavigera* is occupied with READINGS IN HISTORY AND LITERATURE. Ruskin's favourite studies and authors here come before us, as he puts down from month to month his notes on books read, or transcribes passages which had

¹ A Bibliographical Note in Vol. XXIX. gives particulars about this Index.

² See Letter 73, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 13).

³ Letter 85, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 322).

specially struck him. Arranging these readings, more or less in the chronological order of their subject-matter, we may mention, first,

Studies in Greek Mythology and History.—Greek Mythology, as we have seen in earlier volumes,¹ was a subject which had a great fascination for Ruskin, the fluidity of myths affording a tempting scope for the play of his fancy and the exercise of his ingenuity. Among the myths thus touched upon in *Fors* are the life-story of Theseus; the “translation” of the Charioteer; the myths of Apollo and Marsyas; the legends of Dædalus and the Labyrinth; and the relations of Æacus, Minos, and Rhadamanthus.² Ruskin made no sharp division between the mythical and the historical, and with what he says about Theseus may be connected his references to the laws of Lycurgus and to Spartan theories of property and punishment.³ Under this same head come the frequent references in *Fors* to the classics—to the Orphic Hymns, to Hesiod, to Herodotus, to Livy, Virgil, and Horace. It was in the best literature of any age that Ruskin found the surest guidance to its spirit.

Readings in Plato.—His own daily reading, as we have heard,⁴ was in Plato; and *Fors Clavigera*, alike in its character of the author’s commonplace book and in its aspect as a study in Utopia, abounds in passages from the *Republic* and the *Laws*. Every man, as some one has said, is born an Aristotelian or a Platonist. Ruskin was of Plato’s school, and he was ever forward to “praise famous men and our fathers that begat us . . . men renowned for their power, giving counsel by their understanding, and declaring prophecies.” It is to the prophecies of Plato that Ruskin turns for support of his own counsels and paradoxes. There will be something more to be said on this subject when we come to consider Ruskin’s scheme of education (p. lxxiii.); meanwhile, among the scattered readings in Plato, are:—

The City of the Soul (*Rep.*, ix.): Letter 37 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 23–24).

The Sacredness of the Soul (*Laws*, v.): Letter 70 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 724–725).

“Our Battle is Immortal” (*Laws*, x.): Letter 76 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 82–83).

Crimes against the Gods (*Laws*, ix.): Letter 82 (Vol. XXIX. p. 226).

¹ Vol. XIX. p. lxxv.; Vol. XX. p. lvii.

² For these, see (1) Letters 22, 23, 24, 28 (below, pp. 384, 386, 398–409, 426–430, 510–512); (2) Letter 24 (below, pp. 418–419); (3) Letter 83 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 271–272); (4) Letters 23 and 28 (below, pp. 403, 510); and (5) Letters 23 and 82 (below, pp. 409–410, and Vol. XXIX. p. 225 *n.*).

³ For Lycurgus, see Letters 2, 27, 68 (below, pp. 29, 502; Vol. XXVIII. p. 667). For the other topic, Letter 82 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 221–223).

⁴ Vol. XXIV. p. xliv.

Belief in the Gods, the foundation of good Law (*Laws*, xii.): Letter 82 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 227–228).

The Guardians and the Laws (*Laws*, vi.): Letter 78 (Vol. XXIX. p. 139).

The Unwritten and Constant Laws (*Laws*, iii., vii.): Letter 80 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 177–178).

Principles of Education (*Laws*, vii., ii.): Letters 82, 83 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 231–241, 258–262).

“Theuth’s Writing Lessons” (*Phædrus*): Letters 17 (below, pp. 294–295) and 94 (Vol. XXIX. p. 483).

Greek conception of Music (*Laws*, ii., vii.): Letters 73, 82, 83 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 24–26, 241, 257–262).

Greek conception of Leisure (*Laws*, viii.): Letter 82 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 253–254).

Tragedy (*Laws*, vii.): Letter 82 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 234–235).

Readings in the Bible.—With the daily reading of Plato, Ruskin combined that of the Bible. The conjunction takes us to the heart of much of his philosophy. For “much of Ruskin’s work,” it has been well said, “has been the attempt to unite Hellenic and Christian ideals.”¹ He sought to show that industry without art is brutality; but, on the other hand, that life without industry is guilt.² To Ruskin all great Art is the expression of man’s delight in God’s work,³ while true religion is to be found not in contemplation of a future heaven, but in work in a present world which shall be the realisation of deity. He was a believer in the continuity of inspiration; he sought and found “the Word of God” in literature alike “profane” and “sacred”; and thus it was natural for him to pass from readings in Plato to readings in the Bible. To enumerate all the quotations, translations, expositions, adaptations which Ruskin makes in *Fors Clavigera* from the Bible would occupy several pages.⁴ The footnotes supply all the references, which in this book are more frequent even than in other of Ruskin’s works. *Fors Clavigera* was in large part written during years when his standpoint had again become more distinctively Christian. He remarks in the course of his autobiographical reminiscences that his early Bible lessons were “the one essential part”⁵ of his education,

¹ *A Disciple of Plato: a Critical Study of John Ruskin*, by William Smart, 1883, p. 21.

² *Lectures on Art*, § 95 (Vol. XX. p. 93).

³ *Two Paths*, § 48 (Vol. XVI. p. 290).

⁴ In Mr. Faunthorpe’s *Index to “Fors Clavigera,”* the entry “Bible” occupies eleven pages, mostly of small print, in double columns, and even so the list is not complete.

⁵ Letter 42 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 101–102).

and he finds in similar studies material for the education which he most desired to commend to his readers. He was a born preacher, and he remarks with some impatience upon the shallowness of most professional sermons. Clergymen, in search of fresh points and original illustrations for their discourses, may be advised to turn to *Fors Clavigera*.¹ Ruskin speaks in *Fors* of his devotion to St. Francis, and elsewhere of himself as almost a Brother of the Third Order.² In his use of the Bible, Ruskin closely follows St. Francis, whose writings (it has been said) “abound not only in allegory and personification, but also in quaint concepts and naïve deductions. His final argument is often a text of Holy Scripture, which he uses with a familiarity and freedom altogether remarkable. Indeed there are parts of his writings in which the interweaving of Scriptural phrases is so intricate as almost to defy any attempt to indicate them by references, the more so since the Biblical language adopted by St. Francis is not always taken from the Bible, but often from the Liturgy, Missal, and Breviary.”³ These remarks precisely apply to *Fors Clavigera*. One is constantly struck by the quaint and unfamiliar use of familiar texts; as, for instance, when Ruskin translates the vision of Abram into modern terms: “Fear not, Sir Stafford, I am thy Devastation; and thou shalt have an exceeding great surplus.”⁴ The actual quotations from the Bible are very numerous, but indication by references is sometimes almost impossible, so closely is the Biblical language interwoven in the texture of Ruskin’s sentences. He is not always satisfied with the translation in the Authorised Version; he charges it with many imperfections, and principally with violation of the first rule of honest translation, namely, always to render the same word by the same equivalent.⁵ He has the Vulgate and the Septuagint⁶ at hand, and utilises now the Latin, and now the Greek, according as it seems to him to be most significant in meaning, or sonorous in sound. The

¹ Commentators on Ruskin should ever keep Cruden’s *Concordance* at their side. In *The Bible of Amiens* (ch. ii. § 48), Ruskin says of Clovis after his conversion that “the Frank leopard had not so wholly changed his spots as to surrender to an enemy the opportunity of a first spring.” A French editor explains “Allusion, me dit Robert d’Humières, à ce proverbe anglais: ‘L’Ethiopien ne peut changer sa peau ni le léopard ses taches.’” Such is fame, even with the prophet Jeremiah.

² Vol. XXIII. p. xlvii.

³ *The Writings of Saint Francis of Assisi, newly translated into English, with an Introduction and Notes*, by Father Paschal Robinson, 1906, p. xv.

⁴ Letter 65, § 4 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 590).

⁵ See below, p. 202 *n.*, where other passages to like effect are collected.

⁶ Ruskin, as we have seen (Vol. I. p. xxxiii.), had at one time a little Hebrew also; but he did not pursue the study in later years.

following list gives only the longer and more important of the Bible readings included in *Fors*:—

- The Word of God: Letter 36 (below, pp. 669–672).
 The meaning of Christmas; the Life of Christ and its Lessons: Letter 12 (below, pp. 217–220).
 The Parables of Christ: Letter 68 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 667–668).
 Genesis x.: Letters 61 and 62 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 496–499, 522–523).
 Genesis xv.: Letter 65 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 587–601).
 Leviticus xxv., 35–37: Letter 68 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 672–673).
 Joshua xxiv. 15: Letter 84 (Vol. XXIX. p. 293).
 The story of Joab: Letter 40 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 70–72).
 Psalm viii.: Letter 53 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 324–328).
 Psalm xiv., xv.: Letters 23 and 36 (below, pp. 415–416, 672–676).
 Psalm xix. expounded: Letter 75 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 55–57).
 Psalm lviii.: Letter 66 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 615–616).
 Psalm xcvi.: Letter 48 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 217).
 Proverbs i.: Letter 87 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 374–378).
 Wisdom xiii.: Letter 82 (Vol. XXIX. p. 229).
 Wisdom xv., xvi.: Letter 53 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 333–334).
 Book of Tobit: Letter 74 (Vol. XXIX. p. 35).
 Isaiah vi. 5: Letter 45 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 145–146).
 Isaiah xvi.: Letter 66 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 617).
 Isaiah liv. 11–17: Letter 8 (below, pp. 144–145).
 Nahum: Letter 65 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 600, 601).
 Matthew xxiv.: Letter 84 (Vol. XXIX. p. 288).
 John ii. 3, 5: Letter 84 (Vol. XXIX. p. 286).
 John xiv. 2 (the “mansions” of God): Letter 27 (below, pp. 489, 490).
 John xvi. 32 (“Your own place”): Letter 28 (below, pp. 507–508).
 John xxi.: Letter 74 (Vol. XXIX. p. 37).
 Ephesians vi. 14–17: Letter 48 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 215–216).
 First Epistle to Timothy ii. 8: Letter 25 (below, pp. 467–468).
 Hebrews i., ii.: Letter 53 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 329–330).
 First Epistle of John: Letter 81 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 192–193).
 Epistle of Jude: Letters 76 and 77 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 93–95, 108–111).
 Revelation ii., iii.: Letter 84 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 296–304).
 Revelation xx. 13: Letter 72 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 759).

Readings in Virgil.—Next to the Bible, the books which Ruskin wished all his disciples to be familiar with were those of Plato, Virgil, Dante, Carpaccio, and Shakespeare.¹ With Plato we have dealt

¹Letters 18, § 13 (below, p. 314), and 71, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 732).

already, and so we come next to his references to Virgil. These are hardly so numerous as might be expected from the importance he attached to the poet; but it should be noted that Ruskin intended to issue a translation of the first two *Georgics* and of the sixth *Æneid*, as a volume in his *Bibliotheca Pastorum*, adding to it the first two books of Livy, “for completion of the image of Roman life.”¹ Similarly, there is even less in *Fors Clavigera* of two other favourite authors—Hesiod and Xenophon—because both were reserved for separate treatment in the same series, supplementary to *Fors*. Virgilian references will be found, however, in Letters 8 and 66.²

Readings in Dante.—After Virgil, Ruskin mentioned Dante, and there is probably no book, other than the Bible, to which there are more references in his writings than the *Divina Commedia*. In this respect *Fors* is no exception to the rule. Here, as in the case of the Bible, the words, images, and thoughts of Dante are much interwoven with Ruskin’s text. The General Index must be consulted for the scattered references; the longer passages are those discussing the lake of pitch, the divisions of Hell, and the circle of fraud.³

Studies in Shakespeare.—The “author” whom Ruskin named next to Dante is Carpaccio. This collocation of a painter among poets and philosophers is characteristic. Ruskin’s final test of painters was the number and nobility of their ideas.⁴ He would have agreed with the remark of Jean François Millet, who, when a young painter came to lay his accomplishments at the master’s feet, replied, “It is well, and you can paint; but what have you to say?”⁵ The medium may be song, dialogue, epic, or painting; it is the message—the beautiful thought in beautiful form—that gives lasting vitality to each alike. Here, however, it will be more convenient to notice Ruskin’s studies in Carpaccio under the head of painting; and thus we come to the last of his five selected authors. The order, it should be explained, was not of merit—none is first among the Kingdom of Heaven; the five authors were representative of the five cities, whose history Ruskin wished his readers to study—Plato of Athens, Virgil of Rome, Dante of Florence, Carpaccio of Venice, and Shakespeare of London. Scattered

¹ Letter 61, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 500).

² Below, pp. 143–144; Vol. XXVIII. p. 622.

³ For these passages, see (1) Letter 18 (below, pp. 313–314); (2) Letters 23 and 24 (below, pp. 410–412, 423–428); (3) Letter 72 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 764–765).

⁴ *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 92).

⁵ John La Farge, *Considerations on Painting*, New York, 1895, p. 20. To like effect, Sir Walter Scott: “A painting should, to be excellent, have something to say to the mind of a man” (Lockhart, vol. vi. p. 234).

references and allusions to Shakespeare are very numerous in *Fors*; among more considerable notices, an analysis of a favourite passage of Ruskin's in *King Richard II.* may be mentioned, as also discussions upon the moral law in the Tragedies and upon the close of *Romeo and Juliet*.¹

Readings in Froissart.—Shakespeare, as we have seen, was taken by Ruskin as the author best representative of England. Our order brings us, therefore, next to other studies in English history and literature; and, first among them, to Froissart—an author, by the way, who did not at first appeal greatly to Ruskin,² and whose true spirit he may have been the more anxious on that account to illustrate. He quotes from the *Chronicles*, with various comment, the accounts of the battle of Crécy and of the siege of Calais, and of the meeting of Edward III. and Alice of Salisbury.³

Studies in Heraldry.—Connected with Froissart in spirit, as also roughly in time, are various studies in Heraldry. This, as we have seen in earlier volumes (especially in *The Laws of Fésole*, *Eagle's Nest*, and *Val d' Arno*) was a favourite subject with Ruskin, and it is often introduced in *Fors Clavigera*. Thus he takes a florin, and gives an interesting discourse on the Royal Arms of the United Kingdom. He picks up a phrase in Froissart—"so they were served"—and discusses the Prince of Wales's Feathers. Froissart's story of Alice of Salisbury suggests the traditional account of the Order of the Garter, and this in turn leads to a discussion of the Scottish Arms.⁴

Readings in Chaucer and "*The Romaunt of the Rose*."—In a literary miscellany intended, as was *Fors Clavigera* (in this aspect of it), to have a historical purpose, Chaucer naturally occupied frequent place, and with Chaucer he grouped the French chivalric literature which the English poet partly translated. Chaucer is, says Ruskin, "the most perfect type of a true English mind in its best possible temper."⁵ An edition of selections from Chaucer was, therefore, among the volumes which Ruskin designed for his Library of Classical Literature.⁶ This part of the design was not to be accomplished; but a reference to the General Index will show how frequently Ruskin read his author,

¹ See Letters 25 (below, pp. 459–460); 83 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 266–267); and 91 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 446, 447).

² See (in a later volume of this edition) his letter to C. E. Norton of February 28, 1858.

³ See Letters 4, 25, and 31 (below, pp. 72–74, 460–464, 570–571).

⁴ See Letters 25, 28 (below, pp. 454–458, 512–513).

⁵ *Lectures on Art*, § 14 (Vol. XX. p. 29).

⁶ Letter 61, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 500).

while in *Fors Clavigera* we have readings from the *Legende of Goode Women*, from the *Romaunt of the Rose*, and studies in "Largesse" and "Franchise";¹ while quotations from the *Book of a Hundred Ballads* are given in Letters 15 and 32.²

Other Readings in English History.—Under this head come notices of the story of Henry II. and his rebellious sons (Letter 3); of the character and laws of Richard I. (*ibid.*³); the relations of Ascham and Lady Jane Grey (Letter 54⁴); the life and writings of Sir Thomas More (Letters 6 and 7⁵); notices of Elizabethan voyages (Letters 13 and 22⁶); and studies of Sir Philip Sidney (Letters 35, 36, 55, 66⁷). Finally, among this group of subjects, we come to one of the most popular strains in the miscellany; namely,

Notes on the Life and Works of Sir Walter Scott—a thread in the pages of *Fors Clavigera* which many readers found so attractive that they begged Ruskin to drop the other threads and continue only with this (a piece of advice which probably had a precisely contrary effect⁸).

Outline of Scott's Ancestry and Early Life (1771–1776): Letters 31, 32, 33 (below, pp. 563–597, 608–621).

Scott's Homes: (1) Rosebank, Letter 92 (Vol. XXIX. p. 460); (2) Lasswade, Letter 29 (below, p. 531); (3) Ashestiel and Abbotsford, Letters 47 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 198), and 92 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 460–464).

Scott's Excursions: Letter 44 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 130–131).

Scott and Mungo Park: Letter 92 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 452–454).

Scott and his Servants: Letter 32 (below, pp. 599–601).

Scott on the Poor Laws: Letter 27 (below, pp. 500–502).

Notes on Scott's Character: Letter 32 (below, pp. 584, 597–598).

Scott's genius Epic, not Dramatic: Letter 34 (below, pp. 628–631).

Analysis of *Redgauntlet*: Letter 47 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 189–198).

The Supernatural Element: Letter 92 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 454–456).

Unconsciousness of his Genius: Letter 83 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 263–265).

The foregoing summaries are by no means exhaustive. If they were, reference would have to be made to notices of Goldsmith, Addison,

¹ For these passages, see (1) Letter 23 (below, p. 406); (2) Letters 24 and 34 (below, pp. 433–435, 624–626); (3) Letter 45 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 160–163); and (4) Letter 43 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 114–115).

² Below, pp. 263, 601.

³ See below, pp. 52–53, 53–59.

⁴ Vol. XXVIII. pp. 353–356.

⁵ See below, pp. 113, 117–119.

⁶ See below, pp. 237–239, 385–386.

⁷ Below, pp. 651–656, 671; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 373–374, 624–625.

⁸ See the opening of Letter 33 (below, p. 606).

Fielding, Miss Edgeworth, Miss Martineau, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Emerson, Thackeray, Dickens, George Eliot, and many other writers; and among foreign authors, to Goethe, Balzac, Gaboriau. But the longer, and more important, notices included in Ruskin's Miscellany as typical of various phases in English life and thought have now been indicated. Another general category, under which the miscellaneous literary contents of *Fors Clavigera* may be arranged, is that of STUDIES OF COUNTRY LIFE. It is from this point of view, as also from that of studies in purity or simplicity of style, that Ruskin directed his disciples to Marmontel and Gotthelf.

Readings in Marmontel.—We have heard from Ruskin already that Marmontel was one of “the persons in past history” with whom he “had most sympathy.”¹ Any reader, who is not familiar with Marmontel already, will understand this sympathy the better after referring to the places in *Fors*, where Ruskin gives translations from the *Autobiography*, *The Misanthrope Corrected*, and *The Scruple*.² It is the old peasant life in France, reflected in Marmontel's pages as in the placid surface of some country pool, that appealed so strongly to Ruskin; and with the passages, above noted, we may connect the extracts from John Moore's Journal, descriptive of French society and manners, as still subsisting on the eve of the Revolution (Letter 29, below, pp. 538–541).

Readings in Gotthelf.—It was from the same standpoint—from a desire to show the conditions of rural life “where men and women are perfectly happy and good, without any iron servants”³—that Ruskin attached so much importance to his extracts from Gotthelf, comprising, in various places of *Fors*, a complete translation of his story of *The Broom Merchant*.⁴ The Swiss tales by this writer appealed strongly to Ruskin, both for their quiet and unaffected simplicity of style, and for their pictures of pastoral life. They were to form part of the Library which he projected in connexion with *Fors Clavigera*, and a translation of one of Gotthelf's books duly appeared, with a preface and notes by Ruskin, in 1888 (Vol. XXXII.). With Gotthelf, we may connect various pages, either in the text or in the “Notes and Correspondence” of *Fors*, which contain other studies in peasant life.

In

¹ *Sesame and Lilies*, Preface of 1871 (Vol. XVIII. p. 48).

² For these passages, see (1) Letter 14 (below, pp. 251–254); (2) Letters 17 and 40 (below, pp. 300–303, and Vol. XXVIII. pp. 62–65); and (3) Letter 21 (below, pp. 366–367).

³ See below, p. 88.

⁴ Letters 30, 34, 39, 55 (below, pp. 548–553, 632–635; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 55–60, 366–372).

the preface just mentioned Ruskin couples Gotthelf's *Ulric* with Miss Francesca Alexander's Tuscan studies. These, again, were separately edited by him (Vol. XXXII.); but one of them—the story of a “Rosy Vale”—is incorporated in *Fors* (Letter 96, Vol. XXIX. pp. 519–527).

We now pass to another general category which comprises a considerable proportion of the whole contents of *Fors Clavigera*; namely, STUDIES IN ART. First, among these, comes a subject already mentioned (p. xxxviii.).

Studies in Carpaccio.—This painter, whose discovery by Ruskin has been recorded in an earlier volume,¹ was one of the five authors whose “opinions” were to be studied by his disciples. Ruskin, accordingly, explains what those opinions were; he discusses, that is to say, the painter's general outlook and mental standpoint (Letter 71, Vol. XXVIII. pp. 732–737). These general remarks are illustrated by particular examples. Thus, Ruskin describes Carpaccio's conception of St. George, contrasting it with the account of the saint accepted by Emerson (Letter 26; below, pp. 475 *seq.*). He tells, by aid of Mr. Anderson, the legend of St. Ursula, as it was known and accepted in Carpaccio's day (Letter 71, Vol. XXVIII. pp. 740–744). He describes, adding further touches from time to time as further study revealed new points, the picture of “St. Ursula's Dream” (Letters 20, 71, 72, 74, and 91²). And, in the manner habitual in *Fors Clavigera*, he compares Past and Present, making the picture of St. Ursula the text for a discourse on the nature of true blessedness.³

Studies in Venetian Architecture.—Carpaccio, as we have seen, was taken by Ruskin as a typical representative of Venetian ways and thoughts; and the pages which he devotes to this painter should thus be connected with the descriptions given in other Letters of details on the Ducal Palace and other Stones of Venice.⁴ These studies in Venetian architecture should also be compared with other passages, in which Ruskin notices some of the laws and institutions of the Venetian Republic.⁵ The connexion need not be here dwelt upon, for Ruskin's conception of art as the interpreter and record of national life and character is already familiar to us.

The Four Lesson Photographs.—*Fors* contains also many pages devoted to art-criticism in the more technical sense. As Ruskin designed for use by his scholars, and in his community of St. George,

¹ Vol. IV. p. 356 *n.*; and compare Vol. XXIV. pp. xlix.–lvii.

² Below, pp. 342–347; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 744, 760; Vol. XXIX. pp. 31, 441.

³ See Letter 20 (below, pp. 344–345).

⁴ Letters 74, 75, 78 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 33–35, 62, 124–126, 130–131).

⁵ Letter 74 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 38–43).

a Standard Library of Classical Literature, so also he contemplated a Standard Collection of Works of Art.¹ This scheme, as distinct from the St. George's Museum, took the form of a Collection of Photographs, which Ruskin placed on sale through his agent, Mr. Ward. Principal among these were the four which Ruskin called "The Lesson Photographs." Reproductions of these Lesson Photographs are included in Vol. XXVIII., where the descriptions of them occur.²

Other Studies in Art.—Among the miscellaneous passages of art-criticism there are notes on the life and character of Botticelli; interpretations of engravings, attributed to him, of "The Mount of Pity" and "Theseus and Ariadne"; notes on Giotto's "Marriage of St. Francis with Poverty"; a discussion of some characteristics of Egyptian art; references to various woodcuts by Holbein; and a *critique* of the first exhibition at the Grosvenor Gallery. To this latter subject, with the libel action brought against Ruskin by Whistler, further reference will be found in the Introduction to Volume XXIX.³ These passages are all of a critical character; but Ruskin intended *Fors Clavigera*, here as in other points, to be more than critical. Its pages, he said,⁴ were to contain practical lessons in art. Hence the book includes hints on how to acquire an elementary and practical knowledge of the arts of incision, and several lessons in the art of line-drawing beautiful penmanship.⁵ The hints on the former subject, if we may judge from the skit by a Companion of St. George,⁶ were not found very easy to follow.

It was part of Ruskin's scheme of artistic education, as we have seen in an earlier volume,⁷ that the teaching of art should be connected directly with other studies—such as heraldry, and more particularly botany and zoology. Thus we come to the fourth category, under which the contents of his Miscellany may be arranged; namely, STUDIES IN NATURAL HISTORY. These are not very frequent, however, for, at the time when Ruskin was writing *Fors Clavigera*, he was concurrently

¹ See Letter 59 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 445).

² See, in that volume, pp. 445, 459, 574, 625–627, 698–701, 720 *n.*; and Vol. XXIX. pp. 117, 127–129.

³ For these subjects, see (1)—Botticelli—Letters 22, 28 (below, pp. 371–375, 387–388, 510–512); (2)—Giotto—Letters 41, 45 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 89, 163–165); (3)—Egypt—Letter 64 (*ibid.*, pp. 563, 569–570); (4)—Holbein—Letters 4, 6, 53, 63 (below, pp. 78, 112; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 321, 550); (5)—Grosvenor Gallery—Letter 79 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 157–161).

⁴ See Vol. XXVIII. p. 409.

⁵ For these subjects, see (1) Letters 64, 65 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 571–573, 605–606); (2) Letters 61, 62, 64 (*ibid.*, pp. 492–495, 524–527, 573–575).

⁶ See Letter 69, § 23 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 709–710).

⁷ Vol. XXI. p. xxx.

passing through the press (as he explains¹) his separate volumes of studies in *Birds, Flowers, and Stones*. Sometimes, however, his studies in natural history overflowed into the all-embracing pages of *Fors*; and thus we find in the book discussions on the theories of glacier-motion; remarks on bees and shells; and notes on streams and inundations.²

Two other categories remain to be noticed, among those comprising the miscellaneous contents of *Fors Clavigera*. One is Ruskin's Autobiography; but this may more conveniently be reserved for later notice (below, p. lxxvi.). The other comprises passages which defy classification. One might call it Ruskin's basket of the wares of Autolycus. The collection of *olla podrida* contains, among other things, a discussion of the London cabman's hypotenuse, the Drury Lane Pantomime, and the use of holes in a fire shovel.

A book containing such a variety of topics, treated not consecutively (as rearranged in the foregoing lists), but apparently haphazard, may well seem to the casual reader to be a mighty maze without a plan. It pleased Ruskin to attribute the arrangement of his material wholly to his mistress, Chance; but there is such a thing as choice in accepting or refusing the promptings of chance, and there is an art which hides the art. We shall see in the end, I think, that what Ruskin elsewhere says is true: the Letters of *Fors Clavigera* are "a mosaic-work," in which the pieces are "set, indeed, in patches, but not without design."³ Still, of the miscellaneous contents of the book hitherto noticed, it may be said that they are not essential parts of its design. The omission of them, though it would deprive the book of variety and charm, would leave the main argument intact. They are episodes, illustrations, and examples; they are not part of the framework.

(2)

Separating the incidental and the illustrative elements from the essentials of the book, we may describe *Fors Clavigera* as (*a*) a criticism of the later decades of the nineteenth century, and (*b*) as an essay in social reconstruction. These two aspects of the book are in Ruskin's treatment closely blended; one can hardly say anywhere of

¹ Letter 60 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 460, 461).

² For these subjects, see (1) Letters 34, 35, 43 (below, pp. 635–643, 647, 662–663; Vol. XXVIII. p. 123); (2) Letters 51, 52, 62, 63, 64 (*ibid.*, pp. 276–286, 304–310, 526–527, 551–555, 584); (3) Letters 19, 85, 86 (below, pp. 324–327; Vol. XXIX. pp. 332–334, 345–349).

³ Letter 36, § 2 (below, p. 669).

this Letter that it deals with the one subject, or of that Letter that it deals with the other. But, in order to analyse the book, the two aspects may conveniently be treated in separate order.

The criticism of the nineteenth century which runs through the book from its first page to the last is deeply coloured by the influence of Carlyle. Ruskin in one Letter speaks of his work in *Fors Clavigera* as being done “with only one man in England—Thomas Carlyle—to whom I can look for steady guidance.”¹ The opening passage of the book, in which, “looking down from Ingleborough,” Ruskin describes England as sunk in “misery and beggary,” recalls—and, I doubt not, was meant to recall—the words with which Carlyle, thirty years before, opened his *Past and Present*:—

“The condition of England is justly regarded as one of the most ominous, and withal one of the strangest ever seen in this world. England is full of wealth, of multifarious produce, supply for human want in every kind; yet England is dying of inanition.”²

And there is a letter of Carlyle’s, written in 1874, which in its turn recalls, and sounds as a summary or echo of much that Ruskin had been writing in *Fors Clavigera*. The letter, which is incidentally referred to by one of Ruskin’s correspondents in *Fors*,³ appeared in the *Times* of January 28 in that year, and has not, I think, hitherto been reprinted. It was addressed to Sir Joseph Whitworth, in connexion with some philanthropic plans of that captain of industry for the benefit of his workmen:—

“Would to Heaven,” wrote Carlyle, “all or many of the captains of industry in England had a soul in them such as yours, and could do as you have done, or could still further co-operate with you in works and plans to like effect! The look of England to me is at this moment abundantly ominous, the question of capital and labour growing every year more anarchical, insoluble by the notions hitherto applied to it, pretty certain to issue in Petroleum one day, unless some other gospel than that of the Dismal Science come to illuminate it. Two things are pretty sure to me. The first is that capital and labour never can or will agree together till they both first of all decide on doing their work faithfully throughout, and like men of conscience and honour, whose highest aim is

¹ Letter 37 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 22). So, in his *Report* of January 1886 on the St. George’s Guild, Ruskin speaks of his scheme as “following Carlyle’s grander exhortation in *Past and Present*” (Vol. XXX.).

² Compare Ruskin’s *Lectures on Art*, § 123 (Vol. XX. p. 114).

³ See Letter 44, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 142).

to behave like faithful citizens of this universe, and obey the eternal commandment of Almighty God who made them. The second thing is that a sadder object even than that of the coal strike, or any conceivable strike, is the fact that, loosely speaking, we may say all England has decided that the profitablest way is to do its work ill, slimly, swiftly, and mendaciously. What a contrast between now and say only one hundred years ago! At the latter date, or still more conspicuously for ages before it, all England awoke to its work with an invocation to the Eternal Maker to bless them in their day's labour, and help them to do it well. Now all England, shopkeepers, workmen, all manner of competing labourers, awoken as it were with an unspoken but heartfelt prayer to Beelzebub, 'Oh help us, thou great Lord of shoddy, adulteration, and malfeasance, to do our work with the *maximum* of slimness, swiftness, profit, and mendacity, for the Devil's sake. Amen.' "

Carlyle's letter serves not inaptly as a summary of those which Ruskin addressed "To the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain." The letter gives Ruskin's point of view, or rather one of his points of view, for Ruskin had others, more suggestive, as it seems to me, than those of his master. *Fors Clavigera* may thus be described, under one aspect of it, as a resumption, at the latter part of the century, of the contrast between *Past and Present* which Carlyle had drawn three decades before.¹ The background, against which Ruskin set his criticism, is the scheme of social economy, already expounded in his earlier books, and especially in *Unto this Last* and *Munera Pulveris*. It is unnecessary here to go in detail over ground which has already been mapped out in the Introduction to those books,² where, moreover, frequent references to *Fors* are supplied. It will, however, be serviceable, perhaps, to give here, as in the case of the miscellaneous contents of the book, a series of references to the principal places in which various of Ruskin's economic doctrines are expounded. The present pages, together with the Introduction to Vol. XVII., fulfil, I hope, a task which Ruskin suggested to another student of his works; namely, the compilation of "a general index of the important topics, *Fors* being the basis, and the other political economy books collaterally given":³—

The "carnivorous" assumption: criticism of the abstraction of the selfish motives as the basis of the current political economy: Letters 45, 62, 77,

¹ See Ruskin's own references to the book in Letter 10 (below, p. 179).

² Vol. XVII. pp. lxxxiii.–xcviii.

³ See, in a later volume of this edition, the letter to the Rev. J. P. Fautnorpe of March 14, 1883.

78, 81 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 159, 516; Vol. XXIX. pp. 110, 134, 199). For this criticism in Ruskin's other economic books, see Vol. XVII. pp. lxxxiii., ciii.

The definition of wealth and utility: Letters 4, 37, 44, 70, 73, 90 (below, pp. 64–66; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 18, 126–128, 713–720; Vol. XXIX. pp. 14–16, 423–424). On these subjects, see Vol. XVII. pp. lxxxvi., lxxxviii., civ.

“National Store” and National Debts: Letters 1, 7, 22, 58, 67 (below, pp. 14, 121, 377; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 428, 639–641). Compare Vol. XVII. p. xc.

Criticism of the theory of capital and interest (under the figure of “the position of William” and otherwise): Letters 1, 5, 8, 11, 18, 32 (below, pp. 24–26, 90, 136, 187–190, 316–319, 600).

Criticism of the theory of rent: Letters 2, 43, 44, 78 (below, p. 30; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 108, 135–137; Vol. XXIX. p. 136).

Criticism of the theory that “a demand for commodities is not a demand for labour”: Letter 2 (below, pp. 31–34). On this subject, compare Vol. XVII. p. xcvi.

The theory of profit in exchange; the “heresy of the tables”: Letters 45, 82 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 159–160; Vol. XXIX. p. 225 *n.*). Compare Vol. XVII. p. xcvi. (8).

The theory of exchange-value; the “Judasian heresy”: Letters 45, 70, 82 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 160, 717; Vol. XXIX. p. 225 *n.*). Compare Vol. XVII. p. lxxxix. (2).

Money and currency: Letters 44, 58, Appendix 11 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 134–135 *n.*, 429–430; Vol. XXIX. pp. 553–558). On these subjects, see Vol. XVII. pp. xc.–xcii.

Denunciation of all interest as “usury”: Letters 21, 43, 44, 46, 53, 60, 66, 67, 68, 80, 81 (below, pp. 363–366; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 121–122, 139, 187, 335–338, 468–469, 624, 669–674; Vol. XXIX. pp. 179, 184–187, 199–200).

The last heading in the list covers, as will be seen, a great many passages in *Fors*. It marks a development of Ruskin's views on the subject, which may partly be traced in *Fors* itself. In *Munera Pulveris* he defined “usury” as “taking an exorbitant sum for the use of anything.” Gradually, however, he was brought by his correspondent, Mr. Sillar, to accept the view that the taking of interest of any amount whatever should be denounced as usury.¹ He seems to have reached this conclusion with difficulty, and for a time was unwilling to

¹ See Vol. XVII. p. 220 and *n.*

press it with any great persistence.¹ But it more and more took hold of him, and in the later Letters he is in full tilt against the “usurers.” He carried on the crusade in some separate Papers, which will be found in a later volume.

These economic and political criticisms are, it will have been noticed, scattered up and down the book. The Letters begin with some sort of continuous discussion of such problems, but the thread is soon broken, and the Letters become a casual criticism of the events of the time, in the course of which certain general propositions are suggested. To attempt in any abstract and concise form to summarise these main contents of the book would be idle. Ruskin himself began the task more than once, but abandoned it. He did, however, give several summaries of his main argument or principal contentions, and it may be useful to bring these summaries together.

The first summary is in Letter 22, where Ruskin states Eight Propositions as containing the gist of the earlier Letters; which propositions, summed yet more briefly, come to these—that the alleged prosperity of the country is non-existent; that it is time to begin accumulating a true National Store; that redemption from distress does not depend on Governments or Parliaments; that landlords should not be forcibly dispossessed, but that workmen should become landlords themselves and also capitalists; and that agricultural and technical schools should be established.

The next summary is in Letter 43, and is on a different plan. It is an account of the contents of the Letters as they stand, and it has been used in the abstracts now added at the beginning of Letters: but Ruskin proceeded no further than Letter 7; the abstract, he said, began itself to need further abstraction (Vol. XXVIII. p. 110). To what Ruskin thus did in Letter 43, the following notes of his may be added:—

“The three numbers, 5th, 7th, and 9th, are the three explaining the laws of Hope, Charity, and Faith, or Hope, Love, and Admiration. The intermediate 6th is the exponent of Envy. The 8th is only the development of the 5th, showing the ground of our practical Hope. The 9th, of Faith, is summed in the words, ‘They will know what it is to see the sky’ (*cf.* 12, § 7).

“Then the 10th and 11th are exponents of Injustice and Justice. The extreme of Injustice, passively sheathed sword in Park with a

¹ See, for instance, below, p. 363; and Vol. XXVIII. p. 121.

hook for collecting rent—his castle turned into a railway tunnel (*cf.* 9, §§ 3, 13).

“Letter XI. Justice—the great exponent of peasant producer and polite smooth-tongued pilferer—my limited and salutary portion of pease (§ 21). The Eleventh has the main inquiry why we fine people are to be fine, and labourers coarse, and the main challenge to Fawcett on his profits of idleness—followed out in 18, § 15.”¹

The next summary is in Letter 67, where Ruskin states sixteen aphorisms as containing “the gist of the book.” These may in turn be summarised:—

(1) Forms of Government less important than the reality of the governors and obedience of the governed.

(2) The duties of Government are to provide (*a*) food, fuel, and clothes; and (*b*) education.

(3) Food, fuel, and clothes can only be got out of the ground or sea; every man must work for his living, or render equivalent benefit to life.

(4) The *mercenary* professions of preaching, lawgiving, and fighting to be abolished.

(5) Scholars, painters, and musicians to be maintained in limited numbers.

(6) Labour to be organised by the State; and most attention to be paid to the wants of the most necessitous.

(7) The State to provide the raw materials of labour.

(8) Food not to be imported in exchange for useless articles; the population which cannot be fed on the home-grown food to emigrate to colonies.

(9) All classes of the nation to work with their hands for their bread.

(10) Machinery driven by *steam* to be prohibited, except in some special cases.

(11) The speedy abolition of all abolishable filth, the first process of education.

(12) Education to be primarily moral.

(13) Moral Education begins with making a creature clean and obedient;

(14) And is summed when the creature has been made to do useful work with delight and thoroughly.

(15) Intellectual Education consists in giving the creature the faculties of admiration, hope, and love.

(16) The sum of intellectual education is the separation of what is inhuman in religious faith from what is human and eternally true.

¹ This eleventh Letter is said elsewhere to contain “the most pregnant pages in the entire series” (Vol. XXVIII. p. 644 *n.*).

In Letter 81, again, he summarises his message, as is noticed below (p. lxxxii. *n*). Yet another summary is given by Ruskin in Letter 84. The “entire assertion made in *Fors*” is, he says, that the evils of the day arise from “the pillage of the labourer by the idler”; by the landlords, by the soldiers, lawyers, and priests. To this brief abstract of the evil a summary may be added from *Sesame and Lilies* of Ruskin’s words of practical advice. In the Preface of 1871 to that book he refers to certain passages in it as containing “the best expression I have yet been able to put in words of what, so far as is within my power, I mean henceforward both to do myself, and to plead with all over whom I have any influence, to do also according to their means: the letters begun on the first day of this year, to the workmen of England, having the object of originating, if possible, this movement among them, in true alliance with whatever trustworthy element of help they can find in the higher classes.”¹ The paragraphs in *Sesame* to which Ruskin here refers enjoins his readers to do all the wholesome work they can, and to spend all they can spare on doing all the good they can. What is certainly good is to feed people, to dress people, to lodge people, and, finally, to “please people, with arts, or sciences, or any other subject of thought.” Interpret these injunctions widely, and you have in them a summary of the message delivered in *Fors Clavigera*.

These, then, are the main propositions of the book; this is the body of doctrine which serves as the background for Ruskin’s criticism of the nineteenth century. But it is only a background. He proceeds not from generals to particulars, but from particulars to generals. The form of Letters into which he cast the book permitted him to deal with passing events, drawing or suggesting their moral, instead of dealing with abstract principles. He notes any incident, policy, or opinion of the day, as he found it in the papers or encountered it in his own experience, and relates it to some of his doctrines, or contrasts it with some past event or some better opinion. In one place he states, greatly daring, that he “never reads newspapers.”² He picked and chose, no doubt; and one can believe that he never read the whole of a Parliamentary debate. But he was a persistent reader

¹ Vol. XVIII. p. 34. For the other reference, see *ibid.*, pp. 181–187.

² Letter 89, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 403). Ruskin’s playful remarks were sometimes taken with strange literalness. In Grant-Duff’s *Notes from a Diary*, 1886–1888 (vol. i. p. 80) a story is told, on the authority of Sir George Trevelyan, that being met by a friend with the remark “Plevna has fallen,” Ruskin said, “Plevna? I never heard of it. I know of nothing later than the fourteenth century.” Sir George, who knew Ruskin, would of course have understood his quizzing way; but the

of the newspapers; he sometimes ruled off parallel columns to point a contrast;¹ and he collected a great number of cuttings from them—not always (unhappily for his editors!) recording their source correctly, if at all. The point of a large proportion of the remarks in *Fors Clavigera* must in large measure be lost upon a reader who does not recall the events of the day to which they refer; and as political memories are proverbially short, and as moreover many of Ruskin's allusions are in themselves somewhat obscure, explanatory notes and references have been supplied in this edition.

The general trend of events during the decade of *Fors* should also be borne in mind. The Letters began during the Franco-Prussian war. Before the second of them was issued, Paris had capitulated (January 30, 1871). The siege of Paris had brought misery and starvation in its train, and Ruskin was a member of the Mansion House Committee for its relief. The conclusion of peace between France and Germany was followed by the revolt of the Commune, and the second siege of Paris, by the Versailles troops, was in progress (March 18-May 21) while Ruskin was writing his Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Letters. Attention has been called in an earlier Introduction to Ruskin's French sympathies,² and to the mark which the war made on other of his books. In the case of *Fors Clavigera* the earlier Letters are full of allusions to it, and the pity and terror of those cruel months often recur to his mind at later times.³ These events had a potent influence alike in healing his anger and quickening his compassion. They also, as he tells us, "broke up what little consistency of plan he had formed."⁴

The Franco-German war, with the destruction of property which it caused, gave a great impetus to British trade. These were years in which the revenue went up "by leaps and bounds," and politicians waxed enthusiastic over the "unexampled prosperity of the country." They were years also of a large Liberal majority in the House of Commons and of a Government full of reforming zeal. The reforms of Mr. Gladstone's first Administration, however salutary and needful

diarist cites the tale as an instance of Ruskin's aloofness. Ruskin followed the Eastern crisis closely (see next page). There is a similar story to the effect that Ruskin, being accosted by somebody with a remark upon Gordon and the Soudan, replied, "Who is the Soudan?" As a matter of fact Ruskin was deeply interested in General Gordon, and had called attention, in a letter to the public press, to some opinions of M. de Lesseps on the Soudan.

¹ See below, pp. 192–193.

² Vol. XVIII. pp. xxii.–xxiii.

³ See, for instance, below, p. 41; Vol. XXVIII. p. 69; and Vol. XXIX. p. 187.

⁴ Letter 22, § 17 (below, p. 382). Compare Letter 43, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 109).

they may have been, were for the most part political, rather than social. The sphere of Government "interference" was as yet restricted in social matters, and a powerful member of the Administration, Mr. Bright, was a representative of the Manchester school of "laissez-faire." The Education Act of 1870 is an exception; but its administration was still in the somewhat mechanical stage, stereotyped in Mr. Lowe's "Revised Code of 1861," which fixed the grants on a system of "payment by results"; that is, the State grant was determined by the results in the case of each individual child of an examination in reading, writing, and arithmetic. This system remained in force, with some modifications, until the Royal Commission of 1887 condemned it as "causing greater evils than it was intended to cure."

The play of parties and changes of government were not in the order of things which interested Ruskin, and one might read a good many numbers of *Fors Clavigera* without being made aware that Mr. Disraeli had succeeded Mr. Gladstone in 1874. Ruskin dealt with systems and ideas which were common to Ministers of both parties. A Chancellor of the Exchequer's standards of prosperity were subject equally to his criticism, whether the holder of the office was Mr. Lowe or Sir Stafford Northcote. But the chief characteristic of the Beaconsfield Administration—namely (in the phrase of the time), its "spirited foreign policy"—left its mark, in due turn, on Ruskin's book.¹

During the years alike of spirited foreign policy by the Conservatives, and of domestic reform by their opponents, Ruskin was alive, more keenly and quickly than many professional politicians, to the real tendencies of the time. He warned them that an era of more imperious democracy was at hand.² He foretold the pressure that would compel radical alterations in the Land Laws.³ He was insistent upon the Housing Question.⁴ By a curious intuition he seems to have foreseen the Chinese Labour Question⁵ which played so large a part in the General Election of 1905 and is at this moment (January 1907) agitating South Africa. The feature of the Election of 1905 which attracted most attention, and which seems likely to have the most marked effect upon the course of British legislation, was the accession of strength gained by the Labour Party. An

¹ See, for instance, Vol. XXIX. pp. 61, 375.

² See Letter 83, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 257–258).

³ *Ibid.*, p. 273.

⁴ See Letter 93, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 469).

⁵ Letter 44, § 9 *n.* (Vol. XXVIII. p. 133).

inquisitive journalist issued a circular to the Labour members, inviting them to state the books which had most influenced them.¹ The author whose name figured more frequently than any other in the lists was Ruskin, though, where a particular book is mentioned, it is *Unto this Last*, and not *Fors Clavigera*. “I write to the labourers of England,” he said in *Fors*; “but not of England in 1870–1873.”² Let us hope that these readers of his, now so influential in the State, have assimilated the whole of his teaching. Let us hope that they are indeed the elect readers of the time for which he wrote, “when we shall have men resolute to do good work, and capable of reading and thinking while they rest; who will not expect to build like Athenians without knowing anything about the first king of Athens, nor like Christians without knowing anything about Christ: then they will find my letters useful, and read them.”

To the foregoing retrospect of affairs in the State during the years of *Fors Clavigera*, a few words must be added about affairs in the Church. The most concise way of doing this is to take note of the titles to the chapters, dealing with this period, in the *Life of Archbishop Tait*. They are “The Athanasian Creed,” “The Priest in Absolution,” “The Public Worship Regulation Act,” “Ritual Disputes,” “The Burials Controversy,” “Ritualism and Ecclesiastical Courts.” There are specific allusions to some of these matters in the book;³ and the absorption of so much of the energy of the Church in controversies which to Ruskin were fruitless and unworthy, explains the vials of wrath which he poured out upon the Bishops in many a page.

Such are the main currents in Church and State during the publication of *Fors Clavigera* which it is necessary to bear in mind in reading the book, because they colour Ruskin’s reflections. But his criticism of the time has a scope at once wider and narrower—wider in its general scope, ranging over the whole field of national thought and conduct; narrower in its particular allusions, which are often to trivial, though it may be significant, doings and sayings of the moment. He sees one morning the completion of the British Indian Submarine cable hailed as a triumph of progress; but what, he wants to know, are the messages it conveys?⁴ He finds his morning newspaper dilating upon

¹ See “The Labour Party and the Books that Helped to Make It,” in the *Review of Reviews*, June 1906.

² Letter 36, § 2 (below, p. 669).

³ See, for instance, Vol. XXIX. pp. 94, 403.

⁴ Letter 5, § 8 (below, p. 85).

railroad enterprise; but is it any real advantage, he asks, that “every fool in Buxton can be at Bakewell in half-an-hour, and every fool in Bakewell at Buxton?”¹ He is especially fond of taking hold of some evidence of unexampled prosperity, as it is estimated by Chancellors of the Exchequer, and contrasting it with pictures of domestic life as they are drawn in the courts of police-magistrates and coroners.² So, again, he will take some incident of travel which gives him a good instance of vacuity or vulgarity,³ and contrast it with times of fuller life or persons of better sensibility. Or, once more, he fastens on some act or word of impiety to the good and beautiful,⁴ and compares it with some gracious act or fine thought in the past. These are contrasts drawn somewhat in the style of his pictorial representation of Charles Keene’s “Self-made man” side by side with a Greek Apollo.⁵ Leslie Stephen has remarks in this connexion which seem to me just. Ruskin’s criticisms will often strike the reader as undeserved or overdrawn. He practises “the art of saying stinging things, of which the essence is to make particular charges which we feel to be true, whilst we are convinced that the tacit generalisation is unfair.”⁶ His cases are not always, perhaps even not often, fair; but then, as Stephen adds in another essay, though his attacks on modern society might be caricatures, yet “clearly there were ugly things to caricature. Whether he bewailed the invasion of country solitudes by railways and the invasion of suburban villas, or the mean and narrow life of the dwellers in villas, or went further and produced hideous stories of gross brutality in the slums of London or Manchester, he had an unpleasant plausibility. If you tried to reply that such things were not unprecedented, you felt that the line of defence was rather mean, and that even if Ruskin was over-angry, you had no business to be too cool. When I read *Fors* I used always to fancy that I could confute him, and yet to feel uncomfortable that he might be essentially in the right. The evils which had stung so fine a nature to such wrath must at least be grievous.”⁷

“I hold myself, and this book of mine,” says Ruskin, “for nothing better than Morning, Noon, and Evening Advertisers of what things

¹ Below, p. 86.

² See, for instance, below, pp. 42, 431, 432, 667.

³ See, for instance, below, pp. 161, 183, 345; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 39, 83, 300, 690.

⁴ See, for instance, below, pp. 348, 349; and Vol. XXVIII. pp. 92 *seq.*

⁵ See Plate IX. in Vol. XX. (p. 294).

⁶ “Mr. Ruskin’s Recent Writings,” in *Fraser’s Magazine*, June 1874, vol. 9 (new series), p. 695.

⁷ “John Ruskin,” in the *National Review*, April 1900, p. 249.

appear verily noteworthy in the midst of us.”¹ Noteworthy occasionally for praise—as, for instance, a speech at the Manchester Chamber of Commerce on “the immorality of cheapness” and Samuel Plimsoll’s protest against over-laden ships²—but more often for blame. He takes hold of the speeches of prominent politicians—of Mr. Lowe’s on the paltriness of the battle of Marathon, or of Mr. Bright on adulteration, or Sir Mountstuart Grant-Duff on foreign policy, or of Sir Charles Adderley on the colonies,³ and finds texts in them for attacks on the vulgarity, narrowness, or selfishness of a materialistic and money-grubbing age. Or, again, he fastens upon circulars, prospectuses, and newspaper articles, and exposes them as types of the stupidities of the age, for “it seems to be the appointed function of the nineteenth century to exhibit in all things the elect pattern of perfect Folly.”⁴ This is one of the senses of his “Nail-bearing” *Fors*. Thus a statement, in some circular or other, that over-production is the cause of distress is nailed down as “the negative acme of mortal stupidity.”⁵ The process of nailing down is often done with pitiless satire and unrestrained vehemence. “I perceive,” he says, “that I live in the midst of a nation of thieves and murderers; that everybody around me is trying to rob every one else, and that not bravely and strongly, but in the most cowardly and loathsome way of lying trade; that ‘Englishman’ is now merely another word for blackleg and swindler; and English honour and courtesy, changed to the sneaking and the smiles of a whipped pedlar, an inarticulate Autolycus, with a steam hurdy-gurdy instead of a voice.”⁶ He proposes to prosecute a search for “men of truth, hating covetousness”—“naturally, in a Christian country, it will be difficult enough.”⁷ Speaking of foreign wars and domestic misery and sport, he puts it to us “whether it would not be more kind, and less expensive, to make the machinery a little smaller, by taking our sport in shooting babies instead of rabbits.”⁸ When most violent, he declares himself to be most restrained.⁹

Thus, then, *Fors Clavigera* is a book of prophecy in which a seer lashes the faults and follies of the age. Ruskin brought to this part of his work every resource of his literary art. In substance it is, as

¹ Letter 61, § 18 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 504).

² Vol. XXVIII. pp. 270, 394, 402.

³ Below, pp. 102, 244, 627; Vol. XXVIII. p. 16.

⁴ See, for instance, below, pp. 75, 235.

⁵ Below, p. 81.

⁶ Letter 58, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 426).

⁷ Letter 62, § 5 (*ibid.*, p. 515).

⁸ Letter 24, § 24, below, p. 436).

⁹ See Vol. XXIX. pp. 197–198.

Mr. Harrison says, “a satire on our vices, ignorances, and vulgarities. In form it is a combination of badinage, raillery, irony, and invective.”¹ What Mr. Harrison calls “a fantastic waggery in the phrasing” is not less conspicuous than the fierceness of its invective; and the two literary forms were expressions of a common purpose. He wears sometimes, he says, “the Harlequin’s mask,”² but only to veil the grim intensity of his meaning. His tone is sometimes playful, but the play is stern—as stern, he says, as Morgiana’s dance, in the *Arabian Nights*, around the robber chief, whom she amuses in order to conceal her poniard. Ruskin writes sometimes as if in jest, but “the apparent jest arises only from the frank opposition of his statements to ordinary impressions and ordinary practice.”³

In two respects, however, *Fors Clavigera* is unlike other satires of the kind, and these are the respects which give to the book its distinctively Ruskinian character. The first is its combination of tenderness with irony. Ruskin’s “fiercest imprecations die away,” as Mr. Harrison has finely said, “into words as tender as those of Jesus when He wept at the sight of Jerusalem.” The mingled strain of imprecation and compassion, of fierce invective and gentle grace, recalls the description which Ruskin gives of himself as sympathising at once, “in his enforced and accidental temper,” with Swift, and “in his constant natural temper,” with Marmontel.⁴ And with the tenderness was united in Ruskin’s work an element of active pity, of hopefulness, of constructive suggestion. Ruskin in very truth, as he once wrote to his father, was no misanthrope.⁵ Through all his railing accusations he had still, as Leslie Stephen noted, “a power of conceiving Utopia which Swift would have considered worthy of the philosophers of Laputa.”⁶ The author of *Fors* and the Master of St. George’s Guild might have said with William Blake:—

“I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England’s green and pleasant land.”

The ground of modern England reeked, for him, with a multitude of murdered men; its sacred places were defiled; and the tide before

¹ *John Ruskin*, in the “English Men of Letters” Series, p. 185.

² Letter 62, § 4 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 513–514).

³ Vol. XXVIII. pp. 512, 650; Vol. XXIX. p. 197.

⁴ Preface of 1871 to *Sesame and Lilies*, Vol. XVIII. p. 48.

⁵ See the letter in Vol. XVII. p. xl.

⁶ *Fraser’s Magazine*, June 1874, N.S., vol. 9, p. 691.

his door was full of floating corpses.¹ Yet he looked ever backward and forward—backward in imagination to “a land of fruitful vales and pastoral mountains; and a heaven of pleasant sunshine and kindly rain; and a race of pure heart, iron sinew, splendid fame, and constant faith;”² forward, in hope and help, to golden days yet to return. “Over those fields of ours the winds of Heaven shall be pure; and, upon them, the work of men shall be done in honour and truth.”³ For—and these are the last words of Ruskin’s book—“the story of Rosy Vale is not ended—surely out of its silence the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and round it the desert rejoice, and blossom as the rose!”

(3)

The constructive side of Ruskin’s criticism as developed in *Fors Clavigera* took two forms. One was the foundation of his Guild of St. George; the other was the explanation of a system of education, which in its turn was illustrated by various practical efforts and experiments.

The subject of the actual experiments made by Ruskin is reserved for the Introduction to a later Volume (XXX.), in which the various Circulars, Reports, Accounts, and Catalogues relating to the Guild and its Museum are collected. This practical work of the Guild, except in the case of the Museum, amounted to no great things; but it is necessary to remember, in reading *Fors Clavigera* and the subsequent history of the Guild, certain limitations and distinctions. Ruskin was neither so unpractical nor so visionary as people have sometimes supposed; he had a clear distinction in his mind between what was immediately practicable or desirable, and what was ideally best, although he did not always choose to label his pages as belonging to the one or the other order of ideas. A careful reader will easily distinguish between the author’s wider appeal and “the narrow action of St. George’s Guild for the present help of our British peasantry.”⁴ And, again, with regard to what was immediately practicable, he did not profess to be a political leader, setting out to found a colony or an

¹ Letter 8 (below, p. 133); Letter 72 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 757).

² Letter 45, § 11 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 153).

³ Vol. XXVIII. p. 427.

⁴ Letter 85, § 2 (Vol. XXIX. p. 316).

ideal community.¹ He hoped at the start that such leaders would arise at his call. When they failed him, he resolved, on some small scale to make a beginning and give an example of his own. But, all along, he was far more intent on laying down principles, than on carrying them out in detail; and when he writes of ideal conditions, as they figured themselves to his imagination, he was often amusing himself with Utopian dreams (as, for instance, in his proposals for a separate coinage) rather than drawing up codes for actual practice. He was legislating for his “island of Barataria,” as he calls it elsewhere,² rather than for the actual estates of St. George’s Guild.

The general principles which he laid down are clear enough. The only sound condition of society was, he held, one in which every man worked for his living; and of all forms of work, the healthiest and most certainly useful was work upon the land. This was “the main message of St. George.”³ So far, therefore, as St. George’s Guild became operative at all, it was to be a land-owning company. The members of the company were to pursue their own avocations, banded together only by loyalty to the terms of St. George’s vow. The labourers employed on the land of the Guild were to have fixed rents and decent conditions of life. The Guild was also to show, by schools and Museums, what should be done for the education of the labourer, whether in town or country. “To divert a little of the large current of English charity and justice from watching disease to guarding health, and from the punishment of crime to the reward of virtue; to establish, here and there, exercise grounds instead of hospitals, and training schools instead of penitentiaries”—such were the simple objects of the Guild; the scheme, as Ruskin adds, “is not, if you will slowly take it to heart, a frantic imagination.”⁴ The influence of his imagination is to be judged not merely by the success or failure of his own small experiments, but by the efforts of other individuals⁵ and movements to which his teaching gave stimulus or suggestion.

Ruskin’s ideas with regard to the ideal reconstruction of society at large have already been summarised in the Introduction to *Time and Tide*, where also some estimate has been attempted of the influence of those ideas upon the thought and practice of the time.⁶ Here, again,

¹ See below, pp. 95, 96, 142, and Vol. XXVIII. p. 236.

² *A Joy for Ever*, § 65 (Vol. XVI. p. 59).

³ Letter 93, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. p. 473).

⁴ Letter 9, § 13 (below, p. 158).

⁵ As, for instance, of his friend, the late Mr. C. H. Woodd: see Vol. XXVIII. p. 43 n.

⁶ See Vol. XVII. pp. xcvi.—cii., cii.—cxii.

it is well to distinguish between suggestions for Utopia, between ultimate ideals, and general principles towards which each individual may contribute something of realisation. The principles upon which Ruskin laid most stress had relation to political systems, and to the duties of landlords, employers, and “bishops,” respectively. In politics, he was a disciple of Plato. He sought to reconstruct society on the Platonic conception of Justice—assigning to each man his due place, and requiring from each man the fulfilment of his duties. To him, as to Plato, the health and happiness of all the citizens was the sole end of legislation, and the rule of the wisest was the surest method of securing it. To the landlords he said, The land is yours, only on condition that you hold it in trust for the rearing and tending of healthy and happy life. To the employers he said, Your business is to be “captains” of industry, trustees of the wealth you hold. To the workmen, “Do good work whether you live or die.” To the State at large he said, Your political reforms, your “unexampled prosperity” are all meaningless and worthless so long as masses of your people are herded together in soul-destroying conditions of life. To the “bishops” he said, Yours is the duty of over-seeing the flock of Christ’s people, and of preaching to the rich their duties to the poor. The forms into which Ruskin threw his reconstruction of society belong to the sphere of Utopian suggestion. The essential thing was the spirit which was to influence it and the end to which it was to be directed. This is what he means when he says that “it is no business of his to think about possibilities”;¹ he was concerned only to lay down the principles which were essential to sound reform, in whatever form it might be embodied. For instance: in what he says, in the Letter already mentioned (p. xxvii.), about a “Doge of Sheffield” and his duties, the root of the matter is not in the title given to the appointed officer, but in the pleading for a quickened sense of obligation, on the part of the municipal authorities, to use their powers for the promotion of public health and the protection of the food of the people from impurity or adulteration. He did not expect any great or sudden changes. He knew perfectly well the interval that separates counsels of perfection from practicable reforms. We shall never see the realisation of Ruskin’s Utopia; and yet each man may realise it for himself. For “the better Burg which shall be for ever” is “the City which is our own.”² “Whether there really is or ever will be such a city is of no importance to him who desires to see it, for he

¹ Letter 67, § 20 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 656). Compare Vol. XXIX. p. 198.

² See Letter 82, § 35 (Vol. XXIX. p. 254), and the title of Letter 37.

will act according to the laws of that city and of no other.”¹ The ideals of the wise and good are built

“To music, therefore never built at all,
And therefore built for ever.”²

(4)

We pass now to a second aspect of Ruskin’s constructive work; namely, his essay in educational reform. It was, as Mr. Hobson points out, essential to his rôle as a social reformer to have clear ideas on education of the young; “for what marks him off most distinctively from others is his repudiation of all mechanical or merely external methods of reform, and his insistence upon individual and social character as the means and the end.”³ Hence a discussion of the theory and practice of education becomes an essential part of *Fors Clavigera* as an essay in social reconstruction. There is perhaps no subject on which Ruskin has thrown out so many luminous and suggestive ideas as upon education, nor any field in which his teaching has been more helpful and fruitful. Not, indeed, that he claimed any originality here, or elsewhere; his only ambition was to recall to modern minds, and apply to modern conditions, the ancient wisdom of Plato and Xenophon; if he had read the works of the great educational reformers, such as Pestalozzi, Froebel, or Thring, he would have rejoiced to find many of his own suggestions anticipated or repeated by them; and so, too, it is interesting to note how often passages in Ruskin’s writings forestall or unwittingly repeat the Reports of Matthew Arnold. Ruskin wrote not as a specialist, and seldom used technical terms; his thoughts on education, though most abundant in *Fors Clavigera*, are scattered in many of his earlier books; they form part of the texture of his work, and as such one cannot doubt that their influence has extended into circles untouched by technical treatises and Reports to “My Lords.” In the following pages an attempt is made to bring his scattered contributions together and to direct the reader to them in some approach to a logical order.⁴

What, then, according to Ruskin is *the aim and scope of education*? We may begin with some words which Ruskin uses early in the book,

¹ Plato’s *Republic*, quoted in Vol. XXVIII. p. 24.

² Tennyson, *Gareth and Lynette*.

³ *John Ruskin, Social Reformer*, 1898, p. 233.

⁴ I have found much help, in this section of the Introduction, in *Ruskin on Education*, by William Jolly (one of H. M. Inspectors of Schools), 1894.

and which are very characteristic of its style. The main purpose of education, he says, is “to see the sky.” To see it, he explains, not with the astronomer’s telescope, but with human eyes trained to love and reverence.¹ In other words, education is an ethical, rather than an intellectual, process. “You do not educate a man by telling him what he knew not, but by making him what he was not.” “Education does not mean teaching people to know what they do not know. It means teaching them to behave as they do not behave.”² “All education must be moral first; intellectual, secondarily. Intellectual education without moral is, in completeness, impossible; and in incompleteness, a calamity.”³ “The great leading error of modern times is the mistaking erudition for education. . . . The cry for education is a foolish and vain cry, if it be understood, as in the plurality of cases it is meant to be, for the expression of mere craving after knowledge, irrespective of the simple purposes of the life that now is and blessings of that which is to come. . . . Millions of peasants are at this moment better educated than most of those who call themselves gentlemen.”⁴ These are texts on which many pages of *Fors Clavigera* are based.⁵

It follows from the text that education is not to be estimated by mere acquisition of knowledge; and that *competitive examination* (for this and other reasons) is to be discouraged. Any stimulus given to “envious or anxious effort” is inimical to the true ends of education. Erudition is not education.⁷ Ruskin’s emphatic and repeated enunciation of these principles were a protest against the system of “payment by results” in the three R’s—a system which of late years has for the most part been abolished in the Education Codes. The doom of the old theory and the vindication of Ruskin’s protests were pronounced (so far as official regulation goes) when, in introducing the Education Budget of 1893, Mr. Acland discarded Mr. Lowe’s views on education as “far too mechanical and inflexible,” and said “our object is to consider not merely what the children know when they

¹ See below, pp. 164, 219, and Vol. XXIX. p. 58.

² *Munera Pulveris*, § 106 (Vol. XVII. p. 232); and *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 144 (Vol. XVIII. p. 502).

³ The twelfth of the Aphorisms in which Ruskin sums the gist of *Fors* and the substance of his past teaching (Vol. XXVIII. p. 655).

⁴ *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii., Appendix 7 (Vol. XI. pp. 261, 263).

⁵ See also (in a later volume of this edition) a letter in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, March 17, 1886.

⁶ Letter 9, § 5 (below, p. 149); and see, among many other places, *A Joy for Ever*, § 135 (Vol. XVI. p. 121), and *Eagle’s Nest*, § 177 (Vol. XXII. p. 243).

⁷ *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. (Vol. XI. p. 261).

leave, but what they are, and what they are to do; bearing in mind that the great object is not merely knowledge, but character.”¹

Ruskin was led by these same principles to the paradox of opposing *the three R's*. His scholars, he said, were to be educated “not at all necessarily, in either arithmetic, writing, or reading.”² Probably there are many people who know no more about Ruskin’s views than this sentence. The newspapers, more ready to amuse than to instruct their readers, fastened on it, and made fun of the fact that, though “the workmen and labourers of Great Britain” were not to learn to read, they were expected to know Latin. Ruskin in his characteristic way protested that he meant what he said quite literally, and he tells us that he “wrote with some indignation” to the Companion of St. George who had ventured to promise instruction in the three R’s.³ What unquestionably he meant is that the three R’s are not the “be all” and “end all” even of elementary education. At the time when he began to write *Fors* his paradox was very much needed, for by the English Education Code of 1870, and the Scottish of 1872, the three R’s were the total of such education sanctioned and paid for by the State. Ruskin did not of course object to children being taught reading, writing, and arithmetic; but he maintained that there were other things more important, and that, if one branch of education or the other had to be omitted, he would in many cases prefer to see the three R’s omitted. The true “compulsory education,” he wrote in 1869, “is not teaching the youths of England the shapes of letters and the tricks of numbers, and then leaving them to turn their arithmetic to roguery and their literature to lust. It is, on the contrary, training them into the perfect exercise and kingly continence of their bodies and souls.”⁴ “Of all plagues that afflict mortality, the venom of a bad book to weak people and the charms of a foolish one to simple people, are,” he wrote in 1886, “without question the deadliest; and they are so far from being redeemed by the too imperfect work of the best writers, that I never would wish to see a child taught to read at all, *when the other conditions of its education were alike gentle and judicious.*”⁵ The words which I have italicised show what he means. To be able to read, if you read nothing worth reading, is not to be educated; and a man though he can “only read

¹ July 31, 1893. See Hansard, 4th Series, vol. 15, p. 899.

² Letter 17, § 6 (below, p. 296).

³ Letter 94, § 2 (Vol. XXIX. p. 479).

⁴ *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 144 (Vol. XVIII. p. 502).

⁵ A paper on “The Best Hundred Books,” in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, February 23, 1886 (reprinted in a later volume of this edition).

with difficulty and write scarcely intelligibly” may yet be educated.¹ Also, he thought that the three R’s were seldom taught in the right way, and he provided in his ideal schools “a children’s library in which the scholars who care to read may learn that art.”² What he sought to guard against was teaching children to read and then leaving them without guidance as to what and how to read. The perception of this danger has led to such movements as that of the “National Home Reading Union”; and it explains the importance which Ruskin attached in his Utopia to lists of selected books.³

From the proposition that education is to be an ethical process, another conclusion follows; namely, that *true education is not directed to “success in life.”* “You do not learn that you may live, you live that you may learn.” The true education “is, in itself, advancement in Life. . . . He only is advancing in life whose heart is getting softer, whose blood warmer, whose brain quicker, whose spirit is entering into Living Peace.”⁴ To like effect, Pestalozzi: “The ultimate end of education is, not perfection in the accomplishments of the school, but fitness for life”;⁵ and Lord Goschen, “Education is a means not of livelihood, but of life.”⁶

How, then, is Education to fit us for life? “True education has respect, first, to the ends which are proposable to the man, or attainable by him; and, secondly, to the material of which the man is made. So far as it is able, it chooses the end according to the material . . . but the material is as various as the ends; every man is essentially different from every other.”⁷ Hence there can be no such thing as a general education equally applicable to everybody. *Education should be regulated by natural endowment.* True justice in education “consists in the granting to every human being due aid in the development of such faculties as he possesses for action and enjoyment.”⁸ This is the idea which underlies much of Ruskin’s chapter on “Discovery” in *The Political Economy of Art*, and his suggestion of trial schools. Education can discover; it cannot create. The gold is a fixed quantity; “the best you can do with it is always

¹ Letter 4, § 2 (below, p. 61).

² Letter 94, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 484).

³ Letters 57 and 58 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 407, 434).

⁴ *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 145 (Vol. XVIII. p. 503); and *Sesame and Lilies*, §§ 2, 42 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 55, 100). On this subject, see a lecture (“In what sense ought Schools to prepare Boys and Girls for Life?”) delivered by Professor M. E. Sadler before the Ruskin Society of Birmingham, December 13, 1899: *St. George*, vol. iii. pp. 97–113.

⁵ Quoted by Mr. Jolly, p. 139.

⁶ *On the Cultivation of the Imagination*, 1877, p. 5.

⁷ *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii., Appendix 7 (Vol. XI. p. 262).

⁸ Letter 9, § 3 (below, p. 148).

merely sifting, melting, hammering, purifying—never creating.”¹ This is a principle on which Ruskin strongly insists in *Fors*. “The idea,” he says, “of a general education which is to fit everybody to be Emperor of Russia . . . is the most entirely and directly diabolic of all the countless stupidities into which the British nation has been of late betrayed.”² Ruskin maintained further, in opposition to the view of many conscientious teachers, that “you are to take most pains with the best material”; with the reminder, however, that “the cleverest boys often look very like the dull ones.”³ Ruskin’s suggestions and injunctions with regard to education must all be read in subordination to this plea for adjusting the teaching to the capacity and circumstances of the scholar.

Yet there are some common elements in all education. Our education is to fit us for life; and the life of man consists of Work and Worship. First, then, *education must be directed to practical work*. “The first condition of education is being put to wholesome and useful work.” “You don’t know how to make a brick, a tile, or a pot; or how to build a dyke, or drive a stake that will stand. No more do I. Our education has to begin.” “Do you think you can make a brick, or a tile? You rather think not? Well, . . . go and learn.”⁴ Ruskin meant all this very seriously. In his scheme of education not only would every child of the working classes be taught a trade, but the children of every class would be disciplined in some form of manual labour. This is one of the points at which Ruskin’s educational theories touch most closely his social; for his ideas, which often seem to casual readers paradoxical and disconnected, were in fact closely interwoven. Passages enforcing the requirement of manual or technical instruction occur sometimes (as cited above) in connexion with educational matters, and at other times in his political discussions.⁵ But apart from any schemes of social reconstruction, he held profoundly to the gospel of manual labour as a branch of education, both physical and mental—physical as conducing to health and strength, mental as bringing children into touch with realities and correcting the one-sidedness of verbal training. Hence his insistence upon the desirability of giving to physical exercises a useful, and not only a gymnastic, character. “I believe,” he had written in

¹ Vol. XVI. p. 30.

² Letter 95 (Vol. XXIX. p. 495).

³ Letter 9, § 4 (below, p. 148).

⁴ Letter 2, § 15 (below, p. 39); 47, § 15, and 64, § 6 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 199, 566).

⁵ See, for instance, Letter 86, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 341).

Modern Painters, “an immense gain in the bodily health and happiness of the upper classes would follow on their steadily endeavouring, however clumsily, to make the physical exertion they now necessarily take in amusements definitely serviceable.”¹ And thus, in *Fors*, it is part of St. George’s Vow to “labour with such strength and opportunity as God gives me, for my own daily bread”; and “any one may be a Companion of St. George who sincerely does what they can, to make themselves useful, and earn their daily bread by their own labour.”² How Ruskin endeavoured to set in practice at Oxford what he preached, we have already seen in an earlier volume, where also reference has been made to some application of his principle in modern experiments in education.³ Ruskin had social aims in view, as well as educational; but, on the educational side, the importance which he attached to manual labour is in accord with the precepts of all great educational reformers. “It was the central idea in Xenophon’s education of Cyrus; in Fellenberg’s celebrated institute at Hofwyl, in which education was united with and carried on through agriculture; in Pestalozzi’s educational reforms; in Froebel’s Kindergarten system, which is the intimate union of handwork and headwork. It has gained increased impulse in the new and growing extension of Manual Instruction; in the Sluyd system; and in the mixed, but notable, modern cry for technical education.”⁴

In connexion partly with the importance which Ruskin thus attached to manual training, and partly in order to facilitate nature-lessons, he lays it down that every parish school should have “garden and cultivable land, spacious enough to employ the scholars in fine weather mostly out of doors.”⁵ In this point, as in many others, Ruskin was but a little in front of his time. In the existing Code, local education authorities are empowered to provide school-gardens;

¹ Vol. VII. p. 428.

² Vol. XXVIII. pp. 419, 645.

³ Vol. XX. pp. xliv. xlv. Reference may also be made to a Paper on “Schoolboys as Navvies,” by Mr. J. L. Paton, High Master of Manchester Grammar School, in *St. George*, January 1904, vol. vii. pp. 54–58, and to “Manual Training as an Element in a Liberal Education” (No. 2 of the “Occasional Papers” issued in connexion with Clayesmore School). “Shrewsbury, Sedburgh, and Bath College boys have all done navvy work,” says Mr. Paton, “on their own playing fields, and now the Manchester boys are doing the same. Abbotsholme, Bedales, and Clayesmore, the A. B. C. of the reformed schools, make dovecotes, boathouses, and pavilions, fell trees, dig potatoes, cut and cart hay, dig out skating ponds, throw up rifle-butts, and erect bridges, to present as a gift of friendship to the Parish Council.”

⁴ Jolly, pp. 28–29.

⁵ Letter 94, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 484).

and there is much in the “Memorandum on Courses of Work in Rural Evening Schools,”¹ recently issued (July 1906), which reads like a practical commentary upon Ruskin’s Letters of a quarter of a century ago. The Board of Education dwells upon the importance of “definite training in manual operations”; points to the desirability of “farm schools, agricultural colleges, and courses in agriculture and horticulture”; advises “instruction in ‘How to manage a garden’ ”; and commends “the increasing care which is being taken to connect the work of the public elementary schools with the surroundings of the scholars.” I do not know that the Board has yet acted on the distinction which Ruskin draws between “agricultural schools inland and naval schools by the sea.”²

Next, *education must be consciously directed to developing the faculties of Worship*, in the widest sense of that term. “We live by Admiration, Hope, and Love.” Ruskin took Wordsworth’s line for “literal guide in all education.” Admiration, hope, and love are the three immaterial things which are essential to Life; and no day’s schooling is complete which has not done something to develop a child’s capacity for these things.³

The Lines on which the education of children should proceed in this direction must depend on their several endowments; but *the elementary virtues should be a common element in all education*. “Habits of gentleness and justice,” no less than “the calling by which he is to live,” are to be taught to every child.⁴ Ruskin was a firm believer in Carlyle’s “Gospel of Soap and Water.”⁵ Moral education, he says, “begins in making the creature to be educated, clean”; and next, “obedient.” “Religion means obedience.” And these two virtues must be taught “thoroughly, and at any cost, and with any kind of compulsion rendered necessary by the nature of the animal.”⁶ Let us hope that the words in the Code of 1894, which echo Ruskin’s injunctions, bear full fruit in the actual education of British children. “The managers and teachers will be expected to satisfy the Inspector that all reasonable care is taken to bring up the children in the habits of punctuality, of good manners and language, of cleanliness and neatness,

¹ “Evening” schools, it should be understood, is a technical term in official phraseology; the Government grants are equally applicable to “evening schools” which meet in the day-time.

² Letter 8 § 10 (below, p. 143).

³ Below, pp. 90-91, 94, 156-157; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 255, 656.

⁴ *Unto this Last*, Preface, § 6 (Vol. XVII. p. 21).

⁵ *Friedrich*, book xiii. ch. xiii.

⁶ Letters 67, § 19, and 45, § 12 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 655, 156).

and also to impress upon the children the importance of cheerful obedience to duty, of consideration and respect for others, and of honour and truthfulness in word and act" (§ 101). Other virtues which Ruskin desired to see made the subject of education were kindness and humility. He dwells especially on the importance of teaching "gentleness to all brute creatures";¹ and he took much interest in the child-society of "Friends to Living Creatures."² The teaching of Humility is the subject of some detailed notice in Letter 94,³ which many school-masters and schoolmistresses would do well to read, mark, and learn.

How are "admiration, hope, and love" to be taught? "By *the study of beautiful Nature*; the sight and history of noble persons; and the setting forth of noble objects of action."⁴ The words that I have italicised bring us to a very interesting point on which Ruskin is at one with the great educational writers of all ages. He agreed with Wordsworth's counsel, "Let Nature be your teacher." Mr. Jolly perhaps gives rather too mechanical a turn to Ruskin's theory in claiming him as an advocate of "open-air class-rooms." His view was rather that children should run wild as in a paddock, learning unconsciously (as Wordsworth says) "in sun and shower."⁵ The ideal education was that of Joan of Arc, in the forests of Domremy.⁶ "My own belief is," he says, "that the best study of all is the most beautiful; and that a quiet glade of forest, or the nook of a lake shore, are worth all the schools in Christendom, when once you are past the multiplication table."⁷ Hence the destruction of beautiful scenery was to Ruskin the destruction of the best means of education.⁸

But, even if the conditions be favourable, the study of beautiful Nature cannot be wholly passive. To the *teaching of natural science* in elementary education, Ruskin devotes many pages in *Fors*—ridiculing the kind of information which to him seemed uneducational (that is, unsuitable in any scheme of general or elementary education), and, by way of sample lessons, indicating the kind of things which he would teach.⁹ His three books on natural history—*Love's Meinie*,

¹ Letter 8, § 10 (below, p. 143).

² See the note to "The Doge's Daughter" in *Christ's Folk in the Apennine* (Vol. XXXII).

³ See Vol. XXIX, pp. 484–486.

⁴ Letter 67 (Vol. XXVIII, p. 656).

⁵ *Sesame and Lilies*, § 70 (Vol. XVIII, p. 124).

⁶ *Sesame and Lilies*, § 82 (Vol. XVIII, p. 133).

⁷ *A Joy for Ever*, § 105 (Vol. XVI, p. 90).

⁸ See, for one typical passage, *Sesame and Lilies*, §§ 82–85 (Vol. XVIII, pp. 133–136).

⁹ See, for instance, Letters 51 and 52, §§ 15–19 (Vol. XXVIII, pp. 288 *seq.*, 304 *seq.*).

Proserpina, and *Deucalion*—were, as he explains, intended for “school grammars.”¹

The study of nature was to Ruskin, it need not be said, the study of art; and thus we come next to his discussion of *aesthetic teaching*. He was at one with all the great educationalists in emphasising the cultivation of taste as a principal element in education. “We shall not succeed,” he says, “in making a peasant’s opinion good evidence on the merits of the Elgin marbles; yet I believe we may make art a means of giving him helpful and happy pleasure, and of gaining for him serviceable knowledge.”² Like Plato, he trusted much to the unconscious education of a child’s surroundings. He protested against “cheap furniture and bare walls” in the school-room; he preached—at a time (1857) when the lesson was still little learnt—the need for some architectural decoration in school buildings, and showed the use of pictures, especially historical paintings, in the class-rooms.³ And so in *Fors*, schools “are to be externally of a majestic character,” and internally to be hung with works of art.⁴ “The notion of fixing the attention by keeping the room empty is a wholly mistaken one.”⁵ Here, again, Ruskin’s pleadings were presently to receive official sanction. In 1894 a deputation, organised by Mr. T. C. Horsfall, waited upon Mr. Acland, then the Minister of Education, asking, among other things, that visits to museums, historical buildings, and botanical gardens should be admitted into the school curriculum. Mr. Acland, in reply, “spoke of the need of making schools bright and attractive, and of teaching children to appreciate beautiful things. He would like to see school walls filled with reproductions of friezes and pictures, which would be an education in form and colour; he heartily held the idea of William Morris, that, no more than education, than liberty itself, should art be for the few; and he pledged himself to carry out the wishes of the deputation in the New Code” (of 1894).⁶ Ruskin’s personal influence may be traced in such efforts as those of the Kyrle Society, founded in 1877 by his friend and pupil, Miss Octavia Hill and her sister; and in the Art for Schools Association, which has done so much admirable work in producing and circulating prints for use in schools. Ruskin was the President of this Association, which was

¹ Letter 67, § 12 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 647).

² *A Joy for Ever*, § 154 (Vol. XVI. p. 144).

³ *Ibid.*, §§ 104–107 (pp. 88–92).

⁴ Letters 7 (below, p. 121) and 79 (Vol. XXIX. p. 156).

⁵ *A Joy for Ever*, § 105 (Vol. XVI. p. 89).

⁶ *Journal of Education*, June 1894, p. 324.

founded in 1883 by the late Miss Mary Christie, to whom he addressed the following letter:—

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE, 13th April.

DEAR MISS CHRISTIE,—I have read with great interest your letter of intercession for some effective use of Art in children's schools,—said letter being forwarded to me by the kindness of Mrs. Ritchie. I think you can scarcely but be aware, before I say so, how entirely I concur with you in feeling of what is needed in such matters, and how heartily I hope for your success in setting the movement on foot; but I think, before the letter is printed, you might say a word or two—which I feel sure would suggest themselves on your thinking the matter over in that light—of the material there is for such instruction in merely domestic scenes, the peasant life of different countries, if it were all rightly painted. I hope Mr. Herkomer might assist you in obtaining very lovely photographs. I have myself given to our village school chiefly pictures (coloured) of birds and their eggs—but one very pretty water-colour painting of a wood girl carrying home a faggot, which cost a good deal more than £5!¹

The St. George's Museum also contains exemplary pieces of water-colour copies from the Old Masters.

Believe me always, dear Miss Christie, your faithful servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

Ruskin attached, however, more importance to *music and dancing* than to pictorial art as instruments of æsthetic training. "Music and Dancing! They are quite the two primal instruments of education. . . . In St. George's schools, reading, writing, and accounts may be spared where pupils show no turn to any of these scholarships, but music and dancing, never."² To this subject fuller reference will be made presently (p. lxxiii.).

Music, in Ruskin's scheme, meant also *poetry*, for by music he meant principally song, and he recognised no songs as educationally fit which are not wedded to fine words. He lays great stress in *Fors* upon the importance both of the selection of fine models, and of exercise in learning by heart. See, for instance, in Letter 50 ("Agnes'

¹ Miss Christie's letter, addressed to the editor of the *Journal of Education*, and there printed with the above (June 1, 1883), was a plea for the organisation of "a scheme for supplying elementary schools with photographs and engravings of good pictures." Miss Christie calculated in her letter that a sum of £ 5 would buy and frame from six to ten suitable photographs.

² Letter 57, §§ 6, 7 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 405–406).

Book”), his analysis of “The Children’s Prize” and citation, by way of contrast, of Herrick’s “Graces for Children.”¹ Listening to good reading and learning poetry by heart were to be an essential part of education.² It is interesting to note how closely Ruskin’s advice here follows that which Matthew Arnold used to press upon “My Lords” in his official Reports. The remedy for the failure to instil taste and general culture will be found to lie, says Arnold, “not in attempting to teach the rules of taste directly—a lesson which we shall never get learnt—but in introducing a lesson which we can get learnt, which has a value in itself whether it leads to something more or not, and which, in happy natures, will probably lead to this something more. The learning by heart extracts from good authors is such a lesson.”³ Ruskin gives an instance of such a happy nature in *Fors*, where he describes the death of a little boy who passed away singing the bits of hymns he had learnt at the Sunday-school—“so much of his education finally available to him, you observe.”⁴

Many of Ruskin’s detailed hints on the subject of elementary education need not be here repeated, because they are given consecutively in Letters 94 and 95 of *Fors*. He there enumerates the subjects which he desired to have taught; describes the writing and reading lessons as he conceived them; discourses on the art of elocution; makes suggestions for memory lessons; and gives hints on the teaching of geography, drawing, astronomy, zoology, botany, and needlework.⁵ Among such practical hints thrown out by Ruskin, what he says about *maps* is of particular interest, and something may here be added to it. His indictment of the ordinary map is as amusing as it is scathing.⁶ The ugliness of them annoyed him the more, because from his early youth he had a particular fondness for maps, and he believed that they might be made a means of combining both artistic pleasure and scientific instruction with geological information. He began as a boy to learn drawing by copying maps,⁷ and “he ended his career,” says Mr. Collingwood, “in bidding his hearers do likewise. ‘I place map-making,’ he said, ‘first among the elementary exercises.’ He made his young pupils begin with simple facsimile—‘If you can draw Italy you know something about form’—and then paint the globe

¹ Vol. XXVIII. pp. 257–265.

² See Letters 94 and 95 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 489, 502).

³ *Reports on Elementary Schools, 1852–1882*, p. 94. See also p. 209.

⁴ Letter 94 (Vol. XXIX. p. 488).

⁵ See Vol. XXIX. pp. 479–511.

⁶ See Vol. XXIX. pp. 504–505.

⁷ *Notes on Turner*, Vol. XIII. pp. 502–503.

with its conflicting shade and local colour. Afterwards, in setting one at Turner, he would say, 'I want you to make a map of the subject. Get the masses outlined, and fill in the spaces with the main colours; and that will do.' " It is interesting that one of the most often quoted of Ruskin's "best passages"—the description of the scenery of Europe as it might be seen by a stork or a swallow on its northward flight¹—is but an elaborate picture of the map of Europe. When a boy of sixteen he made for himself a set of geological maps in preparation for his journey of 1835; and throughout his life he collected maps wherever he went. "He kept them in a special set of drawers in his study, some mounted on spent diagram-cards from his lectures, and some dropping to pieces with wear and tear. . . . The Ordnance Survey is fully represented, but because too much was put into these beautiful six-inch sheets, he has coloured them fancifully and vigorously, to get clear divisions of important parts." To a map-lover such as Ruskin the ordinary modern map was an abomination. It was too full and yet too empty. It gave the names of places of no importance, yet it disguised or perverted all the physical features of a country. He believed in the importance of drawing sketch-maps; such as the one of Spain [the lower figure on Plate A] which he "scribbled on a sheet of foolscap to keep him in mind of the graceful, swinging coastline and the proportions of the provinces."² So, for instance, he advises the reader to draw a map of the Seven Churches of Asia, lying "along the hills and across the plain, sweeping in one wide curve, like a flight of birds or swirl of cloud."³ There were two ways in which Ruskin thought that maps should be made more useful for educational purposes.⁴ He desired to see good physical atlases founded on models,⁵ and historical atlases in which graphic symbols might be used. It appears that Ruskin put himself into communication with map-makers on the subject, for in a letter to Mr. Allen (November 19, 1879) he speaks of one of them seeming "likely to take up my map plans." Of an experiment made by Ruskin himself upon a raised model, Mr. Collingwood has given a characteristic account:—

"Beck's raised map of Switzerland (1853) was often in use, but it was spoilt for Ruskin by the shining surface, which catches the high lights and distracts the eye: all models ought to be painted in dead colours,

¹ *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. ch. vi. § 8 (Vol. X. p. 186).

² W. G. Collingwood, *Ruskin Relics*, p. 115.

³ Letter 84, § 15 (Vol. XXIX. p. 296).

⁴ See (in a later volume of this edition) his letter of January 24, 1883, to Mr. Faunthorpe.

⁵ See Letter 65, § 13 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 598).

except the water, which needs the shine for the sake of transparency. So, in 1881, when he was working at the physical geology of the Coniston neighbourhood, he tried to make a model of the hills and dales, to see how the strike and dip of strata and faults and dykes in the rocks came out in relation to ups and downs, lake-basins and crags, and so forth. He found modelling too tedious to carry out himself, and, with characteristic oddness in his employment of means to ends, he set his gardener, the late Dawson Herdson, on the job. Herdson made a very fair general sketch in clay of the Old Man, and the main features as seen from the Coniston side; but he had not pegged out his distances, and when Dow Crag was built up into emphatic gloom, and Leverswater hollowed into depth, the smaller heights had no space left for them, and the effect was altogether too willow-patterned. Then Ruskin put another of his employés to work, and after much labour the model now in the Coniston Museum was evolved. This was intended to be photographed or engraved in a side-light, as one of a series of physical maps. Another was to have been of Savoy, for which Ruskin made the sketch here shown [the upper one on Plate A]. The black Lake of Geneva is dark blue in his drawing; the valleys are green, and the mountains roughly knocked in with lamp-black and Chinese white, tinted over with yellow for limestone, pink for Mont Blanc protogine, and red for gneiss. Rough as the sketch is, you see the structure of the Alps, and the lie of the land, at a glance. Towns, roads, and all the rest should be shown, he said, on separate plans.”¹

In the preparation of such plans, and of historical atlases, Ruskin believed in the introduction of graphic details. He liked the quaint productions of ancient cartographers, of which he had a collection, such as showed “the camels of the Tartar who dwells on the plains of Thibet”; or the Russian peasants along the banks of the Volga. “William Morris has shown in the illustrations of the Saga Library how maps may become picturesque designs, and this was much on the lines that Ruskin would have followed.” He engraved in the *Bible of Amiens* a diagrammatic history of France—first giving only the mountain ranges and courses of the great rivers, and then, in a successive series, showing by means of roses, lilies, and other symbols, the main courses of historical development. “Worked out completely, an atlas of history on this plan might be as pretty as any picture-book. A child accustomed to such maps would have little trouble in remembering the outlines of national growth, and the whole tedious business of dates and uncouth names would be infinitely lightened.”² Letter 95

¹ *Ruskin Relics*, pp. 115, 116.

² *Ibid.*, p. 118.

of *Fors* was written while Ruskin was preparing the plate for the *Bible of Amiens*, and he gives an amusing account of the kind of help which the ordinary school-atlas afforded him as a student of French history.¹

Another subject to which Ruskin devoted much attention was the *teaching of music*. In the importance which he attached to music in education he was a loyal follower of Plato, and those who wish to read connectedly Ruskin's studies in this subject should turn first to the translations from Plato, with comments, which occupy Letters 82 and 83. Ruskin accepts his master's estimate of music as the prime element in moral education.² But, like Plato, Ruskin felt that just as music, rightly followed, might be the noblest, so, corrupted, it might be the most dissolute, of influences.³ For good or for evil, the influence must always be great; but we do not always recognise "how much music, from the nurse's song to the military band and the lover's ballad, does really modify existing civilized life."⁴ The purpose of noble music is, in Ruskin's definition, "to say a thing that you mean deeply, in the strongest and clearest possible way."⁵ It is in music thus understood that Ruskin believed as an instrument of education, and of such music that he was thinking when he said, at the outset of *Fors*, "we will have music and poetry; the children shall learn to dance to it and sing it."⁶ To three points, besides the selection of music with meaning in it, he attached chief importance. The voice was always to be principal; choral association was essential;⁷ and beautiful words were always to be wedded to the song. Ruskin's detailed suggestions on these three points were given in separate books, subsidiary to *Fors Clavigera*—namely, *Rock Honeycomb* and *Elements of English Prosody* (Vol. XXXI.). In the Preface to the former he explained "the required method of musical teaching," dwelling especially on the propositions that "all perfectly rhythmic poetry is meant to be sung to music," and that "all entirely noble music is the illustration of noble words." The selection from Sir Philip Sidney's

¹ See Vol. XXIX. pp. 504–505.

² It may be noted, in passing, that he often finds modern applications for Plato's laws. Thus, in connexion with Plato's "choir of children," see what Ruskin suggests in *Rock Honeycomb* (Preface, § 2, Vol. XXXI.) about village choirs. For other notes on details of Platonic ideas adapted by Ruskin, see below, pp. 248, 671.

³ Letter 82, § 15 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 234); and compare "The Relation of National Ethics to National Arts" (Vol. XIX. pp. 175–180).

⁴ Letter 82, § 18 (Vol. XXIX. p. 239).

⁵ Letter 9, § 12 (below, p. 157).

⁶ Letter 5, § 21 (below, p. 96).

⁷ See Letters 83, § 2, and 82, § 18 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 259, 239).

Psalter in the body of the book was given “for beginning of songs” to be thus sung. In the *Elements of English Prosody* Ruskin similarly interprets the measures, or metres, of poetry in terms of musical notation. Ruskin himself, it may be added, was in the habit of taking music-lessons throughout his life; he was a constant concert-goer; he had many friends among singers, and listening to vocal music was one of his keenest pleasures. He tried his hand occasionally at composition, and one or two pieces, which have found their way into print, are given in a later volume of this edition. He records in *Fors* some experiments he made in the Coniston village school, laying stress on bell-ringing;¹ very rightly, for in many villages this is the favourite, if not the only, form of music exercise. We have seen, too, in an earlier volume, how in the school at Winnington he arranged dances to words and tunes, sometimes of his own invention.²

The foregoing summary of Ruskin’s essay in education is confined, for the most part, to what he says about elementary schools. We have seen in an earlier volume that he took much interest in middle class and University education.³ This was outside the range of *Fors*; but it would be an imperfect and misleading summary of Ruskin’s scheme of education, even for elementary schools, that ignored what he says, more explicitly elsewhere than in *Fors*, about the importance of *teaching in social and political economy*. This is indeed one of the distinguishing features of Ruskin as an educational reformer. More and more am I struck as volume succeeds volume in this complete edition of his Works with the discursiveness of his treatment and yet the solidarity of his thought. His discussion of educational theories and practice may conveniently be separated, as I have separated them in this Introduction, from his political criticisms; yet the two themes are essentially connected in the author’s mind. His theory of education is advocated as that which is best calculated to develop the capacities of the individual, but it is also nicely adjusted to the requirements of individuals co-operating in a social organism. As Mr. Hobson well says,⁴ to Ruskin the object of education is not to perfect the functions of the human being in order to the production of a prize specimen existing beautifully; it has ever the purpose of enabling each man to do his work well, so as to bring use and happiness both to himself and to others. “Moral education consists,” he

¹ Letter 95 (Vol. XXIX. p. 500).

² Vol. XVIII. p. lxxvii.

³ Vol. XVI. pp. lxxvii.–lxxviii.

⁴ *John Ruskin, Social Reformer*, p. 254.

says, “in making the creature practically serviceable to other creatures, according to the nature and extent of his own capacities; taking care that it be healthily developed in such service.”¹ It follows from such a conception that social and political economy must be an element in every complete system of education. “Men’s proper business in this world,” says Ruskin, is “to know themselves and the existing state of things they have to do with; to be happy in themselves, and in the existing state of things; to mend themselves and the existing state of things, as far as either are marred or mendable.”² Hence comes Ruskin’s protest against the too rhetorical turn given to University education;³ and hence his plea for the admission into all school curricula of “politics,” by which he means “the science of the relations and duties of men to each other.”⁴ The protest and the plea are among the most deeply felt, and therefore the most eloquent, passages in his Works. Thirty or forty years after he thus wrote, official recognition was given to his ideas in the Code—again the work of a son of the first Trustee of St. George’s Guild, Mr. Arthur Acland—which included courses in the Life and Duties of the Citizen in the grant-earning programme of Evening Continuation Schools.⁵ In the sphere of Ruskin’s Utopia his ideas were carried out by making a translation of Xenophon’s *Economist* the first volume in the “Shepherd’s Library.”⁶

We are now, I think, in a position to recognise that the miscellaneous contents of the book, though “Fors” may have governed the order of their places, yet all serve a purpose in a designed whole. The readings in classical authors are given “in statement of necessary truth”—in confirmation or illustration of “things that are for ever true”—and in correction of passing follies or fallacies.⁷ The readings in ancient and mediæval history are meant to illustrate, among other points, the comparative unimportance of forms of government. The studies of peasant life—of “such life, as in here and there a hollow of the rocks of Europe, just persons have sometimes lived, untracked by the hounds of war”⁸—are given in defence and illustration of his

¹ Letter 67 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 655).

² *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 71).

³ In Appendix III. to *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. pp. 483–485).

⁴ In Appendix 7 to *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. (Vol. XI. pp. 260–261).

⁵ *Code of Regulations for Evening Continuation Schools*, 1894 (C.—7330). It is interesting to notice that in the detailed scheme suggested for the course, Ruskin’s “tools to the man who can use them” is quoted (p. 16).

⁶ See Letter 61 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 499).

⁷ See Vol. XXIX. p. 227; below, pp. 250, 363; and Vol. XXVIII. p. 235.

⁸ Letter 14, § 6 (below, p. 250).

Utopia. Passages of history and biography are introduced as suggestions of the way in which education should set forth noble objects of action.¹ And so throughout, the topics are introduced in “abrupt haste,” yet in “true sequence.”²

(5)

Another aspect of *Fors Clavigera* must now be considered, for besides being so much else it is also a Book of Personal Confessions. Besides those other and weightier matters, *Fors* contains, says Ruskin in one of his many summaries of the book, “much trivial and desultory talk by the way. Scattered up and down in it—perhaps by the Devil’s sowing tares among the wheat—there is much casual expression of my own personal feelings and faith, together with bits of autobiography.”³ There are thus two sides to the personal aspect of *Fors*. It contains passages of formal autobiography relating to Ruskin’s early years, and also informal self-revelation at the time when he was writing *Fors*.

The formal autobiography certainly stands in no need of the apology which, in the passage just cited, Ruskin goes on to give. The bits of autobiography “were allowed place,” he says, “not without some notion of their being useful, but yet imprudently, and even incontinently, because I could not at the moment hold my tongue about what vexed or interested me, or returned soothingly to the memory.” It was fortunate for English literature that Ruskin’s childhood thus returned soothingly to his memory, while he was writing *Fors*, for out of the notes thus included grew one of the most charming of his books—the fragment of autobiography which he called *Præterita*. The autobiographical notes in *Fors* were included in *Præterita*, after revision and re-arrangement. A list in the Bibliographical Note (p. ciii.) enumerates the autobiographical passages of *Fors* in the order of their inclusion in that book; and when read in this order, the scattered passages in *Fors* will be found to give a fairly consecutive account of Ruskin’s childhood. They were not, however, included on their own account. Like so many of the miscellaneous contents of the book, which seem at first disconnected, they fit in, and in several connexions, with its main topics. He began to give his recollections, in order to show the kind of education which had

¹ Vol. XXVIII. p. 656.

² Letter 75, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 61).

³ Letter 88, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 384).

cultivated in him the habit of admiration.¹ His Notes on Scott were introduced with a similar intention, and they in turn led him to pursue his own recollections: he wished to show that in some respects his training had specially fitted him for understanding Scott's thoughts and temper.² His own education, again, and the comfort in which he was able to live, were used as a concrete illustration of the manner in which our social organisation works out in the sphere of distributive justice.³

Ruskin's charge against himself of some imprudence and incontinence in autobiographical talk has more relevance to the second of the personal sides in *Fors Clavigera*. "Weakly communicative," he calls himself in another place;⁴ adding, in yet another Letter and superfluously, "I rather enjoy talking about myself, even in my follies."⁵ He talked no less freely about his graces; giving testimonials to his kindness, and setting forth some (though by no means all) of his charities. There were reasons, and good ones, for such confessions in *Fors Clavigera*. He was setting himself up as a teacher and a leader; and "it is when the sentimentalist turns preacher of morals that we investigate his character, and are justified in so doing. He may express as many and as delicate shades of feeling as he likes—for this the sensibility of his organization perfectly fits him, no other person could do it so well, but the moment he undertakes to establish his feeling as a ground of conduct, we ask at once, "How far are his own life and deed in accordance with what he preaches? For every man feels instinctively that all the beautiful sentiments in the world count less than a single lovely action; and that while tenderness of feeling and susceptibility to generous emotions are accidents of temperament, goodness is an achievement of the will and a quality of the life. The only conclusive evidence of a man's sincerity is that he give *himself* for a principle."⁶ Ruskin felt the force of what his friend, Lowell, says here, and this is the excuse which he made in an earlier book for "what taint of ungracefulness" might attach to his speaking about himself: whether people accused him of boasting or not, he thought it right to let them know that he practised what he preached.⁷ As *Fors Clavigera* proceeded, and Ruskin was led into the position of leader in

¹ See Letter 10 (below, pp. 167, 168).

² On this subject, see Appendix 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 539).

³ See Letters 4 (below, p. 63) and 56 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 392, 393).

⁴ Letter 51, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 270).

⁵ Letter 75, § 19 (Vol. XXIX. p. 74).

⁶ *Among my Books*, 1870, p. 358.

⁷ *Time and Tide*, § 115 (Vol. XVII. p. 412.)

a proposed reformation and of Master of an actual organisation, he felt the call to some self-revelation to be the more instant. He was appealing to men of leisure and culture to share their gifts and spend themselves freely for their fellows. His "Companions of St. George" were to have "glass pockets";¹ therefore the Master first revealed his own. It was fitting that he should so far raise the curtain upon his own practice as that they should know his sentiments to be sincere. "From that sincerity," as Lowell beautifully adds, "his words gain the force and pertinency of deeds, and his money is no longer the pale drudge 'twixt man and man, but, by a beautiful magic, what erewhile bore the image and superscription of Cæsar seems now to bear the image and superscription of God." Ruskin was like Chaucer's Parson:

"Cristes lore, and His Apostles twelve,
He taughte, and first he folwede it himselve;"

and if he was careful to let men see some of his good works, it was in order that they might "glorify your Father which is in heaven."

At one point Ruskin's sincerity was still assailed by occasional correspondents. He preached that interest was wrong; but in practice he received interest from Bank Stock. Such criticisms came sometimes from disciples with troubled heads; at others, from hostile critics who are ever delighted to defend a system by pointing to an individual's acceptance of it. Ruskin meets the objection frankly, and, as it seems to me, with entire cogency. "I hold bank stock," he says, "simply because I suppose it to be safer than any other stock, and I take the interest of it because, though taking interest is, in the abstract, as wrong as war, the entire fabric of society is at present so connected with both usury and war that it is not possible violently to withdraw, nor wisely to set example of withdrawing, from either evil."² Social evils, in other words, are not to be cured by individual remedies. Ruskin was content "to know his principle, and to work steadily towards better fulfilment of it."³ But this attitude, though logically unassailable, did not in practice give him entire peace of mind, as Mr. Collingwood has related:—

"I remember his saying, in his rooms at Oxford in one of those years: 'Here I am, trying to reform the world, and I suppose I ought to begin with myself. I am trying to do St. Benedict's work,

¹ Letter 8, § 7 (below, p. 139).

² Letter 21, § 18 (below, p. 364).

³ Letter 44, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 139). See also *ibid.*, p. 673.

and I ought to be a saint. And yet I am living between a Turkey carpet and a Titian, and drinking as much tea'—taking his second cup—'as I can *swig!*'

"That was the way he put it to an undergraduate; to a lady friend, he wrote later on, 'I'm reading history of early saints, too, for my Amiens book, and feel that I ought to be scratched, or starved, or boiled, or something unpleasant; and I don't know if I'm a saint or a sinner in the least, in mediæval language. How did the saints feel themselves, I wonder, about their saintship?' "¹

He did not in any wise set himself up as a saint. He was, he says,² "a man clothed in soft raiment." He "reproached himself that he had not the courage to live in a garret, or make shoes like Tolstoi."³ His compromises were not wholly self-indulgent; yet he found "there is yet something wrong; I have no peace, still less ecstasy." Perhaps the camel's-hair coat is necessary for that, and he did not like camel-hair.⁴ Yet, as he was delivering a message and calling on other men to follow him, he felt justified in letting them know what his own practice was, and in asking them at least to do as much.⁵

But Ruskin, as we have heard, "rather enjoyed talking about himself"—when there was no compelling reason, as well as when there was. He tells us accordingly of his flirtations and affections, of his cats and dogs, of his pets and their frocks, of his dressing-gown, his wristbands and his blue ties. His good tempers and his ill, his pleasures and pains, his dreams, his fancies, his whims, are all in turn reflected on the printed pages of *Fors*. To some readers all this constitutes an added charm in the book; to others, it has proved a rock of offence. There need be no arguing in the matter. *Fors Clavigera*, among its many aspects, is a book of confessions, revealing a person. If we like the person, we shall like his book; if we are not in sympathy with him, we shall not. "I allowed myself to write on each subject," says Ruskin, "whatever came into my mind, wishing the reader, like a friend, to know exactly what my mind was; but no candour will explain this to persons who have no feelings in common with me."⁶ Reviewers often fell foul of the Letters on the score of their egotism and vanity. Ruskin was certainly an egotist, though his egotism

¹ *Life and Work of John Ruskin*, p. 289 (1900 edition).

² Letter 58, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 425).

³ Mrs. Meynell, *John Ruskin*, p. 272.

⁴ Letter 41 § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 88).

⁵ See Letter 80 (Vol. XXIX. p. 180).

⁶ Letter 85, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 315).

was only paper-deep, and egotism is what fascinates readers in the best letters of all ages. Ruskin, when sitting down to pen chit-chat about himself, might have answered the objector in the words with which the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table defended the “trivial personalities,” the “splashes and streaks of sentiment,” which “you may see when I show you my heart’s corolla as if it were a tulip”:—“Pray, do not give yourself the trouble to fancy me an idiot whose conceit it is to treat himself as an exceptional being. It is because you are just like me that I talk and know you will listen. We are all splashed and streaked with sentiments—not with precisely the same tints, or in exactly the same patterns, but by the same hand and from the same palette.” That there was an element of vanity in Ruskin he was too keen a critic of himself to deny;¹ but with regard to this, I am of the opinion expressed by an eminently sane critic with regard to one of Ruskin’s favourite authors. “His vanity,” says Mr. Birrell of Richardson, “afforded nobody anything but pleasure. The vanity of a distinguished man, if at the same time he happens to be a good man, is a quality so agreeable in its manifestations that to look for it and not to find it would be to miss a pleasure.”² And nobody can read *Fors Clavigera* without perceiving that Ruskin was a good man.

(6)

In no other book does Ruskin confess so plainly as in *Fors Clavigera* the faith that was in him. I have spoken hitherto of its personal reminiscences, its side-lights upon the author’s moods and temper, its intimate and sometimes trivial, pieces of self-revelation. But the book contains much more than these. It is in a deeper sense (to repeat Mr. Harrison’s phrase) “Ruskin’s Apocalypse.” He himself regarded it as the end which crowned his work. He traces in one of the Letters the development and the harmony of the main teaching in his successive books; describing, through *Modern Painters*, the *Stones of Venice*, *Unto this Last*, and the *Oxford Lectures on Art*, “the message which, knowing no more as I unfolded the scroll of it, what next would be written there, than a blade of grass knows what the form of its fruit shall be, I have been led on year by year to speak, even to this its end.”³ *Fors Clavigera* was the end because

¹ See *Ariadne Florentina*, § 2 (Vol. XXII. p. 302.)

² *Res Judicatae*, p. 33.

³ Letter 78, § 14 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 137–138). Compare Letter 9, § 15 (below, p. 159).

it endeavoured to show the conditions under which alone great art (itself the product of the happy life of the workman) was possible; the conditions which are required in order that the Sun of Justice may shine upon "gracious laws of beauty and labour." And in thus crowning his work, Ruskin was led to expound, more definitely than elsewhere, the faith which inspired it. His beliefs changed; the texture, that is, which clothed his conceptions of the spiritual world, were subject to successive modifications. He traces some of them in *Fors*.¹ But the abiding substance of his faith is summed in the sonorous words of "St. George's Creed."² It proclaims the sacredness of Nature as the revelation of God, and the sacredness of Man as the interpreter of God in Nature. It teaches the service of man as the honour of God. And thus the final substance of Ruskin's practical message is summed up, as he indicates, in the passages in *Fors* from which the following extracts are taken:—

"The Law of God concerning man is, that if he acts as God's servant he shall be rewarded with such pleasure as no heart can conceive nor tongue tell."

"Bishops cannot take, much less give, account of men's souls unless they first take and give account of their bodies."

"Begin therefore to-day to do good work for Him, and see that every stroke of this work—be it weak or strong—shall therefore be done in lov of God and your neighbour and in hatred of covetousness."

"To your master Christ you must stand, with your best might; and in this manner only, self-asserting as you may think it, can you confess Him before men."

"You will find it needful to live, if it be with success, according to God's Law; and the first uttered article in it is, 'In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread.' "

"Every earthly good and possession will be given you, if you seek first the Kingdom of God and His Justice. If, in the assurance of Faith, you can ask and strive that such kingdom may be with you, though it is not meat and drink, but Justice, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost,—if, in the first terms I put to you for oath, you will do good work, whether you live or die, and so lie down at night, whether hungry or weary, at least in peace of heart and surety of honour;—then, you shall rejoice, in your native land, and on your nursing sea, in all fulness of temporal possession;—then, for you the earth shall bring forth her increase, and for you the floods clap their hands;—throughout your sacred pilgrimage, strangers here

¹ See Letter 76 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 86 *seq.*).

² Letter 58 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 419).

and sojourners with God, yet His word shall be with you,—’the land shall not be sold for ever, for the land is Mine,’ and after your numbered days of happy loyalty, you shall go to rejoice in His Fatherland, and with His people.”¹

Of Ruskin’s personal movements during the period covered by this volume (Letters 1–36), little need be said. The book begins in the second year of his Professorship at Oxford. His work during the preceding decade (1860–1870) had been increasingly social and political in aim.² He was now assuming a post which required him, for the most part, to devote himself to artistic studies. He was unwilling to leave the other work alone, for, indeed, as I have tried to show more than once in these Introductions, his artistic and his political thoughts were, in his mind, two sides of one and the same problem. The Oxford appointment, which gave to the artistic side the first call upon his time, was thus a reason compelling him to pay “ransom” in *Fors Clavigera*. This is a frame of mind which comes out clearly enough in the first few Letters of the series. In the spring of 1872 Ruskin went to Italy,³ and his movements may be traced in Letters 18–21. For the rest, the Letters in this volume were written, in the main, at Oxford or at Brantwood. The years which they cover (1871–1873) were a period of steady work, and the Letters were written in a temper less tried and stormy than will reveal itself in the other volumes of *Fors*.

Carlyle remarked to Emerson upon the difficulty of getting Ruskin’s books and pamphlets “owing to the ways he has towards the bibliopolic world.”⁴ The experiment to which Carlyle thus alluded has considerable interest and importance in the history of the book trade in this country. In starting *Fors Clavigera* Ruskin determined to make two innovations, and therefore, as he explained on the wrappers of the first Letters (see below, p. 11 *n.*), to “retain complete command over their mode of publication.” The Letters were to discuss, among other things, principles and methods of modern business; they were to inveigh against

¹ See Vol. XXVIII. pp. 502, 512, 517, 543, 564. These passages are indicated by Ruskin as central in Letter 81, Vol. XXIX. p. 195; whilst the last passage (Vol. XXVIII. p. 767) is given as the substance of his “message.”

² *Unto this Last, Munera Pulveris, Time and Tide.*

³ See Vol. XXII. pp. xxvi.–xxviii.

⁴ See below, p. lxxxvii.

the system of credits, discounts, commission, and flamboyant advertisement. Ruskin, as we have seen, was one who strove to practise what he preached; therefore it behoved him, as himself a producer of goods for market, to set his own shop in order. In the ordinary publishing trade there was “the published price” of a book, but this did not represent with any certainty either what the consumer had to pay to the bookseller, or what the bookseller had to pay to the publisher. There were “trade discounts” of varying amounts to the booksellers, wholesale or retail, while the booksellers, in turn, either charged the “published price” to customers, or gave varying discounts according as motives of competition with rivals or other conditions of their business might suggest. All this was wholly inconsistent with the gospel of fixed prices, cash down, and confessed profits which Ruskin meant to preach in *Fors Clavigera*.

He decided, accordingly, to cut himself free from the customs of the trade by becoming his own publisher, and by supplying *Fors* (as presently also his other books) on a new system. The published price was to be the actual price charged alike to the booksellers and to private purchasers who bought direct from the author-publisher. There was to be no credit allowed, and no abatement given on quantity or for any other reason. “The trade may charge a proper and acknowledged profit for their public in retailing the book. Then the public will know what they are about, and so will tradesmen.” The “absolute refusal of credit or abatement is only the carrying out of a part of my general method of political economy; and I adopt this method of sale because I think authors ought not to be too proud to sell their own books, any more than painters to sell their own pictures.”¹ And similarly he declined to advertise his wares, by announcing that “no intelligent workman should pass a day without acquainting himself with the entirely original views contained in these pages.”² For the first three years copies of the Letters were sent to the press, but in 1874 Ruskin stopped even this form of advertisement.³

In order to carry out his scheme Ruskin appointed as his agent Mr. George Allen, at that time one of his assistants and the engraver of many of his plates, who was thus started, at a week’s notice, on the career of publisher. The method of publication adopted from the first with *Fors Clavigera* was gradually extended to all Ruskin’s books, and

¹ Below, pp. 100, 195, 257–258.

² Below, p. 354.

³ See Letter 38, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 42).

first among them to the enlarged edition of *Sesame and Lilies* which he issued in June 1871, as the opening volume of a Revised Series of his Works. The statements which he issued with that volume are printed in Vol. XVIII. pp. 10, 11. The new system involved a breach with his old publisher, Mr. George Smith. At first Mr. Smith consented to act as agent concurrently with Mr. Allen; he continued to print *Fors* and other publications of Ruskin's until 1873; the name of his firm remained on the title-pages till that date, and he was the sole publisher of a new edition of *The Stones of Venice* issued in the same year. Ruskin's intention at first had been to apply the new method of publication only to his new books; and, in order to be quit of business worries, he was minded to sell outright to Mr. Smith the copyright of all his earlier works. There proved, however, to be a wide difference between the estimates which publisher and author respectively placed upon the value of the copyright, and by degrees Ruskin withdrew the whole of his books from Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co.'s hands. The breach was not without regret on both sides. For no author had the firm published so many volumes as for Ruskin, and Mr. Smith had been for many years on the friendliest terms both with him and with his father. Ruskin, on his side, though convinced that he was in the right, and though he seems to have rather enjoyed crossing swords with him, yet says in *Fors* that he would "like much again to be on terms with my old publisher, and hear him telling me nice stories over our walnuts, this Christmas, after dividing his year's spoil with me in Christmas charity."¹

Ruskin's experiment met with the usual reception of pioneer-work. Some further particulars about it are given in Volume XXX. Here it may be stated generally that the experiment went through the three stages of ridicule, modification, and general acceptance. Mr. Smith warned his old friend, more in sorrow than in anger, that the new plan would prove a melancholy failure. The booksellers, in whose interest Ruskin had conceived his plan, were bitterly opposed to it, and for some time there was a more or less general boycott of his books by the trade.² Ruskin published in *Fors* a sample or two of the

¹ Letter 72, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 757).

² The fact is worth nothing in connexion with discussions now current (1907) in the book trade that the opposition to fixed prices came not in the first instance from Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co., but from the booksellers. "Smith was not averse," says his biographer, "to making the experiment which Ruskin desired, but the booksellers did not welcome the new plan of sale, and the circulation of Ruskin's books declined" (*Dictionary of National Biography*, Supplement, vol. i. p. xl.).

kind of remonstrance he received.¹ But he held on firmly, and gradually Mr. Allen gathered together a large nucleus of customers. "The public has a very long nose," Ruskin once said, "and scents out what it wants, sooner or later."² Ruskin, meanwhile, was coming more and more, owing to the distribution of his inherited fortune, to depend for his livelihood upon the sale of his books, and in 1882 he agreed to a modification of his original plan. Instead of selling a book to the booksellers at a fixed price to which they were to add whatever sum they chose before selling it again to the public, he fixed the price at which it was sold to the public, giving the trade a fixed discount. Thus there was one uniform price, say 6s., at which customers everywhere could obtain the book. The discount given to the trade was not large enough to allow the booksellers to under-sell each other, by offering the book at 5s. or 4s. 6d., but was sufficient to leave them "a living wage" for the cost and trouble of retailing. With this modification, Ruskin's experiment in publishing became a great success.³ The publisher lived and thrived, and the author received from his books a steady income, far in excess of his former receipts, and probably larger than that of any other didactic writer of the time.

Ruskin, it will thus be seen, was the pioneer of the system now commonly adopted under the phrase "the net book system." The "unpractical" visionary was proved to know the booksellers' business better than they knew it themselves. They ridiculed his plan and did all they could to strangle the new system in its infancy. The plan was initiated, as Ruskin said in 1871, "not in hostility to booksellers, but, as I think they will find eventually, with a just regard to their interest."⁴ These words have been entirely fulfilled, for we read to-day that "the Net Book System was established eight years

¹ See Letters 14 (below, pp. 257–258) and 52 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 315). The following is a form of reply which Ruskin drew up (1871) for Mr. Allen to send to applications for free copies of *Fors*:—

"In answer to your communication of date, I beg to state that I have no instructions from Mr. R. respecting the supply of any public institutions with his works; but *Fors Clavigera* and those of which the sale may in future be in my hands are not privately printed but are at any one's command. Mr. R. simply insists that they shall be paid for over the counter, and any bookseller may sell them, charging a fair extra profit."

² W. G. Collingwood, *Life and Work of John Ruskin*, p. 285 (1900 edition).

³ Mr. Collingwood (*ibid.*, p. 295) records "the curious tribute once paid to Ruskin by the journal of a big modern shop (Compton House, Liverpool) as a 'great tradesman.'"

⁴ Vol. XVIII. p. 10.

ago *at the earnest request of the booksellers themselves* to keep them out of the disastrous condition to which the under-cutting of prices among themselves had reduced their business.”¹

The “ways towards the bibliopolic world,” described above, had some influence in retarding the sale of the earlier volumes of *Fors Clavigera*; but the book steadily, if gradually, made its way. He complains at one place in *Fors* of the comparatively slow sale of the book;² but already, in September 1871, he was able to report to Professor Norton that *Fors* “is beginning to make an impression.”³ For reasons sufficiently indicated in foregoing sections of this Introduction, it was much ridiculed in the public press, but it was not ignored. Ruskin’s name probably figured more frequently in the newspapers during the continuance of *Fors* than at any previous period. If the book called forth derision in some quarters, it attracted to Ruskin devout disciples from others. As his work at Oxford caused him to be generally called in some circles “The Professor,” so *Fors* and the St. George’s Guild won for him in others the title of “The Master.” It may be doubted whether this was altogether a gain. His correspondence was greatly increased,⁴ to the serious detriment of other work, and the atmosphere of uncritical adulation, which increasingly surrounded him, was perhaps not without some effect in accentuating a tendency to absolutism and over-emphasis. These were characteristics which were confined to Ruskin as writer; in personal intercourse he remained to the end the most courteous and considerate of men.

By no one was the progress of *Fors* watched more sympathetically than by Carlyle. He saw what Ruskin was aiming at from the start, and the book had not proceeded far when he wrote the following letter to Ruskin:—

5 CHEYNE ROW, 30th April 1871.

“DEAR RUSKIN,—This *Fors Clavigera* (No. 5), which I have just finished reading, is incomparable; a quasi-sacred consolation to me, which almost brings tears into my eyes! Every word of it is as if spoken, not out of my poor heart only, but out of the eternal skies; words winged with Empyrean wisdom, piercing as lightning—and which I really do not remember to have heard the like of. *Continue*, while you have such utterances

¹ *The “Times” and the Publishers*, printed for the Publishers’ Association, 1906, p. 9. The italics are in the original.

² Letter 36, § 1 (below, p. 668).

³ See, in a later volume of this edition, the letter of September 24, 1871.

⁴ See below, pp. 280, 542.

in you, to give them voice. They will find and force entrance into human hearts, *whatever* the 'angle of incidence' may be; that is to say, whether, for the degraded and *inhuman* Blockheadism we, so-called 'men,' have mostly now become, you come in upon them at the broadside, at the top, or even at the bottom. Euge, Euge!

"Yours ever,

"T. CARLYLE."¹

From the fourteenth Letter Carlyle made quotations in one of his own books;² and at the time when he had been reading the Letter, he wrote as follows, first to his brother (Dr. John Carlyle) and then to Emerson:—

"(24th Feb. 1872.)—I am reading Ruskin's books in these evenings. . . . I find a real spiritual comfort in the noble fire, wrath, and inexorability with which he smites upon all base things and wide-spread public delusions; and insists relentlessly on having the ideal aimed at everywhere; for the rest I do not find him wise—headlong rather, and I might even say weak. But there is nothing like him in England in these other respects."³

"(2nd April 1872.)—Do you read Ruskin's *Fors Clavigera*, which he cheerily tells me gets itself reprinted in America? If you don't, *do*, I advise you. Also his *Munera Pulveris*, Oxford-*Lectures* on Art, and whatever else he is now writing,—if you can manage to get them (which is difficult here, owing to the ways he has towards the bibliopolic world!). There is nothing going on among us as notable to me as those fierce lightning-bolts Ruskin is copiously and desperately pouring into the black world of Anarchy all around him. No other man in England that I meet has in him the divine rage against iniquity, falsity, and baseness that Ruskin has, and that every man ought to have. Unhappily he is not a strong man; one might say a weak man rather; and has not the least prudence of management; though if he can hold out for another fifteen years or so, he may produce, even in this way, a great effect. God grant it, say I."⁴

Subsequently, as we shall see in the next volume, Carlyle's enthusiasm for *Fors* cooled. Partly he found some of the later Letters less interesting, and partly perhaps he was concerned at the heightened temper which they revealed.

¹ Printed in W. G. Collingwood's *Life and Work of John Ruskin*, p. 288 (1900 edition).

² See below, p. 247 *n*.

³ *New Letters of Thomas Carlyle*, edited by Alexander Carlyle, 1904, vol. ii. p. 284.

⁴ *Correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson*, 1883, vol. ii. p. 352.

IT remains to give here some account of the text and manuscripts of *Fors Clavigera* generally, and of the illustrations in the present volume.

The *manuscript* of the book, as sent to the printers, is either very much dispersed or destroyed, and the editors have had access to some few portions only. These are as follow:—

Of Letters 1, 2, and 4 the first draft (much altered before publication) is in No. 2 of the “Oxford Ledgers,” described in an earlier volume.¹ This also contains Letter 10, §§ 1–14. A page of the MS. of the first draft of Letter 1 is here given in *facsimile* (p. 12). A few passages from these first drafts are now given in footnotes.²

There remains at Brantwood a collection of manuscript material connected with the book. This includes a large part of the MS. of Letters 12 and 13 (for a *facsimile* of a page of Letter 12, see p. 204); the MS. of Letter 58, with the first draft also of St. George’s Creed (facsimiled in Vol. XXVIII.); portions of the MS. of Letters 60, 61, 62, and 63; rejected drafts of portions of Letters 61, 64, and 66; a large part of the MS. of Letter 74; the complete MS. of Letter 84; a fair copy of nearly the whole of Letter 88, with rejected drafts of portions of it; the complete MS. of Letters 92 and 95 (with an additional passage, now given in Vol. XXIX. p. 497 *n.*).

Of Letter 91, the MS. was given by Ruskin to Miss Grace Allen. It shows very numerous revisions, of which a passage printed in Vol. XXIX. p. 448 *n.* gives an illustration. An examination of this, as of the other portions of the manuscript above mentioned, fully bears out what Ruskin says, in several places,³ about the care which he bestowed in the composition of *Fors*.

The papers relating to *Fors*, which Ruskin preserved, contain (besides various newspaper cuttings and letters from correspondents, put into type and intended for the book) a large number of passages in Ruskin’s hand, often carefully revised, which supplement or illustrate in a very interesting way the original text. Mr. Allen also had a certain amount of “over matter” in type which Ruskin instructed him to keep. A selection from this material has been made in the Appendix to the book (Vol. XXIX.).

¹ Vol. XX. p. xlix.

² See, for instance, below, pp. 34–35, 165–166.

³ See especially Letter 82, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 227).

The *text of Fors Clavigera*, as printed hitherto, has often been far from correct. Full particulars of the somewhat complicated Bibliography of the book are given in the usual Note (p. xci.). The close examination of the text entailed in the discovery of these particulars has enabled the editors to make many corrections. Ruskin explains that “the misprints were atrocious.”¹ An instance of a curious error, hitherto uncorrected, is noted beneath the text on p. 610. Ruskin left much of the task of press-correction to others,² and did not himself closely follow or check the successive issues of the several Letters. Mr. Allen possesses, however, a set of Letters 1–36 (with a duplicate set of Letters 1–12), which Ruskin read very closely, marking a large number of corrections. His corrections in Letters 1–12 have, by some oversight, not been made till now; most of the others (though not all) were made in the second edition, or later. Ruskin also gave to Mr. Wedderburn a complete copy of the book, containing several notes and corrections. This copy is the source of several minor corrections in the text, as also of numerous notes, now appended.³ Particulars of the more important of these will be found in the Bibliographical Notes; many others are in matters of punctuation, which, though too small for separate notice, add a good deal to the easy intelligibility of the text. Other corrections were noted by Ruskin either in *Fors* itself, or in his two volumes of Index. All these are now embodied in the text of the book. Further corrections of a like kind⁴ were made by Ruskin in a few of the Letters belonging to a set which he gave to Rawdon Brown, now in the Library of St. Mark at Venice.⁵ Brown had enriched this copy with various cuttings and autograph letters from Ruskin. These have been utilised in the present edition,⁶ which, it is believed, presents the text of *Fors* for the first time in a form at once complete and correct. The principal text is, in accordance with the rule of the edition, that which was last

¹ Vol. XXVIII. p. 94 *n*.

² Vol. XXVIII. p. 511.

³ See, for instance, in this volume, pp. 19, 21, 96, 252, 291, 311, 424.

⁴ See, for instance, Vol. XXVIII. p. 548 *n*.

⁵ Rawdon Brown left many of his manuscripts and books (including a fine copy of the *Examples of Venetian Architecture*, with Ruskin’s autograph inscription) to the Library of St. Mark, where they are thus inscribed:—

“Legato di Rawdon Brown Inglese alla Biblioteca di San Marco, che egli amò quanto la sua Venezia, ove morì in MDCCLXXXIII.”

A collection of Ruskin’s letters to Brown is in the British Museum: see a later volume of this edition.

⁶ See, for instance, Vol. XXVIII. p. 583.

revised by Ruskin. Passages, which appeared in editions earlier than such revision, are supplied in footnotes or in the Bibliographical Notes.¹

The *illustrations* in the present volume comprise all those which appeared in the original issue of Letters 1–36, together with a few additional plates. Of the original illustrations, five were autotype reproductions of various vices and virtues painted by Giotto in the Arena Chapel at Padua (here Plates I.–V.). Those of the series not thus given by Ruskin in *Fors Clavigera* are included in this edition as illustrations to *Giotto and his Works in Padua*.² The other illustrations, given by Ruskin in *Fors* (here Plates VI., VII., IX., XI.–XIV.), are sufficiently described in the Contents and footnotes to the text. As elsewhere in this edition, photogravures are, as a rule, substituted for the less satisfactory autotypes of the original editions. In two cases, where the subjects lent themselves preferably to engraving, woodcuts have been substituted. This remark applies to Plate XIV., and to Fig. 8.

The additional plates introduced in this volume are four in number. The *frontispiece* is a photogravure from a photograph of Ruskin, taken in what may be called his middle *Fors* period. The “Studies in Maps” (Plate A) have already been referred to (pp. lxxi., lxxii.). Another new plate is a photogravure from the so-called “Theseus” in the British Museum (Plate X.)—a subject frequently referred to in the text. The third of the new plates is a chromo-lithograph of Carpaccio’s “Dream of St. Ursula” (Plate VIII.)—a picture described in Letter 20. Ruskin made a small water-colour study of the picture, and from this he employed Mr. D. Gould to colour some photographs. These were for a time placed on sale by Ruskin through his publisher and agent. It is from the coloured photograph that the present chromo-lithograph has been reduced.

The illustrations in the text (other than Fig. 8) already mentioned are printed from the original wood blocks.

E. T. C.

¹ See, for instance, in this volume, p. 374. In one case, however, for reasons of typographical convenience, certain correspondence, which appeared in one edition only, is printed in the principal text (Vol. XXVIII. p. 396).

² Vol. XXIV., Plates XLI.–XLIII. (pp. 115, 120, 122).

[*Bibliographical Note.*—The Ninety-six Letters entitled *Fors Clavigera* have appeared in three different forms—(1) each Letter as a separate octavo pamphlet (in the case of the first thirty-six Letters, each with a separate pagination—an arrangement which was preserved even when the Letters were issued in volume form); (2) in eight volumes, each set of twelve Letters forming a volume; (3) in four crown 8vo volumes, with some curtailments and omissions.

It should be noted generally, with regard to the Ninety-six Letters, that, with the exception of Letters 90–96, they were originally published without names. Titles were not given to the Letters till July 1882: see Letter 90, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 423).

The numbering of the sections (§§) is for the first time introduced in this edition.

LETTERS 1–12, FORMING VOL. I.: 1871

The title-page to each Letter was as follows, the only changes being in the numbers of the Letters and the dates:—

Fors Clavigera. | Letters | to the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain. | By John Ruskin, LL.D. | Letter the First. | January 1st, 1871. | [*Rose.*] | London: Printed for the author | by Smith, Elder & Co. 15, Waterloo Place; | and sold only by | Mr. G. Allen, Heathfield Cottage, Keston, Kent. | *Price Sevenpence.*

The dates on the title-pages are given in brackets below, after the words *First Edition*. On the reverse of the title-page was an “Advertisement.” For the text of this, as originally printed, see below, p. 11 *n*.

In Letters 4–24, the following additional passages were inserted after the second paragraph of the “Advertisement”:—

“Post-office orders, in advance, may be made payable to Mr. George Allen, Hayes, Beckenham, Kent.

“If I keep my health, there will be a number for every month of the present year.”

The latter of these two paragraphs was omitted in Letter 25 and later.

For another alteration in the wording after Letter 6, see, again, p. 11 *n*.

Each of the twelve Letters was issued in paper wrappers of a pale grey colour, with the title-page reproduced upon the front.

The imprints on the wrappers of the Second and later editions vary slightly, for in February 1873 Ruskin transferred the printing of *Fors Clavigera* from Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co. to Messrs. Watson & Hazell (afterwards Messrs. Hazell, Watson & Viney); whilst in February 1874 Mr. George Allen changed his address from “Heathfield Cottage, Keston, Kent,” to “Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent.” As a general rule the wrappers

of later editions bear the words "Second," "Third," or "Fourth" Thousand or Edition on the front. When the Letters were furnished with names, these were printed on the wrapper and also as a heading to the Text, and the Letters were numbered "Letter the 1st" (etc.) instead of "Letter the First." It may be noted that the *first* edition of Letters 1 to 12 were exhausted before any of the volumes were made up with title-pages supplied by the publisher. Collectors may ask how first editions (often to be met with, bound up without title-pages or wrappers) can be distinguished. Diligent study of the following pages supplies the necessary material; but it may here be remarked summarily that after the first edition of Letters 1–20 (in the case of Letter 1, after the second), the pagination of each Letter was altered. After Letter 20 the title-page was omitted, and thus the first page of the text was p. 1 instead of p. 3.

The first edition of each Letter consisted of 1050 copies; later editions (except where otherwise stated), of 1000.

LETTER 1. *First Edition* (January 1, 1871).—Octavo, pp. 20; title-page, p. 1; "Advertisement" (see below, p. 11 *n.*), p. 2; text, pp. 3–20.

Second Edition (August 1872).—Octavo, pp. 20; collation as before, "Second Thousand" took the place of the date on the wrapper.

Third Edition (January 1878).—Pages 18, the title-page being withdrawn, and the "Advertisement" moved to p. 4 of the wrapper. "Third Thousand" on the wrapper.

Fourth Edition (March 1885).—Again pp. 18. By this time the Letter had received a title, which was printed both on the wrapper and as a heading to the text. "Fourth Thousand."

Fifth Edition (July 1894).—350 copies.

LETTER 2. *First Edition* (February 1, 1871).—Pages 23; title-page, p. 1; "Advertisement," p. 2; text, pp. 3–23.

Second Edition (May 1873).—Pages 21, the title-page being withdrawn, and the "Advertisement" moved to p. 4 of the wrapper. "Second Thousand" on the wrapper. Such indication of the edition was given in all cases, and will not be further mentioned in this Note.

Third Edition (April 1880).—Again pp. 21.

Fourth Edition (July 1886).—Again pp. 21. The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 3. *First Edition* (March 1, 1871).—Pages 20; title-page, p. 1; "Advertisement," p. 2; text, pp. 3–20.

Second Edition (February 1874).—Pages 18, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

Third Edition (November 1880).—Again pp. 18.

Fourth Edition (October 1887).—Again pp. 18. The title of the Letter was now added. 900 copies.

LETTER 4. *First Edition* (April 1, 1871).—Pages 24; text, pp. 3–24.

Second Edition (February 1874).—Pages 22, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

Third Edition (November 1880).—Again pp. 22.

Fourth Edition (October 1887).—Again pp. 22. The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 5. *First Edition* (May 1, 1871).—Pages 24; text, pp. 3–24.

Second Edition (January 1874).—Pages 22, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

Third Edition (November 1880).—Again pp. 22.

Fourth Edition (March 1887).—Again pp. 22. The title of the Letter was now added.

Giotto “Hope” (Plate I. in this volume) was given, by autotype process, as a frontispiece to this Letter. In the first edition the plate was printed very dark, and the lines of Giotto’s inscription were undiscernible. This was remedied in later editions by lighter printing from the same negative. In this volume the fresco is given in photogravure.

LETTER 6. *First Edition* (June 1, 1871).—Pages 21; text, pp. 3–21.

Second Edition (September 1874).—Pages 19, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

Third Edition (April 1882).—Again pp. 19.

Fourth Edition (March 1888).—Again pp. 19. The title of the Letter was now added. 850 copies.

Giotto’s “Envy” (Plate II. in this volume) was given, by autotype process, as a frontispiece to this Letter. In this volume the fresco is given in photogravure, and the plate is transferred to p. 111.

LETTER 7. *First Edition* (July 1, 1871).—Pages 24; text, pp. 3–24.

Second Edition (September 1874).—Pages 22, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

Third Edition (November 1881).—Again pp. 22.

Fourth Edition (March 1888).—Again pp. 22. The title of the Letter was now added. 900 copies.

Giotto’s “Charity” (Plate III. in this volume) was given, by autotype process, as frontispiece to this Letter.

LETTER 8. *First Edition* (August 1, 1871).—Pages 18; text, pp. 3–18.

Second Edition (September 1874).—Pages 16, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

Third Edition (November 1883).—Again pp. 16. The title of the Letter was now added.

Fourth Edition (December 1888).—Again pp. 16. 850 copies.

LETTER 9. *First Edition* (September 1, 1871).—Pages 26; text, pp. 3–26.

Second Edition (October 1874).—Pages 24, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

Third Edition (December 1882).—Again pp. 24. The title of the Letter was now added.

Fourth Edition (February 1889).—Again pp. 24. 850 copies.

LETTER 10. *First Edition* (October 2, 1871).—Pages 21; text, pp. 3–21.

Second Edition (September 1874).—Pages 19, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

Third Edition (December 1882).—Again pp. 19. The title of the Letter was now added.

Fourth Edition (February 1889).—Again pp. 19. 850 copies.

Giotto’s “Injustice” (now Plate IV.) was given, by autotype process, as frontispiece to this Letter.

LETTER 11. *First Edition* (November 1, 1871).—Pages 23; text, pp. 3–23.

Second Edition (October 1874).—Pages 22. The title-page was withdrawn, the text beginning on p. 1, but in the resetting the type was spaced out, the text thus extending to p. 22.

Third Edition (December 1882).—Again pp. 22. The title of the Letter was now added.

Fourth Edition (February 1889).—Again pp. 22. 850 copies.

Giotto's "Justice" (now Plate V.) was given, by autotype process, as frontispiece to this Letter.

LETTER 12. *First Edition* (December 23, 1871).—Pages 28; text, pp. 3–28.

Second Edition (October 1874).—Pages 26, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

Third Edition (December 1882).—Again pp. 26. The title of the Letter was now added.

Fourth Edition (February 1889).—Again pp. 26. 850 copies.

The editions of Letters 1–12, above described, are all that have been issued in octavo form, the editions of Volume I., next described, being made up from the separate Parts.

In the case of Volumes I. and III., and in that of Volume II. up to 1895, the volumes, as supplied by the publisher, were made up of the separate Letters. Title-pages for Volumes I.–III. were first supplied early in 1875. The publisher's imprint was an anachronism. It was given as "Orpington," with the dates 1871 (Vol. i.), 1872 (vol. ii.), and 1873 (vol. iii.), though, as the title-pages of the separate Letters show, Mr. Allen was residing at Keston in those years. A copy of Volume I., obtained from the publisher in 1875, consisted of the second edition of each Letter (issued, severally, in 1872, 1873, and 1874), with a title-page bearing the date 1871; but of course sets of Volume I. exist, in which collectors bound up their first editions with the antedated title-page.

In July 1882 Title-pages and Contents (giving the titles of the several Letters) were issued for binding up with Volumes I.–VII. To give one sample, the Contents sheet for Volume I. was as follows:—

FORS CLAVIGERA
FIRST SERIES
CONTENTS OF VOL. I. (1871)

| LETTER | LETTER |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| I. Looking Down from Ingleborough | VII. Charities |
| II. The Great Picnic | VIII. Not as the World Gives |
| III. Richard of England | IX. Honour to whom Honour |
| IV. Switches of Broom | X. The Baron's Gate |
| V. Whitethorn Blossom | XI. The Abbot's Chapel |
| VI. Elysian Fields | XII. The Prince's Lesson |

The Titles and Contents of Volumes I.–VII. were issued in July 1882, at the price of sixpence. On the completion of the work in December 1884,

the Titles and Contents of the eight volumes were sold at the same price.

Up to 1882, volumes were sold by the publisher in fancy bindings only. In July 1882 they were issued in mottled-grey paper boards, with white paper labels on the back, lettered "Ruskin. | Fors Clavigera. | Vol. I. [II., etc]." Volumes I–III. were published at 7s. each; later volumes at 10s. each.

The title-page, as first issued in 1875 (with the date, however, "1871"), is as given here on p. 3. The last issued title-page is:—

Fors Clavigera. | Letters | To the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain, |
By John Ruskin, LL.D., | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Honorary
Fellow of Corpus | Christi College, Oxford. | Vol. I. | *Sixth Edition.* | [*Rose.*] |
George Allen, | Orpington and London. | 1895.

The sheet of contents followed. No imprint. Issued in green cloth, lettered on the back, "Ruskin | Fors | Clavigera | Vol. I. | 1871." Price 7s. Medium 8vo. This edition is still current.

LETTERS 13–24, FORMING VOL. II.: 1872

The title-page to each Letter was as follows, the only changes being in the numbers of the Letters and the dates:—

Fors Clavigera. | Letters | to the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain. | By
John Ruskin, LL.D. | Letter the Thirteenth. | January 1st, 1872. | [*Rose.*] |
London: Printed for the author | by Smith, Elder & Co., 15, Waterloo Place; |
and sold only by | Mr. G. Allen, Heathfield Cottage, Keston, Kent. | *Price*
Sevenpence.

The dates on the title-pages are given in brackets below, after the words *First Edition*.

Each of the Letters was issued in wrappers of a pale grey colour. In Letters 13–20 the title-page was reproduced upon the front of the wrapper. In Letter 21, and in all the others of the series (21–96), no title-page was given; the title appearing upon the front of the wrapper only, while the "Advertisement" was transferred to p. 4 of the wrapper.

The first edition of the Letters again consisted of 1050 copies; later editions (except where otherwise stated), of 1000.

LETTER 13. *First Edition* (January 1, 1872).—Pages 20; text, pp. 3–20.

Second Edition (June 1875).—Pages 18, the title-page being withdrawn.

Third Edition (January 1884).—Again pp. 18. The title of the Letter was now added.

Fourth Edition (October 1895).—Again pp. 18. 100 copies, printed at the same time as Letters 13–24 in volume form.

LETTER 14. *First Edition* (February 1, 1872).—Pages 22+2 unnumbered pages; text of Letter, pp. 3–22; "Notes and Correspondence" ("Advice" to Works Series and Correspondence with Messrs. Parker and Co.) on the unnumbered pages.

Second Edition (July 1875).—Pages 20+1 unnumbered page. The

title-page was withdrawn, the "Advice" was revised (as in the present text, see p. 257), and the correspondence with Messrs. Parker was withdrawn.

Third Edition (January 1884).—Again pages 20+1. The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 15. *First Edition* (March 1, 1872).—Pages 23+1 unnumbered; text, pp. 3–23; "Notes and Correspondence" on the unnumbered page.

Second Edition (January 1876).—Pages 23. The title-page being withdrawn and the "Advertisement" transferred to p. 4 of the wrapper, the text of the Letter occupied pp. 1–21, and the "Notes and Correspondence" (now leaded out), pp. 22, 23.

Third Edition (January 1884).—Again pp. 23. The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 16. *First Edition* (April 1, 1872).—Pages 20; text, pp. 3–20.

Second Edition (December 1875).—Pages 18, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

Third Edition (January 1884).—Again pp. 18. The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 17. *First Edition* (May 1, 1872).—Pages 20; text, pp. 3–20.

Second Edition (February 1876).—Pages 18, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

Third Edition (January 1884).—Again pp. 18. The title of the Letter was now added.

Fourth Edition (October 1895).—Again pp. 18. 75 copies, printed at the same time as Letters 13–24 in volume form.

With this Letter was issued a frontispiece (autotype process) of "Robert, Count of Flanders" (now Plate VI.). Ruskin writes on one of his sets (now in Mr. Allen's possession), "Two 17th Letters kept for states of plate." It may be noted that in ed. 1 the plate has a pale green tint lithographed over it; in later editions the tint is a pale cream. In this volume the plate (*photogravure*) is transferred to p. 297.

LETTER 18. *First Edition* (June 1, 1872).—Pages 20; text, pp. 3–20.

Second Edition (May 1876).—pages 18, the title-page being withdrawn.

Third Edition (January 1884).—Again pp. 18. The title of the Letter was no added.

LETTER 19. *First Edition* (July 1, 1872).—Pages 18 (text of the Letter, pp. 3–18), followed by one unnumbered page of "Notes and Correspondence."

Second Edition (May 1876).—Pages 16+1 unnumbered, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

Third Edition (January 1884).—Again pp. 16+1. The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 20. *First Edition* (August 1, 1872).—Pages 24; text of Letter, pp. 3–22; "Notes and Correspondence," pp. 23, 24.

Second Edition (February 1876).—Pages 22, the title-page being withdrawn, etc.

Third Edition (November 1883).—Again pp. 22. The title of the Letter was now added.

Fourth Edition (June 1892).—Again pp. 22. 250 copies.

With this Letter a frontispiece was issued (autotype process), of “The Chapel of St. Mary of the Thorn” (now Plate VII.). The plate in ed. 2 is printed in a browner tone than in ed. 1, and does not show the details so well; in later 8vo editions the printing was again lighter. In this volume the plate (*photogravure*) is transferred to p. 349.

LETTER 21. *First Edition* (September 2, 1872).—In this and the subsequent Letters no title-page was given in the first edition, and the “Advertisement” was placed on p. 4 of the wrapper. There is, therefore, from Letter 21 onward, no difference in pagination (with some exceptions) between the first and succeeding editions. Pages 24.

Second Edition (March 1876).

Third Edition (January 1884).—Title of the Letter added.

LETTER 22. *First Edition* (October 4, 1872).—Pages 28.

Second Edition (May 1876).

Third Edition (January 1884).—Title of the Letter added.

Fourth Edition (October 1895).—75 copies, printed at the same time as Letters 13–24 in volume form.

With this Letter a frontispiece was issued (woodcut) of “The Mount of Compassion” (now Plate IX.).

LETTER 23. *First Edition* (November 1, 1872).—Pages 26.

Second Edition (July 1876).

Third Edition (January 1884).—Title of the Letter added.

With this Letter a frontispiece was issued (autotype) of “Theseus.” For this volume the design has been cut on wood, and placed as Fig. 8 on p. 404.

LETTER 24. *First Edition* (December 2, 1872).—Pages 28; text of Letter, pp. 1–24; “Notes and Correspondence,” pp. 25–28.

Second Edition (March 1876).—Pages 27, the “Notes and Correspondence” being more closely set.

Third Edition (January 1884).—Again pp. 27. Title of the Letter added.

Fourth Edition (October 1895).—Again pp. 27. 75 copies, printed at the same time as Letters 13–24 in volume form.

With this Letter a frontispiece was issued (autotype) of Luini’s “We have seen His star in the East” (now Plate XI.). In ed. 1 the plate was printed in a warm red tint; in later issues, it was greyer. In this volume the lettering has been corrected (see p. 434 *n.*).

Letters 13–24 were next printed in volume form. The remarks on Volume I. apply also to this volume; but in October 1895 the Letters 13–24 were all reprinted at one time (the loose Parts being exhausted) and in one volume. As in most cases there had been only three editions of these Letters in separate form, the volume comprising them all was called “Fourth Edition” on the title-page. The publisher’s imprint is “George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, | and | 156 Charing Cross Road, London, | 1895. | [*All rights reserved.*] On the back of p. 27 of Letter 24 is the imprint, “Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson and Co. | Edinburgh and London.” 500 copies. Price 7s. This edition is still current.

LETTERS 25–36, FORMING VOL. III.: 1873

The title-page (that is, the title on the front of the wrapper) to Letters 25 and 26 was as follows:—

Fors Clavigera. | Letters | To the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain. | By John Ruskin, LL.D. | Letter the Twenty-Fifty (Twenty-Sixth). | January 1873 (February 1873). | [*Rose.*] | London: Printed for the Author | by Smith, Elder & Co., 15 Waterloo Place; | and sold only by | Mr. G. Allen, Heathfield Cottage, Keston, Kent. | *Price Sevenpence.*

Ruskin after this date removed the printing of *Fors* from Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co., and the titles of Letter 27 bore a different imprint, thus:—

“London: Printed for the Author by | Watson and Hazell, London & Aylesbury; | and sold only by | Mr. George Allen, Heathfield Cottage, Keston, Kent. | *Price Sevenpence.*”

Letters 31–36, “And sold by” (“only” being omitted).

Each of the Letters was issued in wrappers of a pale grey colour, except Letter 28, which was issued in salmon-coloured wrappers

Each edition of the Letters consisted (except where otherwise stated) of 1000 copies.

LETTER 25. *First Edition* (January 1873).—Pages 32. 1050 copies.

In this Letter, and succeeding ones, the following paragraph, which had been inserted in the “Advertisement” in Letter 4 and onwards, was omitted: “If I keep my health, there will be a number for every month of the present year.” Issued about the middle of the month: see § 1 (p. 447).

Second Edition (July 1876).

Third Edition (March 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 26. *First Edition* (February 1873).—Pages 20. 1050 copies.

Second Edition (August 1876).

Third Edition (March 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 27. *First Edition* (March 1873).—Pages 24; text of the Letter, pp. 1–19; p. 20, blank; “Notes and Correspondence,” pp. 21–24. 1050 copies.

Second Edition (May 1876).—Text, pp. 1–20; “Notes and Correspondence,” pp. 21–24.

Third Edition (March 1885).—Text, etc., as in ed. 2. The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 28. *First Edition* (April 1, 1873).—Pages 27; text of the Letter, pp. 1–19; p. 20, blank; “Notes and Correspondence,” pp. 21–27. This Letter was issued in salmon-coloured paper wrappers.

Second Edition (December 1876).—Text, pp. 1–20; “Notes and Correspondence,” pp. 21–27.

Third Edition (March 1885).—Text, etc., as in ed. 2. The title of the Letter was now added.

Fourth Edition (January 1900).—Text, etc., as in eds. 2 and 3. 50 copies, printed at the same time as Letters 25–36 in volume form.

With this Letter a frontispiece was issued (autotype) of “The Tale of Adriane” (now Plate XII.). In this volume the plate (*photogravure*) has been transferred to p. 510.

LETTER 29. *First Edition* (May 1, 1873).—Pages 28.

Second Edition (September 1876).

Third Edition (March 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 30. *First Edition* (June 2, 1873).—Pages 23.

Second Edition (February 1877).

Third Edition (March 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 31. *First Edition* (July 1, 1873).—Pages 28.

Second Edition (May 1876).

Third Edition (March 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

With this Letter a frontispiece was issued (autotype) of “Walter of the Border-land” (now Plate XIII.). In this volume the drawing (by Chantrey) has been reproduced by photogravure.

LETTER 32. *First Edition* (August 1, 1873).—Pages 29.

Second Edition (February 1877).

Third Edition (March 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 33. *First Edition* (September 1, 1873).—Pages 24.

Second Edition (February 1877).

Third Edition (May 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 34. *First Edition* (October 1, 1873).—Pages 32.

Second Edition (September 1876).

Third Edition (October 1884).—The title of the Letter was now added.

With this Letter a frontispiece (autotype) was issued of “Sunday Playthings” (now Plate XIV.). The plate in eds. 2 and 3 is different from that in ed. 1; the background in the later editions being rough instead of smooth, and the shadow being on the right of the coins instead of on the left. For this volume the designs have been cut on wood, and the plate is transferred to p. 633.

LETTER 35. *First Edition* (November 1, 1873).—Pages 31.

Second Edition (April 1877).

Third Edition (July 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 36. *First Edition* (December 1, 1873).—Pages 14, followed by an unnumbered leaf containing on its front (reverse blank) an “Advice”

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

and List of Subscriptions (see here p. 678). This edition contained a slip, which reads as follows:—

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE.

"MR. ALLEN begs respectfully to give notice to Subscribers, that on and after January 1st, 1874, all communications must be addressed—

"Mr. George Allen,
"Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent."

Second Edition (February 1877).

Third Edition (May 1885).—The title of the Letter was now added.

Letters 25–36 were next issued in volume form. Up to 1900, copies of this volume were supplied, as described under Volume I., but in that year Letters 25–36 were all reprinted in a volume. This was called "Fifth Edition" on the title-page. Publisher's imprint as in vol. ii. (with date 1900); printer's imprint (as in vol. ii.) on the reverse of the title-page. 400 copies. Price 7s. This edition is still current.

SMALL EDITION IN FOUR VOLUMES

This is a curtailed edition of the whole ninety-six Letters in four volumes, first issued in 1896. Its scope is explained in the following "Advice to the New Edition" by its editor, Mr. W. G. Collingwood:—

ADVICE
TO THE NEW EDITION

"THIS edition of *Fors* is published for the use of readers who are content to have Mr. Ruskin's own Letters without those of his correspondents.

"By omitting from the appendices of the former issue everything except such passages as are necessary to explain the text, the eight large volumes are now reduced to four of a handy size, uniform with the cheap edition of the Works Series.

"All the illustrations are given; the full-page photographs reproduced as tint blocks from the original negatives; and a new index is added to each of the volumes.

"W. G. C."

The curtailments were somewhat more extensive than this "Advice" indicates: see below.

The new Index to each volume was compiled by Mr. W. G. Collingwood. In his Indexes he occasionally added Notes and Translations; these are, for the most part, incorporated in the present edition: see, *e.g.*, in this volume, pp. 504, 601, 626; and in Vol. XXVIII., pp. 115, 591.

As the volumes of the "Small Edition" do not coincide in their contents with the volumes of the present edition, it will be convenient to give in this place the bibliographical particulars of the whole of it, and not only of such portions (*viz.*, vol. i. and part of vol. ii.) as are included in the present volume. The notice of curtailments, on the other hand, will be more conveniently given in each volume of the present edition.

The autotype illustrations of the octavo editions were in the Small Edition reproduced by half-tone process.

Each volume was published at 6s., the price being reduced in January 1904 to 5s. The Small Edition was electrotyped, and no changes have been made in successive issues of it, other than the substitution of title-pages with altered dates.

VOLUME I. (containing Letters 1–24).—The title-pages is as follows:—

Fors Clavigera | Letters | To the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain | by
| John Ruskin, D.C.L., LL.D. | New Edition | Vol. I. | Containing Letters
I.–XXIV. | [*Rose.*] | George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington | and | 156, Charing
Cross Road, London | 1896 | [*All rights reserved*].

Small crown 8 vo, pp. viii.+524. Half-title, with blank reverse, pp. i., ii.; title-page (with imprint at foot of reverse—“Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co. | At the Ballantyne Press”), pp. iii., iv.; “Advice” (see above), with blank reverse, pp. v., vi.; Contents, pp. vii.–viii.; List of Illustrations, p. viii.; text of Letters, pp. 1–504; Index, pp. 505–524 (imprint repeated at foot of p. 524).

First Edition issued in April 1896, in green cloth, uniform with the other “small editions,” lettered on the back, “Ruskin | Fors | Clavigera | Vol I. | Letters I. –XXIV. | George Allen.” 3000 copies.

Reprinted in January 1899 (1000 copies), with “Second Small Edition” on title-page; and in January 1902 (1000 copies), “Third Small Edition.”

VOLUME II. (containing Letters 25–48).—The title-page is the same as that of Volume I., except for “Vol. II. | Containing Letters XXV.–XLVIII.”

Small crown 8vo, pp. vi.+517. Half-title, with blank reverse, pp. i., ii.; title-page (with imprint as before), pp. iii., iv.; Contents, pp. v., vi.; List of Illustrations, p. vi.; text of Letters, pp. 1–498; Index, pp. 499–517 (imprint repeated at foot of reverse of p. 517).

First Edition issued in June 1896, bound as before. 3000 copies.

Reprinted in July 1900 (“Second Small Edition”: 1000 copies). And again in December 1906 (“Third Small Edition”: 500 copies).

VOLUME III. (containing Letters 49–72).—The title-page is the same as that of Volume I., except for “Vol. III. | Containing Letters XLIX.–LXXII.”

Small crown 8vo, pp. vi.+480. Arrangement of pp. i.–vi. as in Vol. II. Text, pp. 1–460; Index, pp. 461–480. Imprint as before.

First Edition issued in October 1896, bound as before. 3000 copies.

Reprinted in January 1902 (“Second Small Edition”: 1000 copies).

VOLUME IV. (containing Letters 73–96).—The title-page is the same as in Volume III., except for the description of the volume: “Vol. IV. | (Terminal) | Containing Letters LXXIII.–XCVI.”

Small crown 8vo, pp. vi.+530. Arrangement of pp. i.–vi. as in Vol. II. Text, pp. 1–507; Index, pp. 509–530.

First Edition issued in December 1896, bound as before. 3000 copies.

Reprinted in July 1902 (“Second Small Edition”: 1000 copies).

The curtailments, etc., made in Letters 1–36 (in addition to the omission of the whole of “Notes and Correspondence” from Letters 14, 15, 20, 21, 24, 27, 28, 30) are the following:—

Letter 5, § 17, footnote omitted.

Letter 8, §§ 1, 3, footnotes omitted.

Letter 10, § 19, p. 180 (of this edition), lines 4–10, the passage “There was an article . . . mud-walks of literature” omitted.

Letter 14, § 3, footnote, the passage “In the more elaborate . . . to the public?” omitted.

Letter 16, § 3, footnote omitted.

Letter 21, § 2, line 1, the text is altered to “The first is in a letter from a workman.”

Letter 22, the “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that § 26 is printed as a footnote to Letter 21, § 18.

Letter 25. Here the “Notes and Correspondence” are given, but the passage (§ 24) “I was greatly pleased . . . Her Majesty’s Service” is omitted.

Letter 29. Here, again, the “Notes and Correspondence” are given, but the passage (§ 14) “As the circulation . . . I have said” is omitted.

Letter 30, § 6, the passage “This unlucky index . . . necessity” is omitted.

Letter 31, § 7 *n.*, “Dinlay;—where” is altered to “Dinlay; in Liddesdale.”

Letter 32. The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that two lines of Dr. John Brown’s letter are printed as a note to Letter 31, § 1, line 22.

Letter 33, § 10, the passage “Respecting . . . sentimental proceedings” is omitted; § 10, the footnote is omitted. The “Notes and Correspondence” are given, with the omission of the first few lines (“I have . . . meantime”).

Letter 34, §§ 11–17, the whole of this passage (though Ruskin’s) is omitted. The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that the letter to young girls (§ 20) is given.

Letter 35, § 11, footnote omitted; §§ 12–15, the whole of this passage (again Ruskin’s) is omitted. The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that a few lines are printed as a note to § 4.

Letter 36. The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that a few lines are printed as a note to § 11.

POCKET EDITION

This edition, issued in 1906, is printed from the electrotype plates of the Small Edition, above described. The only alteration in the text, other than new title-pages, is the substitution for the editor’s “Advice” of the following “Publisher’s Note”:—

“In this Edition of *Fors Clavigera* the ‘Notes and Correspondence’ of the Original Editions are omitted, but Mr. Ruskin’s own letters are given in full.”

This latter statement is not quite accurate (see curtailments noted above).

VOLUME I. The title-page has the following text (surrounded by a floral border): “Fors Clavigera | Letters I. to XXIV. | By | John Ruskin | London: George Allen.” On the reverse of the title-page is the rose device and (at the foot) “February 1906 | All rights reserved.” The title-pages in Volumes II.–IV. are the same, excepting for the numbers of the Letters.

Issued on February 9, 1906, uniform with the other volumes in the Pocket Edition (see Vol. XV. p. 6). 4000 copies.

VOLUME II. Issued on March 9, 1906. 4000 copies.

VOLUME III. Issued on April 6, 1906. 4000 copies.

VOLUME IV. Issued on May 9, 1906. 4000 copies.

The price of each volume was 3s. Still current.

INDEXES TO "FORS CLAVIGERA"

These, as hitherto published, are of two kinds (not counting the new indexes made by Mr. Collingwood for the "Small Edition")—(1) by Ruskin himself, extending, however, only to Letters 1–48; (2) to the whole work, by Mr. Faunthorpe and various assistants.

For Biographical Note, see Vol. XXIX., where Ruskin's Indexes to Letters 1–24 and 25–48 are combined, with additional entries (mainly from his Notes) completing the work.

PASSAGES OF "FORS" USED IN "PRÆTERITA"

The following list, referred to in the Introduction (p. lxxvi.), enumerates the autobiographical notes *in Fors* in the order in which they were incorporated (with revisions) in *Præterita*:—

| | | | | | |
|--------|-----|----|--------|---|------------|
| Letter | 10, | §§ | 2–8 | (<i>Præterita</i> , i. ch. I. | §§ 1–7). |
| " | 46, | §§ | 2–6 | (" "" | §§ 8–12). |
| " | 51, | §§ | 2–7 | (" "" | §§ 13–18). |
| " | 52, | §§ | 1–5 | (" "" | §§ 19–23). |
| " | 56, | §§ | 3–9 | (" "" | §§ 24–30). |
| " | 28, | § | 15 | (" "" | § 31). |
| " | 56, | §§ | 10–12 | (" "" | §§ 32–34). |
| " | 54, | §§ | 3–11 | (" "ch. ii. | §§ 36–45). |
| " | 53, | § | 1 | (not repeated in <i>Præterita</i>). | |
| " | 53, | §§ | 2, 3 | (<i>Præterita</i> , i. ch. ii. | § 46). |
| " | 33, | § | 13 | (" "" | § 47). |
| " | 42, | § | 12 | (" "" | § 48). |
| " | 54, | §§ | 13–19 | (" "" | §§ 48–54). |
| " | 63, | §§ | 11, 12 | (" "ch. iii. | §§ 69–70). |
| " | 63, | § | 13 | (not repeated in <i>Præterita</i>). | |
| " | 63, | § | 14 | (<i>Præterita</i> , i. ch. iii. § 70). | |
| " | 65, | §§ | 17–19 | (" "" | §§ 71–73). |

SELECTIONS FROM "FORS CLAVIGERA"

In 1899 a volume of selections was issued, the object of which was explained in the following "Preface":—

"THIS series of passages from *Fors Clavigera* has been compiled with the aim of opening its message to all sorts and conditions of men for whom it may be practically inaccessible by reason of its difficulty, length, and costliness. The workers here addressed, and many genuine students of the master, are often poor,

unleisured, unlettered. They are the 'little ones' of wisdom; they have not won strength to overcome, patience to endure, power to rule fortune, like the three *Fors* heroes.¹

"And those readers also within whose reach the whole book lies, may, like myself, find much advantage in having its essential and permanent elements sifted, separated, and summed up, and so made to stand out in stronger relief. If ever selection is to be justified, surely it is here. The ninety-six Letters cover a period of thirteen years (1871–1884), and deal with an immense range of subjects and interests; they were written in many places and many moods, sometimes under severest strain, and composed in a style which holds the solid purpose of the author, as it were, in solution, while they are still further complicated by the practical experiment in which he sought to embody his scheme of social reform. It is a literature rather than a book, the 'Confessions' of a man of genius as well as 'Letters to Workmen.' All these strange characteristics constitute its rare quality and charm for lovers of literature and of the master, but we cannot afford to relegate this unique work to the curious in things literary or the indiscriminating 'Ruskinian.' The influence of Ruskin's life and work culminates in his social teaching, and of that teaching *Fors Clavigera* is the crown and climax. It completes his development from the art-critic to the critic of life, drawing to a focus his radiant wisdom and the Christ-like love of men, which

'White of heat, awakes to flame.'

Without it the student cannot thoroughly grasp his system, nor perceive the unity underlying his life, thought, and conduct. And above all, this—the last of his five chief works, as he himself counts them²—is indispensable for the workers and the thinkers, those who are in travail for that new birth of society of which it is at once a prophecy and a sign.

"I have tried to set aside everything except the directly ethical or social teaching, to keep on the whole to principles, avoiding applications and illustrations; the story of St. George's Company, and much besides of deep interests or beauty, is therefore passed over. But this little volume does not claim to represent the cream of the bowl; its purpose will best be fulfilled if the nature of its contents—fragmentary, though 'more golden than gold'—should make the reader go seek for himself in the treasury out of which they have been collected.

"CAROLINE A. WURTZBURG.

"SCARBOROUGH, July 1899."

The title-page of the volume was as follows:—

Reading | in | John Ruskin's | *Fors Clavigera* | 1871–1884 | George Allen,
Sunnyside, Orpington | and | 156, Charing Cross Road, London | 1899 | [*All
rights reserved*].

Foolscap 8vo, pp. x.+200. Half-title (with blank reverse), pp. i., ii.; title-page (with imprint at the foot of the reverse—"Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson and Co. | At the Ballantyne Press"), pp. iii., iv.; Preface (as above), pp. v., vi.; Contents, pp., viii.; "The St. George's Creed" (from Letter 58, see Vol. XXVIII. p. 419), pp. ix., x. Text, pp. 1–198; Index, pp. 199, 200 (with imprint repeated at foot of p. 200). The Selections are classified under four "Sections"—Preliminary, Ethic, Economic, and Didactic. Each of these sections has a fly-title with contents on the reverse.

The following is a list (taken from the Index) of the extracts included;

¹ The reference is to Hercules, Theseus, and Lyeurgus: Letter 2, § 2 (below, pp. 28, 29).

² See Letter 78, § 14 (Vol. XXIX. p. 137).

the numbers immediately following each item are those of the Letters of *Fors Clavigera* quoted from:—

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Issued, December 6, 1899, in green cloth boards, lettered on the back, "Ruskin | Reading | in | Fors | Clavigera." 2000 copies. Price 2s. 6d. *Reprinted* in July 1902 ("Third Thousand").

TRANSLATIONS

Fors Clavigera, as a whole, has not been translated into any foreign language.

Numerous passages from it are translated into *German* in the following books, edited and arranged, by Jakob Feis:—

Wege zur Kunst, I.—*Eine Gedankenlese aus den Werken des John Ruskin*. Strassburg, J. H. Ed. Heitz (*Heitz und Mündel*). This book is now in a second edition.

Wie Wir arbeiten and wirthschaften müssen.—*Eine Gedankenlese aus den Werken des John Ruskin*. (Same publishers.) Also in a second edition.

Aphorismen zur Lebensweisheit.—*Eine Gedankenlese aus den Werken des John Ruskin*. (Same publishers.) Also in a second edition.

Some passages are translated into *Italian* in a work entitled *Venezia* (Florence, 1901), already described: see Vol. XXIV. p. 198. The greater part of Letter 26 will be found at pp. 65–73; and of Letter 71 at pp. 272–277.

There has been no authorised *American edition* of *Fors Clavigera*. Unauthorised editions are numerous.

REVIEWS (1871–1873)

Fors Clavigera, as already explained (above, p. lxxxiii.), was for a time widely sent by Ruskin to the newspapers, and notices of the Letters in the public press (daily, weekly, and monthly) were very frequent. It would be as impracticable, as unprofitable, to collect them all. The following is

a list of some notices of Letters 1–36 (for reviews of the later Letters, see Vols. XXVIII. and XXIX.):—

Saturday Review, January 7, 1871, vol. 31, pp. 13, 14 (“Mr. Ruskin’s *Fors Clavigera*”).

Liverpool Daily Courier, February 9, 1871 (referred to by Ruskin in Letter 4, p. 67).

Times, May 8 and December 25, 1871 (extracts from Letters 5 and 12, headed “A New Arcadia”).

Liverpool Daily Post, June 9, 1871 (referred to in Letters 6, 7, pp. 106, 118).

Daily News, August 3, 1871.

Republican, August 19, 1871.

Spectator, October 7, 1871, vol. 44, pp. 1202–1204 (“Mr. Ruskin’s ‘Violent Toryism’ ”).

Glasgow Herald, 1872 (referred to in Letter 15, p. 276).

Daily News, May 2, 1873 (referred to in Letter 30, p. 560).

Christian World, June 6, 1873 (“Mr. Ruskin’s Eccentricities”).

For some Italian press notices of Letter 19, see p. 328 *n*.

PUBLICATIONS SUPPLEMENTARY TO, OR CIRCULATED
WITH, “FORS CLAVIGERA”

PHOTOGRAPHS

Mr. William Ward’s list contained for many years the following items:—

The Four Lesson Photographs

(See *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 59, 64, 66, 69, 77, 78)

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Madonna, by Filippo Lippi (2s. 6d.). | Madonna, by Titian (3s. 6d.). |
| The Etruscan Leucothea (1s. 6d.). | Infanta Margaret, by Velasquez (3s. 6d.). |

On Fly-leaf, for binding with “Fors Clavigera”

(See Letters 63 and 78)

| | |
|---|---|
| Holbein’s Introduction to the “Dance of Death” (1s.). | A Kingfisher (see Letter 65) from a drawing by Professor Ruskin (1s.). Also several Italian Photographs. |
| Athena (woodcut) (6d.). | |

PAMPHLETS AND CIRCULARS

The following is a list of pamphlets, etc., distributed with *Fors Clavigera*, with Ruskin’s sanction:—

Society Classified. By E. D. Girdlestone, B.A. Pages 12. Published by Charles Robbins, Weston-super-Mare. 1876. Price One Penny. [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 555.]

Thoughts on Luxury and Poverty. By E. D. Girdlestone, B.A. Pages 10. Published by Charles Robbins, Weston-super-Mare. 1876. Price One Penny. [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 575.]

Our Misdirected Labour. By E. D. Girdlestone, B.A. Pages 16. Published by Charles Robbins, Weston-super-Mare; Hamilton, Adams & Co., London. 1876. Price One Penny. [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 606.]

Water for Manchester from Thirlmere. By R. Somervell. Pages 16. London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co. [1877.] Price One Penny.

Thirlmere Defence Association. A leaflet of four pages.

Thirlmere Defence Fund. One quarto page.

John Wesley and Usury. Reprint of Correspondence in *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, July and August, 1876. Pages 29. Sunderland: B. Williams. 1877. (See Letter 71, Vol. XXVIII. p. 751.)

Abstract of the Objects and Constitution of St. George's Guild. This circular (printed in Vol. XXX.) was issued with Letter 86.

Varia Lectiones.—The following are the variations (other than those already described) between the text of the different editions of Letters 1–36.

With regard to the present edition, it should be remembered that the numbering of the paragraphs in the text is now for the first time introduced. The system of references throughout the book is, therefore, changed. The trifling alterations in the text thus occasioned are, as a rule, not included in the following list.

It should further be noted that differences in setting have been introduced, for the sake both of uniformity and of space, in the present edition. Thus, in the text of the Letters, extracts are, as a rule, now set in smaller type: Ruskin's own practice in this matter varied. Where, however, he gave special reasons for large type, it has been retained. In the text of the "Notes and Correspondence," communications by correspondents are now set in a type smaller than that given to Ruskin's own remarks.

Of other variations, the more important are given under the text, and to these a reference only is here supplied. Minor matters of punctuation, spelling, etc., are not, as a rule, enumerated, but they are occasionally given (as aids to the identification of various editions):—

Letter 1, at the end, ed. 1 adds "My next letter, I hope, on 1st February." § 10, and line 5, "gentlemen" is misprinted "gentleman" in ed. 3.

Letter 2, § 13, line 8, "previous" is here substituted for the number of the page in other editions.

Letter 3, § 6, line 11, "at all" was misprinted "to all" in ed. 3. § 15, line 8, ed. 1 read ". . . fighting for them, by mere spade . . ."

Letter 4, § 10, last line, "of August" was misprinted "in August" in eds. 1 and 2. § 11, line 14, "then" is here inserted according to the corrections in the author's copy. § 12, line 18, "as to" is similarly corrected for "and" (a misprint in all previous editions).

Letter 5. Ruskin in his copy makes the title "The White-thorn Blossom" (adding "The"). § 7, line 1, "Botanical" is similarly omitted before "Lecturer," and line 3, "only Leaves" altered to "only—gladdened Leaves"; line 22, the word "rightly" is inserted before "seen" in accordance with the author's note in his Index to vols. i. and ii. (see p. 85 *n.*). § 10, line 4, ed. 1 reads correctly "spin and weave"; later editions misprinted "build and weave." § 12, line 7, "Hesse's" in all previous editions is here corrected to "Hess's." § 15, line 5, ed. 1 reads correctly "quantities"; latter editions misprinted "qualities." § 17 *n.*, line 1 of the note on p. 94, ed. 1 reads "round" for "around." § 18, line 12, "for" altered to "until" as in the author's copy.

Letter 6, § 4, line 15, the words "green or blue" are inserted after "either" as marked by Ruskin in one of his copies.

Letter 7, title, see p. 115 *n.* § 10, line 3, ed. 1 reads correctly “goods”; later editions misprinted “good.” § 12, and line 18, ed. 1 reads correctly “Christian”; later editions misprinted “Christians.” § 13, line 20, ed. 1 reads “thieves and fools”; later editions “fools and thieves”; line 33, “on the labour” has hitherto been misprinted “or the labour.” § 18, line 3, ed. 1 reads “spits”; later editions “spit.”

Letter 8, title, hitherto “Not as the world gives”; corrected by Ruskin in his copy to “giveth.” § 6, line 13, “bleu” is here (as in the Small Edition) as correction for “blue” (in the octavo editions); line 26, see p. 138 *n.*

Letter 9, § 4, line 34, ed. 1 reads “round”; later editions “around.” § 5, last line, ed. 1 reads correctly “for ever inimitable”; later editions omit the “for.”

Letter 10, § 3, three lines from end, see p. 168 *n.*

Letter 11, § 17, line 30, see p. 194 *n.*; in ed. 1 there was the following terminal note:—

*“The December Number of ‘Fors Clavigera’ will be published, D. V.,
on Saturday, December 23rd; the Number for January 1872 on Monday,
January 1st.”*

Letter 13, § 6, ninth line from end, “December” is here a correction for “November.” § 8, lines 9 and 10, for “with idealization of pudding,” ed. 1 reads “with speculative pudding.”

Letter 14, § 4, note, line 3, “idiotcy” in ed. 1, corrected by Ruskin to “idiocy”; § 5, line 9, the words “don’t bring any spoil home, but” are inserted in accordance with Ruskin’s revision in his copy. § 6, line 13, ed. 1 reads “Henry the Fowler in Germany”; line 31, “or woodcuts” in ed. 1, which is clearly right; misprinted “of woodcuts” in later editions. Notes and Correspondence, for additional matter in ed. 1, see p. 257 *n.*

Letter 15, § 1, line 16, all previous editions omitted the words “honourably industrious” before “multitudes” (see p. 260 *n.*). § 10, first note, last line but one, ed. 1 reads “Only the soldier is truly free, and only the merchants, who . . .” § 15, last line, and § 16, line 18, “Fisk” is here a correction for “Fiske” (so also in Letter 16, § 2).

Letter 16, § 3, line 12, “in” was correctly printed in ed. 1; later editions misprinted it as “is” (with unfortunate consequences to the grammar of the sentence); line 20, “1872” was misprinted “1822” in ed. 1. § 10, “Xeres” was misprinted “Xerxes” in ed. 3. § 12, p. 289, lines 16–19, the construction of the sentence (by Ruskin’s correspondent) has here been mended; the passage has hitherto been printed “Glasgow, for instance, has no splendid buildings. She has increased . . . Exchange; but except her grand old Cathedral . . .” Page 290, ninth line from bottom, “150,000” is here a correction for “180,000.”

Letter 17, § 7, p. 297, last line but one of the author’s third note, “Jehan” is here a correction for “Jean.”

Letter 18, § 9, line 14, hitherto “I heard the Rev. Mr. Tipple”; the alteration in the text is Ruskin’s in his own copy; and so, in line 20, he substituted “the Rev. Pardoner” for “the Rev. Mr. Tipple.” See p. 311 *n.* § 13, line 9, “the love of” inserted by Ruskin in his copy. § 16, the italics are also introduced from it.

Letter 19, § 3, line 35, “friends” in ed. 1 (rightly); afterwards misprinted “friend.” § 8, line 20, ed. 1 misprinted “size in shape” for “size and shape.” §§ 10, 13, 16, italics as marked by Ruskin in his copy.

Letter 20, § 6, line 4, ed. 1 has “mind” for “minds.”

Letter 21, § 20, line 22, “savants” has hitherto been misprinted “servants.”

Letter 22, § 5, see pp. 374–375 *nn.* § 20, lines 31–33, the sense has been made clearer in the present edition by revised punctuation, the passage having hitherto been printed “. . . for such; unless when their people got drunk, (which sometimes happened, with sorrowful issue,) and all equality . . .” § 24, lines 7 and 8, the words “in order” and the brackets are now inserted in accordance with Ruskin’s corrections in one of his copies.

Letter 23, § 10, last line but two, “Fig. 8” is here substituted for “the frontispiece.” § 22, line 13, the reference to Cary, “line 120” is now corrected to “line 130.”

Letter 24, § 11, line 11, “soul” is italicised in accordance with Ruskin’s revision. § 15, in the first line of the quotation from *Othello* “Not” is here a correction for “Nor.” § 22, author’s first note, the correction of “insert” to “omit” was made by him in a note to Letter 25.

Letter 25, § 16, footnote, previous editions add after “translation,” “By the way, in the last *Fors*, p. 21, note, for ‘insert,’ read ‘omit.’” The correction has now been made. § 24, ed. 1 reads “Neither are vulgar.”

Letter 26, § 6, line 35, “Fisk,” is here a correction for “Fiske.” § 7, line 1, “Mr. Emerson’s” is Ruskin’s correction for “his” § 8, line 23, “here” is his correction for “now.” § 11, line 8, “saw” is italicised by him.

Letter 28, § 9, line 18, in ed. 1 “disorderly” was misprinted “orderly”; in many of the copies the “dis” was inserted by hand. Notes and correspondence (Question 6), here § 22, p. 525, ed. 1 misprinted “. . . productive labour? and what if it employs them all in productive labour.”

Letter 29, § 13, in the quotation from Moore’s *View of Society in France*, on p. 541, line 1, dots are now introduced after “tender air,” as Ruskin here omits a passage; and at the end of the last paragraph but one, “I lent . . . to pay the taxes” is corrected, in accordance with Moore’s text, from “I have lent . . . to pay taxes.”

Letter 30, § 2, line 7, “for” inserted by Ruskin in one of his copies. § 3, line 38, “eighth” for “ninth” in ed. 1, which also in line 40 misprinted “yoe for” “you.” § 4, line 2, “fall” was misprinted “all” in ed. 1.

Letter 31, §§ 4, 12, the spelling “Stuart” or “Stewart” has varied in various editions. Ed. 1 “Stuart” is now followed. § 8, line 2, “23rd and 24th,” here corrected to “26th and 27th.” § 12, line 8, in the quotation from the *Heart of Midlothian*, “horse’s” has hitherto been omitted before “feet.”

Letter 32, § 1, last line, “end” is italicised by Ruskin in his copy, and in § 2, line 1, “death” is inserted. § 2, line 14, “in” after “indulge” is here omitted as it does not occur in the original. § 5 (5) “Adam” is here a correction for “Adams.”

Letter 33, § 2, line 18 *n.*, “62” is here a correction for “52.” § 6, lines 3, 4, see p. 610 *n.* § 16, seventh line from end, “Pump-room” was misprinted “Pamprom” in ed. 1. § 17, line 11, ed. 1 had “having been probably” for “having probably been.” Notes and Correspondence, see p. 622 *n.*

Letter 34, § 10, by a grotesque misprint in all previous editions, the words “Les ont brusquées . . . broussaille,” instead of being added to “Has quarrelled with them,” have been printed as a separate note to “gone off to Pepperland”! § 12, line 8, “Hirsch” in eds. 1–3 was a misprint for “Hirst.”

Letter 35, § 1, line 7 of the quotation, ed. 1 misprinted “with him” for “to him.” In line 9 of it, “Sir Philip Sidney’s” is here a correction for “his.”]

FORS CLAVIGERA
LETTERS 1-36

FORS CLAVIGERA.

LETTERS

*TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS
OF GREAT BRITAIN.*

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART.

VOL. I.



GEORGE ALLEN,
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.
1871.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I

(1871)

LETTER 1 (*January*)

LOOKING DOWN FROM INGLEBOROUGH PAGE
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1. Political condition of England, external: the doctrine of non-intervention. 2. Internal, prevailing state of misery and beggary: the author will endure it no longer. 3. Must clear himself of responsibility by explaining its causes, and proposes to begin a National Store. 4, 5. Men's prosperity is in their own hands. A Government cannot be created with a word, nor its character defined in a few words. Author a violent Illiberal, but not therefore a Conservative. The White Company. 6. Forms of Government in themselves immaterial and often misleading. The question to be asked of existing Governments is, What they want with your money? 7. The first beginnings of prosperity must be in getting food, clothes, lodging and fuel. Some people have too much of these things; others too little. 8. Teaching science and art will not tend to a better distribution. 9. The net result of a transference of patronage from one industry to another may be zero. 10, 11. The principle of Free Trade in relation to international affairs. 12. Definition of "Wages." Capital, in the form of money or machinery, cannot feed men. All capital is imaginary or unimportant, except the quantity of food existing in the world at any given moment. Men cannot live by lending money to each other, and the conditions of such loan at present are absurd and deadly.¹ 13, 14. James, William, and the plane: "the Position of William."

LETTER 2 (*February*)

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1, 2. Meaning of the title *Fors Clavigera*. 3–5. The nature of Rent. It is an exaction, by force of hand, for the maintenance of Squires; but had better at present be left to them. The maintenance of "Employers" is perhaps not equally necessary. The nature of useful and useless employment. 6–9. The proposition that "a demand for commodities is not a demand for labour." Author's criticism of it.—10. (Iron Lace of Verona.)—11. Two absolutely opposite kinds of labour—the one, supported by capital,

¹ Much of this summary of the contents of Letter 1 (as also in the case of Letters 2–7) is taken from the "rough abstract" given by Ruskin in Letter 43 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 108–110).

producing nothing; the other, unsupported by capital, producing all things. 12. An example of the first kind. 13, 14. An example of the second. 15. The first condition of labour is being put to wholesome and useful work. 16. The upper classes have been one large Picnic Party. 17. What they might have done. 18. What they have done: a picture of the Franco-German war. 19. A picture of domestic life in London. 20. The feeding of the "Woolwich infant" and the starving of Wapping infants. 21. The prospectus of the Boardmen's and General Advertising Co-operative Society. We had better employ ourselves without any appeal to the capitalists. 22. To do this successfully, it must be with three resolutions—namely, to be personally honest, socially helpful, and conditionally obedient. St. George's Vow.

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¹ This letter, says Ruskin in Letter 43, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 109), "written under the excitement of continual news of the revolution in Paris, is desultory"; it notices "some of the causes of that revolution: chiefly the idleness, disobedience, and covetousness of the richer and middle classes."

—Paris Communists—Church plate and candlesticks—modern and old scientific view of the sun—wax candles for church service at Abbeville and the want of them by cottagers' wives. 10. The masculine aristocracy of Europe: their conduct. 11. The sin of the destruction of Paris not the rabble's, but that of those who have sought only "the entertainment of the hour." 12. Giotto's *Covetousness*, and one of her ministering angels as drawn by Holbein. 13. Holbein—Sir Thomas More and Henry VIII. 14. The Louvre and the Tuileries in flames. The destructive and non-productive capacity of petroleum.

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(General subject: the Elysium of ancient days.¹) 1. Effect of the fighting in Paris upon author's friends and himself. 2. Parisian notion of Communism differs from author's. 3. Present meaning of "Ouvrier," to *undo* good work—4. How "laissez faire" is being replaced by "laissez refaire." 5. The definitions of true and spurious Communism. Communism of the old school. 6. Extract from More's *Utopia*. 7, 8. How thoroughgoing Communists of the old School behave respecting work; and respecting property—9. How they may be classed according to their shade of redness—the rose-red division—10, the vermilion or Tyrian-red sect—11, which dreads getting miserly of virtue—12, and hates all manner of thieving. 13. Reason for war, that the majority of people are thieves—and the guilty thieves of Europe are the capitalists. 14. The filtration of riches—the *Spectator* prefers a Lancashire cotton mill to a Titian. 15. An income tax the only honest and right one. 16. Do good work, whether you live or die—and die rather than make any destroying mechanism or compound. 17. Charity, as drawn by Giotto. 18. The crime of making war machinery. 19. Seek to revenge no injury. 20. Learn to obey good laws.

LETTER 8 (*August*)

NOT AS THE WORLD GIVETH

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1. The storm-cloud of the nineteenth century—2. It looks as if it were made of dead men's souls. 3–5. The French war indemnity, and how the interest on the loan will have to be paid. 6. Ladies at the Queen's concert—ouvrier and pétroleuse. War; and Peace "not as the world giveth." 7. Objection to an income tax in France—it would be the inquisition—the Inquisition must come—glass pockets. 8. Author has sold some houses, but has great difficulty in getting settlement owing to uncertainty about the stamp duty. 9. Author gives £1000 to St. George's Fund. 10. How the money is to be used—proposal to buy land and cultivate it by manual labour—how the children

¹ For a note by Ruskin on the contents of this letter, see Letter 43, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 110).

are to be educated, and taught the history of five cities. 11. Utopia and Kakotopia. 12. Isaiah liv. 11–17: establishment of the nations in righteousness (*i.e.*, justice).

LETTER 9 (*September*)

HONOUR TO WHOM HONOUR

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1. Author's scheme and newspaper criticism. 2. As many British children as possible to be trained in healthy, brave, and kindly life. 3. True justice consists in granting every human being due aid in the development of their faculties. 4. *Due* aid, not *equal* aid—most pains to be taken with best material. 5. No competitive examination. 6. Scottish student asks, "Do you think, sir, that I shall ever draw as well as Turner?" 7. The result of modern system of prize-giving and competition upon this Scottish student. 8. A man's happiness consists infinitely more in admiration of the faculties of others than in confidence in his own. 9. Respect and obedience. 10. The *Agincourt*—seamen in iron ships, impossible. 11. The chivalries of the Horse and the Wave. 12. *Pudor*, and its negative, *impudence*—the commemoration of heroes. 13. Author's scheme requires patience, but he is hopeful of success. 14. Author must do his own proper work first—the Kensington system of Art teaching—the founding by author of a Mastership of Drawing at Oxford. 15. The conditions necessary for the Arts of men are the best for their souls and bodies. 16. The trustees of St. George's Fund, and their duties—author believes that gentlemen of England will see the necessity of living on, and farming, their estates. 17. Modern manners: "A Trip to Margate" (letters in the *Times*). 18. The historical and natural interest of Margate. 19. The loveliest skies in Europe are to be seen in the Isle of Thanet, said Turner, and author agrees with him.

LETTER 10 (*October*)

THE BARON'S GATE

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1. A landlord cultivating huge farms for himself. 2–8. Autobiographical. 9 and 10. French Republicans and Napoleon III. 11–13. On the clergy as the only friends of the poor. 14. That "you must not have large cities" asserted by a minister to be "an unpractical saying." 15. Miss Octavia Hill's management of the author's property in Marylebone. 16. Ruin of absentee landlords predicted. 17. The *Telegraph's* beau-ideal of the landowner—the Black Countess and "her sainted Derby" in *Pevevil of the Peak*. 18. Giotto's imagination of Injustice, and the author's. 19. "Carlyle is the only living writer who has spoken the absolute and perpetual truth about yourselves and your business." 20. Eternity of good law, and the need of obedience to it: "good work for your bread" and "good bread for your work."

LETTER 11 (*November*)THE ABBOT'S CHAPEL¹

PAGE

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1, 2. Author is accused of writing above the level of those whom he addresses; and asks why workmen are assumed not to understand scholar's English. A statement that something had been settled by seventy-two newspapers. 3 and 4. Author with some lady friends at Furness Abbey comes into contact with navvies. 5. The necessity of turnips (as typical of everything) being produced for our daily sustenance—the peasant paymasters and their attendant crowd of polite persons. 6. The artist as provider of clothes and house. 7. The peasant as fairly dealt with, and as in the "position of William." 8–11. Professor Fawcett's definition of rent, wages, and profit, criticised. 12. Want of consideration of justice in the demands of workmen. 13. Mr. "Justice in Person" criticised by author. Land and Tools should belong to those who can use them. 14. Giotto's Image of Justice. 15. The chairman of the Midland Railway and his statement that the remuneration of labour depends altogether on the law of supply and demand. 16. The famine in Persia. 17. Author is a practical person and wishes to make people round and merry instead of flat and sulky—a merry Tyrolese peasant. 18. Mr. Zion Ward—the price of *Fors*. 19. Nobody has a right to have opinions—author's plan is not an experiment. 20–23. Author might devote his garden to public service, but instead has bought other land for that purpose, and intends to give £7000 to St. George's Fund.

LETTER 12 (*December*)

THE PRINCE'S LESSON

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1. The author's gift of £7000, and the difficulties imposed by English law. 2–10. History of the first Christmas; its reality—what does the festival mean to you now? 11. Think less of praising God, and more of pleasing Him—12. And cease quarrelling about your opinions of Him. The Egyptian darkness caused by smoke cast forth by modern furnaces. 13. An ecclesiastical trial before the Privy Council. 14. Mill's statement, "scarcely any means open to a woman of gaining a livelihood, except as a wife and mother." The "poor girl of Nazareth." 15–17. The shepherds and "David's village." They came to see, and returned—celebrated shepherds. 18. The visit of the Magi. 19. A wise Greek's account of the education of the princes of Persia. 20. Cassell's *Educator*, the patent filter of modern human faculty. 21. Ancient and modern systems of education compared. A Raphael too dear, although we can afford ironclads. 22. Obedience. 23. Oil of Gethsemane and petroleum. 24. Prosperity measured by consumption of beer and tobacco. 25. We must *see* God before we can be allowed to help Him. 26. The use of American expressions causes a sense of sudden chill. 27. Intrinsic value—its recognition by the Magi, and its denial by the misteaching of our day. 28–32. The Nativity—the Life of Christ and its lessons.

¹ For a reference by Ruskin to this letter, and a statement of the proposition which it was meant to enforce, see Letter 67 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 654).

FORS CLAVIGERA¹

LETTER 1

LOOKING DOWN FROM INGLEBOROUGH²

DENMARK HILL,
1st January, 1871.³

1. FRIENDS,—We begin to-day another group of ten years, not in happy circumstances.⁴ Although, for the time, exempted from the direct calamities which have fallen on neighbouring states, believe me, we have not escaped them because of our better deservings, nor by our better wisdom; but only for one or two bad reasons, or for both: either that we have not sense enough to determine in a great national quarrel which side is right, or that we have not courage to defend the right, when we have discerned it.⁵

¹ [As originally issued, each letter of *Fors Clavigera* contained an "Advertisement" (printed on p. 2 in Letters 1–20, on p. 4 of the *cover* in Letters 21–96):—

"For reasons which will be explained in the course of these Letters, the Author wishes to retain complete command over their mode of publication.

"For the present, they will be sold only by Mr. G. Allen, Heathfield Cottage, Keston, Kent.

"They will be sold for Sevenpence each, without abatement on quantity, and forwarded, post paid, on remittance of the price of the number required, to any place in the United Kingdom.

"I send a copy to each of the principal journals and periodicals, to be noticed or not, at their pleasure: otherwise I shall use no advertisements."

After Letter 6, "the Author wishes" was altered to "I wish." For later alterations, see Bibliographical Note. For the "reasons" referred to, see below, pp. 49, 98–101, 257–258, 354.]

² [For the meaning of the title, see below, § 11 *n.* (p. 23); and compare Letter 90, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 430).]

³ [It should be noticed that the dates at the beginning of the letters do not always indicate when they were written.]

⁴ [For Ruskin's restatement, in a later letter, of the proposition contained in § 1 here, see below, p. 376.]

⁵ [For other references to the Franco-German war, see Vol. XX. pp. 199, 401; Vol. XXIII. pp. 23, 145; and Vol. XXV. p. 329; compare also, below, p. 131. For the effect that it had on the course of *Fors*, see Letter 22, § 17 (p. 382); and for Ruskin's view of the policy of non-intervention in general, Vol. XVIII. pp. xxii.–xxvi.]

I believe that both these bad reasons exist in full force; that our own political divisions prevent us from understanding the laws of international justice; and that, even if we did, we should not dare to defend, perhaps not even to assert them, being on this first of January, 1871, in much bodily fear; that is to say, afraid of the Russians; afraid of the Prussians; afraid of the Americans; afraid of the Hindoos; afraid of the Chinese; afraid of the Japanese; afraid of the New Zealanders; and afraid of the Caffres:¹ and very justly so, being conscious that our only real desire respecting any of these nations has been to get as much out of them as we could.

They have no right to complain of us, notwithstanding, since we have all, lately, lived ourselves in the daily endeavour to get as much out of our neighbours and friends as we could; and having by this means, indeed, got a good deal out of each other, and put nothing into each other, the actually obtained result, this day, is a state of emptiness in purse and stomach, for the solace of which our boasted “insular position” is ineffectual.²

2. I have listened to many ingenious persons, who say we are better off now than ever we were before. I do not know how well off we were before; but I know positively that many very deserving persons of my acquaintance have great difficulty in living under these improved

¹ [“Afraid of the Prussians”: Ruskin, it will be remembered, took the French side warmly in the war. “Afraid of the Americans”: he refers to the dispute over the Alabama Claims (see Vol. XXII. p. 140 *n.*). “Afraid of the Hindoos”: this appears to be only a general reference to the never quite absent fear of a rising in India. “Afraid of the Chinese”: for Ruskin’s references to the “opium wars,” see Vol. XVIII. pp. xxvi., 82; in the decade before the date of this letter, the services of “Chinese Gordon” had, it will be remembered, been enlisted by the Imperial Government against the rebellious Tai-pings. “Afraid of the Japanese”: this, again, appears to be only a general reference—to the continuous efforts of England and other foreign powers to obtain rights of trade, etc., in Japan. “Afraid of the New Zealanders”: here Ruskin refers to the long series of Maori wars, of which the previous year (1870) saw the last. “Afraid of the Caffres”: for Ruskin’s reference here, see Vol. XI. p. 261, Vol. XVII. p. 219 *n.*, and Vol. XXV. p. 130.]

² [The reference here is to an article which Mr. Gladstone had contributed to the *Edinburgh Review*, October 1870, in defence of the policy of non-intervention: “Happy England! happy in this, that the wise dispensation of Providence has cut her off, by that streak of silver sea,” etc., etc.]

For my own part, I cannot and I will not stand it
any longer - I have no peace in my life. I am not
an unselfish person - nor on evangelical one. ~~any~~ ^{with a few}
I have no particular pleasure in doing good, ~~and I don't~~
dislike doing it as much as to be expected to be rewarded
for it ^{in another world} ~~after I die~~ - but I simply ~~cannot~~ ^{cannot}
~~for my life~~ cannot paint, nor read, nor look at
miscellaneous nor do anything else that I like - and the
very ~~best~~ ^{light of my eyes} thing has become hateful to me, because
of the misery that I know of, and that I see signs
of where I do not know it. not.

~~For which reason~~
And therefore, as I say, I will not stand it
any longer. but will nevertheless henceforward do my possi-
ble best, with any body else whom I can get to help me
- to ^{abate} ~~and~~ this misery ^{as} I can
And in order that I ^{may} do my best, I positively will not
be miserable myself any longer, if I can help it.
- for no man who is watched, ~~and doubtful~~ in his
in his own heart - and doubtful in his own work -

can help other people rightly
I do my own special ^{pleasure} ~~work~~ ^{has} also been lately ^{connected} ~~connected~~ with an
my special duty; I care more for good pictures, ^{& music} than
for anything else, ~~in the world~~ and I have been ordered
to lecture on them, ~~to and~~ to endeavour to reach an
English youth, to care for them also. And I mean to
set my main strength on this business. and that I may
do so with a free heart, I must first quit myself
from all responsibility for the distress round me.

I dislike helping to pick ^{wounded} people out of ditches - and I equally
dislike leaving of their throats each other for nothing, and
lying ^{in the} ~~in the~~ ^{ditches} ~~in the~~ ^{ports}
I ~~don't~~ ^{will not} ~~want~~ ^{to} ~~have~~ ^{any} ~~one~~ ^{reading} ~~begging~~ ^{letter} ~~for~~ ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{the}
and I especially will not give away any money any more ^{for} ~~the~~ ^{the}
to people in distress. ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~beggers~~ ^{for} ~~that~~ ^{money} ~~we~~ ^{still} ~~are~~ ^{are}
I want to buy pictures with it, ^{to} ~~to~~ ^{buy} ~~and~~ ^{other} ~~other~~ ^{places}
and to ~~to~~

circumstances: also, that my desk is full of begging letters, eloquently written either by distressed or dishonest people; and that we cannot be called, as a nation, well off, while so many of us are either living in honest or in villainous beggary.¹

For my own part, I will put up with this state of things, passively, not an hour longer. I am not an unselfish person, nor an Evangelical one; I have no particular pleasure in doing good; neither do I dislike doing it so much as to expect to be rewarded for it in another world. But I simply cannot paint, nor read, nor look at minerals, nor do anything else that I like, and the very light of the morning sky, when there is any—which is seldom, nowadays, near London²—has become hateful to me, because of the misery that I know of, and see signs of, where I know it not, which no imagination can interpret too bitterly.

Therefore, as I have said, I will endure it no longer quietly; but henceforward, with any few or many who will help, do my poor best to abate this misery. But that I may do my best, I must not be miserable myself any longer; for no man who is wretched in his own heart, and feeble in his own work, can rightly help others.

3. Now my own special pleasure has lately been connected with a given duty. I have been ordered to endeavour to make our English youth care somewhat for the arts;³ and must put my uttermost strength into that business. To which end I must clear myself from all sense of responsibility for the material distress around me, by explaining to you, once for all, in the shortest English I can, what I know of its causes; by pointing out to you some of the methods by which it might be relieved; and by setting aside regularly some small percentage of my income, to assist, as one of yourselves, in what one and all we shall

¹ [Ruskin in his copy refers to Letter 4, § 9—as explaining what he means by “honest beggary”: see pp. 70, 71.]

² [On the “storm-cloud,” see Letter 8, § 1 (below, p. 132).]

³ [*Fors* was started in the second year of Ruskin’s Professorship at Oxford; for a general account of which, see Introduction to Vol. XX.]

have to do; each of us laying by something, according to our means, for the common service; and having amongst us, at last, be it ever so small, a National Store instead of a National Debt.¹ Store which, once securely founded, will fast increase, provided only you take the pains to understand, and have perseverance to maintain, the elementary principles of Human Economy, which have, of late, not only been lost sight of, but wilfully and formally entombed under pyramids of falsehood.²

4. And first I beg you most solemnly to convince yourselves of the partly comfortable, partly formidable fact, that your prosperity is in your own hands. That only in a remote degree does it depend on external matters, and least of all on forms of government.³ In all times of trouble the first thing to be done is to make the most of whatever forms of government you have got, by setting honest men to work them; (the trouble, in all probability, having arisen only from the want of such;) and for the rest, you must in no wise concern yourselves about them; more particularly it would be lost time to do so at this moment, when whatever is popularly said about governments cannot but be absurd, for want of definition of terms. Consider, for instance, the ridiculousness of the division of parties into “Liberal” and “Conservative.” There is no opposition whatever between those two kinds of men. There is opposition between Liberals and Illiberals; that is to say, between people who desire liberty, and who dislike it. I am a violent Illiberal; but it does not follow that I must be a Conservative. A Conservative is a person who wishes to keep things as they are; and he is opposed to a Destructive, who wishes to destroy them, or to an Innovator, who wishes to alter them. Now, though I am an Illiberal, there are many things I should like to destroy. I should like

¹ [Ruskin in his copy here refers to Letter 7, § 8 (p. 121), as resuming the subject of a National Store. For “National Store” and “National Debt,” see *Munera Pulveris* (Vol. XVII. pp. 141, 164 *seq.*.)]

² [For Ruskin’s restatement, in a later letter, of the proposition contained in §§2, 3 here, see below, p. 377; and for the restatement of that in § 4, p. 378.]

³ [On this point, compare Vol. XVII. pp. 245–248, 446.]

to destroy most of the railroads in England, and all the railroads in Wales.¹ I should like to destroy and rebuild the Houses of Parliament, the National Gallery, and the East end of London; and to destroy, without rebuilding, the new town of Edinburgh, the north suburb of Geneva, and the city of New York.² Thus in many things I am the reverse of Conservative; nay, there are some long-established things which I hope to see changed before I die; but I want still to keep the fields of England green, and her cheeks red; and that girls should be taught to curtsy, and boys to take their hats off, when a Professor or otherwise dignified person passes by; and that Kings should keep their crowns on their heads, and Bishops their crosiers in their hands; and should duly recognize the significance of the crown, and the use of the crook.³

As you would find it thus impossible to class me justly in either party, so you would find it impossible to class any person whatever, who had clear and developed political opinions, and who could define them accurately. Men only associate in parties by sacrificing their opinions, or by having none worth sacrificing; and the effect of party government is always to develop hostilities and hypocrisies, and to extinguish ideas.

5. Thus the so-called Monarchic and Republican parties have thrown Europe into conflagration and shame, merely

¹ [Ruskin in his copy here refers to Letter 5, § 9 (p. 86).]

² [For later references to this passage, see Letters 31, § 6 *n.* (p. 565), and 82, §§ 5, 35 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 225, 254). For Ruskin's dislike of the architecture of the Houses of Parliament, see Vol. VII. p. 450 *n.*, Vol. XVIII. p. 408, and Vol. XXII. p. 261; for that of the National Gallery, Vol. X. p. 144 *n.*; for Geneva, past and present, *Præterita*, ii. §§ 84 *seq.*; for the new town of Edinburgh, Vol. I. p. 258. Professor J. S. Blackie had a recollection of Ruskin in this last connexion. "Some forty years ago, I was walking with Ruskin down Princes Street, and he was looking up at the old town which rises high before you. 'When I walk along this grand street,' he said, 'I am always glad when I come to the cross streets, for then I look from the works of man to the works of God.' 'But,' said I, 'have you no eye for those palatial structures which are now rising all along the street to vary the monotony of the original three-storied houses.' 'No,' said he; 'I hate high houses.' 'Why?' said I. 'Because,' said he, 'they are bad for people with rheumatic legs'" ("Illustrated Interview" with Professor Blackie in the *Strand Magazine*, February 1892, vol. iii. p. 228).]

³ [Here in his copy Ruskin refers to Letter 4, § 12 (pp. 76–77), where he deals with the neglect of duties by kings and bishops.]

for want of clear conception of the things they imagine themselves to fight for. The moment a Republic was proclaimed in France, Garibaldi came to fight for it as a “Holy Republic.”¹ But Garibaldi could not know,—no mortal creature could know,—whether it was going to be a Holy or Profane Republic. You cannot evoke any form of government by beat of drum. The proclamation of a government implies the considerate acceptance of a code of laws, and the appointment of means for their execution, neither of which things can be done in an instant. You may overthrow a government, and announce yourselves lawless, in the twinkling of an eye, as you can blow up a ship, or upset and sink one. But you can no more create a government with a word, than an ironclad.

No; nor can you even define its character in few words; the measure of sanctity in it depending on degrees of justice in the administration of law, which are often independent of form altogether. Generally speaking, the community of thieves in London or Paris have adopted Republican Institutions, and live at this day without any acknowledged Captain or Head; but under Robin Hood,² brigandage in England, and under Sir John Hawkwood, brigandage in Italy, became strictly monarchical. Theft could not, merely by that dignified form of government, be made a holy manner of life; but it was made both dexterous and decorous. The pages of the English knights under Sir John Hawkwood spent nearly all their spare time in burnishing the knights’ armour, and made it always so bright, that they were called “The White Company.”³ And the notary of Tortona, Azario, tells us of them, that these foragers

¹ [Garibaldi was begged to come by General Bordone, who had been with him in 1859. He escaped from Caprera and reached Tours, then the seat of the Provisional Government, on October 8, 1870. See *Garibaldi et l’ Armée des Vosges: Récit officiel*, par le Général Bordone: 1871. For other references to Garibaldi, see Letters 3, § 7, and 7, § 5 (below, pp. 51, 117); Letter 76, § 14 (Vol. XXIX. p. 96); and *Præterita*, iii. § 7.]

² [Compare Letters, 14, § 1, and 22, § 20 (below, pp. 243, 385).]

³ [For further reference by Ruskin to Sir John Hawkwood and his “White Company,” see Letter 15, §§ 10–17 (below, pp. 267–272); and compare *Val d’ Arno*, § 188 (Vol. XXIII. p. 112).]

(*furatores*) “were more expert than any plunderers in Lombardy. They for the most part sleep by day, and watch by night, and have such plans and artifices for taking towns, that never were the like or equal of them witnessed.”*¹

6. The actual Prussian expedition into France merely differs from Sir John’s in Italy by being more generally savage, much less enjoyable, and by its clumsier devices for taking towns; for Sir John had no occasion to burn their libraries.² In neither case does the monarchical form of government bestow any Divine right of theft; but it puts the available forces into a convenient form. Even with respect to convenience only, it is not yet determinable by the evidence of history, what is absolutely the best form of government to live under.³ There are indeed said to be republican villages (towns?) in America, where everybody is civil, honest, and substantially comfortable;⁴ but these villages have several unfair advantages—there are no lawyers in them,⁵ no town councils, and no parliaments. Such republicanism, if possible on a large scale, would be

* Communicated to me by my friend Mr. Rawdon Brown, of Venice, from his yet unpublished work, *The English in Italy in the Fourteenth Century*.⁶

¹ [“Sunt furatores excellentiores quibusque aliis prædatoribus Lombardiae. De die plerumque dormiunt et de nocte vigilant. Et habent talia studia et artificia ad terras capiendas quod nusquam aliqui visi fuerunt similes vel coæquales:” see the History by Azario, p. 380 in vol. xvi. of Muratori’s *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*. Compare, below, pp. 249, 269.]

² [Ruskin is here thinking of the destruction of the library at Strassburg during the siege (*Times*, October 7, 1870); see his letter in the *Daily Telegraph* of October 8, 1870 (reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. ii. p. 38, and in a later volume of this edition).]

³ [For some early speculations by Ruskin on this subject (1845), see Vol. VIII. p. 262 n. The comparative unimportance of forms of government is one of the main propositions in *Fors Clavigera*; see what Ruskin says to that effect in Letter 67, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 651), and compare, in the present volume, Letter 13, §§ 7, 8 (below, pp. 233–234). See also *Munera Pulveris*, § 125, and *Time and Tide*, § 158 (Vol. XVII. pp. 248, 446).]

⁴ [“Republicanism in some forms beautiful, but all of no consequence; Letter 13, § 6, p. 232, chief place.”—MS. note in Author’s copy.]

⁵ [See below, p. 55 n.]

⁶ [Never published; but some notices of Hawkwood are contained in the first volume (1202–1509) of the *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts relating to English Affairs existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice*, edited by Rawdon Brown, 1864. See also *Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica*, No. IV., “Memoirs of Sir John Hawkwood,” 1782. (The copy in the British Museum has a few MS. additions by R. Brown.) The Memoirs were by Richard Gough. The fullest account of Hawkwood is the Life of him by John Temple-Leader and G. Marcotti (1889).]

worth fighting for; though, in my own private mind, I confess I should like to keep a few lawyers, for the sake of their wigs,¹ and the faces under them—generally very grand when they are really good lawyers—and for their (unprofessional) talk. Also I should like to have a Parliament, into which people might be elected on condition of their never saying anything about politics, that one might still feel sometimes that one was acquainted with an M.P.² In the meantime Parliament is a luxury to the British squire, and an honour to the British manufacturer, which you may leave them to enjoy in their own way; provided only you make them always clearly explain, when they tax you, what they want with your money; and that you understand yourselves, what money is, and how it is got, and what it is good for, and bad for.³

7. These matters I hope to explain to you in this and some following letters; which, among various other reasons, it is necessary that I should write in order that you may make no mistake as to the real economical results of Art

¹ [Compare Letters 16, § 6 (p. 283); and 38, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 37).]

² [The first draft continues:—

“But this kind of republic I have never myself seen; and the republicanism with which I am practically acquainted has consisted always chiefly in roaring about the streets at night, spitting about them by day, throwing stones at statues and windows; and confiscating any property that could be got hold of”—

in which passage Ruskin’s recollection went back to his experiences of France in 1848: see Vol. VIII. pp. xxxii., xxxiii., 262 *n*. The draft then continues with a passage which shows how from the first the idea of a guild or company was in Ruskin’s mind:—

“And very seriously, my friends, it is not yet determinable from the evidence of history, nor by any effort of reason, what is absolutely the best form of government, to live in, or under. But one thing is both determinable, and long since manifest and evident,—that no wise or happy government of any sort is possible but to honest men, and to industrious men, and to quietly disposed men, who would be glad to live peaceably if they might. Now I do not doubt that many among us are really desirous to be honest, if only honest trade were practicable, and to be industrious, if useful work were to be found; and if only a few of them, recognizing each other, would hold together and carry out, with due respect to the existing laws and constituted authorities of their country, such principles of trade and modes of life as, after due inquiry, they perceived to be just,—though they were but a score or two in beginning,—yet gradually and with such calm and slow growth as good things must usually consent to, they would gather to them other men of like temper, and found an English society which would indeed be an ‘Institute’ of many things.”]

³ [For a re-statement by Ruskin, in a later letter, of the argument in §§ 6 *seq.* see below, p. 379.]

teaching, whether in the Universities or elsewhere. I will begin by directing your attention particularly to that point.

The first object of all work—not the principal one, but the first and necessary one—is to get food, clothes, lodging, and fuel.

It is quite possible to have too much of all these things. I know a great many gentlemen, who eat too large dinners; a great many ladies, who have too many clothes. I know there is lodging to spare in London, for I have several houses there myself, which I can't let. And I know there is fuel to spare everywhere, since we get up steam to pound the roads with, while our men stand idle;¹ or drink till they can't stand, idle, or any otherwise.

8. Notwithstanding, there is agonizing distress even in this highly favoured England, in some classes, for want of food, clothes, lodging, and fuel.² And it has become a popular idea among the benevolent and ingenious, that you may in great part remedy these deficiencies by teaching, to these starving and shivering persons, Science and Art.³ In their way—as I do not doubt you will believe—I am very fond of both; and I am sure it will be beneficial for the British nation to be lectured upon the merits of Michael Angelo, and the nodes of the moon. But I should strongly object myself to being lectured on either, while I was hungry and cold; and I suppose the same view of the matter would be taken by the greater number of British citizens in those predicaments. So that, I am convinced, their present eagerness for instruction in painting and astronomy proceeds from an impression in their minds that, somehow, they may paint or star-gaze themselves into clothes and victuals. Now it is perfectly true that you may sometimes sell a picture for a thousand pounds; but the chances are greatly against your doing so—much more

¹ [On this subject, compare the “Notes on the General Principles of Employment,” Vol. XVII. pp. 543–544.]

² [Compare *Lectures on Art*, § 123 (Vol. XX. p. 114), and the other passages there noted.]

³ [“Cf. Letter 4, § 4; and Letter 5, §§ 3, 4, 7, 8 (pp. 63, 81, 84–85). Needs amplifying and modifying about Science.”—*Author's MS. note in his copy*. It may be noted that, in referring to this passage later, Ruskin speaks of it as saying “that people cannot live by art”: see Letter 67, § 10 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 646).]

than the chances of a lottery. In the first place, you must paint a very clever picture; and the chances are greatly against your doing that. In the second place, you must meet with an amiable picture-dealer; and the chances are somewhat against your doing that. In the third place, the amiable picture-dealer must meet with a fool; and the chances are not always in favour even of his doing that—though, as I gave exactly the sum in question for a picture myself, only the other day,¹ it is not for me to say so. Assume, however, to put the case most favourably, that what with the practical results of the energies of Mr. Cole, at Kensington,² and the æsthetic impressions produced by various lectures at Cambridge and Oxford, the profits of art employment might be counted on as a rateable income. Suppose even that the ladies of the richer classes should come to delight no less in new pictures than in new dresses; and that picture-making should thus become as constant and lucrative an occupation as dress-making. Still, you know, they can't buy pictures and dresses too. If they buy two pictures a day, they can't buy two dresses a day; or if they do, they must save in something else. They have but a certain income, be it never so large. They spend that now; and you can't get more out of them. Even if they lay by money, the time comes when somebody must spend it. You will find that they do verily spend now all they have, neither more nor less. If ever they seem to spend more, it is only by running in debt, and not paying; if they for a time spend less, some day the overplus must come into circulation. All they have, they spend; more than that, they cannot at any time; less than that, they can only for a short time.

9. Whenever, therefore, any new industry, such as this of picture-making, is invented, of which the profits depend on patronage, it merely means that you have effected a

¹ [Meissonier's "1814": see Vol. XIV. pp. 381, 438. For another reference to this purchase, see below, p. 67.]

² [For other references to Mr. (afterwards Sir Henry) Cole, see Vol. XVI. pp. xxvi.–xxviii., 265; and for the "Kensington" system of art-teaching, see below, p. 605.]

diversion of the current of money in your own favour, and to somebody else's loss. Nothing, really, has been gained by the nation, though probably much time and wit, as well as sundry people's senses, have been lost. Before such a diversion can be effected, a great many kind things must have been done; a great deal of excellent advice given; and an immense quantity of ingenious trouble taken: the arithmetical course of the business throughout being, that for every penny you are yourself better, somebody else is a penny the worse; and the net result of the whole, precisely zero.

Zero, of course, I mean, so far as money is concerned. It may be more dignified for working women to paint than to embroider; and it may be a very charming piece of self-denial, in a young lady, to order a high art fresco instead of a ball-dress; but as far as cakes and ale¹ are concerned, it is all the same,—there is but so much money to be got by you, or spent by her, and not one farthing more, usually a great deal less, by high art than by low. Zero, also, observe, I mean partly in a complimentary sense to the work executed. If you have done no good by painting, at least you have done no serious mischief. A bad picture is indeed a dull thing to have in a house, and in a certain sense a mischievous thing; but it won't blow the roof off. Whereas, of most things which the English, French, and Germans are paid for making nowadays,—cartridges, cannon, and the like,—you know the best thing we can possibly hope is that they *may* be useless, and the net result of them, zero.²

10. The thing, therefore, that you have to ascertain approximately, in order to determine on some consistent organization, is the maximum of wages-fund you have to depend on to start with, that is to say, virtually the sum of the income of the gentlemen of England. Do not trouble yourselves at first about France or Germany, or any other foreign country. The principle of free trade is,

¹ [*Twelfth Night*, Act ii. sc. 3.]

² ["Zero needs amplifying into Minus. You have got nothing (but out of other people). But you have also wasted all your own producing time and power, and are minus that."—*MS. note by Author in his copy.*]

that French gentlemen should employ English workmen, for whatever the English can do better than the French; and that English gentlemen should employ French workmen, for whatever the French can do better than the English. It is a very right principle, but merely extends the question to a wider field. Suppose, for the present, that France, and every other country but your own, were—what I suppose you would, if you had your way, like them to be—sunk under water, and that England were the only country in the world. Then, how would you live in it most comfortably? Find out that, and you will then easily find how two countries can exist together; or more, not only without need for fighting, but to each other's advantage.

11. For, indeed, the laws by which two next-door neighbours might live most happily—the one not being the better for his neighbour's poverty, but the worse, and the better for his neighbour's prosperity—are those also by which it is convenient and wise for two parishes, two provinces, or two kingdoms, to live side by side. And the nature of every commercial and military operation which takes place in Europe, or in the world, may always be best investigated by supposing it limited to the districts of a single country.¹ Kent and Northumberland exchange hops and coals on precisely the same economical principles as Italy and England exchange oil for iron; and the essential character of the war between Germany and France may be best understood by supposing it a dispute between Lancaster and Yorkshire for the line of the Ribble. Suppose that Lancashire, having absorbed Cumberland and Cheshire, and been much insulted and troubled by Yorkshire in consequence, and at last attacked; and having victoriously repulsed the attack, and retaining old grudges against Yorkshire, about the colour of roses,² from the fifteenth century, declares that it cannot possibly be safe against the attacks of Yorkshire any longer,

¹ [Compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 96 (Vol. XVII. p. 218).]

² [For other references to the Wars of the Roses, see Vol. XVIII. p. 501, and Vol. XX. p. 210.]

unless it gets the townships of Giggleswick and Wigglesworth, and a fortress on Pen-y-gent. Yorkshire replying that this is totally inadmissible, and that it will eat its last horse, and perish to its last Yorkshireman, rather than part with a stone of Giggleswick, a crag of Pen-y-gent, or a ripple of Ribble,—Lancashire with its Cumbrian and Cheshire contingents invades Yorkshire, and meeting with much Divine assistance,¹ ravages the West Riding, and besieges York on Christmas day. That is the actual gist of the whole business; and in the same manner you may see the downright common sense—if any is to be seen—of other human proceedings, by taking them first under narrow and homely conditions. So, for the present, we will fancy ourselves, what you tell me you all want to be, independent: we will take no account of any other country but Britain;² and on that condition I will begin to show you in my next paper how we ought to live,³ after ascertaining the utmost limits of the wages-fund, which means the income of our gentlemen; that is to say, essentially, the income of those who have command of the land, and therefore of all food.

12. What you call “wages,” practically, is the quantity of food which the possessor of the land gives you, to work for him. There is, finally, no “capital” but that. If all the money of all the capitalists in the whole world were destroyed, the notes and bills burnt, the gold irrecoverably buried, and all the machines and apparatus of manufactures crushed, by a mistake in signals, in one catastrophe; and nothing remained but the land, with its animals and vegetables, and buildings for shelter,—the poorer population would be very little worse off than they are at this instant;

¹ [Here Ruskin has a hit at the King of Prussia’s despatches to Queen Augusta (as, for instance, from Sedan on September 3) during the Franco-German war, which were parodied at the time in the lines: “Thanks be to God, my dear Augusta, We’ve had another awful buster; Ten thousand Frenchmen sent below, Praise God from whom all blessings flow.” Compare Letter 40, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 69).]

² [Ruskin in his copy here writes, “Looking from Ingleborough”—thus indicating the meaning of the title which he afterwards gave to this letter: it is a survey of “the condition of England question” from Ingleborough.]

³ [See below, p. 44; and then, pp. 61, 90.]

and their labour, instead of being “limited” by the destruction, would be greatly stimulated. They would feed themselves from the animals and growing crops; heap here and there a few tons of ironstone together, build rough walls round them to get a blast, and, in a fortnight, they would have iron tools again, and be ploughing and fighting, just as usual. It is only we who had the capital who would suffer; we should not be able to live idle, as we do now, and many of us—I, for instance—should starve at once: but you, though little the worse, would none of you be the better eventually, for our loss—or starvation. The removal of superfluous mouths would indeed benefit you somewhat, for a time; but you would soon replace them with hungrier ones; and there are many of us who are quite worth our meat to you in different ways, which I will explain in due place:¹ also I will show you that our money is really likely to be useful to you in its accumulated form (besides that, in the instances when it has been won by work, it justly belongs to us), so only that you are careful never to let us persuade you into borrowing it, and paying us interest for it. You will find a very amusing story, explaining your position in that case, at the 117th page of the *Manual of Political Economy*, published this year at Cambridge, for your early instruction, in an almost devotionally catechetical form, by Messrs. Macmillan.²

13. Perhaps I had better quote it to you entire: it is taken by the author “from the French”—

There was once in a village a poor carpenter, who worked hard from morning to night. One day James thought to himself, “With my hatchet, saw, and hammer, I can only make coarse furniture, and can only get the pay for such. If I had a plane, I should please my customers more, and they would pay me more. Yes, I am resolved, I will make myself a plane.” At the end of ten days, James had in his possession an admirable

¹ [As, for instance, in the case of Squires, in Letter 2; and in that of literary and artistic persons, below, p. 185, and Letter 67, § 10 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 646).]

² [*Political Economy for Beginners*, by Millicent Garrett Fawcett, pp. 116–118; published at London and Cambridge, and therefore (as also because the writer was the wife of the Professor of Political Economy) called by Ruskin “the Cambridge Catechism” (see pp. 31, 187). Mrs. Fawcett abridges her example from Bastiat’s *Capital et Rente*, Paris, 1849, pp. 30 *seq.* (“Le rabot”). For another reference to the passage, see Letter 81, § 9 (Vol. XXIX. p. 200).]

plane which he valued all the more for having made it himself. Whilst he was reckoning all the profits which he expected to derive from the use of it, he was interrupted by William, a carpenter in the neighbouring village. William, having admired the plane, was struck with the advantages which might be gained from it. He said to James—

“You must do me a service; lend me the plane for a year.” As might be expected, James cried out, “How can you think of such a thing, William? Well, if I do you this service, what will you do for me in return?”

W. Nothing. Don’t you know that a loan ought to be gratuitous?

J. I know nothing of the sort; but I do know that if I were to lend you my plane for a year, it would be giving it to you. To tell you the truth, that was not what I made it for.

W. Very well, then; I ask you to do me a service; what service do you ask me in return?

J. First, then, in a year the plane will be done for. You must therefore give me another exactly like it.

W. That is perfectly just. I submit to these conditions. I think you must be satisfied with this, and can require nothing further.

J. I think otherwise. I made the plane for myself, and not for you. I expected to gain some advantage from it. I have made the plane for the purpose of improving my work and my condition; if you merely return it to me in a year, it is you who will gain the profit of it during the whole of that time. I am not bound to do you such a service without receiving anything in return. Therefore, if you wish for my plane, besides the restoration already bargained for, you must give me a new plank as a compensation for the advantages of which I shall be deprived.

These terms were agreed to, but the singular part of it is that at the end of the year, when the plane came into James’s possession, he lent it again; recovered it, and lent it a third and fourth time. It has passed into the hands of his son, who still lends it. Let us examine this little story. The plane is the symbol of all capital, and the plank is the symbol of all interest.

If this be an abridgment, what a graceful piece of highly wrought literature the original story must be! I take the liberty of abridging it a little more.

James makes a plane, lends it to William on 1st January for a year. William gives him a plank for the loan of it, wears it out, and makes another for James which he gives him on 31st December. On 1st January he again borrows the new one; and the arrangement is repeated continuously. The position of William¹ therefore is, that he makes a plane every 31st of December; lends it to James till the next day, and pays James a plank annually for the privilege

¹ [For other references to “the position of William,” see below, pp. 90, 136, 187, 600.]

of lending it to him on that evening. This, in future investigations of capital and interest, we will call, if you please, “the Position of William.”

14. You may not at the first glance see where the fallacy lies (the writer of the story evidently counts on your not seeing it at all).

If James did not lend the plane to William, he could only get his gain of a plank by working with it himself, and wearing it out himself. When he had worn it out at the end of the year, he would, therefore, have to make another for himself. William, working with it instead, gets the advantage instead, which he must, therefore, pay James his plank for; and return to James, what James would, if he had not lent his plane, then have had—not a new plane—but the worn-out one. James must make a new one for himself, as he would have had to do if no William had existed; and if William likes to borrow it again for another plank—all is fair.¹

That is to say, clearing the story of its nonsense, that James makes a plane annually, and sells it to William for its proper price, which, in kind, is a new plank. But this arrangement has nothing whatever to do with principal or with interest. There are, indeed, many very subtle conditions involved in any sale; one among which is the value of ideas; I will explain that value to you in the course of time² (the article is not one which modern political economists have any familiarity with dealings in); and I will tell you somewhat also of the real nature of interest;³ but if you will only get, for the present, a quite clear idea of “the Position of William,” it is all I want of you.⁴

I remain, your faithful friend,

JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ [“Interest. No lending ever to be on interest. ‘Borrowing’ is not the proper word for using for a while and returning scatheless.”—*MS. note by Author in his copy.*]

² [The explanation is again promised in Letter 18 (p. 317); is partially given in Letter 31 (p. 580); and is more fully discussed in Letters 44 and 67 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 128, 646).]

³ [See pp. 319, 363, 378.]

⁴ [“*Cf.* Letter 8, § 4” (p. 136).—*MS. note by Author.*]

LETTER 2

THE GREAT PICNIC¹

DENMARK HILL,

1st February 1871.

1. FRIENDS,—Before going farther, you may like to know, and ought to know, what I mean by the title of these Letters;² and why it is in Latin. I can only tell you in part, for the Letters will be on many things, if I am able to carry out my plan in them; and that title means many things, and is in Latin, because I could not have given an English one that meant so many. We, indeed, were not till lately a loquacious people, nor a useless one; but the Romans did more, and said less, than any other nation that ever lived; and their language is the most heroic ever spoken by men.³

Therefore I wish you to know, at least, some words of it, and to recognize what thoughts they stand for.

Some day, I hope you may know—and that European workmen may know—many words of it;⁴ but even a few will be useful.

Do not smile at my saying so. Of Arithmetic, Geometry, and Chemistry, you can know but little, at the utmost; but that little, well learnt, serves you well. And a little Latin, well learnt, will serve you also, and in a higher way than any of these.

2. “Fors” is the best part of three good English words,

¹ [For the meaning of the title, see below, § 16, p. 39.]

² [For other passages in which Ruskin draws out the meaning of *Fors Clavigera*, see below, p. 231 *n.*]

³ [Compare *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iv. § 24, where, in contrasting English with Latin, Ruskin speaks of the “metallic or crystalline condensation” of the latter.]

⁴ [For a reference to the ridicule cast in comic papers on the recommendation “that peasants should learn Latin,” see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 105.]

Force, Fortitude, and Fortune. I wish you to know the meaning of those three words accurately.

“Force” (in humanity), means power of doing good work. A fool, or a corpse, can do any quantity of mischief; but only a wise and strong man, or, with what true vital force there is in him, a weak one, can do good.

“Fortitude” means the power of bearing necessary pain, or trial of patience, whether by time, or temptation.

“Fortune” means the necessary fate of a man: the ordinance of his life which cannot be changed. To “make your fortune” is to rule that appointed fate to the best ends of which it is capable.

Fors is a feminine word; and Clavigera, is, therefore, the feminine of “Claviger.”

Clava means a club. Clavis, a key. Clavus, a nail, or a rudder.

Gero means “I carry.” It is the root of our word “gesture” (the way you carry yourself); and, in a curious bye-way, of “jest.”

Clavigera may mean, therefore, either Club-bearer, Key-bearer, or Nail-bearer.

Each of these three possible meanings of Clavigera corresponds to one of the three meanings of Fors.

Fors, the Club-bearer, means the strength of Hercules, or of Deed.

Fors, the Key-bearer, means the strength of Ulysses, or of Patience.

Fors, the Nail-bearer, means the strength of Lycurgus, or of Law.

I will tell you what you may usefully know of those three Greek persons in a little time.¹ At present, note only of the three powers: 1. That the strength of Hercules is for deed, not misdeed; and that his club—the favourite

¹ [To Hercules and Ulysses Ruskin did not, however, return in *Fors Clavigera* (though there are incidental references to the former in Letters 79 and 82, Vol. XXIX. pp. 150, 251); nor, in telling the story of Theseus does he say how the hero helped Hercules (as recounted by Euripides: see below, p. 430 *n.*). To Lycurgus Ruskin returns in Letters 27, § 14 (p. 502), and 68, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 667).]

weapon, also, of the Athenian hero Theseus,¹ whose form is the best inheritance left to us by the greatest of Greek sculptors (it is in the Elgin room of the British Museum, and I shall have much to tell you of him—especially how he helped Hercules in his utmost need, and how he invented mixed vegetable soup²)—was for subduing monsters and cruel persons, and was of olive-wood.³ 2. That the Second Fors Clavigera is portress at a gate which she cannot open till you have waited long; and that her robe is of the colour of ashes, or dry earth.* 3. That the third Fors Clavigera, the power of Lycurgus, is Royal † as well as Legal; and that the notablest crown yet existing in Europe of any that have been worn by Christian kings, was—people say—made of a Nail.⁴

3. That is enough about my title, for this time; now to our work. I told you,⁵ and you will find it true, that, practically, all wages mean the food and lodging given you by the possessors of the land.

It begins to be asked on many sides how the possessors of the land became possessed of it, and why they should still possess it, more than you or I; and Ricardo's "Theory"

* See Cary's translation of the ninth book of Dante's *Purgatory*, line 106.⁶

† Observe generally, "Royalty" means rule of any kind; "Monarchy" rule by a single person; "Kingship" rule by an able and wise person.—[*Author's addition under the word "Royalty" in his Index to Vols. I. and II.*]

¹ [For the club of Theseus, see below, p. 396 *n.*; for the Elgin marble, called "Theseus," see Plate X.]

² [For the story of the vegetable soup, see below, p. 429 *n.*]

³ [Ruskin in one of his copies here wrote in the margin, "Explain Alcmena and Rhadamanthus, connection with Minos." He thus notes as significant that the mother of Hercules should have married the rewarding judge, Rhadamanthus, who is distinguished from Minos, the tormenting judge, brutal and rabid: see "The Tortoise of Ægina," § 8 (Vol. XX. p. 383). For Hercules, see further *Queen of the Air*, § 4 (Vol. XIX. p. 298); for his club of olive-wood, see Pausanias ii. 31, 10.]

⁴ [For another reference to the Iron Crown of Lombardy (in which the fillet of iron which lines the diadem is said to have been hammered from one of the nails used at the Crucifixion), see Vol. XX. p. 363.]

⁵ [Letter 1, § 12 (above, p. 23).]

⁶ ["Ashes, or earth ta'en dry out of the ground,
Were of one colour with the robe he wore." (Cary.)

The passage is from the description of the angel deputed by St. Peter to keep the gate of Purgatory. For Ruskin's description here of Patience as portress at the gate of Art and Promise, see *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 33 (Vol. XIX. pp. 85–86).]

of Rent,¹ though, for an economist, a very creditably ingenious work of fiction, will not much longer be imagined to explain the “Practice” of Rent.

The true answer, in this matter, as in all others, is the best. Some land has been bought; some, won by cultivation: but the greater part, in Europe, seized originally by force of hand.²

You may think, in that case, you would be justified in trying to seize some yourselves, in the same way.

If you could, you, and your children, would only hold it by the same title as its present holders. If it is a bad one, you had better not so hold it; if a good one, you had better let the present holders alone.

4. And in any case, it is expedient that you should do so, for the present holders, whom we may generally call “Squires” (a title having three meanings, like Fors, and all good; namely, Rider, Shield-bearer, and Carver³), are quite the best men you can now look to for leading: it is too true that they have much demoralized themselves lately by horse-racing, bird-shooting, and vermin-hunting;⁴ and most of all by living in London, instead of on their estates; but they are still (without exception) brave; nearly without exception, good-natured; honest, so far as they understand honesty; and much to be depended on, if once you and they understand each other.⁵

Which you are far enough now from doing; and it is imminently needful that you should: so we will have an accurate talk of them soon.⁶ The needfullest thing of all first is that you should know the functions of the persons whom you are being taught to think of as your protectors

¹ [See ch. ii. of the *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation*: “Rent is that portion of the produce of the earth which is paid to the landlord for the use of the original and indestructible powers of the soil.”]

² [Compare Letter 73, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 16).]

³ [Compare Letter 22, §§ 18–20 (pp. 383–384).]

⁴ [For a collection of Ruskin’s passages on sport, see Vol. VII. p. 340 *n.*; and on the evils of absenteeism, see Letters 9, § 16, and 10, § 8 (below, pp. 161, 170).]

⁵ [For a re-statement by Ruskin, in a later letter, of the argument in §§ 4 *seq.*, see below, p. 379.]

⁶ [See Letter 3, § 10 (p. 54); but the principal discussion of Squires is in Letter 45.]

against the Squires;—your “Employers,” namely; or Capitalist Supporters of Labour.

5. “Employers.” It is a noble title. If, indeed, they have found you idle, and given you employment, wisely,—let us no more call them mere “Men” of Business, but rather “Angels” of Business: quite the best sort of Guardian Angel.

Yet are you sure it is necessary, absolutely, to look to superior natures for employment? Is it inconceivable that you should employ—yourselves? I ask the question, because these Seraphic beings, undertaking also to be Seraphic Teachers or Doctors,¹ have theories about employment which may perhaps be true in their own celestial regions, but are inapplicable under worldly conditions.

6. To one of these principles, announced by themselves as highly important, I must call your attention closely, because it has of late been the cause of much embarrassment among persons in a sub-seraphic life. I take its statement verbatim, from the 25th page of the Cambridge catechism before quoted:²—

“This brings us to a most important proposition respecting capital, one which it is essential that the student should thoroughly understand.

“The proposition is this—A demand for commodities is not a demand for labour.

“The demand for labour depends upon the amount of capital: the demand for commodities simply determines in what direction labour shall be employed.

“AN EXAMPLE.—The truth of these assertions can best be shown by examples. Let us suppose that a manufacturer of woollen cloth is in the habit of spending £50 annually in lace. What does it matter, say some, whether he spends this £50 in lace or whether he uses it to employ more labourers in his own business? Does not the £50 spent in lace maintain the labourers who make the lace, just the same as it would maintain the labourers who make cloth, if the manufacturer used the money in

¹ [A passage in the first draft shows how Ruskin was playing in his mind with this phrase. The employers were to be called Angels of Business; and as theirs is “the lovely science of Political Economy, we may even call them Seraphs of Business, or best of all, “Seraphic Doctors’ of Business”—the St. Bonaventura of the day—“and write after their names L. S. D., Legum Seraphicus Doctor.”]

² [See above, Letter 1, § 12 (p. 24 *n.*); the extract is from pp. 25, 26 of the book, where a passage from Mill’s *Political Economy* is incorporated. For another examination of the proposition that “a demand for commodities is not a demand for labour,” see *Unto this Last*, § 76 (Vol. XVII. p. 102).]

extending his own business? If he ceased buying the lace, for the sake of employing more cloth-makers, would there not be simply a transfer of the £50 from the lace-makers to the cloth-makers? In order to find the right answer to these questions, let us imagine what would actually take place if the manufacturer ceased buying the lace, and employed the £50 in paying the wages of an additional number of cloth-makers. The lace manufacturer, in consequence of the diminished demand for lace, would diminish the production, and would withdraw from his business an amount of capital corresponding to the diminished demand. As there is no reason to suppose that the lace-maker would, on losing some of his custom, become more extravagant, or would cease to desire to derive income from the capital which the diminished demand has caused him to withdraw from his own business, it may be assumed that he would invest this capital in some other industry. This capital is not the same as that which his former customer, the woollen cloth manufacturer, is now paying his own labourers with; it is a second capital; and in the place of £50 employed in maintaining labour, there is now £100 so employed. There is no transfer from lace-makers to cloth-makers. There is fresh employment for the cloth-makers, and a transfer from the lace-makers to some other labourers.”—*Principles of Political Economy*, vol. i. p. 102.¹

7. This is very fine; and it is clear that we may carry forward the improvement in our commercial arrangements by recommending all the other customers of the lace-maker to treat him as the cloth-maker has done. Whereupon he of course leaves the lace business entirely, and uses all his capital in “some other industry.” Having thus established the lace-maker with a complete “second capital,” in the other industry, we will next proceed to develop a capital out of the cloth-maker, by recommending all *his* customers to leave *him*. Whereupon, he will also invest his capital in “some other industry,” and we have a Third capital, employed in the National benefit.

We will now proceed in the round of all possible businesses, developing a correspondent number of new capitals, till we come back to our friend the lace-maker again, and find him employed in whatever his new industry was. By now taking away again all his new customers, we begin the development of another order of Capitals in a higher Seraphic circle—and so develop at last an Infinite Capital!

8. It would be difficult to match this for simplicity; it

¹ [*i.e.*, summarised by Mrs. Fawcett from Mill’s *Principles* (see note on next page).]

is more comic even than the fable of James and William,¹ though you may find it less easy to detect the fallacy here; but the obscurity is not because the error is less gross, but because it is threefold. Fallacy 1st is the assumption that a cloth-maker may employ any number of men, whether he has customers or not; while a lace-maker must dismiss his men if he has not customers. Fallacy 2nd: That when a lace-maker can no longer find customers for lace, he can always find customers for something else. Fallacy 3rd (the essential one): That the funds provided by these new customers, produced seraphically from the clouds, are a “second capital.” Those customers, if they exist now, existed before the lace-maker adopted his new business; and were the employers of the people in that business. If the lace-maker gets them, he merely diverts their fifty pounds from the tradesman they were before employing, to himself; and that is Mr. Mill’s “second capital.”

9. Underlying these three fallacies, however, there is, in the mind of “the greatest thinker in England,”² some consciousness of a partial truth, which he has never yet been able to define for himself—still less to explain to others. The real root of them is his conviction that it is beneficial and profitable to make broadcloth; and unbeneficial and unprofitable to make lace;* so that the trade of cloth-making should be infinitely extended, and that of lace-making infinitely repressed. Which is, indeed, partially true. Making

* I assume the Cambridge quotation to be correct: in my old edition (1848), the distinction is between “weavers and lace-makers” and “journey-men bricklayers”; and making velvet is considered to be the production of a “commodity,” but building a house only doing a “service.”³

¹ [See Letter 1, §§ 13, 14 (pp. 24–25).]

² [Ruskin had picked up this description of Mill (cited again at pp. 64–65) from some book or paper of the time: see his letter to Professor Norton of September 12, 1869 (in a later volume of this edition). See also Froude’s *Carlyle’s Life in London*, vol. ii. p. 420, where Carlyle, in connexion with Mill’s *Autobiography*, writes of “the cock-a-leerie crow about ‘the Great Thinker of his Age.’ ”]

³ [The passage in Mrs. Fawcett’s *Political Economy for Beginners* (called by Ruskin “the Cambridge Catechism”) is not a quotation, but a summary of Mill’s argument with a different illustration. The passage in Mill is in book i. ch. v. § 9: “A consumer may expend his income either in buying services or commodities. He may employ part of it in hiring journeymen bricklayers to build a house . . . , or, instead of this, he may expend the same value in buying velvet and lace.”]

cloth, if it be well made, is a good industry; and if you had sense enough to read your Walter Scott thoroughly, I should invite you to join me in sincere hope that Glasgow might in that industry long flourish; and the chief hostelry at Aberfoil be at the sign of the “Nicol Jarvie.”¹ Also, of lace-makers, it is often true that they had better be doing something else. I admit it, with no good will, for I know a most kind lady, a clergyman’s wife, who devotes her life to the benefit of her country by employing lace-makers; and all her friends make presents of collars and cuffs to each other, for the sake of charity; and as, if they did not, the poor girl lace-makers would probably indeed be “diverted” into some other less diverting industry, in due assertion of the rights of women (cartridge-filling, or percussion-cap making, most likely), I even go the length, sometimes, of furnishing my friend with a pattern, and never say a word to disturb her young customers in their conviction that it is an act of Christian charity to be married in more than ordinarily expensive veils.

10. But there *is* one kind of lace for which I should be glad that the demand ceased. Iron lace. If we must even doubt whether ornamental thread-work may be, wisely, made on cushions in the sunshine, by dexterous fingers for fair shoulders,—how are we to think of Ornamental Ironwork, made with deadly sweat of men, and steady waste, all summer through, of the coals that Earth gave us for winter fuel? What shall we say of labour spent on lace such as that?

Nay, says the Cambridge catechism, “the demand for commodities is not a demand for labour.”²

¹ [The first draft reads, “. . . flourish, at the sign of the Golden, Nicol Jarvie instead of the Golden Fleece.” For Nicol Jarvie, a weaver like his father the deacon before him, and his adventures at the Clachan of Aberfoil, where he gets hung up by the skirts of his riding coat, “not unlike to the sign of the Golden Fleece over the door of the Trongate of his native city” (Glasgow), see *Rob Roy*, chaps. xxix., xxx. The “Bailie Nicol Jarvie” is now the chief inn at Aberfoil. Glasgow, long famous for its looms—though for cotton rather than cloth—has for its motto “Let Glasgow Flourish.”]

² [The first draft of the letter continues differently from this point:—
“Cast iron is no commodity, then? Presumably,—an Incommodity? It may be; but the demand for any product is assuredly demand for the

Doubtless, in the economist's new earth, cast iron will be had for asking: the hapless and brave Parisians find it even rain occasionally out of the new economical Heavens, *without* asking. Gold will also one day, perhaps, be begotten of gold, until the supply of that, as well as of iron, may be, at least, equal to the demand. But, in this world, it is not so yet. Neither thread-lace, gold-lace, iron-lace, nor stone-lace, whether they be commodities or incommodities, can be had for nothing. How much, think you, did the gilded flourishes cost round the gas-lamps on Westminster Bridge? or the stone-lace of the pinnacles of the temple of Parliament at the end of it (incommodious enough, as I hear); or the point-lace of the park-railings

labour of its production, and the demand for an incommodious product is too often the demand for incommodious production. I had once a pleasant walk through the fields from the bottom of Herne Hill to Dulwich. The path is now divided from the grass (what grass is left, it being now mostly covered with broken bottles and brickbats) by a beautiful iron railing, and a railroad crosses it, high on arches, every pier of which is decorated with a piece of cast-iron lace, woven into this pattern. You suppose you have benefited greatly, my working friends, by your employment in those productions. And it is very necessary for you workmen to know the exact process and economical result of the manufacture of cast-iron lace (lace of wrought iron I hope to see you again at work on some day, in good smiths' forges, well open to the air; here is a little bit of it of old days in Verona). Of that afterwards. It is our present method of operation, and the profits of it to body and soul which I have to explain, reducing, as I have told you it is always needful to do, the facts to a small scale that you may see the accurate gist of them.

"We had James and William for our last 'position'; we will have Tom and Harry for this.

"Tom and Harry are two farmers, farming each their four or five hundred acres on opposite sides of a trout stream. They can pay the squire his rent without much trouble, and they and their labourers have enough to live on, fresh air to breathe, pure water to drink, blackberry hedges for field fences, and palings to keep in the pigs and other unruly creatures.

"Some blessed day the Capitalist arrives and announces to them the approach of the millennium.

"He buys another bit of land from the squire, digs a pit in it a thousand feet deep, builds a chimney on it four hundred feet high, kills all the trout in the stream, and keeps most of the water of it for boiling, and is ready for business. First, he must persuade Harry that he should pull down his barns and build greater, in the hope of getting Tom's custom at the market town as well as his own. Next, he also persuades Harry that he should cast his initials and the date of this event in iron, and decorate his barn walls with many of them, lest perchance the London holiday makers should call him 'Arry instead of Harry, or be ignorant of the precise epoch of the enlargement of his barns.

"Harry is greatly pleased at this prospect of advance towards the millennium, and is ready to buy iron Hs and 1871s to any extent, paying, of

which you so improperly pulled down, when you wanted to be Parliamentary yourselves¹ (much good you would have got of that!); or the “openwork” of iron railings generally—the special glories of English design? Will you count the cost, in labour and coals, of the blank bars ranged along all the melancholy miles of our suburban streets, saying with their rusty tongues, as plainly as iron tongues can speak, “Thieves outside, and nothing to steal within”?² A beautiful wealth they are! and a productive capital! “Well, but,” you answer, “the making them was work for us.” Of course it was; is not that the very thing I am telling you? Work it was; and too much. But will you be good enough to make up your minds, once for all, whether it is really work that you want, or rest? I thought you rather objected to your quantity of work;—that you were all for having eight hours of it instead of ten? You may have twelve instead of ten, easily,—sixteen,

course, in kind (the Cambridge Catechism very properly supposes this) a quantity of that year’s corn.

“Next, the Seraphic Doctor advises Tom that his pigs, being more than usually progressive pigs, require to be kept in with iron railings having gilded points to them.

“Tom anticipating that this cannot but greatly raise the price of pork, and conceiving the millennium essentially to mean dear pork, is immediately ready to purchase dear pork, any quantity of iron railings, with a quantity of this last year’s best bacon.

“Then the Seraphic Doctor informs the farm labourers generally (who were sometimes a little hard put to it, even in their days of ignorance) that his pit and chimney are protoplasmic means of the production of bread and bacon, and that he can give them any quantity if they will come and make iron railings and iron Hs.

“Whereupon the chimney begins to smoke to purpose, and the new barns are built, and the pigs have an æsthetic sty, and the pitmen have unlimited bread and bacon, and become refined characters accordingly. The Seraphic Doctor keeps 50 per cent. of bread and bacon for himself, as the just reward of ingenuity in a celestial state, and everybody wonders how it was possible to exist in pre-millennial periods. The old and infirm farm labourers and their children nevertheless feel that there’s a pinch somewhere, and that there seems to them practically a deficiency in bacon, but that, no doubt, is because reform is wanted in Parliament, and because in pre-millennial times the women didn’t work as well as the men. So the women go to work in the fields, by way of claiming their rights, and once get reform in Parliament, and a few more pits and chimneys—and we shall see!”]

¹ [For a reference to this incident of the Parliamentary Reform agitation of 1866, see Vol. XVII. p. lxxx. See also Letters 10, § 16, and 27, § 5 (pp. 176, 493).]

² [Compare *Two Paths*, § 163 (Vol. XVI. p. 387); *Crown of Wild Olive*, §§ 2, 5 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 387, 389); and below, p. 43. See also the letter printed in Appendix 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 531).]

if you like! If it is only occupation you want, why do you cast the iron? Forge it in the fresh air, on a workman's anvil; make iron-lace like this of Verona,¹—every link of it swinging loose like a knight's chain mail: then you may have some joy of it afterwards, and pride; and say you knew the cunning of a man's right hand.² But I think it is pay that you want, not work; and it is very true that pretty iron-work like that does not pay; but it *is* pretty, and it might even be entertaining, if you made those leaves at the top of it (which are, as far as I can see, only artichoke, and not very well done) in the likeness of all the beautiful leaves you could find, till you knew them all by heart. "Wasted time and hammer-strokes," say you? "A wise people like the English will have nothing but spikes; and, besides, the spikes are highly needful, so many of the wise people being thieves." Yes, that is so; and, therefore, in calculating the annual cost of keeping your thieves, you must always reckon, not only the cost of the spikes that keep them in, but of the spikes that keep them out. But how if, instead of flat rough spikes, you put triangular polished ones, commonly called bayonets; and instead of the perpendicular bars, put perpendicular men? What is the cost to you then, of your railing, of which you must feed the idle bars daily? Costly enough, if it stays quiet. But how, if it begin to march and countermarch? and apply its spikes horizontally?³

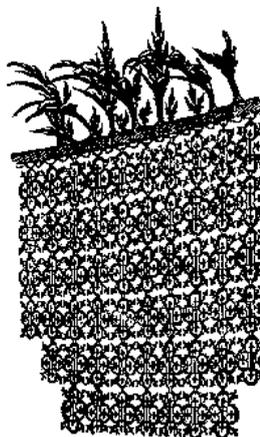


Fig. 1

¹ [For Ruskin's account of his drawing of this ironwork (on the tomb of Can Signorio della Scala), see Vol. XIX. p. liii. See also Plate B in Vol. XI. p. 90; and on the beauty of Veronese ironwork generally, Vol. VIII. p. 85 *n.*, and Vol. X. p. 289.]

² [Psalms cxxxvii. 5.]

³ ["*Cf.* Cannon, Letter 1, § 9" (p. 21).—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]

11. And now note this that follows; it is of vital importance to you.

There are, practically, two absolutely opposite kinds of labour going on among men, for ever.*

The first, labour supported by Capital, producing nothing.

The second, labour unsupported by Capital, producing all things.

Take two simple and precise instances on a small scale.

12. A little while since, I was paying a visit in Ireland,¹ and chanced to hear an account of the pleasures of a picnic party, who had gone to see a waterfall. There was of course ample lunch, feasting on the grass, and basketsful of fragments taken up afterwards.

Then the company, feeling themselves dull, gave the fragments that remained to the attendant ragged boys, on condition that they should “pull each other’s hair.”

Here, you see, is, in the most accurate sense, employment of food, or capital, in the support of entirely unproductive labour.

13. Next, for the second kind. I live at the top of a short but rather steep hill;² at the bottom of which, every day, all the year round, but especially in frost, coal-waggons get stranded, being economically provided with the smallest number of horses that can get them along on level ground.

The other day, when the road, frozen after thaw, was at the worst, my assistant,³ the engraver of that bit of iron-work on the previous page, was coming up here, and found three coal-waggons at a lock, helpless; the drivers, as usual, explaining Political Economy to the horses, by beating them over the heads.

* I do not mean that there are no other kinds, nor that well-paid labour must necessarily be unproductive. I hope to see much done, some day, for just pay, and wholly productive. But these, named in the text, are the two opposite extremes; and, in actual life, hitherto, the largest means have been usually spent in mischief, and the most useful work done for the worst pay.

¹ [In 1868: see Vol. XIX. p. xxxviii.]

² [Ruskin had not yet left Denmark Hill for Brantwood.]

³ [For a notice of Ruskin’s assistant, Arthur Burgess, see Vol. XIV. pp. 349–356. See also, below, p. 112 *n.*]

There were half-a-dozen fellows besides, out of work, or not caring to be in it—standing by, looking on. My engraver put his shoulder to a wheel (at least his hand to a spoke), and called on the idlers to do as much. They didn't seem to have thought of such a thing, but were ready enough when called on. "And we went up screaming," said Mr. Burgess.

Do you suppose that was one whit less proper human work than going up a hill against a battery, merely because, in that case, half of the men would have gone down, screaming, instead of up; and those who got up would have done no good at the top?

14. But observe the two opposite kinds of labour. The first lavishly supported by Capital, and producing Nothing. The second, unsupported by any Capital whatsoever,—not having so much as a stick for a tool,—but called, by mere goodwill, out of the vast void of the world's Idleness, and producing the definitely profitable result of moving a weight of fuel some distance towards the place where it was wanted, and sparing the strength of overloaded creatures.

Observe further. The labour producing no useful result was demoralizing. All such labour is.

The labour producing useful result was educational in its influence on the temper. All such labour is.

15. And the first condition of education, the thing you are all crying out for,¹ is being put to wholesome and useful work. And it is nearly the last conditions of it, too; you need very little more; but, as things go, there will yet be difficulty in getting that. As things have hitherto gone, the difficulty has been to avoid getting the reverse of that.

16. For, during the last eight hundred years, the upper classes of Europe have been one large Picnic Party. Most of them have been religious also; and in sitting down, by companies, upon the green grass,² in parks, gardens, and the

¹ [Compare, below, pp. 60–61, 211. Mr. Forster's Education Act had been the principal measure of the previous Session (1870). For "wholesome and useful work" as the first duty of life, see *Sesame and Lilies*, § 135 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 181–182).]

² [Mark vi. 39.]

like, have considered themselves commanded into that position by Divine authority, and fed with bread from Heaven: of which they duly considered it proper to bestow the fragments in support, and the tithes in tuition, of the poor.

17. But, without even such small cost, they might have taught the poor many beneficial things. In some places they *have* taught them manners, which is already much. They might have cheaply taught them merriment also:—dancing and singing, for instance. The young English ladies who sit nightly to be instructed, themselves, at some cost, in melodies illustrative of the consumption of La Traviata, and the damnation of Don Juan, might have taught every girl peasant in England to join in costless choirs of innocent song.¹ Here and there, perhaps, a gentleman might have been found able to teach his peasantry some science and art. Science and fine art don't pay; but they cost little. Tithes—not of the income of the country, but of the income, say, of its brewers—nay, probably the sum devoted annually by England to provide drugs for the adulteration of its own beer,—would have founded lovely little museums, and perfect libraries, in every village. And if here and there an English churchman had been found (such as Dean Stanley²) willing to explain to peasants the sculpture of his and their own cathedral, and to read its black-letter inscriptions for them; and, on warm Sundays, when they were too sleepy to attend to anything more proper—to tell them a story about some of the people who had built it, or lay buried in it—we perhaps might have been quite as religious as we are, and yet need not now have been offering prizes for competition in art schools, nor lecturing with tender sentiment on the inimitableness of the works of Fra Angelico.

¹ [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. p. 391).]

² ["It was Stanley's delight to take parties of working-men over the Abbey on Saturday evenings, and afterwards to provide them with tea in the Jerusalem Chamber. 'These parties appear to me,' he says, 'one of the most useful purposes to which the Abbey can be turned'" (see R. E. Prothero's *Life and Correspondence of Arthur Penrhyn Stanley*, 1893, vol. ii. pp. 310 *seq.*.)]

These things the great Picnic Party might have taught without cost, and with amusement to themselves. One thing, at least, they were bound to teach, whether it amused them or not:—how, day by day, the daily bread they expected their village children to pray to God for, might be earned in accordance with the laws of God. *This* they might have taught, not only without cost, but with great gain. One thing only they *have* taught, and at considerable cost.

18. They have spent four hundred millions* of pounds here in England within the last twenty years!—how much in France and Germany, I will take some pains to ascertain for you,¹—and with this initial outlay of capital, have taught the peasants of Europe—to pull each other’s hair.²

With *this* result, 17th January, 1871, at and around the chief palace of their own pleasures, and the chief city of their delights:—

“Each demolished house has its own legend of sorrow, of pain, and horror; each vacant doorway speaks to the eye, and almost to the ear, of hasty flight, as armies or fire came—of weeping women and trembling children running away in awful fear, abandoning the home that saw their birth, the old house they loved—of startled men seizing quickly under each arm their most valued goods, and rushing, heavily laden, after their wives and babes, leaving to hostile hands the task of burning all the rest. When evening falls, the wretched outcasts, worn with fatigue and tears, reach Versailles, St. Germain, or some other place outside the range of fire, and there they beg for bread and shelter, homeless, foodless, broken with despair. And this, remember, has been the fate of something like a hundred thousand people during the last four months. Versailles alone has about fifteen thousand such fugitives to keep alive, all ruined, all hopeless, all vaguely asking the grim future what still worse fate it may have in store for them.”—*Daily Telegraph*, Jan. 17th, 1871.

* £992,740,328, in seventeen years, say the working-men of Burnley, in their address just issued—an excellent address in its way, and full of very fair arithmetic—if its facts are all right; only I don’t see, myself, how, “from fifteen to twenty-five millions per annum,” make nine hundred and ninety-two millions in seventeen years.

¹ [This, however, was not done; but for some figures of the kind at an earlier date, see *Time and Tide*, § 17 (Vol. XVII. p. 331), and *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 28 (Vol. XVIII. p. 408).]

² [“Cost of war. Compare Letters 4, § 11; 6, § 9; 37, § 16” (pp. 74, 107, and Vol. XXVIII. p. 29).—*MS. note by Author in his copy.*]

19. This is the result round their pleasant city, and *this* within their industrious and practical one: let us keep, for the reference of future ages, a picture of domestic life, out of the streets of London in her commercial prosperity, founded on the eternal laws of Supply and Demand, as applied by the modern Capitalist:—

“A father in the last stage of consumption—two daughters nearly marriageable with hardly sufficient rotting clothing to ‘cover their shame.’ The rags that hang around their attenuated frames flutter in strips against their naked legs. They have no stool or chair upon which they can sit. Their father occupies the only stool in the room. They have no employment by which they can earn even a pittance. They are at home starving on a half-chance meal a day, and hiding their raggedness from the world. The walls are bare, there is one bed in the room, and a bundle of dirty rags are upon it. The dying father will shortly follow the dead mother; and when the parish coffin encloses his wasted form, and a pauper’s grave closes above him, what shall be his daughters’ lot? This is but a type of many other homes in the district: dirt, misery, and disease alone flourish in that wretched neighbourhood. ‘Fever and smallpox rage,’ as the inhabitants say, ‘next door, and next door, and over the way, and next door to that, and further down.’ The living, dying, and dead are all huddled together. The houses have no ventilation, the back yards are receptacles for all sorts of filth and rubbish, the old barrels or vessels that contain the supply of water are thickly coated on the sides with slime, and there is an undisturbed deposit of mud at the bottom. There is no mortuary house—the dead lie in the dogholes where they breathed their last, and add to the contagion which spreads through the neighbourhood.”—*Pall Mall Gazette*, January 7th, 1871, quoting the *Builder*.¹

20. As I was revising this sheet,—on the evening of the 20th of last month,—two slips of paper were brought to me. One contained, in consecutive paragraphs, an extract from the speech of one of the best and kindest of our public men,² to the “Liberal Association” at Portsmouth; and an account of the performances of the 35-ton gun

¹ [Compare, with this account from Wapping, the similar one from Spitalfields in *Sesame and Lilies*, § 36 (Vol. XVIII. p. 91).]

² [The Right Hon. William Francis Cowper (1811–1888); assumed the name Cowper-Temple on inheriting the estates of his step-father, Lord Palmerston (1869); created Baron Mount-Temple in 1880. M.P. for Hertford (1835–1868), for South Hampshire (1868–1880); Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, 1857–1858; First Commissioner of Works, 1860–1866; responsible for the “Cowper-Temple Clause” in the Education Act of 1870. Married in 1848, Georgiana, daughter of Vice-Admiral J. R. D. Tollemache. For Ruskin’s friendship with her and her husband, see Vol. XXIV. p. xxi. Mr. Cowper-Temple presently accepted the Trusteeship of the St. George’s Fund: see below, pp. 141, 159.]

called the “Woolwich infant,”¹ which is fed with 700-pound shot, and 130 pounds of gunpowder at one mouthful; not at all like the Wapping infants, starving on a half-chance meal a day. “The gun was fired with the most satisfactory result,” nobody being hurt, and nothing damaged but the platform, while the shot passed through the screens in front at the rate of 1303 feet per second: and it seems, also, that the Woolwich infant has not seen the light too soon. For Mr. Cowper-Temple, in the preceding paragraph, informs the Liberals of Portsmouth, that in consequence of our amiable neutrality “we must contemplate the contingency of a combined fleet coming from the ports of Prussia, Russia, and America, and making an attack on England.”²

21. Contemplating myself these relations of Russia, Prussia, Woolwich, and Wapping, it seems to my uncommercial mind merely like another case of iron railings—thieves outside, and nothing to steal within.³ But the second slip of paper announced approaching help in a peaceful direction. It was the prospectus of the Boardmen’s and General Advertising Co-operative Society, which invites, from the “generosity of the public, a necessary small preliminary sum,” and, “in addition to the above, a small sum of money by way of capital,” to set the members of the society up in the profitable business of walking about London between two boards.⁴ Here *is* at last found for us, then, it appears, a line of life! At the West End, lounging about the streets, with a well-made back to one’s coat, and front to one’s shirt, is usually thought of as not much in the way of business; but, doubtless, to lounge at the East

¹ [The “Woolwich Infant”—then the largest gun ever made, length 16 ft. 3 in., weight 35 tons, formed of a steel tube with coiled breech-piece; designed to fire a 700-lb. projectile with 120-lb. charge. Made at Woolwich in 1870. When tried at Woolwich in December 1871 the inner tube cracked. Others were made in 1872. For other references to it, see below, pp. 142, 266; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 95, 153; and Vol. XXIX. p. 17.]

² [A fuller report of Mr. Cowper-Temple’s speech to his constituents may be read in the *Times* of January 20, 1871; for another reference to it, see below, p. 186.]

³ [See above, p. 36.]

⁴ [*Cf.* Letter 3, § 5” (p. 49).—*MS. note in Author’s copy.*]

End about the streets, with one Lie pinned to the front of you, and another to the back of you, will pay, in time, only with proper preliminary expenditure of capital. My friends, I repeat my question: Do you not think you could contrive some little method of employing—yourselves? for truly I think the Seraphic Doctors are nearly at their wits' end (if ever their wits had a beginning). Tradesmen are beginning to find it difficult to live by lies of their own; and workmen will not find it much easier to live, by walking about, flattened between other people's.

22. Think over it. On the first of March, I hope to ask you to read a little history with me; perhaps also, because the world's time, seen truly, is but one long and fitful April, in which every day is All Fools' day,—we may continue our studies in that month; but on the first of May, you shall consider with me what you can do, or let me, if still living, tell you what I know you can do—those of you, at least, who will promise—(with the help of the three strong Fates) these three things:—

(1.) To do your own work well, whether it be for life or death.

(2.) To help other people at theirs, when you can, and seek to avenge no injury.

(3.) To be sure you can obey good laws before you seek to alter bad ones.¹

Believe me,

Your faithful friend,

JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ ["St. George's vow; see Letter 5, §§ 19–21" (pp. 95, 96).—*MS. note in Author's copy.* See also Letter 7, §§ 16–20 (pp. 129 *seq.*), and Letter 62, §§ 7, 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 517); and for (1), below, pp. 116, 347, and Vol. XXVIII. pp. 147, 767; for (3), below, p. 178, and Letter 74, § 15 (Vol. XXIX. p. 45).]

LETTER 3

RICHARD OF ENGLAND¹

DENMARK HILL,

1st March, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—We are to read—with your leave—some history to-day; the leave, however, will perhaps not willingly be given, for you may think that of late you have read enough history, or too much, in *Gazettes* of morning and evening. No; you have read, and can read, no history in these. Reports of daily events, yes;—and if any journal would limit itself to statements of well-sifted fact, making itself not a “news” paper, but an “olds” paper, and giving its statements tested and true, like old wine, as soon as things could be known accurately; choosing also, of the many things that might be known, those which it was most vital to know, and summing them in few words of pure English,—I cannot say whether it would ever pay well to sell it; but I am sure it would pay well to read it, and to read no other.²

But even so, to know only what was happening day by day, would not be to read history. What happens now is but the momentary scene of a great play, of which you can understand nothing without some knowledge of the former action. And of that, so great a play is it, you can at best understand little; yet of history, as of science, a little, well known, will serve you much, and a little, ill known, will do you fatally the contrary of service.

¹ [See below, § 10. Discarded titles for this letter were “English Ghosts and their Land” and “The Haunted Land” (see below, § 8).]

² [Compare Ruskin’s letter of June 1887 on “The Function of the *Pall Mall Gazette*” (reprinted in a later volume of this edition); and Vol. XXVIII. pp. 20, 26.]

2. For instance, all your journals will be full of talk, for months to come, about whose fault the war was; and you yourselves, as you begin to feel its deadly recoil on your own interests, or as you comprehend better the misery it has brought on others, will be looking about more and more restlessly for some one to accuse of it. That is because you don't know the law of Fate, nor the course of history. It is the law of Fate that we shall live, in part, by our own efforts, but in the greater part, by the help of others; and that we shall also die, in part, for our own faults; but in the greater part for the faults of others. Do you suppose (to take the thing on the small scale in which you can test it) that those seven children torn into pieces out of their sleep, in the last night of the siege of Paris,* had sinned above all the children in Paris, or above yours? or that their parents had sinned more than you? Do you think the thousands of soldiers, German and French, who have died in agony, and of women who have died of grief, had sinned above all other soldiers, or mothers, or girls, there and here?¹

3. It was not their fault, but their Fate. The thing appointed to them by the Third Fors. But you think it was at least the Emperor Napoleon's fault, if not theirs? Or Count Bismarck's? No; not at all. The Emperor Napoleon had no more to do with it than a cork on the top of a wave has with the toss of the sea. Count Bismarck had very little to do with it. When the Count

* *Daily Telegraph*, 30th January, 1871.²

¹ [See Luke xiii. 2-5.]

² [From a letter from a Special Correspondent, entitled "Paris before the Fall": "Some nights' work of the German batteries succeeds only too well, and we have to deplore the loss of not fewer than 60 killed and 140 wounded. One-third of those killed are children, and one-fourth are women. Among the juvenile victims of a recent night were seven little boys, all under ten years of age, scholars in the École des Frères Chrétiens in the Latin Quarter. . . . Towards midnight, several shells having fallen near the house, the frères ascended to the boys' dormitory to waken their sleeping charges, . . . when a bomb burst through the roof, filling it with smoke and flames, and a horrible fracas, above which were plainly heard the shrieks of the little ones, mingled with cries of 'Maman,' 'Mon Dieu.' Then an awful silence ensued. Seven of them had been hurried into eternity."]

sent for my waiter, last July, in the village of Lauter-brunnen, among the Alps,¹—that the waiter then and there packed his knapsack and departed, to be shot, if need were, leaving my dinner unserved (as has been the case with many other people’s dinners since)—depended on things much anterior to Count Bismarck. The two men who had most to answer for in the mischief of the matter were St. Louis and his brother, who lived in the middle of the thirteenth century.² One, among the very best of men; and the other, of all that I ever read of, the worst. The good man, living in mistaken effort, and dying miserably, to the ruin of his country; the bad man living in triumphant good fortune, and dying peaceably, to the ruin of many countries. Such were their Fates, and ours. I am not going to tell you of them, nor anything about the French war to-day; and you have been told, long ago (only you would not listen, nor believe), the root of the modern German power—in that rough father of Frederick, who “yearly made his country richer, and this not in money alone (which is of very uncertain value, and sometimes has no value at all, and even less), but in frugality, diligence, punctuality, veracity,—the grand fountains from which money, and all real *values* and valours, spring for men. As a Nation’s *Husband*, he seeks his fellow among Kings, ancient and modern. Happy the nation which gets such a Husband, once in the half thousand years. The Nation, as foolish wives and Nations do, repines and grudges a good deal, its weak whims and will being thwarted very often; but it advances steadily, with consciousness or not, in the way of well-doing; and, after long times, the harvest of this diligent sowing becomes manifest to the Nation, and to all Nations.”*

* Carlyle’s *Frederick*, Book IV. ch. iii.

¹ [See Vol. XX. p. lv.]

² [On St. Louis (who died of dysentery, 1270, when crusading in Tunis), see further Letter 40, §§ 6–8 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 68, 69); and compare *Val d’Arno*, where account is given of the death of Charles of Anjou (Vol. XXIII. pp. 36, 144, 155).]

No such harvest is sowing for you,—Freemen and Independent Electors of Parliamentary representatives, as you think yourselves.

4. Freemen, indeed! You are slaves, not to masters of any strength or honour; but to the idlest talkers at that floral end of Westminster Bridge.¹ Nay, to countless meaner masters than they. For though, indeed, as early as the year 1102, it was decreed in a council at St. Peter's, Westminster, "that no man for the future should presume to carry on the wicked trade of selling men in the markets, like brute beasts, which hitherto hath been the common custom of England,"² the no less wicked trade of *under-selling* men in markets has lasted to this day; producing conditions of slavery differing from the ancient ones only in being starved instead of full-fed: and besides this, a state of slavery unheard of among the nations till now, has arisen with us. In all former slaveries, Egyptian, Algerine, Saxon, and American, the slave's complaint has been of compulsory *work*. But the modern Politico-Economic slave is a new and far more injured species, condemned to Compulsory *Idleness*, for fear he should spoil other people's trade; the beautifully logical condition of the national Theory of Economy in this matter being that, if you are a shoemaker, it is a law of Heaven that you must sell your goods under their price, in order to destroy the trade of other shoemakers; but if you are not a shoemaker, and are going shoeless and lame, it is a law of Heaven that you must not cut yourself a bit of cowhide, to put between your foot and the stones, because that would interfere with the total trade of shoemaking.

Which theory, of all the wonderful—!

5. We will wait till April to consider of it;³ meantime,

¹ [See Letter 2, § 10 (p. 35).]

² [See *The History of Great Britain*, by Robert Henry, book iii. ch. vi. (vol. iii. p. 520, 1777). For Ruskin's opinion, and use, of Henry's history, see Letter 25, § 11 (p. 457).]

³ [See Letter 4, § 11 (p. 75).]

here is a note I have received from Mr. Alsager A. Hill, who having been unfortunately active in organizing that new effort in the advertising business, designed, as it seems, on this loveliest principle of doing nothing that will be perilously productive—was hurt by my manner of mention of it in the last number of *Fors*.¹ I offered accordingly to print any form of remonstrance he would furnish me with, if laconic enough; and he writes to me,

“The intention of the Boardmen’s Society is not, as the writer of *Fors Clavigera* suggests, to ‘find a line of life’ for able-bodied labourers, but simply, by means of co-operation, to give them the fullest benefit of their labour whilst they continue a very humble but still remunerative calling. See Rule 12. The capital asked for to start the organization is essential in all industrial partnerships, and in so poor a class of labour as that of street board-carrying could not be supplied by the men themselves. With respect to the ‘lies’ alleged to be carried in front and behind, it is rather hard measure to say that mere announcements of public meetings or places of entertainments (of which street notices chiefly consist) are necessarily falsehoods.”

To which, I have only to reply that I never said the newly-found line of life was meant for able-bodied persons. The distinction between able and unable-bodied men is entirely indefinite. There are all degrees of ability for all things; and a man who can do anything, however little, should be made to do that little usefully. If you can carry about a board with a bill on it, you can carry, not about, but where it is wanted, a board *without* a bill on it; which is a much more useful exercise of your ability. Respecting the general probity, and historical or descriptive accuracy, of advertisements, and their function in modern economy, I will inquire in another place.² You see I use none for this book, and shall in future use none for any of my books; having grave objection even to the very small minority of advertisements which are approximately true. I am correcting this sheet in the “Crown and Thistle” inn

¹ [See Letter 2, § 21 (p. 43).]

² [See Letter 21, §§ 2, 3 (pp. 352–353). For his refusal to advertise *Fors*, see the announcement, p. 11 *n*. Ruskin never advertised any press opinions of his books, after Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co. ceased to publish them; and for many years he did not allow Mr. Allen to announce their publication in the newspapers.]

at Abingdon,¹ and under my window is a shrill-voiced person, slowly progressive, crying, “Soles, three pair for a shillin’.” In a market regulated by reason and order, instead of demand and supply, the soles would neither have been kept long enough to render such advertisement of them necessary, nor permitted, after their inexpedient preservation, to be advertised.

6. Of all attainable liberties,² then, be sure first to strive for leave to be useful.³ Independence you had better cease to talk of, for you are dependent not only on every act of people whom you never heard of, who are living round you, but on every past act of what has been dust for a thousand years. So also does the course of a thousand years to come depend upon the little perishing strength that is in you.

Little enough, and perishing, often without reward, however well spent. Understand that. Virtue does not consist in doing what will be presently paid, or even paid at all, to you, the virtuous person. It may so chance; or may not. It will be paid, some day; but the vital condition of it, as virtue, is that it shall be content in its own deed,⁴ and desirous rather that the pay of it, if any, should be for others; just as it is also the vital condition of vice to be content in its own deed, and desirous that the pay thereof, if any, should be to others.⁵

7. You have probably heard of St. Louis before now: and perhaps also that he built the Sainte Chapelle of Paris, of which you may have seen that I wrote the other day to the *Telegraph*,⁶ as being the most precious piece of

¹ [See Vol. XX. p. xl.]

² [“Cf. Letter 4, § 12” (p. 77).—*MS. note in Author’s copy.*]

³ [“Usefulness; see Letter 4, § 6” (p. 65).—*Ibid.*]

⁴ [Compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, §§ 32, 33 (“fee-first men”), Vol. XVIII. pp. 412–414.]

⁵ [“Virtue, cf. Letter 7, §§ 11 and 12” (pp. 125, 126).—*MS. note in Author’s copy.* Reference should be made also to Letter 43, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 109), where, in summarising the argument of the present letter, Ruskin says, “Virtue ceases to be such, if expecting reward; it is therefore never materially rewarded,” but adds, “I ought to have said, except as one of the appointed means of physical and mental health.”]

⁶ [A letter in the *Daily Telegraph* of January 19, 1871 (reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. i. pp. 227, 228, and in a later volume of this edition).]

Gothic in Northern Europe; but you are not likely to have known that the spire of it was Tenterden steeple over again,¹ and the cause of fatal sands many, quick, and slow, and above all, of the running of these in the last hour-glass of France; for that spire, and others like it, subordinate, have acted ever since as lightning-rods, in a reverse manner; carrying, not the fire of heaven innocently to earth, but electric fire of earth innocently to heaven, leaving us all, down here, cold. The best virtue and heart-fire of France (not to say of England who, building her towers for the most part with four pinnacles instead of one, in a somewhat quadrumanous type, finds them less apt as conductors), have spent themselves for these past six centuries in running up those steeples and off them, nobody knows where, leaving a “holy Republic”² as residue at the bottom; helpless, clay-cold, and croaking, a habitation of frogs, which poor Garibaldi fights for, vainly raging against the ghost of St. Louis.³

8. It is of English ghosts, however, that I would fain tell you somewhat to-day; of them, and of the land they haunt, and know still for theirs. For hear this to begin with:—

“While a map of France or Germany in the eleventh century is useless for modern purposes, and looks like the picture of another region, a map of England proper in the reign of Victoria hardly differs at all from a map of England proper in the reign of William” (the Conqueror). So says, very truly, Mr. Freeman in his *History of the Conquest*.⁴ Are there any of you who care for this *old* England, of

¹ [The allusion is to the reply of the old inhabitant, who to a Royal Commissioner (Sir Thomas More), appointed to inquire into the cause of Goodwin Sands, replied, “I believe Tenterden Steeple is the cause” (see Latimer’s *Sermons*). Hence the phrase that one thing has no more to do with another “than Tenterden Steeple with Goodwin Sands,” used as a proverbial *non sequitur* (see, e.g., Letter 86, Notes and Correspondence); the sequence existed, however, for it appeared that the Abbot of St. Augustine, Canterbury, had employed for building the steeple a quantity of stone which had been collected for strengthening the sea-wall of the Goodwins, then a part of the mainland.]

² [See Letter 1, § 5 (p. 16).]

³ [Compare Letter 8, § 6 (p. 138).]

⁴ [*History of the Norman Conquest*, vol. i. ch. ii. p. 8 (1867 edition).]

which the map has remained unchanged for so long? I believe you would care more for her, and less for yourselves, except as her faithful children, if you knew a little more about her; and especially more of what she has been. The difficulty, indeed, at any time, is in finding out what she has been; for that which people usually call her history is not hers at all; but that of her Kings, or the tax-gatherers employed by them, which is as if people were to call Mr. Gladstone's history, or Mr. Lowe's,¹ yours and mine.

9. But the history even of her Kings is worth reading. You remember, I said, that sometimes in church it might keep you awake to be told a little of it.² For a simple instance, you have heard probably of Absalom's rebellion against his father, and of David's agony at his death, until from very weariness you have ceased to feel the power of the story.³ You would not feel it less vividly if you knew that a far more fearful sorrow, of the like kind, had happened to one of your own Kings, perhaps the best we have had, take him for all in all.⁴ Not one only, but three of his sons, rebelled against *him*, and were urged into rebellion by their mother.⁵ The Prince, who should have been King after him, was pardoned, not once, but many times—pardoned wholly, with rejoicing over him as over the dead alive, and set at his father's right hand in the kingdom; but all in vain. Hard and treacherous to the heart's core, nothing wins him, nothing warns, nothing binds. He flies to France, and wars at last alike against father and brother, till falling sick through mingled guilt, and shame, and rage, he repents idly as the fever-fire withers him. His father sends him the signet-ring from his finger in token of one more forgiveness. The Prince lies down upon a heap of

¹ [Mr. Lowe being at this time, as Chancellor of the Exchequer (1868–1873), one of the best known and most criticised members of Mr. Gladstone's administration.]

² [See above, p. 40.]

³ [2 Samuel xviii. 33.]

⁴ [*Hamlet*, Act i. sc. 2.]

⁵ [In these references to the rebellious sons of Henry II.—Henry (died 1182), Richard, and John—Ruskin quotes from Robert Henry's *History of Great Britain*, book iii. ch. i. § 3, vol. iii. pp. 124–125 132, 133.]

ashes with a halter round his neck, and so dies. When his father heard it he fainted away three times, and then broke out into bitterest crying and tears. This, you would have thought enough for the Third dark Fate to have appointed for a man's sorrows. It was little to that which was to come. His second son, who was now his Prince of England, conspired against him, and pursued his father from city to city, in Norman France. At last, even his youngest son, best beloved of all, abandoned him, and went over to his enemies.

This was enough. Between him and his children Heaven commanded its own peace. He sickened and died of grief on the 6th of July, 1189.¹

The son who had killed him, "repented" now; but there could be no signet-ring sent to him. Perhaps the dead do not forgive. Men say, as he stood by his father's corpse, that the blood burst from his nostrils. One child only had been faithful to him, but he was the son of a girl whom he had loved much, and as he should not; his Queen, therefore, being a much older person, and strict upon proprieties, poisoned her; nevertheless poor Rosamond's son never failed him; won a battle for him in England, which, in all human probability, saved his kingdom; and was made a bishop, and turned out a bishop of the best.²

10. You know already a little about the Prince who stood unforgiven (as it seemed) by his father's body. He, also, had to forgive, in his time; but only a stranger's arrow shot—not those reversed "arrows in the hand of the giant,"³ by which his father died. Men called him "Lion-heart," not untruly; and the English as a people, have

¹ [For a later reference to the story of Henry II. and his sons, see Letter 84, § 11 (Vol. XXIX. p. 293).]

² [Geoffrey, Archbishop of York (died 1212), reputed son of Henry II. by 'Fair Rosamond'; took a prominent part in suppressing the northern rebellion of 1173–1174; made Bishop of Lincoln, 1173. For a critical account of the story of Rosamond Clifford, the mistress of Henry II. (who is said to have hidden her away from the Queen's jealousy at Woodstock: see below, p. 76), and the subject of many popular legends (such as the labyrinth and the poisoning by Queen Eleanor), see T. A. Archer's article in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.]

³ [Psalms cxxvii. 4 (Prayer-book version).]

prided themselves somewhat ever since on having, every man of them, the heart of a lion; without inquiring particularly either what sort of heart a lion has, or whether to have the heart of a lamb might not sometimes be more to the purpose. But it so happens that the name was very justly given to this prince; and I want you to study his character somewhat, with me, because in all our history there is no truer representative of one great species of the British squire, under all the three significances of the name; for this Richard of ours was beyond most of his fellows, a Rider and a Shield-bearer; and beyond all men of his day, a Carver; and in disposition and *unreasonable* exercise of intellectual power, typically a Squire¹ altogether.²

11. Note of him first, then, that he verily desired the good of his people (provided it could be contrived without any check of his own humour), and that he saw his way to it a great deal clearer than any of your squires do now. Here are some of his laws for you:—

“Having set forth the great inconveniences arising from the diversity of weights and measures in different parts of the kingdom, he, by a law, commanded all measures of corn, and other dry goods, as also of liquors, to be exactly the same in all his dominions; and that the rim of each of these measures should be a circle of iron. By another law, he commanded all cloth to be woven two yards in breadth within the lists, and of equal goodness in all parts; and that all cloth which did not answer this description should be seized and burnt. He enacted, further, that all the coin of the kingdom should be exactly of the same weight and fineness;—that no Christian should take any interest for money lent; and, to prevent the extortions of the Jews, he commanded that all compacts between Christians and Jews should be made in the presence of witnesses, and the conditions of them put in writing.”³

So, you see, in Cœur-de-Lion’s day, it was not esteemed of absolute necessity to put agreements between *Christians* in writing! Which if it were not now, you know we might

¹ [Compare Letter 2, § 4 (p. 30).]

² [“Compare with this sketch, Sir Walter’s entirely exhaustive definition of Sir Geoffrey Peveril, in Chapter I. of *Peveril of the Peak*.”—*Author’s Index to Vols. I. and II.* And for Richard I., as an English type, compare Vol. XXII. p. 497.]

³ [*The History of Great Britain*, by Robert Henry, book iii. ch. vi. (vol. iii. p. 534). The original source, summarised by Henry, is the “Assize of Measures” (1197), given by Roger de Hoveden in his *Annals* (vol. ii. p. 410, Bohn’s edition).]

save a great deal of money, and discharge some of our workmen round Temple Bar,¹ as well as from Woolwich Dockyards. Note also that bit about interest of money also for future reference. In the next place observe that this King had great objection to thieves—at least to any person whom he clearly comprehended to be a thief. He was the inventor of a mode of treatment which I believe the Americans—among whom it has not fallen altogether into disuse—do not gratefully enough recognize as a Monarchical institution. By the last of the laws for the government of his fleet in his expedition to Palestine, it is decreed,—“That whosoever is convicted of theft shall have his head shaved, melted pitch poured upon it, and the feathers from a pillow shaken over it, that he may be known; and shall be put on shore on the first land which the ship touches.”² And not only so; he even objected to any theft by misrepresentation or deception,—for being evidently particularly interested, like Mr. Mill, in that cloth manufacture,³ and having made the above law about the breadth of the web, which has caused it to be spoken of ever since as “Broad Cloth,” and besides, for better preservation of its breadth, enacted that the Ell shall be of the same length all over the kingdom, and that it shall be made of iron—(so that Mr. Tennyson’s provision for National defences—that every shop-boy should strike with his cheating yardwand home,⁴ would be mended much by the substitution of King Richard’s *honest* ell-wand, and for once with advisable encouragement to the iron trade)—King Richard finally declares—“That it shall be of the same goodness in the middle as at the sides, and that no merchant in any part of the kingdom of England shall stretch before his shop or booth a red or black cloth, or any other thing by which

¹ [For other passages in which Ruskin refers to the labours of lawyers as superfluous, see Letters 1, 4, 16, 31 (pp. 17, 77, 280–284, 580), 44 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 135), and 84 (Vol. XXIX. p. 295). For his criticism upon standing armies, compare below, p. 185 *n.*]

² [*The History of Great Britain*, by Robert Henry, book iii. ch. vi. (vol. iii. p. 533).]

³ [See Letter 2, § 6 (p. 31).]

⁴ [*Maud*, Part I. 52.]

the sight of buyers is frequently deceived in the choice of good cloth.”¹

12. These being Richard’s rough and unreasonable, chancing nevertheless, being wholly honest, to be wholly right, notions of business, the next point you are to note in him is his unreasonable good-humour; an eminent character of English Squires; a very lovable one; and available to himself and others in many ways, but not altogether so exemplary as many think it. If you are unscrupulously resolved, whenever you can get your own way, to take it; if you are in a position of life where in you can get a good deal of it, and if you have pugnacity enough to enjoy fighting with anybody who will not give it to you, there is little reason why you should ever be out of humour, unless indeed your way is a broad one, wherein you are like to be opposed in force. Richard’s way was a very narrow one. To be first in battle (generally obtaining that main piece of his will without question; once only worsted, by a French knight, and then not at all good-humouredly²), to be first in recognized command—therefore contending with his father, who was both in wisdom and acknowledged place superior; but scarcely contending at all with his brother John, who was as definitely and deeply beneath him; good-humoured unreasonably, while he was killing his father, the best of kings, and letting his brother rule unresisted, who was among the worst; and only proposing for his object in life to enjoy himself everywhere in a chivalrous, poetical, and pleasantly animal manner, as a strong man always may. What should he have been out of humour for? That he brightly and bravely lived through his captivity is much indeed to his honour; but it was his point of honour to be bright and brave; not at all to take care of his kingdom. A king

¹ [Not in Henry. The passage is translated from the same “Assize of Measures” cited on p. 54: see *Annals of Roger de Hoveden*, vol. ii. p. 411.]

² [The reference is to Richard’s encounter with William de Barres (1191). The king was so enraged at being worsted that he said to the French knight, “Away with you hence, and take care that you never appear in my presence again, for at heart I shall for everlasting be the enemy of you and yours” (*Annals of Roger de Hoveden*, vol. ii. p. 192).]

who cared for that, would have got thinner and sadder in prison.

And it remains true of the English squire¹ to this day, that, for the most part, he thinks that his kingdom is given him that he may be bright and brave; and not at all that the sunshine or valour in him is meant to be of use to his kingdom.

13. But the next point you have to note in Richard is indeed a very noble quality, and true English; he always does as much of his work as he can with his own hands. He was not in any wise a king who would sit by a windmill to watch his son and his men at work, though brave kings have done so.² As much as might be, of whatever had to be done, he would steadfastly do from his own shoulder; his main tool being an old Greek one, and the working God Vulcan's—the clearing axe. When that was no longer needful, and nothing would serve but spade and trowel, still the king was foremost; and after the weary retreat to Ascalon, when he found the place “so completely ruined and deserted, that it afforded neither food, lodging, nor protection,” nor any other sort of capital,—forthwith, 20th January, 1192—his army and he set to work to repair it; a three months' business, of incessant toil, “from which the king himself was not exempted, but wrought with greater ardour than any common labourer.”³

14. The next point of his character is very English also, but less honourably so. I said but now that he had a great objection to anybody whom he clearly comprehended to be a thief. But he had great difficulty in reaching anything like an abstract definition of thieving, such as would include every method of it, and every culprit, which is an incapacity very common to many of us to this day. For instance, he carried off a great deal of treasure which belonged to his father, from Chinon (the royal treasury-town

¹ [“Cf. Letter 45.”—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]

² [The reference is to the stone windmill (the site of which is still pointed out) which Edward I. is said to have occupied at the Battle of Crécy.]

³ [Henry, book iii. ch. i. § 4 (vol. iii. p. 149).]

in France), and fortified his own castles in Poitou with it;¹ and when he wanted money to go crusading with, sold the royal castles, manors, woods, and forests, and even the superiority of the Crown of England over the kingdom of Scotland, which his father had wrought hard for, for about a hundred thousand pounds.² Nay, the highest honours and most important offices become venal under him; and from a Princess's dowry to a Saracen caravan,³ nothing comes much amiss; not but that he gives generously also; whole ships at a time when he is in the humour;⁴ but his main practice is getting and spending, never saving; which covetousness is at last the death of him. For hearing that a considerable treasure of ancient coins and medals has been found in the lands of Vidomar, Viscount of Limoges, King Richard sends forthwith to claim this waif for himself.⁵ The Viscount offers him part only, presumably having an antiquarian turn of mind. Whereupon Richard loses his temper, and marches forthwith some Brabant men, mercenaries, to besiege the Viscount in his castle of Chalus; proposing, first, to possess himself of the antique and otherwise interesting coin in the castle, and then, on his general principle of objection to thieves, to hang the garrison. The garrison, on this, offer to give up the antiquities if they may march off themselves; but Richard declares that nothing will serve but they must all be hanged. Whereon the siege proceeding by rule, and Richard looking, as usual, into matters with his own eyes, and going too near the walls, an arrow well meant, though half spent, pierces

¹ [Henry, book i. ch. i. § 3 (vol. iii. p. 130), and Roger de Hoveden, vol. ii. p. 318 (Stubbs' edition, 1869).]

² [Henry, *ibid.*, p. 138.]

³ [For Richard's claiming from Tancred, King of Sicily, the dowry of his sister, Johanna, see Henry, *ibid.*, p. 141, and Hoveden, iii. p. 61 (Stubbs); and for the story of the caravan, Henry, *ibid.*, p. 151.]

⁴ ["The King of England made presents of many ships to the King of France and his own people, and distributed his treasures with such profuseness among all the knights and men-at-arms of his whole army, that it was said by many that not one of his predecessors had ever given so much in a whole year, as he gave away in that month" (1191): *Annals of Roger de Hoveden*, vol. ii. p. 192 (Bohn).]

⁵ [See Henry, *ibid.*, pp. 161, 162.]

the strong white shoulder; the shield-bearing one, carelessly forward above instead of under shield; or perhaps, rather, when he was afoot, shieldless, engineering. He finishes his work, however, though the scratch teases him; plans his assault, carries his castle, and duly hangs his garrison, all but the archer, whom in his royal, unreasoning way he thinks better of, for the well-spent arrow. But he pulls it out impatiently, and the head of it stays in the fair flesh; a little surgery follows; not so skilful as the archery of those days, and the lion heart is appeased¹—

Sixth April, 1199.

15. We will pursue our historical studies, if you please, in that month of the present year.² But I wish, in the meantime, you would observe, and meditate on, the quite Anglican character of Richard, to his death.

It might have been remarked to him, on his projecting the expedition to Chalus, that there were not a few Roman coins, and other antiquities, to be found in his own kingdom of England, without fighting for them, but by mere spade labour and other innocuous means;—that even the brightest new money was obtainable from his loyal people in almost any quantity for civil asking; and that the same loyal people, encouraged and protected, and above all, kept clean-handed, in the arts, by their king, might produce treasures more covetable than any antiquities.

“No;” Richard would have answered,—“that is all hypothetical and visionary; here is a pot of coin presently to be had—no doubt about it—inside the walls here:—let me once get hold of that, and then,”—

That is what we English call being “Practical.”

Believe me,

Faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ [For references to this account of the death of Cœur-de-Lion, see Letter 78, § 11 (Vol. XXIX. p. 135), and *Pleasures of England*, §§ 81, 107 n.]

² [See Letter, §§ 10 *seq.* (pp. 72 *seq.*.)]

LETTER 4

SWITCHES OF BROOM¹

DENMARK HILL,
1st April, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—It cannot but be pleasing to us to reflect, this day, that if we are often foolish enough to talk English without understanding it, we are often wise enough to talk Latin without knowing it. For this month retains its pretty Roman name, and means the month of Opening; of the light in the days, and the life in the leaves, and of the voices of birds, and of the hearts of men.

And being the month of Manifestation, it is pre-eminently the month of Fools;—for under the beatific influences of moral sunshine, or Education, the Fools always come out first.

But what is less pleasing to reflect upon, this spring morning, is, that there are some kinds of education which may be described, not as moral sunshine, but as moral moonshine; and that, under these, Fools come out both First—and Last.

2. We have, it seems, now set our opening hearts much on this one point, that we will have education for all men and women now, and for all boys and girls that are to be.² Nothing, indeed, can be more desirable, if only we determine also what kind of education we are to have. It is taken for granted that any education must be good;

¹ [For the title, see § 12, p. 76.]

² [See above, p. 39; and compare “The Story of Arachne,” § 1 (Vol. XX. p. 371 and *n.*.)]

—that the more of it we get, the better; that bad education only means little education; and that the worst thing we have to fear is getting none. Alas, that is not at all so. Getting no education is by no means the worst thing that can happen to us. One of the pleasantest friends I ever had in my life was a Savoyard guide, who could only read with difficulty, and write scarcely intelligibly, and by great effort.¹ He knew no language but his own—no science, except as much practical agriculture as served him to till his fields. But he was, without exception, one of the happiest persons, and, on the whole, one of the best, I have ever known: and after lunch, when he had had his half bottle of Savoy wine, he would generally, as we walked up some quiet valley in the afternoon light, give me a little lecture on philosophy; and after I had fatigued and provoked him with less cheerful views of the world than his own, he would fall back to my servant behind me, and console himself with a shrug of the shoulders, and a whispered “*Le pauvre enfant, il ne sait pas vivre!*”—(“The poor child, he doesn’t know how to live.”)²

No, my friends, believe me, it is not the going without education at all that we have most to dread. The real thing to be feared is getting a bad one. There are all sorts—good, and very good; bad, and very bad. The children of rich people often get the worst education that is to be had for money; the children of the poor often get the best for nothing. And you have really these two things now to decide for yourselves in England before you can take one quite safe practical step in the matter, namely, first, what a good education is; and, secondly, who is likely to give it you.

What it is? “Everybody knows that,” I suppose you would most of you answer. “Of course—to be taught to

¹ [Joseph Marie Couttet; for whom, see Vol. IV. p. xxv. and *n.*, Vol. XX. p. 371, and Vol. XXVI. p. lv. For his death and other reminiscences of him, see Letter 75, § 10 (Vol. XXIX. p. 67).]

² [For another reference to this saying, see below, p. 85.]

read, and write, and cast accounts; and to learn geography, and geology, and astronomy, and chemistry, and German, and French, and Italian, and Latin, and Greek and the aboriginal Aryan language.”

3. Well, when you had learned all that, what would you do next? “Next? Why then we should be perfectly happy, and make as much money as ever we liked, and we would turn out our toes before any company.” I am not sure myself, and I don’t think you can be, of any one of these three things. At least, as to making you very happy, I know something, myself, of nearly all these matters—not much, but still quite as much as most men, under the ordinary chances of life, with a fair education, are likely to get together—and I assure you the knowledge does not make me happy at all. When I was a boy I used to like seeing the sun rise. I didn’t know, then, there were any spots on the sun; now I do, and am always frightened lest any more should come. When I was a boy, I used to care about pretty stones. I got some Bristol diamonds at Bristol,¹ and some dog-tooth spar in Derbyshire; my whole collection had cost, perhaps, three half-crowns, and was worth considerably less; and I knew nothing whatever, rightly, about any single stone in it;—could not even spell their names: but words cannot tell the joy they used to give me. Now, I have a collection of minerals worth perhaps from two to three thousand pounds; and I know more about some of them than most other people. But I am not a whit happier, either for my knowledge, or possessions, for other geologists dispute my theories, to my grievous indignation and discontentment; and I am miserable about all my best specimens, because there are better in the British Museum.²

4. No, I assure you, knowledge by itself will not make you happy; still less will it make you rich. Perhaps you

¹ [For an account of this acquisition, see *Præterita*, i. § 106.]

² [To the Museum, however, he gave some of his best specimens: see Vol. XXVI. pp. 1. *seq.*]

thought I was writing carelessly when I told you, last month, “science did not pay.”¹ But you don’t know what science is. You fancy it means mechanical art; and so you have put a statue of Science on the Holborn Viaduct,² with a steam-engine regulator in its hands. My ingenious friends, science has no more to do with making steam-engines than with making breeches; though she condescends to help you a little in such necessary (or it may be, conceivably, in both cases, sometimes unnecessary) businesses. Science lives only in quiet places, and with odd people, mostly poor. Mr. John Kepler, for instance, who is found by Sir Henry Wotton “in the picturesque green country by the shores of the Donau, in a little black tent in a field, convertible, like a windmill, to all quarters, a camera-obscura, in fact. Mr. John invents rude toys, writes almanacks, practises medicine, for good reasons, his encouragement from the Holy Roman Empire and mankind being a pension of £18 a year and that hardly ever paid.”* This is what one gets by star-gazing, my friends. And you cannot be simple enough, even in April, to think I got my three thousand pounds’-worth of minerals by studying mineralogy? Not so; they were earned for me by hard labour; my father’s in England, and many a sunburnt vineyard-dresser’s in Spain.³

5. “What business had you, in your idleness, with their earnings then?” you will perhaps ask. None, it may be; I will tell you in a little while how you may find that out;⁴ it is not to the point now. But it is to the point

* Carlyle, *Frederick*, vol. i. p. 321 (first edition).⁵

¹ [Not “last month,” but in Letter 2, § 17 (p. 40); see also Letter 1, § 8 (p. 19).]

² [Then recently finished, the Viaduct having been opened by Queen Victoria on November 6, 1869.]

³ [For the vineyards of “Ruskin, Telford, and Domecq,” see *Præterita*, i. § 25.]

⁴ [See below, pp. 185, 187; and compare Letter 67 (Vol. XXVIII, pp. 644–646).]

⁵ [Book iii. ch. xiv. See also, in Carlyle, the essay on *Voltaire*, and *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, ii.; and for other references by Ruskin to Kepler’s wages, *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 449), and Vol. XX. p. 23 n.]

that you should observe I have not kept their earnings, the portion of them, at least, with which I bought minerals. That part of their earnings is all gone to fee the miners in Cornwall, or on the Hartz mountains, and I have only got for myself a few pieces of glittering (not always that, but often unseemly) stone, which neither vine-dressers nor miners cared for; which you yourselves would have to learn many hard words, much cramp mathematics, and useless chemistry, in order to care for; which if ever you did care for, as I do, would most likely only make you envious of the British Museum, and occasionally uncomfortable if any harm happened to your dear stones. I have a pieces of red oxide of copper, for instance, which grieves me poignantly by losing its colour;¹ and a crystal of sulphide of lead, with a chip in it, which causes me a great deal of concern—in April; because I see it then by the fresh sunshine.

My oxide of copper and sulphide of lead you will not then wisely envy me. Neither, probably, would you covet a handful of hard brown gravel, with a rough pebble in it, whitish, and about the size of a pea; nor a few grains of apparently brass fillings, with which the gravel is mixed. I was but a fool to give good money for such things, you think? It may well be. I gave thirty pounds for that handful of gravel, and the miners who found it were ill-paid then; and it is not clear to me that this produce of their labour was the best possible. Shall we consider of it, with the help of the Cambridge Catechism?² at the tenth page of which you will find that Mr. Mill's definition of productive labour is—"That which produces utilities fixed and embodied in material objects."³

6. This is very fine—indeed, superfine—English; but I can, perhaps, make the meaning of the Greatest Thinker

¹ [This may be a piece which Ruskin afterwards gave to the Museum of Kirkcudbright: see Vol. XXVI. p. 468.]

² [See Letter 1, § 12 (p. 24).]

³ [See Mill's *Political Economy*, book i. ch. iii. § 3. For other references to Mill's definition, see Letters 71 and 76 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 734 and Vol. XXIX. p. 101).]

in England¹ a little more lucid for you by vulgarizing his terms.

“Object,” you must always remember, is fine English for “Thing.” It is a semi-Latin word, and properly means a thing “thrown in your way”; so that if you put “ion” to the end of it, it becomes Objection. We will rather say “Thing,” if you have no objection—you and I. A “Material” thing, then, of course, signifies something solid and tangible. It is very necessary for Political Economists always to insert this word “material,” lest people should suppose that there was any use or value in Thought or Knowledge, and other such immaterial objects.

“Embodied” is a particularly elegant word; but superfluous, because you know it would not be possible that a Utility should be disembodied, as long as it was in a material object. But when you wish to express yourself as thinking in a great manner, you may say—as, for instance, when you are supping vegetable soup—that your power of doing so conveniently and gracefully is “Embodied” in a spoon.

“Fixed” is, I am afraid, rashly, as well as superfluously, introduced into his definition by Mr. Mill. It is conceivable that some Utilities may be also volatile, or planetary, even when embodied. But at last we come to the great word in the great definition—“Utility.”

And this word, I am sorry to say, puzzles me most of all; for I never myself saw a Utility, either out of the body, or in it, and should be much embarrassed if ordered to produce one in either state.

But it is fortunate for us that all this seraphic language, reduced to the vulgar tongue, will become, though fallen in dignity and reduced in dimension, perfectly intelligible. The Greatest Thinker in England means by these beautiful words to tell you that Productive labour is labour that produces a Useful Thing. Which, indeed, perhaps, you knew—or, without the assistance of great thinkers, might have

¹ [See above, Letter 2, § 9 (p. 33).]
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known, before now. But if Mr. Mill had said so much, simply, you might have been tempted to ask farther—"What things are useful, and what are not?" And as Mr. Mill does not know, nor any other Political Economist going,¹—and as they therefore particularly wish nobody to ask them,—it is convenient to say instead of "useful things," "utilities fixed and embodied in material objects," because that sounds so very like complete and satisfactory information, that one is ashamed, after getting it, to ask for any more.

7. But it is not, therefore, less discouraging that for the present I have got no help towards discovering whether my handful of gravel with the white pebble in it was worth my thirty pounds or not. I am afraid it is not a useful thing to *me*. It lies at the back of a drawer, locked up all the year round. I never look at it now, for I know all about it: the only satisfaction I have for my money is knowing that nobody else can look at it; and if nobody else wanted to, I shouldn't even have that.

"What did you buy it for, then?" you will ask. Well, if you must have the truth, because I was a Fool, and wanted it. Other people have bought such things before me. The white stone is a diamond, and the apparent brass filings are gold dust; but, I admit, nobody ever yet wanted such things who was in his right senses. Only now, as I have candidly answered all your questions, will you answer one of mine? If I hadn't bought it, what would you have had me do with my money? Keep *that* in the drawer instead?—or at my banker's, till it grew out of thirty pounds into sixty and a hundred, in fulfilment of the law respecting seed sown in good ground?²

Doubtless, that would have been more meritorious for the time. But when I had got the sixty or the hundred pounds—what should I have done with *them*? The question only becomes doubly and trebly serious; and all the more, to me, because when I told you last January that I

¹ [Compare Letter 5, § 13 (p. 90).]

² [Matthew xiii. 23.]

had bought a picture for a thousand pounds,¹ permitting myself in that folly for your advantage, as I thought, hearing that many of you wanted art Patronage, and wished to live by painting,—one of your own popular organs, the *Liverpool Daily Courier*, of February 9th, said, “it showed want of taste,—of tact,” and was “something like a mockery,” to tell you so! I am not to buy pictures, therefore, it seems;—you like to be kept in mines and tunnels, and occasionally blown hither and thither, or crushed flat, rather than live by painting, in good light, and with the chance of remaining all day in a whole and unextended skin? But what *shall* I buy, then, with the next thirty pieces of gold I can scrape together? Precious things have been bought, indeed, and sold, before now for thirty pieces, even of silver,² but with doubtful issue. The over-charitable person who was bought to be killed at that price, indeed, advised the giving of alms;³ but you won’t have alms, I suppose, you are so independent, nor go into almshouses—(and, truly, I did not much wonder, as I walked by the old church of Abingdon, a Sunday or two since, where the almshouses⁴ are set round the churchyard, and under the level of it, and with a cheerful view of it, except that the tombstones slightly block the light of the lattice-windows; with beautiful texts from Scripture over the doors, to remind the paupers still more emphatically that, highly blessed as they were, they were yet mortal)—you won’t go into almshouses; and all the clergy in London have been shrieking against almsgiving to the lower poor this whole winter long, till I am obliged, whenever I want to give anybody a penny, to look up and down the street first, to see if a clergyman’s coming.⁵ Of course, I know I might buy as many iron

¹ [See Letter 1, § 8 (p. 20).]

² [Matthew xxvi. 15.]

³ [Luke xi. 41.]

⁴ [Christ’s Hospital. Among the texts which decorate the cloister are Acts x. 4, 5; 2 Corinthians ix. 6; Hebrews xiii. 16.]

⁵ [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 136 (Vol. XVIII. p. 182); and Letter 73, § 17 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 27). It appears from a letter in the *Times* of December 26, 1870, from the Chairman of the Charity Organisation Committee, that mendicity was rife, and that the public could not be persuaded to check it by withholding indiscriminate alms.]

railings as I please,¹ and be praised; but I've no room for them. I can't well burn more coals than I do, because of the blacks, which spoil my books; and the Americans won't let me buy any blacks alive,² or else I would have some black dwarfs with parrots, such as one sees in the pictures of Paul Veronese. I should, of course, like myself, above all things, to buy a pretty white girl, with a title—and I could get great praise for doing that—only I haven't money enough.³ White girls come dear, even when one buys them only like coals, for fuel. The Duke of Bedford, indeed, bought Joan of Arc from the French, to burn, for only ten thousand pounds, and a pension of three hundred a year to the Bastard of Vendôme⁴—and I could and would have given that for her, and not burnt her; but one hasn't such a chance every day. *Will* you, any of you, have the goodness—beggars, clergymen, workmen, seraphic doctors, Mr. Mill, Mr. Fawcett, or the Politico-Economic Professor of my own University—I challenge you, I beseech you, all and singly, to tell me what I am to do with my money.

8. I mean, indeed, to give you my own poor opinion on the subject in May;⁵ though I feel the more embarrassed in the thought of doing so, because, in this present April, I am so much a fool as not even to know clearly whether I have got any money or not. I know, indeed, that things go on at present as if I had; but it seems to me that there must be a mistake somewhere, and that some

¹ [See Letter 2, § 10 (p. 37).]

² [Compare below, p. 245; and for Ruskin's attitude on the question of slavery, see Vol. XVII. p. 254 *n.*]

³ [For a later reference to this passage, see Letter 91, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 445).]

⁴ [Ruskin here follows many of the historians into an error. The individual into whose hands Joan of Arc had fallen at Compiègne (May 24, 1430) was not of royal blood, "the bastard of Vendôme," but a man-at-arms, in the service of John of Luxembourg, and he is called in contemporary documents "a bastard of Wandonne" (now Wandomme, in the Pas-de-Calais). John, Duke of Bedford, the English Regent in France, bought the Maid (through Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, as intermediary), the 10,000 *livres* going to John of Luxembourg, and the pension to her actual captor, "the bastard." She was then handed over to the Inquisition, and burnt (May 30, 1431). See the collection of documents, edited by Jules Quicherat, under the title *Procès de condamnation et de réhabilitation de Jeanne d' Arc* (Paris, 5 vols., 1841–1849), vol. i. p. 13 *n.*, and vol. iii. p. 134.]

⁵ [See Letter 5, §§ 20, 21 (pp. 95–97).]

day it will be found out. For instance, I have seven thousand pounds in what we call the Funds or Founded things; but I am not comfortable about the Founding of them. All that I can see of them is a square bit of paper, with some ugly printing on it, and all that I know of them is that this bit of paper gives me a right to tax you every year, and make you pay me two hundred pounds out of your wages; which is very pleasant for me: but how long will you be pleased to do so? Suppose it should occur to you, any summer's day, that you had better not? Where would my seven thousand pounds be? In fact, where are they now? We call ourselves a rich people; but you see this seven thousand pounds of mine has no real existence;—it only means that you, the workers, are poorer by two hundred pounds a year than you would be if I hadn't got it. And this is surely a very odd kind of money for a country to boast of. Well, then, besides this, I have a bit of low land at Greenwich,¹ which, as far as I see anything of it, is not money at all, but only mud; and would be of as little use to me as my handful of gravel in the drawer, if it were not that an ingenious person has found out that he can make chimney-pots of it; and, every quarter, he brings me fifteen pounds off the price of his chimney-pots, so that I am always sympathetically glad when there's a high wind, because then I know my ingenious friend's business is thriving. But suppose it should come into his head, in any less windy month than this April, that he had better bring me none of the price of his chimneys? And even though he should go on, as I hope he will, patiently,—(and I always give him a glass of wine when he brings me the fifteen pounds),—is this really to be called money of mine? And is the country any richer because, when anybody's chimney-pot is blown down in Greenwich, he must pay something extra, to me, before he can put it on again?

Then, also, I have some houses in Marylebone, which

¹ [For further account of the pottery at Greenwich and houses in Marylebone, see Letter 76, § 20 (Vol. XXIX. p. 102).]

though indeed very ugly and miserable, yet, so far as they are actual beams and brick-bats put into shape, I might have imagined to be real property; only, you know, Mr. Mill says that people who build houses don't produce a commodity, but only do us a service.¹ So I suppose my houses are not "utilities embodied in material objects" (and indeed they don't look much like it); but I know I have the right to keep anybody from living in them unless they pay me; only suppose some day the Irish faith, that people ought to be lodged for nothing, should become an English one also—where would my money be? Where is it now, except as a chronic abstraction from other people's earnings?

9. So again, I have some land in Yorkshire²—some Bank "Stock" (I don't in the least know what *that* is)—and the like; but whenever I examine into these possessions, I find they melt into one or another form of future taxation, and that I am always sitting (if I were working I shouldn't mind, but I am only sitting) at the receipt of Custom, and a Publican as well as a sinner.³ And then to embarrass the business further yet, I am quite at variance with other people about the place where this money, whatever it is, comes from. The *Spectator*, for instance, in its article of 25th June of last year, on Mr. Goschen's "lucid and forcible speech of Friday-week," says that "the country is once more getting rich, and the money is filtering downwards to the actual workers."⁴ But whence, then, did it filter down to us, the actual idlers? This is really a question very appropriate for April. For such golden rain raineth *not*

¹ [See above, p. 33 n.]

² [Ruskin in his copy marks this statement for correction. No land in Yorkshire is mentioned in the full account of his property in Letter 76 (Vol. XXIX. p. 100), nor do his representatives know of any such possession. For the Bank Stock, see, again, Letter 76 (Vol. XXIX. p. 99 n.).]

³ [Matthew ix. 9, 11.]

⁴ ["Mr. Goschen on the Condition of England," vol. 43, p. 716. The article is reprinted in Letter 48, § 21 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 220-221). For another reference to the article, see Letter 7, § 14 (p. 127). The speech in question was made by Mr. Goschen, as President of the Poor Law Board, in the House of Commons on June 17, on a motion by Mr. M'Cullagh Torrens calling attention to "the continued want of employment."]

every day,¹ but in a showery and capricious manner, out of heaven, upon us; mostly, as far as I can judge, rather pouring down than filtering upon idle persons, and running in thinner driblets, but I hope purer for the filtering process, to the “actual workers.” But where *does* it come from? and in the times of drought between the showers, where does it go to? “The country is getting rich again,” says the *Spectator*; but then, if the April clouds fail, may it get poor again? And when it again becomes poor,—when, last 25th of June, it *was* poor,—what becomes, or had become, of the money? Was it verily lost, or only torpid in the winter of our discontent?² or was it sown and buried in corruption,³ to be raised in a multifold power? When we are in a panic about our money, what do we think is going to happen to it? Can no economist teach us to keep it safe after we have once got it? nor any “beloved physician”⁴—as I read the late Sir James Simpson is called in Edinburgh⁵—guard even our solid gold against death, or at least, fits of an apoplectic character, alarming to the family?

10. All these questions trouble me greatly; but still to me the strangest point in the whole matter is, that though we idlers always speak as if we were enriched by Heaven, and became ministers of its bounty to *you*; if ever you think the ministry slack, and take to definite pillage of us, no good ever comes of it to you; but the sources of wealth seem to be stopped instantly, and you are reduced to the small gain of making gloves of our skins;⁶ while, on the contrary, as long as we continue pillaging you, there seems no end to the profitableness of the business; but always, however bare we strip you, presently, more, to be had.

¹ [“For the rain it raineth every day” (*Twelfth Night*, Act v. sc. 1).]

² [*King Richard III.*, Act i. sc. 1.]

³ [1 Corinthians xv. 42.]

⁴ [Colossians iv. 14.]

⁵ [Sir James Young Simpson (1811–1870); introduced use of chloroform, 1847; created a baronet and D.C.L. of Oxford, 1866; received a public funeral at Edinburgh.]

⁶ [“At Meudon there was a Tannery of Human Skins” (Carlyle’s *French Revolution*, vol. iii. book v. ch. vii.).]

For instance—just read this little bit out of Froissart—about the English army in France before the battle of Crécy:¹—

“We will now return to the expedition of the King of England. Sir Godfrey de Harcourt, as marshal, advanced before the King, with the vanguard of five hundred armed men and two thousand archers, and rode on for six or seven leagues’ distance from the main army, burning and destroying the country. They found it rich and plentiful, abounding in all things; the barns full of every sort of corn, and the houses with riches: the inhabitants at their ease, having cars, carts, horses, swine, sheep, and everything in abundance which the country afforded. They seized whatever they chose of all these good things, and brought them to the King’s army; but the soldiers did not give any account to their officers, or to those appointed by the King, of the gold and silver they took, which they kept to themselves. When they were come back, with all their booty safely packed in waggons, the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Suffolk, the Lord Thomas Holland, and the Lord Reginald Cobham, took their march, with their battalion on the right, burning and destroying the country in the same way that Sir Godfrey de Harcourt was doing. The King marched, with the main body, between these two battalions; and every night they all encamped together.

“The King of England and Prince of Wales had, in their battalion, about three thousand men-at-arms, six thousand archers, ten thousand infantry, without counting those that were under the marshals; and they marched on in the manner I have before mentioned, burning and destroying the country, but without breaking their line of battle. They did not turn towards Coutances, but advanced to St. Lo, in Coutantin, which in those days was a very rich and commercial town, and worth three such towns as Coutances. In the town of St. Lo was much drapery, and many wealthy inhabitants; among them you might count eight or nine score that were engaged in commerce. When the King of England was come near to the town, he encamped; he would not lodge in it for fear of fire. He sent, therefore, his advanced guard forward, who soon conquered it, at a trifling loss, and completely plundered it. No one can imagine the quantity of riches they found in it, nor the number of bales of cloth. If there had been any purchasers, they might have bought enough at a very cheap rate.

“The English then advanced towards Caen, which is a much larger town, stronger, and fuller of draperies and all other sorts of merchandize, rich citizens, noble dames and damsels, and fine churches.

“On this day (Froissart does not say what day) the English rose very early, and made themselves ready to march to Caen: the King heard mass before sunrise, and afterwards mounting his horse, with the Prince of Wales,

¹ [For the purport of this extract, see Letters 7, § 13 (p. 127), 45, § 13 *n.* (Vol. XXVIII. p. 158), and 78, § 11 (Vol. XXIX. p. 135). The passages are taken, with some abbreviations, from *Sir John Froissart’s Chronicles*, newly translated by Thomas Johnes, 1803, chaps. cxx.–cxxv. (vol. i. pp. 302, 304–305, 306, 307, 308, 309–311, 312).]

and Sir Godfrey de Harcourt (who was marshal and director of the army), marched forward in order of battle. The battalion of the marshals led the van, and came near to the handsome town of Caen.

“When the townsmen, who had taken the field, perceived the English advancing, with banners and pennons flying in abundance, and saw those archers whom they had not been accustomed to, they were so frightened that they betook themselves to flight, and ran for the town in great disorder.

“The English, who were after the runaways, made great havoc; for they spared none.

“Those inhabitants who had taken refuge in the garrets, flung down from them, in these narrow streets, stones, benches, and whatever they could lay hands on; so that they killed and wounded upwards of five hundred of the English, which so enraged the King of England, when he received the reports in the evening, that he ordered the remainder of the inhabitants to be put to the sword, and the town burnt. But Sir Godfrey de Harcourt said to him: ‘Dear sir, assuage somewhat of your anger, and be satisfied with what has already been done. You have a long journey yet to make before you arrive at Calais, whither it is your intention to go: and there are in this town a great number of inhabitants, who will defend themselves obstinately in their houses, if you force them to it: besides, it will cost you many lives before the town can be destroyed, which may put a stop to your expedition to Calais, and it will not redound to your honour: therefore be sparing of your men, for in a month’s time you will have call for them.’ The King replied: ‘Sir Godfrey, you are our marshal; therefore order as you please; for this time we wish not to interfere.’

“Sir Godfrey then rode through the streets, his banner displayed before him, and ordered, in the King’s name, that no one should dare, under pain of immediate death, to insult or hurt man or woman of the town, or attempt to set fire to any part of it. Several of the inhabitants, on hearing this proclamation, received the English into their houses; and others opened their coffers to them, giving up their all, since they were assured of their lives. However, there were, in spite of these orders, many atrocious thefts and murders committed. The English continued masters of the town for three days; in this time, they amassed great wealth, which they sent in barges down the river of Estreham, to St. Sauveur, two leagues off, where their fleet was. The Earl of Huntingdon made preparations therefore, with the two hundred men-at-arms and his four hundred archers, to carry over to England their riches and prisoners. The King purchased, from Sir Thomas Holland and his companions, the Constable of France and the Earl of Tancarville, and paid down twenty thousand nobles for them.

“When the King had finished his business in Caen, and sent his fleet to England, loaded with cloths, jewels, gold and silver plate, and a quantity of other riches, and upwards of sixty knights, with three hundred able citizens, prisoners; he then left his quarters and continued his march as before, his two marshals on his right and left, burning and destroying all the flat country. He took the road to Evreux, but found he could not gain anything there, as it was well fortified. He went on towards another

town called Louviers, which was in Normandy, and where there were many manufactories of cloth: it was rich and commercial. The English won it easily, as it was not inclosed; and having entered the town, it was plundered without opposition. They collected much wealth there; and, after they had done what they pleased, they marched on into the county of Evreux, where they burnt everything except the fortified towns and castles, which the King left unattacked, as he was desirous of sparing his men and artillery. He therefore made for the banks of the Seine, in his approach to Rouen, where there were plenty of men-at-arms from Normandy, under the command of the Earl of Harcourt, brother to Sir Godfrey, and the Earl of Dreux.

“The English did not march direct towards Rouen, but went to Gisors, which has a strong castle, and burnt the town. After this, they destroyed Vernon, and all the country between Rouen and Pont-de-l’Arche: they then came to Mantes and Meulan, which they treated in the same manner, and ravaged all the country round about.

“They passed by the strong castle of Roulleboise, and everywhere found the bridges on the Seine broken down. They pushed forward until they came to Poissy, where the bridge was also destroyed; but the beams and other parts of it were lying in the river.

“The King of England remained at the nunnery of Poissy to the middle of August, and celebrated there the feast of the Virgin Mary.”

11. It all reads at first, you see, just like a piece out of the newspapers of last month; but there are material differences, notwithstanding. We fight inelegantly as well as expensively, with machines instead of bow and spear; we kill about a thousand now to the score then, in settling any quarrel¹—(Agincourt was won with the loss of less than a hundred men; only 25,000 English altogether were engaged at Crécy; and 12,000, some say only 8000, at Poitiers); we kill with far ghastlier wounds, crashing bones and flesh together; we leave our wounded necessarily for days and nights in heaps on the fields of battle; we pillage districts twenty times as large, and with completer destruction of more valuable property; and with a destruction as irreparable as it is complete; for if the French or English, then, burnt a church one day, they could build a prettier one the next; but the modern Prussians couldn’t even build so

¹ [This was a subject in which Ruskin was much interested. It has been contended that, in proportion at least to the number of combatants engaged, war is less sanguinary than it was. On this aspect of the question Ruskin wrote a letter in 1876 to *Fraser’s Magazine* (reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. ii. pp. 43 *seq.*, and in a later volume of this edition).]

much as an imitation of one; we rob on credit, by requisition, with ingenious mercantile prolongations of claim; and we improve contention of arms with contention of tongues, and are able to multiply the rancour of cowardice, and mischief of lying, in universal and permanent print; and so we lose our tempers as well as our money, and become indecent in behaviour as in raggedness; for, whereas, in old times, two nations separated by a little pebbly stream like the Tweed, or even the two halves of one nation, separated by thirty fathoms' depth of salt water (for most of the English knights and all the English kings were French by race, and the best of them by birth also)—would go on pillaging and killing each other century after century, without the slightest ill-feeling towards, or disrespect for, one another,—we can neither give anybody a beating courteously, nor take one in good part, or without screaming and lying about it: and finally, we add to these perfected Follies of Action more finely perfected Follies of Inaction; and contrive hitherto unheard-of ways of being wretched through the very abundance of peace; our workmen, here, vowing themselves to idleness, lest they should lower Wages, and there, being condemned by their parishes to idleness, lest they should lower Prices;¹ while outside the workhouse all the parishioners are buying anything nasty, so that it be cheap; and, in a word, under the seraphic teaching of Mr. Mill, we have determined at last that it is not Destruction, but Production, that is the cause of human distress; and the “Mutual and Co-operative Colonization Company” declares, ungrammatically but distinctly, in its circular sent to me on the 13th of last month, as a matter universally admitted, even among Cabinet Ministers—“that it is in the greater increasing power of production and distribution as compared with demand, enabling the few to do the work of many, that the active cause of the wide-spread poverty among the producing and lower-middle classes lay, which entails such enormous burdens on the Nation, and

¹ [On this subject, see above, p. 48.]

exhibits our boasted progress in the light of a monstrous Sham.”¹

12. Nevertheless, however much we have magnified and multiplied the follies of the past, the primal and essential principles of pillage have always been accepted; and from the days when England lay so waste under that worthy and economical King who “called his tailor lown,”² that “whole families, after sustaining life as long as they could by eating roots, and the flesh of dogs and horses, at last died of hunger, and you might see many pleasant villages without a single inhabitant of either sex,”³ while little Harry Switch-of-broom sate learning to spell in Bristol Castle (taught, I think, properly by his good uncle the preceptorial use of his name-plant, though they say the first Harry was the finer clerk⁴), and his mother, dressed all in white, escaped from Oxford over the snow in the moonlight, through Bagley Wood here, to Abingdon;⁵ and under the snows, by Woodstock, the buds were growing for the bower of his Rose,⁶—from that day to this, when the villages round Paris, as to food-supply, are, by the blessing of God, as they then were round London—Kings have for the most part desired to win that pretty name of “Switch-of-Broom” rather by habit of growing in waste places; or even emulating the Vision of Dion in “sweeping—diligently sweeping,”⁷

¹ [“Cf. Letter 5, §§ 3 and 11” (pp. 80, 88).—*MS. note in Author’s copy.*]

² [King Stephen: see *Othello*, Act ii. sc. 3.]

³ [So a contemporary historian, in *Gesta Regis Stephani*, p. 961; quoted by Henry, book iii. ch. i. § 2 (vol. iii. p. 80).]

⁴ [“Prince Henry had now (A.D. 1147) resided in the castle of Bristol above four years, prosecuting his studies under the care of his uncle Robert, the most learned as well as the most virtuous nobleman of his age” (Henry, *ibid.*, p. 79). For the first Harry’s name of *Beauclerc* (the Fine Scholar), see *ibid.*, p. 59).]

⁵ [“The river being frozen over, and the ground covered with snow, she dressed herself and three trusty knights in white, and issuing silently about midnight, at a postern of the castle, passed all the enemies’ sentinels unobserved, travelled on foot to Abington, and from thence on horseback to Wallingford” (Henry, *ibid.*, p. 78).]

⁶ [See above, Letter 3, § 9 (p. 53).]

⁷ [Wordsworth’s *Dion* (see Plutarch’s *Lives*), iv.:—

“So, but from toil less sign of profit reaping,
The sullen spectre to her purpose bowed,
Sweeping—vehemently sweeping.”]

than by attaining the other virtue of the *Planta Genista*, set forth by Virgil and Pliny, that it is pliant, and rich in honey;¹ the Lion-hearts of them seldom proving profitable to you, even so much as the stomach of Samson's Lion, or rendering it a soluble enigma in our Israel, that "out of the eater came forth meat";² nor has it been only your Kings who have thus made you pay for their guidance through the world, but your ecclesiastics have also made you pay for guidance out of it—particularly when it grew dark, and the signpost was illegible where the upper and lower roads divided;—so that as far as I can read or calculate, dying has been even more expensive to you than living;³ and then, to finish the business, as your virtues have been made costly to you by the clergyman, so your vices have been made costly to you by the lawyers; and you have one entire learned profession living on your sins,⁴ and the other on your repentance. So that it is no wonder that, things having gone on thus for a long time, you begin to think that you would rather live as sheep without any shepherd,⁵ and that having paid so dearly for your instruction in religion and law, you should now set your hope on a state of instruction in Irreligion and Liberty, which is, indeed, a form of education to be had for nothing, alike by the children of the Rich and Poor; the saplings of the tree that was to be desired to make us wise,⁶ growing now in copsewood on the hills, or even by the roadsides, in a Republican-Plantagenet manner, blossoming into cheapest gold, either for coins, which of course you Republicans will call, not Nobles, but Ignobles; or crowns, second and third hand—(head, I should say)—supplied punctually on demand, with liberal reduction on quantity; the roads themselves beautifully public—tramwayed, perhaps—and with

¹ [*Georgics*, ii. 12 (*lentaque genestæ*); Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxiv. 40 (*flores apibus gratissimi*).]

² [Judges xiv. 14.]

³ [Compare Letters 10, § 11 (pp. 172–173) and 31 (p. 580).]

⁴ [On lawyers, see above, p. 55.]

⁵ [See 1 Kings xxii. 17; Matthew ix. 36.]

⁶ [Genesis iii. 6.]

gates set open enough for all men to the free, outer, better world,
 your chosen guide preceding you merrily, thus¹—with music
 and dancing.²



Fig. 2

You have always danced too willingly, poor friends, to that
 player on the viol. We will try to hear, far away, a faint note or
 two from a more chief musician on stringed instruments, in May,
 when the time of the Singing of Birds is come.³

Faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ [A facsimile by Arthur Burgess of the third woodcut ("The Expulsion from Eden")
 by Holbein in the "Dance of Death."]

² [1 Samuel xviii. 6.]

³ [Canticles ii. 12.]

LETTER 5¹

THE WHITE-THORN BLOSSOM²

“For lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone,
The flowers appear on the earth,
The time of the singing of birds is come,

Arise, O my fair one, my dove,
And come.”³

DENMARK HILL,
1st May, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—It has been asked of me, very justly, why I have hitherto written to you of things you were little likely to care for, in words which it was difficult for you to understand.⁴

I have no fear but that you will one day understand all my poor words,—the saddest of them, perhaps, too well. But I have great fear that you may never come to understand these written above, which are part of a king’s love-song, in one sweet May, of many long since gone.

I fear that for you the wild winter’s rain may never pass,—the flowers never appear on the earth;—that for you no bird may ever sing;—for you no perfect Love arise, and fulfil your life in peace.

“And why not for us, as for others?” will you answer me so, and take my fear for you as an insult?

Nay, it is no insult;—nor am I happier than you. For me, the birds do not sing, nor ever will. But they would, for you, if you cared to have it so. When I told you

¹ [For Carlyle’s comments on this letter, see above, Introduction, p. lxxxvi.]

² [The title is suggested by the date of the letter, May Day, the festival of Merrie England.]

³ [Canticles ii. 11–13.]

⁴ [Compare below, p. 181.]



A. S. S. & Co. Sc.

HOPE

Drawn thus by Giotto in the Chapel of the Arena at Padua.

that you would never understand that love-song, I meant only that you would not desire to understand it.

2. Are you again indignant with me? Do you think, though you should labour, and grieve, and be trodden down in dishonour all your days, at least you can keep that one joy of Love, and that one honour of Home? Had you, indeed, kept that, you had kept all. But no men yet, in the history of the race, have lost it so piteously. In many a country, and many an age, women have been compelled to labour for their husbands' wealth, or bread; but never until now were they so homeless as to say, like the poor Samaritan, "I have no husband."¹ Women of every country and people have sustained without complaint the labour of fellowship: for the women of the latter days in England it has been reserved to claim the privilege of isolation.

This, then, is the end of your universal education and civilization, and contempt of the ignorance of the Middle Ages, and of their chivalry. Not only do you declare yourselves too indolent to labour for daughters and wives, and too poor to support them; but you have made the neglected and distracted creatures hold it for an honour to be independent of you, and shriek for some hold of the mattock for themselves. Believe it or not, as you may, there has not been so low a level of thought reached by any race, since they grew to be male and female out of star-fish, or chickweed, or whatever else they have been made from, by natural selection,—according to modern science.

3. That modern science also, Economic and of other kinds, has reached its climax at last. For it seems to be the appointed function of the nineteenth century to exhibit in all things the elect pattern of perfect Folly, for a warning to the farthest future. Thus the statement of principle which I quoted to you in my last letter,² from the circular of the Emigration Society, that it is over-production which is the cause of distress, is accurately the most foolish thing,

¹ [John iv. 17.]

² [See Letter 4, § 11 (pp. 75–76).]

not only hitherto ever said by men, but which it is possible for men ever to say, respecting their own business. It is a kind of opposite pole (or negative acme of mortal stupidity) to Newton's discovery of gravitation as an acme of mortal wisdom:—as no wise being on earth will ever be able to make such another wise discovery, so no foolish being on earth will ever be capable of saying such another foolish thing, through all the ages.

4. And the same crisis has been exactly reached by our natural science and by our art. It has several times chanced to me, since I began these papers, to have the exact thing shown or brought to me that I wanted for illustration,¹ just in time*—and it happened that on the very day on which I published my last letter, I had to go to the Kensington Museum; and there I saw the most perfectly and roundly ill-done thing which, as yet, in my whole life I ever saw produced by art. It had a tablet in front of it, bearing this inscription:—

“Statue in black and white marble, a Newfoundland Dog standing on a Serpent, which rests on a marble cushion, the pedestal ornamented with pietra dura fruits in relief.—*English. Present Century*. No. I.”²

It was so very right for me, the Kensington people having been good enough to number it “I.,” the thing itself being almost incredible in its one-ness; and, indeed, such a punctual accent over the iota of Miscreation,—so absolutely and exquisitely miscreant,³ that I am not myself

* Here is another curious instance: I have but a minute ago finished correcting these sheets, and take up the *Times* of this morning, April 21st, and find in it the suggestion by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the removal of exemption from taxation of Agricultural horses and carts,⁴ in the very nick of time to connect it, as a proposal for economic practice, with the statement of economic principle respecting Production, quoted on last page.

¹ [See, for instance, above, p. 42; and compare, below, p. 360.]

² [For another reference to this statue, see *The Eagle's Nest*, § 88 (Vol. XXII. p. 187).]

³ [Ruskin in his copy puts against this word, “Needs a note.” He explains elsewhere that the word “miscreant” means etymologically “unbelieving” (so Sir T. More, *Works*, p. 774 a: “all miscreant paynynms”): see below, p. 466; and Vol. XXVIII. p. 762. Compare also *Deucalion*, i. ch. vii. § 34 (Vol. XXVI. p. 188).]

⁴ [In his Budget speech (April 20) Lowe had referred regretfully to the exemptions in question. He disapproved of them, but “did not suppose the Committee

capable of conceiving a Number two, or three, or any rivalship or association with it whatsoever. The extremity of its unvirtue consisted, observe, mainly in the quantity of instruction which was abused in it. It showed that the persons who produced it had seen everything, and practised everything; and misunderstood everything they saw, and misapplied everything they did. They had seen Roman work, and Florentine work, and Byzantine work, and Gothic work; and misunderstanding of everything had passed through them as the mud does through earthworms, and here at last was their worm-cast of a Production.

5. But the second chance that came to me that day, was more significant still. From the Kensington Museum I went to an afternoon tea, at a house where I was sure to meet some nice people. And among the first I met was an old friend who had been hearing some lectures on botany at the Kensington Museum, and been delighted by them. She is the kind of person who gets good out of everything, and she was quite right in being delighted; besides that, as I found by her account of them, the lectures were really interesting, and pleasantly given. She had expected botany to be dull, and had not found it so, and “had learned so much.” On hearing this, I proceeded naturally to inquire what; for my idea of her was that before she went to the lectures at all, she had known more botany than she was likely to learn by them. So she told me that she had learned first of all that “there were seven sorts of leaves.” Now I have always a great suspicion of the number Seven; because when I wrote the *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, it required all the ingenuity I was master of to prevent them from becoming Eight, or even Nine, on my hands.¹ So I thought to myself that it would be very charming if there were only seven sorts of leaves; but that, perhaps, if one looked the woods and forests of the

would assist him in doing away with them.” For another reference to the same Budget speech, see below, p. 101.]

¹ [Compare Vol. VIII. p. 138 *n.*]

world carefully through, it was just possible that one might discover as many as eight sorts; and then where would my friend's new knowledge of Botany be? So I said, "That was very pretty; but what more?" Then my friend told me that she had no idea, before, that petals were leaves.¹ On which, I thought to myself that it would not have been any great harm to her if she had remained under her old impression that petals were petals. But I said, "That was very pretty, too; and what more?" So then my friend told me that the lecturer said, "the object of his lectures would be entirely accomplished if he could convince his hearers that there was no such thing as a flower." Now, in that sentence you have the most perfect and admirable summary given you of the general temper and purposes of modern science. It gives lectures on Botany, of which the object is to show that there is no such thing as a flower; on Humanity, to show that there is no such thing as a Man; and on Theology, to show there is no such thing as a God. No such thing as a Man, but only a Mechanism; no such thing as a God, but only a series of forces. The two faiths are essentially one: if you feel yourself to be only a machine, constructed to be a Regulator of minor machinery, you will put your statue of such science on your Holborn Viaduct,² and necessarily recognize only major machinery as regulating *you*.

6. I must explain the real meaning to you, however, of that saying of the Botanical lecturer, for it has a wide bearing. Some fifty years ago the poet Goethe discovered that all the parts of plants had a kind of common nature, and would change into each other.³ Now this was a true discovery, and a notable one; and you will find that, in fact, all plants are composed of essentially two parts—the leaf and root⁴—one loving the light, the other darkness; one

¹ [The account of the lecture here given was not, it seems, strictly accurate: see below, p. 125 *n*.]

² [Compare Letter 4, § 4 (p. 63).]

³ [*Versuch die Metamorphose der Pflanzen zu erklären*, first published at Gotha in 1790.]

⁴ [Compare *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 218.]

liking to be clean, the other to be dirty; one liking to grow for the most part up, the other for the most part down; and each having faculties and purposes of its own. But the pure one which loves the light has, above all things, the purpose of being married to another leaf, and having child-leaves, and children's children of leaves, to make the earth fair for ever. And when the leaves marry, they put on wedding-ropes, and are more glorious than Solomon in all his glory,¹ and they have feasts of honey, and we call them "Flowers."

7. In a certain sense, therefore, you see the lecturer was quite right. There are no such things as Flowers—there are only—gladdened Leaves. Nay, farther than this, there may be a dignity in the less happy, but unwithering leaf, which is, in some sort, better than the brief lily of its bloom;—which the great poets always knew,—well;—Chaucer, before Goethe; and the writer of the first Psalm, before Chaucer.² The Botanical lecturer was, in a deeper sense than he knew, right.

But in the deepest sense of all, the Botanical lecturer was, to the extremity of wrongness, wrong; for leaf, and root, and fruit, exist, all of them, only—that there may be flowers.³ He disregarded the life and passion of the creature, which were its essence. Had he looked for these, he would have recognized that in the thought of Nature herself, there is, in a plant, nothing else but its flowers.

Now in exactly the sense that modern Science declares there is no such thing as a Flower, it has declared there is no such thing as a Man, but only a transitional form of Ascidiæ and apes. It may, or may not be true—it is not of the smallest consequence whether it be or not. The real fact is, that, rightly seen with human eyes, there is nothing else but man; that all animals and beings beside

¹ [Matthew vi. 29.]

² ["His leaf also shall not wither" (Psalms i. 3); for other references to Chaucer's poem, *The Flower and the Leaf*, see Vol. VII. pp. 474, 477.]

³ [Compare *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. pp. 249, 250.]

him are only made that they may change into him; that the world truly exists only in the presence of Man, acts only in the passion of Man. The essence of light is in his eyes,—the centre of Force in his soul,—the pertinence* of action in his deeds.

And all true science—which my Savoyard guide rightly scorned me when he thought I had not,—all true science is “savoir vivre.”¹ But all your modern science is the contrary of that. It is “savoir mourir.”†

8. And of its very discoveries, such as they are, it cannot make use.

That telegraphic signalling was a discovery; and conceivably, some day, may be a useful one. And there was some excuse for your being a little proud when, about last sixth of April² (Cœur-de-Lion’s death-day, and Albert Dürer’s), you knotted a copper wire all the way to Bombay, and flashed a message along it, and back.

But what was the message, and what the answer? Is India the better for what you said to her? Are you the better for what she replied?

If not, you have only wasted an all-round-the-world’s length of copper wire,—which is, indeed, about the sum of your doing. If you had had, perchance, two words of common-sense to say, though you had taken wearisome time and trouble to send them;—though you had written them slowly in gold, and sealed them with a hundred seals,

* Observe the use of the word “pertinence”; meaning action which “pertains” or properly belongs to the agent and aim, as opposed to accidental and impertinent action.³

† Note this passage, one of the most important of the book, and compare Letter 4, §§ 3 and 4 (pp. 62–63).—*Author’s Note in the Index to Vols. I. and II.*

¹ [See Letter 4, § 2 (p. 61).]

² [That is, in 1870. The *Times* City article of April 7, 1870, contains the following note: “Telegraphic communication with India appears now to be efficiently established. A message was received to-day through the British-Indian Submarine, at 1 P.M. from Bombay, dated 1.35, the transit, allowing for difference of time, being thus about four hours.”]

³ [This is Ruskin’s note in the Index to vols. i. and ii., under the entry “Man, the centre of his world,” where he also inserts in the text (above, p. 84) the word “rightly” (“rightly seen with human eyes”).]

and sent a squadron of ships of the line to carry the scroll, and the squadron had fought its way round the Cape of Good Hope, through a year of storms, with loss of all its ships but one,—the two words of common-sense would have been worth the carriage, and more. But you have not anything like so much as that to say, either to India, or to any other place.¹

9. You think it a great triumph to make the sun draw brown landscapes for you. That was also a discovery, and some day may be useful.² But the sun had drawn landscapes before for you, not in brown, but in green, and blue, and all imaginable colours, here in England. Not one of you ever looked at them then; not one of you cares for the loss of them now, when you have shut the sun out with smoke, so that he can draw nothing more, except brown blots through a hole in a box. There was a rocky valley between Buxton and Bakewell, once upon a time, divine as the Vale of Tempe; you might have seen the Gods there morning and evening—Apollo and all the sweet Muses of the light—walking in fair procession on the lawns of it, and to and fro among the pinnacles of its crags. You cared neither for Gods nor grass, but for cash (which you did not know the way to get); you thought you could get it by what the *Times* calls “Railroad Enterprise.” You Enterprised a Railroad through the valley—you blasted its rocks away, heaped thousands of tons of shale into its lovely stream. The valley is gone, and the Gods with it; and now, every fool in Buxton can be at Bakewell in half-an-hour, and every fool in Bakewell at Buxton; which you think a lucrative process of exchange—you Fools Everywhere.³

To talk at a distance, when you have nothing to say, though you were ever so near; to go fast from this place

¹ [“Said in *Stones of Venice*; and compare Letter 29, § 11” (p. 537).—*MS. note in Author’s copy*. The real reference is, however, to *Modern Painters*, vol. iii., where Ruskin quotes Emerson to like effect: see Vol. V. p. 381 and *n.*]

² [For Ruskin’s personal interest in photography, see Vol. III. p. 210 *n.*; for discussions of its relation to art, Vol. XX. pp. 27, 165, 363.]

³ [Ruskin reprinted § 9 in *Præterita*, iii. § 84 *n.*]

to that, with nothing to do either at one or the other: these are powers certainly. Much more, power of increased Production, if you, indeed, had got it, would be something to boast of. But are you so entirely sure that you *have* got it—that the mortal disease of plenty, and afflictive affluence of good things, are all you have to dread?

10. Observe. A man and a woman, with their children, properly trained, are able easily to cultivate as much ground as will feed them; to build as much wall and roof as will lodge them, and to spin and weave as much cloth as will clothe them. They can all be perfectly happy and healthy in doing this. Supposing that they invent machinery which will build, plough, thresh, cook, and weave, and that they have none of these things any more to do, but may read, or play croquet, or cricket, all day long, I believe myself that they will neither be so good nor so happy as without the machines. But I waive my belief in this matter for the time. I will assume that they become more refined and moral persons, and that idleness is in future to be the mother of all good. But observe, I repeat, the power of your machine is only in enabling them to be idle. It will not enable them to live better than they did before, nor to live in greater numbers. Get your heads quite clear on this matter. Out of so much ground, only so much living is to be got, with or without machinery. You may set a million of steam-ploughs to work on an acre, if you like—out of that acre only a given number of grains of corn will grow, scratch or scorch it as you will. So that the question is not at all whether, by having more machines, more of you can live. No machines will increase the possibilities of life. They only increase the possibilities of idleness. Suppose, for instance, you could get the oxen in your plough driven by a goblin, who would ask for no pay, not even a cream bowl,¹—(you have nearly managed to get it driven

¹ [Milton's *L'Allegro*:—

“Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set.”

The passage is again referred to in Letter 61, § 20 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 506).]

by an iron goblin, as it is);—Well, your furrow will take no more seeds than if you had held the stilts yourself. But, instead of holding them, you sit, I presume, on a bank beside the field, under an eglantine;—watch the goblin at his work, and read poetry. Meantime, your wife in the house has also got a goblin to weave and wash for her. And she is lying on the sofa, reading poetry.

11. Now, as I said, I don't believe you would be happier so, but I am willing to believe it; only, since you are already such brave mechanists, show me at least one or two places where you *are* happier. Let me see one small example of approach to this seraphic condition. *I* can show *you* examples, millions of them, of happy people, made happy by their own industry. Farm after farm I can show you, in Bavaria, Switzerland, the Tyrol, and such other places, where men and women are perfectly happy and good, without any iron servants. Show me, therefore, some English family, with its fiery familiar, happier than these. Or bring me,—for I am not invincible by any kind of evidence,—bring me the testimony of an English family or two to their increased felicity. Or if you cannot do so much as that, can you convince even themselves of it? They *are* perhaps happy, if only they knew how happy they were; Virgil thought so, long ago, of simple rustics;¹ but you hear at present your steam-propelled rustics are crying out that they are anything else than happy, and that they regard their boasted progress “in the light of a monstrous Sham.”² I must tell you one little thing, however, which greatly perplexes my imagination of the relieved ploughman sitting under his rose bower, reading poetry. I have told it you before indeed, but I forget where.³ There was really a great festivity, and expression of satisfaction in the new order of things, down in Cumberland, a little while ago; some first of May, I

¹ [*Georgics*, ii. 458 (“O fortunatos nimium sua si bona norint”).]

² [See Letter 4, § 11 (p. 76).]

³ [*Crown of Wild Olive*, § 152 (Vol. XVIII. p. 508).]

think it was, a country festival, such as the old heathens, who had no iron servants, used to keep with piping and dancing. So I thought, from the liberated country people—their work all done for them by goblins—we should have some extraordinary piping and dancing. But there was no dancing at all, and they could not even provide their own piping. They had their goblin to pipe for them. They walked in procession after their steam-plough, and their steam-plough whistled to them occasionally in the most melodious manner it could. Which seemed to me, indeed, a return to more than Arcadian simplicity; for in old Arcadia, ploughboys truly whistled as they went, for want of thought;¹ whereas, here was verily a large company walking without thought, but not having any more even the capacity of doing their own whistling.²

12. But next, as to the inside of the house. Before you got your power-looms, a woman could always make herself a chemise and petticoat of bright and pretty appearance. I have seen a Bavarian peasant-woman at church in Munich, looking a much grander creature, and more beautifully dressed, than any of the crossed and embroidered angels in Hess's high-art frescoes;³ (which happened to be just above her, so that I could look from one to the other). Well, here you are, in England, served by household demons, with five hundred fingers, at least, weaving, for one that used to weave in the day of Minerva. You ought to be able to show me five hundred dresses for one that used to be; tidiness ought to have become five hundred-fold tidier; tapestry should be increased into cinque-cento-fold iridescence of tapestry. Not only your peasant-girl ought to be lying on the sofa reading poetry, but she ought to have in her wardrobe five hundred petticoats instead of one. Is

¹ [Dryden, *Cymon and Iphigenia*, 84.]

² [Compare *Time and Tide*, § 46 (Vol. XVII. p. 356); and Letter 57, § 4 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 405).]

³ [Heinrich Maria von Hess (1798–1863), an artist of the Düsseldorf school, painted the frescoes in the Allerheiligen Hofkirche at Munich. For another reference to him, written at the time of Ruskin's visit to Munich in 1859, see Vol. VII. p. liii.]

that, indeed, your issue? or are you only on a curiously crooked way to it?

13. It is just possible, indeed, that you may not have been allowed to get the use of the goblin's work—that other people may have got the use of it, and you none; because, perhaps, you have not been able to evoke goblins wholly for your own personal service: but have been borrowing goblins from the capitalist, and paying interest, in the “position of William,” on ghostly self-going planes;¹ but suppose you had laid by capital enough, yourselves, to hire all the demons in the world,—nay,—all that are inside of it; are you quite sure you know what you might best set them to work at? and what “useful things” you should command them to make for you? I told you, last month, that no economist going (whether by steam or ghost) knew what are useful things and what are not.² Very few of you know, yourselves, except by bitter experience of the want of them. And no demons, either of iron or spirit, can ever make them.

14. There are three Material things, not only useful, but essential to Life. No one “knows how to live”³ till he has got them.

These are, Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

There are three Immaterial things, not only useful, but essential to Life. No one knows how to live till he has got them.

These are, Admiration, Hope, and Love.*

* Wordsworth, *Excursion*, Book 4th; in Moxon's edition, 1857 (stupidly without numbers to lines), vol. vi. p. 135.⁴

Love, chief of the three spiritual needs, put last, as culminating, or crowning, because men must be capable of admiration and of hope before they can be capable of love. Wordsworth's verse, “We live by admiration, hope, and love,” is answered presently⁵ with the words in a reverse order—love, hope, and admiration.

¹ [See Letter 1, §§ 13, 14 (pp. 24 *seq.*.)]

² [See Letter 4, § 6 (p. 66).]

³ [Compare Letter 4, § 2 (p. 61).]

⁴ [This was the author's note to the text of *Fors*; the following passage is his note in the Index to vols. i. and ii. of *Fors*. The line from Wordsworth is quoted also in Letter 50, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 255); and in Vol. VII. p. 309, Vol. XVI. p. 154, Vol. XVII. p. 105, and Vol. XX. p. 71. Compare also Vol. XXVI. p. 338.]

⁵ [That is, five lines lower down in the same Book of the *Excursion*.]

Admiration—the power of discerning and taking delight in what is beautiful in visible Form, and lively in human Character; and, necessarily, striving to produce what is beautiful in form, and to become what is lovely in character.

Hope—the recognition, by true Foresight, of better things to be reached hereafter, whether by ourselves or others; necessarily issuing in the straightforward and undisappointable effort to advance, according to our proper power, the gaining of them.

Love, both of family and neighbour, faithful, and satisfied.

These are the six chiefly useful things to be got by Political Economy, when it *has* become a science. I will briefly tell you what modern Political Economy—the great “savoir mourir”¹—is doing with them.

15. The first three, I said, are Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

Heaven gives you the main elements of these. You can destroy them at your pleasure, or increase, almost without limit, the available quantities of them.

You can vitiate the air by your manner of life, and of death, to any extent. You might easily vitiate it so as to bring such a pestilence on the globe as would end all of you. You, or your fellows, German and French, are at present busy in vitiating it to the best of your power in every direction; chiefly at this moment with corpses, and animal and vegetable ruin in war: changing men, horses, and garden-stuff into noxious gas. But everywhere, and all day long, you are vitiating it with foul chemical exhalations; and the horrible nests, which you call towns, are little more than laboratories for the distillation into heaven of venomous smokes and smells, mixed with effluvia from decaying animal matter, and infectious miasmata from purulent disease.

On the other hand, your power of purifying the air, by

¹ [Compare above, § 7.]

dealing properly and swiftly with all substances in corruption; by absolutely forbidding noxious manufactures; and by planting in all soils the trees which cleanse and invigorate earth and atmosphere,—is literally infinite. You might make every breath of air you draw, food.

16. Secondly, your power over the rain and river-waters of the earth is infinite. You can bring rain where you will,¹ by planting wisely and tending carefully;—drought where you will, by ravage of woods and neglect of the soil. You might have the rivers of England as pure as the crystal of the rock; beautiful in falls, in lakes, in living pools; so full of fish that you might take them out with your hands instead of nets. Or you may do always as you have done now, turn every river of England into a common sewer, so that you cannot so much as baptize an English baby but with filth, unless you hold its face out in the rain; and even *that* falls dirty.

17. Then for the third, Earth,—meant to be nourishing for you, and blossoming. You have learned, about it, that there is no such thing as a flower;² and as far as your scientific hands and scientific brains, inventive of explosive and deathful, instead of blossoming and life-giving, Dust, can contrive, you have turned the Mother-Earth, Demeter,*

* Read this, for instance, concerning the Gardens of Paris: one sentence in the letter is omitted; I will give it in full elsewhere,³ with its necessary comments:—

“To the Editor of the ‘Times’

“5th April, 1871.⁴

“SIR,—As the paragraph you quoted on Monday from the *Field* gives no idea of the destruction of the gardens round Paris, if you can spare me a very little space I will endeavour to supplement it.

“The public gardens in the interior of Paris, including the planting on the greater number of the Boulevards, are in a condition perfectly surprising when one considers the sufferings even well-to-do persons had to endure for want of fuel during the siege. Some of them, like the little oases in the

¹ [Compare Letter 85, §§ 5, 6 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 323–324).]

² [See above, p. 83.]

³ [This, however, was not done.]

⁴ [The letter itself is undated; it appeared in the *Times* of April 5.]

into the Avenger-Earth, Tisiphone¹—with the voice of your brother's blood crying out of it,² in one wild harmony round all its murderous sphere.

This is what you have done for the three Material Useful Things.

18. Then for the Three Immaterial Useful Things. For

centre of the Louvre, even look as pretty as ever. After a similar ordeal it is probable we should not have a stick left in London, and the presence of the very handsome planes on the Boulevards, and large trees in the various squares and gardens, after the winter of 1870–71, is most creditable to the population. But when one goes beyond the Champs Elysées and towards the Bois, down the once beautiful Avenue de l'Impératrice, a sad scene of desolation presents itself. A year ago it was the finest avenue garden in existence; now a considerable part of the surface where troops were camped is about as filthy and as cheerless as Leicester Square or a sparsely furnished rubbish yard.

“The view into the once richly-wooded Bois from the huge and ugly banks of earth which now cross the noble roads leading into it is desolate indeed, the stump of the trees cut down over a large extent of its surface reminding one of the dreary scenes observable in many parts of Canada and the United States, where the stumps of the burnt or cut-down pines are allowed to rot away for years. The zone of the ruins round the vast belt of fortifications I need not speak of, nor of the other zone of destruction round each of the forts, as here houses and gardens and all have disappeared. But the destruction in the wide zone occupied by French and Prussian outposts is beyond description. I got to Paris the morning after the shooting of Generals Clément Thomas and Lecomte,³ and in consequence did not see so much of it as I otherwise might have done; but round the villages of Sceaux, Bourg-la-Reine, L'Hay, Vitry, and Villejuif, I saw an amount of havoc which the subscriptions to the French Horticultural Relief Fund will go but a very small way to repair. Notwithstanding all his revolutions and wars, the Frenchman usually found time to cultivate a few fruit trees, and the neighbourhood of the villages above mentioned was only a few of many covered by nurseries of young trees. When I last visited Vitry, in the autumn of 1868, the fields and hill-sides around were everywhere covered with trees; now the view across them is only interrupted by stumps about a foot high. When at Vitry on the 28th of March, I found the once fine nursery of M. Honoré Dufresne deserted, and many acres once covered with large stock and specimens cleared to the ground. And so it was in numerous other cases. It may give some notion of the effect of the war on the gardens and nurseries around Paris, when I state that, according to returns made up just before my visit to Vitry and Villejuif, it was found

¹ [See Vol. XVII. pp. 95 n., 99, 255, and Vol. XX. p. 143.]

² [Genesis iv. 10.]

³ [These two Generals were shot on March 18 by the Communists: see the *Times*, March 21.]

Admiration, you have learnt contempt and conceit.* There is no lovely thing ever yet done by man that you care for, or can understand; but you are persuaded you are able to do much finer things yourselves. You gather, and exhibit together, as if equally instructive, what is infinitely bad, with what is infinitely good. You do not know which is which; you instinctively prefer the Bad, and do more of it. You instinctively hate the Good, and destroy it.†

Then, secondly, for Hope. You have not so much spirit of it in you as to begin any plan which will not pay until ten years; nor so much intelligence of it in you (either politicians or workmen) as to be able to form one clear idea of what you would like your country to become.

Then, thirdly, for Love. You were ordered by the

that around these two villages alone 2,400,400 fruit and other trees were destroyed. As to the private gardens, I cannot give a better idea of them than by describing the materials composing the protecting bank of a battery near Sceaux. It was made up of mattresses, sofas, and almost every other large article of furniture, with the earth stowed between. There were, in addition, nearly forty orange and oleander tubs gathered from the little gardens in the neighbourhood visible in various parts of this ugly bank. One nurseryman at Sceaux, M. Keteleer, lost 1500 vols. of books, which were not taken to Germany, but simply mutilated and thrown out of doors to rot.¹ . . . Multiply these few instances by the number of districts occupied by the belligerents during the war, and some idea of the effects of glory on gardening in France may be obtained.

W.

ROBINSON.”

* Compare Republican letter in correspondence at the end of Letter 29 [p. 543].—*Index to Vols. I. and II.*

† Last night (I am writing this on the 18th of April) I got a letter from Venice, bringing me the, I believe, too well-grounded, report that the Venetians have requested permission from the government of Italy to pull down their Ducal Palace, and “rebuild” it. Put up a horrible model of it, in its place, that is to say, for which their architects may charge a commission.² Meantime, all their canals are choked with human dung, which they are too poor to cart away, but throw out at their windows.

And all the great thirteenth-century cathedrals in France have been destroyed, within my own memory, only that architects might charge commission for putting up false models of them in their place.

¹ [The omitted passage is: “His dwelling-house, inhabited by Bavarians, was half filled with ordure, as were the pretty orchid-houses beneath the windows.”]

² [Compare the lecture on “The Architecture of the Valley of the Somme,” § 31 (Vol. XIX. p. 265). The Ducal Palace was not pulled down and rebuilt, but extensive restorations were commenced at this time: see Vol. X. p. 464.]

Founder of your religion to love your neighbour as yourselves.¹

You have founded an entire Science of Political Economy, on what you have stated to be the constant instinct of man—the desire to defraud his neighbour.

And you have driven your women mad, so that they ask no more for Love, nor for fellowship with you; but stand against you, and ask for “justice.”

19. Are there any of you who are tired of all this? Any of you, Landlords or Tenants? Employers or Workmen?

Are there any landlords,—any masters,—who would like better to be served by men than by iron devils?

Any tenants, any workmen, who can be true to their leaders and to each other? who can vow to work and to live faithfully, for the sake of the joy of their homes?

Will any such give the tenth of what they have, and of what they earn,²—not to emigrate with, but to stay in England with; and do what is in their hands and hearts to make her a happy England?

20. I am not rich (as people now estimate riches), and great part of what I have is already engaged in maintaining art-workmen, or for other objects more or less of public utility. The tenth of whatever is left to me, estimated as accurately as I can (you shall see the accounts), I will make over to you in perpetuity, with the best security that English law can give, on Christmas Day of this year,³ with engagement to add the tithe of whatever I earn afterwards. Who else will help, with little or much? the object of such fund being, to begin, and gradually—no matter how slowly—to increase, the buying and securing of land in England, which shall not be built upon, but cultivated by Englishmen, with their own hands, and such help of force as they can find in wind and wave.

21. I do not care with how many, or how few, this

¹ [Matthew v. 43.]

² [A correspondent subsequently raised the question whether Ruskin required a tenth of what they have *and* earn, or of what they have *or* make (as at p. 296): see Letter 42, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 104).]

³ [See Letter 12, § 1 (p. 199).]

thing is begun, nor on what inconsiderable scale,—if it be but in two or three poor men’s gardens.¹ So much, at least, I can buy, myself, and give them.² If no help come, I have done and said what I could, and there will be an end. If any help come to me, it is to be on the following conditions:—We will try to take some small piece of English ground, beautiful, peaceful, and fruitful. We will have no steam-engines upon it, and no railroads; we will have no untended or unthought-of creatures on it; none wretched, but the sick; none idle but the dead. We will have no liberty upon it;³ but instant obedience to known law, and appointed persons: no equality upon it;⁴ but recognition of every betterness that we can find, and reprobation of every worseness. When we want to go anywhere, we will go there quietly and safely, not at forty miles an hour in the risk of our lives; when we want to carry anything anywhere, we will carry it either on the backs of beasts, or on our own, or in carts, or boats; we will have plenty of flowers and vegetables in our gardens, plenty of corn and grass in our fields,—and few bricks. We will have some music and poetry; the children shall learn to dance to it and sing it;—perhaps some of the old people, in time, may also. We will have some art, moreover; we will at least try if, like the Greeks, we can’t make some pots. The Greeks used to paint pictures of gods on their pots; we, probably, cannot do as much, but we may put some pictures of insects on them, and reptiles;—butterflies, and frogs, if nothing better. There was an excellent old potter in France who used to put frogs and vipers into his dishes, to the admiration of mankind;⁵ we can surely put something nicer than that. Little by little, some higher art and imagination may manifest themselves among us; and

¹ [For a restatement, by Ruskin, in a later letter of the argument in § 21 here, see below, p. 380.]

² [“Mark this—all I promised.”—*MS. note in Author’s copy*. The note should be read in connexion with Letter 49, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 236), where Ruskin disclaims the idea of founding a colony.]

³ [Compare, below, pp. 105, 107; also Vol. XX. p. 173, and General Index.]

⁴ [Compare Letter 9, § 4 (p. 148); see also Letter 95, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 496), Vol. VIII. p. 167 *n.*, Vol. XI. p. 260 *n.*; and Vol. XVI. p. 121.]

⁵ [Palissy: see Letter 6, § 6 (p. 104).]

feeble rays of science may dawn for us. Botany, though too dull to dispute the existence of flowers; and history, though too simple to question the nativity of men;—nay—even perhaps an uncalculating and uncovetous wisdom,¹ as of rude Magi, presenting, at such nativity, gifts of gold and frankincense.²

Faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ ["As opposed to modern University money wisdom."—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]

² [Matthew ii. 11. "Scent of Gods,—as opposed to Dante's smell of the pit."—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]

LETTER 6

ELYSIAN FIELDS¹

DENMARK HILL,
1st June, 1871.*

1. MY FRIENDS,—The main purpose of these letters having been stated in the last of them, it is needful that I should tell you why I approach the discussion of it in this so desultory way, writing (as it is too true that I must continue to write) “of things that you little care for, in words that you cannot easily understand.”²

I write of things you care little for, knowing that what you least care for is, at this juncture, of the greatest moment to you.

And I write in words you are little likely to understand, because I have no wish (rather the contrary) to tell you anything that you can understand without taking trouble. You usually read so fast that you can catch nothing but the echo of your own opinions, which, of course, you are pleased to see in print. I neither wish

* I think it best to publish this letter as it was prepared for press on the morning of the 25th of last month, at Abingdon, before the papers of that day had reached me. You may misinterpret its tone, and think it is written without feeling; but I will endeavour to give you, in my next letter,³ a brief statement of the meaning, to the French and to all other nations, of this war, and its results: in the meantime, trust me, there is probably no other man living to whom, in the abstract, and irrespective of loss of family and property, the ruin of Paris is so great a sorrow as it is to me.⁴

¹ [For the title, see § 5 (p. 102).]

² [See Letter 5, § 1 (p. 79).]

³ [See Letter 7, § 13 (p. 126).]

⁴ [On May 25, 1871, the Government troops occupied Paris, and three days later the Communist rising was finally quelled. For other references to the Commune and the preceding siege by the Germans, see Vol. XVII. p. 135, and Vol. XX. pp. 199, 354.]

to please, nor displease you; but to provoke you to think; to lead you to think accurately; and help you to form, perhaps, some different opinions from those you have now.

2. Therefore, I choose that you shall pay me the price of two pots of beer, twelve times in the year, for my advice, each of you who wants it.¹ If you like to think of me as a quack doctor, you are welcome; and you may consider the large margins, and thick paper, and ugly pictures of my book, as my caravan, drum, and skeleton. You would probably, if invited in that manner, buy my pills; and I should make a great deal of money out of you; but being an honest doctor, I still mean you to pay me what you ought. You fancy, doubtless, that I write—as most other political writers do—my “opinions”; and that one man’s opinion is as good as another’s. You are much mistaken. When I only opine things, I hold my tongue; and work till I more than opine—until I know them. If the things prove unknowable, I, with final perseverance, hold my tongue about them, and recommend a like practice to other people. If the things prove knowable, as soon as I know them, I am ready to write about them, if need be; not till then.² That is what people call my “arrogance.”³ They write and talk themselves, habitually, of what they know nothing about; they cannot in anywise conceive the state of mind of a person who will not speak till he knows; and then tells them, serenely, “This is so; you may find it out for yourselves, if you choose; but, however little you may choose it, the thing is still so.”

3. Now it has cost me twenty years of thought, and of hard reading, to learn what I have to tell you in these pamphlets; and you will find, if you choose to find, it is true; and may prove, if you choose to prove, that it is

¹ [For particulars of the original issue of these letters in monthly parts, see Bibliographical Note, above, p. xci.]

² [Compare Letters 11, § 19 (below, p. 195); 43, § 1; 44, § 3; 71, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 107, 128, 732); and 89, §§ 2, 7 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 399, 405).]

³ [Compare Letter 7, § 5 (p. 117).]

useful: and I am not in the least minded to compete for your audience with the “opinions” in your damp journals, morning and evening, the black of them coming off on your fingers, and—beyond all washing—into your brains. It is no affair of mine whether you attend to me or not; but yours wholly; my hand is weary of pen-holding—my heart is sick of thinking; for my own part, I would not write you these pamphlets though you would give me a barrel of beer, instead of two pints, for them:—I write them wholly for your sake; I choose that you shall have them decently printed on cream-coloured paper, and with a margin underneath, which you can write on, if you like. That is also for your sake: it is a proper form of book for any man to have who can keep his books clean; and if he cannot, he has no business with books at all. It costs me ten pounds to print a thousand copies, and five more to give you a picture; and a penny off my sevenpence to send you the book;—a thousand sixpences are twenty-five pounds; when you have bought a thousand *Fors* of me, I shall therefore have five pounds for my trouble—and my single shopman, Mr. Allen, five pounds for his;¹ we won’t work for less, either of us; not that we would not, were it good for you; but it would be by no means good. And I mean to sell all my large books, henceforward, in the same way; well printed, well bound, and at a fixed price; and the trade may charge a proper and acknowledged profit for their trouble in retailing the book. Then the public will know what they are about, and so will tradesmen; I, the first producer, answer, to the best of my power, for the quality of the book;—paper, binding, eloquence, and all: the retail dealer charges what he ought to charge, openly; and if the public do not choose to give it, they can’t get the book. That is what I call legitimate business. Then as for this misunderstanding of me—remember that it is really not easy to understand anything, which you have

¹ [Mr. Allen was not yet, however, Ruskin’s sole publisher: see Vol. XVIII. pp. 9–11.]

not heard before, if it relates to a complex subject; also, it is quite easy to misunderstand things that you are hearing every day—which seem to you of the intelligiblest sort. But I *can* only write of things in my own way and as they come into my head; and of the things I care for, whether you care for them or not, as yet. I will answer for it, you must care for some of them, in time.

4. To take an instance close to my hand: you would of course think it little conducive to your interests that I should give you any account of the wild hyacinths which are opening in flakes of blue fire, this day, within a couple of miles of me, in the glades of Bagley wood through which the Empress Maud fled in the snow¹ (and which, by the way, I slink through, myself, in some discomfort, lest the gamekeeper of the college of the gracious Apostle St. John should catch sight of me; not that he would ultimately decline to make a distinction between a poacher and a professor, but that I dislike the trouble of giving an account of myself). Or, if even you would bear with a scientific sentence or two about them, explaining to you that they were only green leaves turned blue, and that it was of no consequence whether they were either green or blue; and that, as flowers, they were scientifically to be considered as not in existence,²—you will, I fear, throw my letter, even though it has cost you sevenpence, aside at once, when I remark to you that these wood-hyacinths of Bagley have something to do with the battle of Marathon, and if you knew it, are of more vital interest to you than even the Match Tax.³

5. Nevertheless, as I shall feel it my duty, some day,

¹ [See above, Letter 4, § 12 (p. 76).]

² [Compare Letter 5, § 5 (p. 83).]

³ [The references are to the Match Tax—and stamp with the motto *Ex luce lucellum*—which Mr. Lowe proposed in the Budget of 1871 (*Times*, April 21), and which immediately caused great popular outcry (for another reference to the same Budget speech, see above, p. 81 *n.*); and to his speech at the Institution of Civil Engineers, in which, criticising the educational importance attached to “the literature and language of a people who have long since passed away,” he said, “When I think of the celebrated battle of Marathon and all our school-boy enthusiasm about the 192 persons who perished on that occasion on the side of the

to speak to you of Theseus and his vegetable soup,¹ so, to-day, I think it necessary to tell you that the wood-hyacinth is the best English representative of the tribe of flowers which the Greeks called "Asphodel," and which they thought the heroes who had fallen in the battle of Marathon, or in any other battle, fought in just quarrel, were to be rewarded, and enough rewarded, by living in fields-full of;² fields called, by them, Elysian, or the Fields of Coming, as you and I talk of the good time "Coming," though with perhaps different views as to the nature of the to be expected goodness.

Now what the Chancellor of the Exchequer said the other day to the Civil Engineers (see *Saturday Review*, April 29th³) is entirely true; namely, that in any of our colliery or cartridge-manufactory explosions, we send as many men (or women) into Elysium as were likely to get there after the battle of Marathon;* and that is, indeed, like the rest of our economic arrangements, very fine, and pleasant to think upon; neither may it be doubted, on modern principles of religion and equality, that every collier and cartridge-filler is as fit for Elysium as any heathen could be; and that in all these respects the battle of Marathon is no more deserving of English notice. But what I want you to reflect upon, as of moment to you, is

* Of course this was written, and in type, before the late catastrophe in Paris;⁴ and the one at Dunkirk is, I suppose, long since forgotten, much more our own good beginning at—Birmingham—was it? I forget, myself, now.

victorious, and compare it with the grand drama which has been enacted in another part of Europe within the last seven or eight months, I cannot help feeling how small were the matters to which our early attention was directed. Why, a good colliery accident, under the auspices of those professional gentlemen whom I see around me, would throw one of those great events of ancient times completely into the shade" (*Times*, April 24, 1871). For another reference to Mr. Lowe on the battle of Marathon, see Letter 80, § 8 (Vol. XXIX, p. 177).]

¹ [See below, p. 429 n.]

² [Compare Vol. XVI. p. 33 n. So Homer of the spirit of the son of Æacus, walking "along the mead of asphodel" (*Odyssey*, xi. 539).]

³ [An article on "Mr. Lowe on the Battle of Marathon," vol. 31, p. 526.]

⁴ [The explosion of a cartridge manufactory in the Champ de Mars, killing from 100 to 150 persons (*Times*, May 20, 1871). The explosion at Dunkirk is described in a letter in the *Times* of February 10, 1871.]

whether you *really* care for the hyacinthine Elysium you are going to? and if you do, why you should not live a little while in Elysium here, instead of waiting so patiently, and working so hardly, to be blown or flattened into it? The hyacinths will grow well enough on the top of the ground, if you will leave off digging away the bottom of it; and another plant of the asphodel species, which the Greeks thought of more importance even than hyacinths—onions;¹ though, indeed, one dead hero is represented by Lucian as finding something to complain of even in Elysium, because he got nothing but onions there to eat.² But it is simply, I assure you, because the French did not understand that hyacinths and onions were the principal things to fill their existing Elysian Fields, or Champs Elysées, with, but chose to have carriages, and roundabouts, instead, that a tax on matches in those fields would be, nowadays, so much more productive than one on Asphodel; and I see that only a day or two since even a poor Punch's show could not play out its play in Elysian peace, but had its corner knocked off by a shell from Mont Valérien, and the dog Toby "seriously alarmed."

6. One more instance of the things you don't care for, that are vital to you, may be better told now than hereafter.

In my plan for our practical work, in last number, you remember I said, we must try and make some pottery, and have some music, and that we would have no steam engines.³ On this I received a singular letter from a resident at Birmingham, advising me that the colours for my pottery must be ground by steam, and my musical instruments constructed by it. To this, as my correspondent was an educated person, and knew Latin, I ventured

¹ [Compare the analysis of Classical Landscape in *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. pp. 235–236), where Ruskin notes the stress laid in the garden of Alcinoüs on beds of herbs, "chiefly leeks."]

² [This statement is not made in Lucian. Possibly Ruskin (connecting onions with asphodels) had in his mind a vague recollection of Περὶ Πενθεοῦς ("Of Mourning"), § 19: οὐχ οὕτως ἀσπορός οὐδὲ ἀκαρπός ἡ τοῦ Πλούτωνος ἀρχὴ οὐδ' ἐπιλελοιπέν πῦμας ὁ ἀσφοδελὸς τῆνα παρ' ὑμῶν τὰ σίττια μεταστελλόμεθα ("Pluto's realm is not so barren, nor asphodel so scarce with us, that we must apply to you for provisions").]

³ [See Letter 5, § 21 (p. 96).]

to answer that porcelain had been painted before the time of James Watt; that even music was not entirely a recent invention; that my poor company, I feared, would deserve no better colours than Apelles and Titian made shift with, or even the Chinese; and that I could not find any notice of musical instruments in the time of David, for instance, having been made by steam.

To this my correspondent again replied that he supposed David's "twangling upon the harp" would have been unsatisfactory to modern taste;¹ in which sentiment I concurred with him (thinking of the Cumberland procession, without dancing, after its sacred, cylindrical Ark).² We shall have to be content, however, for our part, with a little "twangling" on such roughly-made harps, or even shells, as the Jews and Greeks got their melody out of, though it must indeed be little conceivable in a modern manufacturing town that a nation could ever have existed which imaginarily dined on onions in Heaven, and made harps of the near relations of turtles on Earth.³ But to keep to our crockery, you know I told you that for some time we should not be able to put any pictures of Gods on it; and you might think that would be of small consequence: but it is of moment that we should at least try—for indeed that old French potter, Palissy, was nearly the last of potters in France,⁴ or England either, who could have done so, if anybody had wanted Gods.⁵ But nobody in his time did;—they only wanted Goddesses, of a demi-divine-monde pattern; Palissy, not well able to produce such, took to moulding innocent frogs and vipers instead, in his dishes;⁶ but at Sèvres and other places for shaping

¹ [For a later reference to this correspondent's remark, see Letter 57, § 4 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 405).]

² [See Letter 5, § 11 (pp. 88–89).]

³ [The reference is to the Homeric Hymn to Hermes, where the poet describes how Hermes found a tortoise and recognised the soul of music in its shell. There is a representation of Hermes making the lyre on a bronze disk in the British Museum (see E. T. Cook's *Popular Handbook to the Greek and Roman Antiquities*, pp. 446–447).]

⁴ [On Palissy were, see Vol. XVI. p. 428.]

⁵ [See Letter 5, § 21 (p. 96).]

⁶ [Compare *St. Mark's Rest*, § 228 (Vol. XXIV. p. 388).]

of courtly clay, the charmingest things were done, as you probably saw at the great peace-promoting Exhibition of 1851; and not only the first rough potter's fields, tileries, as they called them, or Tuileries,¹ but the little den where Palissy long after worked under the Louvre, were effaced and forgotten in the glory of the House of France; until the House of France forgot also that to it, no less than the House of Israel, the words were spoken, not by a painted God, "As the clay is in the hands of the potter, so are ye in mine;"² and thus the stained and vitrified show of it lasted, as you have seen, until the Tuileries again became the Potter's field, to bury, not strangers in,³ but their own souls, no more ashamed of Traitorhood, but invoking Traitorhood, as if it covered, instead of constituting, uttermost shame:—until, of the kingdom and its glory there is not a shard left, to take fire out of the hearth.⁴

7. Left—to men's eyes, I should have written. To their thoughts, is left yet much; for true kingdoms and true glories cannot pass away.⁵ What France has had of such, remain to her. What any of us can find of such, will remain to us. Will you look back, for an instant, again to the end of my last Letter, § 21 [p. 96], and consider the state of life described there:—"No liberty, but instant obedience to known law and appointed persons; no equality, but recognition of every betterness and reprobation of every worseness; and none idle but the dead."

I beg you to observe that last condition especially. You will debate for many a day to come the causes that have brought this misery upon France, and there are many; but one is chief—chief cause, now and always, of evil everywhere; and I see it at this moment, in its deadliest form, out of the window of my quiet English inn. It is

¹ [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 153 (Vol. XX. p. 308 n.).]

² [Jeremiah xviii. 6.]

³ [Matthew xxvii. 7.]

⁴ [Isaiah xxx. 14.]

⁵ [See Matthew xxiv. 35.]

the 21st of May, and a bright morning, and the sun shines, for once, warmly on the wall opposite, a low one, of ornamental pattern, imitative in brick of wood-work (as, if it had been of wood-work, it would, doubtless, have been painted to look like brick). Against this low decorative edifice leans a ruddy-faced English boy of seventeen or eighteen, in a white blouse and brown corduroy trousers, and a domical felt hat; with the sun, as much as can get under the rim, on his face, and his hands in his pockets; listlessly watching two dogs at play. He is a good boy, evidently, and does not care to turn the play into a fight;* still it is not interesting enough to him, as play, to relieve the extreme distress of his idleness, and he occasionally takes his hands out of his pockets, and claps them at the dogs, to startle them.

8. The ornamental wall he leans against surrounds the county police-office, and the residence at the end of it, appropriately called "Gaol Lodge." This county gaol, police-office, and a large gasometer, have been built by the good people of Abingdon to adorn the principal entrance to their town from the south. It was once quite one of the loveliest, as well as historically interesting, scenes in England. A few cottages and their gardens, sloping down to the river-side, are still left, and an arch or two of the great monastery; but the principal object, from the road, is now the gaol; and from the river, the gasometer. It is curious that since the English have believed (as you will find the editor of the *Liverpool Daily Post*, quoting to you from Macaulay, in his leader of the 9th of this month), "the only cure for Liberty is more liberty"¹ (which is true enough, for when you have got all you can, you will be past physic), they always make their gaols conspicuous and

* This was at seven in the morning; he had them fighting at half-past nine.

¹ [See Macaulay's essay on "Milton": "There is only one cure for the evils which newly acquired freedom produces; and that cure is freedom." For another reference to the newspaper article, see below, p. 118.]

ornamental. Now I have no objection, myself, detesting, as I do, every approach to liberty,¹ to a distinct manifestation of gaol, in proper quarters; nay, in the highest, and in the close neighbourhood of palaces;² perhaps, even, with a convenient passage, and Ponte de' Sospiri, from one to the other, or, at least, a pleasant access by water-gate and down the river; but I do not see why in these days of "incurable" liberty, the prospect in approaching a quiet English county town should be a gaol, and nothing else.

That being so, however, the country boy, in his white blouse, leans placidly against the prison wall this bright Sunday morning, little thinking what a luminous sign-post he is making of himself, and living gnomon of sun-dial, of which the shadow points sharply to the subtlest cause of the fall of France, and of England, as is too likely, after her.

9. Your hands in your own pockets, in the morning. That is the beginning of the last day; your hands in other people's pockets at noon; that is the height of the last day; and the gaol, ornamented or otherwise,—(assuredly the great gaol of the grave),—for the night. That is the history of nations under judgment. Don't think I say this to any single class; least of all specially to you; the rich are continually, nowadays, reproaching you with your wish to be idle. It is very wrong of you; but, do they want to work all day, themselves? All mouths are very properly open now against the Paris Communists because they fight that they may get wages for marching about with flags. What do the upper classes fight for, then? What have they fought for since the world became upper and lower, but that they also might have wages for walking about with flags, and that mischievously? It is very wrong of the Communists to steal church-plate and candlesticks. Very

¹ [Compare above, p. 96.]

² [Byron, *Childe Harold*, iv. 1:—

"I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs;
A palace and a prison on each hand."]

wrong indeed; and much good may they get of their pawnbrokers' tickets. Have you any notion (I mean that you shall have some soon¹) how much the fathers and fathers' fathers of these men, for a thousand years back, have paid their priests, to keep them in plate and candlesticks? You need not think I am a republican, or that I like to see priests ill-treated, and their candlesticks carried off. I have many friends among priests, and should have had more had I not long been trying to make them see that they have long trusted too much in candlesticks, not quite enough in candles; not at all enough in the sun, and least of all enough in the sun's Maker. Scientific people indeed of late opine the sun to have been produced by collision,² and to be a splendidly permanent railroad accident, or explosive Elysium: also I noticed, only yesterday, that gravitation itself is announced to the members of the Royal Institution as the result of vibratory motion.³ Some day, perhaps, the members of the Royal Institution will proceed to inquire after the cause of—vibratory motion. Be that as it may, the Beginning, or Prince of Vibration, as modern science has it,—Prince of Peace, as old science had it;⁴—continues through all scientific analysis His own arrangements about the sun, as also about other lights, lately hidden or burning low. And these are primarily, that He has appointed a great power to rise and set in heaven, which gives life, and warmth, and motion, to the bodies of men, and beasts, creeping things, and flowers; and which also causes light and colour in the eyes of things that have eyes. And He has set above the souls of men, on earth, a great law or Sun of Justice or Righteousness,⁵ which brings also life and health in the daily strength and spreading of it, being spoken of

¹ [This, however, was not done.]

² [See *Ethics of the Dust*, § 107 (Vol. XVIII. p. 342); and compare Letters 45, § 3 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 147), and 75, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 59).]

³ [The reference is perhaps to Huxley's paper, "On Bishop Berkeley and the Metaphysics of Sensation," read at the Royal Institution on May 19, 1871; abstracted in the *Notices of Proceedings*, vol. vi. 1870–1872, pp. 341 *seq.*, and afterwards published in his *Critiques and Addresses*.]

⁴ [Isaiah ix. 6.]

⁵ [Malachi iv. 2; compare *Unto this Last*, § 44 *n.* (Vol. XVII. p. 59). See also Vol. XVIII. p. 350, and Vol. XXII. p. 204.]

in the priest's language (which they never explain to anybody, and now wonder that nobody understands) as having "healing in its wings": and the obedience to this law, as it gives strength to the heart, so it gives light to the eyes of souls that have got any eyes, so that they begin to see each other as lovely, and to love each other. That is the final law respecting the sun, and all manner of minor lights and candles, down to rushlights; and I once got it fairly explained, two years ago, to an intelligent and obliging wax-and-tallow chandler at Abbeville, in whose shop I used to sit sketching in rainy days;¹ and watching the cartloads of ornamental candles which he used to supply for the church at the far east end of the town (I forget what saint it belongs to, but it is opposite the late Emperor's large new cavalry barracks), where the young ladies of the better class in Abbeville had just got up a beautiful evening service, with a pyramid of candles which it took at least half-an-hour to light, and as long to put out again, and which, when lighted up to the top of the church, were only to be looked at themselves, and sung to, and not to light anybody or anything. I got the tallow-chandler to calculate vaguely the probable cost of the candles lighted in this manner, every day, in all the churches of France; and then I asked him how many cottagers' wives he knew round Abbeville itself who could afford, without pinching, either dip or mould in the evening to make their children's clothes by, and whether, if the pink and green beeswax of the district were divided every afternoon among them, it might not be quite as honourable to God, and as good for the candle trade? Which he admitted readily enough; but what I should have tried to convince the young ladies themselves of, at the evening service, would probably not have been admitted so readily;—that they themselves were nothing more than an extremely graceful kind of wax-tapers which

¹ [In 1868: see Vol. XIX. pp. xli., xlii., 267. The church is that of Saint-Gilles, restored in modern times "with more luxuriousness than taste" (*Guide Joanne*). For a later reference to this passage, see Letter 76, § 12 (Vol. XXIX. p. 94).]

had got into their heads that they were only to be looked at, for the honour of God, and not to light anybody.

10. Which is indeed too much the notion of even the masculine aristocracy of Europe at this day. One can imagine them, indeed, modest in the matter of their own luminousness, and more timid of the tax on agricultural horses and carts, than of that on lucifers;¹ but it would be well if they were content, here in England, however dimly phosphorescent themselves, to bask in the sunshine of May at the end of Westminster Bridge (as my boy on Abingdon Bridge²), with their backs against the large edifice they have built there,—an edifice, by the way, to my own poor judgment, less contributing to the adornment of London,³ than the new police-office to that of Abingdon. But the English squire, after his fashion, sends himself to that highly decorated gaol all spring-time; and cannot be content with his hands in his own pockets, nor even in yours and mine; but claps and laughs, semi-idiot that he is, at dog-fights on the floor of the House, which, if he knew it, are indeed dog-fights of the Stars in their courses,⁴ Sirius against Procyon;⁵ and of the havoc and loosed dogs of war,⁶ makes, as the *Times* correspondent says they make, at Versailles, of the siege of Paris, “the Entertainment of the Hour.”⁷

You think that, perhaps, an unjust saying of him, as he will, assuredly, himself. He would fain put an end to this wild work, if he could, he thinks.

11. My friends, I tell you solemnly, the sin of it all, down to this last night’s doing, or undoing (for it is

¹ [See above, Letters 5, § 4 n., and 6, § 4 (pp. 81, 101).]

² [See above, § 7.]

³ [See above, p. 15 n.]

⁴ [Judges v. 20.]

⁵ [Procyon (Horace, *Odes*, iii. 29, 18), or Antecanis, the star that rises before the dog-star (Sirius).]

⁶ [*Julius Cæsar*, Act iii. sc. 1 (“Cry *Havoc*, and let slip the dogs of war”).]

⁷ [The reference is to the French siege of Paris, of May 1871. “Carriages are hired by the hour to carry parties out to Meudon, and the entertainment of the hour is to view the siege of Paris. The French people do not appear to view it in the serious light in which, to judge from the papers, it is regarded by foreigners at a distance” (*Times*, May 22, 1871).]

Monday now, I waited before finishing my letter, to see if the Sainte Chapelle would follow the Vendôme Column¹); the sin of it, I tell you, is not that poor rabble's, spade and pickaxe in hand among the dead;² nor yet the blasphemer's, making noise like a dog³ by the defiled altars of our Lady of Victories;⁴ and round the barricades, and the ruins, of the Street of Peace.

This cruelty has been done by the kindest of us, and the most honourable; by the delicate women, by the nobly-nurtured men, who through their happy and, as they thought, holy lives, have sought, and still seek, only "the entertainment of the hour." And this robbery has been taught to the hands,—this blasphemy to the lips,—of the lost poor, by the False Prophets who have taken the name of Christ in vain, and leagued themselves with His chief enemy, "Covetousness, which is idolatry."⁵

12. Covetousness, lady of Competition and of deadly Care; idol above the altars of Ignoble Victory; builder of streets, in cities of Ignoble Peace. I have given you the picture of her—your goddess and only Hope—as Giotto saw her:⁶ dominant in prosperous Italy as in prosperous England, and having her hands clawed then, as now, so

¹ ["PARIS, May 16.—The *Journal Officiel* announced that the Vendôme Column would positively fall to-day at 2. A great concourse assembled. Bands played. The Commune, and their staff, attended on horseback. At 3.15 P.M. an attempt was made, which failed owing to the breaking of a snatch-block. The ropes slackened suddenly, injuring two men. Another attempt was made, and the Column fell about 10 minutes to 6. . . . The excitement was intense" (*Times*, May 17, 1871). For another reference to the demolition of the Vendôme Column, see Vol. XVI. p. 155, and *Rock Honeycomb*, note on line 188.]

² ["PARIS, May 18.—Bodies are being removed from the crypt of the Church of Les Petits Pères. Bones strew the pavement on both sides of the church door" (*Times*, May 19, 1871).]

³ [Psalms lix. 6.]

⁴ [Notre Dame des Victoires, a famous pilgrimage church in the Place des Victoires. The altar, to the right of the choir, which is the object of special veneration, was despoiled by the Communists. The *Times* of Monday, May 22, 1871, announced: "The Church of Notre Dame des Victoires has been sacked and occupied by the troops." See the *Daily Telegraph* of the same date for an account of the outrages. The barricade fighting in the Rue de la Paix and elsewhere was in progress at the same time.]

⁵ [Colossians iii. 5.]

⁶ [Plate II. (originally placed as frontispiece to this Letter); compare Vol. XXIV. p. 120.]



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ENVY

Drawn thus by Giotto in the Chapel of the Arena at Padua

that she can only clutch, not work; also you shall read next month with me what one of Giotto's friends¹ says of her—a rude versifier, one of the twangling harpers;² as Giotto was a poor painter for low price, and with colours ground by hand; but such cheap work must serve our turn for this time; also, here, is portrayed for you* one of the ministering angels of the goddess;



Fig. 3

for she herself, having ears set wide to the wind, is careful to have wind-instruments provided by her servants for other people's ears.³

13. This servant of hers was drawn by the court portrait-painter, Holbein; and was a councillor at poor-law boards, in his day; counselling then, as some of us have, since, "Bread of Affliction and Water of Affliction"⁴ for the vagrant as such,—which is, indeed, good advice, if you are quite sure the vagrant has, or may have, a home; not otherwise. But we will talk further of this next month, taking into council one of Holbein's prosaic friends, as well as that singing friend of Giotto's—an English lawyer and

* Engraved, as also the woodcut in the April number,⁵ carefully after Holbein, by my coal-waggon-assisting assistant:⁶ but he has missed his mark somewhat, here; the imp's abortive hands, hooked processes only, like Envy's, and pterodactylous, are scarcely seen in their clutch of the bellows, and there are other faults. We will do it better for you, afterwards.⁷

¹ [Dante: see *Purgatorio*, xiii., xiv.; but Ruskin does not in the next letter, nor later, refer to the passages. Among Dante's instances of the envious is the nymph Aglauros, who envied her sister Hersè (*Purg.*, xiv. 136–139). Ruskin promises some account of her in Letter 12, but does not give it (see below, p. 202): see, however, Vol. XIX. p. 334.]

² [See above, § 6, p. 104.]

³ [Holbein's woodcut ("He that hath ears to hear let him hear"), from which this is enlarged, is given in *Ariadne Florentina*, § 176 (see Vol. XXII. p. 417, and Fig. 9). Ruskin's drawing is No. 73 in the Educational Series (Vol. XXI. p. 81).]

⁴ [1 Kings xxii. 27.]

⁵ [Letter 4, § 12 (p. 78).]

⁶ [Arthur Burgess: see Letter 2, § 13 (p. 38).]

⁷ [See Letter 53, § 6 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 321), where Ruskin refers readers of *Fors* to the woodcut in *Ariadne*.]

country gentleman,¹ living on his farm, at Chelsea (somewhere near Cheyne Row, I believe)—and not unfrequently visited there by the King of England, who would ask himself unexpectedly to dinner at the little Thames-side farm, though the floor of it was only strewn with green rushes. It was burnt at last, rushes, ricks, and all; some said because bread of affliction and water of affliction² had been served to heretics there, its master being a stout Catholic; and, singularly enough, also a Communist; so that because of the fire, and other matters, the King at last ceased to dine at Chelsea. We will have some talk, however, with the farmer, ourselves, some day soon;³ meantime and always, believe me,

Faithfully yours,
JOHN RUSKIN.

POSTSCRIPT

14. *25th May (early morning)*.—Reuter's final telegram, in the *Echo* of the last night, being "The Louvre and the Tuileries are in flames, the Federals having set fire to them with petroleum,"⁴ it is interesting to observe how, in fulfilment of the Mechanical Glories of our age, its ingenious

¹ ["The King also used, of a particular love, to come on a sudden to Chelsea, where Sir Thomas More now lived, and leaning on his shoulder to talk with him of secret counsel in his garden, yea, and to dine with him upon no inviting" (*Life of Sir Thomas More*, by Cresacre More, 1828 edition, p. 59). "Neither mean nor subject to envy, yet magnificent enough" was Erasmus's description of the house. More, it will be remembered, was declared guilty of misprision of treason on account of his acquaintance with the "Nun of Kent." The rest of Ruskin's allusions are not clear, for though after More's execution the King confiscated his property, the house and grounds were presented by him to Sir William Pawlet, Marquis of Winchester. The house was not demolished till 1740 (see Lysons, *Environs of London*, 1795, vol. ii. pp. 79 *seq.*; and Cresacre More, p. 102 *n.*); the only remains of it, now extant, are some parts of the garden walls at the back of Paulton's Square and at the entrance of the Moravian burial-ground.]

² [1 Kings xxii. 27.]

³ [See Letter 7, §§ 5, 6 (pp. 116–119).]

⁴ [The *Times* correspondent announced next morning, however (May 26), that though the Tuileries was in ashes, "happily not very much of the Louvre is destroyed."]

Gomorrhah manufactures, and supplies to demand, her own brimstone; achieving also a quite scientific, instead of miraculous, descent of it from Heaven; and ascent of it, where required, without any need of cleaving or quaking of earth, except in a superficially “vibratory”¹ manner.

Nor can it be less encouraging to you to see how, with a sufficiently curative quantity of Liberty,² you may defend yourselves against all danger of over-production, especially in art; but, in case you should ever wish to re-“produce” any of the combustibles (as oil, or canvas) used in these Parisian Economies, you will do well to inquire of the author of the *Essay on Liberty* whether he considers oil of linseed, or petroleum, as best fulfilling his definition, “utilities fixed and embodied in material objects.”³

¹ [See above, § 9 (p. 108).]

² [See above, § 8 (p. 106).]

³ [See Letter 4, §§ 5, 6 (pp. 64–66).]

LETTER 7

CHARITAS¹

DENMARK HILL,

1st July, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—It seldom chances, my work lying chiefly among stones, clouds, and flowers, that I am brought into any freedom of intercourse with my fellow-creatures; but since the fighting in Paris I have dined out several times, and spoken to the persons who sat next me, and to others when I went upstairs; and done the best I could to find out what people thought about the fighting, or thought they ought to think about it, or thought they ought to say. I had, of course, no hope of finding any one thinking what they ought to do. But I have not yet, a little to my surprise, met with any one who either appeared to be sadder, or professed himself wiser for anything that has happened.

It is true that I am neither sadder nor wiser, because of it, myself. But then I was so sad before, that nothing could make me sadder; and getting wiser has always been to me a very slow process (sometimes even quite stopping for whole days together), so that if two or three new ideas fall in my way at once, it only puzzles me; and the fighting in Paris has given me more than two or three.

2. The newest of all these new ones, and, in fact, quite a glistening and freshly minted idea to me, is the Parisian notion of Communism, as far as I understand it (which I

¹ [In his own copy Ruskin wrote "Charity" and "Charitas" (see below, § 13), and the latter is no doubt the true title, though the word has hitherto been misprinted "Charities."]



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CHARITY

Drawn thus by Donato in the Chapel of the Arena at Padua

don't profess to do altogether, yet, or I should be wiser than I was, with a vengeance).

For, indeed, I am myself a Communist of the old school—reddest also of the red; and was on the very point of saying so at the end of my last letter; only the telegram about the Louvre's being on fire stopped me, because I thought the Communists of the new school, as I could not at all understand them, might not quite understand me. For we Communists of the old school think that our property belongs to everybody, and everybody's property to us; so of course I thought the Louvre belonged to me as much as to the Parisians, and expected they would have sent word over to me, being an Art Professor, to ask whether I wanted it burnt down. But no message or intimation to that effect ever reached me.

3. Then the next bit of new coinage in the way of notion which I have picked up in Paris streets, is the present meaning of the French word "Ouvrier," which in my time the dictionaries used to give as "Workman," or "Working-man." For again, I have spent many days, not to say years, with the working-men of our English school myself;¹ and I know that, with the more advanced of them, the gathering word is that which I gave you at the end of my second number [p. 44]—"To do good work, whether we live or die." Whereas I perceive the gathering, or rather scattering, word of the French "ouvrier" is, "To *undo* good work, whether we live or die."

4. And this is the third, and the last, I will tell you for the present, of my new ideas, but a troublesome one: namely, that we are henceforward to have a duplicate power of political economy; and that the new Parisian expression for its first principle is not to be "laissez faire," but "laissez *refaire*."

5. I cannot, however, make anything of these new French fashions of thought till I have looked at them

¹ [For Ruskin's connexion with the Working Men's College, see Vol. V. pp. xxxvi. *seq.*]

quietly a little; so to-day I will content myself with telling you what we Communists of the old school meant by Communism; and it will be worth your hearing, for—I tell you simply in my “arrogant” way¹—we know, and have known, what Communism is—for our fathers knew it, and told us, three thousand years ago;² while you baby Communists do not so much as know what the name means, in your own English or French—no, not so much as whether a House of Commons implies, or does not imply, also a House of Uncommons; nor whether the Holiness of the Commune, which Garibaldi came to fight for,³ had any relation to the Holiness of the “Communion” which he came to fight against.

6. Will you be at the pains, now, however, to learn rightly, and once for all, what Communism is? First, it means that everybody must work in common, and do common or simple work for his dinner;⁴ and that if any man will not do it, he must not have his dinner.* That much, perhaps, you thought you knew?—but you did not think we Communists of the old school knew it also? You shall have it, then, in the words of the Chelsea farmer and stout Catholic, I was telling you of, in last number.⁵ He was born in Milk Street, London, three hundred and ninety-one years ago (1480, a year I have just been telling my Oxford pupils to remember for manifold reasons⁶), and he planned a Commune flowing with milk and honey, and otherwise Elysian; and called it the “Place of Wellbeing,” or Utopia;⁷ which is a word you perhaps have occasionally

* Cf. Letter 28, § 22, Question 10 [p. 526].—*Note in Author's Index to Vols. I. and II.*

¹ [Compare Letter 6, § 2 (p. 99).]

² [Ruskin has here in mind early Greek society—as depicted in Plutarch's Lives of Lycurgus (§§ 8, 9) and of Theseus, with his meals in common: compare below, p. 396, where Ruskin dates Theseus “three thousand years ago.”]

³ [Compare Letter 1, § 5 (p. 16).]

⁴ [2 Thessalonians iii. 10 (“if any man would not work, neither should he eat”).]

⁵ [Sir Thomas More: see Letter 6, § 13 (p. 113).]

⁶ [See *Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, § 8 (Vol. XXII. p. 82).]

⁷ [More called it rather οὐτοπος, nowhere; “Nusquama,” as he calls it sometimes in his letters.]

used before now, like others, without understanding it;—(in the article of the *Liverpool Daily Post* before referred to,¹ it occurs felicitously seven times). You shall use it in that stupid way no more, if I can help it. Listen how matters really are managed there.²

“The chief, and almost the only business of the government,* is to take care that no man may live idle, but that every one may follow his trade diligently; yet they do not wear themselves out with perpetual toil from morning till night, as if they were beasts of burden, which, as it is indeed a heavy slavery, so it is everywhere the common course of life amongst all mechanics except the Utopians; but they, dividing the day and night into twenty-four hours, appoint six of these for work, three of which are before dinner and three after; they then sup, and, at eight o’clock, counting from noon, go to bed and sleep eight hours: the rest of their time, besides that taken up in work, eating, and sleeping, is left to every man’s discretion; yet they are not to abuse that interval to luxury and idleness, but must employ it in some proper exercise, according to their various inclinations, which is, for the most part, reading.

“But the time appointed for labour is to be narrowly examined, otherwise, you may imagine that, since there are only six hours appointed for work, they may fall under a scarcity of necessary provisions: but it is so far from being true that this time is not sufficient for supplying them with plenty of all things, either necessary or convenient, that it is rather too much; and this you will easily apprehend, if you consider how great a part of all other nations is quite idle. First, women generally do little, who are the half of mankind; and, if some few women are diligent, their husbands are idle: then,— . . .”

What then?

We will stop a minute, friends, if you please, for I want you before you read what then, to be once more made fully aware that this farmer who is speaking to you is one of the sternest Roman Catholics of his stern time;

* I spare you, for once, a word for “government” used by this old author, which would have been unintelligible to you, and is so, except in its general sense, to me.³

¹ [See Letter 6, § 8 (p 106).]

² [Ruskin here translates and compresses from the original Latin of the second book of *Utopia* (see pp. 83–86 of Arber’s reprint of 1869 of the English edition of 1556).]

³ [The magistrates are, says More, called “in the old language of the Utopians,” “Syphograutes,” and this is the word here rendered “government” by Ruskin. The word may have been intended for nothing more than unintelligible jargon. It has, however, been suggested that in inventing the first part of the word, More was thinking of *στυφος* “a sty,” and of the Benchers and Steward (Sty-ward) of his old Inn of Court (see J. H. Lupton’s edition of *Utopia*, 1895, p. 135 n.).]

and at the fall of Cardinal Wolsey, became Lord High Chancellor of England in his stead.

“—then, consider the great company of idle priests, and of those that are called religious men; add to these, all rich men, chiefly those that have estates in land, who are called noblemen and gentlemen, together with their families, made up of idle persons, that are kept more for show than use; add to these, all those strong and lusty beggars that go about, pretending some disease in excuse for their begging; and, upon the whole account, you will find that the number of those by whose labours mankind is supplied is much less than you, perhaps, imagined: then, consider how few of those that work are employed in labours that are of real service! for we, who measure all things by money, give rise to many trades that are both vain and superfluous, and serve only to support riot and luxury: for it those who work were employed only in such things as the conveniences of life require, there would be such an abundance of them, *that the prices of them would so sink that tradesmen could not be maintained by their gains;*”

—(italics mine—Fair and softly, Sir Thomas! we must have a shop round the corner, and a pedlar or two on fair-days, yet);—

“if all those who labour about useless things were set to more profitable employments, and if all that languish out their lives in sloth and idleness (every one of whom consumes as much as any two of the men that are at work) were forced to labour, you may easily imagine that a small proportion of time would serve for doing all that is either necessary, profitable, or pleasant to mankind, especially while pleasure is kept within its due bounds: this appears very plainly in Utopia; for there, in a great city, and in all the territory that lies round it, you can scarce find five hundred, either men or women, by their age and strength capable of labour, that are not engaged in it! even the heads of government, though excused by the law, yet do not excuse themselves, but work, that, by their examples, they may excite the industry of the rest of the people.”

7. You see, therefore, that there is never any fear, among us of the old school, of being out of work; but there is great fear, among many of us, lest we should not do the work set us well; for, indeed, we thorough-going Communists make it a part of our daily duty to consider how common we are; and how few of us have any brains or souls worth speaking of, or fit to trust to;—that being the, alas, almost unexceptionable lot of human creatures. Not that we think ourselves (still less, call ourselves without thinking so) miserable sinners, for we are not in

anywise miserable, but quite comfortable for the most part; and we are not sinners, that we know of; but are leading godly, righteous, and sober lives, to the best of our power, since last Sunday (on which day some of us were, we regret to be informed, drunk); but we are of course common creatures enough, the most of us, and thankful if we may be gathered up in St. Peter's sheet, so as not to be uncivilly or unjustly called unclean too.¹ And therefore our chief concern is to find out any among us wiser and of better make than the rest, and to get them, if they will for any persuasion take the trouble, to rule over us, and teach us how to behave, and make the most of what little good is in us.

8. So much for the first law of old Communism, respecting work. Then the second respects property, and it is that the public, or common, wealth, shall be more and statelier in all its substance than private or singular wealth; that is to say (to come to my own special business for a moment) that there shall be only cheap and few pictures, if any, in the insides of houses, where nobody but the owner can see them; but costly pictures, and many, on the outsides of houses, where the people can see them;² also that the Hôtel-de-Ville, or Hotel of the whole Town, for the transaction of its common business, shall be a magnificent building, much rejoiced in by the people, and with its tower seen far away through the clear air; but that the hotels for private business or pleasure, cafés, taverns, and the like, shall be low, few, plain, and in back streets; more especially such as furnish singular and uncommon drinks and refreshments; but that the fountains which furnish the people's common drink shall be very lovely and stately, and adorned with precious marbles, and the like. Then farther, according to old Communism, the private dwellings of uncommon persons—dukes and lords—are to be very simple, and roughly put together,—such persons being

¹ [See Acts x. 11.]

² [Compare *Two Paths*, § 74 (Vol. XVI. p. 320).]

supposed to be above all care for things that please the commonalty; but the buildings for public or common service, more especially schools, almshouses, and workhouses, are to be externally of a majestic character, as being for noble purposes and charities; and in their interiors furnished with many luxuries for the poor and sick. And, finally and chiefly, it is an absolute law of old Communism that the fortunes of private persons should be small, and of little account in the State; but the common treasure of the whole nation should be of superb and precious things in redundant quantity, as pictures, statues, precious books; gold and silver vessels, preserved from ancient times; gold and silver bullion laid up for use, in case of any chance need of buying anything suddenly from foreign nations; noble horses, cattle, and sheep, on the public lands; and vast spaces of land for culture, exercise, and garden, round the cities, full of flowers, which, being everybody's property, nobody could gather; and of birds which, being everybody's property, nobody could shoot. And, in a word, that instead of a common poverty, or national debt, which every poor person in the nation is taxed annually to fulfil his part of, there should be a common wealth, or national reverse of debt, consisting of pleasant things, which every poor person in the nation should be summoned to receive his dole of, annually; and of pretty things, which every person capable of admiration, foreigners as well as natives, should unfeignedly admire, in an æsthetic, and not a covetous manner (though for my own part I can't understand what it is that I am taxed now to defend, or what foreign nations are supposed to covet, here). But truly, a nation that has got anything to defend of real public interest, can usually hold it; and a fat Latin Communist gave for sign of the strength of his commonalty, in its strongest time,—

“Privatus illis census erat brevis,
Commune magnum;”¹

¹ [Horace, *Odes*, ii. xv. 13.]

which you may get any of your boys or girls to translate for you, and remember; remembering, also, that the commonalty or publicity depends for its goodness on the nature of the *thing* that is common, and that is public. When the French cried, “Vive la République!” after the battle of Sedan, they were thinking only of the Publique, in the word, and not of the Re in it. But that is the essential part of it, for that “Re” is not like the mischievous Re in Reform, and Refaire,¹ which the words had better be without; but it is short for *res*, which means “thing”; and when you cry, “Live the Republic,” the question is mainly, what thing it is you wish to be publicly alive, and whether you are striving for a Common-Wealth, and Public-Thing; or, as too plainly in Paris, for a Common-Illth,² and Public-Nothing, or even Public-Less-than-nothing and Common Deficit.

9. Now all these laws respecting public and private property, are accepted in the same terms by the entire body of us Communists of the old school; but with respect to the management of both, we old Reds fall into two classes, differing, not indeed in colour of redness, but in depth of tint of it—one class being, as it were, only of a delicately pink, peach-blossom, or dog-rose redness; but the other, to which I myself do partly, and desire wholly, to belong, as I told you, reddest of the red—that is to say, full crimson, or even dark crimson, passing into that deep colour of the blood which made the Spaniards call it blue,³ instead of red, and which the Greeks call φοινικεος,⁴ being an intense phœnix or flamingo colour: and this not merely, as in the flamingo feathers, a colour on the outside, but going through and through, ruby-wise; so that Dante, who is one

¹ [See above, § 4 (p. 116).]

² [For Ruskin’s coinage of the word “Illth,” see *Unto this Last*, § 64 (Vol. XVII. p. 89).]

³ [“Blue blood” and “true blue” being originally Spanish phrases, the old families of Spain who trace their pedigree beyond the time of the Moorish Conquest claiming that they have *venas ceruleas*, whereas the blood in the veins of the common people is black.]

⁴ [On this word, see *Queen of the Air*, § 91 (Vol. XIX. p. 380).]

of the few people who have ever beheld our queen¹ full in the face, says of her that, if she had been in a fire, he could not have seen her at all, so fire-colour she was, all through.*

And between these two sects or shades of us, there is this difference in our way of holding our common faith (that our neighbour's property is ours, and ours his), namely, that the rose-red division of us are content in their diligence of care to preserve or guard from injury or loss their neighbours' property, as their own; so that they may be called, not merely dog-rose red, but even "watch-dog-rose" red; being, indeed, more careful and anxious for the safety of the possessions of other people (especially their masters) than for any of their own; and also more sorrowful for any wound or harm suffered by any creature in their sight, than for hurt to themselves. So that they are Communists, even less in their having part in all common well-being of their neighbours, than part in all common pain: being yet, on the whole, infinite gainers; for there is in this world infinitely more joy than pain to be shared, if you will only take your share when it is set for you.

10. The vermilion, or Tyrian-red sect of us, however, are not content merely with this carefulness and watchfulness over our neighbour's goods, but we cannot rest unless we are giving what we can spare of our own; and the more precious it is, the more we want to divide it with somebody. So that above all things, in what we value most of possessions, pleasant sights, and true knowledge, we cannot relish seeing any pretty things unless other people see them also; neither can we be content to know anything for

* "Tanto rossa, ch' appena fora dentro al fuoco nota."—*Purg.*, xxix. 122.²

¹ [Charity: see below, § 17.]

² ["So ruddy, that her form had scarce
Been known within a furnace of clear flame."]

—Cary's translation.]

ourselves, but must contrive, somehow, to make it known to others.

And as thus especially we like to give knowledge away, so we like to have it good to give (for, as for selling knowledge, thinking it comes by the spirit of Heaven, we hold the selling of it to be only a way of selling God again, and utterly Iscariot's business); also, we know that the knowledge made up for sale is apt to be watered and dusted, or even itself good for nothing; and we try for our part, to get it, and give it, pure: the mere fact that it is to be given away at once to anybody who asks to have it, and immediately wants to use it, is a continual check upon us. For instances, when Colonel North, in the House of Commons, on the 20th of last month (as reported in the *Times*), "would simply observe, in conclusion, that it was impossible to tell how many thousands of the young men who were to be embarked for India next September, would be marched, not to the hills, but to their graves;"¹ any of us Tyrian-reds "would simply observe" that the young men themselves ought to be constantly, and on principle, informed of their destination before embarking; and that this pleasant communicativeness of what knowledge on the subject was to be got, would soon render quite possible the attainment of more. So also, in abstract science, the instant habit of making true discoveries common property, cures us of a bad trick which one may notice to have much hindered scientific persons lately, of rather spending their time in hiding their neighbours' discoveries, than improving their own:² whereas, among us, scientific flamingoes are not only openly graced for discoveries, but openly disgraced for coveries; and that sharply and permanently; so that there is rarely a hint or thought among them of

¹ [Speech by Colonel J. S. North (M.P. for Oxfordshire) on the Army Regulation Bill on June 19 (reported in the *Times* of June 20, 1871). Colonel North was objecting to the inclusion in the drafts for India of soldiers under the age of twenty-one.]

² [On this subject, see *Love's Meinie*, § 65 n. (Vol. XXV. p. 59); and compare Letters 34, § 17 (below, p. 642) and 85, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 318).]

each other's being wrong, but quick confession of whatever is found out rightly.*

11. But the point in which we dark-red Communists differ most from other people is, that we dread, above all things, getting miserly of virtue; and if there be any in us, or among us, we try forthwith to get it made common, and would fain hear the mob crying for some of that treasure, where it seems to have accumulated. I say, "seems," only: for though, at first, all the finest virtue looks as if it were laid up with the rich (so that, generally, a millionaire would be much surprised at hearing that his daughter had made a *petroleuse* of herself, or that his son had murdered anybody for the sake of their watch and cravat),—it is not at all clear to us dark-reds that this virtue, proportionate to income, is of the right sort; and we believe that even if it were, the people who keep it thus all to themselves, and leave the so-called *canaille* without any, vitiate what they keep by keeping it, so that it is like manna laid up through the night, which breeds worms in the morning.¹

12. You see, also, that we dark-red Communists, since we exist only in giving, must, on the contrary, hate with a perfect hatred all manner of thieving: even to Cœur-de-Lion's tar-and-feather extreme;² and of all thieving, we dislike thieving on trust most (so that, if we ever get to be strong enough to do what we want, and chance to catch hold of any failed bankers, their necks will not be

* Confession always a little painful, however; scientific envy being the most difficult of all to conquer. I find I did much injustice to the botanical lecturer, as well as to my friend, in my last letter;³ and, indeed, suspected as much at the time; but having some botanical notions myself, which I am vain of, I wanted the lecturer's to be wrong, and stopped cross-examining my friend as soon as I had got what suited me. Nevertheless, the general statement that follows, remember, rests on no tea-table chat; and the tea-table chat itself is accurate, as far as it goes.

¹ [Exodus xvi. 20.]

² [See Letter 3, § 11 (p. 55).]

³ [Not *last* letter, but Letter 5, §§ 5, 6, 7 (pp. 82–85).]

worth half-an-hour's purchase¹). So also, as we think virtue diminishes in the honour and force of it in proportion to income, we think vice increases in the force and shame of it, and is worse in kings and rich people than in poor; and worse on a large scale than on a narrow one; and worse when deliberate than hasty. So that we can understand one man's coveting a piece of vineyard-ground for a garden of herbs, and stoning the master of it (both of them being Jews);—and yet the dogs ate queen's flesh for that, and licked king's blood!² but for two nations—both Christian—to covet their neighbours' vineyards, all down beside the River of their border, and slay until the River itself runs red! The little pool of Samaria!—shall all the snows of the Alps, or the salt pool of the Great Sea, wash their armour, for these?

13. I promised in my last letter³ that I would tell you the main meaning and bearing of the war, and its results to this day:—now that you know what Communism is, I can tell you these briefly, and, what is more to the purpose, how to bear yourself in the midst of them.

The first reason for all wars, and for the necessity of national defences, is that the majority of persons, high and low, in all European nations, are Thieves, and, in their hearts, greedy of their neighbours' goods, land, and fame.

But besides being Thieves, they are also fools, and have never yet been able to understand that if Cornish men want pippins cheap, they must not ravage Devonshire—that the prosperity of their neighbours is, in the end, their own also;⁴ and the poverty of their neighbours, by the communism of God, becomes also in the end their own. "Invidia," jealousy of your neighbour's good, has been, since dust was first made flesh, the curse of man;⁵ and "Charitas," the desire to do your neighbour grace, the one source of all human glory, power, and material Blessing.

¹ [Compare, below, p. 131; and Letter 48, § 19 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 220).]

² [See 1 Kings xxi. and xxii.; 2 Kings ix.]

³ [See above, p. 98 *n.*]

⁴ [See, for this as applied to Ireland, Vol. XXVI. p. 295 *n.*]

⁵ [On this subject, compare Letter 62, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 518).]

But war between nations (fools and thieves though they be) is not necessarily in all respects evil. I gave you that long extract from Froissart¹ to show you, mainly, that Theft in its simplicity—however sharp and rude, yet if frankly done, and bravely—does not corrupt men’s souls; and they can, in a foolish, but quite vital and faithful way, keep the feast of the Virgin Mary in the midst of it.²

But Occult Theft,—Theft which hides itself even from itself, and is legal, respectable, and cowardly,—corrupts the body and soul of man, to the last fibre of them. And the guilty Thieves of Europe, the real sources of all deadly war in it, are the Capitalists³—that is to say, people who live by percentages on the labour of others; instead of by fair wages for their own. The *Real* war in Europe, of which this fighting in Paris is the Inauguration, is between these and the workman, such as these have made him, They have kept him poor, ignorant, and sinful, that they might, without his knowledge, gather for themselves the produce of his toil. At last, a dim insight into the fact of this dawns on him; and such as they have made him he meets them, and *will* meet.

14. Nay, the time is even come when he will study that Meteorological question, suggested by the *Spectator*, formerly quoted, of the Filtration of Money from above downwards.⁴

“It was one of the many delusions of the Commune” (says to-day’s *Telegraph*, 24th June) “that it could do without rich consumers.”⁵ Well, such unconsumed existence would be very wonderful! Yet it is, to me also, conceivable. Without the riches,—no; but without the consumers?—possibly! It is occurring to the minds of the workmen that these Golden Fleeces must get their dew

¹ [See Letter 4, § 10 (p. 72).]

² [Compare Letters 14, § 1; 22, § 20; 31, § 15 (pp. 243, 385, 577).]

³ [Compare *Unto this Last*, § 76. n. (Vol. XVII. p. 103).]

⁴ [See Letter 4, § 9 (p. 70).]

⁵ [For a later reference to this passage, see below, p. 384.]

from somewhere. “Shall there be dew upon the fleece only?”¹ they ask:—and will be answered. They cannot do without these long purses, say you? No; but they want to find where the long purses are filled. Nay, even their trying to burn the Louvre,² without reference to Art Professors, had a ray of meaning in it—quite Spectatorial.

“If we must choose between a Titian and a Lancashire cotton-mill” (wrote the *Spectator* of August 6th, last year, instructing me in political economy, just as the war was beginning), “in the name of manhood and morality, give us the cotton-mill.”³

So thinks the French workman also, energetically; only *his* mill is not to be in Lancashire. Both French and English agree to have no more Titians,—it is well,—but which is to have the Cotton-Mill?

15. Do you see in the *Times* of yesterday and the day before, 22nd and 23rd June, that the Minister of France dares not, even in this her utmost need, put on an income-tax; and do you see why he dares not?⁴

Observe, such a tax is the only honest and just one; because it tells on the rich in true proportion to the poor, and because it meets necessity in the shortest and bravest way, and without interfering with any commercial operation.

All rich people object to income-tax, of course;—they like to pay as much as a poor man pays on their tea, sugar, and tobacco,—nothing on their incomes.

Whereas, in true justice, the only honest and wholly right tax is one not merely on income, but property; increasing in percentage as the property is greater. And the

¹ [Judges vi. 37.]

² [See above, p. 113.]

³ [Compare Letter 27, § 12 (p. 500); Letters 45, § 2, and 46, § 18 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 146, 186); Letter 76, § 9 (Vol. XXIX. p. 91); *Academy Notes*, 1875 (Vol. XIV. p. 302); and *Aratra Pentelici*, § 139 (Vol. XX. p. 297).]

⁴ [M. Thiers, in making his Budget statement, “declared that he would never associate his name with the establishment of an Income Tax in France” (*Times*, June 22, 1871). The Special Correspondent of the paper, in a letter published on the following day, described the deep-rooted objection felt by the French people to the disclosures required by an income tax, and to the certainty that if it were instituted, false returns would be made. See below, p. 139.]

main virtue of such a tax is that it makes publicly known what every man has, and how he gets it.¹

For every kind of Vagabonds, high and low, agree in their dislike to give an account of the way they get their living; still less, of how much they have got sewn up in their breeches. It does not, however, matter much to a country that it should know how its poor Vagabonds live; but it is of vital moment that it should know how its rich Vagabonds live; and that much of knowledge, it seems to me, in the present state of our education, is quite attainable. But that, when you have attained, it, you may act on it wisely, the first need is that you should be sure you are living honestly yourselves. That is why I told you, in my second letter, you must learn to obey good laws before you seek to alter bad ones:—I will amplify now a little the three promises I want you to make. Look back at them.²

16. (I.) You are to do good work, whether you live or die. It may be you will have to die;—well, men have died for their country often, yet doing her no good; be ready to die for her in doing her assured good: her, and all other countries with her. Mind your own business with your absolute heart and soul; but see that it is a good business first. That it *is* corn and sweet pease you are producing,—not gunpowder and arsenic. And be sure of this, literally:—*you must simply rather die than make any destroying mechanism or compound.* You are to be *literally* employed in cultivating the ground, or making useful things, and carrying them where they are wanted. Stand in the streets, and say to all who pass by: Have you any vineyard we can work in,—*not* Naboth's?³ In your powder and petroleum manufactory, we work no more.

17. I have said little to you yet of any of the pictures engraved—you perhaps think, not to the ornament of my book.

¹ [Compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 147 (Vol. XVIII. p. 505).]

² [See Letter 2, § 22 (p. 44).]

³ [See 1 Kings xxi.]

Be it so. You will find them better than ornaments in time. Notice, however, in the one I give you with this letter—the “Charity” of Giotto—the Red Queen of Dante,¹ and ours also,—how different his thought of her is from the common one.

Usually she is nursing children, or giving money. Giotto thinks there is little charity in nursing children;—bears and wolves do that for their little ones; and less still in giving money.

His Charity tramples upon bags of gold—has no use for them. She gives only corn and flowers; and God’s angel gives *her*, not even these—but a Heart.*

Giotto is quite literal in his meaning, as well as figurative. Your love is to give food and flowers, and to labour for them only.

18. But what are we to do against powder and petroleum, then? What men may do; not what poisonous beasts may. If a wretch spit in your face, will you answer by spitting in his?—if he throw vitriol at you, will you go to the apothecary for a bigger bottle?

There is no physical crime at this day, so far beyond pardon,—so without parallel in its untempted guilt, as the making of war-machinery, and invention of mischievous substance. Two nations may go mad, and fight like harlots—God have mercy on them;—you, who hand them carving-knives off the table, for leave to pick up a dropped sixpence, what mercy is there for *you*? We are so humane, forsooth, and so wise; and our ancestors had tar-barrels for witches; *we* will have them for everybody else, and drive the witches’ trade ourselves, by daylight; we will have our cauldrons, please Hecate, cooled (according to the

* I do not doubt I read the action wrong; she is *giving* her heart to God, while she gives gifts to men.—*Author’s Index to Vols. I. and II.*²

¹ [See above, § 9; and compare Letter 41, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 80).]

² [Compare *Mornings in Florence*, § 94 (Vol. XXIII. p. 388), and *Giotto and his Works in Padua* (Vol. XXIV. p. 118).]

Darwinian theory) with baboon's blood,¹ and enough of it, and sell hell-fire in the open street.

19. (II.) Seek to revenge no injury. You see now—do not you—a little more clearly why I wrote that? what strain there is on the untaught masses of you to revenge themselves, even with insane fire?

Alas, the Taught masses are strained enough also;—have you not just seen a great religious and reformed nation, with its goodly Captains,—philosophical, sentimental, domestic, evangelical-angelical-minded altogether, and with its Lord's Prayer really quite vital to it,—come and take its neighbour nation by the throat, saying, “Pay me that thou owest”?²

Seek to revenge no injury: I do not say, seek to punish no crime: look what I hinted about failed bankers.³ Of that hereafter.⁴

20. (III.) Learn to obey good laws; and in a little while you will reach the better learning—how to obey good Men, who are living, breathing, unblinded law; and to subdue base and disloyal ones, recognizing in these the light, and ruling over those in the power of the Lord of Light and Peace, whose Dominion is an everlasting Dominion, and His Kingdom from generation to generation.⁵

Ever faithfully yours,
JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ [Compare *Macbeth*, Act iv. sc. 1.]

² [Matthew xviii. 28. The reference is to the indemnity of 5 milliard francs included by Prussia in the preliminaries of peace (February 1871).]

³ [See above, § 12.]

⁴ [See below, p. 473.]

⁵ [Daniel iv. 3.]

LETTER 8

NOT AS THE WORLD GIVETH¹

1. MY FRIENDS,—I begin this letter a month before it is wanted,* having several matters in my mind that I would fain put into words at once. It is the first of July, and I sit down to write by the dimmest light that ever yet I wrote by; namely, the light of this midsummer morning, in mid-England (Matlock, Derbyshire), in the year 1871.

For the sky is covered with grey cloud;—not rain-cloud, but a dry black veil, which no ray of sunshine can pierce; partly diffused in must, feeble mist, enough to make distant objects unintelligible, yet without any substance, or wreathing, or colour of its own.² And everywhere the leaves of the trees are shaking fitfully, as they do before a thunderstorm; only not violently, but enough to show the passing to and fro of a strange, bitter, blighting wind. Dismal enough, had it been the first morning of its kind that summer had sent. But during all this spring, in London, and at Oxford, through meagre March, through changelessly

* I have since been ill,³ and cannot thoroughly revise my sheets; but my good friend Mr. Robert Chester,⁴ whose keen reading has saved me many a blunder ere now, will, I doubt not, see me safely through the pinch.

¹ [John xiv. 27. For the title, see below, § 6.]

² ["Cf. Letter 12, § 8" (p. 203).—*MS. note in Author's copy.* The present is the earliest passage in which Ruskin describes the "storm-cloud" and "plague-wind": see in a later volume *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century* (1884), § 29, where Ruskin refers to this notice of the phenomenon, and quotes § 1 (from "It is the first of July") and § 2 (down to "displeased enough"). For further notices of it, see Letter 29, § 1 (p. 527); also Letters 53, § 1, and 59, § 5 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 317, 443).]

³ [For Ruskin's illness at Matlock in 1871, see Vol. XXII. p. xviii.]

⁴ [The reader at Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co.'s printing office, then in Old Bailey.]

sullen April, through despondent May, and darkened June, morning after morning has come grey-shrouded thus.

And it is a new thing to me, and a very dreadful one. I am fifty years old, and more; and since I was five, have gleaned the best hours of my life in the sun of spring and summer mornings; and I never saw such as these, till now.

And the scientific men are busy as ants, examining the sun, and the moon, and the seven stars, and can tell me all about *them*, I believe, by this time; and how they move, and what they are made of.

And I do not care, for my part, two copper spangles how they move, nor what they are made of. I can't move them any other way than they go, nor make them of anything else, better than they are made. But I would care much and give much, if I could be told where this bitter wind comes from, and what *it* is made of.

For, perhaps, with forethought, and fine laboratory science, one might make it of something else.

2. It looks partly as if it were made of poisonous smoke; very possibly it may be: there are at least two hundred furnace chimneys in a square of two miles on every side of me. But mere smoke would not blow to and fro in that wild way. It looks more to me as if it were made of dead men's souls—such of them as are not gone yet where they have to go, and may be flitting hither and thither, doubting, themselves, of the fittest place for them.

You know, if there *are* such things as souls, and if ever any of them haunt places where they have been hurt, there must be many about us, just now, displeas¹ enough!

You may laugh, if you like. I don't believe any one of you would like to live in a room with a murdered man in the cupboard, however well preserved chemically;—even with a sunflower growing out at the top of his head.

And I don't, myself, like living in a world with such a multitude of murdered men in the ground of it—though

¹ ["The last sentence refers of course to the battles of the Franco-German campaign" (says Ruskin in *The Storm-Cloud*, § 29).]

we *are* making heliotropes of them, and scientific flowers, that study the sun.¹

I wish the scientific men would let me and other people study it with our own eyes, and neither through telescopes nor heliotropes. You shall, at all events, study the rain a little, if not the sun, to-day, and settle that question we have been upon so long as to where it comes from.

3. All France, it seems, is in a state of enthusiastic delight and pride at the unexpected facility with which she has got into debt;² and Monsieur Thiers is congratulated by all our wisest papers on his beautiful statesmanship of borrowing. I don't myself see the cleverness of it, having suffered a good deal from that kind of statesmanship in private persons: but I daresay it is as clever as anything else that statesmen do, nowadays; only it happens to be more mischievous than most of their other doings, and I want you to understand the bearings of it.

Everybody in France who has got any money is eager to lend it to M. Thiers at five per cent. No doubt; but who is to pay the five per cent.? It is to be "raised" by duties on this and that. Then certainly the persons who get the five per cent. will have to pay some part of these duties themselves, on their own tea and sugar, or whatever else is taxed; and this taxing will be on the whole of their trade, and on whatever they buy with the rest of their fortunes;* but the five per cent. only on what they lend M. Thiers.

* "The charge on France for the interest of the newly-created debt, for the amount advanced by the Bank, and for the annual repayments—in short, for the whole additional burdens which she has rendered necessary—is substantially to be met by increased Customs and Excise duties. The two principles which seem to have governed the selection of these imposts are, to extort the largest amount of money as it is leaving the hand of the purchaser, and to enforce the same process as the cash is falling into the hand of the native vendor; the results being to burden the consumer

¹ [The name heliotrope (ηλιοτρόπιον), now applied to the fragrant H. Peruvianum, was originally given to the sunflower and other plants of which the flowers turn so as to follow the sun.]

² [See the report of M. Thiers' Budget speech in the *Times* of June 22, 1871. The speech had "an inspiring effect" upon his hearers (*ibid.*, June 23).]

It is a low estimate to say the payment of duties will take off one per cent. of their five.

Practically, therefore, the arrangement is that they get four per cent. for their money, and have all the trouble of customs duties, to take from them another extra one per cent., and give it them back again Four per cent., however, is not to be despised. But who pays *that*?

4. The people who have got no money to lend, pay it; the daily worker and producer pays it. Unfortunate “William,”¹ who has borrowed, in this instance, not a plane he could make planks with, but mitrailleuses and

and restrict the national industry. Leading commodities of necessary use—such as sugar and coffee, all raw materials for manufacture, and all textile substances—have to pay *ad valorem* duties, in some cases ruinously heavy. Worse still, and bearing most seriously on English interests, heavy export duties are to be imposed on French products, among which wine, brandy, liqueurs, fruits, eggs, and oilcake stand conspicuous—these articles paying a fixed duty; while all others, grain and flour, we presume, included, will pay 1 per cent. *ad valorem*. Navigation dues are also to be levied on shipping, French and foreign; and the internal postage of letters is to be increased 25 per cent. From the changes in the Customs duties alone an increased revenue of £10,500,000 is anticipated. We will not venture to assert that these changes may not yield the amount of money so urgently needed; but if they do, the result will open up a new chapter in political economy. Judging from the experience of every civilised State, it is simply inconceivable that such a tariff can be productive, can possess the faculty of healthy natural increase, or can act otherwise than as a dead weight on the industrial energies of the country. Every native of France will have to pay more for articles of prime necessity, and will thus have less to spare on articles of luxury—that is, on those which contribute most to the revenue, with the least of damage to the resources of his industry. Again, the manufacturer will have the raw material of his trade enhanced in value; and, though he may have the benefit of a drawback on his exports, he will find his home market starved by State policy. His foreign customer will purchase less, because the cost is so much greater, and because his means are lessened by the increase in the prices of food through the export duty on French products. The French peasant finds *his* market contracted by an export duty which prevents the English consumers of his eggs, poultry, and wine from buying as largely as they once did; his profits are therefore reduced, his piece of ground is less valuable, his ability to pay taxes is lessened. The policy, in short, might almost be thought expressly devised to impoverish the entire nation when it most wants enriching—to strangle French industry by slow degrees, to dry up at their source the main currents of revenue. Our only hope is, that the proposals, by their very grossness, will defeat themselves.”—*Telegraph*, June 29th.

¹ [See Letter 1, §§ 13–14 (pp. 24–26).]

gunpowder, with which he has planed away his own farmsteads, and forests, and fair fields of corn, and having left himself desolate, now has to pay for the loan of this useful instrument, five per cent. So says the gently commercial James to him: “Not only the price of your plane, but five per cent. to me for lending it, O sweetest of Williams.”

Sweet William, carrying generally more absinthe in his brains than wit, has little to say for himself, having, indeed, wasted too much of his sweetness lately, tainted disagreeably with petroleum, on the desert air of Paris. And the people who are to get their five per cent. out of him, and roll him and suck him,—the sugar-cane of a William that he is,—how should they but think the arrangement a glorious one for the nation?

So there is great acclaim and triumphal procession of financiers! and the arrangement is made; namely, that all the poor labouring persons in France are to pay the rich idle ones five per cent. annually, on the sum of eighty millions of sterling pounds, until further notice.

5. But this is not all, observe. Sweet William is not altogether so soft in his rind that you can crush him without some sufficient machinery: you must have your army in good order, “to justify public confidence”; and you must get the expense of that, beside your five per cent., out of ambrosial William. He must pay the cost of his own roller.

Now, therefore, see briefly what it all comes to.

First, you spend eighty millions of money in fireworks, doing no end of damage in letting them off.

Then you borrow money, to pay the firework-maker’s bill, from any gain-loving persons who have got it.

And then, dressing your bailiff’s men in new red coats and cocked hats, you send them drumming and trumpeting into the fields, to take the peasants by the throat, and make them pay the interest on what you have borrowed; and the expense of the cocked hats besides.¹

¹ [For a later reference to this analysis of National Debts, see Letter 58, § 11 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 428).]

That is “financiering,” my friends, as the mob of the money-makers understand it. And they understand it well. For that is what it always comes to, finally; taking the peasant by the throat. He *must* pay—for he only *can*. Food can only be got out of the ground, and all these devices of soldiership, and law, and arithmetic, are but ways of getting at last down to him, the furrow-driver, and snatching the roots from him as he digs.¹

And they have got him down, now, they think, well, for a while, poor William, after his fit of fury and petroleum: and can make their money out of him for years to come, in the old ways.

6. Did you chance, my friends, any of you, to see, the other day, the 83rd number of the *Graphic*, with the picture of the Queen’s concert in it? All the fine ladies sitting so trimly, and looking so sweet, and doing the whole duty of woman—wearing their fine clothes gracefully; and the pretty singer, white-throated, warbling “Home, sweet home” to them, so morally, and melodiously! Here was yet to be our ideal of virtuous life, thought the *Graphic*!² Surely, we are safe back with our virtues in satin slippers and lace veils;—and our Kingdom of Heaven is come again, *with* observation,³ and crown diamonds of the dazzlingest. Cherubim and Seraphim in toilettes de Paris—(bleu-de-ciel—vert d’olivier-de—Noé—mauve de colombe-fusillée) dancing to Coote and Tinney’s band; and vulgar Hell reserved for the canaille, as heretofore! Vulgar Hell shall be didactically portrayed, accordingly (see page 17),

¹ [Compare below, p. 184.]

² [A double-page illustration of “Her Majesty’s State Concert at Buckingham Palace,” with Adelina Patti (?) singing “Home, Sweet Home,” in the number for July 1, 1871. (The picture seems, however, to have been imaginary, for the Court Circular—*Times*, June 21—shows that Patti was not among the performers; that “Home, Sweet Home” was not in the programme; and that the Queen was not present.) In a note on the concert (p. 14) the *Graphic* enlarged on the pure taste which is illustrated by State concerts. On p. 17 it published an illustration of a “Convoy of Communist Prisoners at Versailles.” On p. 3 of the same issue was an article on “July Fashions,” mentioning “a few of the toilettes worn at a grand ball last week.”]

³ [Luke xvii. 20 (“The kingdom of God cometh not with observation”); compare Vol. XVIII. p. 428.]

—Wickedness going its way to *its* poor Home—bitter-sweet. Ouvrier and pétroleuse—prisoners at last—glaring wild on their way to die.

Alas! of these divided races, of whom one was appointed to teach and guide the other, which has indeed sinned deepest—the unteaching, or the untaught?—which now are guiltiest—these, who perish, or those—who forget?

Ouvrier and pétroleuse; they are gone their way—to their death. But for these, the Virgin of France shall yet unfold the oriflamme above their graves, and lay her blanch lilies on their dust.¹ Yes, and for these, great Charles shall rouse his Roland, and bid him put ghostly trump to lip, and breathe a point of war;² and the helmed Pucelle shall answer with a wood-note of Domrémy;—yes, and for these the Louis they mocked,³ like his master, shall raise his holy hands, and pray God’s peace.

“Not as the world giveth.”⁴ Everlasting shame only, and unrest, are the world’s gifts. These Swine of the five per cent. shall share them duly.

“La sconoscente vita, che i fe’ sozzi
Ad ogni conoscenza or li fa bruni.

Che tutto l’oro, ch’è sotto la luna,
E che già, fù, di queste anime stanche
Non potrebbe farne posar una.”⁵

¹ [Hitherto “lay her blanched lilies on their smirched dust”; corrected by Ruskin in his copy as above.]

² [Ruskin here reverses the legend which tells of the blast of Roland’s horn arousing Charlemagne: as in *Marmion*, vi. 33, and as referred to by Ruskin in his note on line 626 in *Rock Honeycomb*. For “a point of war,” see 2 *Henry IV.*, Act iv. sc. 1. For the home of La Pucelle, the Maid of Orleans, in the forests of Domrémy, see *Sesame and Lilies*, § 82 (Vol. XVIII. p. 133).]

³ [This seems to refer to the imminent risk of destruction to which the Sainte Chapelle was exposed during the Communist conflagrations. Compare Letter 40, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 69): “the modern Cité rises round the Sainte Chapelle. . . . But St. Louis perhaps is not wholly dead yet.”]

⁴ [John xiv. 27. The title of this letter.]

⁵ [Dante’s *Inferno*, vii. 53–54, 64–66:—

“That ignoble life,
Which made them vile before, now makes them dark,
And to all knowledge indiscernible.
Not all the gold that is beneath the moon,
Or ever hath been, of these toil-worn souls
Might purchase rest for one.” (Cary.)

Ruskin quotes the passage also in *Munera Pulveris*, § 88 n. (Vol. XVII. p. 210 n.).]

7. “Ad ogni conoscenza bruni”: Dark to all recognition! So they would have it indeed; true of instinct. “Ce serait l’Inquisition,” screamed the Senate of France, threatened with income-tax, and inquiry into their ways and means.¹ Well,—what better thing could it be? Had they not been blind long enough, under their mole-hillocks, that they should shriek at the first spark of “Inquisition”? A few things might be “inquired,” one should think, and answered, among honest men, now, to advantage, and openly? “Ah no—for God’s sake,” shrieks the Senate, “no Inquisition. If ever anybody should come to know how we live, we were disgraced for ever, honest gentlemen that we are.”

Now, my friends, the first condition of all bravery is to keep out of *this* loathsomeness. If you *do* live by rapine, stand up like a man for the old law of bow and spear; but don’t fall whimpering down on your belly, like Autolycus, “grovelling on the ground,”² when another human creature asks you how you get your daily bread, with an “Oh, that ever I was born,—here is inquisition come on me!”

The Inquisition must come. Into men’s consciences, no; not now: there is little worth looking into there. But into their pockets—yes; a most practicable and beneficial inquisition, to be made thoroughly and purgatorially, once for all, and rendered unnecessary hereafter, you furnishing the relieved marsupialia³ with—*glass* pockets, for the future.

8. You know, at least, that we, in our own society, are to have glass pockets, as we are all to give the tenth of what we have, to buy land with, so that we must every one know each other’s property to a farthing. And this month I begin making up my own accounts for you, as I said I would: I could not, sooner, though I set matters

¹ [See above, p. 128.]

² [*The Winter’s Tale*, Act iv. sc. 2: compare Vol. XXVIII. p. 426.]

³ [For later references to this passage, in which Ruskin proposes to substitute glass-pockets for pouches, see Letters 62, § 17 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 528), and 77, § 6 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 113). Compare also *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 147 (Vol. XVIII. p. 505).]

in train as soon as my first letter was out, and effected (as I supposed!), in February, a sale of £14,000 worth of houses, at the West End, to Messrs.——and——, of——Row.

But from then till now, I've been trying to get that piece of business settled, and until yesterday, 19th July, I have not been able.

For, first there was a mistake made by my lawyer in the list of the houses: No. 7 ought to have been No. 1. It was a sheer piece of stupidity, and ought to have been corrected by a dash of the pen; but all sorts of deeds had to be made out again, merely that they might be paid for; and it took about three months to change 7 into 1.

At last all was declared smooth again, and I thought I should get my money; but Messrs. —— never stirred. My people kept sending them letters, saying I really did want the money, though they mightn't think it. Whether they thought it or not, they took no notice of any such informal communications. I thought they were going to back out of their bargain; but my man of business at last got their guarantee for its completion.

"If they've guaranteed the payment, why don't they pay?" thought I; but still I couldn't get any money. At last I found the lawyers on both sides were quarrelling over the stamp-duties! Nobody knew, of the whole pack of them, whether this stamp or that was the right one! and my lawyers wouldn't give an eighty-pound stamp, and theirs wouldn't be content with a twenty-pound one.

Now, you know, all this stamp business itself is merely Mr. Gladstone's* way of coming in for *his* share of the booty. I can't be allowed to sell my houses in peace, but Mr. Gladstone must have his three hundred pounds out of me, to feed his Woolwich infant¹ with, and fire it

* Of course the Prime Minister is always the *real* tax-gatherer; the Chancellor of the Exchequer is only the cat's-paw.

¹ [See Letter 2, § 20 *n.* (p. 43).]

off “with the most satisfactory result,” “nothing damaged but the platform.”

I am content, if only he would come and say what he wants, and take it, and get out of my sight. But not to know what he *does* want! and to keep me from getting my money at all, while his lawyers are asking which is the right stamp? I think he had better be clear on that point next time.

But here, at last, are six months come and gone, and the stamp question is—not settled, indeed, but I’ve undertaken to keep my man of business free of harm, if the stamps won’t do; and so at last he says I’m to have my money; and I really believe, by the time this letter is out, Messrs. —— will have paid me my £14,000.

9. Now you know I promised you the tenth of all I had, when free from incumbrances already existing on it. This first instalment of £14,000 is not all clear, for I want part of it to found a Mastership of Drawing under the Art Professorship at Oxford;¹ which I can’t do rightly for less than £5000. But I’ll count the sum left as £10,000 instead of £9000, and that will be clear for our society, and so, you shall have a thousand pounds down, as the tenth of that, which will quit me, observe, of my pledge thus far.

A thousand *down*, I say; but down where? Where can I put it to be safe for us? You will find presently, as others come in to help us, and we get something worth taking care of, that it becomes a very curious question indeed, where we can put our money to be safe!

In the meantime, I’ve told my man of business to buy £1000 consols in the names of two men of honour; the names cannot yet be certain.² What remains of the round thousand shall be kept to add to next instalment. And

¹ [See Vol. XXI. p. xxi.]

² [Ultimately Mr. Cowper-Temple (see above, p. 42) and Sir Thomas Acland (brother of Ruskin’s great friend, Henry): see below, p. 159. “I have telegraphed and written, both, to your brother,” wrote Ruskin to Henry Acland (August 4), “to ask his pardon for using his name to-day with Mr. Cowper-Temple’s. I wanted

thus begins the fund, which I think we may advisably call the “St. George’s” fund. And although the interest on consols is, as I told you before,¹ only the taxation on the British peasant continued since the Napoleon wars, still *this* little portion of his labour, the interest on our St. George’s fund, will at last be saved for him, and brought back to him.

10. And now, if you will read over once again the end of my fifth letter [p. 95], I will tell you a little more of what we are to do with this money, as it increases.

First, let whoever gives us any, be clear in their minds that it is a Gift. It is not an Investment. It is a frank and simple gift to the British people: nothing of it is to come back to the giver.

But also, nothing of it is to be lost. The money is not to be spent in feeding Woolwich infants with gunpowder. It is to be spent in dressing the earth and keeping it,²—in feeding human lips,—in clothing human bodies,—in kindling human souls.

First of all, I say, in dressing the earth. As soon as the fund reaches any sufficient amount, the Trustees shall buy with it any kind of land offered them at just price in Britain. Rock, moor, marsh, or sea-shore—it matters not what, so it be British ground, and secured to us.

Then, we will ascertain the absolute best that can be made of every acre. We will first examine what flowers and herbs it naturally bears; every wholesome flower that it will grow shall be sown in its wild places, and every kind of fruit-tree that can prosper; and arable and pasture land extended by every expedient of tillage, with humble

to buy instantly, for fear the statement in *Fors* should be suspected. I have bought 2000 consols (as another tithed of 1000 will be due this month) in Sir Thos. Acland’s and Mr. Cowper’s name as Trustees. I write this in case he should be with you instead of at Kilverton. The Trusteeship of course involves no approval of details of plan.”]

¹ [See Letter 4, § 8 (p. 69).]

² [Genesis ii. 15. See the opening words of *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 13).]

and simple cottage dwellings under faultless sanitary regulation. Whatever piece of land we begin to work upon, we shall treat thoroughly at once, putting unlimited manual labour on it, until we have every foot of it under as strict care as a flower-garden: and the labourers shall be paid sufficient, unchanging wages; and their children educated compulsorily in agricultural schools inland, and naval schools by the sea, the indispensable first condition of such education being that the boys learn either to ride or to sail;¹ the girls to spin, weave, and sew, and at a proper age to cook all ordinary food exquisitely;² the youth of both sexes to be disciplined daily in the strictest practice of vocal music;³ and for morality, to be taught gentleness to all brute creatures,—finished courtesy to each other,—to speak truth with rigid care, and to obey orders with the precision of slaves. Then, as they get older, they are to learn the natural history of the place they live in,—to know Latin, boys and girls both,—and the history of five cities: Athens, Rome, Venice, Florence, and London.⁴

11. Now, as I told you in my fifth letter, to what extent I may be able to carry this plan into execution, I know not; but to *some* visible extent, with my own single hand, I can and will, if I live. Nor do I doubt but that I shall find help enough, as soon as the full action of the system is seen, and ever so little a space of rightly cultivated ground in perfect beauty, with inhabitants in peace of heart, of whom none

“Doluit miserans inopem, aut invidit habenti.”⁵

Such a life we have lately been taught by vile persons to think impossible; so far from being impossible, it *has*

¹ [Compare Letter 9, § 11 (p. 156) and Letter 85, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 322).]

² [Compare “The Story of Arachne,” § 25 (Vol. XX. p. 377).]

³ [Compare Letter 57, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 406).]

⁴ [“*cf.* opinions of five men [Plato, Virgil, Dante, Victor Carpaccio, and Shakespeare], Letter 18, § 13” (p. 314).—*MS. note in Author’s copy.* For the five cities, see (in a later volume of this edition) Ruskin’s Preface (§ 3) to *The Economist of Xenophon.*]

⁵ [Virgil, *Georgics*, ii. 499.]

been the actual life of all glorious human states in their origin.

“Hanc olim veteres vitam coluere Sabini;
Hanc Remus et frater; sic fortis Etruria crevit;
Scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma.”¹

But, had it never been endeavoured until now, we might yet, learn to hope for its unimagined good by considering what it has been possible for us to reach of unimagined evil. Utopia and its benediction are probable and simple things, compared to the Kakotopia and its curse, which we had seen actually fulfilled. We have seen the city of Paris (what miracle can be thought of beyond this?) with her own forts raining ruin on her palaces, and her young children casting fire into the streets in which they had been born, but we have not faith enough in heaven to imagine the reverse of this, or the building of any city whose streets shall be full of innocent boys and girls playing in the midst thereof.²

12. My friends, you have trusted, in your time, too many idle words. Read now these following, not idle ones; and remember *them*; and trust them, for they are true:—

“Oh, thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

“And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

“In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee. . . .

“Whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. . . .

“No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment

¹ [Virgil, *Georgics*, ii. 532–534.]

² [Zechariah viii. 5.]

thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord ; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.”¹

Remember only that in this now antiquated translation, “righteousness” means, accurately and simply, “justice,”² and is the eternal law of right, obeyed alike in the great times of each state, by Jew, Greek, and Roman. In my next letter, we will examine into the nature of this justice, and of its relation to Governments that deserve the name.

And so believe me,

Faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ [Isaiah liv. 11, 13–15, 17.]

² [See above, pp. 108–109.]

LETTER 9

HONOUR TO WHOM HONOUR¹

DENMARK HILL,

1st September, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—As the design which I had in view when I began these letters (and many a year before, in the germ and first outlines of it²) is now fairly afoot, and in slow, but determined, beginning of realization, I will endeavour in this and the next following letter to set its main features completely before you; though, remember, the design would certainly be a shallow and vain one, if its bearings could be either shortly explained, or quickly understood. I have much in my own hope, which I know you are as yet incapable of hoping, but which your enemies are dexterous in discouraging, and eager to discourage. Have you noticed how curiously and earnestly the greater number of public journals that have yet quoted these papers, allege, for their part, nothing but the difficulties in our way; and that with as much contempt as they can venture to express? No editor could say to your face that the endeavour to give you fresh air, wholesome employment, and high education, was reprehensible or dangerous. The worst he can venture to say is, that it is ridiculous,—which you observe is, by most, declared as wittily as they may.

2. Some must, indeed, candidly think, as well as say so. Education of any noble kind has of late been so constantly given only to the idle classes, or, at least, to those who

¹ [For the title, see § 11.]

² [See Introduction, above, p. xviii.]

conceive it a privilege to be idle,* that it is difficult for any person, trained in modern habits of thought, to imagine a true and refined scholarship, of which the essential foundation is to be skill in some useful labour. Time and trial will show which of the two conceptions of education is indeed the ridiculous one—and *have* shown, many and many a day before this, if any one would look at the showing. Such trial, however, I mean anew to make, with what life is left to me, and help given to me: and the manner of it is to be this, that, few or many, as our company may be, we will secure for the people of Britain as wide spaces of British ground as we can; and on such spaces of freehold land we will cause to be trained as many British children as we can, in healthy, brave, and kindly life, to every one of whom there shall be done true justice, and dealt fair opportunity of “advancement,” or what else may, indeed, be good for them.

3. “True justice!” I might more shortly have written “justice,” only you are all now so much in the way of asking for what you think “rights,” which, if you could get them, would turn out to be the deadliest wrongs;—and you suffer so much from an external mechanism of justice, which for centuries back has abetted, or, at best, resulted in, every conceivable manner of injustice—that I am compelled to say “*True* justice,” to distinguish it from that which is commonly imagined by the populace, or attainable under the existing laws, of civilized nations.

This true justice (not to spend time, which I am apt to be too fond of doing, in verbal definition) consists mainly

* Infinite nonsense is talked about the “work done” by the upper classes. I have done a little myself, in my day, of the kind of work they boast of; but mine, at least, has been all play.¹ Even lawyer’s, which is, on the whole, the hardest, you may observe to be essentially grim play, made more jovial for themselves by conditions which make it somewhat dismal to other people. Here and there we have a real worker among soldiers, or no soldiering would long be possible; nevertheless young men don’t go into the Guards with any primal or essential idea of work.

¹ [Compare below, p. 513.]

in the granting to every human being due aid in the development of such faculties as it possesses for action and enjoyment; primarily, for useful action, because all enjoyment worth having (nay, all enjoyment not harmful) must in some way arise out of that, either in happy energy, or rightly complacent and exulting rest.

4. “Due” aid, you see, I have written. Not “equal” aid. One of the first statements I made to you respecting this domain of ours was “there shall be no equality in it.”¹ In education especially, true justice is curiously unequal—if you choose to give it a hard name, iniquitous. The right law of it is that you are to take most pains with the best material. Many conscientious masters will plead for the exactly contrary iniquity, and say you should take the most pains with the dullest boys. But that is not so (only you must be very careful that you know which *are* the dull boys; for the cleverest look often very like them). Never waste pains on bad ground; let it remain rough, though properly looked after and cared for; it will be of best service so; but spare no labour on the good, or on what has in it the capacity of good. The tendency of modern help and care is quite morbidly and madly in reverse of this great principle.² Benevolent persons are always, by preference, busy on the essentially bad; and exhaust themselves in efforts to get maximum intellect from cretins, and maximum virtue from criminals. Meantime, they take no care to ascertain (and for the most part when ascertained, obstinately refuse to remove) the continuous sources of cretinism and crime, and suffer the most splendid material in child-nature to wander neglected about the streets, until it has become rotten to the degree in which they feel prompted to take an interest in it. Now I have not the slightest intention—understand this, I beg of you, very clearly—of setting myself to mend or reform people; when they are once out of form they may

¹ [See Letter 5, § 21 (p. 96).]

² [Compare *A Joy for Ever*, § 184 (Vol. XVI. p. 168); Vol. XVII. p. 542; and Letter 81, § 17 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 214).]

stay so, for me.* But of what unspoiled stuff I can find to my hand I will cut the best shapes there is room for: shapes unalterable, if it may be, for ever.

“The best shapes there is room for,” since, according to the conditions around them, men’s natures must expand or remain contracted; and, yet more distinctly, let me say, “the best shapes that there is *substance* for,” seeing that we must accept contentedly infinite difference in the original nature and capacity, even at their purest; which it is the first condition of right education to make manifest to all persons—most of all to the persons chiefly concerned. That other men should know their measure, is, indeed, desirable; but that they should know it themselves, is wholly necessary.

5. “By competitive examination of course?” Sternly, no! but under absolute prohibition of all violent and strained effort—most of all envious or anxious effort—in every exercise of body and mind; and by enforcing on every scholar’s heart, from the first to the last stage of his instruction, the irrevocable ordinance of the third Fors Clavigera, that his mental rank among men is fixed from the hour he was born,—that by no temporary or violent effort can he train, though he may seriously injure the faculties he has; that by no manner of effort can he increase them; and that his best happiness is to consist in the admiration of powers by him for ever unattainable, and of arts, and deeds, by him for ever inimitable.¹

* I speak in the first person, not insolently, but necessarily, being yet alone in this design: and for some time to come the responsibility of carrying it on must rest with me, nor do I ask or desire any present help, except from those who understand what I have written in the course of the last ten years, and who can trust me, therefore. But the continuance of the scheme must depend on the finding men staunch and prudent for the heads of each department of the practical work, consenting, indeed, with each other as to certain great principles of that work, but left wholly to their own judgment as to the manner and degree in which they are to be carried into effect.

¹ [In his Index to vols. i. and ii. Ruskin under “Competitive Examinations” refers to this place as giving “the proper substitute for them,” and adds, “read this last passage carefully.” Compare Vol. I. p. 384 and *n.*; and below, p. 248 *n.*]

6. Some ten or twelve years ago, when I was first actively engaged in Art teaching, a young Scottish student¹ came up to London to put himself under me, having taken many prizes (justly, with respect to the qualities looked for by the judges) in various schools of Art. He worked under me very earnestly and patiently for some time; and I was able to praise his doings in what I thought very high terms: nevertheless, there remained always a look of mortification on his face, after he had been praised, however unqualifiedly. At last, he could hold no longer, but one day, when I had been more than usually complimentary, turned to me with an anxious, yet not unconfident expression, and asked: "Do you think, sir, that I shall ever draw as well as Turner?"

I paused for a second or two, being much taken aback; and then answered,* "It is far more likely you should be made Emperor of All the Russias.² There is a new Emperor every fifteen or twenty years, on the average; and by strange hap, and fortunate cabal, anybody might be made Emperor. But there is only one Turner in five hundred years, and God decides, without any admission of auxiliary cabal, what piece of clay His soul is to be put in."

7. It was the first time that I had been brought into direct collision with the modern system of prize-giving and competition; and the mischief of it was, in the sequel clearly shown to me, and tragically. This youth had the finest powers of mechanical execution I have ever met with, but was quite incapable of invention, or strong intellectual effort of any kind. Had he been taught early and thoroughly to know his place, and be content with his faculty, he would have been one of the happiest and most

* I do not mean that I answered in these words, but to the effect of them, at greater length.

¹ [J. J. Laing (see Vol. V. p. 12). Several letters to him from Ruskin are given in a later volume of this edition.]

² [Compare Letter 95, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 495).]

serviceable of men. But, at the Art schools, he got prize after prize for his neat handling; and having, in his restricted imagination, no power of discerning the qualities of great work, all the vanity of his nature was brought out unchecked; so that, being intensely industrious and conscientious, as well as vain (it is a Scottish combination of character not unfrequent*), he naturally expected to become one of the greatest of men. My answer not only mortified, but angered him, and made him suspicious of me; he thought I wanted to keep his talents from being fairly displayed, and soon afterwards asked leave (he was then in my employment as well as under my teaching) to put himself under another master. I gave him leave at once, telling him, "if he found the other master no better to his mind, he might come back to me whenever he chose." The other master giving him no more hope of advancement than I did, he came back to me; I sent him into Switzerland, to draw Swiss architecture; but instead of doing what I bid him, quietly, and nothing else, he set himself, with furious industry, to draw snowy mountains and clouds, that he might show me he *could* draw like Albert Dürer, or Turner;—spent his strength in agony of vain effort;—caught cold, fell into decline, and died. How many actual deaths are now annually caused by the strain and anxiety of competitive examination, it would startle us all if we could know: but the mischief done to the best faculties of the brain in all cases, and the miserable confusion and absurdity involved in the system itself, which offers every place, not to the man who is indeed fitted for it, but to the one who, on a given day, chances to have bodily strength enough to stand the cruellest strain, are evils infinite in their consequences, and more lamentable than many deaths.

* We English are usually bad altogether in a harmonious way, and only quite insolent when we are quite good-for-nothing; the least good in us shows itself in a measure of modesty; but many Scotch natures, of fine capacity otherwise, are rendered entirely abortive by conceit.

8. This, then, shall be the first condition of what education it may become possible for us to give, that the strength of the youths shall never be strained; and that their best powers shall be developed in each, without competition, though they shall have to pass crucial, but not severe, examinations, attesting clearly to themselves and to other people, not the utmost they can do, but that at least they can do *some* things accurately and well: their own certainty of this being accompanied with the quite as clear and much happier certainty, that there are many other things which they will never be able to do at all.

“The happier certainty?” Yes. A man’s happiness consists infinitely more in admiration of the faculties of others than in confidence in his own. That reverent admiration is the perfect human gift in him; all lower animals are happy and noble in the degree they can share it. A dog reverences you, a fly does not; the capacity of partly understanding a creature above him, is the dog’s nobility. Increase such reverence in human beings, and you increase daily their happiness, peace, and dignity; take it away, and you make them wretched as well as vile. But for fifty years back modern education has devoted itself simply to the teaching of impudence; and then we complain that we can no more manage our mobs! “Look at Mr. Robert Stephenson” (we tell a boy), “and at Mr. James Watt, and Mr. William Shakespeare! You know you are every bit as good as they; you have only to work in the same way, and you will infallibly arrive at the same eminence.” Most boys believe the “you are every bit as good as they,” without any painful experiment; but the better-minded ones really take the advised measures; and as, at the end of all things, there *can* be but one Mr. James Watt or Mr. William Shakespeare, the rest of the candidates for distinction, finding themselves, after all their work, still indistinct, think it must be the fault of the police, and are riotous accordingly.

9. To some extent it *is* the fault of the police, truly

enough, considering as the police of Europe, or teachers of politeness and civic manners, its higher classes,—higher either by race or faculty. Police they are, or else are nothing: bound to keep order, both by clear teaching of the duty and delight of Respect, and, much more, by being themselves—Respectable; whether as priests, or kings, or lords, or generals, or admirals;—if they will only take care to be verily *that*, the Respect will be forthcoming, with little pains: nay, even Obedience, inconceivable to modern free souls as it may be, we shall get again, as soon as there is anybody worth obeying, and who can keep us out of shoal water.

10. Not but that those two admirals and their captains have been sorely, though needfully, dealt with. It was, doubtless, not a scene of the brightest in our naval history—that *Agincourt*, entomologically, as it were, pinned to her wrong place, off Gibraltar; but in truth, it was less the captain's fault, than the ironmonger's. You need not think you can ever have seamen in iron ships; it is not in flesh and blood to be vigilant when vigilance is so slightly necessary: the best seaman born will lose his qualities, when he knows he can steam against wind and tide,* and has to handle ships so large that the care of them is necessarily divided among many persons. If you want sea-captains indeed, like Sir Richard Grenville or Lord Dundonald,¹ you must give them small ships, and wooden ones,—nothing

* “Steam has, of course, utterly extirpated seamanship,” says Admiral Rous, in his letter to the *Times* (which I had, of course, not seen when I wrote this). Read the whole letter and the article on it in the *Times* of the 17th, which is entirely temperate and conclusive.²

¹ [For other references to Grenville, see Vol. XVIII. p. 538; and, below, p. 385; also Letters 42, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 95), and 88, § 9 (Vol. XXIX. p. 387); and for Dundonald (Cochrane), Letter 66, § 20 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 630).]

² [The *Agincourt* (Captain Hamilton Beamish), 6621 tons, struck on the Pearl Rock, near Gibraltar, July 11, 1871; got off by great skill and management by the *Hercules* (Captain Lord Guildford). Particulars of the accident, etc., are given in the *Times* of July 17, 1871. By the Admiralty Minute (*Times*, August 19) Admirals Wellesley and Wilmot were ordered to strike flags, Captains Beamish and Wells superseded, others censured. There was a leading article on the Minute on August 19. Admiral Rous's letter, from which Ruskin quotes, was published on August 24, and a leading article was again devoted to the subject.]

but oak, pine, and hemp to trust to, above or below,—and those, trustworthy.

11. You little know how much is implied in the two conditions of boys' education that I gave you in my last letter,¹—that they shall all learn either to ride or sail; nor by what constancy of law the power of highest discipline and honour is vested by Nature in the two chivalries—of the Horse and the Wave.² Both are significative of the right command of man over his own passions; but they teach, farther, the strange mystery of relation that exists between his soul and the wild natural elements on the one hand, and the wild lower animals on the other. The sea-riding gave their chief strength of temper to the Athenian, Norman, Pisan, and Venetian,—masters of the arts of the world: but the gentleness of chivalry, properly so called, depends on the recognition of the order and awe of lower and loftier animal-life, first clearly taught in the myth of Chiron,³ and in his bringing up of Jason, Æsculapius, and Achilles, but most perfectly by Homer in the fable of the horses of Achilles, and the part assigned to them, in relation to the death of his friend, and in prophecy of his own.⁴ There is, perhaps, in all the *Iliad* nothing more deep in significance—there is nothing in all literature more perfect⁵ in human tenderness, and honour for the mystery of inferior life,* than the verses that describe the sorrow of the divine

* The myth of Balaam; the cause assigned for the journey of the first King of Israel from his father's house; and the manner of the triumphal entry of the greatest King of Judah into His capital, are symbolic of the same truths; but in a yet more strange humility.⁶

¹ [Letter 8, § 10 (p. 143).]

² [Compare Letter 75, § 17 (Vol. XXIX. p. 73). On the chivalry of the Horse, see also Letter 22, § 18 (p. 383), and compare Vol. XX. p. 351. On that of the Wave, see Vol. XX. p. 394. For riding and rowing as parts of education, see *A Joy for Ever*, § 128 (Vol. XVI. p. 111).]

³ [Compare below, p. 428, and Vol. XX. pp. 390 *seq.*]

⁴ [*Iliad*, xix. 404–417. Compare Vol. VII. pp. 338–339 *n.*, and *Love's Meinie*, § 138 (Vol. XXV. p. 131).]

⁵ [So Matthew Arnold says: "No passages (in literature) have moved me more than, in poetry, the lines describing the pity of Zeus for the horses of Achilles (*Iliad*, xvii. 441–447)."—*Fortnightly Review*, August 1887.]

⁶ [The references here are to Numbers xxii.; 1 Samuel ix.; and John xii. 14.]

horses at the death of Patroclus, and the comfort given them by the greatest of the gods. You shall read Pope's translation; it does not give you the manner of the original, but it entirely gives you the passion:—

“Meantime, at distance from the scene of blood,
 The pensive steeds of great Achilles stood;
 Their godlike master slain before their eyes
 They wept, and shared in human miseries.
 In vain Automedon now shakes the rein,
 Now plies the lash, and soothes and threats in vain;
 Nor to the fight nor Hellespont they go,
 Restive they stood, and obstinate in woe;
 Still as a tombstone, never to be moved,
 On some good man or woman unreprieved
 Lays its eternal weight; or fix'd as stands
 A marble courser by the sculptor's hands,
 Placed on the hero's grave. Along their face,
 The big round drops coursed down with silent pace,
 Conglobing on the dust. Their manes, that late
 Circled their arched necks, and waved in state,
 Trail'd on the dust, beneath the yoke were spread,
 And prone to earth was hung their languid head:
 Nor Jove disdain'd to cast a pitying look,
 While thus relenting to the steeds he spoke:
 ‘Unhappy coursers of immortal strain!
 Exempt from age, and deathless now in vain!
 Did we your race on mortal man bestow,
 Only, alas! to share in mortal woe?
 For ah! what is there, of inferior birth,
 That breathes or creeps upon the dust of earth;
 What wretched creature of what wretched kind,
 Than man more weak, calamitous and blind?
 A miserable race! But cease to mourn!
 For not by you shall Priam's son be borne
 High on the splendid car; one glorious prize
 He rashly boasts; the rest our will denies.
 Ourselves will swiftness to your nerves impart,
 Ourselves with rising spirits swell your heart.
 Automedon your rapid flight shall bear
 Safe to the navy through the storm of war. . . .’
 He said; and, breathing in th' immortal horse
 Excessive spirit, urged them to the course;
 From their high manes they shake the dust, and bear
 The kindling chariot through the parted war.”¹

¹ [Pope's *Homer's Iliad*, xvii. 484–519, 524–527 (translating Homer, lines 424 *seq.*).]

Is not that a prettier notion of horses than you will get from your betting English chivalry on the Derby day?* We will have, please heaven, some riding, not as jockeys ride, and some sailing, not as pots and kettles sail, once more on English land and sea; and out of both, kindled yet again, the chivalry of heart of the Knight of Athens, and Eques of Rome, and Ritter of Germany, and Chevalier of France, and Cavalier of England—chivalry gentle always and lowly, among those who deserved their name of knight; showing mercy to whom mercy was due, and honour to whom honour.¹

12. It exists yet, and out of La Mancha,² too (or none of *us* could exist), whatever you may think in these days of ungentleness and Dishonour. It exists secretly, to the full, among you yourselves, and the recovery of it again would be to you as the opening of a well in the desert. You remember what I told you were the three spiritual treasures of your life—Admiration, Hope, and Love.³ Admiration is the Faculty of giving Honour. It is the best word we have for the various feelings of wonder, reverence, awe, and humility, which are needful for all lovely work, and which constitute the habitual temper of all noble and clear-sighted persons, as opposed to the “impudence” of base and blind ones. The Latins called this great virtue “pudor,” of which our “impudence” is the negative; the Greeks had a better word, “αἰδώς;”⁴ too wide in the bearings of it for me to explain to you to-day, even if it *could* be explained before you recovered the feeling;—which, after being taught for fifty years that impudence is the chief duty of man, and that living in coal-holes and ash-heaps in his proudest existence, and that

* Compare also Black Auster at the Battle of the Lake, in Macaulay’s *Lays of Rome* [“Battle of the Lake Regillus,” stanza xxx.].

¹ [Romans xiii. 7.]

² [For Ruskin on *Don Quixote*, see Vol. III. p. 81 *n.*, and General Index.]

³ [See Letter 5, §§ 14, 18 (pp. 90, 94).]

⁴ [Compare *Eagle’s Nest*, § 71 (Vol. XXII. p. 173).]

the methods of generation of vermin are his loftiest subject of science,—it will not be easy for *you* to do; but your children may, and you will see that it is good for them. In the history of the five cities I named,¹ they shall learn, so far as they can understand, what has been beautifully and bravely done; and they shall know the lives of the heroes and heroines in truth and naturalness; and shall be taught to remember the greatest of them on the days of their birth and death; so that the year shall have its full calendar of reverent Memory. And on every day, part of their morning service shall be a song in honour of the hero whose birthday it is:² and part of their evening service, a song of triumph for the fair death of one whose death-day it is: and in their first learning of notes they shall be taught the great purpose of music, which is to say a thing that you mean deeply, in the strongest and clearest possible way; and they shall never be taught to sing what they don't mean. They shall be able to sing merrily when they are happy, and earnestly when they are sad; but they shall find no mirth in mockery, nor in obscenity; neither shall they waste and profane their hearts with artificial and lascivious sorrow.

Regulations which will bring about some curious changes in piano-playing, and several other things.

13. “Which *will* bring.” They are bold words, considering how many schemes have failed disastrously (as your able editors gladly point out), which seemed much more plausible than this. But, as far as I know history, good designs have not failed except when they were too narrow in their final aim, and too obstinately and eagerly pushed in the beginning of them. Prosperous Fortune only grants an almost invisible slowness of success, and demands invincible patience in pursuing it. Many good men have failed in haste; more in egotism, and desire to keep everything in their own hands; and some by mistaking the signs of their times;

¹ [See Letter 8, § 10 (p. 143).]

² [Compare Letters 37, § 8, and 42, § 6 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 20, 95).]

but others, and those generally the boldest in imagination, have not failed; and their successors, true knights or monks, have bettered the fate and raised the thoughts of men for centuries; nay, for decades of centuries. And there is assuredly nothing in this purpose I lay before you, so far as it reaches hitherto, which will require either knightly courage or monkish enthusiasm to carry out. To divert a little of the large current of English charity and justice from watching disease to guarding health, and from the punishment of crime to the reward of virtue; to establish, here and there, exercise grounds instead of hospitals, and training schools instead of penitentiaries, is not, if you will slowly take it to heart, a frantic imagination. What farther hope I have of getting some honest men to serve, each in his safe and useful trade, faithfully, as a good soldier serves in his dangerous, and too often very wide of useful one, may seem, for the moment, vain enough; for indeed, in the last sermon I heard out of an English pulpit,¹ the clergyman said it was now acknowledged to be impossible for any honest man to live by trade in England. From which the conclusion he drew was, not that the manner of trade in England should be amended, but that his hearers should be thankful they were going to heaven. It never seemed to occur to him that perhaps it might be only through amendment of their ways in trade that some of them could ever get there.

14. Such madness, therefore, as may be implied in this ultimate hope of seeing some honest work and traffic done in faithful fellowship, I confess to you: but what, for my own part, I am about to endeavour, is certainly within my power, if my life and health last a few years more, and the compass of it is soon definable. First,—as I told you at the beginning of these Letters,²—I must do my own proper work as well as I can—nothing else must come in the way of that; and for some time to come, it will

¹ [At Matlock: see below, p. 378.]

² [See above, p. 13.]

be heavy, because, after carefully considering the operation of the Kensington system of Art-teaching throughout the country, and watching for two years its effect on various classes of students at Oxford, I became finally convinced that it fell short of its objects in more than one vital particular: and I have, therefore, obtained permission to found a separate Mastership of Drawing in connection with the Art Professorship at Oxford; and elementary schools will be opened in the University galleries, next October, in which the methods of teaching will be calculated to meet requirements which have not been contemplated in the Kensington system.¹ But how far what these, not new, but very ancient, disciplines teach, may be by modern students, either required or endured, remains to be seen. The organization of the system of teaching, and preparation of examples, in this school, is, however, at present my chief work,—no light one,—and everything else must be subordinate to it.

15. But in my first series of lectures at Oxford, I stated (and cannot too often or too firmly state) that no great arts were practicable by any people, unless they were living contented lives, in pure air, out of the way of unsightly objects, and emancipated from unnecessary mechanical occupation.² It is simply one part of the practical work I have to do in Art-teaching, to bring, somewhere, such conditions into existence, and to show the working of them.³ I know also assuredly that the conditions necessary for the Arts of men, are the best for their souls and bodies; and knowing this, I do not doubt but that it may be with due pains, to some material extent, convincingly shown; and I am now ready to receive help, little or much, from any one who cares to forward the showing of it.

16. Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, and the Right Hon. William Cowper-Temple, have consented to be the Trustees

¹ [Compare Letter 57, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 408); and on these matters, see further Vol. XXI. pp. xxii. *seq.*]

² [See *Lectures on Art*, §§ 116 *seq.* (Vol. XX. pp. 107 *seq.*.)]

³ [Compare Letter 78 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 137–138).]

of the fund; it being distinctly understood that in that office they accept no responsibility for the conduct of the scheme, and refrain from expressing any opinion of its principles. They simply undertake the charge of the money and land given to the St. George's Fund; certify to the public that it is spent, or treated, for the purposes of that fund, in the manner stated in my accounts of it; and, in the event of my death, hold it for such fulfilment of its purposes as they may then find possible.

But it is evidently necessary for the right working of the scheme that the Trustees should not, except only in that office, be at present concerned with or involved in it; and that no ambiguous responsibility should fall on them. I know too much of the manner of law to hope that I can get the arrangement put into proper form before the end of the year; but, I hope, at latest, on the eve of Christmas Day (the day I named first¹) to publish the December number of *Fors* with the legal terms all clear: until then, whatever sums or land I may receive will be simply paid to the Trustees, or secured in their name, for the St. George's Fund; what I may attempt afterwards will be, in any case, scarcely noticeable for some time; for I shall only work with the interest of the fund;* and as I have strength and leisure:—I have little enough of the one; and am like to have little of the other, for years to come, if these drawing-schools become useful, as I hope. But what I may do myself is of small consequence. Long before it can come to any convincing result, I believe some of the gentlemen of England will have taken up the

* Since last *Fors* was published I have sold some more property, which has brought me in another ten thousand to tithe; so that I have bought a second thousand Consols in the names of the Trustees—and have received a pretty little gift of seven acres of woodland, in Worcestershire,² for you, already—so you see there is at least a beginning.

¹ [See above, p. 95; and for the reference in the December *Fors*, below, p. 199. The legal position of the Company was, however, not established till much later: see Vol. XXX.]

² [At Bewdley. There seems, however, to have been some delay on Ruskin's part in formally accepting the gift, which was ultimately increased to twenty acres: see Vol. XXVIII. pp. 424, 607.]

matter, and seen that, for their own sake, no less than the country's, they *must* now live on their estates, not in shooting-time only, but all the year; and be themselves farmers, or "shepherd lords,"¹ and make the field gain on the street, not the street on the field; and bid the light break into the smoke-clouds, and bear in their hands, up to those loathsome city walls, the gifts of Giotto's Charity, corn and flowers.²

17. It is time, too, I think. Did you notice the lovely instances of chivalry, modesty, and musical taste recorded in those letters in the *Times*,³ giving description of the "civilizing" influence of our progressive age on the rural district of Margate?

They are of some documentary value, and worth preserving, for several reasons. Here they are:—

I.—A TRIP TO MARGATE

To the Editor of the "Times"

SIR,—On Monday last I had the misfortune of taking a trip per steamer to Margate. The sea was rough, the ship crowded, and therefore most of the Cockney excursionists prostrate with sea-sickness. On landing on Margate pier I must confess I thought that, instead of landing in an English seaport, I had been transported by magic to a land inhabited by savages and lunatics. The scene that ensued when the unhappy passengers had to pass between the double line of a Margate mob on the pier must be seen to be believed possible in a civilized country. Shouts, yells, howls of delight greeted every pale-looking passenger, as he or she got on the pier, accompanied by a running comment of the lowest, foulest language imaginable. But the most insulted victims were a young lady, who having had a fit of hysterics on board, had to be assisted up the steps, and a venerable-looking old gentleman with a long grey beard, who, by-the-by, was not sick at all, but being crippled and very old, feebly tottered up the slippery steps leaning on two sticks. "Here's a guy!" "Hallo! you old thief, you won't get drowned, because you know that you are to be hung," etc., and worse than that, were the greetings of that poor old man. All this while a very much silver-bestriped policeman stood calmly by, without interfering by word or deed; and myself, having several ladies to take care of, could do nothing except telling the ruffianly mob some hard

¹ [See below, p. 210.]

² [See above, Letter 7, § 17 (p. 130).]

³ [*Times*, August 18 and 19, 1871.]

XXVII.

words, with, of course, no other effect than to draw all the abuse on myself. This is not an exceptional exhibition of Margate ruffianism, but, as I have been told, is of daily occurrence, only varying in intensity with the roughness of the sea.

Public exposure is the only likely thing to put a stop to such ruffianism; and now it is no longer a wonder to me why so many people are ashamed of confessing that they have been to Margate.

I remain, Sir, yours obediently,
C. L. S.

London, August 16.

II.—MARGATE

To the Editor of the "Times"

SIR,—From personal experience obtained from an enforced residence at Margate, I can confirm all that your correspondent "C. L. S." states of the behaviour of the mob on the jetty; and in addition I will venture to say that in no town in England, or, so far as my experience goes, on the Continent, can such utterly indecent exhibitions be daily witnessed as at Margate during bathing hours. Nothing can be more revolting to persons having the least feelings of modesty than the promiscuous mixing of the bathers; nude men dancing, swimming, or floating with women not quite nude, certainly, but with scant clothing. The machines for males and females are not kept apart, and the latter do not apparently care to keep within the awnings. The authorities post notices as to "indecent bathing," but that appears to be all they think they ought to do.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,
B.

To the Editor of the "Times"

SIR,—The account of the scenes which occur at the landing of passengers at the Margate jetty, given by your correspondent to-day, is by no means overcharged. But that is nothing. The rulers of the place seem bent on doing their utmost to keep respectable people away, or, doubtless, long before this the class of visitors would have greatly improved. The sea-fronts of the town, which in the summer would be otherwise enjoyable, are abandoned to the noisy rule of the lowest kinds of itinerant mounte-banks, organ-grinders, and niggers; and from early morn till long after nightfall the place is one hopeless, hideous din. There is yet another grievance. The whole of the drainage is discharged upon the rocks to the east of the harbour, considerably above low-water mark; and to the west, where much building is contemplated, drains have already been laid into the sea, and, when these new houses are built and inhabited, bathing at Margate, now its greatest attraction, must cease for ever.

Yours obediently,
PHAROS.

Margate, August 18.

18. I have printed these letters for several reasons. In the first place, read after them this account of the town of Margate, given in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, in 1797: “Margate, a seaport town of Kent, on the north side of the Isle of Thanet, near the North Foreland. It is noted for shipping vast quantities of corn (most, if not all, the product of that island) for London, and has a salt-water bath at the Post-house, which has performed great cures in nervous and paralytic cases.”

Now this Isle of Thanet, please to observe, which is an elevated (200 to 400 feet) mass of chalk, separated from the rest of Kent by little rivers and marshy lands, ought to be respected by you (as Englishmen), because it was the first bit of ground ever possessed in this greater island by your Saxon ancestors, when they came over, some six or seven hundred of them only, in three ships, and contented themselves for a while with no more territory than that white island. Also, the North Foreland, you ought, I think, to know, is taken for the terminal point of the two sides of Britain, east and south, in the first geographical account of our dwelling-place, definitely given by a learned person.¹ But you ought, beyond all question, to know, that the cures of the nervous and paralytic cases, attributed seventy years ago to the “salt-water bath at the Post-house,” were much more probably to be laid to account of the freshest and changefullest sea-air to be breathed in England, bending the rich corn over that white dry ground, and giving to sight, above the northern and eastern sweep of sea, the loveliest skies that can be seen, not in England only, but perhaps in all the world; able, at least, to challenge the fairest in Europe, to the far south of Italy.

19. So it was said, I doubt not rightly, by the man

¹ [George Lily (died 1559), domestic chaplain to Cardinal Pole, Canon of Canterbury, and author of some Latin historical works, “drew the first exact map of this island” (R. Gough’s *British Topography*, 1780, vol. i. p. 87). The map (which may be seen in the British Museum) was printed at Rome, “Anglorum studio and diligentia,” in 1546, and is signed “G. L. A.” (*i.e.*, Gulielmus Lilius Anglus). It is apparently to this map that Ruskin refers; it shows the North Foreland as the

who of all others knew best; the once in five hundred years given painter,¹ whose chief work, as separate from others, was the painting of skies. He knew the colours of the clouds over the sea, from the Bay of Naples to the Hebrides; and being once asked where, in Europe, were to be seen the loveliest skies, answered instantly, "In the Isle of Thanet." Where, therefore, and in this very town of Margate, he lived, when he chose to be quit of London, and yet not to travel.

And I can myself give this much confirmatory evidence of his saying;—that though I never stay in Thanet, the two loveliest skies I have myself ever seen (and next to Turner, I suppose few men of fifty have kept record of so many), were, one at Boulogne, and the other at Abbeville;² that is to say, in precisely the correspondent French districts of corn-bearing chalk, on the other side of the Channel.

"And what are pretty skies to us?" perhaps you will ask me: "or what have they to do with the behaviour of that crowd on Margate Pier?"

Well, my friends, the final result of the education I want you to give your children will be, in a few words, this. They will know what it is to see the sky.³ They will know what it is to breathe it. And they will know, best of all, what it is to behave under it, as in the presence of a Father who is in heaven.

Faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

"terminal point," eastward, and places it very near to the southernmost point. Or, possibly, Ruskin may refer to the *Geography* of Ptolemy (about 150 A.D.), in whose map of Britain the North Foreland is shown. Ruskin presented to the St. George's Museum a copy of Ptolemy's work in the Latin edition of 1513.]

¹ [See above, § 6.]

² [At Boulogne in August 4, 1861, and at Abbeville in September 1868. They are both described in Ruskin's letters, see Vol. XIX. p. xlii. and *n.*]

³ [Compare, below, p. 219; and Letters 75, § 4, and 88, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 58, 383).]

LETTER 10

THE BARON'S GATE¹

DENMARK HILL,

7th September, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—For the last two or three days, the papers have been full of articles on a speech of Lord Derby's, which, it seems, has set the public mind on considering the land question.² My own mind having long ago been both set, and entirely made up, on that question, I have read neither the speech nor the articles on it; but my eye being caught this morning, fortunately, by the words "Doomsday Book" in my *Daily Telegraph*, and presently looking up the column, by "stalwart arms and heroic souls of free resolute Englishmen," I glanced down

¹ ["Castle Gates," "Warwick Castle," and "My First Travelling," were discarded titles for this letter. For the actual title, see § 18.]

² [This reference to Lord Derby's speech on the Land Question displaced the following passage on the Abolition of Purchase in the Army in the first draft of the letter:—

"MY FRIENDS,—I know well how provoked you must be with me by this time (the few of you who pay any attention to me at all), because I *will* not tell you plainly all I am going to try to do.

"I cannot help it; what can be actually done I am ready to tell you, but you cannot at present see, nor are you likely to believe what the doing it will tend to. It will indeed tend to the alteration of some bad laws, but chiefly to the slow establishment of good ones; and you cannot set hand to the work at all, unless you are sure of yourselves in that final requirement of my second letter: 'Be sure you can obey good laws before you seek to alter bad ones.'

"You will turn restive, I suppose, at that word 'obey,' and think I want you to obey me. Put that at once out of your heads. I would not be troubled with any ordering of you, though you give me the Queen's income to do it—twenty times over. The Queen herself never tries to do it. Nay, you set her Prime Minister at her to get her warrant to nullify the House of Lords, who were trying to do it, for once,—only unluckily thinking only of themselves; therefore ordering, the wrongest and basest thing but one they could have hazarded their Lordships on. Except it had been the buying of Livings, they could not have made a stand for a worse iniquity than the buying of commissions. For the Army is the purest and brightest body of Englishmen we have left; and corruption in that was not by any means a Holy Hedge or Haye Sainte, for their



Allen & Co. Sc.

INJUSTICE

Drawn thus by Giotto in the Chapel of the Arena at Padua

the space between, and found this, to me, remarkable passage:¹—

“The upshot is, that, looking at the question from a purely mechanical point of view, we should seek the *beau idéal* in a landowner cultivating huge farms for himself, with abundant machinery and a few well-paid labourers to manage the mechanism, or delegating the task to the smallest possible number of tenants with capital. But when we bear in mind the origin of landlordism, of our national needs, and the real interests of the great body of English tenantry, we see how advisable it is to retain intelligent yeomen as part of our means of cultivating the soil.”

This is all, then, is it, that your Liberal paper² ventures to say for you? It is *advisable* to retain a *few* intelligent yeomen in the island. I don't mean to find fault with the *Daily Telegraph*: I think it always means well on the whole, and deals fairly; which is more than can be said for its highly toned and delicately perfumed opponent, the *Pall Mall Gazette*.³ But I think a “Liberal” paper might have said more for the “stalwart arms and heroic souls” than this. I am going myself to say a great deal more for them, though I am not a Liberal—quite the polar contrary of that.⁴

2. You, perhaps, have been provoked, in the course of these letters, by not being able to make out *what* I was.

unlucky Lordships to abide by. They will have to stand by Holy Hedges of a more literal kind soon, if they would keep their coronets—and Heaven grant they may!—not for their sake but yours.

“You are provoked with me also, doubtless, because you not only cannot make out what I want, but what I am. I am, and my father was before me . . .”

The reference is to the Army Regulation Bill (1871) which included among its provisions the abolition of the system of purchasing commissions. When the Bill reached the Lords the purchase clause was, on the motion of the Duke of Richmond, postponed (July 17). Mr. Gladstone thereupon advised the Queen, in exercise of the royal prerogative, to cancel the Warrant legalising purchase (July 20). There is another reference to the farm of La Haye Sainte, on the field of Waterloo, in Vol. I. p. 161.]

¹ [From the second leading article on September 7, 1871. Lord Derby's speech at Liverpool was on September 5, 1871; for another reference to the speech, see Vol. XXII. p. 149 n.; and for the *Daily Telegraph's* comment, Letter 45, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 159), and Appendix 17, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 570).]

² [The *Daily Telegraph* was at this time a warm supporter of Mr. Gladstone, of whom Ruskin was at this time not an admirer (see Vol. XXVIII. p. 403). For other references to the paper, see below, pp. 377, 499.]

³ [For a note on the history of this paper, and on Ruskin's contributions to it, see Vol. XVIII. p. 95.]

⁴ [Namely, a “violent Illiberal”: see above, Letter 1, § 4 (p. 14).]

It is time you should know, and I will tell you plainly.¹ I am, and my father was before me, a violent Tory of the old school (Walter Scott's school, that is to say, and Homer's). I name these two out of the numberless great Tory writers, because they were my own two masters. I had Walter Scott's novels, and the *Iliad* (Pope's translation), for my only reading when I was a child, on weekdays: on Sundays this effect was tempered by *Robinson Crusoe* and the *Pilgrim's Progress*; my mother having it deeply in her heart to make an evangelical clergyman of me. Fortunately, I had an aunt more evangelical than my mother; and my aunt gave me cold mutton for Sunday's dinner, which—as I much preferred it hot—greatly diminished the influence of the *Pilgrim's Progress*; and the end of the matter was, that I got all the noble imaginative teaching of Defoe and Bunyan, and yet—am not an evangelical clergyman.

3. I had, however, still better teaching than theirs, and that compulsorily, and every day of the week. (Have patience with me in this egotism; it is necessary for many reasons that you should know what influences have brought me into the temper in which I write to you.)

Walter Scott and Pope's *Homer* were reading of my own election, but my mother forced me, by steady daily toil, to learn long chapters of the Bible by heart; as well as to read it every syllable through, aloud, hard names and all, from Genesis to the Apocalypse, about once a year; and to that discipline—patient, accurate, and resolute—I owe not only a knowledge of the book, which I find occasionally serviceable, but much of my general power of taking pains, and the best part of my taste in literature. From Walter Scott's novels I might easily, as I grew older, have fallen to other people's novels; and Pope might, perhaps, have led me to take Johnson's English, or Gibbon's,

¹ [§§ 2–8 of this letter, beginning “I am, and my father was before me,” were used by Ruskin when writing *Præterita*, where they appear, somewhat revised, as §§ 1–7 of vol. i. ch. i. In the case of this and later passages, similarly used in *Præterita*, the variations will be indicated in the Bibliographical Note to that book; annotations on such passages are also, for the most part, reserved for *Præterita*.]

as types of language; but, once knowing the 32nd of Deuteronomy, the 119th Psalm, the 15th of 1st Corinthians, the Sermon on the Mount, and most of the Apocalypse, every syllable by heart, and having always a way of thinking with myself what words meant, it was not possible for me, even in the foolishness of youth, to write entirely superficial or formal English, and the affectation to write like Hooker¹ and George Herbert, which I now with shame confess of having long tried,² was the most innocent I could have fallen into.

4. From my own masters, then, Scott and Homer, I learned the Toryism which my best after-thought has only served to confirm.

That is to say a most sincere love of kings, and dislike of everybody who attempted to disobey them. Only, both by Homer and Scott, I was taught strange ideas about kings, which I find, for the present, much obsolete; for, I perceived that both the author of the *Iliad* and the author of *Waverley* made their kings, or king-loving persons, do harder work than anybody else. Tydides or Idomeneus always killed twenty Trojans to other people's one, and Redgauntlet speared more salmon than any of the Solway fishermen, and—which was particularly a subject of admiration to me,—I observed that they not only did more, but in proportion to their doings, got less, than other people³—nay, that the best of them were even ready to govern for nothing, and let their followers divide any quantity of spoil or profit. Of late it has seemed to me that the idea of a king has become exactly the contrary of this, and that it has been supposed the duty of superior persons generally to do less, and to get more than anybody else; so that it was, perhaps, quite as well that in those early days my contemplation of existent kingship was a very distant one, and my childish eyes wholly unacquainted with the splendour of courts.

¹ [Compare Vol. IV. p. 334, and Vol. XVIII. p. 32.]

² [This is a correction in one of Ruskin's copies for ". . . the affectation of trying to write."]

³ [For a later reference to this passage, see below, p. 384.]

5. The aunt who gave me cold mutton on Sundays was my father's sister: she lived at Bridge-end, in the town of Perth, and had a garden full of gooseberry-bushes, sloping down to the Tay, with a door opening to the water, which ran past it clear-brown over the pebbles three or four feet deep; an infinite thing for a child to look down into.

6. My father began business as a wine-merchant, with no capital, and a considerable amount of debts bequeathed him by my grandfather. He accepted the bequest, and paid them all before he began to lay by anything for himself, for which his best friends called him a fool, and I, without expressing any opinion as to his wisdom, which I knew in such matters to be at least equal to mine, have written on the granite slab over his grave that he was "an entirely honest merchant."¹ As days went on he was able to take a house in Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, No. 54 (the windows of it, fortunately for me, commanded a view of a marvellous iron post, out of which the water-carts carts were filled through beautiful little trap-doors, by pipes like boa-constrictors; and I was never weary of contemplating that mystery, and the delicious dripping consequent); and as years went on, and I came to be four or five years old, he could command a post-chaise and pair for two months in the summer, by help of which, with my mother and me, he went the round of his country customers (who liked to see the principal of the house his own traveller); so that, at a jog-trot pace, and through the panoramic opening of the four windows of a post-chaise, made more panoramic still to me because my seat was a little bracket in front (for we used to hire the chaise regularly for the two months out of Long Acre, and so could have it bracketed and pocketed as we liked), I saw all the highroads, and most of the cross ones, of England and Wales, and great part of lowland Scotland, as far as Perth, where every other year we spent the whole summer; and I used to read the *Abbot* at Kinross, and the *Monastery* in Glen Farg, which I confused with "Glendearg," and thought

¹ [For the full epitaph, see Vol. XVII. p. lxxvii.]

that the White Lady had as certainly lived by the streamlet in that glen of the Ochils, as the Queen of Scots in the island of Loch Leven.

7. It happened also, which was the real cause of the bias of my after life, that my father had a rare love of pictures. I use the word "rare" advisedly, having never met with another instance of so innate a faculty for the discernment of true art, up to the point possible without actual practice. Accordingly, wherever there was a gallery to be seen, we stopped at the nearest town for the night; and in reverentest manner I thus saw nearly all the noblemen's houses in England; not indeed myself at that age caring for the pictures, but much for castles and ruins, feeling more and more, as I grew older, the healthy delight of uncovetous admiration, and perceiving, as soon as I could perceive any political truth at all, that it was probably much happier to live in a small house, and have Warwick Castle to be astonished at, than to live in Warwick Castle,¹ and have nothing to be astonished at; but that, at all events, it would not make Brunswick Square in the least more pleasantly habitable, to pull Warwick Castle down. And, at this day, though I have kind invitations enough to visit America, I could not, even for a couple of months, live in a country so miserable as to possess no castles.

8. Nevertheless, having formed my notion of kinghood chiefly from the FitzJames of the *Lady of the Lake*, and of noblesse from the Douglas there, and the Douglas in *Marmion*, a painful wonder soon arose in my child-mind, why the castles should now be always empty. Tantallon was there; but no Archibald of Angus:—Stirling, but no Knight of Snowdoun. The galleries and gardens of England were beautiful to see—but his Lordship and her Ladyship were always in town, said the housekeepers and gardeners. Deep yearning took hold of me for a kind of "Restoration," which I began slowly to feel that Charles the Second had not altogether effected, though I always wore

¹ [For a reference to this passage, see Ruskin's letter to the *Daily Telegraph*, December 22, 1871; reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. i. p. 223, and in a later volume of this edition.]

a gilded oak-apple very reverently in my button-hole on the 29th of May. It seemed to me that Charles the Second's Restoration had been, as compared with the Restoration I wanted, much as that gilded oak-apple to a real apple. And as I grew older, the desire for red pippins instead of brown ones, and Living Kings instead of dead ones, appeared to me rational as well as romantic; and gradually it has become the main purpose of my life to grow pippins, and its chief hope, to see Kings.¹

9. Hope, this last, for others much more than for myself. I can always behave as if I had a King, whether I have one or not; but it is otherwise with some unfortunate persons. Nothing has ever impressed me so much with the power of kingship, and the need of it, as the declamation of the French Republicans against the Emperor before his fall.

He did not, indeed, meet my old Tory notion of a King;² and in my own business of architecture he was doing, I saw, nothing but mischief; pulling down lovely buildings, and putting up frightful ones carved all over with L. N.'s: but the intense need of France for a governor of some kind was made chiefly evident to me by the way of Republicans confessed themselves paralyzed by him. Nothing could be done in France, it seemed, because of the Emperor: they could not drive an honest trade; they could not keep their houses in order; they could not study the sun and moon; they could not eat a comfortable *déjeuner à la fourchette*; they could not sail in the Gulf of Lyons, nor climb on the Mont d'Or; they could not, in fine (so they said), so much as walk straight, nor speak plain, because of the Emperor. On this side of the water, moreover, the Republicans were all in the same tale. Their opinions, it appeared, were not printed to their minds in the Paris journals, and the world must come to an end therefore. So that, in fact, here was all the Republican

¹ [Ruskin's autobiographical notes are resumed in Letter 28, § 15 (p. 517).]

² [For other passages giving Ruskin's estimate of Napoleon III., see Vol. V. pp. 410, 415; Vol. VIII. p. 224; Vol. XII. pp. 55, 421; and Vol. XIX. p. 254. Compare also, below, p. 579. For the "Hausmannizing" of Paris during his reign, see Vol. XII. p. 427.]

force of France and England, confessing itself paralyzed, not so much by a real King, as by the shadow of one. All the harm the extant and visible King did was, to encourage the dressmakers and stone-masons in Paris,—to pay some idle people very large salaries,—and to make some, perhaps agreeably talkative, people, hold their tongues. That, I repeat, was all the harm he did, or could do; he corrupted nothing but what was voluntarily corruptible,—crushed nothing but what was essentially not solid: and it remained open to these Republican gentlemen to do anything they chose that was useful to France, or honourable to themselves, between earth and heaven, except only—print violent abuse of this shortish man, with a long nose, who stood, as they would have it, between them and heaven. But there they stood, spell-bound; the one thing suggesting itself to their frantic impotence as feasible, being to get this one shortish man assassinated. Their children would not grow, their corn would not ripen, and the stars would not roll, till they had got this one short man blown into shorter pieces.

If the shadow of a King can thus hold (how many?) millions of men, by their own confession, helpless for terror of it, what power must there be in the substance of one?

10. But this mass of republicans—vociferous, terrified, and mischievous—is the least part, as it is the vilest, of the great European populace who are lost for want of true kings. It is not these who stand idle, gibbering at a shadow, whom we have to mourn over;—they would have been good for little, even governed;—but those who work and do *not* gibber,—the quiet peasants in the fields of Europe, sad-browed, honest-hearted, full of natural tenderness and courtesy, who have none to help them, and none to teach; who have no kings, except those who rob them while they live, no tutors, except those who teach them—how to die.

11. I had an impatient remonstrance sent me the other day, by a country clergyman's wife, against that saying in my

former letter, “Dying has been more expensive to you than living.”¹ Did I know, she asked, what a country clergyman’s life was, and that he was the poor man’s only friend?

Alas, I know it, and too well. What can be said of more deadly and ghastly blame against the clergy of England, or any other country, than that they are the poor man’s only friends?

Have they, then, so betrayed their Master’s charge and mind, in their preaching to the rich; so smoothed their words, and so sold their authority,—that, after twelve hundred years’ entrusting of the gospel to them, there is no man in England (this is their chief plea for themselves forsooth) who will have mercy on the poor, but they; and so they must leave the word of God, and serve tables?²

12. I would not myself have said so much against English clergymen, whether of country or town. Three—and one dead makes four—of my dear friends (and I have not many dear friends) are country clergymen;³ and I know the ways of every sort of them; my architectural tastes necessarily bringing me into near relations with the sort who like pointed arches and painted glass; and my old religious breeding having given me an unconquerable habit of taking up with any travelling tinker of evangelical principles I may come across; and even of reading, not without awe, the prophetic warnings of any persons belonging to that peculiarly well-informed “persuasion,” such, for instance, as those of Mr. Zion Ward “concerning the fall of Lucifer, in a letter to a friend, Mr. William Dick, of Glasgow, price twopence,”⁴ in which I read (as aforesaid, with unfeigned feelings of concern) that “the slain of the Lord shall be MAN-Y; that is, man, in whom death is, with all the works of carnality, shall be burnt up!”

¹ [See Letter 4, § 12 (p. 77).]

² [Acts vi. 2.]

³ [For the Rev. W. L. Brown, Rector of Wendlebury, who died in 1862, see Vol. I. p. 464 *n.*; for the Rev. Osborne Gordon, Rector of Easthampstead, *Præterita*, ii. § 10; the Rev. W. Kingsley, Vicar of South Kilverton, Vol. XIII. p. 162 *n.* The fourth friend is probably the Rev. J. C. Hilliard, Rector of Cowley (Uxbridge).]

⁴ [For a correction of this reference, see Letter 11, § 18 (p. 194).]

13. But I was not thinking either of English clergy, or of any other group of clergy, specially, when I wrote that sentence; but of the entire Clerkly or Learned Company, from the first priest of Egypt to the last ordained Belgravian curate, and of all the talk they have talked, and all the quarrelling they have caused, and all the gold they have had given them, to this day, when still “they are the poor man’s only friends”—and by no means all of them that, heartily! though I see the Bishop of Manchester¹ has, of late, been superintending—I beg his pardon, Bishops don’t superintend—looking on, or over, I should have said²—the recreations of his flock at the seaside; and “the thought struck him” that railroads were an advantage to them in taking them for their holiday out of Manchester. The thought may, perhaps, strike him, next, that a working man ought to be able to find “holy days”³ *in* his home, as well as out of it.*

14. A year or two ago, a man who had at the time, and has still, important official authority over much of the business of the country, was speaking anxiously to me of the misery increasing in the suburbs and back streets of London, and debating, with the good help of the Oxford Regius Professor of Medicine⁴—who was second in council—what sanitary or moral remedy could be found. The debate languished, however, because of the strong conviction in the minds of all three of us that the misery was inevitable in the suburbs of so vast a city. At last,

* See § 159 (written seven years ago) in *Munera Pulveris* [Vol. XVII. p. 282].

¹ [Dr. James Fraser (1818–1885); appointed Bishop of Manchester in 1870. For another reference to the Bishop’s commendation of holidays by rail, see Letter 22, § 24 (below, p. 390); and with this § 13 generally compare Letter 84, § 7 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 290). The address or sermon referred to by Ruskin is not included in the Bishop’s *Life* or published *Sermons*; but the *Christian World* of September 23, 1871, noticed an address by him to employees of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. This elicited the following pamphlet: *A Plea for the Sabbath by A Layman, suggested by the Bishop of Manchester’s Address to Railway Employés*, 1871.]

² [See Vol. XVII. p. 378; and compare Letter 62, § 3 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 513).]

³ [Compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 36 (Vol. XVIII. p. 418).]

⁴ [Dr. Acland. The “important official authority” was perhaps Dr. John Simon, Officer of Health to the Privy Council: see Vol. XVIII. p. xxii.]

either the minister or physician, I forget which, expressed the conviction. “Well,” I answered, “then you must not have large cities.” “That,” answered the minister, “is an unpractical saying—you know we *must* have them, under existing circumstances.”

I made no reply, feeling that it was vain to assure any man actively concerned in modern parliamentary business, that no measures were “practical” except those which touched the source of the evil opposed. All systems of government—all efforts of benevolence, are vain to repress the natural consequences of radical error. But any man of influence who had the sense and courage to refuse himself and his family one London season—to stay on his estate, and employ the shopkeepers in his own village, instead of those in Bond Street—would be “practically” dealing with, and conquering, this evil, so far as in him lay; and contributing with his whole might to the thorough and final conquest of it.

15. Not but that I know how to meet it directly also, if any London landlords choose so to attack it. You are beginning to hear something of what Miss Hill has done in Marylebone, and of the change brought about by her energy and good sense in the centre of one of the worst districts of London.¹ It is difficult enough, I admit, to find a woman of average sense and tenderness enough to be able for such work; but there are, indeed, other such in the world, only three-fourths of them now get lost in pious lecturing, or altar-cloth sewing; and the wisest remaining fourth stay at home as quiet house-wives, not seeing their way to wider action; nevertheless, any London landlord who will content himself with moderate and fixed rent (I get five per cent. from Miss Hill, which is surely enough!), assuring his tenants of secure possession if that is paid, so that they need not fear having their rent raised, if they improve their houses; and who will secure also a quiet bit

¹ [See Vol. XIX. pp. xxiv., 213–214; and for later references in *Fors* to Miss Hill’s work, see below, p. 364; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 63 *n.*, 81, 173; Vol. XXIX. p. 354.]

of ground for their children to play in, instead of the street,—has established all the necessary conditions of success; and I doubt not that Miss Hill herself could find co-workers able to extend the system of management she has originated, and shown to be so effective.

But the best that can be done in this way will be useless ultimately, unless the deep source of the misery be cut off. While Miss Hill, with intense effort and noble power, has partially moralized a couple of acres in Marylebone, at least fifty square miles of lovely country have been Demoralized outside London, by the increasing itch of the upper classes to live where they can get some gossip in their idleness, and show each other their dresses.

16. That life of theirs must come to an end soon, both here and in Paris, but to what end, it is, I trust, in their own power still to decide. If they resolve to maintain to the last the present system of spending the rent taken from the rural districts in the dissipation of the capitals, they will not always find they can secure a quiet time, as the other day in Dublin, by withdrawing the police,¹ nor that park-railings are the only thing which (police being duly withdrawn) will go down.² Those favourite castle battlements of mine, their internal “police” withdrawn, will go down also; and I should be sorry to see it;—the lords and ladies, houseless at least in shooting season, perhaps sorrier, though they *did* find the grey turrets dismal in winter time. If they would yet have them for autumn, they must have them for winter. Consider, fair lords and ladies, by the time you marry, and choose your dwelling-places, there are for you but forty or fifty winters more in whose dark days you may see the snow fall and wreath. There will be no snow in Heaven, I presume—still less elsewhere (if lords and ladies ever miss of Heaven).

¹ [On August 6, 1871, an Amnesty meeting held in the Phoenix Park was dispersed by the police, and many injuries were inflicted. The affair was the subject of debate in Parliament (August 17), and shortly afterwards the Government gave way on the point and allowed meetings to be held in the Park (see *Times*, August 28).]

² [For another reference to the pulling down of the Hyde Park railings at the time of the Reform agitation, see above, p. 36.]

17. And that some may, is perhaps conceivable, for there are more than a few things to be managed on an English estate, and to be “faithful” in those few¹ cannot be interpreted as merely abstracting the rent of them. Nay, even the *Telegraph’s* beau-ideal of the landowner, from a mechanical point of view, may come short, somewhat. “Cultivating huge farms for himself with abundant machinery;—”² Is that Lord Derby’s ideal also, may it be asked? The Scott-reading of my youth haunts me, and I seem still listening to the (perhaps a little too long) speeches of the Black Countess who appears terrifically through the sliding panel in *Peveril of the Peak*, about “her sainted Derby.”³ Would Saint Derby’s ideal, or his Black Countess’s, of due ordinance for their castle and estate of Man, have been a minimum of Man therein, and an abundance of machinery? In fact, only the Trinacrian Legs of Man,⁴ transposed into many spokes of wheels—no use for “stalwart arms” any more—and less than none for inconveniently “heroic” souls?

18. “Cultivating huge farms for himself!” I don’t even see, after the sincerest efforts to put myself into a mechanical point of view, how it is to be done. For himself? Is he to eat the corn-ricks then? Surely such a beau-ideal is more Utopian than any of mine? Indeed, whether it be praise or blame-worthy, it is not so easy to cultivate anything wholly for oneself, nor to consume, oneself, the products of cultivation. I have, indeed, before now, hinted to you that perhaps the “consumer” was not so necessary a

¹ [See Matthew xxv. 23.]

² [See above, § 1.]

³ [*Peveril*, ch. v.]

⁴ [The Earls of Derby quartered the arms of the Isle of Man, on receiving the island from the King of England. “Three legs armed *Proper*, conjoined in Fess at the upper Part of the Thigh, flexed in Triangle, garnished and spurred *Topaz*. This coat is quartered by the Right Honourable William, Earl of Derby. In ancient Times, Soldiers that either had sold or otherwise lost their Armour by negligence were (by a military Law) punished with Death, as he that runneth from his Captain” (Guillim, p. 347, 1724 edition). The point of the device (adopted by the Isle in 1270) is, however, better gathered from the motto *Quocunque jeceris stabit*. For the word “Trinacrian,” see Vol. XXV. p. 296 n.]

person economically, as has been supposed;¹ nevertheless, it is not in his own mere eating and drinking, or even his picture-collecting, that a false lord injures the poor. It is in his bidding and forbidding—or worse still, in ceasing to do either. I have given you another of Giotto's pictures, this month, his imagination of Injustice,² which he has seen done in his time, as we in ours; and I am sorry to observe that his Injustice lives in a battlemented castle and in a mountain country, it appears; the gates of it between rocks, and in the midst of a wood; but in Giotto's time, woods were too many, and towns too few. Also, Injustice has indeed very ugly talons to his fingers, like Envy; and an ugly quadruple hook to his lance, and other ominous resemblances to the "hooked bird,"³ the falcon, which both knights and ladies too much delighted in. Nevertheless Giotto's main idea about him is, clearly, that he "sits in the gate"⁴ pacifically, with a cloak thrown over his chain-armour (you can just see the links of it appear at his throat), and a plain citizen's cap for a helmet, and his sword sheathed, while all robbery and violence have way in the wild places round him,—he heedless.

Which is, indeed, the depth of Injustice; not the harm you do, but that you permit to be done,—hooking perhaps here and there something to you with your clawed weapon meanwhile. The baronial type exists still, I fear, in such manner, here and there, in spite of improving centuries.

19. My friends, we have been thinking, perhaps, to-day, more than we ought of our masters' faults,—scarcely enough of our own. If you would have the upper classes do *their* duty, see that you also do yours. See that you can obey good laws,⁵ and good lords, or law-wards,⁶ if you once get them—that you believe in goodness enough to know what

¹ [See Letter 7, § 14 (p. 127).]

² [Compare *Giotto and his Works in Padua*, Vol. XXIV. p. 121.]

³ [For the epithet γαμψωνυξ, see "The Eagle of Elis," § 10 (Vol. XX. p. 401).]

⁴ [Psalms lxix. 12.]

⁵ [See above, Letters 2, § 22, and 7, § 20 (pp. 44, 131).]

⁶ [On this meaning of "lords," compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 88 (Vol. XVIII. p. 138 n.).]

a good law is. A good law is one that holds, whether you recognize and pronounce it or not; a bad law is one that cannot hold, however much you ordain and pronounce it. That is the mighty truth which Carlyle has been telling you for a quarter of a century—once for all the told it you, and the landowners, and all whom it concerns, in the third book of *Past and Present* (1845, buy Chapman and Hall's second edition if you can, it is good print, and read it till you know it by heart¹), and from that day to this, whatever there is in England of dullest and insolentest may be always known by the natural instinct it has to howl against Carlyle. Of late, matters coming more and more to crisis, the liberty men seeing their way, as they think, more and more broad and bright before them, and still this too legible and steady old signpost saying, That it is *not* the way, lovely as it looks, the outcry against it becomes deafening. Now, I tell you once for all, Carlyle is the only living writer who has spoken the absolute and perpetual truth about yourselves and your business; and exactly in proportion to the inherent weakness of brain in your lying guides, will be their animosity against Carlyle. Your lying guides, observe, I say—not meaning that they lie wilfully—but that their nature is to do nothing else. For in the modern Liberal there is a new and wonderful form of misguidance. Of old, it was bad enough that the blind should lead the blind;² still, with

¹ [Ruskin's copy of this edition of the book is now in the British Museum, thus inscribed: "Alfred Macfee, From John Ruskin. 10th January 1887," and with the following autograph letter inserted:—

"BRANTWOOD, 10th Jan., 1887.

"MY DEAR BOY,—It chanced that this is one of my—more or less—so far as I understand them—Fortunate days; whether they lead death wards faster, I do not know. But your letter pleases me, and I have sent you a book which I read no more because it has become a part of myself, and my old marks in it are now useless, because in my heart I mark it all. God's peace and strength be with you.
Faithfully yours, JOHN RUSKIN."

Two lithograph copies of this letter are inserted at the end, and on the last sheet of the cover are outlines of profiles of capitals, etc., by Ruskin. The book is much scored by him. The letter to Alfred Macfee was printed in *World Literature* (the supplement to *Igdrasil*, edited by William Marwick), March 1892, vol. i. p. 106; and Ruskin's marks were noted, in the greatest detail, in the same publication, pp. 53, 65, 90–92, 105–106.]

² [Matthew xv. 14.]

dog and stick, or even timid walking with recognized need of dog and stick, if not to be had, such leadership might come to good end enough; but now a worse disorder has come upon you, that the squinting should lead the squinting. Now the nature of bat, or mole, or owl, may be undesirable, at least in the day-time, but worse may be imagined. The modern Liberal politico-economist of the Stuart Mill school is essentially of the type of a flat-fish—one eyeless side of him always in the mud, and one eye, on the side that *has* eyes, down in the corner of his mouth,—not a desirable guide for man or beast. There was an article—I believe it got in by mistake, but the Editor, of course, won't say so—in the *Contemporary Review*, two months back, on Mr. Morley's Essays, by a Mr. Buchanan, with an incidental page on Carlyle in it, unmatchable (to the length of my poor knowledge) for obliquitous platitude in the mud-walks of literature.¹

20. Read your Carlyle, then, with all your heart, and with the best of brain you can give; and you will learn from him first, the eternity of good law, and the need of obedience to it: then, concerning your own immediate business, you will learn farther this, that the beginning of all good law, and nearly the end of it, is in these two ordinances,—That every man shall do good work for his bread: and secondly, that every man shall have good bread for his work. But the first of these is the only one you have to think of. If you are resolved that the work shall be good, the bread will be sure; if not,—believe me, there is neither steam plough nor steam mill, go they never so glibly, that will win it from the earth long, either for you, or the Ideal Landed Proprietor.²

Faithfully yours,
J. RUSKIN.

¹ [*Contemporary Review* for June 1871, vol. xvii. pp. 319–337: “Mr. John Morley's Essays,” by Robert Buchanan, whose attack on Carlyle will be found on pp. 328–329.]

² [See above, § 1; and for the reference to Carlyle, see *Munera Pulveris*, § 158 n. (Vol. XVII. p. 280).]

LETTER 11

THE ABBOT'S CHAPEL¹

DENMARK HILL,

15th October, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—A day seldom passes, now that people begin to notice these Letters a little, without my receiving a remonstrance on the absurdity of writing “so much above the level” of those whom I address.²

I have said, however, that eventually you shall understand, if you care to understand, every work in these pages. Through all this year I have only been putting questions; some of them such as have puzzled the wisest, and which may, for a long time yet, prove too hard for you and me: but, next year, I will go over all the ground again, answering the questions, where I know of any answers; or making them plain for your examination, when I know of none.

2. But, in the meantime, be it admitted, for argument's sake, that this way of writing, which is easy to me, and which most educated persons can easily understand, *is* very much above your level. I want to know why it is assumed so quietly that your brains must always be at a low level. Is it essential to the doing of the work by which England exists, that its workmen should not be able to understand scholar's English (remember, I only assume mine to be so for argument's sake), but only newspaper's English? I chanced, indeed, to take up a number of *Belgravia* the other day, which contained a violent attack on an old enemy of mine—*Blackwood's Magazine*;³ and I enjoyed the attack mightily, until *Belgravia* declared, by way of *coup de grâce* to *Blackwood*, that something which *Blackwood* had spoken of as settled in one way had

¹ [“Furness Abbey” and “Peasant Paymasters” (see below, § 5) were rejected titles for this Letter. For the actual title, see § 3.]

² [Compare above, p. 79.]

³ [See Vol. III. pp. xviii., xliii.–xliv.]



Allen & Co. So.

Justice

Drawn thus by Giotto in the Chapel of the Arena at Padua

been irrevocably settled the other way,—“settled,” said triumphant *Belgravia*, “in seventy-two newspapers.”¹

Seventy-two newspapers, then, it seems—or, with a margin, eighty-two,—perhaps, to be perfectly safe, we had better say ninety-two—are enough to settle anything in this England of ours, for the present. But, irrevocably, I doubt. If, perchance, you workmen should reach the level of understanding scholar’s English instead of newspaper’s English, things might a little unsettle themselves again; and, in the end, might even get into positions un contemplated by the ninety-two newspapers,—contemplated only by the laws of Heaven, and settled by them, some time since, as positions which, if things ever got out of, they would need to get into again.

And, for my own part, I cannot at all understand why well-educated people should still so habitually speak of you as beneath their level, and needing to be written down to, with condescending simplicity, as flat-foreheaded creatures of another race, unredeemable by any Darwinism.

3. I was waiting last Saturday afternoon on the platform of the railway station at Furness Abbey (the station itself is tastefully placed so that you can see it, and nothing else but it, through the east window of the Abbot’s Chapel, over the ruined altar), and a party of the workmen employed on another line, wanted for the swiftly progressive neighbourhood of Dalton,² were taking Sabbatical refreshment at the tavern recently established at the south side of the said Abbot’s Chapel. Presently, the train whistling for them, they came out in a highly refreshed state, and made for it as fast as they could by the tunnel under the line, taking very long steps to keep their balance in the direction of motion, and securing themselves, laterally, by

¹ [The article, by G. A. Sala, was entitled “The Cant of Modern Criticism,” and appeared in *Belgravia* for November 1867, vol. iv. pp. 45–55. Sala takes up the title of a political article in *Blackwood*, No. 623, “The Question Settled,” and says “Toryism is objectionable enough, under any circumstances; but stale Toryism! and stale Scotch Toryism! Did you ever try to munch an ancient ‘scon’—a stale Scotch bun? Dead-Sea apples are juicy and succulent compared with *that* diet. The question settled! Why, it was settled months ago, in five-and-seventy newspapers” (p. 47).]

² [Dalton-in-Furness, the seat of numerous iron-ore mines.]

hustling the wall, or any chance passengers. They were dressed universally in brown rags, which, perhaps, they felt to be the comfortablest kind of dress; they had, most of them, pipes, which I really believe to be more enjoyable than cigars; they got themselves adjusted in their carriages by the aid of snatches of vocal music, and looked at us (I had charge of a lady and her two young daughters)¹ with supreme indifference, as indeed at creatures of another race; pitiable, perhaps,—certainly disagreeable and objectionable—but, on the whole, despicable, and not to be minded. We, on our part, had the insolence to pity them for being dressed in rags, and for being packed so close in the thirdclass carriages: the two young girls bore being run against patiently; and when a thin boy of fourteen or fifteen, the most drunk of the company, was sent back staggering to the tavern for a forgotten pickaxe, we would, any of us, I am sure, have gone and fetched it for him, if he had asked us. For we were all in a very virtuous and charitable temper: we had had an excellent dinner at the new inn, and had earned that portion of our daily bread by admiring the Abbey all the morning. So we pitied the poor workmen doubly—first, for being so wicked as to get drunk at four in the afternoon; and, secondly, for being employed in work so disgraceful as throwing up clods of earth into an embankment, instead of spending the day, like us, in admiring the Abbey: and I, who am always making myself a nuisance to people with my political economy, inquired timidly of my friend whether she thought it all quite right. And she said, certainly not; but what could be done? It was of no use trying to make such men admire the Abbey, or to keep them from getting drunk. They wouldn't do the one, and they would do the other—they were quite an unmanageable sort of people, and had been so for generations.²

4. Which, indeed, I knew to be partly the truth, but it only made the thing seem to me more wrong than it

¹ [For another reference to them, see Letter 80, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 176).]

² [For other references to “the navvies of Furness,” see Letters 64, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 568), and 81, § 4 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 194.)]

did before, since here were not only the actual two or three dozen of unmanageable persons, with much taste for beer, and none for architecture; but these implied the existence of many unmanageable persons before and after them,—nay, a long ancestral and filial unmanageableness. They were a Fallen Race, every way incapable, as I acutely felt, of appreciating the beauty of *Modern Painters*, or fathoming the significance of *Fors Clavigera*.

5. But what they had done to deserve their fall, or what I had done to deserve the privilege of being the author of those valuable books, remained obscure to me; and indeed, whatever the deservings may have been on either side, in this and other cases of the kind, it is always a marvel to me that the arrangement and its consequences are accepted so patiently. For observe what, in brief terms, the arrangement is. Virtually, the entire business of the world turns on the clear necessity of getting on table, hot or cold, if possible, meat—but, at least, vegetables,—at some hour of the day, for all of us: for you labourers, we will say at noon; for us æsthetical persons, we will say at eight in the evening; for we like to have done our eight hours' work of admiring abbeys before we dine. But, at some time of day, the mutton and turnips, or, since mutton itself is only a transformed state of turnips, we may say, as sufficiently typical of everything, turnips only, must absolutely be got for us both.¹ And nearly every problem of State policy and economy, as at present understood, and practised, consists in some device for persuading you labourers to go and dig up dinner for us reflective and æsthetical persons, who like to sit still, and think, or admire. So that when we get to the bottom of the matter, we find the inhabitants of this earth broadly divided into two great masses;—the peasant paymasters²—spade in hand, original and imperial producers of turnips; and, waiting on them all

¹ [Ruskin's reference to this passage in his Index to vols. i. and ii. is, "Turnips, as generally representing food; phenomena of their distribution"; and he compares Letter 8, § 5, p. 137: "snatching the roots from him as he digs."]

² ["The peasant paymaster; cf. Letter 15, § 1, Letter 16 (invaluable), and Letter 47, §§ 15, 16."—*MS. note in Author's copy*. See pp. 260, 279 *seq.*; and Vol. XXVIII. pp. 199, 200.]

round, a crowd of polite persons, modestly expectant of turnips, for some—too often theoretical—service. There is, first, the clerical person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for giving him moral advice; then the legal person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for telling him, in black-letter, that his house is his own;¹ there is, thirdly, the courtly person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for presenting a celestial appearance to him; there is, fourthly, the literary person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for talking daintily to him;² and there is, lastly, the military person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for standing, with a cocked hat on, in the middle of the field, and exercising a moral influence upon the neighbours.³ Nor is the peasant to be pitied if these arrangements are all faithfully carried out. If he really gets moral advice from his moral adviser; if his house is, indeed, maintained to be his own, by his legal adviser; if courtly persons, indeed, present a celestial appearance to him;⁴ and literary persons, indeed, talk beautiful words: if, finally, his scarecrow do, indeed, stand quiet, as with a stick through the middle of it, producing, if not always a wholesome terror, at least, a picturesque effect, and colour-contrast of scarlet with green,—they are all of them worth their daily turnips. But if, perchance, it happen that he get *immoral* advice from his moralist, or if his lawyer advise him that his house is *not* his own; and his bard, story-teller, or other literary charmer, begin to charm him unwisely,⁵ not with beautiful words, but with obscene and ugly words—and he be readier with his response in vegetable produce for these than for any other sort; finally, if his quiet scarecrow become disquiet, and seem likely to bring upon him a whole flight of scarecrows out of his neighbours' fields,—

¹ [For an explanation of this passage, see Letter 47, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 188).]

² [Compare Letters 81, § 12 *n.*, and 86, § 7 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. pp. 205, 341).]

³ [The reference to this passage in the Index is:—

“Army, standing, function of, under type of scarecrow. In that passage I ought to have indicated the function of the quiet scarecrow as that of keeping order in one’s fields. *Compare* Letter 2, end of § 10, and passage on Horse Guards, Letter 19, § 3; the parallel domestic *mischief* is described in Letter 8, § 5.”

For these references, see pp. 37, 321, 136—137.]

⁴ [For an explanation of this passage, see Letter 45, § 17 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 162).]

⁵ [See Psalms lviii. 5.]

the combined fleets of Russia, Prussia, etc., as my friend and your trustee, Mr. Cowper-Temple, has it (see above, Letter 2, § 20¹), it is time to look into such arrangements under their several heads.*

6. Well looked after, however, all these arrangements have their advantages, and a certain basis of reason and propriety. But there are two other arrangements which have no basis on either, and which are very widely adopted, nevertheless, among mankind, to their great misery.

I must expand a little the type of my primitive peasant before defining these. You observe, I have not named among the polite persons giving theoretical service in exchange for vegetable diet, the large, and lately become exceedingly polite, class, of artists. For a true artist is only a beautiful development of tailor or carpenter.† As the peasant provides the dinner, so the artist provides the clothes and house: in the tailoring and tapestry producing function, the best of artists ought to be the peasant's wife herself, when properly emulative of Queens Penelope, Bertha, and Maude;² and in the house-producing-and-painting

* This is the most important passage of definition in the course of the book hitherto.³—*Index to Vols. I. and II.* (under "Working Men").]

† Artists are included under the term Workmen; but I see the passage is inaccurate,—for I of course meant to include musicians among artists, and therefore among working men; but musicians are not "developments of tailor or carpenter." Also it may be questioned why I do not count the work given to construct poetry, when I count that given to perform music; this will be explained in another place.⁴—*Index to Vols. I. and II.* (under "Artists").

¹ [Above, p. 43.]

² [For other references to Penelope, as typical spinster, see Vol. XV. p. 400, and Vol. XVIII. p. 117. For other references to Queen Matilda and her tapestry, see Vol. X. p. 76, and Vol. XX. p. 269. The "Bertha" here referred to was the daughter of Burkhard, Duke of the Alemanni, and wife of Rudolf II., King of Burgundy. After Rudolf's death in 937 she acted as regent for her infant son, Konrad. She is represented on seals and other monuments of the time as sitting on her throne spinning.]

³ [Similarly in Letter 67, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 644), Ruskin refers to §§ 3–5 here as "the most pregnant pages in the entire series of these letters."]

⁴ [It may be noted that in Letter 89, § 11 (Vol. XXIX. p. 410), where Ruskin enumerates the twenty-one essential trades, he includes "musicians" but not "poets." There are many places in *Fors* in which he insists on the essential place of music in education; but he does not give the explanation he promised, unless it be in Letter 76 (Vol. XXIX. p. 85), where he says that "the vital form of real

function, though concluding itself in such painted chambers as those of the Vatican, the artist is still typically and essentially a carpenter or mason; first carving wood and stone, then painting the same for preservation;—if ornamentally, all the better. And, accordingly, you see these letters of mine are addressed to the “workmen and labourers” of England,—that is to say, to the providers of houses and dinners, for themselves, and for all men, in this country, as in all others.*

Considering these two sorts of Providers, then, as one great class, surrounded by the suppliant persons for whom, together with themselves, they have to make provision, it is evident that they both have need originally of two things—land, and tools. Clay to be subdued; and plough, or potter’s wheel, wherewith to subdue it.

7. Now, as aforesaid, so long as the polite surrounding personages are content to offer their salutary advice, their legal information, etc., to the peasant, for what these articles are verily worth in vegetable produce, all is perfectly fair; but if any of the polite persons contrive to get hold of the peasant’s land, or of his tools, and put him into the “position of William,”¹ and make him pay annual interest, first for the wood that he planes, and then for the plane he planes it with!—my friends, polite or otherwise, these two arrangements cannot be considered as settled yet, even by the ninety-two newspapers, with all Belgravia to back them.²

Not by the newspapers, nor by Belgravia, nor even by the Cambridge Catechism,³ or the Cambridge Professor of Political Economy.

* As in the title of the work, by workmen I mean people who must use their heads as well as their hands for what they do; by labourers, those who use their hands only.—*Index to Vols. I. and II.* (under “Working Men”).

poetry” is “simple singing for heart’s delight.” Perhaps what he had here in his mind was his conception of song as essentially including the setting of right words to right tunes: see the Preface to *Rock Honeycomb* (Vol. XXXI.).]

¹ [See Letter 1, §§ 13–14 (pp. 24–26).]

² [See above, § 2.]

³ [Mrs. Fawcett’s: see above, p. 24.]

8. Look to the beginning of the second chapter in the last edition of Professor Fawcett's *Manual of Political Economy* (Macmillan, 1869, p. 105). The chapter purports to treat of the "Classes among whom wealth is distributed." And thus it begins:—

"We have described the requisites of production to be three: land, labour, and capital. Since, therefore, land, labour, and capital are essential to the production of wealth, it is natural to suppose that the wealth which is produced ought to be possessed by those who own the land, labour, and capital which have respectively contributed to its production. The share of wealth which is thus allotted to the possessor of the land is termed rent; the portion allotted to the labourer is termed wages, and the remuneration of the capitalist is termed profit.¹

You observe that in this very meritoriously clear sentence both the possessor of the land and the possessor of the capital are assumed to be absolutely idle persons. If they contributed any labour to the business, and so confused themselves with the labourer, the problem of triple division would become complicated directly;—in point of fact, they do occasionally employ themselves somewhat, and become deserving, therefore, of a share, not of rent only, nor of profit only, but of wages also. And every now and then, as I noted in my last letter,² there is an outburst of admiration in some one of the ninety-two newspapers,³ at the amount of "work" done by persons of the superior classes; respecting which, however, you remember that I also advised you that a great deal of it was only a form of competitive play. In the main, therefore, the statement of the Cambridge Professor may be admitted to be correct as to the existing facts; the Holders of land and capital being virtually in a state of Dignified Repose, as the Labourer is in a state of (at least, I hear it always so announced in the ninety-two newspapers) Dignified Labour.

9. But Professor Fawcett's sentence, though, as I have just said, in comparison with most writings on the subjects,

¹ ["See Letter 22, § 14" (p. 381).—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]

² [Not *last* letter, but Letter 9, § 2 *n.* (p. 147).]

³ [See above, p. 182.]

meritoriously clear, yet is not as clear as it might be,—still less as scientific as it might be. It is, indeed, gracefully ornamental, in the use, in its last clause, of the three words, “share,” “portion,” and “remuneration,” for the same thing; but this is not the clearest imaginable language. The sentence, strictly put, should run thus:—“The portion of wealth which is thus allotted to the possessor of the land is termed rent; the portion allotted to the labourer is termed wages; and the portion allotted to the capitalist is termed profit.”

And you may at once see the advantage of reducing the sentence to these more simple terms; for Professor Fawcett’s ornamental language has this danger in it, that “Remuneration,” being so much grander a word than “Portion,” in the very roll of it seems to imply rather a thousand pounds a day than three-and-sixpence. And until there be scientific reason shown for anticipating the portions to be thus disproportioned, we have no right to suggest their being so, by ornamental variety of language.

10. Again, Professor Fawcett’s sentence is, I said, not entirely scientific. He founds the entire principle of allotment on the phrase “it is natural to suppose.” But I never heard of any other science founded on what it was natural to suppose. Do the Cambridge mathematicians, then, in these advanced days, tell their pupils that it is natural to suppose the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones? Nay, in the present case, I regret to say it has sometimes been thought wholly *unnatural* to suppose any such thing; and so exceedingly unnatural, that to receive either a “remuneration,” or a “portion,” or a “share,” for the loan of anything, without personally working, was held by Dante and other such simple persons in the Middle Ages to be one of the worst of the sins that could be committed *against* nature: and the receivers of such interest were put in the same circle of Hell with the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.¹

¹ [*Inferno*, xi. 50: see Vol. XVII. pp. 220, 560. For other questions addressed to Professor Fawcett, see below, pp. 316–318, 378.]

11. And it is greatly to be apprehended that if ever our workmen, under the influences of Mr. Scott and Mr. Street,¹ come indeed to admire the Abbot's Chapel at Furness more than the railroad station, they may become possessed of a taste for Gothic opinions as well as Gothic arches, and think it "natural to suppose" that a workman's tools should be his own property.

Which I, myself, having been always given to Gothic opinions, do, indeed suppose, very strongly; and intend to try with all my might to bring about that arrangement wherever I have any influence;—the arrangement itself being feasible enough, if we can only begin by not leaving our pickaxes behind us after taking Sabbatical refreshment.²

12. But let me again, and yet again, warn you, that only by beginning so,—that is to say, by doing what is in your own power to achieve of plain right,—can you ever bring about any of your wishes; or, indeed, can you, to any practical purpose, begin to wish. Only by quiet and decent exaltation of your own habits can you qualify yourselves to discern what is just, or to define even what is possible. I hear you are, at last, beginning to draw up your wishes in a definite manner (I challenged you to do so, in *Time and Tide*,³ four years ago, in vain), and you mean to have them at last "represented in Parliament"; but I hear of small question yet among you, whether they be just wishes, and can be represented to the power of everlasting Justice, as things not only natural to be supposed, but necessary to be done. For *she* accepts no representation of things in beautiful language, but takes her own view of them, with her own eyes.

13. I did, indeed, cut out a slip from the *Birmingham Morning News*, last September (12th), containing a letter written by a gentleman signing himself "Justice" in person,

¹ [For another reference to Scott and Street as the leading architects of the Gothic revival, see Vol. XIX. p. 23.]

² [See above, § 3.]

³ [See *Time and Tide*, Letter III. (Vol. XVII. p. 325).]

and professing himself an engineer, who talked very grandly about the “individual and social laws of our nature”: but *he* had arrived at the inconvenient conclusions that “no individual has a natural right to hold property in land,” and that “all land sooner or later must become public property.” I call this an inconvenient conclusion, because I really think you would find yourselves greatly inconvenienced if your wives couldn’t go into the garden to cut a cabbage, without getting leave from the Lord Mayor and Corporation; and if the same principle is to be carried out as regards tools, I beg to state to Mr. Justice-in-Person, that if anybody and everybody is to use my own particular palette and brushes, I resign my office of Professor of Fine Art.* Perhaps, when we become really acquainted with the true Justice in Person, not professing herself an engineer, she may suggest to us, as a Natural Supposition,—“That land should be given to those who can use *it*, and tools to those who can use *them*;”¹ and I have a notion you will find this a very tenable supposition also.

14. I have given you, this month, the last of the pictures I want you to see from Padua;—Giotto’s Image of Justice²—which, you observe, differs somewhat from the Image of Justice we used to set up in England, above insurance offices, and the like. Bandaged close about the eyes, our English Justice was wont to be, with a pair of grocers’ scales in her hand, wherewith, doubtless, she was accustomed to weigh out accurately their shares to the landlords, and portions to the labourers, and remunerations to the capitalists.³ But Giotto’s Justice has no bandage about her eyes (Albert Dürer’s has them *round* open, and flames flashing from them),⁴ and weighs, not with scales, but

* Cf. Letter 22, §§ 12–14, and Letter 25, § 25 (Question 1) (pp. 380, 470).—*Index to Vols. I. and II.*

¹ [For a re-statement of this proposition by Ruskin, in a later Letter, see below, p. 381. Compare *Unto this Last*, §§ 62, 63 (Vol. XVII. p. 87).]

² [Compare *Giotto and his Works in Padua*, Vol. XXIV. p. 116.]

³ [See above, §§ 8, 9.]

⁴ [Compare Vol. XIX. p. 273, and Vol. XXIV. p. 116.]

with her own hands; and weighs not merely the shares, or remunerations of men, but the worth of them; and finding them worth this or that, gives them what they deserve—death, or honour. Those are her forms of “Remuneration.”

15. Are you sure that you are ready to accept the decrees of this true goddess, and to be chastised or rewarded by her, as is your due, being seen through and through to your heart’s core? Or will you still abide by the level balance of the blind Justice of old time; of rather, by the oblique balance of the squinting Justice of our modern geological Mud-Period?—the mud, at present, becoming also more slippery under the feet—I beg pardon, the belly—of squinting Justice, than was once expected; becoming, indeed (as it is announced, even by Mr. W. P. Price, M.P., chairman at the last half-yearly meeting of the Midland Railway Company), quite “delicate ground.”

The said chairman, you will find, by referring to the *Pall Mall Gazette* of August 17th, 1871, having received a letter from Mr. Bass on the subject of the length of time that the servants of the company were engaged in labour, and their inadequate remuneration, made the following remarks:—“He (Mr. Bass) is treading on very delicate ground. The remuneration of labour, the value of which, like the value of gold itself, depends altogether on the one great universal law of supply and demand, is a question on which there is very little room for sentiment. He, as a very successful tradesman, knows very well how much the success of commercial operations depends on the observance of that law; and we, sitting here as your representatives, cannot altogether close our eyes to it.”

16. Now it is quite worth your while to hunt out that number of the *Pall Mall Gazette* in any of your free libraries, because a quaint chance in the placing of the type has produced a lateral comment on these remarks of Mr. W. P. Price, M.P.

Take your carpenter’s rule, apply it level under the words, “Great Universal Law of Supply and Demand,”

and read the line it marks off in the other column of the same page. It marks off this, "In Khorassan one-third of the whole population has perished from starvation, and at Ispahan no less than 27,000 souls."¹

Of course you will think it no business of yours if people are starved in Persia. But the Great "Universal" Law of Supply and Demand may some day operate in the same manner over here; and even in the Mud-and-Flat-fish period, John Bull may not like to have his belly flattened for him to that extent.

17. You have heard it said occasionally that I am not a practical person.² It may be satisfactory to you to know, on the contrary, that this whole plan of mine is founded on the very practical notion of making you round persons instead of flat. Round and merry, instead of flat and sulky. And my beau-ideal is not taken from "a mechanical point of view,"³ but is one already realised. I saw last summer, in the flesh, as round and merry a person as I ever desire to see. He was tidily dressed—not in brown rags, but in green velveteen; he wore a jaunty hat, with a feather in it, a little on one side; he was not drunk, but the effervescence of his shrewd good-humour filled the room all about him; and he could sing like a robin. You may say "like a nightingale," if you like, but I think robins' singing the best, myself;⁴ only I hardly ever hear

¹ [For another reference to this famine in Persia, see *Eagle's Nest*, § 36 (Vol. XXII. p. 149).]

² [See above, p. 175; and below, p. 279. Compare Vol. XXVIII. p. 14, and Vol. XXIX. p. 358. On the word "practical," see also, above, p. 59, and below, p. 449.]

³ [See the extract from the *Daily Telegraph*, above, p. 166.]

⁴ ["'Why,' asks a writer to *St. George* in 1899, 'does Mr. Ruskin like robins' singing better than nightingales'?' (*Fors*). Is it not for the same reason that he "had rather see a brown harvest-field than the brightest Aurora Borealis" (*Modern Painters*, vol. ii.), and that the Jura pastures and forests were more to him than the grandest scenes of the New Continent could have been? (*Seven Lamps*). Is it not, in fact, because the robins, and the harvest-field, and the Alpine scenery were suggestive to him of human associations and domestic sympathies; and "seen with human eyes, there is nothing else but man; all animals and beings beside him are only made that they may change into him: the world truly exists only in the presence of man, acts only in the passion of man" [above, p. 85]. Strange how these detached utterances, delivered at long intervals of time (1849, 1871, 1883) bind

it now, for the young ladies of England have had nearly all the robins shot, to wear in their hats, and the bird-stuffers are exporting the few remaining to America.

This merry round person was a Tyrolese peasant; and I hold it an entirely practical proceeding, since I find my idea of felicity actually produced in the Tyrol, to set about the production of it, here, on Tyrolese principles; which, you will find, on inquiry, have not hitherto implied the employment of steam, nor submission to the great Universal Law of Supply and Demand, nor even Demand for the Local Supply of a "Liberal" government. But they do imply labour of all hands on pure earth and in fresh air. They do imply obedience to government which endeavours to be just, and faith in a religion* which endeavours to be moral.¹ And they result in strength of limbs, clearness of throats, roundness of waists, and pretty jackets, and still prettier corsets, to fit them.

18. I must pass, disjointedly, to matters which, in a written letter, would have been put in a postscript; but I do not care, in a printed one, to leave a useless gap in the type. First, the reference in § 12 of last number [p. 173] to the works of Mr. Zion Ward, is incorrect. The passage I quoted is not in the "Letter to a Friend," price twopence, but in the "Origin of Evil Discovered," price fourpence. (John Bolton, Steel House Lane, Birmingham.) And, by the way, I wish that booksellers would save themselves, and

* Religion. It is of no use to give references to the occurrence of this word, which is not yet anywhere completely defined;² only observe that I always use it impartially, of all the forms of submission to a Supreme Being adopted by men; and that such submission, involving moral obligation, is stated to be essential to all healthy human action.—*Index to Vols. I. and II.*

themselves together into a consistent whole the moment they are brought together. Only a sincere man could write so consistently' " (*St. George*, vol. ii. pp. 57–58). For the reference to *Modern Painters*, see Vol. IV. p. 71 n. (a note of 1883); for that to *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. p. 223.]

¹ [Part of this sentence—"be just, and faith in a religion which endeavours to"—was omitted, owing to a printer's error, from some of the later editions.]

² [But see a later letter, Vol. XXVIII. p. 156.]

me, some (now steadily enlarging) trouble, by noting that the price of these Letters to friends of mine, as supplied by me, the original inditer, to all and sundry, through my only shopman, Mr. Allen, is sevenpence per epistle,¹ and not fivepence halfpenny; and that the trade profit on the sale of them is intended to be, and must eventually be, as I intend, a quite honestly confessed profit, charged to the customer, not compressed out of the author; which object may be easily achieved by the retail bookseller, if he will resolvedly charge the symmetrical sum of Tenpence per epistle over his counter, as it is my purpose he should. But to return to Mr. Ward; the correction of my reference was sent me by one of his disciples, in a very earnest and courteous letter, written chiefly to complain that my quotation totally misrepresented Mr. Ward's opinions. I regret that it should have done so, but gave the quotation neither to represent, nor misrepresent Mr. Ward's opinions; but to show, which the sentence, though brief, quite sufficiently shows, that he had not right to have any.

19. I have before noted to you, indeed, that, in a broad sense, *nobody* has a right to have opinions; but only knowledges:² and, in a practical and large sense, nobody has a right even to make experiments, but only to act in a way which they certainly know will be productive of good. And this I ask you to observe again, because I begin now to receive some earnest inquiries respecting the plan I have in hand, the inquiries very naturally assuming it to be an "experiment," which may possibly be successful, and much more possibly may fail. But it is not an experiment at all. It will be merely the carrying out of what has been done already in some places, to the best of my narrow power, in other places: and so far as it can be carried, it *must* be productive of some kind of good.

¹ [Referring to the original issue of the letters: see the Bibliographical Note, above, p. xci.]

² [Compare Letter 6, §§ 2, 3 (pp. 99–100); also 43, § 1; 44, § 3; 71, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 107–108, 128, 732); and Letters 87, § 15, and 89, § 2 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 374, 399).]

20. For example; I have round me here at Denmark Hill seven acres of leasehold ground. I pay £50 a year ground-rent, and £250 a year in wages to my gardeners; besides expenses in fuel for hothouses, and the like. And for this sum of three hundred odd pounds a year I have some pease and strawberries in summer; some camellias and azaleas in winter; and good cream, and a quiet place to walk in, all the year round. Of the strawberries, cream, and pease, I eat more than is good for me; sometimes, of course, obliging my friends with a superfluous pottle or pint. The camellias and azaleas stand in the ante-room of my library; and everybody says, when they come in, "How pretty!" and my young lady friends have leave to gather what they like to put in their hair, when they are going to balls. Meantime, outside of my fenced seven acres—owing to the operation of the great universal law of supply and demand—numbers of people are starving; many more, dying of too much gin; and many of their children dying of too little milk; and, as I told you in my first Letter, for my own part, I won't stand this sort of thing any longer.¹

21. Now it is evidently open to me to say to my gardeners, "I want no more azaleas or camellias; and no more strawberries and pease than are good for me. Make these seven acres everywhere as productive of good corn, vegetables, or milk, as you can; I will have no steam used upon them, for nobody on my ground shall be blown to pieces; nor any fuel wasted in making plants blossom in winter, for I believe we shall, without such unseasonable blossoms, enjoy the spring twice as much as now; but, in any part of the ground that is not good for eatable vegetables, you are to sow such wild flowers as it seems to like, and you are to keep all trim and orderly. The produce of the land, after I have had my limited and salutary

¹ [Letter 1, § 2 (p. 13). With § 20 here may be compared the introductory remarks (April 21, 1870) in Ruskin's "Notes on the Educational Series" (Vol. XXI. pp. 103–104).]

portion of pease, shall be your own; but if you sell any of it, part of the price you get for it shall be deducted from your wages.”

22. Now observe, there would be no experiment whatever in any one feature of this proceeding. My gardeners might be stimulated to some extra exertion by it; but in any event I should retain exactly the same command over them that I had before. I might save something out of my £250 of wages, but I should pay no more than I do now, and in return for the gift of the produce I should certainly be able to exact compliance from my people with any such capricious fancies of mine as that they should wear velveteen jackets, or send their children to learn to sing; and, indeed, I could grind them, generally, under the iron heel of Despotism, as the ninety-two newspapers¹ would declare, to an extent unheard of before in this free country. And, assuredly, some children would get milk, strawberries, and wild flowers who do not get them now; and my young lady friends would still, I am firm in my belief, look pretty enough at their balls, even without the camellias or azaleas.

23. I am not going to do this with my seven acres here; first, because they are only leasehold; secondly, because they are too near London for wild flowers to grow brightly in. But I have bought, instead, twice as many freehold acres, where wild flowers are growing now, and shall continue to grow; and there I mean to live;² and, with the tenth part of my available fortune, I will buy other bits of freehold land, and employ gardeners on them in this above-stated matter. I may as well tell you at once that my tithe will be, roughly, about seven thousand pounds altogether (a little less rather than more).³ If I get no help, I can show what I mean, even with this; but if any one cares to help me with gifts of either

¹ [See Letter 11, § 2 (p. 182).]

² [For Ruskin's purchase of, and removal to, Brantwood, see Vol. XXII. pp. xx. *seq.*]

³ [See the next letter, p. 199; and Letter 48, § 23 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 224).]

money or land, they will find that what they give is applied honestly, and does a perfectly definite service: they might, for aught I know, do more good with it in other ways; but *some* good in this way—and that is all I assert—they will do, certainly, and not experimentally. And the longer they take to think of the matter the better I shall like it, for my work at Oxford is more than enough for me just now, and I shall not practically bestir myself in this land-scheme for a year to come, at least; nor then, except as a rest from my main business: but the money and land will always be safe in the hands of your trustees for you, and you need not doubt, though I show no petulant haste about the matter, that I remain

Faithfully yours,
J. RUSKIN.

LETTER 12

THE PRINCE'S LESSON¹

DENMARK HILL,

23rd December, 1871.

1. MY FRIENDS,—You will scarcely care to read anything I have to say to you this evening—having much to think of, wholly pleasant, as I hope; and prospect of delightful days to come next week. At least, however, you will be glad to know that I have really made you the Christmas gift I promised²—£7000 Consols, in all, clear; a fair tithe of what I had: and to as much perpetuity as the law will allow me. It will not allow the dead to have their own way, long, whatever licence it grants the living in their humours: and this seems to me unkind to those helpless ones:—very certainly it is inexpedient for the survivors. For the wisest men are wise to the full in death; and if you would give them, instead of stately tombs, only so much honour as to do their will, when they themselves can no more contend for it, you would find it good memorial of them, such as the best of them would desire, and full of blessing to all men for all time.

English law needs mending in many respects; in none more than in this. As it stands, I can only vest my gift in trustees, desiring them, in the case of my death, immediately to appoint their own successors, and in such

¹ [See below, § 19. “The Prince’s Masters” was a rejected title for this letter.]

² [See Letter 5, § 20, and Letter 11, § 23 (pp. 95, 197).]

continued succession, to apply the proceeds of the St. George's Fund to the purchase of land in England and Scotland, which shall be cultivated to the utmost attainable fruitfulness and beauty by the labour of man and beast thereon, such men and beasts receiving at the same time the best education attainable by the trustees for labouring creatures, according to the terms stated in this book, *Fors Clavigera*.

2. These terms, and the arrangement of the whole matter, will become clearer to you as you read on with me, and cannot be clear at all, till you do:—here is the money, at any rate, to help you, one day, to make merry with, only, if you care to give me any thanks, will you pause now for a moment from your merrymaking, to tell me,—to whom, as Fortune has ordered it, no merrymaking is possible at this time (nor, indeed, much at any time);—to me, therefore, standing as it were astonished in the midst of this gaiety of yours, will you tell—what it is all about?

Your little children would answer, doubtless, fearlessly, “Because the Child Christ was born to-day”: but you, wiser than your children, it may be,—at least, it should be,—are you also sure that He was?

And if He was, what is that to you?

3. I repeat, are you indeed *sure* He was? I mean, with real happening of the strange things you have been told, that the Heavens opened near Him, showing their hosts, and that one of their stars stood still over His head? You are sure of that, you say? I am glad; and wish it were so with me; but I have been so puzzled lately by many matters that once seemed clear to me, that I seldom now feel sure of anything. Still seldomer, however, do I feel sure of the contrary of anything. That people say they saw it, may not prove that it was visible; but that I never saw it cannot prove that it was invisible: and this is a story which I more envy the people who believe on the weakest grounds, than who deny on the strongest. The

people whom I envy not at all are those who imagine they believe it, and do not.

For one of two things this story of the Nativity *is* certainly, and without any manner of doubt. It relates either a fact full of power, or a dream full of meaning. It is, at the least, not a cunningly devised fable, but the record of an impression made, by some strange spiritual cause, on the minds of the human race, at the most critical period of their existence:—an impression which has produced, in past ages, the greatest effect on mankind ever yet achieved by an intellectual conception; and which is yet to guide, by the determination of its truth or falsehood, the absolute destiny of ages to come.

4. Will you give some little time, therefore, to think of it with me to-day, being, as you tell me, sure of its truth? What, then, let me ask you, is its truth to *you*? The Child for whose birth you are rejoicing was born, you are told, to save His people from their sins;¹ but I have never noticed that you were particularly conscious of any sins to be saved from. If I were to tax you with any one in particular—lying, or thieving, or the like—my belief is you would say directly I had no business to do anything of the kind.

Nay, but, you may perhaps answer me—“That is because we *have* been saved from our sins; and we are making merry, because we are so perfectly good.”

Well; there would be some reason in such an answer. There is much goodness in you to be thankful for: far more than you know, or have learned to trust. Still, I don't believe you will tell me seriously that you eat your pudding and go to your pantomimes, only to express your satisfaction that you are so very good.

5. What is, or may be, this Nativity, to you, then, I repeat? Shall we consider, a little, what, at all events, it was to the people of its time; and so make ourselves more clear as to what it might be to us? We will read slowly.

¹ [1 Timothy i. 15.]

“And there were, in that country, shepherds, staying out in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night.”¹

Watching night and day, that means; not going home. The staying out in the field is the translation of a word from which a Greek nymph has her name, Agraulos, “the stayer out in fields,” of whom I shall have something to tell you soon.²

“And behold, the Messenger of the Lord stood above them, and the glory of the Lord lightened round them, and they feared a great fear.”³

“Messenger.” You must remember that, when this was written, the word “angel” had only the effect of our word—“messenger”—on men’s minds.⁴ Our translators say “angel” when they like, and “messenger” when they like; but the Bible, messenger only, or angel only, as you please.⁵ For instance, “Was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the angels, and sent them forth another way?”⁶

6. Would not you fain know what this angel looked like? I have always grievously wanted, from childhood upwards, to know that; and gleaned diligently every word written by people who said they had seen angels: but none of them ever tell me what their eyes are like, or hair, or even what dress they have on. We dress them, in pictures, conjecturally, in long robes, falling gracefully; but we only continue to think that kind of dress angelic, because religious young girls, in their modesty, and wish to look only human, give their dresses flounces. When I was a child, I used to be satisfied by hearing that angels had always two

¹ [Luke ii. 8: ποιμενες αγραυλωντες.]

² [Not done in *Fors*; but for an earlier reference, see *Queen of the Air*, § 38 (Vol. XIX. p. 334), and, for a later, Ruskin’s Preface (§ 19) to *The Economist of Xenophon*, written in 1876.]

³ [Luke ii. 9.]

⁴ [Compare Letter 84, § 16 (Vol. XXIX. p. 296).]

⁵ [For “angel” as “messenger,” see Letter 82, § 19 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 240). For other places in which Ruskin complains of the English translators for rendering the same word by different ones, see Letter 27, § 2 (below, p. 490), and Letters 68, § 8, and 77, § 3 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 672, and Vol. XXIX. pp. 109, 110); and Ruskin’s note on Psalm ix. in *Rock Honeycomb*.]

⁶ [James ii. 25.]

wings, and sometimes six; but now nothing dissatisfies me so much as hearing that; for my business compels me continually into close drawing of wings; and now they never give me the notion of anything but a swift or a gannet. And, worse still, when I see a picture of an angel, I know positively where he got his wings from—not at all from any heavenly vision, but from the worshipped hawk and ibis, down through Assyrian flying bulls, and Greek flying horses, and Byzantine flying evangelists, till we get a brass eagle (of all creatures in the world, to choose!), to have the gospel of peace read from the back of it.¹

Therefore, do the best I can, no idea of an angel is possible to me. And when I ask my religious friends, they tell me not to wish to be wise above that which is written.² My religious friends, let me write a few words of this letter, not to my poor puzzled workmen, but to you, who will all be going serenely to church to-morrow. This messenger, formed as we know not, stood above the shepherds, and the glory of the Lord lightened round them.

7. You would have liked to have seen it, you think! Brighter than the sun; perhaps twenty-one coloured, instead of seven-coloured, and as bright as the lime-light: doubtless you would have liked to see it, at midnight, in Judæa.

You tell me not to be wise above that which is written; why, therefore, should you be desirous, above that which is given? You cannot see the glory of God as bright as the lime-light at midnight; but you may see it as bright as the sun, at eight in the morning, if you choose. You might, at least, forty Christmases since: but not now.

8. You know I must antedate my letters for special days. I am actually writing this sentence on the second December, at ten in the morning, with the feeblest possible gleam of sun on my paper; and for the last three weeks the days have been one long drift of ragged gloom, with

¹ [Compare "The Eagle of Elis," Vol. XX. p. 398.]

² [See 1 Corinthians iv. 6. Compare Letter 40, § 10 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 72).]

only sometimes five minutes' gleam of the glory of God, between the gusts, which no one regarded.¹

I am taking the name of God in vain, you think? No, my religious friends, not I. For completed forty years I have been striving to consider the blue heavens, the work of His fingers, and the moon and the stars, which He hath ordained;² but you have left me nothing now to consider here at Denmark Hill, but these black heavens, the work of your fingers, and the blotting of moon and stars, which you have ordained; you,—taking the name of God in vain every Sunday, and His work and His mercy in vain all the week through.

9. "You have nothing to do with it—you are very sorry for it—and Baron Liebig says that the power of England is coal?"³

You have everything to do with it. Were you not told to come out and be separate from all evil?⁴ You take whatever advantage you can of the evil work and gain of this world, and yet expect the people you share with to be damned, out of your way, in the next. If you would begin by putting them out of your way here, you would perhaps carry some of them with you there. But return to your night vision, and explain to me, if not what the angel was like, at least what you understand him to have said,—he, and those with him. With his own lips he told the shepherds there was born a Saviour for them; but more was to be told: "And suddenly there was with him a multitude of the heavenly host."⁵

People generally think that this verse means only that after one angel had spoken, there came more to sing, in the manner of a chorus; but it means far another thing than that. If you look back to Genesis you find creation

¹ [Compare Letter 8, §§ 1, 2 (pp. 132–133).]

² [Psalms viii. 3.]

³ [For the reference here, see *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 123 n. (Vol. XVIII. p. 485); and compare Letter 48, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 209).]

⁴ [2 Corinthians vi. 17.]

⁵ [Luke ii. 13.]

summed thus:—"So the heavens and earth were finished, and all the host of them."¹ Whatever living powers of any order, great or small, were to inhabit either, are included in the word. The host of earth includes the ants and the worms of it; the host of heaven includes,—we know not what;—how should we?—the creatures that are in the stars which we cannot count,—in the space which we cannot imagine; some of them so little and so low that they can become flying pursuivants to this grain of sand we live on; others having missions, doubtless, to larger grains of sand, and wiser creatures on them.

10. But the vision of their multitude means at least this; that all the powers of the outer world which have any concern with ours became in some way visible now: having interest—they, in the praise,—as all the hosts of earth in the life, of this Child, born in David's town. And their hymn was of peace to the lowest of the two hosts—peace on earth;—and praise in the highest of the two hosts; and, better than peace, and sweeter than praise, Love, among men.²

The men in question, ambitious of praising God after the manner of the hosts of heaven, have written something which they suppose this Song of Peace to have been like: and sing it themselves, in state, after successful battles. But you hear it, those of you who go to church in orthodox quarters, every Sunday; and will understand the terms of it better by recollecting that the Lordship, which you begin the *Te Deum* by ascribing to God, is this, over all creatures, or over the two Hosts. In the Apocalypse it is "Lord, All governing"—Pantocrator—which we weakly translate "Almighty";³ but the Americans still understand the original sense, and apply it so to their god, the dollar,⁴ praying that the will may be done of their Father which is in Earth. Farther on in the hymn, the word "Sabaoth"

¹ [Genesis ii. 1.]

² [Luke ii. 14.]

³ [Revelation iv. 8.]

⁴ [For the phrase "Almighty dollar," see Vol. XVII. p. 286 n.]

again means all “hosts” or creatures;¹ and it is an important word for workmen to recollect, because the saying of St. James is coming true, and that fast, that the cries of the reapers whose wages have been kept back by fraud, have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth;² that is to say, Lord of all creatures, as much of the men at St. Catherine’s Docks as of Saint Catherine herself, though they live only under Tower Hill, and she lived close under Sinai.³

11. You see, farther, I have written above, not “good will towards men,” but “love among men.” It is nearer right so; but the word is not easy to translate at all. What it means precisely, you may conjecture best from its use at Christ’s baptism—“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am *well-pleased*.”⁴ For, in precisely the same words, the angels say, there is to be “well-pleasing in men.”

Now, my religious friends, I continually hear you talk of acting for God’s glory, and giving God praise. Might you not, for the present, think less of praising, and more of pleasing Him? He can, perhaps, dispense with your praise; your opinions of His character, even when they come to be held by a large body of the religious press, are not of material importance to Him. He has the hosts of heaven to praise Him, who see more of His ways, it is likely, than you; but you hear that you may be pleasing to Him, if you try:—that He expected, then, to have some satisfaction in you; and might have even great satisfaction—well-pleasing, as in His own Son, if you tried. The sparrows and the robins, if you give them leave to nest as they choose about your garden, will have their own opinions about your garden; some of them will think it well laid out,—others ill. You are not solicitous about their opinions; but you like them to love each other; to build their nests

¹ [See Vol. VII. p. 206.]

² [James v. 4.]

³ [St. Catherine of Alexandria; called also “of Sinai” (below, p. 482), because after her martyrdom angels carried her body to its grave on that mount: see Stanley’s *Sinai and Palestine*, 1873, p. 45.]

⁴ [Matthew iii. 17.]

without stealing each other's sticks, and to trust you to take care of them.

12. Perhaps, in like manner, if in this garden of the world you would leave off telling its Master your opinions of Him, and, much more, your quarrelling about your opinions of Him; but would simply trust Him, and mind your own business modestly, He might have more satisfaction in you than He has had yet these eighteen hundred and seventy-one years, or than He seems likely to have in the eighteen hundred and seventy-second. For first, instead of behaving like sparrows and robins, you want to behave like those birds you read the Gospel from the backs of,—eagles. Now the Lord of the garden made the claws of eagles for them, and your fingers for you; and if you would do the work of fingers, with the fingers He made, would, without doubt, have satisfaction in you. But, instead of fingers, you want to have claws—not mere short claws, at the finger-ends, as Giotto's Injustice has them;¹ but long claws that will reach leagues away; so you set to work to make yourselves manifold claws,—far-scratching;—and this smoke, which hides the sun and chokes the sky—this Egyptian darkness that may be felt²—manufactured by you, singular modern children of Israel, that you may have *no* light in your dwellings, is none the fairer, because cast forth by the furnaces, in which you forge your weapons of war.

A very singular children of Israel! Your Father, Abraham, indeed, once saw the smoke of a country go up as the smoke of a furnace;³ but not with envy of the country.

Your English power is coal? Well; also the power of the Vale of Siddim was in slime,—petroleum of the best; yet the Kings of the five cities fell there;⁴ and the end was no well-pleasing of God among men.

¹ [See Letter 10, § 18 (p. 178), and Plate IV.]

² [Exodus x. 21.]

³ [Genesis xix. 28.]

⁴ [See Genesis xiv. 9, 10. There "four kings" fought "with five," but it is only said that "the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fell there." "They that remained fled to the mountain."]

13. Emmanuel! God with us!¹—how often, you tenderlyminded Christians, have you desired to see this great sight—this Babe lying in a manger?² Yet, you have so contrived it, once more, this year, for many a farm in France, that if He were born again, in that neighbourhood, there would be found no manger for Him to lie in; only ashes of mangers. Our clergy and lawyers dispute, indeed, whether He may not be yet among us; if not in mangers, in the straw of them, or the corn. An English lawyer³ spoke twenty-six hours but the other day—the other four days, I mean—before the Lords of her Majesty’s most Honourable Privy Council, to prove that an English clergyman had used a proper quantity of equivocation in his statement that Christ was in Bread. Yet there is no harm in anybody thinking that He is in Bread,—or even in Flour! The harm is, in their expectation of His Presence in gunpowder.

14. Present, however, you believe He was, that night, in flesh, to any one who might be warned to go and see Him. The inn was quite full;⁴ but we do not hear that any traveller chanced to look into the cow-house; and most likely, even if they had, none of them would have been much interested in the workman’s young wife, lying there. They probably would have thought of the Madonna, with Mr. John Stuart Mill (*Principles of Political Economy*, 8vo, Parker, 1848, vol. ii., page 321⁵), that there was scarcely “any means open to her of gaining a livelihood, except as a wife and mother”; and that “women who prefer that occupation might justifiably adopt it—but, that there should be no option, no other carrière possible, for the great majority of women, except in the humbler departments of

¹ [Matthew i. 23.]

² [Luke ii. 7.]

³ [Mr. A. J. Stephens, Q.C., leading counsel for the appellant (Shepherd) in the case of *Shepherd v. Bennett*; his speech occupied four whole sittings of the Court (November 28, 29, 30, December 1). Judgment was given in the following year (June 8, 1872).]

⁴ [Luke ii. 7.]

⁵ [Book iv. ch. vii. § 3. This passage in Mill is the subject of frequent references in *Fors*: see below, p. 431; and Letter 66, § 12 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 622).]

life, is one of those social injustices which call loudest for remedy.”*

The poor girl of Nazareth had less option than most; and with her weak “be it unto me as Thou wilt,”¹ fell so far below the modern type of independent womanhood, that one cannot wonder at any degree of contempt felt for her by British Protestants. Some few people, nevertheless, were meant, at the time, to think otherwise of her. And now, my working friends, I would ask you to read with me, carefully, for however often you may have read this before, I know there are points in the story which you have not thought of.

15. The shepherds were told that their Saviour was that day born to them “in David’s village.”² We are apt to think that this was told, as of special interest to them, because David was a King.

Not so. It was told them because David was in youth *not* a King; but a Shepherd like themselves. “To you, shepherds, is born this day a Saviour in the shepherd’s town;”² that would be the deep sound of the message in their ears. For the great interest to them in the story of David himself must have been always, not that he had saved the monarchy, or subdued Syria, or written Psalms, but that he had kept sheep in those very fields they were watching in; and that his grandmother† Ruth had gone gleaning hard by.

16. And they said hastily, “Let us go and see.”³

Will you note carefully that they only think of *seeing*, not of worshipping? Even when they do see the Child, it is not said that they worshipped. They were simple people, and had not much faculty of worship; even though the heavens had opened for them, and the hosts of heaven had

* Compare the whole of Letter 29.—*Index to Vols. I. and II.*

† Great;—father’s father’s mother.

¹ [Luke i. 38.]

² [Luke ii. 11.]

³ [Luke ii. 15.]

sung. They had been at first only frightened; then curious, and communicative to the bystanders: they do not think even of making any offering, which would have been a natural thought enough, as it was to the first of shepherds: but they brought no firstlings of their flock (it is only in pictures, and those chiefly painted for the sake of the picturesque, that the shepherds are seen bringing lambs, and baskets of eggs). It is not said here that they brought anything, but they looked, and talked, and went away praising God, as simple people,—yet taking nothing to heart; only the mother did that.

17. They went away:—“returned,”¹ it is said,—to their business, and never seem to have left it again. Which is strange, if you think of it. It is a good business truly, and one much to be commended, not only in itself, but as having great chances of “advancement”—as in the case of Jethro the Midianite’s Jew shepherd,² and the herdsman of Tekoa;³ besides the keeper of the few sheep in the wilderness, when his brethren were under arms afield.⁴ But why are they not seeking for some advancement now, after opening of the heavens to them? or, at least, why not called to it afterwards, being, one would have thought, as fit for ministry under a shepherd king, as fishermen, or custom-takers?⁵

Can it be that the work is itself the best that can be done by simple men; that the shepherd, Lord Clifford,⁶ or Michael of the Greenhead Ghyll,⁷ are ministering better in

¹ [Luke ii. 20.]

² [Moses: see Exodus iii. 1.]

³ [Amos: see Amos i. 1.]

⁴ [David: see 1 Samuel xvi. 11.]

⁵ [Mark i. 16, ii. 14.]

⁶ [See Wordsworth’s *Song, at the Feast of Brougham Castle*, “Upon the restoration of Lord Clifford, the Shepherd, to the Estates and Honours of his Ancestors.” The poet tells, in a note to the song, how Henry, Lord Clifford, was “deprived of his estate and honours during the space of twenty-four years; all which time he lived as a shepherd in Yorkshire or in Cumberland. He was restored to his estate and honours in the first year of Henry the Seventh.” For other references to him, see above, p. 161; Letter 38, § 18 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 44); and the letters to Mr. Woodd in Appendix 2 (Vol. XXIX. p. 533).]

⁷ [See Wordsworth’s *Michael, a Pastoral Poem*.]

the wilderness than any lords or commoners are likely to do in Parliament, or other apostleship; so that even the professed Fishers of Men¹ are wise in calling themselves Pastors rather than Piscators? Yet it seems not less strange that one never hears of any of these shepherds any more. The boy who made the pictures in this book for you could only fancy the Nativity, yet left his sheep,² that he might preach of it, in his way, all his life. But they, who saw it, went back to their sheep.

18. Some days later, another kind of persons came. On that first day, the simplest people of His own land:—twelve days after, the wisest people of other lands, far away: persons who had received, what you are all so exceedingly desirous to receive, a good education;³ the result of which, to you,—according to Mr. John Stuart Mill, in the page of the chapter on the probable future of the labouring classes, opposite to that from which I have just quoted his opinions⁴ about the Madonna’s line of life—will be as follows:—

“From this increase of intelligence, several effects may be confidently anticipated. First: that they will become even less willing than at present to be led, and governed, and directed into the way they should go, by the mere authority and prestige of superiors. If they have not now, still less will they have hereafter, any deferential awe, or religious principle of obedience, holding them in mental subjection to a class above them.”⁵

It is curious that, in this old story of the Nativity, the greater wisdom of these educated persons appears to have produced upon them an effect exactly contrary to that which you hear Mr. Stuart Mill would have “confidently anticipated.” The uneducated people came only to see, but these highly trained ones to worship; and they have allowed themselves to be led, and governed, and directed into the way which they should go (and that a long one), by the mere authority and prestige of a superior person, whom they

¹ [Matthew iv. 19; Mark i. 17.]

² [For this incident in the life of Giotto, see Vol. XXIV. p. 18.]

³ [Compare, above, pp. 39, 60–61.]

⁴ [See above, § 14.]

⁵ [*Principles of Political Economy*, book iv. ch. vii. § 2. For other references to the passage, see Letters 57, § 6, 60, § 2, and 69, § 15 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 405, 462, 699).]

clearly recognize as a born king, though not of their people. “Tell us, where is He that is born King of the Jews, for we have come to worship Him.”¹

19. You may perhaps, however, think that these Magi had received a different kind of education from that which Mr. Mill would recommend, or even the book which I observe is the favourite of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—*Cassell’s Educator*.² It is possible; for they were looked on in their own country as themselves the best sort of Educators which the Cassell of their day could provide, even for Kings. And as you are so much interested in education, you will, perhaps, have patience with me while I translate for you a wise Greek’s account of the education of the princes of Persia; account given three hundred years, and more, before these Magi came to Bethlehem:—

“When the boy is seven years old he has to go and learn all about horses, and is taught by the masters of horsemanship, and begins to go against wild beasts; and when he is fourteen years old, they give him the masters whom they call the Kingly Child-Guiders: and these are four, chosen the best out of all the Persians who are then in the prime of life—to wit, the most wise man they can find, and the most just, and the most temperate, and the most brave; of whom the first, the wisest, teaches the prince the magic of Zoroaster; and that magic is the service of the Gods: also, he teaches him the duties that belong to a king. Then the second, the justest, teaches him to speak truth all his life through. Then the third, the most temperate, teaches him not to be conquered by even so much as a single one of the pleasures, that he may be exercised in freedom, and verily a king, master of all things within himself, not slave to them. And the fourth, the bravest, teaches him to be dreadless of all things, as knowing that whenever he fears, he is a slave.”³

20. Three hundred and some odd years before that carpenter, with his tired wife, asked for room in the inn, and found none,⁴ these words had been written, my enlightened friends; and much longer than that, these things had

¹ [Matthew ii. 2.]

² [The reference is to a speech delivered by Robert Lowe, Chancellor of the Exchequer, at the Halifax Mechanics’ Institution on December 4, 1871 (reported in the *Times*, December 6): “After suggesting that the people were not far wrong who confined their educational efforts to the three R’s, and recommending for self-instruction the study of *Cassell’s Educator*, revised edition of Blackstone’s *Commentaries*, Smith’s *Wealth of Nations*, and Arnot’s *Physics*, he referred,” etc., etc.]

³ [Plato, *Alcibiades I.*, 121 E.]

⁴ [Luke ii. 7.]

been done. And the three hundred and odd years (more than from Elizabeth's time till now) passed by, and much fine philosophy was talked in the interval, and many fine things found out: but it seems that when God wanted tutors for His little Prince,—at least, persons who would have been tutors to any other little prince, but could only worship this one,—He could find nothing better than those quaint-minded masters of the old Persian school. And since then, six times over, three hundred years have gone by, and we have had a good deal of theology talked in them;—not a little popular preaching administered; sundry Academies of studious persons assembled,—Paduan, Parisian, Oxonian, and the like; persons of erroneous views carefully collected and burnt; Eton, and other grammars, diligently digested; and the most exquisite and indubitable physical science obtained,—able, there is now no doubt, to extinguish gases of every sort, and explain the reasons of their smell. And here we are, at last, finding it still necessary to treat ourselves by *Cassell's Educator*,—patent filter of human faculty. Pass yourselves through that, my intelligent working friends, and see how clear you will come out on the other side.

21. Have a moment's patience yet with me, first, while I note for you one or two of the ways of that older tutorship. Four masters, you see, there were for the Persian Prince. One had no other business than to teach him to speak truth; so difficult a matter the Persians thought it. *We* know better,—we. You heard how perfectly the French gazettes did it last year, without any tutor, by their Holy Republican instincts. Then the second tutor had to teach the Prince to be free. That tutor both the French and you have had for some time back; but the Persian and Parisian dialects are not similar in their use of the word "freedom"; of the hereafter.¹ Then another master has to teach the Prince to fear nothing; him, I admit, you want little teaching from, for your modern Republicans fear

¹ [A discussion promised again in Letter 15 (below, p. 266 *n.*). See Letter 43 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 113 *seq.*) for French "franchise."]

even the devil little, and God, less; but may I observe that you are occasionally still afraid of thieves, though as I said some time since, I never can make out what you have got to be stolen.¹

For instance, much as we suppose ourselves desirous of beholding this Bethlehem Nativity, or getting any idea of it, I know an English gentleman who was offered the other day a picture of it, by a good master,—Raphael,—for five-and-twenty pounds; and said it was too dear:² yet had paid, only a day or two before, five hundred pounds for a pocket-pistol that shot people out of both ends, so afraid of thieves was he.*

22. None of these three masters, however, the masters of justice, temperance, or fortitude, were sent to the little Prince at Bethlehem. Young as He was, He had already been in some practice of these; but there was yet the fourth cardinal virtue, of which, so far as we can understand, He had to learn a new manner for His new reign: and the masters of that were sent to Him—the masters of Obedience. For He had to become obedient unto Death.³

And the most wise—says the Greek—the most wise master of all, teaches the boy magic; and this magic is the service of the gods.

23. My skilled working friends, I have heard much of your magic lately. Sleight of hand, and better than that (you say) sleight of machine. Léger-de-main, improved into léger-de-mécanique. From the West, as from the East, now, your American and Arabian magicians attend you; vociferously crying their new lamps for the old stable

* The papers had it that several gentlemen concurred in this piece of business; but they put the Nativity at five-and-twenty thousand, and the Agincourt, or whatever the explosive protector was called, at five hundred thousand.

¹ [See Letter 2 (above, pp. 36, 43).]

² [The “Madonna di Sant’ Antonio,” now the property of Mr. Pierpont Morgan, and deposited on loan in the National Gallery (1906): for further particulars of the British Government’s refusal to buy the picture, see *Eagle’s Nest*, § 24 n. (Vol. XXII. p. 140).]

³ [Philippians ii. 8.]

lantern of scapegoat's horn.¹ And for the oil of the trees of Gethsemane, your American friends have struck oil more finely inflammable. Let Aaron look to it, how he lets any run down his beard;² and the wise virgins trim their wicks cautiously,³ and Madeleine la Pétroleuse, with her improved spikenard, take good heed how she breaks her alabaster,⁴ and completes the worship of her Christ.

24. Christmas, the mass of the Lord's anointed;—you will hear of devices enough to make it merry to you this year, I doubt not. The increase in the quantity of disposable malt liquor and tobacco is one great fact, better than all devices. Mr. Lowe has, indeed, says the *Times* of June 5th,

“done the country good service, by placing before it, in a compendious form, the statistics of its own prosperity.⁵ . . . The twenty-two millions of people of 1825 drank barely nine millions of barrels of beer in the twelve months: our thirty-two millions now living drink all but twenty-six millions of barrels. The consumption of spirits has increased also, though in nothing like the same proportion; but whereas sixteen million pounds of tobacco sufficed for us in 1825, as many as forty-one million pounds are wanted now. By every kind of measure, therefore, and on every principle of calculation, the growth of our prosperity is established.”*

25. Beer, spirits, and tobacco, are thus more than ever at your command; and magic besides, of lantern, and harlequin's wand; nay, necromancy if you will, the Witch of Endor⁶ at number so and so round the corner, and raising of the dead, if you roll away the tables from off them. But of this one sort of magic, this magic of Zoroaster,

* This last clause does not, you are however to observe, refer in the great Temporal Mind, merely to the merciful Dispensation of beer and tobacco, but to the general state of things, afterwards thus summed with exultation: “We doubt if there is a household in the kingdom which would now be contented with the conditions of living cheerfully accepted in 1825.”

¹ [For other references to the “History of Aladdin; or, The Wonderful Lamp,” see Letter 71, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 736), and General Index.]

² [Psalms cxxxiii. 2.]

³ [Matthew xxv.]

⁴ [Mark xiv. 3.]

⁵ [For later references to this passage, see Letters 50, § 12 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 263); 73, § 6, and 86, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 17, 340).]

⁶ [See 1 Samuel xxviii. Compare *Val d'Arno*, § 228 (Vol. XXIII. p. 133).]

which is the service of God, you are not likely to hear. In one sense, indeed, you have heard enough of becoming God's servants; to wit, servants dressed in His court livery, to stand behind His chariot, with gold-headed sticks. Plenty of people will advise you to apply to Him for that sort of position: and many will urge you to assist Him in carrying out His intentions, and be what the Americans call helps, instead of servants.

Well! that may be, some day, truly enough; but before you can be allowed to help Him, you must be quite sure that you can *see* Him. It is a question now, whether you can even see any creature of His—or the least thing that He has made,—see it,—so as to ascribe due worth, or worship to it,—how much less to its Maker?

26. You have felt, doubtless, at least those of you who have been brought up in any habit of reverence, that every time when in this letter I have used an American expression, or aught like one,¹ there came upon you a sense of sudden wrong—the darting through you of acute cold. I meant you to feel that: for it is the essential function of America to make us all feel that. It is the new skill they have found there;—this skill of degradation; others they have, which other nations had before them, from whom they have learned all they know, and among whom they must travel, still, to see any human work worth seeing. But this is their speciality, this their one gift to their race, to show men how *not* to worship,—how never to be ashamed in the presence of anything. But the magic of Zoroaster is the exact reverse of this, to find out the worth of all things and do them reverence.

27. Therefore, the Magi bring treasures, as being discerners of treasures, knowing what is intrinsically worthy, and worthless; what is best in brightness, best in sweetness, best in bitterness—gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Finders of treasure hid in fields, and goodliness in strange

¹ [See “helps” (above, § 25); “almighty dollar,” p. 205; and “struck oil,” p. 215.]

pearls,¹ such as produce no effect whatever on the public mind, bent passionately on its own fashion of pearl-diving at Gennesaret.

And you will find that the essence of the mis-teaching, of your day, concerning wealth of any kind, is in this denial of intrinsic value.² What anything is worth, or not worth, it cannot tell you: all that it can tell is the exchange value. What Judas, in the present state of Demand and Supply, can get for the article he has to sell, in a given market, that is the value of his article:—Yet you do not find that Judas had joy of his bargain. No Christmas, still less Easter, holidays, coming to him with merrymaking. Whereas, the Zoroastrians, who “take stars for money,”³ rejoice with exceeding great joy at seeing something, which—they cannot put in their pockets. For, “the vital principle of their religion is the recognition of one supreme power; the God of Light—in every sense of the word—the Spirit who creates the world, and rules it, and defends it against the power of evil.”*

28. I repeat to you, now, the question I put at the beginning of my letter. What is this Christmas to you? What Light is there, for your eyes, also, pausing yet over the place where the Child lay?⁴

I will tell you, briefly, what Light there should be;—what lessons and promise are in this story, at the least. There may be infinitely more than I know; but there is certainly, this.

The Child is born to bring you the promise of new life. Eternal or not, is no matter; pure and redeemed, at least.

* MAX MÜLLER: “Genesis and the Zend-Avesta.”⁵

¹ [Matthew ii. 11, xiii. 44, 45.]

² [Compare Vol. XVII. p. lxxxvi.]

³ [George Herbert, *The Temple* (“Church Porch,” stanza 29); quoted also below, p. 419, and in Letter 75, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 60).]

⁴ [See Matthew ii. 9.]

⁵ [A chapter so entitled in Max Müller’s *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. i. (1867): see p. 154 for Ruskin’s quotation.]

He is born twice on your earth; first, from the womb, to the life of toil; then, from the grave, to that of rest.

To His first life He is born in a cattle-shed, the supposed son of a carpenter; and afterwards brought up to a carpenter's craft.

29. But the circumstances of His second life are, in great part, hidden from us: only note this much of it. The three principal appearances to His disciples are accompanied by giving or receiving of food. He is known at Emmaus in breaking of bread; at Jerusalem He Himself eats fish and honey to show that He is not a spirit; and His charge to Peter is "when they had dined," the food having been obtained under His direction.¹

But in His first showing Himself to the person who loved Him best, and to whom He had forgiven most,² there is a circumstance more singular and significant still. Observe—assuming the accepted belief to be true,—this was the first time when the Maker of men showed Himself to human eyes, risen from the dead, to assure them of immortality. You might have thought. He would have shown Himself in some brightly glorified form,—in some sacred and before unimaginable beauty.

He shows Himself in so simple aspect, and dress, that she, who, of all people on the earth, should have known Him best, glancing quickly back through her tears, does not know Him. Takes Him for "the gardener."³

30. Now, unless absolute orders had been given to us, such as would have rendered error impossible (which would have altered the entire temper of Christian probation), could we possibly have had more distinct indication of the purpose of the Master—borne first by witness of shepherds, in a cattle-shed, then by witness of the person for whom He had done most, and who loved Him best, in the garden, and in gardener's guise, and not known

¹ [Luke xxiv. 30–43; John xxi. 15.]

² [Luke vii. 47; Matthew xxviii. 1.]

³ [John xx. 15.]

even by His familiar friends till He gave them bread—could it be told us, I repeat, more definitely by any sign or indication whatsoever, that the noblest human life was appointed to be by the cattle-fold and in the garden; and to be known as noble in breaking of bread?¹

31. Now, but a few words more. You will constantly hear foolish and ignoble persons conceitedly proclaiming the text, that “not many wise and not many noble are called.”²

Nevertheless, of those who are truly wise, and truly noble, all are called that exist. And to sight of this Nativity, you find that, together with the simple persons, near at hand, there were called precisely the wisest men that could be found on earth at that moment.

And these men, for their own part, came—I beg you very earnestly again to note this—not to see, nor talk—but to do reverence. They are neither curious nor talkative, but submissive.

And, so far as they came to teach, they came as teachers of one virtue only: Obedience. For of this Child, at once Prince and Servant, Shepherd and Lamb, it was written: “See, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. He shall not strive, nor cry, till he shall bring forth Judgment unto Victory.”³

32. My friends, of the black country, you may have wondered at my telling you so often,⁴—I tell you nevertheless, once more, in bidding you farewell this year,—that one main purpose of the education I want you to seek is, that you may see the sky, with the stars of it again; and be enabled, in their material light—“riveder le stelle.”⁵

But, much more, out of this blackness of the smoke of the Pit, the blindness of heart, in which the children of

¹ [See Mark xiv. 22; Luke xxiv. 30.]

² [1 Corinthians i. 26.]

³ [Isaiah xlii. 1–3, and Matthew xii. 20.]

⁴ [See, for instance, p. 164.]

⁵ [Dante's *Inferno*, xxxiv., last line.]

Disobedience blaspheme God and each other, heaven grant to you the vision of that sacred light, at pause over the place where the young Child was laid; and ordain that more and more in each coming Christmas it may be said of you, "When they saw the Star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy."¹

Believe me your faithful servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ [Matthew ii. 10.]

FORS CLAVIGERA.

LETTERS

*TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS
OF GREAT BRITAIN.*

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH,

AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART.

VOL. II.



GEORGE ALLEN,
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.
1872.

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FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTER 13

EVERY MAN HIS DUE¹

1st January, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—I would wish you a happy New Year, if I thought my wishes likely to be of the least use. Perhaps, indeed, if your cap of liberty were what you always take it for, a wishing cap, I might borrow it of you, for once; and be so much cheered by the chime of its bells, as to wish you a happy New Year, whether you deserved one or not: which would be the worst thing I could possibly bring to pass for you. But wishing cap, belled or silent, you can lend me none; and my wishes having proved, for the most part, vain for myself, except in making me wretched till I got rid of them, I will not present you with anything which I have found to be of so little worth. But if you trust more to any one else's than mine, let me advise your requesting them to wish that you may deserve a happy New Year, whether you get one or not.

2. To some extent, indeed, that way, you are sure to get it: and it will much help you towards the seeing such way if you would make it a practice in your talk always to say you “deserve” things, instead of that you “have a right” to them. Say that you “deserve” a vote,—“deserve” so much a day, instead of that you have “a

¹ [“Of Republics” was a discarded title for this letter, Ruskin adding a reference to the words “Republics at once holy and enlightened” in § 13.]

right to” a vote, etc. The expression is both more accurate and more general; for if it chanced, which heaven forbid,—but it might be,—that you deserved a whipping, you would never think of expressing that fact by saying you “had a right to” a whipping; and if you deserve anything better than that, why conceal your deserving under the neutral term, “rights”; as if you never meant to claim more than might be claimed also by entirely nugatory and worthless persons? Besides, such accurate use of language will lead you sometimes into reflection on the fact, that what you deserve, it is not only well for you to get, but certain that you ultimately *will* get; and neither less nor more.

3. Ever since Carlyle wrote that sentence about rights and mighths, in his *French Revolution*,¹ all blockheads of a benevolent class have been declaiming against him, as a worshipper of force. What else, in the name of the three Magi, *is* to be worshipped? Force of brains, Force of heart, Force of hand;—will you dethrone these, and worship apoplexy?—despise the spirit of Heaven, and worship phthisis? Every condition of idolatry is summed in the one broad wickedness of refusing to worship Force, and resolving to worship No-Force;—denying the Almighty, and bowing down to four-and-twopence with a stamp on it.²

But Carlyle never meant in that place to refer you to such final truth. He meant but to tell you that before you dispute about what you should get, you would do well to find out first what is to be gotten. Which briefly is, for everybody, at last, their deserts, and no more.

4. I did not choose, in beginning this book a year since, to tell you what I meant it to become. This, for one of several things, I mean,—that it shall put before you so much of the past history of the world, in an intelligible manner, as may enable you to see the laws of Fortune

¹ [Really in *Chartism* (1839), ch. v. (“Rights and Mighths”), where there is some discussion of the French Revolution.]

² [For the “Almighty dollar,” see Letter 12, § 10 (p. 205).]

or Destiny, “Clavigera,” Nail bearing;¹ or, in the full idea, nail-and-hammer bearing; driving the iron home with hammer-stroke, so that nothing shall be moved; and fastening each of us at last to the Cross we have chosen to carry. Nor do I doubt being able to show you that this irresistible power is also just; appointing measured return for every act and thought, such as men deserve.

And that being so, foolish moral writers will tell you that whenever you do wrong you will be punished, and whenever you do right rewarded: which is true, but only half the truth. And foolish immoral writers will tell you that if you do right, you will get no good; and if you do wrong dexterously, no harm. Which, in their sense of good and harm, is true also, but, even in that sense, only half the truth. The joined and four-square truth is, that every right is exactly rewarded, and every wrong exactly punished; but that, in the midst of this subtle, and, to our impatience, slow, retribution, there is a startlingly separate or counter ordinance of good and evil,—one to this man, and the other to that,—one at this hour of our lives, and the other at that,—ordinance which is entirely beyond our control; and of which the providential law, hitherto, defies investigation.

5. To take an example near at hand, which I can answer for. Throughout the year which ended this morning, I have been endeavouring, more than hitherto in any equal period, to act for others more than for myself: and looking back on the twelve months, am satisfied that in some measure I have done right. So far as I am sure of that, I see also, even already, definitely proportioned fruit, and clear results following from that course;—consequences simply in accordance with the unfailing and undeceivable Law of Nature.

¹ [For meanings of *Fors Clavigera*, see Letter 2, § 2 (p. 28); and on the further meaning here dwelt upon, compare Letters 22, § 6 (p. 375), 60, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 463), 73, § 2, and 81, § 9 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 14, 199). On the subject of the title generally, see the Introduction (above, pp. xix. *seq.*)]

That it has chanced to me, in the course of the same year, to have to sustain the most acute mental pain yet inflicted on my life; to pass through the most nearly mortal illness;—and to write your Christmas letter beside my mother’s dead body,¹ are appointments merely of the hidden Fors, or Destiny, whose power I mean to trace for you in past history,² being hitherto, in the reasons of it, indecipherable, yet palpably following certain laws of storm, which are in the last degree wonderful and majestic.

6. Setting this Destiny, over which you have no control whatsoever, for the time, out of your thoughts, there remains the symmetrical destiny, over which you have control absolute—namely, that you are ultimately to get—exactly what you are worth.

And your control over this destiny consists, therefore, simply in *being* worth more or less, and not at all in voting that you are worth more or less. Nay, though you should leave voting, and come to fighting, which I see is next proposed,³ you will not, even that way, arrive any nearer to your object—admitting that you *have* an object, which is much to be doubted. I hear, indeed, that you mean to fight for a Republic, in consequence of having been informed by Mr. John Stuart Mill, and others, that a number of utilities are embodied in that object.⁴ We will inquire into the nature of this object presently, going over the ground of my last January’s letter⁵ again; but first, may I suggest to you that it would be more prudent, instead of fighting to make us all republicans against our will,—to make the most of the republicans you have got? There are many, you tell me, in England,—more in France, a sprinkling in Italy,—and nobody else in the United

¹ [For his acute mental pain, see Vol. XXII. p. xx.; for his illness at Matlock, *ibid.*, p. xviii.; for his mother’s death, *ibid.*, p. xxiii.]

² [See, for instance, pp. 384 *n.*, 387, 564.]

³ [An allusion, presumably, to occasional harangues in the Republican agitation of the time, and to vaguely violent articles in the *Republican*.]

⁴ [For this phrase, see Letter 4, §§ 5, 6 (pp. 64–66). For Mill’s views on “The Ideally best Polity,” see ch. iii. of his *Representative Government*.]

⁵ [Letter 1.]

States. What should you fight for, being already in such prevalence? Fighting is unpleasant, nowadays, however glorious, what with mitrailleuses, torpedoes, and mismanaged commissariat. And what, I repeat, should you fight for? All the fighting in the world cannot make us Tories change our old opinions, any more than it will make you change your new ones. It cannot make us leave off calling each other names if we like—Lord this, and the Duke of that, whether you republicans like it or not. After a great deal of trouble on both sides, it might, indeed, end in abolishing our property; but without any trouble on either side, why cannot your friends begin by abolishing their own? Or even abolishing a tithe of their own? Ask them to do merely as much as I, an objectionable old Tory, have done for you. Make them send you in an account of their little properties, and strike you off a tenth, for what purposes you see good; and for the remaining nine-tenths, you will find clue to what should be done in the *Republican* of last December,¹ wherein Mr. W. Riddle, C.E., “fearlessly states” that all property must be taken under control;² which is, indeed, precisely what Mr. Carlyle has been telling you these last thirty years, only he seems to have been under an impression, which I certainly shared with him, that you republicans objected to control of any description. Whereas if you let anybody put your property under control, you will find practically he has a good deal of hold upon *you*, also.

7. You are not all agreed upon that point perhaps? But you are all agreed that you want a Republic. Though England is a rich country, having worked herself literally black in the face to become so, she finds she cannot afford to keep a Queen any longer;³—is doubtful even whether

¹ [The *Republican*: an Advocate and Record of Republican and Democratic Principles and Movements, No. 24. With No. 26 the periodical came to an end.]

² [See Letter 14, § 2 (below, p. 245).]

³ [The reference is to the agitation in which Sir Charles Dilke (“Citizen Dilke,” as the comic papers called him) was engaged during the winter of 1871 against the expenses of royalty.]

she would not get on better Queenless; and I see with consternation that even one of my own personal friends, Mr. Auberon Herbert, rising the other day at Nottingham,¹ in the midst of great cheering, declares that, though he is not in favour of any immediate change, yet, “if we asked ourselves what form of government was the most reasonable, the most in harmony with ideas of self-government and self-responsibility, and what Government was most likely to save us from unnecessary divisions of party, and to weld us into one compact mass, he had no hesitation in saying the weight of argument was in favour of a Republic.”*

8. Well, suppose we *were* all welded into a compact mass. Might it not still be questionable what sort of a mass we were? After any quantity of puddling, iron is still nothing better than iron;—in any rarity of dispersion, gold-dust is still gold. Mr. Auberon Herbert thinks it desirable that you should be stuck together. Be it so; but what is there to stick? At this time of year,² doubtless, some of your children, interested generally in production of puddings, delight themselves, to your great annoyance, with idealization of pudding in the gutter; and enclose, between unctuous tops and bottoms, imaginary mince. But none of them, I suppose, deliberately come in to their mothers, at cooking time, with materials for a treat on Republican principles. Mud for suet—gravel for plums—droppings of what heaven may send, for flavour;—“Please, mother, a towel, to knot it tight—(or, to use Mr. Herbert’s expression, “weld it into a compact mass”)—Now for the old saucepan, mother;—and you just lay the cloth!”³

* See *Pall Mall Gazette*, Dec. 5th, 1871.

¹ [On December 4, 1871, Mr. Charles Seely and Mr. Auberon Herbert (1838–1906), Liberal members for Nottingham, addressed their constituents. Mr. Seely made a moderate speech, and “resumed his seat amid groans and cheers.” Mr. Auberon Herbert, rising amid great cheering and cries of cheers for “Taylor, Dilke, and Fawcett,” defended the agitation in favour of a Republic.]

² [Ruskin was writing at Christmas time.]

³ [For a reference to §§ 7, 8, and a statement of the proposition which they were meant to illustrate, see Letter 67, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 651); and compare, above, p. 17.]

9. My friends, I quoted to you last year the foolishest thing, yet said, according to extant history, by lips of mankind—namely, that the cause of starvation is quantity of meat.* But one can yet see what the course of foolish thought was which achieved that saying: whereas, though it is not absurd to quite the same extent to believe that a nation depends for happiness and virtue on the form of its government, it is more difficult to understand how so large a number of otherwise rational persons have been beguiled into thinking so. The stuff of which the nation is made is developed by the effort and the fate of ages: according to that material, such and such government becomes possible to it, or impossible. What other form of government you try upon it than the one it is fit for, necessarily comes to nothing; and a nation wholly worthless is capable of none.

10. Notice, therefore, carefully Mr. Herbert's expression "welded into a compact mass." The phrase would be likely enough to occur to any one's mind, in a midland district; and meant, perhaps, no more than if the speaker had said "melted," or "blended" into a mass. But whether Mr. Herbert meant more or not, his words meant more. You may melt glass or glue into a mass, but you can only weld, or wield, metal. And are you sure that, if you would have a Republic, you are capable of being welded into one? Granted that you are no better than iron, are you as good? Have you the toughness in you? and can you bear the hammering? Or, would your fusion together—your literal con-fusion,—be as of glass only, blown thin with nitrogen, and shattered before it got cold?

Welded Republics there indeed have been, ere now, but they ask first for bronze, then for a hammerer, and, mainly, for patience on the anvil. Have you any of the three at command,—patience, above all things, the most

* Letter 4, § 11 [p. 75]. Compare Letter 5, § 3 [p. 80]; and observe, in future references of this kind I shall merely say, 4, § 11; 5, § 3, etc.¹

¹ [In the original editions the references were to the Letters and *Pages*; they are now to the Letters and *Sections*.]

needed, yet not one of your prominent virtues? And finally, for the cost of such smith's work,—My good friends, let me recommend you, in that point of view, to keep your Queen.

11. Therefore, for your first bit of history this year, I will give you one pertinent to the matter, which will show you how a monarchy, and such a Republic as you are now capable of producing, have verily acted on special occasion, so that you may compare their function accurately.

The special occasion that I choose shall be the most solemn of all conceivable acts of Government; the adjudging and execution of the punishment of Death. The two examples of it shall be, one under an absolutely despotic Monarchy, acting through ministers trained in principles of absolute despotism; and the other in a completely free Republic, acting by its collective wisdom, and in association of its practical energies.

12. The example of despotism shall be taken from the book which Mr. Froude most justly calls “the prose epic of the English nation,” the records compiled by Richard Hakluyt, Preacher, and sometime Student of Christ Church in Oxford, imprinted at London by Ralph Newberie, anno 1599,¹ and then in five volumes, quarto, in 1811, two hundred and seventy copies only of this last edition being printed.

These volumes contain the original—usually personal,—narratives of the earliest voyages of the great seamen of all countries,—the chief part of them English; who “first went out across the unknown seas, fighting, discovering, colonizing; and graved out the channels, paving them at last with their bones, through which the commerce and enterprise of England has flowed out over all the world.”*

* J. A. Froude, *Short Studies on Great Subjects*. Longmans, 1867. Page 297.²

¹ [For fuller title, see below, p. 239 *n*. Two volumes appeared in 1599; a third, in 1600.

² [In the essay entitled “England's Forgotten Worthies,” first published in the *Westminster Review*, 1852. Ruskin's quotations are in vol. i. p. 446 of the 1891 edition of *Short Studies*.]

I mean to give you many pieces to read out of this book,¹ which Mr. Froude tells you truly is your English Homer; this piece, to our present purpose, is already quoted by him in his essay on England's forgotten worthies; among whom, far-forgotten though they be, most of you must have heard named Sir Francis Drake. And of him, it now imports you to know this much: that he was the son of a clergyman, who fled into Devonshire to escape the persecution of Henry VIII. (abetted by our old friend, Sir Thomas of Utopia²)—that the little Frank was apprenticed by his father to the master of a small vessel trading to the Low Countries; and that, as apprentice, he behaved so well that his master, dying, left him his vessel, and he begins his independent life with that capital. Tiring of affairs with the Low Countries, he sells his little ship, and invests his substance in the new trade to the West Indies. In the course of his business there, the Spaniards attack him, and carry off his goods. Whereupon, Master Francis Drake, making his way back to England, and getting his brother John to join with him, after due deliberation, fits out two ships, to wit, the *Passover* of 70 tons, and the *Swan* of 24, with 73 men and boys (both crews, all told), and a year's provision; and, thus appointed, Master Frank in command of the *Passover*, and Master John in command of the *Swan*, weigh anchor from Plymouth on the 24th of May, 1572, to make reprisals on the most powerful nation of the then world. And making his way in this manner over the Atlantic, and walking with his men across the Isthmus of Panama, he beholds "from the top of a very high hill, the great South Sea, on which no English ship had ever sailed. Whereupon, he lifted up his hands to God, and implored His blessing on the

¹ [This, however, was not done, though in Letter 22 Ruskin quotes from another book of Drake's *Voyages* (below, p. 385). For another allusion to the book, see Letter 88, § 9 (Vol. XXIX. p. 387); and for the work of the Hakluyt Society, Letter 37, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 26).]

² [For previous references to Sir Thomas More, see Letters 6, § 13, and 7, § 6 (above, pp. 113, 117); for later references, Letters 22, § 20 (below, p. 385); 37, § 11; 38, § 19 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 23, 47); and 82, § 20 (Vol. XXIX. p. 242).]

resolution which he then formed, of sailing in an English ship on that sea.”¹ In the meantime, building some light fighting pinnaces, of which he had brought out the material in the *Passover*, and boarding what Spanish ships he can, transferring his men to such as he finds most convenient to fight in, he keeps the entire coast of Spanish America in hot water for several months; and having taken and rifled, between Carthagena and Nombre de Dios (Name of God) more than two hundred ships of all sizes, sets sail cheerfully for England, arriving at Plymouth on the 9th of August, 1573, on Sunday, in the afternoon; and so much were the people delighted with the news of their arrival, that they left the preacher, and ran in crowds to the quay, with shouts and congratulations.

13. He passes four years in England, explaining American affairs to Queen Elizabeth and various persons at court; and at last in mid-life, in the year 1577, he obtains a commission from the Queen, by which he is constituted Captain-general of a fleet of five ships: the *Pelican*, admiral, 100 tons, his own ship; the *Elizabeth*, vice-admiral, 80 tons; the *Swan*, 50 tons; *Marigold*, 30; and *Christopher* (Christ-bearer), 15; the collective burden of the entire fleet being thus 275 tons; its united crews 164 men, all told: and it carries whatever Sir Francis thought “might contribute to raise in those nations, with whom he should have any intercourse, the highest ideas of the politeness and magnificence of his native country. He, therefore, not only procured a complete service of silver for his own table, and furnished the cook-room with many vessels of the same metal, but engaged several musicians to accompany him.”

14. I quote from Johnson’s life of him,—you do not know if in jest or earnest? Always in earnest, believe me, good friends. If there be jest in the nature of things, or of men, it is no fault of mine. I try to set them before

¹ [Ruskin in §§ 12, 13 quotes and summarises from Samuel Johnson’s *Life of Sir Francis Drake* (first published in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* for 1740): see Johnson’s *Works* (Oxford English Classics), 1825, vol. vi. pp. 326, 329, 339.]

you as they truly are. And Sir Francis and his crew, musicians and all, were in uttermost earnest, as in the quiet course of their narrative you will find. For arriving on the 20th of June, 1578,

“in a very good harborough, called by Magellan Port St. Julian, where we found a gibbet standing upon the maine, which we supposed to be the place where Magellan did execution upon his disobedient and rebellious company. . . . In this port our Generall began to inquire diligently of the actions of M. Thomas Doughtie, and found them not to be such as he looked for, but tending rather to contention or mutinie, or some other disorder, whereby (without redresse) the successe of the voyage might greatly have bene hazarded; whereupon the company was called together and made acquainted with the particulars of the cause, which were found, partly by Master Doughtie’s owne confession, and partly by the evidence of the fact, to be true; which when our Generall saw, although his private affection to M. Doughtie (as hee then in the presence of us all sacredly protested) was great, yet the care he had of the state of the voyage, of the expectation of her Maiestie, and of the honour of his countrey, did more touch him (as, indeede, it ought) than the private respect of one man: so that, the cause being thoroughly heard, and all things done in good order, as neere as might be to the course of our lawes in England, it was concluded that M. Doughtie should receive punishment according to the qualitie of the offence: and he, seeing no remedie but patience for himselfe, desired before his death to receive the Communion, which he did at the hands of M. Fletcher, our Minister, and our Generall himselfe accompanied him in that holy action: which being done, and the place of execution made ready, hee having embraced our Generall, and taken his leave of all the companie, with prayer for the Queen’s Maiestie and our realme, in quiet sort laid his head to the blocke, where he ended his life. This being done, our Generall made divers speaches to the whole company, persuading us to unitie, obedience, love, and regard of our voyage; and for the better confirmation thereof, willed every man the next Sunday following to prepare himselfe to receive the Communion, as Christian brethren and friends ought to doe, which was done in very reverent sort, and so with good contentment every man went about his businesse.”¹

Thus pass judgment and execution, under a despotic Government and despotic Admiral,² by religious, or, it may be, superstitious laws.

15. You shall next see how judgment and execution

¹ [From *The Third and Last Volume of the Voyages, Navigations, Traffiques, and Discoveries of the English Nation*. . . . Collected by Richard Hakluyt, Preacher, and sometimes Student of Christ Church in Oxford. Imprinted at London by George Bishof, Ralfe Newberie, and Robert Barker, Anno Dom. 1600. For Ruskin’s quotation, see p. 733.]

² [Ruskin gives another passage from the Life of Drake in Letter 22, § 20 (below, p. 385).]

pass on the purest republican principles; every man's opinion being held as good as his neighbour's; and no superstitious belief whatsoever interfering with the wisdom of popular decision, or the liberty of popular action. The republicanism shall also be that of this enlightened nineteenth century: in other respects the circumstances are similar; for the event takes place during an expedition of British—not subjects, indeed, but quite unsubjected persons,—acknowledging neither Queen nor Admiral,—in search, nevertheless, of gold and silver, in America, like Sir Francis himself. And to make all more precisely illustrative, I am able to take the account of the matter from the very paper which contained Mr. Auberon Herbert's speech,¹ the *Pall Mall Gazette* of 5th December last.

16. In another column, a little before the addresses of the members for Nottingham, you will therein find, quoted from the *New York Tribune*, the following account of some executions which took place at “the Angels” (Los Angeles), California, on the 24th October:—

“The victims were some unoffending Chinamen, the executioners were some ‘warm-hearted and impulsive’ Irishmen, assisted by some Mexicans. It seems that owing to an impression that the houses inhabited by the Chinamen were filled with gold, a mob collected in front of a store belonging to one of them named Yo Hing with the object of plundering it. The Chinamen barricaded the building, shots were fired, and an American was killed. Then commenced the work of pillage and murder. The mob forced an entrance, four Chinamen were shot dead, seven or eight were wounded, and seventeen were taken and hanged. The following description of the hanging of the first victim will show how the executions were conducted:—

“ ‘Weng Chin, a merchant, was the first victim of hanging. He was led through the streets by two lusty Irishmen, who were cheered on by a crowd of men and boys, most of Irish and Mexican birth. Several times the unfortunate Chinaman faltered or attempted to extricate himself from the two brutes who were leading him, when a half-drunken Mexican in his immediate rear would plunge the point of a large dirk knife into his back. This, of course, accelerated his speed, but never a syllable fell from his mouth. Arriving at the eastern gate of Tomlinson's old lumber yard, just out of Temple Street, hasty preparations for launching the inoffensive man into eternity were followed by his being pulled up to the beam with a rope round his neck. He didn't

¹ [See above, § 7.]

Irishmen got upon his shoulders and jumped upon them, breaking his collar-bone. What with shots, stabs, and strangulation, and other modes of civilized torture, the victim was 'hitched up' for dead, and the crowd gave vent to their savage delight in demoniac yells and a jargon which too plainly denoted their Hibernian nationality.'

"One victim, a Chinese physician of some celebrity, Dr. Gnee Sing, offered his tormentors 4000 dollars in gold to let him go. His pockets were immediately cut and ransacked, a pistol-shot mutilated one side of his face 'dreadfully,' and he too was 'stretched up' with cheers. Another wretched man was jerked up with great force against the beam, and the operation repeated until his head was broken in a way we cannot describe. Three Chinese, one a youth of about fifteen years old, picked up at random, and innocent of even a knowledge of the disturbance, were hanged in the same brutal manner. Hardly a word escaped them, but the younger one said, as the rope was being placed round his neck, 'Me no 'fraid to die; me velly good China boy; me no hurt no man.' Three Chinese boys who were hanged 'on the side of a waggon' struggled hard for their lives. One managed to lay hold of the rope, upon which two Irishmen beat his hands with clubs and pistols till he releases his hold and fell into a 'hanging position.' The Irishmen then blazed away at him with bullets, and so put an end to his existence."

17. My republican friends,—or otherwise than friends, as you choose to have it—you will say, I presume, that this comparison of methods of magistracy is partial and unfair? It is so. All comparison—as all experiments—are unfair till you have made more. More you shall make with me; and as many as you like, on your own side. I will tell you, in due time, some tales of Tory gentlemen who lived, and would scarcely let anybody else live, at Padua and Milan, which will do your hearts good.¹ Meantime, meditate a little over these two instances of capital justice, as done severally by monarchists and republicans in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries; and meditate, not a little, on the capital justice which you have lately accomplished yourselves in France. You have had it all your own way there, since Sedan. No Emperor to paralyze your hands any more, or impede the flow of your conversation. Anything, since that fortunate hour, to be done,—anything to be said, that you liked; and in the midst of you, found by sudden good fortune, two quiet, honest, and brave men;

¹ [For instance, Ezzelino da Romano, Lord of Padua: see below, p. 249.]
xxvii.

one old and one young, ready to serve you with all their strength, and evidently of supreme gifts in the way of service,—Generals Trochu and Rossel.¹ You have exiled one, shot the other;* and, but that, as I told you,² my wishes are of no account that I know of, I should wish you joy of your “situation.”

Believe me, faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

* “You did not shoot him”? No; my expression was hasty; you only stood by, in a social manner, to see him shot;—how many of you?—and so finely organized as you say you are!

¹ [General Louis Jules Trochu (1815–1896) was Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Paris, and at the revolution of September 4 became President of the Government of National Defence. When the capitulation of Paris became inevitable he resigned the Governorship (January 22, 1871). He was not, however, exiled, nor did he retire from political life till July 1872.

General Louis Nathaniel Rossel was instrumental in discovering Bazaine’s treachery at Metz; placed his services at the disposal of the Commune; disheartened by the anarchy and ineptitude, resigned; arrested by the Versailles troops, and shot on November 28, 1871. He was twenty-seven years of age. There was an appreciation of him by Mazzini in the *Contemporary Review* for May 1872 (vol. 9, pp. 812–823: “The individuality of Rossel, with that of a very few others, stands out in strong relief from the crowd of professional demagogues, and rebels actuated by jealousy or rage, by whom the Parisian movement was perverted and doomed beforehand to destruction. . . . The great French Revolution and Napoleon would have perceived in him the stuff of a Hoche, Marceau, or Desaix.”]

² [See above, p. 229.]

LETTER 14

ON THE DORDOGNE¹

DENMARK HILL,

1st February, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—In going steadily over our ground again, roughly broken last year, you see that, after endeavouring, as I did last month, to make you see somewhat more clearly the absurdity of fighting for a Holy Republic² before you are sure of having got so much as a single saint to make it of,³ I have now to illustrate further the admission made in § 5 of my first Letter [p. 16], that even the most courteous and perfect Monarchy cannot make an unsaintly life into a saintly one, nor constitute thieving, for instance, an absolutely praiseworthy profession, however glorious or delightful. It is indeed more difficult to show this in the course of past history than any other moral truth whatsoever. For, without doubt or exception, thieving has not only hitherto been the most respected of professions, but the most healthy, cheerful, and in the practical outcome of it, though not in theory, even the honestest, followed by men.⁴ Putting the higher traditional and romantic ideals, such as that of our Robin Hood, and the Scottish Red Robin,⁵ for the time, aside, and keeping to meagre historical facts, could any of you help giving your heartiest sympathy to Master Francis Drake, setting out in his little *Paschal Lamb*⁶ to seek his fortune on the Spanish seas, and coming home, on that happy Sunday morning, to the

¹ [See below, § 8. “Dissimilar Rectangles” (see below, § 3) was a rejected title for this Letter. There is a MS. note in the author’s copy, in which Ruskin also summarised the contents of the letter as “Marmontel and my own books.”]

² [For this reference to Garibaldi, see above, pp. 16, 117.]

³ [See Letter 13, § 10 (p. 235).]

⁴ [Compare Letters 7, § 13; 22, § 20; and 31, § 15 (pp. 127, 385, 577).]

⁵ [Rob Roy.]

⁶ [Or rather *Passover*: see above, p. 237.]

unspeakable delight of the Cornish congregation?¹ Would you like to efface the stories of Edward III., and his lion's whelp, from English history; and do you wish that instead of pillaging the northern half of France, as you read of them in the passages quoted in my fourth Letter, and fighting the Battle of Crécy to get home again, they had stayed at home all the time; and practised, shall we say, upon the flute, as I find my moral friends think Frederick of Prussia should have done?² Or would you have chosen that your Prince Harry should never have played that set with his French tennis-balls,³ which won him Harfleur, and Rouen, and Orleans, and other such counters, which we might have kept, to this day perhaps, in our pockets, but for the wood maid of Domrémy?⁴ Are you ready, even now, in the height of your morality, to give back India to the Brahmins and their cows, and Australia to her aborigines and their apes? You are ready? Well, my Christian friends, it does one's heart good to hear it, providing only you are quite sure you know what you are about. "Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labour."⁵ You are verily willing to accept that alternative? I inquire anxiously, because I see that your Under Secretary of State for India, Mr. Grant Duff, proposes to you, in his speech at Elgin,⁶ not at all as the first object of your lives to be honest;

¹ [See Letter 13, § 12 (p. 238); and compare "Candida Casa," § 19 (in a later volume of this edition).]

² [The reference is probably to a discussion with Professor Norton on the character of Frederick: see (in a later volume of this edition) Ruskin's letters of acter of Frederick: see (in a later volume of this edition) Ruskin's letters of August 26, 1870, and December 9, 1871. For Frederick the Great's proficiency in the flute, see Carlyle's *Friedrich*, book x. ch. i. (vol. ii. p. 375, 1869 edition), and *Memoirs of* (his sister) *Wilhelmina, Margravine of Baireuth*, by Edith E. Cuthell, 1905, vol. i. pp. 69–70, vol. ii. p. 66.]

³ [See *King Henry V.*, Act i. sc. 2: compare (in later volumes of this edition) *Elements of Prosody*, § 41, and *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 65.]

⁴ [Compare Letter 8, § 6 (above, p. 138); and *Sesame and Lilies*, § 82 (Vol. XVIII. p. 133).]

⁵ [Ephesians iv. 28.]

⁶ [Speech to his constituents, reported in the *Times* of December 21, 1871. The Liberal Party, he said, must "accept the legacy left by the late Mr. Cobden." We must increase our riches, and, in regard to foreign affairs, must adopt a policy of non-intervention, and become "supremely well-informed." "I rack my brain," he said, "without success to think of any probable combination of European events in which the assistance of an English force, even if that force consisted of men each worth two of any other army, would be half so useful to our allies as money." See Ruskin's citation of this passage in § 5.]

but, as the first, to be rich, and the second to be intelligent: now when you have all become rich and intelligent, how do you mean to live? Mr. Grant Duff, of course, means by being rich that you are each to have two powdered footmen; but then who are to be the footmen, now that we mustn't have blacks?¹ And granting you all the intelligence in the world on the most important subjects,—the spots in the sun, or the nodes of the moon, as aforesaid,²—will that help you to get your dinner, unless you steal it in the old fashion?

2. The subject is indeed discussed with closer definition than by Mr. Grant Duff, by Mr. William Riddle, C.E., the authority I quoted to you for taking property “under control.”³ You had better perhaps be put in complete possession of his views, as stated by himself in the *Republican* of December last; the rather, as that periodical has not had, according to Mr. Riddle, hitherto a world-wide circulation:—

“THE SIMPLE AND ONLY REMEDY FOR THE WANTS
OF NATIONS.”

“It is with great grief that I hear that your periodical finds but a limited sale. I ask you to insert a few words from me, which may strike some of your readers as being important. These are *all in all*. What all nations want, Sir, are, 1, Shelter; 2, Food; 3, Clothes; 4, Warmth; 5, Cleanliness; 6, Health; 7, Love; 8, Beauty. These are only to be got in one way. I will state it. 1.—An International Congress must make a number of steam engines, or use those now made, and taking all property under its control (I fearlessly state it) must roll off iron and glass for buildings to shelter hundreds of millions of people. 2.—Must, by such engines, make steam apparatus to plough immense plains of wheat, where steam has elbow-room, abroad; must make engines to grind it on an enormous scale, first fetching it in flat-bottomed ships, made of simple form, larger than the *Great Eastern*, and of simple form of plates, machine fastened; must bake it by machine ovens commensurate. 3.—Machine looms must work unattended night and day, rolling off textile yarns and fabrics, and machines must make clothes, just as envelopes are knocked off. 4.—Machinery must do laundress work, ironing and mangling; and, in a word, our labour must give place to machinery, laid down in gigantic factories on common-sense principles by an International leverage. This is the education you must inculcate. Then man will be at last emancipated. All else is utter bosh, and I will prove it so when and wherever I can get the means to lecture.

“WM. RIDDLE, C.E.

“SOUTH LAMBETH, *Nov. 2.*”

¹ [Compare, above, p. 68.]

² [Compare Letter 1, § 8 (p. 19).]

³ [See Letter 13, § 6 (p. 233).]

3. Unfortunately, till those means can be obtained (may it be soon), it remains unriddled to us on what principles of “international leverage” the love and beauty are to be provided. But the point I wish you mainly to notice is, that for this general emancipation, and elbow-room for men and steam, you are still required to find “immense plains of wheat abroad.” Is it not probable that these immense plains may belong to somebody “abroad” already? And if not, instead of bringing home their produce in flat-bottomed ships, why not establish, on the plains themselves, your own flat-bottomed—I beg pardon,—flat-bellied, persons, instead of living here in glass cases, which surely, even at the British Museum, cannot be associated in your minds with the perfect manifestation of love and beauty? It is true that love is to be measured, in your perfected political economy, by rectangular area, as you will find on reference to the ingenious treatise of Mr. W. Stanley Jevons, M.A., Professor of Logic and Political Economy in Owens College, Manchester, who informs you, among other interesting facts, that pleasure and pain “are the ultimate objects of the calculus of economy,” and that a feeling, whether of pleasure or pain, may be regarded as having two dimensions—namely, in duration and intensity, so that the feeling, say of a minute, “may be represented by a rectangle whose base corresponds to the duration of a minute, and whose height is proportioned to the intensity.”* The collective

* I quote from the *Pall Mall Gazette* of January 16th. In the more elaborate review given in the *Fortnightly*, I am glad to see that Professor Caird¹ is beginning to perceive the necessity of defining the word “useful”;² and, though greatly puzzled, is making way towards a definition: but would it not be wiser to abstain from exhibiting himself in his state of puzzlement to the public?

¹ [So Ruskin wrote; but the article to which he referred was in fact by J.E. Cairnes (1823–1875, Professor of Political Economy at Trinity College, Dublin, and at Galway)—a review of Jevons’s *Theory of Political Economy* (1871), entitled “New Theories in Political Economy,” *Fortnightly Review*, January 1, 1872, No. 6, N.S., vol. xi. pp. 71 *seq.* Cairnes’s tentative suggestions towards a definition of “utility” are on pp. 74, 75. For the passages quoted by the *Pall Mall Gazette* from Jevons, see pp. 37 *seq.* of his book (1888 edition). For another reference to Jevons, see Vol. XXII. p. 522 *n.*]

² [For Ruskin’s definition of “useful,” see *Unto this Last*, § 63 (Vol. XVII. p. 87).]

area of the series of rectangles will mark the “aggregate of feeling generated.”

But the Professor appears unconscious that there is a third dimension of pleasure and pain to be considered, besides their duration and intensity; and that this third dimension is, to some persons, the most important of all—namely, their quality. It is possible to die of a rose in aromatic pain;¹ and, on the contrary, for flies and rats, even pleasure may be the reverse of aromatic. There is swine’s pleasure, and dove’s; villain’s pleasure, and gentleman’s, to be arranged, the Professor will find, by higher analysis, in eternally dissimilar rectangles.

4.² My friends, the follies of Modern Liberalism, many and great though they be, are practically summed in this denial or neglect of the quality and intrinsic value of things. Its rectangular beatitudes, and spherical benevolences,—theology of universal indulgence, and jurisprudence which will hang no rogues³—mean, one and all of them, in the root, incapacity of discerning, or refusal to discern, worth and unworth in anything, and least of all in man; whereas Nature and Heaven command you, at your peril, to discern worth from unworth in everything, and most of all in man.⁴ Your main problem is that ancient and trite one, “Who is best man?” and the Fates forgive much,—forgive the wildest, fiercest, cruellest experiments,—if fairly made for the determination of that. Theft and blood-guiltiness are not pleasing in their sight; yet the favouring power of the spiritual and material world will confirm to you your stolen goods; and their noblest voices applaud the lifting of your spear, and rehearse the sculpture of your shield, if only your

¹ [Pope, *Essay on Man*, Epistle I., 226.]

² [§ 4 was quoted by Carlyle in his *Early Kings of Norway* (1875), ch. xvi., his introductory passage being, “Here is one of those strange, piercing, winged, words of Ruskin, which has in it a terrible truth for us in these epochs now come.” For Carlyle’s inscription in sending a copy of the book to Ruskin, see Vol. XIV. p. 497 *n*. For a later reference by Ruskin to the present passage, see below, p. 385.]

³ [Compare *Lectures on Art*, § 89 (Vol. XX. p. 89), and Vol. XXV. p. 168. On the subject of capital punishment, see also, below, p. 667 *n*.]

⁴ [Compare *The Crown of Wild Olive*, § 137 (Vol. XVIII. p. 497), where, in a note of 1873, Ruskin refers to this letter.]

robbing and slaying have been in fair arbitrament of that question, “Who is best man?”¹ But if you refuse such inquiry, and maintain every man for his neighbour’s match,*—if you give vote to the simple, and liberty to the vile,—the powers of those spiritual and material worlds in due time present you inevitably with the same problem, soluble now only wrong side upwards; and your robbing and slaying must be done then to find out “Who is *worst* man?” Which, in so wide an order of merit, is, indeed, not easy; but a complete Tammany Ring,² and lowest circle in the Inferno of Worst, you are sure to find, and to be governed by.

5. And you may note that the wars of men, in this winnowing or sifting function, separate themselves into three distinct stages. In healthy times of early national development, the best men go out to battle, and divide the spoil; in rare generosity, perhaps, giving as much to those who tarry by the stuff, as to those who have followed to the field.³ In the second, and more ingenious stage, which is the one we have reached now in England and America, the best men still go out to battle, and don’t bring any spoil home, but get themselves killed,—or, at all events, well withdrawn from public affairs,⁴—and the worst stop at home, manage the government, and make money out

* Every man as good as his neighbour! you extremely sagacious English persons; and forthwith you establish competitive examination,⁵ which drives your boys into idiocy, before you will give them a bit of bread to make their young muscles of! Every man as good as his neighbour! and when I told you, seven years ago, that at least you should give every man his penny of wages, whether he was good or not, so only that he gave you the best that was in him, what did you answer to me?⁶

¹ [Compare *The Crown of Wild Olive*, § 101 (Vol. XVIII. p. 471), where, again in a note of 1873, Ruskin refers to this passage. The idea is that of Carlyle’s “Fortieth Article, which includes all the other Thirty-nine” (*Latter-Day Pamphlets*, iii.), which in its turn is derived from Plato’s “philosopher kings” (*Republic*, v. 473).]

² [The organised system of public plunder, carried on by the Tammany Ring in New York, had been exposed (in the *New York Times*) in July 1871. A history of the organization may be read in Bryce’s *American Commonwealth*, part v. ch. lxxxviii. Ruskin refers to a Tammany leader in the next Letter, pp. 271–272.]

³ [See 1 Samuel xxx. 24.]

⁴ [Ruskin in his copy here writes, “Major Edwardes,” for whom, see *A Knight’s Faith* (in *Bibliotheca Pastorum*).]

⁵ [Compare, above, p. 149.]

⁶ [See *Unto this Last*, §§ 13, 14 (Vol. XVII. pp. 33, 34).]

of the commissariat. (See § 124 of *Munera Pulveris*,¹ and my note there on the last American War.) Then the third and last stage, immediately preceding the dissolution of any nation, is when its best men (such as they are)—stop at home too!—and pay other people to fight for them. And this last stage, not wholly reached in England yet, is, however, within near prospect; at least, if we may again on this point refer to, and trust, the anticipations of Mr. Grant Duff, “who racks his brains, without success, to think of any probable combination of European events in which the assistance of our English force would be half so useful to our allies as money.”²

6. Next month³ I will give you some farther account of the operations in favour of their Italian allies in the fourteenth century, effected by the White Company under Sir John Hawkwood (they first crossed the Alps with a German captain, however), not at all consisting in disbursements of money, but such, on the contrary, as to obtain for them—(as you read in my first Letter⁴) the reputation, with good Italian judges, of being the best thieves⁵ known at the time. It is in many ways important for you to understand the origin and various tendencies of mercenary warfare; the essential power of which, in Christendom, dates, singularly enough, from the struggle of the free burghers of Italy with a Tory gentlemen,⁶ a friend of Frederick II. of Germany; the quarrel, of which you shall hear the

¹ [Vol. XVII. p. 246.]

² [See above, p. 244.]

³ [Letter 15, §§ 10 *seq.*]

⁴ [Letter 1, § 5 (p. 17).]

⁵ [*i.e.*, skilfullest.]—*MS. note by Author in his copy.*]

⁶ [Ezzelino III., who in 1235 called the Emperor Frederick II. into Lombardy to combat the Lombard League: see Sismondi, ch. xvi. (vol. iii. pp. 9 *seq.*, Paris edition of 1826). See below, p. 260, where the story is again promised, but not given. Ruskin, however, discussed the relations of Frederick to the Italian cities in *Val d'Arno*; where he calls particular attention to the events of 1248 at Florence, when “the first interference of the Germans in Florentine affairs” took place (Vol. XXIII. p. 60). From such events, it seems, following upon Ezzelino’s relations with Frederick, Ruskin dates “the essential power of mercenary warfare.” For the habit of calling in foreign aid grew, and in the next century Sir John Hawkwood and his Company were constantly employed, “fighting first for one town and then for another” (below, p. 269). For other references to Ezzelino, see Letters 84, § 3, and 93, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 287, 471), and Vol. XII. p. 137 *n.*]

prettiest parts, being one of the most dramatic and vital passages of mediæval history. Afterwards we shall be able to examine, more intelligently, the prospects in store for us according to the—I trust not too painfully racked,—brains of our Under Secretary of State. But I am tired to-day of following modern thought in these unexpectedly attenuated conditions; and I believe you will also be glad to rest, with me, by reading a few words of true history of such life as, in here and there a hollow of the rocks of Europe, just persons have sometimes lived, untracked by the hounds of war. And in laying them before you, I begin to give these letters the completed character I intend for them; first, as it may seem to me needful, commenting on what is passing at the time, with reference always to the principles and plans of economy I have to set before you; and then collecting out of past literature, and in occasional frontispieces or woodcuts, out of past art, what may confirm or illustrate things that are for ever true:¹ choosing the pieces of the series so that, both in art and literature, they may become to you in the strictest sense, educational, and familiarize you with the look and manner of fine work.

7. I want you, accordingly, now to read attentively some pieces of agricultural economy, out of Marmontel's *Contes Moraux*² (we too grandly translate the title into *Moral Tales*, for the French word *Mœurs* does not in accuracy correspond to our *Morals*); and I think it first desirable that you should know something about Marmontel himself.³ He was a French gentleman of the old school;

¹ [Compare Letter 49, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 235).]

² [Such pieces are given in Letter 17, § 9 (p. 300)—a translation from the beginning of "The Misanthrope Corrected"; and in Letter 21, § 20 (p. 366)—a translation from "The Scruple"; and in Letter 40, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 62)—a further translation from "The Misanthrope Corrected." A passage from the *Memoirs* is given in *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 166 n.); and one from the *Moral Tales* ("The Connoisseur"), *ibid.*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 67).]

³ [In reading this account of Marmontel's life and surroundings, it will be remembered that Ruskin speaks elsewhere of his own sympathy "in my constant natural temper, and thoughts of things and people, with Marmontel" (Vol. XVIII. p. 48). A point of contact between Ruskin and one with whom he was generally unsympathetic may here be noted. It was the reading of Marmontel's *Mémoires* that once helped and inspired John Stuart Mill (see his *Autobiography*, 1873, pp. 140, 141).]

not noble, nor, in French sense, even “gentilhomme”; but a peasant’s son, who made his way into Parisian society by gentleness, wit, and a dainty and candid literary power. He became one of the humblest, yet honestest, placed scholars at the court of Louis XV., and wrote pretty, yet wise, sentimental stories, in finished French, which I must render as I can in broken English; but, however rudely translated, the sayings and thoughts in them deserve your extreme attention, for in their fine tremulous way, like the blossoming heads of grass in May, they are perfect.

8. For introduction, then, you shall have, to-day, his own description of his native place, Bort, in central south France, and of the circumstances of his child-life. You must take it without further preamble—my pages running short.¹

“Bort, situated on the river Dordogne, between Auvergne and the province of Limoges, is a frightful place enough, seen by the traveller descending suddenly on it; lying, as it does, at the bottom of a precipice, and looking as if the storm torrents would sweep it away, or as if, some day, it must be crushed under a chain of volcanic rocks, some planted like towers on the height which commands the town, and others already over-hanging, or half uprooted: but, once in the valley, and with the eye free to wander there, Bort becomes full of smiles. Above the town, on a green island which the river embraces with equal streams, there is a thicket peopled with birds, and animated also with the motion and noise of a mill. On each side of the river are orchards and fields, cultivated with laborious care. Below the village the valley opens, on one side of the river, into a broad, flat meadow, watered by springs; on the other, into sloping fields, crowned by a belt of hills whose soft slope contrasts with the opposing rocks, and is divided, farther on, by a torrent which rolls and leaps through the forest, and falls into the Dordogne in one of the most beautiful cataracts on the Continent. Near that spot is situated the little farm of St. Thomas, where I used to read Virgil under the blossoming trees that surrounded our bee-hives, and where I made delicious lunches of their honey. On the other side of the town, above the mill, and on the slope to the river, was the enclosure where, on fête days, my father took me to gather grapes from the vines he had himself planted, or cherries, plums, and apples, from the trees he had grafted.

“But what in my memory is the chief charm of my native place is the impression of the affection which my family had for me, and with

¹ [See *Mémoires d'un Père pour servir à l'instruction de ses enfans*, in vols. i.–iv. of *Œuvres Posthumes de Marmontel*, 1804. Ruskin here translates from vol. i. pp. 2–6; in § 9 from pp. 6–8, 9–12; and in § 10, from pp. 12, 13. Dots are inserted in the present edition where Ruskin omits passages.]

which my soul was penetrated in earliest infancy. If there is any goodness in my character, it is to these sweet emotions, and the perpetual happiness of loving, and being loved, that I believe it is owing. What a gift does Heaven bestow on us in the virtue of parents!

"I owed much also to a certain gentleness of manners which reigned then in my native town; and truly the sweet and simple life that one led there must have had a strange attraction, for nothing was more unusual than that the children of Bort should ever go away from it. In their youth they were well educated, and in the neighbouring¹ colleges their colony distinguished itself; but they came back to their homes as a swarm of bees comes back to the hive with its spoil.

"I learned to read in a little convent where the nuns were friends of my mother. . . . Thence I passed to the school of a priest of the town, who gratuitously, and for his own pleasure, devoted himself to the instruction of children; he was the only son of a shoemaker, one of the honestest fellows in the world; and this churchman was a true model of filial piety. I can yet remember, as if I had seen it but a moment since, the air of quiet courtesy and mutual regard which the old man and his son maintained to each other; the one never losing sight of the dignity of the priesthood, nor the other of the sanctity of the paternal character."

9. I interrupt my translation for a moment to ask you to notice how this finished scholar applies his words. A vulgar writer would most probably have said "the sanctity of the priesthood" and "the dignity of the paternal character." But it is quite possible that a priest may not be a saint, yet (admitting the theory of priesthood at all) his authority and office are not, therefore, invalidated. On the other hand, a father may be entirely inferior to his son, incapable of advising him, and, if he be wise, claiming no strict authority over him. But the relation between the two is always sacred.

"The Abbé Vaissière" (that was his name), "after he had fulfilled his duty at the church, divided the rest of his time between reading, and the lessons he gave to us. In fine weather, a little walk, and sometimes for exercise a game at mall in the meadow, were his only amusements. For all society he had two friends, people of esteem in our town. They lived together in the most peaceful intimacy, seeing each other every day, and every day with the same pleasure in their meeting; and for fulfilment of good fortune, they died within a very little while of each other. I have scarcely ever seen an example of so sweet and constant equality in the course of human life.

"At this school I had a comrade, who was from my infancy an object

¹ ["Neighbouring, not too far away—not compulsory as our first colonists to Botany Bay."—*Author's MS. note in his copy.*]

of emulation to me. His deliberate and rational bearing, his industry in study, the care he took of his books, on which I never saw a stain; his fair hair always so well combed, his dress always fresh in its simplicity, his linen always white, were to me a constantly visible example; and it is rare that a child inspires another child with such esteem as I had for him. His father was a labourer in a neighbouring village, and well known to mine. I used to walk with his son to see him in his home. How he used to receive us, the white-haired old man,—the good cream! the good brown bread that he gave us! and what happy presages did he not please himself in making for my future life, because of my respect for his old age. Twenty years afterwards, his son and I met at Paris; I recognized in him the same character of prudence and kindness which I had known in him at school, and it has been to me no slight pleasure to name one of his children at baptism . . .

“When I was eleven years old, just past, my master judged me fit to enter the fourth class of students; and my father consented, though unwillingly, to take me to the College of Mauriac. His reluctance was wise. I must justify it by giving some account of our household.

“I was the eldest of many children; my father, a little rigid, but entirely good under his severe manner, loved his wife to idolatry; and well he might! I have never been able to understand how, with the simple education of our little convent at Bort, she had attained so much pleasantness in wit, so much elevation in heart, and a sentiment of propriety so just, pure, and subtle. My good Bishop of Limoges has often spoken to me since, at Paris, with most tender interest, of the letters that my mother wrote in recommending me to him.

“My father revered her as much as he loved; and blamed her only for her too great tenderness for me: but my grandmother loved me no less. I think I see her yet—the good little old woman! the bright nature that she had! the gentle gaiety! Economist of the house, she presided over its management, and was an example to us all of filial tenderness, for she had also her own mother and her husband’s mother to take care of. I am now dating far back, being just able to remember my great-grandmother drinking her little cup of wine at the corner of the hearth; but, during the whole of my childhood, my grandmother and her three sisters lived with us, and among all these women, and a swarm of children, my father stood alone, their support. With little means enough, all could live. Order, economy, and labour,—a little commerce, but above all things, frugality” (Note again the good scholar’s accuracy of language: “Economy” the right arrangement of things, “Frugality” the careful and fitting use of them)—“these maintained us all in comfort. The little garden produced vegetables enough for the need of the house; the orchard gave us fruit, and our quinces, apples, and pears, preserved in the honey of our bees, made, during the winter, for the children and old women, the most exquisite breakfasts.”

10. I interrupt again to explain to you, once for all, a chief principle with me in translation. Marmontel says, “for the children and *good* old women.” Were I quoting the

French, I would give his exact words; but, in translating, I miss the word "good," of which I know you are not likely to see the application at the moment. You would not see why the old women should be called good, when the question is only what they had for breakfast. Marmontel means that if they had been bad old women they would have wanted gin and bitters for breakfast, instead of honey-candied quinces; but I can't always stop to tell you Marmontel's meaning, or other people's; and therefore, if I think it not likely to strike you, and the word weakens the sentence in the direction I want you to follow, I omit it in translating, as I do also entire sentences, here and there; but never, as aforesaid, in actual quotation.

"The flock of the fold of St. Thomas, clothed, with its wool, now the women, and now the children; my aunt spun it, and spun also the hemp which made our under-dress; the children of our neighbours came to beat it with us in the evening by lamp-light (our own walnut trees giving us the oil), and formed a ravishing picture. The harvest of our little farm assured our subsistence; the wax and honey of our bees, of which one of my aunts took extreme care, were a revenue, with little capital. The oil of our fresh walnuts had flavour and smell, which we liked better than those of the oil-olive, and our cakes of buck-wheat, hot, with the sweet butter of Mont Dor, were for us the most inviting of feasts. By the fireside, in the evening, while we heard the pot boiling with sweet chestnuts in it, our grandmother would roast a quince under the ashes and divide it among us children. The most sober of women made us all gourmands. Thus, in a household, where nothing was ever lost, very little expense supplied all our further wants; the dead wood of the neighbouring forests was in abundance, the fresh mountain butter and most delicate cheese cost little; even wine was not dear, and my father used it soberly."

11. That is as much, I suppose, as you will care for at once. Insipid enough, you think?—or perhaps, in one way, too sapid; one's soul and affections mixed up so curiously with quince-marmalade? It is true, the French have a trick of doing that; but why not take it the other way, and say, one's quince-marmalade mixed up with affection? We adulterate our affections in England, nowadays, with a yellower, harder, baser thing than that; and there would surely be no harm in our confectioners putting a little soul into their sugar,—if they put in nothing worse?

But as to the simplicity,—or, shall we say, wateriness,—of the style, I can answer you more confidently. Milkiness would be a better word, only one does not use it of styles. This writing of Marmontel's is different from the writing you are accustomed to, in that there is never an exaggerating phrase in it—never a needlessly strained or metaphorical word, and never a misapplied one. Nothing is said pithily, to show the author's power, diffusely, to show his observation, nor quaintly, to show his fancy. He is not thinking of himself as an author at all; but of himself as a boy. He is not remembering his native valley as a subject for fine writing, but as a beloved real place, about which he may be garrulous, perhaps, but not rhetorical. But *is* it, or was it, or could it ever be, a real place indeed?—you will ask next. Yes, real in the severest sense; with realities that are to last for ever, when this London and Manchester life of yours shall have become a horrible, and, but on evidence, incredible, romance of the past.

12. Real, but only partially seen; still more partially told. The rightnesses only perceived; the felicities only remembered; the landscape seen as if spring lasted always; the trees in blossom or fruitage evermore: no shedding of leaf: of winter, nothing remembered but its fireside.

Yet not untrue. The landscape is indeed there, and the life; seen through glass that dims them, but not distorts; and which is only dim to Evil.

13. But now supply, with your own undimmed insight and better knowledge of human nature; or invent, with imaginative malice, what evil you think necessary to make the picture true. Still—make the worst of it you will—it cannot but remain somewhat incredible to you, like the pastoral scene in a pantomime, more than a piece of history.

Well; but the pastoral scene in a pantomime itself,—tell me,—is it meant to be a bright or a gloomy part of your Christmas spectacle? Do you mean it to exhibit, by contrast, the blessedness of your own life, in the streets

outside; or, for one fond and foolish half-hour, to recall the “ravishing picture” of days long lost? “The sheep-fold of St. Thomas,” (you have at least, in him, an incredulous saint, and fit patron of a Republic at once holy and enlightened,) the green island full of singing birds, the cascade in the forest, the vines on the steep river-shore;—the little Marmontel reading his Virgil in the shade, with murmur of bees round him in the sunshine;—the fair-haired comrade, so gentle, so reasonable, and, marvel of marvels, beloved for being exemplary! Is all this incredible to you in its good, or in its evil? Those children rolling on the heaps of black and slimy ground, mixed with brickbats and broken plates and bottles, in the midst of Preston or Wigan, as edified travellers behold them when the station is blocked, and the train stops anywhere outside,—the children themselves, black, and in rags evermore, and the only water near them either boiling, or gathered in unctuous pools, covered with rancid clots of scum, in the lowest holes of the earth-heaps,—why do you not paint these for pastime? Are they not what your machine gods have produced for you? The mighty iron arms are visibly there at work;—no St. Thomas can be incredulous about the existence of gods such as they,—day and night at work,—omnipotent, if not resplendent. Why do you not rejoice in these; appoint a new Christmas for these, in memory of the Nativity of Boilers, and put their realms of black bliss into new Arcadias of Pantomime—the harlequin, mask all over? Tell me, my practical friends.

Believe me, faithfully yours,
JOHN RUSKIN.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

14. I MUST in future reserve a page, at the end of these Letters, partly for any chance word of correspondence; partly to give account of what I am doing (when it becomes worth relating) with the interest of the St. George's Fund.

To-day I wish only to invite the reader's attention to the notice, which is sent out with each volume of the revised series of my works,¹ that I mean to sell my own books at a price from which there shall be no abatement—namely, 18s. the plain volumes, and 27s. 6d. the illustrated ones; and that my publisher, Mr. G. Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent, will supply them at that price without abatement, carriage paid, to any person in town or country, on remittance of the price of the number of volumes required.

This absolute refusal of credit or abatement is only the carrying out of a part of my general method of political economy; and I adopt this system

¹ [Here ed. 1 prints, in place of the rest of this brief paragraph, the following notice (it resembles, but is not identical with that given in Vol. XVIII. pp. 10–11):—

“The series of which this volume forms a part will contain all that I think useful of my former writings, so joined to my present work as to form a consistent course of teaching. The volumes will each contain, on the average, two hundred pages of text; they will all be well printed and well bound; and I intend the price asked for them by the retail bookseller to be half a guinea for those without plates, and a guinea for the illustrated volumes. Some will be worth a little less than others; but I want to keep my business simple, and I do not care that anybody should read my books who grudges me a doctor's fee per volume. But I find, in the present state of trade, that when the retail price is printed on books, all sorts of commissions and abatements take place, to the discredit of the author, and, I am convinced, in the end, to every one else's disadvantage. I mean, therefore, to sell my own books, at a price from which there shall be no abatement; namely, 9s. 6d. the plain volumes, and 19s. the illustrated ones. My publishers, Messers. Smith, Elder & Co., will sell all my books at that price over their counter; and my general agent, Mr. G. Allen, Heathfield Cottage, Keston, will supply them at the same price without abatement, carriage paid, to any person in town or country, on remittance of the price of the number of volumes required.

“This absolute refusal of credit . . . their own pictures. If the dealer can accommodate the buyer with various choice, it is for the buyer to pay him his commission; and nothing could more clearly show the diminution of right feeling in the trade, in consequence of the present concealment of the rate of commission, than the subjoined letter, which my agent has just received from a leading provincial firm:—

‘OXFORD, 26th January, 1872.

‘DEAR SIR,—We have received the second volume of Mr. Ruskin's Works in due course, but must decline any more on the same terms, and we shall not only not have his books on our table, but we shall decline to give any information how they are to be obtained. The

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of sale, because I think authors ought not to be too proud to sell their own books, any more than painters to sell their own pictures.

I intend the retail dealer to charge twenty shillings for the plain volumes, and thirty shillings for the others. If he declines offering them for that percentage, it is for the public to judge how much he gets usually.

previous arrangement was, in some degree, satisfactory; the present, not only very unsatisfactory, but absurd in the highest degree. By-the-bye, this volume has a second title: why was not a similar title put to Vol. I.? The set will be incomplete without it.

‘We are, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

‘For James Parker & Co.,

‘MR. G. ALLEN.’

‘JOHN

VAUGHAN.

“You may as well also see a copy of my reply:—

‘DENMARK HILL, S.E.

“GENTLEMEN,—My agent has forwarded to me your letter of the 26th. The injury done me by the non-exposition of my books on your table will, of course, be grave; but I am already accustomed to a modest way of life, and must contract my expenses accordingly. Of the degree of incivility with which, under any given circumstances, it is advisable to treat your customers, you alone can judge; but respecting the absurdity or rationality of the mode of sale I adopt, there must, I conceive, be two opinions. In the present state of the book-selling trade it cannot but appear absurd that a book of which the stated price is 9s. 6d. should not be sold for 7s. 6d.; but you will find that, at least, respecting all books of mine, this economical paradox will continue to exist,

‘I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

‘J. RUSKIN.

‘MESSRS. JAMES PARKER & CO.’ ”

Here ed. 1 ends. The following correspondence, called forth by the present Letter in *Fors*, is here reprinted from pp. 51–53 of *Letters upon Subjects of General Interest from John Ruskin to Various Correspondents* (privately printed 1892):—

“21 CLAPHAM ROAD, S. W.

“JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.

“February 8th,

1872.

“SIR,—As a reader of *Fors Clavigera* and others of your Works, may I ask a question or two relative to some statements you have made in this month’s number of *Fors*?

“In the *Notes and Correspondence* you invite our attention to a notice which is sent out with each revised volume of your Works, in one place of which you say that the price of each volume will be ‘half a guinea for those without plates, and a guinea for the illustrated ones.’ You immediately follow upon this by saying you will sell them for 9s. 6d. the plain volumes, and 19s. the illustrated ones. Now what does this mean, when there is to be no abatement? May I also ask if all your former Works are to be issued upon this your method of political economy, and are they to be retitled and revolved?

“One more question. Since you disparage so much Iron and its manufacture, may it be asked how your books are printed, and how is their paper made? Probably you are aware that both printing and paper-making machines are made of that material.

“I am, Sir,

“Your obedient servant,

“J. GODFREY GRIBBLE.”

Ruskin replied as follows:—

“CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD.

“February 10th, 1872.

“J. GODFREY GRIBBLE, ESQ.

“Sir,—I am indeed aware that printing and paper-making machines are made of iron. I am aware also, which you perhaps are not, that

ploughshares and knives and forks are. And I am aware, which you certainly are not, that I am writing with an iron pen. And you will find in *Fors Clavigera*, and in all my other writings, which you may have done me the honour to read, that my statement is that things which have to do the work of iron should be made of iron, and things which have to do the work of wood should be made of wood; but that (for instance) hearts should not be made of iron, nor heads of wood—and this last statement you may wisely consider, when next it enters into yours to ask questions.

“I am, Sir,

“Your obedient servant,

“J. RUSKIN.”]

LETTER 15

THE FOUR FUNERALS¹

DENMARK HILL,
1st March, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—The Tory gentleman whose character I have to sketch for you, in due counterbalance of that story of republican justice in California,² was, as I told you, the friend of Friedrich II. of Germany, another great Friedrich³ preceding the Prussian one by some centuries, and living quite as hard a life of it. But before I can explain to you anything either about him, or his friend, I must develop the statement made above (11, § 5), of the complex modes of injustice respecting the means of maintenance, which have hitherto held in all ages among the three great classes of soldiers, clergy, and peasants. I mean, by “peasants,” the producers of food, out of land or water; by “clergy,” men who live by teaching or exhibition of behaviour; and by “soliders,” those who live by fighting, either by robbing wise peasants, or getting themselves paid by foolish ones. Into these three classes the world’s honourably industrious multitudes are essentially hitherto divided.* The legitimate merchant of course exists, and can exist, only on the small percentage of pay obtainable for the transfer of goods; and the manufacturer and artist are, in healthy society, developed

* “Before ‘multitudes’ insert words, ‘honourably industrious’ (theft, when open, never being hitherto considered dishonourable).”³—*Index to Vols. I. and II.* [under “Classes”].

¹ [For the title, see § 16. “Sir John and Sir Roger” was a rejected title for this Letter.]

² [See above, pp. 240–241, 249. Ruskin, however, does not tell the story of Ezzelin, the friend of the Emperor Frederick II., but digresses to that of Sir John Hawkwood a century later; to which he had already referred in the First Letter, § 5 (p. 16). For Ruskin’s interest in Frederick II., see Vol. XXIII. p. 57 *n.* He reverts to the promised account of that Emperor below, pp. 365, 388, 621.]

³ [See Letters 7, § 13, and 14, § 1 (pp. 127, 243).]

states of the peasant. The morbid power of manufacture and commerce in our own age is an accidental condition of national decrepitude; the injustices connected with it are mainly those of the gambling-house, and quite unworthy of analytical inquiry; but the unjust relations of the soldier, clergyman, and peasant have hitherto been constant in all great nations;—they are full of mystery and beauty in their iniquity; they require the most subtle, and deserve the most reverent, analysis.

2. The first root of distinction between the soldier and peasant is in barrenness and fruitfulness of possessed ground; the inhabitant of sands and rocks “redeeming his share” (see speech of Roderick in the *Lady of the Lake*¹) from the inhabitant of corn-bearing ground. The second root of it is delight in athletic exercise, resulting in beauty of person and perfectness of race, and causing men to be content, or even triumphant, in accepting continual risk of death, if by such risk they can escape the injury of servile toil.

3. Again, the first root of distinction between clergyman and peasant is the greater intelligence, which instinctively desires both to learn and teach, and is content to accept the smallest maintenance, if it may remain so occupied. (Look back to Marmontel’s account of his tutor.²)

The second root of distinction is that which gives rise to the word “clergy,” properly signifying persons chosen by lot, or in a manner elect, for the practice and exhibition of good behaviour; the visionary or passionate anchorite being content to beg his bread, so only that he may have leave by undisturbed prayer or meditation, to bring himself into closer union with the spiritual world; and the peasant being always content to feed him,³ on condition of his becoming venerable in that higher state, and, as a peculiarly blessed person, a communicator of blessing.

4. Now, both these classes of men remain noble, as long as they are content with daily bread, if they may be

¹ [Canto v. stanza vii.]

² [See Letter 14, § 9 (p. 252).]

³ [Compare Letter 11, § 5 (p. 185).]

allowed to live in their own way; but the moment the one of them uses his strength, and the other his sanctity,¹ to get riches with, or pride of elevation over other men, both of them become tyrants, and capable of any degree of evil. Of the clerk's relation to the peasant, I will only tell you, now, that, as you learn more of the history of Germany and Italy in the Middle Ages, and, indeed, almost to this day, you will find the soldiers of Germany are always trying to get mastery over the body of Italy, and the clerks of Italy are always trying to get mastery over the mind of Germany;—this main struggle between Emperor and Pope, as the respective heads of the two parties, absorbing in its vortex, or attracting to its standards, all the minor disorders and dignities of war; and quartering itself in a quaintly heraldic fashion with the methods of encroachment on the peasant, separately invented by baron and priest.

5. The relation of the baron to the peasant, however, is all that I can touch upon to-day; and first, note that this word “baron” is the purest English you can use to denote the soldier, soldato, or “fighter, hired with pence, or soldi,”² as such. Originally it meant the servant of a soldier, or, as a Roman clerk of Nero's time* tells us (the literary antipathy thus early developing itself in its future nest), “the extreme fool, who is a fool's servant”; but soon it came to be associated with a Greek word meaning “heavy”; and so got to signify heavy-handed, or heavy-armed, or generally prevailing in manhood. For some time it was used to signify the authority of a husband; a woman called herself her husband's † “ancilla” (handmaid), and him*\mjcont

* Cornutus, quoted by Ducange³ under the word “Baro.”

† I am told in the north such pleasant fiction still holds in the Teesdale district; the wife calling her husband “my masterman.”

¹ [It may seem curious that Ruskin should use this word of the clergy when he has just praised Marmontel's precision of language for not doing so (see last Letter, § 9); but here Ruskin is speaking of the ideal clergy.]

² [Compare *Laws of Fésole*, § 10 (Vol. XV. p. 376). On the derivation of “soldier,” see Johnson's *Dictionary*.]

³ [For Ducange's book, see Vol. XXII. p. 281 *n*. The note by Cornutus is on Persius, *Sat.*, v.]

her “baron.” Finally the word got settled in the meaning of a strong fighter receiving regular pay. “Mercenaries are persons who serve for a regularly received pay; the same are called ‘Barones’ from the Greek, because they are strong in labours.”¹ This is the definition given by an excellent clerk of the seventh century, Isidore, Bishop of Seville, and I wish you to recollect it, because it perfectly unites the economical idea of a Baron, as a person paid for fighting, with the physical idea of one, as prevailing in battle by weight, not without some attached idea of slight stupidity;—the notion holding so distinctly even to this day that Mr. Matthew Arnold thinks the entire class aptly describable under the term “barbarians.”²

At all events, the word is the best general one for the dominant rank of the Middle Ages, as distinguished from the pacific peasant, and so delighting in battle that one of the most courteous barons of the fourteenth century tells a young knight who comes to him for general advice, that the moment war fails in any country, he must go into another.

“Et se la guerre est faillie,
Départie
Fay tóst de cellui païs;
N’arresté quoy que nul die.”

“And if the war has ended,
Departure
Make quickly from that country;
Do not stop, whatever anybody says to you.”*

* “The Book of a Hundred Ballads.” You shall hear more of them, soon.³

¹ [Ruskin translates from Ducange; Isidore thus connects the word with [barnV.]

² [See *Culture and Anarchy*, p. 102 in the first edition (1869): “I often, when I want to distinguish clearly the aristocratic class from the Philistines proper, or middle-class, name the former in my own mind, *the Barbarians*; and when I go through the country, and see this and that beautiful and imposing seat of theirs crowning the landscape, ‘There,’ I say to myself, ‘is a great fortified post of the Barbarians.’” For another reference by Ruskin to this passage, see “The Riders of Tarentum,” § 9 (Vol. XX. p. 393).]

³ [For particulars of this book, see Vol. XXIII. p. xxiii. The ballad here quoted is No. xiii. in the series, p. 25. For another reference to the present passage, see *St. Mark’s Rest*, § 69 (Vol. XXIV. p. 262). Ruskin quotes another ballad at the end of Letter 32 (p. 601), but does not otherwise tell us more of the book in *Fors*; at this time he was working on a translation of the Ballads (see Vol. XXIII. as just cited, and, in a later volume, various letters to C. E. Norton).]

6. But long before this class distinction was clearly established, the more radical one between pacific and warrior *nations* had shown itself cruelly in the history of Europe.

You will find it greatly useful to fix in your minds these following elementary ideas of that history:—

The Roman Empire was already in decline at the birth of Christ. It was ended five hundred years afterwards. The wrecks of its civilization, mingled with the broken fury of the tribes which had destroyed it, were then gradually softened and purged by Christianity; and hammered into shape by three great warrior nations, on the north, south, and west, worshippers of the storms, of the sun, and of fate. Three Christian kings, Henry the Fowler of Germany, Charlemagne in France, and Alfred in England, typically represent the justice of humanity, gradually forming the feudal system out of the ruined elements of Roman luxury and law,¹ under the disciplining torment inflicted by the mountaineers of Scandinavia, India, and Arabia.

7. This forging process takes another five hundred years. Christian feudalism may be considered as definitely organized at the end of the tenth century, and its political strength established, having for the most part absorbed the soldiers of the north, and soon to be aggressive on those of Mount Imaus and Mount Sinai.² It lasts another five hundred years, and then our own epoch, that of atheistic liberalism, begins, practically necessitated,—the liberalism by the two discoveries of gunpowder and printing,—and the atheism by the unfortunate persistence of the clerks in teaching children what they cannot understand, and

¹ [For further notice of the work, in this respect, of Henry the Fowler, see Vol. XVIII. p. 517, and Vol. XXIII. p. 27; of Charlemagne, *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 416), *Bible of Amiens*, ch. i. § 34, and *Pleasures of England*, § 21; of Alfred, *Pleasures of England*, § 106.]

² [In this rough blackboard sketch of historical geography, Ruskin notes (1) the absorption by Christian Europe of “the soldiers of the north” (“the mountaineers of Scandinavia”)—that is, the Goths and Vikings. (2) By “the mountaineers of India” (“soldiers of Mount Imaus,” or Western Himalayas), against whom Christian feudalism was “soon to be aggressive,” he seems to mean the Huns: see Gibbon, ch. xxvi., where, in describing their early homes, he says “in the valleys of Imaus, they found a more ample space.” (3) The “mountaineers of Arabia” (“soldiers of Mount Sinai”) are the Arabs, and the Moors.]

employing young consecrated persons to assert in pulpits what they do not know.¹

8. That is enough generalization for you to-day. I want now to fix your thoughts on one small point in all this;—the effect of the discovery of gunpowder in promoting liberalism.

Its first operation was to destroy the power of the baron, by rendering it impossible for him to hold his castle, with a few men, against a mob. The fall of the Bastille is a typical fact in history of this kind; but, of course long previously, castellated architecture had been felt to be useless. Much other building of a noble kind vanishes together with it; nor less (which is a much greater loss than the building), the baronial habit of living in the country.

Next to his castle, the baron's armour becomes useless to him; and all the noble habits of life vanish which depend on the wearing of a distinctive dress,² involving the constant exercise of accurately disciplined strength, and the public assertion of an exclusive occupation in life, involving exposure to danger.

Next, the baron's sword and spear become useless to him; and encounter, no longer the determination of who is best man, but of who is best marksman, which is a very different question indeed.

9. Lastly, the baron being no more able to maintain his authority by force, seeks to keep it by form; he reduces his own subordinates to a fine machinery, and obtains the command of it by purchase or intrigue. The necessity of distinction of character is in war so absolute, and the tests of it are so many, that, in spite of every abuse, good officers get sometimes the command of squadrons or of ships; and one good officer in a hundred is enough to save the honour of an army, and the credit of a system; but generally speaking, our officers at this day do not know their business; and the result is—that, paying thirty millions a

¹ [On this subject, compare Letter 49, § 6 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 238).]

² [Compare Vol. XIX. p. 185; the other passages there noted; Vol. XX. p. 377; and Letter 58, §§ 17, 18 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 433).]

year for our army, we are informed by Mr. Grant Duff that the army we have bought is of no use, and we must pay still more money to produce any effect upon foreign affairs.¹ So, you see, this is the actual state of things,—and it is the perfection of liberalism,—that first we cannot buy a Raphael for five-and-twenty pounds, because we have to pay five hundred for a pocket-pistol;² and next, we are coolly told that the pocket-pistol won't go off, and that we must still pay foreign constables to keep the peace.

10. In old times, under the pure baronial power, things used, as I told you, to be differently managed by us. We were, all of us, in some sense barons; and paid *ourselves* for fighting. We had no pocket-pistols, nor Woolwich Infants³—nothing but bows and spears, good horses (I hear, after two-thirds of our existing barons have ruined their youth in horse-racing, and a good many of them their fortunes also, we are now in irremediable want of horses for our cavalry⁴), and bright armour. Its brightness, observe, was an essential matter with us. Last autumn I saw, even in modern England, something bright; low sunshine at six o'clock⁵ of an October morning, glancing down a long bank of fern covered with hoar-frost, in Yewdale, at the head of Coniston Water. I noted it as more beautiful than anything I had ever seen, to my remembrance, in gladness and infinitude of light. Now, Scott uses this very image to describe the look of the chain-mail of a soldier in one of these free* companies;—Le Balafre, Quentin Durward's

* This singular use of the word "free" in baronial times, corresponding to our present singular use of it respecting trade, we will examine in due time.⁶ A soldier who fights only for his own hand, and a merchant who

¹ [See Letter 14, § 5 (p. 249).]

² [See Letter 12, § 21 (p. 214).]

³ [See Letter 2, § 20 *n.* (p. 43).]

⁴ [Then, as usually, a subject of discussion in the press: see, for instance, a letter from the manager of the Agricultural Hall Horse Show in the *Times*, January 15, 1872.]

⁵ [For correction of the time, see Letter 32, § 25 (p. 603).]

⁶ [Ruskin does not return to the subject in connexion with the "free" companies of mercenaries; but for the "slavery" of work under modern conditions of trade, see Letters 46, § 12 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 178–179) and 89, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 402).]

uncle: “The archer’s gorget, arm-pieces, and gauntlets were of the finest steel, curiously inlaid with silver, and his hauberk, or shirt of mail, was as clear and bright as the frost-work of a winter morning upon fern or briar.”¹ And Sir John Hawkwood’s men, of whose proceedings in Italy I have now to give you some account, were named throughout Italy, as I told you in my first letter,² the White Company of English,—“*Societas alba Anglicorum*,” or generally, the Great White Company, merely from the splendour of their arms. They crossed the Alps in 1361, and immediately caused a curious change in the Italian language. Azario lays great stress on their tall spears with a very long iron point at the extremity; this formidable weapon being for the most part wielded by two, and sometimes moreover by three individuals, being so heavy and huge, that whatever it came in contact with was pierced through and through. He says, that* “at their backs the mounted bowmen carried their bows; whilst those used by the infantry archers were so enormous that the long arrows discharged from them were shot with one end of the bow resting on the ground instead of being drawn in the air.”³

11. Of the English bow you have probably heard before, though I shall have, both of it, and the much inferior Greek bow made of two goats’ horns, to tell you some things⁴ that may not have come in your way; but the change these English caused in the Italian language, and afterwards generally in that of chivalry, was by their use

sells only for his own hand, are of course, in reality, equally the slaves of the persons who employ them. Only those soldiers and merchants are truly free, who fight and sell as their country needs, and bids them.

* I always give Mr. Rawdon Brown’s translation, from his work, *The English in Italy*, already quoted.⁵

¹ [*Quentin Durward*, ch. v.]

² [Letter 1, § 5 (p. 16).]

³ [The passage in Azario’s history, thus translated by Rawdon Brown, is to be found in Muratori’s *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, vol. xvi. p. 380 C, D.]

⁴ [This, however, was not done; for “the Greek bow made of two goats’ horns,” see *Iliad*, iv. 110.]

⁵ [Letter 1, § 5 n. (p. 17).]

of the spear; for “Filippo Villani tells us¹ that, whereas, ‘until the English company crossed the Alps, his countrymen numbered their military forces by “helmets” and colour companies (bandière); thenceforth armies were reckoned by the *spear*, a weapon which, when handled by the White Company, proved no less tremendous than the English bayonet of modern times.’ ”

12. It is worth nothing as one of the tricks of the Third Fors—the giver of names as well as fortunes—that the name of the chief poet of passionate Italy should have been “the bearer of the wing,”² and that of the chief poet of practical England, the bearer or shaker of the spear. Noteworthy also that Shakespeare himself gives a name to his type of the false soldier from the pistol;³ but, in the future, doubtless we shall have a hero of culminating soldierly courage named from the torpedo, and a poet of the commercial period, singing the wars directed by Mr. Grant Duff,⁴ named Shake-purse.

13. The White Company when they crossed the Alps were under a German captain. (Some years before, an entirely German troop was prettily defeated by the Apennine peasants.⁵) Sir John Hawkwood did not take the command until 1364, when the Pisans hired the company, five thousand strong, at the rate of a hundred and fifty thousand golden florins for six months—I think about fifty thousand pounds of our money a month, or ten pounds a man—Sir John himself being then described as a “great general,”

¹ [See book xi. ch. lxxx. of Filippo’s Villani’s *Chronicle*; in Muratori, vol. xiv. p. 747 C, D.]

² [Alighieri. “There has been much discussion as to the correct form of Dante’s surname, which, as might be expected, is spelt in many various ways in MSS. The name itself appears to be of German origin. Minich, however, attempts to give it a local origin, and derives it from *alga*, the sea-weed with which all the swampy land in the Po valley abounds. . . . The most recent investigations tend to show that in the Latin form the name was probably originally *Alagherii*” (see Paget Toynbee’s *Dante Dictionary*, p. 27).]

³ [Pistol: see *King Henry V.*]

⁴ [See above, p. 249.]

⁵ [See Sismondi, vol. vi. pp. 316–317 (Paris edition, 1826), for the defeat of the German troop under Count Lando in 1358. Sismondi’s authority is Matteo Villani, book viii. chaps. lxxii.–lxxiv.]

an Englishman of a vulpine nature, “and astute in *their* fashion.”¹ This English fashion of astuteness means, I am happy to say, that Sir John saw far, planned deeply, and was cunning in military stratagem; but would neither poison his enemies nor sell his friends—the two words of course being always understood as for the time being;—for, from this year 1364 for thirty years onward, he leads his gradually more and more powerful soldier’s life, fighting first for one town and then for another;² here for bishops, and there for barons, but mainly for those merchants of Florence, from whom that narrow street in your city is named Lombard Street, and interfering thus so decidedly with foreign affairs, that, at the end of the thirty years, when he put off his armour, and had lain resting for a little while in Florence Cathedral, King Richard the Second begged his body from the Florentines, and laid it in his own land; the Florentines granting it in the terms of this following letter:³—

“TO THE KING OF ENGLAND

“Most serene and invincible Sovereign, most dread Lord, and our very especial Benefactor—

“Our devotion can deny nothing to your Highness’ Eminence: there is nothing in our power which we would not strive by all means to accomplish, should it prove grateful to you.

“Wherefore, although we should consider it glorious for us and our people to possess the dust and ashes of the late valiant knight, nay, most renowned captain, Sir John Hawkwood, who fought most gloriously for us, as the commander of our armies, and whom at the public expense we caused to be entombed in the Cathedral Church of our city; yet, notwithstanding, according to the form of the demand, that his remains may be

¹ [“Di natura a loro modo volpigna e astuta”: see *Istorie di Filippo Villani*, book xi. ch. lxxix.; in Muratori, vol. xiv., p. 746 E. For particulars of the pay (not quite accurately given in the text), see p. 18 of the English translation of the Life of *Sir John Hawkwood (L’Acuto)* by John Temple-Leader and G. Marcotti, 1889.]

² [See, for instance, his employment by the legate of Bologna: *Val d’Arno*, § 188 (Vol. XXIII. p. 112).]

³ [Dated June 3, 1395. The Latin text is given in Manni’s “Vita del Giovanni Aguto” in Tertinius: *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores* (supplementary to Muratori), 1770, vol. ii. p. 659.]

taken back to his country, we freely concede the permission,¹ lest it be said that your sublimity asked anything in vain, or fruitlessly, of our reverential humility.

“We, however, with due deference, and all possible earnestness, recommend to your Highness’ graciousness, the son and posterity of said Sir John, who acquired no mean repute, and glory for the English name in Italy, as also our merchants and citizens.”

14. It chanced by the appointment of the third Fors,* to which, you know, I am bound in these letters uncomplainingly to submit, that, just as I had looked out this letter for you, given at Florence in the year 1396, I found in an old bookshop two gazettes nearly three hundred years later, namely, Number 20 of the *Mercurius Publicus*, and Number 50 of the *Parliamentary Intelligencer*, the latter comprising the same “foreign intelligence, with the affairs now in agitation in England, Scotland, and Ireland, for information of the people. Publish’d by order, from Monday, December 3rd, to Monday, December 10th, 1660.” This little gazette informs us in its first advertisement, that in London, November 30th, 1660, was lost, in or about this city, a small paper book of accounts and receipts, with a red leather cover, with two clasps on it; and that anybody that can give intelligence of it to the city crier at Bread Street end in Cheapside, “shall have five shillings for their pains, and more if they desire it.” And its last paragraph is as follows:—“On Saturday (December 8), the Most Honourable House of Peers concurred with the Commons in the order for the digging up the carcases of Oliver Cromwell, Henry Ireton, John Bradshaw, and Thomas Pride, and carrying them on an Hurdle to Tyburn, where they are to be first hang’d up in their Coffins, and then buried under the Gallows.”²

* Remember, briefly always, till I can tell you more about it,³ that the first Fors is Courage the second Patience, the third Fortune.⁴

¹ [Hawkwood’s remains were, at his widow’s request, brought to England and buried there; probably at Hedingham Sibil. His monument is in the Cathedral at Florence.]

² [For other references to this, see Vol. XXIII. p. 79.]

³ [See below, p. 291 *n.*]

⁴ [Compare Letter 2, § 2 (p. 28).]

The *Public Mercury* is of date Thursday, June 14th, to Thursday, June 21st, 1660, and contains a report of the proceeding at the House of Commons, on Saturday, the 16th, of which the first sentence is:—

“RESOLVED.—That his Majesty be humbly moved to call in Milton’s two books,¹ and John Goodwin’s, and order them to be burnt by the common hangman.”

15. By the final appointment of the third Fors, I chanced just after finding these gazettes, to come upon the following passage in my *Daily Telegraph*:—

“Every head was uncovered, and although among those who were farthest off there was a pressing forward and a straining to catch sight of the coffin, there was nothing unseemly or rude. The Catafalque was received at the top of the stairs by Col. Braine and other officers of the 9th, and placed in the centre of the vestibule on a rich velvet pall on which rested crowns, crosses, and other devices, composed of tuberose and camellias, while beautiful lilies were scattered over the corpse, which was clothed in full regimentals, the cap and sword resting on the body. The face, with the exception of its pallor, was unchanged, and no one, unless knowing the circumstances, would have believed that Fisk had died a violent death. The body was contained in a handsome rosewood casket, with gold-plated handles, and a splendid plate bearing the inscription, “James Fisk, jun., died January 7th, 1872, in the 37th year of his age.”²

16. In the foregoing passages, you see, there is authentic account given you of the various honours rendered by the enlightened public of the fourteenth, seventeenth, and nineteenth centuries to the hero of their day or hour; the persons thus revered in their burial, or unburial, being all, by profession, soldiers; and holding rank in that profession, very properly describable by the pretty modern English word “Colonel”—leader, that is to say, of a Coronel,

¹ [Namely, his *Eikonoklastes* and *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano contra Salmasium*. The book by John Goodwin (1594–1665, republican divine), ordered to be burnt on the same occasion, was his *‘ybriVtodikai* (1649), in which he defended the proceedings against Charles I.]

² [*Daily Telegraph*, January 24, 1872. James Fisk, *impresario* and financier, and a member of the Erie Railway “ring,” had been assassinated on January 7. He was Colonel of the 9th New York Regiment.]

Coronella, or daisy-like circlet of men; as in the last case of the three before us, of the Tammany “Ring.”

You are to observe, however, that the first of the three, Colonel Sir John Hawkwood, is a soldier both in heart and deed, every inch of him; and that the second, Colonel Oliver Cromwell,¹ was a soldier in deed, but not in heart; being by natural disposition and temper fitted rather for a Huntingdonshire farmer, and not at all caring to make any money by his military business; and finally, that Colonel James Fisk, jun., was a soldier in heart, to the extent of being willing to receive any quantity of soldi from any paymaster, but no more a soldier in deed than you are yourselves, when you go piping and drumming past my gate at Denmark Hill (I should rather say—banging, than drumming, for I observe you hit equally hard and straight-forward to every tune; so that from a distance it sounds just like beating carpets), under the impression that you are defending your country as well as amusing yourselves.

17. Of the various honours, deserved or undeserved, done by enlightened public opinion to these three soldiers, I leave you to consider till next month,² merely adding, to put you more entirely in command of the facts, that Sir John Hawkwood (Acuto, the Italians called him, by happy adaptation of syllables³), whose entire subsistence was one of systematic military robbery, had, when he was first buried, the honour, rarely granted even to the citizens of Florence, of having his coffin laid on the font of the House of his name-saint, St. John Baptist—that same font which Dante was accused of having impiously broken to save a child from drowning, in “mio bel San Giovanni.”⁴ I am soon going to Florence myself to draw this beautiful San Giovanni for the beginning of my lectures on Architecture,

¹ [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 416).]

² [See Letter 16, § 2 (p. 279).]

³ [Hawkwood spelt his name Haucud, Haucwod, and Haukud. It was Italianised into Aguto or Acuto, Villani explaining that it means in English “Falcone in Bosco.”]

⁴ [*Inferno*, xix. 17: compare Vol. XXII. p. 343, and Vol. XXIII. pp. 62, 269, 473.]

at Oxford;¹ and you shall have a print of the best sketch I can make, to assist your meditations on the honours of soldiership, and efficacy of baptism. Meantime, let me ask you to read an account of one funeral more, and to meditate also on that. It is given in the most exquisite and finished piece which I know of English Prose literature in the eighteenth century;² and, however often you may have seen it already, I beg of you to read it now, both in connection with the funeral ceremonies described hitherto, and for the sake of its educational effect on your own taste in writing:—

“We last night received a piece of ill news at our club, which very sensibly afflicted every one of us. I question not but my readers themselves will be troubled at the hearing of it. To keep them no longer in suspense, Sir Roger de Coverley is dead. He departed this life at his house in the country, after a few weeks’ sickness. Sir Andrew Freeport has a letter from one of his correspondents in those parts, that informs him the old man caught a cold at the county-sessions, as he was very warmly promoting an address of his own penning, in which he succeeded according to his wishes. But this particular comes from a Whig justice of peace who was always Sir Roger’s enemy and antagonist. I have letters both from the chaplain and Captain Sentry, which mention nothing of it, but are filled with many particulars to the honour of the good old man. I have

¹ [Ruskin made his sketch in 1872; it is No. 99 in the Reference Series at Oxford, and is in this edition of his Works reproduced on Plate IV. of Vol. XXIII. (p. 17). He himself did not, however, publish any print of the subject.]

² [From the *Spectator*, No. 517 (written by Addison). In illustration of Ruskin’s feeling for Addison, the following letter sent to Mr. J. Dykes Campbell, in acknowledgment of a copy of *Some Portions of Essays contributed to the “Spectator” by Mr. Joseph Addison, now first printed from his MS. Note-book* (printed at Glasgow for James Dykes Campbell, by Bell and Bain: April 1864), may be cited:—

“DENMARK HILL, LONDON, S.E.,
“August 19th, 1864.

“MY DEAR SIR,—I am sincerely obliged to you for this publication; it is of very great interest to me in itself, and it is a great help to me to know that my own work has been of use anywhere.

“What precious MSS. these are of yours! I like that old quiet English work; in the midst of our steaming and puffing, it is like calm fresh air.

“Very sincerely yours,
“J. RUSKIN.”

The letter is here reprinted from a privately-issued volume of *Letters on Art and Literature*, by John Ruskin, edited by Thomas J. Wise, 1894, p. 94.]

likewise a letter from the butler, who took so much care of me last summer when I was at the knight's house. As my friend the butler mentions, in the simplicity of his heart, several circumstances the others have passed over in silence, I shall give my reader a copy of his letter, without any alteration or diminution.

“ ‘HONOURED SIR,—Knowing that you was my old master's good friend, I could not forbear sending you the melancholy news of his death, which has afflicted the whole country, as well as his poor servants, who loved him, I may say, better than we did our lives. I am afraid he caught his death the last county-sessions, where he would go to see justice done to a poor widow woman, and her fatherless children, that had been wronged by a neighbouring gentleman; for you know, Sir, my good master was always the poor man's friend. Upon his coming home, the first complaint he made was, that he had lost his roast-beef stomach, not being able to touch a sirloin, which was served up according to custom: and you know he used to take great delight in it. From that time forward he grew worse and worse, but still kept a good heart to the last. Indeed we were once in great hope of his recovery, upon a kind message that was sent him from the widow lady whom he had made love to the forty last years of his life; but this only proved a light'ning before death. He has bequeathed to this lady, as a token of his love, a great pearl necklace, and a couple of silver bracelets set with jewels, which belonged to my good old lady his mother. He has bequeathed the fine white gelding that he used to ride a hunting upon, to his chaplain, because he thought he would be kind to him, and has left you all his books. He has moreover bequeathed to the chaplain a very pretty tenement with good lands about it. It being a very cold day when he made his will, he left for mourning to every man in the parish, a great frize-coat, and to every woman a black riding-hood. It was a most moving sight to see him take leave of his poor servants, commending us all for our fidelity, whilst we were not able to speak a word for weeping. As we most of us are grown grey-headed in our dear master's service, he has left us pensions and legacies, which we may live very comfortably upon the remaining part of our days. He has bequeathed a great deal more in charity, which is not yet come to my knowledge, and it is peremptorily said in the parish, that he has left money to build a steeple to the church; for he was heard to say some time ago, that if he lived two years longer, Coverley church should have a steeple to it. The chaplain tells every body that he made a very good end, and never speaks of him without tears. He was buried, according to his own directions, among the family of the Coverleys, on the left hand of his father Sir Arthur. The coffin was carried by six of his tenants, and the pall held up by six of the quorum. The whole parish followed the corpse with heavy hearts, and in their mourning suits; the men in frize, and the women in riding-hoods. Captain Sentry, my master's nephew, has taken possession of the Hall-house, and the whole estate. When my old master saw him a little before his death, he took him by the hand, and wished him joy of the estate which was falling to him, desiring him only to make a good use of it, and to pay the several legacies, and the gifts of charity, which he told him he had left as quit-rents upon the estate. The captain truly seems a courteous man, though he says but little. He makes much of

those whom my master loved, and shews great kindness to the old house-dog, that you know my poor master was so fond of. It would have gone to your heart to have heard the moans the dumb creature made on the day of my master's death. He has never enjoyed himself since; no more has any of us. It was the melancholiest day for the poor people that ever happened in Worcestershire. This is all from,

“Honoured Sir,

“Your most sorrowful servant,

“EDWARD BISCUIT.

“P.S.—My master desired, some weeks before he died, that a book, which comes up to you by the carrier, should be given to Sir Andrew Freeport in his name.’

“This letter, notwithstanding the poor butler's manner of writing it, gave us such an idea of our good old friend, that upon the reading of it there was not a dry eye in the club. Sir Andrew opening the book, found it to be a collection of acts of parliament. There was in particular the Act of Uniformity, with some passages in it marked by Sir Roger's own hand. Sir Andrew found that they related to two or three points which he had disputed with Sir Roger the last time he appeared at the club. Sir Andrew, who would have been merry at such an incident on another occasion, at the sight of the old man's hand-writing burst into tears, and put the book into his pocket. Captain Sentry informs me that the knight has left rings and mourning for every one in the club.”

I am obliged to give you this ideal of Addison's because I can neither from my own knowledge, nor, at this moment, out of any domestic chronicles I remember, give you so perfect an account of the funeral of an English squire who has lived an honourable life in peace. But Addison is as true as truth itself. So now, meditate over these four funerals, and the meaning and accuracy of the public opinions they express, till I can write again.

And believe me, ever faithfully

yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

18. A CUTTING was sent me the other day, from a provincial paper, apparently well meant and conducted, but which in its column of “aphorisms,” having unfortunately, ventured to lead off with one on political economy, enunciated itself as follows:—

“All capital comes back at last, though sometimes by a roundabout road, to the pocket of the labourer, in the shape of wages. Consumable produce, however, may be dissipated in a thousand ways, in none of which is either the capitalist or the prolétaire benefited at all.”

I don’t happen to know, at this moment, what a “prolétaire” is, and can’t find it in my French dictionary; but will ascertain by next month,¹ and, meantime, I keep the “aphorism,” being a very curious one, for future comment.²

19. A letter from a “working woman” has given me much pleasure. She says she does not understand my plans; but can trust me. She may be pleased to know that I don’t yet understand some of my plans myself, for they are not, strictly speaking, mine at all, but Nature’s and Heaven’s, which are not always comprehensible, until one begins to act on them. Then they clear as one goes on, and, I hope, my expression of what I can see of them, for her, and all true workers, will, also.

20. I have an interesting letter from Glasgow, but have not been able to read it yet. A slip of the *Glasgow Chronicle*³ was enclosed, containing the Editor’s opinions on my modes of selling my books. Not having any occasion for his opinions on the subject, I threw the slip into the fire. The letter,⁴ which I have just glanced at, says my comparison of the price of my books to a doctor’s fee⁵ is absurd, for the poor don’t pay guinea fees. I know that, and I don’t want any poor people to read my

¹ [The derivation is not given in the next letter. According to Littré, Rousseau introduced (*Contrat Social*, iv. 4) the French use of the Latin *proletarius*, derived from *proles* (progeny), and thus signifying a man of the people, who having no property, contributed to the State by his children.]

² [For a passage bearing on the subject, see Letter 68, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 674.)]

³ [Really, the *Glasgow Herald*: see below, p. 285.]

⁴ [Printed in full Letter 16, § 12 (pp. 287–290).]

⁵ [See Notes and Correspondence as given in the first edition of Letter 14 (above, p. 257 *n.*.)]

books. I said so long ago, in *Sesame*.¹ I want them to read these letters, which they can get, each for the price of two pots of beer; and not to read my large books, nor anybody else's, till they are rich enough, at least, to pay for good printing and binding. Even oracular Mr. Grant Duff says they are all to be rich first, and only next to be intelligent,² and I am happy in supposing it needs a great deal of intelligence to read *Modern Painters*. But, by the way, if the Editor of the *Glasgow Chronicle* will tell me, why, in these fine manufacturing counties of his, and mine, I can only, with the greatest possible difficulty, or by mere good luck, and help of the Third Fors, now get a quarter of a yard of honest leather to stitch my leaves into, I shall be greatly obliged to him, and will reprint his communication in my best type, instead of throwing it into the fire.³

¹ [The reference seems to be to § 32 (Vol. XVIII. p. 85).]

² [See Letter 14, § 1 (p. 244).]

³ [See Letter 16, § 8 (p. 285).]

LETTER 16
GOLD GROWING¹

DENMARK HILL,
15th March, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—The meditation I asked you to give to the facts put before you in my last letter, if given, should have convinced you for one thing, quite sufficiently for all your future needs, of the unimportance of momentary public opinion respecting the characters of men; and for another thing, of the preciousness of confirmed public opinion, when it happens to be right;—preciousness both to the person opined of, and the opiners;—as, for instance, to Sir Roger de Coverley, the opinion formed of him by his tenants and club: and for third thing, it might have properly led you to consider, though it was scarcely probable your thoughts should have turned that way, what an evil trick of human creatures it was to reserve the expression of these opinions—or even the examination of them, until the persons to be opined of are dead; and then to endeavour to put all right by setting their coffins on baptistery fonts—or hanging them up at Tyburn.² Let me very strongly advise you to make up your minds concerning people, while they are with you; to honour and obey those whom you consider good ones; to dishonour and disobey those whom you consider bad ones; and when good and bad ones die, to make no violent or expressive demonstrations of the feelings which have now become entirely useless to the persons concerned, and are only, as they are true or false, serviceable, or the contrary, to yourselves; but to take care that some memorial is kept

¹ [For the title, see below, § 6. “Law, Money, and Literature,” “Calligraphy,” and “The Alchemist,” were rejected titles for this letter.]

² [For the reference to Hawkwood, see above, p. 272; to Cromwell, p. 270.]

of men who deserve memory, in a distinct statement on the stone or brass of their tombs, either that they were true men or rascals,—wise men or fools.

How beautiful the variety of sepulchral architecture might be, in any extensive place of burial, if the public would meet the small expense of thus expressing its opinions, in a verily instructive manner; and if some of the tombstones accordingly terminated in fools' caps; and others, instead of crosses or cherubs, bore engravings of cats-of-nine-tails, as typical of the probable methods of entertainment, in the next world, of the persons, not, it is to be hoped, reposing, below.

2. But the particular subject led up to in my last letter, and which, in this special month of April, I think it appropriate for you to take to heart, is the way in which you spend your money, or allow it to be spent for you. Colonel Hawkwood and Colonel Fisk both passed their whole lives in getting possession, by various means, of other people's money (in the final fact, of working-men's money,—yours, that is to say), and everybody praises and crowns them for doing so. Colonel Cromwell passes his life in fighting for, what in the gist of it meant, not freedom, but freedom from unjust taxation;—and you hang his coffin up at Tyburn.

“Not Freedom, but deliverance from unjust taxation.” You call me unpractical. Suppose you became practical enough yourselves to take that for a watchword for a little while, and see how near you can come to its realization.

For, I very positively can inform you, the considerablest part of the misery of the world comes of the tricks of unjust taxation. All its evil passions—pride, lust, revenge, malice, and sloth—derive their main deadliness from the facilities of getting hold of other people's money open to the persons they influence. Pay every man for his work,—pay nobody *but* for his work,—and see that the work be sound; and you will find pride, lust, and sloth have little room left for themselves.

3. Observe, however, very carefully, that by unjust

taxation I do not mean merely Chancellor of Exchequer's business, but a great part of what really very wise and worthy gentlemen, but, unfortunately, proud also, suppose to be their business.

For instance, before beginning my letter to you this morning (the last I shall ever date from Denmark Hill*), I put out of my sight, carefully, under a large book, a legal document, which disturbed me by its barbarous black lettering. This is an R



Fig. 4

in it, for instance, which is ugly enough, as such;¹ but how ugly in the significance of it, and reasons of its being written that way, instead of in a properly intelligible way, there is hardly vituperation enough in language justly to express to you. This said document is to release the sole remaining executor of my father's will from further responsibility for the execution of it. And all that there is really need for, of English scripture on the occasion, would be as follows:—

I, having received this 15th of March, 1872, from A. B., Esq., all the property which my father left, hereby release

*Between May and October, any letters meant for me should be addressed to Brantwood, Coniston;² between October and May, to Corpus Christi College, Oxford. They must be very short, and very plainly written, or they will not be read; and they need never ask me to do anything, because I won't do it. And, in general, I cannot answer letters; but for any that come to help me, the writers may be sure that I am grateful. I get a great many from people who "know that I must be good-natured," from my books. I *was* good-natured once; but I beg to state, in the most positive terms, that I am now old, tired, and very ill-natured.

¹ [For a later reference to this specimen of "æschrography," see Letter 94, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 486).]

² [For Ruskin's migration from Denmark Hill in 1872, see Vol. XXII. p. xxv. For circulars printed by Ruskin declining correspondence, see a later volume of this edition.]

A. B., Esq., from future responsibility, respecting either my father's property, or mine, or my father's business, or mine. Signed, J. R., before such and such two witnesses.

This document, on properly cured calf-skin (not cleaned by acids), and written as plainly as, after having contracted some careless literary habits, I could manage to write it, ought to answer the purpose required, before any court of law on earth.

4. In order to effect it in a manner pleasing to the present legal mind of England, I receive eighty-seven lines of close writing, containing from fourteen to sixteen words each (one thousand two hundred and eighteen words in all, at the minimum); thirteen of them in black letters of the lovely kind above imitated, but produced with much pains by the scrivener. Of the manner in which this overplus of one thousand two hundred and seventy-eight words is accomplished (my suggested form containing forty only), the following example—the last clause of the document—may suffice.

“And the said J. R. doth hereby for himself his heirs executors and administrators covenant and agree with and to the said A. B. his executors and administrators that he the said J. R. his heirs executors administrators or assigns shall and will from time to time and at all times hereafter save harmless and keep indemnified the said A. B. his heirs executors administrators and assigns from and in respect of all claims and demands whatsoever which may be made upon him or them or any of them for or in respect of the real or personal estate of the said J. R. and from all suits costs charges and damages and expenses whatsoever which the said A. B. his heirs executors administrators or assigns shall be involved in or put unto for or in respect of the said real or personal estate or any part thereof.”¹

5. Now, what reason do you suppose there is for all this barbarism and bad grammar, and tax upon my eyes and time, for very often one has actually to read these things, or hear them read, all through? The reason is simply and wholly that I may be charged so much per

¹ [This was no doubt the discharge of the executors under the will of Ruskin's father. The will was proved on April 22, 1864, by John Pritchard, of Broseley and Bridgnorth, banker, and John Champley Rutter, gentleman, the surviving executors.]

word, that the lawyer and his clerk may live. But do you not see how infinitely advantageous it would be for me (if only I could get the other sufferers under this black literature to be of my mind) to clap the lawyer and his clerk, once for all, fairly out of the way in a dignified almshouse, with parchment unlimited, and ink turned on at a tap, and maintenance for life, on the mere condition of their never troubling humanity more, with either their scriptures or opinions on any subject; and to have this release of mine, as above worded, simply confirmed by the signature of any person whom the Queen might appoint for that purpose (say the squire of the parish), and there an end? How is it, do you think, that other sufferers under the black literature, do *not* come to be of my mind, which was Cicero's mind also,¹ and has been the mind of every sane person before Cicero and since Cicero,—so that we might indeed get it ended thus summarily?

6. Well, at the root of all these follies and iniquities, there lies always one tacit, but infinitely strong persuasion in the British mind, namely, that somehow money grows out of nothing, if one can only find some expedient to produce an article that must be paid for. "Here," the practical Englishman says to himself, "I produce, being capable of nothing better, an entirely worthless piece of parchment, with one thousand two hundred entirely foolish words upon it, written in an entirely abominable hand; and by this production of mine, I conjure out of the vacant air, the substance of ten pounds, or the like. What an infinitely profitable transaction to me and to the world! Creation, out of a chaos of words, and a dead beast's hide, of this beautiful and omnipotent ten pounds. Do I not see with my own eyes that this is very good?"²

¹ [The reference is to Cicero, *Pro Murena*, where (§ 23), of the legal forms of the jurisconsult, he says, "isdem ineptiis fucata sunt illa omnia"; and, again (§ 26), "inanissima prudentiæ . . . fraudis autem et stultitiæ plenissima," and (*ibid.*) "itaque, ut dixi, dignitas in ista scientia nunquam fuit, quæ tota ex rebus fictis commenticiisque constaret."]

² [Genesis i. 10: "God saw that it was good."]

That is the real impression on the existing popular mind; silent, but deep, and for the present unconquerable. That by due parchment, calligraphy, and ingenious stratagem, money may be conjured out of the vacant air. Alchemy is, indeed, no longer included in our list of sciences, for alchemy proposed,—irrational science that it was,—to make money of *something*;—gold of lead, or the like. But to make money of *nothing*,—this appears to be manifoldly possible, to the modern Anglo-Saxon practical person,—instructed by Mr. John Stuart Mill. Sometimes, with rare intelligence, he is capable of carrying the inquiry one step farther. Pushed hard to assign a Providential cause for such legal documents as this we are talking of, an English gentleman would say: “Well, of course, where property needs legal forms to transfer it, it must be in quantity enough to bear a moderate tax without inconvenience; and this tax on its transfer enables many well-educated and agreeable persons to live.”

Yes, that is so, and I (speaking for the nonce in the name of the working man, maker of property) am willing enough to be taxed, straightforwardly, for the maintenance of these most agreeable persons; but not to be taxed obliquely for it, nor teased, either obliquely or otherwise, for it. I greatly and truly admire (as aforesaid, in my first letter¹) these educated persons in wigs; and when I go into my kitchen-garden in spring time, to see the dew on my early sprouts, I often mentally acknowledge the fitness, yet singularity, of the arrangement by which I am appointed to grow mute Broccoli for the maintenance of that talking Broccoli. All that I want of it is to let itself be kept for a show, and not to tax my time as well as my money.

7. Kept for a show, of heads; or, to some better purpose, for writing on fair parchment, with really well-trained hands, what might be desirable of literature. Suppose every existing lawyer’s clerk was trained, in a good drawing

¹ [Letter 1, § 6 (p. 17).]

school, to write red and blue letters as well as black ones, in a loving and delicate manner; here for instance is an R and a number eleven, which begin the eleventh chapter of Job¹ is one of my thirteenth-century Bibles. There is as good a letter and as good a number—every one different in design,—to every chapter, and beautifully gilded and painted ones to the beginning of books; all done for love, and teasing nobody. Now suppose the lawyers' clerks, thus instructed

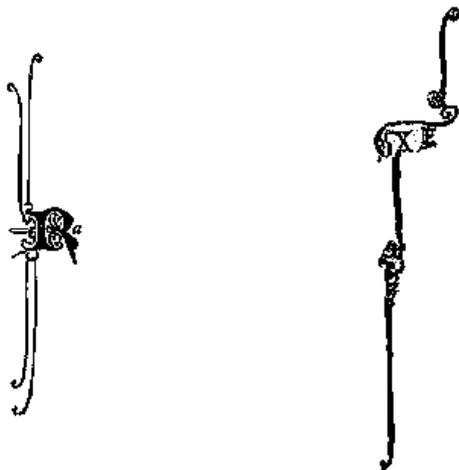


Fig. 5

to write decently, were appointed to write for us, for their present pay, words really worth setting down—Nursery Songs, Grimm's Popular Stories, and the like,—we should have again, not, perhaps, a cheap literature; but at least an innocent one. Dante's words might then be taken up literally by relieved mankind. "Più ridon le carte."² "The papers smile more," they might say, of such transfigured legal documents.³

8. Not a cheap literature, even then; nor pleasing to my

¹ ["Respondens autem Zophar." The letters are from a Bible now in the Ruskin Museum at Sheffield (see Vol. XXIX. p. 50). For another reference to them, see Letter 94, § 7 (*ibid.* p. 486).]

² [*Purgatorio*, xi. 82.]

³ [Compare Letter 64, § 22 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 579), where Ruskin refers to this passage.]

friend the *Glasgow Herald*, who writes to me indignantly, but very civilly (and I am obliged to him), to declare that he is a Herald, and not a Chronicle. I am delighted to hear it; for my lectures on heraldry are just beginning at Oxford,¹ and a Glaswegian opinion may be useful to me, when I am not sure of my blazon. Also he tells me good leather may be had in Glasgow.² Let Glasgow flourish,³ and I will assuredly make trial of the same: but touching this cheap literature question, I cannot speak much in this letter, for I must keep to our especial subject of April—this Fools' Paradise of Cloud-begotten Gold.

Cloud-begotten—and self-begotten—as some would have it. But it is not so, friends.

9. Do you remember the questioning to Job? The pretty letter R stopped me just now at the Response of Zophar;⁴ but look on to the thirty-eighth chapter, and read down to the question concerning this April time:—“Hath the rain a Father—and who hath begotten the drops of dew,—the hoary Frost of Heaven—who hath gendered it?”⁵

That rain and frost of heaven; and the earth which they loose and bind: these, and the labour of your hands to divide them, and subdue, are your wealth, for ever—unincreasable. The fruit of Earth, and its waters, and its light—such as the strength of the pure rock can grow—such as the unthwarted sun in his season brings—these are your inheritance. You can diminish it, but cannot increase: that your barns should be filled with plenty—your presses burst with new wine,⁶—is your blessing; and every year—when it is full—it must be new; and every year, no more.

¹ [“The Heraldic Ordinaries,” Lecture X. of *The Eagle's Nest*, delivered March 9, 1872. He gave no connected course of lectures on heraldry; but, in addition to the lecture above mentioned, referred frequently to the subject in the course published under the title of *Val d'Arno*: see below, Letter 18, § 14 (p. 315). “Lectures on Heraldry” would also apply to his drawing classes, with their heraldic examples: see Vol. XXI.]

² [See Letter 15, § 20 (p. 277).]

³ [“Let Glasgow flourish by the preaching of the Word” (the motto of the City of Glasgow).]

⁴ [Job xi.]

⁵ [Job xxxviii. 28–29.]

⁶ [Proverbs iii. 10.]

10. And this money, which you think so multipliable, is only to be increased in the hands of some, by the loss of others. The sum of it, in the end, represents, and *can* represent, only what is in the barn and winepress. It may represent less, but cannot more.

These ten pounds, for instance, which I am grumbling at having to pay my lawyer—what are they? whence came they?

They were once (and could be nothing now, unless they had been) so many skins of Xeres wine¹—grown and mellowed by pure chalk rock and unafflicted sunshine. Wine drunk, indeed, long ago—but the drinkers gave the vineyard dressers these tokens, which we call pounds, signifying, that having had so much good from them they would return them as much, in future time. And, indeed, for my ten pounds, if my lawyer didn't take it, I could still get my Xeres, if Xeres wine exists anywhere. But, if not, what matters it how many pounds I have, or think I have, or you either? It is meat and drink we want—not pounds.

11. As you are beginning to discover—I fancy too many of you, in this rich country. If you only would discover it a little faster, and demand dinners, instead of Liberty! For what possible liberty do you want, which does not depend on dinner? Tell me, once for all, what is it you want to do, that you can't do? Dinner being provided, do you think the Queen will interfere with the way you choose to spend your afternoons, if only you knock nobody down, and break nobody's windows? But the need of dinner enslaves you to purpose!

12. On reading the letter spoken of in my last correspondence sheet,² I find that it represents this modern form of slavery with an unconscious clearness, which is very interesting. I have, therefore, requested the writer's

¹ [Ruskin refers to his money as inherited from his father, for whose business as a sherry-merchant, see Letter 56 (Vol. XXVIII, pp. 385–386); compare, above, p. 63.]

² [See above, p. 276.]

permission to print it, and with a passage or two omitted, and briefest comment, here it is in full type, for it is worth careful reading:—

“GLASGOW, 12th February, 1872.

“SIR,—You say in your *Fors* that you do not want any one to buy your books who will not give a ‘doctor’s fee’ per volume, which you rate at 10s. 6d.;¹ now, as the *Herald* remarks, you are clearly placing yourself in a wrong position, as you arbitrarily fix *your* doctor’s fee far too high; indeed, while you express a desire, no doubt quite sincerely, to elevate the working man, morally, mentally, and physically, you in the meantime absolutely preclude him from purchasing your books at all, and so almost completely bar his way from the enjoyment and elevating influence of perhaps the most” [etc., complimentary terms—omitted].

“Permit me a personal remark:—I am myself a poorly paid clerk, with a salary not much over the income-tax minimum; now no doctor, here at least, would ever think of charging me a fee of 10s. 6d., and so you see it is as much out of my power to purchase your books as any working man. While Mr. Carlyle is just now issuing a cheap edition of his Works at 2s. per volume, which I can purchase, here, quite easily for 1s. 6d.” [Presumably, therefore, to be had, as far north as Inverness, for a shilling, and for sixpence in Orkney], “I must say it is a great pity that a writer so much, and, in my poor opinion, justly, appreciated as yourself, should as it were inaugurate with your own hands a system which thoroughly barriers your productions from the great majority of the middle and working classes. I take leave, however, to remark that I by no means shut my eyes to the anomalies of the Book-selling Trade, but I can’t see that it can be remedied by an Author becoming his own Bookseller, and, *at the same*

¹ [See above, p. 257 n.]

time, putting an unusually high price on his books. Of course, I would like to see an Author remunerated as highly as possible for his labours.” [You ought not to like any such thing: you ought to like an author to get what he deserves, like other people, not more, nor less.] “I would also crave to remark, following up your unfortunate analogy of the doctor’s fee, that doctors who have acquired, either professionally or otherwise, a competence, often, nay very often, give their advice gratis to nearly every class, except that which is really wealthy; at least, I speak from my own experience, having known, nay even been attended by, such a benevolent physician in a little town in Kirkcudbrightshire, who when offered payment, and I was both quite able and willing to do so, and he was in no way indebted or obliged to me or mine, positively declined to receive any fee. So much for the benevolent physician and his fees.

“Here am I, possessed of a passionate love of nature in all her aspects, cooped up in this fearfully crammed mass of population, with its filthy Clyde, which would naturally have been a noble river, but, under the curse of our much belauded civilization, forsooth, turned into an almost stagnant loathsome ditch, pestilence-breathing, be-lorded over by hundreds upon hundreds of tall brick chimney-stacks vomiting up smoke unceasingly; and from the way I am situated, there are only one day and a half in the week in which I can manage a walk into the country; now, if I wished to foster my taste for the beautiful in nature and art, even while living a life of almost servile red-taped routine beneath the too frequently horror-breathing atmosphere of a huge over-grown plutocratic city like Glasgow, I cannot have your Works” [complimentary terms again], “as, after providing for my necessaries, I cannot indulge in books at 10s. 6d. a volume. Of course, as you may say” [My dear sir, the very last thing I should say¹], “I can get them from

¹ [For Ruskin’s dislike of circulating libraries, see Vol. XVIII. p. 86. Compare also Letter 34 (below, p. 646); and Letter 73, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 16).]

a library. Assuredly, but one (at least I would) wishes to have actual and ever-present possession of productions such as yours” [more compliments]. “You will be aware, no doubt, that ‘Geo. Eliot’ has adopted a ‘new system’ in publishing her new novel¹ by issuing it in 5s. ‘parts,’ with the laudable view of enabling and encouraging readers to buy the work for themselves, and not trusting to get it from some ‘Mudie’ or another for a week, then galloping through the three volumes and immediately forgetting the whole matter. When I possess a book worth having I always recur to it now and again. *Your* ‘new system,’ however, tends to prevent the real reading public from ever possessing your books, and the wealthy classes who could afford to buy books at 10s. 6d. a volume, as a rule, I opine, don’t drive themselves insane by much reading of any kind.

“I beg a last remark and I’ve done. Glasgow, for instance, has increased in wealth till I believe there are some of the greatest merchants in the world trading in her Exchange; but has no splendid public buildings except her grand old Cathedral, founded by an almost-forgotten bishop in the twelfth century, in what we in our vain folly are pleased to call the dark ages, when we ourselves are about as really dark as need be; having no ‘high calling’ to strive for, except by hook or by crook to make money—a fortune—retire at thirty-five by some stroke of gambling of a highly questionable kind on the *Share* market or otherwise, to a suburban or country villa with Turkey carpets, a winecellar and a carriage and pair; as no man nowadays is ever content with making a decent and honest *livelihood*. Truly a very ‘high calling’! Our old Cathedral, thank God, was not built by contract or stock-jobbing: there was, surely, a higher calling of some sort in those quiet, old, unhurrying days. Our local plutocratic friends put their hands into their pockets to the extent of £150,000 to help to build our new University buildings after a design by G. Gilbert

¹ [*Middlemarch*, thus published 1871–1872; *Daniel Deronda* was similarly published 1874–1876.]

Scott, which has turned out a very imposing pile of masonry; at least, it is placed on an imposing and magnificent site. I am no prophet, but I should not wonder if old St. Mungo's Cathedral, erected nearly six hundred years ago to the honour and glory of God, will be standing a noble ruin when our new spick-and-span College is a total wreck after all,—such being the difference between the work of really earnest God-fearing men, and that done by contract and Trades' Unions. The Steam Engine, one of the demons of our mad, restless, headlong civilization, is screaming its unearthly whistle in the very quadrangles of the now deserted, but still venerable College buildings in our High Street, almost on the very spot where the philosophic Professors of that day, to their eternal honour, gave a harbourage to James Watt, when the narrow-minded guild-brethren of Glasgow expelled him from their town as a stranger craftsman hailing from Greenock. Such is the irony of events! Excuse the presumption of this rather rambling letter, and apologizing for addressing you at such length,

“I am, very faithfully yours.”

13. I have only time, just now, to remark on this letter first, that I don't believe any of Mr. Scott's work is badly done,¹ or will come down soon; and that Trades' Unions are quite right when honest and kind: but the frantic mistake of the Glaswegians, in thinking that they can import learning into their town safely in a Gothic case, and have 150,000 pounds' worth of it at command, while they have banished for ever from their eyes the sight of all that mankind have to learn anything *about*, is,—Well—as the rest of our enlightened public opinion. They might as well put a pyx into a pigsty, to make the pigs pious.

In the second place, as to my correspondent's wish to read my books, I am entirely pleased by it; but, putting the question of fee aside for the nonce, I am not in the least minded, as matters stand, to prescribe my books for

¹ [Compare above, p. 190.]

him. Nay, so far as in me lies, he shall neither read them, nor learn to trust in any such poor qualifications and partial comforts of the entirely wrong and dreadful condition of life he is in, with millions of others. If a child in a muddy ditch asked me for a picture-book, I should not give it him; but say, "Come out of that first; or, if you cannot, I must go and get help; but picture-books, there, you shall have none!"

Only a day and a half in the week on which one can get a walk in the country (and how few have as much, or anything like it!), just bread enough earned to keep one alive, on those terms—one's daily work asking not so much as a lucifer match's worth of human intelligence;—unwholesome besides—one's chest, shoulders, and stomach getting hourly more useless. Smoke above for sky, mud beneath for water; and the pleasant consciousness of spending one's weary life in the pure service of the devil! And the blacks are emancipated over the water there—and this is what you call "having your own way," *here*, is it?

Very solemnly, my good clerk-friend, there is something to be *done* in this matter; not merely to be read. Do you know any honest men who have a will of their own, among your neighbours? If none, set yourself to seek for such; if any, commune with them on this one subject, how a man may have sight of the Earth he was made of, and his bread out of the dust of it—and peace! And find out what it is that hinders you now from having these, and resolve that you will fight it, and put end to it. If you cannot find out for yourselves, tell me your difficulties, briefly, and I will deal with them for you, as the Second Fors may teach me. Bring you the First with you, and the Third will help us.¹

And believe me, faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ ["Fors here:—Courage—Patience—Fortune."—*MS. note in Author's copy* (referring to the last letter, § 14, p. 270). Ruskin says "here," because later in the book he sometimes subdivides "Fortune" into the three Fates, and speaks of *them* as the first, second, or third "Fors": see the Introduction, above, p. xxi.]

LETTER 17

THE SWORD OF ST. GEORGE¹

FLORENCE,

1st May, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—Have you thought, as I prayed you to think,² during the days of April, what things they are that will hinder you from being happy on this first of May? Be assured of it, you are meant, to-day, to be as happy as the birds, at least. If you are not, you, or somebody else, or something that you are one or other responsible for, is wrong; and your first business is to set yourself, them, or it, to rights. Of late you have made that your last business; you have thought things would right themselves, or that it was God's business to right them, not yours. Peremptorily it is yours. Not, observe, to get your rights, but to put things to rights. Some eleven in the dozen of the population of the world are occupied earnestly in putting things to wrongs, thinking to benefit themselves thereby. Is it any wonder, then, you are uncomfortable, when already the world, in our part of it, is over-populated, and eleven in the dozen of the over-population doing diligently wrong; and the remaining dozenth expecting God to do their work for them; and consoling themselves with buying two-shilling publications for eighteenpence?³

2. To put things to rights! Do you not know how refreshing it is even to put one's room to rights, when it has got dusty and decomposed? If no other happiness is

¹ [See below, § 7. "The Sword of St. George and his School" and "Marmontel" were rejected titles.]

² [See the last words of the preceding letter.]

³ [See above, p. 287.]

to be had, the mere war with decomposition is a kind of happiness. But the war with the Lord of Decomposition, the old Dragon himself,—St. George's war, with a princess to save, and win¹—are none of you, my poor friends, proud enough to hope for any part in that battle? Do you conceive no figure of any princess for May Queen; or is the definite dragon turned into indefinite cuttlefish, vomiting black venom into the waters of your life; or has he multiplied himself into a host of pulcarious dragons—bug-dragons, insatiable as unclean,—whose food you are, daily?

3. St. George's war! Here, since last May, when I engraved Giotto's Hope for you,² have I been asking whether any one would volunteer for such battle? Not one human creature, except a personal friend or two, for mere love of me, has answered.³

Now, it is true, that my writing may be obscure, or seem only half in earnest. But it is the best I can do: it expresses the thoughts that come to me as they come; and I have no time just now to put them into more intelligible words. And, whether you believe them or not, they are entirely faithful words: I have no interest at all to serve by writing, but yours.⁴

And, literally, no one answers. Nay, even those who read, read so carelessly that they don't notice whether the book is to go on or not.

Heaven knows: but it shall, if I am able, and what I undertook last May, be fulfilled, so far as the poor faculty or time left me may serve.

4. Read over, now, the end of that letter for May last, from "To talk at a distance," in page 86.

I have given you the tenth of all I have, as I promised. I cannot, because of those lawyers I was talking of last

¹ [See *St. Mark's Rest*, Vol. XXIV. pp. 377 *seq.*]

² [Letter 5, frontispiece.]

³ [For the first List of Subscriptions to St. George's Fund, see below, p. 678.]

⁴ [Compare the like claim made at the end of the preface to the closing volume of *Modern Painters*, Vol. VII. p. 10.]

month, get it given you in a permanent and accumulative form; besides that, among the various blockheadisms and rascalities of the day, the perversion of old endowments from their appointed purposes being now practised with applause, gives one little encouragement to think of the future. However, the seven thousand pounds are given, and wholly now out of my own power; and, as I said, only two or three friends, for love of me, and one for true love of justice also, have, in the course of the year, joined with me.

However, this is partly my own fault, for not saying more clearly what I want; and for expecting people to be moved by writing, instead of by personal effort. The more I see of writing, the less I care for it; one may do more with a man by getting ten words spoken with him face to face, than by the black lettering of a whole life's thought.

5. In parenthesis, just read this little bit of Plato;¹ and take it to heart. If the last sentence of it does not fit some people I know of, there is no prophecy on lip of man.

Socrates is speaking. "I have heard indeed—but no one can say now if it is true or not—that near Naucratis, in Egypt, there was born one of the old gods, the one to whom the bird is sacred which they call the ibis; and this god or demigod's name was Theuth."² Second parenthesis—(Theuth, or Thoth: he always has the head of an ibis with a beautiful long bill, in Egyptian sculpture; and you may see him at the British Museum on stone and papyrus infinite,—especially attending at judgments after death, when people's sins are to be weighed in scales; for he is the Egyptian account-keeper, and adds up, and takes note of, things, as you will hear presently from Plato. He became

¹ [*Phædrus*, 274.]

² [For Theuth (the Greek Hermes and Roman Mercury), see also *Ethics of the Dust*, Vol. XVIII. pp. 228, 364. For writing-lessons, spoken of as "Theuth's," see Letters 61, § 8, 64, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 493, 569).]

the god of merchants, and a rogue, among the Romans, and is one now among us)—

“And this demigod found out first, they say, arithmetic, and logic, and geometry, and astronomy, and gambling, and the art of writing. And there was then a king over all Egypt, in the great city which the Greeks called Thebes. And Theuth, going to Thebes, showed the king all the arts he had invented, and said they should be taught to the Egyptians. But the king said:—‘What was the good of them?’ And Theuth telling him, at length, of each, the king blamed some things, and praised others. But when they came to writing: ‘Now, *this* piece of learning, O king,’ says Theuth, ‘will make the Egyptians more wise and more remembering; for this is physic for the memory, and for wisdom.’ But the king answered:—‘O most artful Theuth, it is one sort of person’s business to invent arts, and quite another sort of person’s business to know what mischief or good is in them. And you, the father of letters, are yet so simple-minded that you fancy their power just the contrary of what it really is: for this art of writing will bring forgetfulness into the souls of those who learn it, because, trusting to the external power of the scripture, and stamp* of other men’s minds, and not themselves putting themselves in mind, within themselves, it is not medicine of divine memory, but a drug of memorandum,¹ that you have discovered, and you will only give the reputation and semblance of wisdom, not the truth of wisdom, to the learners: for’ ”—

(now *do* listen to this, you cheap education-mongers),

“‘for becoming hearers of many things, yet without instruction, they will seem to have manifold opinions, but be in truth without any opinions; and the most of them incapable of living together in any good understanding; having become seeming-wise, instead of wise.’ ”

6. So much for cheap literature: not that I like cheap talk better, mind you; but I wish I could get a word or two with a few honest people, now, face to face. For I have called the fund I have established The St. George’s Fund, because I hope to find, here and there, some one who will join in a White Company, like Sir John Hawkwood’s,² to be called the Company of St. George; which shall have for its end the wise creating and bestowing,

* “Type,” the actual word in the Greek.

¹ [See Ruskin’s revised translation of this passage in Letter 94, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 483).]

² [See Letters 1, § 5, and 15, § 10 (pp. 16, 267).]

instead of the wise stealing, of money. Now it literally happened that before the White Company went into Italy, there was an Italian Company called “of St. George,” which was afterwards incorporated with Sir John’s of the burnished armour; and another company, called “of the Rose,” which was a very wicked and destructive one.¹ And within my St. George’s Company,—which shall be of persons still following their own business, wherever they are, but who will give the tenth of what they have, or make,² for the purchase of land in England, to be cultivated by hand, as aforesaid, in my last May number,³—shall be another company, not destructive, called of “Monte Rosa,” or “Mont Rose,”⁴ because Monte Rosa is the central mountain of the range between north and south Europe, which keeps the gift of the rain of heaven. And the motto, or watchword of this company is to be the old French “Mont-joie.”⁵ And they are to be entirely devoted, according to their power, first to the manual labour of cultivating pure land, and guiding of pure streams and rain to the places where they are needed:⁶ and secondly, together with this manual labour, and much by its means, they are to carry on the thoughtful labour of true education, in themselves, and of others. And they are not to be monks nor nuns; but are to learn, and teach all fair arts, and sweet order and obedience of life; and to educate the children entrusted to their schools in such practical arts and patient obedience; but not at all, necessarily, in either arithmetic, writing, or reading.⁷

That is my design, romantic enough, and at this day difficult enough: yet not so romantic, nor so difficult as

¹ [For some notice of these companies of *Condottieri*, see Sismondi, ch. lviii. (vol. viii.); and for the relations between Hawkwood and the St. George’s Company, ch. viii. of the Life of *Sir John Hawkwood* by John Temple-Leader and G. Marcotti (1889).]

² [See above, p. 95 *n.*]

³ [See Letter 5, § 20 (p. 95).]

⁴ [For other references to the proposed “Company of Mont Rose,” see below, pp. 354, 365 *n.*, 416.]

⁵ [Compare *Val d’ Arno*, § 185 (Vol. XXIII. p. 111).]

⁶ [For Ruskin’s constant interest in this subject, see Vol. XVII. pp. 61, 97, 270, 547–552; and Vol. XIX. p. lvii.]

⁷ [For a later reference to the exclusion of the three R’s, see Letter 94, § 2 (Vol. XXIX. p. 479).]

your now widely and openly proclaimed design, of making the words “obedience” and “loyalty”* to cease from the English tongue.

7. That same number of the *Republican* which announced that all property must be taken under control,¹ was graced by a frontispiece, representing, figuratively, “Royalty in extremis”;^{†2} the joyful end of Rule, and of every strength of Kingship; Britannia, having, perhaps, found her waves of late unruly, declaring there shall be no rule over the land neither. Some day I may let you compare this piece of figurative English art with Giotto’s; but, meantime, since, before you look so fondly for the end of Royalty, it is well that you should know somewhat of its beginnings, I have given you a picture³ of one of the companions in the St. George’s Company of all time, out of a pretty book, published at Antwerp, by John Baptist Vrints, cutter of figures in copper, on the 16th April, 1598; and giving briefly the stories, and, in no unworthy imagination, the pictures also, of the first “foresters” (rulers of woods and waves ‡)

* Observe that loyalty, in this and other such places, means fidelity to law, and therefore to the king as its supreme administrator.—*Index to Vols. I. and II.*

† “Royalty, or rule, expiring state of, according to modern republicanism. See ‘Kings’; and observe generally ‘Royalty’ means rule of any kind; ‘Monarchy,’ rule by a single person; ‘Kingship,’ rule by an able and wise person. See ‘Lycurgus.’ ”—*Note in Index to Vols. I. and II.*

‡ “Davantage, ilz se nommoient Forestiers, non que leur charge et gouvernement fust seulement sur la terre, qui estoit lors occupee et empeschee de la forest Charbonniere, mais la garde de la mer leur estoit aussi commise. Convient ici entendre, que ce terme, forest, en vieil bas Aleman, convenoit aussi bien aux eaux comme aux boys, ainsi qu’il est narré es memoires de Jehan du Tillet.”—*Les Genealogies des Forestiers et Comtes de Flandres*, Ant^p. 1598.⁴

¹ [See Letters 13, § 6, and 14, § 2 (pp. 233, 245).]

² [A roughly drawn cartoon (not a frontispiece, but on p. 3) of a decrepit king, with a figure of Death with a scythe behind him. Ruskin did not reproduce the cartoon.]

³ [Plate VI. (originally placed as frontispiece to this letter).]

⁴ [*Les Genealogies et Anciennes Descendes des Forestiers et Comtes de Flandres . . . par Corneille Martin . . . et Ornees de Portraits figures et habitz selon les facons et grives de leurs temps, ainsi qu’elles ont este trouvees es plus anciens tableaux, par Pierre Balthasar, et par lui mesme mises en lumiere, en Anvers chez Jean Baptist Vrints. The date is 16 April 1598. Ruskin quotes in the text from p. 74; in the note, from p. 4. The first and choicer edition of this rare book was issued in 1580.*]



J. B. Wright

Allen & Co. Sc.

Robert, Count of Flanders, called "The Son of St. George."

in Flanders, where the waves once needed, and received, much ruling; and of the Counts of Flanders who succeeded them, of whom this one, Robert, surnamed “of Jerusalem,” was the eleventh, and began to reign in 1077; being “a virtuous, prudent, and brave prince” who,—having first taken good order in his money affairs, and ended some unjust claims his predecessors had made on church property, and established a perpetual chancellorship and legal superintendence over his methods of revenue,—took the cross against the infidels, and got the name, in Syria, for his prowess, of the “Son of St. George.”

So he stands, leaning on his long sword—a man desirous of setting the world to rights, if it might be; but not knowing the way of it, nor recognizing that the steel with which it can be done, must take another shape than that double-edged one.

And from the eleventh century to this dull nineteenth, less and less the rulers of men have known their weapon. So far, yet, are we from beating sword into ploughshare,¹ that now the sword is set to undo the plough’s work when it has been done; and at this hour the ghastliest ruin of all that moulder from the fire, pierced through black rents by the unnatural sunlight above the ashamed streets of Paris, is the long skeleton, and roofless hollow of the “Grenier d’Abondance.”²

8. Such Agriculture have we contrived here, in Europe, and ploughing of new furrows for graves. Will you hear how Agriculture is now contrived in America?—where, since you spend your time here in burning corn, you must send to buy it; trusting, however, still to your serviceable friend the Fire, as here to consume, so there, to sow and reap, for repairing of consumption. I have just received

¹ [Isaiah ii. 4; Micah iv. 3—words often quoted by Ruskin; see, for instance, Vol. XVII. p. 178 *n.*]

² [“The greatest conflagration to-day was that of the Grenier d’Abondance. The flames and smoke from it rose high over the city” (*Times*, May 26, 1871, in an account of the burning of Paris by the Commune). Ruskin refers to this incident in *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 223.]

a letter from California, which I trust the writer will not blame me for printing:¹—

March 1st, 1872.

“SIR,—You have so strongly urged ‘agriculture by the hand’ that it may be of some interest to you to know the result thus far of agriculture by machinery, in California. I am the more willing to address you on this subject from the fact that I may have to do with a new Colony in this State, which will, I trust, adopt, as far as practicable, your ideas as to agriculture by the hand. Such thoughts as you might choose to give regarding the conduct of such a Colony here would be particularly acceptable; and should you deem it expedient to comply with this earnest and sincere request, the following facts may be of service to you in forming just conclusions.

“We have a genial climate and a productive soil. Our farms (‘ranches’) frequently embrace many thousands of acres, while the rule is, scarcely ever less than hundreds of acres. Wheat-fields of 5000 acres are by no means uncommon, and not a few of above 40,000 acres are known. To cultivate these extensive tracts much machinery is used, such as steam-ploughs, gang-ploughs, reaping, mowing, sowing, and thrashing machines; and seemingly to the utter extermination of the spirit of home, and rural life. Gangs of labourers are hired during the emergency of harvesting; and they are left for the most part unhousted, and are also fed more like animals than men. Harvesting over, they are discharged, and thus are left near the beginning of our long and rainy winters to shift for themselves. Consequently the larger towns and cities are infested for months with idle men and boys. Housebreaking and highway robbery are of almost daily occurrence. As to the farmers themselves, they live in a dreamy, comfortless way, and are mostly without education or refinement. To show them how to live better and cleaner; to give them nobler aims than merely to raise wheat for the English market; to teach them the history of those five cities,² and ‘their girls to cook exquisitely,’ etc.,³ is surely a mission for earnest men in this country, no less than in England, to say nothing of the various accomplishments to which you have alluded. I have caused to be published in some of our farming districts many of the more important of your thoughts bearing on these subjects, and I trust with beneficial results.

“I trust I shall not intrude on Mr. Ruskin’s patience if I now say something by way of thankfulness for what I have received from your

¹ [The receipt of this letter gave Ruskin much pleasure. In a note to Mrs. Arthur Severn from Oxford (March 29, 1872) he says:—

“I opened, ten minutes after the last glimpse of you yesterday, a most precious letter from a man in California. He had been a sailor before the mast; found *Modern Painters* in an island in the Pacific! then read all my books, and is now trying to carry out *Fors Clavigera* in California. It is all very wonderful and beautiful.

“Then, this morning I opened at 37th Ezekiel, and read it—it seemed as if just spoken to me—and then, by as utter chance, the 16th Psalm.”]

² [Athens, Rome, Venice, Florence, and London: see Letter 8, § 10 (p. 143).]

³ [*Ibid.*]

works.* I know not certainly if this will ever reach you. If it does, it may in some small way gladden you to know that I owe to your teaching almost all the good I have thus attained. A large portion of my life has been spent at sea, and in roaming in Mexico, Central and South America, and in the Malaysian and Polynesian Islands. I have been a sailor before and abaft the mast. Years ago I found on a remote island of the Pacific the *Modern Painters*; after them the *Seven Lamps of Architecture*; and finally your complete works. Ignorant and uncultivated, I began earnestly to follow certain of your teachings. I read most of the books you recommended, simply because you seemed to be my teacher; and so in the course of these years I have come to believe in you about as faithfully as one man ever believes in another. From having no fixed object in life I have finally found that I have something to do, and will ultimately, I trust, have something to say about sea-life, something that has not, I think, hitherto been said—if God ever permits me the necessary leisure from hard railway work, the most hopeless and depressing of all work I have hitherto done.

“Yours most thankful servant,
-----”

9. With the account given in the first part of this letter of the results of mechanical agriculture in California, you shall now compare a little sketch by Marmontel of the peasant life, not mechanical, in his own province. It is given, altering only the name of the river, in the *Contes Moraux*,¹ in the story, professing to continue that of Molière’s *Misanthrope*:—

“Alceste, discontented as you know, both with his mistress and with his judges, decided upon flying from men, and retired very far from Paris to the banks of the Vologne; this river, in which the shells enclose pearl, is yet more precious by the fertility which it causes to spring on its borders; the valley that it waters is one beautiful meadow. On one side of it rise smiling hills, scattered all over with woods and villages, on the other extends a vast level of fields covered with corn. It was there that Alceste went to live, forgotten by all, free from cares, and from irksome duties; entirely his own, and finally delivered from the odious spectacle of the world, he breathed freely, and praised heaven for having broken all his chains. A little study, much exercise, pleasures not vivid, but

* I accept the blame of vanity in printing the end of this letter, for the sake of showing more perfectly the temper of its writer, whom I have answered privately; in case my letter may not reach him, I should be grateful if he would send me again his address.

¹ [Ruskin here translates the beginning of the story: see vol. iii. pp. 245–254, 1st ed. 1765, of the *Contes Moraux*. “The Misanthrope Corrected” in *Marmontel’s Moral Tales, selected with a Revised Translation*, by George Saintsbury (George Allen, 1895), pp. 390 *seq.* A later passage from the same story is given in Letter 40, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 62).]

untroubled; in a word, a life peacefully active, preserved him from the ennui of solitude: he desired nothing, and regretted nothing. One of the pleasures of his retreat was to see the cultivated and fertile ground all about him nourishing a peasantry, which appeared to him happy. For a misanthrope who has become so by his virtue, only thinks that he hates men, because he loves them. Alceste felt a strange softening of the heart mingled with joy at the sight of his fellow-creatures rich by the labour of their hand. 'Those people,' said he, 'are very happy to be still half savage. They would soon be corrupted if they were more civilized.' As he was walking in the country, he chanced upon a labourer who was ploughing, and singing as he ploughed. 'God have a care of you, my good man!' said he, 'you are very gay?' 'I mostly am,' replied the peasant. 'I am happy to hear it: that proves that you are content with your condition.' 'Until now, I have good cause to be.' 'Are you married?' 'Yes, thank heaven.' 'Have you any children?' 'I had five. I have lost one, but that is a mischief that may be mended.' 'Is your wife young?' 'She is twenty-five years old.' 'Is she pretty?' 'She is, for me, but she is better than pretty, she is good.' 'And you love her?' 'If I love her! Who would not love her! I wonder?' 'And she loves you also, without doubt.' 'Oh! for that matter, with all her heart—just the same as before marriage.' 'Then you loved each other before marriage?' 'Without that, should we have let ourselves be caught?' 'And your children—are they healthy?' 'Ah! it's a pleasure to see them! The eldest is only five years old, and he's already a great deal cleverer than his father; and for my two girls, never was anything so charming! It'll be ill-luck indeed if *they* don't get husbands. The youngest is sucking yet, but the little fellow will be stout and strong. Would you believe it?—he beats his sisters when they want to kiss their mother!—he's always afraid of anybody's taking him from the breast.' 'All that is, then, very happy?' 'Happy! I should think so—you should see the joy there is when I come back from my work! You would say they hadn't seen me for a year. I don't know which to attend to first. My wife is round my neck—my girls in my arms—my boy gets hold of my legs—little Jeannot is like to roll himself off the bed to get to me—and I, I laugh, and cry, and kiss all at once—for all that makes me cry!' 'I believe it, indeed,' said Alceste. 'You *know* it, sir, I suppose, for you are doubtless a father?' 'I have not that happiness.' 'So much the worse for you! There's nothing in the world worth having, but that.'¹ 'And how do you live?' 'Very well: we have excellent bread, good milk, and the fruit of our orchard. My wife, with a little bacon, makes a cabbage soup that the King would be glad to eat! Then we have eggs from the poultry-yard; and on Sunday we have a feast, and drink a little cup of wine.' 'Yes, but when the year is bad?' 'Well, one expects the year to be bad, sometimes, and one lives on what one has saved from the good years.' 'Then there's the rigour of the weather—the cold and the rain, and the heat—that you have to bear.' 'Well! one gets used to it; and if you only knew the pleasure that one has in the evening, in getting the cool breeze after a day of summer; or, in winter, warming one's hands at the blaze of a good faggot, between one's

¹ [Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 48 (Vol. XIX. p. 99), where Ruskin cites these words. See also Appendix 6, Vol. XXIX. p. 538.]

wife and children: and then one sups with good appetite, and one goes to bed; and think you, that one remembers the bad weather? Sometimes my wife says to me,—“My good man, do you hear the wind and the storm? Ah, suppose you were in the fields?” “But I’m *not* in the fields, I’m here,” I say to her. Ah, sir! there are many people in the fine world, who don’t live as content as we.’ ‘Well! but the taxes?’ ‘We pay them merrily—and well we should—all the country can’t be noble, our squires and judges can’t come to work in the fields with us—they do for us what we can’t—we do for them what they can’t—and every business, as one says, has its pains.’ ‘What equity!’ said the misanthrope; ‘there, in two words, is all the economy of primitive society. Ah, Nature! there is nothing just but thee! and the healthiest reason is in thy untaught simplicity. But, in paying the taxes so willingly, don’t you run some risk of getting more put on you?’ ‘We used to be afraid of that; but, thank God, the lord of the place has relieved us from this anxiety. He plays the part of our good king to us. He imposes and receives himself, and, in case of need, makes advances for us. He is as careful of us as if we were his own children.’ ‘And who is this gallant man?’ ‘The Viscount Laval—he is known enough, all the country respects him.’ ‘Does he live in his château?’ ‘He passes eight months of the year there.’ ‘And the rest?’ ‘At Paris, I believe.’ ‘Does he see any company?’ ‘The towns-people of Bruyères, and now and then, some of our old men go to taste his soup and chat with him.’ ‘And from Paris does he bring nobody?’ ‘Nobody but his daughter.’ ‘He is much in the right. And how does he employ himself?’ ‘In judging between us—in making up our quarrels—in marrying our children—in maintaining peace in our families—in helping them when the times are bad.’ ‘You must take me to see his village,’ said Alceste, ‘that must be interesting.’

“He was surprised to find the roads, even the cross-roads, bordered with hedges, and kept with care; but, coming on a party of men occupied in mending them, ‘Ah!’ he said, ‘so you’ve got forced labour here?’ ‘Forced?’ answered an old man who presided over the work. ‘We know nothing of that here, sir; all these men are paid, we constrain nobody; only, if there comes to the village a vagrant, or a do-nothing, they send him to me, and if he wants bread he can gain it; or, he must go to seek it elsewhere.’ ‘And who has established this happy police?’ ‘Our good lord—our father—the father to all of us.’ ‘And where do the funds come from?’ ‘From the commonalty; and, as it imposes the tax on itself, it does not happen here, as too often elsewhere, that the rich are exempted at the expense of the poor.’

“The esteem of Alceste increased every moment for the wise and benevolent master who governed all this little country. ‘How powerful would a king be!’ he said to himself—‘and how happy a state! if all the great proprietors followed the example of this one; but Paris absorbs both property and men, it robs all, and swallows up everything.’

“The first glance at the village showed him the image of confidence and comfort. He entered a building which had the appearance of a public edifice, and found there a crowd of children, women, and old men occupied in useful labour;—idleness was only permitted to the extremely feeble. Childhood, almost at its first steps out of the cradle, caught the habit and

the taste for work; and old age, at the borders of the tomb, still exercised its trembling hands; the season in which the earth rests brought every vigorous arm to the workshops—and then the lathe, the saw, and the hatchet gave new value to products of nature.

“‘I am not surprised,’ said Alceste, ‘that this people is pure from vice, and relieved from discontent. It is laborious, and occupied without ceasing.’ He asked how the workshop had been established. ‘Our good lord,’ was the reply, ‘advanced the first funds for it. It was a very little place at first, and all that was done was at his expense, at his risk, and to his profit; but, once convinced that there was solid advantage to be gained, he yielded the enterprise to us, and now interferes only to protect; and every year he gives to the village the instruments of some one of our arts. It is the present that he makes at the first wedding which is celebrated in the year.’ ”

10. Thus wrote, and taught, a Frenchman of the old school, before the Revolution.¹ But worldly-wise Paris went on her own way absorbing property and men; and has attained, this first of May, what means and manner of festival you see in her Grenier d’Abondance.²

11. Glance back now to my proposal for the keeping of the first of May, in the letter on “Rose Gardens” in *Time and Tide*,³ and discern which state is best for you—modern “civilization,” or Marmontel’s rusticity, and mine.

Ever faithfully yours,
JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ [Compare the impressions of French manners cited in Letter 29 (below, p. 538).]

² [See above, § 7, p. 298.]

³ [Vol. XVII. p. 421.]

LETTER 18

VAL DI NIÉVOLE¹

PISA, 29th April, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—You would pity me, if you knew how seldom I see a newspaper, just now; but I chanced on one yesterday, and found that all the world was astir about the marriage of the Marquis of B.,² and that the Pope had sent him, on that occasion, a telegraphic blessing of superfine quality.

I wonder what the Marquis of B. has done to deserve to be blessed to that special extent, and whether a little mild beatitude, sent here to Pisa, might not have been better spent. For, indeed, before getting hold of the papers, I had been greatly troubled, while drawing the east end of the Duomo,³ by three fellows who were leaning against the Leaning Tower, and expectorating loudly and copiously, at intervals of half a minute each, over the white marble base of it, which they evidently conceived to have been constructed only to be spit upon.⁴ They were all in rags, and obviously proposed to remain in rags all their days, and pass what leisure of life they could obtain, in spitting. There was a boy with them, in rags also, and not less expectorant, but having some remains of human activity in him still (being not more than twelve years old); and he was even a little interested in my brushes

¹ [See below, § 2. A rejected title was “Benediction and Usury (or taxation).”]

² [The marriage of the Marquis of Bute is again referred to in Letter 20, § 5 (p. 337). John Patrick, sixth Earl and third Marquis of Bute (1847–1900), married April 16, 1872, the Hon. Gwendoline Howard, daughter of Lord Howard of Glossop. His entrance into the Roman Catholic Church is the subject of Disraeli’s *Lothair*.]

³ [The drawing is reproduced on Plate III. in Vol. XXIII.]

⁴ [For an English parallel, see *Aratra Pentelici*, § 89 (Vol. XX. p. 260).]

and colours, but rewarded himself, after the effort of some attention to these, by revolving slowly round the iron railing in front of me like a pensive squirrel. This operation at last disturbed me so much, that I asked him if there were no other railings in Pisa he could turn upside down over, but these. “Sono cascato, Signor—” “I tumbled over them, please, Sir,” said he, apologetically, with infinite satisfaction in his black eyes.

Now it seemed to me that these three moist-throated men and the squirrelline boy stood much more in need of a paternal blessing than the Marquis of B.—a blessing, of course, with as much of the bloom off it as would make it consistent with the position in which Providence had placed them; but enough, in its moderate way, to bring the good out of them instead of the evil. For there was all manner of good in them, deep and pure—yet for ever to be dormant; and all manner of evil, shallow and superficial, yet for ever to be active and practical, as matters stood that day, under and practical, as matters stood that day, under the Leaning Tower.

2. *Lucca, 7th May.*—Eight days gone, and I’ve been working hard, and looking my carefulest; and seem to have done nothing, nor begun to see these places, though I’ve known them thirty years, and though Mr. Murray’s Guide says one may see Lucca, and its Ducal Palace and Piazza, the Cathedral, the Baptistery, nine churches, and the Roman amphitheatre, and take a drive round the ramparts, in the time between the stopping of one train and the starting of the next.¹

I wonder how much time Mr. Murray would allow for the view I had to-day, from the tower of the Cathedral, up the valley called of “Niévole,”²—now one tufted softness of fresh springing leaves, far as the eye can reach. You know something of the produce of the hills that bound it, and perhaps of its own: at least, one used to see

¹ [See Vol. XXV. p. 115.]

² [For other reference to this region, see in a later volume of this edition, the “Notes on the Life of S. Zita” in *Roadside Songs of Tuscany*.]

“Fine Lucca Oil” often enough in the grocers’ windows (petroleum has, I suppose, now taken its place), and the staple of Spitalfields was, I believe, first woven with Lucca thread.¹

3. The actual manner of production of these good things is thus:—The Val di Niévole is some five miles wide by thirty long, and is simply one field of corn or rich grass land, undivided by hedges; the corn two feet high, and more, to-day. Quite Lord Derby’s style of agriculture,² you think? No; not quite. Undivided by hedges, the fields are yet meshed across and across by an intricate network of posts and chains. The posts are maple-trees, and the chains, garlands of vine. The meshes of this net each enclose two or three acres of the corn-land, with a row of mulberry-trees up the middle of it, for silk. There are poppies, and bright ones too, about the banks and roadsides; but the corn of Val di Niévole is too proud to grow with poppies, and is set with wild gladiolus instead, deep violet.³ Here and there a mound of crag rises out of the fields, crested with stone-pine, and studded all over with the large stars of the white rock-cistus. Quiet streams, filled with close crowds of the golden waterflag, wind beside meadows painted with purple orchis. On each side of the great plain is a wilderness of hills, veiled at their feet with a grey cloud of olive woods; above, sweet with glades of chestnut; peaks of more distant blue, still, to-day, embroidered with snow, are rather to be thought of as vast precious stones than mountains,

¹ [Ruskin was here probably thinking of a passage in Gibbon (ch. liii.): “In the year 1314 Lucca alone, among her sister republics, enjoyed the lucrative monopoly (of silk). A domestic revolution dispersed the manufacturers to Florence, Bologna, Venice, Milan, and even the countries beyond the Alps, and thirteen years after this event, the statutes of Modena enjoin the planting of mulberry-trees, and regulate the duties on raw silk. The northern climates are less propitious to the education of the silkworm; but the industry of France and England is supplied and enriched by the productions of Italy and China.” The brood silk manufacture was established in England in 1620; but it is to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) that we owe the Spitalfields colony of silk-weavers. There was a colony of Lucchese in London in mediæval times: see below, p. 312 *n.*]

² [See Letter 10, § 1 (p. 166).]

³ [Compare *Val d’Arno*, § 186 (Vol. XXIII. p. 111.)]

for all the state of the world's palaces has been hewn out of their marble.¹

4. I was looking over all this from under the rim of a large bell,² beautifully embossed, with a St. Sebastian upon it, and some lovely thin-edged laurel leaves, and an inscription saying that the people should be filled with the fat of the land,³ if they listened to the voice of the Lord. The bell-founder of course meant, by the voice of the Lord, the sound of his own bell; and all over the plain, one could see towers rising above the vines voiced in the same manner. Also much trumpeting and fiddling goes on below, to help the bells, on holy days; and, assuredly, here is fat enough of land to be filled with, if listening to these scrapings and tinklings were indeed the way to be filled.

The laurel leaves on the bell were so finely hammered that I felt bound to have a ladder set against the lip of it, that I might examine them more closely; and the sacristan and bell-ringer were so interested in this proceeding that they got up, themselves, on the cross-beams, and sat like two jackdaws, looking on, one on each side; for which expression of sympathy I was deeply grateful, and offered the bell-ringer, on the spot, two bank-notes for tenpence each. But they were so rotten with age, and so brittle and black with tobacco, that, having unadvisedly folded them up small in my purse, the patches on their backs had run their corners through them, and they came out tattered like so much tinder. The bell-ringer looked at them hopelessly, and gave me them back. I promised him some better patched ones, and folded the remnants of tinder up carefully, to be kept at Coniston (where we have still a tenpenceworth or so of copper,—though no olive oil)—for specimens of the currency of the new Kingdom of Italy.

¹ ["Carrara Hills."—*MS. note by Author in his copy.*]

² [At Lucca Cathedral: see below, p. 400.]

³ [Genesis xlv. 18.]

Such are the monuments of financial art, attained by a nation which has lived in the fattest of lands for at least three thousand years, and for the last twelve hundred of them has had at least some measure of Christian benediction, with help from bell, book, candle, and, recently, even from gas.

5. Yet you must not despise the benediction, though it has not provided them with clean bank-notes. The peasant race, at least, of the Val di Niévole are not unblest; if honesty, kindness, food sufficient for them, and peace of heart, can anywise make up for poverty in current coin. Only the evening before last, I was up among the hills to the south of Lucca, close to the remains of the country-house of Castruccio Castracani, who was Lord of the Val di Niévole, and much good land besides, in the year 1328 (and whose sword, you perhaps remember, was presented to the King of Sardinia, now King of Italy, when first he visited the Lucchese after driving out the old Duke of Tuscany; and Mrs. Browning wrote a poem upon the presentation¹); a Neapolitan Duchess has got his country-house now, and has restored it to her taste. Well, I was up among the hills, that way, in places where no English, nor Neapolitans either, ever dream of going, being altogether lovely and at rest, and the country life in them unchanged; and I had several friends with me, and among them one of the young girls who were at Furness Abbey last year;² and, scrambling about among the vines, she lost a pretty little cross of Florentine work. Luckily, she had made acquaintance, only the day before, with the peasant mistress of a cottage close by, and with her two youngest children, Adam and Eve. Eve was still tied up tight in swaddling clothes, down to the toes, and carried about as a

¹ ["The Sword of Castruccio Castracani." For Castruccio Castracani, Duke of Lucca, see Vol. XII. pp. 224–225; and for other references to the gift of his sword by the people of Lucca to King Victor Emanuel, see Vol. XIX. p. 441, and Vol. XXIII. p. 472.]

² [See Letter 11, § 3 (p. 182). Mrs. and Miss Hilliard were among Ruskin's travelling companions at this time.]

bundle; but Adam was old enough to run about; and found the cross, and his mother gave it us back next day.¹

Not unblest, such a people, though with some common human care and kindness you might bless them a little more. If only you would not curse them; but the curse of your modern life is fatally near, and only for a few years more, perhaps, they will be seen—driving their tawny kine, or with their sheep following them,—to pass, like pictures in enchanted motion, among their glades of vine.

6. *Rome, 12th May.*—I am writing at the window of a new inn,² whence I have a view of a large green gas-lamp, and of a pond, in rustic rock-work, with four large black ducks in it; also of the top of the Pantheon; sundry ruined walls; tiled roofs innumerable; and a palace about a quarter of a mile long, and the height, as near as I can guess, of Folkestone cliffs under the New Parade; all which I see to advantage over a balustrade veneered with an inch of marble over four inches of cheap stone, carried by balusters of cast iron, painted and sanded, but with the rust coming through,—this being the proper modern recipe in Italy for balustrades which may meet the increasing demand of travellers for splendour of abode. (By the way, I see I can get a pretty little long vignette view of the roof of the Pantheon, and some neighbouring churches, through a chink between the veneering and the freestone.)

7. Standing in this balcony, I am within three hundred yards of the greater Church of St. Mary, from which Castruccio Castracani walked to St. Peter's on 17th January, 1328, carrying the sword of the German Empire, with which he was appointed to gird its Emperor, on his taking possession of Rome, by Castruccio's help, in spite of the Pope. The Lord of the Val di Niévole wore a dress of superb damask silk, doubtless the best that the worms of

¹ [For another reference to this incident, see *Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Florence*, § 66 (Vol. XXIII. p. 233).]

² [The description shows that the inn must have been one of those overlooking the Quirinal; probably the Hôtel d'Italie in the Via delle Quattro Fontane.]

Lucca mulberry-trees could spin; and across his breast an embroidered scroll, inscribed, "He is what God made him," and across his shoulders, behind, another scroll, inscribed, "And he shall be what God will make."¹

On the 3rd of August, that same year, he recovered Pistoja from the Florentines, and rode home to his own Lucca in triumph, being then the greatest war-captain in Europe, and Lord of Pisa, Pistoja, Lucca, half the coast of Genoa, and three hundred fortified castles in the Apennines;² on the 3rd of September he lay dead in Lucca, of fever. "Crushed before the moth;"³ as the silkworms also, who were boiled before even they became so much as moths,⁴ to make his embroidered coat for him. And, humanly speaking, because he had worked too hard in the trenches of Pistoja, in the dog-days, with his armour on, and with his own hands on the mattock, like the good knight he was.

8. Nevertheless, his sword was no gift for the King of Italy, if the Lucchese had thought better of it. For those three hundred castles of his were all Robber-castles, and he, in fact, only the chief captain of the three hundred thieves who lived in them. In the beginning of his career these "towers of the Lunigiana belonged to gentlemen who had made brigandage in the mountains, or piracy on the sea, the sole occupation of their youth. Castruccio united them round him, and called to his little court all the exiles and adventures who were wandering from town to town, in search of war or pleasures."*

And, indeed, to Professors of Art, the Apennine between

* SISMONDI: *History of Italian Republics*, Vol. III., Chap. ii.⁵

¹ [See Villani's *Istorie Fiorentine*, book x. ch. lviii. (vol. vi. p. 83, Milan edition of 1803), and Sismondi's *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes*, ch. xxxi. (vol. v. p. 152, Paris edition of 1826).]

² [Villani, book x. ch. lxxxv. (vol. vi. pp. 119-120).]

³ [Job iv. 19.]

⁴ [For the manufacture of silk, the eggs of the silkworm, called *graine*, are hatched out by artificial heat when the mulberry leaves are ready for the feeding of the larvæ. Subsequently, the pupa is killed to prevent its further progress and the bursting of the shell by the fully developed moth.]

⁵ [Ruskin used the fifth (French) edition of 1838, published at Brussels. The reference is to vol. v. p. 76, in the Paris edition of 1826.]

Lucca and Pistoja is singularly delightful to this day, because of the ruins of these robber-castles on every mound, and of the pretty monasteries and arcades of cloister beside them. But how little we usually estimate the real relation of these picturesque objects! The homes of Baron and Clerk, side by side, established on the hills. Underneath, in the plain, the peasant driving his oxen. The Baron lives by robbing the peasant, and the Clerk by blessing the Baron.

9. Blessing and absolving, though the Barons of grandest type could live, and resolutely die, without absolution. Old Straw-Mattress of Evilstone,* at ninety-six, sent his son from beside his death-mattress to attack the castle of the Bishop of Arezzo, thinking the Bishop would be off his guard, news having gone abroad that the grey-haired Knight of Evilstone¹ could sit his horse no more. But, usually, the absolution was felt to be needful towards the end of life; and if one thinks of it, the two kinds of edifices on the hill-tops may be shortly described as those of the Pillager and Pardoner, or Pardonere, Chaucer's word being classical in spelling, and the best general one for the clergy of the two great Evangelical and Papal sects. Only a year or two ago, close to the Crystal Palace, I heard in the Rev. Mr. Tipple's chapel another Pardoner announce from his pulpit that there was no thief, nor devourer of widows' houses,² nor any manner of sinner, in his congregation that day, who might not leave the church an entirely pardoned and entirely respectable person, if he would only believe—what the Rev. Pardoner was about to announce to him.³

* "Saccone of Pietra-mala."

¹ [Compare Letter 69, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 688). For the incident (in 1356) here noted by Ruskin, see Matteo Villani, book vi. chaps xi., xvi.; and Sismondi, Paris edition of 1826, ch. xlv. (vol. vi. pp. 304 *seq.*.)]

² [Matthew xxiii. 14.]

³ ["In the first edition the piece of teaching was attributed to the incumbent of the chapel. The error was corrected by his letter, printed in the correspondence of Letter 20" (p. 350).—*Author's MS. note in his own copy.* See the Bibliographical Note, above, p. cix.]

10. Strange, too, how these two great pardoning religions agree in the accompaniment of physical filth. I have never been hindered from drawing street subjects by pure human stench, but in two cities,—Edinburgh and Rome.

There are some things, however, which Edinburgh and London pardon, nowadays, which Rome would not. Penitent thieves, by all means, but not impenitent; still less impenitent speculators.

11. Have patience a little, for I must tell you one or two things more about Lucca: they are all connected with the history of Florence, which is to be one of the five cities¹ you are to be able to give account of; and, by the way, remember at once, that her florin in the fourteenth century was of such pure gold that when in Chaucer's "Pardonere's Tale" Death puts himself into the daintiest dress he can, it is into a heap of "floreines faire and bright."² He has chosen another from at Lucca; and when I had folded up my two bits of refuse tinder,³ I walked into the Cathedral to look at the golden lamp which hangs before the Sacred Face—twenty-four pounds of pure gold in the lamp: Face of wood: the oath of kings, since William Rufus' days;⁴ carved eighteen hundred years ago, if one

¹ [Athens, Rome, Venice, Florence, and London: see Letter 8, § 10 (p. 143).]

² [Compare *Val d' Arno*, § 117 (Vol. XXIII. p. 71).]

³ [See above, § 4.]

⁴ [The Volto Santo, which is preserved in a chapel built by Matteo Civitali, is a cedar-wood crucifix about 13 feet in length. It is said to have been carved by Nicodemus, and while he slept an angel carved the face. In 782 it was discovered to a pilgrim bishop from Piedmont, Gualfredo by name, who, instructed by an angel, put it on board an empty bark at Joppa. The bark was guided to Luni, where, at the time of its arrival, was Giovanni, Bishop of Lucca. It was agreed that the crucifix should be placed on a cart drawn by two white oxen, and that, wherever they went, it should remain. The oxen went straight to Lucca, and "there it has ever since remained, working great wonders, and drawing to this day vast crowds of pilgrims from all corners of the Catholic world." It is exposed to view on the Festivals of the Holy Cross, May 3 and September 14, and on the anniversary of the curation of a plague, in December. Mediæval Englishmen had a great devotion to the Volto Santo. William of Malmesbury records that the Red King habitually swore "per sanctum vultum de Luca" (compare Vol. X. p. 451 *n.*), and in an old London church of St. Thomas there was an effigy of the Volto Santo, the cult of which was cared for by the Lucchese colony. See Canon Almerico Guerra's *Notizie Storiche del Volto Santo di Lucca* (Lucca, 1881), and Montgomery Carmichael's *In Tuscany*, 1901, where, at p. 154, is a reproduction from a drawing of the upper portion of the crucifix. A lamp of gold was offered by the people of Lucca at the outbreak of cholera in 1836.]

would believe, and very full of pardon to faithful Lucchese; yet, to some, helpless.

12. There are, I suppose, no educated persons in Italy, and few in England, who do not profess to admire Dante; and, perhaps, out of every hundred of these admirers, three or four may have read the bit about Francesca di Rimini, the death of Ugolino, and the description of the Venetian Arsenal.¹ But even of these honestly studious three or four we should rarely find one, who knew why the Venetian Arsenal was described. You shall hear, if you will:—

“As, in the Venetian Arsenal, the pitch boils in the winter time, where-with to caulk their rotten ships . . . so, not by fire, but divine art, a thick pitch boiled there, beneath, which had plastered itself all up over the banks on either side. But in it I could see nothing, except the bubbles that its boiling raised, which from time to time made it all swell up over its whole surface, and presently fell back again depressed. And as I looked at it fixedly, and wondered, my guide drew me back hastily, saying, ‘Look, look!’ . . . And when I turned, I saw behind us, a black devil come running along the rocks. Ah, how wild his face! ah, how bitter his action as he came with his wings wide, light upon his feet! On his shoulder he bore a sinner, grasped by both haunches; and when he came to the bridge foot, he cried down into the pit: ‘Here’s an ancient² from Lucca; put him under, that I may fetch more, for the land is full of such; there, for money, they make “No” into “Yes” quickly.’ And he cast him in and turned back,—never mastiff fiercer after his prey. The thrown sinner plunged in the pitch, and curled himself up; but the devils from under the bridge cried out, ‘There’s no holy face here; here one swims otherwise than in the Serchio.’ And they caught him with their hooks and pulled him under, as cooks do the meat in broth; crying, ‘People play here hidden; so that they may filch in secret, if they can.’ ”

13. Doubtless, you consider all this extremely absurd, and are of opinion that such things are not likely to happen in the next world. Perhaps not; nor is it clear that Dante believed they would; but I should be glad if you would tell me what you think *is* likely to happen there. In the meantime, please to observe Dante’s figurative meaning, which is by no means absurd. Every one of

¹ [*Inferno*, v., xxxiii., and xxi. (lines 7–9, 16–23, 29–53, being here translated and partly summarised, by Ruskin).]

² [Ruskin in his copy here writes, “Note needed”; it may be explained, therefore, that the reference is to the Elders, or chief Magistrates, of the city.]

his scenes has symbolic purpose, down to the least detail. This lake of pitch is the love of money, which, in our own vulgar English phrase, “sticks to people’s fingers”; it clogs and plasters its margin all over, because the mind of a man bent on dishonest gain makes everything within its reach dirty; it bubbles up and down, because underhand gains nearly always involve alternate excitement and depression; and it is haunted by the most cruel and indecent of all the devils, because there is nothing so mean, and nothing so cruel, but a speculator will do it. So you may read every line figuratively, if you choose: all that I want is, that you should be acquainted with the opinions of Dante concerning speculation. For with the history of the five cities, I wish you to know also the opinions, on all subjects personally interesting to you, of five people who lived in them; namely, of Plato, Virgil, Dante, Victor Carpaccio (whose opinions I must gather for you from his paintings,¹ for painting is the way Venetians write), and Shakespeare.

14. If, after knowing these five men’s opinions on practical matters (these five, as you will find, being all of the same mind), you prefer to hold Mr. J. S. Mill’s and Mr. Fawcett’s opinions, you are welcome. And indeed I may as well end this by at once examining some of Mr. Fawcett’s statements on the subject of Interest, that being one of our chief modern modes of speculation; but before we put aside Dante for to-day, just note farther this, that while he has sharp punishment for thieves, forgers, and speculators,—the thieves being changed into serpents,² the forgers covered with leprosy,³ and the speculators boiled in pitch,⁴—he has no punishment for bad workmen; no Tuscan mind at that day being able to conceive such a ghastly sin as a man’s doing bad work

¹ [See Letter 71, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 732).]

² [*Inferno*, xxiv. 94 *seq.*]

³ [*Ibid.*, xxix. 75 *seq.*]

⁴ [*Ibid.*, xxi. 7 *seq.*]

wilfully; and, indeed, I think the Tuscan mind, and in some degree the Piedmontese, retain some vestige of this old temper; for though, not a fortnight since (on 3rd May), the cross of marble in the arch-spandril next the east end of the Chapel of the Thorn at Pisa was dashed to pieces before my eyes,¹ as I was drawing it for my class in heraldry at Oxford,² by a stone-mason, that his master might be paid for making a new one, I have no doubt the new one will be as honestly like the old as master and man can make it; and Mr. Murray's Guide will call it a "judicious restoration." So also, though here, the new Government is digging through the earliest rampart of Rome (*agger* of Servius Tullius), to build a new Finance Office,³ which will doubtless issue tenpenny notes in Latin, with the dignity of *denarii* (the "pence" of your New Testament), I have every reason to suppose the new Finance Office will be substantially built, and creditable to its masons (the veneering and cast-iron work being, I believe, done mostly at the instigation of British building companies). But it seems strange to me that, coming to Rome for quite other reasons, I should be permitted by the Third Fors to see the *agger* of Tullius cut through, for the site of a Finance Office, and his Mons Justitiæ (Mount of Justice), presumably the most venerable piece of earth in Italy, carted away, to make room for a railroad station of Piccola Velocità. For Servius Tullius was the first king who stamped money with the figures of animals,⁴ and introduced a word among the Romans with the sound of which Englishmen are also now acquainted, "pecunia."

¹ [See also Letter 20, § 20 (p. 348); and compare *Val d' Arno*, § 43 (Vol. XXIII. p. 33).]

² [See above, p. 285 *n.*]

³ [In the Via Venti Settembre. The excavations for this building disclosed the exact position of the ancient Porta Viminalis (see Middleton's *Remains of Ancient Rome*, 1892 edition, vol. i. p. 133). The Mons Justitiæ was close by; for a note on later discoveries made at the site, see p. 46 of the Introduction to Murray's *Handbook to Rome* (1894 edition).]

⁴ [See Pliny, xxxiii., 13: "Servius rex primus signavit æs. . . . Signatum est nota pecudum, unde et pecunia appellata."]

Moreover, it is in speaking of this very *agger* of Tullius that Livy explains in what reverence the Romans held the space between the outer and inner walls of their cities,¹ which modern Italy delights to turn into a Boulevard.

15. Now then, for Mr. Fawcett:—

At the 146th page of the edition of his *Manual* previously quoted,² you will find it stated that the interest of money consists of three distinct parts:

1. Reward for abstinence.
2. Compensation for the risk of loss.
3. Wages for the labour of superintendence.

I will reverse this order in examining the statements; for the only real question is as to the first, and we had better at once clear the other two away from it.

16. (3) Wages for the labour of superintendence.

By giving the capitalist *wages* at all, we put him at once into the class of labourers, which in my November letter I showed you is partly right;³ but, *by Mr. Fawcett's definition*, and in the broad results of business, he is *not* a labourer. So far as he is one, of course, like any other, he is to be paid for his work. There is no question but that the partner who superintends any business should be paid for superintendence; but the question before us is only respecting *payment for doing nothing*. I have, for instance, at this moment £15,000 of Bank Stock, and receive £1200 odd, a year, from the Bank, but I have never received the slightest intimation from the directors that they wished for my assistance in the superintendence of that establishment;—(more shame for them). But even in cases where the partners are active, it does not follow that the one who has most money in the business is either

¹ [Livy, book i. ch. xlv.: "Aggere et fossis et muro circumdat urbem: ita pomerium profert. Pomerium verbi vim solam intuentes postmerium interpretantur esse: est autem magis circa mœrum locus," etc.]

² [See Letter 11, § 8, p. 188: "The last edition of Professor Fawcett's *Manual of Political Economy* (Macmillan, 1869)."]

³ [*Ibid.*]

fittest to superintend it, or likely to do so; it is indeed probable that a man who has made money already will know how to make more; and it is necessary to attach some importance to property as the sign of sense: but your business is to choose and pay your superintendent for his sense, and not for his money. Which is exactly what Mr. Carlyle has been telling you for some time;¹ and both he and all his disciples entirely approve of interest, if you are indeed prepared to define that term as payment for the exercise of common-sense spent in the service of the person who pays for it. I reserve yet awhile, however, what is to be said, as hinted in my first letter, about the sale of ideas.²

17. (2.) Compensation for risk.

Does Mr. Fawcett mean by “compensation for risk,” protection from it, or reward for running it? Every business involves a certain quantity of risk, which is properly covered by every prudent merchant, but he does not expect to make a profit out of his risks, nor calculate on a percentage on his insurance. If he prefer not to insure, does Professor Fawcett mean that his customers ought to compensate him for his anxiety; and that while the definition of the first part of interest is extra payment for prudence, the definition of the second part of interest is extra payment for *imprudence*? Or, does Professor Fawcett mean, what is indeed often the fact, that interest for money represents such reward for risk as people may get across the green cloth at Homburg³ or Monaco? Because so far as what used to be business is, in modern political economy, gambling, Professor Fawcett will please to observe that what one gamester gains another loses. You cannot get anything out of Nature, or from God, by gambling;—only out of your neighbour: and to

¹ [As in *Past and Present*, with its precepts about “captains of industry” and “apportionment of wages to work done.”]

² [See Letter 1, § 14 (p. 26).]

³ [The Prussian Government, however, closed the gaming establishments at Homburg in this very year (1872).]

the quantity of interest of money thus gained, you are mathematically to oppose a precisely equal *disinterest* of somebody else's money.

18. These second and third reasons for interest then, assigned by Professor Fawcett, have evidently nothing whatever to do with the question. What I want to know is, why the Bank of England is paying me £1200 a year. It certainly does not pay me for superintendence. And so far from receiving my dividend as compensation for risk, I put my money into the bank because I thought it exactly the safest place to put it in. But nobody can be more anxious than I to find it proper that I should have £1200 a year. Finding two of Mr. Fawcett's reasons fail me utterly, I cling with tenacity to the third, and hope the best from it.

19. The third, or first,—and now too sorrowfully the last—of the Professor's reasons, is this, that my £1200 are given me as "the reward of abstinence." It strikes me, upon this, that if I had not my £15,000 of Bank Stock I should be a good deal more abstinent than I am, and that nobody would then talk of rewarding me for it. It might be possible to find even cases of very prolonged and painful abstinence, for which no reward has yet been adjudged by less abstinent England. Abstinence may, indeed, have its reward, nevertheless; but not by increase of what we abstain from, unless there be a law of growth for it, unconnected with our abstinence. "You cannot have your cake and eat it." Of course not; and if you don't eat it, you have your cake; but not a cake and a half! Imagine the complex trial of schoolboy minds, if the law of nature about cakes were, that if you ate none of your cake to-day, you would have ever so much bigger a cake to-morrow!—which is Mr. Fawcett's notion of the law of nature about money; and, alas, many a man's beside,—it being no law of nature whatever, but absolutely contrary to all her laws, and not to be enacted by the whole force of united mankind.

Not a cake and a quarter to-morrow, dunce, however abstinent you are—only the cake you have,—if the mice don't get at it in the night.

Interest, then, is not, it appears, payment for labour; it is not reward for risk; it is not reward for abstinence.

What is it?

One of two things it is;—taxation, or usury. Of which in my next letter.¹ Meantime believe me

Faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

¹ [The next reference to this subject is, however, in Letter 21, § 18 (p. 363).]

LETTER 19

RAIN ON THE ROCK¹

VERONA, 18th June, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—What an age of progress it is, by help of advertisements! No wonder you put some faith in them, friends. In summer, one's work is necessarily much before breakfast; so, coming home tired to-day, I order a steak, with which is served to me a bottle of "Moutarde Diaphane," from Bordeaux.

What a beautiful arrangement have we here! Fancy the appropriate mixture of manufactures of cold and hot at Bordeaux—claret, and diaphanous mustard! Then the quantity of printing and proclamation necessary to make people in Verona understand that diaphanous mustard is desirable, and may be had at Bordeaux. Fancy, then, the packing, and peeping into the packages; and porterages, and percentages on porterages; and the engineering, and the tunnelling, and the bridge-building, and the steam whistling, and the grinding of iron, and raising of dust in the Limousin (Marmontel's country²), and in Burgundy, and in Savoy, and under the Mont Cenis, and in Piedmont, and in Lombardy, and at last over the field of Solferino, to fetch me my bottle of diaphanous mustard!

And to think that, besides paying the railway officers all along the line, and the custom-house officers at the frontier, and the original expenses of advertisement, and the profits of its proprietors, my diaphanous mustard paid a

¹ [For the title, see §§ 8, 16. "Diaphanous Mustard" and " 'Cast thy Bread upon the Waters'; or, The Thunder-shower" were rejected titles.]

² [See above, p. 251. Marmontel's home was near Limoges, the capital of the ancient province, or government, of Limousin.]

dividend to somebody or other, all the way here! I wonder it is not more diaphanous by this time!

2. An age of progress, indeed, in which the founding of my poor St. George's Company, growing its own mustard, and desiring no dividends, may well seem difficult. I have scarcely had courage yet to insist on that second particular, but will try to find it, on this Waterloo day.

Observe, then, once for all, it is to be a company for Alms-Giving, not for dividend-getting. For I still believe in Alms-Giving, though most people nowadays do not, but think the only hopeful way of serving their neighbour is to make a profit out of him. I am of opinion, on the contrary, that the hopefulest way of serving him is to let *him* make a profit out of *me*, and I only ask the help of people who are at one with me in that mind.

Alms-giving, therefore, is to be our function; yet alms only of a certain sort. For there are bedesmen and bedesmen, and our charities must be as discriminate as possible.

3. For instance, those two steely and stalwart horsemen, who sit, by the hour, under the two arches opposite Whitehall, from ten to four per diem, to receive the public alms.¹ It is their singular and well-bred manner of begging, indeed, to keep their helmets on their heads, and sit erect on horseback; but one may, with slight effort of imagination, conceive the two helmets held in a reversed manner, each in the mouth of a well-bred and politely-behaving dog, Irish greyhound, or the like; sitting erect, it also, paws in air, with the brass instead of copper pan in its mouth, plume downwards, for reception of pence.

“Ready to fight for us, they are, on occasional 18ths of June.”

Doubtless, and able-bodied;—barons of truest make:² but I thought your idea of discriminate charity was to give rather to the sick than the able-bodied? and that you have

¹ [Compare above, p. 185.]

² [See above, p. 262.]

no hope of interfering henceforward, except by money payments, in any foreign affairs?¹

“But the Guards are necessary to keep order in the Park.”

Yes, certainly, and farther than the Park. The two breastplated figures, glittering in transfixed attitudes on each side of the authoritative clock, are, indeed, very precious timepiece ornamentation. No watch-maker’s window in Paris or Geneva can show the like. Finished little figures, perfect down to the toes of their boots,—the enamelled clasp on the girdle of the British Constitution!—You think the security of that depends on the freedom of your press, and the purity of your elections?

Do but unclasp this piece of dainty jewellery; send the metal of it to the melting-pot, and see where your British Constitution will be, in a few turns of the hands of the faultless clock. They are precious statues, these, good friends; set there to keep you and me from having too much of our own way; and I joyfully and gratefully drop my penny into each helmet as I pass by, though I expect no other dividend from that investment than good order, picturesque effect, and an occasional flourish on the kettledrum.

4. Likewise, from their contributed pence, the St. George’s Company must be good enough to expect dividend only in good order and picturesque effect of another sort. For my notion of discriminate charity is by no means, like most other people’s, the giving to unable-bodied paupers. My alms-people are to be the ablest bodied I can find; the ablest minded I can make; and from ten to four every day will be on duty. Ten to four, nine to three, or perhaps six to twelve;—just the time those two gilded figures sit with their tools idle on their shoulders (being fortunately without employment), my ungilded, but not unstately, alms-men shall stand with tools at work, mattock or flail, axe or hammer. And I do not doubt but, in little time, they will be able to thresh or hew rations for their day out of the

¹ [See above, p. 249.]

ground, and that our help to them need only be in giving them that to hew them out of. Which, you observe, is just what I ask may be bought for them.

“‘May be bought,’ but by whom? and for whom, how distributed, in whom vested?” and much more you have to ask.

As soon as I am sure you understand what needs to be done, I will satisfy you as to the way of doing it.

But I will not let you know my plans, till you acknowledge my principles, which I have no expectation of your doing, yet awhile.

June 22nd.

5. “Bought for *them*”—for whom? How should I know? The best people I can find, or make, as chance may send them: the Third Fors must look to it. Surely it cannot matter much, to you, whom the thing helps, so long as you are quite sure, and quite content, that it won’t help *you*?¹

That last sentence is wonderfully awkward English, not to say ungrammatical; but I must write such English as may come to-day, for there’s something wrong with the Post, or the railroads, and I have no revise of what I wrote for you at Florence, a fortnight since; so that must be left for the August Letter,² and meanwhile I must write something quickly in its place, or be too late for the first of July. Of the many things I have to say to you, it matters little which comes first; indeed, I rather like the Third Fors to take the order of them into her hands, out of mine.

6. I repeat my question. It surely cannot matter to you whom the thing helps, so long as you are content

¹ [The word is italicised in accordance with Ruskin’s note in the Index to vols. i. and ii., where in referring to this passage (under “George, St., Company of”) he says: “Note that in the sentence, ‘it won’t help you,’ ‘*you*’ should be italicised, being addressed to the supposed inquirer into the nature of membership of the Company.”]

² [Printed in the September Letter: 21, §§ 2 *seq.* (p. 352).]

that it won't, or can't, help *you*? But are you content so? For that is the essential condition of the whole business—I will not speak of it in terms of money—are you content to give work? Will you build a bit of wall, suppose—to serve your neighbour, expecting no good of the wall yourself? If so, you must be satisfied to build the wall for the man who wants it built; you must not be resolved first to be sure that he is the best man in the village. Help any one, anyhow you can: so, in order, the greatest possible number will be helped; nay, in the end, perhaps, you may get some shelter from the wind under your charitable wall yourself; but do not expect it, nor lean on any promise that you shall find your bread again, once cast away; I can only say that of what I have chosen to cast fairly on the waters¹ myself, I have never yet, after any number of days, found a crumb. Keep what you want; cast what you can,—and expect nothing back, once lost, or once given.

7. But for the actual detail of the way in which benefit might thus begin, and diffuse itself, here is an instance close at hand. Yesterday a thunder-shower broke over Verona in the early afternoon: and in a quarter of an hour the streets were an inch deep in water over large spaces, and had little rivers at each side of them. All these little rivers ran away into the large river—the Adige, which plunges down under the bridges of Verona, writhing itself in strong rage: for Verona, with its said bridges, is a kind of lock-gate upon the Adige, half open—lock-gate on the ebbing rain of all the South Tyrolese Alps. The little rivers ran into it, not out of the streets only, but from all the hillsides; millions of sudden streams. If you look at Charles Dickens's letter about the rain in Glencoe, in Mr. Forster's *Life of him*,² it will give you a better idea of the

¹ [Ecclesiastes xi. 1.]

² [*The Life of Charles Dickens*, vol. i. pp. 246–247 (ch. xvi.). Ruskin in his copy of *Fors* wrote here, “Add note on Dickens' storm at Steerforth and Tennyson's Brook.” “At Steerforth,” *i.e.*, the description of the gale in which James Steerforth perished (*David Copperfield*, ch. lv.). Ruskin praises this description in a note in * \mjcont

kind of thing than I can, for my forte is really not description, but political economy.—Two hours afterwards the sky was clear, the streets dry,—the whole thunder-shower was in the Adige, ten miles below Verona, making the best of its way to the sea, after swelling the Po a little (which is inconveniently high already),—and I went out with my friends to see the sun set clear, as it was likely to do, and did, over the Tyrolese mountains.

8. The place fittest for such purpose is a limestone crag about five miles nearer the hills, rising out of the bed of a torrent, which, as usual, I found a bed only; a little washing of the sand into moist masses here and there being the only evidence of the past rain.

Above it, where the rocks were dry, we sat down, to draw, or to look; but I was too tired to draw, and cannot any more look at a sunset with comfort, because, now that I am fifty-three, the sun seems to me to set so horribly fast; when one was young, it took its time; but now it always drops like a shell,¹ and before I can get any image of it, is gone, and another day with it.

So, instead of looking at the sun, I got thinking about the dry bed of the stream, just beneath. Ugly enough it was; cut by occasional inundation irregularly out of the thick masses of old Alpine shingle, nearly every stone of it the size of an ostrich-egg. And, by the way, the average size of shingle in given localities is worth your thinking about, geologically. All through this Veronese plain the stones are mostly of ostrich-egg size and shape; some forty times as big as the pebbles of English shingle (say of the Addington Hills), and not flat nor round; but resolutely oval. Now there is no reason, that I know of, why large mountains should break into large pebbles, and small ones into small; and indeed the consistent reduction of our own masses of flint, as big as a cauliflower, leaves and all, into

Frondes Agrestes (see Vol. III. p. 570 *n.*). Of Tennyson's "The Brook," he says elsewhere that it "is far beyond anything I ever did, or could have done in beauty of description" (Vol. IV. p. 355).]

¹ ["Bomb" shell "meant."—*Author's note in his copy.*]

the flattish rounded pebble, seldom wider across than half a crown, of the banks of Addington, is just as strange a piece of systematic reduction as the grinding of Monte Baldo into sculpture of ostrich-eggs:—neither of the processes, observe, depending upon questions of time, but of method of fracture.

9. The evening drew on, and two peasants who had been cutting hay on a terrace of meadow among the rocks, left their work, and came to look at the sketchers, and make out, if they could, what we wanted on their ground. They did not speak to us, but bright light came into the face of one, evidently the master, on being spoken to, and excuse asked of him for our presence among his rocks, by which he courteously expressed himself as pleased, no less than (though this he did not say)—puzzled.

Some talk followed, of cold and heat, and anything else one knew the Italian for, or could understand the Veronese for (Veronese being more like Spanish than Italian); and I praised the country, as was just, or at least as I could, and said I should like to live there. Whereupon he commended it also, in measured terms; and said the wine was good. “But the water?” I asked, pointing to the dry river-bed. The water was bitter, he said, and little wholesome. “Why, then, have you let all that thunder-shower go down the Adige, three hours ago?” “That was the way the showers came.” “Yes, but not the way they ought to go.” (We were standing by the side of a cleft in the limestone which ran down through ledge after ledge, from the top of the cliff, mostly barren; but my farmer’s man had led two of his grey oxen to make what they could of supper from the tufts of grass on the sides of it, half-an-hour before.) “If you had ever been at the little pains of throwing half-a-dozen yards of wall here, from rock to rock, you would have had, at this moment, a pool of standing water as big as a mill-pond, kept out of that thunder-shower, which very water, to-morrow morning, will probably be washing away somebody’s hay-stack into the Po.”

The above was what I wanted to say; but didn't know the Italian for hay-stack. I got enough out to make the farmer understand what I meant.

10. Yes, he said, that would be very good, but "la spesa?"

"The expense! What would be the expense to you of gathering a few stones from this hillside? And the idle minutes, gathered out of a week, if a neighbour or two joined in the work, could do all the building." He paused at this—the idea of neighbours joining in work appearing to him entirely abortive, and untenable by a rational being.¹ Which indeed, throughout Christendom, it at present is,—thanks to the beautiful instructions and orthodox catechisms impressed by the two great sects of Evangelical and Papal pardoners² on the minds of their respective flocks—(and on their lips also, early enough in the lives of the little bleating things. "Che cosa è la fede?"³ I heard impetuously interrogated of a seven years' old one, by a conscientious lady in a black gown and white cap, in St. Michael's at Lucca, and answered in a glib speech a quarter of a minute long). Neither have *I* ever thought of, far less seriously proposed, such a monstrous thing as that neighbours should help one another; but *I have* proposed, and do solemnly still propose, that people who have got no neighbours, but are outcasts and Samaritans, as it were, should put whatever twopenny charity they can afford into useful unity of action; and that, caring personally for no one, practically for every one, they should undertake "la spesa" of work that will pay no dividend on their two-pences; but will both produce and pour oil and wine⁴ where they are most wanted. And I do solemnly propose that the St. George's Company in England, and (please the

¹ [Compare what Ruskin heard in a similar sense at Bellinzona (Vol. XVII. p. 97 *n.*); and on the subject of inundations generally, compare *ibid.*, pp. 547–552.] 552.]

² [See above, Letter 18, § 9 (p. 311).]

³ [Compare Letters 20, § 19, and 22, § 5 (below, pp. 347, 375).]

⁴ [See Luke x. 34.]

University of Padua¹) a St. Anthony's Company in Italy, should positively buy such bits of barren ground as this farmer's at Verona, and make the most of them that agriculture and engineering can.

VENICE, 23rd June.

11. My letter will be a day or two late, I fear, after all; for I can't write this morning, because of the accursed whistling of the dirty steam-engine of the omnibus for Lido, waiting at the quay of the Ducal Palace for the dirty population of Venice, which is now neither fish nor flesh, neither noble nor fisherman;—cannot afford to be rowed, nor has strength nor sense enough to row itself; but smokes and spits up and down the piazzetta all day, and gets itself dragged by a screaming kettle to Lido next morning, to sea-bathe itself into capacity for more tobacco.²

12. Yet I am grateful to the Third Fors for stopping my revise; because just as I was passing by Padua yesterday I chanced upon this fact, which I had forgotten (do me the grace to believe that I knew it twenty years ago), in Antonio Caccianiga's *Vita Campestre*.* “The Venetian Republic founded in Padua”—(wait a minute; for the pigeons are come to my window-sill and I must give them some breakfast)—“founded in Padua, 1765, the first chair

* Second Edition, Milan, 1870. (FRATELLI RECHIADEI), p. 86.³

¹ [St. Anthony being the Saint of Padua, and the University of Padua (§ 12) having been the seat of the first chair of rural economy. Ruskin's own note of explanation in his copy is “pigs”; but this indispensable element in rural economy is the symbol of St. Anthony the hermit, not of St. Anthony of Padua. Compare Letter 26, § 10 *n.* (p. 482 *n.*). In Letter 17, § 6 (p. 296), Ruskin proposed a Company of Monte Rosa.]

² [Here in Rawdon Brown's copy of *Fors* (in the Marciana Library at Venice) are pasted in copies of *Il Tempo* (13 Luglio 1872) and *Il Rinascimento* (14 Luglio), quoting from the *Gazzetta d' Italia* (12 Luglio) an Italian translation of § 11 (“I can't write . . . tobacco”) and § 12 (“This miserable mob . . . Palace quay”). The passages are erroneously described in the Italian papers as being from a letter addressed by Ruskin to a private correspondent. *La Stampa* (17 Luglio) heads an “miserable mob” consists more of visitors than of Venetians.]

³ [At p. 42, in ed. 1 of 1867.]

of rural economy appointed in Italy, annexed to it a piece of ground destined for the study, and called Peter Ardouin, a Veronese botanist, to honour the school with his lectures.”

Yes; that is all very fine; nevertheless, I am not quite sure that rural economy, during the 1760 years previous, had not done pretty well without a chair, and on its own legs. For, indeed, since the beginning of those philosophies in the eighteenth century, the Venetian aristocracy has so ill prospered that instead of being any more able to give land at Padua, it cannot so much as keep a poor acre of it decent before its own Ducal Palace, in Venice; nor hinder this miserable mob (which has not brains enough to know so much as what o'clock it is, nor sense enough so much as to go aboard a boat without being whistled for, like dogs) from choking the sweet sea air with pitch-black smoke, and filling it with entirely devilish noise, which no properly bred human being could endure within a quarter of a mile of them—that so they may be sufficiently assisted and persuaded to embark, for the washing of themselves, at the Palace quay.

13. It is a strange pass for things to have reached, under politic aristocracies and learned professors; but the policy and learning became useless, through the same kind of mistake on both sides. The professors of botany forgot that botany, in its original Greek, meant a science of things to be *eaten*;¹ they pursued it only as a science of things to be *named*. And the politic aristocracy forgot that their own “bestness” consisted essentially in their being fit—in a figurative manner—to be eaten: and fancied rather that their superiority was of a titular character, and that the beauty and power of their order lay wholly in being fit to be—named.

14. I must go back to my wall-building, however, for a minute or two more, because you might probably think

¹ [βοτάνη (όσκω) meaning grass, fodder. On “the science of things to be *named*,” compare *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 346 n.]

that my answer to the farmer's objection about expense (even if I had possessed Italian enough to make it intelligible), would have been an insufficient one; and that the operation of embanking hill-sides so as to stay the rainflow, is a work of enormous cost and difficulty.

Indeed, a work productive of good so infinite as this would be, and contending for rule over the grandest forces of nature, cannot be altogether cheap, nor altogether facile. But spend annually one-tenth of the sum you now give to build embankments against imaginary enemies, in building embankments for the help of people whom you may easily make your real friends,—and see whether your budget does not become more satisfactory, so; and, above all, learn a little hydraulics.

15. I wasted some good time, a year or two since, over a sensational novel in one of our magazines,¹ which I thought would tell me more of what the public were thinking about strikes than I could learn elsewhere. But it spent itself in dramatic effects with lucifer matches, and I learned nothing from it, and the public mislearned much. It ended (no, I believe it didn't end,—but I read no farther) with the bursting of a reservoir, and the floating away of a village. The hero, as far as I recollect, was in the half of a house which was just going to be washed down; and the anti-hero was opposite him, in the half of a tree which was just going to be torn up; and the heroine was floating between them down the stream, and one wasn't to know, till next month, which would catch her. But the hydraulics were the essentially bad part of the book, for the author made great play with the tremendous weight of water against his embankment;—it never having occurred to him that the gate of a Liverpool dry dock can keep out—and could just as easily for that matter keep in—the Atlantic Ocean, to the necessary depth in feet and inches; the depth giving the pressure, not the superficialities.

¹ [*Put Yourself in His Place*, by Charles Reade, which appeared originally as serial in the *Cornhill Magazine* during 1868 and 1869.]

16. Nay, you may see, not unfrequently, on Margate sands, your own six-years-old engineers of children keep out the Atlantic Ocean quite successfully, for a little while, from a favourite hole; the difficulty being not at all in keeping the Atlantic well out at the side, but from surreptitiously finding its way in at the bottom. And that is the real difficulty for old engineers; properly the only one; you must not let the Atlantic begin to run surreptitiously either in or out, else it soon becomes difficult to stop; and all reservoirs ought to be wide, not deep, when they are artificial, and should not be immediately above villages (though they might always be made perfectly safe merely by dividing them by walls, so that the contents could not run out all at once). But when reservoirs are *not* artificial, when the natural rocks, with adamantine wall, and embankment built up from the earth's centre, are ready to catch the rain for you, and render it back as pure as their own crystal,—if you will only here and there throw an iron valve across a cleft,—believe me—if you choose to have a dividend out of Heaven, and sell the Rain, you may get it a good deal more easily and at a figure or two higher per cent. than you can on diaphanous mustard.¹ There are certainly few men of my age who have watched the ways of Alpine torrents so closely as I have² (and you need not think my knowing something of art prevents me from understanding them, for the first good canal-engineer in Italy was Leonardo da Vinci, and more drawings of water-wheels and water-eddies exist of his, by far, than studies of hair and eyes³); and the one strong impression I have respecting them is their *utter docility and passiveness, if you*

¹ [See above, § 1.]

² [See, for instance, *Præterita*, ii. § 222 (extract from diary of 1849); *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. pp. 340, 341); *Unto this Last*, § 72 n.; *Munera Pulveris*, § 147 (Vol. XVII. pp. 97, 270); and the Letters on Inundations, Vol. XVII. pp. 547–552.]

³ [For Leonardo as engineer, compare Vol. XIX. pp. 129–130. It may be mentioned that in the *Codex Atlanticus*, giving Leonardo's own list of his drawings, he includes "studies of water-wheels." For an account of his work in connexion with canals, etc., see vol. ii. pp. 98 *seq.* of the English translation of Eugène Müntz's *Leonardo da Vinci*, 1898.]

will educate them young. But our wise engineers invariably try to manage faggots instead of sticks; and, leaving the rivulets of the Viso without training, debate what bridle is to be put in the mouth of the Po!¹ Which, by the way, is a *running* reservoir, considerably above the level of the plain of Lombardy; and if the bank of *that* one should break, any summer's day, there will be news of it, and more cities than Venice with water in their streets!

June 24th.

17. You must be content with a short letter (I wish I could flatter myself you would like a longer one) this month; but you will probably see some news of the weather here, yesterday afternoon,² which will give some emphasis to what I have been saying, not for the first time by any means; and so I leave you to think of it, and remain

Faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

¹ [Compare *Deucalion*, ii. ch. ii. § 16 (Vol. XXVI. p. 340), where Ruskin refers to this letter.]

² [The matter was not noticed in the *Times*. A description of a typical flood on the Venetian mainland may be read in H. F. Brown's *Life on the Lagoons*, 1884, pp. 60 *seq.*]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

18. I HAVE received from Wells, in Somersetshire, thirty pounds for the St. George's Fund, the first money sent me by a stranger.¹ For what has been given me by my personal friends I will account to them privately; and, henceforward, will accept no more given in their courteous prejudice, lest other friends, who do not believe in my crotchets, should be made uncomfortable. I am not quite sure if the sender of this money from Somersetshire would like his name to appear in so wide solitude; and therefore content myself with thus thanking him, and formally opening my accounts.

¹ [For the name of the donor (Mr. Charles W. Smith), see "Financial History of St. George's Guild," § 10 (Vol. XXX).]

LETTER 20

BENEDICTION¹

VENICE, 3rd July, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—You probably thought I had lost my temper, and written inconsiderately, when I called the whistling of the Lido steamer “accursed.”²

I never wrote more considerately; using the longer and weaker word “accursed” instead of the simple and proper one, “cursed,” to take away, as far as I could, the appearance of unseemly haste; and using the expression itself on set purpose, not merely as the fittest for the occasion, but because I have more to tell you respecting the general benediction engraved on the bell of Lucca,³ and the particular benediction bestowed on the Marquis of B.,⁴ several things more, indeed, of importance for you to know, about blessing and cursing.⁵

2. Some of you may perhaps remember the saying of St. James about the tongue: “Therewith bless we God, and therewith curse we men; out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.”⁶

It is not clear whether St. James means that there should be no cursing at all (which I suppose he does), or merely that the blessing and cursing should not be uttered by the same lips. But his meaning, whatever it was, did

¹ [“On your Eyes be It” was a rejected title for this letter.]

² [See Letter 19, § 11 (p. 328).]

³ [See Letter 18, § 4 (p. 307).]

⁴ [See Letter 18, § 1 (p. 304).]

⁵ [Blessing, compare Letter 18, § 9; and Cursing, *ibid.*, § 5; pp. 311, 309.]

⁶ [James iii. 9, 10.]

not, in the issue, matter; for the Church of Christendom has always ignored this text altogether, and appointed the same persons in authority to deliver, on all needful occasions, benediction or malediction, as either might appear to them due; while our own most learned sect, wielding State power, has not only appointed a formal service of malediction in Lent, but commanded the Psalms of David, in which the blessing and cursing are inlaid as closely as the black and white in a mosaic floor, to be solemnly sung through once a month.¹

3. I do not wish, however, to-day to speak to you of the practice of the churches; but of your own, which, observe, is in one respect singularly different. All the churches, of late years, paying less and less attention to the discipline of their people, have felt an increasing compunction in cursing them when they did wrong; while also, the wrong doing, through such neglect of discipline, becoming every day more complex, ecclesiastical authorities perceived that, if delivered with impartiality, the cursing must be so general, and the blessing so defined, as to give their services an entirely unpopular character.

4. Now, there is a little screw steamer just passing, with no deck, an omnibus cabin, a flag at both ends, and a single passenger; she is not twelve yards long, yet the beating of her screw has been so loud across the lagoon for the last five minutes, that I thought it must be a large new steamer coming in from the sea, and left my work to go and look.

Before I had finished writing that last sentence, the cry of a boy selling something black out of a basket on the quay² became so sharply distinguished above the voices of the always debating gondoliers, that I must needs stop again, and go down to the quay to see what he had got

¹ [The "Commination" with its ten curses is "to be used on the first day of Lent and at other times as the ordinary shall appoint." For the daily use of the Psalms, see Vol. XXIV. p. 226.]

² [Ruskin was on this occasion staying at the Hotel Danieli; for he says further on that the boy was in front of the Ducal Palace.]

to sell. They were half-rotten figs, shaken down, untimely, by the midsummer storms: his cry of “Fighiaie” scarcely ceased, being delivered, as I observed, just as clearly between his legs, when he was stooping to find an eatable portion of the black mess to serve a customer with, as when he was standing up.¹ His face brought the tears into my eyes, so open, and sweet, and capable it was; and so sad. I gave him three very small halfpence, but took no figs, to his surprise: he little thought how cheap the sight of him and his basket was to me, at the money; nor what this fruit “that could not be eaten, it was so evil,”² sold cheap before the palace of the Dukes of Venice, meant, to any one who could read signs, either in earth, or her heaven and sea.*

5. Well, the blessing, as I said, not being now often legitimately applicable to particular people by Christian priests, they gradually fell into the habit of giving it of pure grace and courtesy to their congregations; or more especially to poor persons, instead of money, or to rich ones, in exchange for it,—or generally to any one to whom they wished to be polite: while, on the contrary, the cursing, having now become widely applicable, and even necessary, was left to be understood, but not expressed; and at last, to all practical purpose, abandoned altogether (the rather that it had become very disputable whether it ever did any one the least mischief); so that,

* “And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.”—Rev. vi. 13; compare Jerem. xxiv. 8, and Amos viii. 1 and 2.³

¹ [See also Letter 74, §§ 6, 10 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 33, 37).]

² [See Jeremiah xxiv. 3 and 8.]

³ [“And as the evil figs, which cannot be eaten, they are so evil; surely thus saith the Lord, So will I give Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his princes, and the residue of Jerusalem, that remain in this land, and them that dwell in the land of Egypt” (Jeremiah xxiv. 8).]

“Thus hath the Lord God shewed unto me: and behold a basket of summer fruit. And he said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A basket of summer fruit. Then said the Lord unto me, The end is come upon my people of Israel; I will not again pass by them any more” (Amos viii. 1, 2).]

at this time being, the Pope, in his charmingest manner, blesses the bridecake of the Marquis of B., making, as it were, an ornamental confectionery figure of himself on the top of it; but has not, in anywise, courage to curse the King of Italy, although that penniless monarch has confiscated the revenues of every time-honoured religious institution in Italy; and is about, doubtless, to commission some of the Raphaels in attendance at his court (though, I believe, grooms are more in request there¹) to paint an opposition fresco in the Vatican, representing the Sardinian instead of the Syrian Heliodorus,² successfully abstracting the treasures of the temple, and triumphantly putting its angels to flight.

6. Now the curious difference between your practice, and the Church's, to which I wish to-day to direct your attention, is, that while thus the clergy, in what efforts they make to retain their influence over human minds, use cursing little, and blessing much, you working men more and more frankly every day adopt the exactly contrary practice of using benediction little, and cursing much: so that, even in the ordinary course of conversation among yourselves, you very rarely bless, audibly, so much as one of your own children; but not unfrequently damn, audibly, them, yourselves, and your friends.

I wish you to think over the meaning of this habit of yours very carefully with me. I call it a habit of *yours*, observe, only with reference to your recent adoption of it. You have learned it from your superiors; but they, partly in consequence of your too eager imitation of them, are beginning to mend their manners; and it would excite much surprise, nowadays, in any European court, to hear the reigning monarch address the heir-apparent on an occasion

¹ ["Every one has heard of King Victor's inordinate love of horses, of which he had a rare supply, and spent on them much more than he could afford. We have heard that his successor, who would not sell anything that had belonged to his father, has given some hundreds of these animals as presents to Cavalry officers" (G. S. Godkin: *Life of Victor Emmanuel II.*, 1879, vol. ii. p. 211).]

² [For other references to Raphael's painting of this subject in the Vatican, see Vol. XIX. p. 204 *n.*]

of state festivity, as a Venetian ambassador heard our James the First address Prince Charles,—“Devil take you, why don’t you dance?”¹ But, strictly speaking, the prevalence of the habit among all classes of laymen is the point in question.

4th July.

7. And first, it is necessary that you should understand accurately the difference between swearing and cursing, vulgarly so often confounded. They are entirely different things: the first is invoking the witness of a Spirit to an assertion you wish to make; the second is invoking the assistance of a Spirit, in a mischief you wish to inflict. When ill-educated and ill-tempered people clamorously confuse the two invocations, they are not, in reality, either cursing or swearing; but merely vomiting empty words indecently. True swearing and cursing must always be distinct and solemn; here is an old Latin oath, for instance, which, though borrowed from a stronger Greek one, and much diluted, is still grand:—

“I take to witness the Earth, and the stars, and the sea; the two lights of heaven; the falling and rising of the year; the dark power of the gods of sorrow; the sacredness of unbending Death; and may the Father of all things hear me, who sanctifies covenants with his lightning. For I lay my hand on the altar, and by the fires thereon, and the gods to whom they burn, I swear that no future day shall break this peace for Italy, nor violate the covenant she has made.”²

That is old swearing: but the lengthy forms of it appearing partly burdensome to the celerity, and partly superstitious to the wisdom, of modern minds, have been abridged,—in England, for the most part, into the extremely simple “By God”; in France into “Sacred name of God” (often the first word of the sentence only pronounced),

¹ [Ruskin, no doubt, was told of this remark by Rawdon Brown, but it does not occur in the Venetian State Papers, so far as they have at present (1906) been printed.]

² [Vow of Latinus in the *Æneid*, xii. 197–202. The natural parallel is the oath of Agamemnon in Homer, *Iliad*, xix. 257 *seq.*, though it is perhaps not stronger.]

and in Italy into “Christ” or “Bacchus”; the superiority of the former Deity being indicated by omitting the preposition before the name. The oaths are “Christ,”—never “by Christ”; and “by Bacchus,”—never “Bacchus.”

8. Observe also that swearing is only by extremely ignorant persons supposed to be an infringement of the Third Commandment. It is disobedience to the teaching of Christ; but the Third Commandment has nothing to do with the matter. People do not take the name of God in vain when they swear; they use it, on the contrary, very earnestly and energetically to attest what they wish to say. But when the Monster Concert at Boston begins, on the English day, with the hymn, “The will of God be done,”¹ while the audience know perfectly well that there is not one in a thousand of them who is trying to do it, or who would have it done if he could help it, unless it was his own will too,—*that* is taking the name of God in vain, with a vengeance.²

9. Cursing, on the other hand, is invoking the aid of a Spirit to a harm you wish to see accomplished, but which is too great for your own immediate power: and to-day I wish to point out to you what intensity of faith in the existence and activity of a spiritual world is evinced by the curse which is characteristic of the English tongue.

For, observe, habitual as it has become, there is still so much life and sincerity in the expression, that we all feel our passion partly appeased in its use; and the more serious the occasion, the more practical and effective the cursing becomes. In Mr. Kinglake’s *History of the Crimean War*, you will find the—th Regiment at Alma is stated to have been materially assisted in maintaining position quite vital

¹ [The reference is to the Musical Festival and “International Peace Jubilee” at Boston (U.S.A.) in June 1872. “After the opening, each day is to be devoted to a particular country, the musical selections being taken chiefly from that country. To-day is the English Day,” etc.: see letter from America of June 18, in the *Times* of July 5, 1872.]

² [Compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 46 (Vol. XVIII. p. 427); and on blasphemy generally, see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, §§ 93 seq., and *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*, § 80.]

to the battle by the steady imprecation delivered at it by its colonel for half-an-hour on end.¹ No quantity of benediction would have answered the purpose; the colonel might have said, "Bless you, my children," in the tenderest tones, as often as he pleased,—yet not have helped his men to keep their ground.

10. I want you therefore, first, to consider how it happens that cursing seems at present the most effectual means for encouraging human work; and whether it may not be conceivable that the work itself is of a kind which any form of effectual blessing would hinder instead of help. Then, secondly, I want you to consider what faith in a spiritual world is involved in the terms of the curse we usually employ. It has two principal forms: one complete and unqualified, "God damn your soul," implying that the soul is there, and that we cannot be satisfied with less than its destruction; the other, qualified, and on the bodily members only, "God damn your eyes and limbs." It is this last form I wish especially to examine.

For how do you suppose that either eye, or ear, or limb, *can* be damned? What is the spiritual mischief you invoke? Not merely the blinding of the eye, nor palsy of the limb; but the condemnation or judgment of them. And remember that though you are for the most part unconscious of the spiritual meaning of what you say, the instinctive satisfaction you have in saying it is as much a real movement of the spirit within you, as the beating of your heart is a real movement of the body, though you are unconscious of that also, till you put your hand on it. Put your hand also, so to speak, upon the source of the satisfaction with which you use this curse; and ascertain the law of it.

11. Now this you may best do by considering what it is which will make the eyes and the limbs blessed. For the precise contrary of that must be their damnation.

¹ [For Colonel Lacy Yea's "thunder of imprecation and command," see Kinglake's second volume, 1863, p. 412; and for the importance of the support rendered by "the tenacity of his 7th Fusileers," *ibid.*, p. 420.]

What do you think was the meaning of that saying of Christ's, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see"?¹ For to be made evermore incapable of seeing such things, must be the condemnation of the eyes. It is not merely the capacity of seeing sunshine, which is their blessing; but of seeing certain things under the sunshine; nay, perhaps, even without sunshine, the eye itself becoming a Sun. Therefore, on the other hand, the curse upon the eyes will not be mere blindness to the daylight, but blindness to particular things under the daylight; so that, when directed towards these, the eye itself becomes as the Night.

12. Again, with regard to the limbs, or general powers of the body. Do you suppose that when it is promised that "the lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing"²—(Steam-whistle interrupts me from the *Capo d'Istria*, which is lying in front of my window with her black nose pointed at the red nose of another steamer at the next pier. There are nine large ones at this instant,—half-past six, morning, 4th July,—lying between the Church of the Redeemer and the Canal of the Arsenal; one of them an ironclad, five smoking fiercely, and the biggest,—English and half a quarter of a mile long,—blowing steam from all manner of pipes in her sides, and with such a roar through her funnel—whistle number two from *Capo d'Istria*—that I could not make any one hear me speak in this room without an effort),—do you suppose, I say, that such a form of benediction is just the same as saying that the lame man shall leap as a lion, and the tongue of the dumb mourn? Not so, but a special manner of action of the members is meant in both cases: (whistle number three from *Capo d'Istria*; I am writing on, steadily, so that you will be able to form an accurate idea, from this page, of the intervals of time in modern music. The roaring from the English boat goes on all the while, for bass to the *Capo d'Istria's* treble, and a

¹ [Luke x. 23.]

² [Isaiah xxxv. 6.]

tenth steamer comes in sight round the Armenian Monastery)—a particular kind of activity is meant, I repeat, in both cases. The lame man is to leap, (whistle fourth from *Capo d'Istria*, this time at high pressure, going through my head like a knife) as an innocent and joyful creature leaps, and the lips of the dumb to move melodiously: they are to be blest, so; may not be unblest even in silence; but are the absolute contrary of blest, in evil utterance. (Fifth whistle, a double one, from *Capo d'Istria*, and it is seven o'clock, nearly; and here's my coffee, and I must stop writing. Sixth whistle—the *Capo d'Istria* is off, with her crew of morning bathers. Seventh,—from I don't know which of the boats outside—and I count no more.¹)

5th July.

13. Yesterday, in these broken sentences, I tried to make you understand that for all human creatures there are necessarily three separate states: life positive, under blessing,—life negative, under curse,—and death, neutral between these; and, henceforward, take due note of the quite true assumption you make in your ordinary malediction, that the state of condemnation may begin in this world, and separately affect every living member of the body.

You assume the fact of these two opposite states, then; but you have no idea whatever of the meaning of your words, nor of the nature of the blessedness or condemnation you admit. I will try to make your conception clearer.

14. In the year 1869, just before leaving Venice,² I had been carefully looking at a picture by Victor Carpaccio, representing the dream of a young princess. Carpaccio has taken much pains to explain to us, as far as he can, the

¹ [For another reference to "the steam music" in modern Venice, see Letter 42, § 4 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 93).]

² [See Vol. IV. p. 356, and Vol. XIX. p. xlvii. The reproduction of the picture here given (Plate VIII.) is made from one of the coloured photographs of Ruskin's copy, referred to in Vol. XIII. pp. 525–526. For details added to this general description of the picture, see Letters 71, 72 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 744, 760) and 91, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 441); for the Legend of St. Ursula, Letter 71, § 13 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 740); and for other references to it, see Vol. XXIV. p. li.]

kind of life she leads, by completely painting her little bedroom in the light of dawn, so that you can see everything in it. It is lighted by two doubly-arched windows, the arches being painted crimson round their edges, and the capitals of the shafts that bear them, gilded. They are filled at the top with small round panes of glass; but beneath, are open to the blue morning sky, with a low lattice across them: and in the one at the back of the room are set two beautiful white Greek vases with a plant in each; one having rich dark and pointed green leaves, the other crimson flowers, but not of any species known to me, each at the end of a branch like a spray of heath.¹

These flower-pots stand on a shelf which runs all round the room, and beneath the window, at about the height of the elbow, and serves to put things on anywhere: beneath it, down to the floor, the walls are covered with green cloth; but above, are bare and white. The second window is nearly opposite the bed, and in front of it is the princess's reading-table, some two feet and a half square, covered by a red cloth with a white border and dainty fringe; and beside it her seat, not at all like a readingchair in Oxford, but a very small three-legged stool like a music-stool, covered with crimson cloth. On the table are a book set up at a slope fittest for reading, and an hour-glass. Under the shelf, near the table, so as to be easily reached by the outstretched arm, is a press full of books. The door of this has been left open, and the books, I am grieved to say, are rather in disorder, having been pulled about before the princess went to bed, and one left standing on its side.

Opposite this window, on the white wall, is a small shrine or picture (I can't see which, for it is in sharp retiring perspective) with a lamp before it, and a silver vessel hung from the lamp, looking like one for holding incense.

15. The bed is a broad four-poster, the posts being beautifully wrought golden or gilded rods, variously wreathed

¹ [Identified in Letter 71 as olive and dianthus (Vol. XXVIII. p. 745); olive being corrected to vervain in Letter 74 (Vol. XXIX. p. 31).]

and branched, carrying a canopy of warm red. The princess's shield is at the head of it,¹ and the feet are raised entirely above the floor of the room, on a dais which projects at the lower end so as to form a seat, on which the child has laid her crown. Her little blue slippers lie at the side of the bed,—her white dog beside them. The coverlid is scarlet, the white sheet folded half-way back over it; the young girl lies straight, bending neither at waist nor knee, the sheet rising and falling over her in a narrow unbroken wave, like the shape of the coverlid of the last sleep, when the turf scarcely rises. She is some seventeen or eighteen years old, her head is turned towards us on the pillow, the cheek resting on her hand, as if she were thinking, yet utterly calm in sleep, and almost colourless. Her hair is tied with a narrow riband, and divided into two wreaths, which encircle her head like a double crown. The white nightgown hides the arm raised on the pillow, down to the wrist.

16. At the door of the room an angel enters (the little dog, though lying awake, vigilant, takes no notice). He is a very small angel, his head just rises a little above the shelf round the room, and would only reach as high as the princess's chin, if she were standing up. He has soft grey wings, lustreless; and his dress, of subdued blue, has violet sleeves, open above the elbow, and showing white sleeves below. He comes in without haste, his body, like a mortal one, casting shadow from the light through the door behind, his face perfectly quiet; a palm-branch in his right hand—a scroll in his left.

So dreams the princess, with blessed eyes, that need no earthly dawn. It is very pretty of Carpaccio to make her dream out the angel's dress so particularly, and notice the slashed sleeves; and to dream so little an angel—very nearly a doll angel,—bringing her the branch of palm, and message. But the lovely characteristic of all is the evident delight of her continual life. Royal power over herself,

¹ [See Letter 72, § 5 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 760).]



The Dream of St Ursula
from the picture by Carpaccio

and happiness in her flowers, her books, her sleeping, and waking, her prayers, her dreams, her earth, her heaven.

17. After I had spent my morning over this picture, I had to go to Verona by the afternoon train.¹ In the carriage with me were two American girls with their father and mother, people of the class which has lately made so much money, suddenly, and does not know what to do with it: and these two girls, of about fifteen and eighteen, had evidently been indulged in everything (since they had had the means) which western civilization could imagine. And here they were, specimens of the utmost which the money and invention of the nineteenth century could produce in maidenhood,—children of its most progressive race,—enjoying the full advantages of political liberty, of enlightened philosophical education, of cheap pilfered literature, and of luxury at any cost. Whatever money, machinery, or freedom of thought could do for these two children, had been done. No superstition had deceived, no restraint degraded them:—types, they could not but be, of maidenly wisdom and felicity, as conceived by the forwardest intellects of our time.

And they were travelling through a district which, if any in the world, should touch the hearts and delight the eyes of young girls. Between Venice and Verona! Portia's villa perhaps in sight upon the Brenta, Juliet's tomb to be visited in the evening,—blue against the southern sky, the hills of Petrarch's home.² Exquisite midsummer sunshine, with low rays, glanced through the vine-leaves; all the Alps were clear, from the Lake of Garda to Cadore, and to farthest Tyrol. What a princess's chamber, this, if these are princesses, and what dreams might they not dream, therein!

18. But the two American girls were neither princesses, nor seers, nor dreamers. By infinite self-indulgence, they had

¹ [Ruskin described this experience at the time to Professor Norton; see (in a later volume of this edition) the letter of August 9, 1869; and for another reference to the girls, see Letter 91, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 440).]

² [Compare "Verona and its Rivers," § 9 (Vol. XIX. pp. 433–444).]

reduced themselves simply to two pieces of white putty that could feel pain. The flies and the dust stuck to them as to clay, and they perceived, between Venice and Verona, nothing but the flies and the dust. They pulled down the blinds the moment they entered the carriage, and then sprawled, and writhed, and tossed among the cushions of it, in vain contest, during the whole fifty miles, with every miserable sensation of bodily affliction that could make time intolerable. They were dressed in thin white frocks, coming vaguely open at the backs as they stretched or wriggled; they had French novels, lemons, and lumps of sugar, to beguile their state with; the novels hanging together by the ends of string that had once stitched them, or adhering at the corners in densely bruised dog's-ears, out of which the girls, wetting their fingers, occasionally extricated a gluey leaf. From time to time they cut a lemon open, ground a lump of sugar backwards and forwards over it till every fibre was in a treacly pulp; then sucked the pulp, and gnawed the white skin into leathery strings for the sake of its bitter. Only one sentence was exchanged, in the fifty miles, on the subject of things outside the carriage (the Alps being once visible from a station where they had drawn up the blinds).

“Don't those snow-caps make you cool?”

“No—I wish they did.”

And so they went their way, with sealed eyes and tormented limbs, their numbered miles of pain.

19. There are the two states for you, in clearest opposition; Blessed, and Accursed. The happy industry, and eyes full of sacred imagination* of things that are not

* Imagination (see Faith). Readers who are not familiar with my other books,¹ should keep in mind that I always use this word to express the highest faculty of man—mental creation; and that I consider the responsibility of the human soul for such mental work to be greater than for its material work.—*Index to Vols. I. and II.*

¹ [On Imagination, see General Index; and more particularly, *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. section ii. (Vol. IV. pp. 223 *seq.*.)]

(such sweet cosa è la fede¹), and the tortured indolence, and infidel eyes, blind even to the things that are.*

“How do I know the princess is industrious?”

Partly by the trim state of her room,—by the hour-glass on the table,—by the evident use of all the books she has (well bound, every one of them, in stoutest leather or velvet, and with no dog’s-ears), but more distinctly from another picture of her, not asleep. In that one,² a prince of England has sent to ask her in marriage: and her father, little liking to part with her, sends for her to his room to ask her what she would do. He sits, moody and sorrowful; she, standing before him in a plain housewifely dress, talks quietly, going on with her needlework all the time.³

A work-woman, friends, she, no less than a princess; and princess most in being so. In like manner, in a picture by a Florentine, whose mind I would fain have you know somewhat, as well as Carpaccio’s—Sandro Botticelli—the girl who is to be the wife of Moses, when he first sees her at the desert-well, has fruit in her left hand, but a distaff in her right.†

“To do good work, whether you live or die,”⁴ it is the

* FAITH. I have not yet given any definitions of the final senses in which I use this word, so that it is of no use to refer to the detached places in which it occurs; but generally it will be found to be taken as the equivalent of noble or true imagination (the substance of things hoped for,—the evidence of things not seen⁵). Hence in Letter 20, § 19, the seeing eyes are spoken of as lighted by sweet faith, and the blind eyes as “infidel.” For active faith, or fidelity, see Letter 25, § 20, and the reference to Alice of Salisbury, *ibid.*, § 23 [p. 469], in which I was thinking of the “Shield of Faith.”—*Index to Vols. I. and II.*

† More accurately a rod cloven into three at the top, and so holding the wool. The fruit is a branch of apples; she has golden sandals, and a wreath of myrtle round her hair.⁶

¹ [See Letter 19, § 10 (p. 327).]

² [No. 572 in the Venetian Academy; Plate XLVII. in Vol. XXIV. (p. 166).]

³ [But for a correction of this passage by the author, see Letter 70, § 12 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 726).]

⁴ [See Letters 2, § 22, and 7, § 16 (pp. 44, 129).]

⁵ [Hebrews xi. 1; and for the “shield of faith,” see Ephesians vi. 16.]

⁶ [See Ruskin’s study of Zipporah, frontispiece to Vol. XXIII.]

entrance to all Princedoms; and if not done, the day will come, and that infallibly, when you must labour for evil instead of good.

20. It was some comfort to me, that second of May last, at Pisa, to watch the workman's ashamed face, as he struck the old marble cross to pieces. Stolidly and languidly he dealt the blows,—down-looking,—so far as in anywise sensitive, ashamed,—and well he might be.¹ anywise sensitive, ashamed,—and well he might be.¹

It was a wonderful thing to see done. This Pisan chapel,² first built in 1230, then called the Oracle, or Oratory,—“*Oraculum, vel Oratorium*”—of the Blessed Mary of the New Bridge, afterwards called the Sea-bridge (Ponte-a-Mare), was a shrine like that of ours on the Bridge of Wakefield;³ a boatman's praying-place: you may still see, or might, ten years since, have seen, the use of such a thing at the mouth of Boulogne Harbour, when the mackerel boats went out in a fleet at early dawn. There used to be a little shrine at the end of the longest pier; and as the *Bonne Espérance*, or *Grâce-de-Dieu* or *Vierge Marie*, or *Notre Dame des Dunes*, or *Reine des Anges*, rose on the first surge of the open sea, their crews bared their heads, and prayed for a few seconds.⁴ So also the Pisan oarsmen looked back to their shrine, many-pinnacled, standing out from the quay above the river, as they dropped down Arno under their sea-bridge, bound for the Isles of Greece. Later, in the fifteenth century, “there was laid up in it a little branch of the Crown of Thorns of the Redeemer, which a merchant had brought home, enclosed in a little urn of Beyond-sea”

¹ [See Letter 18, § 14 (p. 315).]

² [See the frontispiece to *Val d'Arno* (Vol. XXIII. p. 3), which shows the chapel in its original position overhanging the river; compare *ibid.*, p. 165 and *n.*]

³ [The chantry, still standing on the bridge over the Calder, originally built by Sir Robert Knolles in the reign of Edward III. and refounded by Edward IV. in order that prayer might be made in it for the soul of his father, Richard, Duke of York, and for those of the followers of the White Rose who fell in the battle of Wakefield (December 31, 1460). For a note on the “restoration” of the chapel in 1847, see Letter 62, § 23 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 533).]

⁴ [For Ruskin's sojourn at Boulogne in 1861 and his friendship with the fishermen, see Vol. XVII. p. xxxvii.]

(ultramarine), and its name was changed to “St. Mary’s of the Thorn.”¹

In the year 1840 I first drew it, then as perfect as when it was built. Six hundred and ten years had only given the marble of it a tempered glow, or touched its sculpture here and there with softer shade. I daguerreotyped the eastern end of it some years later (photography being then unknown), and copied the daguerreotype, that people might not be plagued in looking, by the lustre. The frontispiece² to this letter is engraved from the drawing,³ and will show you what the building was like.

21. But the last quarter of a century has brought changes, and made the Italians wiser. British Protestant missionaries explained to them that they had only got a piece of blackberry stem in their ultramarine box. German philosophical missionaries explained to them that the Crown of Thorns itself was only a graceful metaphor. French republican missionaries explained to them that chapels were inconsistent with liberty on the quay; and their own Engineering missionaries of civilization explained to them that steam-power was independent of the Madonna. And now in 1872, rowing by steam, digging by steam, driving by steam, here, behold, are a troublesome pair of human arms out of employ. So the Engineering missionaries fit them with hammer and chisel, and set them to break up the Spina Chapel.

A costly kind of stone-breaking, this, for Italian parishes to set paupers on! Are there not rocks enough of Apennine, think you, they could break down instead? For truly, the God of their Fathers, and of their land, would rather see them mar His own work, than His children’s.

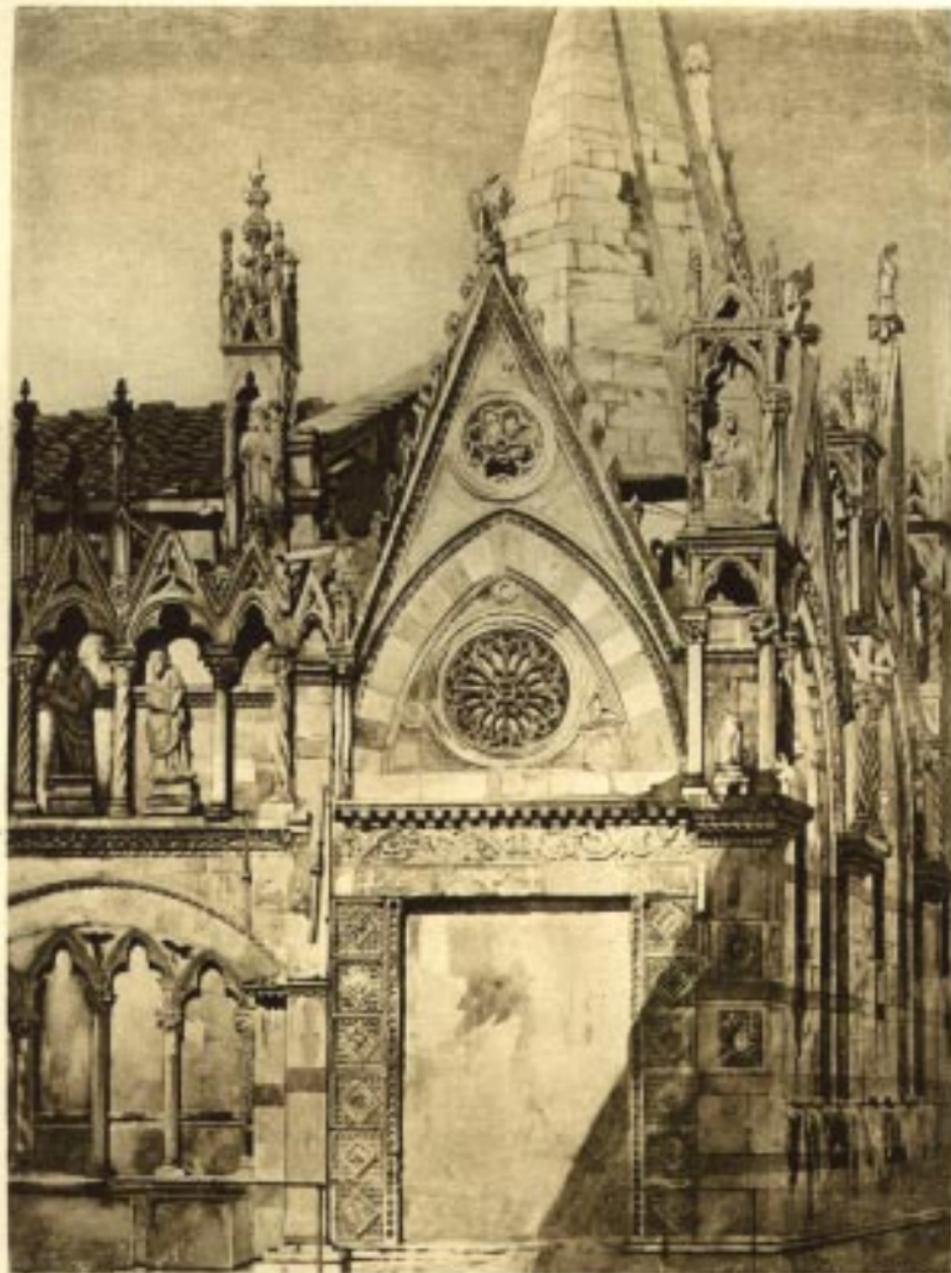
Believe me, faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ [See vol. iii. pp. 310–315 of *Pisa Illustrata nelle Arti del Disegno*, da Alessandro da Morrona (1812).]

² [Plate VII., now transferred to the present place.]

³ [That is, from the drawing made from the daguerreotype; for another reference to it, see Letter 57, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 408). The drawing of 1840 is given in Vol. IV. (p. 136).]



Part of the Chapel of St Mary of the Thorn,
Pisa.

as it was in 1845.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

NORWOOD, S.E., *June 5th.*

22. DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—Will you allow me to inform you that the utterance which you attribute to *me*, on the 12th page of this month's *Fors Clavigera*,¹ is quite wrongly assigned?

It is impossible that you should at any time have heard me say from my pulpit what you ascribe to me. Simply because I never said it, and *could* not—not at all believing it.

I can only account for your misrepresentation by supposing that during my absence from home, from February until the end of June, in the year 1870, or again in July and August of last year, you may have mistaken for me—some other person—doing duty in my stead.

Of course it is of no consequence to the readers of *Fors Clavigera* what “the Rev. Mr. Tipple” says or does not say; but you will understand that to “the Rev. Mr. Tipple” *himself*, it is of consequence—to be exhibited in its pages—with words on his lips which are wholly at variance with what he believes, and is engaged in trying to teach.

Will you be kind enough, therefore, to correct the error into which you have fallen in your next number?

I am, yours truly,

S. A. TIPPLE.

23. If Mr. Tipple had been as unselfish as he is modest, and had considered in anywise what *was* of consequence to the readers of *Fors Clavigera*, as well as of consequence to himself, he would not have left them without some explanation of his eagerness to disclaim the doctrine attributed to him, however erroneously, in the passage he refers to. No words, I beg him to observe, *are* attributed to him. In quoting actual expression I always use inverted commas. The passage in question is the best abstract I could write of a piece of sermon which occupied some five minutes in delivery, and which I myself heard delivered in Mr. Tipple's chapel, and not, certainly, by Mr. Tipple's substitute in 1870, for my father and I had a long talk over the passage when we came out; and my father died in 1864. But I have ever since kept not of this, now so hastily abjured, utterance, as the most perfect and clear statement of the great Evangelical doctrine of salvation by faith only which I ever heard from any English divine. My abstract of it is more logical than eloquent, but I answer absolutely for its accuracy, and for the specification of “thieves” and “devourers of widows' houses” by the preacher: and I am sure that some

¹ [Letter 18, § 9 (p. 311).]

at least of the readers of *Fors Clavigera* will think it of consequence to know how Mr. Tipple, disclaiming the statement even in this undecorated form, can reconcile it with his conscience to remain the instructor of a Protestant congregation.

For my own part, I can only say that I publish his letter with extreme pleasure; and, recommending him, for the future, to examine more accurately into the tenets of his substitutes, congratulate him on his vigorous repudiation of a doctrine which the Church of England most wisely describes as being "very full of comfort,"¹ but which, she ought farther to have observed, is much more comfortable to rogues than to honest people.

¹ [See Article XI.: "Of the Justification of Men."]

LETTER 21

DIVIDEND¹

DULWICH, 10th August, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—I have not yet fully treated the subject of my last letter, for I must show you how things, as well as people, may be blessed, or cursed; and to show you that, I must explain to you the story of Achan the son of Carmi,² which, too probably, you don't feel at present any special interest in; as well as several matters more about steam-engines and steam-whistling: but, in the meantime, here is my lost bit of letter from Florence, written in continuation of the June number;³ and it is well that it should be put into place at once (I see that it notices, incidentally, some of the noises in Florence, which might with advantage cease), since it answers the complaints of two aggrieved readers.

FLORENCE, 10th June, 1872.

2. In the page for correspondence you will find a letter from a workman,⁴ interesting in many respects; and besides, sufficiently representing the kind of expostulation now constantly made with me, on my not advertising either these letters, or any other of my writings. These remonstrances, founded as they always are, very politely, on the assumption that every one who reads my books derives extraordinary benefit from them, require from me,

¹ [For the title, see §§ 9, 10.]

² [See Joshua vii. 1. Ruskin does not return to the story.]

³ [See Letter 19, § 5 (p. 323).]

⁴ [See below, § 23, this correspondence also having been intended for the June number.]

at least, the courtesy of more definite answer than I have hitherto found time to give.

In the first place, my correspondents write under the conviction,—a very natural one,—that no individual practice can have the smallest power to change or check the vast system of modern commerce, or the methods of its transaction.

I, on the contrary, am convinced that it is by his personal conduct that any man of ordinary power will do the greatest amount of good that is in him to do; and when I consider the quantity of wise talking which has passed in at one long ear of the world, and out at the other, without making the smallest impression upon its mind, I am sometimes tempted for the rest of my life to try and do what seems to me rational, silently; and to speak no more.

But were it only for the exciting of earnest talk, action is highly desirable, and is, in itself, advertisement of the best. If, for instance, I had only written in these letters that I disapproved of advertisements, and had gone on advertising the letters themselves, you would have passed by my statement contemptuously, as one in which I did not believe myself. But now, most of my readers are interested in the opinion, dispute it eagerly, and are ready to hear patiently what I can say in its defence.

3. For main defence of it, I reply (now definitely to my correspondent of the Black Country):—You ought to read books, as you take medicine, by advice, and not advertisement. Perhaps, however, you *do* take medicine by advertisement, but you will not, I suppose, venture to call that a wise proceeding? Every good physician, at all events, knows it to be an unwise one, and will by no means consent to proclaim even his favourite pills by the town-crier. But perhaps you have no literary physician,—no friend to whom you can go and say, “I want to learn what is true on such a subject—what book must I read?” You prefer exercising your independent judgment, and you

expect me to appeal to it, by paying for the insertion in all the penny papers of a paragraph that may win your confidence. As, for instance, “Just published, the —th number of *Fors Clavigera*, containing the most important information on the existing state of trade in Europe; and on all subjects interesting to the British Operative. Thousandth thousand. Price 7d. 7 for 3s. 6d. Proportional abatement on large orders. No intelligent workman should pass a day without acquainting himself with the entirely original views contained in these pages.”

You don't want to be advised in that manner, do you say? but only to know that such a book exists. What good would its existence do you, if you did not know whether it was worth reading? Were you as rich as Cræsus, you have no business to spend such a sum as 7d. unless you are sure of your money's worth. Ask some one who knows good books from bad ones to tell you what to buy, and be content. You will hear of *Fors*, so, in time;—if it be worth hearing of.

4. But you have no acquaintance, you say, among people who know good books from bad ones? Possibly not; and yet, half the poor gentlemen of England are fain nowadays to live by selling their opinions on this subject. It is a bad trade, let me tell them. Whatever judgment they have, likely to be useful to the human beings about them, may be expressed in few words; and those words of sacred advice ought not to be articles of commerce. Least of all ought they to be so ingeniously concocted that idle readers may remain content with reading their eloquent account of a book, instead of the book itself. It is an evil trade, and in our company of Mont Rose,¹ we will have no reviewers; we will have, once for all, our book Gazette, issued every 1st of January, naming, under alphabetical list of authors and of titles, whatever serviceable or worthy writings have been published during

¹ [See Letter 17, § 6 (p. 296).]

the past year;¹ and if, in the space of the year following, we have become acquainted with the same thoroughly, our time will not have been ill-spent, though we hear of no new book for twelve months. And the choice of the books to be named, as well as the brief accounts of them given in our Gazette, will be by persons not paid for their opinions, and who will not, therefore, express themselves voluminously.

Meantime, your newspapers being your present advisers, I beg you to observe that a number of *Fors* is duly sent to all the principal ones, whose editors may notice it if they choose; but I will not pay for their notice, nor for any man's.

5. These, then, are my immediate reasons for not advertising. Indirect ones, I have, which weigh with me no less. I write this morning, wearily, and without spirit, being nearly deaf with the bell-ringing and bawling which goes on here, at Florence, ceaselessly, in advertisement of prayers, and wares; as if people could not wait on God for what they wanted, but God had to ring for them, like waiters, for what *He* wanted: and as if they could think of nothing they were in need of till the need was suggested to them by bellowing at their doors, or bill-posting on their housecorners. Indeed, the fresco-painting of the bill-sticker is likely, so far as I see, to become the principal fine art of modern Europe:² here, at all events, it is now the principal source of street effect. Giotto's time is past, like Oderigi's;³ but the bill-poster succeeds: and the Ponte Vecchio, the principal thoroughfare across the Arno, is on one side plastered over with bills in the exact centre, while the other side, for various reasons not to be specified, is little available to passengers.

The bills on the bridge are theatrical, announcing cheap operas; but religious bills, inviting to ecclesiastical festivities,

¹ [Compare Letter 57, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 407).]

² [Compare *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, Vol. VIII. p. 194 *n.*]

³ [The illuminator: see Vol. XII. p. 477; and, for another reference to him, Letter 86, § 10 (Vol. XXIX. p. 346).]

are similarly plastered over the front of the church once called “the Bride” for its beauty;¹ and the pious bill-stickers paste them ingeniously in and out upon the sculptured bearings of the shields of the old Florentine knights. Political bills, in various stages of decomposition, decorate the street corners and sheds of the markets; and among the last year’s rags of these one may still read here and there the heroic apostrophe, “Rome! or Death.”²

6. It never was clear to me, until now, what the desperately-minded persons who found themselves in that dilemma, wanted with Rome; and now it is quite clear to me that they never *did* want it,—but only the ground it was once built on, for finance offices and railroad stations:³ or, it may be, for new graves, when Death, to young Italy, as to old, comes *without* alternative. For, indeed, young Italy has just chosen the most precious piece of ground above Florence, and a twelfth-century church in the midst of it, to bury itself in, at its leisure; and make the summer air loathsome and pestiferous, from San Miniato to Arcetri.⁴

No Rome, I repeat, did young Italy want; but only the site of Rome. Three days before I left it, I went to see a piece not merely of the rampart, but of the actual wall, of Tullius, which zealous Mr. Parker with fortunate excavation has just laid open on the Aventine.⁵ Fifty feet

¹ [The Church of S. Maria Novella, called by Michael Angelo “La Sposa,” the Bride. For another reference to the shields on the Ponte Vecchio, see *Mornings in Florence*, § 78 (Vol. XXIII. p. 371).]

² [After the first defeats of the French armies in 1870, the French army of occupation was recalled from Rome. On September 11 the Italian armies crossed the Papal frontier, and on the 20th they arrived under the walls of Rome. On October 2 a plébiscite was taken, and the annexation of Rome to the kingdom of Italy was voted.]

³ [See Letter 18, § 14 (p. 315).]

⁴ [Murray’s *Handbook for Central Italy*, 1864 edition (by Palgrave), has the following remarks which explain this passage: “The Church of St. Miniato, which had remained closed for several years, has been converted into a receptacle for the dead, and is destined to form the centre of a large suburban cemetery. Already it has been more than half filled with corpses—graves, in close juxtaposition and above each other, being dug in the floor; the consequence of which is, as leaden coffins are not used, that a visit to this elegant basilica during the hot months is far from agreeable.” The grounds of the convent are now laid out as a cemetery.]

⁵ [For reference to J. H. Parker and his *Archæology of Rome*, see Vol. XXIII. p. 99 and *n.* Parker was in Rome pursuing his excavations at this time, and

of blocks of massy stone, duly laid; not one shifted; a wall which was just eighteen hundred years old when Westminster Abbey was begun building. I went to see it mainly for your sakes, for after I have got past Theseus and his vegetable soup,¹ I shall have to tell you something of the constitutions of Servius Tullius;² and besides, from the sweet slope of vineyard beneath this king's wall, one looks across the fields where Cincinnatus was found ploughing, according to Livy;³ though, you will find, in Smith's Dictionary, that Mr. Niebuhr "has pointed out all the inconsistencies and impossibilities in this legend;" and that he is "inclined to regard it as altogether fabulous."⁴

7. Very possibly it may be so (not that, for my own poor part, I attach much importance to Niebuhr's "inclinations"), but it is fatally certain that whenever you begin to seek the real authority for legends, you will generally find that the ugly ones have good foundation, and the beautiful ones none. Be prepared for this; and remember that a lovely legend is all the more precious when it *has* no foundation. Cincinnatus might actually have been found ploughing beside the Tiber fifty times over; and it might have signified little to any one;—least of all to you or me. But if Cincinnatus never was so found, nor ever existed at all in flesh and blood; but the great Roman nation, in its strength of conviction that manual labour in tilling the ground was good and honourable, invented a quite bodiless Cincinnatus; and set him, according to its fancy, in furrows of the field, and put its own words into his mouth, and gave the honour of its ancient deeds into his ghostly

Ruskin in his diary notes on "19th May. At Coliseum all morning. Then Aventine with Mr. Parker." For a note on these excavations, and on the course of the Agger of Servius Tullius generally, see p. 46 of the Introduction to Murray's *Handbook for Rome* (1894 edition).]

¹ [A subject promised in Letters 2 and 6 (pp. 29, 102), and ultimately discussed in Letter 24, pp. 429, 431.]

² [This, however, was not done.]

³ [Livy, book iii. chaps. xxvi.—xxix.]

⁴ [See Dr. W. Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*, 1850, vol. i. p. 752, and Niebuhr, vol. ii. pp. 266–269. For another reference to Niebuhr, see Vol. XXII. p. 500.]

hand; *this* fable, which has no foundation;—this precious coinage of the brain and conscience of a mighty people, you and I—believe me—had better read, and know, and take to heart, diligently.

8. Of which at another time: the point in question just now being that this same slope of the Aventine, under the wall of Tullius, falling to the shore of Tiber just where the Roman galleys used to be moored (the marbles worn by the cables are still in the bank of it there), and opposite the farm of Cincinnatus, commands, as you may suppose, fresh air and a fine view,—and has just been sold on “building leases.”

Sold, I heard, to an English company; but more probably to the agents of the society which is gradually superseding, with its splendid bills at all the street corners, the last vestiges of “Roma, o Morte,”—the “Società Anonima,” for providing lodgings for company in Rome.¹

9. Now this anonymous society, which is about to occupy itself in rebuilding Rome, is of course composed of persons who know nothing whatever about building. They also care about it as little as they know; but they take to building, because they expect to get interest for their money by such operation. Some of them, doubtless, are benevolent persons, who expect to benefit Italy by building, and think that, the more the benefit, the larger will be the dividend. Generally the public notion of such a society would be that it was getting interest for its money in a most legitimate way, by doing useful work, and that Roman comfort and Italian prosperity would be largely promoted by it.

¹ [Compare Letter 44, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 126). On the operations of such Companies, see W. J. Stillman's *The Old Rome and the New* (1897); and also, by the same writer, an article on “The New Rome” in the *Times* of January 10, 1888: “The greater part of the new city is composed of great stucco apartment-palaces with dividing walls that hardly serve for privacy, huge tenement-houses so flimsy in construction that several of them have fallen into the street in the process.” Matthew Arnold, who was in Rome a year later than Ruskin (see *Letters of Matthew Arnold*, vol. ii. p. 103), described the building mania which followed the annexation in his verses entitled “New Rome.”]

10. But observe in what its dividends will consist. Knowing nothing about architecture, nor caring, it neither can choose, nor will desire to choose, an architect of merit. It will give its business to the person whom it supposes able to build the most attractive mansions at the least cost. Practically, the person who can and will do so, is the architect who knows where to find the worst bricks, the worst iron, and the worst workmen, and who has mastered the cleverest tricks by which to turn these to account. He will turn them to account by giving the external effect to his edifices which he finds likely to be attractive to the majority of the public in search of lodging. He will have stucco mouldings, veneered balconies, and cast-iron pillars:¹ but, as his own commission will be paid on the outlay, he will assuredly make the building costly in some way or other; and he can make it costly with least trouble to himself by putting into it, somewhere, vast masses of merely squared stone, chiselled so as to employ handicraftsmen on whose wages commission can be charged, and who all the year round may be doing the same thing, without giving any trouble by asking for directions. Hence there will be assuredly in the new buildings an immense mass of merely squared or rusticated stones; for these appear magnificent to the public mind,—need no trouble in designing,—and pay a vast commission on the execution.

11. The interior apartments will, of course, be made as luxurious as possible; for the taste of the European public is at present practically directed by women of the town; these having the government of the richest of our youth at the time when they spend most freely. And at the very time when the last vestiges of the heroic works of the Roman Monarchy are being destroyed, the *base frescopainting of the worst times of the Empire is being faithfully copied*, with perfectly true lascivious instinct, for interior decoration.

¹ [See Ruskin's account of the new hotel in which he was staying, p. 309.]

12. Of such architecture the anonymous society will produce the most it can; and lease it at the highest rents it can; and advertise and extend itself, so as, if possible, at last to rebuild, after its manner, all the great cities of Italy. Now the real moving powers at the bottom of all this are essentially the vanity and lust of the middle classes, all of them seeking to live, if it may be, in a cheap palace, with as much cheap pleasure as they can have in it, and the airs of great people. By “cheap” pleasure, I mean, as I will show you¹ in explaining the nature of cursed things, pleasure which has not been won by attention, or deserved by toil, but is snatched or forced by wanton passion. But the mechanical power which gives effect to this vanity and lust, is the instinct of the anonymous society, and of other such, to get a dividend by catering for them.

13. It has chanced, by help of the Third Fors (as again and again in the course of these letters² the thing to my purpose has been brought before me just when I needed it), that having to speak of interest of money, and first of the important part of it consisting in rents, I should be able to lay my finger on the point of land in all Europe where the principle of it is, at this moment, doing the most mischief. But, of course, all our great building work is now carried on in the same way; nor will any architecture, properly so called, be now possible for many years in Europe. For true architecture is a thing which puts its builders to cost—not which pays them dividends. If a society chose to organize itself to build the most beautiful houses, and the strongest that it could, either for art’s sake, or love’s—either palaces for itself, or houses for the poor,—such a society would build something worth looking at, but not get dividends. True architecture is built by the man who wants a house for himself, and builds it to his own liking, at his own cost; not for his own gain, to the liking of other people.

¹ [See Letters 61, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 502) and 89, § 13 (Vol. XXIX. p. 412).]

² [See, for instance, above, pp. 42, 81, 82, 315, 323, 328.]

14. All orders of houses may be beautiful when they are thus built by their master to his own liking. Three streets from me, at this moment, is one of the sixteenth century. The corner stones of it are ten feet long by three broad, and two thick—fifty courses of such, and the cornice; flawless stones, laid as level as a sea-horizon, so that the walls become one solid mass of unalterable rock,—four grey cliffs set square in mid-Florence, some hundred and twenty feet from cornice to ground.¹ The man who meant to live in it built it so; and Titian painted his little grand-daughter for him. He got no dividend by his building—no profit on his picture. House and picture, absolutely untouched by time, remain to this day.

15. On the hills about me at Coniston there are also houses built by their owners, according to their means, and pleasure. A few loose stones gathered out of the fields, set one above another to a man's height from the ground; a branch or two of larch, set gable-wise across them,—on these some turf, cut from the next peat moss. It is enough: the owner gets no dividend on his building; but he has covert from wind and rain, and is honourable among the sons of Earth. He has built as best he could, to his own mind.²

16. You think that there ought to be no such differences in habitation: that nobody should live in a palace, and nobody under a heap of turf? But if ever you become educated enough to know something about the arts, you will like to see a palace built in noble manner; and if ever you become educated enough to know something about men, you will love some of them so well as to desire that at least they should live in palaces, though you cannot. But it will be long now before you can know much, either about arts or men. The one point you may be assured of

¹ [The Strozzi Palace. For the picture (now at Berlin), see Plate XIX. in Vol. XXII. (p. 223).]

² [Compare the chapter on "The Mountain Cottage—Westmoreland" in *The Poetry of Architecture* (Vol. I. pp. 42 *seq.*.)]

is that your happiness does not at all depend on the size of your house—(or, if it does, rather on its smallness than largeness¹); but depends entirely on your having peaceful and safe possession of it—on your habits of keeping it clean and in order—on the materials of it being trustworthy, if they are no more than stone and turf—and on your contentment with it, so that gradually you may mend it to your mind, day by day, and leave it to your children a better house than it was.

To your children, and to theirs, desiring for them that they may live as you have lived; and not strive to forget you, and stammer when any one asks who you were, because, forsooth, they have become fine folks by your help.

EUSTON HOTEL, 18th August.

17. Thus far I had written at Florence. To-day² I received a severe lesson from a friend whose teaching is always serviceable to me, of which the main effect was to show me that I had been wrong in allowing myself so far in the habit of jesting, either in these letters, or in any other of my books, on grave subjects; and that although what little play I had permitted, rose, as I told you before,³ out of the nature of the things spoken of, it prevented many readers from understanding me rightly, and was an offence to others. The second effect of the lesson was to show me how vain it was, in the present state of English literature and mind, to expect anybody to attend to the real force of the words I wrote; and that it would be better to spare myself much of the trouble I took in choosing them, and try to get things explained by reiteration instead of precision, or, if I was too proud to do that,

¹ [Compare Letter 63, § 13 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 548); and see what Ruskin says of the conclusions which he drew in his youth from seeing the castles of England (*Præterita*, i. §§ 6, 35; ii. § 22).]

² [The diary shows that on this day Ruskin had come up from Toft, where he had been staying with his friends, Mr. and Mrs. Leycester, and where Miss Rose La Touche had been one of the guests.]

³ [See above, p. 293 (§ 3); and compare, below, p. 544 *n.*]

to write less myself, and only urge your attention, or aid it, to other people's happier sayings. Which indeed I meant to do, as *Fors* went on; for I have always thought that more true force of persuasion might be obtained by rightly choosing and arranging what others have said, than by painfully saying it again in one's own way. And since as to the matter which I have to teach you, all the great writers and thinkers of the world are agreed,¹ without any exception whatsoever, it is certain I can teach you better in other men's words than my own, if I can lay my hand at once on what I want of them. And the upshot of the lesson, and of my meditation upon it, is, that henceforward to the end of the year I will try very seriously to explain, as I promised, step by step, the things put questionably in last year's letters. We will conclude therefore first, and as fast as we can, the debate respecting interest of money which was opened in my letter of January, 1871.²

18. An impatient correspondent of mine, Mr. W. C. Sillar,³ who has long been hotly engaged in testifying publicly against the wickedness of taking interest, writes to me that all I say is mysterious, that I am bound to speak plainly, and, above everything, if I think taking interest sinful, not to hold bank stock.

Once for all, then, Mr. Sillar is wholly right as to the abstract fact that lending for gain is sinful; and he has, in various pamphlets, shown unanswerably that whatever is said either in the Bible, or in any other good and ancient book, respecting usury, is intended by the writers to apply to the receiving of interest, be it ever so little. But Mr. Sillar has allowed this idea to take possession of him, body and soul;⁴ and is just as fondly enthusiastic about abolition of usury as some other people are about the liquor laws. Now of course drunkenness is mischievous, and usury is mischievous, and whoredom is mischievous, and idleness is

¹ [Compare Letter 76, § 16 (Vol. XXIX. p. 98); and Vol. XXII. p. 505.]

² [Letter 1, §§ 12–14 (pp. 23–26).]

³ [See Vol. XVII. p. 220 *n.*, where Mr. Sillar's pamphlets are enumerated.]

⁴ [For Mr. Sillar's reply to these remarks, see Letter 22, § 26 (p. 393).]

mischievous. But we cannot reform the world by preaching temperance only, nor refusal of interest only, nor chastity only, nor industry only. I am myself more set on teaching healthful industry than anything else, as the beginning of all redemption; then, purity of heart and body; if I can get these taught, I know that nobody so taught will either get drunk, or, in any unjust manner, “either a borrower or a lender be.”¹ But I expect also far higher results than either of these, on which, being utterly bent, I am very careless about such minor matters as the present conditions either of English brewing or banking. I hold bank stock simply because I suppose it to be safer than any other stock, and I take the interest of it, because though taking interest is, in the abstract, as wrong as war, the entire fabric of society is at present so connected with both usury and war, that it is not possible violently to withdraw, nor wisely to set example of withdrawing, from either evil.² I entirely, in the abstract, disapprove of war; yet have the profoundest sympathy with Colonel Yea and his fusiliers at Alma, and only wish I had been there with them.³ I have by no means equal sympathy either with bankers or landlords; but am certain that for the present it is better that I receive my dividends as usual, and that Miss Hill should continue to collect my rents in Marylebone.⁴

19. “Ananias over again, or worse,” Mr. Sillar will probably exclaim, when he reads this, and invoke lightning against me. I will abide the issue of his invocation, and only beg him to observe respecting either ancient or modern denunciations of interest, that they are much beside the mark unless they are accompanied with some explanation of the manner in which borrowing and lending, when necessary, can be carried on without it. Neither *are* often necessary in healthy states of society; but they always must remain so to some extent; and the name “Mount

¹ [*Hamlet*, Act i. sc. 3.]

² [Compare Letter 44, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 139).]

³ [Compare Letter 20, § 9 (p. 339).]

⁴ [See Letter 10, § 15 (p. 175).]

of Pity,”* given still in French and Italian to the pawn-broker’s shop, descends from a time when lending to the poor was as much a work of mercy as giving to them. And both lending and borrowing are virtues, when the borrowing is prudent, and the lending kind; how much otherwise than kind lending at interest usually is, you, I suppose, do not need to be told; but how much otherwise than prudent nearly all borrowing is, and above everything, trade on a large scale on borrowed capital, it is very necessary for us all to be told. And for a beginning of other people’s words, here are some quoted by Mr. Sillar from a work on the Labour question recently published in Canada, which, though commonplace, and evidently the expressions of a person imperfectly educated, are true, earnest, and worth your reading:—

“These Scripture usury laws, then, are for no particular race and for no particular time. They lie at the very foundations of national progress and wealth. They form the only great safeguards of labour, and are the security of civil society, and the strength and protection of commerce itself. Let us beware, for our own sakes, how we lay our hand upon the barriers which God has reared around the humble dwelling of the labouring man. . . .

“Business itself is a pleasure, but it is the anxieties and burdens of business arising all out of this debt system, which have caused so many aching pillows and so many broken hearts. What countless multitudes, during the last three hundred years, have gone down to bankruptcy and

* The “Mount” is the heap of money in store for lending without interest. You shall have a picture of it in next number, as drawn by a brave landscape painter four hundred years ago; and it will ultimately be one of the crags of our own Mont Rose;¹ and well should be, for it was first raised among the rocks of Italy by a Franciscan monk, for refuge to the poor against the usury of the Lombard merchants who gave name to our Lombard Street, and perished by their usury, as their successors are like enough to do also. But the story goes back to Friedrich II. of Germany again, and is too long for this letter.²

¹ [See Letter 17, § 6, p. 296; and in this letter, p. 354.]

² [Ruskin seems here to refer, first, to the war of the Lombard League against Frederick II.—“the contest of the craftsman with the pillaging soldier,” *Val d’Arno*, § 91 (Vol. XXIII. p. 55); then, to the fall of the free cities under the “usurer’s fang,” *ibid.*, pp. 161, 162; and to the establishment of the “Mount of Pity” by Brother Marco, of San Gallo: see *Ariadne Florentina*, § 203 (Vol. XXII. p. 439).]

shame—what fair prospects have been for ever blighted—what happy homes desolated—what peace destroyed—what ruin and destruction have ever marched hand in hand with this system of debt, paper, and usury! Verily its sins have reached unto heaven and its iniquities are very great.

“What shall the end of these things be? God only knoweth. I fear the system is beyond a cure. All the great interests of humanity are overborne by it, and nothing can flourish as it ought till it is taken out of the way. It contains within itself, as we have at times witnessed, most potent elements of destruction which in one hour may bring all its riches to nought.”

20. Here, lastly for this month, is another piece of Marmontel for you, describing an ideal landlord’s mode of “investing” his money; losing, as it appears, half his income annually by such investment, yet by no means with “aching pillows” or broken hearts for the result. (By the way, for a lesson in writing, observe that I know the Canada author to be imperfectly educated merely by one such phrase as “aching pillow”—for pillows don’t ache—and again, by his thinking it religious and impressive to say “knoweth” instead of “knows.”) But listen to Marmontel:¹—

“In the neighbourhood of this country-house lived a kind of Philosopher, not an old one, but in the prime of life, who, after having enjoyed everything that he could during six months of the year in town, was in the habit of coming to enjoy six months of his own company in a voluptuous solitude. He presently came to call upon Elise. ‘You have the reputation of a wise man, sir,’ she said—‘tell me, what is your plan of life?’ ‘My plan, madame? I have never had any,’ answered the count. ‘I do everything that amuses me. I seek everything that I like, and I avoid with care everything that annoys or displeases me.’ ‘Do you live alone, or do you see people?’ asked Elise. ‘I see sometimes our clergyman, whom I lecture on morals. I chat with labourers, who are better informed than all our savants. I give balls to little village girls, the prettiest in the world. I arrange little lotteries for them, of laces and ribands.’ (Wrong, Mr. Philosopher: as many ribands as you please; but no lotteries.) ‘What?’ said Elise, with great surprise, ‘do those sort of people know what love is?’ ‘Better than we do, madame—better than we do a hundred times; they love each other like turtle-doves—they make me wish to be married myself?’ ‘You will confess, however,’ said Elise, ‘that they love without any delicacy.’ ‘Nay, madame, delicacy is a refinement of art—they have only the instincts of nature; but, indeed, they have in feeling what we have only in fancy. I have tried, like another, to love,

¹ [“Le Scrupule, ou l’amour mécontent de lui-même” in *Contes Moraux*, Paris, 1765, vol. i. p. 107. The girl’s name is Belisa in Marmontel.]

and to be beloved, in the town,—there, caprice and fashion arrange everything, or derange it:—here, there is true liking, and true choice. You will see in the course of the gaieties I give them, how these simple and tender hearts seek each other, without knowing what they are doing.’ ‘You give me,’ replied Elise, ‘a picture of the country I little expected; everybody says those sort of people are so much to be pitied.’ ‘They were so, madame, some years since; but I have found the secret of rendering their condition more happy.’ ‘Oh! you must tell me your secret!’ interrupted Elise, with vivacity. ‘I wish also to put it in practice.’ ‘Nothing can be easier,’ replied the count,—‘this is what I do: I have about two thousand a year of income; I spend five hundred in Paris, in the two visits that I make there during the year,—five hundred more in my country-house,—and I have a thousand to spare, which I spend on my exchanges.’ ‘And what exchanges do you make?’ ‘Well,’ said the count, ‘I have fields well cultivated, meadows well watered, orchards delicately hedged, and planted with care.’ ‘Well! what then?’ ‘Why, Lucas, Blaise, and Nicholas, my neighbours, and my good friends, have pieces of land neglected or worn out; they have no money to cultivate them. I give them a bit of mine instead acre for acre; and the same space of land which hardly fed them, enriches them in two harvests; the earth which is ungrateful under their hands, becomes fertile in mine. I choose the seed for it, the way of digging, the manure which suits it best, and as soon as it is in good state, I think of another exchange. Those are my amusements.’ ‘That is charming!’ cried Elise; ‘you know then the art of agriculture?’ ‘I learn a little of it, madame; every day, I oppose the theories of the savants to the experience of the peasants. I try to correct what I find wrong in the reasonings of the one, and in the practice of the other.’ ‘That is an amusing study; but how you ought to be adored then in these cantons! these poor labourers must regard you as their father!’ ‘On each side, we love each other very much, madame.’ ”

21. This is all very pretty, but falsely romantic, and not to be read at all with the unqualified respect due to the natural truth of the passages I before quoted to you from Marmontel.¹ He wrote this partly in the hope of beguiling foolish and selfish persons to the unheard-of amusement of doing some good to their fellow-creatures; but partly also in really erroneous sentiment, his own character having suffered much deterioration by his compliance with the manners of the Court in the period immediately preceding the French Revolution. Many of the false relations between the rich and poor, which could not but end in such catastrophe, are indicated in the above-quoted passage. There

¹ [Letters 14, §§ 8–10, and 17, § 9 (pp. 251–254, 300).]

is no recognition of duty on either side: the landlord enjoys himself benevolently, and the labourers receive his benefits in placid gratitude, without being either provoked or instructed to help themselves. Their material condition is assumed to be necessarily wretched unless continually relieved; while their household virtue and honour are represented (truly) as purer than those of their masters. The Revolution could not do away with this fatal anomaly; to this day the French peasant is a better man than his lord; and no government will be possible in France until she has learned that all authority, before it can be honoured, must be honourable.

22. But, putting the romantic method of operation aside, the question remains whether Marmontel is right in his main idea that a landlord should rather take £2000 in rents, and return £1000 in help to his tenants, than remit the £1000 of rents at once. To which I reply, that it is primarily better for the State, and ultimately for the tenant, that administrative power should be increased in the landlord's hands; but that it ought not to be by rents which he can change at his own pleasure, but by fixed duties under State law.¹ Of which, in due time;²—I do not say in my next letter, for that would be mere defiance of the Third Fors.

Ever faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ [Compare *Time and Tide*, § 152 (Vol. XVII. p. 439).]

² [For an exposition of Ruskin's proposed practice with regard to rents, see Letter 58 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 421 *seq.*).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

TIPTON, 8th April, 1872.

23. SIR,—You have written a many letters to workmen, and seem to have suffered from a many replies by clerks, manufacturers, and others, to whom your letters were not addressed; and as you have noticed some of their performances, I am encouraged to expect you will kindly read one written by a man belonging to the class that you have chosen to write to,—one who is emphatically a workman, labouring many hours daily with hands and head in the wilderness known to people living in pleasanter places as the Black Country.

This letter is not, however, sent to invite you to sympathise with me on account of the sooty residence I endure, for it is not so unpleasant a place to a man with a healthy mind, as gentlefolks with exaggerated sensibilities are apt to consider it. We do see the sky, and sometimes the green fields, and those who always live among the latter don't seem to be more refined, more elevated, or more use in the world than we are. But it is written very respectfully to remonstrate with you on account of your peculiar method of publication. You write books and letters, therefore I suppose you wish them to be read; but did it never occur to you that in order to be read, they must be made known to those whom you desire to read them? and how can that be done unless their publication is advertised? You object to do that, but do not substitute any other method—if, indeed, there is any other—of informing us of the letters and books that you have written. Booksellers do not offer your volumes, because your conditions of sale do not allow them to make a fair profit. Their customers can purchase the books as cheap as the book-dealer, and with as little trouble as an application to him would give them*—supposing they have accidentally heard of the books. Like many thousands more in this country of black faces and horny hands, I am imperfectly educated, but desirous to learn, and able, without much self-denial or any inconvenience, to purchase your volumes at a doctor's fee, or two fees each if you fix it so. Some of your books I possess, and the advantage I have received from the study of them makes me desirous that they should be more widely known and read. Commerce is too often a dishonest selfish scramble: employers and employed are at variance when their interests are identical. Daily toil does not obliterate our taste for art, and is it not desirable that those who have the means to gratify that taste should be able to know the right and the wrong in it, and recognize noble art when they see it? Upon all this you have written much in your books, but if the books are not known, it is as if unwritten, or even worse, because it is needful work not doing the good it might do.

Your *Fors* series of letters are almost unknown to those to whom you have addressed them. I heard of them six months after their commencement, because some "able editor" was short of copy, and endeavoured to be clever at your

* If that be so, booksellers are of no use in the world, and ought to be abolished. Am I to give my buyers unnecessary trouble that booksellers may live? [*Author's note.*]

expense. Sir, I hope you will reconsider this matter,—what possible harm could it do to simply announce the publication of a volume or a letter in a few news-papers or magazines? It is certainly a mistake that the knowledge of a newly-issued volume should depend upon the exigencies of foolish editors or the popular relish for their highly-spiced rubbish.

I hate anonymous letters, and you can have my address if you want it. I read the other day if any one dared to expostulate with you that you would gibbet him. What that means, I know not. Something awful, no doubt. So I merely subscribe myself,

Sir,

Your very humble servant,

-----.

LETTER 22

THE MOUNT OF COMPASSION¹

BRANTWOOD, 19th September, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—I am to-day to begin explaining to you the meaning of my own books, which, some people will tell you, is an egotistical and impertinent thing for an author to do. My own view of the matter is, that it is generally more egotistical and impertinent to explain the meaning of other people's books,—which, nevertheless, at this day in England, many young and inexperienced persons are paid for pretending to do. What intents I have had, myself, therefore, in this *Fors Clavigera*, and some other lately published writings, I will take on me to tell you, without more preamble.

2. And first, for their little vignette stamp of roses on title-page. It is copied from the clearest bit of the pattern of the petticoat of Spring, where it is drawn tight over her thigh, in Sandro Botticelli's picture of her, at Florence.² I drew it on the wood myself, and Mr. Burgess cut it; and it is on all my title-pages, because whatever I now write is meant to help in founding the society called of "Monte Rosa";—see § 6 of the seventeenth of these letters. Such reference hereafter, observe, is only thus printed (17, § 6³).

3. And I copied this vignette from Sandro Botticelli, for two reasons: first, that no man has ever yet drawn, and none is likely to draw for many a day, roses as well as Sandro has drawn them; secondly, because he was the only painter of Italy who thoroughly felt and understood

¹ [See below, § 22.]

² [For other references to the picture, see Vol. XXII. pp. 19, 430; Vol. XXIII. p. xlix., and Vol. XXIV. p. 453.]

³ [Originally, the *Page* and not the *Section* was given: see above, p. 235 *n.*]



THE MOUNT OF COMPASSION
And Coronation of its Builder

Drawn thus by Sandro Botticelli

Dante; and the only one also who understood the thoughts of Heathens and Christians equally, and could in a measure paint both Aphrodite and the Madonna. So that he is, on the whole, the most universal of painters; and, take him all in all, the greatest Florentine workman: and I wish you to know with Dante's opinions, his, also, on all subjects of importance to you, of which Florentines could judge.

And of his life, it is proper for you immediately to know thus much:¹ or at least, that so much was current gossip about it in Vasari's time,—that, when he was a boy, he obstinately refused to learn either to read, write, or sum (and I heartily wish all boys would and could do the same, till they were at least as old as the illiterate Alfred);² whereupon his father, “disturbed by these eccentric habits of his son, turned him over in despair to a gossip of his, called Botticello, who was a goldsmith.”³

4. And on this, note two things: the first, that all the great early Italian masters of painting and sculpture, without exception, began by being goldsmiths' apprentices;⁴ the second, that they all felt themselves so indebted to, and formed by the master-craftsman who had mainly disciplined their fingers, whether in work on gold or marble, that they practically considered him their father, and took *his* name rather than their own; so that most of the great Italian workmen are now known, not by their own names, but by those of their masters,* the master being himself often entirely forgotten by the public, and eclipsed by his pupil; but immortal *in* his pupil, and named in his name.⁵ Thus, our Sandro, Alessandro, or Alexander's own name was

* Or of their native towns or villages,—these being recognized, as masters, also.

¹ [With the following passages of this letter, compare *Ariadne Florentina*, Lecture vi., where also Ruskin gives account of Botticelli's life and work (Vol. XXII. pp. 425 *seq.*). See also *The Schools of Florence*, Vol. XXIII. pp. 265 *seq.*]

² [For the youth of Alfred the Great, see *Pleasures of England*, §§ 103–106.]

³ [Vasari; vol. ii. p. 230 (Bohn).]

⁴ [Compare, again, *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 123, 188 (Vol. XXII. pp. 377, 427); and for Botticelli, Vol. XXIII. pp. 265–266.]

⁵ [See, once more, *Ariadne Florentina*, § 65 (Vol. XXII. pp. 340, 341 *n.*).]

Filipepi; which name you never heard of, I suppose, till now: nor I, often, but his master's was Botticello; of which master we nevertheless know only that he so formed, and informed, this boy, that thenceforward the boy thought it right to be called "Botticello's Sandro," and nobody else's. Which in Italian is Sandro di Botticello; and that is abbreviated into Sandro Botticelli. So, Francesco Francia is short for Francesco di Francia, or "Francia's Francis," though nobody ever heard, except thus, of his master the goldsmith, Francia. But his own name was Raibolini. So, Philip Brunelleschi is short for Brunellesco's Philip, Brunellesco being his father's *Christian* name, to show how much he owed to his father's careful training (the family name was Lippo); and, which is the prettiest instance of all, "Piero della Francesca," means "Francesca's Peter"; because he was chiefly trained by his mother, Francesca. All of which I beg you to take to heart, and meditate on, concerning Mastership and Pupilage.

5. But to return to Sandro.

Having learned prosperously how to manage gold, he takes a fancy to know how to manage colour; and is put by his good father under, as it chanced, the best master in Florence, or the world, at that time—the Monk Lippi, whose work is the finest, out and out, that ever monk did; which I attribute, myself, to what is usually considered faultful in him,—his having run away with a pretty novice out of a convent.¹ I am not jesting, I assure you, in the least; but how can I possibly help the nature of things, when *that* chances to be laughable? Nay, if you think of it, perhaps you will not find it so laughable that Lippi should be the only monk (if this be a fact), who ever did good painter's work.²

Be that as it may, Lippi and his pupil were happy in each other; and the boy soon became a smiter of colour,

¹ [On this subject, compare *Ariadne Florentina*, § 185 and *n.* (Vol. XXII. p. 424).]

² [But see what Ruskin said after further study of Fra Angelico: Vol. XXIII. pp. 253 *seq.*, Vol. XXIV. p. 451.]

or colour-smith, no less than a gold-smith; and eventually an “Alexander the Coppersmith,” also, not inimical to St. Paul, and for whom Christian people may wish, not revengefully, “the Lord reward him according to his works,”¹ though he was fain, Demetrius-like, sometimes to shrine Diana.² And he painted, for a beginning, a figure of Fortitude;³ and then, one of St. Jerome, and then, one of our Lady, and then, one of Pallas, and then, one of Venus with the Graces and Zephyrs, and especially the Spring aforesaid with flowery petticoats; and, finally, the Assumption of our Lady, with the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Apostles, the Evangelists, the Martyrs, the Confessors, the Doctors, the Virgins, and the Hierarchies.⁴ It is to be presumed that by this time he had learned to read, though we hear nothing of it (rather the contrary, for he is taunted late in life with rude scholarship⁵),—and then paints under

¹ [2 Timothy iv. 14.]

² [Acts xix. 24.]

³ [Ed. 1. reads:—

“ . . . Fortitude (having, therefore, just right to give us our vignette to *Fors*); and then, . . .”]

⁴ [Ruskin takes the list of works from Vasari (vol. ii. pp. 231, 232, 233, Bohn’s edition). For “Fortitude,” see Plate XXXI. in Vol. XXIII. (p. 334). “One of St. Jerome” is a mistaken reading of Vasari, who says that in the Church of Ognissanti, Botticelli painted a Sant’ Agostino, in emulation of a St. Jerome by Ghirlandajo. The picture of “our Lady” is the “Coronation,” now in the Accademia: see Vol. XXIII. p. 273. A picture of “Pallas and the Centaur” was discovered in 1895 in one of the ante-rooms of the Pitti Palace, but is probably not the one mentioned by Vasari. In the phrase “one of Venus with the Graces and Zephyrs,” Ruskin combines two pictures mentioned by Vasari—namely, “one representing the birth of Venus, who is borne to earth by the Loves and Zephyrs; the second also presenting the figure of Venus crowned with flowers by the Graces; she is here intended to denote the Spring.” For another reference to the Birth of Venus (in the Uffizi), see Vol. XXII. p. 430. The “Assumption” is in the National Gallery (No. 1126); for other references to it, see Vol. XXII. pp. 428, 431.]

⁵ [Ed. 1. reads:—

“ . . . rude scholarship), and was so good a divine, as well as painter, that Pope Sixtus IV. sent for him to be master of the works in his new chapel (the same you have sometimes heard of as the ‘Sixtine’ or ‘Sistine’); wherein he painted Moses, and his wife (see Letter 20, § 19 *n.*), very beautifully; and the Destruction of Korah, and the Temptation of Christ,—all well preserved . . .”
 “Taunted with rude scholarship”: this refers to Vasari’s story (p. 238, Bohn) of Botticelli accusing a friend in jest of heresy. “It is true,” replied the accused man, “that I hold the opinion stated respecting the soul of this man who is a blockhead; nay, does he not appear to you to be a heretic also; for, without a grain of learning, has he not undertaken to make a commentary on Dante, and does he not take his name in vain!”]

notable circumstances, of which presently, the calling of Moses, and of Aaron, and of Christ,—all well preserved and wonderful pieces, which no person now ever thinks of looking at, though they are¹ the best works of pictorial divinity extant in Europe. And having thus obtained great honour and reputation, and considerable sums of money, he squandered all the last away; and then, returning to Florence, set himself to comment upon and illustrate Dante, engraving some plates for that purpose which I will try to give you a notion of, some day.² And at this time, Savonarola beginning to make himself heard, and founding in Florence the company of the Piagnoni (Mourners, or Grumblers, as opposed to the men of pleasure), Sandro made a Grumbler of himself, being then some forty years old; and,—his new master being burned in the great square of Florence, a year afterwards (1498),—became a Grumbler to purpose; and doing what he could to show “che cosa è la fede,”³ namely, in engraving Savonarola’s “Triumph of Faith,”⁴ fell sadder, wiser, and poorer, day by day; until he became a poor bedesman of Lorenzo de’ Medici; and having gone some time on crutches, being unable to stand upright, and received his due share of what I hope we may call discriminate charity, died peacefully in his fifty-eighth year, having lived a glorious life; and was buried at Florence, in the Church of all Saints, three hundred and fifty-seven years ago.

6. So much for my vignette. For my title, see 2, § 2, and 13, § 4. I mean it, as you will see by the latter passage, to be read, in English, as “Fortune the Nail-bearer,” and that the book itself should show you how to form, or make, this Fortune, see the fourth sentence in 2, § 2; and compare 3, §§ 2, 3.

¹ [Ed. 1. reads, “are probably the.”]

² [This, however, was not done; but when the Hamilton Library (including Botticelli’s Dante drawings) was for sale, Ruskin made an appeal for its purchase. He was unsuccessful, and the drawings are now in the Berlin Museum: see Vol. XXX.]

³ [See above, Letter 19, § 10 (p. 327).]

⁴ [Compare, again, Vol. XXIII. p. 266.]

7. And in the course of the first year's letters, I tried gradually to illustrate to you certain general propositions, which, if I had set them down in form at once, might have seemed to you too startling, or disputable, to be discussed with patience. So I tried to lead you into some discussion of them first, and now hope that you may endure the clearer statement of them, as follows:—

PROPOSITION I. (1, § 1).—The English nation is beginning another group of ten years, empty in purse, empty in stomach, and in a state of terrified hostility, to every other nation under the sun.

I assert this very firmly and seriously. But in the course of these papers every important assertion on the opposite side shall be fairly inserted; so that you may consider of them at your leisure. Here is one, for instance, from the *Morning Post* of Saturday, August 31, of this year:—

“The country is at the present moment in a state of such unexampled prosperity that it is actually suffering from the very superabundance of its riches. . . . Coals and meat are at famine prices, we are threatened with a strike among the bakers, and there is hardly a single department of industry in which the cost of production has not been enhanced.”¹

This is exceedingly true; the *Morning Post* ought to have congratulated you further on the fact that the things produced by this greater cost are now usually good for nothing. Hear on this head, what Mr. Emerson said of us, even so far back as 1856 (and we have made much inferior articles since then):—

“England is aghast at the disclosure of her fraud in the adulteration of food, of drugs, and of almost every fabric in her mills and shops; finding that milk will not nourish, nor sugar sweeten, nor bread satisfy, nor pepper bite the tongue, nor glue stick. In true England all is false and forged. . . . It is rare to find a merchant who knows why a crisis occurs in trade,—why prices rise or fall, or who knows the mischief of paper money.* In the culmination of National Prosperity, in the annexation of countries; building of ships, depôts, towns; in the influx of tons of gold

* Or the use of it, Mr. Emerson should have added.

¹ [For later references to this passage, see Letters 73, § 7, and 86, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 18, 340).]

and silver; amid the chuckle of chancellors and financiers, it was found that bread rose to famine prices, that the yeoman was forced to sell his cow and pig, his tools, and his acre of land; and the dreadful barometer of the poor-rates was touching the point of ruin.”*

8. PROPOSITION II. (1, §§ 2, 3).—Of such prosperity I, for one, have seen enough, and will endure it no longer quietly; but will set aside some part of my income to help, if anybody else will join me, in forming a National Store instead of a National Debt; and will explain to you as I have time and power, how to avoid such distress in future, by adhering to the elementary principles of Human Economy, which have been of late wilfully entombed under pyramids of falsehood.

“Wilfully”; note this grave word in my second proposition; and invest a shilling in the purchase of *Bishop Berkeley on Money*, being extracts from his *Querist*, by James Harvey, Liverpool.† At the bottom of the twenty-first page you will find this query, “Whether the continuous efforts on the part of the *Times*, the *Telegraph*,‡ the *Economist*, the *Daily News*, and the daily newspaper press, and also of moneyed men generally, to confound money and capital, be the result of ignorance or design.”

Of ignorance in great part, doubtless, for “moneyed men, generally,” are ignorant enough to believe and assert anything; but it is noticeable that their ignorance always tells on their own side;§ and the *Times* and *Economist* are now nothing more than passive instruments in their hands. But neither they, nor their organs, would long be able to assert untruths in Political Economy, if the nominal

* *English Traits* (ROUTLEDGE, 1856), p. 95.

† PROVOST, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden.¹

‡ The *Telegraph* has always seemed to me to play fairer than the rest.² The words “daily newspaper press” are, of course, too general.

§ Compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 140 [Vol. XVII. p. 265].

¹ [Bishop Berkeley published his *Querist* in 1710. The questions in it which refer to money, and which are reprinted in Mr. Harvey’s pamphlet (1872), were suggested by the excitement caused by the South Sea schemes. To Berkeley’s queries (pp. 1–14) Mr. Harvey adds others of his own (pp. 15–23).]

² [Compare above, p. 166; and below, p. 499.]

professors of the science would do their duty in investigation of it. Of whom I now choose, for direct personal challenge, the Professor at Cambridge; and, being a Doctor of Laws of his own University, and a Fellow of two colleges in mine, I charge him with having insufficiently investigated the principles of the science he is appointed to teach. I charge him with having advanced in defence of the theory of Interest on Money, four arguments, every one of them false, and false with such fallacy as a child ought to have been able to detect. I have exposed one of these fallacies in §§ 13, 14 of the first letter [pp. 24–26], and the three others in §§ 15–19 of the eighteenth letter [pp. 316–319], in this book, and I now publicly call on Professor Fawcett either to defend, or retract, the statements so impugned. And this open challenge cannot be ignored by Professor Fawcett, on the plea that Political Economy is his province, and not mine.¹ If any man holding definite position as a scholar in either University, challenged me publicly and gravely with having falsely defined an elementary principle of Art, I should hold myself bound to answer him, and I think public opinion would ratify my decision.

9. PROPOSITION III. (1, § 4).—Your redemption from the distress into which you have fallen is in your own hands, and in nowise depends on forms of government or modes of election.

But you must make the most of what forms of government you have got, by choosing honest men to work them (if you choose at all), and preparatorily, by honestly obeying them, and in all possible ways, making honest men of yourselves; and if it be, indeed, now impossible—as I heard the clergyman declare at Matlock (9, § 13)—for any honest man to live by trade in England, amending the methods of

¹ [The challenge was not accepted—as Ruskin complains in Letter 78, § 13 (Vol. XXIX. p. 136). “Fawcett,” says his biographer, “sensibly declined a discussion which would at most have been an amusing illustration of argument at cross purposes with an utter absence of any common ground” (Leslie Stephen’s *Life of Henry Fawcett*, 1885, pp. 136–137).]

English trade in the necessary particulars, until it becomes possible for honest men to live by it again. In the meantime resolving that you, for your part, will do good work, whether you live by it or die (2, § 22).

10 PROPOSITION IV. (1, §§ 6–10).—Of present parliaments and governments you have mainly to inquire what they want with your money when they demand it. And that you may do this intelligently, you are to remember that only a certain quantity of money exists at any given time, and that your first business must be to ascertain the available amount of it, and what it is available for. Because you do not put more money into rich people's hands, when you succeed in putting into rich people's heads that they want something to-day which they had no occasion for yesterday. What they pay you for one thing, they cannot for another; and if they now spend their incomes, they can spend no more. Which you will find they do, and always have done, and can, in fact, neither spend more, nor less—this income being indeed the quantity of food their land produces, by which all art and all manufacture must be supported, and of which no art or manufacture, except such as are directly and wisely employed on the land, can produce a morsel.

11. PROPOSITION V. (2, § 4).—You had better take care of your squires. Their land, indeed, only belongs to them, or is said to belong, because they seized it long since by force of hand (compare the quotation from Professor Fawcett at § 17 of the preface to *Munera Pulveris*¹), and you may think you have precisely the same right to seize it now, for yourselves, if you can. So you have,—precisely the same right,—that is to say, none. As they had no right to seize it then, neither have you now. The land, by divine right, can be neither theirs nor yours, except under conditions which you will not ascertain by fighting. In the meantime, by the law of England, the land is theirs; and your first duty as Englishmen is to obey the law of

¹ [Vol. XVII. p. 141.]

England, be it just or unjust, until it is by due and peaceful deliberation altered, if alteration of it be needful; and to be sure that you are able and willing to obey good laws, before you seek to alter unjust ones (2, § 22). For you cannot know whether they are unjust or not until you are just yourselves. Also, your race of squires, considered merely as an animal one, is very precious; and you had better see what use you can make of it, before you let it fall extinct, like the Dodo's. For none other such exists in any part of this round little world: and, once destroyed, it will be long before it develops itself again from Mr. Darwin's germ-cells.

12. PROPOSITION VI. (5, § 21).—But, if you can, honestly, you had better become minute squires yourselves. The law of England nowise forbids your buying any land which the squires are willing to part with, for such savings as you may have ready. And the main proposal made to you in this book is that you should so economize till you can indeed become diminutive squires, and develop accordingly into some proportionate fineness of race.¹

13. PROPOSITION VII. (2, § 5).—But it is perhaps not equally necessary to take care of your capitalists, or so-called "Employers." For your real employer is the public; and the so-called employer is only a mediator between the public and you, whose mediation is perhaps more costly than need be, to you both. So that it will be well for you to consider how far, without such intervention, you may succeed in employing *yourselves*; and my seventh proposition is accordingly that some of you, and all, in some proportion, should be diminutive capitalists, as well as diminutive squires, yet under a novel condition, as follows:—

14. PROPOSITION VIII.—Observe, first, that in the ancient and hitherto existent condition of things, the squire is essentially an idle person who has possession of land, and lends it, but does not use it; and the capitalist is essentially an idle person, who has possession of tools, and lends them, but does not use them; while the labourer, by definition, is a

¹ [For a later reference to Propositions V. and VI., see Letter 73, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 17).]

laborious person, and by presumption, a penniless one, who is obliged to borrow both land and tools; and paying, for rent on the one, and profit on the other, what will maintain the squire and capitalist, digs finally a remnant of roots, wherewith to maintain himself.

These may, in so brief form, sound to you very radical and International¹ definitions. I am glad, therefore, that (though entirely accurate) they are not mine, but Professor Fawcett's. You will find them quoted from his *Manual of Political Economy* at § 8 of my eleventh letter [p. 188]. He does not, indeed, in the passage there quoted, define the capitalist as the possessor of tools, but he does so quite clearly at the end of the fable quoted in 1, § 13,—“The plane is the symbol of all capital,” and the paragraph given in 11, § 8, is, indeed, a most faithful statement of the present condition of things, which is, practically, that rich people are paid for being rich, and idle people are paid for being idle, and busy people taxed for being busy. Which does not appear to me a state of matters much longer tenable; but rather, and this is my 8th Proposition (11, § 13), that land should belong to those who can use *it*, and tools to those who can use *them*; or, as a less revolutionary, and instantly practicable, proposal, that those who have land and tools—should use them.

15. PROPOSITION IX. and last:—To know the “use” either of land or tools, you must know what useful things can be grown from the one, and made with the other. And therefore to know what is useful, and what useless, and be skilful to provide the one, and wise to scorn the other, is the first need for all industrious men. Wherefore, I propose that schools should be established, wherein the use of land and tools shall be taught conclusively:—in other words, the sciences of agriculture (with associated river and sea-culture); and the noble arts and exercises of humanity.

¹ [The reference is to the International Association of Working Men, founded by Karl Marx in 1864, which was at this time holding a conference at The Hague. The meaning of the word in the text has hitherto been obscured by being printed without a capital I. For another reference to the “International,” see Vol. XXIX. p. 252 *n.*]

16. Now you cannot but see how impossible it would have been for me, in beginning these letters, to have started with a formal announcement of these their proposed contents, even now startling enough, probably, to some of my readers, after nearly two years' preparatory talk. You must see also how in speaking of so wide a subject, it is not possible to complete the conversation respecting each part of it at once, and set that aside; but it is necessary to touch on each head by little and little. Yet in the course of desultory talk, I have been endeavouring to exhibit to you, essentially, these six following things, namely,—A, the general character and use of squires; B, the general character and mischievousness of capitalists; C, the nature of money; D, the nature of useful things; E, the methods of finance which obtain money; and F, the methods of work which obtain useful things.

17. To these “six points”¹ I have indeed directed my own thoughts, and endeavoured to direct yours, perseveringly, throughout these letters, though to each point as the Third Fors might dictate; that is to say, as light was thrown upon it in my mind by what might be publicly taking place at the time, or by any incident happening to me personally. Only it chanced that in the course of the first year, 1871, one thing which publicly took place, namely the siege and burning of Paris, was of interest so unexpected that it necessarily broke up what little consistency of plan I had formed, besides putting me into a humour in which I could only write incoherently; deep domestic vexation occurring to me at the same time, till I fell ill, and my letters and vexations had like to have ended together. So I must now patch the torn web as best I can, by giving you reference to what bears on each of the above six heads in the detached talk of these twenty months (and I hope also a serviceable index at the two years' end²); and, if the work goes on,—But I had better keep all Ifs out of it.

¹ [The reference is to the Six Points of the “People's Charter,” 1838.]

² [See Vol. XXIX.]

18. Meantime, with respect to point A, the general character and use of squires, you will find the meaning of the word “Squire” given in 2, § 4, as being threefold, like that of Fors. First, it means a rider; or in more full and perfect sense, a master or governor of beasts: signifying that a squire has fine sympathy with all beasts of the field, and understanding of their natures complete enough to enable him to govern them for their good, and be king over all creatures, subduing the noxious ones, and cherishing the virtuous ones. Which is the primal meaning of chivalry, the horse, as the noblest, because trainablest, of wild creatures, being taken for a type of them all. Read on this point, 9, § 11, and if you can see my larger books, at your library, § 205 of *Aratra Pentelici*; and the last lecture in *Eagle’s Nest*.^{*1} And observe farther that it follows from what is noted in those places, that to be a good squire, one must have the instincts of animals as well as those of men; but that the typical squire is apt to err somewhat on the lower side, and occasionally to have the instincts of animals *instead* of those of men.

19. Secondly. The word “Squire” means a Shield-bearer;—properly, the bearer of some superior person’s shield; but at all events, the declarer, by legend, of good deserving and good intention, either others’ or his own; with accompanying statement of his resolution to defend and maintain the same; and that so persistently that, rather than lose his shield, he is to make it his death-bed; and so honourably and without thought of vulgar gain, that it is the last blame of base governments to become “shield-sellers” (compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 127²). On this

* Compare also Mr. Maurice’s sermon for the fourth Sunday after Trinity in Vol. II. of third series. (SMITH, ELDER & Co., no date.³)

¹ [Vol. XX. p. 351, and Vol. XXII. pp. 265–287.]

² [Vol. XVII. p. 251.]

³ [The date is 1870. *Sermons*, by the Rev. F. D. Maurice, Third Series, 2 vols. See vol. ii. pp. 179 *seq.*, a sermon on “The Glory and Deliverance of the Animal Nature,” on the text “Waiting for the adoption, to wit, redemption of the body” (Romans viii. 23). For Maurice, see below, p. 388.]

part of the Squire's character I have not yet been able to insist at any length; but you will find partial suggestion of the manner in which you may thus become yourselves shield-bearers, in *Time and Tide*, §§ 72, 73,¹ and I shall soon have the elementary copies in my Oxford schools published, and you may then learn, if you will, somewhat of shield-drawing and painting.²

20. And thirdly, the word "Squire" means a Carver, properly a carver at some one else's feast; and typically, has reference to the Squire's duty as a Carver at *all* men's feasts, being Lord of Land, and therefore giver of Food; in which function his lady, as you have heard now often enough (first from Carlyle), is properly styled Loaf-giver;³ her duty being, however, first of all to find out where all loaves come from; for, quite retaining his character in the other two respects, the typical squire is apt to fail in this, and to become rather a loaf-eater, or consumer, than giver (compare 10, §§ 4 and 18); though even in that capacity the enlightened press of your day thinks you cannot do without him (7, § 14). Therefore, for analysis of what he has been, and may be, I have already specified to you certain squires, whose history I wish you to know and think over (with many others in due course: but, for the present, those already specified are enough), namely, the Theseus of the Elgin Marbles and *Midsummer Night's Dream* (2, § 2); the best and unfortunatest* of the Kings of France, "St. Louis" (3, § 7); the best and unfortunatest of the Kings of England, Henry II. (3, § 9); the

* In calling a man pre-eminently unfortunate, I do not mean that, as compared with others, he is absolutely less prosperous; but that he is one who has met with the least help or the greatest hostility, from the Third Fors, *in proportion* to the wisdom of his purposes, and virtue of his character.

¹ [Vol. XVII. p. 379.]

² [The reference is to the intended "Oxford Art School Series": see Vol. XXI. pp. 311-315.]

³ [See Carlyle's *Past and Present*, passim, for "the sacred mission of a Land Aristocracy." For the etymology of "lord" and "lady," see Vol. XVIII. p. 138 *n.*, Vol. XX. pp. 18-19 *n.*; and compare Letters 45, § 17 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 162), and 93, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 471-472).]

Lion-heart of England (3, § 10); Edward III. of England and his lion's whelp (4, § 10); again and again the two Second Friedrichs, of Germany and Prussia;¹ Sir John Hawkwood (1, § 5, and 15, § 13); Sir Thomas More (7, § 6); Sir Francis Drake (13, § 12); and Sir Richard Grenville (9, § 10). Now all these squires are alike in their high quality of captainship over man and beast; they were preeminently the best men of their surrounding groups of men; and the guides of their people, faithfully recognized for such (unless when their people got drunk, which sometimes happened, with sorrowful issue), and all equality with them seen to be divinely impossible. (Compare 14, § 4.) And that most of them lived by thieving does not, under the conditions of their day, in any wise detract from their virtue, or impair their delightfulness (any more than it does that of your, on the whole I suppose, favourite, Englishman, and nomadic Squire of Sherwood, Robin Hode or Hood); the theft, or piracy, as it might happen, being always effected with a good conscience, and in an open, honourable, and merciful manner.² Thus, in the account of Sir Francis's third voyage, which was "faithfully taken out of the reports of Mr. Christofer Ceely, Ellis Hixon, and others who were in the same voyage with him, by Philip Nichols, preacher,"³ revised and annotated by Sir Francis himself, and set forth by his nephew, what I told you about his proceedings on the coast of Spanish America (13, § 12) is thus summed:—

"There were at this time belonging to Carthagene, Nombre de Dios, Rio Grand, Santa Martha, Rio de Hacha, Venta Cruz, Veragua, Nicaragua,

¹ [See, for instance, for the Emperor Frederick II. of Germany, pp. 260, 365 *n.*, 621; and for Frederick the Great of Prussia, pp. 47, 244.]

² [Compare Letters 7, § 13; 14, § 1; and 31, § 15 (pp. 127, 243, 577).]

³ [The inverted commas are here inserted as they are part of the title-page of *Sir Francis Drake Revived: Calling upon this Dull or Effeminate Age to follow his Noble Steps for Golde and Silver, by this Memorable Relation of the Rare Occurrences (never yet declared to the world) in a Third Voyage. . . . Faithfully taken out . . . preacher. Reviewed also by Sir Francis Drake himself before his Death, and much helpen and enlarged, by divers Notes, with his owne hand here and there inserted. Set forth by Sir Francis Drake, Baronet (his nephew now living):* London, 1626. Ruskin's quotation is from pp. 93, 94. The insertion "(people?)" is Ruskin's.]

the Honduras, Jamaica, etc., about two hundred frigates,* some of a hundred and twenty tunnes, other but of tenne or twelve tunne, but the most of thirty or forty tunne, which all had entercourse between Carthagene and Nombre de Dios, the most of which, during our abode in those parts, wee tooke, and some of them twice or thrice each, yet never burnt nor suncke any, unless they were made out men-of-warre against us. . . . Many strange birds, beastes, and fishes, besides fruits, trees, plants and the like were seene and observed of us in this journey, which, willingly, wee pretermitt, as hastening to the end of our voyage, which from this Cape of St. Anthony wee intended to finish by sayling the directest and speediest way homeward, and accordingly even beyonde our owne expectation most happily performed. For whereas our captaine had purposed to touch at New-found-land, and there to have watered, which would have been some let unto us, though wee stood in great want of water, yet God Almighty so provided for us, by giving us good store of raine water, that wee were sufficiently furnished; and within twenty-three dayes wee past from the Cape of Florida to the Iles of Silley, and so arrived at Plimouth on Sunday, about sermon-time, August the Ninth, 1573, at what time the newes of our captaine's returne brought unto his" (people?) "did so speedily pass over all the church, and surpass their minds with desire and delight to see him, that very fewe or none remained with the preacher, all hastening to see the evidence of God's love and blessing towards our gracious Queene and cuntry, by the fruite of our captaine's labour and successe. Soli Deo gloria."

I am curious to know, and hope to find, that the deserted preacher was Mr. Philip Nichols, the compiler afterwards of this log-book of Sir Francis.¹

21. Putting out of the question, then, this mode of their livelihood, you will find all these squires essentially "captaines," head, or chief persons, occupied in maintaining good order, and putting things to rights, so that they naturally become chief Lawyers without Wigs (otherwise called Kings) in the districts accessible to them. Of whom I have named first, the Athenian Theseus, "setter to rights,"

* Italian "fregata," I believe "polished-sided" ship, for swiftness, "fricata"; but the derivation is uncertain.²

¹ [This, however, seems not to have been the case. The Philip Nichols, who is credited with editing Drake's voyage, had a benefice in the diocese of Wells. Little, however, is known of him: see the *Dictionary of National Biography*.]

² ["The ultimate etymology is unknown, the hypothesis of Diez, that it represents a late Latin *fabricata*, in the sense 'building' (cf. French *bâtiment*, building, ship), being generally rejected by recent scholars" (Murray's *New English Dictionary*).]

or “settler,” his name means; he being both the founder of the first city whose history you are to know,¹ and the first true Ruler of beasts: for his mystic contest with the Minotaur is the fable through which the Greeks taught what they knew of the more terrible and mysterious relations between the lower creatures and man; and the desertion of him by Ariadne (for indeed he never deserted her, but she him,—involuntarily, poor sweet maid,—Death calling her in Diana’s name²) is the conclusive stroke against him by the Third Fors.

22. Of this great squire, then, you shall really have some account in next letter.³ I have only further time now to tell you that this month’s frontispiece is a facsimile of two separate parts of an engraving originally executed by Sandro Botticelli.⁴ An impression of Sandro’s own plate is said to exist in the Vatican;⁵ I have never seen one. The ordinarily extant impressions are assuredly from an inferior plate, a copy of Botticelli’s. But his manner of engraving has been imitated by the copyist as far as he understood it, and the important qualities of the design are so entirely preserved that the work has often been assigned to the master himself.

It represents the seven works of Mercy, as completed by an eighth work in the centre of all; namely, lending without interest, from the Mount of Pity accumulated by generous alms. In the upper part of the design are seen the shores of Italy, with the cities which first built Mounts

¹ [See Letter 8, § 10 (p. 143). Ruskin derives the name “Theseus” from tiq̄hmi, the settler, civiliser.]

² [Ruskin follows the Homeric version of the tale (see *Odyssey*, xi. 324), according to which Theseus carried Ariadne with him to the isle of Naxos, where she was slain by Artemis (see below, p. 429). According to other versions, he deserted her in the isle (Plutarch, *Theseus*, 20; Ovid, *Metam.*, viii. 175).]

³ [See below, pp. 402 *seq.*]

⁴ [The ascription to Botticelli must be considered uncertain; for other notice of the plate (of which there is an impression in the British Museum), see *Ariadne Florentina*, Vol. XXII. p. 439 *n.* On the history of the plate, and the subject of it, see Ottley as there cited; also *Introduction to a Catalogue of the Early Italian Prints in the British Museum*, by Richard Fisher, 1886, pp. 141–147. Mr. Fisher quotes the present passage in *Fors*, and accepts the print as being from Botticelli’s design.]

⁵ [See Ottley’s *History of Engraving*, vol. i. p. 427.]

of Pity: Venice, chief of all;—then Florence, Genoa, and Castruccio's Lucca; in the distance prays the monk of Ancona, who first thought—inspired of heaven—of such war with usurers; and an angel crowns him, as you see. The little dashes, which form the dark background, represent waves of the Adriatic; and they, as well as all the rest, are rightly and manfully engraved, though you may not think it; but I have no time to-day to give you a lecture on engraving, nor to tell you the story of Mounts of Pity, which is too pretty to be spoiled by haste;¹ but I hope to get something of Theseus and Frederick the Second, preparatorily, into next letter.² Meantime I must close this one by answering two requests, which, though made to me privately, I think it right to state my reasons for refusing, publicly.

23. The first was indeed rather the offer of an honour to me, than a request, in the proposal that I should contribute to the Maurice Memorial Fund.³

I loved Mr. Maurice, learned much from him, worked under his guidance and authority,⁴ and have deep regard and respect for some persons whose names I see on the Memorial Committee.

But I must decline joining them; first, because I dislike all memorials, as such;⁵ thinking that no man who deserves

¹ [The story was not told in *Fors Clavigera*, but there is mention of it in *Ariadne Florentina* (Vol. XXII. pp. 438–440), as already stated above, p. 365.]

² [For Theseus, see below, pp. 402 *seq.*; but there was nothing of the Emperor Frederick II. got in.]

³ [Frederick Denison Maurice (Broad Churchman, Christian Socialist, and founder of the Working Men's College) had died in April 1872. A petition to the Dean and Chapter, asking that he should be buried in Westminster Abbey, received the signatures of men of weight, but his family opposed the suggestion. He was buried at Highgate on April 5, and a committee was formed to place a memorial of him in the Abbey. The bust (by Woolner) is in the south-west tower or Baptistery. The memorial that would have pleased him most, says his son and biographer (Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice, K.C.B.), was expressed by Dr. Montagu Butler in these words: "Wherever rich and poor are brought closer together, wherever men learn to think more worthily of God in Christ, the great work that he has laboured at for nearly fifty years shall be spoken of as a memorial of him" (*Life of Frederick Denison Maurice*, 1884, vol. ii. p. 643).]

⁴ [Compare *Præterita*, iii. § 13 *seq.*; and for Ruskin's work for Maurice at the Working Men's College, see Vol. V. pp. xxxvi. *seq.*]

⁵ [See, however, Vol. XVI. p. 229, and the note there given.]

them, needs them: and secondly, because, though I affectionately remember and honour Mr. Maurice, I have no mind to put his bust in Westminster Abbey. For I do not think of him as one of the great, or even one of the leading, men of the England of his day; but only as the centre of a group of students whom his amiable sentimentalism at once exalted and stimulated, while it relieved them from any painful necessities of exact scholarship in divinity. And as he was always honest (at least in intention) and unfailingly earnest and kind, he was harmless and soothing in error, and vividly helpful when unerring. I have above referred you,¹ and most thankfully, to his sermon on the relations of man to inferior creatures; and I can quite understand how pleasant it was for a disciple panic-struck by the literal aspect of the doctrine of justification by faith, to be told, in an earlier discourse,² that "We speak of an anticipation as justified by the event. Supposing that anticipation to be something so inward, so essential to me, that my own very existence is involved in it, *I* am justified by it." But consolatory equivocations of this kind have no enduring place in literature; nor has Mr. Maurice more real right to a niche in Westminster Abbey than any other tender-hearted Christian gentleman, who has successfully, for a time, promoted the charities of his faith, and parried its discussion.

24. I have been also asked to contribute to the purchase of the Alexandra Park;³ and I will not: and beg you, my working readers, to understand, once for all, that I wish your *homes* to be comfortable, and refined; and that I will resist, to the utmost of my power, all schemes founded on

¹ [See above, p. 383 *n.*]

² [*Sermons*, Third Series, vol. ii. p. 23; a sermon for the Second Sunday after Easter on "God the Justifier of Man."]

³ [The Alexandra Palace and Park, Muswell Hill, was designed as a Crystal Palace for North London. The enterprise was at this time in difficulties, and a Mansion House Committee had been formed to collect a guarantee fund (*Times*, October 4, 1872). The Palace was opened on May 24, 1873, and burnt down on June 9.]

the vile modern notion that you are to be crowded in kennels till you are nearly dead (in order that other people may make money by your work), and then taken out in squads by tramway and railway, to be revived and refined by science and art. Your first business is to make your homes healthy and delightful: then, keep your wives and children there, and let your return to *them* be your daily "holy day."¹

Ever faithfully yours,
JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ [See above, Letter 10, § 13 (p. 174).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

25. THE subjoined letter is from a clergyman of the Church of England; I publish it with his permission, advising him at the same time to withhold his name, as the arguments he has brought forward are those which would generally occur to a mind ecclesiastically trained:—

“10th September, 1872.

“SIR,—At § 18 of the 21st letter of your *Fors Clavigera* [p. 363] you tell the working men and labourers of this country that ‘lending for gain is sinful’; and you intimate, as I gather, that this is the teaching of the Bible. May I, therefore, be allowed to submit that this unqualified assertion, with its world-wide consequences, is not true?

“In Deut. xxiii. 20, you will find these words: ‘Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury.’ And the margin (*a*), for the scope and meaning of this word ‘stranger,’ refers you to Deut. x. 19, which says, ‘Love ye therefore the stranger.’ And the margin (*b*) refers us also to Lev. xix. 35, which enjoins us to ‘love the stranger’ *as ourselves*.

“So that we are thus plainly taught—

“I. That the lending upon usury *cannot be in itself a sin*, or God (*c*) could not have allowed it in any case whatsoever, any more than He could have allowed theft or lying (*d*).

“II. That the lending to the stranger was not incompatible with the command, ‘Love ye the stranger,’ or else God, in the laws and writings given by Moses, at one and the same time, stultifies and contradicts Himself (*e*).

“III. That the laws forbidding usury, like the laws for preserving estates to their families by the year of Jubilee, and like the laws which bound Israelitish servants until the ‘year of release,’ were peculiar and exclusive, and concerned only that people living in a peculiar and exclusive way. Outside that little patch of territory, but the size of our two largest English counties, the Jews were expressly told they might lend upon usury; and this at the same time that they were enjoined to love the stranger, and not to ‘oppress the stranger’ (*f*).

“Says old *Cruden’s Concordance*:—‘It seems as lawful for me to receive interest for money, which another takes pain with, improves, but runs the hazard of in trade, as it is to receive rent for my land, which another takes pain with, improves, but runs the hazard of in husbandry.’ What should we think of discovering in the holy books of some recently found people, a God so eccentric that he allowed you to invest money in tea, or sugar, or iron, or cotton, and get fifteen or even twenty per cent. out of it, and this from poor and rich alike, with whom you traded; but threatened you with his condemnation and everlasting displeasure if, at the same time, you helped a deserving man to commence business by lending him money at four per cent.; or lent money to your country until such time as it could pay its debts, for a moderate compensation, which would prevent you and yours from being ruined? (*g*) Love of self is as lawful as love of neighbour—

‘Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.’ My neighbour is as much bound to give me some portion of the interest or gain he has earned with my money, as he would be chargeable with selfishness and grasping if he kept it wholly for himself. Trading much more whets the appetite for gain than the taking moderate interest for money. Would our Lord have held up that which was wicked in itself for our imitation, as he has done in Matt. xxv. 27, if lending upon interest were sinful? (*h*) Nothing but this sight of the taking one portion of the Bible without the other, and then summing up and pronouncing judgment upon a portion of the evidence only, thus arriving at an unsound judgment, would have led me to trouble you with these lines.

“I remain, Sir,

“Yours faithfully.”

(*a*), (*b*), and (*c*). My correspondent uses “God” and “the margin” a synonymous terms. May I be allowed to submit to him that they are not the same, and that my statement involved no reference to either? My assertion is respecting the Bible; and has no reference either to its margin, or to God:—and my assertion is simply that “usury,” in the language of the Bible, means any percentage, however small, on lent money. I have made no assertion myself as to the characters assigned to it, for I have not examined them. I know that usury is sinful, as I know that theft is, and have no need of inquiring whether the Bible says so or not, but Ezekiel 18th¹ is sufficiently explicit.

(*d*). Why does not my correspondent say “theft, laying, *or murder*”? The occupation of the land of Canaan was one colossal theft; the prophetess-Judge of Israel gave enthusiastic benediction, in one and the same person, to the firmness of the hand of the murderess, and fineness of the art of the liar; and the first monarch of Israel forfeited his throne, because after having faithfully slain the men, women, children, sucklings, and domestic animals of a hostile tribe, he faithlessly spared their king, and serviceablest cattle.²

(*e*). The writings commonly assumed to be given by Moses very certainly contradict themselves in many places. It is my correspondent’s conclusion, not mine, that therefore God does so.

(*f*). The Jews have accordingly carried out their love to the stranger (though I beg my correspondent to observe that stranger is not the same word as Gentile) by making as much money out of him as they can, in all places and on all occasions. But it does not follow, either that they have been blessed in doing so, or that Christians are therefore justified in treating each other either as strangers or Jews.

(*g*). A singular instance of the looseness of thought possible respecting matters to which we are accustomed. A man is not ruined, because he can get no gain by lending his money. No one objects to his keeping it in his pocket.

(*h*). Presumably, the unjust steward’s modification of his master’s accounts was also virtuous?³

¹ [“He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase.” etc.; verse 8.]

² [See Judges v. and 1 Samuel xv. 7–9.]

³ [See Luke xvi.]

26. I have not time to ask Mr. Sillar's permission, but hope his pardon for assuming it, to print the following portion of a letter I have had very great pleasure in receiving from him:—

“You wrong me in saying¹ I have entirely given myself up to this question. I am occupied in saving our lovely streams from pollution, and endeavouring (no easy task, I assure you) to put in daily practice, the principles you teach. I wish you could see our works at Crossness.

“The reason why I *exclusively* attack this vice is because it is the only one which is not attacked from the pulpit. Men do not know even that it is a vice. I have such confidence in the integrity of Englishmen that I believe they would at once discountenance it if they had the least idea of its character and mischievous nature.”

¹ [See above, p. 363.]

LETTER 23

THE LABYRINTH¹

BRANTWOOD, *October 24th*, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—At breakfast this morning, which I was eating sulkily, because I had final press-corrections to do on *Fors* (and the last are always worst to do, being without repentance), I took up the *Pall Mall Gazette* for the 21st, and chanced on two things, of which one much interested, the other much pleased me, and both are to our present purpose.

What interested me was the statement in the column of “This Evening’s News,” made by a gentleman much acquainted with naval business, that “Mr. Goschen is the one man to whom, and to whom alone, we can as a nation look even for permission to retain our power at sea.”²

Whether entirely, or, as I apprehend, but partially, true, this statement is a remarkable one to appear in the journals of a nation which has occupied its mind lately chiefly on the subject of its liberties; and I cannot but wonder what Sir Francis Drake would have thought of such a piece of Evening’s News, communicated in form to *him*?

2. What he would have thought—if you can fancy it—would be very proper for you also to think, and much to our eventual purpose. But the part of the contents of the *Pall Mall* which I found to bear on the subject of this letter, was the “address by a mangled convict to a

¹ [A rejected title for this letter was “The House that Jack Built”: see below, § 10.]

² [A paragraph summarising a letter in the *Times* of October 21, 1872, by Mr. (afterwards Sir) E. J. Reed, C.B., Chief Constructor of the Navy (1863–1870). Mr. Goschen, who had been President of the Poor Law Board from 1868 to 1870 (for a reference to him in that capacity, see above, Letter 4, p. 70), became in 1871 First Lord of the Admiralty.]

benevolent gentleman.”¹ The Third Fors must assuredly have determined that this letter should be pleasing to the Touchstone mind,—the gods will have it poetical;² it ends already with rhyme, and must begin in like manner, for these first twelve verses of the address are much too precious to be lost among “news,” whether of morning or evening.

“Mr. P. Taylor, honnered Sir,
Accept these verses I indict,
Thanks to a gentle mother dear
Which taught these infant hands to rite.

“And thanks unto the Chaplin here,
A eminent relidjous man,
As kind a one as ever dipt
A beke into the flowing can.

“He pointes out to me most clear
How sad and sinfull is my ways,
And numerous is the briney tear
Which for that man I nigty prays.

“ ‘Cohen,’ he ses, in sech a voice!
‘Your lot is hard, your stripes is sore;
But Cohen,’ he ses, ‘rejoice! rejoice!
And never never steale no more!’

“His langwidge is so kind and good,
It works so strong on me inside,
I would not do it if I coold,
I coold not do it if I tried.

“Ah, wence this moisteur in my eye?
Whot makes me turn agin my food?
O, Mister Taylor, arsk not why,
Ime so cut up with gratitood.

“Fansy a gentleman like you,
No paultry Beak, but a M.P.,
A riggling in your heasy chair
The riggles they put onto me.

¹ [The inverted commas are here inserted, as the words are the heading given to the (unsigned) skit in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. P. A. Taylor (1819–1891) was Radical M.P. for Leicester (1862–1884); an opponent of capital punishment, the lash, etc. The *Times* of October 8 contains a notice of the flogging of two prisoners (one of them named Cohen) who had been sentenced to thirty and twenty-five lashes, in addition to penal servitude, for highway robberies with violence.]

² [*As You Like It*, Act iii. sc. 3.]

“I see thee shudderin ore thy wine,—
 You hardly know what you are at,
 Whenever you think of Us emptyin
 The bloody and unenglish Cat.

“Well may your indignation rise!
 I call it Manley what you feeled
 At seein Britons’ n-k-d b-cks
 By brutial jalors acked and weald.

“Habolish these yere torchiers!
 Dont have no horgies any more
 Of arf a dozen orficers
 All wallerin in a fellers goar.

“Imprisonment alone is not
 A thing of whitch we would complane;
 Add ill-convenience to our lot,
 But do not give the convick pain.

“And well you know that’s not the wust,
 Not if you went and biled us whole;
 The Lash’s degeradation!—that’s
 What cust us to the wery soul!”

3. The questions respecting punishment and reformation, which these verses incidentally propose, are precisely the same which had to be determined three thousand years ago in the city of Athens (the only difference of any importance being that the instrument of execution discussed was club instead of cat¹); and their determination gave rise to the peculiar form in which the history of the great Athenian Squire, Theseus,—our to-day’s subject—was presented to mankind.

The story is a difficult one to tell, and a more difficult one still to understand. The likeness, or imagined likeness, of the hero himself, as the Greeks fancied him, you may see, when you care to do so, at the British Museum, in simple guise enough.²

¹ [See Plutarch’s *Life of Theseus*, §§ 8, 10: “And first in Epidaurus he slew Periphetes, who used a club as his weapon. The club took the fancy of Theseus, and he adopted it as a weapon, and always used it. . . . So did Theseus sally forth and chastise evil-doers, making them undergo the same cruelties which they practised on others, thus justly punishing them for their crimes in their own wicked fashion.”]

² [Plate X.; the so-called “Theseus,” from the East Pediment of the Parthenon. For other references to the marble, see Vol. IV. p. 119 *n.*, and General Index.]



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"Theseus"

4. Miss Edgeworth, in her noble last novel, *Helen*,¹ makes *her* hero fly into a passion at even being suspected of wishing to quote the too trite proverb that “No man is a hero to his valet-de-chambre.” But Mr. Beauclerk disclaims it for its triteness only, when he ought rather to have disclaimed it for its untruth. Every truly great man that ever I heard of, was a principal hero to his servants, and most heroic to those most intimate with him. At all events, the Greeks meant all the world to be to their hero as valets-de-chambre, for he sits mother-naked. Under which primitive aspect, indeed, I would fain show you, mentally as well as bodily, every hero I give you account of. It is the modern method, in order to give you more inviting pictures of people, to dress them—often very correctly—in the costume of the time, with such old clothes as the masquerade shops keep. But my own steady aim is to strip them for you, that you may see if they are of flesh, indeed, or dust. Similarly, I shall try to strip theories bare, and facts, such as you need to know.

Mother-naked sits Theseus: and around about him, not much more veiled, ride his Athenians, in Pan-Athenaic procession, honouring their Queen-Goddess. Admired, beyond all other marble shapes in the world; for which reason, the gentlemen of my literary club here in London, professing devotion to the same goddess, decorate their very comfortable corner house in Pall Mall with a copy of this Attic sculpture.²

Being therein, themselves, Attic in no wise, but essentially barbarous, pilfering what they cannot imitate: for a

¹ [See Vol. XV. p. 227 *n.*, where Ruskin’s fondness for this novel is noted. The passage here referred to is as follows: “ ‘I believe,’ said Beauclerk, ‘in general it is found that few great men of any times stand the test of near acquaintance. No man—’ ‘Spare me!’ cried Lady Davenant, interrupting him for she imagined she knew what he was going to say: ‘oh! spare me that old sentence, “No man is a hero to his valet de chambre.” ’ ‘So do I,’ replied Beauclerk; but Lady Davenant had turned away, and he now spoke in so low a voice that only Helen heard him. ‘So do I detest that quotation, not only for being hackneyed, but for having been these hundred years the comfort both of lean-jawed envy and fat mediocrity’ ” (vol. i. ch. xii. p. 263, 1834 edition).]

² [The frieze on the Athenæum Club-house.]

truly Attic mind would have induced them to pourtray *themselves*, as they appear in their own Pan-Christian procession, whenever and wherever it may be:—presumably, to Epsom Downs on the Derby day.

5. You may see, I said, the statue of Theseus whenever you care to do so. I do not in the least know why you *should* care. But for years back, you, or your foolish friends, have been making a mighty fuss to get yourselves into the British Museum on Sundays:¹ so I suppose you want to see the Theseus, or the stuffed birds, or the crabs and spiders, or the skeleton of the gorilla, or the parched alligator-skins;² and you imagine these contemplations likely to improve, and sanctify, that is to say, recreate, your minds.

But are you quite sure you have got any minds yet to be recreated? Before you expect edification from that long gallery full of long-legged inconceivable spiders, and colossal blotchy crabs, did you ever think of looking with any mind, or mindfulness, at the only too easily conceivable shortlegged spider of your own English acquaintance? or did you ever so much as consider why the crabs on Margate sands were minded to go sideways instead of straight-forward? Have you so much as watched a spider making his cobweb, or, if you have not yet had leisure to do that, in the toil of your own cobweb-making, did you ever *think* how he threw his first thread across the corner?

No need for you to go to the British Museum yet, my friends, either on Sundays or any other day.

6. “Well, but the Greek sculpture? We can’t see *that* at home in our room corners.”

And what is Greeks sculpture, or any sculpture, to you? Are your own legs and arms not handsome enough for you to look at, but you must go and stare at chipped and

¹ [After a prolonged agitation, the Sunday opening of the British Museum and National Gallery was ultimately adopted in 1896.]

² [The Natural History collections were not removed to the new Museum at South Kensington till 1880.]

smashed bits of stone in the likenesses of legs and arms that ended their walks and work two thousand years ago?

“Your own legs and arms are not as handsome as—you suppose they ought to be,” say you?

No; I fancy not: and you will not make them handsomer by sauntering with your hands in your pockets through the British Museum. I suppose you will have an agitation, next, for leave to smoke in it. Go and walk in the fields on Sunday, making sure, first, therefore, that you have fields to walk in: look at living birds, not at stuffed ones; and make your own breasts and shoulders better worth seeing than the Elgin Marbles.

Which to effect, remember, there are several matters to be thought of. The shoulders will get strong by exercise. So indeed will the breast. But the breast chiefly needs exercise *inside* of it—of the lungs, namely, and of the heart; and this last exercise is very curiously inconsistent with many of the athletic exercises of the present day. And the reason I do want you, for once, to go to the British Museum, and to look at that broad chest of Theseus, is that the Greeks imagined it to have something better than a Lion’s Heart beneath its breadth—a hero’s heart, duly trained in every pulse.

7. They imagined it so. Your modern extremely wise and liberal historians will tell you it never was so:—that no real Theseus ever existed then; and that none can exist now, or, rather, that everybody is himself a Theseus and a little more.

All the more strange then, all the more instructive, as the disembodied Cincinnatus of the Roman,¹ so this disembodied Theseus of the Ionian; though certainly Mr. Stuart Mill could not consider him, even in that ponderous block of marble imagery, a “utility fixed and embodied in a material object.”² Not even a disembodied utility—not even a ghost—if he never lived. An idea only; yet one

¹ [See Letter 21, §§ 6, 7 (p. 357).]

² [See Letter 4, §§ 5, 6 (p. 64).]

that has ruled all minds of men to this hour, from the hour of its first being born, a dream, into this practical and solid world.

Ruled, and still rules, in a thousand ways, which you know no more than the paths by which the winds have come that blow in your face. But you never pass a day without being brought, somehow, under the power of Theseus.

8. You cannot pass a china-shop, for instance, nor an upholsterer's, without seeing, on some mug or plate, or curtain, or chair, the pattern known as the "Greek fret," simple or complex. I once held it in especial dislike,¹ as the chief means by which bad architects tried to make their buildings look classical; and as ugly in itself. Which it is: and it has an ugly meaning also; but a deep one, which I did not then know; having been obliged to write too young, when I knew only half truths, and was eager to set them forth by what I thought fine words. People used to call me a good writer then; now they say I can't write at all; because, for instance, if I think anybody's house is on fire, I only say, "Sir, your house is on fire;" whereas formerly I used to say, "Sir, the abode in which you probably passed the delightful days of youth is in a state of inflammation," and everybody used to like the effect of the two p's in "probably passed," and of the two d's in "delightful days."²

9. Well, that Greek fret, ugly in itself, has yet definite and noble service in decorative work, as black has among colours; much more, has it a significance, very precious, though very solemn, when you can read it.

There is so much in it, indeed, that I don't well know where to begin. Perhaps it will be best to go back to our cathedral door at Lucca, where we have been already.³ For as, after examining the sculpture on the bell, with the help of the sympathetic ringer, I was going in to look at

¹ [See *Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849), Vol. VIII. p. 143, where in the note Letter "33" is a misprint for "23."]

² [Compare below, p. 603. For other passages in which Ruskin notices his practice of alliteration, see Vol. VI. p. 486 *n.*, and Vol. XXII. pp. 514, 515.]

³ [See Letter 18, § 4 (p. 307).]

the golden lamp, my eyes fell on a slightly traced piece of sculpture and legend on the southern wall of the porch, which, partly feeling it out with my finger, it being worn away by the friction of many passing shoulders, broad and narrow, these six

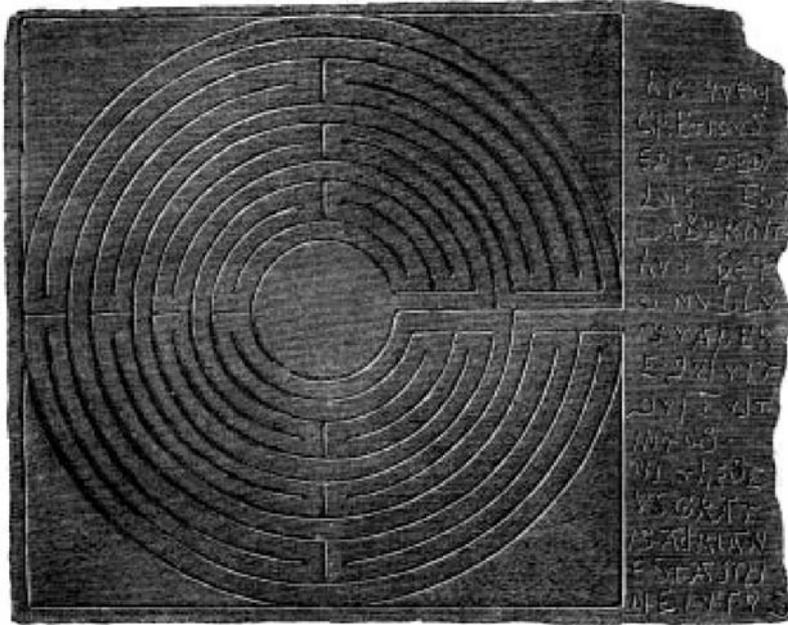


Fig. 6

hundred years and more, I drew for you, and Mr. Burgess has engraved.

10. The straggling letters at the side, read straight, and with separating of the words, run thus:—

“HIC QVEM CRETICVS EDIT DEDALVS EST LABERINTHVS.
DE QVO NVLLVS VADERE QVIVIT QVI FVIT INTVS
NI THESEVS GRATIS ADRIANE STAMINE JVTVS.”

which is in English:—

“This is the labyrinth which the Cretan Dedalus built,
Out of which nobody could get who was inside,
Except Theseus; nor could he have done it, unless he had been helped with a
thread by Adriane, all for love.”

Upon which you are to note, first, that the grave announcement, “This is the labyrinth which the Cretan Dedalus built,”¹ may possibly be made interesting even to some of your children, if reduced from mediæval sublimity, into your more popular legend—“This is the house that Jack built.” The cow with the crumpled horn will then remind them of the creature who, in the midst of this labyrinth, lived as a spider in the centre of his web; and the “maiden all forlorn” may stand for Ariadne, or Adriane—(either name is given her by Chaucer, as he chooses to have three syllables or two²)—while the gradual involution of the ballad, and necessity of clear-mindedness as well as clear utterance on the part of its singer, is a pretty vocal imitation of the deepening labyrinth. Theseus, being a pious hero, and the first Athenian knight who cut his hair short in front,³ may not inaptly be represented by the priest all shaven and shorn; the cock that crew in the morn is the proper Athenian symbol of a pugnacious mind;⁴ and the malt that lay in the house fortunately indicates the connection of Theseus and the Athenian power with the mysteries of Eleusis, where corn first, it is said, grew in Greece.⁵ And by the way, I am more and more struck every day, by the singular Grecism in Shakespeare’s mind, contrary in many respects to the rest of his nature; yet compelling

¹ [On the subject of labyrinths thus engraved on many Christian churches—symbolical of the Divine grace which alone can extricate men from the mazes of sin and error—see *Los Labyrinthes d’ Églises: Labyrinthe de la Cathédrale d’ Amiens*, by Edmond Soyez, Amiens, 1896; and compare *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iv. §§ 12, 13 The people of Lucca are fond, says M. Soyez (p. 11 n.), of following with the finger the lines of the labyrinth; this has been done for so many centuries that the group of Theseus and the Minotaur, which was engraved on the centre, is no longer visible.]

² [Exclusive, that is, of the first syllable, which is common to both.]

³ [See Plutarch’s *Life of Theseus*, § 4: “As it was at that period still the custom for those who were coming to man’s estate to go to Delphi and offer to the god the first-fruits of their hair (which was then cut for the first time), Theseus went to Delphi, and they say that a place there is even to this day named after him. But he only cut the front part of his hair, as Homer tells us the Abantes did, and this fashion of cutting the hair was called Theseus’s fashion because of him.”]

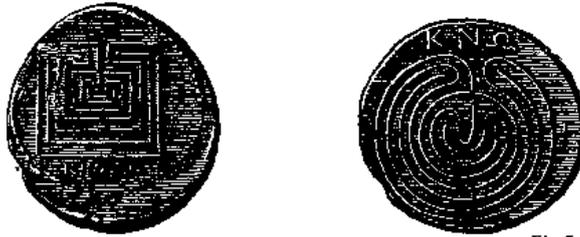
⁴ [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 133 (Vol. XX. p. 291).]

⁵ [“They say that the Rarian plain (near Eleusis) was the first to be sown and the first to bear crops, and therefore it is their custom to take the sacrificial barley and to make the cakes for the sacrifices out of its produce” (Pausanias, i. 38, 6).]

him to associate English fairyland with the great Duke of Athens,¹ and to use the most familiar of all English words for land, “acre,” in the Greek or Eleusinian sense, not the English one!

“Between the acres of the rye,
These pretty country-folks do lie—“²

and again—“search every acre in the high grown field,”³ meaning “ridge,” or “crest,” not “ager,” the root of “agriculture.” Lastly, in our nursery rhyme, observe that the name of Jack, the builder, stands excellently for Dædalus, retaining the idea of him down to the phrase, “Jack-of-all-Trades.” Of this Greek builder you will find some account



at the end of my *Aratra Pentelici*:⁴ to-day I can only tell you he is distinctively the power of finest human, as opposed to Divine, workmanship or craftsmanship. Whatever good there is, and whatever evil, in the labour of the hands, separated from that of the soul, is exemplified by his history and performance.⁵ In the deepest sense, he was to the Greeks, Jack of all trades, yet Master of none; the real Master of every trade being always a God. His own special work or craft was inlaying or dovetailing, and especially of black in white.

And this house which he built was his finest piece of

¹ [Hence Ruskin’s allusion above (p. 384) to “the Theseus of the Elgin Marbles and *Midsummer Night’s Dream*.”]

² [*As You Like It*, Act v. sc. 3.]

³ [*King Lear*, Act iv. sc. 4.]

⁴ [See *Aratra Pentelici*, §§ 206 *seq.* (Vol. XX. pp. 351 *seq.*.)]

⁵ [Here in one of his copies Ruskin compares Letter 28, § 5 (p. 510).]

involution, or cunning workmanship; and the memory of it is kept by the Greeks for ever afterwards, in that running border of theirs, involved in and repeating itself, called the Greek fret, of which you will at once recognize the character in these two pictures of the labyrinth of Dædalus itself, on the coins of the



Fig. 8

place where it was built, Cnossus, in the island of Crete;¹ and which you see, in Figure 8, surrounding the head of Theseus, himself, on a coin of the same city.

11. Of course frets and returning lines were used in

¹ [Electrotypes of similar coins may be seen among those exhibited at the British Museum: III. B. 39 and VI. B. 29.]

ornamentation when there were no labyrinths—probably long before labyrinths. A symbol is scarcely ever invented just when it is needed. Some already recognized and accepted form or thing becomes symbolic at a particular time. Horses had tails, and the moon quarters, long before there were Turks; but the horse-tail and crescent are not less definitely symbolic to the Ottoman. So, the early forms of ornament are nearly alike, among all nations of any capacity for design: they put meaning into them afterwards, if they ever come themselves to *have* any meaning. Vibrate but the point of a tool against an unbaked vase, as it revolves, set on the wheel,—you have a wavy or zigzag line. The vase revolves once; the ends of the wavy line do not exactly tally when they meet; you get over the blunder by turning one into a head, the other into a tail,—and have a symbol of eternity—if, first, which is wholly needful, you have an *idea* of eternity!

12. Again, the free sweep of a pen at the finish of a large letter has a tendency to throw itself into a spiral. There is no particular intelligence, or spiritual emotion, in the production of this line. A worm draws it with his coil, a fern with its bud, and a periwinkle with his shell. Yet, completed in the Ionic capital, and arrested in the bending point of the acanthus leaf in the Corinthian one, it has become the primal element of beautiful architecture and ornament in all the ages; and is eloquent with endless symbolism, representing the power of the winds and waves in Athenian work, and of the old serpent,¹ which is the Devil, and Satan, in Gothic work: or, indeed, often enough, of both, the Devil being held prince of the power of the air²—as in the story of Job,³ and the lovely story of Buonconte of Montefeltro, in Dante:⁴ nay, in this very tale of Theseus, as Chaucer tells it,—having got hold, by ill

¹ [Revelation xii. 9.]

² [Ephesians ii. 2.]

³ [Job i. 19.]

⁴ [*Purgatorio*, v. The passage is quoted with comments in *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. pp. 314–315).]

luck, only of the later and calumnious notion that Theseus deserted his saviour-mistress, he wishes him Devil-speed instead of God-speed, and that energetically—

“A twenty-divel way the wind him drive.”¹

For which, indeed, Chaucer somewhat deserved (for he ought not to have believed such things of Theseus) the God of Love’s anger at his drawing too near the daisy. I will write the pretty lines partly in modern spelling for you, that you may get the sense better:—

“I, kneeling by this flower, in good intent,
 Abode, to know what all the people meant,
 As still as any stone; till at the last
 The God of Love on me his eyen cast
 And said, ‘Who kneeleth there?’ And I answered
 Unto his asking,
 And said, ‘Sir, it am I,’ and came him near
 And salued him.—Quoth he, ‘What dost thou here,
 So nigh mine own flower, so boldly?
 It were better worthy, truly,
 A worm to nighen near my flower than thou.’
 ‘And why, Sir,’ quoth I, ‘an it like you?’
 ‘For thou,’ quoth he, ‘art nothing thereto able,
 It is my relike, digne, and delitable.
 And thou my foe, and all my folk worriest.*
 And of mine old servants thou missayest.’ ”²

But it is only for evil speaking of ladies that Chaucer felt his conscience thus pricked,—chiefly of Cressida; whereas, I have written the lines for you because it is the very curse of this age that we speak evil alike of ladies and knights, and all that made them noble in past days;—nay, of saints also; and I have, for first business, next January,³ to say what I can for our own St. George, against the

* Chaucer’s real word means “warrest with all my folk”; but it was so closely connected with “weary” and “worry” in association of sound, in his days, that I take the last as nearest the sense.

¹ [*The Legende of Goode Women*: “Legenda Adriane de Athenes,” line 292.]

² [From the Prologue to the *Legende of Goode Women*, 308–320.]

³ [Not said in January, but in February (Letter 26).]

enlightened modern American view of him, that he was nothing better than a swindling bacon-seller¹ (good enough, indeed, so, for us, *now!*).

13. But to come back to the house that Jack built. You will want to know, next, whether Jack ever *did* build it. I believe, in veritable bricks and mortar—no; in veritable limestone and cave-catacomb, perhaps, yes; it is no matter how; *somehow*, you see, Jack must have built it, for there is the picture of it on the coin of the town. He built it, just as St. George killed the dragon; so that you put a picture of him also on the coin of *your* town.²

Not but that the real and artful labyrinth might have been, for all we know.³ A very real one, indeed, was built by twelve brotherly kings in Egypt, in two stories, one for men to live in, the other for crocodiles;—and the upper story was visible and wonderful to all eyes, in authentic times:⁴ whereas, we know of no one who ever saw Jack's labyrinth: and yet, curiously enough, the real labyrinth set the pattern of nothing; while Jack's ghostly labyrinth has set the pattern of almost everything linear and complex, since; and the pretty spectre of it blooms at this hour, in vital hawthorn for you, every spring, at Hampton Court.

14. Now, in the pictures of this imaginary maze, you are to note that both the Cretan and Lucchese designs agree in being composed of a single path or track, coiled, and recoiled, on itself. Take a piece of flexible chain and

¹ [See Letter 26, § 5 (p. 476) for the quotation from Emerson.]

² [For Ruskin's criticism of Pistrucchi's design on the British sovereign, see Letter 26, § 3 (p. 475); also Vol. XXVI. p. 563.]

³ [The excavations carried out at Knossos by Mr. Arthur Evans during recent years leave little room for doubt that the "House of Minos" with its mazy corridors and subterranean conduits was the labyrinth of tradition.]

⁴ [Herodotus, ii. 147, 148: "The Egyptians set up over them twelve kings, who made agreement . . . to live in perfect friendship. . . . Moreover they resolved to join together and leave a memorial of themselves; and they caused to be made a labyrinth. . . . This I saw myself, and I found it greater than words can say. . . . There are in it two kinds of chambers, one below the ground and the other above. The upper set of chambers we ourselves saw, going through them, and we tell of them having seen with our own eyes; but the chambers underground we heard about only, for the Egyptians who had charge of them were not willing on any account to show them, saying that here were the sepulchres of the kings who had first built this labyrinth and of the sacred crocodiles."]

lay it down, considering the chain itself as the path: and, without an interruption, it will trace any of the three figures. (The two Cretan ones are indeed the same in design, except in being, one square, and the other round.) And recollect, upon this, that the word “Labyrinth” properly means “rope-walk,” or “coil-of-rope-walk,” its first syllable being probably also the same as our English name “Laura,” “the path,”¹ and its method perfectly given by Chaucer in the single line—“And, for the house is crenkled to and fro.”² And on this, note farther, first, that *had* the walls been real, instead of ghostly, there would have been no difficulty whatever in getting either out or in, for you could go no other way. But if the walls were spectral, and yet the transgression of them made your final entrance or return impossible, Ariadne’s clue was needful indeed.

Note, secondly, that the question seems not at all to have been about getting in; but getting *out* again. The clue, at all events, could be helpful only after you had carried it in; and if the spider, or other monster in midweb, ate you, the help in your clue, for return, would be insignificant. So that this thread of Ariadne’s implied that even victory over the monster would be vain, unless you could disentangle yourself from his web also.

15. So much you may gather from coin or carving: next, we try tradition. Theseus, as I said before, is the great settler or law-giver of the Athenian state;³ but he is so eminently as the Peace-maker, causing men to live in fellowship who before lived separate, and making roads passable that were infested by robbers or wild beasts. He is the exterminator of every bestial and savage element, and the type of human, or humane power, which power you will find in this, and all my other books on policy, summed in

¹ [Ruskin here follows Liddell and Scott, who connect *laburinqoV* with *laura* (path) and *mhrinqoV* (cord). J. G. Frazer (article “Labyrinth” in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*) explains that “the word is derived from the *laurai* or passages in a mine. According to other etymologists the Greek word is “of unknown, probably non-Hellenic, origin” (Murray’s *New English Dictionary*).]

² [*The Legende of Goode Women*: “Legenda Adriane de Athenes,” line 127.]

³ [See Letter 22, § 21 (p. 386).]

the terms, “Gentleness and Justice.”¹ The Greeks dwelt chiefly in their thoughts on the last, and Theseus, representing the first, has therefore most difficulty in dealing with questions of punishment, and criminal justice.²

16. Now the justice of the Greeks was enforced by three great judges, who lived in three islands.³ Æacus, who lived in the island of Ægina, is the administrator of distributive, or “dividing” justice; which relates chiefly to property, and his subjects, as being people of industrious temper, were once ants; afterwards called Ant-people, or “Myrmidons.”

Secondly, Minos, who lived in the island of Crete, was the judge who punished crime, of whom presently; finally, Rhadamanthus, called always by Homer “golden,” or “glowing” Rhadamanthus, was the judge who rewarded virtue;⁴ and he lived in a blessed island covered with flowers, but which eye of man hath not yet seen, nor has any living ear heard lisp of wave on that shore.⁵

For the very essence and primal condition of virtue is that it shall not know of, nor believe in, any blessed islands, till it find them, it may be, in due time.⁶

And of these three judges, two were architects, but the third only a gardener. Æacus helped the gods to build the

¹ [Compare *Unto this Last*, Preface, § 6 (Vol. XVII. p. 21); *Time and Tide*, § 60 (*ibid.*, p. 368); and *Fors*, Letter 41, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 80).]

² [For Theseus “causing men to live in fellowship who before lived separate,” see Plutarch’s *Life*, 24; for his making roads passable, see *ibid.*, 8, 10. For Theseus as “representing Gentleness,” see his character as sketched by Plutarch, and by Euripides (*e.g.*, in the *Supplices*). Ruskin’s next statement, that Theseus “has most difficulty in dealing with questions of punishment and criminal justice,” has not the same classical authority. It seems to be rather his interpretation of the story of Theseus, Ariadne, the labyrinth, and the slaying of the Minotaur. This, the hero’s most difficult task, was accomplished by “the right interweaving of Anger with Love, in criminal justice” (p. 414). “His conquest of the Minotaur, the chief glory of his life, is possible only to him through love” (p. 428); while, on the other hand, “Theseus, slaying the Minotaur, is obeying the law of justice and enforcing anger” (*Val d’Arno*, § 198, Vol. XXIII. p. 117).]

³ [Compare “The Tortoise of Ægina,” §§ 8–11 (Vol. XX. pp. 382–384). See also Letter 82, § 5 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 225), where Ruskin notes this analysis of the powers of the three judges as original.]

⁴ [See the passage from the *Odyssey* given in Vol. XX. p. 383 *n.*]

⁵ [For “the blessed island covered with flowers,” see the passage from Pindar translated in *Queen of the Air*, Vol. XIX. p. 350. For the Bible phrases used in this sentence, see Isaiah lxiv. 4 and 1 Corinthians ii. 9.]

⁶ [Compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, Vol. XVIII. pp. 398–399.]

walls of Troy. Minos appointed the labyrinth in coils round the Minotaur; but Rhadamanthus only set trees, with golden fruit on them, beside waters of comfort,¹ and overlaid the calm waves with lilies.

17. They *did* these things, I tell you, in very truth, cloud-hidden indeed; but the things themselves are with us to this day. No town on earth is more real than that town of Troy. Her prince, long ago, was dragged dead round the walls that Æacus built; but her principedom did not die with him. Only a few weeks since, I was actually standing, as I told you,² with my good friend Mr. Parker, watching the lizards play among the chinks in the walls built by Æacus, for his wandering Trojans, by Tiber side. And, perhaps within memory of man, some of you may have walked up or down Tower Street, little thinking that its tower was also built by Æacus, for his wandering Trojans and their Cæsar, by Thames side: and on Tower Hill itself—where I had my pocket picked only the other day by some of the modern Æacidæ—stands the English Mint, “dividing” gold and silver which Æacus, first of all Greeks, divided in his island of Ægina,³ and struck into intelligible money-stamp and form, that men might render to Cæsar the things which *are* Cæsar’s.⁴

18. But the Minos labyrinth is more real yet; at all events, more real for *us*. And what it was, and is, as you have seen at Lucca, you shall hear at Florence, where you are to learn Dante’s opinion upon it, and Sandro Botticelli shall draw it for us.⁵

That Hell, which so many people think the only place Dante gives any account of⁶ (yet seldom know his account even of that), was, he tells you, divided into upper, mid-most, and nether pits. You usually lose sight of this main

¹ [Psalms xxiii. 2 (Prayer-book version).]

² [See Letter 21, § 6 (p. 356).]

³ [See, again, Vol. XX. p. 381.]

⁴ [Compare Mark xii. 17; Luke xx. 25.]

⁵ [See the old Florentine engraving (Plate XII.) in Letter 28 (p. 510).]

⁶ [Compare Vol. XXII. p. 101 and *n.*; and *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 69. For the divisions of Dante’s Hell, see below, p. 426 and note.]

division of it, in the more complex one of the nine circles; but remember, these are divided in diminishing proportion: six of them are the upper hell; two, the midmost; one, the lowest.* You will find this a very pretty and curious proportion. Here it is in labyrinthine form, putting the three dimensions at right angles to each other, and drawing a spiral round them. I show you it in a spiral line, because the idea of descent is in Dante's mind, spiral (as of a worm's or serpent's coil) throughout; even to the mode of Geryon's flight, "*ruota e discende*";¹ and Minos accordingly indicates which circle any sinner is to be sent to, in a most graphically labyrinthine manner, by twisting his tail round himself so many times, necessarily thus marking the level.²

19. The uppermost and least dreadful hell, divided into six circles, is the hell of those who cannot rightly govern themselves, but have no mind to do mischief to any one else. In the lowest circle of this, and within the same walls with the more terrible mid-hell, whose stench even comes up and reaches to them,³ are people who have not rightly governed their *thoughts*: and these are buried for ever in fiery tombs, and their thoughts thus governed to purpose; which you, my friends, who are so fond of freedom of thought, and freedom of the press, may wisely meditate on.

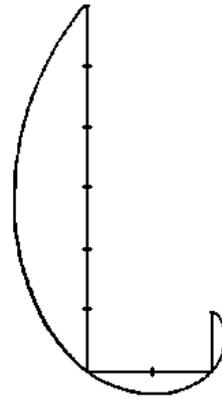


Fig. 9

* The deepening orders of sin, in the nine circles, are briefly these,—1. Unredeemed nature; 2. Lust; 3. Gluttony; 4. Avarice; 5. Discontent; 6. Heresy; 7. Open violence; 8. Fraudful violence; 9. Treachery. But they are curiously dovetailed together,—serpent-tailed, I should say,—by closer coil, not expanding plume. You shall understand the joiner's work next month.⁴

¹ [*Inferno*, xvii. 114: compare *Unto this Last*, § 74 (Vol. XVII. p. 100).]

² [*Ibid.*, v. 11: compare Vol. XX. pp. 353, 383.]

³ [*Inferno*, xi. 10–12.]

⁴ [See Letter 24, §§ 12 *seq.* (pp. 424–428).]

20. Then the two lower hells are for those who have wilfully done mischief to other people. And of these, some do open injury, and some, deceitful injury, and of these the rogues are put the lower; but there is a greater distinction in the manner of sin, than its simplicity or roguery:—namely, whether it be done in hot blood or cold blood. The injurious sins, done in hot blood—that is to say, under the influence of passion—are in the midmost hell; but the sins done in cold blood, without passion, or, more accurately, contrary to passion, far down *below* the freezing-point, are put in the lowest hell: the ninth circle.¹

21. Now, little as you may think it, or as the friend thought it, who tried to cure me of jesting the other day,² I should not have taken upon me to write this *Fors*, if I had not, in some degree, been cured of jesting long ago; and in the same way that Dante was,—for in my poor and faltering path I have myself been taken far enough down among the diminished circles to see this nether hell—the hell of Traitors; and to know, what people do not usually know of treachery, that it is not the fraud, but the *cold-heartedness*, which is chiefly dreadful in it. Therefore, this nether Hell is of ice, not fire; and of ice that nothing can break.

“Oh, ill-starred folk,
Beyond all others wretched, who abide
In such a mansion as scarce thought finds words
To speak of, better had ye here on earth
Been flocks or mountain goats.

I saw, before, and underneath my feet,
A lake, whose frozen surface liker seemed
To glass than water. Not so thick a veil
In winter e'er hath Austrian Danube spread
O'er his still course, nor Tanais, far remote
Under the chilling sky. Rolled o'er that mass
Had Taberniche or Pietrapana fallen
Not even its rim had creaked.

As peeps the frog,
Croaking above the wave,—what time in dreams

¹ [Compare *Time and Tide*, § 85 (Vol. XVII. pp. 391, 392).]

² [See Letter 21, § 17 (p. 362).]

The village gleaner oft pursues her toil,—
 Blue-pinched, and shrined in ice, the spirits stood,
 Moving their teeth in shrill note, like the stork.”¹

22. No more wandering of the feet in labyrinth like this, and the eyes, once cruelly tearless, now blind with frozen tears. But the midmost hell, for hot-blooded sinners, has other sort of lakes,—as, for instance, you saw a little while ago, of hot pitch, in which one bathes otherwise than in Serchio²—(the Serchio is the river at Lucca, and Pietrapana a Lucchese mountain). But observe,—for here we get to our main work again,—the great boiling lake on the Phlegethon³ of this upper hell country is *red*, not black; and its source, as well as that of the river which freezes beneath, is in this island of Crete! in the Mount Ida, “joyous once with leaves and streams.”⁴ You must look to the passage yourselves—*Inferno*, XIV. (line 130 in Cary)—for I have not room for it now. The first sight of it, to Dante, is as “a little brook, whose crimsoned wave Yet lifts my hair with horror.”⁵ Virgil makes him look at this spring as the notablest thing seen by him in hell, since he entered its gate; but the great lake of it is under a ruinous mountain, like the fallen Alp through which the Adige foams down to Verona;—and on the crest of this ruin lies couched the enemy of Theseus—the Minotaur:—

“And there,
 At point of the disparted ridge, lay stretched
 The infamy of Crete—at sight of us
 It gnawed itself, *as one with rage distract*.
 To him my guide exclaimed, ‘Perchance thou deem’st
 The King of Athens here.’ ”⁶

Of whom and of his enemy, I have time to tell you no more to-day—except only that this Minotaur is the type

¹ [*Inferno*, xxxii. 12–16, 23–32, 34–35 (Cary’s translation).]

² [See Letter 18, § 12 (p. 313).]

³ [Compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 79 (Vol. XVII. p. 202).]

⁴ [*Inferno*, xiv. 93 (Cary’s).]

⁵ [*Ibid.*, xiv. 74–75 (Cary’s).]

⁶ [*Ibid.*, xii. 11–17 (Cary’s).]

or embodiment of the two essentially bestial sins of Anger and Lust;—that both these are in the human nature, interwoven inextricably with its chief virtue, Love, so that Dante makes this very ruin of the Rocks of hell, on which the Minotaur is couched, to be wrought on them at the instant when “the Universe was thrilled with love,”¹—(the last moment of the Crucifixion)—and that the labyrinth of these passions is one not fabulous, nor only pictured on coins of Crete. And the right interweaving of Anger with Love, in criminal justice, is the main question in earthly law, which the Athenian lawgiver had to deal with.² Look, if you can, at my introductory Lectures at Oxford, § 89;³ and so I must leave Theseus for this time;—in next letter, which will be chiefly on Christmas cheer, I must really try to get as far as his vegetable soup.⁴

23. As for Æacus, and his coining business, we must even let them alone now, till next year;⁵ only I have to thank some readers who have written to me on the subject of interest of money (one or two complaining that I had dismissed it too summarily, when, alas! I am only at the threshold of it!), and, especially, my reader for the press, who has referred me to a delightful Italian book, *Teoremi di Politica Cristiana* (Naples, 1830), and copied out ever so much of it for me; and Mr. Sillar, for farther most useful letters, of which to-day I can only quote this postscript:—

“Please note that your next number of *Fors Clavigera* ought to be in the hands of your readers on Friday, the 1st, or Saturday, the 2nd, of November. The following day being Sunday, the 3rd, there will be read in every church in England, or in the world, where the Church Service is used, the 15th Psalm, which distinctly declares the man who shall ascend to God’s holy hill to be him who, amongst other things, has not put forth

¹ [*Inferno*, xii. 40 (Cary’s).]

² [See above, p. 408.]

³ [Vol. XX. pp. 88, 89.]

⁴ [See p. 429 and note.]

⁵ [The subject of Æacus was, however, not resumed. Ruskin’s proposals for a St. George’s coinage were given in Letter 58 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 429 *seq.*).]

his money upon usury; a verse impiously ignored in most of the metrical versions of the Psalms; those adapted to popular tunes or popular prejudices.”

24. I think, accordingly, that some of my readers may be glad to have a sounder version of that Psalm; and as the 14th is much connected with it, and will be variously useful to us afterwards,¹ here they both are, done into verse by an English squire,²—or his sister, for they alike could rhyme; and the last finished singing what her brother left unsung, the Third Fors having early put seal on his lips.

PSALM XIV.—(*Dixit insipiens*)

THE foolish man by flesh and fancy ledd,
His guilty hart with this fond thought hath fed:
There is noe God that raigenth.

And so thereafter he and all his mates
Do workes, which earth corrupt, and Heaven hates:
Not one that good remaineth.

Even God himself sent down his piercing ey,
If of this clayy race he could espy
One, that his wisdome learneth.

And loe, he findes that all a strayeng went:
All plung'd in stincking filth, not one well bent,
Not one that God discerneth.

O maddnes of these folkes, thus loosly ledd!
These caniballs, who, as if they were bread,
Gods people do devower:

Nor ever call on God; but they shall quake
More than they now do bragg, when he shall take
The just into his power.

Indeede the poore, opprest by you, you mock:
Their councells are your common jesting stock:
But God is their recomfort.

Ah, when from Syon shall the Saver come,
That Jacob, freed by thee, may glad become
And Israel full of comfort?

¹ [See, for instance, Letter 80, § 9 (Vol. XXIX. p. 179).]

² [Sir Philip Sidney: see Letter 35, § 1 (p. 648). And for Ruskin's notes on the Psalm, see *Rock Honeycomb*.]

PSALM XV.—(*Domine, quis habitabit*)

IN tabernacle thine, O Lord, who shall remaine?
 Lord, of thy holy hill, who shall the rest obtaine?
 Ev'n he that leades a life of uncorrupted traine
 Whose deedes of righteous hart, whose harty wordes be plain:
 Who with deceitfull tongue hath never us'd to faine;
 Nor neighbour hurtes by deede, nor doth with slander stain:
 Whose eyes a person vile doth hold in vile disdain,
 But doth, with honour greate, the godly entertaine:
 Who othe and promise given doth faithfully maintain,
 Although some worldly losse thereby he may sustain;
 From bityng usury who ever doth refraine:
 Who sells not guiltlesse cause for filthy love of gain,
 Who thus proceedes for ay, in sacred mount shall raign.

You may not like this old English at first; but if you can find anybody to read it to you who has an ear, its cadence is massy and grand, more than that of most verse I know, and never a word is lost. Whether you like it or not, the sense of it is true, and the way to the sacred mount (of which mounts, whether of Pity, or of Roses, are but shadows¹) told you for once, straightforwardly,—on which road I wish you God-speed.

Ever faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ [Mount of Pity, see Letter 22, § 22 (p. 388); Mont Rose, see pp. 296, 354, 365 *n.*]

LETTER 24

CRADLE SONG¹

CORPUS CHRISTI COLL.,
November 7th, 1872.

1. MY FRIENDS,—I shall not call you so any more, after this Christmas; first, because things have chanced to me, of late, which have made me too sulky to be friends with anybody; secondly, because in the two years during which I have been writing these letters, not one of you has sent me a friendly word of answer; lastly, because, even if you *were* my friends, it would be waste print to call you so, once a month. Nor shall I sign myself “faithfully yours” any more; being very far from faithfully my own, and having found most other people anything but faithfully mine. Nor shall I sign my name, for I never like the look of it;² being, I apprehend, only short for “Rough Skin,” in the sense of “Pigskin” (and indeed, the planet under which I was born, Saturn, has supreme power over pigs),—nor can I find historical mention of any other form of the name, except one I made no reference to when it occurred, as that of the leading devil of four,—Red-skin, Blue-skin—and I forget the skins of the other two—who performed in a religious play, of the fourteenth century, which was nearly as comic as the religious earnest of our own century. So that the letters will begin henceforward without address; and close without signature. You will probably know whom they come from, and I don’t in the least care whom they go to.

2. I was in London, all day yesterday, where the weather was as dismal as is its wont; and, returning here by the evening train, saw, with astonishment, the stars extricate

¹ [For the title, see below, § 21.]

² [Compare Letter 30 (below, p. 557). For the name “Ruskin,” see further, in this edition, the volume containing *Præterita*.]



"WE HAVE SEEN HIS STAR IN THE EAST"

Painted by Bernard of Loins.

the mistletoe: perhaps I may have time next year: to-day it is of the stars of Ariadne's crown I want to speak.

4. But that giving one's life for a kiss, and not getting it, is indeed a general abstract of the Greek notion of heroism, and its reward;¹ and, by the way, does it not seem to you a grave defect in the stars, at Christmas time, that all their stories are Greek—not one Christian? In all the east, and all the west, there is not a space of heaven with a Christian story in it; the star of the Wise Men having risen but once, and set, it seems, for ever: and the stars of Foolish men—innumerable, but unintelligible, forming, I suppose, all across the sky that broad way of Asses' milk; while a few Greek heroes and hunters, a monster or two, and some crustaceous animals, occupy, here in the north, our heaven's compass, down to the very margin of the illuminated book.² A sky quite good enough for us, nevertheless, for all the use we make of it, either by night or day—or any hope we have of getting into it—or any inclination we have, while still out of it, to “take stars for money.”³

5. Yet, with all deference to George Herbert, I will take them for nothing of the sort. Money is an entirely pleasant and proper thing to have, itself; and the first shilling I ever got in my life, I put in a pill-box, and put it under my pillow, and couldn't sleep all night for satisfaction. I couldn't have done that with a star; though truly the pretty system of usury makes the stars drop down something else than dew. I got a note from an arithmetical friend the other day, speaking of the death of “an old lady, a cousin of mine—who left—*left*, because she could not take it with her—£200,000. On calculation, I found this old lady, who

¹ [On Greek heroism, compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 276).]

² [In so speaking of the sky, Ruskin was thinking of the passage in *Sartor Resartus* (referred to also in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 141 n.), where Carlyle, describing a sunset, says, “Those hues of gold and azure, that hush of expectation as Day died, were still a Hebrew speech for me; nevertheless I was looking at the fair illuminated Letters, and had an eye for their gilding.”]

³ [George Herbert, *The Temple* (“Church Porch,” stanza 29); quoted also above, p. 217.]

has been lying bedridden for a year, was accumulating money (*i.e.*, the results of other people's labour) at the rate of 4d. a minute; in other words, she awoke in the morning ten pounds richer than she went to bed." At which, doubtless, and the like miracles throughout the world, "the stars with deep amaze, stand fixed with steadfast gaze;"¹ for this is, indeed, a Nativity of an adverse god to the one you profess to honour, with them, and the angels, at Christmas, by over-eating yourselves.

6. I suppose that is the quite essential part of the religion of Christmas; and, indeed, it is about the most religious thing you do in the year; and if pious people would understand, generally, that, if there be indeed any other God than Mammon, He likes to see people comfortable, and nicely dressed, as much as Mammon likes to see them fasting and in rags, they might set a wiser example to everybody than they do. I am frightened out of my wits, every now and then, here at Oxford, by seeing something come out of poor people's houses, all dressed in black down to the ground; which (having been much thinking of wicked things lately) I at first take for the Devil, and then find, to my extreme relief and gratification, that it's a Sister of Charity. Indeed, the only serious disadvantage of eating, and fine dressing,² considered as religious ceremonies, whether at Christmas, or on Sunday, in the Sunday dinner and Sunday gown,—is that you don't always clearly understand what the eating and dressing signify. For example: why should Sunday be kept otherwise than Christmas, and be less merry? Because it is a day of rest, commemorating the fulfilment of God's easy work, while Christmas is a day of toil, commemorating the beginning of His difficult work? Is that the reason? Or because Christmas commemorates His stooping to thirty years of sorrow, and Sunday His rising to countless years of joy? Which

¹ [Milton's Ode *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*.]

² [See Ruskin's reference to this letter (in a note of 1872) in *Time and Tide*, § 62 n. (Vol. XVII. p. 369).]

should be the gladdest day of the two, think you, on either ground? Why haven't you Sunday pantomimes?

7. It is a strait and sore question with me, for when I was a child, I lost the pleasure of some three-sevenths of my life because of Sunday; for I always had a way of looking forward to things, and a lurid shade was cast over the whole of Friday and Saturday by the horrible sense that Sunday was coming, and inevitable.¹ Not that I was rebellious against my good mother or aunts in any wise; feeling only that we were all crushed under a relentless fate; which was indeed the fact, for neither they nor I had the least idea what Holiness meant, beyond what I find stated very clearly by Mr. David—the pious author of “The Paradezeal system of Botany, an arrangement representing the whole globe as a vast blooming and fruitful Paradise,”—that “Holiness is a knowledge of the Ho's.”²

My mother, indeed, never went so far as my aunt; nor carried her religion down to the ninth or glacial circle³ of Holiness, by giving me cold dinner; and to this day, I am apt to over-eat myself with Yorkshire pudding, in remembrance of the consolation it used to afford me at one o'clock. Good Friday, also, was partly “intermedled,” as Chaucer would call it,⁴ with light and shade, because there were hot-cross-buns at breakfast, though we had to go to church afterwards. And, indeed, I observe, happening to have under my hand the account in the *Daily Telegraph* of Good Friday at the Crystal Palace, in 1870, that its observance is for your sakes also now “intermedled” similarly,

¹ [Compare Letter 52, § 3 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 297).]

² [J. C. David, herbalist and astrologer. His *Paradezeal System of Botany* appeared in 1846. The present quotation is from another publication, entitled *J. C. David's Geographical Botany and Astronomy*, p. 36: “Ho is a fire of the Heavens. Holiness is knowledge of the Ho's; no man can be a holy-man who is ignorant of the power that constitutes Holiness, for it is said, He telleth the number of the stars.”]

³ [See Letter 23, § 20 (p. 412).]

⁴ [“With skripes bret-ful of lesenges
Entremedled with tydynge.”]

—*House of Fame*, iii. 1034.]

with light and shade, by conscientious persons: for in that year, “whereas in former years the performances had been exclusively of a religious character, the directors had supplemented their programme with secular amusements.” It was, I suppose, considered “secular” that the fountains should play (though I have noticed that natural ones persist in that profane practice on Sunday also), and accordingly, “there was a very abundant water-supply, while a brilliant sun gave many lovely prismatic effects to the fleeting and changeful spray” (not careful, even the sun, for his part, to remember how once he became “black as sackcloth of hair”¹). “A striking feature presented itself to view in the shape of the large and handsome pavilion of Howe and Cushing’s American circus. This vast pavilion occupies the whole centre of the grand terrace, and was gaily decorated with bunting and fringed with the show-carriages of the circus, which were bright with gilding, mirrors, portraits, and scarlet panels. The out-door amusements began”—(the English public always retaining a distinct impression that this festival was instituted in the East)—“with an Oriental procession”—(by the way, why don’t we always call Wapping the Oriental end of London?)—“of fifteen camels from the circus, mounted by negroes wearing richly coloured and bespangled Eastern costume. The performances then commenced, and continued throughout the day, the attractions comprising the trained wolves, the wonderful monkeys, and the usual scenes in the circle.”

8.”There was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.”² I often wonder, myself, how long it will be (in the crucifixion afresh, which all the earth has now resolved upon,³ crying with more unanimous shout than ever

¹ [Revelation vi. 12.]

² [Luke xxiii. 44.]

³ [Ruskin in his copy marks this passage as “wanting a note,” but he does not supply it. He seems, however, to mean that the modern world, in pursuit of gain, is ever committing the sin of the crucifixion, being ready at any moment “for thirty pence to sell its God And trample Christ for Hell’s approving nod.” Compare below, p. 436, where he suggests that perhaps it is Herod rather than Barabbas with whom the modern world is friendly.]

the Jews, “Not this man, but Barabbas”¹)—before the Ninth Hour comes.

9. Assuming, however, that, for the nonce, trained wolves and wonderful monkeys are proper entertainments on Good Friday, pantomimes on Boxing Day, and sermons on Sunday, have you ever considered what observance might be due to Saturday,—the day on which He “preached to the spirits in prison”² for that seems to me quite the part of the three days’ work which most of us might first hope for a share in. I don’t know whether any of you perceive that your spirits are in prison. I know mine is, and that I would fain have it preached to, and delivered, if it be possible. For, however far and steep the slope may have been into the hell which you say every Sunday that you believe He descended into, there are places trenched deep enough now in all our hearts for the hot lake of Phlegethon³ to leak and ooze into: and the rock of their shore is no less hard than in Dante’s time.

10. And as your winter rejoicings, if they mean anything at all, mean that you have now, at least, a chance of deliverance from that prison, I will ask you to take the pains to understand what the bars and doors of it are, as the wisest man who has yet spoken of them tells you.

There is first, observe, this great distinction in his mind between the penalties of Hell, and the joy of Paradise. The penalty is assigned to definite act of hand; the joy, to definite state of mind. It is questioned of no one, either in the Purgatory or the Paradise, what he has done; but only what evil feeling is still in his heart, or what good, when purified wholly, his nature is noble enough to receive.

11. On the contrary, Hell is constituted such by the one great negative state of being without Love or Fear of God;—there are no degrees of that State; but there are more or less dreadful sins which can be done in it,

¹ [John xviii. 40.]

² [1 Peter iii. 19.]

³ [*Inferno*, xiv.: see above, p. 413.]

themselves from the fog, and the moon glow for a little while in her setting, over the southern Berkshire hills, as I breathed on the platform at the Reading station (for there were six people in the carriage, and they had shut both the windows).

When I got to Oxford, the sky was entirely clear; the Great Bear was near the ground under the pole, and the Charioteer high overhead, the principal star of him as bright as a gas-lamp.

3. It is a curious default in the stars, to my mind, that there is a Charioteer among them without a chariot; and a Waggon with no waggoner; nor any waggon, for that matter, except the Bear's stomach; but I have always wanted to know the history of the absent Charles, who must have stopped, I suppose to drink, while his cart went on, and so never got to be stellified himself. I wish I knew; but I can tell you less about him than even about Theseus. The Charioteer's story is pretty, however:—he gave his life for a kiss, and did not get it; got made into stars instead.¹ It would be a dainty tale to tell you under

¹ [The story is that of Myrtilus, son of Hermes and charioteer of Ænomaus, whose horses became under his skilful management the swiftest in all Greece. To Ænomaus an oracle had revealed that the husband of the beautiful Hippodamia, his daughter, would cause his death; wherefore, as if to set an impossible task, he declared that she should be married to the man who should defeat the chariot of her father. Hippodamia (or according to some versions, her favoured suitor, Pelops), persuaded Myrtilus to be unfaithful, in the chariot race, to his master; the embraces of Hippodamia were to be his reward. It was denied to him, and he was cast into the sea; but his father, Hermes, raised him to the heavens, as the constellation Charioteer (Auriga). See *Epitoma Vaticana ex Apollodori Bibliotheca*, ed. R. Wagner, pp. 59 *seq.* Ruskin refers to the story again in a letter to C. E. Norton (August 18, 1874: see a later volume of this edition); and in the first draft of *The Queen of the Air* it is given as an illustration of the literal and symbolic powers of Greek myths:—

“Thus when you are told that the charioteer of Ænomaus was turned into the constellation Auriga, you are, on the one hand, meant to believe it literally;—just as Dante means you to believe literally that the souls of Trajan and Hezekiah formed part of the constellation of the Eagle, and Milton means you to believe that Uriel the archangel inhabits and governs the sun;—while, nevertheless, underlying each of these phantoms in the mind of the relater, there is an abstract significance of a moral principle; and the material light of the transformed mortal, or the enduring angelic spirit, are also symbols of the victories of fidelity and justice, and the all-seeing witness of the supremacy of truth.”

Ruskin, it would thus seem, somewhat moralised the tale of Myrtilus. For the references to Dante and Milton, see *Paradiso*, xx. 44 *seq.*, and *Paradise Lost*, ix. 60.]

according to the degradation of the unredeemed Human nature. And men are judged according to their works.¹

To give a single instance. The punishment of the fourth circle in Hell is for the Misuse of Money, for having either sinfully kept it, or sinfully spent it. But the pain in Purgatory is only for having sinfully *Loved* it: and the hymn of repentance is, “My *soul* cleaveth unto the dust; quicken thou me.”²

12. Farther, and this is very notable. You might at first think that Dante’s divisions were narrow and artificial, in assigning each circle to one sin only, as if every man did not variously commit many. But it is always one sin, the favourite, which destroys souls. That conquered, all others fall with it: that victorious, all others follow with it. Nevertheless, as I told you,³ the joiner’s work, and interwoven walls of Dante’s *Inferno*, marking double forms of sin, and their overlapping, as it were, when they meet, is⁴ one of the subtlest conditions traceable in his whole design.

13. Look back to the scheme I gave you in last number.⁵ The Minotaur, spirit of lust and anger, rules over the central hell. But the *sins* of lust and anger, definitely and limitedly described as such, are punished in the upper hell, in the second and fifth circles. Why is this, think you?

Have you ever noticed—enough to call it noticing seriously—the expression, “fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the *mind*”?⁶ There is one lust and one anger of the flesh only; these, all men must feel; rightly feel, if in temperance; wrongly, if in excess; but even then, not necessarily to the destruction of their souls. But there is another lust, and another anger, of the heart; and *these* are the Furies of Phlegethon⁷—wholly ruinous. Lord of

¹ [Revelation xx. 13.]

² [See *Inferno*, vii., and *Purgatorio*, xix. 73, where those who are being purged of the sin use the words of Psalm cxix. 25.]

³ [Letter 23, § 18 *n.* (p. 411).]

⁴ [In his own copy Ruskin here notes, “Bad grammar; read ‘the joinery, dovetailing, or overlapping of the work is . . .’”]

⁵ [See Letter 23, §§ 18–22 (pp. 411–413).]

⁶ [Ephesians ii. 3.]

⁷ [*Inferno*, xiv.: see above, Letter 23, § 22 (p. 413).]

these, on the shattered rocks, lies couched the Infamy of Crete.¹ For when the heart, as well as the flesh, desires what it should not, and the heart, as well as the flesh, consents and kindles to its wrath, the whole man is corrupted, and his heart's blood is fed in its veins from the lake of fire.

14. Take for special example, this sin of usury with which we have ourselves to deal. The punishment in the fourth circle of the upper hell is on Avarice, not Usury. For a man may be utterly avaricious,—greedy of gold—in an instinctive, fleshly way, yet not corrupt his intellect. Many of the most good-natured men are misers: my first shilling in the pill-box and sleepless night² did not at all mean that I was an ill-natured or illiberal boy; it *did* mean, what is true of me still, that I should have great delight in counting money, and laying it in visible heaps and rouleaux. I never part with a new sovereign without a sigh: and if it were not that I am afraid of thieves, I would positively and seriously, at this moment, turn all I have into gold of the newest, and dig a hole for it in my garden, and go and look at it every morning and evening, like the man in *Æsop's Fables*, or *Silas Marner*:³ and where I think thieves will not break through nor steal I am always laying up for myself treasures upon earth,⁴ with the most eager appetite: that bit of gold and diamonds, for instance (4, § 5), and the most gilded mass-books, and such like, I can get hold of; the acquisition of a Koran, with two hundred leaves richly gilt on both sides, only three weeks since, afforded me real consolation under variously trying circumstances.

Truly, my soul cleaves to the dust of such things. But I have not so perverted my soul, nor palsied my brains, as to expect to be advantaged by that adhesion. I don't expect, because I have gathered much, to find Nature or

¹ [*Ibid.*, xii. 12 (describing the entrance to the seventh circle):—
“At point of the disparted ridge lay stretch'd
The infamy of Crete, detested brood
Of the feign'd heifer” (Cary).]

² [See above, § 5.]

³ [See *Æsop's Fable* of “The Miser,” and *Silas Marner*, ch. ii.]

⁴ [Matthew vi. 19, 20.]

man gathering for me more:—to find eighteenpence in my pill-box in the morning, instead of a shilling, as a “reward for continence”;¹ or to make an income of my Koran by lending it to poor scholars. If I think a scholar can read it (*N.B.*, I can’t, myself)—and would like to—and will carefully turn the leaves by the outside edge, he is welcome to read it for nothing;² if he has got into the habit of turning leaves by the middle, or of wetting his finger, and shuffling up the corners, as I see my banker’s clerks do with their ledgers, for no amount of money shall he read it. (Incidentally, note the essential vulgarism of doing *anything* in a hurry.³)

So that my mind and brains are in fact untainted and unwarped by lust of money, and I am free in that respect from the power of the Infamy of Crete.

15. I used the words just above—Furies of Phlegethon. You are beginning to know something of the Fates: of the Furies also you must know something.

The pit of Dante’s central hell⁴ is reserved for those who have actually committed *malicious* crime, involving mercilessness to their neighbour, or, in suicide, to themselves. But it is necessary to serpent-tail⁵ this pit with the upper hell by a district for insanity without deed; the Fury which has brought horror to the eyes, and hardness to the heart, and yet, having possessed itself of noble persons, issues in no malicious crime. Therefore the sixth circle of the upper hell

¹ [“Reward for abstinence”: see Letter 18, § 15 (p. 316).]

² [Ruskin ultimately presented this copy of the Koran to Whitelands College, with this inscription: “Dec. 6., ’81. I think with its pretty silken cover, binding, and all, it is just the thing to show your girls what sort of thing a book should be. They might do much prettier ones themselves with home-made paper and studies of every flower and beautiful writing of things for ever true.”]

³ [Compare Letter 25, §§ 20, 24 (pp. 467, 470).]

⁴ [That is, the Lower Hell, in which sins of malice are punished (*Inferno*, xi. 82), situated within the City of Dis, containing the three Rounds of the Seventh Circle—the circle presided over by the Minotaur. Within the walls of the City of Dis lies the Sixth Circle, where arch-heretics are punished. After a further descent comes the third region, comprising the ten Pits of the Eighth Circle (*Inferno*, xii. 25): compare Letter 72, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 764). Below this region (Malebolge) is a further abyss, at the bottom of which lies the fourth, or frozen region, comprising the four divisions of the Ninth Circle—the circle presided over by the Giants (*Inferno*, xxxi. 31, 44; xxxiv. 31).]

⁵ [For this word, see above, p. 411 *n.*]

is walled in, together with the central pit, as one grievous city of the dead; and at the gates of it the warders are fiends, and the watchers Furies.¹

Watchers, observe, as sleepless. Once in their companionship,

“Not poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou owed’st yesterday.”²

Sleepless, and merciless; and yet in the Greek vision of them which Æschylus wrote, they are first seen asleep; and they remain in the city of Theseus, in mercy.³

Elsewhere, furies that make the eyes evil and the heart hard. Seeing Dante from their watch-tower, they call for Medusa. “So will we make flint of him”⁴ (“enamel,” rather—which has been in the furnace first, then hardened); but Virgil puts his hands over his eyes.

Thus the upper hell is knitted to the central. The central is half joined to the lower by the power of Fraud: only in the central hell, though in a deeper pit of it (Phlegethon falls into the abyss in a Niagara of blood⁵), Fraud is still joined with human passion, but in the nether hell is passionate no more; the traitors have not natures of flesh or of fire, but of earth; and the earth-giants, the first enemies of Athena, the Greek spirit of Life, stand about the pit, speechless, as towers of war. In a bright morning, this last midsummer, at Bologna, I was standing in the shade of the tower of Garisenda, which Dante says they were like.⁶ The sun had got just behind its battlements,

¹ [*Inferno*, ix. 38.]

² [*Othello*, Act iii. sc. 3.]

³ [*Eumenides*, 46 and the end of the play, *passim*.]

⁴ [*Inferno*, ix. 53: compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 285).]

⁵ [A “red seething wave”: *Inferno*, xiv. 134.]

⁶ [*Inferno*, xxxi. 136, where Dante thus likens Antæus:—

“As appears
The tower of Garisenda, from beneath
Where it doth lean, if chance a passing cloud
So sail across, that opposite it hangs;
Such then Antæus seem’d, as at mine ease
I mark’d him stooping.”]

and sent out rays round them as from behind a mountain peak, vast and grey against the morning sky. I may be able to get some picture of it, for the January *Fors*, perhaps;¹ and perchance the sun may some day rise for us from behind our Towers of Treachery.

16. Note but this farther, and then we will try to get out of Hell for to-day. The divisions of the central fire are under three creatures, all of them partly man, partly animal. The Minotaur has a man's body, a bull's head (which is precisely the general type of the English nation to-day). The Centaur Chiron has a horse's body; a man's head and breast. The Spirit of Fraud, Geryon, has a serpent's body, his face is that of a just man, and his breast chequered like a lizard's, with labyrinthine lines.²

All these three creatures signify the mingling of a brutal instinct with the human mind; but, in the Minotaur, the brute rules, the humanity is subordinate; in the Centaur, the man rules, and the brute is subordinate; in the third, the man and the animal are in harmony; and both false.³

Of the Centaurs, Chiron and Nessus, one, the type of human gentleness, justice, and wisdom, stooping to join itself with the nature of animals, and to be healed by the herbs of the ground,⁴—the other, the destruction of Hercules,—you shall be told in the *Fors* of January:⁵ to-day I must swiftly sum the story of Theseus.

17. His conquest of the Minotaur, the chief glory of his life, is possible only to him through love, and love's hope and help. But he has no joy either of love or victory.

¹ [This, however, was not done. For another reference to the Tower of Garisenda, see Vol. XV. p. 356.]

² [The Minotaur presides over the Seventh Circle (see above, p. 426 *n.*); Chiron is placed, along with Nessus and Pholus, as guardian of the violent in the First Round of the Circle (*Inferno*, xii. 61 *seq.*); Geryon is guardian of the Eighth Circle (*Inferno*, xvii. 1–27).]

³ [For other references, in this sense, to the Minotaur, see above, p. 387; to the Centaurs, "The Riders of Tarentum" (Vol. XX. pp. 390 *seq.*); to Geryon, above, p. 411 *n.*]

⁴ [See, again, Vol. XX. p. 390.]

⁵ [Not told: see Letter 25, § 23 (p. 468). The story of Nessus, and the fatal shirt, dyed in his blood and given to Dejanira, is referred to in Letter 58, § 12 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 429), and Vol. XIV. p. 228.]

Before he has once held Ariadne in his arms, Diana kills her in the isle of Naxos. Jupiter crowns her in heaven, where there is no following her. Theseus returns to Athens alone.

The ship which hitherto had carried the Minotaur's victims only, bore always a black sail. Theseus had received from his father a purple one, to hoist instead, if he returned victorious.

The common and senseless story¹ is that he forgot to hoist it. Forgot! A sail is so inconspicuous a part of a ship! and one is so likely to forget one's victory, returning, with home seen on the horizon! But he returned *not* victorious, at least for himself;—Diana and Death had been too strong for him. He bore the black sail. And his father, when he saw it, threw himself from the rock of Athens, and died.

Of which the meaning is, that we must not mourn for *ourselves*, lest a worse thing happen to us,²—a Greek lesson much to be remembered by Christians about to send expensive orders to the undertaker: unless, indeed, they mean by their black vestments to tell the world that they think their friends are in hell.³ If in Heaven, with Ariadne and the gods, are we to mourn? And if they were fit for Heaven, are we, for ourselves, ever to leave off mourning? Yet Theseus, touching the beach, is too just and wise to mourn *there*. He sends a herald to the city to tell his father he is safe; stays on the shore to sacrifice to the gods, and feast his sailors. He sacrifices; and makes pottage for them there on the sand.⁴ The herald returns to tell him his father is dead also. Such welcome has he for his good work, in the islands, and on the main.

¹ [As told by Plutarch.]

² [See John v. 14.]

³ [For Ruskin's views on "mourning," see Vol. XVI. p. 62, and Vol. XVIII. p. 395.]

⁴ ["The boiling of all sorts of pulse at that time is said to take its rise from their mixing the remains of their provisions, when they found themselves safe ashore, boiling them in one pot, and feasting upon them all together" (Plutarch's *Life of Theseus*). This is the story of "Theseus' vegetable soup," so often referred to (Letters 2, 6, 21, 23, 27; pp. 29, 102, 357, 414, 502).]

18. In which work he persists, no less, and is redeemed from darkness by Hercules, and at last helps Hercules himself in his sorest need—as you shall hear afterwards. I must stop to-day at the vegetable soup,—which you would think, I suppose, poor Christmas cheer. Plum-pudding is an Egyptian dish;² but have you ever thought how many stories were connected with this Athenian one, pottage of lentils? A bargain of some importance, even to us (especially as usurers³); and the healing miracle of Elisha;⁴ and the vision of Habakkuk as he was bearing their pottage to the reapers, and had to take it far away to one who needed it more;⁵ and, chiefly of all, the soup of the bitter herbs, with its dipped bread and faithful company,—“he it is to whom I shall give the sop when I have dipped it.”⁶ The meaning of which things, roughly, is, first, that we are not to sell our birthrights for pottage, though we fast to death; but are diligently to know and keep them: secondly, that we are to poison no man’s pottage, mental or real: lastly, that we look to it lest we betray the hand which gives us our daily bread.

19. Lessons to be pondered on at Christmas time over our pudding; and the more, because the sops we are dipping for each other, and even for our own children, are not always the most nourishing, nor are the rooms in which we make ready their last supper always carefully furnished.⁷

¹ [Theseus, it is said, aided Peirithous and the Lapithæ against the Centaurs, and afterwards assisted him in an attempt to carry off Persephone from the lower world. Peirithous perished in the enterprise, and Theseus was kept in durance until he was delivered by Hercules. The tale of the help rendered by Theseus to Hercules has been already promised (Letter 2, p. 29), but Ruskin does not tell it. The reference is to the close of the *Hercules Furens* of Euripides, where (1394 *seq.*) Hercules, after having in madness killed his children, is persuaded by Theseus not to kill himself but to come with him to Athens.]

² [For descriptions of the puddings and pasties of the Egyptians, drawn from the monuments, see J. G. Wilkinson’s *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. ii. p. 33 (1878 edition).]

³ [That is, the bargain between Esau and Jacob: Genesis xxv. 29–34.]

⁴ [2 Kings iv. 38–41.]

⁵ [In the Apocrypha, The History of the Destruction of Bel and the Dragon, 33, 34.]

⁶ [John xiii. 26.]

⁷ [See Mark xiv. 15.]

Take, for instance, this example of last supper—(no, I see it is breakfast)—in Chicksand Street, Mile End:—

“On Wednesday an inquest was held on the body of Annie Redfern, aged twenty-eight, who was found dead in a cellar at 5, Chicksand Street, Mile End, on the morning of last Sunday. This unfortunate woman was a fruit-seller, and rented the cellar in which she died at 1s. 9d. per week—her only companion being a little boy, aged three years, of whom she was the mother. It appeared from the evidence of the surgeon who was summoned to see the deceased when her body was discovered on Sunday morning that she had been dead some hours before his arrival. Her knees were drawn up and her arms folded in such a position as to show that she died with her child clasped in her arms. The room was very dark, without any ventilation, and was totally unfit for human habitation. The cause of death was effusion of serum into the pericardium, brought on greatly by living in such a wretched dwelling. The coroner said that as there were so many of these wretched dwellings about, he hoped the jurymen who were connected with the vestry would take care to represent the case to the proper authorities, and see that the place was not let as a dwelling again. This remark from the coroner incited a jurymen to reply, ‘Oh, if we were to do that, we might empty half the houses in London; there are thousands more like that, and worse.’ Some of the jurors objected to the room being condemned; the majority, however, refused to sign the papers unless this was done, and a verdict was returned in accordance with the evidence. It transpired that the body had to be removed to save it from the rats. If the little child who lay clasped in his dead mother’s arms has not been devoured by these animals, he is probably now in the workhouse, and will remain a burden on the ratepayers, who unfortunately have no means of making the landlord of the foul den that destroyed his mother answerable for his support.”¹

20. I miss, out of the column of the *Pall Mall* for the 1st of this month, one paragraph after this, and proceed to the next but one, which relates to the enlightened notion among English young women, derived from Mr. J. Stuart Mill,—that the “career” of the Madonna is too limited a one,² and that modern political economy can provide them, as the *Pall Mall* observes, with “much more lucrative occupations than that of nursing the baby.” But you must know, first, that the Athenians always kept memory of Theseus’ pot of vegetable soup, and of his sacrifice, by procession in spring-time, bearing a rod wreathed

¹ [For another reference to this case, see Letter 73, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 15).]

² [Compare Letter 12, § 14 (p. 208).]

with lambs'-wool, and singing an Easter carol, in these words:—

“Fair staff, may the gods grant, by thee, the bringing of figs to us, and buttery cakes, and honey in bulging cups, and the sopping of oil, and wine in flat cups, easy to lift, that thou mayest” (meaning that *we* may, but not clear which is which) “get drunk and sleep.”¹

Which Mr. Stuart Mill and modern political economy have changed into a pretty Christmas carol for English children, lambs for whom the fair staff also brings wine of a certain sort, in flat cups, “that they may get drunk, and sleep.” Here is the next paragraph from the *Pall Mall*:—

“One of the most fertile causes of excessive infant mortality is the extensive practice in manufacturing districts of insidiously narcotising young children, that they may be the more conveniently laid aside when more lucrative occupations present themselves than that of nursing the baby. Hundreds of gallons of opium in various forms are sold weekly in many districts for this purpose. Nor is it likely that the practice will be checked until juries can be induced to take a rather severe view of the suddenly fatal misadventures which this sort of chronic poisoning not unfrequently produces. It appears, however, to be very difficult to persuade them to look upon it as other than a venial offence. An inquest was recently held at Chapel Gate upon the body of an infant who had died from the administration, by its mother, of about twelve times the proper dose of laudanum. The bottle was labelled carefully with a caution that ‘opium should not be given to children under seven years of age.’ In this case five drops of laudanum were given to a baby of eighteen months. The medical evidence was of a quite unmistakable character, and the coroner in summing up read to the jury a definition of manslaughter, and told them that ‘a lawful act, if dangerous, not attended with such care as would render the probability of danger very small, and resulting in death, would amount to manslaughter at the least. Then in this case they must return a verdict of manslaughter unless they could find any circumstance which would take it out of the rule of law he had laid down to them. It was not in evidence that the mother had used any caution at all in administering the poison.’ Nevertheless, the jury returned, after a short interval, the verdict of homicide by misadventure.”

21. “Hush-a-bye, baby, upon the tree top,” my mother used to sing to me: and I remember the dawn of intelligence in which I began to object to the bad rhyme which followed:—“when the wind blows, the cradle will rock.”

¹ [Plutarch, *Life of Theseus*, 22.]

But the Christmas winds must blow rudely, and warp the waters¹ askance indeed, which rock our English cradles now.

Mendelssohn's songs without words have been, I believe, lately popular in musical circles. We shall, perhaps, require cradle songs with very few words, and Christmas carols with very sad ones, before long; in fact, it seems to me, we are fast losing our old skill in carolling. There is a different tone in Chaucer's notion of it (though this carol of his² is in spring-time indeed, not at Christmas):—

“Then went I forth on my right hand,
Down by a little path I found,
Of Mintës full, and Fennel greene.

Sir Mirth I found, and right anon
Unto Sir Mirth gan I gone,
There, where he was, him to solace:
And with him, in that happy place,
So fair folke and so fresh, had he,
That when I saw, I wondered me
From whence such folke might come,
So fair were they, all and some;
For they were like, as in my sight
To angels, that be feathered bright.
These folke, of which I tell you so,
Upon a karole wenten tho,*
A Ladie karoled them, that hight†
Gladnesse, blissful and light.
She could make in song such refraining
It sate her wonder well to sing,
Her voice full clear was, and full sweet,
She was not rude, nor unmeet,
But couth‡ enough for such doing,
As longeth unto karolling;
For she was wont, in every place,
To singen first, men to solace.
For singing most she gave her to,
No craft had she so lefe § to do.”

* Went *then* in measure of a carol dance.

† Was called.

‡ Skilful.

§ Fond.

¹ [*As You Like It*, Act ii. sc. 7 (song).]

² [*The Romaunt of the Rose*, 719–721, 723–748.]

Mr. Stuart Mill would have set her to another craft, I fancy (not but that singing is a lucrative one, nowadays, if it be shrill enough); but you will not get your wives to sing thus for nothing, if you send them out to earn their dinners (instead of earning them yourselves for them), and put their babies summarily to sleep.

22. It is curious how our English feeling seems to be changed also towards two other innocent kind of creatures. In nearly all German pictures of the Nativity (I have given you an Italian one of the Magi for a frontispiece, this time¹), the dove is one way or other conspicuous, and the little angels round the cradle are nearly always, when they are tired, allowed by the Madonna to play with rabbits.² And in the very garden in which *Ladie Gladness* leads her *karol-dance*, “*connis*,” as well as squirrels, are among the happy company; frogs only, as you shall hear, not being allowed; the French says, no flies either, of the watery sort! For the path among the mint and fennel greene leads us into this garden:³—

“The garden was by measuring,
Right even and square in compasing:
It was long as it was large,
Of fruit had every tree his charge,
And many homely trees there were,*
That peaches, coines,† and apples bare.
Medlers, plommes, peeres, chesteinis,
Cherise, of which many one faine‡ is,
With many a high laurel and pine
Was ranged clean all that gardene.
There might men Does and Roes see,
And of Squirrels ful great plentee

* There were foreign trees besides. I omit bits here and there, without putting stars to interrupt the pieces given.

† Quinces.

‡ Fond.

¹ [The plate has hitherto been lettered “Painted by Bernard of Luino, at Milan.” But the fresco has been in the Louvre (No. 1360) since 1867, having been bought by Napoleon III. in that year from the Duke Antonio Litta Visconti Arese.]

² [See *Eagle’s Nest*, § 151 (Vol. XXII. p. 225).]

³ [*The Romaunt of the Rose*, 1349–1352, 1373–1376, 1379, 1380, 1391–1394, 1397, 1399, 1400, 1421–1428.]

From bough to bough always leping;
 Connis there were also playing
 And maden many a tourneying
 Upon the fresh grass springing.
 In places saw I wells there
 In which no frogges were.
 There sprang the violet all new
 And fresh pervinke, rich of hue,
 And flowers yellow, white and rede,
 Such plenty grew there never in mede,
 Full gay was all the ground, and quaint,
 And poudred, as men had it peint
 With many a fresh and sundry flour
 That castes up full good savour.”

23. So far for an old English garden, or “pleasance,” and the pleasures of it. Now take a bit of description written this year of a modern English garden or pleasance, and the pleasures of *it*, and newly invented odours:—

“In a short time the sportsmen issued from the (new?) hall, and, accompanied by sixty or seventy attendants, bent their steps towards that part of the park in which the old hall is situate. Here were the rabbit covers—large patches of rank fern, three or four feet in height, and extending over many acres. The doomed rabbits, assiduously driven from the burrows during the preceding week by the keepers, forced from their lodgings beneath the tree-roots by the suffocating fumes of sulphur, and deterred from returning thither by the application of gas-tar to the “runs,” had been forced to seek shelter in the fern patch; and here they literally swarmed. At the edge of the ferns a halt was called, and the head gamekeeper proceeded to arrange his assistants in the most approved ‘beating’ fashion. The shooting party, nine in number, including the prince, distributed themselves in advance of the line of beaters, and the word ‘Forward!’ was given. Simultaneously the line of beaters moved into the cover, vigorously thrashing the long ferns with their stout sticks, and giving vent to a variety of uncouth ejaculations, which it was supposed were calculated to terrify the hidden rabbits. Hardly had the beaters proceeded half-a-dozen yards when the cover in front of them became violently agitated, and rabbits were seen running in all directions. The quantity of game thus started was little short of marvellous—the very ground seemed to be alive. Simultaneously with the appearance of the terrified animals the slaughter commenced. Each sportsman carried a double-barrelled breechloader, and an attendant followed him closely, bearing an additional gun, ready loaded. The shooter discharged both barrels of his gun, in some cases with only the interval of a second or two, and immediately exchanged it for a loaded one. Rabbits fell in all directions. The warning cry of ‘Rabbit!’ from the relentless keepers was heard continuously, and each cry was as quickly followed by the sharp crack of a gun—a pretty sure indication that the rabbit referred to had come to an untimely end, as the majority of the sportsmen were crack shots.”

24. Of course all this is quite natural to a sporting people who have learned to like the smell of gunpowder, sulphur, and gas-tar, better than that of violets and thyme. But, putting the baby-poisoning, pigeon-shooting, and rabbit-shooting of to-day in comparison with the pleasures of the German Madonna, and her simple company; and of Chaucer and his carolling company; and seeing that the present effect of peace upon earth, and well-pleasing in men, is that every nation now spends most of its income in machinery for shooting the best and bravest men, just when they were likely to have become of some use to their fathers and mothers, I put it to you, my friends all, calling you so, I suppose for the last time (unless you are disposed for friendship with Herod instead of Barabbas), whether it would not be more kind and less expensive, to make the machinery a little smaller; and adapt it to spare opium now, and expenses of maintenance and education afterwards (besides no end of diplomacy), by taking our sport in shooting babies instead of rabbits?

Believe me,

Faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

25. **F** THE first number of *Fors Clavigera* for the year 1873 will be published (I hope) on 1st January next, and in the course of that month the Index to the two first volumes, for the years 1871, 1872, as an extra number, which will be sent gratis to subscribers to the complete work.¹

Subscriptions to the St. George's Fund have been sent to me to the amount of £104, 1s. I have therefore sent a cheque for £100 to be added to the fund accumulating in the hands of the trustees.

I think it inexpedient at present to give the names of my—not numerous—subscribers.² Each of them knows his or her number in the subjoined list:—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|-----------------------------|------|----|----|
| 1. Annual, £4 (1871, 1872) | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. Annual, £20 (1871, 1872) | 40 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. Gift (1871) | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 4. Gift (1872) | 30 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. Gift (1872) | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. Annual (1872) | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | £104 | 1 | 0 |

It is a beginning. We shall get on in time—better than some companies that have started with large capital.

26. The following cry of distress, from a bookseller of the most extended experience, has lain all this year by me, till I could find opportunity, which has not come, for commending its sound common-sense in relation to several matters besides what it immediately touches on. It must stand on its own worth now, and is well able to do so.

“February 28th, 1872.

“It is often a question of considerable embarrassment for parents to know what to do with their children, and to place them in such a manner in a trade or profession as would best fit their talents and aptitudes.

“Notions of ‘gentility’ induce too many parents to bring up their sons for professions or the Civil Service, and their daughters for a status which they are unlikely to attain.

“I will say here only a few words to parents of the humbler classes:—Do not

¹ [There was, however, some delay in the preparation of the Index: see pp. 505, 553. It was ultimately published in September 1873: see Bibliographical Note on the Index in Vol. XXIX.]

² [Later on, Ruskin gave the initials of Companions and subscribers: see Letters 61, § 17, 62, § 19 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 503, 530); and finally the names of the Companions at the close of Letter 93 (Vol. XXIX. p. 477).]

be allured by advertisements into seeking for your sons appointments as clerks in offices where a boy starts at once with a salary and short hours of business. Rely upon it, these tempting offers lead to poor prospects; hence has arisen the superabundant supply of 'genteel clerks,' and the deficient supply of good mechanics. It is much to be regretted that the former practice of apprenticeship has fallen so much out of use. Better mechanics were certainly thus formed.

"There is one mechanical trade with which I am especially connected, viz., that of bookbinding. I regret to say, that an extreme difficulty exists to obtain intelligent and willing men to do the work which is ready to be given out. I ascribe this largely to a defective education of our youth. There is too much conceit amongst parents and their children as to their future in life, too much uniformity of thought, and by far too little exertion and preparation for the struggles of existence. Walking-sticks, meerschaum-pipes, and cheap sensational journals are found in the hands of strutting youngsters, who ought to be modestly attired, and who ought earnestly to prepare themselves for their future career.

"In mentioning such a trade as bookbinding, I wish to convey that it is not the heavy and idle who are wanted, but the hardy and intelligent boys; and the better they are educated, the better are their future chances of success in life.

"Being very much hampered in my pursuit as a bookseller by the want of proper execution in the binding and furbishing of books, I can speak decidedly to the fact that there is ample room for many more labourers in that interesting trade. Intelligence, honesty, and physical strength are required in starting a youth in every business; and when parents have prepared their children with these qualifications, a successful career in the bookbinding trade may be safely guaranteed.

"It is painful to me, and must be equally unpleasant to all owners of libraries, to suffer constantly from the protracted delays caused by the deficiency of good workmen in the binding business.

"Those curses of modern society,* 'Trades' Unions,' on one side, and absurd notions of gentility on the other, are doing each their share of harm in keeping down the supply of new hands.

"I repeat—more hands, 'with heads,' are wanted in the bookbinding trade. This is a cry of distress from a bookseller whose business is injured owing to the delays and the inefficiency of the existing binders and their workmen."

* Let me, however, beg you to observe, my dear Sir, that the cursing is the fault of modern society, not of Trades' Unions, which were an extreme blessing to ancient society, and will be so to all wholesome societies, for ever.

FORS CLAVIGERA.

LETTERS *TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS OF GREAT BRITAIN.*

BY
JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.,
HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART.

VOL. III.



GEORGE ALLEN,
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.
1873.

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FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTER 25

THE PENNY TRACT¹

BRANTWOOD, *January 4th*, 1873.

1. THE Third Fors, having been much adverse to me, and more to many who wish me well, during the whole of last year, has turned my good and helpful printer adrift in the last month of it;² and, with that grave inconvenience to him, contrived for me the minor one of being a fortnight late with my New Year's letter. Under which provocation I am somewhat consoled this morning by finding in a cookery book, of date 1791, "written purely from practice, and dedicated to the Hon. Lady Elizabeth Warburton, whom the author lately served as housekeeper,"³ a receipt for Yorkshire Goose Pie, with which I think it will be most proper and delightful to begin my economical instructions to you for the current year.

2. I am, indeed, greatly tempted to give precedence to the receipt for making "Fairy Butter," and further disturbed by an extreme desire to tell you how to construct

¹ ["Show me a Penny" (Luke xx. 24: see below, § 4) was a rejected title for this letter.]

² [For Ruskin's fortunes during 1872, see Vol. XXII. pp. xxv.–xxix. His "good and helpful printer" was Mr. Robert Chester; for whom, see above, p. 132 *n.*]

³ [*The Experienced English Housekeeper, for the Use and Ease of Ladies, Housekeepers, Cooks, etc. Written purely upon practice; dedicated to the Hon. Lady Elizabeth Warburton, whom the Author lately served as Housekeeper. Consisting of Several Hundred Original Receipts, most of which never appeared in print. . . .* By Elizabeth Raffald. A new Edition. . . . London. Printed for A. Millar, W. Law, and R. Cater. M.DCC.XCI. The receipt for Goose Pie is on p. 148; those for "Fairy Butter" and "Apple Floating-Island" are on p. 258.]

an “Apple Floating-Island”; but will abide, nevertheless, by my Goose Pie:—

“Take a large fat goose, split it down the back, and take all the bones out; bone a turkey and two ducks the same way, season them very well with pepper and salt, with six woodcocks; lay the goose down on a clean dish, with the skin-side down; and lay the turkey into the goose, with the skin down; have ready a large hare, cleaned well, cut in pieces, and stewed in the oven, with a pound of butter, a quarter of an ounce of mace, beat fine, the same of white pepper, and salt to your taste, till the meat will leave the bones, and scum the butter off the gravy, pick the meat clean off, and beat it in a marble-mortar very fine, with the butter you took off; and lay it in the turkey; take twenty-four pounds of the finest flour, six pounds of butter, half a pound of fresh rendered suet, make the paste pretty thick, and raise the pie oval; roll out a lump of paste, and cut it in vine-leaves or what form you please; rub the pie with the yolks of eggs, and put your ornaments on the walls; then turn the hare, turkey, and goose upside down, and lay them in your pie, with the ducks at each end, and the woodcocks on the sides; make your lid pretty thick, and put it on; you may lay flowers, or the shape of the fowls in paste, on the lid, and make a hole in the middle of your lid; the walls of the pie are to be one inch and a half higher than the lid; then rub it all over with the yolks of eggs, and bind it round with three-fold paper, and lay the same over the top; it will take four hours’ baking in a brown-bread oven; when it comes out, melt two pounds of butter in the gravy that comes from the hare, and pour it hot in the pie through a tun-dish; close it well up, and let it be eight or ten days before you cut it; if you send it any distance, make up the hole in the middle with cold butter, to prevent the air from getting in.”

3. Possessed of these instructions, I immediately went to my cook to ask how far we could faithfully carry them out. But she told me nothing could be done without a “brown-bread oven”; which I shall therefore instantly build under the rocks on my way down to the lake: and, if I live, we will have a Lancashire goose-pie next Michaelmas. You may, perhaps, think this affair irrelevant to the general purposes of *Fors Clavigera*; but it is not so by any means: on the contrary, it is closely connected with its primary intentions; and, besides, may interest some readers more than weightier, or, I should rather say, lighter and more spiritual matters. For, indeed, during twenty-three months, I had been writing to you, fellow-workmen, of matters affecting your best interests in this world, and all the

interest you had, anywhere else:—explaining, as I could, what the shrewdest of you, hitherto,¹ have thought, and the best of you have done;—what the most selfish have gained, and the most generous have suffered. Of all this, no notice whatever is taken. In my twenty-fourth letter, incidentally, I mentioned the fact of my being in a bad humour² (which I nearly always am, and which it matters little to anybody whether I am or not, so long as I don't act upon it), and forthwith I got quite a little mailcartful of consolation, reproof, and advice. Much of it kind,—nearly all of it helpful, and some of it wise; but very little bearing on matters in hand: an eager Irish correspondent offers immediately to reply to anything, “though he has not been fortunate enough to meet with the book”; one working man's letter, for self and mates, is answered in the terminal notes:³—could not be answered before for want of address;—another, from a south-country clergyman, could not be answered any way, for he would not read any more, he said, of such silly stuff as *Fors*;—but would have been glad to hear of any scheme for giving people a sound practical education. I fain would learn myself, either from this practical Divine, or any of *his* mates, what the ecclesiastical idea of a sound practical education is;—that is to say, what—in week-day schools (the teaching in Sunday ones being necessarily to do no manner of work)—our clergy think that boys and girls should be taught to practise, in order that, when grown up, they may with dexterity perform the same. For indeed, the constant object of these letters of mine, from their beginning, has been to urge you to do vigorously and dextrously what was useful; and nothing but that. And I have told you of Kings and Heroes, and now am about to tell you what I can of a Saint, because I believe such persons to have done, sometimes, more useful things than you or I: begging your pardon always for not addressing you as heroes, which

¹ [Ruskin in his copy writes here, “Explain ‘hitherto’—a wide word, of *all* workmen in the world.”]

² [Letter 24, § 1 (p. 417).]

³ [See below, § 24.]

I believe you all think yourselves, or as kings, which I presume you all propose to be, or at least, if you cannot, to let nobody else be. Come what may of such proposal, I wish you would consider with me to-day what form of “sound practical education,” if any, would enable you all to be Saints; and whether, such form proving discoverable, you would really like to be put through it, or whether, on the contrary, both the clergy and you mean, verily, and in your hearts, nothing by “practical education” but how to lay one penny upon another. Not but that it does my heart good to hear modern divines exhorting to *any* kind of practice—for, as far as I can make out, there is nothing they so much dread for their congregations as their getting into their heads that God expects them to do anything, beyond killing rabbits if they are rich, and being content with bad wages, if they are poor. But if any virtue more than these (and the last *is* no small one) be indeed necessary to Saint-ship—may we not prudently ask what such virtue is, and, at this Holiday time, make our knowledge of the Ho’s more precise?¹ Nay, in your pleading for perennial Holiday,—in your ten hours or eight hours bills, might you not urge your point with stouter conscience if you were all Saints, and the hours of rest you demanded became a realization of Baxter’s *Saints’ Rest*?

4. Suppose we *do* rest, for a few minutes, from that process of laying one penny upon another (those of us, at least, who have learned the trick of it), and look with some attention at the last penny we laid on the pile—or, if we can do no better, at the first of the pile we mean to lay.

Show me a penny;² or, better, show me the three pages of our British Bible, penny, shilling, and pound, and let us try what we can read on them together. You see how rich they are in picture and legend: surely so practical a nation, in its most valued scriptures, cannot have written or pictured anything but with discretion, and to the benefit of all beholders.

¹ [See Letter 24, § 7 (p. 421).]

² [Luke xx. 24.]

5. We begin with the penny;—not that, except under protest, I call such a thing as that a Penny! Our farthings, when we were boys, were as big as that; and two-pence filled our waistcoat pockets. Who, then, is this lady, whom it represents, sitting, apparently, on the edge of a dish-cover? Britannia? Yes,—of course. But who is Britannia? and what has she got on her head, in her hand, and on her seat?

“Don’t I know who Britannia is?” Not I; and much doubt if you do! Is she Great Britain,—or Little Britain? Is she England, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, and the Indies,—or a small, dishonest, tailoring and engineering firm, with no connection over the way, and publicly fined at the police court for sneakingly supplying customers it had engaged not to?¹ Is she a Queen, or an Actress, or a Slave? Is she a Nation, mother of nations; or a slimy polype, multiplying by involuntary vivisection, and dropping half putrid pieces of itself wherever it crawls or contracts? In the world-feasts of the Nativity, can she sit, Madonna-like, saying: “Behold, I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me”?² Or are her lips capable of such utterance—of *any* utterance—no more; the musical Rose of them cleft back into the long dumb trench of the lizard’s; her motherhood summed in saying that she makes all the world’s ditches dirtier with her spawn?

6. And what has she on her head, in her hand, or on that—Shield, I believe it is meant for, which she sits on the edge of? A most truly symbolic position! For, you know, all those armour-plates and guns you pay for so pleasantly are indeed made, when you look into the matter, not at all to defend you against anybody (no one ever pretends to say distinctly that the newest of them could protect you for twelve hours); but they are made that the iron-masters may get commission on the iron, and the manufacturers commission on the manufacture.³ And so

¹ [A note in Ruskin’s copy (“Fine by arbitration in American war”) shows the reference to be to the Alabama Claims: see Vol. XXII. p. 140.]

² [Isaiah viii. 18; Hebrews ii. 13.]

³ [On this subject, compare Letter 52, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 304); also *Crown of Wild Olive*, Vol. XVIII. pp. 388–389, and Vol. XIX. p. 265 *n.*]

the Ironmongering and Manufacturing Britannia does very literally sit upon her Shield: the cognizance whereof, or—now too literally—the “Bearing,”—so obscured,¹ becomes of small importance. Probably, in a little while, a convenient cushion—or, what not—may be substituted for St. George’s Cross; to the public satisfaction.

7. I must not question farther what any of these symbols may come to mean; I will tell you briefly, what they meant once, and are yet, by courtesy, supposed to mean.

They were all invented by the Greeks; and all, except the Cross, some twelve hundred years before the first Christmas: they became intelligible and beautiful first about Theseus’ time.

The Helmet crest properly signifies the adoption by man of the passions of pride and anger which enable nearly all the lower creatures to erect some spinous or plumose ridge upon their heads or backs. It is curiously associated with the story of the Spartan Phalanthus, the first colonist of Tarentum,² which might have been the port of an Italia ruling the waves, instead of Britannia, had not the crest fallen from the helmet of the Swabian prince, Manfred, in his death-battle with Charles of Anjou.³ He had fastened it that morning, he said, with his own hand,—you may think, if his armourer had fastened it, it would have stayed on, but kings could do things with their own hands in those days;—howbeit, it fell, and Manfred, that night, put off his armour for evermore, and the evil French King reigned in his stead: and South Italy has lain desert since that day, and so must lie, till the crest of some King rise over it again, who will be content with as much horse-hair as is needful for a crest, and not wear it, as our English squires have done lately (or perhaps even the hair of an animal inferior to the horse), on their heads, instead of their helmets.⁴

¹ [As a note in Ruskin’s own copy shows, the meaning is that the shield, no more a defence, becomes a mere stool, which bears the manufacturer seated on it.]

² [For the story of Phalanthus, and of his helmet, see Vol. XX. pp. 394–396.]

³ [For the significance of the battle of Benevento (1266), and for Manfred’s crest, see *Val d’Arno*, §§ 244, 245 (Vol. XXIII. pp. 142–143).]

⁴ [Ruskin here notes in his copy, “This cut at our horsiness obscure.”]

8. Of the trident in Britannia's hand, and why it must *be* a trident, that is to say, have three prongs, and no more; and in what use or significance it differs from other forks (as for pitching, or toasting)—we will inquire at another time.¹ Take up next the shilling, or, more to our purpose, the double shilling,—get a new florin,² and examine the sculpture and legend on that.

The Legend, you perceive, is on the one side English,—on the other Latin. The latter, I presume, you are not intended to read, for not only it is in a dead language, but two words are contracted, and four more indicated only by their first letters. This arrangement leaves room for the ten decorative letters, an M, and a D, and three C's, and an L, and the sign of double stout, and two I's; of which ten letters the total function is to inform you that the coin was struck this year (as if it mattered either to you or to me, when it was struck!). But the poor fifth part of ten letters, preceding—the F and D, namely—have for function to inform you that Queen Victoria is the Defender of our Faith. Which is an all-important fact to you and me, if it be a fact at all;—nay, an all-important brace of facts; each letter vocal, for its part, with one. F, that we have a Faith to defend; D, that our monarch can defend it, if we chance to have too little to say for it ourselves. For both which facts, Heaven be praised, if they be indeed so,—nor dispraised by our shame, if they have ceased to be so: only, if they be so, two letters are not enough to assert them clearly; and if not so, are more than enough to lie with. On the reverse of the coin, however, the legend is full, and clear. “One Florin.” “One Tenth of a Pound.” Yes; that is all very practical and instructive. But do we know either what a pound is, or what a florin or “Fiorino” was, or why this particular coin

¹ [This was not done. The trident which Poseidon bore as ruler of the waves seems to have been the harpoon of the tunny and dolphin fishers: see Æschylus, *Septem contra Thebas*, 131, and compare *Persæ*, 426.]

² [The florin, that is, of Victoria, previous to the Jubilee coinages of 1887 and 1897. It was the “new florin,” because it had been substituted for the one issued in 1849, which raised a storm of indignation owing to the omission of the letters D. G. (Dei Gratia) and was thus known as the godless, or graceless, florin.]

should be called a Florin, or whether we have any right to call *any* coin of England, now, by that name? And, by the way, how is it that I get continually reproved for writing above the level of the learning of my general readers, when here I find the most current of all our books written in three languages, of which one is dead, another foreign, and the third written in defunct letters, so that anybody with two shillings in his pocket is supposed able to accept information conveyed in contracted Latin, Roman numerals, old English, and spoiled Italian?

9. How practical, and how sentimental, at once! For indeed we have no right, except sentimentally, to call that coin a florin,—that is to say, a “flower (lily-flower) piece,” or Florence-piece. What have *we* any more to do with Lilies? Do you ever consider how they grow¹—or care how they die? Do the very water-lilies, think you, keep white now, for an hour after they open, in any stream in England? And for the heraldry of the coin, neither on that, nor any other, have we courage or grace to bear the Fleur-de-Lys any more, it having been once our first bearing of all. For in the first quarter of our English shield we used to bear three golden lilies on a blue ground, being the regal arms of France (our great Kings being Frenchmen, and claiming France as their own, before England). Also these Fleur-de-Lys were from the beginning the ensigns of a King; but those three Lions, which, you see, are yet retained for the arms of England on two of the shields in your false florin (false in all things, for heaven knows, we have as little right to lions now as to lilies), “are deduced onely from Dukedomes:* I say deduced, because the Kings of England after the Conquest did beare two leopards (the ensignes of the Dukedome of Normandy) till the time of King Henry the Second, who, according to the received opinion, by marriage of Eleanor, daughter and heire of the duke of Aquitaine and Guyon” (Guienne) “annexed the

* Guillim, Ed. 1638 [p. 426].

¹ [Compare Matthew vi. 28; Luke xii. 27.]

Lyon, her paternall coate, being of the same Field, Metall, and Forme with the Leopards, and so from thence forward they were jointly marshalled in one Shield and Blazoned three Lyons.” Also “at the first quartering of these coats by Edward the Third, question being moved of his title to France, the King had good cause to put that coat in the first ranke, to show his most undoubted Title to that Kingdom, and therefore would have it the most perspicuous place of his Escoccheon.”

But you see it is now on our shield no more,—we having been beaten into cowardly and final resignation of it, at the peace of Amiens, in George III.’s time, and precisely in the first year of this supreme nineteenth century. He, as monarch of England, being unable to defend our Lilies, and the verbal instruction of the pacific angel Gabriel of Amiens, as he dropped his lilies, being, to the English accordingly,¹ that thenceforward they were to “hate a Frenchman as they did the Devil,”² which, as you know, was Nelson’s notion of the spirit in which England expected every man to do his duty.

10. Next to the three Lions, however (all of them, you find, French), there is a shield bearing one Lion, “Rampant”—that is to say, climbing like a vine on a wall. Remember that the proper sense of the word “rampant” is “creeping” as you say it of ground ivy, and such plants:³ and that a lion rampant—whether British, or, as this one, Scotch, is not at all, for his part, in what you are so fond of getting into—“an independent position,” nor even in a specifically leonine one, but rather generally feline, as of a cat, or other climbing animal on a tree; whereas the three French Lions, or Lioncels,⁴ are “passant-gardant,” “passing on the look out,” as beasts of chase.

¹ [Here Ruskin notes in his copy, “Too obscure. This (“that thenceforward,” etc.) I mean to be the message of the Angel Annunciate (Gabriel) to us.”]

² [For this saying of Nelson’s, see Vol. XVII. p. 462.]

³ [Compare the title of Lecture VII. (“Marble Rampant”), and § 296 in *Val d’Arno* (Vol. XXIII. p. 176).]

⁴ [“In the Blazoning of Armes consisting of more Lions in a Field than one, you must terme them Lioncels” (Guillim’s *Heraldrie*, p. 173, 1724 edition).]

11. Round the rampant Scottish animal (I can't find why the Scotch took him for their type¹) you observe farther, a double line, with—though almost too small to be seen—fleur-de-lys at the knots and corners of it. This is the tressure, or binding belt, of the great Charles, who has really been to both English and Scottish lions what that absent Charles of the polar skies must, I suppose, have been to their Bear, and who entirely therefore deserves to be stellified by British astronomers.²

That Tressure, heraldically, records the alliance of Charlemagne with the Scottish King Achaius,³ and the vision

¹ [The origin of the lion of Scotland is still obscure, as also is that of the tressure, and none of the accounts given of the Scottish arms are historical: see *Heraldry in Relation to Scottish History and Art*, by Sir James Balfour Paul (Lord Lyon King of Arms), 1900, pp. 50 *seq.* In a diary of a later date (January 1875) Ruskin makes the following note:—

“The Lion Rampant of Scotland occurs first on the great seal of Alex. II. (1214–1249), and is not on the seal of his predecessor William the Lion, who may have been called so for introducing it. But no one knows.”]

² [For Charles's Wain, see Letter 24, § 3 (p. 418).]

³ [Here Ruskin accepts the account given by R. Henry (*History of Great Britain*, 1774), book ii. ch. i. § 2, who says that Eochol, called Achaius, reigned 787–817, and had an alliance with Charlemagne: see the authorities cited by Henry, vol. ii. p. 44 *n.*, and also *The Theater of Honour and Knighthood*, written in French by Andrew Favine (English translation, 1623), pp. 78, 79)—the legendary account being that, in recognition of the services rendered by the Scots, the French King added to the Scottish lion the double tressure fleur-de-lisé, to show that the lion had defended the French lilies, and that the latter would surround the lion and defend him. For another reference to this, see Letter 94, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 482). The story of St. Andrew's Cross is, however, traditionally connected with Angus MacFergus, King of the Picts (called Unuist or Hungus in the Chronicles), who is supposed to have reigned 731–761 (Charlemagne reigned 768–814). He is said to have received a celestial vision (like that of Constantine the Great) of St. Andrew's Cross, and in consequence to have founded St. Andrews, and adopted St. Andrew's Cross as the national emblem. The “Legend of St. Andrew” is printed at pp. 138 *seq.* of W. F. Skene's *Chronicles of the Picts and other Early Memorials of Scottish History*, 1867. But the chronicles of all this period are confusing. The legend of the Thistle is that the Danes were making a secret midnight attack, when one of their men set his foot on a thistle and cried out. This gave the alarm, and the Scots fell upon the enemy and defeated them. For an historical note on the adoption of the Thistle as the national badge, see *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 299. On the Rue, Favine (p. 96) says: “Achaius, having won the love and alliance of King Charlemagne, found himself to be so strong and mighty that he took for his device the Thistle and the Rewe”—the Thistle to show that “he feared not foreign princes, seeing he leaned on the succour and alliance of the French”; the Rue, on account of its “admirable virtues” of healing, to “demonstrate to his enemies that he had power to make all their practices unprofitable.” The rue, however, was never a part of the Scottish arms. Its appearance as one of the ornaments on the collar of the Order of the Thistle, or St. Andrew, is thought by some antiquaries to be due merely to an atrocious pun on the word Andrew, the collar being composed of Thistles “*and Rue.*”]

by the Scottish army of St. Andrew's cross—and the adoption of the same, with the Thistle and Rue, for their national device; of all which the excellent Scotch clergyman and historian, Robert Henry, giving no particular account, prefers to note, as an example of such miraculous appearances in Scotland, the introduction, by King Kenneth, the son of Alpine, of a shining figure “clothed in the skins of dried fish, which shone in the dark,” to his nobility and councillors, to give them heavenly admonitions “after they had composed themselves to rest.”¹ Of course a Presbyterian divine must have more pleasure in recording a miracle so connected with the existing national interests of the herring and salmon fisheries, than the tradition of St. Andrew's cross; and that tradition itself is so confused among Rodericks, Alpines, and Ferguses, that the *Lady of the Lake* is about as trustworthy historical reading. But St. Andrew's cross and the Thistle (I don't know when the Rue, much the more honourable bearing of the two, was dropped)—are there, you see, to this day; and you must learn their story—but I've no time to go into that, now.²

12. For England, the tressure really implies, though not in heraldry, more than for Scotland. For the Saxon seven kingdoms had fallen into quite murderous anarchy in Charlemagne's time, and especially the most religious of them, Northumberland; which then included all the country between the Frith of Forth and the Cheviots commanded by the fortress of Edwin's Burg (fortress now always standing in a rampant manner on its hind legs, as the Modern Athens³). But the pious Edwin's spirit had long left his burg, and the state of the whole district from which the Saxon angels (non Angli⁴) had gone forth

¹ [*The History of Great Britain*, by Robert Henry, D.D., Edinburgh, 1774, vol. ii. p. 61.]

² [Nor did Ruskin return to the subject.]

³ [For this name, see Vol. XII. p. 65 *n*. The name is due even more to the situation of the city than to the architecture of some of its buildings.]

⁴ [For another reference to this saying of St. Gregory (“Non Angli sed angeli”), see Vol. XVII. p. 406 *n*. The whole story may be read in Sharon Turner's *History of England*, vol. i., 1839, pp. 335–336.]

to win the pity of Rome, was so distracted and hopeless that Charlemagne called them “worse than heathens,” and had like to have set his hand to exterminate them altogether; but the Third Fors ruled it otherwise, for luckily, a West Saxon Prince, Egbert, being driven to Charles’s court, in exile, Charles determined to make a man of him, and trained him to such true knighthood,¹ that, recovering the throne of the West Saxons, the Frenchbred youth conquered the Heptarchy, and became the first King of “England” (*all* England);—and the Grandfather of Alfred.

Such belt of lilies did the French chivalry bind us with; the “tressure” of Charlemagne.

13. Of the fourth shield,² bearing the Irish Harp, and the harmonious psalmody of which that instrument is significant, I have no time to speak to-day; nor of the vegetable heraldry between the shields;—but before you lay the florin down I must advise you that the very practical motto or war-cry which it now bears—“one tenth of a pound,” was not anciently the motto round the arms of England, that is to say, of English *kings* (for republican England has no shield); but a quite different one—to wit—“Accursed (or evil-spoken of, maledictus, opposed to well-spoken of, or benedictus), be He who thinks Evil”;³ and that this motto ought to be written on another Tressure or band than Charlemagne’s, surrounding the entire shield—namely, on a lady’s garter; specifically the garter of the most beautiful and virtuous English lady, Alice of Salisbury (of whom soon);⁴ and that without this tressure and motto, the mere shield of Lions is but a poor defence.

For this is a very great and lordly motto; marking the

¹ [Egbert, says William of Malmesbury, lib. ii. c. 1, “regnandi disciplinam a Francis acciperit,” and at Charlemagne’s Court, “aciem mentis expediret et mores longè a gentilitia barbarie alienos indueret.”]

² [Fourth, because the first shield is twice repeated: see above, p. 454.]

³ [On the coinage of 1897 this tressure—“Honi soit qui mal y pense”—is placed on the reverse of the florin.]

⁴ [See below, § 23, and Letter 31, § 10 (p. 569).]

utmost point and acme of honour, which is not merely in doing no evil, but in thinking none; and teaching that the first—as indeed the last—nobility of Education is in the rule over our Thoughts, on which matter, I must digress for a minute or two.

14. Among the letters just received by me, as I told you,¹ is one from a working man of considerable experience, which laments that, in his part of the country, “literary institutes are a failure.”

Indeed, your literary institutes must everywhere fail, as long as you think that merely to buy a book, and to know your letters, will enable you to read the book. Not one word of any book is readable by you except so far as your mind is one with its author’s, and not merely his words like your words, but his thoughts like your thoughts.

For instance, the other day, at a bookstall, I bought a shilling Shakespeare.² To such degree of wealth, ingenuity, and literary spirit, has the nineteenth century reached, that it has a shilling to spare for its Shakespeare—can produce its Shakespeare in a pocketable shape for that sum—and is ready to invest its earnings in literature to that extent. Good. You have now your Shakespeare, complete, in your pocket; you will read the greatest of dramatic authors at your leisure, and form your literary taste on that model.

15. Suppose we read a line or two together then, you and I;—it may be, that *I* cannot, unless you help me.

“And there, at Venice, gave
His body to that pleasant country’s earth,
And his pure soul unto his Captain, Christ,
Under whose colours he had fought so long.”³

What do you suppose Shakespeare means by calling Venice a “pleasant” country? What sort of country was, or would have been, pleasant to *him*? The same that is

¹ [See above, § 3.]

² [First published at this price by Dicks, 1872.]

³ [*King Richard II.*, Act iv. sc. 1. Compare, below, p. 481; Vol. IX. p. 420; Vol. XII. p. 141; and Vol. XXIV. p. 444.]

pleasant to you, or another kind of country? Was there any coal in that earth of Venice, for instance? Any gas to be made out of it? Any iron?

Again. What does Shakespeare mean by a “pure” soul, or by Purity in general? How does a soul become pure, or clean, and how dirty? Are you sure that your own soul is pure? if not, is its opinion on the subject of purity likely to be the same as Shakespeare’s? And might you not just as well read a mure soul, or demure, or a scure soul, or obscure, as a pure soul, if you don’t know what Shakespeare means by the word?

Again. What does Shakespeare mean by a captain, or head-person?¹ What were his notions of head-ship, shouldership, or foot-ship, either in human or divine persons? Have you yourselves ever seen a captain, think you—of the true quality (see above, 22, § 20); and did you know him when you saw him?

Or again. What does Shakespeare mean by colours? The “gaily decorative bunting” of Howe and Cushing’s American Circus?² Or the banners with invigorating inscriptions concerning Temperance and Free-trade, under which you walk in procession, sometimes, after a band? Or colours more dim and tattered than these?

16. What he does mean, in all these respects, we shall best understand by reading a little bit of the history of one of those English Squires, named above, for our study (22, § 20), Edward III. of England namely; since it was he who first quartered our arms for us; whom I cannot more honourably first exhibit to you than actually fighting under captainship and colours of his own choice, in the fashion Shakespeare meant.

*Under captainship, mark you, though himself a King, and a proud one. Which came to pass thus:*³ “When the King of England heard these news” (that Geoffrey of Chargny

¹ [On “captain” in this sense, compare *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 317.]

² [See Letter 24, § 7 (p. 422).]

³ [Here Ruskin translates for himself: see chaps. cxlix., cl., vol. i. pp. 376–381 in the translation by Johnes (1803).]

was drawing near his dear town of Calais, and that Amery of Pavia, the false Lombard, was keeping him in play), “then the King set out from England with 300 men at arms, and 600 archers, and took ship at Dover, and by vespers arrived at Calais, and put his people in ambush in the castle, and was with them himself. And said to the Lord de Manny: ‘Master Walter, I will that you should be the *head* in this need, for I and my son will fight under your banner.’* Now My Lord Geoffrey of Chargny had left Arras on the last day of December, in the evening, with all his gens-d’-armes, and came near Calais about one in the morning,—and he said to his knights,† ‘Let the Lombard open the gates quickly—he makes us die of cold.’ ‘In God’s name,’ said Pepin de Werre, ‘the Lombards are cunning folks;—he will look at your florins first, to see that none are false.’ (You see how important this coin is; here is one engraved for you therefore—pure Florentine gold¹—that you may look at it honestly, and not like a Lombard.) And at these words came the King of England, and his son at his side, under the banner of Master Walter de Manny; and there were other banners with them, to wit, the Count of Stafford’s, the Court of Suffolk’s, My Lord John de Montagu’s, My Lord Beauchamp’s, and the Lord de la Werre’s, and no more, that day. When the French saw them come out, and heard the cry, ‘Manny, to the rescue,’ they knew they were betrayed. ‡ Then said Master Geoffrey to his people, ‘Lords, if we fly, we are lost; it is best to fight with good will;—hope is, we may gain the day. ‘By



Fig. 10

* The reason of this honour to Sir Walter was that he had been the first English knight who rode into France after the king had quartered the Fleur-de-Lys.

† I omit much, without putting stars, in these bits of translation.

‡ Not unfairly; only having to fight for their Calais instead of getting in for a bribe.

¹ [On the gold florin of Florence, see *Val d' Arno*, § 117 (Vol. XXIII. p. 71).]

St. George,' said the English, 'you say true, and evil be to him who flies. Whereupon they drew back a little, being too crowded, and dismounted, and let their horses go. And the King of England, under the banner of Master Walter de Manny, came with his people, all on foot, to seek his enemies; who were set close, their lances cut short by five feet, in front of them" (set with the stumps against the ground and points forward, eight or ten feet long, still, though cut short by five). "At the first coming there was hard encounter, and the King stopped under" (opposite) "My Lord Eustace of Ribauumont, who was a strong and brave chevalier. And he fought the King so long that it was a wonder; yes, and much pleasure to see. Then they all joined battle" (the English falling on, I think, because the King found he had enough on his hands, though without question one of the best knights in Europe); "and there was a great coil, and a hard,—and there fought well, of the French, My Lord Geoffrey of Chargny and My Lord John of Landas, and My Lord Gawain of Bailleul, and the Sire of Cresques; and the others; but My Lord Eustace of Ribauumont passed all,—who that day struck the King to his knees twice; but in the end gave his sword to the King, saying, Sire Chevalier, I render me your prisoner, for the day must remain to the English. For by that time they were all taken or killed who were with My Lord Geoffrey of Chargny; and the last who was taken, and who had done most, was Master Eustace of Ribauumont.

"So when the need* was past, the King of England drew back into Calais, into the castle; and made be brought

* Besogne. "The thing that has to be done"—word used still in household service, but impossible to translate:¹ we have no such concentrated one in English.

¹ [*Besogne* is etymologically another form of *besoin*, but the two words have different meanings. Littré gives, as common phrases indicating the sense in which *besogne* is used, "endormir sur la besogne ne pas avancer dans un travail," "faire de la bonne besogne," and (used ironically) "vous avez fait là de la belle besogne" (*i.e.*, *maladresse*).]

all the prisoner-knights thither. And then the French knew that the King of England had been in it, in person, under the banner of Master Walter de Manny. So also the King sent to say to them, as it was the New-year's night, he would give them all supper in his castle of Calais. So when the supper time came" (early afternoon, 1st January, 1349), "the King and his knights dressed themselves, and all put on new robes; and the French also made themselves greatly splendid, for so the King wished, though they were prisoners. The King took seat, and set those knights beside him in much honour. And the gentle* Prince of Wales and the knights of England served them, at the first course; and at the second course, went away to another table. So they were served in peace, and in great leisure.¹ When they had supped, they took away the tables; but the King remained in the hall between those French and English knights; and he was bareheaded; only wearing a chaplet of pearls.† And he began to go from one to another; and when he addressed himself to master Geoffrey of Chagny, he altered countenance somewhat, and looking askance at him, said, 'Master Geoffrey,—I owe you, by right, little love, when you would have stolen by night what had cost me so dear. So glad and joyous I am, that I took you at the trial.' At these words he passed on, and let Master Geoffrey alone, who answered no word; and so came the King to Master Eustace of Ribamont, to whom he said joyously, 'Master Eustace, you are the chevalier whom in all the world I have seen most valiantly attack his enemy and defend his body: neither did I ever find in battle any one

* The passage is entirely spoiled in Johnes' translation by the use of the word "gallant" instead of "gentle" for the French "gentil." The boy was not yet nineteen (born at Woodstock, June 15, 1330), and his father thirty-six: fancy how pretty to see the one waiting on the other, with the French knights at his side.

† Sacred fillet, or "diadema," the noblest, as the most ancient, crown.²

¹ [For a reference to this passage, see Letter 28, § 9 (p. 513).]

² [See *Love's Meinie*, § 167 (Vol. XXV. p. 160).]

who gave me so much work, body to body, as you did to-day. So I give you the prize of the day, and that over all the knights of my own court, by just sentence.’ Thereupon the King took off the chaplet, that he wore (which was good and rich), and put it on the head of My Lord Eustace; and said, ‘My Lord Eustace, I give you this chaplet,¹ for that you have been the best fighter to-day of all those without or within, and I pray you that you wear it all this year for the love of me. I know well that you are gay, and loving, and glad to be among dames and damsels. So therefore say to them whither-soever you go, that I gave it you; and so I quit you of your prison, and you may set forth to-morrow if it please you.’ ”

17. Now, if you have not enjoyed this bit of historical study, I tell you frankly, it is neither Edward the Third’s fault, nor Froissart’s, nor mine, but your own, for not having cheerfulness, loyalty, or generosity enough in you to understand what is going on. But even supposing you have these, and *do* enjoy the story as now read, it does not at all follow that you would enjoy it at your Literary Institute. There you would find, most probably, a modern abstract of the matter given in polished language. You would be fortunate if you chanced on so good a history as Robert Henry’s above referred to,² which I always use myself, as intelligent, and trustworthy for general reference. But hear his polished account of this supper at Calais:—

“As Edward was a great admirer of personal valour, he ordered all the French knights and gentlemen to be feasted by the Prince of Wales, in the great hall of the castle. The King entered the hall in the time of the banquet, and discovered to his prisoners that he had been present in the late conflict, and was the person who had fought hand to hand with the Sieur Ribaumont. Then, addressing himself to that gentleman, he gave him his liberty, presented him with a chaplet adorned with pearls, which he desired him to wear for his sake, and declared him to be the most expert and valorous knight with whom he had ever engaged.”³

¹ [Compare *Val d’ Arno*, § 198 (Vol. XXIII. p. 117), where Ruskin again notes this incident.]

² [§ 11.]

³ [Book iv. ch. i. § 4 (vol. iv. p. 186, 1781).]

18. Now, supposing you can read no other history than such as this, you had—with profoundest earnestness I say it—ininitely better read none. It is not the least necessary for you to know anything about Edward III.; but quite necessary for you to know something vital and real about somebody; and not to have polished language given you instead of life. “But you *do* enjoy it, in Froissart?” And you think it would have been, to you also, a “pleasure to see” that fight between Edward and the Sieur de Ribaumont? So be it: now let us compare with theirs, a piece of modern British fighting, done under no banner, and in no loyalty nor obedience, but in the independent spirit of freedom, and yet which, I think, it would have been no pleasure to any of us to see. As we compared, before, loyal with free justice,¹ so let us now compare loyal with free fighting. The most active of the contending parties are of your own class, too, I am sorry to say, and that the *Telegraph* (16th Dec.) calls them many hard names; but I can’t remedy this without too many inverted commas.

“Four savages—four brute beasts in human form we should rather say—named Slane, Rice, Hays, and Beesley, ranging in age between thirty-two and nineteen years, have been sentenced to death for the murder on the 6th of November last, at a place called Spennymoor, of one Joseph Waine. The convicts are Irishmen, and had been working as puddlers in the iron foundries. The principal offender was the ruffian Slane, who seems to have had some spite against the deceased, a very sober, quiet man, about forty years of age, who, with his wife and son, kept a little chandler’s shop at Spennymoor. Into this shop Slane came one night, grossly insulted Waine, ultimately dragged him from the shop into a dark passage, tripped him up, holding his head between his legs, and then whistled for his three confederates. When Rice, Hays, and Beesley appeared on the scene, they were instructed by the prime savage to hold Waine down—the wretch declaring, ‘If I get a running kick at him, it shall be his last.’ The horrible miscreant did get a ‘running kick’—nay, more than a dozen—at his utterly powerless victim; and when Slane’s strength was getting exhausted the other three wretches set upon Waine, kicking him in the body with their hob-nailed boots, while the poor agonised wife strove vainly to save her husband. A lodger in the house, named Wilson, at last interfered, and the savages ran away. The object of their brutality lived just twenty-five minutes after the outrage, and the post-mortem examination

¹ [See Letter 13, §§ 14–16 (pp. 238–241).]

showed that all the organs were perfectly healthy, and that death could only have arisen from the violence inflicted on Waine by these fiends, who were plainly identified by the widow and her son. It may be noticed, however, as a painfully significant circumstance, that the lodger Wilson, who was likewise a labouring man, and a most important witness for the prosecution, refused to give evidence, and, before the trial came on, absconded altogether.”

19. Among the epithets bestowed by the *Telegraph*,—very properly—but unnecessarily, on these free British Operatives, there is one which needs some qualification;—that of “Miscreant,”¹ or “Misbeliever,” which is only used accurately of Turks or other infidels, whereas it is probable these Irishmen were zealously religious persons, Evangelical or Catholic. But the perversion of the better faith by passion is indeed a worse form of “misbelieving” than the obedient keeping of a poorer creed;² and thus the word, if understood not of any special heresy, but of powerlessness to believe, with strength of imagination, in *anything*, goes to the root of the matter; which I must wait till after Christmas to dig for, having much else on my hands.

26th December, 1872, 8, Morning.

20. The first quiet and pure light that has risen this many a day, was increasing through the tall stems of the trees of our garden, which is walled by the walls of old Oxford;³ and a bird (I am going to lecture on ornithology next term, but don’t know *what* bird, and couldn’t go to ask the gardener) singing steady, sweet, momentary notes, in a way that would have been very pleasant to me, once. And as I was breathing out of the window, thrown up as high as I could (for my servant had made me an enormous fire, as servants always do on hot mornings), and looking at the bright sickle of a moon, fading as she rose, the verse

¹ [On this word, see above, p. 81 n.]

² [Compare below, p. 547.]

³ [Compare Vol. XVIII. p. 517 n., where Ruskin again refers to the old city walls in the garden of Corpus. The lectures on ornithology—*Love’s Meinie* (Vol. XXV.)—were given in March and May 1873.]

came into my mind,—I don't in the least know why,—“Lifting up holy hands, without wrath, and doubting”;¹—which chanced to express in the most precise terms what I want you to feel, about Edward III.'s fighting (though St. Paul is speaking of prayer, not of fighting, but it's all the same); as opposed to this modern British fighting, which is the lifting up of unholy hands,—feet, at least,—*in* wrath, and doubting. Also, just the minute before, I had upset my lucifer-match box, a nasty brown tin thing, containing, as the spiteful Third Fors would have it—just two hundred and sixty-six wax matches, half of which being in a heap on the floor, and the rest all at cross purposes, had to be picked up, put straight and repacked, and at my best time for other work. During this operation, necessarily deliberate, I was thinking of my correspondent's query (see terminal notes) respecting what I meant by doing anything “in a hurry.”² I mean essentially doing it in hurry of *mind*,—“doubting” whether we are doing it fast enough,—not knowing exactly how fast we can do it, or how slowly it *must* be done, to be done well. You cannot pack a lucifer box, nor make a dish of stir-about, nor knead a brown loaf, but with patience; nor meet even the most pressing need, but with coolness. Once, when my father was coming home from Spain, in a merchant ship, and in mid-bay of Biscay, the captain and passengers being at dinner, the sea did something or other to the ship which showed that the steersman was not minding what he was about. The captain jumped straight over the table, went on deck, and took the helm. Now I do not mean that he ought to have gone round the table, but that, if a good captain, as he took the wheel, he would not miss his grasp of the spokes by snatching at them an instant too soon.

And you will find that St. Paul's “without doubting”—for which, if you like, you may substitute, “by, or in, faith,” covers nearly every definition of right action—and

¹ [1 Timothy ii. 8.]

² [See Letter 24, § 14 (p. 426).]

also that it is not possible to have this kind of faith unless one can add—as he does—“having faith, and a good conscience.”¹ It does not at all follow that one must be doing a right thing; that will depend on one’s sense and information; but one must be doing deliberately a thing we entirely *suppose* to be right, or we shall not do it becomingly.

21. Thus, observe, I enter into no question at present as to the absolute rightness of King Edward’s fighting, which caused, that day, at Calais, the deaths of more than four hundred innocent men; nor as to the absolute wrongness of the four Irishmen’s fighting, which causes only the death of one (who also may, for aught I know, have done something really seeming evil to the dull creatures)—but there is no doubt that the King fought wholly without wrath, and without doubting his rightness; and they with vile wrath, and miserable consciousness of doing wrong; and that you have in the two scenes, as perfect types as I can put before you of entirely good ancient French breeding, and entirely bad modern British breeding.

22. Breeding;—observe the word; I mean it literally; involving first the race—and then the habits *enforced* in youth: entirely excluding intellectual conclusions. The “breeding” of a man is what he gets from the Centaur Chiron; the “beastly” part of him in a good sense;—that which makes him courageous by instinct, true by instinct, loving by instinct, as a Dog is; and therefore felicitously above, or below (whichever you like to call it), all questions of philosophy and divinity.

23. And of both the Centaur Chiron, and St. George, one, the typical Greek tutor of gentlemen, and the other, the type of Christian gentlemen, I meant to tell you in this letter; and the Third Fors won’t let me, yet, and I scarcely know when;² for before we leave King Edward, lest you should suppose I mean to set him up for a saint instead

¹ [1 Timothy i. 19.]

² [The story of St. George is given in the next Letter; that of the Centaur Chiron is not told in *Fors*, but see “The Riders of Tarentum” (Vol. XX. pp. 390 *seq.*.)]

of St. George, you must hear the truth of his first interview with Alice of Salisbury¹ (he had seen her married, but not noticed her then, particularly²), wherein you will see *him* becoming doubtful, and of little faith, or distorted faith, “miscreant”; but the lady Alice no wise doubtful; wherefore she becomes worthy to give the shield of England its “tressure” and St. George’s company their watchword, as aforesaid.

But her story must not be told in the same letter with that of our modern British courage; and now that I think of it St. George’s had better be first told in February, when I hope some crocuses will be up, and an amaryllis or two, St. George having much interest in both.³

¹ [For the story of Alice of Salisbury, see Letter 31, § 10 (p. 569); and for a note by Ruskin on the reference to her here, above, p. 347 *n.*]

² [This is a gloss by Ruskin upon Froissart, who says, indeed, that the king had given her in marriage to the Earl of Salisbury, but not that he was present on the occasion: see below, p. 572 *n.*]

³ [For the special interest of St. George, as enemy of the crocodile, in crocuses, see p. 484; for his interest in “the flowers of the field,” p. 488. In specifying the amaryllis, Ruskin is thinking no doubt of the association of lilies with chivalry.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

24. IN an interesting letter “for self and mates” a Manchester working man asks me the meaning of “Fors Clavigera” (surely enough explained in 2, § 2), and whether I mean by vulgarity “commonness,” and why I say that doing anything in a hurry is vulgar.¹ I do not mean by vulgarity, commonness. A daisy is common, and a baby, not uncommon. Neither is vulgar. Has my correspondent really no perception of the difference between good breeding and vulgarity?—if he will tell me this, I will try to answer him more distinctly: meantime, if in the Salford Library there is a copy of my *Modern Painters*, let him look at Vol. V., Part IX., Chap. VII.²

He says also that he and his mates *must* do many things in a hurry.

I know it. But do they suppose such compulsion is a law of Heaven? or that, if not, it is likely to last?

I was greatly pleased by Mr. Affleck’s letter,³ and would have told him so; only he gave me his address in Gordon Street, without telling me of what town. His postmark was Galashiels, which I tried, and Edinburgh; but only with embarrassment to Her Majesty’s service.

25. Another communication, very naïve and honest, came from a Republican of literary tastes, who wished to assist me in the development of my plans in *Fors*; and, in the course of resulting correspondence, expressed his willingness to answer any questions I might wish to put to him. I answered that I imagined myself, as far as I thought needful for me, acquainted with his opinions; but that perhaps he might wish to know something more definite about mine, and that if he liked to put any questions to *me*, I would do my best to reply intelligibly. Whereupon, apparently much pleased, he sent me the following eleven interrogations, to each of which I have accordingly given solution, to the best of my ability.

1. “Can the world—its oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, continents, islands, or portions thereof, be rightfully treated by human legislators as the ‘private property’ of individuals?”

Ans. Certainly. Else would man be more wretched than the beasts, who at least have dens of their own.

¹ [See Letter 24, § 14 (p. 426); and compare, above, p. 467.]

² [See in this edition Vol. VII. pp. 343–362; and compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 28 (Vol. XVIII. p. 79).]

³ [Another correspondent, not elsewhere referred to, so that the subject of his letter does not appear.]

2. "Should cost be the limit of price?"

Ans. It never was, and never can be. So we need not ask whether it should be.

3. "Can one man rightfully tax another man?"

Ans. By all means. Indeed, I have seldom heard of anybody who would tax himself.

4. "Can a million men rightfully tax other men?"

Ans. Certainly, when the other men are not strong enough to tax the million.

5. "Should not each adult inhabitant of a country (who performs service equivalent in value to his or her use of the service of other inhabitants) have electoral rights granted equal to those granted to any other inhabitant?"

Ans. Heaven forbid! It is not everybody one would set to choose a horse, or a pig. How much less a member of Parliament?

6. "Is it not an injustice for a State to require, or try to enforce, allegiance to the State from self-supporting adults, who have never been permitted to share in the framing or endorsing of the laws they are expected to obey?"

Ans. Certainly not. Laws are usually most beneficial in operation on the people who would have most strongly objected to their enactment.¹

7. "The Parliament of this country is now almost exclusively composed of representatives of the classes whose time is mostly occupied in consuming and destroying. Is this statement true? If true—is it right that it should be so?"

Ans. The statement is untrue. A railway navvy consumes usually about six times as much as an average member of Parliament; and I know nothing which members of Parliament kill, except time, which other people would not kill, if they were allowed to. It is the Parliamentary tendency to preservation, rather than to destruction, which I have mostly heard complained of.

8. "The State undertakes the carriage and delivery of letters. Would it be just as consistent and advisable for the State to undertake the supply of unadulterated and wholesome food, clean and healthy dwellings, elementary, industrial, and scientific instruction, medical assistance, a national paper money, and other necessities?"

Ans. All most desirable. But the tax-gatherers would have a busy life of it!

9. "Should not a State represent the co-operation of all the people of a country, for the benefit of all?"

Ans. You mean, I suppose, by "a State" the Government of a State. The Government cannot "represent" such co-operation; but can enforce it, and should.

10. "Is the use of scarce metals as material of which to make 'currency,' economical and beneficent to a nation?"

Ans. No; but often necessary: see *Munera Pulveris*, chap. iii.²

¹ [Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 80 (Vol. XIX. p. 127), where Ruskin says that Liberty is desired most by those least fit for it.]

² [Vol. XVII. p. 197.]

11 “Is that a right condition of a people, their laws, and their money which makes ‘interest’ for use of money legal and possible to obtain?”

Ans. See *Fors Clavigera*, throughout, which indeed I have written to save you the trouble of asking questions on such subjects.¹

It might be well if my Republican correspondent, for his own benefit, would write down an exact definition of the following terms used by him:—

1. “Private property.”
2. “Tax.”
3. “State.”

¹ [See Letter 29, § 16 (p. 543), for “comments of my inquisitive Republican acquaintance on my endeavours to answer his questions.”]

LETTER 26

CROCUS AND ROSE¹

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, 3rd January, 1873.

1. "BY St. George," said the English, "you say true!"²

If, by the same oath, the English could still, nowadays, both say and do true,³ themselves, it would be a merrier England. I hear from those of my acquaintance who are unhappy enough to be engaged in commercial operations, that their correspondents are "failing in all directions."

Failing! What business has *any* body to fail?

I observe myself to be getting into the habit of always thinking the last blockheadism I hear, or think of, the biggest. But this system of mercantile credit, invented simply to give power and opportunity to rogues, and enable them to live upon the wreck of honest men—was ever anything like it in the world before? That the wretched, impatient, scrambling idiots, calling themselves commercial men, forsooth, should not be able so much as to see this plainest of all facts, that any given sum of money will be as serviceable to commerce in the pocket of the seller of the goods, as of the buyer; and that nobody gains one farthing by "credit" in the long run.⁴ It is precisely as great a loss to commerce that every seller has to wait six months for his money, as it is a gain to commerce that every buyer should keep his money six months in his

¹ [See below, §§ 13, 14. A discarded title for this Letter was "St. George's Story" (see § 9).]

² [See the passage from Froissart in the preceding letter, pp. 461, 462.]

³ ["Things (understood)."—*MS. note by Author in his copy.*]

⁴ [On this subject, see the additional passage in Appendix 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 535).]

pocket. In reality there is neither gain nor loss—except by roguery, when the gain is all to the rogue, and the loss to the true man.

In all wise commerce, payment, large or small, should be over the counter. If you can't pay for a thing—don't buy it. If you can't get paid for it—don't sell it. So, you will have calm days, drowsy nights, all the good business you have now, and none of the bad.

2. (Just as I am correcting this sheet I get a lovely illuminated circular, printed in blue and red, from Messrs. Howell, James, and Co., silk mercers, etc., to the Royal Family, which respectfully announces that their half-yearly clearance sale

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and continues one month, and that THE WHOLE OF THE VALUABLE STOCK WILL BE COMPLETELY OVERHAULED, AND LARGE PORTIONS SUBJECTED TO SUCH REDUCTIONS IN PRICE, AS WILL ENSURE THEIR BEING DISPOSED OF PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE APPROACHING SPRING SEASON. EACH DEPARTMENT WILL PRESENT SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS IN THE WAY OF BARGAINS, AND LADIES WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY OF PURCHASING THE HIGHEST CLASS OF GOODS AT PRICES QUITE AS LOW AS THOSE OF INFERIOR MANUFACTURE. What a quite beautiful and generally satisfactory commercial arrangement, most obliging H. and J.!)

3. If, however, for the nonce, you chance to have such a thing as a real “pound” in your own pocket, besides the hypothetical pounds you have in other people's—put it on the table, and let us look at it together.

As a piece of mere die-cutting, that St. George is one of the best bits of work we have on our money.* But as

* The best is on George III.'s pound, 1820; the most finished in work on George IV.'s crown-piece, 1821.

a design,—how brightly comic it is! The horse looking abstractedly into the air, instead of where precisely it *would* have looked, at the beast between its legs: St. George, with nothing but his helmet on (being the last piece of armour he is likely to want), putting his naked feet, at least his feet showing their toes through the buskins, well forward, that the dragon may with the greatest convenience get a bite at them; and about to deliver a mortal blow at him with a sword which cannot reach him by a couple of yards,—or, I think, in George III.'s piece, with a field-marshal's truncheon.

4. Victor Carpaccio had other opinions on the likelihood of matters in this battle. His St. George¹ exactly reverses the practice of ours. He rides armed, from shoulder to heel, in proof—but *without* his helmet. For the real difficulty in dragon-fights, as you shall hear, is not so much to kill your dragon, as to *see* him; at least to see him in time, it being too probable that he will see you first.² Carpaccio's St. George will have his eyes about him, and his head free to turn this way or that. He meets his dragon at the gallop—catches him in the mouth with his lance—carries him backwards off his fore feet, with the spear point out at the back of his neck. But Victor Carpaccio had seen knights tilting; and poor Pistrucci,³ who designed this St. George for us, though he would have been a good sculptor in luckier circumstances, had only seen them presenting addresses as my Lord Mayor and killing turtle instead of dragon.

5. And, to our increasing sorrow, modern literature is as unsatisfactory in its picturing of St. George as modern art. Here is Mr. Emerson's bas-relief of the Saint, given

¹ [For Ruskin's study of Carpaccio's "St. George," see Plate LX. in Vol. XXIV. (p. 340); and for descriptions of the picture, *ibid.*, §§ 168, 223–241 (pp. 340, 383–400).]

² [See below, p. 483.]

³ [Benedetto Pistrucci (1784–1855), gem-engraver and medallist, chief engraver to the Royal Mint from 1817 onwards. For another criticism of Pistrucci's design, see Vol. XXVI. p. 563.]

in his *English Traits*,¹ a book occasionally wise, and always observant as to matters actually proceeding in the world; but thus, in its ninth chapter, calumnious of our Georgic faith:—

“George of Cappadocia, born at Epiphania in Cilicia, was a low parasite, who got a lucrative contract to supply the army with bacon.² A rogue and informer; he got rich, and was forced to run from justice. He saved his money, embraced Arianism, collected a library, and got promoted by a faction to the episcopal throne of Alexandria. When Julian came, A.D. 361, George was dragged to prison. The prison was burst open by the mob, and George was lynched, as he deserved. And this precious knave became in good time, Saint George of England—patron of chivalry, emblem of victory and civility, and the pride of the best blood of the modern world!”

Here is a goodly patron of our dainty doings in Hanover Square! If all be indeed as our clear-sighted, unimaginative American cousin tells us. But if all *be* indeed so, what conclusion would our American cousin draw from it? The sentence is amusing—the facts (*if* facts), surprising. But what is to follow? Mr. Emerson’s own conclusion is “that nature trips us up when we strut.”³ But that is, in the first place, untrue absolutely, for Nature teaches all cock-sparrows, and their like (who are many), to strut; and never without wholesome effect on the minds of hen-sparrows, and their like, who are likewise many. But in its relative, if not absolute, truth, is this the conclusion here wisely to be gathered? Are “chivalry, victory, civility, and the pride of the best blood of the modern world,” generally to be described as “strutting”? And is the discovery of the peculations of George of Cilicia a wholesome reproof, administered by nature, to those unnatural modes of thinking and feeling?

6. Mr. Emerson does not think so. No modern person has truer instinct for heroism than he: nay, he is the only man I know of, among all who ever looked at books of

¹ [Chapter IX.: “Cockayne.”]

² [See *St. Mark’s Rest*, § 46 (Vol. XXIV. p. 244), where Ruskin in a note refers to this Letter.]

³ [See the same chapter of *English Traits* (p. 85, 1856 edition).]

mine, who had nobleness enough to understand and believe the story of Turner's darkening his own picture that it might not take the light out of Lawrence's.¹ The level of vulgar English temper is now sunk so far below the power of doing such a thing, that I never told the story yet, in general society, without being met by instant and obstinate questioning of its truth, if not by quiet incredulity. But men with "the pride of the best blood of England" can believe it; and Mr. Emerson believes it. And yet this chivalry, and faith, and fire of heart, recognized by him as existent, confuse themselves in his mind with effete Gothic tradition; and are all "tripped up" by his investigation, itself superficial, of the story of St. George. In quieter thought, he would have felt that the chivalry and victory, being themselves real, must have been achieved, at some time or another, by a real chevalier and victor,—nay, by thousands of chevaliers and victors. That instead of one St. George, there must have been armies of St. Georges;—that this vision of a single Knight was as securely the symbol of knights innumerable, as the one Dragon, of sins and trials innumerable; and no more depended for its vitality, or virtue, on the behaviour of George of Cilicia, than the terror of present temptation depends on the natural history of the rattlesnake. And farther, being an American, he should have seen that the fact of the Christian world's having made a bishop of a speculating bacon-seller, and afterwards kept reverent record of this false St. George, but only obscure record of its real St. Georges, was by no means an isolated fact in the history of the Christian world,—but rather a part of its confirmed custom and "practical education";² and that, only the other day, St. James Fisk, canonised tearfully in America, and bestrewn with tuberoses and camellias, as above described (15, § 15), was a military gentleman of exactly the type of the Cilician St. George.

¹ [See *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 104 (Vol. XII. p. 131).]

² [See Letter 25, § 3 (p. 449).]

Farther. How did it never occur to Mr. Emerson that, whether his story of the book-collecting bishop were true or not, it was certainly not the story told to Cœur-de-Lion, or to Edward III. when they took St. George for their Master? No book-collecting episcopal person, had he been ever so much a saint, would have served *them* to swear by, or to strike by. They must have heard some other story;—not, perhaps, one written down, nor needing to be written. A remembered story,—yet, probably, a little truer than the written one; and a little older.

7. It is, above all, strange that the confusion of Mr. Emerson's own first sentence did not strike him, "George of Cappadocia, born in Cilicia." It is true that the bacon-selling and book-collecting Arian Bishop was born in Cilicia, and that this Arian Bishop was called George. But the Arians only contrived to get this Bishop of theirs thought of as a saint at all, because there was an antecedent St. George, with whom he might be confused; a St. George, indeed, "of Cappadocia"; and as it chanced that their own bishop came out of Cappadocia to his bishopric, very few years after his death sufficed to render the equivocation possible. But the real St. George had been martyred seventy years before, A.D. 290, where as the Arian bishop was killed in 361. And *this* is the story of the real St. George, which filled the heart of the early Christian Church, and was heard by Cœur-de-Lion and by Edward III., somewhat in this following form, it, luckily for *us*, having been at least once fairly written out, in the tenth century, by the best Eastern scholar who occupied himself with the history of Saints.¹ I give you an old English translation of it, rather than my own, from p. 132 of the "Historie of that most famous Saint and Soldier of Christ Jesus, St. George of Cappadocia, asserted from the fictions of the Middle Ages of the Church, and opposition of the present, . . . by Peter Heylyn; printed in London for Henry Seyle, and to be

¹ [Symeon, surnamed Metaphrastes, of Byzantium.]

sold at his shop the signe of the Tyger's head, in St. Paul's Churchyard, 1631":—

8. "St. George was born in Cappadocia, of Christian parents, and those not of the meanest qualitie: by whom he was brought up in true Religion, and the feare of God. Hee was no sooner past his Childhood, but hee lost his father, bravely encountring with the enemies of Christ; and thereupon departed with his afflicted Mother into Palestine, whereof she was a native; and where great fortunes and a faire inheritance did fall unto him. Thus qualified in birth, and being also of an able bodie, and of an age fit for employment in the warres; hee was made a Colonell." (This word is explained above, 15, § 16.) "In which employment hee gave such testimonies of his valour, and behav'd himselfe so nobly; that forthwith Diocletian, not knowing yet that he was a Christian, advanc'd him to the place and dignitie of his Councill for the warres (for so on good authoritie I have made bold to render 'Comes' in this place and time).¹ About this time his Mother dyed: and hee, augmenting the heroicke resolutions of his mind, with the increase of his revenue, did presently applie himselfe unto the Court and service of his Prince; his twentieth yeere being even then compleat and ended

"But Diocletian being soon after compelled into his persecution of the Christians" (Heylyn here gives abstract of his author), "and warrants granted out unto the officers and rulers of the Provinces to speed the execution, and that done also in frequent senate, the Emperour there himself in person, St. George, though not yet sainted, could continue no longer, but there exposed himself unto their fury and his owne glory." (Translation begins again.)

"When therefore George, even in the first beginnings, had observ'd the extraordinarie cruelty of these proceedings, hee presently put off his military habiliments, and, making dole of all his substance to the poore, on the third

¹ [The brackets here are Heylyn's. Ruskin quotes from pp. 132, 135, 137, 138.]

Session of the Senate, when the Imperiall decree was to be verified, quite voide of feare, he came into the Senate-house, and spake unto them in this manner. ‘How long, most noble Emperour and you Conscript Fathers, will you augment your tyrannies against the Christians? How long will you enact unjust and cruell Lawes against them, compelling those which are aright instructed in the faith, to follow that Religion, of whose truth your selves are doubtfull? Your Idols are no Gods, and I am bold to say againe, they are not. Be not you longer couzned in the same errour. Our Christ alone is God, He only is the Lord, in the glory of the Father. Eyther do you therefore acknowledge that Religion which undoubtedly is true: or else disturbe not them by your raging follies, which would willingly embrace it.’ This said, and all the Senate wonderfully amazed at the free speech and boldnesse of the man” (and no wonder;—my own impression is indeed that most martyrs have been made away with less for their faith than their incivility. I have always a lurking sympathy with the Heathen); “they all of them turn’d their eyes upon the Emperour, expecting what hee would reply: who beckoning to Magnentius, then Consull, and one of his speciall Favourites, to returne an answer; hee presently applyed himselfe to satisfie his Prince’s pleasure.

“Further” (says Heylyn) “we will not prosecute the storie in our Authors words, which are long and full of needlesse conference; but will briefly declare the substance of it, which is this. Upon St. George’s constant profession of his Faith, they wooed him first with promises of future honours, and more faire advancements: but finding him unmoveable, not to be wrought upon with words, they tried him next with torments: not sparing anything which might expresse their cruelty, or enoble his affliction. When they saw all was fruitlesse, at last the fatall Sentence was pronounced against him in this manner: that, beeing had againe to prison, hee should the following day be drawne through the City and beheaded.

“Which sentence was accordingly performed, and George invested with the glorious Crowne of Martyrdome upon the 23. day of April, Anno Domini nostri 290.”

9. That is St. George’s “true” story, how far literally true is of no moment; it is enough for us that a young soldier, in early days of Christianity, put off his armour, and gave up his soul to his Captain, Christ:¹ and that his death did so impress the hearts of all Christian men who heard of it, that gradually he became to them the leader of a sacred soldiery, which conquers more than its mortal enemies, and prevails against the poison, and the shadow, of Pride, and Death.

And above all, his putting off his knight’s armour, especially the military belt, as then taking service with Christ instead of the Roman Emperor, impressed the minds of the later Christian knights; because of the law referred to by St. Golden-Lips (quoted by Heylyn farther on):² “No one who is an officer would dare to appear without his zone and mantle before him who wears the diadem.” So that having thus voluntarily humbled himself, he is thought of as chiefly exalted among Christian soldiers, and called, not only “the *great* Martyr,” but the “Standard-Bearer” (Tropæophorus³). Whence he afterwards becomes the knight bearing the bloody cross on the argent field, and the Captain of Christian war.

10. The representation of all his spiritual enemies under the form of the Dragon was simply the natural habit of the Greek mind: the stories of Apollo delivering Latona from the Python, and of Perseus delivering Andromeda from the sea monster, had been as familiar as the pitcher and winecups they had been painted on, in red and black, for a thousand years before: and the name of St. George,⁴

¹ [*King Richard II.*, Act iv. sc. 1 (“gave . . . his pure soul unto his Captain, Christ”): see Letter 25, § 15, p. 459].

² [Chrysostom; Heylyn (p. 148) quotes from his 26th Homily on Corinthians.]

³ [Compare “The Place of Dragons,” Vol. XXIV. pp. 375 *seq.*, where Mr. Anderson works out the Greek analogies with the story of St. George.]

⁴ [Compare *Lectures on Art.*, § 116 (Vol. XX. p. 108).]

the “Earthworker,” or “Husbandman,”* connected him instantly, in Greek thoughts, not only with the ancient dragon, Erichthonius, but with the Spirit of agriculture, called “Thrice-warrior,” to whom the dragon was a harnessed creature of toil.¹ Yet, so far as I know, it was not until the more strictly Christian tradition of the armed archangel Michael confused its symbolism with that of the armed saint, that the dragon enters definitely into the story of St. George. The authoritative course of Byzantine painting, sanctioned and restricted by the Church in the treatment of every subject, invariably represents St. George as the soldier Martyr, or witness,² before Diocletian, never as victor over the dragon:† his story, as the painters tell it, corresponds closely with that of St. Catherine of Sinai;‡ and is, in the root of it, truth, and in

* More properly “named from the husbandman.” Thus Lycus is “a wolf,” Lycius, named from the “wolf,” or “wolfish.” So, Georgus is “a husbandman,” Georgius, “named from the husbandman,” or “husbandmanship.”

† See the complete series of subjects as given by M. Didron³ in his *Iconographie Chrétienne* (8vo, Paris, 1845, p. 369), and note the most interesting trace of the idea of Triptolemus, in the attendant child with the water-pitcher behind the equestrian figures of the Saint.

‡ You will find that in my 19th letter, § 10 [p. 328], I propose that our St. George’s Company in England shall be under the patronage also of St. Anthony in Italy. And in general, we will hold ourselves bound to reverence, in one mind, with Carpaccio and the good Painters and Merchants of Venice, the eight great Saints of the Greek Church,—namely (in the order M. Didron gives them)—the Archangel Michael, the Precursor (John Baptist), St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Nicholas, St. George, Ste. Catherine of Sinai, and St. Anthony, these being patrons of our chief occupations⁴ (while, over our banking operations we will have for patron or principal manager, the more modern Western Saint, Francis of Assisi); meaning always no disrespect to St. Jerome or Ste. Cecilia, in case we need help in our literature or music.

¹ [See the woodcut of “Triptolemus in his Car,” Plate V. in Vol. XX. (p. 243).]

² [Compare Letter 82, § 29 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 249).]

³ [That is, in the treatise by the Byzantine Monk Dionysius, translated by Paul Durand, and furnished with an introduction by M. Didron; the title of the translation, etc., being *Manuel d’Iconographie Chrétienne*. The order of the Saints is given in pp. 352–378. For other references to the book, see Vol. XIX. p. 355 *n.*]

⁴ [That is, warfare against evil (St. Michael); “washing with pure water” (the Baptist. see Letter 73, § 14; Vol. XXIX. p. 23); fishing (St. Peter: see Vol. XXVIII. p. 34); the practice of works and charity (St. Paul: see below, p. 509); sea-faring (St. Nicholas); husbandry (St. George and St. Anthony: see p. 328); and the arts and sciences (St. Catherine). For St. Catherine, called “of Sinai,” see above, p. 206 *n.* For a list of St. George’s occupations generally, see Letter 93, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 473).]

the branching of it, beautiful dream, of the same wild and lovely character. And we might as well confuse Catherine of Sinai with Catherine of Siena (or for that matter, Catherine de Medicis!) as St. George of the Eastern Church with George the Arian. And this witness of painting remains simple and unbroken, down to the last days of Venice. St. Mark, St Nicholas, and St. George are the three saints who are seen, in the vision of the Fisherman, delivering Venice from the fiends.¹ St. George, first “of the seaweed,” has three other churches besides in Venice; and it will be the best work I have ever done in this broken life of mine, if I can some day show you, however dimly, how Victor Carpaccio has painted him in the humblest of these,—the little chapel of St. George on the “Shore of the Slaves.”² There, however, our dragon does not fail us, both Carpaccio and Tintoret having the deepest convictions on that subject;—as all strong men *must* have; for the Dragon is too true a creature, to all such, spiritually. That it is an indisputably living and venomous creature, materially, has been the marvel of the world, innocent and guilty, not knowing what to think of the terrible worm; nor whether to worship it, as the Rod of their lawgiver, or to abhor it as the visible symbol of the everlasting Disobedience.

11. Touching which mystery, you must learn one or two main facts.³

The word “Dragon” means “the Seeing Creature,” and I believe the Greeks had the same notion in their other word for a serpent, “*ophis*.”⁴ There were many other creeping, and crawling, and rampant things; the olive stem and the ivy were serpentine enough, blindly; but here was a creeping thing that *saw*!

¹ [See Vol. X. p. 76.]

² [For S. Giorgio in Alga, see Vol. X. p. 4, and Vol. XXIV. p. xliii. The other churches are S. Giorgio Maggiore, S. Giorgio de' Greci, and S. Giorgio degli Schiavoni; the pictures in the last was the subject of ch. x. in *St. Mark's Rest*, Vol. XXIV. pp. 335 *seq.*]

³ [Compare *Queen of the Air*, Vol. XIX. pp. 361 *seq.*]

⁴ [Here compare *Deucalion*, vol. ii. ch. i. § 8 (Vol. XXVI. p. 301).]

The action of the cobra, with its lifted and levelled head, and the watchfulness of the coiled viper, impressed the Egyptians and Greeks intensely. To the Egyptian the serpent was awful and sacred, and became the ornament on the front of the King's diadems¹ (though an evil spirit also, when not *erect*). The Greeks never could make up their minds about it. All human life seems to them as the story of Laocoon.² The fiery serpents slay us for our wisdom and fidelity;—then writhe themselves into rest at the feet of the Gods.

12. The Egyptians were at the same pause as to their Nile Dragon, for whom I told you they built their labyrinth.³

“For in the eyes of some of the Egyptians, the crocodiles are sacred; but by others they are held for enemies. And it is they who dwell by the Lake Mœris, who think them greatly sacred. Every one of these lake people has care of his own crocodile, taught to be obedient to the lifting of finger. And they put jewels of enamel and gold into their ears, and bracelets on their forefeet, and feed them with the sacred shew-bread daily, and attend upon them, that they may live beautiful lives; and, when they die, bury them, embalmed, in holy tombs.” (Thus religion, as a pious friend, I observe, writes in a Devonshire paper the other day, leads to the love of Nature!) “But they of the city Elephantine eat their crocodiles, holding them nowise sacred. Neither do they call them crocodiles, but ‘champsæ’; it is the Ionians who call them ‘crocodiles,’ because they think them like the little crocodiles that live in the dry stone walls.”⁴

13. I do not know if children generally have strong associative fancy about words; but when I was a child, that word “Crocodile” always seemed to me very terrific, and I would even hastily, in any book, turn a leaf in which it was printed with a capital C. If anybody had but told me the meaning of it—“a creature that is afraid of crocuses!”⁵

¹ [Compare Letter 75, § 12 (Vol. XXIX. p. 69), and *Proserpina*, i. ch. xii. § 2 (Vol. XXV. p. 363).]

² [For the Laocoon, see Vol. IV. pp. 120–121.]

³ [See Letter 23, § 13 (p. 407).]

⁴ [Herodotus, ii. 69.]

⁵ [See the account of the word in Gaisford's *Etymologicum Magnum . . . ex pluribus Scholiastis et grammaticis*: “the land crocodile fears the crocus; whence bee-keepers, when the animal comes up to eat their honey, put out crocuses, at the sight of which the crocodile flees.”]

That, at least, is all I can make of it, now; though I can't understand how this weakness of the lizard mind was ever discovered, for lizards never *see* crocuses, that I know of. The next I meet in Italy (poor little, glancing, panting things,—I miss them a little here from my mossy walls)—shall be shown an artificial crocus, Paris-made; we will see what it thinks of it! But however it came to be given, for the great Spirit-Lizard, the name is a good one. For as the wise German's final definition of the Devil (in the second part of *Faust*) is that he is afraid of Roses,¹ so the earliest and simplest possible definition of him is that in spring-time he is afraid of crocuses; which I am quite sure, both our farmers and manufacturers are now, in England, to the utmost. On the contrary, the Athenian Spirit of Wisdom was so fond of crocuses that she made her own robe crocus-colour, before embroidering it with the wars of the Giants;² she being greatly antagonistic to the temper which dresses sisters of charity in black, for a crocus-colour dress was much the gayest—not to say the giddiest—thing she could possibly wear in Athens.

14. And of the crocus, vernal, and autumnal, more properly the enchanted herb of Colchis³ (see by the way, White's *History of Selborne* at the end of its 41st letter⁴), I must tell you somewhat more in next letter;⁵ meantime, look at the saffron crest in the centre of it, carefully, and read, with some sympathy, if you can, this true story of a crocus, which being told me the other day by one who, whether I call him friend or not, is indeed friendly to me,

¹ [Compare Letter 46, § 15 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 182–183); and see Vol. XIII. p. 520 *n.*]

² [For the crocus-colour of the robe, see *Laws of Fésole*, ch. vii. § 26 (Vol. XV. p. 427), and compare Vol. XIX. p. 375; for its embroidery with the wars of the giants, compare Vol. XXIII. p. 275.]

³ [The name for the meadow-saffron—*klcikon*—having reference to the enchantments of Medea of Colchis.]

⁴ [Letter 83 in Bohn's edition. "The vernal crocus expands its flowers by the beginning of March at farthest, and often in very rigorous weather; and cannot be retarded but by some violence offered; while the autumnal (the saffron) defies the influence of the spring and summer, and will not blow till most plants begin to fade and run to seed. This circumstance is one of the wonders of the creation."]

⁵ [This, however, was not done.]

and to all whom he can befriend, I begged him to write it for your sakes, which he has thus graciously done,¹—

“A STORY OF A FLOWER

“It is impossible to describe the delight which I took in my first flower, yet it was only a poor pecky little sprouting crocus. Before I begin the story, I must, in two lines, make known my needy state at the time when I became the owner of the flower. I was in my eleventh year, meanly clothed, plainly fed, and penniless; an errand boy in receipt of one shilling and sixpence a week, which sum I consumed in bread and shoe leather. Yet I was happy enough, living in a snug cottage in the suburbs of Oxford, within sight of its towers, and within hearing of its bells. In the back

¹ [Henry Merritt (1822–1877), picture-cleaner and art critic, author of *Dirt and Pictures Separated*, Robert Dalby, and other works, which were collected by his widow (the artist, Anna Lea Merritt) in 1879 under the title *Henry Merritt: Art Criticism and Romance* (Kegan Paul & Co., 2 vols.). “His generosity was amazing. Not only did he give to those whom he cared for, but to some whom he despised, to one at least who had grossly injured him. No man perhaps ever won more sincere respect and affection from those who came to him as employees and remained as friends, enjoying the originality of his conversation, and the simple nobility of his character”: see the “Recollections” prefixed to his Remains, where the two following letters from Ruskin are given (pp. 42, 43):—

“CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
“December 1, 1872.

“MY DEAR MERRITT,—When I got your story of a flower I put it aside for a quiet day when I should not be tired. It has refreshed me this morning, being somewhat ill, and not able to see anything golden anywhere but through your young eyes. It is very beautiful. Might I use it for my February *Fors*?

“Had you been a little less gently made you would have been a great painter. The world has crumbled you in its fingers, or, rather, used you as soft earth for its own purposes, but you have made many a seeming dead crocus bloom again.

“Ever affectionately yours,
“J. RUSKIN.”

“BRANTWOOD, January 19, 1875.

“MY DEAR MERRITT,—I will be sure to give you due alarm concerning the old masters. You have given great pleasure to Carlyle by your report, and you always give much to *me* whenever you write to me. I have no other friend who says such pretty things to me, in a way that reminds me of the little courtesies of old days, when people were graceful by kind act in a letter as much as in a quadrille, and when flattery was the naughtiest of one’s faults to one’s friends, never carelessness.

“Ever affectionately yours,
“J. RUSKIN.”

“A Story of a Flower” was reprinted in the same volume, vol. i. pp. 269–272.]

yard of my home were many wonders. The gable end of a barn was mantled with ivy, centuries old, and sparrows made their home in its leafage; an ancient wall, old as the Norman tower at the other end of the town, was rich in gilly-flowers; a wooden shed, with red tiles, was covered by a thriving 'tea tree,' so we called it, which in summer was all blossom, pendant mauve-coloured blossoms. This tree managed to interlace its branches among the tiles so effectively as in the end to lift off the whole roof in a mass, and poise it in the air. Bees came in swarms to sip honey at the blossoms: I noted civilised hive bees, and large ones whose waxen cells were hidden in mossy banks in the woods—these had crimson and saffron tinted bodies, or, for variety, hairy shapes of sombre green and black. I was never weary of my wall-flowers, and bees, and butterflies. But, so it is, I happened one day to get a glimpse of a college garden about the end of February, or the beginning of March, when its mound of venerable elms was lit up with star-like yellow flowers. The dark earth was robed as with a bright garment of imperial, oriental splendour. It was the star-shaped aconite, as I believe, but am not sure, whose existence in flower is brief, but glorious, when beheld, as I beheld it, in masses. Henceforth, if Old Fidget, the gardener, was not at the back gate of St. J—, I peeped through the keyhole at my yellow garden bed, which seemed flooded with sunlight, only broken by patches of rich black earth, which formed strange patterns, such as we see on Japanese screens of lacquer and bronze, only that the flowers had a glory of their own. Well, I looked through the keyhole every time I passed, and that was four times daily, and always with increased interest for my flowering aconite. But oh! trouble upon trouble, one day I found the keyhole stopt, and there was an end to my daily joy, and of the interest which had been awakened in me, in a new way, for the wonders of nature. My love of flowers, however, increased, and I found means to feed my love. I had often observed Old Fidget, the head gardener, and his mates, bring out wheelbarrow loads of refuse from the shrubbery and flower beds and throw them in a heap along the garden wall without, where a long deep trench had become the well-known receptacle for rubbish. Such places were common in town suburbs in those days. The rubbish consisted of cuttings of shrubs and plants, and rakings of flower-borders, but more beautifully, of elm leaves, and the cast-off clothing of chestnut trees, which soon lay rotting in flaky masses, until I happened to espy a fragment of a bulb, and then, the rubbish of the garden, which concealed sprouting chestnuts, knew no rest. I went, one holiday, and dug deep, with no other implement than my hands, into this matted mass. I laboured, till at length, in a mass of closely pressed leaves, I came upon a perfect crocus. It lay like a dead elfin infant in its forest grave. I was enchanted, and afraid to touch it, as one would fear to commit a piece of sacrilege. It lay in its green robes, which seemed spun from dainty silken threads unsoiled by mortal hands. Its blossom of pale flesh tint lay concealed within a creamy opalescent film, which seemed to revive and live when the light penetrated the darksome tomb, contrasting with the emerald robes, and silken, pliant roots. At length I lifted the flower from its bed, and carried it to my garden plot with breathless care. My garden plot, not much larger than a large baking-dish, was enclosed by broken tiles, a scrubby place, unsuited to my newly

discovered treasure. I broke up the earth and pulverised it with my fingers, but its coarseness was incurable. I abandoned it as I thought of some mole hills in a neighbouring copse, and soon my plot was filled deeply with soft sandy soil, fit for my flower. And then came the necessity of protecting it from the searching March winds, which I did effectually by covering it with a flower-pot, and the season wore on, and soft, mild days set in apace, and my flower, which was ever uppermost in my thoughts, whether sleeping or waking, began to show signs of life, as day by day I permitted the sun to look at it, until at length, one sunny, silent, Sunday morning, it opened its glowing, golden, sacramental cup, gleaming like light from heaven—dropt in a dark place, living light and fire. So it seemed to my poor vision, and I called the household and the neighbours from their cares to share my rapture. But alas! my dream was ended; the flower had no fascination for those who came at my call. It was but a yellow crocus to them—some laughed, some tittered, some jeered me, and old Dick Willis, poor man, who got a crust by selling soft water by the pail, he only rubbed his dim eyes, and exclaimed in pity, ‘God bless the poor boy!’ ”

Little thinking how much he was already blessed,—he—and his flower!

For indeed *Crocus* and *Carduus*¹ are alike Benedict flowers, if only one knew God’s gold and purple from the Devil’s, which, with St. George’s help, and St. Anthony’s,—the one well knowing the flowers of the field, and the other those of the desert,—we will try somewhat to discern.

¹ [The wild thistle.]

LETTER 27

CHRIST'S LODGINGS¹

BRANTWOOD, 27th January, 1873.

1. "IF it were not so, I would have told you."²

I read those strange words of St. John's Gospel this morning, for at least the thousandth time; and for the first time, that I remember, with any attention. It is difficult, if not impossible, to attend rightly without some definite motive, or chance-help, to words which one has read and re-read till every one of them slips into its place unnoticed, as a familiar guest,—unchallenged as a household friend. But the Third Fors helped me, to-day, by half effacing the "n" in the word Mona, in the tenth-century MS. I was deciphering; and making me look at the word, till I began to think of it, and wondered. You may as well learn the old meaning of that pretty name of the isle of Anglesea. "In my Father's house," says Christ, "are many monas,"—remaining-places—"if it were not so, I would have told you."²

Alas, had He but told us more clearly that it *was* so!

I have the profoundest sympathy with St. Thomas, and would fain put all his questions over again, and twice as many more. "We know not whither Thou goest."³ That Father's house,—where is it? These "remaining-places," how are they to be prepared for us?—how are we to be prepared for them?

¹ ["Servants' Lodgings" was a rejected title for this letter.]

² [John xiv. 2: monai pollai.]

³ [John xiv. 5.]

2. If ever your clergy mean really to help you to read your Bible,—the whole of it, and not merely the bits which tell you that you are miserable sinners, and that you needn't mind,—they must make a translation retaining as many as possible of the words in their Greek form, which you may easily learn, and yet which will be quit of the danger of becoming debased by any vulgar English use. So also, the same word must always be given when it *is* the same;¹ and not in one place translated “mansion,” and in another “abode.” (Compare verse 23 of this same chapter.*) Not but that “mansion” is a very fine Latin word, and perfectly correct, (if only one knows Latin), but I doubt not that most parish children understand by it, if anything, a splendid house with two wings, and an acre or two of offices, in the middle of a celestial park; and suppose that some day or other they are all of them to live in such, as well as the Squire's children; whereas, if either “mona” or “remaining” were put in both verses, it is just possible that sometimes both the Squire and the children, instead of vaguely hoping to be lodged some day in heaven by Christ and His Father, might take notice of their offer in the last verse I have quoted, and get ready a spare room both in the mansion and cottage, to offer Christ and His Father immediately, if they liked to come into lodgings on earth.²

3. I was looking over some of my own children's books the other day, in the course of re-arranging the waifs and strays of Denmark Hill at Brantwood; and came upon a catechism of a very solemn character on the subject of the

* “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” Our mona,—as in the 2nd verse (John xiv.).

¹ [Compare Letter 12, § 5 (p. 202).]

² [See *The Crown of Wild Olive*, § 26 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 406, 407), where Ruskin refers to this Letter in a footnote of 1873.]

County of Kent.¹ It opens by demanding “the situation of Kent”; then, the extent of Kent,—the population of Kent, and a sketch of the history of Kent; in which I notice with interest that hops were first grown in Kent in 1524, and petitioned against as a wicked weed in 1528. Then, taking up the subject in detail, inquiry is made as to “the situation of Dover?” To which the orthodox reply is that Dover is pleasantly situated on that part of the island of Great Britain nearest the Continent, and stands in a valley between stupendous hills. To the next question, “What is the present state of Dover?” the well-instructed infant must answer, “That Dover consists of two parts, the upper, called the Town, and the lower, the Pier; and that they are connected by a long narrow street, which, from the rocks that hang over it, and seem to threaten the passenger with destruction, has received the name of Snaregate Street.” The catechism next tests the views of the young respondent upon the municipal government of Dover, the commercial position of Dover, and the names of the eminent men whom Dover has produced; and at last, after giving a proper account of the Castle of Dover and the two churches in Dover, we are required to state whether there is not an interesting relic of antiquity in the vicinity of Dover; upon which, we observe that, about two miles north-west from Dover, are the remains of St. Radagune’s Abbey, now converted into a farm-house;² and finally, to the crucial interrogation—“What nobleman’s seat is near Dover?” we reply, with more than usual unction, that “In the Parish of Waldershaw, five miles and a half from Dover, is Waldershaw Park, the elegant seat of the Earl of Guildford, and that the house is a magnificent structure,

¹ [*Pinnock’s County Histories. The History and Topography of the County of Kent, with Biographical Sketches, etc., etc., and a Neat Map of the County.* London: Printed for Pinnock and Maunder. Ruskin quotes from pp. 1, 17 n., 10, 15.]

² [St. Radigund’s Abbey was founded in 1191; the chapel and some domestic buildings, considerably altered in the sixteenth century, still remain in use as a farmhouse. For the legend of the queen and saint, Radigund (or Radegunda), the patroness of the Trinitarian Order, see Mrs. Jameson’s *Legends of the Monastic Orders*, p. 220.]

situated in a vale, in the centre of a well-wooded Park.” Whereat I stopped reading; first, because St. Radagune’s Abbey, though it is nothing but walls with a few holes through them by which the cows get in for shelter on windy days, was the first “remaining” of Antiquity I ever sketched, when a boy of fourteen, spending half my best BB pencil on the ivy and the holes in the walls; and, secondly, the tone of these two connected questions in the catechism marks exactly the curious period in the English mind when the worship of St. Radagune was indeed utterly extinct, so that *her* once elegant mansion becomes a farm-house, as in that guise fulfilling its now legitimate function:—but the worship of Earls of Guildford is still so flourishing that no idea would ever occur to the framers of catechism that the elegant seats of these also were on the way to become farm-houses.

Which is nevertheless surely the fact:—and the only real question is whether St. Radagune’s mansion and the Earl of Guildford’s are both to be farm-houses, or whether the state of things at the time of the Dover Catechism may not be exactly reversed,—and St. Radagune have her mansion and park railed in again, while the Earl’s walls shelter the cows on windy days. For indeed, from the midst of the tumult and distress of nations, fallen wholly Godless and lordless, perhaps the first possibility of redemption may be by cloistered companies, vowed once more to the service of a divine Master, and to the reverence of His saints.

4. You were shocked, I suppose, by my catalogue, in last *Fors*, of such persons, as to be revered by our own Company.¹ But have you ever seriously considered what a really vital question it is to you whether St. Paul and St. Pancras (not that I know myself at this moment, who St. Pancras was,—but I’ll find out for next *Fors*²),—St. George and St. Giles, St. Bridget and St. Helen, are really only to become

¹ [See Letter 26, § 10 *n.* (p. 482).]

² [See Letter 32, § 26 (p. 603).]

the sponsors of City parishes, or whether you mean still to render them any gratitude as the first teachers of what used to be called civilization; nay, whether there may not even be, irrespective of what we *now* call civilization—namely, coals and meat at famine prices,¹—some manner of holy living and dying, of lifting holy hands without wrath,² and sinking to blessed sleep without fear, of which these persons, however vaguely remembered, have yet been the best patterns the world has shown us.

Don't think that I want to make Roman Catholics of you, or to make anything of you, except honest people. But as for the vulgar and insolent Evangelical³ notion, that one should not care for the Saints,—nor pray to them,⁴—Mercy on us!—do the poor wretches fancy that God wouldn't be thankful if they would pray to *anybody*, for what it was right they should have; or that *He* is piqued, forsooth, if one thinks His servants can help us sometimes, in our paltry needs?

“But they are dead, and cannot help us, nor hear!”

Alas; perchance—no. What would I not give to be so much a heretic as to believe the Dead *could* hear!—but are there no living Saints, then, who can help you? Sir C. Dilke, or Mr. Beales, for instance?⁵ and if you don't believe there are any parks or monas abiding for you in heaven, may you not pull down some park railings here and—hold public meetings in them, of a Paradisiacal character?

5. Indeed, that pulling down of the Piccadilly railings was a significant business. “Park,” if you will look to your Johnson, you will find is one of quite the oldest words in Europe; *vox antiquissima*,⁶ a most ancient word, and now a familiar one among active nations. French, Parc, Welsh,

¹ [See Letter 22, § 7 (p. 376).]

² [1 Timothy ii. 8: see above, p. 467.]

³ [Compare below, p. 546.]

⁴ [See the letter to Miss Anderson in Vol. XXIV. p. xxiv.]

⁵ [For Sir Charles Dilke's “republican” agitation at this time, see above, p. 233 *n*. Mr. Beales was president of the Reform League at the time of the pulling down of the Park railings, for which see Vol. XVII. pp. lxxx., 326, and compare Letters 2, § 10 (above, p. 36), and 74, § 15 (Vol. XXIX. p. 45).]

⁶ [Quoted, as is also the definition from John Manwood's *A Brefe Collection of the Lawes of the Forest* (1592), from Todd's edition of Johnson.]

the same, Irish, *Pairc*, being “a piece of ground enclosed and stored with wild beasts of chase.” Manwood, in his *Forest Law*, defines it thus:—

“A park is a place for privilege for wild beasts of venery, and also for other wild beasts that are beasts of the forest and of the chase, and those wild beasts are to have a firm peace and protection there, so that no man may hurt or chase them within the park, without licence of the owner: a park is of another nature than either a chase or a warren; for a park *must be enclosed*, and may not lie open—if it does, it is a good cause of seizure into the King’s hands.”

Or into King Mob’s for parliamentary purposes—and how monstrous, you think, that such pleasant habitations for wild beasts should still be walled in, and in peace, while you have no room to—speak in,—I had like to have said something else than speak—but it is at least polite to you to call it “speaking.”

6. Yes. I have said so, myself, once or twice;—nevertheless something is to be said for the beasts also. What do you think they were made for? All these spotty, scaly, finned, and winged, and clawed things, that grope between you and the dust, that flit between you and the sky. These motes in the air—sparks in the sea—mists and flames of life. The flocks that are your wealth—the moth that frets it away. The herds upon a thousand hills,¹—the locust,—and the worm, and the wandering plague whose spots are worlds. The creatures that mock you, and torment. The creatures that serve and love you (or would love if they might), and obey. The joys of the callow nests and burrowed homes of Earth. The rocks of it, built out of its own dead. What is the meaning to you of all these,—what their worth to you?

No worth, you answer, perhaps; or the contrary of worth. In fact, you mean to put an end to all that. You will keep pigeons to shoot—geese to make pies of—cocks for fighting—horses to bet on—sheep for wool, and cows for cheese. As to the rest of the creatures, you owe no thanks

¹ [Psalms 1. 10.]

to Noah; and would fain, if you could, order a special deluge for their benefit; failing that, you will at all events get rid of the useless feeders as fast as possible.

Indeed, there is some difficulty in understanding why some of them were made. I lost great part of my last hour for reading, yesterday evening, in keeping my kitten's tail out of the candles,—a useless beast, and still more useless tail—astonishing and inexplicable even to herself. Inexplicable, to me, all of them—heads and tails alike. “Tiger—tiger—burning bright”¹—is this then all you were made for—this ribbed hearthrug, tawny and black!

7. If only the Rev. James McCosh were here! His book is; and I'm sure I don't know how, but it turns up in rearranging my library. “Method of the Divine Government Physical and Moral.”² Preface begins:—

“We live in an age in which the reflecting portion of mankind are much addicted to the contemplation of the works of Nature. It is the object of the author in this Treatise to interrogate Nature with the view of making her utter her voice in answer to some of the most important questions which the inquiring spirit of man can put.”

Here is a catechumen for you!—and a catechist! Nature with her hands behind her back—Perhaps Mr. McCosh would kindly put it to her about the tiger. Farther on, indeed, it is stated that the finite cannot comprehend the infinite, and I observe that the author, with the shrinking modesty characteristic of the clergy of his persuasion, feels that even the intellect of a McCosh cannot, without risk of error, embrace *more* than the present method of the Divine management of Creation. Wherefore “no man,” he says, “should presume to point out *all* the ways in which a God of unbounded resources might govern the universe.”

8. But the present way (allowing for the limited capital),

¹ [W. Blake's *Songs of Experience* (“The Tiger”); referred to also in Vol. XIX. p. 56; Vol. XXV. p. 361; and *Rock Honeycomb*, note to lines 267–269.]

² [First published in 1850; tenth edition, 1870. Ruskin quotes from p. 146. Mr. McCosh (1811–1894), Presbyterian minister, was Professor of Logic at Queen's College, Belfast, 1851–1868, and President of Princeton College, New Jersey, 1868–1888.]

—we *may* master that, and pay our compliments to God upon it? We will hope so; in the meantime I can assure you, this creation of His will bear more looking at than you have given, yet, however addicted you may be to the contemplation of Nature (though I suspect you are more addicted to the tasting of her¹); and that if instead of being in such a hurry to pull park railings down, you would only beg the owners to put them to their proper use, and let the birds and beasts, which were made to breathe English air as well as you, take shelter there, you would soon have a series of National Museums more curious than that in Great Russell Street;² and with something better worth looking at in them than the sacred crocodiles. Besides, you might spare the poor beasts a little room on earth, for charity, if not for curiosity. *They* have no mansions preparing for them elsewhere.

What! you answer; indignant,—“All that good land given up to beasts!” Have you ever looked how much or little of England *is* in park land? I have here, by me, Hall’s Travelling Atlas of the English Counties;³ which paints conveniently in red the railroads, and in green the parks (not conscious, probably—the colourist—of his true expression of antagonism by those colours).

The parks lie on the face of each county like a few crumbs on a plate; if you could turn them all at once into corn land, it would literally not give you a mouthful extra of dinner. Your dog, or cat, is more costly to you, in proportion to your private means, than all these kingdoms of beasts would be to the nation.

“Cost what they might, it would be too much”—think you? You will not give those acres of good land to keep beasts?

¹ [Ruskin notes here in his copy, “Obscure. I think there must have been a misprint somewhere.” The passage seems, however, clearly to refer to the following page, where he describes the crops grown for beer.]

² [The Natural History Collections had not yet removed from Bloomsbury.]

³ [A *Travelling County Atlas: with all the Coach and Rail Roads accurately laid down and coloured, and carefully corrected to the present time*. Engraved by Sidney Hall, 1845.]

9. Perhaps not beasts of God's making; but how many acres of good land do you suppose, then, you *do* give up, as it is, to keep beasts He never made,—never meant to be made,—the beasts you make of yourselves?

Do you know how much corn land in the United Kingdom is occupied in supplying you with the means of getting drunk?

Mind, I am no temperance man.¹ You should all have as much beer and alcohol as was good for you if I had my way. But the beer and alcohol which are *not* good for you,—which are the ruin of so many of you, suppose you could keep the wages you spend in that liquor in the savings bank, and left the land, now tilled to grow it for you, to natural and sober beasts?—Do you think it would be false economy?—Why, you might have a working men's park for nothing, in every county, bigger than the Queen's! and your own homes all the more comfortable.

10. I had no notion myself, till the other day, what the facts were, in this matter. Get, if you can, Professor Kirk's *Social Politics*² (Hamilton, Adams, and Co.), and read, for a beginning, his 21st chapter, on land and liquor; and then, as you have leisure, all the book, carefully. Not that he would help me out with my park plan; he writes with the simple idea that the one end of humanity is to eat and drink; and it is interesting to see a Scotch Professor thinking the lakes of his country were made to be "Reservoirs," and particularly instancing the satisfaction of thirsty Glasgow out of Loch Katrine; so that, henceforth, it will be proper in Scotch economical circles not to speak of the Lady of the Lake, but of the Lady of the Reservoir. Still, assuming that to eat and

¹ [The "temperance" movement at this time was, it should be remembered, largely identified with proposals for the total abolition of the liquor trade.]

² [*Social Politics in Great Britain and Ireland*, by Professor J. Kirk, Edinburgh, 1870. On p. 48 he says: "Such is the value of that water which is now flowing from our great lake reservoirs." The Glasgow Waterworks, by means of which 70,000,000 gallons of water are daily conveyed to Glasgow by tunnels or aqueducts, were partially opened by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in 1859.]

drink *is* the end of life, the Professor shows you clearly how much better this end may be accomplished than it is now. And the broad fact which he brings out concerning your drink is this; that about one million five hundred thousand acres of land in the United Kingdom are occupied in producing strong liquor (and I don't see that he has included in this estimate what is under the wicked weeds of Kent;¹ it is curious what difficulty people always seem to have in putting anything accurately into short statement). The produce of this land, which is more than all the arable for bread in Scotland, after being manufactured into drink, is sold to you at the rates,—the spirits, of twenty-seven shillings and sixpence for two shillings' worth; and the beer, of two shillings for threepence-halfpenny worth. The sum you spend in these articles, and in tobacco, annually, is ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SIX MILLIONS OF POUNDS; on which the pure profit of the richer classes (putting the lower alehouse gains aside) is, roughly, a hundred millions.² That is the way the rich Christian Englishman provides against the Day of Judgment, expecting to hear his Master say to him, "I was thirsty—and ye gave me drink³—Two shillings' worth for twenty-seven and sixpence."

11. Again; for the matter of lodging. Look at the Professor's page 73. There you find that in the street dedicated in Edinburgh to the memory of the first Bishop of Jerusalem, in No. 23, there are living 220 persons. In the first floor of it live ten families,—forty-nine persons; in the second floor, nine families—fifty-four persons; and so on, up to six floors, the ground-floor being a shop; so that "the whole 220 persons in the building are without one foot of the actual surface of the land on which to exist."⁴

¹ [Hops: see above, § 3. Compare *Proserpina*, i. ch. vi. § 5 *n.* (Vol. XXV. p. 284).]

² [Compare Letter 67, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 644), and Letters 73 and 84 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 22, 290).]

³ [Matthew xxv. 35.]

⁴ [For another notice of tenements in Edinburgh, see Letter 40, § 11 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 73); and compare Letters 73, § 3, and 90, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 15, 432).]

“In my Father’s house,” says Christ, “are many mansions.”¹ Verily, that appears to be also the case in some of His Scotch Evangelical servants’ houses here. And verecund Mr. McCosh, who will not venture to suggest any better arrangement of the heavens,²—has he likewise no suggestion to offer as to the arrangement of No. 23, St. James’s Street?

12. “Whose fault is it?” do you ask?

Immediately, the fault of the landlords; but the landlords, from highest to lowest, are more or less thoughtless and ignorant persons, from whom you can expect no better. The persons really answerable for all this are your two professed bodies of teachers; namely, the writers for the public press, and the clergy.

Nearly everything that I ever did of any use in this world has been done contrary to the advice of my friends; and as my friends are unanimous at present in begging me never to write to newspapers,³ I am somewhat under the impression that I ought to resign my Oxford professorship, and try to get a sub-editorship in the *Telegraph*. However, for the present, I content myself with my own work, and have sustained patiently, for thirty years, the steady opposition of the public press to whatever good was in it (said *Telegraph* always with thanks excepted⁴), down to the article in the *Spectator* of August 13th, 1870, which, on my endeavour to make the study of art, and of Greek literature, of some avail in Oxford to the confirmation of right principle in the minds of her youth, instantly declared that “the artistic perception and skill of Greece were nourished by the very lowness of her ethical code, by her lack of high aims, by her freedom from all aspirations after moral good, by her inability even to conceive a Hebrew tone of

¹ [See above, p. 489.]

² [See above, § 7.]

³ [The remonstrances were suggested presumably by Ruskin’s letters to the *Pall Mall Gazette* in January 1873 on “How the Rich Spend their Money”: see Vol. XVII. pp. 553–555.]

⁴ [Compare Letter 22, § 8 (p. 377 n.).]

purity, by the fact that she lived without God, and died without hope.”¹

“High aims” are explained by the *Spectator*, in another place, to consist in zeal for the establishment of cotton mills. And the main body of the writers for the public press are also—not of that opinion—for they have no opinions; but they get their living by asserting so much to you.

13. Against which testimony of theirs, you shall hear, to-day, the real opinion of a man of whom Scotland once was proud; the man who first led her to take some notice of that same reservoir of hers,² which Glasgow,—Clyde not being deep enough for her drinking, or perhaps (see above, 16, § 12) not being now so sweet as stolen waters,—cools her tormented tongue with:—

“The poor laws into which you have ventured for the love of the country, form a sad quagmire. They are like John Bunyan’s Slough of Despond, into which, as he observes, millions of cart-loads of good resolutions have been thrown, without perceptibly mending the way. From what you say, and from what I have heard from others, there is a very natural desire to trust to one or two empirical remedies, such as general systems of education, and so forth. But a man with a broken constitution might as well put faith in Spilsburg or Godbold. It is not the knowledge, but the use which is made of it, that is productive of real benefit.

“There is a terrible evil in England to which we are strangers” (some slight acquaintance has been raked up since, Sir Walter), “the number, to wit, of tipping houses, where the labourer, as a matter of course, spends the overplus of his earnings. In Scotland there are few; and the Justices are commendably inexorable in rejecting all application for licences where there appears no public necessity for granting them. A man, therefore, cannot easily spend much money in liquor, since he must walk three or

¹ [From a Second Notice of *Lectures on Art*. “Another place” was the First Notice of the same book, in the preceding number, August 6, 1870; compare Vol. XX. pp. 296–297, and above, Letter 7, § 14, p. 128.]

² [After the publication of *The Lady of the Lake* (1810), “the whole country rang with the praises of the poet; crowds set off to view the scenery of Loch Katrine, till then comparatively unknown; and as the book came out just before the season for excursions, every house and inn in that neighbourhood was crammed with a constant succession of visitors. It is a well-ascertained fact that from the date of the publication of *The Lady of the Lake* the posthorse duty in Scotland rose in an extraordinary degree, and indeed it continued to do so regularly” (Robert Cadell, in Lockhart’s *Life of Scott*, vol. ii. p. 292).]

four miles to the place of suction, and back again, which infers a sort of malice prepense of which few are capable; and the habitual opportunity of indulgence not being at hand, the habits of intemperance, and of waste connected with it, are not acquired. If financiers would admit a general limitation of the alehouses over England to one-fourth of the number, I am convinced you would find the money spent in that manner would remain with the peasant, as a source of self-support and independence. All this applies chiefly to the country; in towns, and in the manufacturing districts, the evil could hardly be diminished by such regulations. There would, perhaps, be no means so effectual as that (which will never be listened to) of taxing the manufacturers according to the number of hands which they employ on an average, and applying the produce in maintaining the manufacturing poor. If it should be alleged that this would injure the manufacturers, I would boldly reply,—‘And why not injure, or rather limit, speculations, the excessive stretch of which has been productive of so much damage to the principles of the country, and to the population, whom it has, in so many respects, degraded and demoralized?’ For a great many years, manufacturers, taken in a general point of view, have not partaken of the character of a regular profession, in which all who engaged with honest industry and a sufficient capital might reasonably expect returns proportional to their advances and labour,—but have, on the contrary, rather resembled a lottery, in which the great majority of the adventurers are sure to be losers, although some may draw considerable advantage. Men continued for a great many years to exert themselves, and to pay extravagant wages, not in hopes that there could be a reasonable prospect of an orderly and regular demand for the goods they wrought up, but in order that they might be the first to take advantage of some casual opening which might consume their cargo, let others shift as they could. Hence extravagant wages on some occasions; for these adventurers who thus played at hit or miss, stood on no scruples while the chance of success remained open. Hence also, the stoppage of work, and the discharge of the workmen, when the speculators failed of their object. All this while the country was the sufferer;—*for whoever gained, the result, being upon the whole a loss, fell on the nation*, together with the task of maintaining a poor, rendered effeminate and vicious by over-wages and over-living, and necessarily cast loose upon society. I cannot but think that the necessity of making some fund beforehand, for the provision of those whom they debauch, and render only fit for the almshouse, in prosecution of their own adventures, though it operated as a check on the increase of manufacturers, would be a measure just in itself, and beneficial to the community. But it would never be listened to;—the weaver’s beam, and the sons of Zeruah, would be too many for the proposers.

“This is the eleventh of August; Walter, happier than he will ever be again, perhaps, is preparing for the moors. He has a better dog than Trout, and rather less active. Mrs. Scott and all our family send kind love. Yours ever. W. S.”¹

¹ [Lockhart’s *Life of Scott*, vol. iv. pp. 84–87 (letter of August 11, 1817, to Mr. Morritt). For another reference to the passage, see Letter 73, § 13 (Vol. XXIX. p. 23).]

14. I have italicized one sentence in this letter, written in the year 1817 (what would the writer have thought of the state of things now?)—though I should like, for that matter, to italicize it all. But that sentence touches the root of the evil which I have most at heart, in these letters, to show you; namely, the increasing poverty of the *country* through the enriching of a few. I told you, in the first sentence of them, that the English *people* was not a rich people; that it “was empty in purse—empty in stomach.”¹ The day before yesterday, a friend, who thinks my goose pie² not an economical dish! sent me a penny cookery book, a very desirable publication, which I instantly sat down to examine. It starts with the great principle that you must never any more roast your meat, but always stew it; and never have an open fire, but substitute, for the open fire, close stoves, all over England.³

Now observe. There was once a dish, thought peculiarly English—Roast Beef. And once a place, thought peculiarly English—the Fireside. These two possessions are now too costly for you. Your England, in her unexampled prosperity, according to the *Morning Post*,⁴ can no longer afford either her roast beef—or her fireside. She can only afford boiled bones, and a stove-side.

Well. Boiled bones are not so bad things, neither. I know something more about *them* than the writer of the penny cookery book. Fifty years ago, Count Rumford perfectly ascertained the price, and nourishing power, of good soup;⁵ and I shall give you a recipe for Theseus’ vegetable diet, and for Lycurgus’ black and

¹ [See above, p. 12.]

² [See Letter 25, § 2 (p. 448).]

³ [For a later reference to this passage, see Letter 73, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 15).]

⁴ [See Letter 22, § 7 (p. 376).]

⁵ [More than “fifty years ago.” Sir Benjamin Thompson, Count von Rumford (Bavaria), F.R.S., lived 1753–1814. His studies in cheap food were made at Munich in 1796 onwards. For a summary of his figures about soup, etc., see *An Essay on Food, and particularly on Feeding the Poor, exhibiting the Science of Nutrition and the Art of Providing Wholesome and Palatable Food at a Small Expense*. By Count Rumford, edited by Sir R. Musgrave (1847).]

Esau's red pottage, for your better pot-luck.¹ But what next?

15. To-day, you cannot afford beef—to-morrow, are you sure that you will be still able to afford bones? If things are to go on thus, and you are to study economy to the utmost, I can beat the author of the penny cookery book even on that ground. What say you to this diet of the Otomac Indians; persons quite of our present English character? "They have a decided aversion to cultivate the land, and live almost exclusively on hunting and fishing. They are men of a very robust constitution, and passionately fond of fermented liquors. While the waters of the Orinoco are low, they subsist on fish and turtles, but at the period of its inundations (when the fishing ceases) they eat daily, during some months, three-quarters of a pound of clay, slightly hardened by fire"*—(probably stewable in your modern stoves with better effect).—"Half, at least" (this is Father Gumilla's statement, quoted by Humboldt), "of the bread of the Otomacs and the Guamoes is clay—and those who feel a weight on their stomach, purge themselves with the fat of the crocodile, which restores their appetite, and enables them to continue to eat pure earth." "I doubt"—Humboldt himself goes on, "the manteca de caiman being a purgative. But it is certain that the Guamoes are very fond, if not of the fat, at least of the flesh, of the crocodile."

16. We have surely brickfields enough to keep our clay from ever rising to famine prices, in any fresh accession of

* Humboldt, *Personal Narrative*, London, 1827, vol. v., p. 640 *et seq.* I quote, as always, accurately, but missing the bits I don't want.

¹ [Ruskin did not give any of the promised recipes. For Theseus' vegetable diet, see above, p. 429 *n.* The reference to Lycurgus is to his Life by Plutarch, where, in describing the public repasts instituted by him, Plutarch says: "The dish that was in the highest esteem among them was the black broth. The old men were so fond of it that they ranged themselves on one side and ate it, leaving the meat to the young people. It is related of a king of Pontus that he purchased a Lacedæmonian cook for the sake of this broth. But when he came to taste it, he strongly expressed his dislike; and the cook made answer, 'Sir, to make this broth relish, it is necessary first to bathe in the Eurotas.' " For Esau's pottage, see Genesis xxv. 30.]

prosperity;—and though fish can't live in our rivers, the muddy waters are just of the consistence crocodiles like: and, at Manchester and Rochdale, I have observed the surfaces of the streams smoking, so that we need be under no concern as to temperature. I should think you might produce in them quite “streaky” crocodile,—fat and flesh concordant,—St. George becoming a bacon purveyor, as well as seller,¹ and laying down his dragon in salt (indeed it appears, by an experiment made in Egypt itself, that the oldest of human words is Bacon²); potted crocodile will doubtless, also, from countries unrestrained by religious prejudices, be imported, as the English demand increases, at lower quotations; and for what you are going to receive, the Lord make you truly thankful.

¹ [See Letter 26, § 5 (p. 476).]

² [Herodotus, ii. 2. Psammetichus isolated children from birth to see what they would “naturally” say. They said “*beko*.”]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

17. **F** I HOPE, in future, to arrange the publishing and edition of *Fors*, so that the current number may always be in my readers' hands on the first of the month: but I do not pledge myself for its being so. In case of delay, however, subscribers may always be secure of its ultimate delivery, as they would at once receive notice in the event of the non-continuance of the work. I find index-making more difficult and tedious than I expected,¹ and am besides bent at present on some Robinson Crusoe operations of harbour-digging,² which greatly interfere with literary work of every kind; but the thing is in progress.

18. I cannot, myself, vouch for the facts stated in the following letter, but am secure of the writer's purpose to state them fairly, and grateful for his permission to print his letter:—

“1, ST. SWITHIN'S LANE, LONDON, E.C.,
“4th February, 1873.

“MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I have finished reading your *Munera Pulveris*, and your paragraph No. 160 is such a reflex of the experience I have of City business that I must call your attention to it.

“I told you that I was endeavouring to put into practice what you are teaching, and thus our work should be good work, whether we live or die.

“I read in the *Quarterly Journal of Science* that the waste of the Metropolitan sewage is equivalent to three million quartern loaves floating down the Thames every day. I read in the papers that *famine* fever has broken out in the Metropolis.

“I have proved that this bread can be saved by purifying sewage, and growing such corn with the produce as amazes those that have seen it.³ I have proved this so completely to capitalists that they have spent £25,000 in demonstrating it to the Metropolitan Board of Works.

“ ‘But nothing of this work will pay.’* ”

* The saying is only quoted in *Munera Pulveris* to be denied, the reader must observe. [Vol. XVII. p. 282.]

¹ [See above, p. 437 n.]

² [For Ruskin's harbour-digging, see Vol. XXIII. p. xxiv.]

³ [The reference in this letter is to a sewage process of which Mr. Sillar was one of the patentees, and which was worked by a company called the “Native Guano Company.” See *The A. B. C. Sewage Process; being a Report of the Experiments hitherto made at Leicester, Tottenham, and Leamington, on the Purification and Utilization of Sewage*. Published in 1868, by W. C. Sillar, R. G. Sillar, and G. W. Wigner. “The A. B. C. mixture (so called from the initials of the three principal ingredients—Animal-charcoal, Blood, and Clay) is a compound which, when dissolved in either sewage or water, and added to the sewage, produces an immediate precipitation,” etc. (p. 7). The second Report of the Rivers Pollution Commission (1870) reported unfavourably on the process; but it afterwards met with some expert approval, and was tried in various places. Experiments were made with it at Crossness (where was the outfall of Metropolitan sewage), but were abandoned. See Mr. Sillar's evidence in the *Second Report* of the Royal Commission on Metropolitan Sewage Discharge, 1884–1885, pp. 25–33; and §§ 161, 197 of the Report itself, where again the opinion expressed is not entirely favourable.]

“We have never puffed, we have never advertised, and hard work I have had to get the Board of Directors to agree to this modest procedure—nevertheless they have done so.

“Now, there is a band of conspirators on the Stock Exchange bound to destroy the Company, because, like Jezebel, they have sold a vineyard that does not belong to them—in other words, they have sold ‘bears,’ and they cannot fulfil their contract without killing the Company, or terrifying the shareholders into parting with their property.

“No stone is left unturned to thwart our work, and if you can take the trouble to look at the papers I send you, you will see what our work would be for the country, and how it is received.

“We are now to be turned out of Crossness, and every conceivable mischief will be made of the fact.

“I have fought the fight almost single-handed. I might have sold out and retired from the strife long ago, for our shares were 800 per cent. premium, but I prefer completing the work I have begun, if I am allowed.

“From very few human beings have I ever received, nor did I expect, anything but disapproval, for this effort to discountenance the City’s business way of doing things, except Alfred Borwick, and my Brother, R. G. Sillar; but we have been repeatedly told that we *must* abandon these absurd principles

“However, with or without encouragement, I shall work on, though I have to do it through a mass of moral filth and corruption, compared with which a genuine cesspit is good company.

“Believe me sincerely yours,

“W. C. SILLAR.”

19. The Third Fors puts into my hand, as I correct the press, a cutting from the *Pall Mall Gazette* of September 13th, 1869, which aptly illustrates the former “waste” of sewage referred to by Mr. Sillar:—

“We suffer much from boards of guardians and vestries in and about London, but what they must suffer in remote parts of the country may be imagined rather than described. At a late meeting of the Lincoln Board of Guardians Mr. Mantle gave a description of a visit he paid with other gentlemen to the village of Scotherne. What they saw he said he should never forget. The village was full of fever cases, and no wonder. The beck was dried up and the wells were filled with sewage matter. They went to one pump, and found the water emitted an unbearable stench. He (Mr. Mantle) asked a woman if she drank the water from the well, and she replied that she did, but that it stank a bit; and there could be no doubt about that, for the well was full of ‘pure’ sewage matter. They went to another house, occupied by a widow with five children, the head of the family having died of fever last year. This family was now on the books of the union. The house was built on a declivity; the pigsty, privy, vault, and cesspool were quite full, and after a shower of rain the contents were washed up to and past the door. The family was in an emaciated state, and one of the children was suffering from fever. After inspecting that part of the village, they proceeded to the house of a man named Harrison, who, with his wife, was laid up with fever; both man and wife were buried in one grave yesterday week, leaving five children to be supported by the union. When visited, the unfortunate couple were in the last stage of fever, and the villagers had such a dread of the disease that none of them would enter the house, and the clergyman and relieving officer had to administer the medicine themselves. Harrison was the best workman in the parish. The cost to the union has already been £12, and at the lowest computation a cost of £600 would fall upon the union for maintaining the children, and probably they might remain paupers for life. This amount would have been sufficient to drain the parish.”

LETTER 28

SERVANTS' WAGES¹

BRANTWOOD, 20th Feb., 1873.

1. I WAS again stopped² by a verse in St. John's Gospel this morning: not because I have not thought of it before, often enough; but because it bears much on our immediate business in one of its expressions,—“Ye shall be scattered, every man to his own.”³

His own what?

His own property, his own rights, his own opinions, his own place, I suppose one must answer? Every man in his own place; and every man acting on his own opinions; and every man having his own way. Those are somewhat your own notions of the rightest possible state of things, are they not?

And do you not think it of any consequence to ask what sort of a place your own is?

As for instance, taking the reference farther on, to the one of Christ's followers who that night, most distinctly of all that were scattered, *found* his place, and stayed in it—“This ministry and Apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to *his own place*.”⁴ What sort of a place?

2. It should interest you, surely, to ask of such things, since you all, whether you like them or not, *have* your own places; and whether you know them or not, your own

¹ [“Nurse's Wages” and “Christ's Footmen and Housemaids” were rejected titles for this Letter.]

² [As at the beginning of the last letter: see p. 489.]

³ [John xvi. 32.]

⁴ [Acts i. 25.]

opinions. It is too true that very often you fancy you think one thing, when, in reality, you think quite another. Most Christian persons, for instance, fancy they would like to be in heaven. But that is not their real opinion of the place at all. See how grave they will look if their doctor hints to them that there is the least probability of their soon going there.¹

And the ascertaining what you really do think yourself, and do not merely fancy you think, because other people have said so; as also the ascertaining, if every man had indeed to go to his own place, what place he would verily have to go to, are most wholesome mental exercises; and there is no objection whatever to your giving weight to that really “private opinion,” and that really “individual right.”

3. But if you ever come really to know either what you think, or what you deserve, it is ten to one but you find it as much the character of Prudence as of Charity, that she “seeketh not her own.”² For indeed that same apostle, who so accurately sought his own, and found it, is, in another verse, called the “Son of Loss.” “Of them whom Thou gavest me, have I lost none, but the Son of Loss,” says Christ (your unlucky translation, again, quenches the whole text by its poor Latinism—“perdition”³). Might it not be better to lose your place than to find it, on such terms?

But, lost or found, what do you think *is* your place at this moment? Are you minded to stay in it, if you are in it? Do you mind where it is, if you are out of it? What sort of creatures do you think yourselves? How do those you call your best friends think of you, when they advise you to claim your just place in the world?

4. I said, two letters back, that we would especially

¹ [Compare Ruskin’s Introduction, § 14, to *The Crown of Wild Olive*, Vol. XVIII. p. 395.]

² [1 Corinthians xiii. 5.]

³ [John xvii. 12: compare Letter 77, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 111).]

reverence eight saints, and among them St. Paul.¹ I was startled to hear, only a few days afterwards, that the German critics have at last positively ascertained that St. Paul was Simon Magus;²—but I don't mind whether he was or not;—if he was, we have got seven saints, and one of the Magi, to reverence, instead of eight saints;—plainly and practically, whoever wrote the 13th of 1st Corinthians is to be much respected and attended to; not as the teacher of salvation by faith, still less of salvation by talking, nor even of salvation by almsgiving or martyrdom, but as the bold despiser of faith, talk-gift, and burning, if one has not love. Whereas this age of ours is so far contrary to any such Pauline doctrine that, without especial talent either for faith or martyrdom, and loquacious usually rather with the tongues of men than of angels,³ it nevertheless thinks to get on, not merely without love of its neighbour, but founding all its proceedings on the precise contrary of that,—love of itself, and the seeking of every man for his own,—I should say of every beast for *its* own; for your modern social science openly confesses that it no longer considers you as men, but as having the nature of Beasts of Prey,* which made me more solicitous to explain to you the significance of that word “Park” in my last letter:⁴ for indeed you have already pulled down the railings of those small green spots of park to purpose—and in a very solemn sense, turned all England into a Park. Alas!—if it were but even so much. Parks are for beasts of the field, which can dwell together in peace: but you have made your selves beasts of the Desert, doleful creatures,⁵ for whom the grass is green no more, nor dew falls on lawn or bank;

* See terminal notes [p. 524].

¹ [See Letter 26, § 10 n. (p. 482).]

² [For a destructive criticism of this theory of the Tübingen critics (Baur, Volkmar, and others), see Dr. Harnack's article on Simon Magus in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.]

³ [See 1 Corinthians xiii. 1.]

⁴ [Letter 27, § 5 (p. 494).]

⁵ [Compare Isaiah xiii. 21.]

no flowers for you—not even the bare and quiet earth to lie down on, but only the sand-drift, and the dry places which the very Devils cannot rest in.¹ Here and there, beside our sweet English waters, the sower may still send forth the feet of the ox and the ass;² but for *men* with ox's heads, and ass's heads,—not the park, for these; by no manner of means the Park; but the everlasting Pound. Every man and beast being in their own place, *that* you choose for yours.

5. I have given you therefore, this month, for frontispiece, the completest picture³ I can find of that pound or labyrinth which the Greeks supposed to have been built by Dædalus, to enclose the bestial nature, engrafted on humanity. The Man with the Bull's head. The Greek Dædalus⁴ is the power of mechanical as opposed to imaginative art;* and this is the kind of architecture which Greeks and Florentines alike represent him as providing for human beasts. Could anything more precisely represent the general look of your architecture now? When I come down here, to Coniston, through Preston and Wigan, it seems to me that I have seen that thing itself, only built a little higher, and smoking, or else set on its side, and spinning round, a thousand times over in the course of the day.

6. Then the very writing of the name of it is so like your modern education! You miss the first letter of your lives; and begin with A for apple-pie, instead of L for love; and the rest of the writing is—some little—some big—some turned the wrong way; and the sum of it all to you, Perplexity. “Abberinto.”

* Compare 23, § 10 [p. 403].

¹ [Compare Matthew xii. 43; Luke xi. 24.]

² [Compare Isaiah xxxii. 20.]

³ [Hitherto given as frontispiece; now Plate XII., from an early Italian engraving attributed in the British Museum collection to the school of Finiguerra, and by other authorities to Baccio Baldini. Ascribed by Ruskin to Botticelli (above, p. 410).]

⁴ [Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 13 (Vol. XIX. p. 66), and Vol. XX. p. 352.]



Allen & Co. Sc.

The Tale of Adriane,
As it was told at Florence

For the rest, the old Florentine engraver took the story as it ran currently, that Theseus deserted Ariadne¹ (but, indeed, she was the letter L lost out of his life), and besides, you know if he ever *did* do anything wrong, it was all Titania's fault,—

“Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night,
And make him with fair Ægle break his faith,
With Ariadne, and Antiopa?”²

7. If you have young eyes, or will help old ones with a magnifying glass, you will find all her story told. In the front, Theseus is giving her his faith; their names, TESEO . ADRIANNA, are written beneath them. He leans on his club reversed. She brings him three balls of thread, in case one, or even two, should not be long enough. His plumed cap means earthly victory; her winged one heavenly power and hope. Then, at the side of the arched gate of the labyrinth, Theseus has tied one end of the clue to a ring, and you see his back and left leg as he goes in. And just above, as the end of the adventure, he is sailing away from Naxos, with his black sail. On the left is the isle of Naxos, and deserted Ariadne waving Theseus back, with her scarf tied to a stick. Theseus not returning, she throws herself into the sea; you can see her feet, and her hand, still with the staff in it, as she plunges in backwards. Whereupon, winged Jupiter, GIOVE, comes down and lifts her out of the sea; you see her winged head raised to him. Then he carries her up to heaven. He holds her round the waist, but, strangely, she is not thinking of Jupiter at all, but of something above and more than Jupiter; her hands and head raised, as in some strong desire. But on the right, there is another fall, without such rising. Theseus' father throws himself into the sea from the wall of Athens, and you see *his* feet as he goes in; but there is no God to lift him out of the waves. He stays in his place, as Ariadne in hers.

¹ [On the two forms of the story, see above, p. 387 n.]

² [A *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act ii. sc. 1.]

8. "Such an absurd old picture, or old story, you never saw or heard of? The very blaze of fireworks, in which Jupiter descends, drawn with black sparks instead of white! the whole point of the thing, the 'terrific combat,' missed out of the play, and nothing, on the whole, seen, except people's legs, as in a modern pantomime, only not to so much advantage."

That is what you think of it? Well, such as it is, that is "fine art" (if you will take my opinion in my own business); and even this poor photograph of it is simply worth all the illustrations in your *Illustrated News* or *Illustrated Times* from one year's end to another. Worth them all—nay, there is no comparison, for these illustrated papers do you definite mischief, and the more you look at them, the worse for you. Whereas, the longer you look at this, and think of it, the more good you will get.

9. Examine, for instance, that absurdly tall crest of Theseus. Behind it, if you look closely, you will see that he also has the wings of hope on his helmet; but the upright plumes nearly hide them. Have you never seen anything like them before? They are five here, indeed; but you have surely met with them elsewhere,—in number, Three—those curling, upright plumes?

For that Prince who waited on his father and the French Knights in the castle of Calais,¹ bears them in memory of the good knight and king who fought sightless at Crécy; whose bearings they were, with the motto which you know so well, yet are so little minded to take for your own,—“I serve.” Also the cap of the Knights of St. George has these white plumes “of three falls,” but the Prince of Wales more fitly, because the meaning of the ostrich feather is order and rule;² for it was seen that, long and loose though the filaments seemed, no wind

¹ [For this story of the Black Prince, see above, Letter 25, § 16 (p. 463). For the adoption, thenceforward, by the Prince of Wales, of the crest and arms of John, the blind King of Bohemia, slain at the battle of Crécy, see Vol. XVIII. p. 463.]

² [See Guillim, p. 225 (1638 edition).]

could entangle or make them disorderly. “So this plume betokeneth such an one as nothing can disturb his mind or disquiet his spirits, but is ever one and the same.” Do you see how one thing bears out and fulfils another, in these thoughts and symbols of the despised people of old time? Do you recollect Froissart’s words of the New Year’s Feast at Calais?

“So they were served in peace, and in great leisure.”¹

You have improved *that* state of things, at any rate. I must say so much for you, at Wolverton, and Rugby, and such other places of travellers’ repose.

Theseus, then, to finish with him for this time, bears these plumes specially as the Institutor of Order and Law at Athens; the Prince or beginner² of the State there; and your own Prince of Wales bears them in like manner as the beginner of State with us (the mocking and purposeful lawlessness of Henry the Fifth when Prince, yet never indeed violating law, or losing self-command, is one of the notablest signs, rightly read, in the world’s history). And now I want you to consider with me very carefully the true meaning of the words he begins his State with:—

“I serve.”

10. You have, I hope, noticed that throughout these letters addressed to you as workmen and labourers,—though I have once or twice ventured to call myself your fellow-workman, I have oftener spoken as belonging to, and sharing main modes of thought with, those who are not labourers, but either live in various ways by their wits—as lawyers, authors, reviewers, clergymen, parliamentary orators, and the like—or absolutely in idleness on the labour of others,—as the representative Squire. And, broadly speaking, I address you as workers, and speak in the name of the rest as idlers, thus not estimating the mere with-work as work at all: it is always play, when it is good.³

Speaking to you, then, as workers, and of myself as an

¹ [See Letter 25, § 16 (p. 463).]

² [See *Munera Pulveris*, § 105 (Vol. XVII. p. 229).]

³ [Compare, above, p. 147 n.]

idler, tell me honestly whether you consider me as addressing my betters or my worses? Let us give ourselves no airs on either side. Which of us, do you seriously think, you or I, are leading the more honourable life? Would you like to lead my life rather than your own; or, if you couldn't help finding it pleasanter, would you be ashamed of yourselves for leading it? Is your place, or mine, considered as cure and sinecure, the better? And are either of us legitimately in it? I would fain know your own real opinion on these things.¹

11. But note further: there is another relation between us than that of idler and labourer; the much more direct one of Master and Servant. I can set you to any kind of work I like, whether it be good for you or bad, pleasant to you or painful. Consider, for instance, what I am doing at this very instant—half-past seven, morning, 25th February, 1873. It is a bitter black frost, the ground deep in snow, and more falling. I am writing comfortably in a perfectly warm room; some of my servants were up in the cold at half-past five to get it ready for me; others, a few days ago, were digging my coals near Durham, at the risk of their lives; an old woman brought me my watercresses through the snow for breakfast yesterday; another old woman is going two miles through it to-day to fetch me my letters at ten o'clock. Half-a-dozen men are building a wall for me to keep the sheep out of my garden, and a railroad stoker is holding his own against the north wind, to fetch me some Brobdingnag raspberry plants* to put in it. Somebody in the east end of London is making boots for me, for I can't wear those I have much longer; a washerwoman is in suds, somewhere, to get me a clean shirt for to-morrow; a fisherman is in dangerous weather

* See Miss Edgeworth's story, "Forgive and Forget," in the *Parents' Assistant*.²

¹ [*Cf.* Letter 36, § 13.]—*MS. note by Author in his copy.*]

² [Mr. Oakly's request to Mr. Grant:—"He was going to ask for some of the Brobdingnag raspberry plants": *Parents' Assistant*, vol. v. p. 225 (1800).]

somewhere, catching me some fish for Lent; and my cook will soon be making me pancakes, for it is Shrove Tuesday. Having written this sentence, I go to the fire, warm my fingers, saunter a little, listlessly, about the room, and grumble because I can't see to the other side of the lake.

12. And all these people, my serfs or menials, who are undergoing any quantity or kind of hardship I choose to put on them,—all these people, nevertheless, are more contented than I am: I can't be happy, not I,—for one thing, because I haven't got the MS. Additional (never mind what number¹) in the British Museum, which they bought in 1848, for two hundred pounds, and I never saw it! And have never been easy in my mind, since.

But perhaps it is not the purpose of Heaven to make refined personages, like me, easy in our minds; we are supposed to be too grand for that. Happy, or easy, or otherwise, am I in my place, think you; and you, my serfs, in yours?

13. “You are not serfs,” say you, “but free-born Britons”? Much good may your birth do you. What does your birth matter to me, since, now that you are grown men, you must do whatever I like, or die by starvation? “Strike!”—will you? Can you live by striking? And when you are forced to work again, will not your masters choose again, as they have chosen hitherto, what work you are to do? Not serfs!—it is well if you are so much as that; a serf would know what o'clock he had to go to his work at; but I find that clocks are now no more comprehensible in England than in Italy, and *you* also have to be “whistled for, like dogs,”² all over Yorkshire—or rather buzzed for, that being the appropriate call to business, of

¹ [Probably No. 17, 341—a Lectionary of Sainte Chapelle—thus described in the Catalogue: “Evangelium: in quo continentur omnia Evangelia anni ad usum et consuetudinem ecclesie Parisiensis. Vellum, earlier part of the XIVth century; with miniatures and ornamental initial letters of the highest beauty.” Ruskin in his notes of 1854 on the illuminated MSS. in the Museum (see Vol. XII. p. lxxviii.) marked “No. 17, 341” as “my choicest favourite.” The price actually paid by the Museum was not £200, but £ 115.]

² [Ruskin repeats his phrase “whistled for, like dogs” from Letter 19 (above, p. 329).]

due honey-making kind. “Hark,” says an old Athenian, according to Aristophanes, “how the nightingale has filled the thickets with honey” (meaning, with music as sweet).¹ In Yorkshire, your steam-nightingales fill the woods with—Buzz; and for four miles round are audible,² summoning you—to your pleasure, I suppose, my free-born?

It is well, I repeat, if you are so much as serfs. A serf means a “saved person”³—the word comes first from a Greek one, meaning to drag, or drag away into safety (though captive safety), out of the slaughter of war. But alas, the trades most of you are set to nowadays have no element of safety in them, either for body or soul. They take thirty years from your lives here;—what they take from your lives hereafter, ask your clergy. I have no opinion on that matter.

14. But I used another terrible word just now—“menial.” The modern English vulgar mind has a wonderful dread of doing anything of that sort!

I suppose there is scarcely another word in the language which people more dislike having applied to them, or of which they less understand the application. It comes from a beautiful old Chaucerian word, “meinie,” or many, signifying the attendant company of any one worth attending to; the disciples of a master, scholars of a teacher, soldiers of a leader, lords of a King. Chaucer says the God of Love came, in the garden of the Rose, with “his many”;⁴

¹ [*Birds*, 224; quoted also in *Love’s Meinie*, § 38 (Vol. XXV. p. 42).]

² [See the letter from Wakefield in Letter 57 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 412), where the steam-whistle, or “American devil,” is said to be audible “five miles off.” For another reference to it, see below, p. 600.]

³ [This is the etymology given by Justinian (*Institutes*, i. 3, 3): “They are called *servi* because military commanders are accustomed to sell the slaves and thus *save* them, instead of killing them.” Ruskin apparently connects *servus* with the Greek *surw*. Modern etymologists derive *servus* from the root *svar* (a weight), comparing the Greek *erma*.]

⁴ [See *Romaunt of the Rose*, 605, 1305, where, however, it is (in the first place) “Sir Myrthe,” and (in the latter) “Faire Idilnesse,” who comes into the garden with his “meynee”: The God of Love enters with a retinue of birds, hence the title of Ruskin’s book on birds, *Love’s Meinie* (see Vol. XXV. pp. xxiv., 13); Chaucer, however, does not himself use the word in that passage. For Ruskin’s next reference, see *The Sompnoures Tale*, 343:—

“Irous Cambyses was eek dronkelewe,
And eye delited him to ben a schrewe;
And so bifel, a lord of his meigne,” etc.]

—in the court of the King of Persia spoke a Lord, one “of his many.” Therefore there is nothing in itself dishonourable in being menial: the only question is—*whose* many you belong to, and whether he is a person worth belonging to, or even safe to be belonged to; also, there is somewhat in the cause of your following: if you follow for love, it is good to be menial—if for honour, good also;—if for ten per cent.—as a railroad company follows its Director, it is not good to be menial. Also there is somewhat in the manner of following: if you obey your Taskmaster’s eye,¹ it is well;—if only his whip, still, well; but not so well:—but, above all, or below all, if you have to obey the whip as a bad hound, because you have no nose, like the members of the present House of Commons, it is a very humble form of menial service indeed.

But even as to the quite literal form of it, in house or domestic service, are you sure it is so very disgraceful a state to live in?

15. Among the people whom one must miss out of one’s life, dead, or worse than dead, by the time one is fifty-four, I can only say, for my own part, that the one I practically and truly miss most, next to father and mother (and putting losses of imaginary good out of the question), was a “menial,” my father’s nurse, and mine.² She was one of our many (our many being always but few), and from her girlhood to her old age, the entire ability of her life was given to serving us. She had a natural gift and specialty for doing disagreeable things; above all, the service of a sick room; so that she was never quite in her glory unless some of us were ill. She had also some parallel specialty for *saying* disagreeable things; and might be relied upon to give the extremely darkest view of any subject, before proceeding to ameliorative action upon it. And she had a very creditable and republican aversion to doing immediately, or in set terms,

¹ [“As ever in my great Task-master’s eye” (Milton: “On his being arrived at the Age of Twenty-three”).]

² [See Vol. XXII. p. xviii.]

as she was bid; so that when my mother and she got old together, and my mother became very imperative and particular about having her teacup set on one side of her little round table, Anne would observantly and punctiliously put it always on the other; which caused my mother to state to me, every morning after breakfast, gravely, that, if ever a woman in this world was possessed by the Devil, Anne was that woman.¹ But in spite of these momentary and petulant aspirations to liberality and independence of character, poor Anne remained verily servile in soul all her days; and was altogether occupied from the age of fifteen to seventy-two, in doing other people's wills instead of her own, and seeking other people's good instead of her own; nor did I ever hear on any occasion of her doing harm to a human being, except by saving two hundred and some odd pounds for her relations; in consequence of which some of them, after her funeral, did not speak to the rest for several months.²

16. Two hundred and odd pounds;—it might have been more; but I used to hear of little loans to the relations occasionally; and besides, Anne would sometimes buy a quite unjustifiably expensive silk gown. People in her station of life are always so improvident. Two hundred odd pounds at all events she had laid by, in her fifty-seven years of unselfish labour. Actually twenty ten-pound notes. I heard the other day, to my great satisfaction, of the approaching marriage of a charming girl;—but to my dissatisfaction, that the approach was slow. “We can't marry yet”—said she;—“you know, we can't possibly marry on five hundred a year.” People in that station of life are always so provident.

Two hundred odd pounds,—that was what the Third Fors, in due alliance with her sisters,³ thought fit to reward our Anne with, for fifty years of days' work and nights' watching; and what will not a dash of a pen win, sometimes, in the hands of superior persons! Surely the

¹ [For a reference to this passage, see *Præterita*, ii. § 233.]

² [§ 15 of this letter was used by Ruskin when writing *Præterita*, where it appears, slightly revised, as § 31 of vol. i. ch. i. His autobiographical notes are resumed in Letter 33, § 13 (p. 617).]

³ [Fortune, with Courage and Patience: see Letter 15, § 14 *n.* (p. 270).]

condition must be a degraded one which can do no better for itself than this!

17. And yet, have you ever taken a wise man's real opinion on this matter? You are not fond of hearing opinions of wise men; you like your anonymous penny-a-liners' opinions better. But do you think you could tolerantly receive that of a moderately and popularly wise man—such an one as Charles Dickens, for example? Have you ever considered seriously what *his* opinion was, about “Dependants” and “Menials”? He did not perhaps quite know what it was himself;—it needs wisdom of stronger make than his to be sure of what it *does* think. He would talk, in his moral passages, about Independence, and Self-dependence, and making one's way in the world, just like any hack of the “Eatanswill Independent.”¹ But which of the people of his imagination, of his own true children, did he love and honour most? Who are your favourites in his books—as they have been his? Menials, it strikes me, many of them. Sam, Mark, Kit, Peggotty, Mary-my-dear,—even the poor little Marchioness! I don't think Dickens intended you to look upon any of them disrespectfully. Or going one grade higher in his society, Tom Pinch, Newman Noggs, Tim Linkinwater, Oliver Twist—how independent, all of them! Very nearly menial, in soul, if they chance on a good master; none of them brilliant in fortune, nor vigorous in action. Is not the entire testimony of Dickens, traced in its true force, that no position is so *good* for men and women, none so likely to bring out their best human character, as that of a dependant, or menial? And yet with your supreme modern logic, instead of enthusiastically concluding from his works

¹ [See *Pickwick Papers*, ch. xiii. For Sam Weller's “Mary, my dear” (housemaid to Mr. Nupkins), see *ibid.*, ch. xxv. For Mark Tapley (hostler at the Blue Dragon: compare Letter 93, Vol. XXIX. p. 475) and Tom Pinch (assistant to Mr. Pecksniff), see *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Clara Peggotty (servant to Mrs. Copperfield and David's nurse) was among Dickens's favourite characters (see Forster's *Life*, vol. iii. p. 16). For Kit Nubbles (errand-boy to Little Nell's grandfather) and “the Marchioness” (servant to Mr. Sampson Brass), see *The Old Curiosity Shop*, passim; and for Newman Noggs (Mr. Ralph Nickleby's clerk), Tim Linkinwater (chief clerk of the Cheeryble Brothers) and Sir Mulberry Hawk, *Nicholas Nickleby*.]

“let us all be servants,” one would think the notion he put in your heads was quite the other, “let us all be masters,” and that you understood his ideal of heroic English character to be given in Mr. Pecksniff or Sir Mulberry Hawk!

18. Alas! more’s the pity you cannot all be dependants and menials, even if you were wise enough to wish it. Somebody there must be to be served, else there could be no service. And for the beatitudes and virtues of Masterhood, I must appeal to a wiser man than Dickens—but it is no use entering on that part of the question to-day;¹ in the meantime, here is another letter of his (you have had one letter already in last *Fors*²), just come under my hand, which gives you a sketch of a practical landlord, and true Master, on which you may meditate with advantage.

“Here, above all, we had the opportunity of seeing in what, universal respect and comfort a gentleman’s family may live in that country, and in far from its most favoured district; provided only they live there habitually and do their duty as the friends and guardians of those among whom Providence has appointed their proper place. Here we found neither mud hovels nor naked peasantry, but snug cottages and smiling faces all about. Here there was a very large school in the village, of which masters and pupils were, in nearly equal proportion, Protestants and Roman Catholics, the Protestant Squire himself making it a regular part of his daily business to visit the scene of their operations, and strengthen authority and enforce discipline by personal superintendence. Here, too, we pleased ourselves with recognising some of the sweetest features in Goldsmith’s picture of ‘Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain’; and, in particular, we had ‘the playful children just let loose from school’ in perfection. Mr. Edgeworth’s paternal heart delighted in letting them make a play-ground of his lawn; and every evening, after dinner, we saw leap-frog going on with the highest spirit within fifty yards of the drawing-room windows, while fathers and mothers, and their aged parents also, were grouped about among the trees watching the sport. It is a curious enough coincidence that Oliver Goldsmith and Maria Edgeworth should both have derived their early love and knowledge of Irish character and manners from the same identical district. He received part of his education at this very school of Edgeworthstown; and Pallasmore (the ‘locus cui nomen est Pallas’ of Johnson’s epitaph), the little hamlet where the author of the *Vicar of Wakefield* first saw the light, is still, as it was in his time, the property of the Edgeworths.”³

¹ [The subject is resumed in Letter 29, § 5 (p. 531). See also a passage in Appendix 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 536).]

² [Letter 27, § 13 (p. 500).]

³ [Lockhart’s *Life of Scott*, vol. vi. pp. 58, 59 (letter from Edgeworthstown, August 1825).]

19. “Strengthen authority,” “enforce discipline”! What ugly expressions these! and a “whole hamlet,” though it *be* a little one, “the property of the Edgeworths”! How long are such things yet to be? thinks my Republican correspondent,¹ I suppose—from whom, to my regret, I have had no further dispatch since I endeavoured to answer his interrogations.* Only, note further respecting this chief question of the right of private property, that there are two kinds of ownership, which the Greeks wisely expressed in two different ways: the first, with the word which brought me to a pause in St. John’s Gospel,² “idios,” signifying the way, for instance, in which a man’s opinions and interests are his own; “idia,” so that by persisting in them, independently of the truth, which is above opinion, and of the public interest, which is above private, he becomes what we very properly, borrowing the Greek word, call an “idiot.”³ But their other phrase expresses the kind of belonging which is nobly won, and is truly and inviolably ours, in which sense a man may learn the full meaning of the word “Mine” only once in his life,—happy he who has ever so learnt it.⁴ I was thinking over the prettiness of the word in that sense, a day or two ago, and opening a letter, mechanically, when a newspaper clipping dropped out of it (I don’t know from what paper), containing a quotation from the *Cornhill Magazine*⁵ setting forth the present privileges of the agricultural labourer attained for him by modern improvements in machinery, in the following terms:—

“An agricultural labourer, from forty to forty-five years of age, of tried skill, of probity, and sobriety, with £200 in his pocket, is a made man. True, he has had to forego the luxury of marriage; but so have his betters.”

* 21st March: one just received, interesting, and to be answered next month.⁶

¹ [See Letter 25, § 25 (p. 470).]

² [See above, § 1, p. 507.]

³ [Compare Vol. XVII. p. 88. For an additional passage on this word, see Appendix 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 537).]

⁴ [See Letter 91, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 445).]

⁵ [Two anonymous articles on “The Agricultural Labourer” in the *Cornhill Magazine*, February and March 1873, vol. 27. pp. 215 and 307. See Vol. XVII. p. 561; Letter 73, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 18); Appendix 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 538) and *Love’s Meinie*, § 39 (Vol. XXV. p. 44).]

⁶ [Letter 29, § 16 (p. 543).]

20. And I think you may be grateful to the Third Fors for this clipping; which you see settles, in the region of Cornhill, at least, the question whether you are the betters or the worses of your masters. Decidedly the worses, according to the *Cornhill*. Also, exactly the sum which my old nurse had for her reward at the end of her life, is, you see, to be the agricultural labourer's reward in the crowning triumph of his;—provided always that he has followed the example of his betters on the stock exchange and in trade, in the observance of the strictest probity;—that he be entirely skilful;—not given to purchasing two shillings' worth of liquor for twenty-seven and sixpence,¹—and finally, until the age of forty-five, has dispensed with the luxury of marriage.

I have just said I didn't want to make Catholics of you;² but truly I think your Protestantism is becoming *too* fierce in its opposition to the Popedom. Cannot it be content with preaching the marriage of the clergy, but it must preach also the celibacy of the laity?

21. And the moral and anti-Byronic Mrs. B. Stowe, who so charmingly and pathetically describes the terrors of slavery,³ as an institution which separates men from their wives, and mothers from their children! Did she really contemplate, among the results contributed to by her interesting volumes, these ultimate privileges of Liberty,—that the men, at least under the age of forty-five, are not to have any wives to be separated from; and that the women, who under these circumstances have the misfortune to become mothers, are to feel it a hardship, not to be parted from their children, but to be prevented from accelerating the parting with a little soothing syrup?⁴

¹ [See Letter 27, § 10 (p. 498).]

² [See above, p. 493.]

³ [For other references to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, see Vol. XVII. p. 476 n. Mrs. Stowe is here called "anti-Byronic" with reference to her then recently published *Lady Byron Vindicated* (1870). Her charges against Byron excited much indignation at the time; but new light has been thrown on the matter by Lord Lovelace's *Astarte* (1905).]

⁴ [See above, p. 432.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

22. I HAVE kept by me, and now reprint from the *Pall Mall Gazette* of July 6th, 1868, the following report of a meeting held on the Labour Question by the Social Science Association in the previous week.¹ It will be seen that it contains confirmation of my statement in § 4 of the text. The passage I have italicized contains the sense of the views then entertained by the majority of the meeting. I think it desirable also to keep note of the questions I proposed to the meeting, and of the answers given in the *Gazette*. I print the article, therefore, entire:—

THE SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION ON THE LABOUR QUESTION

THERE would be something touching in the way in which people discuss the question of labour and wages, and in the desperate efforts made by Mr. Gladstone and other persons of high position to make love to the workmen, if there was not almost always a touch of absurdity in such proceedings. Mr. Gladstone, in particular, never approaches such subjects without an elaborate patting and stroking of the working man, which is intelligible only upon the assumption that *primâ facie* the labourer and the gentleman are natural enemies, and that they must be expected to regard each other as such, unless the higher class approaches the lower with the most elaborate assurances of goodwill and kindness. Such language as the following appears to us very ill-judged. After condemning in strong terms the crimes committed by some trade unions, Mr. Gladstone went on to say:—"Some things the working men required at their hands. In the first place, it was required that they should be approached in a friendly spirit, that they should feel that they were able to place confidence in their good intentions, that they should be assured that they were not approached in the spirit of class, but in the spirit of men who were attached to the truth," etc., etc. What can be the use of this sort of preaching? Does any human being suppose that any kind of men whatsoever, whether working men or idle men, are indifferent to being approached in an unfriendly spirit, or are disposed to deal with people whom they believe to entertain bad intentions towards them, or to be utterly indifferent to their interests, or to be actuated by interests opposed to their own? Such protestations always appear to us either prosy, patronizing, or insincere. No one suspects Mr. Gladstone of insincerity, but at times he is as prosy as a man must be, who, being already fully occupied with politics, will never miss an opportunity of doing a little philanthropy and promoting peace and goodwill between different classes of the community. Blessed no doubt are the peacemakers, but at times they are bores.

After Mr. Gladstone's little sermon the meeting proceeded to discuss a variety of resolutions about strikes, some of which seem very unimportant. *One piece of vigorous good sense enlivened the discussion, and appears to us to sum up pretty*

¹ [For Ruskin's speech at this meeting, see Vol. XVII. pp. 536-538.]

nearly all that can be said upon the whole subject of strikes. It was uttered by Mr. Applegarth, who observed that "no sentiment ought to be brought into the subject. The employers were like the employed in trying to get as much as possible for as little as they could." Add to this the obvious qualification that even in driving a bargain it is possible to insist too strongly upon your own interest, and that it never can be in the interest either of masters or of men that the profits of any given trade to the capitalist should be permanently depressed much below the average profits of other trades; and nearly all that can be said upon the subject will have been said. If, instead of meeting together and kissing each other in public, masters and men would treat each other simply as civilized and rational beings who have to drive a bargain, and who have a common interest in producing the maximum of profit, though their interests in dividing it when it is produced are conflicting, they would get on much better together. People can buy and sell all sorts of other things without either quarrelling or crying over the transaction, and if they could only see it, there is no reason why they should not deal in labour just as coolly.

The most remarkable feature of the evening was the attack made by Mr. Ruskin on this view of the subject. Replying to Mr. Dering, who had said that whenever it was possible "men would seek their own interests even at the expense of other classes," he observed* that many students of political economy "looked upon man as a predatory animal, while man on the contrary was an affectionate animal, and until the mutual interest of classes was based upon affection, difficulties must continue between those classes." There are, as it appears to us, several weak points in this statement. One obvious one is that most animals are both predatory and affectionate. Wolves will play together, herd together, hunt together, kill sheep together; and yet, if one wolf is wounded, the rest will eat him up. Animals, too, which as between each other are highly affectionate, are predatory to the last degree as against creatures of a different species or creatures of their own species who have got something which they want. Hence, if men are actuated to some extent at some times, and towards some persons, by their affections, and to a different extent at other times towards the same or other persons by their predatory instincts, they would resemble other animals. Mr. Ruskin's opposition between the predatory and affectionate animal is thus merely imaginary. Apart from this, the description of man as "an affectionate animal" appears to us not merely incomplete but misleading. Of course the affections are a most important branch of human nature, but they are by no means the whole of it. A very large department of human nature is primarily self-regarding. A man eats and drinks because he is hungry or thirsty, and he buys and sells because he wants to get gain. These are and always will be his leading motives, but they are no doubt to a certain extent counteracted in civilized life by motives of a different kind. No man is altogether destitute of regard for the interests and wishes of his neighbours, and almost every one will sacrifice something more or less for the gratification of others. Still, self-interest of the most direct unmistakable kind is the great leading active principle in many departments of life, and in particular in the trading department; to deny this is to shut one's eyes to the sun at noon-day. To try to change is like trying to stop the revolution of the earth. To call it a "predatory" instinct is to talk at random. To take from a man by force what he possesses is an essentially different thing from driving the hardest of hard bargains with him. Every bargain is regarded as an advantage by both parties at the time when it is made. Otherwise it would not be made at all. If I save a drowning man's life on condition that he will convey to me his whole estate, he is better off than if I leave him to drown. My act is certainly not affectionate, but neither is it predatory. It improves the condition of both parties, and the same is true of all trade.

* I observed nothing of the kind. It was the previous speaker (unknown to me, but according to the *Pall Mall* Mr. Dering) who not merely "observed" but positively affirmed, as the only groundwork of sound political economy, that the nature of man was that of a beast of prey, to all his fellows.

The most singular part of Mr. Ruskin's address consisted of a catechism which appears to us to admit of very simple answers, which we will proceed to give, as "the questions were received with much applause," though we do not appreciate their importance. They are as follows:—

Question.—"1. It is stated in a paper read before the jurisprudence section of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, and afterwards published at their office, that "without the capitalist labour could accomplish nothing" (p. 4). But for long periods of time in some parts of the world the accumulation of money was forbidden, and in others it was impossible. Has labour never accomplished anything in such districts?"

Answer.—Capital is not merely "an accumulation of money." It is a general name for the whole stock by and out of which things are made. Labour never accomplished anything without materials or anything important without tools, and materials and tools are capital.

Question.—"2. Supposing that in the present state of England the capital is necessary, are capitalists so? In other words, is it needful for right operation of capital that it should be administered under the arbitrary power of one person?"

Answer.—Yes, it is, unless you do away with the institution of private property. It is necessary for the right operation of capital that some one or other should have arbitrary power over it, and that arbitrary power must either be lodged in individuals, who thereupon become capitalists, or else in the public or its representatives, in which case there is only one capitalist—the State.

Question.—"3. Whence is all capital derived?"

Answer.—From the combination of labour and material.

Question.—"4. If capital is spent in paying wages for labour or manufacture which brings no return (as the labour of an acrobat or manufacturer of fireworks), is such capital lost or not? and if lost, what is the effect of such loss on the future wages fund?"

Answer.—In the case supposed the capital ceases to exist as capital, and the future wages fund is diminished to that extent; but see the next answer.

Question.—"5. If under such circumstances it is lost, and can only be recovered (much more recovered with interest) when it has been spent in wages for productive labour or manufacture, what labours and manufactures are productive, and what are unproductive? Do all capitalists know the difference, and are they always desirous to employ men in productive labours and manufactures, and in these only?"

Answer.—Generally speaking, productive labour means labour which produces useful or agreeable results. Probably no paid labour is absolutely unproductive; for instance, the feats of the acrobat and the fireworks amuse the spectators. Capitalists in general desire to employ men in labours and manufactures which produce gain to the capitalists themselves. The amount of the gain depends on the relation between the demand for the product and the cost of production; and the demand for the product depends principally upon the extent to which it is useful or agreeable—that is, upon the extent to which the labour is productive or unproductive. In this indirect way capitalists are generally desirous to employ men in productive labours and manufactures, and in them only.

Question.—"6. Considering the unemployed and purchasing public as a great capitalist, employing the workmen and their masters both, what results happen finally to this purchasing public if it employs all its manufactures in productive labour? and what if it employs them all in unproductive labour?"

Answer.—This is not the light in which we should consider the "unemployed and purchasing public." But if they are all to be considered in that light, it is obvious that the result of employing all manufactures in doing what is useless or disagreeable would be general misery, and *vice versâ*.

Question.—"7. If there are thirty workmen, ready to do a day's work, and there is only a day's work for one of them to do, what is the effect of the natural laws of wages on the other twenty-nine?"

Answer.—The twenty-nine must go without work and wages; but the phrase "natural law" is not ours.

Question.—"8. (a) Is it a natural law that for the same quantity or piece of work, wages should be sometimes high, sometimes low? (b) With what standard do we properly or scientifically compare them, in calling them high or low? (c) And what is the limit of their possible lowness under natural laws?"

Answer.—(a) It is an inevitable result from the circumstances in which mankind are placed, if you call that a natural law.

(b) High wages are wages greater than those which have been usually paid at a given time and place in a given trade; low wages are the reverse. There is no absolute standard of wages.

(c) The limit of the possible lowness of wages is the starvation of the workman.

Question.—"9. In what manner do natural laws affect the wages of officers under Government in various countries?"

Answer.—In endless ways, too long to enumerate.

Question.—"10. 'If any man will not work, neither should he eat.'¹ Does this law apply to all classes of society?"

Answer.—No; it does not. It is not a law at all, but merely a striking way of saying that idleness produces want.

¹ [Compare Letter 7, § 6 (p. 117 n.).]

LETTER 29

LA DOUCE AMIE¹

BRANTWOOD, *April 2, 1873.*

1. It is a bright morning, the first entirely clear one I have seen for months;² such, indeed, as one used to see, before England was civilized into a blacksmith's shop, often enough in the sweet spring-time; and as, perhaps, our children's children may see often enough again, when their coals are burnt out, and they begin to understand that coals are not the source of all power Divine and human.³ In the meantime, as I say, it is months since I saw the sky, except through smoke, or the strange darkness brought by blighting wind (8, § 1, 2), and if such weather as this is to last, I shall begin to congratulate myself, as the *Daily News* does its readers, on the "exceptionally high price of coal," indicating a most satisfactory state of things, it appears, for the general wealth of the country, for, says that well-informed journal, on March 3rd, 1873, "The net result of the exceptionally high price of coal is in substance this, that the coal owners and workers obtain an unusually large share in the distribution of the gross produce of the community, *and the real capital of the community is increased!*"⁴

2. This great and beautiful principle must of course apply to a rise in price in all other articles, as well as in coals. Accordingly, whenever you see the announcement in any shops, or by any advertising firm, that you can get something there cheaper than usual, remember, the capital

¹ [See below, end of § 13. "What reward have ye?" (Matthew v. 46) and "Weekly Bills—Clerk's House" were rejected titles for this Letter.]

² [Compare, above, p. 132.]

³ [Compare Letter 12, §§ 9, 12 (pp. 204, 207).]

⁴ [For a later reference to this passage, see Letter 73, § 7. (Vol. XXIX. p. 18).]

of the community is being diminished; and whenever you have reason to think that anybody has charged you threepence for a twopenny article, remember that, according to the *Daily News*, “the real capital of the community is increased.”¹ And as I believe you may be generally certain, in the present state of trade, of being charged even as much as twenty-seven pence for a twopenny article,² the capital of the community must be increasing very fast indeed. Holding these enlightened views on the subject of the *prices* of things, the *Daily News* cannot be expected to stoop to any consideration of their *uses*. But there is another “net result” of the high price of coal, besides the increase of the capital of the community, and a result which is more immediately your affair—namely, that a good many of you will die of cold. It may console you to reflect that a great many rich people will at least feel chilly, in economical drawing-rooms of state, and in ill-aired houses, rawly built on raw ground, and already mouldy for want of fires, though under a blackened sky.

3. What a pestilence of them, and unseemly plague of builders’ work—as if the bricks of Egypt had multiplied like its lice, and alighted like its locusts—has fallen on the suburbs of loathsome London?

The road from the village of Shirley, near Addington, where my father and mother are buried,³ to the house⁴ they lived in when I was four years old, lay, at that time, through a quite secluded district of field and wood, traversed here and there by winding lanes, and by one or two smooth mail-coach roads, beside which, at intervals of a mile or two, stood some gentleman’s house, with its lawn, gardens, offices, and attached fields, indicating a country life of long continuance and quiet respectability. Except such an one here and there, one saw no dwellings above the size of cottages or small farmsteads; these, wood-built usually,

¹ [For reply of the *Daily News*, see Letter 30, § 10 (p. 560).]

² [Spirits: see Letter 27, § 10 (p. 498).]

³ [See Vol. XVII. p. lxxvii.]

⁴ [Now No. 28 Herne Hill.]

and thatched, their porches embroidered with honeysuckle, and their gardens with daisies, their doors mostly ajar, or with a half one shut to keep in the children, and a bricked or tiled footway from it to the wicket gate,—all neatly kept, and vivid with a sense of the quiet energies of their contented tenants,—made the lane-turnings cheerful, and gleamed in half-hidden clusters beneath the slopes of the woodlands at Sydenham and Penge. There were no signs of distress, of effort, or of change; many of enjoyment, and not a few of wealth beyond the daily needs of life. That same district is now covered by, literally, many thousands of houses built within the last ten years, of rotten brick, with various iron devices to hold it together. They, every one, have a drawing-room and dining-room, transparent from back to front, so that from the road one sees the people's heads inside, clear against the light. They have a second story of bedrooms, and an underground one of kitchen. They are fastened in a Siamese-twin manner together by their sides, and each couple has a Greek or Gothic portico shared between them, with magnificent steps, and highly ornamented capitals. Attached to every double block are exactly similar double parallelograms of garden, laid out in new gravel and scanty turf, on the model of the pleasure grounds in the Crystal Palace, and enclosed by high, thin, and pale brick walls. The gardens in front are fenced from the road with an immense weight of cast iron, and entered between two square gate-posts, with projecting stucco cornices, bearing the information that the eligible residence within is Mortimer House or Montague Villa. On the other side of the road, which is laid freshly down with large flints, and is deep at the sides in ruts of yellow mud, one sees Burleigh House, or Devonshire Villa, still to let, and getting leprous in patches all over the fronts.

4. Think what the real state of life is, for the people who are content to pass it in such places; and what the people themselves must be. Of the men, their wives, and children, who live in any of those houses, probably not the

fifth part are possessed of one common manly or womanly skill, knowledge, or means of happiness. The men can indeed write, and cast accounts, and go to town every day to get their living by doing so; the women and children can perhaps read story-books, dance in a vulgar manner, and play on the piano with dull dexterities for exhibition; but not a member of the whole family can, in general, cook, sweep, knock in a nail, drive a stake, or spin a thread. They are still less capable of finer work. They know nothing of painting, sculpture, or architecture; of science, inaccurately, as much as may more or less account to them for Mr. Pepper's ghost,¹ and make them disbelieve in the existence of any other ghost but that, particularly the Holy One: of books, they read *Macmillan's Magazine* on week days, and *Good Words* on Sundays, and are entirely ignorant of all the standard literature belonging to their own country, or to any other. They never think of taking a walk, and, the roads for six miles round them being ankle deep in mud and flints, they could not if they would. They cannot enjoy their gardens, for they have neither sense nor strength enough to work in them. The women and girls have no pleasures but in calling on each other in false hair, cheap dresses of gaudy stuffs, machine made, and high-heeled boots, of which the pattern was set to them by Parisian prostitutes of the lowest order: the men have no faculty beyond that of cheating in business; no pleasures but in smoking or eating; and no ideas, nor any capacity of forming ideas, of anything that has yet been done of great, or seen of good, in this world.

5. That is the typical condition of five-sixths, at least, of the "rising" middle classes about London—the lodgers in those damp shells of brick, which one cannot say they inhabit, nor call their "houses"; nor "their's" indeed, in any sense; but packing-cases in which they are temporarily stored, for bad use. Put the things on wheels (it is already done in America, but you must build them stronger

¹ [For this entertainment, see Vol. XVIII. p. 96 n.]

first), and they are mere railway vans of brick, thrust in rows on the siding; vans full of monkeys that have lost the use of their legs. The baboons in Regent's Park—with Mr. Darwin's pardon—are of another species; a less passive, and infinitely wittier one. Here, behold, you have a group of gregarious creatures that cannot climb, and are entirely imitative, not as the apes, occasionally, for the humour of it, but all their lives long; the builders trying to build as Christians did once, though now swindling on every brick they lay; and the lodgers to live like the Duke of Devonshire, on the salaries of railroad clerks. Lodgers, do I say? Scarcely even that. Many a cottage, lodged in but for a year or two, has been made a true home, for that span of the owner's life. In my next letter but one,¹ I hope to give you some abstract of the man's life whose testimony I want you to compare with that of Dickens, as to the positions of Master and Servant:² meantime compare with what you may see of these railroad homes, this incidental notice by him of *his* first one:—

“When we approached that village (Lasswade), Scott, who had laid hold of my arm, turned along the road in a direction not leading to the place where the carriage was to meet us. After walking some minutes towards Edinburgh, I suggested that we were losing the scenery of the Esk, and, besides, had Dalkeith Palace yet to see.

“ ‘Yes,’ said he, ‘and I have been bringing you where there is little enough to be seen, only that Scotch cottage (one by the roadside, with a small garth); but, though not worth looking at, I could not pass it. It was our first country house when newly married, and many a contrivance we had to make it comfortable. I made a dining-table for it with my own hands. Look at these two miserable willow trees on either side the gate into the enclosure; they are tied together at the top to be an arch, and a cross made of two sticks over them is not yet decayed. To be sure, it is not much of a lion to show a stranger; but I wanted to see it again myself, for I assure you that after I had constructed it, mamma (Mrs. Scott) and I both of us thought it so fine, we turned out to see it by moonlight, and walked backwards from it to the cottage door, in admiration of our own magnificence and its picturesque effect. I did want to see if it was still there.’ ”³

¹ [See Letter 31, pp. 562 *seq.*]

² [See Letter 28, §§ 17, 18 (pp. 519, 520).]

³ [Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. ii. pp. 182, 183 (recollections by Mr. Morritt, 1808).]

6. I had scarcely looked out this passage for you, when I received a letter from the friend who sent me the penny cookery book,¹ incidentally telling me of the breaking up of a real home. I have obtained her leave to let you read part of it. It will come with no disadvantage, even after Scott's, recording as it does the same kind of simple and natural life, now passing so fast away. The same life, and also in the district which, henceforward, I mean to call "Sir Walter's Land"; definable as the entire breadth of Scots and English ground from sea to sea, coast and isle included, between Schehallien on the north, and Ingleborough on the south.² (I have my reasons, though some readers may doubt them, for fixing the limit south of Skye, and north of Ashby-de-la-Zouche.) Within this district, then, but I shall not say in what part of it, the home my friend speaks of stood. In many respects it was like the "Fair-ladies" in *Redgauntlet*;³ as near the coast, as secluded, and in the same kind of country; still more like, in its mistress's simple and loyal beneficence. Therefore, because I do not like leaving a blank for its name, I put "Fair-ladies" for it in the letter, of which the part I wish you to see begins thus:—

"Please let me say one practical thing. In no cottage is there a possibility of roasting more than a pound of meat, if any; and a piece of roast beef, such as you or I understand by the word, costs ten shillings or twelve, and is not meant for artisans. I never have it in this house now, except when it is full. I have a much sadder example of the changes wrought by modern wages and extravagance. Miss —, who had her house and land for her home-farm expenses (or rather produce), and about — hundred a year,—who entertained for years all her women and children acquaintances, trained a dozen young servants in a year, and was a blessing to the country for miles round, writes me word yesterday that she hopes and intreats that we will go this summer to Fair-ladies, as it is *the last*. She says the provisions are double the price they used to be—the wages also—and she cannot even work her farm as she used to do; the men want beer instead of milk, and won't do half they used to do; so she must give it up, and let the place, and come and live by me or some one

¹ [See Letter 27, § 14 (p. 502).]

² ["Cf. Letter 1."—*Author's MS. note in his copy.*]

³ [See *Redgauntlet*, ch. xv.]

to comfort her, and Fair-ladies will know her no more. I am so sorry, because I think it such a loss to the wretched people who drive her away. Our weekly bills are double what they used to be, yet every servant asks higher wages each time I engage one; and as to the poor people in the village, they are not a bit better off—they eat more, and drink more, and learn to think less of religion and all that is good. One thing I see very clearly—that, as the keeping of Sunday is being swept away, so is their day of *rest* going with it. Of course, if no one goes to worship God one day more than another,* what is the sense of talking about the Sabbath? If all the railway servants, and all the post-office, and all the museum and art-collection servants, and all the refreshment places, and other sorts of amusement, servants are to work on Sunday, why on earth should not the artisans, who are as selfish and irreligious as any one? No! directly I find every one else is at work, I shall insist on the baker and the butcher calling for orders as usual. (Quite right, my dear.) The result of enormous wages will be that I rely more on my own boys for carpentering, and on preserved food, and the cook and butcher will soon be dismissed.”

7. My poor little darling, rely on your own boys for carpentering by all means; and grease be to their elbows—but you shall have something better to rely on than potted crocodile,¹ in old England, yet,—please the pixies, and pigs, and St. George, and St. Anthony.²

Nay, we will have also a blue-aproned butcher or two still, to call for orders; they are not yet extinct. We have not even reached the preparatory phase of steam-butcher-boys, riding from Buxton for orders to Bakewell, and from Bakewell for orders to Buxton;³ and paying dividends to a Steam-Butcher’s-boy-Company. Not extinct yet, and a kindly race, for the most part. “He told me” (part of another friend’s letter, speaking of his butcher) “his sow had fourteen pigs, and could only rear twelve, the other two, he said, he was feeding with a spoon. I never could bear, he said, to kill a young animal because he was one too many.” Yes; that is all very well when it’s a pig; but

* My dear friend, I can’t bear to interrupt your pretty letter; but, indeed, one should *not* worship God on one day more, or *less*, than on another; and one should rest when one needs rest, whether on Sunday or Saturday.

¹ [Compare Letter 27, § 15 (p. 503).]

² [See above, p. 328.]

³ [Compare Letter 5, § 9 (p. 86).]

if it be—Wait a minute;—I must go back to Fair-ladies, before I finish my sentence.¹

8. For note very closely what the actual facts are in this short letter from an English housewife.

She in the south, and the mistress of Fair-ladies in the north, both find “their weekly bills double what they used to be”; that is to say, they are as poor again as they were, and they have to pay higher wages, of course, for now all wages buy so much less. I have too long, perhaps, put questions to you which I knew you could not answer, partly in the hope of at least making you think, and partly because I knew you would not believe the true answer, if I gave it. But, whether you believe me or not, I must explain the meaning of this to you at once. The weekly bills are double, because the greater part of the labour of the people of England is spent unproductively; that is to say, in producing iron plates, iron guns, gunpowder, infernal machines, infernal fortresses floating, about, infernal fortresses standing still, infernal means of mischievous locomotion,² infernal law-suits, infernal parliamentary elocution, infernal beer, and infernal gazettes, magazines, statues, and pictures. Calculate the labour spent in producing these infernal articles annually, and put against it the labour spent in producing food! The only wonder is, that the weekly bills are not tenfold instead of double. For this poor housewife, mind you, cannot feed her children with any one, or any quantity, of these infernal articles. Children can only be fed with divine articles. Their mother can indeed get to London cheap, but she has no business there; she can buy all the morning’s news for a halfpenny, but she has no concern with them; she can see Gustave Doré’s pictures³ (and she had better see the devil) for a shilling; she can be carried through any

¹ [See below, § 9 (p. 536).]

² [For Ruskin’s justification of this phrase, see Letter 44, § 5 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 129).]

³ [Compare Letter 34, § 8 (p. 630); Vol. XVII. pp. 344–346; and Vol. XIX. p. 212.]

quantity of filthy streets on a tramway for threepence; but it is as much as her life's worth to walk in them, or as her modesty's worth to look into a print shop in them. Nay, let her have but to go on foot a quarter of a mile in the West End, she dares not take her purse in her pocket, nor let her little dog follow her. These are her privileges and facilities, in the capital of civilization. But none of these will bring meat or flour into her own village. Far the contrary! The sheep and corn which the fields of her village produce are carried away from it to feed the makers of Armstrong guns. And her weekly bills are double.

But you, forsooth, you think, with your beer for milk, are better off. Read § 10 of my second letter over again.¹ And now observe farther:—

9. The one first and absolute question of all economy is—What are you making? Are you making Hell's articles, or Heaven's?—gunpowder, or corn?

There is no question whether you are to have work or not. The question is, *what* work. This poor housewife's mutton and corn are given you to eat. Good. Now, if you, with your day's work, produce for her, and send to her, spices, or tea, or rice, or maize, or figs, or any other good thing,—*that* is true and beneficent trade. But if you take her mutton and corn from her, and send her back an Armstrong gun, what can she make of that? But you can't grow figs and spices in England, you say? No, certainly, and therefore means of transit for produce in England are little necessary. Let my poor housewife keep her sheep in her near fields, and do you—keep sheep at Newcastle—and the weekly bills will not rise. But you forge iron at Newcastle; then you build an embankment from Newcastle to my friend's village, whereupon you take her sheep from her, suffocating half of them on the way; and you send her an Armstrong gun back; or, perhaps not even to her, but to somebody who can fire it down your own throats, you jolterheads.

¹ [See above, p. 34.]

No matter, you say, in the meantime, we eat more, and drink more; the housewife herself allows that. Yes, I have just told you, her corn and sheep are all sent to you. But how about other people? I will finish my sentence now, paused in above.¹ It is all very well to bring up creatures with a spoon, when they are one or two too many, if they are useful things, like pigs. But how if they be useless things, like young ladies? You don't want any wives, I understand, now, till you are forty-five;² what in the world will you do with your girls? Bring them up with a spoon, to that enchanting age?

10. "The girls may shift for themselves." Yes,—they may, certainly. Here is a picture of some of them, as given by the *Telegraph* of March 18th of the present year, under Lord Derby's new code of civilization, endeavouring to fulfil Mr. John Stuart Mill's wishes, and procure some more lucrative occupation than that of nursing the baby:³—

"After all the discussion about woman's sphere and woman's rights, and the advisability of doing something to redress the inequality of position against which the fair sex, by the medium of many champions, so loudly protests and so constantly struggles, it is not satisfactory to be told what happened at Cannon Row two days last week. It had been announced that the Civil Service Commissioners would receive applications personally from candidates for eleven vacancies in the metropolitan post-offices, and in answer to this notice, about 2000 young women made their appearance. The building, the courtyard, and the street were blocked by a dense throng of fair applicants; locomotion was impossible, even with the help of policemen; windows were thrown up to view the sight, as if a procession had been passing that way; traffic was obstructed, and nothing could be done for hours. We understand, indeed, that the published accounts by no means do justice to the scene. Many of the applicants, it appears, were girls of the highest respectability and of unusually good social position, including daughters of clergymen and professional men, well connected, well educated, tenderly nurtured; but nevertheless, driven by the *res angustæ* which have caused many a heart-break, and scattered the members of many a home, to seek for the means of independent support. The crowd, the agitation, the anxiety, the fatigue, proved too much for many of those who attended; several fainted away; others went into violent hysterics; others, despairing of success, remained just long enough to be

¹ [See above, end of § 7.]

² [See Letter 28, end of § 19 (p. 521).]

³ [See Letter 12, § 14 (p. 208).]

utterly worn out, and then crept off, showing such traces of mental anguish as we are accustomed to associate with the most painful bereavements. In the present case, it is stated, the Commissioners examined over 1000 candidates for the eleven vacancies. This seems a sad waste of power on both sides, when, in all probability, the first score supplied the requisite number of qualified aspirants.”¹

11. Yes, my pets, I am tired of talking to these workmen, who never answer a word; I will try *you* now—for a letter or two—but I beg your pardon for calling you pets,—my “qualified aspirants” I mean (Alas! time was when the qualified aspiration was on the bachelor’s side). Here you have got all you want, I hope!—liberty enough, it seems—if only the courtyard were bigger; equality enough—no distinction made between young ladies of the highest, or the lowest, respectability; rights of women generally claimed, you perceive; and obtained without opposition from absurdly religious, moral, or chivalric persons. You have got no God, now, to bid you do anything you don’t like; no husbands, to insist on having their own way (and much of it they got, in the old times—didn’t they?)—no pain nor peril of childbirth;²—no bringing up of tiresome brats. Here is an entirely scientific occupation for you! Such a beautiful invention this of Mr. Wheatstone’s! and I hope you all understand the relations of positive and negative electricity. Now you may “communicate intelligence” by telegraph. Those wretched girls that used to write love-letters, of which their foolish lovers would count the words, and sometimes be thankful for—less than twenty³—how they would envy you if they knew. Only the worst is, that this beautiful invention of Mr. Wheatstone’s for talking miles off, won’t feed people in the long run, my

¹ [For a later reference to this passage, see Letter 73, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 18).]

² [See the final prayer in the Thanksgiving, commonly called The Churching of Women.]

³ [The charge for an inland telegram was then a shilling for twenty words. “It is in connection with the electric telegraph that the name of Sir Charles Wheatstone (1802–1875) will always live. He was not the ‘inventor’ of the electric telegraph. Indeed no one can lay claim to that title. But to Wheatstone, with his coadjutor, Sir William Fothergill Cooke, is due the merit of having been the first to render it available for the public transmission of messages (1834–1841)”: *Dictionary of National Biography*.]

dears, any more than the old invention of the tongue, for talking near, and you'll soon begin to think that was not so bad a one, after all.¹ But you can't live by talking, though you talk in the scientificalest of manners, and to the other side of the world. All the telegraph wire over the earth and under the sea, will not do so much for you, my poor little qualified aspirants, as one strong needle with thimble and thread.

12. You *do* sometimes read a novel still, don't you, my scientific dears? I wish I could write one; but I can't; and George Eliot always makes them end so wretchedly that they're worse than none²—so she's no good, neither. I must even translate a foreign novelette or nouvelette, which is to my purpose, next month;³ meantime I have chanced on a little true story, in the journal of an Englishman, travelling, before the Revolution, in France,⁴ which shows you something of the temper of the poor unscientific girls of that day. Here are first, however, a little picture or two which he gives in the streets of Paris, and which I want all my readers to see; they mark, what most Englishmen do not know, that the beginning of the French Revolution, with what of good or evil it had, was in English, not French, notions of “justice” and “liberty.” The writer is travelling with a friend, Mr. B——, who is of the Liberal school, and,

“He and I went this forenoon to a review of the foot-guards, by Marshal Biron. There was a crowd, and we could with difficulty get within the circle, so as to see conveniently. And old officer of high rank touched some people who stood before us, saying, ‘Ces deux Messieurs sont des étrangers;’ upon which they immediately made way, and allowed us to pass. ‘Don't you think that was very obliging?’ said I. ‘Yes,’ answered he; ‘but, by heavens, it was very unjust.’

¹ [Compare Letter 5, § 8 (p. 85).]

² [For Ruskin's dislike of George Eliot's novels, see Vol. XI. p. 234, and the other passages there noted.]

³ [See pp. 548 *seq.*]

⁴ [John Moore, M.D. (1729–1802), who had travelled on the Continent during the years 1772–1778 in attendance on the Duke of Hamilton. The extract here given is from his *View of Society and Manners in France, Switzerland, and Italy, By a Gentleman who resided Several Years in those Countries*, 1789, Letter xi., vol. i. pp. 75–79.]

“We returned by the Boulevards, where crowds of citizens, in their holiday dresses, were making merry; the young dancing cotillons, the old beating time to the music, and applauding the dancers. ‘These people seem very happy,’ said I. ‘Happy!’ exclaimed B——; ‘if they had common-sense, or reflection, they would be miserable.’ ‘Why so?’ ‘Could not the minister,’ answered he, ‘pick out half-a-dozen of them if he pleased, and clap them into the Bicêtre?’¹ ‘That is true, indeed,’ said I; ‘that is a catastrophe which, to be sure, may very probably happen, and yet I thought no more of it than they.’

“We met, a few days after he arrived, at a French house where we had been both invited to dinner. There was an old lady of quality present, next to whom a young officer was seated, who paid her the utmost attention. He helped her to the dishes she liked, filled her glass with wine or water, and addressed his discourse particularly to her. ‘What a fool,’ says B——, ‘does that young fellow make of the poor old woman! if she were my mother, d—n me, if I would not call him to an account for it.’

“Though B—— understands French, and speaks it better than most Englishmen, he had no relish for the conversation, soon left the company, and has refused all invitations to dinner ever since. He generally finds some of our countrymen, who dine and pass the evening with him at the Parc Royal.

“After the review this day, we continued together, and being both disengaged, I proposed, by way of variety, to dine at the public ordinary of the Hôtel de Bourbon. He did not like this much at first. ‘I shall be teased,’ says he, ‘with their confounded ceremony;’ but on my observing that we could not expect much ceremony or politeness at a public ordinary, he agreed to go.

“Our entertainment turned out different, however, from my expectations and his wishes. A marked attention was paid us the moment we entered; everybody seemed inclined to accommodate us with the best places. They helped us first, and all the company seemed ready to sacrifice every convenience and distinction to the strangers; for, next to that of a lady, the most respected character at Paris is that of a stranger.

“After dinner, B—— and I walked into the gardens of the Palais Royal.

“ ‘There was nothing real in all the fuss those people made about us,’ says he.

“ ‘I can’t help thinking it something,’ said I, ‘to be treated with civility and apparent kindness in a foreign country, by strangers who know nothing about us, but that we are Englishmen, and often their enemies.’ ”

13. So much for the behaviour of old Paris. Now for our country story. I will not translate the small bits of French in it; my most entirely English readers can easily find out what they mean, and they must gather what

¹ [The Lunatic Asylum.]

moral they may from it, till next month,¹ for I have no space to comment on it in this letter.

“My friend F—— called on me a few days since, and as soon as he understood that I had no particular engagement, he insisted that I should drive somewhere into the country, dine *tête-à-tête* with him, and return in time for the play.

“When we had driven a few miles, I perceived a genteel-looking young fellow, dressed in an old uniform. He sat under a tree on the grass, at a little distance from the road, and amused himself by playing on the violin. As we came nearer we perceived he had a wooden leg, part of which lay in fragments by his side.

“‘What do you do there, soldier?’ said the Marquis. ‘I am on my way home to my own village, mon officer,’ said the soldier. ‘But, my poor friend,’ resumed the Marquis, ‘you will be a furious long time before you arrive at your journey’s end, if you have no other carriage besides these,’ pointing at the fragments of his wooden leg. ‘I wait for my equipage and all my suite,’ said the soldier, ‘and I am greatly mistaken if I do not see them this moment coming down the hill.’

“We saw a kind of cart, drawn by one horse, in which was a woman, and a peasant who drove the horse. While they drew near, the soldier told us he had been wounded in Corsica—that his leg had been cut off—that before setting out on that expedition, he had been contracted to a young woman in the neighbourhood—that the marriage had been postponed till his return; but when he appeared with a wooden leg, that all the girl’s relations had opposed the match. The girl’s mother, who was her only surviving parent when he began his courtship, had always been his friend; but she had died while he was abroad. The young woman herself, however, remained constant in her affections, received him with open arms, and had agreed to leave her relations, and accompany him to Paris, from whence they intended to set out in the diligence to the town where he was born, and where his father still lived. That on the way to Paris his wooden leg had snapped, which had obliged his mistress to leave him, and go to the next village in quest of a cart to carry him thither, where he would remain till such time as the carpenter should renew his leg. ‘C’est un malheur,’ concluded the soldier, ‘mon officer, bientôt réparé—et voici mon amie!’

“The girl sprung before the cart, seized the outstretched hand of her lover, and told him, with a smile full of affection, that she had seen an admirable carpenter, who had promised to make a leg that would not break, that it would be ready by to-morrow, and they might resume their journey as soon after as they pleased.

“The soldier received his mistress’s compliment as it deserved.

“She seemed about twenty years of age, a beautiful, fine-shaped girl—a brunette, whose countenance indicated sentiment and vivacity.

“‘You must be much fatigued, my dear,’ said the Marquis. ‘On ne se fatigue pas, Monsieur, quand on travaille pour ce qu’on aime,’ replied

¹ [The moral was not drawn next month, but see the reference in Letter 43, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 114), and compare Letter 40, § 1 (*ibid.*, p. 65).]

the girl. The soldier kissed her hand with a gallant and tender air. . . . ‘Allons,’ continued the Marquis, addressing himself to me; ‘this girl is quite charming—her lover has the appearance of a brave fellow; they have but three legs betwixt them, and we have four;—if you have no objection, they shall have the carriage, and we will follow on foot to the next village, and see what can be done for these lovers.’ I never agreed to a proposal with more pleasure in my life.

“The soldier began to make difficulties about entering into the *vis-à-vis*. ‘Come, come, friend,’ said the Marquis, ‘I am a colonel, and it is your duty to obey: get in without more ado, and your mistress shall follow.’

“ ‘Entrons, mon bon ami,’ said the girl, ‘since these gentlemen insist upon doing us so much honour.’

“ ‘A girl like you would do honour to the finest coach in France. Nothing could please me more than to have it in my power to make you happy,’ said the Marquis. ‘Laissez-moi faire, mon colonel,’ said the soldier. ‘Je suis heureuse comme une reine,’ said Fanchon. Away moved the chaise, and the Marquis and I followed.

“ ‘Voyez-vous, combien nous sommes heureux, nous autres François, à bon marchè,’ said the Marquis to me, adding with a smile, ‘le bonheur, à ce qu’on m’a dit, est plus cher en Angleterre.’ ‘But,’ answered I, ‘how long will this last with these poor people?’ ‘Ah, pour le coup,’ said he, ‘voilà une réflexion bien Anglaise;—that, indeed, is what I cannot tell; neither do I know how long you or I may live; but I fancy it would be great folly to be sorrowful through life, because we do not know how soon misfortunes may come, and because we are quite certain that death is to come at last.’

“When we arrived at the inn to which we had ordered the postillion to drive, we found the soldier and Fanchon. After having ordered some victuals and wine, ‘Pray,’ said I to the soldier, ‘how do you propose to maintain your wife and yourself?’ ‘One who has contrived to live for five years on soldier’s pay,’ replied he, ‘can have little difficulty for the rest of his life. I can play tolerably well on the fiddle,’ added he, ‘and perhaps there is not a village in all France of the size, where there are so many marriages as in that in which we are going to settle; I shall never want employment.’ ‘And I,’ said Fanchon, ‘can weave hair nets and silk purses, and mend stockings. Besides, my uncle has two hundred livres of mine in his hands, and although he is brother-in-law to the Bailiff, and *volontiers brutal*, yet I will make him pay it every sous.’ ‘And I,’ said the soldier, ‘have fifteen livres in my pocket, besides two louis that I lent to a poor farmer to enable him to pay the taxes, and which he will repay me when he is able.’

“ ‘You see, Sir,’ said Franchon to me, ‘that we are not objects of compassion. May we not be happy, my good friend (turning to her lover with a look of exquisite tenderness), if it be not our own fault?’ ‘If you are not, ma douce amie!’¹ said the soldier with great warmth, ‘je serai bien à plaindre.’ ”²

¹ [The title to this Letter.]

² [Moore’s *View of Society in France*, etc., Letter xv., pp. 112–119. “My friend F——” is the “Marquis of Fontanelle” (see vol. i. p. 17).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

14. As the circulation of *Fors* increases, the correspondence connected with it must of course, and that within no long time, become unmanageable, except by briefest reference to necessary points in letters of real value; many even of such may not be acknowledged, except with the general thanks which I render in advance to all who write either with the definite purpose of helping me, or of asking explanation of what I have said.

A letter of great interest has thus lain by me since Christmas, though the writer would know I had received it by my instant use of the book he told me of,—Professor Kirk's.¹ With reference to the statements therein made respecting the robbing of the poor by the rich, through temptation of drink, the letter goes on:—

“But to my mind the inquiry does not reach deep enough. I would know, first, why it is that the workers have so little control over their appetites in this direction? (*a*) and what the remedy? secondly, why is it that those who wish to drain the working men are permitted to govern them? (*b*) and what the remedy? (*c*)

“The answers to each question will, I think, be found to be nearly related.

“The possibility of a watchful and exacting, yet respected, government within a government, is well shown by the existence and discipline of the Society of Friends, of which I am a member. Our society is, no doubt, greatly injured by narrow views of religious truth; yet may it not be that their change from an agricultural to a trading people has done the most to sap the vital strength of their early days? But the tree is not without good fruit yet. A day or two ago the following sentence was extracted by me from a newspaper notice of the death of Robert Charleton, of Bristol:²—

“ ‘In him the poor and needy, the oppressed, the fallen and friendless, and the lonely sufferer, ever had a tender and faithful friend. When in trade, he was one of the best employers England could boast. He lived for his people, rather than expected them to live for him; and when he did not derive one penny profit from his factory, but rather lost by it, he still kept the business going, for the sake of his workpeople’ ” (*d*).

15. The answers to my correspondent's questions are very simple. (*a*) The workers have in general much more control over their appetites than idle people. But as they are for the most part hindered by their occupation from all rational, and from the best domestic, pleasures, and as manual work naturally makes people thirsty, what can they do but drink? Intoxication is the only Heaven that, practically, Christian England ever

¹ [See Letter 27, §§ 10, 11, (pp. 497–498). Ruskin again made use of Professor Kirk's book: see Letter 73, § 12 (Vol. XXIX. p. 22).]

² [Robert Charleton (1809–1872), pin manufacturer; one of the peace deputation to the Czar Nicholas, 1854; a Quaker preacher, 1860–1872.]

displays to them. But see my statements on this point in the fourth lecture in the *Crown of Wild Olive*,¹ when I get it out (the unfinished notes on Frederick keeping it back a while). (b) Because, as the working men have been for the last fifty years taught that one man is as good as another, they never think of looking for a good man to govern them; and only those who intend to pillage or cheat them will ever come forward of their own accord to govern them; or can succeed in doing so, because as long as they trust in their own sagacity, any knave can humbug them to the top of his bent; while no wise man can teach them anything whatever, contrary to their immediate notions. And the distrust in themselves, which would make them look for a real leader, and believe him, is the last sensation likely to occur to them at present (see my republican correspondent's observations on election, in the next letter²). (c) My correspondent twice asks, What is the remedy? I believe none, now, but the natural one;—namely, some of the forms of ruin which necessarily cut a nation of blockheads down to the ground, and leave it, thence to sprout again, if there be any life left for it in the earth, or lesson teachable to it by adversity. But, through whatever catastrophes, for any man who cares for the right and sees it, his own duty in the wreck is always clear—to keep himself cool and fearless, and do what is instantly serviceable to the people nearest him, and the best he can, silently, for all. Cotton in one's ears may be necessary—for we are like soon to have screaming enough in England, as in the wreck of the *Northfleet*,³ if that would do any good. (d) Yes, that is all very fine; but suppose that keeping useless work going on, for the sake of the workpeople, be not the wisest thing to do for the sake of *other* people? Of this hereafter. The sentence respecting the corrupting power of trade, as opposed to agriculture, is certainly right, and very notable.

16. Perhaps some of my readers may be surprised at my giving space to the following comments of my inquisitive Republican acquaintance on my endeavours to answer his questions.⁴ But they are so characteristic of the genius of Republicanism, that I esteem them quite one of the best gifts of the Third Fors to us: also, the writer is sincere, and might think, if I did not print his answers, that I treated him unfairly. I may afterwards take note of some points in them, but have no time this month.⁵

“We are all covetous. I am ravenously covetous of the means to speak in such type and on such paper as you can buy the use of. ‘Oh that mine enemy would’ give me the means of employing such a printer as you can employ!” (Certainly, he could do nothing worse for you!)

“I find you have published my questions, and your criticism thereon. I thank

¹ [The lecture on “The Future of England,” added in the edition of 1873, §§ 148, 149 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 505, 506); and compare Letter 81 (Vol. XXIX. p. 214).]

² [Below, § 16.]

³ [Lost off *Dungeness*, in consequence of a collision, January 22, 1873; 300 lives were lost.]

⁴ [See Letter 25, § 25 (p. 470).]

⁵ [Among the MSS. for *Fors* at Brantwood are some sheets, containing Ruskin's replies. These, however, he did not use in *Fors*; a passage from them is now given in Appendix 6, Vol. XXIX. p. 538.]

you for your 'good-will to man,' but protest against the levity of your method of dealing with politics.¹

"You assume that you understand me, and that I don't understand myself or you. I fully admit that I don't understand you or myself, and I declare that neither do you understand me. But I will pass hyper-criticism (and, by-the-by, I am not sure that I know what that compound word means; you will know, of course, for me) and tackle your 'Answers.'

"1. You evade the meaning—the question,—for I cannot think you *mean* that the 'world,' or an 'ocean,' can be rightfully regarded by legislators as the private property of 'individuals.'

"2. 'It never was, and never can be.' The price of a cocoa-nut was the cost of labour in climbing the tree; the climber ate the nut.

"3. What do *you* understand by a 'tax'? The penny paid for the conveyance of a letter is not a tax. Lord Somebody says I must perish of hunger, or pay him for permission to dig in the land on which I was born. He taxes me that he may live without labouring, and do you say 'of course,' 'quite rightfully'?

"4.?

"5. You may choose a pig or horse for yourself, but I claim the right of choosing mine, even though you know that you could choose better animals for me. By your system, if logically carried out, we should have no elections, but should have an emperor of the world,—the man who knew himself to be the most intelligent of all. I suppose *you* should be allowed to vote? It is somebody else who must have no political voice? Where do you draw the line? Just below John Ruskin? Is a man so little and his polish so much? Men and women must vote, or must not submit. I have bought but little of the polish sold at schools; but, ignorant as I am, I would not yield as the 'subject' of thirty million Ruskins, or of the king they might elect without consulting me. You did not let either your brain or your heart speak when you answered that question.

"6. 'Beneficial.' I claim the right of personal judgment, and I would grant the exercise of that right to every man and woman.

"7. 'Untrue.' *Untrue*. Lord Somebody consumes, with the aid of a hundred men and women, whom he keeps from productive industry, as much as would suffice to maintain a hundred families. A hundred—yes, a thousand navvies. 'Destroying'? Did you forget that so many admirals, generals, colonels, and captains, were your law-makers? Are they not professional destroyers? I could fill your pages with a list of other destructive employments of your legislators.

"8. Has the tax-gatherer too busy a time of it to attend to the duties added by the establishment of a National Post Office? We remove a thousand toll-bars, and collect the assessment annually with economy. We eat now, and are poisoned, and pay dearly. The buyers and sellers of bread 'have a busy time of it.'

"9. Thank you for the straightforwardness. But I find you ask me what I mean by a 'State.' I meant it as you accepted it, and did not think it economical to bother you or myself with a page of incomplete definitions.

"10. 'See *Munera Pulveris!*' And, ye 'workmen and labourers,' go and consult the Emperor of China.

"You speak of a king who killed, 'without wrath, and without doubting his rightness,' and of a collier who killed with 'consciousness.' Glorious, ignorant brute of a king! Degraded, enlightened collier! It is enough to stimulate a patriot to burn all the colleges and libraries. Much learning makes us ignoble! No! it is the much labour and the bad teaching of the labourer by those who never earned their food by the sweat of their own brow."

* My correspondent will perhaps be surprised to hear that I have never in my life voted for any candidate for Parliament, and that I never mean to.²

¹ [Compare, above, p. 362. In his own copy Ruskin here wrote, "People could not generally see the drift; it is all too fine run and the mocking too quiet." Compare the Introduction, p. xxxii.]

² [See, further, the MS. passage just referred to.]

LETTER 30

THE CART THAT WENT OF ITSELF¹

BRANTWOOD, April 19, 1873

1. ON the thirteenth shelf of the south bookcase of my home-library, stand, first, Kenelm Digby's *Broad Stone of Honour*,² then in five volumes, bound in red, the *History of the Ingenious Gentleman, Don Quixote of La Mancha*; and then, in one volume, bound in green, a story no less pathetic, called the *Mirror of Peasants*.³

Its author does not mean the word "mirror" to be understood in the sense in which one would call Don Quixote the "Mirror of Chivalry"; but in that of a glass in which a man—beholding his natural heart—may know also the hearts of other men, as, in a glass, face answers to face.⁴

The author of this story was a clergyman; but employed the greater part of his day in writing novels, having a gift for that species of composition as well as for sermons, and observing, though he gave both excellent in their kind, that his congregation liked their sermons to be short, and his readers, their novels to be long.

2. Among them, however, were also many tiny novelettes, of which, young ladies, I to-day begin translating for you one of the shortest; hoping that you will not think the worse of it for being written by a clergyman. Of this author I will only say, that, though I am not prejudiced in favour of persons of his profession, I think him the wisest

¹ [See § 5.]

² [For another reference to this book, see Vol. VII. p. 361.]

³ [*Der Bauernspiegel, oder Lebensgeschichte des Jeremias Gotthelf* was first published in 1836; it is printed in vol. i. of his *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin, 1856). A full life of Bitzius is prefixed to this collection. Ruskin used the French translation, *Le Miroir des Paysans* (Berne, 1854). For other references to Jeremias Gotthelf (the pen-name of Albert Bitzius, 1797–1855), see Vol. VI. p. 172, and Vol. VII. p. 430.]

⁴ [See James i. 23.]

man, take him for all in all,¹ with whose writings I am acquainted; chiefly because he showed his wisdom in pleasant and unappalling ways; as, for instance, by keeping, for the chief ornament of his study (not being able to afford expensive books), one book beautifully bound, and shining with magnificence of golden embossing; this book of books being his register, out of which he read, from the height of his pulpit, the promises of marriage.² “Dans lequel il lisait, du haut de la chaire, les promesses de mariage.”³

He rose always early; breakfasted himself at six o'clock; and then got ready with his own hands the family breakfast, liking his servants better to be at work out of doors: wrote till eleven, dined at twelve, and spent the afternoon in his parish work, or in his fields, being a farmer of shrewdest and most practical skill; and through the Sundays of fifteen years, never once was absent from his pulpit.

3. And now, before I begin my little story, which is a translation of a translation, for the original is German, and I can only read French, I must say a few serious words as to the sense in which I wish you to receive what religious instruction this romantic clergyman may sometimes mingle with his romance. He is an Evangelical divine of the purest type. It is therefore primarily for my Evangelical readers that I translate this or others of his tales; and if they have read either former letters of *Fors*, or any of my later books, they must know that I do not myself believe in Evangelical theology.⁴ But I shall, with my best care, represent and enforce this clergyman's teaching to my said Evangelical readers, exactly as I should feel it my duty, if I were talking to a faithful Turk, to represent and enforce to him any passage of the Koran which was beyond all

¹ [*Hamlet*, Act i. sc. 2.]

² [Compare “Notes on the Priest's Office” in *Roadside Songs of Tuscany*.]

³ [See p. 30 of the biographical notice prefixed to the following work: *Jeremias Gotthelf: Œuvres Choisies, Traduites avec une notice Biographique, par Max Buchon. Les Joies et Les Souffrances d'un Maître d'École. Tome premier. Neuchâtel et Paris: 1857.*]

⁴ [See, for instance, above, p. 493; and compare, below, p. 673. See also Vol. XXVIII. pp. 70, 259, 366, and Vol. XXIX. p. 92. For passages to the same effect in other of Ruskin's later books, see the Preface of 1871 to *Sesame and Lilies*, Vol. XVIII. p. 31; and *Præterita*, iii. § 23.]

question true, in its reference to practical life; and with the bearings of which I was more familiar than he. For I think that our common prayer that God “would take away all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of His word, from all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics,”¹ is an entirely absurd one. I do not think all Jews have hard hearts; nor that all infidels would despise God’s word, if only they could hear it; nor do I in the least know whether it is my neighbour or myself who is really the heretic. But I pray that prayer for myself as well as others; and in this form, that God would make all Jews honest Jews, all Turks honest Turks, all infidels honest infidels, and all Evangelicals and heretics honest Evangelicals and heretics;² that so these Israelites in whom there is no guile,³ Turks in whom there is no guile, and so on, may in due time see the face, and know the power, of the King alike of Israel and Esau. Now, therefore, young ladies, I beg you to understand that I entirely sympathize with this Evangelical clergyman’s feelings because I know him to be honest: also, that I give you of his teaching what is universally true: and that you may get the more good from his story, I will ask you first to consider with yourselves what St. James means by saying in the ninth verse of his general Epistle, “Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted, but the rich in that he is made low”;⁴ and if you find, as you generally will, if you think seriously over any verse of your Bibles whatsoever, that you never have had, and are never likely to have, the slightest idea what it means, perhaps you will permit me to propose the following explanation to you. That while both rich and poor are to be content to remain in their several states, gaining only by the due and natural bettering of an honest man’s settled life; if, nevertheless, any chance should occur to cause sudden difference in either

¹ [Third Collect for Good Friday.]

² [Compare, above, p. 466; Letters 37, § 6; 41, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 19, 79); and 86, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 337–338). See also *Ethics of the Dust*, § 118 (Vol. XVIII. p. 356); and *Præterita*, ii. § 110.]

³ [Compare John i. 47.]

⁴ [James i. 9, 10.]

of their positions, the poor man might wisely desire that it should be some relief from the immediate pressure of poverty, while the rich should esteem it the surest sign of God's favour, if, without fault of his own, he were forced to know the pain of a lower condition.

4. I have noticed, in *Sesame and Lilies*, § 2, the frantic fear of the ordinary British public, lest they should fall below their proper "station in life."¹ It appears that almost the only real sense of duty remaining now in the British conscience is a passionate belief in the propriety of keeping up an appearance; no matter if on other people's money, so only that there be no signs of their coming down in the world.

I should be very glad therefore if any of my young lady readers, who consider themselves religious persons, would inform me whether they are satisfied with my interpretation of the text; and if so, then how far they would consent, without complaining, to let God humble them, if He wished to? If, for instance, they would, without pouting, allow Him to have His way, even to the point of forcing them to gain their bread by some menial service,—as, suppose, a housemaid's; and whether they would feel aggrieved at being made lower housemaid instead of upper.

5. If they have read their Bible to so good purpose as not to care which, I hope the following story may not be thought wholly beneath their attention; concerning, as it does, the housemaid's principal implement; or what (supposing her a member of St. George's Company) we may properly call her spear, or weapon of noble war.

THE BROOM MERCHANT²

Brooms are, as we know, among the imperious necessities of the epoch; and in every household, there are many needful articles of the kind which must be provided from day to day, or week to week; and which

¹ [See Vol. XVIII. p. 54.]

² [*Der Besenbinder von Rychiswyl*, first published in 1852; vol. ix., pp. 343–374 of the *Gesammelte Schriften*. The story ("Le Marchand de Balais") is the first (pp. 1–36) in the *Nouvelles Bernoises, traduites par Max. Buchon, Première Serie*, 1854. Ruskin omits some introductory passages, and here (§ 5) translates pp. 343–351.]

one accordingly finds, everywhere, persons glad to supply. But we pay daily less and less attention to these kindly disposed persons, since we have been able to get the articles at their lowest possible price.

Formerly it was not thus. The broom merchant, the egg merchant, the sand and rottenstone merchant, were, so to speak, part of the family; one was connected with them by very close links; one knew the day on which each would arrive; and according to the degree of favour they were in, one kept something nice for their dinner; and if, by any chance, they did not come to their day, they excused themselves, next time, as for a very grave fault indeed. They considered the houses which they supplied regularly, as the stars of their heaven,—took all the pains in the world to serve them well,—and, on quitting their trade for anything more dignified, did all they could to be replaced either by their children, or by some cousin, or cousine. There was thus a reciprocal bond of fidelity on one side, and of trust on the other, which unhappily relaxes itself more and more every day, in the measure that also family spirit disappears.

The broom merchant of Rychiswyl was a servant of this sort; he whom one regrets now, so often at Berne,—whom everybody was so fond of at Thun! The Saturday might sooner have been left out of the almanack, than the broom-man not appear in Thun on the Saturday. He had not always been the broom-man; for a long time he had only been the broom-boy; until, in the end, the boy had boys of his own, who put themselves to push his cart for him. His father, who had been a soldier, died early in life; the lad was then very young, and his mother ailing. His elder sister had started in life many a day before, barefoot, and had found a place in helping a woman who carried pine-cones and turpentine to Berne. When she had won her spurs, that is to say, shoes and stockings, she obtained advancement, and became a governess of poultry, in a large farm near the town. Her mother and brother were greatly proud of her, and never spoke but with respect of their pretty Babeli. Hansli could not leave his mother, who had need of his help, to fetch her wood, and the like. They lived on the love of God and good people; but badly enough. One day, the farmer they lodged with says to Hansli:

My lad, it seems to me you might try and earn something now; you are big enough, and sharp enough.

I wish I could, said Hansli; but I don't know how.

I know something you could do, said the farmer. Set to work to make brooms; there are plenty of twigs on my willows. I only get them stolen as it is; so they shall not cost you much. You shall make me two brooms a year of them.*

Yes, that would be very fine and good, said Hansli; but where shall I learn to make brooms?

Pardieu,† there's no such sorcery in the matter, said the farmer. I'll take on me the teaching of you; many a year now I've made all the brooms

* Far wiser than letting him gather them as valueless.

† Not translatable. In French, it has the form of a passionate oath, but the spirit of a gentle one.¹

¹ ["Pardieu" is an interpolation in the French translation.]

we use on the farm myself, and I'll back myself to make as good as are made;* you'll want few tools, and may use mine at first.

All which was accordingly done; and God's blessing came on the doing of it. Hansli took a fancy to the work; and the farmer was enchanted with Hansli.

Don't look so close;† put all in that is needful, do the thing well, so as to show people they may put confidence in you. Once get their trust, and your business is done, said always the farmer, ‡ and Hansli obeyed him.

In the beginning, naturally, things did not go very fast, nevertheless he placed § what he could make; and as he became quicker in the making, the sale increased in proportion. Soon, everybody said that no one had such pretty brooms as the little merchant of Rychiswyl; and the better he succeeded, the harder he worked. His mother visibly recovered liking for life. Now the battle's won, said she; as soon as one can gain one's bread honourably, one has the right to enjoy oneself, and what can one want more! Always, from that time, she had, every day, as much as she liked to eat; nay, even every day there remained something over for the next: and she could have as much bread as she liked. Indeed, Hansli very often brought her even a little white bread back from the town, whereupon|| how happy did she not feel herself! and how she thanked God for having kept so many good things for her old days.

On the contrary, now for a little while, Hansli was looking cross and provoked. Soon he began actually to grumble. "Things could not go on much longer that way; he could not put up with it." When the farmer at last set himself to find out what that meant, Hansli declared to him that he had too many brooms to carry, and could not carry them; and that even when the miller took them on his cart, it was very inconvenient, and that he absolutely wanted a cart of his own, but he hadn't any money to buy one, and didn't know anybody who was likely to lend him any. You are a gaby,¶ said the peasant. Look you, I won't have you become one of those people who think a thing's done as soon as they've dreamt it. That's the way one spends one's money to make the fish go into other

* Head of house doing all he can do *well*, himself. If he had not had time to make the brooms well, he would have bought them.

† Do not calculate so closely how much you can afford to give for the price.

‡ Not meaning "you can cheat them afterwards," but that the customer would not leave him for another broom-maker.

§ Sold.

|| "Aussi," *also* how happy she felt. Aussi is untranslatable in this pretty use; so hereafter I shall put it, as an English word, in its place.¹

¶ "Nigaud," good for nothing but trifles; worthless, but without sense of vice (*vaut-rien*, means viciously worthless). The real sense of this word here would be "Handless fool," but said good-humouredly.²

¹ [See, for instance, p. 552.]

² [The German original is "Ein dummer Bub."]

people's nets. You want to buy a cart, do you? why don't you make one yourself?

Hansli put himself,* to stare at the farmer with his mouth open, and great eyes.

Yes, make it yourself: you will manage it, if you make up your mind, went on the farmer. You can chip wood well enough, and the wood won't cost you much—what I haven't, another peasant will have; and there must be old iron about, plenty, in the lumber-room. I believe there's even an old cart somewhere, which you can have to look at—or to use, if you like. Winter will be here soon; set yourself to work, and by the spring all will be done, and you won't have spent a threepenny piece,† for you may pay the smith too, with brooms, or find a way of doing without him—who knows?

Hansli began to open his eyes again. I make a cart,—but how ever shall I,—I never made one. Gaby, answered the farmer, one must make everything once the first time. Take courage, and it's half done. If people took courage solidly, there are many now carrying the beggar's wallet, who would have money up to their ears, and good metal, too. Hansli was on the point of asking if the peasant had lost his head. Nevertheless, he finished by biting at the notion; and entering into it little by little, as a child into cold water. The peasant came now and then to help him; and in spring the new cart was ready, in such sort that on Easter Tuesday Hansli conducted it,‡ for the first time, to Berne, and the following Saturday to Thun, also for the first time. The joy and pride that this new cart gave him, it is difficult to form anything like a notion of. If anybody had proposed to give him the Easter ox for it, that they had promenaded at Berne the evening before, and which weighed well its twenty-five quintals, he wouldn't have heard of such a thing. It seemed to him that everybody stopped as they passed, to look at his cart; and, whenever he got a chance, he put himself to explain at length what advantages that cart had over every other cart that had yet been seen in the world. He asserted very gravely that it went of itself,¹ except only at the hills; where it was necessary to give it a touch of the hand.§ A cookmaid said to him that she would not have thought him so clever; and that if ever she

* *Se mit à regarder*. I shall always translate such passages with the literal idiom—put himself.

† A single batz,² about three halfpence in bad silver, flat struck: I shall use the word without translating henceforward.³

‡ Pushed it.⁴ No horse wanted.

§ *Coup de main*, a nice French idiom meaning the stroke of hand as opposed by that of a senseless instrument.⁵ The phrase “Taking a place by a coup de main” regards essentially not so much the mere difference between sudden and long assault, as between assault with flesh or cannon.

¹ [The title to this *Fors* is here indicated.]

² [In the original, “nicht manchen Batzen.”]

³ [As on p. 553, and in Letter 44, § 5 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 129).]

⁴ [In the original, “zog.”]

⁵ [In the German, simply “nachhelfen.”]

wanted a cart, she would give him her custom. That cookmaid, always, afterwards, when she bought a fresh supply of brooms, had a present of two little ones into the bargain, to sweep into the corners of the hearth with; things which are very convenient for maids who like to have everything clean even into the corners; and who always wash their cheeks to behind their ears. It is true that maids of this sort are thin-sprinkled enough.*

From this moment, Hansli began to take good heart to his work: his cart was for him his farm;† he worked with real joy; and joy in getting anything done is, compared to ill-humour, what a sharp hatchet is to a rusty one, in cutting wood. The farmers of Rychiswyl were delighted with the boy. There wasn't one of them who didn't say, "When you want twigs, you've only to take them in my field; but don't damage the trees, and think of the wife sometimes; women use so many brooms in a year that the devil couldn't serve them." Hansli did not fail; also was he in great favour with all the farm-mistresses. They never had been in the way of setting any money aside for buying brooms; they ordered their husbands to provide them,‡ but one knows how things go, that way. Men are often too lazy to make shavings,§ how much less brooms!—aussi the women were often in a perfect famine of brooms, and the peace of the household had greatly to suffer for it. But now, Hansli was there before one had time to think; and it was very seldom a paysanne|| was obliged to say to him, "Hansli, don't forget us, we're at our last broom." Besides the convenience of this, Hansli's brooms were superb—very different from the wretched things which one's grumbling husband tied up loose, or as rough and ragged as if they had been made of oat straw. Of course, in these houses, Hansli gave his brooms for nothing; yet they were not the worst placed pieces of his stock; for, not to speak of the twigs given him gratis, all the year round he was continually getting little presents, in bread and milk, and such kind of things, which a paysanne has always under her hand, and which she gives without looking too close. Also, rarely one churned butter without saying to him, Hansli,

* *Assez clair semées.*¹

† He is now a capitalist, in the entirely wholesome and proper sense of the word. See answer of *Pall Mall Gazette*, driven to have recourse to the simple truth, to my third question in last *Fors*.²

‡ See above, the first speech of the farmer to Hansli, "Many's the year now," etc. It would be a shame for a well-to-do farmer to have to buy brooms; it is only the wretched townspeople whom Hansli counts on for custom.

§ *Copeaux*, I don't understand this.³

|| The mistress of a farm; paysan, the master. I shall use paysanne, after this, without translation, and peasant, for paysan; rarely wanting the word in our general sense.

¹ [In the German, "so gar häufig sind die aber nicht."]

² [Not *last Fors*, but Letter 28, § 22 (p. 525).]

³ [In the German, "nun weiss man, wie das geht, ist dasselbe ja oft zu faul zum Holzspalten, geschweige denn zum Besenmachen."]

we beat butter to-morrow; if you like to bring a pot, you shall have some of the beaten.*

And as for fruit, he had more than he could eat of it; so that it could not fail, things going on in this way, that Hansli should prosper; being besides thoroughly economical. If he spent as much as a batz on the day he went to the town, it was the end of the world.† In the morning, his mother took care he had a good breakfast, after which he took also something in his pocket, without counting that sometimes here, and sometimes there, one gave him a morsel in the kitchens where he was well known; and finally he didn't imagine that he ought always to have something to eat, the moment he had a mind to it.¹

6. I am very sorry, but find there's no chance of my getting the romantic part of my story rightly into this letter; so I must even leave it till August, for my sketch of Scott's early life is promised for July,² and I must keep my word to time more accurately than hitherto, else, as the letters increase in number, it is too probable I may forget what I promised in them; not that I lose sight even for a moment of my main purpose; but the contents of the letters being absolutely as the Third Fors may order, she orders me here and there so fast sometimes that I can't hold the pace. This unlucky index, for example! It is easy enough to make an index, as it is to make a broom of odds and ends, as rough as oat straw; but to make an index tied up tight, and that will sweep well into corners, isn't so easy. Ill-tied or well, it shall positively be sent with the July number³ (if I keep my health), and will be only six months late then; so that it will have been finished in about a fourth of the time a lawyer would

* "Du battu," I don't know if it means the butter, or the butter-milk.⁴

† "Le bout du monde," meaning, he never thought of going any farther.⁵

¹ [For continuation, see Letter 34, § 10 (p. 632).]

² [Letter 31. The promise was made above, p. 531.]

³ [See pp. 437, 505, 568.]

⁴ [In his copy Ruskin noted that "buttermilk" is the meaning. The German is "Ankenmilch," *Anke* being a Swiss dialect-word for butter (anken, to make butter): see Staub and Tobler's *Schweizerisches Idiotikon*, 1881.]

⁵ [In the German, "so war es viel."]

have taken to provide any document for which there was a pressing necessity.

7. In the meantime, compare the picture of country life in Switzerland, already beginning to show itself in outline in our story of the broom-maker, with this following account of the changes produced by recent trade in the country life of the island of Jersey. It is given me by the correspondent who directed me to Professor Kirk's book (see the notes in last letter¹), and is in every point of view of the highest value. Compare especially the operations of the great universal law of supply and demand in the article of fruit, as they affect the broom-boy, and my correspondent; and consider for yourselves, how far that beautiful law may affect, in time to come, not your pippins only, but also your cheese; and even at last your bread.

I give this letter large print; it is quite as important as anything I have myself to say. The italics are mine.

"MONT À L' ABBÉ, JERSEY, *April 17, 1873.*

"DEAR MASTER,—The lesson I have gathered here in Jersey as to the practical working of bodies of small landowners, is that they have three arch-enemies to their life and well-being. First, the covetousness that, for the sake of money-increase, permits and seeks that great cities should drain the island of its life-blood—their best men and their best food or means of food; secondly, love of strong drink and tobacco; *and* thirdly (for these two last are closely connected), want to true recreation.

"The island is cut up into small properties or holdings, a very much larger proportion of these being occupied and cultivated by the owners themselves than is the case in England. Consequently, as I think, the poor do not suffer as much as in England. Still the times have altered greatly for the worse within the memory of every

¹ [See Letter 29, § 14 (p. 542).]

middle-aged resident, and the change has been wrought chiefly *by the regular and frequent communication* with London and Paris, but more especially the first, which *in the matter of luxuries of the table, has a maw insatiable*.^{*} Thus the Jersey farmer finds that, by devoting his best labour and land to the raising of potatoes sufficiently early to obtain a fancy price for them, very large money-gains are sometimes obtained,—subject also to large risks; for spring frosts on the one hand, and being outstripped by more venturous farmers on the other, are the Jersey farmers' Scylla and Charybdis.

“Now for the results. Land, especially that with southern aspect, has increased marvellously in price. Wages have also risen. In many employments nearly doubled. Twenty years ago a carpenter obtained 1s. 8d. per day. Now he gets 3s.; and field labourers' wages have risen nearly as much in proportion. *But* food and lodging have *much more* than doubled. Potatoes for ordinary consumption are now from 2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. per cabot (40 lb.); here I put out of court the early potatoes, which bring, to those who are fortunate in the race, three times that price. Fifteen years ago the regular price for the same quantity was from 5d. to 8d. Butter is now 1s. 4d. per lb. Then it was 6d.; and milk of course has altered in the same proportion. *Fruit, which formerly could be had in lavish, nay almost fabulous abundance, is now dearer than in London.* In fact I, who am essentially a frugivorous animal, have found myself unable to indulge in it, and it is only at very rare intervals to be found in any shape at my table. All work harder, and all fare worse; but *the poor especially so.* The well-to-do possess a secret solace denied to them. It is found in the ‘share market.’ I am told by one employed in a banking-house and ‘finance’ business here, that it is quite wonderful how fond the Jersey farmers are

^{*} Compare, if you can get at the book in any library, my article on “Home, and its Economies” in the *Contemporary Review* for May [1873: see now Vol. XVII. pp. 556–565.]

of Turkish bonds, Grecian and Spanish coupons. Shares in mines seem also to find favour here. My friend in the banking-house tells me that he was once induced to try his fortune in that way. To be cautious, he invested in four different mines. It was perhaps fortunate for him that he never received a penny of his money back from any one of the four.

“Another mode by which the earnings of the saving and industrious Jerseyman find their way back to London or Paris is the uncalculated, but not unfrequent, advent of a spendthrift among the heirs of the family. I am told that the landlord of the house I live in is of this stamp, and that two years more of the same rate of expenditure at Paris that he now uses, will bring him to the end of his patrimony.

“But what of the stimulants, and the want of recreation? I have coupled these together because I think that drinking is an attempt to find, by a short and easy way, the reward of a true recreation; to supply a coarse goad to the wits, so that there may be forced or fancied increase of play to the imagination, and to experience, with this, an agreeable physical sensation. I think men will usually drink to get the fascinating combination of the two. True recreation is the cure, and this is not adequately supplied here, either in kind or degree, by tea-meetings and the various religious ‘services,’ which are almost the only social recreations (no irreverence intended by thus classing them) in use among the country folk of Jersey.

“But I had better keep to my facts. The deductions I can well leave to my master.

“Here is a fact as to the working of the modern finance system here. There is exceedingly little gold coin in the island; in place thereof we use one-pound notes issued by the banks of the island. *The principal bank issuing these, and also possessing by far the largest list of depositors, has just failed. Liabilities, as estimated by the accountants, not less than £332,000; assets calculated by the same authorities*

*not exceeding £34,000.*¹ The whole island is thrown into the same sort of catastrophe as English merchants by the Overend-Gurney failure. Business in the town nearly at a stand-still, and failures of tradesmen taking place one after another, with a large reserve of the same in prospect. But as the country people are as hard at work as ever, and the panic among the islanders has hindered in nowise the shooting of the blades through the earth, and general bursting forth of buds on the trees, I begin to think the island may survive to find some other chasm for their accumulations. Unless indeed the champion slays the dragon first. (As far as one of the unlearned may have an opinion, I strongly object both to 'Rough skin,' and 'Red skin,' as name derivations.² There have been useful words derived from two sources, and I shall hold that the Latin prefix to the Saxon *kin* establishes a sort of relationship with St. George.)”

8. I am greatly flattered by my correspondent's philological studies; but alas, his pretty result is untenable: no derivation can stand astride on two languages; also, neither he, nor any of my readers, must think of me as setting myself up either for a champion or a leader. If they will look back to the first letter of this book, they will find it is expressly written to quit myself of public responsibility in pursuing my private work. Its purpose is to state clearly what must be done by all of us, as we can, in our place; and to fulfil what duty I personally acknowledge to the State; also I have promised, if I live, to show some example of what I know to be necessary, if no more able person will show it first. That is a very different thing from pretending to leadership in a movement which must one day be as wide as the world. Nay, even my marching

¹ [The Mercantile Union Bank. A proposal was made in the Jersey States that a lottery should be sanctioned in aid of the shareholders (*Times*, April 8, May 28, 1873).]

² [See Letter 24, § 1 (p. 417).]

days may perhaps soon be over, and the best that I can make of myself be a faithful sign-post. But what I am, or what I fail to be, is of no moment to the cause. The two facts which I have to teach, or sign, though alone, as it seems, at present, in the signature, that food can only be got out of the ground, and happiness only out of honesty, are not altogether dependent on any one's championship, for recognition among mankind.

9. For the present, nevertheless, these two important pieces of information are never, so far as I am aware, presented in any scheme of education either to the infantine or adult mind. And, unluckily, no other information whatever, without acquaintance with these facts, can produce either bread and butter, or felicity. I take the following four questions, for instance, as sufficiently characteristic, out of the seventy-eight, proposed, on their Fifth subject of study, to the children of St. Matthias,¹ National School, Granby Street, Bethnal Green (school fees, twopence or threepence a week), by way of enabling them to pass their First of May pleasantly, in this blessed year 1873.

1. Explain the distinction between an identity and an equation, and give an easy example of each. Show that if a simple equation in x is satisfied by two different values of x , it is an identity.
2. In what time will a sum of money double itself if invested at 10 per cent. per annum, compound interest?
3. How many different permutations can be made of the letters in the word *Chillianwallah*? How many if arranged in a circle, instead of a straight line? And how many different combinations of them, two and two, can be made?
4. Show that if a and b be constant, and f and l variable, and if

$$\frac{\cos^2 \alpha \cos^2 \beta (\tan^2 \alpha \cos^2 \lambda + \tan^2 \beta \sin^2 \lambda)}{\tan^2 \alpha \cos^2 \beta \cos^2 \lambda + \tan^2 \beta \cos^2 \alpha \sin^2 \lambda} =$$

$$\frac{\sin^2 \alpha \cos^2 \phi + \sin \beta \sin^8 \phi}{\tan^2 \alpha \cos^2 \phi + \tan^2 \beta \sin^2 \phi} =$$

then $\cos^2 \beta \tan \phi = \cos^2 \alpha \tan^2 \lambda$, unless $\alpha = \beta + n\pi$.

¹ [For a correction of this statement, see Letter 32, § 26 (p. 603). Mr. Faunthorpe in his Index to *Fors Clavigera* (s. "Examination") makes a further correction: "Note.—Not for children, but *Third Stage Mathematics*."]]

I am bound to state that I could not answer any one of these interrogations myself, and that my readers must therefore allow for the bias of envy in the expression of my belief that to have been able to answer the sort of questions which the First of May once used to propose to English children,—whether they knew a cowslip from an oxlip, and a blackthorn from a white,—would have been incomparably more to the purpose, both of getting their living, and liking it.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

10. THE following expression of the wounded feelings of the *Daily News*¹ is perhaps worth preserving:—

“Mr. Ruskin’s *Fors Clavigera* has already become so notorious as a curious magazine of the blunders of a man of genius who has travelled out of his province, that it is perhaps hardly worth while to notice any fresh blunder. No one who writes on financial subjects need be at all surprised that Mr. Ruskin funnily misinterprets what he has said, and we have ourselves just been the victim of a misinterpretation of the sort. Mr. Ruskin quotes a single sentence from an article which appeared in our impression of the 3rd of March, and places on it the interpretation that ‘whenever you have reason to think that anybody has charged you threepence for a twopenny article, remember that, according to the *Daily News*, the real capital of the community is increased.’² We need hardly tell our readers that we wrote no nonsense of that kind. Our object was to show that the most important effect of the high price of coal was to alter the distribution of the proceeds of production in the community, and not to diminish the amount of it; that it was quite possible for real production, which is always the most important matter in a question of material wealth, to increase, even with coal at a high price; and that there was such an increase at the time we were writing, although coal was dear. These are certainly very different propositions from the curious deduction which Mr. Ruskin makes from a single short sentence in a long article, the purport of which was clear enough. There is certainly no cause for astonishment at the blunders which Mr. Ruskin makes in political economy and finance, if his method is to rush at conclusions without patiently studying the drift of what he reads. Oddly enough, it may be added, there is one way in which dear coal *may* increase the capital of a country like England, though Mr. Ruskin seems to think the thing impossible. We are exporters of coal, and of course the higher the price the more the foreigner has to pay for it. So far, therefore, the increased price is advantageous, although on balance, every one knows, it is better to have cheap coal than dear.”

11. Let me at once assure the Editor of the *Daily News* that I meant him no disrespect in choosing a “long” article for animadversion. I had imagined that the length of his articles was owing rather to his sense of the importance of their subject than to the impulsiveness and rash splendour of his writing. I feel, indeed, how much the consolation it conveys is enhanced by this fervid eloquence; and even when I had my pocket picked the other day on Tower Hill, it might have soothed my ruffled temper to reflect that, in the beautiful language of the *Daily News*, the most important effect of that operation was “to alter the distribution of the proceeds of production in the community, and not to diminish the

¹ [May 2, 1873.]

² [See Letter 29, § 2 (p. 528).]

amount of it." But the Editor ought surely to be grateful to me for pointing out that, in his present state of mind, he may not only make one mistake in a long letter, but two in a short one. Their object, declares the *Daily News* (if I would but have taken the pains to appreciate their efforts), "was to show that it was quite possible for real production to increase, even with coal at a high price." It is quite possible for the production of newspaper articles to increase, and of many other more useful things. The speculative public probably knew, without the help of the *Daily News*, that they might still catch a herring, even if they could not broil it. But the rise of price in coal itself was simply caused by the diminution of its production, or by roguery.

Again, the intelligent journal observes that "dear coal may increase the capital of a country like England, because we are exporters of coal, and the higher the price, the more the foreigner has to pay for it." We are exporters of many other articles besides coal, and foreigners are beginning to be so foolish, finding the prices rise, as, instead of "having more to pay for them," never to buy them. The *Daily News*, however, is under the impression that over, instead of under, selling, is the proper method of competition in foreign markets, which is not a received view in economical circles.

I observe that the *Daily News*, referring with surprise to the conclusions which unexpectedly, though incontrovertibly, resulted from their enthusiastic statement, declare they need hardly tell their readers they "wrote no nonsense of that kind." But I cannot but feel, after their present better-considered effusion, that it would be perhaps well on their part to warn their readers how many other kinds of nonsense they will in future be justified in expecting.

LETTER 31¹

WAT OF HARDEN

1. OF the four great English tale-tellers whose dynasties have set or risen within my own memory—Miss Edgeworth, Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray²—I find myself greatly at pause in conjecturing, however dimly, what essential good has been effected by them, though they all had the best intentions. Of the essential mischief done by them, there is, unhappily, no doubt whatever. Miss Edgeworth made her morality so impertinent that, since her time, it has only been with fear and trembling that any good novelist has ventured to show the slightest bias in favour of the Ten Commandments. Scott made his romance so ridiculous, that, since his day, one can't help fancying helmets were always pasteboard, and horses were always hobby. Dickens made everybody laugh, or cry, so that they could not go about their business till they had got their faces in wrinkles; and Thackeray settled like a meat-fly on whatever one had got for dinner, and made one sick of it.

That, on the other hand, at least Miss Edgeworth and Scott have indeed some inevitable influence for good, I am the more disposed to think, because nobody now will read them.³ Dickens is said to have made people good-natured. If he did,

¹ [The portrait of Scott (Plate XIII.) is from a slight pencil sketch by Sir F. Chantrey. It is inscribed "Sir Walter Scott, Bart., 19th April, 1820. F. Chantrey." The sketch must have been made during Scott's sittings to the sculptor for the marble bust, presented to the poet (of which the Duke of Wellington had a replica). This pencil sketch was presented to the Oxford University Galleries by Ruskin's friend, Henry Willett, of Brighton. For a reference to the likeness, see Letter 32, § 23 (p. 602).]

² [For other passages in which Ruskin criticises the "morality" of Miss Edgeworth, see *Ethics of the Dust*, §§ 78, 79 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 299, 300), and *Proserpina*, i. ch. vi. § 1 (Vol. XXV. p. 282); and compare Letter 47, § 5 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 192). For his view of Thackeray, see Vol. XVIII. p. 130 *n.*]

³ [For a criticism of this statement, so far as it relates to Scott, see Letter 32, § 23 (p. 602).]



WALTER of the BORDER-LAND.

Facsimile of Chantrey's sketch from life.

I wonder what sort of natures they had before! Thackeray is similarly asserted to have chastised and repressed flunkeydom,—which it greatly puzzles me to hear, because, as far as I can see, there isn't a carriage now left in all the Row with anybody sitting inside it: the people who ought to have been in it are, every one, hanging on behind the carriage in front.

2. What good these writers have done, is therefore, to me, I repeat, extremely doubtful. But what good Scott has in him to do, I find no words full enough to tell. His ideal of honour in men and women is inbred, indisputable;¹ fresh as the air of his mountains; firm as their rocks. His conception of purity in woman is even higher than Dante's; his reverence for the filial relation, as deep as Virgil's; his sympathy universal;—there is no rank or condition of men of which he has not shown the loveliest aspect; his code of moral principle is entirely defined, yet taught with a reserved subtlety like Nature's own, so that none but the most earnest readers perceive the intention: and his opinions on all practical subjects are final; the consummate decisions of accurate and inevitable commonsense, tempered by the most graceful kindness.

3. That he had the one weakness—I will not call it fault—of desiring to possess more and more of the actual soil of the land which was so rich to his imagination, and so dear to his pride; and that, by this postern-gate of idolatry, entered other taints of folly and fault, punished by supreme misery, and atoned for by a generosity and solemn courage more admirable than the unsullied wisdom of his happier days, I have ceased to lament: for all these things make him only the more perfect to us as an example, because he is not exempt from common failings, and has his appointed portion in common pain.

4. I said we were to learn from him the true relations of Master and Servant;² and learning these, there is little left for us to learn; but, on every subject of immediate

¹ [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 59 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 115, 116).]

² [Letter 29, § 5 (p. 531).]

and vital interest to us, we shall find, as we study his life and words, that both are as authoritative as they are clear. Of his impartiality of judgment, I think it is enough, once for all, to bid you observe that, though himself, by all inherited disposition and accidental circumstances, prejudiced in favour of the Stuart cause, the aristocratic character, and the Catholic religion,—the only perfectly noble character in his first novel is that of a Hanoverian colonel,* and the most exquisitely finished and heroic character in all his novels, that of a Presbyterian milkmaid.

5. But before I press any of his opinions—or I ought rather to say, knowledges—upon you, I must try to give you some idea of his own temper and life. His temper, I say; the mixture of clay, and the fineness of it, out of which the Potter made him; and of his life, what the power of the Third Fors had been upon it, before his own hands could make or mar his fortune, at the turn of tide.¹ I shall do this merely by abstracting and collating (with comment) some passages out of Lockhart's life of him; and adding any elucidatory pieces which Lockhart refers to, or which I can find myself, in his own works, so that you may be able to read them easily together. And observe, I am not writing, or attempting to write, another life of Scott; but only putting together bits of Lockhart's life in the order which my side-notes on the pages indicate for my own reading; and I shall use Lockhart's words, or my own, indifferently, and without the plague of inverted

* Colonel Talbot, in *Waverley*; I need not, surely, name the other:—note only that, in speaking of heroism, I never admit into the field of comparison the merely stage-ideals of impossible virtue and fortune—(Ivanhoe, Sir Kenneth,² and the like)—but only persons whom Scott meant to be real. Observe also that with Scott, as with Titian, you must often expect the most tender pieces of completion in subordinate characters.

¹ [See *Julius Cæsar*, Act iv. sc. 3.]

² [For Colonel Talbot, compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 59 (Vol. XVIII. p. 115 n.); and for Jeanie Deans, in *The Heart of Midlothian*, *ibid.*; *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 113; and *Fors*, Letters 42, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 98); 91, § 4, and 92, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 441, 449). To Sir Kenneth of the Couchant Leopard, Prince Royal of Scotland, Ruskin does not elsewhere specifically refer, though for a general criticism of *The Talisman*, see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 12.]

commas. Therefore, if anything is wrong in my statement, Lockhart is not answerable for it; but my own work in the business will nevertheless be little more than what the French call putting dots on the i's,¹ and adding such notes as may be needful for our present thought.

6. Sir Walter was born on the 15th August, 1771, in a house belonging to his father, at the head of the College Wynd, Edinburgh. The house was pulled down to make room for the northern front of the New College; and the wise people of Edinburgh then built, for I don't know how many thousand pounds, a small vulgar Gothic steeple on the ground, and called it the "Scott Monument."² There seems, however, to have been more reason than usual for the destruction of the College Wynd, for Scott was the first survivor of seven children born in it to his father, and appears to have been saved only by the removal to the house in George's Square,* which his father always afterwards occupied; and by being also sent soon afterwards into the open country. He was of purest Border race—seventh in descent from Wat of Harden and the Flower of Yarrow. Here are his six ancestors, from the sixteenth century, in order:—

1. Walter Scott (Auld Wat) of Harden.
2. Sir William Scott of Harden.
3. Walter Scott of Raeburn.
4. Walter Scott, Tutor of Raeburn.
5. Robert Scott of Sandy-Knowe.
6. Walter Scott, citizen of Edinburgh.

* I beg my readers to observe that I never flinch from stating a fact that tells against me. This George's Square is in that New Town of Edinburgh³ which I said, in the first of these letters, I should like to destroy to the ground.⁴

¹ ["Mettre les points sur les i": see Littré, under "I."]

² [Ruskin here confuses the New College, which is the United Free Church College and Assembly Hall, and which stands at the head of the Mound overlooking the Scott Monument, with the University. The house, in which Walter Scott was born, was pulled down in 1871 to improve what is now Chambers Street, and to open up the view of the northern front of the University. For the cost, and other particulars, of the Monument, see the note to Ruskin's early paper on the subject at Vol. I. p. 264.]

³ [But see below, Letter 32, § 23 (p. 602).]

⁴ [See above, p. 15.]

7. I will note briefly what is important respecting each of these.

(I.) Wat of Harden. Harden means “the ravine of hares.” It is a glen down which a little brook flows to join the river Borthwick, itself a tributary of the Teviot, six miles west of Hawick, and just opposite Branxholm. So long as Sir Walter retained his vigorous habits, he made a yearly pilgrimage to it, with whatever friend happened to be his guest at the time.*

Wat’s wife, Mary, the Flower of Yarrow, is said to have chiefly owed her celebrity to the love of an English captive,—a beautiful child whom she had rescued from the tender mercies† of Wat’s moss-troopers,¹ on their return from a Cumberland foray. The youth grew up under her protection, and is believed to have written both the words and music of many of the best songs of the Border.‡

This story is evidently the germ of that of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, only the captivity is there of a Scottish boy to the English. The lines describing Wat of Harden are in the 4th canto,²—

“Marauding chief; his sole delight
The moonlight raid, the morning fight.
Not even the Flower of Yarrow’s charms,
In youth, might tame his rage for arms;
And still in age he spurned at rest,
And still his brows the helmet pressed,
Albeit the blanchèd locks below
Were white as Dinlay’s spotless snow.” §

* Lockhart’s *Life*, 8vo. Edinburgh: Cadell, 1837. Vol. i. p. 65. In my following footnotes I shall only give volume and page—the book being understood.

† i. 67. What sort of tender mercies were to be expected?

‡ His name unknown, according to Leyden,³ is perhaps discoverable; but what songs? Though composed by an Englishman, have they the special character of Scottish music?

§ Dinlay;—where?⁴

¹ [On this word, see *Proserpina*, i. ch. i. § 13 (Vol. XXV. p. 213).]

² [Stanza ix.]

³ [John Leyden (1775–1811), the physician and poet who assisted Scott with the earlier volumes of the *Border Minstrelsy*, and appears frequently in the earlier part of Lockhart’s *Life of Scott*. See the verses by Leyden on “the nameless minstrel” in Lockhart, vol. i. p. 67.]

⁴ [In Liddesdale: see Letter 32, § 24 (p. 602).]

8. With these, read also the answer of the lady of Branksome, 26th and 27th stanzas,—

“ ‘Say to your lords of high emprize,
Who war on women and on boys,—
For the young heir of Branksome’s line,
God be his aid; and God be mine:
Through me no friend shall meet his doom;
Here, while I live, no foe finds room.’ ”

Proud she looked round, applause to claim;
Then lightened Thirlstane’s eye of flame;
His bugle Wat of Harden blew.
Pensils* and pennons wide were flung,
To heaven the Border slogan rung,
‘St. Mary, for the young Buccleugh.’ ”

Let us stop here to consider what good there may be in all this for *us*. The last line, “St. Mary, for the young Buccleugh,” probably sounds absurd enough to you. You have nothing whatever to do, you think, with either of these personages. You don’t care for any St. Mary; and still less for any, either young or old, Buccleugh?

Well, I’m sorry for you:—but if you don’t care for St. Mary, the wife of Joseph, do you care at all for St. Mary-Anne, the wife of Joe? Have you any faith in the holiness of your own wives, who are here, in flesh and blood? or do you verily wish them, as Mr. Mill† would have it—

* Pensil, a flag hanging down—“pensile.” Pennon, a stiff flag sustained by a cross arm, like the broad part of a weathercock. Properly, it is the stiff-set feather of an arrow.

“Ny autres riens qui d’or ne fust,
Fors que les pennons et le fust.”

Romance of the Rose, of Love’s arrows: Chaucer translates,

“For all was gold, men might see,
Out-take the feathers and the tree.”¹

† People would not have me speak any more harm of Mr. Mill, because he’s dead,² I suppose? Dead or alive, all’s one to me, with mischievous persons; but alas! how very grievously all’s two to me, when they are helpful and noble ones.

¹ [Lines 947, 948 in Chaucer.]

² [The death of Mill had just occurred (May 8, 1873).]

sacrifice all pretence to saintship, as to holy days—to follow “some more lucrative occupation than that of nursing the baby”?¹ And you don’t care for the young Buccleugh? Cut away the cleugh, then, and read the Buc backwards. Do you care for your own cub as much as Sir Walter would have cared for his own beast? (see, farther on, how he takes care of his wire-haired terrier, Spice²), or as any beast cares for *its* cub? Or do you send your poor little brat to make money for you, like your wife; as though a cock should send his hen and chickens to pick up what they could for *him*; and it were the usual law of nature that nestlings should feed the parent bird? If that be your way of liberal modern life, believe me, the Border faith in its Mary and its master, however servile, was not benighted in comparison.

9. But the Border morals? “Marauding chief, whose sole delight,” etc.³ Just look for the passages indicated under the word “theft” in my fine new index to the first two volumes of *Fors*.⁴ I will come back to this point: for the present, in order to get it more clearly into your minds, remember that the Flower of Yarrow was the chieftainess to whom the invention of serving the empty dish with two spurs in it, for hint to her husband that he must ride for his next dinner, is first ascribed. Also, for comparison of the English customs of the same time, read this little bit of a letter of Lord Northumberland’s to Henry VIII. in 1533:*—

“Please it your most gracious Highness to be advertised that my comptroller, with Raynold Carnaby, desired licence of me to invade the realm of Scotland, to the annoyance of your Highness’s enemies, and so they did meet upon Monday before night, at Warhope, upon North Tyne

* Out of the first of Scott’s notes to the Lay,⁵ but the note is so long that careless readers are sure to miss the points; also I give modern spelling for greater ease.

¹ [See Letter 24, § 20 (p. 431).]

² [See Scott’s letter to Miss Edgeworth, dated February 24, 1824, in Lockhart’s *Life*, vol. v. p. 342.]

³ [See above, § 7.]

⁴ [See Vol. XXIX.]

⁵ [Note D.]

water, to the number of 1500 men: and so invaded Scotland, at the hour of eight of the clock at night, and actively did set upon a town* called Branxholm, where the Lord of Buccleugh dwelleth, albeit that knight he was not at home. And so they burnt the said Branxholm, and other towns, and had ordered themselves so that sundry of the said Lord Buccleugh's servants, who did issue forth of his gates, were taken prisoners. They did not leave one house, one stack of corn, nor one sheaf without the gate of the said Lord Buccleugh unburnt; and so in the breaking of the day receded homeward. And thus, thanks be to God, your Highness's subjects, about the hour of twelve of the clock the same day, came into this, your Highness's realm, bringing with them above forty Scotsmen prisoners, one of them named Scott, of the surname and kin of the said Lord of Buccleugh. And of his household they brought also three hundred nowte" (cattle), "and above sixty horses and mares, keeping in safety from loss or hurt all your said Highness's subjects."

They had met the evening before on the North Tyne, under Carter Fell (you will find the place partly marked as "Plashett's coal-fields" in modern atlases¹); rode and marched their twenty miles to Branxholm; busied themselves there, as we hear, till dawn, and so back thirty miles down Liddesdale,—a fifty miles' ride and walk altogether, all finished before twelve on Tuesday: besides what pillaging and burning had to be done.

10. Now, but one more point is to be noticed, and we will get on with our genealogy.

After this bit of the Earl's letter, you will better understand the speech of the Lady of Buccleugh, defending her castle in the absence of her lord,² and with her boy taken prisoner. And now look back to my 25th letter, for I want you not to forget Alice of Salisbury.³ King Edward's first sight of her was just after she had held her castle exactly in this way, against a raid of the Scots in Lord Salisbury's absence. Edward rode night and day to help her; and the Scots besiegers, breaking up at his approach, this is what follows, which you may receive on

* A walled group of houses: tynen, Saxon, to shut in (Johnson).⁴

¹ [Plashetts and Tynehead, a parish near Falstone containing many coal mines.]

² [See above, § 8.]

³ [Letter 25, § 23 (p. 469).]

⁴ [On the defence of towns, see *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 165 (Vol. XVIII. p. 517 n.).]

Froissart's telling as the vital and effectual truth of the matter. A modern English critic will indeed always and instantly extinguish this vital truth; there is in it something inherently detestable to him; thus the editor of Johnes' Froissart prefaces this very story with "the romance—for it is nothing more."¹ Now the labyrinth of Crete, and the labyrinth of Woodstock,² are indeed out of sight; and of a real Ariadne or Rosamond, a blockhead might be excused for doubting; but St. George's Chapel at Windsor (or Winde-Rose, as Froissart prettily transposes it, like Adriane for Ariadne) is a very visible piece of romance; and the stones of it were laid, and the blue riband which your queen wears on her breast is fastened, to this day, by the hand of Alice of Salisbury.

"So the King came at noon; and angry he was to find the Scots gone; for he had come in such haste that all his people and horses were deadtired and toiled. So every one went to rest; and the King, as soon as he was disarmed, took ten or twelve knights with him, and went towards the castle to salute the Countess, and see how the defence had been made. So soon as the Lady of Salisbury knew of the King's coming, she made all the gates be opened" (inmost and outmost at once), "and came out, so richly dressed that every one was wonderstruck at her, and no one could cease looking at her, nor from receiving, as if they had been her mirrors, the reflection of her great nobleness, and her great beauty, and her gracious speaking and bearing herself. When she came to the King, she bowed down to the earth, over against him, in thanking him for his help, and brought him to the castle, to delight him and honour him—as she who well knew how to do it. Every one looked at her, even to amazement, and the King himself could not stop looking at her, for it seemed to him that in the world never was lady who was so much to be loved as she. So they went hand in hand into the castle, and the Lady led him first into the great hall, and then into her own chamber (what the French now call a pouting-room, but the ladies of that day either smiled or frowned, but did not pout³), which was nobly furnished, as befitted such lady. And always the King looked at the gentle Lady, so hard that she became all ashamed. When he had looked at her a long while, he went away to a window, to lean upon it, and began to

¹ [See vol. i. p. 102 *n.* of the edition of 1839; the editor's name is not given.]

² [For the labyrinth of Woodstock and Fair Rosamond, see Letter 3, § 9 (p. 53 *n.*)]

³ ["Boudoir," meaning literally a place to pout, or sulk, in (*bouder*, to pout). So Kingsley in *Yeast* (ii. 24): "Argemone was busy in her boudoir (too often a true boudoir to her)."]

think deeply. The Lady went to cheer the other knights and squires; then ordered the dinner to be got ready, and the room to be dressed. When she had devised all, and commanded her people what seemed good to her, she returned with a gladsome face before the King,¹—

in whose presence we must leave her yet awhile, having other matters to attend to.²

11. So much for Wat of Harden's life then, and his wife's. We shall get a little faster on with the genealogy after this fair start.

(II.) Sir William Scott of Harden.

Wat's eldest son; distinguished by the early favour of James VI.

In his youth, engaging in a foray on the lands of Sir Gideon Murray of Elibank, and being taken prisoner, Murray offers him choice between being hanged, or marrying the

¹ [Ruskin's translation: see ch. lxxvi. in vol. i. pp. 198–200 of Johnes.]

² [Nor did Ruskin return to the story, except in passing allusion (see Letter 45, § 17, and 54, § 25, Vol. XXVIII. pp. 163 *n.*, 357). The story may here be completed in order to make his earlier references (Letter 25, §§ 13, 23) intelligible. Having described in ch. lxxv. (Johnes' edition) how the Countess held Wark Castle against the Scots, Froissart goes on in ch. lxxvi. to tell how "the King of England is enamoured with the Countess." On returning "with a gladsome face before the King, 'Dear sir,' she said, 'what are you musing on? So much meditating is not proper for you, saving your grace; you ought rather to be in high spirits, for having driven your enemies before you. . . . 'Oh, dear lady,' said the King, 'other things touch my heart and lie there than what you think of: for, in truth, the elegant carriage, the perfections and beauties which I have seen you possess, have very much surprised me, and have so deeply impressed my heart, that my happiness depends on meeting a return from you to my flame, which no denial can ever extinguish.' 'Sweet sir,' replied the Countess, 'do not amuse yourself in laughing at, or tempting me; for I cannot believe you mean what you have just said, or that so noble and gallant a prince as you are would ever think to dishonour me or my husband, who is so valiant a knight, who has served you faithfully, and who, on your account, now lies in prison. Certainly, sir, this would not add to your glory; nor would you be the better for it. Such a thought has never once entered my mind, and I trust in God it never will, for any man living; and, if I were so culpable, it is you who ought to blame me, and have my body punished, through strict justice.'"]

On this story by Froissart (who adds later that the King arranged for fêtes in London at which the Countess was present, vol. iv. p. 125 in Lettenhove's edition), a popular tale was founded connecting the Countess of Salisbury with the Order of the Garter (founded 1349). She dropped her garter, it is said, at Court; and on some of the courtiers making jests on the subject, the King picked up the garter, fastened it on his knee, saying "Hon y soit qui mal y pense," and thereupon resolved to establish the Order.

Ruskin accepts both stories as historical; but there are difficulties in the way. For a statement of the reasons, chronological and other, which throw doubt on Froissart's story of the scene at Wark Castle, see W. Longman's *History of the Life and Times of Edward the Third*, 1869, vol. i. pp. 200–202: "Although it is

plainest of his daughters. The contract of marriage, written on the parchment of a drum, is still in possession of the family of Harden.*

This is Lockhart's reading of the circumstances, and I give his own statement of them in the note below. But his assumption of the extreme plainness of the young lady, and of the absolute worldly-mindedness of the mother, are both examples of the modern manner of reading traditions, out of which some amusement may be gathered by looking only at them on the grotesque side, and interpreting that grotesqueness ungenerously. There may, indeed, be farther

* i. 68. "The indignant laird was on the point of desiring his prisoner to say a last prayer, when his more considerate dame interposed milder counsels, suggesting that the culprit was born to a good estate, and that they had three unmarried daughters. Young Harden, not it is said without hesitation, agreed to save his life by taking the plainest of the three off their hands."

quite possible that Edward may have fallen in love with the Countess of Salisbury at some time or other, yet it is certain that Froissart's story of the time when, and circumstances under which he did so, is entirely devoid of foundation." This is also the opinion of the author of the best edition of Froissart: see (*Euvres de Froissart publiées avec les variations des divers manuscrits*, par M. le Baron Kervyn de Lettenhove (Brussels, 1867, etc.), vol. xxiii. pp. 101–107. Ruskin gets the name "Alice" of Salisbury (not given in Johnes's translation) from an earlier passage in Froissart, who, in describing the services rendered to the King by William de Montacute, first Earl of Salisbury (1337), says: "et pour lui rémunérer ses bons services, li rois li donna le jone contesse de Salebrin, madame Aélis, dont il tenoit la terre en se main et en garde, et estoit li une des plus belles jones dames del monde" (vol. ii. p. 420, Lettenhove). The name of Montacute's wife, however, was not Alice, but Catharine, daughter of Sir William Grandison.

With regard to the story of the garter, it may be noted that Froissart, who notes the institution of the Order, does not mention the tale which afterwards became popular. It is first given, nearly two hundred years after the event, by Polydore Vergil (1534) in his *Historia Anglica* (see vol. ii. p. 964, 1603 edition), who mentions no name in connexion with it. Later writers, in accepting the story, are at variance as to which Countess of Salisbury was the heroine of it; some naming Catharine Montacute (Froissart's "Alice"), others Joan, the Fair Maid of Kent. Heylyn (*Cosmographie and History of the Whole World*, 1621, vol. i. p. 286), Ashmole (*Order of the Garter*, 1672, p. 179), and Guillim (*Display of Heraldrie*, p. 171) reject the tale. "It is," says Heylyn, "a vain and idle Romance, derogatory both to the Founder and the Order, first published by Pol. Virgil, a stranger to the affairs of England, and by him taken upon no better ground than fama vulgi, the tradition of the common people, too trifling a foundation to so great a building." Ruskin probably followed pp. 67–68, vol. ii. of *The Theater of Honour and Knighthood; or, A Compendious Chronicle and Historie of the whole Christian World*. Written in French, by Andrew Favine. London: Printed by William Jaggard, 1623 (an English translation of the French original of 1620). Favine there accepts Vergil's story, and gives the passages from Froissart.]

ground than Lockhart has thought it worth while to state for his colour of the facts; but all that can be justly gathered from those he has told is that, Sir Gideon having determined the death of his troublesome neighbour, Lady Murray interfered to save his life: and could not more forcibly touch her husband's purpose than by reminding him that hostility might be better ended in alliance than in death.

The sincere and careful affection which Sir William of Harden afterwards shows to all his children by the Maid of Elibank, and his naming one of them after her father, induce me still farther to trust in the fairer reading of the tradition. I should, indeed, have been disposed to attach some weight, on the side of the vulgar story, to the curiously religious tendencies in Sir William's children, which seem to point to some condition of feeling in the mother, arising out of despised life. Women are made nobly religious by the possession of extreme beauty, and morbidly so by distressed consciousness of the want of it; but there is no reason for insisting on this probability, since both the Christian and surname of Sir Gideon Murray point to his connection with the party in Scotland which was at this time made strong in battle by religious faith, and melancholy in peace by religious passion.

12. (III.) Walter Scott, first Laird of Raeburn; third son of Sir William and this enforced bride of Elibank. They had four sons altogether; the eldest, William, becomes the second Sir William of Harden; their father settled the lands of Raeburn upon Walter; and of Highchester on his second son, Gideon, named, after the rough father-in-law, of Elibank.

Now about this time (1657), George Fox comes into Scotland: boasting that "as he first set his horse's feet upon Scottish ground he felt the seed of grace to sparkle about him like innumerable sparks of fire."¹ And he forthwith succeeds in making Quakers of Gideon, Walter, and Walter's wife. This is too much for Sir William of Harden, the

¹ [*Heart of Midlothian*, Dedication, n.]

eldest brother, who not only remains a staunch Jacobite, but obtains order from the Privy Council of Scotland to imprison his brother and brother's wife; that they may hold no further converse with Quakers, and also to "separate and take away their children, being two sons and a daughter, from their family and education, and to breed them in some convenient place."¹ Which is accordingly done; and poor Walter, who had found pleasantly conversible Quakers in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, is sent to Jedburgh, with strict orders to the Jedburgh magistrates to keep Quakers out of his way. The children are sent to an orthodox school by Sir William; and of the daughter I find nothing further; but the two sons both became good scholars, and were so effectually cured of Quakerism, that the elder (I don't find his Christian name), just as he came of age, was killed in a duel with Pringle of Crichton, fought with swords in a field near Selkirk—ever since called, from the Raeburn's death, "the Raeburn meadow-spot";—and the younger, Walter, who then became "Tutor of Raeburn," *i.e.*, guardian to his infant nephew, intrigued in the cause of the exiled Stuarts till he had lost all he had in the world—ran a narrow risk of being hanged—was saved by the interference of Anne, Duchess of Buccleugh—founded a Jacobite club in Edinburgh, in which the conversation is said to have been maintained in Latin—and wore his beard unclipped to his dying day, vowing no razor should pass on it until the return of the Stuarts, whence he held his Border name of "Beardie."

It is only when we remember how often this history must have dwelt on Sir Walter's mind that we can understand the tender subtlety of design with which he has completed, even in the weary time of his declining life, the almost eventless story of *Redgauntlet*, and given, as we

¹ [See *Heart of Midlothian*, Prefatory Letter, in the notes to which Scott gives the Orders of the Privy Council (June 20 and July 5, 1665) anent the education by Scott of Raeburn's children. Ruskin quotes from the second of these Orders, and it is curious that he omitted to notice that the name of the elder son, William, is given both in the earlier Order and in the note itself, as also in Scott's autobiography in the first chapter of Lockhart (vol. i. p. 4). The daughter's name, Isabel, is also given in the Order of June 20.]

shall presently see,¹ in connection with it, the most complete, though disguised, portion of his own biography.

13. (IV.) Beardie. I find no details of Beardie's life given by Scott, but he was living at Leasudden when his landlord, Scott of Harden,* living at Mertoun House, addressed to him the lines given in the note to the introduction to the sixth canto of *Marmion*, in which Scott himself partly adopts the verses, writing from Mertoun House to Richard Heber.

“For course of blood, our proverbs dream,
Is warmer than the mountain stream.
And thus my Christmas still I hold
Where my great grandsire came of old,†
'With amber beard and flaxen hair,
And reverend apostolic air,
The feast and holytide to share,
And mix sobriety with wine,
And honest mirth with thoughts divine.’
Small thought was his, in after-time,
E'er to be hitched into a rhyme.
The simple sire could only boast
That he was loyal to his cost,
The banished race of kings revered,
And lost his land—but kept his beard,—“

“a mark of attachment,” Scott adds in his note, “which I suppose had been common during Cromwell's usurpation; for in Cowley's *Cutter of Coleman Street* one drunken cavalier upbraids another that when he was not able to pay a barber, he affected to ‘wear a beard for the King.’ ”

Observe, here, that you must always be on your guard, in reading Scott's notes or private letters, against his way of kindly laughing at what he honours more deeply than he likes to confess. The house in which Beardie died was still standing when Sir Walter wrote his autobiography (1808), at the north-east entrance of the churchyard of Kelso.

He left three sons. Any that remain of the family of

* Eldest son, or grandson, of Sir William Scott of Harden, the second in our genealogy.

† Came by invitation from his landlord, Scott of Harden.

¹ [See below, p. 585 n.]

the elder are long since settled in America (male heirs extinct). James Scott, well known in India as one of the original settlers of Prince of Wales Island, was a son of the youngest, who dies at Lasswade, in Midlothian (first mention of Scott's Lasswade).

14. But of the second son, Scott's grandfather, we have to learn much.

(v.) Robert Scott of Sandy-Knowe, second son of Beardie. I cannot shorten Scott's own account of the circumstances which determined his choice of life:—

"My grandfather was originally bred to the sea, but being shipwrecked near Dundee in his trial voyage, he took such a sincere dislike to that element, that he could not be persuaded to a second attempt. This occasioned a quarrel between him and his father, who left him to shift for himself. Robert was one of those active spirits to whom this was no misfortune. He turned Whig upon the spot, and fairly abjured his father's politics and his learned poverty. His chief and relative, Mr. Scott of Harden, gave him a lease of the farm of Sandy-Knowe, comprehending the rocks in the centre of which Smailholm or Sandy-Knowe Tower is situated. He took for his shepherd an old man called Hogg, who willingly lent him, out of respect to his family, his whole savings, about £30, to stock the new farm. With this sum, which it seems was at the time sufficient for the purpose, the master and servant* set off to purchase a stock of sheep at Whitsun-tryste, a fair held on a hill near Wooler, in Northumberland. The old shepherd went carefully from drove to drove, till he found a hirsel likely to answer their purpose, and then returned to tell his master to come up and conclude the bargain. But what was his surprise to see him galloping a mettled hunter about the race-course, and to find he had expended the whole stock in this extraordinary purchase! Moses' bargain of green spectacles did not strike more dismay into the Vicar of Wakefield's family than my grandfather's rashness into the poor old shepherd. The thing, however, was irretrievable, and they returned without the sheep. In the course of a few days, however, my grandfather, who was one of the best horsemen of his time, attended John Scott of Harden's hounds on this same horse, and displayed him to such advantage that he sold him for double the original price. The farm was now stocked in earnest, and the rest of my grandfather's career was that of successful industry. He was one of the first who were active in the cattle trade, afterwards carried to such an extent between the Highlands of Scotland and the leading counties in England, and by his droving transactions acquired a considerable sum of money. He was a man of middle stature, extremely active, quick, keen, and fiery in his temper, stubbornly honest,

* Here, you see, our subject begins to purpose!¹

¹ [See Letter 29, § 5 (p. 531), and above, § 4.]

and so distinguished for his skill in country matters that he was the general referee in all points of dispute which occurred in the neighbourhood. His birth being admitted as gentle, gave him access to the best society in the county, and his dexterity in country sports, particularly hunting, made him an acceptable companion in the field as well as at the table.”¹

15. Thus, then, between Auld Wat of Harden, and Scott’s grandfather, we have four generations, numbering approximately a hundred and fifty years, from 1580 to 1730,* and in that time we have the great change in national manners from stealing cattle to breeding and selling them, which at first might seem a change in the way of gradually increasing honesty. But observe that this *first* cattle-dealer of our line is “*stubbornly* honest,” a quality which it would be unsafe to calculate upon in any dealer of our own days.

Do you suppose, then, that this honesty was a sudden and momentary virtue—a lightning flash of probity between the two darknesses of Auld Wat’s thieving and modern cozening?

Not so. That open thieving had no dishonesty in it whatsoever.² Far the contrary. Of all conceivable ways of getting a living, except by actual digging of the ground, this is precisely the honestest. All other gentlemanly professions but this have taint of dishonesty in them. Even the best—the physician’s—involves temptation to many forms of cozening. How many second-rate mediciners have lived, think you, on prescriptions of bread pills and rose-coloured water?—How many, even of leading physicians, owe all their success to skill unaided by pretence? Of clergymen, how many preach wholly what they know to be true without fear of their congregations? Of lawyers, of authors, of painters, what need we speak? These all, so far as they try to please the mob for their living, are

¹ *I give the round numbers for better remembering. Wat of Harden married the Flower of Yarrow in 1567; Robert of Sandy-Knowe married Barbara Haliburton in 1728.

¹ [Scott’s Autobiography in Lockhart’s *Life of Scott*, vol. i. p. 5, 6.]

² [Compare Letters 7, § 13; 14, § 1; and 22, § 20 (pp. 127, 243, 385).]

true cozeners,—unsound in the very heart's core. But Wat of Harden, setting my farm on fire, and driving off my cattle, is no rogue. An enemy, yes, and a spoiler; but no more a rogue than the rock eagles. And Robert the first cattle-dealer's honesty is directly *inherited from his race*, and notable as a virtue, not in opposition to *their* character, but to ours. For men become dishonest by occult trade, not by open rapine.

16. There are, nevertheless, some very definite faults in our pastoral Robert of Sandy-Knowe, which Sir Walter himself inherits and recognizes in his own temper, and which were in him severely punished. Of the rash investment of the poor shepherd's fortune we shall presently hear what Sir Walter thought.¹ Robert's graver fault, the turning Whig to displease his father, is especially to be remembered in connection with Sir Walter's frequent warnings against the sacrifice to momentary passion of what ought to be the fixed principles of youth. It has not been enough noticed that the design of his first and greatest story is to exhibit and reprehend, while it tenderly indicates the many grounds for forgiving, the change of political temper under circumstances of personal irritation.²

17. But in the virtues of Robert Scott, far outnumbering his failings, and above all in this absolute honesty and his contentment in the joy of country life, all the noblest roots of his grandson's character found their happy hold.

Note every syllable of the description of him given in the introduction to the third canto of *Marmion*:—

“Still, with vain fondness, could I trace
Anew each kind familiar face
That brightened at our evening fire;
From the thatched mansion's grey-haired sire,
Wise without learning, plain and good,
And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood;

¹ [The reference, although Ruskin does not return to the subject, is, no doubt, to the last chapter of Lockhart (vol. vii. p. 400), in which he states how Sir Walter was prone to trace his character to heredity: “he would point to ‘Honest Robine’ and say, ‘Blood will out:—my building and planting was but his buying the hunter before he stocked his sheep-walk over again.’”]

² [*Waverley*; compare Letter 61, § 10 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 495).]

Whose eye in age, quick, clear, and keen,
 Showed what in youth its glance had been;
 Whose doom discording neighbours sought,
 Content with equity unbought,
 To him, the venerable priest,
 Our frequent and familiar guest.”

Note, I say, every word of this. The faces “brightened at the evening fire,”—not a patent stove; fancy the difference in effect on the imagination, in the dark long nights of a Scottish winter, between the flickering shadows of fire-light, and utter gloom of a room warmed by a close stove!¹

“The *thatched* mansion’s.”—The coolest roof in summer, warmest in winter. Among the various mischievous things done in France, apparently by the orders of Napoleon III., but in reality by the foolish nation uttering itself through his passive voice (he being all his days only a feeble Pan’s pipe, or Charon’s boatswain’s whistle, instead of a true king²), the substitution of tiles for thatch on the cottages of Picardy was one of the most barbarous. It was to prevent fire, forsooth! and all the while the poor peasants could not afford candles, except to drip about over their church floors. See above, 6, § 9 [p. 109].

“Wise without learning.”—By no means able, this Border rider, to state how many different arrangements may be made of the letters in the word Chillianwallah.³ He contrived to exist, and educate his grandson to come to something, without that information.

“Plain, and good.”—Consider the value there is in that virtue of plainness—legibility, shall we say?—in the letters of character. A clear-printed man, readable at a glance. There are such things as illuminated letters of character also,—beautifully unreadable; but this legibility in the head of a family is greatly precious.

“And sprung of Scotland’s gentler blood.”—I am not sure if this is merely an ordinary expression of family pride,

¹ [Compare Letter 27, § 14 (p. 502).]

² [For Ruskin’s view of Napoleon III., see above, p. 171.]

³ [See Letter 30, § 9 (p. 558).]

or whether, which I rather think, Scott means to mark distinctly the literal gentleness and softening of character in his grandfather, and in the Lowland Scottish shepherd of his day, as opposed to the still fiery temper of the Highland clans—the blood being equally pure, but the race altogether softer and more Saxon. Even Auld Wat was fair-haired, and Beardie has “amber beard and flaxen hair.”

“Whose doom discording neighbours sought,
Content with equity unbought.”—

Here you have the exactly right and wise condition of the legal profession.

18. All good judging, and all good preaching, must be given gratis. Look back to what I have incidentally said of lawyers and clergy, as professional—that is to say, as living by their judgment, and sermons.¹ You will perhaps now be able to receive my conclusive statement, that all such professional sale of justice and mercy is a deadly sin. A man may sell the work of his hands, but not his equity, nor his piety. Let him live by his spade; and if his neighbours find him wise enough to decide a dispute between them, or if he is in modesty and simplicity able to give them a piece of pious advice, let him do so, in Heaven’s name, but not take a fee for it.

19. Finally, Robert Scott is a cattle-dealer, yet a gentleman, giving us the exact balance of right between the pride which refuses a simple employment, and the baseness which makes that simple employment disgraceful, because dishonest. Being wholly upright, he can sell cattle, yet not disgrace his lineage. We shall return presently to his house;² but must first complete, so as to get our range of view within due limits, the sketch of the entire ancestral line.

20. (vi.) Walter Scott, of George’s Square, Edinburgh, Scott’s father, born 1729.

¹ [See above, § 15; and compare Letter 75, § 21 (Vol. XXIX. p. 77).]

² [This, however, was not done; though the locality of Sandy Knowe generally is described in the next letter.]

He was the eldest son of Robert of Sandy-Knowe, and had three brothers and a sister, namely, Captain Robert Scott, in East India Service; Thomas Scott, cattle-dealer, following his father's business; a younger brother who died early, (also) in East India Service; and the sister Janet, whose part in Scott's education was no less constant, and perhaps more influential, than even his mother's. Scott's regard for one of his Indian uncles, and his regret for the other's death, are both traceable in the development of the character of Colonel Mannering; but of his uncle Thomas, and his aunt Jessie,¹ there is much more to be learned and thought on.

21. The cattle-dealer followed his father's business prosperously; was twice married—first to Miss Raeburn, and then to Miss Rutherford of Knowsouth—and retired, in his old age, upon a handsome independence. Lockhart, visiting him with Sir Walter, two years before the old man's death (he being then eighty-eight years old), thus describes him:—

“I thought him about the most venerable figure I had ever set my eyes on,—tall and erect, with long flowing tresses of the most silvery whiteness, and stockings rolled up over his knees, after the fashion of three generations back. He sat reading his Bible without spectacles, and did not, for a moment, perceive that any one had entered his room; but on recognizing his nephew he rose with cordial alacrity, kissing him on both cheeks, and exclaiming, ‘God bless thee, Walter, my man; thou hast risen to be great, but thou wast always good.’ His remarks were lively and sagacious, and delivered with a touch of that humour which seems to have been shared by most of the family. He had the air and manners of an ancient gentleman, and must in his day have been eminently handsome.”²

22. Next read Sir Walter Scott's entry made in his copy of the Haliburton Memorials:—

“The said Thomas Scott died at Monklaw, near Jedburgh, at two of the clock, 27th January, 1823, in the 90th year of his life, and fully possessed of all his faculties. He read till nearly the year before his

¹ [Ruskin, it may be noted, use the name “Janet,” and its common substitute “Jessie,” indiscriminately for Scott's aunt; by Lockhart and by Scott, she is always called “Janet.” Ruskin, no doubt, chooses to call her “Jessie,” so that both he and Scott may have an “Aunt Jessie”: for Ruskin's aunt, see Letter 63, § 11 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 546).]

² [Lockhart, vol. i. pp. 74, 75.]

death; and being a great musician on the Scotch pipes, had, when on his deathbed, a favourite tune played over to him by his son James, that he might be sure he left him in full possession of it. After hearing it, he hummed it over himself, and corrected it in several of the notes. The air was that called ‘Sour Plums in Galashiels.’¹ When barks and other tonics were given him during his last illness, he privately spat them into his handkerchief, saying, as he had lived all his life without taking doctor’s drugs, he wished to die without doing so.”²

No occasion whatever for deathbed repentances, you perceive, on the part of this old gentleman; no particular care even for the disposition of his handsome independence; but here is a bequest of which one must see one’s son in full possession—here is a thing to be well looked after, before setting out for heaven, that the tune of “Sour Plums in Galashiels” may still be played on the earth in an incorrupt manner, and no damnable French or English variations intruded upon the solemn and authentic melody thereof. His views on the subject of *Materia Medica* are also greatly to be respected.

“I saw more than once,” Lockhart goes on, “this respectable man’s sister (Scott’s aunt Janet), who had married her cousin Walter, Laird of Raeburn, thus adding a new link to the closeness of the family connection. She also must have been, in her youth, remarkable for personal attractions; as it was, she dwells on my memory as the perfect picture of an old Scotch lady, with a great deal of simple dignity in her bearing, but with the softest eye and the sweetest voice, and a charm of meekness and gentleness about every look and expression. She spoke her native language pure and undiluted, but without the slightest tincture of that vulgarity which now seems almost unavoidable in the oral use of a dialect so long banished from courts, and which has not been avoided by any modern writer who has ventured to introduce it, with the exception of Scott, and I may add, speaking generally, of Burns. Lady Raeburn, as she was universally styled, may be numbered with those friends of early days whom her nephew has alluded to in one of his prefaces as preserving what we may fancy to have been the old Scotch of Holyrood.”³

23. To this aunt, to his grandmother, his mother, and to the noble and most wise Rector of the High School of Edinburgh, Dr. Adam,⁴ Scott owed the essential part of his

¹ [See Letter 33, § 8 (p. 613).]

² [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 74.]

³ [*Ibid.*, p. 75.]

⁴ [Alexander Adam (1741–1801), author of a Latin Grammar, learnt by Ruskin (see *Præterita*, i. §§ 64, 92; ii. § 229 *n.*); see also the last-mentioned place for a conversation with Carlyle about Adam.]

“education,” which began in this manner. At eighteen months old his lameness came on, from sudden cold, bad air, and other such causes. His mother’s father, Dr. Rutherford, advised sending him to the country; he is sent to his grandfather’s at Sandy-Knowe, where he first becomes conscious of life, and where his grandmother and aunt Janet beautifully instruct, but partly spoil him. When he is eight years old, he returns to, and remains in his father’s house at George’s Square. And now note the following sentence:—

“I felt the change from being a single indulged brat, to becoming a member of a large family, very severely; for under the gentle government of my kind grandmother, who was meekness itself, and of my aunt, who, though of a higher temper, was exceedingly attached to me, I had acquired a degree of license which could not be permitted in a large family. I had sense enough, however, to bend my temper to my new circumstances; but such was the agony which I internally experienced, that I have guarded against nothing more, in the education of my own family, than against their acquiring habits of self-willed caprice and domination.”¹

The indulgence, however, no less than the subsequent discipline, had been indeed altogether wholesome for the boy, he being of the noble temper which is the better for having its way. The essential virtue of the training he had in his grandfather’s and father’s house, and his aunt Jessie’s at Kelso, I will trace further in next letter.

¹ [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 25.]

LETTER 32

SANDY-KNOWE

1. I DO not know how far I shall be able in this letter to carry you forward in the story of Scott's life; let me first, therefore, map its divisions clearly; for then, wherever we have to stop, we can return to our point in fit time.

First, note these three great divisions—essentially those of all men's lives, but singularly separate in his,—the days of youth, of labour, and of death.

Youth is properly the forming time—that in which a man makes himself, or is made, what he is for ever to be. Then comes the time of labour, when, having become the best he can be, he does the best he can do.¹ Then the time of death, which, in happy lives, is very short: but always a *time*. The ceasing to breathe is only the *end* of death.

2. Scott records the beginning of his own death in the following entry in his diary, which reviews the life then virtually ended:—

“*December 18th, 1825.**—What a life mine has been!—half educated, almost wholly neglected, or left to myself; stuffing my head with most nonsensical trash, and undervalued by most of my companions for a time; getting forward, and held a bold, clever fellow, contrary to the opinion of all who thought me a mere dreamer; broken-hearted for two years; my heart handsomely pieced again, but the crack will remain till my dying day. Rich and poor four or five times: once on the verge of ruin, yet opened a new source of wealth almost overflowing. Now to be broken in my pitch of pride . . . †

* Lockhart, vol. vi., pp. 164, 165.

† Portion omitted, short, and of no moment just now. I shall refer to it afterwards.²

¹ [Ruskin, in re-reading *Fors*, marked this passage for special emphasis.]

² [The omitted portion is “. . . pitch of pride, and nearly winged (unless good news should come), because London chooses to be in an uproar, and in the tumult of bulls and bears a poor inoffensive lion like myself is pushed to the wall. But what is to be the end of it? God knows; and so ends the catechism. Nobody in the end . . .” Ruskin does not refer to this passage afterwards. But the entry of

“Nobody in the end can lose a penny by me; that is one comfort. Men will think pride has had a fall. Let them indulge their own pride in thinking that my fall will make them higher, or seem so at least. I have the satisfaction to recollect that my prosperity has been of advantage to many, and to hope that some at least will forgive my transient wealth on account of the innocence of my intentions, and my in the real wish to do good to the poor. Sad hearts, too, at Darnick, and in the cottages of Abbotsford. I have half resolved never to see the place again. How could I tread my hall with such a diminished crest?—how live a poor, indebted man, where I was once the wealthy, the honoured? I was to have gone there on Saturday, in joy and prosperity, to receive my friends. My dogs will wait for me in vain. It is foolish, but the thoughts of parting from these dumb creatures have moved me more than any of the painful reflections I have put down. Poor things, I must get them kind masters! There may be yet those who, loving me, may love my dog because it has been mine. I must end these gloomy forebodings, or I shall lose the tone of mind with which men should meet distress. I feel my dogs’ feet on my knees; I hear them whining, and seeking me everywhere.”

He was fifty-four on the 15th August of that year, and spoke his last words—“God bless you all,”¹—on the 21st September, 1832: so ending seven years of death.

3. His youth, like the youth of all the greatest men, had been long, and rich in peace, and altogether accumulative and crescent. I count it to end with that pain which you see he remembers to his dying day, given him by—Lilias Redgauntlet, in October, 1796.² Whereon he sets himself to his work, which goes on nobly for thirty years, lapping over a little into the death-time* (*Woodstock* showing scarcely a trace of diminution of power³).

* The actual toil gone through by him is far greater during the last years than before—in fact it is unceasing, and mortal; but I count only as the true labour-time that which is healthy and fruitful.

“December 18, 1825” includes further *preceding* passages; and among them, the few lines quoted by Ruskin below, p. 598. It is probably to this earlier passage, and not to the later one, that Ruskin here intended to refer.]

¹ [Lockhart, vol. vii. p. 394.]

² [The allusion is to Scott’s early attachment to Williamina, daughter of Sir John and Lady Jane Stuart Belches of Inverary—ended by her marriage on October 12, 1796, to William Forbes (afterwards Sir William) of Pitsligo, a banker who proved to be one of Scott’s most generous and delicate friends in the time of his financial troubles. This love affair is noticed by Lockhart (i. pp. 161 *seq.*, 242–244), who says (i. p. 161) that “Scott himself unquestionably sat for his own picture in young Alan Fairford,” and suggests that Lilias Redgauntlet was in some respects drawn from his early love.]

³ [On *Woodstock* (finished March 26, 1826), compare *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 27 *n.*]

Count, therefore, thus:—

| | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Youth, twenty-five years | 1771–1796. |
| Labour-time, thirty years | 1796–1826. |
| Death-time, seven years | 1825–1832. |

4. The great period of mid-life is again divided exactly in the midst by the change of temper which made him accurate instead of fantastic in delineation, and therefore habitually write in prose rather than verse. The *lady of the Lake* is his last poem (1810). *Rokeby* (1812) is a versified novel; the *Lord of the Isles* is not so much. The steady legal and historical work of 1810–1814, issuing in the Essay on Scottish Judicature, and the Life of Swift, with preparation for his long-cherished purpose of an edition and Life of Pope* (“the true deacon of the craft,” as Scott often called him¹), confirmed, while they restrained and chastised, his imaginative power; and *Waverley* (begun in 1805) was completed in 1814. The apparently unproductive year of accurate study, 1811, divides the thirty years of mid-life in the precise centre, giving fifteen to song, and fifteen to history.

You may be surprised at my speaking of the novels as history. But Scott’s final estimate of his own work, given in 1830, is a perfectly sincere and perfectly just one (received, of course, with the allowance I have warned you always to make for his manner of reserve in expressing deep feelings²). “He replied † that in what he had done for Scotland as a writer, he was no more entitled to the merit which had been ascribed to him than the servant who scours the brasses to the credit of having made them;

* If my own life is spared a little longer, I can at least rescue Pope from the hands of his present scavenger biographer:³ but alas, for Scott’s loving hand and noble thought, lost to him!

† To the speech of Mr. Baillie of Jerviswoode; vol. vii., p. 221.

¹ [See Lockhart, vol. iii. p. 121.]

² [See above, p. 575.]

³ [See Letter 40, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 75–76). Ruskin, however, never found time to write on Pope.]

that he had perhaps been a good housemaid to Scotland, and given the country a 'rubbing up'; and in so doing might have deserved some praise for assiduity, and that was all." Distinguish, however, yourselves, and remember that Scott always tacitly distinguishes, between the industry which deserves praise, and the love which disdains it.¹ You do not praise Old Mortality for his love to his people; you praise him for his patience over a bit of moss in a troublesome corner.² Scott is the Old Mortality, not of tables of stone, but of the fleshly tables of the heart.³

5. We address ourselves to-day, then, to begin the analysis of the influences upon him during the first period of twenty-five years, during which he built and filled the treasure-house of his own heart. But this time of youth I must again map out in minor detail, that we may grasp it clearly.

(1.) From birth to three years old. In Edinburgh, a sickly child; permanent lameness contracted, 1771–1774.

(2.) Three years old to four. Recovers health at Sandy-Knowe. The dawn of conscious life, 1774–1775.

(3.) Four years old to five. At Bath, with his aunt, passing through London on the way to it. Learns to read, and much besides, 1775–1776.

(4.) Five years old to eight. At Sandy-Knowe. Pastoral life in its perfectness forming his character (an important though short interval at Prestonpans begins his interest in sea-shore), 1776–1779.

(5.) Eight years old to twelve. School life, under the Rector Adam, at High School of Edinburgh, with his aunt Janet to receive him at Kelso, 1779–1783.

(6.) Twelve years old to fifteen. College life, broken by illness, his uncle Robert taking good care of him at Rose-bank, 1783–1786.

(7.) Fifteen to twenty-five. Apprenticeship to his father,

¹ [Here, again, Ruskin in re-reading *Fors* marked this sentence with special emphasis.]

² [See the Introduction to *Old Mortality*.]

³ [2 Corinthians iii. 3.]

and law practice entered on. Study of human life, and of various literature in Edinburgh. His first fee of any importance expended on a silver taper-stand for his mother. 1786–1796.¹

6. You have thus “seven ages”² of his youth to examine, one by one; and this convenient number really comes out without the least forcing; for the virtual, though not formal, apprenticeship to his father—happiest of states for a good son—continues through all the time of his legal practice. I only feel a little compunction at crowding the Prestonpans time together with the second Sandy-Knowe time; but the former is too short to be made a period, though of infinite importance to Scott’s life. Hear how he writes of it,* revisiting the place fifty years afterwards:—

“I knew the house of Mr. Warroch, where we lived” (see where the name of the Point of Warroch in *Guy Mannering* comes from!³) “I recollected my juvenile ideas of dignity attendant on the large gate, a black arch which lets out upon the sea. I saw the Links where I arranged my shells upon the turf, and swam my little skiff in the pools. Many recollections of my kind aunt—of old George Constable—of Dalgetty” (you know *that* name also, don’t you?⁴), “a virtuous half-pay lieutenant, who swaggered his solitary walk on the parade, as he called a little open space before the same port.” (Before the black arch, Scott means, not the harbour.) And he falls in love also there, first—“as children love.”⁵

7. And now we can begin to count the rosary of his youth, bead by bead.

(1st period—From birth to three years old.)

* Vol. vii., p. 213.

¹ [Of these “seven ages,” Ruskin only deals methodically with three—(1) in this letter, §§ 7, 8; (2) §§ 9–12; (3) in Letter 33. For some additional passages, dealing with later periods, see Appendix 8, Vol. XXIX. pp. 541–545, where Ruskin makes period (7) last till 1799.]

² [*As You Like It*, Act ii. sc. 7.]

³ [*Guy Mannering*, ch. ix.]

⁴ [See *A Legend of Montrose*.]

⁵ [See Lockhart, vol. vii. p. 214.]

I have hitherto said nothing to you of his father or mother, nor shall I yet, except to bid you observe that they had been thirteen years married when Scott was born; and that his mother was the daughter of a physician, Dr. Rutherford, who had been educated under Boerhaave.¹ This fact might be carelessly passed by you in reading Lockhart; but if you will take the pains to look through Johnson's life of Boerhaave, you will see how perfectly pure and beautiful and strong every influence was, which, from whatever distance, touched the early life of Scott. I quote a sentence or two from Johnson's closing account of Dr. Rutherford's master:—

“There was in his air and motion something rough and artless, but so majestic and great at the same time, that no man ever looked upon him without veneration, and a kind of tacit submission to the superiority of his genius. The vigour and activity of his mind sparkled visibly in his eyes, nor was it ever observed that any change of his fortune, or alteration in his affairs, whether happy or unfortunate, affected his countenance.

“His greatest pleasure was to retire to his house in the country, where he had a garden stored with was all the herbs and trees which the climate would bear; here he used to enjoy his hours unmolested, and prosecute his studies without interruption.”*

* Not to break away from my text too long, I add one or two farther points worth notice, here:—

“Boerhaave lost none of his hours, but when he had attained one science attempted another. He added physick to divinity, chemistry to the mathematicks, and anatomy to botany.

“He knew the importance of his own writings to mankind, and lest he might, by a roughness and barbarity of style too frequent among men of great learning, disappoint his own intentions, and make his labours less useful, he did not neglect the politer arts of eloquence and poetry. Thus was his learning at once various and exact, profound and agreeable.

“But his knowledge, however uncommon, holds in his character, but the second place; his virtue was yet much more uncommon than his learning.

“Being once asked by a friend, who had often admired his patience under great provocations, whether he knew what it was to be angry, and by what means he had so entirely suppressed that impetuous and ungovernable passion, he answered, with the utmost frankness and sincerity, that he was naturally quick of resentment, but that he had, by daily prayer and meditation, at length attained to this mastery over himself.”

¹ [Dr. Herman Boerhaave (1668–1738), Professor of Physick at Leyden. For his life, see *Works of Samuel Johnson* (Oxford edition, 1825), vol. vi. Ruskin quotes (in his text and note) from pp. 289, 290.]

The school of medicine in Edinburgh owed its rise to this man, and it was by this pupil Dr. Rutherford's advice, as we saw, that the infant Walter's life was saved.¹ His mother could not nurse him, and his first nurse had consumption. To this, and the close air of the wynd, must be attributed the strength of the childish fever which took away the use of the right limb when he was eighteen months old. How many of your own children die, think you, or are wasted with sickness, from the same causes in our increasing cities? Scott's lameness, however, we shall find,² was, in the end, like every other condition of his appointed existence, helpful to him.

8. A letter from my dear friend, Dr. John Brown,* corrects (to my great delight) a mistake about George's Square I made in my last letter.³ It is not in the New Town, but in what was then a meadow district, sloping to the south from old Edinburgh; and the air of it would be almost as healthy for the child as that of the open country. But the change to George's Square, though it checked the illness, did not restore the use of the limb; the boy wanted exercise as well as air, and Dr. Rutherford sent him to his other grandfather's farm.

9. (II. 1774-1775.) The first year at Sandy-Knowe. In this year, note first his new nurse. The child had a maid sent with him to prevent his being an inconvenience to the family. This maid had left her heart behind her in Edinburgh (ill trusted), † and went mad in the solitude;—"tempted by the devil," she told Alison Wilson, the housekeeper, "to kill the child and bury it in the moss."

"Alison instantly took possession of my person," says

* See terminal notes [p. 602].

† Autobiography, p. 15 [in Lockhart, vol. i.].

¹ [See Letter 31, § 23 (p. 583).]

² [See pp. 591, 690.]

³ [Letter 31, § 6 (p. 565). For Ruskin's friendship with Dr. Brown, see Vol. XII. p. xx.]

Scott. And there is no more said of Alison in the autobiography.

But what the old farm-housekeeper must have been to the child, is told in the most finished piece of all the beautiful story of *Old Mortality*.¹ Among his many beautifully invented names, here is one not invented—very dear to him:—

“ ‘I wish to speak an instant with one Alison Wilson, who resides here,’ said Henry.

“ ‘She’s no at hame the day,’ answered Mrs. Wilson in propriâ persona—the state of whose head-dress perhaps inspired her with this direct mode of denying herself—‘and ye are but a mislear’d person to speer for her in sic a manner. Ye might have had an M under your belt for Mistress Wilson of Milnwood.’ ”

Read on, if you forget it, to the end, that third chapter of the last volume of *Old Mortality*.² The story of such return to the home of childhood has been told often; but never, so far as I have knowledge, so exquisitely. I do not doubt that Elphin’s name is from Sandy-Knowe also; but cannot trace it.

10. Secondly, note his grandfathers’ medical treatment of him; for *both* his grandfather were physicians,—Dr. Rutherford, as we have seen, so professed, by whose advice he is sent to Sandy-Knowe. There, his cattle-dealing grandfather, true physician by diploma of Nature, orders him, whenever the day is fine, to be carried out and laid down beside the old shepherd among the crags or rocks round which he fed his sheep. “The impatience of a child soon inclined me to struggle with my infirmity, and I began by degrees to stand, to walk, and to run. Although the limb affected was much shrunk and contracted, my general health, which was of more importance, was much strengthened by being frequently in the open air; and, in a word, I, *who in a city had probably been condemned to hopeless and helpless*

¹ [For other references to Alison Wilson in *Old Mortality*, see *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 296; and Letter 62, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 518).]

² [Ch. xxxix., where Morton is recognised by Alison Wilson by saying, “ ‘Down, Elphin, down.’ ‘Ye ken our dog’s name,’ said the old lady.”]

decrepitude (italics mine), was now a healthy, high-spirited, and, my lameness apart, a sturdy child,—non sine dis animosus infans.”¹

This, then, is the beginning of Scott’s conscious existence,—laid down beside the old shepherd, among the rocks, and among the sheep. “He delighted to roll about in the grass all day long in the midst of the flock, and the sort of fellowship he formed with the sheep and lambs impressed his mind with a degree of affectionate feeling towards them which lasted throughout life.”*

Such cradle, and such companionship, Heaven gives its favourite children.

11. In 1837, two of then maid-servants of Sandy-Knowe were still living in its neighbourhood; one of them, Tibby Hunter, remembered the child Scott’s coming, well:—

“The young ewe-milkers delighted, she says, to carry him about on their backs among the crags; and he was ‘very gleg (quick) at the uptak, and soon kened every sheep and lamb by head-mark as well as any of them.’ His great pleasure, however, was in the society of the ‘aged hind’ recorded in the epistle to Erskine. ‘Auld Sandy Ormistoun,’ called, from the most dignified part of his function, ‘the cow-bailie,’ had the chief superintendence of the flocks that browsed upon ‘the velvet tufts of loveliest green.’ If the child saw his in the morning, he could not be satisfied unless the old man would set him astride on his shoulder, and take him to keep him company, as he lay watching his charge. . . . The cow-bailie blew a particular note on his whistle which signified to the maid-servants in the house below when the little boy wished to be carried home again.”²

12. “Every sheep and lamb by head-mark;”—that is our first lesson; not an easy one, you will find it, if you try the flock of such a farm. Only yesterday (12th July, 1873) I saw the dairy of one half filled with the “berry-bread” (large flat-baked cakes enclosing layers of

* His own words to Mr. Skene of Rubislaw, vol. i., p. 83, spoken while Turner was sketching Smailholm Tower, vol. vii., p. 302.

¹ [Lockhart, vol. i. pp. 20, 21. The Latin quotation is from Horace, *Odes*, iii. 4, 20.]

² [*Ibid.*, p. 82. The poetic “Epistle to Erskine” is prefixed to Canto Third of *Marmion*; Lockhart’s quotation (“velvet tufts”) is from it.]

gooseberries) prepared by its mistress for her shearers;—the flock being some six or seven hundred, on Coniston Fells.

That is our first lesson, then, very utterly learned “by heart.” This is our second (marginal note on Sir Walter’s copy of Allan Ramsay’s *Tea-Table Miscellany*, ed. 1724):¹ “This book belonged to my grandfather, Robert Scott, and out of it I was taught ‘Hardiknute’* by heart before I could read the ballad myself. It was the first poem I ever learnt, the last I shall ever forget.”² He repeated a great part of it, in the forests of La Cava, in the spring of the year in which he died; and above the lake Avernus, a piece of the song of the ewe-milkers:—

“Up the craggy mountain, and down the mossy glen,
We canna’ go a-milking, for Charlie and his men.”³

These I say, then, are to be your first lessons. The love, and care, of simplest living creatures; and the remembrance and honour of the dead, with the workmanship for them of fair tombs of song.

13. The Border district of Scotland was at this time, of all districts of the inhabited world, pre-eminently the singing

* The Ballad of Hardiknute is only a fragment—but one consisting of forty-two stanzas of eight lines each. It is the only heroic poem in the *Miscellany*, of which—and of the poem itself—more hereafter.⁴ The first four lines are ominous of Scott’s own life:—

“Stately stept he East the wa’,
And stately stept he West;
Full seventy years he now had seen,
With scarce seven years of rest.”

¹ [Allan Ramsay (the elder), *The Tea-Table Miscellany; or, A Collection of Scots Sangs*, 3 vols., 1724–1727. See, again, Letter 33, § 10 (p. 615). The Ballad of Hardiknute (by Lady Wardlaw, first published in 1719) is in vol. ii. pp. 231–242.]

²[Lockhart, vol. i. p. 83.]

³[See Lockhart, vol. vii. pp. 356, 357. The lines are from the favourite Jacobite song “Charlie is my Darling.” The version of the lines given by James Hogg (*Jacobite Relics of Scotland*, Second Series, 1821, p. 94) differs from that here quoted from Lockhart, and is

“It’s up you heathery mountain,
And down yon scraggy glen,
We daurna gang a-milking
For Charlie and his men.”]

⁴[See Letter 33, §§ 9, 10 (pp. 614, 615).]

country,—that which most naturally expressed its noble thoughts and passions in song.

The easily traceable reasons for this character are, I think, the following (many exist, of course, untraceably).

First, distinctly pastoral life, giving the kind of leisure which, in all ages and countries, solaces itself with simple music, if other circumstances are favourable,—that is to say, if the summer air is mild enough to allow repose, and the race has imagination enough to give motive to verse.

The Scottish Lowland air is, in summer, of exquisite clearness and softness,—the heat never so great as to destroy energy, and the shepherd's labour not severe enough to occupy wholly either mind or body. A Swiss herd may have to climb a hot ravine for thousands of feet, or cross a difficult piece of ice, to rescue a lamb, or lead his flock to an isolated pasture. But the borderer's sheep-path on the heath is, to his strong frame, utterly without labour or danger; he is free-hearted and free-footed all the summer day long; in winter darkness and snow finding yet enough to make him grave and stout of heart.

Secondly, the soldier's life, passing gradually, not in cowardice or under foreign conquest, but by his own increasing kindness and sense, into that of the shepherd; thus, without humiliation, leaving the war-wounded past to be recalled for its sorrow and its fame.

Thirdly, the extreme sadness of that past itself: giving pathos and awe to all the imagery and power of Nature.

Fourthly (this a merely physical cause, yet a very notable one), the beauty of the sound of Scottish streams.

14. I know no other waters to be compared with them;—such streams can only exist under very subtle concurrence of rock and climate. There must be much soft rain, not (habitually) tearing the hills down with floods; and the rocks must break irregularly and jaggedly. Our English Yorkshire shales and limestones merely form—carpenter-like—tables and shelves for the rivers to drip and leap from; while the Cumberland and Welsh rocks break too boldly,

and lose the multiplied chords of musical sound. Farther, the loosely-breaking rock must contain hard pebbles, to give the level shore of white shingle, through which the brown water may stray wide, in rippling threads. The fords even of English rivers have given the names to half our prettiest towns and villages (the difference between ford and bridge curiously—if one may let one’s fancy loose for a moment—characterizing the difference between the baptism of literature, and the edification of mathematics, in our two great universities); but the pure crystal of the Scottish pebbles,* giving the stream its gradations of amber to the edge, and the sound as of “ravishing division to the lute,”¹ makes the Scottish fords the happiest pieces of all one’s day walk.

“The farmhouse itself was small and poor, with a common kailyard on one flank, and a staring barn of the doctor’s (‘Douglas’²) erection on the other; while in front appeared a filthy pond, covered with ducks and duck-weed,† from which the whole tenement had derived the unharmonious designation of ‘Clarty Hole.’³ But the Tweed was everything to him: a beautiful river, flowing broad and bright over a bed of milk-white pebbles, unless where, here and there, it darkened into a deep pool, overhung as yet only by the birches and alders which had survived the statelier growth of the primitive forest; and the first hour that he took possession he claimed for his farm the name of the adjoining ford.”‡

With the murmur, whisper, and low fall of these streamlets, unmatched for mystery and sweetness, we must remember also the variable, but seldom wild, thrilling of the

*Lockhart, in the extract just below, calls them “milk-white.” This is exactly right of the pale bluish translucent quartz, in which the agatescent veins are just traceable, and no more, out of the trap-rocks; but the gneissitic hills give also exquisitely brilliant pure white and creamcoloured quartz, rolled out of their vein stones.

† With your pardon, Mr. Lockhart, neither ducks nor duckweed are in the least derogatory to the purity of a pool.

‡ Vol. ii., p. 358; compare ii., 70. “If it seemed possible to scramble through, he scorned to go ten yards about, and in fact preferred the ford,” etc.

¹[1 *King Henry IV.*, Act iii. sc. 1.]

²[This is Ruskin’s interpolation, “the doctor” being the Rev. Dr. Robert Douglas, minister of Galashiels, from whom Scott had bought the farm at Abbotsford.]

³[See Letter 33, §§ 2, 8, and 18 (pp. 607, 613, 622).]

wind among the recesses of the glens; and, not least, the need of relief from the monotony of occupations involving some rhythmic measure of the beat of foot or hand, during the long evenings at the hearth-side.

15. In the rude lines describing such passing of hours quoted by Scott in his introduction to the *Border Minstrelsy*,* you find the grandmother spinning, with her stool next the hearth,—“for she was old, and saw right dimly” (firelight, observe, all that was needed even then); “she spins to make a web of good Scots linen” (can you show such now, from your Glasgow mills?). The father is pulling hemp (or beating it). The only really beautiful piece of song which I heard at Verona, during several months’ stay there in 1869, was the low chant of girls unwinding the cocoons of the silkworm, in the cottages among the olive-clad hills on the north of the city.¹ Never any in the streets of it;—there, only insane shrieks of Republican populace, or senseless dance-music, played by operatic-military bands.

16. And one of the most curious points connected with the study of Border-life is this connection of its power of song either with its industry or human love, but never with the religious passion of its “Independent” mind. The definite subject of the piper or minstrel being always war or love (peasant love as much honoured as the proudest), his feeling is steadily antagonistic to Puritanism; and the discordance of Scottish modern psalmody is as unexampled among civilized nations as the sweetness of their ballads—shepherds’ or ploughmen’s (the plough and pulpit coming into fatalest opposition in Ayrshire); so that Wandering Willie must, as a matter of course, head the troop of Redgauntlet’s riotous fishermen with “Merrily danced the

* 8vo, 1806, p. 119.

¹[For this incident see Ruskin’s letter of June 18, 1869, in Vol. XIX. p. lvii.]

Quaker's wife."¹ And see Wandering Willie's own description of his gudesire:—

"A rambling, rattling chiel he had been, in his young days, and could play weel on the pipes;—he was famous at 'Hoopers and Girders'; a' Cumberland could na touch him at 'Jockie Lattin'; and he had the finest finger for the back-lilt between Berwick and Carlisle;—the like o' Steenie was na the sort they made Whigs o'."²

And yet, to this Puritan element, Scott owed quite one of the most noble conditions of his mental life.

17. But it is of no use trying to get on to his aunt Janet in this letter, for there is yet one thing I have to explain to you before I can leave you to meditate, to purpose, over that sorrowful piece of Scott's diary with which it began.

If you had before any thoughtful acquaintance with his general character, or with his writings, but had not studied this close of his life, you cannot but have read with surprise, in the piece of the diary I quoted,³ the recurring sentences showing the deep wounds of his pride. Your impression of him was, if thoughtfully received, that of a man modest and self-forgetful, even to error. Yet, very evidently, the bitterest pain under his fallen fortune is felt by his pride.

Do you fancy the feeling is only by chance so strongly expressed in that passage?

It is dated 18th December. Now read this:—

"*February 5th, 1826.*—Missie was in the drawing-room, and overheard William Clerk and me laughing excessively at some foolery or other in the back room, to her no small surprise, which she did not keep to herself. But do people suppose that he was less sorry for his poor sister, or I for my lost fortune? If I have a very strong passion in the world, it is pride; and that never hinged upon world's gear, which was always, with me—Light come, light go."⁴

18. You will not at first understand the tone of this last piece, in which two currents of thought run counter, or, at least, one with a back eddy; and you may think Scott

¹[*Redgauntlet*, ch. iv.]

²[*Ibid.*, Letter XI.]

³[See above, § 2.]

⁴[Lockhart, vol. vi. p. 209.]

did not know himself, and that his strongest passion was *not* pride; and that he *did* care for world's gear.

Not so, good reader. Never allow your own conceit to betray you into that extremest folly of thinking that you can know a great man better than he knows himself. He may not often wear his heart on his sleeve¹ for you; but when he does, depend upon it, he lets you see deep, and see true.

Scott's ruling passion *was* pride; but it was nobly set—on his honour, and his courage, and his quite conscious intellectual power. The apprehended loss of honour,—the shame of what he thinks in himself cowardice,—or the fear of failure in intellect, are at any time overwhelming to him. But now, he felt that his honour was safe; his courage was, even to himself, satisfying; his sense of intellectual power undiminished; and he had therefore recovered some peace of mind, and power of endurance. The evils he could not have borne, and lived, have not been inflicted on him, and could not be. He can laugh again with his friend;—"but do people suppose that *he* was less sorry for his poor sister, or I for my lost fortune?"

19. What is this loss, then, which he *is* grieving for—as for a lost sister? Not world's gear, "which was always, with me, Light come, light go."

Something far other than that.

Read but these three short sentences more,* out of the entries in December and January:—

"My heart clings to the place I have created: there is scarce a tree on it that does not owe its being to me."

"Poor Will Laidlaw—poor Tom Purdie—such news will wring your hearts; and many a poor fellow besides, to whom my prosperity was daily bread."

"I have walked my last on the domains I have planted, sate the last time in the halls I have built. But death would have taken them from me if misfortune had spared them.—My poor people, whom I loved so well!"

*Vol. vi., pp. 164, 166, 196.

¹[*Othello*, Act i. sc. 1.]

20. Nor did they love him less. You know that his house was left to him, and that his “poor people” served him until his death—or theirs. Hear now *how* they served:—

“The butler,” says Lockhart, visiting Abbotsford in 1827, “instead of being the easy chief of a large establishment, was now doing half the work of the house, at probably half his former wages. Old Peter, who had been for five-and-twenty years a dignified coachman, was now ploughman-in-ordinary, only putting his horses to the carriage upon high and rare occasions; and so on with all the rest that remained of the ancient train. And all, to my view, seemed happier than they had ever done before. Their good conduct had given every one of them a new elevation in his own mind; and yet their demeanour had gained, in place of losing, in simple humility of observance. The great loss was that of William Laidlaw, for whom (the estate being all but a fragment in the hands of the trustees and their agent) there was now no occupation here. The cottage which his taste had converted into a loveable retreat had found a rent-paying tenant; and he was living a dozen miles off, on the farm of a relation in the Vale of Yarrow. Every week, however, he came down to have a ramble with Sir Walter over their old haunts, to hear how the pecuniary atmosphere was darkening or brightening, and to read, in every face at Abbotsford, that it could never be itself again until circumstances should permit his re-establishment at Kaeside.

“All this warm and respectful solicitude must have had a preciously soothing influence on the mind of Scott, who may be said to have lived upon love. No man cared less about popular admiration and applause; but for the least chill on the affection of any near and dear to him, he had the sensitiveness of a maiden. I cannot forget, in particular, how his eyes sparkled when he first pointed out to me Peter Mathieson guiding the plough on the haugh. ‘Egad,’ said he, ‘auld Pepe’ (this was the children’s name for their good friend), ‘auld Pepe’s whistling at his darg.’¹ The honest fellow said a yoking in a deep field would do baith him and the blackies good. If things get round with me, easy shall be Pepe’s cushion.’ ”²

21. You see there is not the least question about striking for wages on the part of Sir Walter’s servants. The law of supply and demand is not consulted, nor are their wages determined by the great principle of competition—so rustic and absurd are they; not but that

¹[See Letter 33, § 2 (p. 606); *darg* meaning “a day’s work,” the word being a syncopated form of *daywerk*.]

²[Lockhart, vol. vii. pp. 80, 81.]

they take it on them sometimes to be masters instead of servants:—

“*March 21.—Wrote till twelve, then out upon the heights, and faced the gale bravely. Tom Purdie was not with me; he would have obliged me to keep the sheltered ground.*”*

You are well past all that kind of thing, you think, and know better how to settle the dispute between Capital and Labour.

“What has that to do with domestic servants?” do you ask? You think a house with a tall chimney, and two or three hundred servants in it, is not properly a house at all; that the sacred words, *Domus, Duomo*, cannot be applied to it; and that Giotto would have refused to build a Buzzer Tower,¹ by way of belfry, in Lancashire?

Well, perhaps you are right. If you are merely unlucky Williams—borrowing colossal planes²—instead of true servants, it may well be that Pepe’s *own* whistling at his darg must be very impossible for you, only manufactured whistling any more possible. Which are you? Which *will* you be?

22. I am afraid there is little doubt which you are;—but there is no doubt whatever which you would like to be, whether you know your own minds or not. You will never whistle at your dargs more, unless you are serving masters whom you can love. You may shorten your hours of labour as much as you please;—no minute of them will be merry, till you are serving truly: that is to say, until the bond of constant relationship—service to death—is again established between your masters and you. It has been broken by their sin, but may yet be recovered by your virtue. All the best of you cling to the least remnant or shadow of it. I heard but the other day of a foreman, in a large house of business, discharged at a week’s warning

* Vol. vii., p. 9. [The italics are Ruskin’s.]

¹ [See above, p. 516.]

² [See Letter 1, §§ 13, 14 (pp. 24–26).]

on account of depression in trade,—who thereupon went to one of the partners, and showed him a letter which he had received a year before, offering him a situation with an increase of his salary by more than a third; which offer he had refused without so much as telling his masters of its being made to him, that he might stay in the old house. He was a Scotchman—and I am glad to tell the story of his fidelity with that of Pepe and Tom Purdie. I know not how it may be in the south; but I know that in Scotland, and the northern border, there still remains something of the feeling which fastened the old French word “loial” among the dearest and sweetest of their familiar speech; and that there are some souls yet among them, who, alike in labour or in rest, abide in, or will depart to, the Land of the Leal.¹

*“Sire, moult me plaist vostre escole
Et vo noble conseil loial,
Ne du trespasser n’ay entente;
Sans lui n’aray ne bien ne mal.
Amours ce vouloir me présente,*

*Qui veult que tout mon appareil
Soit mis à servir soir et main
Loiauté, et moult me merveil
Comment homs a le cuer si vain
Qu’il a à fausseté réclaim.”²*

¹ [The title of the song by Caroline Oliphant, Baroness Nairne.]

² [No. 51 in *Le Livre des Cent Ballades* (see above, p. 263 *n.*). The old French verses are thus rendered by Mr. Collingwood in his Index to vol. ii. of the Small Edition of *Fors*:—

“Fair Sir, your teaching gladdens me,—
Your noble lore of loyalty,—
Nor thereagainst would I transgress;
Without it hope nor fear I see.
Love lays on me such willingness,

And bids that all my strength be set
Both morn and evening to obey
Loyalty:—and I marvel yet
How heart of man so far away
From faith to faithlessness can stray.”]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

23. I have been making not a few mistakes in *Fors* lately; and, indeed, am careless enough in it, not solicitous at all to avoid mistakes; for being entirely sure of my main ground, and entirely honest in purpose, I know that I cannot make any mistake which will invalidate my work,¹ and that any chance error which the Third *Fors* may appoint for me, is often likely to bring out, in its correction, more good than if I had taken the pains to avoid it. Here, for instance, is Dr. Brown's letter, which I should not have had, but for my having confused George's Street with George's Square,² and having too shortly generalized my experience of modern novel readers; and it tells me, and you, something about Scott and Dickens which is of the greatest use.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am rejoiced to see you upon Scott. It will be a permanent good, your having broken this ground. But you are wrong in two things—George's Square is not in the detestable New Town, it is to the south of the very Old Town, and near the Meadows.

"Then you say 'nobody now will read them' (Miss Edgeworth and Sir Walter).³ She is less read than I think she should be, but he is enormously read—here and in America.

"In the twelve months ending June, 1873, Adam Black and his sons have sold over 250,000 *Waverleys*, and I know that when Dickens—that great master of fun and falsetto—went last to America, and there was a fury for him and his books, the sale of them only touched for a short time the ordinary sale of the Scott Novels, and subsided immensely, soon, the Scotts going steadily on increasing. Our young 'genteel' girls and boys, I fear, don't read them as the same class did thirty years ago, but the readers of them, in the body of the people, are immense, and you have only to look at the four or five copies of the whole set in our public libraries to see how they are being read. That is a beautiful drawing of Chantrey's,⁴ and new to me,—very like, having the simple, childlike look which he had. The skull is hardly high enough."

24. A subsequent letter tells me that Dinlay is a big hill in Liddesdale;⁵ and enclosed (search for it being made) the tune of Sour Plums in Galashiels,⁶ of which I will only at present bid you farther observe that it

¹ [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iii., Preface, § 3 (Vol. V. p. 6).]

² [See Letters 31 (§ 6 *n.*) and, above, § 8, pp. 565, 590. The communication had been forwarded to Ruskin through Mr. Allen. "It is a bad mistake," wrote Ruskin to him (July 2, 1873), "and there is nothing for it but humble pie."]

³ [See Letter 31, § 1 (p. 562).]

⁴ [Plate XIII.; see above (p. 562 *n.*).]

⁵ [See Letter 31, § 7 *n.* (p. 566).]

⁶ [See Letter 31, § 22 (p. 582).]

is the first “touch of the auld bread-winner” that Wandering Willie plays to Darsie.¹

25. Another valued correspondent reminds me that people might get hold of my having spoken, a good many numbers back, of low sunshine “at six o’clock on an October morning”;² and truly enough it must have been well on towards seven.

26. A more serious, but again more profitable, mistake, was made in the June *Fors*, by the correspondent (a working man) who sent me the examination paper, arranged from a Kensington one, from which I quoted the four questions,³—who either did not know, or did not notice, the difference between St. Matthew and St. Matthias. The paper had been set in the schools of St. Matthew, and the chairman of the committee of the schools of St. Matthias wrote to me in violent indignation—little thinking how greatly pleased I should be to hear of *any* school in which Kensington questions were not asked,—or if asked, were not likely to be answered.

I find even that the St. Matthias children *could* in all probability answer the questions I proposed as alternative,—for they have flower shows, and prizes presented by Bishops, and appear to be quite in an exemplary phase of education: all which it is very pleasant to me to learn. (Apropos of the equivoque between St. Matthew and St. Matthias, another correspondent puts me in mind of the promise I made to find out for you who St. Pancras was.⁴ I did; but did not much care to tell you—for I had put him with St. Paul only because both their names began with P;⁵ and found that he was an impertinent youth of sixteen, who ought to have been learning to ride and swim, and took to theology instead, and was made a martyr of, and had that mock-Greek church built to his Christian honour in Mary-le-bone. I have no respect whatever for boy or girl martyrs;—we old men know the value of the dregs of life: but young people will throw the whole of it away for a freak, or in a pet at losing a toy.)

27. I suppose I shall next have a fiery letter abjuring Kensington from the committee of the schools of St. Matthew:—nothing could possibly give me greater pleasure. I did not, indeed, intend for some time to give you any serious talk about Kensington, and then I meant to give it you in large print—and at length; but as this matter has been “forced” upon me (note the power of the word *Fors* in the first syllable of that word) I will say a word or two now.

I have lying beside me on my table, in a bright orange cover, the seventh edition of the “Young Mechanic’s Instructor; or, Workman’s Guide to the various Arts connected with the Building Trades; showing how to strike out all kinds of Arches and Gothic Points, to set out and construct Skew Bridges; with numerous Illustrations of Foundations, Sections, Elevations, etc. Receipts, Rules, and Instructions in the art of Casting,

¹ [*Redgauntlet*, Letter X.]

² [See Letter 15, § 10 (p. 266).]

³ [See Letter 30, § 9 (p. 558).]

⁴ [See Letter 27, § 4 (p. 492).]

⁵ [Compare above, p. 400.]

Modelling, Carving, Gilding, Dyeing, Staining, Polishing, Bronzing, Lacquering, Japanning, Enamelling, Gasfitting, Plumbing, Glazing, Painting, etc. Jewellers' Secrets, Miscellaneous Receipts, Useful Tables, etc., and a variety of useful information designed specially for the Working Mechanic.—London: Brodie and Middleton, 79, Long Acre; and all Booksellers in Town and Country. Price, 2s. 6d.”¹

From pages 11, 20, and 21 of the introduction to this work, I quote the following observations on St. Paul's, the Nineveh sculptures, and the Houses of Parliament.

I.—OF ST. PAUL'S

“Since London was first built, which we are led to believe was about the year 50, by the Romans, there has not been a more magnificent building erected in it than St. Paul's—this stupendous edifice which absorbs the attention, and strikes with wonder all who behold it, was founded by Ethelbert, the fifth King of Kent, in the year 604 A.D. And it is certain that since the completion of this building, succeeding generations have made no progress in the construction of public buildings.”

II.—OF THE NINEVEH SCULPTURES

“There is one feature in the Nineveh sculptures which most beautifully illustrates and corroborates the truth of the Scriptures; any person who has carefully read the Scriptures, and has seen the Nineveh sculptures, cannot fail to see the beautiful illustration; it will be remembered that the king is spoken of in many places as riding in his chariot, and of² the king's armour-bearer following him to the battle. In the Nineveh sculptures you will see the fact exemplified—the king in his chariot, and his armour-bearer defending him with his shield.”

III.—OF THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

“Of all the Gothic buildings that we have in our country, both of ancient and modern date, the Houses of Parliament are the best and most elaborate; the first step of its grandeur is, that it stands parallel to the majestic stream of the River Thames, and owing to its proximate distance to the river, there is no thoroughfare between it and the water; its open situation gives it a sublime view from the opposite side; but especially from Westminster Bridge its aspect is grand and magnificent in the extreme. Its superb tracery glitters in the distance, in the sight of the spectator, like the yellow autumnal foliage of some picturesque grove, which beautifies the verdant valleys and bedecks the silvery hills. The majestic figures in their stately order, encanopied in their Gothic palaces, bring to our remembrance the noble patriarchs of old, or the patriots of recent days. Its numerous pinnacles, turrets, and towers, rise up into the smoky and blue atmosphere like forest trees, which will stand as an everlasting memento of the great and noble-minded generation who raised this grand and magnificent structure, so that after-generations may say, ‘Surely our forefathers were great and illustrious men, that they had reached the climax of human skill, so that we cannot improve on their superb and princely buildings.’ ”

These three extracts, though in an extreme degree, are absolutely and accurately characteristic of the sort of mind, unexampled in any former

¹ [By C. Allen; first published in 1863.]

² [The words do not read grammatically; but Ruskin's citation is accurate.]

ages for its conceit, its hypocrisy, and its sevenfold—or rather seventy times sevenfold—ignorance, the dregs of corrupted knowledge, which modern art-teaching, centralized by Kensington, produces in our workmen and their practical “guides.” How it is produced, and how the torturing examinations as to the possible position of the letters in the word Chillianwallah,¹ and the collection of costly objects of art from all quarters of the world, end in these conditions of paralysed brain and corrupted heart, I will show you at length in a future letter.²

¹ [See Letter 30, § 9 (p. 558).]

² [No future letter was devoted expressly to this subject; but for other references to the “Science and Art Department,” connected with the South Kensington Museum, see above, pp. 20, 159; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 256–257, 300, 407, 435; and Vol. XXIX. p. 154.]

LETTER 33

AUNT JESSIE¹

1. I FIND some of my readers are more interested in the last two numbers of *Fors* than I want them to be.

“Give up your *Fors* altogether, and let us have a life of Scott,” they say.²

They must please to remember that I am only examining the conditions of the life of this wise man, that they may learn how to rule their own lives, or their children’s, or their servants’; and, for the present, with this particular object, that they may be able to determine, for themselves, whether ancient sentiment, or modern common-sense,³ is to be the rule of life, and of service.

I beg them, therefore, to refer constantly to that summary of modern common-sense given by Mr. Applegarth, and quoted with due commendation by the *Pall Mall Gazette* (above, 28, § 22):—

“One piece of vigorous good sense enlivened the discussion. It was uttered by Mr. Applegarth, who observed that ‘no sentiment ought to be brought into the subject.’ ”

No sentiment, you observe, is to be brought into your doing, or your whistling, according to Mr. Applegarth.

2. And the main purpose of *Fors* is to show you that there is, sometimes, in weak natural whistling quite as much virtue as in vigorous steam whistling.⁴ But it cannot show you this without explaining what your darg, or

¹ [See above, p. 581 *n.*]

² [That Ruskin had some sort of idea of writing a *Life of Scott* appears from a passage (which, however, is ironical) in the Introduction to *Deucalion* (Vol. XXVI. p. 96).]

³ [Ruskin in his copy writes beside these words, “Ironical, but not marked enough as such.”]

⁴ [Compare Letters 5, § 11, and 32, § 20 (pp. 89, 599).]

“doing,” *is*; which cannot be shown merely by writing pleasant biographies. You are always willing enough to *read* lives, but never willing to *lead* them. For instance, those few sentences, almost casually given in last *Fors*, about the Scottish rivers,¹ have been copied, I see, into various journals, as if they, at any rate, were worth extract from the much useless matter of my books. Scotchmen like to hear their rivers talked about, it appears! But when last I was up Huntley Burn way,² there was no burn there. It had all been drawn off to somebody’s “works”; and it is painful for me, as an author, to reflect that, “of all polluting liquids belonging to this category (liquid refuse from manufactories), the discharges from paper works are the most difficult to deal with.”*

At Edinburgh there is a railroad station instead of the North Loch; the Water of Leith is—well, one cannot say in civilized company what it is;† and at Linlithgow,—of all the palaces so fair,—built for a royal dwelling, etc.,³—the oil (paraffin), floating on the streams, can be ignited, burning with a large flame.‡

My good Scottish friends, had you not better leave off pleasing yourselves with descriptions of your rivers as they were, and consider what your rivers are to be? For I correct my derivation of Clarty Hole too sorrowfully.§ It is the *Ford* that is clarty now—not the Hole.⁴

* Fourth Report of Rivers Pollution Commission, p. 62.⁵

† See Analysis of Water of Leith, the Foul Burn, and Pow Burn, same Report, p. 21.

‡ Same Report; so also the River Almond, pp. 22–45.

§ See terminal notes [p. 622].

¹ [Letter 32, § 14 (p. 594).]

² [In 1867: see Vol. XIX. pp. xxviii., xxix.]

³ [“Of all the palaces so fair
Built for the royal dwelling
In Scotland, far beyond compare
Linlithgow is excelling.”

—Scott: *Marmion*, canto iv., 15.]

⁴ [See Letter 32, § 14 (p. 595); and for the meaning of “clarty,” p. 622 *n.*]

⁵ [Fourth Report of the Commissioners appointed in 1868 to Inquire into the Best Means of Preventing the Pollution of Rivers: *Pollution of Rivers of Scotland. 1872.*]

3. To return to our sentimental work, however, for a while. I left in my last letter one or two of the most interesting points in the first year at Sandy-Knowe unnoticed, because I thought it best to give you, by comparison with each other, some idea of the three women who, as far as education could do it, formed the mind of Scott. His masters only polished and directed it. His mother, grandmother, and aunt welded the steel.

Hear first this of his mother (Lockhart, vol. i., p. 78):—

“She had received, as became the daughter of an eminently learned physician, the best sort of education then bestowed on young gentlewomen in Scotland. The poet, speaking of Mrs. Euphemia Sinclair, the mistress of the school at which his mother was reared, to the ingenious local antiquary, Mr. Robert Chambers, said that ‘she must have been possessed of uncommon talents for education, as all her young ladies were, in afterlife, fond of reading, wrote and spelled admirably, were well acquainted with history and the belles lettres, without neglecting the more homely duties of the needle and accout-book, and perfectly well-bred in society.’ Mr. Chambers adds, ‘Sir Walter further communicated that his mother, and many others of Mrs. Sinclair’s pupils, were sent afterwards *to be finished off* by the Honourable Mrs. Ogilvie, a lady who trained her young friends to a style of manners which would now be considered intolerably stiff. Such was the effect of this early training upon the mind of Mrs. Scott, that even when she approached her eightieth year, she took as much care to avoid touching her chair with her back, as if she had still been under the stern eye of Mrs. Ogilvie.’ ”

4. You are to note in this extract three things. First, the singular influence of education, given by a master or mistress of real power. “All her young ladies” (*all*, Sir Walter! do you verily mean this?) “fond of reading,” and so forth.

Well, I believe that, with slight exception, Sir Walter *did* mean it. He seldom wrote, or spoke, in careless generalization. And I doubt not that it is truly possible, by first insisting on a girl’s really knowing how to read, and then by allowing her very few books, and those absolutely wholesome,—and not amusing!—to give her a healthy appetite for reading. Spelling, I had thought was impossible to many girls; but perhaps this is only

because it is not early enough made a point of: it cannot be learned late.

Secondly: I wish Mr. Chambers had given us Sir Walter's words, instead of only the substance of what he "further communicated." But you may safely gather what I want you to notice, that Sir Walter attributes the essentials of good breeding to the first careful and scholarly mistress; and only the formality, which he somewhat hesitatingly approves, to the finishing hand of Mrs. Ogilvie. He would have paid less regard to the opinion of modern society on such matters, had he lived to see our languid Paradise of sofas and rocking-chairs. The beginning, and very nearly the end, of bodily education for a girl, is to make sure that she can stand, and sit, upright; the ankle vertical, and firm as a marble shaft; the waist elastic as a reed, and as unfatiguable.* I have seen my own mother travel from sunrise to sunset, in a summer's day, without once leaning back in the carriage.

Thirdly: The respectability belonging in those days to the profession of a schoolmistress. In fact, I do not myself think that any old lady *can* be respectable, unless she *is* one, whether she be paid for her pupils or not. And to deserve to be one, makes her Honourable at once, titled or untitled.

5. This much comes, then, of the instructions of Mrs. Sinclair and Mrs. Ogilvie; and why should not all your daughters be educated by Honourable Mrs. Ogilvies, and learn to spell, and to sit upright? Then they will all have sons like Sir Walter Scott, you think?

Not so, good friends. Miss Rutherford had not wholly learned to sit upright from Mrs. Ogilvie. She had some disposition of her own in that kind, different from the other pupils, and taught in older schools. Look at the lines in the *Lay*, where Conrad of Wolfenstein—

* "I ought to have dwelt more on the carrying pitchers or other burdens on the head, and on uprightness and elasticity of grace in moral character."—*Author's MS. note.*

“In humour highly crossed
 About some steeds his band had lost,
 High words to words succeeding still,
 Smote with his gauntlet stout Hunthill;
 A hot and hardy Rutherford,
 Whom men call Dickon Draw-the-Sword.
 Stern Rutherford right little said,
 But bit his glove, and shook his head.—
 A fortnight thence, in Inglewood,
 Stout Conrad, cold and drenched in blood,
 His bosom gored with many a wound,
 Was by a woodman’s lyme-dog* found;
 Unknown the manner of his death,
 Gone was his brand, both sword and sheath;
 But ever from that time, ’twas said
 That Dickon wore a Cologne blade.”¹

6. Such the race,—such the school education,—of Scott’s mother. Of her home education, you may judge by what she herself said of her father to her son’s tutor (whose exquisitely grotesque letter, for the rest, vol. i., p. 108,² is alone enough to explain Scott’s inevitable future perception of the weakness of religious egotism).³

“Mrs. Scott told me that, when prescribing for his patients, it was Dr. Rutherford’s custom to offer up, at the same time, a prayer for the accompanying blessing of heaven,—a laudable practice, in which, I fear, he has not been generally imitated by those of his profession.”

A very laudable practice indeed, good Mr. Mitchell; perhaps even a useful and practically efficacious one, on

* Blood-hound, from “lym,” Saxon for leash.

¹ [*The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, canto vi. stanza vii.]

² [Mr. James Mitchell, “tutor in Mr. Walter Scott’s family,” whose letter of reminiscences is given by Lockhart, vol. i. pp. 106–114.]

³ [Ruskin’s meaning in this passage has been seriously perverted by a misprint, or officious correction, in all editions subsequent to the first. Ed. 1 reads: “. . . her son’s tutor (whose exquisitely grotesque letter, for the rest, vol. i. p. 108), is alone enough . . . religious egotism.” Obviously the second bracket was misplaced and should have come after “egotism.” Mr. Mitchell’s letter (as any one can see by reference to its text in Lockhart) is full in other respects of “exquisitely grotesque” religious egotism, but Mr. Mitchell’s commendation of Dr. Rutherford’s practice of prayer is endorsed by Ruskin. Some corrector for the press, however, failing to perceive the misplacement of the bracket, altered the text as follows: “. . . her son’s tutor (whose exquisitely grotesque letter, for the rest, vol. i. p. 108), *which* is alone enough . . . religious egotism”—thus making Ruskin say that the doctor’s practice of prayer was alone enough, etc.! For Scott’s own account of his tutor’s fanaticism, see Lockhart, i. 30.]

occasion; at all events one of the last remains of noble Puritanism, in its sincerity, among men of sound learning.

For Dr. Rutherford was also an excellent linguist, and, according to the custom of the times, delivered his prelections to the students in Latin (like the conversation in Beardie's Jacobite Club¹). Nowadays, you mean to have no more Latin talked, as I understand; no prayers said. Pills—Morison's and others—can be made up on cheaper terms, you think,²—and be equally salutary?

Be it so. In these ancient manners, however, Scott's mother is brought up, and consistently abides; doubtless, having some reverence for the Latin tongue, and much faith in the medicine of prayer:—having had troubles about her soul's safety also; perhaps too solicitous, at one time, on that point; but being sure she has a soul to be solicitous about, which is much; obedient herself to the severest laws of morality and life; mildly and steadily enforcing them on her children; but naturally of light and happy temper, and with a strong turn to study poetry and works of imagination.

7. I do not say anything of his father till we come³ to the apprenticeship,—except only that he was no less devout than his mother, and more formal. Of training which could be known or remembered, neither he nor the mother gives any to their boy until after the Sandy-Knowe time. But how of the unremembered training? When do you suppose the education of a child begins? At six months old it can answer smile with smile, and impatience with impatience. It can observe, enjoy, and suffer, acutely, and, in a measure, intelligently. Do you suppose it makes no difference to it that the order of the house is perfect and quiet, the faces of its father and mother full of peace, their soft voices

¹ [See Letter 31, § 12 (p. 574).]

² [James Morison (1770–1840), self-styled “the Hygeist,” vendor and advertiser of the once famous “Morison's pills.” See book i. ch. iv. (“Morison's Pill”) of Carlyle's *Past and Present*: “Brothers, I am sorry I have got no Morison's Pill for curing the maladies of Society.”]

³ [This point, however, was not reached in *Fors*; but in Letter 47 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 191) Ruskin points out that Saunders Fairford in *Redgauntlet* is Scott's father.]

familiar to its ear,¹ and even those of strangers, loving; or that it is tossed from arm to arm, among hard, or reckless, or vain-minded persons, in the gloom of a vicious household, or the confusion of a gay one? The moral disposition is, I doubt not, greatly determined in those first speechless years. I believe especially that quiet, and the withdrawal of objects likely to distract, by amusing, the child, so as to let it fix its attention undisturbed on every visible least thing in its domain, is essential to the formation of some of the best powers of thought.² It is chiefly to this quietude of his own home that I ascribe the intense perceptiveness and memory of the three-years'-old child at Sandy-Knowe; for, observe, it is in that first year he learns his Hardiknute; by his aunt's help he learns to read at Bath,³ and can cater for himself on his return. Of this aunt, and her mother, we must now know what we can. You notice the difference which Scott himself indicates between the two: "My grandmother, who was meekness itself, and my aunt, who was of a higher temper."⁴ Yet his grandmother, Barbara Haliburton, was descended from the so-called, in speciality of honour, "Standard-bearer" of the Douglases; and Dryburgh Abbey was part of her family's estate, they having been true servants to the monks of it, once on a time. Here is a curious little piece of lecture on the duties of master and servant,—Royal Proclamation on the 8th of May, 1535, by James the Fifth: *—

"Whereas we, having been advised, and knowing the said gentlemen, the Halliburtons, to be *leal* and *true* honest men, long servants unto the saide abbeye, for the saide landis, stout men at armes, and goode borderers against England; and doe therefore decree and ordaine, that they shall be re-possess'd, and bruik and enjoy the landis and steedings they had of the said abbeye, paying the use and wonte: and that they sall be goode servants to the said venerabil father, like as they and their predecessours

* Introduction to *Border Minstrelsy*, p. 86.

¹ [For Ruskin's reminiscences of his own childhood in this respect, see Letter 54, § 13 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 349).]

² [Here, again, Ruskin is thinking of his own childhood: see Letter 51, § 3 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 272).]

³ [For his learning the ballad of Hardiknute, see above, Letter 32, § 12, p. 593; and see Lockhart, vol. i. p. 21.]

⁴ [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 25.]

were to the said venerabil father, and his predecessours, and he a good master to them.”

The Abbot of Dryburgh, however, and others in such high places, having thus misread their orders, and taken on themselves to be masters instead of ministers, the Reformation took its course; and Dryburgh claims allegiance no more—but to its dead.

8. You notice the phrase, “good borderers against England.” Lest I should have to put it off too long, I may as well, in this place, let you know the origin of the tune which Scott’s uncle was so fond of.¹ From the letter of one of his friends to Dr. Brown I gratefully take the following passage:—

“In the fourteenth century some English riders were slaking their thirst on the banks of the Tweed, nearly opposite Cartley Hole,—now Abbotsford,—where wild plums grew. The borderers came down upon them unexpectedly, and annihilated them, driving some into the Tweed, at a place called the Englishman’s Dyke. The borderers accordingly thought their surprise sourer fruit to the invaders than the plums they went to pluck, and christened themselves by the soubriquet of ‘Sour Plums in Galashiels,’ which gave a text for the song and tune, and a motto for the arms of the town of Galashiels.”

There is something to think of for you, when next you see the blackthorn blow, or the azure bloom spread on its bossed clusters of fruit. I cannot find any of the words of the song;² but one beautiful stanza of the ballad of Cospatrick³ may at least serve to remind you of the beauty of the Border in its summer time:—

“For to the greenwood I maun gae
To pu’ the red rose and the slae,
To pu’ the red rose and the thyme,
To deck my mother’s bour and mine.”

¹ [See Letter 31, § 22 (p. 582).]

² [Galashiels has long been famous for its damsons. The motto of the town is “Soor Plooms,” and its arms a plum-tree fructed, between two foxes. There is a story that certain of the men of Sir Ralph Evers, who had plundered its orchards, were seized with pain, and in that condition fallen on and annihilated by Pringle of Gala, in a spot between the town and the foot of the Gala Water, hence called “The Englishman’s Dyke.” This is the account of the town arms given by Mr. Craig-Brown in his *History of Selkirkshire*, p. 478. But upon the town seal the tree represented is a grape-bearing vine, and it has been suggested that the original seal was a classical gem representing Æsop’s fox and grapes (see *The Arms of the Royal and Parliamentary Burghs of Scotland*, by John, Marquis of Bute, 1897, p. 157).]

³ [Printed by Scott in his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*: see vol. iii. p. 56.]

9. “Meekness itself,” and yet possibly with some pride in her also, this Barbara, with the ruins of her Dryburgh still seen grey above the woods, from the tower at whose foot her grandchild was playing. So short the space he had to travel, when his lameness should be cured,—the end of all travel already in sight!

Some pride in her, perhaps: you need not be surprised her grandchild should have a little left.

“Many a tale” (she told him) “of Watt of Harden, Wight Willie of Aikwood (Oakwood), Jamie Tellfer of the fair Dodhead, and other heroes—merry men, all of the persuasion and calling of Robin Hood and Little John. A more recent hero, but not of less note, was the celebrated De’il of Little Dean, whom she well remembered, as he had married her mother’s sister. Of this extraordinary person I learned many a story—grave and gay, comic and warlike”—(dearest, meek, grandmamma!).

“Two or three old books which lay in the window-seat were explored for my amusement in the tedious winter days. *Automathes** and Ramsay’s *Tea-table Miscellany* were my favourites, although, at a later period, an odd volume of Josephus’s *Wars of the Jews* divided my partiality.”¹

10. “Two or three old books in the window-seat,” and “an odd volume of Josephus.” How entertaining our farm library! (with the Bible, you observe) and think how much matters have changed for the better: your package down from Mudie’s monthly with all the new magazines, and a dozen of novels; Good Words—as many as you choose,—and Professor Tyndall’s last views on the subject of the Regelation of Ice.² (Respecting which, for the sake of Scott’s first love,³ and for the sake also of my own first love—which was of snow, even more than water,—I have a few words to say to Professor Tyndall, but they must be

* “The Capacity and Extent of the Human Understanding; exemplified in the extraordinary case of Automathes, a young nobleman who was accidentally left in his infancy upon a desolate island, and continued nineteen years in that solitary state, separate from all human society.” By John Kirkby. 1745. Small 8vo.

¹ [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 18.]

² [Tyndall’s *Forms of Water* had just been published: see Vol. XXVI. p. 280.]

³ [Ruskin defers (at p. 636) his explanation of the point of connexion between glacier theories and the life of Scott, and he did not afterwards give it. His point was that J. D. Forbes, whose glacier-theory he was bent on defending against Tyndall, was a son of Scott’s “first love” (see above, p. 585 *n.*, and J. C. Shairp’s *Life and Letters of J. D. Forbes*, 1873, p. 4). For Ruskin’s early love of rocks and rivers, see above, p. 331.]

for next month, as they will bitterly interrupt our sentimental proceedings.¹⁾

Nay—with your professional information that when ice breaks you can stick it together again, you have also imaginative literature of the rarest. Here—instead of Ramsay's *Tea-Table Miscellany*,² with its Hardiknute and other ballads of softer tendency,—some of them not the best of their kind, I admit,—here you have Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, M.P.'s,³ *Tales at Tea-Time*,* dedicated to the schoolroom teapot, in which the first story is of the "Pea Green Nose," and in which (opening at random) I find it related of some Mary of our modern St. Mary's Lochs,⁴ that "Mary stepped forward hastily, when one of the lobsters sprang forward, and seized her arm in his claw, saying, in a low, agitated, tone of voice," etc., etc.

11. You were better off, little as you think it, with that poor library on the window-seat. Your own, at worst,

* It is impossible to concentrate the vulgar modern vices of art and literature more densely than has been done in this—in such kind, documental—book. Here is a description of the "Queen of the Flowers" out of it, which is so accurately characteristic of the "imagination" of an age of demand and supply, that I must find space for it in small print. She appears in a wood in which "here and there was a mulberry tree *disporting* itself among the rest." (Has Mr. Hugessen, M.P., ever seen a mulberry tree, or read as much of Pyramus and Thisbe as Bottom?)

"The face was the face of a lady, and of a pretty, exceedingly good-humoured lady too; but the hair which hung down around her head" (the author had better have written hung *up*) "was nothing more or less than festoons of roses,—red, lovely, sweet-scented" (who would have thought it?) "roses; the arms were apparently entirely composed of cloves and" (allspice! no) "carnations; the body was formed of a multitude of various flowers—the most beautiful you can imagine, and a cloak of honeysuckle and sweet-briar was thrown *carefully* over the shoulders." (Italics mine—care being as characteristic of the growth of the honeysuckle as disport is that of the mulberry.)

¹ [See Letter 34, §§ 11 *seq.* (p. 635).]

² [See above, p. 593 *n.*]

³ [*Tales at Tea-Time. Fairy Stories*, by E. H. Knatchbull-Hugessen, M.P. (afterwards Lord Brabourne). Illustrated by William Brunton. Ruskin quotes from pp. 95 (the story of "The River King"), 169 ("Sybil's Vision"). For another reference to the story of the mulberry, and Pyramus and Thisbe, see Vol. XVIII. p. 367.]

⁴ [For St. Mary's Loch (the reservoir which feeds the stream of Yarrow), see Introduction to Canto Second of *Marmion*.]

though much fingered and torn;—your own mentally, still more utterly; and though the volume be odd, do you think that, by any quantity of reading, you can make your knowledge of history, even?

You are so proud of having learned to read too, and I warrant you could not read so much as Barbara Haliburton's shield: Or, on a bend azure, three mascles of the first; in the second quarter a buckle of the second.

12. I meant to have engraved it, but shall never get on to aunt Jessie at this rate.

"My kind and affectionate aunt, Miss Janet Scott, whose memory will ever be dear to me, used to read these works to me, with admirable patience, until I could repeat long passages by heart."¹

Why admirable, Sir Walter? Surely she might have spent her time more usefully—lucratively at least—than in this manner of "nursing the baby."² Might you not have been safely left, to hunt up Hardiknute, in maturer years, for yourself?

By no manner of means, Sir Walter thinks; and justly. With all his gifts, but for this aunt Janet,—for his mother,—and for Lilius Redgauntlet,³—he had assuredly been only hunting laird, and the best story-teller in the Lothians.

13. We scarcely ever, in our study of education, ask this most essential of all questions about a man, What *patience* had his mother or sister with him?

And most men are apt to forget it themselves. Pardon me for speaking of myself for a moment (if I did not know things by my own part in them, I would not write of them at all⁴). You know that people sometimes call me a good writer:⁵ others like to hear me speak. I seldom misspell or mis-pronounce a word, grossly; and can generally say what I want to say. Well, my own impression about

¹ [Lockhart, vol. i. pp. 18, 19.]

² [See Letter 24, § 20 (p. 431).]

³ [See above, p. 585 *n.*]

⁴ [In this connexion, see the passage in Appendix 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 539).]

⁵ [Compare above, p. 400.]

this power, such as it may be, is that it was born with me, or gradually gained by my own study. It is only by deliberate effort that I recall the long morning hours of toil, as regular as sunrise,—toil on both sides equal,—by which, year after year, my mother forced me to learn all the Scotch paraphrases by heart, and ever so many chapters of the Bible besides (the eighth of 1st Kings being one,—try it, good reader, in a leisure hour!) allowing not so much as a syllable to be missed or misplaced; while every sentence was required to be said over and over again till she was satisfied with the accent of it. I recollect a struggle between us of about three weeks, concerning the accent of the “of” in the lines

“Shall any following spring revive
The ashes of the urn?”¹

I insisting, partly in childish obstinacy, and partly in true instinct for rhythm, (being wholly careless on the subject both of urns and their contents²), on reciting it, “The ashes *of* the urn.” It was not, I say, till after three weeks’ labour, that my mother got the accent laid upon the ashes, to her mind. But had it taken three years, she would have done it, having once undertaken to do it. And, assuredly, had she not done it, I had been simply an avaricious picture collector, or perhaps even a more avaricious money collector, to this day; and had she done it wrongly, no after-study would ever have enabled me to read so much as a single line of verse.³

14. It is impossible, either in history or biography, to

¹ [Ruskin quotes from No. viii. (Job xiv. 1–15) of the “Translations and Paraphrases, in Verse, collected and prepared by a Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in order to be sung in Churches.” The lines are the composition of John Logan (see his piece beginning “When chill the blast of winter blows”), who was one of the committee appointed in 1775 to revise the “Translations and Paraphrases.”]

² [Ruskin is here thinking of another experience of his childhood: see “The Story of Arachne,” § 3 (Vol. XX. p. 372).]

³ [The latter portion of § 13 of this letter was used by Ruskin when writing *Præterita*, where it appears, slightly revised, as § 47 of vol. i. ch. ii. His autobiographical notes are resumed in Letter 42, § 12 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 101).]

arrange what one wants to insist upon wholly by time, or wholly by rational connection. You must observe that the visit to England, of which I am now going to speak, interrupts, with a brilliant display of pyrotechnic light, the steady burning of the stars above Scott's childhood. From the teaching of his aunt, *before* he could read, I should like, for several reasons, to go on at once to the teaching of his mother, *after* he could read; but I must content myself, for the moment, with adding the catalogue of mamma's library to that of aunt Jessie's. On the window-seat of Sandy-Knowe—only to be got at the pith of by help of auntie—we had the odd volume of Josephus, *Automathes*, and two or three old books not named. A year later, mamma provides for us—now scholars ourselves—Pope's *Homer*, Allan Ramsay's *Evergreen*, and, for Sundays, Bunyan, Gesner's *Death of Abel*, and Rowe's (Mrs.) *Letters from the Other World*.¹

15. But we have made our grand tour in the meantime, and have some new ideas of *this* world in our head; of which the reader must now consider:

"I was in my fourth year when my father was advised that the Bath waters might be of some advantage to my lameness. My affectionate aunt—although such a journey promised to a person of her retired habits anything but pleasure or amusement—undertook as readily to accompany me to the wells of Bladud, as if she had expected all the delight that ever the prospect of a watering-place held out to its most impatient visitants."²

And why should she not? Does it not seem somewhat strange to you, from what you know of young, or even middle-aged, aunt Jessies of the present day, that Miss Scott should look upon the journey to Bath as so severe a piece of self-denial; and that her nephew regards her doing so as a matter of course?

How old was aunt Jessie, think you? Scott's father, the eldest of a large family, was born in 1729,—in this year, therefore, was forty-six. If we uncharitably suppose Miss Jessie the next oldest, she would be precisely of the age of

¹ [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 20.]

² [*Ibid.*, p. 26.]

Mrs. Tabitha Bramble; and one could fancy her, it seems to me, on the occasion of this unforeseen trip to the most fashionable watering-place in England, putting up her “rose-collard neglegay with green robins, and her bloo quilted petticoat,”¹ without feeling herself in the position of a martyr led to the stake. But aunt Jessie must really have been much younger than Mrs. Tabitha, and have had the advantage of her in other particulars besides spelling. She was afterwards married, and when Lockhart saw her (1820?)—forty years or so after this—had still “the softest eye and the sweetest voice.”² And from the thatched mansion of the moorland, Miss Jessie feels it so irksome and solemn a duty—does she?—to go to “the square, the circus, and the parades, which put *you*” (Miss Lydia Melford) “in mind of the sumptuous palaces represented in prints and pictures; and the new buildings, such as Prince’s Row, Harlequin’s Row, Bladud’s Row, and twenty other rows besides,”³—not to speak of a real pump in a pump-room, with a handle to it, and other machinery, instead of the unpumped Tweed!

Her nephew, however, judges her rightly. Aunt Jessie could give him no truer proof of faithful affection than in the serenity with which she resolves to take him to this centre of gaiety.

Whereupon, you are to note this, that the end of all right education for a woman is to make her love her home better than any other place; that she should as seldom leave it as a queen her queendom; nor ever feel entirely at rest but within its threshold.

16. For her boy, however, there are things to be seen in Bath, and to be learned:

“I acquired the rudiments of reading from an old dame near our lodgings, and I had never a more regular teacher, though I think I did not attend her more than a quarter of a year. An occasional lesson from my aunt supplied the rest.”⁴

¹ [*Humphry Clinker* (the second letter). Mistress Tabitha Bramble was “a maiden of 45” (the fourth letter).]

² [See the passage from Lockhart quoted on p. 582.]

³ [*Humphry Clinker* (Roscoe’s edition, 1831, p. 43).]

⁴ [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 21.]

Yes, little Walter. If we indeed have a mind to our book, that is all the teaching we want; we shall perhaps get through a volume or two in time.

“The circumstances I recollect of my residence in Bath are but trifling; yet I never recall them without a feeling of pleasure. The beauties of the Parade (which of them I know not), with the river Avon winding around it, and the lowing of the cattle from the opposite hills, are warm in my recollection, and are only rivalled by the splendours of a toy-shop somewhere near the Orange Grove. I had acquired, I know not by what means, a kind of superstitious terror for statuary of all kinds. No ancient Iconoclast or modern Calvinist could have looked on the outside of the Abbey Church (if I mistake not the principal church at Bath is so called), with more horror than the image of Jacob’s Ladder, with all its angels, presented to my infant eye. My uncle* effectually combated my terrors, and formally introduced me to a statue of Neptune, which perhaps still keeps guard at the side of the Avon, where a pleasure-boat crosses to Spring Gardens.”¹

“A sweet retreat”—Spring Gardens (again I quote Miss Lydia)—“laid out in walks, and ponds, and parterres of flowers, and hard by the Pump-room is a coffee-house for the ladies, but my aunt says young girls are not admitted, inasmuch as the conversation turns upon politics, scandal, philosophy, and other subjects above our capacity.”² Is aunt Janet old enough and clever enough for the company, I wonder? And Walter—what toys did he mostly covet in the Orange Grove?

17. The passage about the effect of sculpture upon him is intensely interesting to me, partly as an indication of the state of his own nascent imagination, partly as illustrative of the power of religious sculpture, *meant* to terrify, on the minds of peasant children of high faculty. But I cannot dwell on this point here: I must get on to his first sight of a play. The Third Fors—still favourable to him—appoints it to be *As You Like It*.

A never-to-be-forgotten delight, influencing him in his whole nature thenceforward. It is uncle Robert’s doing

* Robert, who comes to visit them in Bath, to little Walter’s great joy.

¹ [Lockhart, vol. i. pp. 22, 23.]

² [*Humphry Clinker* (Roscoe’s edition, 1831, p. 45).]

this,¹ aunt Jessie having probably been doubtful on the matter, but irresistibly coaxed. Uncle Robert has much to answer for! How much, I can't tell you to-day; nor for a while now,² for I have other matters on hand in the next *Fors* or two—Glacier theory, and on the road to it I must not let you forget the broom-market between Berne and Thun;³ and I've got to finish my notes on Friedrich and his father, who take more noticing than I expected;⁴ besides that I've Friedrich II. of Germany to give some account of;⁵ and all my Oxford work besides. I can only again and again beg the many valued correspondents whose letters I must abruptly answer, to remember that not one word on any of these subjects can be set down without care; and to consider what the length of a day is, under existing solar arrangements.

Meantime, here is a point for you to think of. The boy interrupts the first scene of the play by crying aloud "An't they brothers?"⁶ (the Third *Fors* had appointed for him that one day he should refuse to speak to his own⁷); and long remembers the astonishment with which he "looked upon the apathy of the elder part of our company, who, having the means, did not spend every evening at the theatre."⁸

How was it that he never could write a Play?⁹

¹ [See Lockhart, vol. i. p. 22.]

² [The story of Scott's life was not resumed, though many incidental references occur in later Letters. For some additional passages written for *Fors*, see now Appendix 8 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 541–545).]

³ [See Letter 30 (p. 553), where the story of the Broom-Merchant was broken off.]

⁴ [Nor were the notes on Frederick the Great, of Prussia, ever finished; but see Appendix to *Crown of Wild Olive*, Vol. XVIII. pp. 532–533.]

⁵ [Promised at pp. 260, 365 *n.*, 388; but the account was never given in *Fors*, though there are many references to the Emperor in *Val d'Arno*.]

⁶ [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 22.]

⁷ [See Lockhart, vol. ii. pp. 254–255.]

⁸ [Lockhart, vol. i. p. 86.]

⁹ [The question is resumed in the next Letter, § 3 (p. 628).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

18. I HAVE mislaid, just when I wanted it, a valuable letter, which gave me the first name of Abbotsford accurately,¹—Clarty Hole being only a corruption of it, and the real name bearing no such sense. I shall come upon it some time or other: meantime, my Scottish readers must not suppose I mean that the treatment of rivers is worse in North than in South Britain,—only they have prettier streams in Scotland to float their paraffin, or other beautiful productions of modern art, or nature, on the top of. We had one or two clear streams in Surrey, indeed; but as I was investigating the source of one of them, only the other day, I found a police office had been built over it, and that the authorities had paid five hundred pounds to construct a cesspool, with a huge iron cylinder conducting to it, through the spring. Excavating, I found the fountain running abundantly, *round* the pipe.²

19. The following paragraph, and the two subjoined letters,³ appeared in the same impression of the *Daily Telegraph*, on the 12th January, 1871. I wish to preserve them in *Fors*; and I print them in this number, because the succession of the first four names in the statement of the journal, associated with that of the first magistrate of the City of London, in connection with the business in hand that day, is to me the most pleasant piece of reading—and I think must be to all of us among the most significant—that has lately met our eyes in a public print; and it means such new solemn league and covenant as Scott had been fain to see. My letter about the Italian streams may well follow what I have said of Scottish ones.

THE FRENCH APPEAL TO ENGLAND

“We are happy to announce further contributions to the fund which is being raised in response to the appeal of the Bishop of Versailles and the clergy of the Seine-et-Oise department; and also to state that, in addition to those influential

¹ [The first name—Cartley Hole—is incidentally given in the text, above, § 8. In Crockett’s *The Scott Country*, 1905, p. 254, the name is given as Cartleyhole (in the Melrose session records, as Cartlawhole and Cartlihole), christened by the neighbours as it fell into disrepair by the more characteristic name of Clarty Hole. For the passage in Lockhart, connecting the transposed name with a dirty (clarty) pond, see above, p. 595.]

² [No doubt the Wandel at Carshalton: see Vol. XVIII. p. 385, and Vol. XXII. p. xxiv.]

³ [The second letter, on “Roman Inundations,” is, however, not given here, as it has already been printed with others on the same subject in Vol. XVII. pp. 547 *seq.* For later references to them, see Letters 85 and 86 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 334, 345–346.)]

persons whom we named yesterday as being ready to serve on a committee, two other gentlemen of high official and social position have consented to join the body. The list at present is as follows: The Lord Bishop of London; Dr. Manning, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster; the Rev. Dr. Brock, the Baptist minister; Mr. Alfred de Rothschild; and the Lord Mayor, who has courteously placed the Mansion House at the service of the committee. Besides these names, the members of the 'Paris Food Fund,' as will be seen from the subjoined letter, propose to join the more comprehensive organization.

To the Editor of the Daily Telegraph

"SIR,—Acting on your suggestion that the 'Paris Food Fund,' which I yesterday described to you, might be advantageously united with that which has been suggested by the Bishop of Versailles, I beg to say that Archbishop Manning, Professor Huxley, Sir John Lubbock, and Mr. Ruskin will, with myself, have great pleasure in forming part of such a public committee as you have advised, and in placing the subscriptions already sent to us at its disposal.

"I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"JAMES T. KNOWLES."

"Jan. 11."

Daily Telegraph, Jan. 12, 1871.

LETTER 34

LA DOUCE DAME¹

*“Love, it is a wrathful peace,
A free acquittance, without release,
And truth with falsehood all a-fret,
And fear within secureness set;
In heart it is despairing hope;
And full of hope, it is vain hope.
Wise madness and wild reasonne,
And sweet danger, wherein to droune.
A heavy burden, light to bear;
A wicked way, away to wear.
It is discordance that can accord,
And accordance to discord;
It is cunning without science,
Wisdom without sapience,
Wit without discretion,
Having, without possession,
And health full of malady,
And charity full of envy,
And restraint full of abundance,
And a greedy suffisaunce.
Delight right full of heaviness,
And drearihood, full of gladness;
Bitter sweetness, and sweet error,
Right evil savoured good savour;
Sin, that pardon hath within,
And pardon, spotted outside with sin:
A pain also it is joyous,
And cruelty, right piteous;
A strength weak to stand upright,
And febleness full of might;
Wit unadvised, sage follie,
And joy full of tormentry.
A laughter it is, weeping aye;
Rest, that travaileth night and day;*

¹ [See line 6 of the French verses. A rejected title for this letter was “The Two Loves.”]

*Also a sweet Hell it is,
 And a sorrowful Paradise;*
 A pleasant gaol, and an easy prison,
 And full of froste, summer season;
 Prime-time, full of froste's white,
 And May devoid of all delight."*

*“Mesment de ceste amour
 Li plus sages n'y sceunt tour
 Maiz ou entent je te diray
 Une aût (oultre) amour te descriray
 De celle veuil je que pour t'ame
 Tu aimes la tres-doulce dame.
 Si com dist la ste escripture
 Amours est fors, amours est dure,
 Amours soustient, amours endure,
 Amours revient, et tousjours dure;
 Amours met en amer sa cure;
 Amours loyal, amours secure
 Sert, et de servise nacure.
 Amours fait de propre commun,
 Amours fait de deux cuers un;
 Amours enchace, ce me semble,
 Amours rent cuers, amours les emble,
 Amours despice, amours refait,
 Amours fait paix, amours fait plait,
 Amours fait bel, amours fait lait,
 Toutes heures quant il lui plaist
 Amours attrait, amours estrange
 Amours fait de prive estrange;
 Amours seurprent, amours emprent
 Amours reprent, amours esprent,
 Il n'est riens qu'amours ne face;
 Amours tolt cuer, amours tolt grace,
 Amours delie, amours enlance,
 Amours ocist, amours efface,
 Amours ne craint ne pic ne mace:
 Amours fist Dieu venir en place,
 Amours lui fist ûre (notre) char prendre,
 Amours le fist devenir mendre,
 Amours le fist en la croix pendre,
 Amours le fist illec extendre,
 Amours le fist le coste fendre,
 Amours le fist les waulx reprendre,
 Amours lui fist les bons aprendre,
 Amours le fist a nous venir,
 Amours nous fait a lui tenir.”*

* See first terminal note [p. 644].

1. These descriptions of the two kinds of noble love are both given in the part of the *Romance of the Rose*¹ which was written by Jean de Meung.* Chaucer translated the first, and I have partly again translated his translation into more familiar English. I leave the original French of the other for you to work at, if ever you care to learn French;—the first is all that I want you to read just now; but they should not be separated, being among the most interesting expressions extant of the sentiment of the dark ages, which Mr. Applegarth is desirous of eliminating from modern business.²

2. The two great loves,—that of husband and wife, representing generally the family affections, and that of mankind, to which, at need, the family affection must be sacrificed,—include, rightly understood, all the noble sentiments of humanity. Modern philosophy supposes these conditions of feeling to have been always absurd, and at present, happily, nearly extinct; and that the only proper, or, in future, possible, motives of human action are the three wholly unsentimental desires,—the lust of the flesh (hunger, thirst, and sexual passion), the lust of the eyes (covetousness), and the pride of life (personal vanity).³

Thus, in a recent debate on the treatment of Canada, †

* Or Méhun, near Beaugency, Loire.

† On Mr. M'Fie's motion for a committee to consider the relations that subsist between the United Kingdom and the Colonies.⁴ On the varieties of filial sentiment, compare Herodotus, iii. 38; iv. 26.⁵

¹ [Lines 4397–4434 (in Chaucer, lines 4706–4751) and 4505–4545. The whole poem, consisting of 22,000 lines, was commenced by Guillaume de Lorris, who wrote the first 4070; dying in 1260. The work was afterwards taken up and completed by Jean de Meung, who is supposed to have died about 1318.]

² [See Letters 28, § 22, and 33, § 1 (pp. 524, 606).]

³ [Compare 1 John ii. 16.]

⁴ [Mr. Macfie (member for Leith) moved on February 28, 1873, that "A Select Committee be appointed to consider the relations that subsist between the United Kingdom and the Colonies, particularly as they affect the direction which emigration takes, and the occupation of waste lands within the empire." Sir Charles Adderley (afterwards Lord Norton) deprecated the continuance of "a debate of this character," and urged the House "at once to draw a graceful curtain upon what was really becoming merely an annual sentimental exercitation."]

⁵ [Darius asked the Greeks to eat their parents, and the Callatians to burn them: both refused with horror—so, "I think," adds Herodotus, "that Pindar

Sir C. Adderley deprecates the continuance of a debate on a question “purely sentimental.” I doubt if Sir C. Adderley knew in the least what was meant by a sentimental question. It is a purely “sentimental question,” for instance, whether Sir C. Adderley shall, or shall not, eat his mother, instead of burying her. Similarly, it is a purely sentimental question, whether, in the siege of Samaria, the mother who boiled her son and ate him, or the mother who hid her son, was best fulfilling her duty to society.¹ Similarly, the relations of a colony to its mother-country, in their truth and depth, are founded on purely parental and filial instincts, which may be either sentimental or bestial, but *must* be one or the other. Sir Charles probably did not know that the discussion of every such question must therefore be either sentimental *or* bestial.

Into one or other, then, of these two forms of sentiment, conjugal and family love, or compassion, all human happiness, properly so called, resolves itself; but the spurious or counter-happiness of lust, covetousness, and vanity being easily obtained, and naturally grasped at, instead, may altogether occupy the lives of men, without ever allowing them to know what happiness means.

3. But in the use I have just made of the word “compassion,” I mean something very different from what is usually understood by it. Compassion is the Latin form of the Greek word “sympathy”—the English for both is “fellow-feeling”; and the condition of delight in characters higher than our own is more truly to be understood by the word “compassion” than the pain of pity for those inferior to our own; but in either case, the imaginative understanding of the natures of others, and the power of putting ourselves in their place, is the faculty on which the virtue depends. So that an unimaginative person can neither be reverent nor kind. The main use of works of

spoke rightly when he said, ‘of all things usage is King.’ ” The Issedononians eat their fathers, and keep the skulls, gilt; “in other respects they are just folk, and their women have equal rights with the men.”]

¹ [2 Kings vi. 29.]

fiction, and of the drama, is to supply, as far as possible, the defect of this imagination in common minds. But there is a curious difference in the nature of these works themselves, dependent on the degree of imaginative power of the writers, which I must at once explain, else I can neither answer for you my own question put in last *Fors*, why Scott could not write a play,¹ nor show you, which is my present object, the real nature of sentiment.

4. Do you know, in the first place, what a play is? or what a poem is? or what a novel is? That is to say, do you know the perpetual and necessary distinctions in literary aim which have brought these distinctive names into use? You had better first, for clearness' sake, call all the three "poems," for all the three are so, when they are good, whether written in verse or prose. All truly imaginative account of man is poetic; but there are three essential kinds of poetry,—one dramatic, one lyric, and one epic.

Dramatic poetry is the expression by the poet of other people's feelings, his own not being told.

Lyric poetry is the expression by the poet of his own feelings.

Epic poetry is account given by the poet of other people's external circumstances, and of events happening to them, with only such expression either of their feelings, or his own, as he thinks may be conveniently added.

The business of Dramatic poetry is therefore with the heart essentially; it despises external circumstance.

Lyric poetry may speak of anything that excites emotion in the speaker; while Epic poetry insists on external circumstances, and no more exhibits the heart-feeling than as it may be gathered from these.

5. For instance, the fight between the Prince of Wales and Hotspur, in *Henry the Fourth*,² corresponds closely, in the character of the event itself, to the fight of Fitz-James

¹ [See Letter 33, § 17 (p. 621).]

² [Part I., Act v. sc. 4.]

with Roderick, in the *Lady of the Lake*.¹ But Shakespeare's treatment of his subject is strictly dramatic; Scott's, strictly epic.

Shakespeare gives you no account whatever of any blow or wound: his stage direction is, briefly, "Hotspur is wounded, and falls." Scott gives you accurate account of every external circumstance, and the finishing touch of botanical accuracy,—

"Down came the blow; but in the *heath*
The erring blade found bloodless sheath,"²—

makes his work perfect, as epic poetry. And Scott's work is always epic, and it is contrary to his very nature to treat any subject dramatically.

6. That is the technical distinction, then, between the three modes of work. But the gradation of power in all three depends on the degree of imagination with which the writer can enter into the feelings of other people. Whether in expressing their's or his own, and whether in expressing their feelings only, or also the circumstances surrounding them, his power depends on his being able to feel as they do; in other words, on his being able to conceive character. And the literature which is not poetry at all, which is essentially unsentimental, or anti-poetic, is that which is produced by persons who have no imagination; and whose merit (for of course I am not speaking of bad literature) is in their wit or sense, instead of their imagination.

7. The most prosaic, in this sense, piece I have ever myself examined, in the literature of any nation, is the *Henriade* of Voltaire.³ You may take that as a work of a man whose head was as destitute of imaginative power as it is possible for the healthy cerebral organization of a highly developed mammalian animal to be. The description of the storm which carries Henry to Jersey, and of the

¹ [Canto v. stanzas xv.—xvi.]

² [*The Lady of the Lake*, canto v. stanza xvi.]

³ [*Le Henriade, Poème en Dix Chants*. Ruskin quotes from "Chant Premier."]

hermit in Jersey “que Dieu lui fit connaître,” and who, on that occasion, “au bord d’une onde pure, offre un festin champêtre,” cannot be rivalled, for stupor in conceptive power, among printed books of reputation. On the other hand, Voltaire’s wit, and reasoning faculties, are nearly as strong as his imagination is weak.¹ His natural disposition is kind; his sympathy therefore is sincere with any sorrow that he can conceive; and his indignation great against injustices of which he cannot comprehend the pathetic motives. Now notice further this, which is very curious, and to me inexplicable, but not on that account less certain as a fact.

8. The imaginative power always purifies; the want of it therefore as essentially defiles; and as the wit-power is apt to develop itself through absence of imagination, it seems as if wit itself had a defiling tendency. In Pindar, Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Scott, the colossal powers of imagination result in absolute virginal purity of thought. The defect of imagination and the splendid rational power in Pope and Horace associate themselves—it is difficult to say in what decided measures—with foulness of thought. The *Candide* of Voltaire, in its gratuitous filth, its acute reasoning, and its entire vacuity of imagination, is a standard of what may perhaps be generally and fitly termed “fimetic² literature,” still capable, by its wit, and partial truth, of a certain service in its way. But lower forms of modern literature and art—Gustave Doré’s paintings, for instance,³—are the corruption, in national decrepitude, of this pessimist method of thought; and of these, the final condemnation is true—they are neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill.⁴

9. It is one of the most curious problems respecting mental government to determine how far this fimetic taint

¹ [For other references to Voltaire, see Vol. XII. p. 55; and Letter 87, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 361).]

² [This word is a coinage of Ruskin’s; from the obsolete “fime,” or dung. He uses the word again in *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 6.]

³ [Compare, above, p. 534.]

⁴ [Luke xiv. 35.]

must necessarily affect intellects in which the reasoning and imaginative powers are equally balanced, and both of them at high level,—as in Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Chaucer, Molière, Cervantes, and Fielding; but it always indicates the side of character which is unsympathetic, and therefore unkind (thus Shakespeare makes Iago the foulest in thought, as cruelest in design, of all his villains), but which, in men of noble nature, is their safeguard against weak enthusiasms and ideals. It is impossible, however, that the highest conditions of tenderness in affectionate conception can be reached except by the absolutely virginal intellect. Shakespeare and Chaucer throw off, at noble work, the lower part of their natures as they would a rough dress; and you may also notice this, that the power of conceiving personal, as opposed to general, character, depends on this purity of heart and sentiment. The men who cannot quit themselves of the impure taint, never invent character, properly so called; they only invent symbols of common humanity. Even Fielding's Allworthy is not a character, but a type of a simple English gentleman; and Squire Western is not a character, but a type of the rude English squire.¹ But Sir Roger de Coverley is a character, as well as a type; there is no one else like him; and the masters of Tullyveolan, Ellangowan, Monkbarne, and Osbaldistone Hall,² are all, whether slightly or completely drawn, portraits, not mere symbols.

10. The little piece which I shall to-day further translate for you from my Swiss novel is interesting chiefly in showing the power with which affectionate and sentimental imagination may attach itself even to inanimate objects, and give them personality. But the works of its writer

¹ [For Ruskin's appreciation of the character-drawing in *Tom Jones*, see *Academy Notes*, 1875, No. 75 (Vol. XIV. p. 279); and for Sir Roger de Coverley, Letter 15 (above, p. 273).]

² [For other references to Mr. Godfrey Bertram, of Ellangowan (*Guy Mannering*), see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, §§ 97, 117; and for Mr. Jonathan Oldbuck, of Monkbarne (*The Antiquary*)—"a portrait of Scott himself"—*ibid.*, § 35. Of Bradwardine, Baron Tullyveolan, Scott's friend, Mr. Morritt, wrote, on the first appearance of *Waverley*, that he "could depon to the likeness in any court of taste" (Lockhart, vol. iii. p. 298). Lockhart gives no indication of the original of Mr. Osbaldistone (*Rob Roy*).]

generally show the most wholesome balance of the sentimental and rational faculty I have ever met with in literature;—the part of Gotthelf's nature which is in sympathy with Pope and Fielding enables him to touch, to just the necessary point, the lower grotesqueness of peasant nature, while his own conception of ideal virtue is as pure as Wordsworth's.

But I have only room in this *Fors* for a very little bit more of the broom-maker.¹ I continue the last sentence of it from Letter 30, § 5:—

“And then Hansli always knew that as soon as he got home there would be enough to eat;—his mother saw faithfully to that. She knew the difference it makes whether a man finds something ready to eat, when he comes in, or not. He who knows there will be something at home, does not stop in the taverns; he arrives with an empty stomach, and furnishes it, highly pleased with all about him; but if he usually finds nothing ready when at home, he stops on the road, comes in when he has had enough or too much; and grumbles right and left.

“Hansli was not avaricious, but economical. For things really useful and fit, he did not look at the money. In all matters of food and clothes, he wished his mother to be thoroughly at ease. He made a good bed for himself; and when he had saved enough to buy a knife or a good tool, he was quite up in the air. He himself dressed well, not expensively, but solidly. Any one with a good eye knows quickly enough, at the sight of houses or of people, whether they are going up or down. As for Hansli, it was easy to see he was on his way up—not that he ever put on anything fine, but by his cleanliness and the careful look of his things: aussi, everybody liked to see him, and was very glad to know that he prospered thus, not by fraud, but by work. With all that, he never forgot his prayers. On Sunday he made no brooms: in the morning he went to the sermon,* and in the afternoon he read a chapter of the Bible to his mother, whose sight was now failing. After that he gave himself a personal treat. This treat consisted in bringing out all his money, counting it, looking at it,† and calculating how much it had increased, and how much it would yet increase, etc., etc. In that money there were some very pretty pieces,— above all, pretty white pieces” (silver among the copper). “Hansli was very strong in exchanges; he took small money willingly enough, but never kept it long; it seemed always to him that the wind got into it and carried it off too quickly. The new white pieces gave him an extreme

* Much the most important part of the service in Protestant Switzerland, and a less formal one than in Scotland.

† Utmost wisdom is not in self-denial, but in learning to find extreme pleasure in very little things.

¹ [The passage here given is at pp. 351–356 in the original.]



Sunday Playthings

The Superbe Suisse and his Bear

pleasure,—above all, the fine dollars of Berne with the bear, and the superb Swiss of old time. When he had managed to catch one of these, it made him happy for many days.*

“Nevertheless, he had also his bad days. It was always a bad day for him when he lost a customer, or had counted on placing a dozen of new brooms anywhere, and found himself briskly sent from the door with ‘We’ve got all we want.’ At first Hansli could not understand the cause of such rebuffs, not knowing that there are people who change their cook as often as their shirt—sometimes oftener,—and that he couldn’t expect new cooks to know him at first sight. He asked himself then, with surprise, what he could have failed in,—whether his brooms had come undone, or whether anybody had spoken ill of him. He took that much to heart, and would plague himself all night to find out the real cause. But soon he took the thing more coolly; and even when a cook who knew him very well sent him about his business, he thought to himself, ‘Bah! cooks are human creatures, like other people; and when master or mistress have been rough with them † because they’ve put too much pepper in the soup, or too much salt in the sauce, or when their schatz’ (lover,—literally, treasure) ‘is gone off to Pepperland,¹ the poor girls have well the right to quarrel with somebody else. Nevertheless, the course of time needs brought him some worse days still, which he never got himself to take coolly. He knew now, personally, very nearly all his trees; he had indeed given, for himself alone, names to his willows, and some other particular trees, as Lizzie, Little Mary-Anne, Rosie, and so on. These trees kept him in joy all the year round, and he divided very carefully the pleasure of gathering their twigs. He treated the most beautiful with great delicacy, and carried the brooms of them to his best customers. It is true to say also that these were always master-brooms. But when he arrived thus, all joyous, at his willows, and found his Lizzie or his Rosie all cut and torn from top to bottom, his heart was so strained that the tears ran down his cheeks, and

* This pleasure is a perfectly natural and legitimate one, and all the more because it is possible only when the riches are very moderate. After getting the first shilling of which I told you,² I set my mind greatly upon getting a pile of new “lion shillings,” as I called them³—the lion standing on the top of the crown; and my delight in the bloomy surface of their dead silver is quite a memorable joy to me. I have engraved, for the frontispiece,⁴ the two sides of one of Hansli’s Sunday playthings; it is otherwise interesting as an example of the comparatively vulgar coinage of a people uneducated in art.

† Has quarrelled with them.⁵ “Les ont brusquées.” I can’t get the derivation beyond Johnson: “Fr. brusque; Gothic, braska.” But the Italian brusco is connected with the Provençal brusca, thicket, and Fr. broussaille.

¹ [In the German, “ins Land gegangen, wo der Pfeffer wächst.”]

² [See Letter 24, § 5, p. 419.]

³ [This shilling was of the coinage of 1816; the arms on the reverse bore in the second quarter a lion rampant standing almost upon the crown. The same arms appeared on the coins of George IV. and William IV.]

⁴ [See now Plate XIV.]

⁵ [In the German, “Schnauzten.”]

his blood became so hot that one could have lighted matches at it. That made him unhappy for a length of time; he could not swallow it, and all he asked was that the thief might fall into his grip, not for the value of the twigs, but because his trees had been hurt. If Hansli was not tall, still he knew how to use his limbs and his strength, and he felt his heart full of courage. On that point he absolutely would not obey his mother, who begged him for the love of God not to meddle with people who might kill him, or do him some grievous harm. But Hansli took no heed of all that. He lay in wait and spied until he caught somebody. Then there were blows and formidable battles in the midst of the solitary trees. Sometimes Hansli got the better, sometimes he came home all in disorder. But at the worst, he gained at least this, that thenceforward one let his willows more and more alone, as happens always when a thing is defended with valour and perseverance. What is the use of putting oneself in the way of blows, when one can get things somewhere else without danger? Aussi, the Rychiswyl farmers were enchanted with their courageous little gardechampêtre, and if one or the other saw him with his hair pulled, they failed not to say, 'Never mind, Hansli; he will have had his dance all the same. Tell me the next time you see anything—I'll go with you, and we'll cure him of his taste for brooms.' Whereupon, Hansli would tell him when he saw anybody about that should not be; the peasant* kept himself hid; Hansli began the attack; the adversary, thinking himself strongest, waited for him; once the thief seized, the peasant showed himself, and all was said. Then the marauder would have got away if he could, but Hansli never let go till he had been beaten as was fitting.

"This was a very efficacious remedy against the switch-stealers, and Little Mary-Anne and Rosie remained in perfect security in the midst of the loneliest fields. Thus Hansli passed some years without perceiving it, and without imagining that things could ever change. A week passed, as the hand went round the clock, he didn't know how. Tuesday, market-day at Berne, was there before he could think about it; and Tuesday was no sooner past than Saturday was there; and he had to go to Thun, whether he would or no, for how could the Thun people get on without him? Between times he had enough to do to prepare his cartload, and to content his customers,—that is to say, those of them that pleased him. Our Hansli was a man; and every man, when his position permits it, has his caprices of liking and disliking. Whenever one had trod on his toes, one must have been very clever afterwards to get the least twig of a broom from him. The parson's wife, for instance, couldn't have got one if she would have paid for it twice over. It was no use sending to him; every time she did, he said he was very sorry, but he hadn't a broom left that would suit her.

"That was because she had one day said to him that he was just like other people, and contented himself with putting a few long twigs all round, and then bad ones in the middle.

" 'Then you may as well get your brooms from somebody else,' said he; and held to it too;—so well that the lady died without ever having been able to get the shadow of a broom from him.

* Paysan—see above [Letter 30, § 5 *n.*, p. 552].

“One Tuesday he was going to Berne with an enormous cartful of his prettiest brooms, all gathered from his favourite trees,—that is to say, Rosie, Little Mary-Anne, and company. He was pulling with all his strength, and greatly astonished to find that his cart didn’t go of itself, as it did at first; that it really pulled too hard, and that something must be wrong with it. At every moment he was obliged to stop to take breath and wipe his forehead. ‘If only I was at the top of the hill of Stalden!’ said he. He had stopped thus in the little wood of Muri, close to the bench that the women rest their baskets on. Upon the bench sat a young girl, holding a little bundle beside her, and weeping hot tears. Hansli, who had a kind heart, asked her what she was crying for.

“The young girl recounted to him that she was obliged to go into the town, and that she was so frightened she scarcely dared; that her father was a shoemaker, and that all his best customers were in the town; that for a long time she had carried her bundle of shoes in, on market days, and that nothing had ever happened to her. But behold, there had arrived in the town a new gendarme, very cross, who had already tormented her every Tuesday she had come, for some time back; and threatened her, if she came again, to take her shoes from her, and put her in prison. She had begged her father not to send her any more, but her father was as severe as a Prussian soldier, and had ordered her to ‘go in, always; and if anybody hurt her, it was with him they would have affairs;’ but what would that help her?—she was just as much afraid of the gendarme as before.

“Hansli felt himself touched with compassion; above all, on account of the confidence the young girl had had in telling him all this; that which certainly she would not have done to everybody. ‘But she has seen at once that I am not a bad fellow, and that I have a kind heart,’ thought he.

“Poor Hansli!—but after all, it is faith which saves, people say.”¹

11. My readers may at first be little interested by this uneventful narrative; but they will find it eventually delightful, if they accustom themselves to classic and sincere literature; and as an account of Swiss life now fast passing away, it is invaluable. More than the life of Switzerland,—its very snows,—eternal, as one foolishly called them,—are passing away,² as if in omen of evil. One-third, at least, in the depth of all the ice of the Alps has been lost in the last twenty years; and the change of climate thus indicated is without any parallel in authentic history. In its bearings on the water supply and atmospheric conditions of central Europe, it is the most

¹ [For continuation of the story, see Letter 39, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 55).]

² [On this subject, compare Letter 59, § 5 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 443).]

important phenomenon, by far, of all that offer themselves to the study of living men of science: yet in Professor Tyndall's recent work on the glaciers,* though he notices the change as one which, "if continued, will reduce the Swiss glaciers to the mere spectres of their former selves," he offers no evidence, nor even suggestion, as to the causes of the change itself.

I have no space in this number of *Fors* to say what reason there is for my taking notice of this book, or the glacier theory, in connection with the life of Scott.¹ In the interests of general literature, it is otherwise fitting that the nature of the book itself should be pointed out.

12. Its nature, that is to say, so far as it has any. It seems to be written for a singular order of young people,² whom, if they were older, Professor Tyndall assures them, it would give him pleasure to take up Mont Blanc; but whom he can at present invite to walk with him along the moraine from the Jardin, where "perfect steadiness of foot is necessary,—a slip would be death;" and to whom, with Mr. Hirst, he can "confide confidently" the use of his surveying chain. It is, at all events, written for entirely ignorant people—and entirely idle ones, who cannot be got to read without being coaxed and flattered into the unusual exertion. "Here, my friend," says the Professor, at the end of his benevolently alluring pages, "our labours close! It has been a true pleasure to me to have you at my side so long. You have been steadfast and industrious throughout. . . . Steadfast, prudent, without terror, though not at all times without awe, I have found you, on rock and ice. Give me your hand—Goodbye." Does the

* *The Forms of Water*. King and Co., Cornhill. 1872. [Preface.]

¹ [See above, p. 614 n.]

² [The book consists of notes of a course of lectures delivered to a Juvenile Audience at the Royal Institution, during the Christmas holidays, 1871. Mr. Hirst was Tyndall's assistant there. Ruskin's quotations are from §§ 136, 180, 492, 493. For similar criticisms on the style of Tyndall's book, on the *Glaciers of the Alps*, see *Deucalion*, Vol. XXVI. pp. 144–145.]

Professor count, then, upon *no* readers but those whom he can gratify with polite expressions of this kind? Upon none who perhaps unsteadfast, imprudent, and very much frightened upon rock and ice, have nevertheless done their own work there, and know good work of other people's, from bad, *anywhere*; and true praise from false anywhere; and can detect the dishonouring of nameable and noble persons, couched under sycophancy of the nameless? He has at least had one reader whom I can answer for, of this inconvenient sort.

13. It is, I am sorry to say, just forty years (some day last month) since I first saw the Bernese Alps from above Schaffhausen.¹ Since that evening I have never let slip a chance of knowing anything definite about glaciers and their ways; and have watched the progress of knowledge, and the oscillations of theory, on the subject, with an interest not less deep, and certainly more sincere, than it would have been if my own industry had been able to advance the one, or my own ingenuity to complicate the other. But only one great step in the knowledge of glaciers has been made in all that period;² and it seems the principal object of Professor Tyndall's book to conceal its having been taken, that he and his friends may get the credit, some day, of having taken it themselves.

I went to the University in 1836, and my best friend there, among the older masters, Dr. Buckland,³ kept me not ill-informed on my favourite subject, the geological, or crystallogical, question. Nearly everything of which Professor Tyndall informs his courageous readers was known then, just as well as it is now. We all,—that is to say, all geologists of any standing, and their pupils,—knew that glaciers moved; that they were supplied by snow at the top of the Alps, and consumed by heat at the bottom of

¹ [In 1833; see the verses on "The Alps from Schaffhausen" in Vol. II. p. 366, and the description in *Præterita*, i. §§ 133–136.]

² [The following discussion should be read in connexion with the summary given in Vol. XXVI. pp. xxxiii.–xl.]

³ [Compare *Præterita*, i. ch. xi. § 233.]

them; that there were cracks all through them, and moraines all down them; that some of their ice was clear, and other ice opaque; that some of it was sound, and some rotten; and that streams fell into them at places called mills, and came out of them at places called grottoes.¹ We were, I am sorry to say, somewhat languidly content with these articles of information; we never thought of wading “breast-deep through snow” in search of more, and still less of “striking our theodolites with the feelings of a general who had won a small battle.”* Things went on thus quietly enough. We were all puzzled to account for glacier motion, but never thought of ascertaining what the motion really was. We knew that the ice slipped over the rocks at some places, tumbled over them at others; gaped, or as people who wanted to write sublimely always said, yawned, when it was steep, and shut up again when it was level. And Mr. Charpentier wrote a thick volume² to show that it moved by expansion and contraction, which I read all through, and thought extremely plausible. But none of us ever had the slightest idea of the ice’s being anything but an entirely solid substance, which was to be reasoned about as capable indeed of being broken, or crushed, or pushed, or pulled in any direction, and of sliding or falling as gravity and smooth surfaces might guide it, but was always entirely rigid and brittle in its substance like so much glass or stone.

14. This was the state of affairs in 1841. Professor Agassiz, of Neuchâtel, had then been some eight or ten years at work on the glaciers: had built a cabin on one of them; walked a great many times over a great many of them; described a number of their phenomena quite

* When next the reader has an opportunity of repeating Professor Tyndall’s experiments (p. 92) in a wreath of dry snow, I recommend him first to try how much jumping is necessary in order to get into it “breast-deep”; and secondly, how far he can “wade” in that dramatic position.

¹ [See Note by Author, below, § 21.]

² [Jean de Charpentier, *Essai sur les Glaciers*, Lausanne, 1841.]

correctly; proposed, and in some cases performed, many ingenious experiments upon them; and indeed done almost everything that was to be done for them—except find out the one thing that we wanted to know.

As his malicious fortune would have it, he invited in that year (1841) a man of acute brains to see what he was about.¹ The invitation was accepted. The visitor was a mathematician; and after examining the question, for discussion of which Agassiz was able to supply him with all the data except those which were essential, resolved to find out the essential ones himself.

Which in the next year (1842) he quietly did; and in 1843 solved the problem of glacier motion for ever,—announcing, to everybody's astonishment, and to the extreme disgust and mortification of all glacier students,—including my poor self (not the least envious, I fancy, though with as little right to be envious as any one),—that glaciers were not solid bodies at all, but semi-liquid ones, and ran down in their beds like so much treacle.

“Cela saute aux yeux,” we all said, as soon as we were told; and I well remember the intense mortification of first looking down on the dirt bands of the Mer de Glace, from the foot of the Little Charmoz, after I had read Principal Forbes' book.² That we never should have seen them before!—so palpable, so inevitable now, with every inch of the ice's motion kept record of, in them, for centuries, and every curve pencilled in dark, so that no river eddies, no festooned fall of sweeping cascade, could be more conclusive in proof of the flowing current. And of course it flowed; how else could it have moved but by a series of catastrophes?* Everything explained, now, by one shrewd and

* See the last terminal note [p. 647].

¹ [James D. Forbes visited M. Agassiz, who had a hut, known as the Hôtel des Neuchâtelois, on the Unteraar Glacier in August 1841. On the very first day of his visit Forbes noticed the veined, or ribbon, structure of the ice, which gave him the clue: see, again, Vol. XXVI. p. xxxv.]

² [See Vol. XXVI. p. xxxviii.]

clear-sighted man's work for a couple of summer months; and what asses we had all been!

15. But fancy the feelings of poor Agassiz in his Hôtel des Neuchâtelois! To have had the thing under his nose for ten years, and missed it! There is nothing in the annals of scientific mischance (perhaps the truer word would be scientific dulness) to match it; certainly it would be difficult for provocation to be more bitter,—at least, for a man who thinks, as most of our foolish modern scientific men do think, that there is no good in knowing anything for its own sake, but only in being the first to find it out.

Nor am I prepared altogether to justify Forbes in his method of proceeding, except on the terms of battle which men of science have laid down for themselves. Here is a man has been ten years at his diggings; has trenched here, and bored there, and been over all the ground again and again, except just where the nugget is. He asks one to dinner—and one has an eye for the run of a stream; one does a little bit of pickaxing in the afternoon on one's own account,—and walks off with his nugget. It is hard.

Still, in strictness, it is perfectly fair. The new-comer, spade on shoulder, does not understand, when he accepts the invitation to dinner, that he must not dig,—or must give all he gets to his host. The luck is his, and the old pitsman may very excusably growl and swear at him a little; but has no real right to quarrel with him,—still less to say that his nugget is copper, and try to make everybody else think so too.

Alas, it was too clear that this Forbes' nugget was not copper. The importance of the discovery was shown in nothing so much as in the spite of Agassiz and his friends. The really valuable work of Agassiz on the glaciers was itself disgraced, and made a monument to the genius of Forbes, by the irrelevant spite with which every page was stained in which his name could be introduced. Mr. Desor found consolation in describing the cowardice of the

Ecossais on the top of the Jungfrau;¹ and all the ingenuity and plausibility of Professor Tyndall have been employed, since the death of Forbes, to diminish the lustre of his discovery, and divide the credit of it.

16. To diminish the lustre, observe, is the fatallest wrong; by diminishing its distinctness. At the end of this last book of his, in the four hundred and tenth of the sapient sentences which he numbers with paternal care, he still denies, as far as he dares, the essential point of Forbes' discovery; denies it interrogatively, leaving the reader to consider the whole subject as yet open to discussion,—only to be conclusively determined by—Professor Tyndall and his friends. “Ice splits,” he says, “if you strike a pointed pricker into it; fissures, narrow and profound, may be traced for hundreds of yards through the ice. Did the ice possess even a very small modicum of that power of stretching which is characteristic of a viscous substance, such crevasses could not be formed.”² Professor Tyndall presumably never having seen a crack in clay, nor in shoe-leather, nor in a dish of jelly set down with a jerk; nor, in the very wax he himself squeezed flat to show the nature of cleavage,³—understood that the cleavage meant the multiplication of fissure!

And the book pretends to be so explanatory, too, to his young friends!—explanatory of the use of the theodolite, of the nature of presence of mind, of the dependence of enjoyment of scenery upon honest labour, of the necessity that in science, “thought, as far as possible, should be wedded to fact,” and of the propriety of their becoming older and better informed before they unqualifiedly accept his opinion of the labours of Rendu!⁴

But the one thing which, after following him through the edification of his four hundred and ten sentences, they

¹ [For the passage to which Ruskin here alludes, see Vol. XXVI. p. xxxvi. n.]

² [See *Forms of Water*, §§ 409, 410.]

³ [As explained in his lecture at the Royal Institution on June 6, 1856: see *Glaciers of the Alps*, p. 435.]

⁴ [See *Forms of Water*, §§ 403, 402. For the labours of Rendu, see, again, Vol. XXVI. pp. xxxiv., xxxv.]

had a right to have explained to them—the one thing that will puzzle them if ever they see a glacier, “*how* the centre flows past the sides, and the top flows over the bottom,” the Professor does *not* explain; but only assures them of the attention which the experiments of Mr. Mathews, Mr. Froude, and above all Signor Bianconi, on that subject, “will doubtless receive at a future time.”¹

17. The readers of *Fors* may imagine they have nothing to do with personal questions of this kind. But they have no conception of the degree in which general science is corrupted and retarded by these jealousies of the schools;² nor how important it is to the cause of all true education, that the criminal indulgence of them should be chastised. Criminal is a strong word, but an entirely just one. I am not likely to overrate the abilities of Professor Tyndall; but he had at least intelligence enough to know that his dispute of the statements of Forbes by quibbling on the word “viscous” was as uncandid as it was unscholarly; and it retarded the advance of glacier science for at least ten years. It was unscholarly, because no other single word existed in the English language which Forbes could have used instead; and uncandid, because Professor Tyndall knew perfectly well that Forbes was aware of the difference between ice and glue, without any need for experiments on them at the Royal Institution. Forbes said that the mass of glacier ice was viscous, though an inch of ice was not, just as it may be said, with absolute truth, that a cartload of fresh-caught herring is liquid, though a single herring is not. And the absurdity as well as the iniquity of the Professor’s wilful avoidance of this gist of the whole debate is consummated in this last book, in which, though its title is *The Forms of Water*, he actually never traces the transformation of snow into glacier ice at all (blundering by the way, in consequence, as to the use of one of the

¹ [*Forms of Water*, § 411.]

² [For other passages in which Ruskin insists on this point, see above, p. 124 *n.*]

commonest words in Savoyard French, *névé*¹). For there are three great “forms of water” by which the Alps are sheeted,—one is snow; another is glacier ice; the third is *névé*, which is the transitional substance between one and the other. And there is not a syllable, from the beginning of the book to the end, on the subject of this change, the nature of which is quite the first point to be determined in the analysis of glacier motion.

I have carried my letter to an unusual length, and must end for the time; and next month have to deal with some other matters; but as the Third Fors has dragged me into this business, I will round it off as best I may; and in the next letter which I can devote to the subject, I hope to give some available notes on the present state of glacier knowledge, and of the points which men who really love the Alps may now usefully work upon.²

¹ [“The French term *névé* is applied,” says Tyndall (§ 127), “to the glacial region above the snow-line, while the word *glacier* is restricted to the ice below it.” For the true meaning of the word (as given by Ruskin), see Littré, under *Névé*.]

² [See Letter 35, §§ 13, 14 (pp. 662–663), and 43, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 123).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

18. I CUT out of the *Morning Post* of September 15th, 1873, the following piece of fashionable intelligence, as a sufficiently interesting example of the "Sorrowful Paradise"¹ which marriage, and the domestic arrangements connected with it, occasionally construct in the districts of England where Mr. Applegarth's great principle, "No sentiment ought to be brought into the subject,"² would be most consistently approved in all the affairs of life. The inconvenience to his master of the inopportune expression of sentiment on the part of the dog, is a striking corroboration of Mr. Applegarth's views:—

"Charles Dawson, an ironworker, who had left his wife and cohabited with a young woman named Margaret Addison, attacked her in the house with a coal rake on the head and body. He then, when his victim screamed, pressed her neck down on the floor with one of his heavy boots, while with the other he kicked her. He jumped upon her, and finally seized a large earthen pan and dashed it upon her head, killing her on the spot. The whole of the attack was witnessed by a man who was deterred from interfering by a loaded revolver which Dawson held. Dawson decamped, and strong bodies of police guarded the different roads from the town, and searched several of his haunts. At three o'clock yesterday morning a dog recognised to be Dawson's was followed, and Sergeant Cuthbert broke open the door where the animal was scratching to obtain admission, and captured Dawson, who was sitting on a chair. Although he was armed with a loaded revolver, he offered no resistance."

19. I ought to have noted in last *Fors*,³ respecting the difficulty of spelling, some forms of bad spelling which result from the mere quantity of modern literature, and the familiarity of phrases which are now caught by the eye and ear, without being attentively looked at for an instant, so that spelling and pronunciation go to ruin together.

On the other hand, I print the following portions of a very graceful letter I received early this year, which indicates the diffusion of really sound education. I wish its writer would tell me her employment.

"LONDON, S.E.,
"March 9th, 1873.

"And you will not again call yourself our friend, because you are disheartened by our regardlessness of your friendship, and still more, it may be, by the discouraging voice of some on whom you might perhaps more reasonably have counted.

"You say we have never written you a word of encouragement. But don't you

¹ [See above, p. 625.]

² [See Letters 28, § 22, and 33, § 1 (above, pp. 524, 606).]

³ [Letter 33, § 4 (p. 608).]

think the fault-finders would be sure to speak first, and loudest? *I* even, in my loneliness, am able to lend my copies to four, who all look forward to their turn with pleasure. (They get their pleasure *for nothing*, and I was not quite sure you would approve! until I found you would be willing to lend your Talmud!)

“On one point *I* grumble and find fault.

“Most of those works which you say you want us to read, I have read; but if I had had to pay the price at which you propose to publish them, they would have cost me £3, and I could not have afforded it; because, much as I delighted in them, I longed for certain other books as well. Many an intelligent working man with a family is poorer than I am.

“I quite thoroughly and heartily sympathise with your contempt for advertising (as it is abused at present, anyway). But I think all good books should be cheap. I would make bad ones as dear as you like.

“Was it not Socrates alone of the great Greeks who would put *no* price on his wisdom?—and Christ ‘taught daily in their streets.’ I do assure you there are plenty of us teachable enough, if only any one capable of teaching could get near enough, who will never, in this world, be able to afford ‘a doctor’s fee.’

“I wonder—if it be wrong to take interest—of what use my very small savings could be to me in old age? Would it be worth while for working women to save at all?

(Signed) “A WORKING WOMAN.”

No, certainly not wrong. The wrong is in the poor wages of good work, which make it impossible to buy books at a proper price, or to save what would be enough for old age. Books should not be cheaper, but work should be dearer.

20. A young lady writing to me the other day to ask what I really wanted girls to do, I answered as follows, requesting her to copy the answer, that it might serve once for all. I print it accordingly, as perhaps a more simple statement than the one given in *Sesame and Lilies*.¹

Women’s work is,—

- I. To please people.
- II. To feed them in dainty ways.
- III. To clothe them.
- IV. To keep them orderly.
- V. To teach them.

I. To please.—A woman must be a pleasant creature. Be sure that people like the room better with you in it than out of it; and take all pains to get the power of sympathy, and the habit of it.

II. Can you cook plain meats and dishes economically and savourily? If not, make it your first business to learn, as you find opportunity. When you can, advise, and personally help, any poor woman within your reach who will be glad of help in that matter; always avoiding impertinence or discourtesy of interference. Acquaint yourself with the poor, not as their patroness, but their friend: if then you can modestly recommend a little more water in the pot, or half-an-hour’s more boiling, or a dainty bone they did not know of, you will have been useful indeed.

¹ [That is, in the Preface of 1871 to the “Works” Edition: see Vol. XVIII. pp. 35 *seq.*]

III. To clothe.—Set aside a quite fixed portion of your time for making strong and pretty articles of dress of the best procurable materials. You may use a sewing machine;¹ but what work is to be done (in order that it may be entirely sound) with finger and thimble, is to be your especial business.

First-rate material, however costly, sound work, and such prettiness as ingenious choice of colour and adaptation of simple form will admit, are to be your aims. Head-dress may be fantastic, if it be stout, clean, and consistently worn, as a Norman paysanne's cap. And you will be more useful in getting up, ironing, etc., a pretty cap for a poor girl who has not taste or time to do it for herself, than in making flannel petticoats or knitting stockings. But do both, and give (don't be afraid of giving;—Dorcas wasn't raised from the dead that modern clergymen might call her a fool²) the things you make to those who verily need them. What sort of persons these *are*, you have to find out. It is a most important part of your work.

IV. To keep them orderly,—primarily clean, tidy, regular in habits.—Begin by keeping *things* in order; soon you will be able to keep people, also.

Early rising—on all grounds, is for yourself indispensable. You must be at work by latest at six in summer and seven in winter. (Of course that puts an end to evening parties, and so it is a blessed condition in two directions at once.) Every day do a little bit of housemaid's work in your own house, thoroughly, so as to be a pattern of perfection in that kind. Your actual housemaid will then follow your lead, if there's an atom of woman's spirit in her (if not, ask your mother to get another). Take a step or two of stair, and a corner of the dining-room, and keep them polished like bits of a Dutch picture.

If you have a garden, spend all spare minutes in it in actual gardening. If not, get leave to take care of part of some friend's, a poor person's, but always out of doors. Have nothing to do with greenhouses, still less with hothouses.³

When there are no flowers to be looked after, there are dead leaves to be gathered, snow to be swept, or matting to be nailed, and the like.

V. Teach—yourself first—to read with attention, and to remember with affection, what deserves both, and nothing else. Never read borrowed books.⁴ To be without books of your own is the abyss of penury. Don't endure it. And when you've to buy them, you'll think whether they're worth reading; which you had better, on all accounts.

¹ [But see Letter 59, § 14, author's second note (Vol. XXVIII. p. 453).]

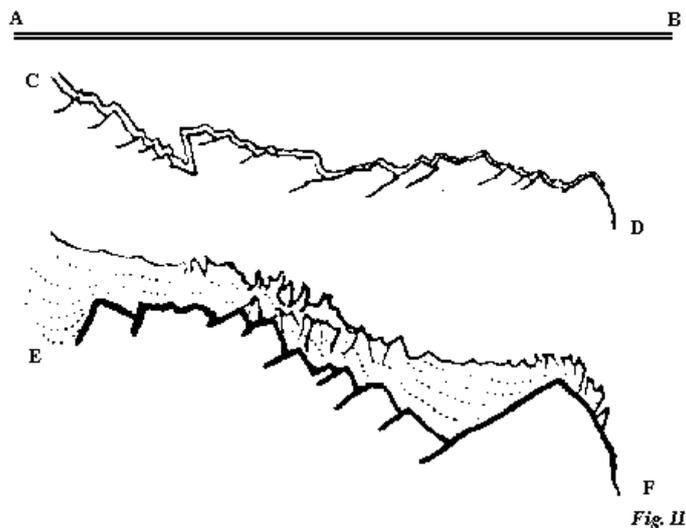
⁵ [See Acts ix. 36–42. For a later reference by Ruskin to this paragraph III., in reinforcement of the necessity of not being afraid of the opinion of the world, see Letter 66, § 24 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 635).]

³ [See, on this subject, Letter 46, § 15 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 181).]

⁴ [Compare Letter 16, § 12 (p. 288).]

(Glacier Catastrophe, § 13)

21. With the peculiar scientific sagacity on which Professor Tyndall piques himself, he has entirely omitted to inquire what would be the result on a really brittle body,—say a sheet of glass, four miles long by two hundred feet thick (A to B, in this figure, greatly exaggerates the proportion in depth), of being pushed down over a bed of rocks of any given probable outline—say C to D. Does he suppose it would adhere to them like a tapering leech, in the line given between C and D? The third



sketch shows the actual condition of a portion of a glacier flowing from E to F over such a group of rocks as the lower bed of the Glacier des Bois once presented. Professor Tyndall has not even thought of explaining what course the lines of lower motion, or subsidence (in ice of the various depths roughly suggested by the dots) would follow on *any* hypothesis; for, admitting even Professor Ramsay's theory, that the glacier cut its own bed¹ (though it would be just as rational to think that its own dish was made for itself by a custard pudding), still the rocks must have had some irregularity in shape to begin with, and are not cut, even now, as smooth as a silver spoon.

¹ [On this subject, see *Deucalion*, Vol. XXVI. pp. lxxv., lxxvi.]

LETTER 35

SONGS OF SONGS¹

BRANTWOOD, 18th September, 1873.

1. LOOKING up from my paper, as I consider what I am to say in this letter, and in what order to say it, I see out of my window, on the other side of the lake, the ivied chimneys (thick and strong-built, like castle towers, and not at all disposed to drop themselves over people below) of the farmhouse,² where, I told you the other day,³ I saw its mistress preparing the feast of berry-bread for her sheep-shearers. In that farmhouse, about two hundred and fifty years ago, warmed, himself at the hearth, then feet across, of its hall, the English squire⁴ who wrote the version of the Psalms from which I chose for you the fourteenth and fifteenth, last November.⁵ Of the said squire I wish you, this November, to know somewhat more; here, to begin, is his general character, given by a biographer who may be trusted:⁶—

“He was a true model of worth; a man fit for conquest, plantation, reformation, or what action soever is greatest and hardest among men; withal such a lover of mankind, and goodness, that whosoever had any real parts, in him found comfort, participation, and protection to the uttermost of his power. The universities abroad and at home accounted him a general Mæcenas of learning, dedicated their books to him, and communicated every invention or improvement of knowledge to him. Soldiers honoured him, and were so honoured by him, as no man thought he marched under the true banner of Mars, that had not obtained Sir Philip

¹ [For the title, see § 7, where Ruskin refers to the Canticles, or Song of Songs, as one of the Songs of Songs with which the Letter deals.]

² [Coniston Hall; for woodcut of it, see *The Poetry of Architecture*, Vol. I. p. 60.]

³ [See Letter 32, § 12 (p. 592).]

⁴ [Sir Philip Sidney (see Preface to *Rock Honeycomb*).]

⁵ [Letter 23, § 24 (p. 415).]

⁶ [Ruskin quotes, with some compression, from p. 60 of the Life of Sidney in the following book: *The Miscellaneous Works of Sir Philip Sidney, Knt. With a Life of the Author and Illustrative Notes by William Gray*: Oxford, 1829. The original authority there cited by Gray is Sidney's friend, Fulke Greville, Lord Brook: see vol. i. pp. 25, 26 of *Lord Brook's Life of Sir Philip Sydney* (1816 edition).]

Sidney's approbation. Men of affairs, in most parts of Christendom, entertained correspondency with him. But what speak I of these? His heart and capacity were so large, that there was not a cunning painter, a skillful engineer, an excellent musician, or any other artificer of extraordinary fame, that made not himself known to this famous spirit, and found him his true friend without hire, and the common rendezvous of worth in his time."

2. This being (and as I can assure you, by true report) his character, and manner of life, you are to observe these things, farther, about his birth, fate, and death.

When he was born, his mother was in mourning for her father, brother, and sister-in-law, who all had died on the scaffold.¹ Yet, very strangely, you will find that he takes no measures, in his political life, for the abolition of capital punishment.

Perhaps I had better at once explain to you the meaning of his inactivity in that cause, although for my own part I like best to put questions only, and leave you to work them out for yourselves as you are able. But you could not easily answer this one without help. This psalm-singing squire has nothing to urge against capital punishment, because his grandfather, uncle, and aunt-in-law all died innocent. It is only rogues who have a violent objection to being hanged, and only abettors of rogues who would desire anything else for them. Honest men don't in the least mind being hanged occasionally by mistake, so only that the general principle of the gallows be justly maintained; and they have the pleasure of knowing that the world they leave is positively minded to cleanse itself of the human vermin with which they have been classed by mistake.²

3. The contrary movement—so vigorously progressive in modern days—has its real root in a gradually increasing conviction on the part of the English nation that they are *all* vermin. ("Worms" is the orthodox Evangelical expression. Which indeed is becoming a fact, very fast indeed;—but was by no means so in the time of this psalm-singing squire. In his days, there was still a quite sharp separation

¹ [See below, § 9.]

² [For other passages in which Ruskin states his views on Capital Punishment, see below, p. 667 *n.*]

between honest men and rogues; and the honest men were perfectly clear about the duty of trying to find out which was which. The confusion of the two characters is a result of the peculiar forms of vice and ignorance, reacting on each other, which belong to the modern Evangelical sect, as distinguished from other bodies of Christian men; and date therefore, necessarily, from the Reformation.

They consist especially in three things. First, in declaring a bad translation of a group of books of various qualities, accidentally associated, to be the “Word of God.” Secondly, reading, of this singular “Word of God,” only the bits they like; and never taking any pains to understand even those.* Thirdly, resolutely refusing to practise even the very small bits they do understand, if such practice happen to go against their own worldly—especially money—interests. Of which three errors, the climax is in their always delightedly reading—without in the slightest degree understanding—the fourteenth Psalm; and never reading, nor apparently thinking it was ever intended they should read, the next one to it—the fifteenth. For which reason I gave you those two together, from the squire’s version, last November,—and, this November and December, will try to make you understand both. For among those books accidentally brought together, and recklessly called the “Word of God,”¹ the book of Psalms is a very precious one. It is certainly not the “Word of God”; but it is the collected words of very wise and good men, who knew a great many important things which you don’t know, and had better make haste to know,—and were ignorant of

* I have long since expressed these facts in my *Ethics of the Dust*, but too metaphorically. “The way in which common people read their Bibles is just like the way that the old monks thought hedgehogs ate grapes. They rolled themselves (it was said) over and over, where the grapes lay on the ground: what fruit stuck to their spines, they carried off and ate. So your hedgehoggy readers roll themselves over and over their Bibles, and declare that whatever sticks to their own spines is Scripture, and that nothing else is.”²

¹ [On the subject of Inspiration, compare below, p. 669; and see *Time and Tide*, § 35 (Vol. XVII. pp. 348–350).]

² [Lecture V., § 59 (Vol. XVIII. p. 275). Compare Vol. XXVIII. p. 72.]

some quite unimportant things, which Professor Huxley knows, and thinks himself wiser on that account than any quantity of Psalmists, or Canticle-singers, either. The distinction between the two, indeed, is artificial, and worse than that, non-natural. For it is just as proper and natural, sometimes, to write a psalm, or solemn song, to your mistress, and a canticle, or joyful song, to God, as to write grave songs only to God, and canticles to your mistress. And there is, observe, no proper distinction in the words at all. When Jean de Meung continues the love-poem of William de Loris,¹ he says sorrowfully:—

“Cys trespassa Guilleaume
De Loris, et ne fit plus pseume.”

“Here died William
Of Loris, and made psalm no more.”

And the best word for “Canticles” in the Bible is “Asma,”² or Song, which is just as grave a word as Psalmos, or Psalm.

4. And as it happens, this psalm-singing, or, at least, exquisitely psalm-translating, squire, mine ancient neighbour, is just as good a canticle-singer. I know no such lovely love-poems as his, since Dante’s.

Here is a specimen for you, which I choose because of its connection with the modern subject of railroads; only note, first,

The word Squire,³ I told you, meant primarily a “rider.” And it does not at all mean, and never can mean, a person carried in an iron box by a kettle on wheels. Accordingly, this squire, riding to visit his mistress along an old English road, addresses the following sonnet to the ground of it,—gravel or turf, I know not which:—

“Highway, since you my chief Parnassus be;
And that my Muse, to some ears not unsweet,
Tempers her words to trampling horses’ feet,
More oft than to a chamber melody;

¹ [See above, p. 626.]

² [The title, in the Septuagint, of the Song of Solomon.]

³ [See Letter 2, § 4 (p. 30).]

Now, blessed you, bear onward blessed me,
 To her, where I my heart, safe left, shall meet;
 My Muse and I must you of duty greet
 With thanks and wishes; wishing thankfully—
 ‘Be you still fair, honour’d by public heed;
 By no encroachment wrong’d, nor time forgot;
 Nor blamed for blood, nor shamed for sinful deed;
 And that you know, I envy you no lot
 Of highest wish, I wish you so much bliss,—
 Hundreds of years you Stella’s feet may kiss.’ ”¹

Hundreds of years! You think that a mistake? No, it is the very rapture of love. A lover like this does not believe his mistress can grow old, or die. How do you think the other verses read, apropos of railway signals and railway scrip?

“Be you still fair, honour’d by public heed,*
 Nor blamed for blood, nor shamed for sinful deed.”

5. But to keep our eyes and ears with our squire. Presently he comes in sight of his mistress’s house, and then sings this sonnet:—

“I see the house; my heart, thyself contain!²
 Beware full sails drown not thy tott’ring barge;
 Lest joy, by nature apt spirits to enlarge,
 Thee, to thy wreck, beyond thy limits strain.
 Nor do like lords, whose, weak, confused brain,
 Not pointing to fit folks each undercharge,
 While ev’ry office themselves will discharge,
 With doing all, leave nothing done but pain.
 But give apt servants their due place; let eyes
 See beauty’s total sum, summ’d in her face;
 Let ears hear speech, which wit to wonder ties;
 Let breath suck up those sweets; let arms embrace
 The globe of weal; lips, Love’s indentures make;
 Thou, but of all the kingly tribute take!”³

6. And here is one more, written after a quarrel, which is the prettiest of all as a song; and interesting for you to

* See terminal notes, § 16 [p. 664].

¹ [*Astrophel and Stella*, 84th sonnet.]

² [Ruskin in his copy notes against these words, “Continence, Measure, Moderation of infinite love.”]

³ [*Astrophel and Stella*, 85th sonnet.]

compare with the Baron of Bradwardine's song at Lucky M'Leary's:¹—

“All my sense thy sweetness gained,
Thy fair hair my heart enchained;
My poor reason thy words moved,²
So that thee, like heav'n, I loved.

Fa, la, la, leridan, dan, dan, dan, deridan;
Dan, dan, dan, deridan, dei;
While to my mind the outside stood,
For messenger of inward good.

Now thy sweetness sour is deemed;
Thy hair not worth a hair esteemed,
Reason hath thy words removed,
Finding that but words they proved.

Fa, la, la, leridan, dan, dan, dan, deridan;
Dan, dan, dan, deridan, dei;
For no fair sign can credit win,
If that the substance fail within.

No more in thy sweetness glory,
For thy knitting hair be sorry;
Use thy words but to bewail thee,
That no more thy beams avail thee
Dan, dan,
Dan, dan,

Lay not thy colours more to view
Without the picture be found true.

Woe to me, alas! she weepeth!
Fool! in me what folly creepeth?
Was I to blaspheme enraged
Where my soul I have engaged?
And wretched I must yield to this?
The fault I blame, her chasteness is.

Sweetness! sweetly pardon folly;
Tie me, hair, your captive wholly;
Words! O words of heav'nly knowledge!
Know, my words their faults acknowledge
And all my life I will confess,
The less I love, I live the less.”³

¹[*Waverley*, ch. xi.]

²[Here in his copy Ruskin notes, “The triplicity—Sense (sweetness), Heart (hair), Reason (words),” the three points being taken up in each verse (but one) of the poem.]

³[One of Certaine Sonnets appended to *Arcadia*.]

7. Now if you don't like these love-songs, you either have never been in love, or you don't know good writing from bad (and likely enough both the negatives, I'm sorry to say, in modern England). But perhaps if you are a very severe Evangelical person, you may like them still less, when you know something more about them. Excellent love-songs seem always to be written under strange conditions. The writer of that "Song of Songs" was himself, as you perhaps remember, the child of her for whose sake the Psalmist murdered his Hittite friend;¹ and besides, loved many strange women himself, after that first bride. And these, sixty or more, exquisite love-ditties, from which I choose, almost at random, the above three, are all written by my psalm-singing squire to somebody else's wife, he having besides a very nice wife of his own.

For this squire is the, so called, "Divine" Astrophel, "Astrophilos," or star lover,—the un-to-be-imitated Astrophel, the "ravishing sweetness of whose poesy," Sir Piercie Shafton, with his widowed voice,—"widowed in that it is no longer matched by my beloved viol-de-gambo,"²—bestows on the unwilling ears of the Maid of Avenel.* And the Stella, or star, whom he loved was the Lady Penelope Devereux, who was his first love, and to whom he was betrothed, and remained faithful in heart all his life, though she was married to Robert, Lord Rich, and he to the daughter of his old friend, Sir Francis Walsingham.

How very wrong, you think?

8. Well, perhaps so;—we will talk of the wrongs and the rights of it presently.³ One of quite the most curious facts bearing upon them is that the very strict queen (the

* If you don't know your Scott properly, it is of no use to give you references.

¹[Solomon, the son of David by Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah: see 2 Samuel xi. and xii.]

²[*The Monastery*, ch. xx.]

³[Not done fully, but see Letters 39, § 8, and 55, § 5 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 54, 373).]

mother of Cœur-de-Lion) who poisoned the Rose of Woodstock and the world¹ for her improper conduct, had herself presided at the great court of judgment held by the highest married ladies of Christian Europe, which re-examined, and finally re-affirmed, the decree of the Court of love, held under the presidency of Ermengarde, Countess of Narbonne;—decree, namely, that “True love cannot exist between married persons.”* Meantime let me finish what I have mainly to tell you of the divine Astrophel. You hear by the general character first given of him that he was as good a soldier as a lover, and being about to take part in a skirmish in the Netherlands,—in which, according to English history, five hundred, or a few more, English, entirely routed three thousand Dutchmen,—as he was going into action, meeting the marshal of the camp lightly armed, he must needs throw off his own cuishes, or thigh armour, not to have an unfair advantage of him; and after having so led three charges, and had one horse killed under him and mounted another, “he was struck by a musket shot a little above his left knee, which brake and rifted the bone, and entered the thigh upward; whereupon he unwillingly left the field”² (not without an act of gentleness, afterwards much remembered, to a poor soldier, wounded also);³ and, after lingering sixteen days in severe and unceasing pain, “which he endured with all the fortitude and resignation of a Christian, symptoms of mortification, the certain forerunner of death, at length appeared; which he himself

* “Dicimus, et stabilito tenore firmamus, amorem non posse, inter duos jugales, suas extendere vires.”⁴

¹[For Queen Eleanor and Fair Rosa-mundi, see above, pp. 53, 76.]

²[Ruskin here, and in the next pages, quotes, with some compression, from pp. 52–56 of the *Life* mentioned on p. 648, above. See p. 52 for the “skirmish in the Netherlands,” *i.e.*, the attack by the English under Sidney upon a Dutch convoy which was on its march to relieve Zutphen.]

³[See below, p. 671 *n.*]

⁴[This was the answer to the question “Utrum inter conjugatos amor possit habere locum?” See the lecture on “The School of Florence,” *Aratra Pentelici*, § 234 (Vol. XX. p. 364).]

being the first to perceive, was able nevertheless to amuse his sick-bed by composing an ode on the nature of his wound, which he caused to be sung to solemn music, as an entertainment that might soothe and divert his mind from his torments; and on the 16th October breathed his last breath in the arms of his faithful secretary and bosom companion, Mr. William Temple, after giving this charge to his own brother: 'Love my memory; cherish my friends. Their faith to me may assure you they are honest. But above all govern your will and affections by the will and word of your Creator,* in me beholding the end of this world, with all its vanities.' "

9. Thus died, for England, and a point of personal honour, in the thirty-second year of his age, Sir Philip Sidney, whose name perhaps you have heard before, as well as that of his aunt-in-law, Lady Jane Grey, for whose capital punishment, as well as that of the Duke of Northumberland (his grandfather), his mother, as above stated, was in mourning when he was born.

And Spenser broke off his *Faëry Queen*, for grief, when he died;¹ and all England went into mourning for him; which meant, at that time, that England was really sorry, and not that an order had been received from Court.

10. 16th October (St. Michael's).—I haven't got my goose-pie made, after all;² for my cook has been ill, and, unluckily, I've had other things as much requiring the

* He meant the Bible; having learned Evangelical views at the massacre of St. Bartholomew.

¹[Here, again, Ruskin quotes from W. Gray's *Life of Sidney* (as cited above, p. 648 n.), according to whom (p. 57 n.) there is some foundation "for the assertion that the death of Sidney prevented the completion of the Fairy Queen, by depriving its author both of the means and the spirit to complete his design. It has been pretty generally admitted that he intended to represent our hero under the character of Prince Arthur." Sidney had in 1572 "witnessed, and nearly suffered in, that most savage act of religious bigotry, the fiendlike massacre of St. Bartholomew" (Gray, p. 7).]

²[See Letter 25, § 2 (p. 448).]

patronage of St. Michael, to think of. You suppose, perhaps (the English generally seem to have done so since the blessed Reformation), that it is impious and Popish to think of St. Michael with reference to any more serious affair than the roasting of goose, or baking thereof; and yet I have had some amazed queries from my correspondents, touching the importance I seem to attach to my pie;¹ and from others, questioning the economy of its construction. I don't suppose a more savoury, preservable, or nourishing dish could be made, with Michael's help, to drive the devil of hunger out of poor men's stomachs,² on the occasions when Christians make a feast, and call to it the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind. But, putting the point of economy aside for the moment, I must now take leave to reply to my said correspondents, that the importance and reality of goose-pie, in the English imagination, as compared with the unimportance and unreality of the archangel Michael, his name, and his hierarchy, are quite as serious subjects of regret to me as to them; and that I believe them to be mainly traceable to the loss of the ideas, both of any "arche," beginning, or principdom of things, and of any holy or hieratic end of things; so that, except in eggs of vermin, embryos of apes, and other idols of genesis enthroned in Mr. Darwin's and Mr. Huxley's shrines, or in such extinction as may be proper for lice, or double-ends as may be discoverable in amphibænas, there is henceforward, for man, neither alpha nor omega,—neither beginning nor end,³ neither nativity nor judgment; no Christmas Day, except for pudding; no Michaelmas, except for goose; no Dies Iræ, or day of final capital punishment, for anything; and that, therefore, in the classical words of Ocellus Lucanus, quoted by Mr. Ephraim Jenkinson, "Anarchon kai atelutaion to pan."⁴

11. There remains, however, among us, very strangely, some instinct of general difference between the abstractedly

¹ [See above, p. 447.]

² [Compare Letter 62, § 4 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 514).]

³ [See Revelation i. 8.]

⁴ [*Vicar of Wakefield*, ch. xxv.]

angelic, hieratic, or at least lord-and lady-like character;—and the diabolic, non-hieratic, or slave-and (reverse-of-lady-) like character. Instinct, which induces the *London Journal*, and other such popular works of fiction, always to make their heroine, whether saint or poisoner, a “Lady” something; and which probably affects your minds not a little in connection with the question of capital punishment; so that when I told you just now who Sir Philip’s aunt was, perhaps you felt as if I had cheated you by the words of my first reference to her, and would say to yourselves, “Well, but Lady Jane Grey wasn’t hanged!”

No; she was not hanged; nor crucified, which was the most vulgar of capital punishments in Christ’s time; nor kicked to death, which you at present consider the proper form of capital punishment for your wives;¹ nor abused to death, which the mob will consider the proper form of capital punishment for your daughters,* when Mr. John Stuart Mill’s *Essay on Liberty* shall have become the Gospel of England, and his statue be duly adored.

She was only decapitated, in the picturesque manner represented to you by Mr. Paul de la Roche in that charming work of modern French art² which properly companions the series of Mr. Gérome’s deaths of duellists and gladiators, and Mr. Gustave Doré’s pictures of lovers, halved, or quartered, with their hearts jumping into their mistresses’ laps. Of all which pictures, the medical officer of the Bengalee-Life-Insurance Society would justly declare that “even in an anatomical point of view, they were—per-fection.”³

* For the present, the daughters seem to take the initiative. See story from Halifax in the last terminal note [p. 667].

¹ [See above, p. 644; and compare Letter 42, § 11 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 100).]

² [A photographic reproduction of Paul Delaroche’s “Death of Lady Jane Grey” may be seen at p. 52 of *Historical Illustrations*, by Paul Delaroche, 1873. For another reference, in a similar sense, to the works of Gérome and Doré, see Vol. XXII. p. 472. In a *Descriptive Catalogue of Pictures by M. Gustave Doré*, exhibited at the Doré Gallery in Bond Street, 1872, p. 18, a laudatory “press opinion” on the picture of “Paolo and Francesca” is quoted:—

“The deadly blue of the wound has an anatomical truth that is startling. Let M. Doré paint thus and his fame will take care of itself.”]

³ [*Martin Chuzzlewit*, ch. xxvii.]

She was only decapitated, by a man in a black mask, on a butcher's block; and her head rolled into sawdust,—if that's any satisfaction to you. But why on earth do you care more about her than anybody else, in these days of liberty and equality?

12. I shall have something soon to tell you of Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*, no less than Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*.¹ The following letter, though only a girl's, contains so much respecting the *Arcadia* of Modern England which I cannot elsewhere find expressed in so true and direct a way, that I print it without asking her permission, promising however, hereby, not to do so naughty a thing again,—to her, at least; new correspondents must risk it.

"I wish people would be good, and do as you wish, and help you. Reading *Fors* last night made me determined to try very hard to be good. I *cannot* do all the things you said in the last letter you wanted us to do, but I will try.

"Oh dear! I wish you would emigrate, though I know you won't. I wish we could all go somewhere fresh, and begin anew: it would be so much easier. In fact it seems impossible to alter things here. You cannot think how it is, in a place like this. The idea of there being any higher law to rule all one's actions than self-interest, is treated as utter folly; really, people do not hesitate to say that in business each one must do the best he can for himself, at any risk or loss to others. You do know all this, perhaps, by hearsay, but it is so sad to see in practice. They all grow alike—by constant contact I suppose; and one has to hear one after the other gradually learning and repeating the lesson they learn in town—to trust no one, believe in no one, admire no one; to act as if all the world was made of rogues and thieves, as the only way to be safe, and not to be a rogue or thief oneself if it's possible to make money without. And what can one do? They laugh at me. Being a woman, of course I know nothing; being, moreover, fond of reading, I imagine I do know something, and so get filled with foolish notions, which it is their duty to disabuse me of as soon as possible. I should so like to drag them all away from this wretched town, to some empty, new, beautiful, large country, and set them all to dig, and plant, and build; and we could, I am sure, all be pure and honest once more. No, there is no chance here. I am so sick of it all.

"I want to tell you one little fact that I heard the other day that mad

¹ [This, however, was not done, though incidental references to More's *Utopia* will be found in Vol. XXVIII. pp. 23, 47. There are many references to Sidney's paraphrase of the Psalms (*e.g.*, *ibid.*, pp. 327, 373, 615), but none to the *Arcadia*.]

me furious. It will make a long letter, but please read it. You have heard of—,—the vilest spot in all the earth, I am sure, and yet they are very proud of it. It is all chemical works, and the country for miles round looks as if under a curse. There are still some farms struggling for existence, but the damage done to them is very great, and to defend themselves, when called upon to make reparation, the chemical manufacturers have formed an association, so that if one should be brought to pay, the others should support him. Of course, generally, it is almost impossible to say which of the hundreds of chimneys may have caused any particular piece of mischief; and *further frightened by this coalition, and by the expense of law*,* the farmers have to submit. But one day, just before harvest-time this year, a farmer was in his fields, and saw a great stream, or whatever you would call it, of smoke come over his land from one of these chimneys, and, as it passed, destroy a large field of corn. It literally burns up vegetation, as if it were a fire. The loss to this man, who is not well off, is about £400. He went to the owners of the works and asked for compensation. They did not deny that it might have been their gas, but told him he could not prove it, and they would pay nothing. I dare say they were no worse than other people, and that they would be quite commended by business men. But that is our honesty, and this is a country where there is supposed to be justice. These chemical people are very rich, and could consume all this gas and smoke at a little more cost of working. I do believe it is hopeless to attempt to alter these things, they are so strong. Then the other evening I took up a *Telegraph*—a newspaper is hardly fit to touch nowadays—but I happened to look at this one, and read an account of some cellar homes in St. Giles'. It sent me to bed miserable, and I am sure that no one has a right to be anything but miserable while such misery is in the world. What cruel wretches we must all be, to suffer tamely such things to be, and sit by, enjoying ourselves! I must do something; yet I am tied hand and foot, and can do nothing but cry out. And meanwhile—oh! it makes me mad—our clergymen, who are supposed to do right, and teach others right, are squabbling over their follies; here they are threatening each other with prosecutions, for exceeding the rubric, or not keeping the rubric, and mercy and truth are forgotten. I wish I might preach once, to them and to the rich;—no one ought to be rich; and if I were a clergyman I would not go to one of their dinner-parties, unless I knew that they were moving heaven and earth to do away with this poverty, which, whatever its cause, even though it be, as they say, the people's own fault, is a disgrace to every one of us. And so it seems to me hopeless, and I wish you would emigrate.

"It is no use to be more polite, if we are less honest. No use to treat women with more respect outwardly, and with more shameless, brutal, systematic degradation secretly. Worse than no use to build hospitals, and kill people to put into them; and churches, and insult God by pretending to worship Him. Oh dear! what is it all coming to? Are we going like Rome, like France, like Greece, or is there time to stop? Can St. George fight such a Dragon? You know I am a coward, and it does

* Italics mine.

frighten me. Of course I don't mean to run away, but *is* God on our side? Why does He not arise and scatter His enemies? If you could see what I see here! This used to be quite a peaceful little country village; now the chemical manufacturers have built works, a crowd of them, along the river, about two miles from here. The place where this hideous colony has planted itself, is, I am sure, the ugliest, most loathsome spot on the earth." (Arcadia, my dear, Arcadia.) "It has been built just as any one wanted either works or a row of cottages for the men,—all huddled up, backs to fronts, any way; scrambling, crooked, dirty, squeezed up; the horrid little streets separated by pieces of waste clay, or half-built-up land. The works themselves, with their chimneys and buildings, and discoloured ditches, and heaps of refuse chemical stuff lying about, make up the most horrible picture of 'progress' you can imagine. Because they are all so proud of it. The land, now every blade of grass and every tree is dead, is most valuable—I mean, they get enormous sums of money for it,—and every year they build new works, and say, 'What a wonderful place — — is!' It is creeping nearer and nearer here. There is a forest of chimneys visible, to make up, I suppose, for the trees that are dying. We can hardly ever now see the farther bank of our river, that used to be so pretty, for the thick smoke that hangs over it. And worse than all, the very air is poisoned with their gases. Often the vilest smells fill the house, but they say they are not unhealthy. I wish they were—perhaps then they would try to prevent them. It nearly maddens me to see the trees, the poor trees, standing bare and naked, or slowly dying, the top branches dead, the few leaves withered and limp. The other evening I went to a farm that used to be (how sad that 'used to be' sounds) so pretty, surrounded by woods. Now half the trees are dead, and they are cutting down the rest as fast as possible, so that they can at least make use of the wood. The gas makes them useless. Yesterday I went to the house of the manager of some plate-glass works. He took me over them, and it was very interesting, and some of it beautiful. You should see the liquid fire streaming on to the iron sheets, and then the sparkling lakes of gold, so intensely bright, like bits out of a setting sun sometimes. When I was going away, the manager pointed proudly to the mass of buildings we had been through, and said, 'This was all corn-fields a few years ago!' It sounded so cruel, and I could not help saying, 'Don't you think it was better growing corn than making glass?' He laughed, and seemed so amused; but I came away wondering, if this goes on, what will become of England. The tide is so strong—they *will* try to make money, at any price. And it is no use trying to remedy one evil, or another, unless the root is rooted out, is it?—the love of money."

It is of use to remedy any evil you can reach: and all this will very soon now end in forms of mercantile catastrophe, and political revolution, which will end the "amusement" of managers, and leave the ground (too fatally) free, without "emigration."

OXFORD, 24th October.

13. The Third Fors has just put into my hands, as I arrange my books here, a paper read before a Philosophical Society in the year 1870 (in mercy to the author, I forbear to give his name;¹ and in respect to the Philosophical Society, I forbear to give *its* name), which alleges as a discovery, by “interesting experiment,” that a horizontal plank of ice laid between two points of support, bends between them; and seriously discusses the share which the “motive power of heat” has in that amazing result. I am glad, indeed, to see that the author “cannot, without some qualifications, agree” in the lucid opinion of Canon Moseley,² that since, in the Canon’s experiments, ice was crushed under a pressure of 308 lb. on the square inch, a glacier over 710 feet thick would crush itself to pieces at the bottom. (The Canon may still further assist modern science by determining what weight is necessary to crush an inch cube of water; and favouring us with his resulting opinion upon the probable depth of the sea.) But I refer to this essay only to quote the following passages in it, to prove, for future reference, the degree of ignorance to which the ingenuity of Professor Tyndall had reduced the general scientific public, in the year 1870:—

“The generally accepted theory proved by the Rev. Canon Moseley to be incorrect.—Since the time that Professor Tyndall had shown that all the phenomena formerly attributed by Professor Forbes to plasticity could be explained upon the principle of regelation, discovered by Faraday, the viscous theory of glacier-motion has been pretty generally given up. The ice of a glacier is now almost universally believed to be, not a soft plastic substance, but a substance hard, brittle, and unyielding. The power that the glacier has of accommodating itself to the inequalities of its bed

¹ [The reference is to a paper, “On the Cause of the Motion of Glaciers,” by James Croll, of the Geological Survey of Scotland. The paper was not read before a Philosophical Society, but communicated to the *London, Edinburgh, and Dublin Philosophical Magazine and Journal of Science*, September 1870, 4th Series, vol. 40. Ruskin quotes from pp. 153, 167.]

² [See “On the Mechanical Properties of Ice,” by Henry Moseley, F.R.S., Canon of Bristol, vol. 39 (4th Series), January 1870, p. 6 of the same Magazine. Moseley was answered by J. Ball, F.R.S. (President of the Alpine Club), in the same Magazine, July 1870, 4th Series, vol. 40, pp. 1 *seq.*]

without losing its apparent continuity is referred to the property of regelation possessed by ice. All this is now plain.”

“*The present state of the question.*—The condition which the perplexing question of the cause of the descent of glaciers has now reached seems to be something like the following. The ice of a glacier is not in a soft and plastic state, but is solid, hard, brittle, and unyielding.”

14. I hope to give a supplementary number of *Fors*, this winter, on glacier questions;¹ and will only, therefore, beg my readers at present to observe that the opponents of Forbes are simply in the position of persons who deny the flexibility of chain-mail because “steel is not flexible”; and, resolving that steel is not flexible, account for the bending of an old carving-knife by the theory of “contraction and expansion.”

Observe, also, that “regelation” is only scientific language for “freezing again”; and it is supposed to be more explanatory, as being Latin.²

Similarly, if you ask any of these scientific gentlemen the reason of the forms of hoar-frost on your window-pane, they will tell you they may be all explained by the “theory of congelation.”

15. Finally; here is the first part of the question, in brief terms for you to think over.

A cubic foot of snow falls on the top of the Alps. It takes, more or less, forty years (if it doesn’t melt) to get to the bottom of them. During that period it has been warmed by forty summers, frozen by forty winters; sunned and shaded,—sopped and dried,—dropped and picked up again,—wasted and supplied,—cracked and mended,—squeezed together and pulled asunder, by every possible variety of temperature and force that wind, weather, and colossal forces of fall and weight, can bring to bear upon it.

How much of it will get to the bottom? With what additions or substitutions of matter, and in what consistence?

¹ [See Letter 43, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 123).]

² [For other cases of such “explanation,” criticised by Ruskin, see Vol. XXVI. p. 317 *n.*; and compare, above, pp. 65, 508.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

16. I FIND an excellent illustration of the state of modern roads, “not blamed for blood,”¹ in the following “Month’s List of Killed and Wounded,” from the *Pall Mall Gazette*.²—

“We have before us a task at once monotonous, painful, and revolting. It is to record, for the benefit of the public, the monthly list of slaughter by rail, for the last four weeks unprecedented in degree and variety. In August there were three ‘accidents,’ so called, for every five days. In the thirty days of September there have been in all thirty-six. We need not explain the dreary monotony of this work. Every newspaper reader understands that for himself. It is also painful, because we are all more or less concerned, either as travellers, shareholders, or workers on railways; and it is grievous to behold enormous sums of money thrown away at random in compensation for loss of life and limb, in making good the damage done to plant and stock, in costly law litigation, and all for the sake of what is called economy. It is, moreover, a just source of indignation to the tax-payer to reflect that he is compelled to contribute to maintain a costly staff of Government inspectors (let alone the salaries of the Board of Trade), and that for any practical result of the investigations and reports of these gentlemen, their scientific knowledge and ‘urgent recommendations,’ they might as well be men living in the moon. It is revolting because it discloses a miserable greed, and an entire callousness of conscience on the part of railway directors, railway companies, and the railway interest alike, and in the Government and Legislature a most unworthy and unwise cowardice. It is true that the situation may be accounted for by the circumstance that there are between one and two hundred railway directors in the House of Commons who uniformly band together, but that explanation does not improve the fact.

Sept. 2.—North-Eastern Railway, near Hartlepool. Passenger train got off the line; three men killed, several injured. Cause, a defective wheel packed with sheet iron. The driver had been recently fined for driving too slowly.

Sept. 5.—Great Western. A goods train ran into a number of beasts, and then came into collision with another goods train.

Sept. 6.—Line from Helensburgh to Glasgow. A third-class carriage got on fire. No communication between passengers and guard. The former got through the windows as best they could, and were found lying about the line, six of them badly injured.

Sept. 8.—A train appeared quite unexpectedly on the line between Tamworth and Rugby. One woman run over and killed.

Sept. 9.—Cannon Street. Two carriages jumped off the line; traffic much delayed.

Sept. 9.—Near Guildford. A bullock leaped over a low gate on to the line; seven carriages were turned over the embankment and shivered to splinters; three passengers were killed on the spot, suffocated or jammed to death; about fifteen were injured.

Sept. 10.—London and North-Western, at Watford. Passenger train left the rails where the points are placed, and one carriage was overturned; several persons injured, and many severely shaken.

¹ [Sir Philip Sidney: see above, § 4.]

² [October 4, 1873. There is a similar list of “Railway Disasters for October” in the issue of November 4. For Ruskin’s views on railroad management, see his letters contributed during 1865–1870 to the *Daily Telegraph* (Vol. XVII. pp. 528 *seq.*.)]

Sept. 10.—Great Northern, at Ardsley. Some empty carriages were put unsecured on an incline, and ran into the Scotch express; three carriages smashed, several passengers injured, and driver, stoker, and guard badly shaken.

Sept. 11.—Great Eastern, near Sawbridgeworth. A goods train, to which was attached a waggon inscribed as defective and marked for repair, was proceeding on the up line; the waggon broke down, and caught a heavy passenger train on the down line: one side of this train was battered to pieces; many passengers severely shaken and cut with broken glass.

Sept. 12.—East Lancashire, near Bury. A collision between two goods trains. Both lines blocked and waggons smashed. One driver was very badly hurt.

Sept. 13.—London, Chatham, and Dover, near Birchington station. Passenger train drove over a number of oxen; engine was thrown off the line; driver terribly bruised; passengers severely shaken. Cause, the animals got loose while being driven over a level-crossing, and no danger signals were hoisted.

Sept. 15.—Caledonian line, near Glasgow. Passenger train ran into a mineral train which had been left planted on the line; one woman not expected to survive, thirteen passengers severely injured. Cause, gross negligence.

Same day, and same line.—Caledonian goods train was run into broadside by a North British train; great damage done; the guard was seriously injured. Cause, defective signalling.

Sept. 16.—Near Birmingham. A passenger train, while passing over some points, got partly off the line; no one severely hurt, but all shaken and frightened. Cause, defective working of points.

Sept. 17.—Between Preston and Liverpool, near Houghton. The express train from Blackburn ran into a luggage train which was in course of being shunted, it being perfectly well known that the express was overdue. About twenty passengers were hurt, or severely shaken and alarmed, but no one was actually killed. Cause, gross negligence, want of punctuality, and too much traffic.

Same day.—Great Eastern. Points not being closed, a cattle train left the metal and ploughed up the line, causing much damage and delay in traffic. Cause, negligence.

Same day.—Oxford and Bletchley Railway. Axle-wheel of waggon broke, and with seven trucks left the line. A general smash ensued; broken carriages were strewn all over the line, and a telegraph post was knocked down: blockage for four hours. Cause, defective axle.

Same day.—A goods train from Bolton to Manchester started so laden as to project over the other line for the down traffic. Encountering the express from Manchester near Stone Clough, every passenger carriage was in succession struck and injured. Cause, gross negligence of porters, station-master, and guard of goods train.

“Here, it will be observed, we have already got eighteen catastrophes within seventeen days. On September 18 and 19 there was a lull, followed by an appalling outbreak.

Sept. 20.—At the Bristol terminus, where the points of the Midland and Great Western meet, a mail train of the former ran full into a passenger train belonging to the latter. As they were not at full speed, no one was killed, but much damage was done. Cause, want of punctuality and gross negligence. Under a system where the trains of two large companies have a junction in common and habitually cross each other many times a day, the block system seems impossible in practice.

Same day.—Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincoln line. A passenger train was unhooked from the engine at Penistone, and ran down the incline at a fearful rate. A signalman, seeing something wrong, and naturally confused, turned it on to the Sheffield line. At Wortley it encountered a goods train laden with pig-iron. Smash in every direction, carriages and trucks mounting one on the top of the other. Fortunately there were only three passengers; but all were seriously injured. Cause, gross negligence.

Sept. 22.—Midland Railway, near Kettering. A train ran off the line; metals torn up; traffic delayed for two hours.

Same day.—Passenger train from Chester was descending the tunnel under Birkenhead; the engine ran off the line and dashed against the tunnel wall. Passengers much shaken, but not seriously maimed. Traffic stopped for several hours.

Sept. 23.—A lull.

Sept. 24.—North British Railway, at Reston Junction. The early express train which leaves Berwick for Edinburgh at 4.30 a.m. was going at full speed, all signals being at safety, but struck a waggon which was left standing a little on the main line over a siding; engine damaged, and the panels and foot-boards of ten carriages knocked to bits; no loss of life. Cause, gross negligence.

Sept. 25.—A Midland excursion train from Leicester got off the line near New Street station; the van was thrown across both lines of rails; great damage and delay. Cause, over-used metal.

Same day.—London and North-Western, between Greenfield and Moseley. A bundle of cotton which had fallen from a train pulled one waggon off the line; twenty other waggons followed it, and the line was ploughed up for two hundred yards; great damage, delay, and many waggons smashed: no loss of life. Cause, negligence.

Same day.—Great Eastern, St. Ives. Through carelessness a pointsman ran a Midland passenger train into a siding on to some trucks; passengers badly shaken, and a good many had their teeth knocked out. The account stated naïvely, "No passengers were seriously hurt, but they were nevertheless very much alarmed, and fled the carriages in the greatest state of excitement." Cause, gross negligence.

Same day.—South Yorkshire, near Conisbro'. A mineral train (signals being all right) dashed full into a heavy coal train. Much damage, but no loss of life. Cause, gross negligence and over-traffic.

Sept. 26.—This was a very fatal day. At Sykes Junction, near Retford, the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincoln joins the Great Northern. A coal train of the latter while passing the junction was run into at full speed by a cattle train of the former. The engine and fifteen carriages were thrown down the bank and smashed, and valuable cattle killed. Meanwhile a goods train drew up, the signal being for once at danger, and was immediately run into by a mineral train from behind, which had not been warned. Drivers, guards, firemen injured. A fog was on at the time, but no fog signals appear to have been used. Cause, negligence and over-traffic.

Same day.—North-Eastern passenger train from Stockton to Harrogate ran into a heavy goods train near Arthington. The crash was fearful. About twenty passengers were injured; half that number very seriously. The signals contradicted each other. Cause, gross negligence.

Same day.—North-Eastern, Newcastle and Carlisle division. There was a collision between a mineral and a cattle train on a bridge of the river Eden more than 100 feet high. Part of the bridge was hurled down below; several waggons followed it, while others remained suspended. Cattle were killed; three men badly injured. Cause, gross negligence.

Same day.—Near Carnarvon. A passenger train ran over a porter's lorry which had been left on the line; no one was injured, but damage ensued; passengers had fortunately alighted. Cause, negligence.

Same day.—Great Eastern. A train of empty carriages was turned on to a siding at Fakenham, and came into collision with laden trucks, which in their turn were driven into a platform wall; much damage done, but no personal injury. Cause, gross negligence.

Sept. 27.—The Holyhead mail due at Crewe at 5.30 was half-an-hour late; left standing on a curve, it was run into by a goods train; a number of carriages were smashed, and though no one was killed, nearly fifty persons were injured. The signals were against the goods train, but the morning being hazy the driver did not see them. Cause, negligence, unpunctuality, and want of fog signals.

Sept. 28.—South Devon Line, near Plymouth. A luggage train was set on fire, and a van laden with valuable furniture completely consumed.

Sept. 30.—The London and Glasgow express came up at full speed near Motherwell Junction, and dashed into a van which was being shunted on the main line; the engine was thrown down an embankment of thirty feet, and but for the accident of the coupling-iron breaking the whole train would have followed it. The fireman was crushed to death, the driver badly injured, and many passengers severely shaken. Cause, criminal recklessness in shunting van when an express is due.

Same day.—Great Western. Collision at Uffington between a fish and luggage train; no loss of life, but engine shattered, traffic delayed, and damage done. Cause, negligence.

"Besides the above, two express trains had a very narrow escape from serious collision on September 13 and September 26, the one being near Beverley station, and the other on the Great Western, between Oxford and Didcot. Both were within an ace of running into luggage vans which had got off the lines. It will be observed that in this dismal list there is hardly one which can properly be called an accident, *i.e.*, non-essential to the existing condition of things, not to be foreseen or prevented, occurring by chance, which means being caused by our ignorance of laws which we have no means of ascertaining. The reverse is the true state of the case: the real accidents would have been if the catastrophes in question had *not* occurred."

17. A correspondent, who very properly asks, "Should we not straightway send more missionaries to the Kaffirs?" sends me the following extracts from the papers of this month. I have no time to comment on them. The only conclusion which Mr. Dickens would have drawn from them, would

have been that nobody should have been hanged at Kirkdale;¹ the conclusion the public will draw from them will doubtless be, as suggested by my correspondent, the propriety of sending more missionaries to the Kaffirs, with plenty of steam-engines.

JUVENILE DEPRAVITY

Yesterday, a lad named Joseph Frieman, eleven years of age, was charged before the Liverpool magistrates with cutting and wounding his brother, a child six years old. It appeared that on Saturday, during the absence of their mother, the prisoner threw the little fellow down and wounded him with a knife in a frightful manner, and on the return of the mother she found the lad lying in great agony and bleeding profusely. In reply to her questions the prisoner said that his brother "had broken a plate, and the knife slipped." The woman stated that the prisoner was an incorrigible boy at home, and stole everything he could lay his hands on. A few weeks ago, about the time of the recent execution at Kirkdale, he suspended his little sister with a rope from the ceiling in one of the bedrooms, nearly causing death. The prisoner was remanded for a week, as the injured boy lies in a very dangerous state.

SHOCKING PARRICIDE IN HALIFAX

A man, named Andrew Costello, 86, died in Halifax yesterday, from injuries committed on him by his daughter, a mill hand. She struck him on Monday with a rolling-pin, and on the following day tore his tongue out at the root at one side. He died in the workhouse, of lockjaw.²

¹ [So, in his note to line 155 of *Rock Honeycomb*, Ruskin speaks of "your modern Charles Dickens manner of Christian, who would have nobody hanged"; see also (in another later volume of this edition) Ruskin's letter to W. C. Bennett of July 11, 1855. The reference is to the letter which Dickens sent to the *Times* in 1849, describing the public execution of the Mannings, and to the agitation which followed thereon (see Forster's *Life*, vol. ii. p. 447). While deciding, on grounds of expediency, to limit his immediate agitation to the abolition of public executions, Dickens was "on principle opposed to capital punishment" (see his *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 209). Ruskin, while glad that men's minds should be turned to other methods of preventing crime than punishment, was strongly in favour of capital punishment: see Vol. XVII. p. 542 and *n.* Compare, above, pp. 239, 247, 649; Vol. XXVIII. p. 100; and Vol. XXIX. pp. 72, 220.]

² [The girl, Annie Costello, was convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to ten years' penal servitude: see Assize Intelligence in the *Times* of December 3, 1873.]

LETTER 36

TRAVELLER'S REST¹

1. THREE years have passed since I began these letters. Of the first, and another, I forget which, a few more than a thousand have been sold;² and as the result of my begging for money, I have got upwards of two hundred pounds. The number of the simple persons who have thus trusted me is stated at the end of this letter. Had I been a swindler, the British public would delightedly have given me two hundred thousand pounds instead of two hundred,³ of which I might have returned them, by this time, say, the quarter, in dividends; spent a hundred and fifty thousand pleasantly, myself, at the rate of fifty thousand a year; and announced, in this month's report, with regret, the failure of my project, owing to the unprecedented state of commercial affairs induced by strikes, unions, and other illegitimate combinations among the workmen.

And the most curious part of the business is that I fancy I should have been a much more happy and agreeable member of society, spending my fifty thousand a year thus, in the way of business, than I have been in giving away my own seven thousand, and painfully adding to it this collection of two hundred, for a piece of work which is to give me a great deal of trouble, and be profitable only to other people.

Happy, or sulky, however, I have got this thing to do; and am only amused, instead of discouraged, by the beautiful reluctance of the present English public to trust an honest person, without being flattered, or promote a useful work, without being bribed.

¹ [For the title, see § 5.]

² [The Bibliographical Note shows that at this time only the first and second Letters had gone into a second edition.]

³ [See below, p. 678.]

2. It may be true that I have not brought my plan rightly before the public yet. “A bad thing will pay, if you put it properly before the public,” wrote a first-rate man of business the other day, to one of my friends. But what the final results of putting bad things properly before the public will be to the exhibitor of them, and the public also, no man of business that I am acquainted with is yet aware.

I mean, therefore, to persist in my own method; and to allow the public to take their time. One of their most curiously mistaken notions is that they can hurry the pace of Time itself, or avert its power. As to these letters of mine, for instance, which all my friends beg me not to write, because no workman will understand them now;¹—what would have been the use of writing letters only for the men who have been produced by the instructions of Mr. John Stuart Mill? I write to the labourers of England; but not of England in 1870–73. A day will come when we shall have men resolute to do good work, and capable of reading and thinking while they rest; who will not expect to build like Athenians without knowing anything about the first king of Athens, nor like Christians without knowing anything about Christ: and then they will find my letters useful, and read them. And to the few readers whom these letters now find, they will become more useful as they go on, for they are a mosaic-work into which I can put a piece here and there as I find glass of the colour I want; what is as yet done being set, indeed, in patches, but not without design.

3. One chasm I must try to fill to-day, by telling you why it is so grave a heresy (or wilful source of division) to call any book, or collection of books, the “Word of God.”²

By that Word, or Voice, or Breath, or Spirit, the heavens and earth, and all the host of them, were made;³ and in it they exist. It is your life; and speaks to you always, so long as you live nobly;—dies out of you as you refuse to

¹ [Compare, above, p. 181.]

² [See Letter 35, § 3 (p. 650).]

³ [Genesis ii. 1; John i. 1.]

obey it; leaves you to hear, and be slain by, the word of an evil spirit, instead of it.

It may come to you in books,—come to you in clouds,—come to you in the voices of men,—come to you in the stillness of deserts. You must be strong in evil, if you have quenched it wholly;—very desolate in this Christian land, if you have never heard it at all. Too certainly, in this Christian land you do hear, and loudly, the contrary of it,—the doctrine or word of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy; forbidding to marry, recommending women to find some more lucrative occupation than that of nursing the baby;¹ and commanding to abstain from meats (and drinks) which God has appointed to be received with thanksgiving. For “everything which God has made is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be sanctified by the Word of God.” And by what else?

4. If you have been accustomed to hear the clergyman’s letter² from which I have just been quoting, as if it were *itself* the Word of God,—you have been accustomed also to hear our bad translation of it go on saying, “If it be sanctified by the Word of God, and *prayer*.” But there is nothing whatever about prayer in the clergyman’s letter,—nor does he say, *If* it be sanctified. He says, “For it *is* sanctified by the Word of God, and the chance that brings it.”* Which means, that when meat comes in your way when you are hungry, or drink when you are thirsty, and you know in your own conscience that it is good for you to have it, the meat and drink are holy³ to you.

5. But if the Word of God in your heart⁴ is against it,

* The complete idea I believe to be “the Divine Fors,” or Providence, accurately so called, of God. “For it is sanctified by the Word of God, and the granting.”

¹ [See Letter 24, § 20 (p. 431).]

² [See St. Paul’s first Epistle to Timothy, iv. 1–5. Here, however, Ruskin’s memory of the Bible fails him, the English version being that which Ruskin says it should be, namely, “For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.” The Greek word here translated “prayer” is *entēnxiV*, which has primarily the meaning here taken by Ruskin, though it occurs also in classical Greek in the sense of a petition.]

³ [That is, in one sense, helpful: see Vol. VII. p. 206.]

⁴ [Romans x. 8.]

and you know that you would be better without the extra glass of beer you propose to take, and that your wife would be the better for the price of it, then it is unholy to you: and you can only have the sense of entire comfort and satisfaction, either in having it, or going without it, if you are simply obeying the Word of God about it in your mind, and accepting contentedly the chances for or against it; as probably you have heard of Sir Philip Sidney's accepting the chance of another soldier's needing his cup of water more than he, on his last battle-field, and instantly obeying the Word of God coming to him on that occasion.¹ Not that it is intended that the supply of these good creatures of God² should be left wholly to chance; but that if we observe the proper laws of God concerning them, and, for instance, instead of forbidding marriage, duly and deeply reverence it, then, in proper time and place, there will be true Fors, or chancing on, or finding of, the youth and maid by each other, such in character as the Providence of Heaven appoints for each: and, similarly, if we duly recognize the laws of God about meats and drinks, there will for every labourer and traveller be such chancing upon meat and drink and other entertainment as shall be sacredly pleasant to him. And there cannot indeed be at present imagined a more sacred function for young Christian men than that of hosts or hospitallers, supplying, to due needs, and with proper maintenance of their own lives, wholesome food and drink to all men: so that as, at least, always at one end of a village there may be a holy church and vicar, so at the other end of the village there may be a holy tavern and tapster,³ ministering the good creatures of

¹ ["Being thirsty with excess of bleeding, he called for drink, which was presently brought him; but as he was putting the bottle to his mouth, he saw a poor soldier carried along, who had eaten his last at the same feast, ghastly casting up his eyes at the bottle; which Sir Philip perceiving, took it from his head before he drank, and delivered it to the poor man, with these words: 'Thy necessity is yet greater than mine' " (*Lord Brook's Life of Sir Philip Sidney*, 1816 edition, vol. ii. p. 32).]

² ["These thy creatures of bread and wine"—Consecration Prayer in the Communion Service.]

³ [Compare Letters 70 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 729, note c), 83, 84, 90, and 93 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 272, 295, 434, 474). The idea in these passages closely resembles that of Plato in the *Laws*, xi. 918.]

God, so that they may be sanctified by the Word of God and His Providence.

6. And as the providence of marriage, and the giving to each man the help-meet for his life, is now among us destroyed by the wantonness of harlotry, so the providence of the Father who would fill men's hearts with food and gladness¹ is destroyed among us by prostitution of joyless drink; and the never to be enough damned guilt of men, and governments, gathering pence at the corners of the streets, standing there, pot in hand, crying, "Turn in hither;"² come, eat of my evil bread, and drink of my beer, which I have venomously mingled."

7. Against which temptations—though never against the tempters—one sometimes hears one's foolish clergy timorously inveighing; and telling young idlers that it is wrong to be lustful, and old labourers that it is wrong to be thirsty: but I never heard a clergyman yet (and during thirty years of the prime of my life I heard one sermon at least every Sunday, so that it is after experience of no fewer than one thousand five hundred sermons, most of them by scholars, and many of them by earnest men), that I now solemnly state I never heard *one* preacher deal faithfully with the quarrel between God and Mammon, or explain the need of choice between the service of those two masters. And all vices are indeed summed, and all their forces consummated, in that simple acceptance of the authority of gold instead of the authority of God; and preference of gain, or the increase of gold, to godliness, or the peace of God.³

8. I take then, as I promised,⁴ the fourteenth and fifteenth Psalms for examination with respect to this point.

The second verse of the fourteenth declares that of the children of men, there are none that seek God.

¹ [Acts xiv. 17.]

² [Compare Proverbs ix. 4, 5.]

³ [Compare 1 Timothy vi. 5.]

⁴ [See Letter 35, § 3 (p. 650).]

The fifth verse of the same Psalm declares that God is in the generation of the righteous. *In* them, observe; not needing to be sought by them.

From which statements, evangelical persons conclude that there are no righteous persons at all.

Again, the fourth verse of the Psalm declares that all the workers of iniquity eat up God's people as they eat bread.

Which appears to me a very serious state of things, and to be put an end to, if possible; but evangelical persons conclude thereupon that the workers of iniquity and the Lord's people are one and the same. Nor have I ever heard in the course of my life any single evangelical clergyman so much as put the practical inquiry, Who is eating, and who is being eaten?¹

Again, the first verse of the Psalm declares that the fool hath said in his heart there is no God; but the sixth verse declares of the poor that he not only knows there is a God, but finds Him to be a refuge.

Whereupon evangelical persons conclude that the fool and the poor mean the same people; and make all the haste they can to be rich.²

9. Putting them, and their interpretations, out of our way, the Psalm becomes entirely explicit. There have been in all ages children of God and of man: the one born of the Spirit, and obeying it; the other born of the flesh, and obeying it.³ I don't know how that entirely unintelligible sentence, "There were they in great fear," got into our English Psalm; in both the Greek and Latin versions it is, "God hath broken the bones of those that please men."⁴

¹ [For another reference to this point, see Letter 39, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 53).]

² [See Proverbs xxviii. 20.]

³ [See John iii. 6.]

⁴ [Ruskin's statement is at fault, perhaps owing to his confusing the fourteenth Psalm, with which he is dealing, and the fifty-third, to which he has not referred. In the fourteenth the words are simply "There were they in great fear, for God is in the generation of the righteous." In the fifty-third (verse 5), "There were they

And it is here said of the entire body of the children of men, at a particular time, that they had at that time all gone astray beyond hope; that none were left who so much as sought God, much less who were likely to find Him; and that these wretches and vagabonds were eating up God's own people as they ate bread.

Which has indeed been generally so in all ages; but beyond all recorded history is so in ours. Just and godly people can't live; and every clever rogue, and industrious fool, is making his fortune out of them, and producing abominable works of all sorts besides,—material gasometers, furnaces, chemical works, and the like;—with spiritual lies, and lasciviousness¹ unheard of till now in Christendom. Which plain and disagreeable meaning of this portion of Scripture you will find pious people universally reject with abhorrence,—the direct word and open face of their Master being, in the present day, always by them, far more than His other enemies, “spitefully entreated, and spitted on.”²

10. Next for the fifteenth Psalm.

It begins by asking God who shall abide in His tabernacle, or movable tavern; and who shall dwell in His holy hill. Note the difference of those two abidings. A tavern, or taberna, is originally a hut made by a traveller, of sticks cut on the spot; then, if he so arrange it as to be portable, it is a tabernacle;³ so that, generally, a portable hut or house, supported by rods or sticks when it is set up, is a tabernacle;—on a large scale, having boards as well as curtains, and capable of much stateliness, but nearly synonymous with a tent, in Latin.

Therefore, the first question is, Who among travelling

in great fear, where no fear was, for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee.” All three versions—Vulgate, LXX., and the English Bible—agree in the case of both Psalms, except that in the fifty-third, for “of him that encampeth against thee,” the Vulgate has “eorum qui hominibus placent,” and the LXX. “ἀνθρωπώπρεσκων.”]

¹ [Ruskin writes in his copy, “Explain; spiritualism, music, painting, etc.”]

² [Luke xviii. 32.]

³ [On this word, compare Vol. XXII. p. 392 *n.*]

men will have God to set up his tavern for him when he wants rest?

And the second question is, Who, of travelling men, shall finally dwell, desiring to wander no more, in God's own house, established above the hills, where all nations flow to it?

11. You, perhaps, don't believe that either of these abodes may, or do, exist in reality: nor that God would ever cut down branches for you; or, better still, bid them spring up for a bower; or that He would like to see you in His own house, if you would go there. You prefer the buildings lately put up in rows for you "one brick thick in the walls,"* in convenient neighbourhood to your pleasant business? Be it so;—then the fifteenth Psalm has nothing to say to you. For those who care to lodge with God, these following are the conditions of character.

They are to walk or deal uprightly with men. They are to work or do justice; or, in sum, do the best they can with their hands. They are to speak the truth to their own hearts, and see they do not persuade themselves they are honest when they ought to know themselves to be knaves; nor persuade themselves they are charitable and kind, when they ought to know themselves to be thieves and murderers. They are not to bite people with their tongues behind their backs, if they dare not rebuke them face to face. They are not to take up, or catch at, subjects of blame; but they are utterly and absolutely to despise vile persons who fear no God, and think the world was begot by mud, and is fed by money; and they are not to defend a guilty man's cause against an innocent one. Above all, this last verse is written for lawyers, or professed interpreters of justice, who are of all men most villainous, if, knowingly, they take reward against an innocent or rightfully contending person. And on these conditions the promise of God's presence and strength is finally given.

* See § 14 in the Notes [p. 677].

He that doeth thus shall not be moved, or shaken: for him, tabernacle and rock are alike safe: no wind shall overthrow them, nor earthquake rend.

12. That is the meaning of the fourteenth and fifteenth Psalms; and if you so believe them, and obey them, you will find your account in it. And they are the Word of God to you, so far as you have hearts capable of understanding them, or any other such message brought by His servants. But if your heart is dishonest and rebellious, you may read them for ever with lip-service, and all the while be “men-pleasers,”¹ whose bones are to be broken at the pit’s mouth, and so left incapable of breath, brought by any winds of Heaven. And that is all I have to say to you this year.

¹ [Compare Ephesians vi. 6; Colossians iii. 22. Compare § 9, above.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

13. As I send these last sheets to press, I get from the Cheap-Fuel Supply Association, Limited, a letter advising me that the Right Hon. Lord Claud Hamilton, M.P., and the late Director of Stores at the War Office, and Michael Angelo, Esq., of St. James's Square, and the late Controller of Military Finance in Calcutta, with other estimable persons, are about to undertake the manufacture of peat into cheap fuel, for the public benefit; and promise a net profit on the operation, of six shillings and sixpence a ton; of which I am invited to secure my share. The manufacture of peat into portable fuel may, or may not, be desirable; that depends on what the British public means to do after they have burnt away all their bituminous and boggy ground in driving about at forty miles an hour, and making iron railings, and other such valuable property, for the possession of their posterity. But granting the manufacture desirable, and omitting all reference to its effect on the picturesque, why Lord Claud Hamilton and Michael Angelo, Esq., should offer *me*, a quiet Oxford student, any share of their six-and-sixpences, I can't think. I could not cut a peat if they would give me six-and-sixpence the dozen—I know nothing about its manufacture. What on earth do they propose to pay me for?¹

14. The following letter from an old friend, whose manner of life, like my own, has been broken up (when it was too late to mend it again) by modern improvements, will be useful to me for reference in what I have to say in my January letter:²—

“About myself—ere long I shall be driven out of my house, the happiest refuge I ever nested in. It is again, like most old rooms, very lofty, is of wood and plaster, evidently of the Seventh Harry's time, and most interesting in many ways. It belonged to the Radcliffe family,—some branch, as I understand, from the scanty information I can scrape, of the Derwentwater family. Lord —— owns it now, or did till lately; for I am informed he has sold it and the lands about it to an oil-cloth company, who will start building their factory behind it shortly, and probably resell the land they do not use, with the hall, to be demolished as an incumbrance that does not pay. Already the 'Egyptian plague of bricks'³ has alighted on its eastern side, devouring every green blade. Where the sheep fed last year, five streets of cheap cottages—one brick thick in the walls—for the factory operatives belonging to two great cotton mills near) are in course of formation—great cartloads of stinking oyster-shells having been laid for their foundations; and the whole vicinity on the eastern side, in a state of mire and *débris* of broken bricks and slates, is so painful to my eyes that I scarce ever go out in daylight.

“Fifteen years ago a noble avenue of sycamores led to the hall, and a large wood covered the surface of an extensive plateau of red sandstone, and a moat surrounded the walls of the hall. Not a tree stands now, the moat is filled up, and the very rock itself is riddled into sand, and is being now carted away.”

¹ [“Cf. Letter 28, § 10” (p. 513).—*MS. note by Author.*]

² [See Letter 37, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 21).]

³ [See Letter 29, § 3 (above, p. 528).]

ADVICE

15. I have now published my *Fors Clavigera* during three years, at a price which (some of my first estimates having been accidentally too low) neither pays me for my work, nor my assistant for his trouble. To my present subscribers, nevertheless, it will be continued at its first price. To new subscribers or casual purchasers, the price of each number, after the 31st December, 1873, will be tenpence, carriage paid as hitherto; and there will be no frontispieces.

16. TOTAL SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ST. GEORGE'S FUND

TO THE END OF THE YEAR 1873

(The subscribers each know his or her number in this List)

| | | | | | | | | |
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| 1. Annual, | £4 | 0 | 0 | (1871, '72) | | £8 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. Annual, | £20 | 0 | 0 | (1871, '72, '73) | | 60 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. Gift | | | | | | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 4. Gifts (1871) | | | | | £30 | 0 | 0 | |
| | | | | (1873) | 20 | 0 | 0 | |
| | | | | | | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. Gift (1872) | | | | | | 20 | 0 | 0 |
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| 7. Gift (1872) | | | | | | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| 8. Annual, | £20 | 0 | 0 | (1872) | | 60 | 0 | 0 |
| 9. Annual, | £25 | 0 | 0 | (1872) | | 60 | 0 | 0 |
| 10. Annual, | £5 | 0 | 0 | (1872, '73) | | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| 11. Annual, | £1 | 1 | 0 | (1873) | | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 12. Gift (1873) | | | | | | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 13. Gift (1873) | | | | | | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 14. Gift (1873) | | | | | | 13 | 10 | 0 |
| 15. Gift (1873) | | | | | | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | £236 | 13 | 0 ¹ |

¹ [In a marked copy of this letter (in Mr. Allen's possession) Ruskin adds: "16. Alfred Hunt. Gift. 1873. £25. 17. Gift in Allen's hands still £1. 18. Ellis" (no amount specified). Against "7" he writes "Pakenham Stillwell."]

END OF VOLUME XXVII



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FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTERS TO THE WORKMEN
AND
LABOURERS OF GREAT BRITAIN

VOLUME II

CONTAINING

LETTERS 37–72

1874, 1875, 1876

BY

JOHN RUSKIN

LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD
NEW YORK: LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1907

THE COMPLETE
WORKS OF
JOHN RUSKIN

LIBRARY EDITION

THE WORKS OF

JOHN RUSKIN

EDITED BY

E. T. COOK

AND

ALEXANDER WEDDERBURN



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VOLUME XXVIII

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The Virgin and Child with St. John

From the picture by Fra Filippo Lippi

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INTRODUCTION TO VOL. XXVIII

THIS volume contains Letters 37–72 of *Fors Clavigera*; that is, volumes iv., v., and vi. of the original issue (1874, 1875, 1876). Full particulars of the original publication, and of subsequent alterations, are given in the Bibliographical Note (p. xxiii.).

To the general account of *Fors Clavigera*, given in the Introduction to Vol. XXVII., it is only necessary to add here a few particulars about Ruskin's movements and enterprises during the years 1874–1876. Two features of the present volume will strike every reader. One is the bulk, in spite of the brevity of its prefatory manner; the other is the more and more distinctively Christian tone of the author's teaching. To this latter point he himself called attention in a subsequent Letter.¹ Both these features of the volume are connected with a phase of Ruskin's history, which has been described in a previous Introduction. The time covered by the present Letters of *Fors* was the time of his "conclusive" sorrow.² The romance of his life came, after much tribulation, to a tragic ending; and, as Carlyle noted, "despair on the personal question" made Ruskin "go ahead all the more with fire and sword upon the universal one."³ Thus *Fors Clavigera*, and the business of the St. George's Guild which grew out of it, came to occupy more and more of his time and thoughts. The correspondence connected with it greatly increased, and the numbers of *Fors* itself became longer. At the same time their tone became more definitely religious, and their temper was heightened. The writing of these Letters, with their passionate appeals and note of mystic fervour, greatly excited Ruskin, and this is probably the reason which led Carlyle to regret their continuance. "Ruskin," he wrote to his brother, Dr. John Carlyle (November 6, 1875), "has not sent me the *Fors Clavigera* this month, hitherto. Does that mean anything? I fear it does not mean that he has given it up altogether!"⁴

¹ [See Vol. XXIX. p. 86.]

² [See Letter 61, § 3 (p. 486).]

³ [See Vol. XXIV. p. xx.]

⁴ [*New Letters of Carlyle*, edited by Alexander Carlyle, vol. ii. p. 316. Carlyle's pleasure in an earlier number of 1875 is noted below, p. 319 *n.*]

Several of the earlier Letters in this volume are written, it will be seen, from Italy, where Ruskin spent several months in 1874. The influence of his sojourn at Assisi was particularly marked, both in causing some revision of his estimate of Italian art, and in quickening his spiritual life. These impressions are noted by him in *Fors*,¹ and have been discussed in an earlier Introduction.² The sketch of the Sacristan's Cell at Assisi, introduced into the present volume (Plate II.) was made at this time.

The development of Ruskin's schemes in connexion with St. George's Guild appears in the Letters themselves, and the subject is further dealt with in Vol. XXX. One or two minor enterprises, to which incidental reference is made in the present volume, may, however, here be noted. One of these, which belongs to an earlier date, was an endeavour to exhibit "an ideally clean street pavement, in the centre of London, in the pleasant environs of Church Lane, St. Giles's."³ This modern instance of cleansing Augean stables was to be the first Labour of St. George, as Ruskin explained in the following letter to the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* (December 28, 1871):—

"SIR,—I have been every day on the point of writing to you since your notice, on the 18th,⁴ of the dirty state of the London streets, to ask whether any of your readers would care to know how such matters are managed in my neighbourhood. I was obliged, a few years ago, for the benefit of my health, to take a small house in one of the country towns of Utopia; and though I was at first disappointed in the climate, which indeed is no better than our own (except that there is no foul marsh air), I found my cheerfulness and ability for work greatly increased by the mere power of getting exercise pleasantly close to my door, even in the worst of the winter, when, though I have a little garden at the back of my house, I dislike going into it, because the things look all so dead; and find my walk on the whole pleasanter in the streets, these being always perfectly clean, and the wood-carving of the houses prettier than much of our indoor furniture. But it was about the streets I wanted to tell you. The Utopians have the oddest way of carrying out things, when once they begin, as far as they can go; and it occurred to them one dirty December long since, when they, like us, had only crossing-sweepers, that they might just as well sweep the whole

¹ [See Letter 76 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 90–91).]

² [Vol. XXIII. pp. xlv., xlvi.]

³ [Letter 48, § 3 (p. 204).]

⁴ A paragraph complaining of the condition of the streets.

of the street as the crossings of it, so that they might cross anywhere. Of course that meant more work for the sweepers; but the Utopians have always hands enough for whatever work is to be done in the open air;—they appointed a due number of brooms-men to every quarter of the town; and since then, at any time of the year, it is in our little town as in great Rotterdam when Doctor Brown saw it on his journey from Norwich to Colen in 1668,¹ ‘the women go about in white slippers,’ which is pretty to see. Now, Sir, it would, of course, be more difficult to manage anything like this in London, because, for one thing, in our town we have a rivulet running down every street that slopes to the river;—and besides, because you have coal-dust and smoke and what not to deal with; and the habit of spitting, which is worst of all—in Utopia a man would as soon vomit as spit in the street (or anywhere else, indeed, if he could help it). But still it is certain we can at least anywhere do as much for the whole street, as we have done for the crossing; and to show that we can, I mean, on 1st January next, to take three street-sweepers into constant service; they will be the first workpeople I employ with the interest of the St. George’s fund, of which I shall get my first dividend this January; and, whenever I can get leave from the police and inhabitants, I will keep my three sweepers steadily at work for eight hours a day; and I hope soon to show you a bit of our London streets kept as clean as the deck of a ship of the line.

“I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

“JOHN RUSKIN.

“December 27, 1871.”

Ruskin was as good as his word, and in the following January his brigade was at work. He himself was the bishop, or overseer, of this work, and his diary, as has been already noted,² shows that he carefully numbered and took stock of his labourers. A passage now appended to *Fors* shows his interest in their domestic economy.³ He took the broom himself, for a start; put on his gardener, Downs, as foreman of the job; and often drove round with his friends to inspect the works. He ascribes the collapse of the experiment to the removal of his personal direction when he left Denmark Hill for Brantwood.⁴

¹ Dr. Edward Browne, the son of the author of the *Religio Medici*, Sir Thomas Browne. Writing to his father from Rotterdam, in 1668, he says: “The cleanliness and neatness of this towne is so new unto mee, that it affoordeth great satisfaction, most persons going about the streets in white slippers” (*Life and Works of Sir Thomas Browne*, 1836, vol. i. p. 154).

² Vol. XXII. p. xxv.

³ Appendix 3, Vol. XXIX. p. 535.

⁴ See below, p. 204.

Something must be allowed, also, for “the young rogue of a crossing-sweeper” mentioned in *Fors*. He was “an extremely handsome and lively shoeblick, picked up in St. Giles’. It turned out that he was not unknown in the world; he had sat to artists—to Mr. Edward Clifford, to Mr. Severn; and went by the name of ‘Cheeky.’ He used to be caught at pitch and toss or marbles in unswept Museum Street. Ruskin rarely ever dismissed a servant; but street sweeping was not good enough for Cheeky, and so he enlisted. The army was not good enough, and so he deserted; and was last seen disappearing into the darkness, after calling a cab for his old friends one night at the Albert Hall.”¹ And so the enterprise was abandoned; but sometimes when I find a piece of London road which is better swept owing to the quickened zeal of our municipal authorities, I seem to see the figure of Ruskin with his broom among the workers.

The other experiment, to which Ruskin refers in the same place in *Fors*, was the starting of a tea-shop. This was opened in 1874 at 29 Paddington Street, near his Marylebone property. The painting of the sign—“Mr. Ruskin’s Tea-shop”—which caused him (he tells us) some months of artistic indecision,² was ultimately undertaken by Mr. Arthur Severn. Ruskin “resolutely refused to compete with neighbouring tradesmen either in gas or rhetoric”; and it is to be doubted whether the absence of these allurements was compensated for by the set of fine old china, bought at Siena, with which he dressed his shopwindow. Two old servants of his mother’s, Harriet and Lucy Tovey, were installed as shopwomen, and when, two years later, Harriet died, the shop was abandoned.³ The experiment had a very useful purpose. Ruskin’s object was to sell pure tea only—a matter in which, as a confirmed tea-drinker, he was somewhat of a connoisseur; and also to sell it in packets as small as poor customers chose to buy, without making a profit on the subdivision—a very important point in the domestic economy of the poor, especially at times of alteration in the tea-duty. When I hear of larger, and more successful undertakings on the same basis, I seem to see Ruskin behind the counter; and I recall a practice which was to prevail in the Utopia of his master: “For, if I may venture to say a ridiculous thing, if we were to compel the best men everywhere to keep taverns for a time, to carry on retail trade, or do anything of that sort: or if, in consequence of some necessity, the best women were compelled to take to a similar calling,

¹ W. G. Collingwood, *Life and Work of John Ruskin*, 1900, p. 293.

² See p. 205.

³ See Letter 67, § 23 (p. 661).

then we should know how agreeable and pleasant all these things are. And if they were carried on according to pure reason, all such occupations would be held in honour, and those who practised them would be deemed parents or nurses.”¹

Ruskin’s movements during the years covered by this volume are recounted in earlier Introductions. During the later part of 1873 and the earlier months of 1874 he was much in Oxford,² and the volume opens with an incident at his lectures there (p. 14). Then came the foreign tour, already mentioned, during which he wrote Letters 41–47 and part of 48. At the end of 1874 he was again in Oxford, but the years 1875 and 1876 were mostly spent at Brantwood.³ The death of “the woman whom he hoped would have been his wife” is foreshadowed in Letter 49 (p. 246), and this was the cause of his partial retirement from Oxford. His interest in the peasants around his country home appears in the Letters on cottage libraries (50, 51, 59). The driving tours, which have been described in an earlier volume,⁴ appear in Letters 50, 52, and 66. A visit to Arundel⁵ is mentioned in Letter 62. In August 1876 Ruskin went to Venice, but before he left he visited the property of the St. George’s Guild at Barmouth, as mentioned in Letter 69. His stay at Venice, in connection with *Fors Clavigera*, may more conveniently be treated in the Introduction to the next volume.

With regard to the *illustrations* in this volume, only two of the plates—namely, the specimen of “Lombardic Writing” (IV.) and the facsimile of “Nelson’s Writing” (VI.)—appeared in the Letters as issued by Ruskin; for with Letter 37, the frontispieces to *Fors* were, as he explains, suspended (p. 25). He issued, however, in another form, several illustrations which were discussed in *Fors*. One of these was an enlargement from a woodcut in Holbein’s “Dance of Death.” The enlargement was made by Arthur Burgess, and from this autotypes were taken which Ruskin placed on sale to readers of *Fors*, through his agent, Mr. William Ward. In the present volume the enlargement has been re-cut on wood by Mr. H. S. Uhlrich (Plate III.).

Next, Ruskin selected four photographs of well-known works of art to serve as elementary standards or lessons. He sent copies of the photographs to his Museum at Sheffield, and placed others on sale,

¹ Plato, *Laws*, xi. 918 (Jowett’s translation).

² Vol. XXIII. p. xxx.

³ Vol. XXIV. pp. xx.–xxxiv.

⁴ Vol. XXIV. p. xxvii.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xxvi.

again through Mr. Ward.¹ These "Lesson Photographs," as they were called, were of the following works:—

1. "Madonna and Child, with St. John," by Fra Filippo Lippi, in the Uffizi at Florence (*Frontispiece*);
2. "The Etruscan Leucothea," as Ruskin named it—a bas-relief in the Villa Albani at Rome (Plate V.);
3. Titian's "Madonna with the Cherries," in the Imperial Gallery at Vienna (Plate VII.); and,
4. "The Infanta Margarita Teresa, as a Child," by Velasquez, in the same gallery (Plate VIII.).

This numbering corresponds with the order in which Ruskin selected the examples, and is adopted in his list;² but historically of course No. 2 precedes No. 1, and readers should note that he sometimes calls the "Leucothea" the "first Lesson Photograph."³ Modern criticism, it may be added, rejects alike the Etruscan ascription and the identification of the subject as "Leucothea with the infant Bacchus"; there can be little doubt that the work is an early Attic sepulchral relief (see further, on this subject, p. 574 *n.*). In this volume the "Lessons" are represented by photogravures from selected photographs.

Ruskin makes many interesting remarks on these four examples in the text; and in one place (p. 574) he remarks that the "Etruscan Leucothea" stands half-way between "the Egyptian Madonna" and the Florentine Madonna of Lippi. A woodcut has accordingly been introduced in this edition (Fig. 11) of a bronze of Isis and Hours in the British Museum. A comparison of the three examples is interesting as showing the development of an artistic type. The other illustrations printed with the text were all in the original edition. Another new plate (IIA.) introduced in this volume, is a woodcut by Mr. H. S. Uhlrich, showing a page of a Thirteenth-Century Psalter: the reason for its inclusion is explained in a note to the text (p. 324).

The two plates not yet mentioned illustrate the Letters from Assisi. Plate I. is a photogravure from Giotto's fresco of "The Marriage of St. Francis and Poverty," described in the text (p. 164). Plate II. is a photogravure of two sketches by Ruskin—in pencil and body-colour (6½ x 9½ each)—which are framed together in his Oxford School (Educational Series, No. 296⁴). The upper sketch is of the facade of the Upper Church at Assisi; the lower, of the Sacristan's Cell which Ruskin used as his study.

¹ See below, pp. 459, 550, 574, 625.

² At p. 625.

³ See, for instance, p. 626.

⁴ See Vol. XXI. p. 101 *n.*

For general remarks on the *manuscripts* and *text* of *Fors Clavigera*, the reader is referred to the preceding Introduction.¹ Passages of interest, given from the first edition or added from the MS., will be found here on pp. 403, 420, 564, 576. In connexion with a passage attacking Mr. Gladstone which Ruskin afterwards withdrew,² a facsimile of a letter to Mr. George Allen, giving him instructions to that effect, is inserted (p. 403). The other facsimiles are of a passage of much personal interest (p. 81); and of the first draft for "St. George's Creed" (p. 420).

E. T. C.

¹ Vol. XXVII. pp. lxxxviii.–lxxxix.

² As explained in Letter 87, Vol. XXIX. p. 364.

[*Bibliographical Note.*—For general Note on *Fors Clavigera*, see Vol. XXVII. p. xci. Here details are given of (1) the issue of Letters 37–72 in separate form; (2) the issue of the same Letters in octavo volumes; and (3) the curtailments in the same Letters made in the “Small Edition” (see Vol. XXVII. p. c.).

(1) LETTERS 37–72: SEPARATE ISSUE

Title-pages were not issued with these Letters. The title on the front of the wrapper of each of them was as follows, the only changes being in the numbers of the Letters and the dates:¹—

Fors Clavigera. | Letters | To the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain | by John Ruskin, LL.D. | Letter the Thirty-seventh. | January 1st, 1874. | [*Rose.*] | London: Printed for the Author by | Watson & Hazell, London and Aylesbury; | and sold by | Mr. George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | Price Tenpence.

The dates given below are those of the publication of the First Editions. On the back of the wrapper was the following “Advertisement”:—

“*** For reasons which will be explained in the course of these Letters, I wish to retain complete command over their mode of publication.

“For the present, they will be sold by MR. GEORGE ALLEN, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. Post-office Orders, in advance, may be made payable to MR. GEORGE ALLEN, Chief Office, London.

“They will be sold for Tenpence each, without abatement on quantity, and forwarded, post-paid, on remittance of the price of the number required, to any place in the United Kingdom.”

The price, as stated, was raised to Tenpence from Sevenpence (see Letter 37, § 12). The price of volumes supplied by the publisher correspondingly became 10s., but this was reduced in March 1893 to 7s. The wrappers were of pale grey paper, and the size, octavo, as before.

The pagination was now continuous through each set of twelve Letters.

Except in the case of the first edition of Letters 58, 59, 61–72, which consisted of 1050 copies, all the editions of Letters 37–72 consisted of 1000 copies.

The title of the Letter was also, except where otherwise stated (see under Letter 57), added in the Third Edition in each case.

LETTERS 37–48, FORMING VOLUME IV.: 1874

LETTER 37. *First Edition* (January 1, 1874).—Pages 1–24.

Second Edition (February 1877). *Third Edition* (September 1885).

LETTER 38. *First Edition* (February 1, 1874).—Pages 25–50.

Second Edition (February 1877). *Third Edition* (March 1886).

¹ It may also be noted that on and after Letter 60 the imprint was changed to “Hazell, Watson, & Viney, London and Aylesbury.”

- LETTER 39. *First Edition* (March 2, 1874).—Pages 51–71 (p. 72 blank)
Second Edition (July 1877). *Third Edition* (July 1886).
- LETTER 40. *First Edition* (April 1, 1874).—Pages 73–100.
Second Edition (April 1877). *Third Edition* (April 1886).
- LETTER 41. *First Edition* (May 1, 1874).—Pages 101–114.
Second Edition (June 1877). *Third Edition* (July 1886).
- LETTER 42. *First Edition* (June 1, 1874).—Pages 115–136.
Second Edition (April 1877). *Third Edition* (July 1886).
- Letters 41 and 42, though differently dated, were in fact issued together: see Letter 41, § 1, p. 79.
- LETTER 43. *First Edition* (July 1, 1874).—Pages 137–160.
Second Edition (June 1877). *Third Edition* (July 1886).
- LETTER 44. *First Edition* (August 1, 1874).—Pages 161–189.
Second Edition (April 1877). *Third Edition* (April 1886).
- LETTER 45. *First Edition* (September 1, 1874).—Pages 191–218.
Second Edition (March 1877). *Third Edition* (January 1886).
- LETTER 46. *First Edition* (October 1, 1874).—Pages 219–242.
Second Edition (February 1877). *Third Edition* (October 1885).
- LETTER 47. *First Edition* (November 2, 1874).—Pages 243–262.
Second Edition (May 1877). *Third Edition* (July 1886).
- LETTER 48. *First Edition* (December 24, 1874).—Pages 263–294.
Second Edition (May 1877). *Third Edition* (July 1886).

Letters 37–48 have not been reprinted collectively in volume form. Volumes supplied by the publisher have been made up from time to time of the current editions of the separate Letters. The title-page as issued in 1875 is as given here (p. 3).

LETTERS 49–60, FORMING VOLUME V.: 1875

- LETTER 49. *First Edition* (January 1, 1875).—Pages 1–27.
Second Edition (July 1876). *Third Edition* (January 1886).
- LETTER 50. *First Edition* (February 1, 1875).—Pages 29–51.
Second Edition (May 1877). *Third Edition* (July 1886).
- LETTER 51. *First Edition* (March 1, 1875).—Pages 53–88.
Second Edition (February 1877). *Third Edition* (April 1886).
- LETTER 52. *First Edition* (April 1, 1875).—Pages 89–116.
Second Edition (June 1877). *Third Edition* (September 1886).
- LETTER 53. *First Edition* (May 1, 1875).—Pages 117–153.
Second Edition (May 1877). *Third Edition* (September 1886).
- LETTER 54. *First Edition* (June 1, 1875).—Pages 155–182.
Second Edition (March 1877). *Third Edition* (September 1886).
- LETTER 55. *First Edition* (July 1, 1875).—Pages 183–216.
Second Edition (July 1877). *Third Edition* (April 1886).
- LETTER 56. *First Edition* (August 2, 1875).—Pages 217–245.
Second Edition (July 1877).

In this edition the letter from a correspondent (§ 21, p. 396 in this volume) which occupied pp. 233–238 of the first edition was withdrawn. This alteration caused the text to end on p. 242.

Third Edition (September 1886).—Text as in the second edition. Except

in the first edition, there are no pp. 243–246, as Letter 57 (in all editions) still begins on p. 247.

LETTER 57. *First Edition* (September 1, 1875).—Pages 247–270.

Second Edition (February 1877).

This Letter contained some disparaging remarks upon Mr. Gladstone, whom, Ruskin visited at Hawarden in January 1878 (see Vol. XXV. p. xxiii.). He thereupon cancelled the *Second Edition*, and issued a third.

Third Edition (February 1878).—For the cancelled passage and the explanatory note by the author, see p. 403.

Fourth Edition (September 1886).—The title of the Letter was now added.

LETTER 58. *First Edition* (October 1, 1875). Pages 271–298.

Second Edition (November 1876). *Third Edition* (May 1885).

LETTER 59. *First Edition* (November 1, 1875).—Pages 299–328.

Second Edition (February 1877). *Third Edition* (April 1886).

LETTER 60. *First Edition* (December 1, 1875).—Pages 329–354.

Second Edition (February 1877). *Third Edition* (April 1886).

Letters 49–60 have never been reprinted collectively in volume form. Volumes supplied by the publisher have been made up from time to time of the current editions of the separate Letters. The title-page originally supplied is reproduced in this volume (p. 225).

LETTERS 61–72, FORMING VOLUME VI.: 1876

LETTER 61. *First Edition* (January 1, 1876).—Pages 1–39.

Second Edition (February 1877). *Third Edition* (August 1885).

LETTER 62. *First Edition* (February 1, 1876).—Pages 41–78.

Second Edition (February 1877). *Third Edition* (October 1885).

LETTER 63. *First Edition* (March 1, 1876).—Pages 79–108.

Second Edition (February 1877). *Third Edition* (March 1886).

LETTER 64. *First Edition* (April 1, 1876).—Pages 109–140.

Second Edition (March 1877). This edition omitted one passage (see p. 576 *n.*).
Third Edition (April 1886).

With this Letter an illustration was issued, facing p. 123, “Facsimile from Lombardic Writing” (in the present volume Plate IV.).

LETTER 65. *First Edition* (May 1, 1876).—Pages 141–169.

Second Edition (March 1877). *Third Edition* (April 1886).

LETTER 66. *First Edition* (June 1, 1876).—Pages 171–202.

Second Edition (March 1877). *Third Edition* (October 1885).

With this Letter a frontispiece was issued, “Facsimile of the last words written by Nelson” (here Plate VI.).

LETTER 67. *First Edition* (July 1, 1876).—Pages 203–242.

Second Edition (February 1877). *Third Edition* (September 1884).

LETTER 68. *First Edition* (August 1, 1876).—Pages 243–273.

Second Edition (April 1877). *Third Edition* (October 1885).

LETTER 69. *First Edition* (September 1, 1876).—Pages 275–310.

Second Edition (April 1877). *Third Edition* (March 1886).

LETTER 70. *First Edition* (October 2, 1876).—Pages 311–338.

Second Edition (May 1877). *Third Edition* (October 1885).

LETTER 71. *First Edition* (November 1, 1876).—Pages 339–376.

Of this Letter 100 copies were bound in red leatherette (for sale in Venice), lettered on the front, “Fors Clavigera. No. 71. | The Legend of St. Ursula | Ruskin.”

Second Edition (July 1877).

Third Edition (October 1884).—In the List of Contents issued in 1882 the Letter is entitled “The Feudal Ranks,” but by inadvertence, or because in the leatherette copies a different title was given, no title was printed above the letter.

LETTER 72. *First Edition* (December 1, 1876).—Pages 377–396.

Second Edition (June 1877). *Third Edition* (April 1886).

Letters 61–72 have never been reprinted collectively in volume form. Volumes supplied by the publisher have been made up from time to time of current copies of the several Letters. The title-page originally supplied was as here printed (p. 471). The volume as now supplied by the publisher has a different title-page thus:—

Fors Clavigera. | Letters | To the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain. |
By John Ruskin, LL.D., | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Honorary
Fellow of Corpus | Christi College, Oxford. | Vol. VI. | Third Edition. | [*Rose.*]
| George Allen, | Orpington and London. | 1895.

“Third Edition” means that the volume is made up of third edition copies of the several Letters.

LETTER TO YOUNG GIRLS

(*A reprint, with addition, from Letters 65 and 66*)

First Edition (1876).—This is a pamphlet without title-page, but with the following “drop-title” on p. 1:—

Letter to Young Girls. | By J. Ruskin, LL.D.

A footnote to the title states, “Reprinted, with slight addition, from *Fors Clavigera*.”

Duodecimo, pp. 8. The imprint at the foot of p. 8 is “Published by and to be had of George Allen, Sunnyside, | Orpington, Kent.” The head-line is “Letter to Young Girls” on each page.

Issued stitched, without wrappers, and sold in packets containing twelve copies, at the price of eightpence per packet.

Later editions have been very numerous. They are distinguished by the number of the edition or thousand being added at the end of the text on p. 8, where also the publisher’s imprint has varied from time to time. The edition now current (1907) is “Seventy-fifth Thousand” and bears the date “May 1902.”

The Letter consists of: (1) On pp. 1–5 a reprint (with slight revisions) of *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 65, §§ 24, 25. For note of the revisions, see below, pp. 608, 610. (2) On pp. 5–7 a reprint (again with revisions) of *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 66, § 24. For note of the revisions, see below, pp. 635, 637. (3) On pp. 7–8 an additional passage. This has here been

incorporated in the text (see below, pp. 636–637). It may be noted that the revisions made by the author in preparing the reprint were not embodied in later editions of *Fors*. In cases where such revisions are in matters of style and punctuation, they are now embodied in the text; the other revisions being given in footnotes.

SMALL EDITION

Letters 37–72 are contained in the Small Edition, thus: Letters 37–48 in vol. ii. pp. 272 to end; while Letters 49–72 make vol. iii.

For further particulars of this edition, see the Bibliographical Note in Vol. XXVII. p. c.

The curtailments, etc., made in Letters 37–72 are as follow, in addition to the omission of all the “Notes and Correspondence” in Letters 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 50, 51, 52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 60, 62, 63, 66, 67, 68, 70, and 71.

Letter 39, § 9 *n.*, see p. 60 *n.*

Letter 42, § 5, the passage “From the Rinnovamento . . . pregnant sentences” is omitted in consequences of the omission of the “Notes and Correspondence” referred to in it.

LETTER 43. The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that Article (II.), § 15, is printed as a footnote to the last line of § 6, and that a few lines of the quotation from Lecky in § 14 are given as a footnote where Lecky is mentioned in Letter 48, § 5.

LETTER 44, § 11, the author’s second footnote is omitted in consequence of the omission of the “Notes and Correspondence.”

LETTER 45, § 16, at line 14 of the quotation from Chaucer, the author’s footnote is altered to “Or sarsynysh (sarsenet). Fr. Sarrasinesse.” See the present note on the passage (p. 161 *n.*).

LETTER 48. The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that “Subscriptions” (§ 23) are given, and that Article (III.), § 20, is given as a footnote to Letter 47, § 9.

LETTER 49, § 9, footnote, the words “which I will presently reprint” are altered to “reprinted in ‘On the Old Road,’ vol. ii.”; § 13, lines 4, 5, the words “The reader . . . this year” are omitted. The “Notes and Correspondence” are also omitted, except that Article (II.), § 18, is printed (with the omission of the two lines at the end, “I append . . . Faith”), a portion of Article (III.), § 19, is given and the whole of § 20.

LETTER 53, § 2, lines 1–16 (down to “for myself”) are omitted; the footnote is omitted (as also in the present edition: see below under “*Variæ*”); § 3, lines 20 to the end are omitted; the whole of § 7 is omitted. The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that § 24 is printed at the end of Letter 51.

LETTER 55, § 1, lines 10–12, the Small Edition reads, “The three clergymen who have successively corresponded with me have every one . . .”; in § § 1, 3, Mr. Headlam’s name is omitted; § 3, line 31, to § 4, line 5, “Nay, this notable . . . March 1874,” omitted.

LETTER 56, § 1, lines 1–10 (“I believe . . . misrepresenting *me*” and “For instance”) are omitted.

LETTER 57, § 10, the long passage “Yet people tell me . . . close to the tower” is omitted.

LETTER 59. The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that Article (I.), § 12, is printed as a footnote to Letter 58, § 1, and that a small portion of Article (V.), § 16, is printed as a footnote to § 9.

LETTER 60. The whole of § 1 is omitted.

LETTER 61. The note at the beginning (“In the house . . . from it”) is omitted; § 8, lines 5–7, the words “Happily . . . talk of mine,” and the note, are omitted. The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that a condensation of Article (I.), §§ 18, 19, is given.

LETTER 62. A few lines of § 1, referring to misprints, are omitted; § 14, last line, the footnote is omitted.

LETTER 63, § 12, line 1, “An aggrieved correspondent” is substituted for “My aggrieved correspondent of Wakefield”; § 16, the footnote is omitted; § 22 is omitted.

LETTER 64, § 10, the passage referring to “my new ‘Elements of Drawing’” is omitted; § 16, the coloured facsimile of the octavo edition is represented only by a black and white block, and the following note is appended: “As it has been found impracticable to reproduce the handcoloured plate as it appeared in the original edition, a few remarks on the colour have been omitted.—ED.” §§ 18, 19, 20, the text of the Small Edition ends at line 18 of § 18 (with the words “than the large”). The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that Article (III.), § 24, is printed as a note at the end of Letter 62.

LETTER 65. §§ 20, 21 are omitted, except that lines (“The circle . . . may be”) are printed as a footnote to Letter 64, § 15. The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that Article (III.), §§ 24, 25, are given at the end of Letter 66.

LETTER 66. The whole of the long passage, §§ 8–15, is omitted, and § 16 begins at “My writing-lesson.” At the end of the Letter, the whole of the *Letter to Young Girls* (following the text of the reprint, with the additional passage) is given.

LETTER 67, § 10, the footnote is omitted; § 19, the second footnote is omitted.

LETTER 68, § 4, lines 1–8 (“Mr. Harrison’s letter . . . lawyers are not”) are omitted; § 9, the footnote is omitted; § 10, lines 5–7 from the end, the words “I print . . . and” are omitted.

LETTER 69, § 4, the footnote is omitted. The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that an extract from Article (III.), § 19, is printed as part of the text (with consequential editorial alterations) in § 3.

LETTER 70, § 9, the footnote is omitted, as the prospectus is given in small print.

LETTER 71, § 8, line 8, the words “displayed in our correspondence” are omitted; § 13, the second footnote is omitted.

LETTER 72. The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that the first paragraph of Article (III.), § 14, is printed as a footnote to § 3; and that a part of Article (V.), § 16, is given as a footnote to Letter 75, § 17.

REVIEWS

Fraser's Magazine, June 1874, New Series, vol. 9, pp. 688–701, an article on “Mr. Ruskin's Recent Writings,” by Leslie Stephen (referred to in Letter 48; below, p. 207).

Fun, March 29, 1876, a full-page cartoon of “Saint Rusty” with a halo labelled “Super-Fine Art”; the cartoon is entitled “Playing with Edged Tools: an Undeserved Snub for Sheffield.”

Saturday Review, October 24, 1874 (“Mr. Ruskin on Mr. Ruskin”); and March 4, 1876 (“Mr. Ruskin and Wakefield”): see p. 382 *n*.

Monetary Gazette, November 13, 1875; January 15, February 16 (referred to at p. 558, below), May 17, July 12, August 16, and September 13, 1876.

Spectator, December 2, 1876 (a review of the *Letter to Young Girls*).

Fortnightly Review, July 1876, “Past and Present,” by Mr. Frederic Harrison, being, “A Letter to Professor Ruskin in reply to one addressed to the Writer by Mr. Ruskin in *Fors Clavigera* for June 1876”: see p. 618 *n*.

Variæ Lectiones.—The following is a list of variations in the text other than those already described. The more important are given as footnotes to the text, and to these a reference only is here given. Minor matters of spelling, punctuation, etc., are as a rule not enumerated, but a few are mentioned, in order to assist collectors, whose copies of Letters may be without the wrappers (which state the edition), to identify editions:—

Letter 37, line 7 of the verses at the beginning, ed. 1 misprinted “in ayme” for “m' ayme.” § 1, line 10, “ancles” for “ankles” in ed. 1; § 11, in the seventh line of the passage from Plato, the misprint (in all previous editions) of “greater” for “gentler” is here corrected; and in the nineteenth line, “pleasure” is corrected to “pleasures.”

Letter 38, § 9, line 7, “Bridges” is here a correction for “Bridge”; § 11, line 9 of the author's note, “Eldin” is a correction for “Eldon”; § 18, line 8, see p. 44 *n*.

Letter 39, § 1, the letters to the diagram were omitted in ed. 3. § 4, line 13, “might” for “may” is Ruskin's correction in his copy.

Letter 40, § 10, line 25, “having found” for “getting” is Ruskin's correction in his copy. § 14, “Elwin” is here a correction for “Elwyn.”

Letter 41, § 8, footnote, last line, “some” for “his” is Ruskin's correction in his copy. § 10, line 17, ed. 1 wrongly inserted “or” before “perhaps.”

Letter 42, § 1, line 11, “coloured” for “covered” in ed. 1. § 6, line 13, “Eugeneans” (hitherto) corrected by Ruskin in his copy to “Euganeans.” § 12, lines 5–7, in ed. 1 the punctuation was “yellow, now, with age, and flexible, but not unclean with much use, except . . .” In referring to the passage in Letter 53, § 2, Ruskin appended the following footnote:—

“Will the reader be kind enough, in the two last lines of page 128, to put with his pen, a semicolon after ‘age,’ a comma after ‘unclean,’ and a semicolon after ‘use’? He will find the sentence thus take a different meaning.”

Letter 43, § 5, line 21, “dug” was misprinted “pug” in ed. 3. § 8, in ed. 1 there were numerous misprints in the French which were subsequently corrected (*e.g.*, “chopes” for “chopines”).

Letter 44, § 6, in the second extract from Lockhart, “na” is here substituted for “nae” and “naething” for “nothing.”

Letter 45, § 13, line 19, “spicula” is here a correction for “spiculæ.” § 14, in the extracts, “Carnivora” is here printed in capitals in accordance with Ruskin’s copy. § 19, lines 20, 21, see p. 166 *n*.

Letter 46, § 2, line 25, “one” italicised in accordance with Ruskin’s copy. § 7, the two lines “(And now I go on with the piece of this letter written last month at Assisi.)” have hitherto been printed at the beginning of § 6, but they obviously belong to the beginning of § 7. § 11, last word similarly italicised in accordance with Ruskin’s copy.

Letter 47, § 7, line 15, “unproved” was misprinted “improved” in ed. 1.

Letter 48, § 13, line 21, “thoughtlessness” was misprinted “thoughtless” in ed. 2. “Notes and Correspondence,” § 22, third line from end, “Certified” was misprinted “Certifical” in ed. 2.

Letter 49, § 7, footnote, the reference to *Lamentations* has hitherto been incorrectly given as “v. 13,” instead of “iv. 13, 14.”

Letter 50, § 5, line 21, “cuts” is here altered to “cut” in accordance with Ruskin’s copy. § 11, footnote, “therefor” was printed “therefore” in ed. 1. § 14, line 13, “Sibthorpe” is here corrected to “Sibthrop.”

Letter 51, § 12, line 22 and footnote, “Cassell and Galpin” in ed. 1. § 13, line 18, “palpus” in ed. 1. § 14, second footnote, “overthrown” has hitherto been misprinted for “overflown” (Ruskin corrects the misprint in his copy). § 16, last four lines, the “and” has here been transferred from before “the one which Bingley” to before “the leaf-cutting Bee.” § 19, line 13, “Tome” was misprinted “Tom” in ed. 1. § 22, line 28, “peewit’s” in ed. 1. § 23, line 23, “Dovrefield” is here a correction for “Dovrefeldt.”

Letter 52, § 5, line 8, “mother’s” is here corrected to “mother” (as in *Præterita*). § 13, line 22, “Cokayne” is here a correction for “Cockayne.” § 15, line 15, “bee’s” was misprinted “bees’ ” in ed. 1. § 22, line 17, “devours” is the author’s correction in his copy for “discerns.” § 28, last line, “Welsh” was misprinted “Welch” in ed. 1.

Letter 53, § 2, line 41, for a footnote appended here in previous editions, see under Letter 42. § 6, line 10, “sixth” is here a correction for “seventh.” § 9, line 13, of the black-letter type, see p. 325 *n*. § 9, “own” is italicised as marked by Ruskin in his copy. § 10, footnote, after the reference to *Crown of Wild Olive*, previous editions add “and put in the fifth line of that page, a comma after ‘heaven,’ and in the eighth line a semicolon after ‘blessing.’ ” In this edition these corrections have been made. § 13, line 7, “creatures” in ed. 1. § 15, footnote, “bit” for “bits” in ed. 1. § 15, lines 9 and 10 of the passage from Pope have hitherto been omitted; as Ruskin says we are to read the whole passage, the omission must have been inadvertent. § 25, line 6, “Jewel” is here a correction for “Jewell.”

Letter 54, title, “Platted” is Ruskin’s correction in his copy (in

accordance with the spelling in the Bible) for “Plaited.” § 15, line 19, “did” is now italicised in accordance with Ruskin’s marking in his copy. §§ 22, 24 (passages from Ascham’s *Scholemaster*), see pp. 354, 356 *nn*.

Letter 56, “Notes and Correspondence,” § 21 was omitted after the first edition (see p. 396 *n*).

Letter 57, § 2, see p. 403 *n*. § 10, line 17, see p. 409 *n*.; see also pp. 410 *n*., 411 *n*. § 11, line 6, “One of the pamphlets . . . *Fors*” was not in ed. 1.

Letter 59, § 3, line 9, “fifth” is here a correction for “fourth.” § 8, footnote, “this Madonna” for “the Madonna” in ed. 1. § 8, line 18, “of” is inserted in the Small Edition before “the little angular,” but the sentence reads correctly as Ruskin wrote it, if commas are inserted (as here) after “begin” and “again.”

Letter 60, see p. 467. In ed. 1 the “Notes and Correspondence” was differently and presumably wrongly arranged. Thus “I.” (§ 8) began, “The extract in the following letter makes me wonder . . .” “II.” (§ 9) was called “(Letter from a clergyman, now an accepted companion),” and the letter ended at “(Ecc. Polity, Book II.),” while the rest of the letter was given as “III. (Useful letter from a friend).”

Letter 61. For Ruskin’s note of various misprints in ed. 1 of this Letter, see Letter 62, § 1 (p. 511). The misprints were corrected in all later editions. They were the following: § 18, line 11, “deaths” was misprinted “death” in ed. 1. § 21 (p. 508, line 18) ed. 1 had no note of interrogation. § 22 (p. 509 *n*.), the first words were printed in ed. 1 “Yes, my dear, shares down; and—it.” In § 3, line 6, “my” is italicised in accordance with Ruskin’s marking in his own copy.

Letter 62, § 1, various references to lines and pages are altered in this edition. § 13, line 2, “Carey’s” is here corrected to “Cary’s.” § 19, subscription list: No. 12, “J. S.” corrected by Ruskin in his copy to “J. A.,” and No. 38, “S. S.” to “Sarah A. Grindon, £2, 2s. Od.” § 24 (p. 535, line 37) “Blade” in ed. 1 corrected to “Blades” in later editions.

Letter 63, § 11, line 7, ed. 1 has “maternal” for “paternal.” § 13, line 29, see p. 548 *n*. § 15, line 20, “fifth” is here a correction for “third.” § 16, author’s footnote, “T. R. Green” is here corrected to “J. R. Green.” § 24, see p. 559 *n*.

Letter 64, § 4, line 19, “material” was misprinted “maternal” in ed. 1. § 5, line 16, the commas before and after “there” were omitted in ed. 1. § 10, line 8, “at the side” is here an alteration for “below”; line 22, “Nectanebus” is here a correction for “Nectabenes.” § 19, for a passage omitted in the later editions, see p. 575 *n*. § 20, line 2, “modern” is here inserted before “Japanese” in accordance with Ruskin’s note. § 21, line 2, “the next page” is here an alteration for “next two pages.” Page 579, line 7, “1875” has hitherto been misprinted “1876.” § 24, the signature “R. L.” has hitherto been misprinted “H. L.”

Letter 65, § 8, line 21, “Ion’s” is Ruskin’s alteration (in his copy) for “his.” § 11, “Araunah” was misprinted “Arannah” in ed. 1. § 14, author’s footnote, the reference to Genesis xiii. “18” is here a correction

for “28,” and that to Joshua “xvii.” 15 is a correction for “xvi.” § 17, line 6, ed. 1 had the following footnote:—

“* I need scarcely desire the reader to correct the misprint of ‘maternal’ for ‘paternal’ in line 14 of p. 90 in *Fors* of March. In last *Fors*, please put the i into ‘material’ in p. 112, line 16, and a comma before and after ‘there’ in p. 113, line 8.”

§ 17, author’s footnote, line 4, ed. 1 had “Elspeth” for “Elizabeth” (see p. 634). § 21, line 3, see p. 605 *n.* § 26, line 2, “charges” was misprinted “changes” in ed. 1 (see p. 634).

Letter 66. For a notice in ed. 1, see p. 612 *n.* §§ 3, 9, “Frederick” is here corrected to “Frederic.” § 6, line 3, ed. 1 has “LXX.” for “Septuagint.” § 12, line 17, “verily” is Ruskin’s correction for “indeed.” § 19 (line 11 of Mr. Tarrant’s letter), “employed myself” in ed. 1 (line 14 of the same), “conduct” is now inserted after “entire.” § 24, line 11, “Work” has hitherto been misprinted “Word.”

Letter 67, § 8, line 27, ed. 3 misprints “set for” for “set forth.” § 14, line 6, ed. 1 reads correctly “in sum”; later editions, “in some.” § 17, (6) footnote, see p. 652 *n.* § 20, fourth line from end, “second” is here substituted for “first.” § 21, the “Cash Account” has hitherto been printed on a separate page, and at the end of § 21 there have been the words, “For Cash Account, see next page (230).” § 22, line 2, “May” is here a correction for “June.”

Letter 68, § 2, last line but one, “flour” was misprinted “flower” in the second thousand. § 6, line 8, the word “householder’s” is now inserted before “life,” in accordance with Ruskin’s copy.

Letter 69, § 3, line 20, “number” is Ruskin’s correction for “quantity.” § 19, line 4 from end, “so soon as” in ed. 1; “as soon as,” in later editions. § 20, p. 707, line 9, “3½” in ed. 1, “2½” later.

Letter 70, § 10, line 14, “fourth” is here corrected to “third.” § 17, in ed. 1, Article (III.) of the “Notes and Correspondence” was headed “From ‘Carlisle Journal,’” and at the end were the words “*Carlisle Journal*, August 18, 1876.”

Letter 71, § 5, line 2, “be” was misprinted “he” in ed. 1. § 6, line 10, “angel” is the author’s correction (in his copy) for “angels”— the reference being to the angel in “The Dream of St. Ursula.” § 10, line 3, “Iapetic” misprinted “Lapetic” in all the previous 8vo editions (see p. 738 *n.*).

Letter 72, § 3, note, ed. 1 reads “terminal,” afterwards corrected to “third.” § 4, author’s footnote, the reference to Dante’s *Inferno* was corrected in ed. 3 from “xxiii.” to “xxxiii.” (as noted by Ruskin at the end of Letter 74). § 11, line 7, “page” is here altered to “paragraph” (in correspondence with altered references in line 1). § 13, last line, in the accounts, ed. 1 has “Balance, Nov. 15” against £1135, 3s. 4d. § 15, line 2, “26” is here added.]

FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTERS 37–72

FORS CLAVIGERA.

LETTERS

TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS

OF GREAT BRITAIN.

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND HONORARY FELLOW OF CORPUS

CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD.

VOL. IV.



GEORGE ALLEN,

SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.

1874.

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(1874)

LETTER 37 (*January*)

THE CITY WHICH IS OUR OWN

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(Rome.) 1. Purpose of Fors Clavigera: to explain the powers of Fortune as she offers men the conditions of prosperity, and nails down their fate; to state the authoritative conditions of life, happiness, and honour. Old doctrine, not new; facts, not opinions. 2. Abstract of Letters 1–7. (Assisi.) 3. How the author's scheme was affected by the Franco-German war and revolution in Paris. 4. Selfishness of the German temper. Saying attributed to Bismarck in an interview with Maurus Jokai: "Take away from the French the cook, the tailor, and the hairdresser, and a copper-coloured Indian remains." 5. Deeds and virtues of the French. Miss Edgeworth's Frank. Frankness and Frenchness. 6. The Franks so free and noble that the virtue is called after their name, and English

political liberty becomes *franchise*. 7. Freedom of heart (the true Franchise) as described in the *Romance of the Rose*. 8. Corruption of the type, under modern conditions of "liberty," in the French grisette as described by Gaboriau. 9. "Normandie, la franche; France, la solue." 10. Corruption of these characters: illustrations from Gaboriau's types. 11. Typical Frenchmen of the twelfth century: Bishop Hugo and Cœur-de-Lion. 12. The better types in Gaboriau among the poorer classes. (*Rome*.) 13. The author and a Campagna peasant.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE.—14. Notes by Mr. W. C. Sillar on Usury (extract from Lecky). 15. The word "Franc." 16. Why the author has not continued the subject of Glaciers in *Fors*. Newspaper article on the dispute between Ruskin and Tyndall.

LETTER 44 (*August*)

THE SQUIRREL CAGE. ENGLISH SERVITUDE

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Notes and Correspondence.—16. Letter from a correspondent on Law Reform. 17. Extract from the *Times* on the cost of the Tichborne Case. 18. Letter from J. C. Sillar and Co. on the Church of England in South Australia lending money for interest. 19. Extract from an American book on "the power of money to accumulate value by interest."

(*Lucca.*) 1. Author's discussion with the Sacristan at Assisi. Isaiah vi. 5: "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." 2. The separation between the author and the world around him. 3. "The Sun is God," said Turner. "The sun is a gigantic railroad accident," says the modern Baal worshipper. 4. The author's challenge: "Do any of you know what the *Te Deum* means?" 5. A challenge from "a poor gipsy herald." 6. Squires; the difference between those who "die in the Lord" and otherwise. 7. A "Last Judgment" upon Squires: a picture which Reynolds did not paint. 8. The honourable landlord and the surreptitious appropriator. 9. The gipsy hunt is up; the British Constitution breaking fast; the landlord to fight for his land. 10. The coming revolution: 1848 and 1880. 11. The heritage of the British Squire, and how it has been bartered. 12. Advice to landlords: fixed rents and compensation for improvements; limitation of personal expenses, and improvement of estates. Religion means Obedience. 13. Land, won at the lance's point, must so be held; but the knight's spear fights not for what it can get, but for what it can give. 14. The Largesse of chivalry, and the carnivorous man of modern political economy. 15. Unprofitableness of mere exchange. Mr. Kettle and Mr. Pot: the principles of Trade and Interest. 16. The theory of Exchange, and the conception of Largesse in the *Romaunt of the Rose*. 17. The duty of the Squire's wife to give loaves—and brooches, and to be, herself, lovely. 18. Explanation of Giotto's fresco of "The Marriage of Poverty." 19. Appeal to the Women of England.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE.—20. Extract from the *Spectator* on peasant proprietors, and comments thereon.

LETTER 46 (*October*)

(*Florence.*) 1. The Fresco of Emperor, King, and Baron, with Pope, Cardinal, and Bishop in the Spanish Chapel. 2–6. Autobiography; the author's grandmother, mother, and aunt. 7. The author at home in the Sacristan's cell at Assisi. 8. St. George's Company to "do good work." 9. The good work of God: the story of the six days' work of Creation. 10. The six good works of men, and the correspondent diabolic works. 11. The doing and undoing of Creation. 12. Every man, woman, and child can

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do some Divine work, or undo some Diabolic work, every day. 13. Author's letter to a lady asking her to arrange her dinner-party on the supposition that Christ had sent to say He would be one of her guests. 14. What boys and girls can do, of Divine work. 15. The ethics of gardening. 16. Flowers and the poor.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE.—17. Article in the *Spectator* on the author's road-digging work at Oxford. 18. Extract from the *Liverpool Commercial News* on signs of national prosperity. 19. Answers to correspondents. 20. Letter from Mr. Sillar on usury. 21. Extract from the *Times* on Rope Cordage: superior strength of hand-spun rope.

LETTER 47 (*November*)

MINOS RETAINED. THE BRITISH JUDGE

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(*St. Martin's.*) 1. The function of the lawyer. 2. The opinions of Scott and Dickens on the legal profession. 3. Examples from Dickens. 4. Examples from Scott. 5. Scott's *Redgauntlet*: how love ought to come. 6. How it did come, according to Scott. 7–12. Analysis of *Redgauntlet*. Dickens's Miss Flite contrasted with Peter Peebles. The beautiful operation of the Civil Law of Great Britain according to Scott. Dickens on the Court of Chancery. 13. First piece of good work for a man, to find his resting-place, his house, or piece of Holy land. The desire for a better house every ten years. 14. A house that is "fit for its owner." 15. The simplest house, one like Robinson Crusoe's. 16. "Build, my man, build, or dig, one of the two."

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE.—17. Comments on a letter from a correspondent in defence of Railway dividends.

LETTER 48 (*December*)

THE ADVENT COLLECT

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1. Subscriptions to St. George's Fund might have disappointed author, had he not been happy with stones and pictures. 2. This state of mind people call "rational." Author's experiments with his own money; his piece of mountain ground at Coniston. 3. His cleansing a spring of the Wandel at Carshalton; his attempt to exhibit ideally clean street pavement in St. Giles's. 4. His tea-shop in Paddington Street. 5. The peace which comes from manual labour. Mr. Lecky's satisfaction with present-day wisdom; 6. but those who reverence their fathers would go mad but for the labour of their hands. 7. Author's reflections on a Bewickian pig. (*Paris.*) 8. French chambermaid of the right old school. German importation of waiter. 9. Plan of life under St. George.

Beet and cane sugar. (*Herne Hill*.) 10. Author and the cuckoo-clock: his ignorance of its mechanism. Science and handicraft in St. George's Schools. 11. The gist of *Fors*, to make people build their own houses, provide and cook their own dinners, and be content with both. The secret of contentment: the author unhappy because he is always wanting to be something else than he is. 12. Comments on reported fight between a dwarf and a bull-dog; 13. and on stoning a squirrel: thoughtlessness the chief calamity of the time. 14. Noah and his ark, and the builder of the *Devastation*, at the Advent. 15. The Advent Collect. 16. Comments on Ephesians vi. 14–17. 17. Enjoy Christmas thankfully. The joyfulest Christmas carol, the 96th Psalm.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE.—18. Letter of encouragement to author. 19. Letter asking author to reprint in *Fors* his correspondence with newspapers; reprint of author's letter to *Pall Mall Gazette* on "Madness and Crime." 20. Note from a friend on author's criticism of Dickens. 21. Extract from the *Spectator* ("Mr. Goschen on the condition of England"). 22. Extracts from *Pall Mall Gazette* (memorial to Archbishop Longley; an inquest; female crime in Liverpool; visitation of prisoners; Mr. Fowler on the death of Mr. Ernest Jones; a charge of forgery; a Liverpool merchant fined; a boy committed to an Industrial school). 23. Subscriptions to St. George's Fund.

FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTER 37

THE CITY WHICH IS OUR OWN¹

1st January, 1874.

*“Selon la loy, et ly prophetes,
Qui a charité parfaicte
Il ayme Dieu sur toute rien,
De cueur, de force, et d’ame nette;
Celui devons-nous tous de debte
Comme soy-mesmes, son prochain;
Qu’on dit qui m’ ayme, ayme mon chien.
De tel pierre, et de tel merrien
Est ès cieulx nostre maison faicte;
Car nulz ne peut dire, ‘c’est mien,’
Fors ce qu’il a mis en ce bien;
Tout le remenant est retraicte.”²*

*“According to the Law and the Prophets,
He who has perfect charity,
Loves God above everything,
With heart, with flesh, and with spirit pure.
Him also, our neighbour, we are all in debt
To love as ourselves;
For one says, Who loves me, loves my dog.
Of such stone, and of such crossbeam,
Is in the heavens our house made;
For no one can say, ‘It is mine,’
Beyond what he has put into that good;
All the rest is taken away.”*

1. ONE day last November, at Oxford, as I was going in at the private door of the University galleries, to give a

¹For the meaning of the title, see below, § 11, p. 24. Ruskin, in addition to the above title, wrote in his own copy, “My mind to me a kingdom is” (the opening line of a poem by Sir Edward Dyer, poet, courtier, and friend of Sir Philip Sidney). “The Stone and Crossbeam” (see line 8 of motto) was another rejected title for the Letter.]

²[Lines 1560–1571 of *Le Testament de Jean de Meung*, appended to *Le Roman de la Rose*.]

lecture on the Fine Arts in Florence,¹ I was hindered for a moment by a nice little girl, whipping a top on the pavement. She was a *very* nice little girl; and rejoiced wholly in her whip, and top; but could not inflict the reviving chastisement with all the activity that was in her, because she had on a large and dilapidated pair of woman's shoes, which projected the full length of her own little foot behind it and before; and being securely fastened to her ankles in the manner of mocassins, admitted, indeed, of dextrous glissades, and other modes of progress quite sufficient for ordinary purposes; but not conveniently of all the evolutions proper to the pursuit of a whipping-top.

There were some worthy people at my lecture, and I think the lecture was one of my best. It gave some really trustworthy information about art in Florence six hundred years ago. But all the time I was speaking, I knew that nothing spoken about art, either by myself or other people, could be of the least use to anybody there. For their primary business, and mine, was with art in Oxford, now; not with art in Florence, then; and art in Oxford now was absolutely dependent on our power of solving the question—which I knew that my audience would not even allow to be proposed for solution—“Why have our little girls large shoes?”

2. Indeed, my great difficulty, of late, whether in lecturing or writing, is in the intensely practical and matter-of-fact character of my own mind² as opposed to the loquacious and speculative disposition, not only of the British public, but of all my quondam friends. I am left utterly stranded, and alone, in life, and thought. Life and knowledge, I ought to say; for I have done what thinking was needful for me long ago, and know enough to act upon, for the few days, or years, I may have yet to live. I find some of my friends greatly agitated in mind, for instance,

¹ [One of the last six lectures on Tuscan Art, published under the title *Val d'Arno* (Vol. XXIII).]

² [Compare *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 407; and Letter 11, § 17 (Vol. XXVII. p. 193).]

about Responsibility, Free-will, and the like.¹ I settled all those matters for myself, before I was ten years old, by jumping up and down an awkward turn of four steps in my nursery-stairs, and considering whether it was likely that God knew whether I should jump only three, or the whole four at a time. Having settled it in my mind that He knew quite well, though I didn't, which I should do; and also whether I should fall or not in the course of the performance,—though I was altogether responsible for taking care not to,—I never troubled my head more on the matter, from that day to this. But my friends keep buzzing and puzzling about it, as if they had to order the course of the world themselves; and won't attend to me for an instant, if I ask why little girls have large shoes.

3. I don't suppose any man, with a tongue in his head, and zeal to use it, was ever left so entirely unattended to, as he grew old, by his early friends; and it is doubly and trebly strange to me, because I have lost none of my power of sympathy with them. Some are chemists; and I am always glad to hear of the last new thing in elements; some are palæontologists, and I am no less happy to know of any lately unburied beast peculiar in his bones; the lawyers and clergymen can always interest me with any story out of their courts or parishes;—but not one of them ever asks what I am about myself. If they chance to meet me in the streets of Oxford, they ask whether I am staying there. When I say, yes, they ask how I like it; and when I tell them I don't like it at all, and don't think little girls should have large shoes, they tell me I ought to read the *Cours de Philosophie Positive*.² As if a man who had lived to be fifty-four, content with what philosophy was needful to assure him that salt was savoury, and pepper hot, could ever be made positive in his old age, in the impertinent manner of these youngsters. But positive

¹ [For Ruskin on Free-will, see Vol. XVIII. p. 51 *n.*]

² [An injunction which Ruskin did not obey: see his avowal in Letter 67, p. 663 (*e*).]

in a pertinent and practical manner, I have been, and shall be, with such stern and steady wedge of fact and act as time may let me drive into the gnarled blockheadism of the British mob.

4. I am free to confess I did not quite know the sort of creature I had to deal with, when I began,¹ fifteen years ago, nor the quantity of ingenious resistance to practical reform which could be offered by theoretical reformers. Look, for instance, at this report of a speech of Mr. Bright's in the *Times*, on the subject of adulteration of food.*

"The noble lord has taken great pains upon this question, and has brought before the House a great amount of detail in connection with it. As I listened to his observations I hoped and believed that there was, though unintentional, no little exaggeration in them. Although there may be particular cases in which great harm to health and great fraud may possibly be shown, yet I think that general statements of this kind, implicating to a large extent the traders of this country, are dangerous, and are almost certain to be unjust. Now, my hon. friend (Mr. Pochin) who has just addressed the House in a speech showing his entire mastery of the question, has confirmed my opinion, for he has shown—and I dare say he knows as much of the matter as any present—that there is a great

* Of 6th March, not long ago, but I have lost note of the year.²

¹ [That is, began his distinctively political work, in *Unto this Last* (1860).]

² [Speech in the House of Commons on March 5, 1869, when Bright was President of the Board of Trade. Lord Eustace Cecil had moved, "That it is expedient that her Majesty's Government should give their earliest attention to the widespread and most reprehensible practices of using false weights and measures, and of adulterating food, drink, and drugs." Bright's speech, as here quoted by Ruskin from the *Times*, is given in the same words in "Hansard." Where Ruskin's first dots occur, the speaker recited Lord Eustace Cecil's motion. Where the second set of dots occur, Bright referred to a statement made by the Secretary of the Standards Commission reporting that the convictions for fraudulent weights and measures were few. The fact that this Commission was sitting was adduced as a reason against action. He pointed out that local authorities had power to institute proceedings against offenders, and that the rarity of such action tended to show that the evil had been much exaggerated. At the end of the speech, Bright explained that the Government could not take immediate action, invited private members to produce a Bill, said that previous legislation had been a failure, and added, "I regard these subjects as about the most difficult, and at the same time, I think, about the least advantageous to which any Party can devote itself." Froude had previously called attention to Bright's speech in an article in *Fraser's Magazine* for January 1870, entitled "England and her Colonies," now reprinted in *Short Studies upon Great Subjects*, 1891, vol. ii. pp. 196, 197. For other references to it, see Vol. XX. p. 111 *n.*; and *Fors*, Letter 74, § 11 (Vol. XXIX. p. 39).]

deal of exaggeration in the opinions which have prevailed in many parts of the country, and which have even been found to prevail upon the matter in this House. . . . Now, I am prepared to show, that the exaggeration of the noble lord—I do not say intentionally, of course; I am sure he is incapable of that—is just as great in the matter of weights and measures as in that of adulteration. Probably he is not aware that in the list of persons employing weights that are inaccurate—I do not say fraudulent—no distinction is drawn between those who are intentionally fraudulent and those who are accidentally inaccurate, and that the penalty is precisely the same, and the offence is just as eagerly detected, whether there be a fraud or merely an accident. Now, the noble lord will probably be surprised when I tell him that many persons are fined annually, not because their weights are too small, but because they are too large. In fact, when the weights are inaccurate, but are in favour of the customer, still the owner and user of the weight is liable to the penalty, and is fined. . . . My own impression with regard to this adulteration is that it arises from the very great, and perhaps inevitable, competition in business; and that to a great extent it is promoted by the ignorance of customers. As the ignorance of customers generally is diminishing, we may hope that before long the adulteration of food may also diminish. The noble lord appears to ask that something much more extensive and stringent should be done by Parliament. The fact is, it is vain to attempt by the power of Parliament to penetrate into and to track out evils such as those on which the noble lord has dwelt at such length. It is quite impossible that you should have the oversight of the shops of the country by inspectors, and that you should have persons going into shops to buy sugar, pickles, and Cayenne pepper, to get them analyzed, and then raise complaints against shopkeepers, and bring them before the magistrates. If men in their private businesses were to be tracked by Government officers and inspectors every hour of the day, life would not be worth having, and I recommend them to remove to another country, where they would not be subject to such annoyance.”

5. Now, I neither know, nor does it matter to the public, what Mr. Bright actually said; but the report in the *Times* is the permanent and universally influential form of his sayings: and observe what the substance is, of these three or four hundred Parliamentary words, so reported.

First. That an evil which has been exaggerated ought not to be prevented.

Secondly. That at present we punish honest men as much as rogues; and must always continue to do so if we punish anybody.

Thirdly. That life would not be worth having if one's weights and measures were liable to inspection.

I can assure Mr. Bright that people who know what life means, can sustain the calamity of the inspection of their weights and measures with fortitude. I myself keep a tea-and-sugar shop.¹ I have had my scales and weights inspected more than once or twice, and am not in the least disposed to bid my native land good-night² on that account. That I could bid it nothing *but* good-night—never good-morning, the smoke of it quenching the sun, and its parliamentary talk, of such quality as the above, having become darkness voluble,³ and some of it worse even than that, a mere watchman's rattle, sprung by alarmed constituencies of rascals when an honest man comes in sight,—these are things indeed which should make any man's life little worth having, unless he separate himself from the scandalous crowd; but it must not be in exile from his country.

6. I have not hitherto stated, except in general terms, the design to which these letters point, though it has been again and again defined, and it seems to me explicitly enough—the highest possible education, namely, of English men and women living by agriculture in their native land. Indeed, during these three past years I have not hoped to do more than make my readers feel what mischiefs they have to conquer. It is time now to say more clearly what I want them to do.

The substantial wealth of man consists in the earth he cultivates, with its pleasant or serviceable animals and plants, and in the rightly produced work of his own hands. I mean to buy, for the St. George's Company, the first pieces of ground offered to me at fair price (when the subscriptions enable me to give any price),—to put them as rapidly as possible into order, and to settle upon them as many families as they can support, of young and healthy persons, on the condition that they do the best they can for

¹ [See Letter 48, § 4 (below, p. 204).]

² [Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, i. 13.]

³ [Ruskin in his copy marked these lines for special emphasis.]

their livelihood with their own hands, and submit themselves and their children to the rules written for them.

I do not care where the land is, nor of what quality. I would rather it should be poor, for I want space more than food. I will make the best of it that I can, at once, by wage-labour, under the best agricultural advice. It is easy now to obtain good counsel, and many of our landlords would willingly undertake such operations occasionally, but for the fixed notion that every improvement of land should at once pay, whereas the St. George's Company is to be consistently monastic in its principles of labour, and to work for the redemption of any desert land, without other idea of gain than the certainty of future good to others. I should best like a bit of marsh land of small value, which I would trench into alternate ridge and canal, changing it all into solid land, and deep water, to be farmed in fish. If, instead, I get a rocky piece, I shall first arrange reservoirs for rain, then put what earth is sprinkled on it into workable masses; and ascertaining, in either case, how many mouths the gained spaces of ground will easily feed, put upon them families chosen for me by old landlords, who know their people, and can send me cheerful and honest ones, accustomed to obey orders, and live in the fear of God. Whether the fear be Catholic, or Church-of-England, or Presbyterian, I do not in the least care, so that the family be capable of any kind of sincere devotion;¹ and conscious of the sacredness of order. If any young couples of the higher classes choose to accept such rough life, I would rather have them for tenants than any others.

Tenants, I say, and at long lease, if they behave well: with power eventually to purchase the piece of land they live on for themselves, if they can save the price of it; the rent they pay, meanwhile, being the tithe of the annual produce, to St. George's fund. The modes of the cultivation

¹ [For other passages in which Ruskin insists on sincerity of belief as more important than form of creed, see below, p. 79; and Letter 30, § 3 (Vol. XXVII. p. 547 and *n.*.)]

of the land are to be under the control of the overseer of the whole estate, appointed by the Trustees of the fund; but the tenants shall build their own houses to their own minds, under certain conditions as to materials and strength; and have for themselves the entire produce of the land, except the tithe aforesaid.

7. The children will be required to attend training schools for bodily exercise, and music, with such other education as I have already described.¹ Every household will have its library, given it from the fund, and consisting of a fixed number of volumes,—some constant, the others chosen by each family out of a list of permitted books, from which they afterwards may increase their library if they choose. The formation of this library for choice, by a republication of classical authors in standard forms, has long been a main object with me.² No newspapers, nor any books but those named in the annually renewed lists, are to be allowed in any household. In time I hope to get a journal published, containing notice of any really important matters taking place in this or other countries, in the closely sifted truth of them.³

8. The first essential point in the education given to the children will be the habit of instant, finely accurate, and totally unreasoning, obedience to their fathers, mothers, and tutors; the same precise and unquestioning submission being required from heads of families to the officers set over them. The second essential will be the understanding of the nature of honour, making the obedience solemn and constant;⁴ so that the slightest wilful violation of the laws of the society may be regarded as a grave breach of trust, and no less disgraceful than a soldier's recoiling from his place in a battle.

In our present state of utter moral disorganization, it

¹ [See Letters 5, § 21; 8, § 10; and 9, §§ 2–12 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 95, 142, 146).]

² [See *Sesame and Lilies*, § 49 (Vol. XVIII. p. 104); and, for later references to the scheme, Letters 51, 57, 58, 61, and 67 (pp. 276, 407, 434, 499, 648).]

³ [Compare Letter 3, § 1 (Vol. XXVII. p. 45); and below, p. 26.]

⁴ [Compare Letter 42, § 6 (p. 95).]

might indeed seem as if it would be impossible either to secure obedience, or explain the sensation of honour; but the instincts of both are native in man,¹ and the roots of them cannot wither, even under the dust-heap of modern liberal opinions. My settlers, you observe, are to be young people, bred on old estates; my commandants will be veteran soldiers;² and it will be soon perceived that pride based on servitude to the will of another³ is far loftier and happier than pride based on servitude to humour of one's own.

Each family will at first be put on its trial for a year, without any lease of the land: if they behave well, they shall have a lease for three years; if through that time they satisfy their officers, a life-long lease, with power to purchase.

9. I have already stated that no machines moved by artificial power are to be used on the estates of the society;⁴ wind, water, and animal force are to be the only motive powers employed, and there is to be as little trade or importation as possible; the utmost simplicity of life, and restriction of possession, being combined with the highest attainable refinement of temper and thought. Everything that the members of any household can sufficiently make for themselves, they are so to make, however clumsily; but the carpenter and smith, trained to perfectest work in wood and iron, are to be employed on the parts of houses and implements in which finish is essential to strength. The ploughshare and spade must be made by the smith, and the roof and floors by a carpenter; but the

¹ [See, later on, p. 63 *n.*; and Article I. of St. George's Creed: Letter 58, § 2 (p. 419).]

² [For a reference to this point, see *General Statement Explaining the Nature and Purposes of St. George's Guild*, § 2 (Vol. XXX).]

³ [On "the first duty of every man to find his true master," see *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 82 (Vol. XIX. p. 129); and compare Letter 70, § 4 *n.* (p. 715).]

⁴ [See Letters 5, §§ 10–13; 8, § 10; and 12, § 1 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 87–90, 143, 200). On reading this passage, a "manufacturing friend" (Mr. Joseph Brooke) wrote stating the difficulties he felt. Ruskin replied partly in *Fors* (see below, pp. 132 *seq.*), partly in private letters. These have now been placed at the editors' disposal, and are printed in Appendix 10: see Vol. XXIX. pp. 547–552.]

boys of the house must be able to make either a horseshoe, or a table.

10. Simplicity of life without coarseness, and delight in life without lasciviousness, are, under such conditions, not only possible to human creatures, but natural to them. I do not pretend to tell you straightforwardly all laws of nature respecting the conduct of men; but some of those laws I know, and will endeavour to get obeyed; others, as they are needful, will be in the sequel of such obedience ascertained. What final relations may take place between masters and servants, labourers and employers, old people and young, useful people and useless, in such a society, only experience can conclude; nor is there any reason to anticipate the conclusion. Some few things the most obstinate will admit, and the least credulous believe: that washed faces are healthier than dirty ones, whole clothes decenter than ragged ones, kind behavior more serviceable than malicious, and pure air pleasanter than foul. Upon that much of “philosophie positive”¹ I mean to act; and, little by little, to define in these letters the processes of action. That it should be left to me to begin such a work, with only one man in England—Thomas Carlyle—to whom I can look for steady guidance, is alike wonderful and sorrowful to me; but as the thing is so, I can only do what seems to me necessary, none else coming forward to do it. For my own part, I entirely hate the whole business; I dislike having either power or responsibility; am ashamed to ask for money, and plagued in spending it. I don’t want to talk, nor to write, nor to advise or direct anybody. I am far more provoked at being thought foolish by foolish people, than pleased at being thought sensible by sensible people; and the average proportion of the numbers of each is not to my advantage.² If I could find any one able to carry on the plan instead of me, I never should trouble

¹ [See above, § 3.]

² [For another reference to the saying of Carlyle’s here in Ruskin’s mind, see Vol. XII. p. 342.]

myself about it more; and even now, it is only with extreme effort and chastisement of my indolence that I go on: but, unless I am struck with palsy, I do not seriously doubt my perseverance, until I find somebody able to take up the matter in the same mind, and with a better heart.

11. The laws required to be obeyed by the families living on the land will be,—with some relaxation and modification, so as to fit them for English people,—those of Florence in the fourteenth century. In what additional rules may be adopted, I shall follow, for the most part, Bacon, or Sir Thomas More, under sanction always of the higher authority which of late the English nation has wholly set its strength to defy—that of the Founder of its Religion; nor without due acceptance of what teaching was given to the children of God by their Father, before the day of Christ, of which, for present ending, read and attend to these following quiet words.*

“ ‘In what point of view, then, and on what ground shall a man be profited by injustice or intemperance or other baseness, even though he acquire money or power?’

‘There is no ground on which this can be maintained.’

‘What shall be profit if his injustice be undetected? for he who is undetected only gets worse, whereas he who is detected and punished has the brutal part of his nature silenced and humanized; the gentler element in him is liberated, and his whole soul is perfected and ennobled by the acquirement of justice and temperance and wisdom, more than the body ever is by receiving gifts of beauty, strength, and health, in proportion as the soul is more honourable than the body.’

‘Certainly,’ he said.

‘Will not, then, the man of understanding, gather all that is in him, and stretch himself like a bent bow to this aim of life; and, in the first place, honour studies which thus chastise and deliver his soul in perfection; and despise others?’¹

* The close of the ninth book of Plato’s *Republic*. I use for the most part Mr. Jowett’s translation, here and there modifying it in my own arbitrarily dogged or diffuse way of Englishing passages of complex significance.

¹ [Jowett’s version is: “The man of understanding will concentrate himself on this as the work of life. And, in the first place, he will honour studies which impress these qualities on the soul, and will disregard others.” For other references to Jowett’s translation, see Letter 82 (Vol. XXIX. p. 240 *n.*); and compare a letter to Norton of July 9, 1879 (in a later volume of this edition).]

‘Clearly,’ he said.

‘In the next place, he will keep under his body, and so far will he be from yielding to brutal and irrational pleasures,* that he will not even¹ first look to bodily health as his main object, nor desire to be fair, or strong, or well, unless he is likely thereby to gain temperance; but he will be always desirous of preserving the harmony of the body for the sake of the concord of the soul?’

‘Certainly,’ he replied, ‘that he will, if he is indeed taught by the Muses.’²

‘And he will also observe the principle of classing and concord in the acquisition of wealth; and will not, because the mob beatify him, increase his endless load of wealth to his own infinite harm?’

‘I think not,’ he said.

‘He will look at the city which is within him, and take care to avoid any change of his own institutions, such as might arise either from abundance or from want; and he will duly regulate his acquisition and expense in so far as he is able?’

‘Very true.’

‘And, for the same reason, he will accept such honours as he deems likely to make him a better man; but those which are likely to loosen his possessed habit,³ whether private or public honours, he will avoid?’

‘Then, if this be his chief care, he will not be a politician?’

‘By the dog of Egypt, he will! in the city which is his own,⁴ though in his native country perhaps not, unless some providential accident should occur.’

‘I understand; you speak of that city of which we are the founders, and which exists in idea only, for I do not think there is such an one anywhere on earth?’

‘In heaven,’ I replied, ‘there is laid up a pattern of such a city; and he who desires may behold this, and, beholding, govern himself accordingly. But whether there really is, or ever will be, such an one, is of no importance to him, for he will act accordingly to the laws of that city and of no other?’

‘True,’ he said.”

* Plato does not mean here, merely dissipation of a destructive kind (as the next sentence shows), but also healthy animal stupidities, as our hunting, shooting, and the like.⁵

¹ [Here Jowett has “. . . that he will regard even health as quite a secondary matter; his first object will be not that he may be fair . . .”]

² [Jowett’s version is: “. . . has true music in him. And there is a principle of order (ξυνταξιν) and harmony in the acquisition of wealth; this also he will observe, and will not allow himself to be dazzled by the opinion of the world, and heap up riches to his own infinite harm.”]

³ [Jowett has “. . . likely to disorder his constitution” (λυσειν την υπαρχουσαν εξιν

⁴ [See the title of this Letter.]

⁵ [For Ruskin’s view of such sports, see Vol. VII. p. 340 *n.*; and compare Letters 45, 46, and 51 (below, pp. 156, 177, 286). See also Article V. in St. George’s Creed (below, p. 419).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

12. IT is due to my readers to state my reasons for raising the price, and withdrawing the frontispieces, of *Fors*.¹

The cessation of the latter has nothing to do with the price. At least, for the raised price I could easily afford the plates, and they would help the sale; but I cannot spare my good assistant's time in their preparation, and find that, in the existing state of trade, I cannot trust other people, without perpetual looking after them; for which I have no time myself. Even last year the printing of my *Fors* frontispieces prevented the publication of my Oxford lectures on engraving;² and it is absolutely necessary that my Oxford work should be done rightly, whatever else I leave undone. Secondly, for the rise in price. I hold it my duty to give my advice for nothing; but not to write it in careful English, and correct press, for nothing. I like the feeling of being paid for my true work as much as any other labourer; and though I write *Fors*, not for money, but because I know it to be wanted, as I would build a wall against the advancing sea for nothing, if I couldn't be paid for doing it; yet I will have proper pay from the harbour-master, if I can get it. As soon as the book gives me and the publisher what is right, the surplus shall go to the St. George's fund.³ The price will not signify ultimately;—sevenpence, or tenpence, or a shilling, will be all the same to the public if the book is found useful;—but I fix, and mean to keep to, tenpence, because I intend striking for use on my farms⁴ the pure silver coin called in Florence the "soldo," of which the golden florin was worth twenty (the soldo itself being misnamed from the Roman "solidus"); and this soldo will represent the Roman denarius, and be worth ten silver pence; and this is to be the price of *Fors*.

Then one further *petty* reason I have for raising the price. In all my dealings with the public, I wish them to understand that my first price is my lowest. They may have to pay more; but never a farthing less. And I am a little provoked at not having been helped in the least by the Working Men's College, after I taught there for five years,⁵ or by any of my old pupils there, whom I have lost sight of:—(three remain who would always help me in anything⁶), and I think they will soon begin to want *Fors*, now,—and they shall not have it for sevenpence.

¹ [See the Bibliographical Note, above, p. xxiii.]

² [*Ariadne Florentina*; for the delay in its publication, see Vol. XXII. p. 463.]

³ [On the cost of *Fors*, see Letter 6, § 8 (Vol. XXVII. p. 99).]

⁴ [On the proposed, but never actually struck, coinage for St. George's farms, see Letter 58, §§ 14–16 (pp. 430–432); and on the "soldo," Vol. XV. p. 376.]

⁵ [Namely, 1854–1859: see Vol. V. pp. xxxvii. *seq.*]

⁶ [Ruskin refers no doubt to Mr. George Allen and Mr. William Ward (both pupils at the Working Men's College); while the third is probably Arthur Burgess, who, though he did not belong to the College, was an old pupil and general assistant of Ruskin (see Vol. XIV. pp. 349 *seq.*)]

13. The following three stray newspaper cuttings may as well be printed now; they have lain some time by me. The first two relate to economy. The last is, I hope, an exaggerated report; and I give it as an example of the kind of news which my own journal will *not* give on hearsay.¹ But I know that things did take place in India which were not capable of exaggeration in horror, and such are the results, remember, of our past missionary work, as a whole, in India and China.

I point to them to-day, in order that I may express my entire concurrence in all that I have seen reported of Professor Max Müller's lecture in Westminster Abbey,² though there are one or two things I should like to say in addition, if I can find time.

14. "Those who find fault with the present Government on account of its rigid economy, and accuse it of shabbiness, have little idea of the straits it is put to for money and the sacrifices it is obliged to make in order to make both ends meet. The following melancholy facts will serve to show how hardly pushed this great nation is to find sixpence even for a good purpose. The Hakluyt Society was, as some of our readers may know, formed in the year 1846 for the purpose of printing in English for distribution among its members rare and valuable voyages, travels, and geographical records, including the more important early narratives of British enterprise.³ For many years the Home Office, the Board of Trade, and the Admiralty have been in the habit of subscribing for the publications of this society; and considering that an annual subscription of one guinea entitles each subscriber to receive without further charge a copy of every work produced by the society within the year subscribed for, it can hardly be said that the outlay was ruinous to the Exchequer. But we live in an exceptional period; and accordingly last year the society received a communication from the Board of Trade to the effect that its publications were no longer required. Then the Home Office wrote to say that its subscription must be discontinued, and followed up the communication by another, asking whether it might have a copy of the society's publications, supplied to it gratuitously. Lastly, the Admiralty felt itself constrained by the urgency of the times to reduce its subscription, and asked to have only one instead of two copies annually. It seems rather hard on the Hakluyt Society that the Home Office should beg to have its publications for nothing, and for the sake of appearance it seems advisable that the Admiralty should continue its subscription for two copies, and lend one set to its impoverished brother in Whitehall until the advent of better times."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

15. "We make a present of a suggestion to Professor Beesly, Mr. Frederic Harrison, and the artisans who are calling upon the country to strike a blow for France.⁴ They must appoint a Select Committee to see what war really means.

¹ [See above, § 7, p. 20.]

² [See *On Missions: a Lecture delivered in Westminster Abbey on December 3, 1873*, by F. Max Müller, with an *Introductory Sermon* by A. P. Stanley, Dean of Westminster: 1873. For another reference to foreign missions, see Letter 60, § 8 (below, p. 468).]

³ [For Ruskin's interest in the Society's publication, see Letter 13, § 12 (Vol. XXVII. p. 236).]

⁴ [The reference here is to the agitation conducted in 1870–1871 by the Positivist leaders in this country (Professor Beesly, Mr. Harrison, Mr. R. Congreve and others, in conjunction with Mr. George Odger and other representatives of the working classes), with a view to inducing the Government of the day to take up arms on the side of France against Prussia. A "Remonstrance" to this effect was addressed to Mr. Gladstone; Professor Beesly published a pamphlet (*A Word for*

Special commissioners will find out for them how many pounds, on an average, have been lost by the families whose breadwinners have gone to Paris with the King, or to Le Mans with Chanzy. Those hunters of facts will also let the working men know how many fields are unsown round Metz and on the Loire. Next, the Select Committee will get an exact return of the killed and wounded from Count Bismarck and M. Gambetta. Some novelist or poet—a George Eliot or a Browning—will then be asked to lavish all the knowledge of human emotion in the painting of one family group out of the half-million which the returns of the stricken will show. That picture will be distributed broadcast among the working men and their wives. Then the Select Committee will call to its aid the statisticians and the political economists—the Leone Levis,¹ and the John Stuart Mills. Those authorities will calculate what sum the war has taken from the wages fund of France and Germany; what number of working men it will cast out of employment, or force to accept lower wages, or compel to emigrate.” (I do not often indulge myself in the study of the works of Mr. Levi or Mr. Mill;—but have they really never done anything of this kind hitherto?) “Thus the facts will be brought before the toiling people, solidly, simply, truthfully. Finally, Professor Beesly and Mr. Harrison will call another meeting, will state the results of the investigation, will say, ‘This is the meaning of war,’ and will ask the workmen whether they are prepared to pay the inevitable price of helping Republican France. The answer, we imagine, would at once shock and surprise the scholarly gentlemen to whom the Democrats are indebted for their logic and their rhetoric. Meanwhile Mr. Ruskin and the Council of the Workmen’s National Peace Society have been doing some small measure of the task which we have mapped out. The Council asks the bellicose section of the operative classes a number of questions about the cost and the effect of battles.² Some, it is true, are not very cogent, and some are absurd; but, taken together, they press the inquiry whether war pays anybody, and in particular whether it pays the working man. Mr. Ruskin sets forth the truth much more vividly in the letter which appeared in our impression of Thursday.³ ‘Half the money lost by the inundation of the Tiber,’ etc. (the *Telegraph* quotes the letter to the end).

“Before stating what might have been done with the force which has been spent in the work of mutual slaughter, Mr. Ruskin might have explained what good it has undone, and how. take, first, the destruction of capital. Millions of pounds have been spent on gunpowder, bombs, round shot, cannon, needle-guns, chassespots, and mitrailleuses. But for the war, a great part of the sum would have been expended in the growing of wheat, the spinning of cloth, the building of railway bridges, and the construction of ships. As the political economists say, the amount would have been spent productively, or, to use the plain words of common speech, would have been so used that, directly or indirectly, it would have added to the wealth of the country, and increased the fund to be distributed among the working people. But the wealth has been blown away from the muzzle of the cannon, or scattered among the woods and forts of Paris in the shape of broken shells and dismounted guns. Now, every shot which is fired is a direct loss to the labouring classes of France and Germany. *King William on the one side,*

France); Dr. J. H. Bridges another (*Why we should Stand by France*); and Mr. Congreve, a third (*Positivist Considerations on the War*). A public meeting of “the Committee of Sympathizers with France” was held at the Cannon Street Hotel on Tuesday, January 3. As a counterblast to this, the “Council of the Workmen’s National Peace Society” issued a series of “Questions for the Working Men of Great Britain to ask themselves before they vote at public meetings in favour of a war policy to assist France.”]

¹ [Leone Levis (1821–1888), Professor of Commerce in King’s College, London; author of numerous books on economics and mercantile law.]

² [Compare Vol. XXVII. p. 41 *n.*]

³ [Printed in Vol. XVII. p. 547: see also Letter 33, § 19 (Vol. XXVII. p. 262).]

and General Trochu on the other, really load their guns with gold. They put the wages of the working people into every shell. The splinters of iron that strew the fields represent the pay which would have gone to the farm labourers of Alsace, the mechanics of Paris and Berlin, and the silk-weavers of Lyons. If the political economist were some magician, he would command the supernatural agent to transform the broken gun-carriages, the fragments of bombs, and the round shot into loaves of bread, bottles of wine, fields of corn, clothes, houses, cattle, furniture, books, the virtue of women, the health of children, the years of the aged. The whole field would become alive with the forms, the wealth, the beauty, the bustle of great cities. If working men ever saw such a transformation, they would rise up from end to end of Europe, and execrate the King or Emperor who should let loose the dogs of war. And yet such a scene would represent only a small part of the real havoc. For every man whom Germany takes away from the field or the workshop to place in the barrack or the camp, she must sustain as certain a loss as if she were to cast money into the sea. The loss may be necessary as an insurance against still greater injury; but nevertheless the waste does take place, and on the working people does it mainly fall. The young recruit may have been earning thirty shillings a week or a day, and that sum is lost to himself or his friends. Hitherto he has supported himself; now he must be maintained by the State—that is, by his fellow-subjects. Hitherto he has added to the national wealth by ploughing the fields, building houses, constructing railways. A skilful statistician could state, with some approach to accuracy, the number of pounds by which the amount of his yearly productive contribution could be estimated. It might be thirty, or a hundred, or a thousand. Well, he ceases to produce the moment that he becomes a soldier. He is then a drone. He is as unproductive as a pauper. The millions of pounds spent in feeding and drilling the army as clearly represent a dead loss as the millions spent on workhouses. Nor are these the only ways in which war destroys wealth. Hundreds of railway bridges have been broken down; the communications between different parts of the country have been cut off; hundreds of thousands have lost their means of livelihood; and great tracts of country are wasted like a desert. Thus the total destruction of wealth has been appalling. A considerable time ago Professor Leone Levi calculated that Germany alone had lost more than £300,000,000; France must have lost much more; and, even if we make a liberal discount from so tremendous a computation, we may safely say that the war has cost both nations at least half as much as the National Debt of England.

“A large part of that amount, it is true, would have been spent unproductively, even if the war had not taken place. A vast sum would have been lavished on the luxuries of dress and the table, on the beauties of art, and on the appliances of war. But it is safe to calculate that at least half of the amount would have been so expended as to bring a productive return. Two or three hundred millions would have been at the service of peace; and Mr. Ruskin’s letter points the question, What could have been done with that enormous total? If it were at the disposal of an English statesman as far-seeing in peace as Bismarck is in war, what might not be done for the England of the present and the future? The prospect is almost millennial. Harbours of refuge might be built all round the coast; the fever dens of London, Manchester, and Liverpool might give place to abodes of health; the poor children of the United Kingdom might be taught to read and write; great universities might be endowed; the waste lands might be cultivated, and the Bog of Allen drained; the National Debt could be swiftly reduced; and a hundred other great national enterprises would sooner or later be fulfilled. But all this store of human good has been blown away from the muzzles of the Krupps and the chassé-pots. It has literally been transformed into smoke. We do not deny that such a waste may be necessary in order to guard against still further destruction. Wars have often been imperative. It would frequently be the height of national wickedness to choose an ignoble peace. Nevertheless war is the most costly and most wasteful of human pursuits. When the

working class followers of Professor Beesly ask themselves what is the price of battle, what it represents, and by whom the chief part is paid, they will be better able to respond to the appeal for armed intervention than they were on Tuesday night."—*Daily Telegraph, January 14th, 1871.*

16. "The story of the massacre of Tientsin, on the 21st June last, is told in a private letter dated Cheefoo, June 30th, published in Thursday's *Standard*, but the signature of which is not given. The horrors narrated are frightful, and remembering how frequently stories of similar horrors in the Mutiny melted away on close investigation,—though but too many were true,—we may hope that the writer, who does not seem to have been in Tientsin at the time, has heard somewhat exaggerated accounts. Yet making all allowances for this, there was evidently horror enough. The first attack was on the French Consul, who was murdered, the Chinese mandarins refusing aid. Then the Consulate was broken open, and two Catholic priests murdered, as well as M. and Madame Thomassin, an attache to the Legation at Peking and his bride. Then came the worst part. The mob, acting with regular Chinese soldiers, it is said, whom their officers did not attempt to restrain, attacked the hospital of the French Sisters of Charity, stripped them, exposed them to the mob, plucked out their eyes, mutilated them in other ways, and divided portions of their flesh among the infuriated people, and then set fire to the hospital, in which a hundred orphan children, who were the objects of the sisters' care, were burnt to death."—*The Spectator, September 3rd, 1870.*

LETTER 38

“CHILDREN, HAVE YE HERE ANY MEAT?”¹

HERNE HILL, *December*, 1873.

1. THE laws of Florence in the fourteenth century, for us in the nineteenth!²

Even so, good reader. You have, perhaps, long imagined that the judges of Israel, and heroes of Greece, the consuls of Rome,³ and the dukes of Venice, the powers of Florence, and the kings of England, were all merely the dim foreshadowings and obscure prophesyings of the advent of the Jones and Robinson of the future: demi-gods revealed in your own day, whose demi-divine votes, if luckily coincident upon any subject, become totally divine, and establish the ordinances thereof, for ever.

You will find it entirely otherwise, gentlemen, whether of the suburb, or centre. Laws small and great, for ever unchangeable;—irresistible by all the force of Robinson, and unimprovable by finest jurisprudence of Jones, have long since been known, and, by wise nations, obeyed.

2. Out of the statute books of one of these I begin with an apparently unimportant order, but the sway of it cuts deep.

“No person whatsoever shall buy fish, to sell it again, either in the market of Florence, or in any markets in the state of Florence.”

It is one of many such laws, entirely abolishing the profession of middleman, or costermonger of perishable articles of food, in the city of the Lily.

¹ [Luke xxiv. 41; John xxi. 5.]

² [See Letter 37, § 11 (p. 23). Ruskin quotes here (§ 2) and in § 15 from Florentine archives. A large collection of laws (not including, however, those for the fish trade) is printed in the third volume (1866) of Paolo Emiliani-Giudici's *Storia dei Comuni Italiani*.]

³ [See, for a similar reference, *Aratra Pentelici*, § 214 (Vol. XX. p. 357).]

“Entirely abolishing;—nonsense!” thinks your modern commercial worship. “Who was to prevent private contract?”

Nobody, my good sir;—there is, as you very justly feel, no power in law whatever to prevent private contract. No quantity of laws, penalties, or constitutions, can be of the slightest use to a public inherently licentious and deceitful. There is no legislation for liars and traitors. They cannot be prevented from the pit; the earth finally swallows them. They find their level against all embankment—soak their way down, irrestrainably, to the gutter grating;—happiest the nation that most rapidly so gets rid of their stench. There is no law, I repeat, for these, but gravitation. Organic laws can only be serviceable to, and in general will only be written by, a public of honourable citizens, loyal to their state, and faithful to each other.

3. The profession of middleman was then, by civic consent, and formal law, rendered impossible in Florence with respect to fish. What advantage the modern blessed possibility of such mediatorial function brings to our hungry multitudes; and how the miraculous draught of fishes, which living St. Peter discerns, and often dextrously catches—“the shoals of them like shining continents” (said Carlyle to me, only yesterday)—are by such apostolic succession miraculously diminished, instead of multiplied; and, instead of baskets full of fragments taken up from the ground, baskets full of whole fish laid down on it, lest perchance any hungry person should cheaply eat of the same,—here is a pleasant little account for you, by my good and simple clergyman’s wife. It would have been better still, if I had not been forced to warn her that I wanted it for *Fors*, which of course took the sparkle out of her directly.

4. Here is one little naughty bit of private preface, which really must go with the rest. “I have written my little letter about the fish trade, and L. says it is all right. I am afraid you won’t think there is anything in it worth putting in *Fors*, as I really know very little about it, and

absolutely nothing that every one else does not know, except ladies, who generally never trouble about anything, but scold their cooks, and abuse the fishmongers—when they cannot pay the weekly bills easily.” (After this we are quite proper.)

“The poor fishermen who toil all through these bitter nights, and the retail dealer who carries heavy baskets, or drags a truck so many weary miles along the roads, get but a poor living out of their labour; but what are called ‘fish salesmen,’ who by reason of their command of capital keep entire command of the London markets, are making enormous fortunes.

“When you ask the fishermen why they do not manage better for themselves at the present demand for fish, they explain how helpless they are in the hands of what they call ‘the big men.’ Some fishermen at Aldborough, who have a boat of their own, told my brother that one season, when the sea seemed full of herrings, they saw in the newspapers how dear they were in London, and resolved to make a venture on their own account; so they spent all their available money in the purchase of a quantity of the right sort of baskets, and, going out to sea, filled them all,—putting the usual five hundred lovely fresh fish in each,—sent them straight up to London by train, to the charge of a salesman they knew of, begging him to send them into the market and do the best he could for them. But he was very angry with the fishermen; and wrote them word that the market was quite sufficiently stocked; that if more fish were sent in, *the prices would go down*; that he should not allow their fish to be sold at all; and, if they made a fuss about it, he would not send their baskets back, and would make them pay the carriage. As it was, he returned them, after a time; but the poor men never received one farthing for their thousands of nice fish, and only got a scolding for having dared to try and do without the agents who buy the fish from the boats at whatever price they choose to settle amongst themselves.

“When we were at Yarmouth this autumn, the enormous abundance of herrings on the fish quay was perfectly wonderful; it must be (I should think) two hundred yards long, and is capable of accommodating the unloading of a perfect fleet of boats. The ‘swills,’ as they call the baskets, each containing five hundred fish, were side by side, touching each other, all over this immense space, and men were shovelling salt about, with spades, over heaps of fish, previous to packing at once in boxes. I said, ‘How surprised our poor people would be to see such a sight, after constantly being obliged to pay three-halfpence for every herring they buy.’ An old fisherman answered me, saying, ‘No one need pay that, ma’am, if we could get the fish to them; we could have plenty more boats, and plenty more fish, if we could have them taken where the poor people could get them.’ We brought home a hundred dried herrings, for which we paid ten shillings; when we asked if we might buy some lovely mackerel on the Fish Quay, they said (the fishermen) that they were not allowed to sell them there, except all at once. Since then, I have read an account of a Royal Commission having been

investigating the subject of the fishery for some time past, and the result of its inquiries seems to prove that it is inexhaustible, and that in the North Sea it is always harvest-time.*

“When I told our fishmonger all about it, he said I was quite right about the ‘big men’ in London, and added, ‘They will not let us have the fish under their own prices; and if it is so plentiful that they cannot sell it all at that, they have it thrown away, or carted off for manure; sometimes sunk in the river. If we could only get it here, my trade would be twice what it is, for, except sprats, the poor can seldom buy fish now.’¹

“I asked him if the new Columbia Market² was of no use in making things easier, but he said, ‘No’; that these salesmen had got that into their hands also; and were so rich that they would keep any number of markets in their own hands. A few hundred pounds sacrificed any day to keep up the prices they think well worth their while.”

* Not quite so, gentlemen of the Royal Commission. Harvests, no less than sales, and fishermen no less than salesmen, need regulation by just human law. Here is a piece of news, for instance, from Glasgow, concerning Loch Fyne:—“Owing to the permission to fish for herring by trawling, which not only scrapes up the spawn from the bottom, but catches great quantities of the fry, which are useless for market, and only fit for manure, it is a fact that, whereas Loch Fyne used to be celebrated for containing the finest herrings to be caught anywhere, and thousands and tens of thousands of boxes used to be exported from Inverary, there are not now enough caught there to *enable them to export a single box*, and the quantity caught lower down the loch, near its mouth (and every year the herring are being driven farther and farther down) is not a tithe of what it used to be. Such a thing as a Loch Fyne herring (of the old size and quality) cannot be had now in Glasgow for any money, and this is only a type of the destruction which trawling, and too short close-time, are causing to all the west-coast fishing. Whiting Bay, Arran, has been rid of its whiting by trawling on the spawning coast opposite. The cupidity of careless fishers, unchecked by beneficial law, is here also ‘killing the goose that lays the golden eggs,’ and herring of any kind are *very scarce and very bad* in Glasgow, at a penny and sometimes twopence each. Professor Huxley gave his sanction to trawling, in a Government Commission, I am told, some years ago,³ and it has been allowed ever since. I will tell you something similar about the seal-fishing off New-foundland, another time.”

¹ [For a later reference to this passage, see Letter 88, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 383).]

² [In Bethnal Green; erected by the Baroness Burdett-Coutts at a cost of £200,000. “As a place of business in the way designed by its noble founder, Columbia Market from the very first has proved a comparative failure. . . . In April 1877 it was reopened as a meat market” (Cassell’s *Old and New London*, vol. v. p. 506).]

³ [Huxley (who afterwards in 1881 succeeded Frank Buckland as Inspector of Fisheries) “had been a member from 1863–65 of the Commission which had conducted an elaborate investigation into the fisheries of the United Kingdom, and had taken a large share in the preparation of the Report. This protracted investigation had convinced Huxley that the supply of fish in the deep sea was practically inexhaustible. . . . He was not, however, equally certain that particular

5. What do you think of that, by way of Free-trade?—my British-never-never-never-will-be-slaves,—hey? Freetrade; and the Divine Law of Supply and Demand; and the Sacred Necessity of Competition, and what not;—and here’s a meek little English housewife who can’t get leave, on her bended knees, from Sultan Costermonger, to eat a fresh herring at Yarmouth! and must pay three-halfpence apiece, for his leave to eat them anywhere;—and you, you simpletons—Fishermen, indeed!—Cod’s heads and shoulders, say rather,—meekly receiving back your empty baskets; your miracle of loaves and fishes executed for you by the Costermongering Father of the Faithful, in that thimblorig manner!

6. “But haven’t you yourself been hard against competition, till now? and haven’t *you* always wanted to regulate prices?”¹

Yes, my good SS. Peter and Andrew!—very certainly I want to regulate prices; and very certainly I will, as to such things as I sell, or have the selling of. I should like to hear of anybody’s getting this letter for less than tenpence!—and if you will send *me* some fish to sell for you, perhaps I may even resolve that they shall be sold at two-pence each, or else made manure of,—like these very costermongers; but the twopence shall go into your pockets—not mine; which you will find a very pleasant and complete difference in principle between his Grace the Costermonger and me; and, secondly, if I raise the price of a herring to twopence, it will be because I know that people have been in some way misusing them, or wasting them; and need to get fewer for a time; or will eat twopenny herrings at fashionable tables (when they wouldn’t touch halfpenny

areas of sea shore might not be exhausted. . . . His reports for 1882 and 1883, in which he gave elaborate accounts of the results of legislation on the Tyne and on the Severn, show that he keenly appreciated the necessity of regulating the Salmon Fisheries”: Sir Spencer Walpole in Leonard Huxley’s *Life and Letters of Huxley*, vol. ii. pp. 294–295 (1903 edition).]

¹ [See, for instance, on competition, *Unto this Last*, § 54 (Vol. XVII. p. 75); and on the regulation of prices, *Time and Tide*, § 80 (*ibid.* p. 386): on the latter point, compare Letter 58, § 17 (below, p. 433).]

ones), and so give the servants no reason to turn up their noses at them.* I may have twenty such good reasons for fixing the price of your fish; but not one of them will be his Grace the Costermonger's. All that I want you to see is, not only the possibility of regulating prices, but the fact that they *are* now regulated, and regulated by rascals, while all the world is bleating out its folly about Supply and Demand.

“Still, even in your way, you would be breaking the laws of Florence, anyhow, and buying to sell again?” Pardon me: I should no more buy your fish than a butcher's boy buys his master's mutton. I should simply carry your fish for you where I knew it was wanted; being as utterly your servant in the matter as if I were one of your own lads sent dripping up to the town with basket on back. And I should be paid, as your servant, so much wages (not *commission*, observe); making bargains far away for you, and many another Saunders Mucklebackit, just as your wife makes them, up the hill at Monkbarns; and no more buying the fish, to shell again, than she.¹

7. “Well, but where could we get anybody to do this?”

Have you no sons then?—or, among them, none whom you can take from the mercy of the sea, and teach to serve you mercifully on the land?

It is not that way, however, that the thing will be done. It must be done for you by gentlemen. They may stagger on perhaps a year or two more in their vain ways; but the day *must* come when your poor little honest puppy, whom his people have been wanting to dress up in a surplice, and call, “The to be Feared,” that he might have pay enough, by tithe or tax, to marry a pretty girl, and live in a parsonage,²—some poor little honest wretch of a

* In my aunt's younger days, at Perth, the servants used regularly to make bargain that they should not be forced to dine on salmon more than so many times a week.

¹ [*The Antiquary*, ch. xi.]

² [Compare Letter 40, § 14 (below, p. 76).]

puppy, I say, will eventually get it into his glossy head that he would be incomparably more reverend to mortals, and acceptable to St. Peter and all Saints, as a true monger of sweet fish, than a false fisher for rotten souls; and that his wife would be incomparably more “lady-like”—not to say Madonna-like—marching beside him in purple stockings and sabots—or even frankly barefoot—with her creel full of caller herring on her back, than in administering any quantity of Ecclesiastical scholarship to her Sunday-schools.¹

8. “How dreadful—how atrocious!”—thinks the tender clerical lover. “My wife walk with a fish-basket on her back!”²

Yes, you young scamp, yours. You were going to lie to the Holy Ghost, then, were you, only that she might wear satin slippers and be called a “lady”? Suppose, instead of fish, I were to ask her and you to carry coals. Have you ever read your Bible carefully enough to wonder where Christ got them from, to make His fire (when He was so particular about St. Peter’s dinner, and St. John’s³)? Or if I asked you to be hewers of wood, and drawers of water;—would that also seem intolerable to you? My poor clerical friends, God was never more in the burning bush of Sinai than He would be in every crackling faggot (cut with your own hands) that you warmed a poor hearth with: nor did that woman of Samaria ever give Him to drink more surely than you may, from every stream and well in this your land, that you can keep pure.

9. *20th Dec.*—To hew wood—to draw water;—you think these base businesses, do you? and that you are noble, as well as sanctified, in binding faggot-burdens on poor men’s backs, which you will not touch with your own fingers;⁴—

¹ [For other new duties for the clergy, see *Time and Tide*, § 106 (Vol. XVII. p. 404).]

² [Compare Letter 93, § 9 (Vol. XXIX. p. 475).]

³ [John xxi. 9. The other Bible references in § 8 are Joshua ix. 21; Exodus iii. 2, xix. 18; and John iv. 7.]

⁴ [See Matthew xxiii. 4.]

and in preaching the efficacy of baptism inside the church,¹ by yonder stream (under the first bridge of the Seven Bridges Road here at Oxford), while the sweet waters of it are choked with dust and dung, within ten fathoms from your font;—and in giving benediction with two fingers and your thumb, of a superfine quality, to the Marquis of B.² Honester benediction, and more efficacious, can be had cheaper, gentlemen, in the existing market. Under my own system of regulating prices, I gave an Irishwoman twopence yesterday for two oranges, of which fruit—under pressure of competition—she was ready to supply me with three for a penny. “The Lord Almighty take you to eternal glory!” said she.

You lawyers, also,—distributors, by your own account, of the quite supreme blessing of Justice,—you are not so busily eloquent in her cause but that some of your sweet voices might be spared to Billingsgate, though the river air might take the curl out of your wigs, and so diminish that æsthetic claim, which, as aforesaid,³ you still hold on existence. But you will bring yourselves to an end soon,—wigs and all,—unless you think better of it.

10. I will dismiss at once, in this letter, the question of regulation of prices, and return to it no more, except in setting down detailed law.

Any rational group of persons, large or small, living in war or peace, will have its commissariat;—its officers for provision of food. Famine in a fleet, or an army, may sometimes be inevitable; but in the event of *national* famine, the officers of the commissariat should be starved the first. God has given to man corn, wine, cheese, and honey, all preservable for a number of years;—filled His seas with inexhaustible salt, and incalculable fish; filled the woods with beasts, the winds with birds, and the fields with fruit. Under these circumstances, the stupid human brute stands

¹ [The new church of St. Frideswide, opened in 1872.]

² [See Letter 18, § 1 (Vol. XXVII. p. 304).]

³ [See Letter 1, § 6 (Vol. XXVII. p. 17).]

talking metaphysics, and expects to be fed by the law of Supply and Demand. I do not say that I shall always succeed in regulating prices, or quantities, absolutely to my mind; but in the event of any scarcity of provision, rich tables shall be served like the poorest, and—we will see.

11. The price of every other article will be founded on the price of food. The price of what it takes a day to produce, will be a day's maintenance; of what it takes a day to week to produce, a week's maintenance,—such maintenance being calculated according to the requirements of the occupation, and always with a proportional surplus for saving.

“How am I to know exactly what a day's maintenance is?” I don't want to know exactly. I don't know exactly how much dinner I ought to eat; but, on the whole, I eat enough, and not too much. And I shall not know “exactly” how much a painter ought to have for a picture. It may be a pound or two under the mark—a pound or two over. On the average it will be right,—that is to say, his decent keep* during the number of days' work that are properly accounted for in the production.

“How am I to hinder people from giving more if they like?”

* As for instance, and in farther illustration of the use of herrings, here is some account of the maintenance of young painters and lawyers in Edinburgh, sixty years since, sent me by the Third Fors; and good Dr. Brown, in an admirable sketch of the life of an admirable Scottish artist, says: “Raeburn (Sir Henry) was left an orphan at six, and was educated in Heriot's Hospital. At fifteen he was apprenticed to a goldsmith; but after his time was out, set himself entirely to portrait painting. About this time he became acquainted with the famous cynic, lawyer, and wit, John Clerk, afterwards Lord Eldin,¹ then a young advocate. Both were poor. Young Clerk asked Raeburn to dine at his lodgings. Coming in, he found the landlady laying the cloth, and setting down two dishes, one containing three herrings, and the other three potatoes. ‘Is this a’?’ said John. ‘Ay, it's a’.’ ‘A’! didna I tell ye, woman, that a gentleman is to dine wi' me, and that ye were to get six herrin' and six potatoes?’ ”²

¹ [Hitherto misprinted “Eldon.” John Clerk (1757-1832), Lord Eldin, was a Lord of Session (1823-1828).]

² [Compressed from p. 2 of Dr. John Brown's notice of the artist prefixed to *Portraits by Sir Henry Raeburn, Photographed by Thomas Annan, with Bibliographical Sketches*, Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot. There is no date on the title-page, but Dr. Brown's essay is dated December 6, 1873.]

People whom I catch doing as they like will generally have to leave the estate.

“But how is it to be decided to which of two purchasers, each willing to give its price, and more, anything is to belong?”

In various ways, according to the nature of the thing sold, and circumstances of sale. Sometimes by priority; sometimes by privilege; sometimes by lot; and sometimes by auction, at which whatever excess of price, above its recorded value, the article brings, shall go to the national treasury. So that nobody will ever buy anything to make a profit on it.

12. 11th January, 1874.—Thinking I should be the better of a look at the sea, I have come down to an old watering-place,¹ where one used to be able to get into a decent little inn, and possess one’s self of a parlour with a bow window looking out on the beach, a pretty carpet, and a print or two of revenue cutters, and the Battle of the Nile. One could have a chop and some good cheese for dinner; fresh cream and cresses for breakfast, and a plate of shrimps.

I find myself in the Umfraville Hotel, a quarter of a mile long by a furlong deep; in a ghastly room, five-and-twenty feet square, and eighteen high,—that is to say, just four times as big as I want, and which I can no more light with my candles in the evening than I could the Peak cavern.² A gas apparatus in the middle of it serves me to knock my head against, but I take good care not to light it, or I should soon be stopped from my evening’s work by a headache, and be unfit for my morning’s business besides. The carpet is threadbare, and has the look of having been spat upon all over. There is only one window, of four huge panes of glass, through which one commands a view of a plaster balcony, some ornamental iron railings, an esplanade,—and,—well, I suppose,—in the

¹ [Margate.]

² [Familiar to Ruskin from his boyhood: see Vol. I. p. 412 and *Præterita*, i. § 83.]

distance, that is really the sea, where it used to be. I am ashamed to ask for shrimps,—not that I suppose I could get any if I did. There's no cream, “because, except in the season, we could only take so small a quantity, sir.” The bread's stale, because it's Sunday; and the cheese, last night, was of the cheapest tallow sort. The bill will be at least three times my old bill;—I shall get no thanks from anybody for paying it;—and this is what the modern British public thinks is “living in style.” But the most comic part of all the improved arrangements is that I can only have codlings for dinner, because all the cod goes to London, and none of the large fishing-boats dare sell a fish, here.

13. And now but a word or two more, final, as to the fixed price of this book.

A sensible and worthy tradesman writes to me in very earnest terms of expostulation, blaming me for putting the said book out of the reach of most of the persons it is meant for, and asking me how I can expect, for instance, the working men round him (in Lancashire),—who have been in the habit of strictly ascertaining that they have value for their money,—to buy, for tenpence, what they know might be given them for twopence-halfpenny.

14. Answer first:

My book is meant for no one who cannot reach it. If a man with all the ingenuity of Lancashire in his brains, and breed of Lancashire in his body; with all the steam and coal power in Lancashire to back his ingenuity and muscle; all the press of literary England vomiting the most valuable information at his feet; with all the tenderness of charitable England aiding him in his efforts, and ministering to his needs; with all the liberality of republican Europe rejoicing in his dignities as a man and a brother; and with all the science of enlightened Europe directing his opinions on the subject of the materials of the Sun, and the origin of his species; if, I say, a man so circumstanced, assisted, and informed, living besides in the richest country of the

globe, and, from his youth upwards, having been in the habit of “seeing that he had value for his money,” cannot, as the upshot and net result of all, now afford to pay me tenpence a month—or an annual half-sovereign, for my literary labour,—in Heaven’s name, let him buy the best reading he can for twopence-halfpenny. For that sum, I clearly perceive he can at once provide himself with two penny illustrated newspapers and one halfpenny one,—full of art, sentiment, and the Tichborne trial.¹ He can buy a quarter of the dramatic works of Shakespeare, or a whole novel of Sir Walter Scott’s. Good value for his money, he thinks;—reads one of them through, and in all probability loses some five years of the eyesight of his old age; which he does not, with all his Lancashire ingenuity, reckon as part of the price of his cheap book. But how has he read? There is an act of *Midsummer Night’s Dream* printed in a page. Steadily and dutifully, as a student should, he reads his page. The lines slip past his eyes, and mind, like sand in an hour-glass; he has some dim idea at the end of the act that he has been reading about Fairies, and Flowers, and Asses. Does he know what a Fairy is? Certainly not. Does he know what a flower is? He has perhaps never seen one wild, or happy, in his life. Does he even know—quite distinctly, inside and out—what an Ass is?

15. But, answer second. Whether my Lancashire friends need any aid to their discernment of what is good or bad in literature, I do not know;—but I mean to give them the best help I can; and, therefore, not to allow them to have for twopence what I know to be worth tenpence. For here is another law of Florence, still concernng fish, which is transferable at once to literature.

“Eel of the lake shall be sold for three soldi a pound; and eel of the common sort for a soldo and a half.”

And eel of a bad sort was not allowed to be sold at all.

¹ [For other references to the Tichborne trial, see Letters 44, § 17 (p. 143), and 94, § 2 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 480); also Vol. XXVI. p. 110.]

“Eel of the lake,” I presume, was that of the Lake of Bolsena; Pope Martin IV. died of eating too many,¹ in spite of their high price. You observe I do not reckon my *Fors* Eel to be of Bolsena; I put it at the modest price of a soldo a pound, or English tenpence. One cannot be precise in such estimates;—one can only obtain rude approximations. Suppose, for instance, you read the *Times* newspaper for a week, from end to end; your aggregate of resultant useful information will certainly not be more than you may get out of a single number of *Fors*. But your *Times* for the week will cost you eighteenpence.

You borrow the *Times*? Borrow this then; till the days come when English people cease to think they can live by lending, or learn by borrowing.

16. I finish with copy of a bit of a private letter to the editor of an honestly managed country newspaper, who asked me to send him *Fors*.

“I find it—on examining the subject for these last three years very closely—necessary to defy the entire principle of advertisement; and to make no concession of any kind whatsoever to the public press—even in the minutest particular. And this year I cease sending *Fors* to *any* paper whatsoever. It *must* be bought by every one who has it, editor or private person.

“If there are ten people in——willing to subscribe a penny each for it, you can see it in turn; by no other means can I let it be seen. From friend to friend, or foe to foe, it must make its own way, or stand still, abiding its time.”

¹ [Compare *Val d' Arno*, § 261 (Vol. XXIII. p. 153).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

17. THE following bit of a private letter to a good girl belonging to the upper classes may be generally useful; so I asked her to copy it for *Fors.*

“January, 1874.

“Now mind you dress always charmingly; it is the first duty of a girl to be charming, and she cannot be charming if she is not charmingly dressed.

“And it is quite the first of firsts in the duties of girls in high position, nowadays, to set an example of beautiful dress without extravagance,—that is to say, without waste, or unnecessary splendour.

“On great occasions they may be a blaze of jewels, if they like, and can; but only when they are part of a great show or ceremony. In their daily life, and ordinary social relations, they ought *at present* to dress with marked simplicity, to put down the curses of luxury and waste which are consuming England.

“Women usually apologize to themselves for their pride and vanity, by saying, ‘It is good for trade.’

“Now you may soon convince yourself, and everybody about you, of the monstrous folly of this, by a very simple piece of definite action.

“Wear, yourself, becoming, pleasantly varied, but simple dress, of the best possible material.

“What you think necessary to buy (beyond this) ‘for the good of trade,’ buy, and immediately *burn*.

“Even your dullest friends will see the folly of that proceeding. You can then explain to them that by wearing what they don’t want (instead of burning it) for the good of trade, they are merely adding insolence and vulgarity to absurdity.”¹

18. I am very grateful to the writer of the following letters for his permission to print the portions of them bearing on our work.² The first was written several years ago.

“Now, my dear friend, I don’t know why I should intrude what I now want to say about my little farm, which you disloyally dare to call a kingdom, but that I know you *do* feel an interest in such things; whereas I find not one in a hundred

¹ [Compare *A Joy for Ever*, § 48 (Vol. XVI. p. 48 and *n.*.)]

² [The letters were from Ruskin’s friend, Charles H. Woodd, and refer to Oughtershaw in Upper Wharfedale—“a bit of God’s garden,” writes Miss Woodd, “still untouched by smoke or railways, though last year (1902) a new railway was begun, to run from Skipton to within 15 miles of us.”]

does care a jot for the moral influence and responsibilities of landowners, or for those who live out of it, and, by the sweat of the brow for them and their's,¹ own luxuries which pamper them, whilst too often their tenants starve, and the children die of want and fever.

"One of the most awful things I almost ever heard was from the lips of a clergyman, near B——, when asked what became of the children, by day, of those mothers employed in mills. He said, 'Oh, I take care of them; they are brought to me, and I lay them in the churchyard.' Poor lambs! What a flock!

"But now for my little kingdom,—the *royalties* of which, by the way, still go to the Duke of Devonshire, as lord of the minerals under the earth.

"It had for many years been a growing dream and desire of mine (whether right or wrong I do not say) to possess a piece of God's earth, be it only a rock or a few acres of land, with as few people to live out of and upon it. Well, my good father had an estate about four miles across, embracing the whole upper streams and head of ——dale, some twelve hundred feet above the sea, and lifted thus far away above the din and smoke of men, surrounded by higher hills, the grassy slopes of Ingleborough and Carn Fell. It was a waste moorland, with a few sheep farms on it, undivided, held in common,—a few small enclosures of grass and flowers, taken off at the time of the Danes, retaining Danish names and farm usages,—a few tenements, built by that great and noble Lady Anne Clifford, two hundred years ago; in which dwelt honest, sturdy, great-hearted English men and women, as I think this land knows.

"Well, this land my father made over by deed of gift to me, reserving to himself the rents for life, but granting to me full liberty to 'improve' and lay out what I pleased; charged also with the maintenance of a schoolmaster for the little school-house I built in memory of my late wife, who loved the place and people. With this arrangement I was well pleased, and at once began to enclose and drain, and, on Adam Smith principle, make two blades of grass grow where one grew before. This has gone on for some years, affording labour to the few folks there, and some of their neighbours. Of the prejudices of the old farmers, the less said the better; and as to the prospective increased value of rental, I may look, at least, for my five per cent, may I not? I am well repaid, at present, by the delight gained to me in wandering over this little Arcady, where I fancy at times I still hear the strains of the pipe of the shepherd Lord Clifford of Cumberland,² blending with the crow of the moor-fowl, the song of the lark, and cry of the curlew, the bleating of sheep, and heaving and dying fall of the many waters. To think of all this, and yet men prefer the din of war or commercial strife! It is so pleasant a thing to know all the inhabitants, and all their little joys and woes,—like one of your bishops; and to be able to apportion them their work. Labour, there, is not accounted degrading work; even stone-breaking for the roads is not *pauper's* work, and a test of starvation, but taken gladly by tenant farmers to occupy spare time; for I at once set to work to make roads, rude bridges, plantations of fir-trees, and of oak and birch, which once flourished there, as the name signifies.

"I am now laying out some thousands of pounds in draining and liming, and *killing out* the Alpine flowers, which you tell me* is not wrong to do, as God has reserved other gardens for them, though I must say not one dies without a pang to me; yet I see there springs up the fresh grass, the daisy, the primrose—the

* I don't remember telling you anything of the sort. I should tell you another story now, my dear friend.

¹ [This passage has hitherto been printed unintelligibly as "and by the sweat of the brow for them and their own luxuries . . ." The MS. is not available; but the alteration now adopted makes sense.]

² [See Letter 12, § 17, and the letter there referred to (Vol. XXVII. p. 210).]

life of growing men and women, the source of labour and of happiness; God be thanked if one does even a little to attain that for one's fellows, either for this world or the next!

"How I wish you could see them on our one day's feast and holiday, when all—as many as will come from all the country round—are regaled with a hearty Yorkshire tea at the *Hall*, as they will call a rough mullioned-windowed house I built upon a rock rising from the river's edge. The children have their games, and then all join in a missionary meeting, to hear something of their fellowcreatures who live in other lands; the little ones gather their pennies to support and educate a little Indian school child;* this not only for sentiment, but to teach a care for others near home and far off.

"The place is five miles from church, and, happily, as far from a public-house, though still, I grieve to say, drink is the one failing of these good people, mostly arising from the want of full occupation.

"You speak of *mining* as servile work: why so? Hugh Miller was a quarryman, and I know an old man who has wrought coal for me in a narrow seam, lying on his side to work, who has told me that in winter time he had rather work thus than sit over his fireside; † he is quiet and undisturbed, earns his bread, and is a man not without reflection. Then there is the smith, an artist in his way, and loves *his* work too; and as to the quarrymen and masons, they are some of the merriest fellows I know: they come five or six miles to work, *knitting* stockings as they walk along.

"I must just allude to one social feature which is pleasant,—that is, the free intercourse, without familiarity, or loss of respect for master and man. The farmer or small landowner sits at the same table at meals with the servants, yet the class position of yeoman or labourer is fully maintained, and due respect shown to the superior, and almost royal worship to the lord of the soil, if he is in anywise a good landlord. Now, is England quite beyond all hope, when such things exist here, in this nineteenth century of machine-made life? I know not why, I say again, I should inflict all this about *self* upon you, except that I have a hobby, and I love it, and so fancy others must do so too.

"Forgive me this, and believe me always,

"Yours affectionately."

"5th January, 1874.

19. "MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I have just come from an old Tudor house in Leicestershire, which tells of happier days in some ways than our own. It was once the Grange of St. Mary's Abbey, where rent and service were paid and done *in kind*. When there, I wished I could have gone a few miles with you to St. Bernard's Monastery¹ in Charnwood Forest; there you would see what somewhat resembles your St. George's land, only without the family and domestic features—

* Very fine; but have all the children in Sheffield and Leeds had their pennyworth of gospel, first?²

† All I can say is, tastes differ; but I have not myself tried the degree of comfort which may be attained in winter by lying on one's side in a coal-seam, and cannot therefore feel confidence in offering an opinion.

¹ [A mile east of Whitwick; the Abbey of Mount St. Bernard, the first Abbey completed by the Roman Catholics in England since the Reformation. A Cistercian monastery, founded in 1835, but removed to the present site in 1839; the buildings designed by Pugin; opened in 1844. The Abbey is occupied by about sixty monks of the Cistercian order, founded by the Englishman, Stephen Harding. They observe perpetual silence, employ themselves in husbandry, and have redeemed the neighbouring waste land by their industry.]

² [On the subject of home and foreign missions, compare Letter 60, § 8 (p. 468).]

certainly most essential to the happiness of a people.* But there you may see rich well-kept fields and gardens, where thirty years ago was nothing but wild moorland and granite tors on the hill ridges.

"The Cross of Calvary rises now on the highest rock; below are gardens and fields, all under the care and labour (happy labour it seems) of the Silent Brothers,† and a reformatory for boys. There is still much waste land adjoining. The spot is central, healthy, and as yet unoccupied: it really seems to offer itself to you. There, too, is space, pure air and water, and quarries of slate and granite, etc., for the less skilled labour.

"Well, you ask¹ if the dalesmen of Yorkshire rise to a vivid state of contented life and love of the pretty things of heaven and earth. They have a rough outside, at times hard to penetrate; but when you do, there is a warm heart, but not much culture, although a keen value of manly education, and their duty to God and man. Apart from the vanities of the so-called 'higher education,' their calling is mostly out of doors, in company with sheep and cattle; the philosophy of their minds often worthy of the Shepherd Lord,—not much sight for the beauties

* Very much so indeed, my good friend; and yet, the plague of it is, one never can get people to do anything that is wise or generous, unless they go and make monks of themselves. I believe this St. George's land of mine will really be the first place where it has been attempted to get married people to live in any charitable and human way, and graft apples where they may eat them, without getting driven out of their Paradise.

† There, again! why, in the name of all that's natural, can't decent men and women use their tongues, on occasion, for what God made them for,—talking in a civil way; but must either go and make dumb beasts of themselves, or else (far worse) let out their tongues for hire, and live by vomiting novels and reviews!

¹ [The following is the letter from Ruskin, to which his correspondent is here replying:—

"Dec. 29, 1873.

"MY DEAR WOodd,—I am very grateful for your letter. I have just put aside for reference some former ones, very interesting and valuable, about your people. There is certainly no need for any measures of mine when proprietors like yourself are taking due charge of their people, and—so that the land be made the best of, that there is a 'return,' is all the better—my work being only to deal with land that can give no return except in the future.

"May I ask—for it is a matter of grave importance to me—how far *you* are satisfied with the state of your hill people. Satisfying themselves, it ought not to be interfered with, unless with extreme caution; but have you any idea of leading them into a more vivid and refined state of equally contented life? or of removing causes of unnecessary hardship? It seems to me you have exactly the conditions under your control which will enable you to ascertain and illustrate the duty of English landlords. You have a peaceful tenantry, who will not explode at a touch into insurrection; you have space, pure earth and water, and—the Knowledge of divine law, which is *my* notion of 'Capital.' What are you going to do? or to keep untouched?

"Ever affectionately yours,

"J. RUSKIN.

"Thanks for the lovely story of your little boy. The pretty things? What? How far might the hill peasant's child recognize them also?"
The "lovely story" was of Mr. Woodd's son, who, when taken out of a pond, said to his mother, "Am I drowned? I don't want to leave you and all the pretty things yet."]

of Nature beyond its *uses*. I CAN say their tastes are not *law* nor *degraded* by literature of the daily press, etc. I have known them for twenty years, have stood for hours beside them at work, building or draining, and I never heard one foul or coarse word. In sickness, both man and woman are devoted. They have, too, a reverence for social order and 'Divine Law,'—familiar without familiarity. This even pervades their own class or sub-classes;—for instance, although farmers and their families, and work-people and servants, all sit at the same table, it is a rare thing for a labourer to presume to ask in a marriage a farmer's daughter. Their respect to landlords is equally shown. As a specimen of their politics, I may instance this;—to a man at the county election they voted for Stuart Wortley,¹ 'because he bore a well-known Yorkshire name, and had the blood of a gentleman.'

"As to *hardships*, I see none beyond those incident to their calling, in snowstorms, etc. You never see a child unshod or ill-clad. Very rarely do they allow a relative to receive aid from the parish.

"I tried a reading-club for winter evenings, but found they liked their own fireside better. Happily, there is, in my part, no public-house within six miles; still I must say drink is the vice of some. In winter they have much leisure time, in which there is a good deal of card-playing. Still some like reading; and we have among them now a fair lot of books, mostly from the Pure Literature Society. They are proud and independent, and, as you say, must be dealt with cautiously. Everywhere I see much might be done. Yet on the whole, when compared with the town life of men, one sees little to amend. There is a pleasant and curious combination of work. Mostly all workmen,—builders (*i.e.*, wallers), carpenters, smiths, etc.,—work a little farm as well as follow their own craft; this gives wholesome occupation as well as independence, and almost realizes Sir T. More's Utopian plan. There is contented life of men, women, and children,—happy in their work and joyful in prospect: what could one desire further, if each be full according to his capacity and refinement?

"You ask what I purpose to do further, or leave untouched. I desire to leave untouched some 3000 acres of moorland needed for their sheep, serviceable for peat fuel, freedom of air and mind and body, and the growth of all the lovely things of moss and heather. Wherever land is capable of improvement, I hold it is a grave responsibility until it is done. You must come and look for yourself some day.

"I enclose a cheque for ten guineas for St. George's Fund, with my best wishes for this new year.

"Ever yours affectionately."

I have questioned one or two minor points in my friend's letters; but on the whole, they simply describe a piece of St. George's old England, still mercifully left,—and such as I hope to make even a few pieces more, again; conquering them out of the Devil's new England.

¹ [That is, at the election for the West Riding, when the Hon. J. Stuart Wortley won the seat for the Conservatives. In 1846 he succeeded his father as Lord Wharnccliffe, and the Liberals then regained the seat.]

LETTER 39¹

THE CART GOES BETTER, SO²

1. ON a foggy forenoon, two or three days ago, I wanted to make my way quickly from Hengler's Circus to Drury Lane Theatre, without losing time which might be philosophically employed; and therefore afoot, for in a cab I never can think of anything but how the driver is to get past whatever is in front of him.

On foot, then, I proceeded, and accordingly by a somewhat complex diagonal line, to be struck, as the stars might guide me, between Regent Circus and Covent Garden. I have never been able, by the way, to make any coachman understand that such diagonals were not always profitable. Coachmen, as far as I know them, always possess just enough geometry to feel that the hypotenuse is shorter than the two sides, but I never yet could get one to see that an hypotenuse constructed of cross streets in the manner of the line A C, had no advantage, in the matter of distance to be traversed, over the simple thoroughfares A B, B C, while it involved the loss of the momentum of the carriage, and a fresh start for the cattle, at seventeen corners instead of one, not to mention the probability of a block at half-a-dozen of them, none the less frequent since underground railways, and more difficult to get out of, in consequence of the increasing discourtesy and diminishing patience of all human creatures.

2. Now here is just one of the pieces of practical

¹ [As a summary of the contents of this Letter Ruskin wrote in his copy, "Comparison between Theatric true life and practical false."]

² [For the bearing of the title, see § 8.]

geometry and dynamics which a modern schoolmaster, exercising his pupils on the positions of letters in the word Chillianwallah,¹ would wholly despise. Whereas, in St. George's schools, it shall be very early learned, on a square and diagonal of actual road, with actual loaded wheel-barrow—first one-wheeled, and pushed; and secondly, two-wheeled, and pulled. And similarly, every bit of science the children learn shall be directly applied by them, and the use of it felt, which involves the truth of it being known in the best possible way, and without any debating thereof. And what they cannot apply they shall not be troubled to know. I am not the least desirous



Fig. 1

that they should know so much even of the sun as that it stands still (if it does). They may remain, for anything I care, under the most simple conviction that it gets up every morning and goes to bed every night; but they shall assuredly possess the applicable science of the hour it gets up at, and goes to bed at, on any day of the year, because they will have to regulate their own gettings up and goings to bed upon those solar proceedings.²

3. Well, to return to Regent Street. Being afoot, I took the complex diagonal, because by wise regulation of one's time and angle of crossing, one may indeed move on foot in an economically drawn line, provided one does not miss its main direction. As it chanced, I took my line correctly enough; but found so much to look at and think of on the way, that I gained no material advantage. First, I could not help stopping to consider the metaphysical reasons of the extreme gravity and self-abstraction of Archer Street. Then I was delayed a while in Prince's Street,

¹ [See Letter 30, § 9 (Vol. XXVII. p. 558).]

² [This passage was written in January 1874, and in his diary Ruskin notes the grumbling which his persistent early rising caused in his hotel in London. On the next day (January 22) he records a visit to the circus (see § 6 here): "the splendid fellows and girls and horses, so humiliating to me in their own power and virtue."]

Soho, wondering what Prince it had belonged to.¹ Then I got through Gerrard Street into Little Newport Street; and came there to a dead pause, to think why, in these days of division of mechanical labour, there should be so little space for classification of commodities, as to require oranges, celery, butchers' meat, cheap hosiery, soap, and salt fish, to be all sold in the same alley.

4. Some clue to the business was afforded me by the sign of the "Hôtel de l'Union des Peuples" at the corner, "bouillon et bœuf à emporter;" but I could not make out why, in spite of the union of people, the provision merchant at the opposite corner had given up business, and left his house with all its upper windows broken, and its door nailed up. Finally, I was stopped at the corner of Cranbourne Street by a sign over a large shop advising me to buy some "screwed boots and shoes." I am too shy to go in and ask, on such occasions, what screwed boots are, or at least too shy to come out again without buying any, if the people tell me politely, and yet I couldn't get the question what such things might be out of my head, and nearly got run over in consequence, before attaining the Arcadian shelter of Covent Garden. I was but just in time to get my tickets for Jack in the Box, on the day I wanted, and put them carefully in the envelope with those I had been just securing at Hengler's for my fifth visit to Cinderella. For indeed, during the last three weeks, the greater part of my available leisure has been spent between Cinderella and Jack in the Box; with this curious result upon my mind, that the intermediate scenes of Archer Street and Prince's Street, Soho, have become to me merely as one part of the drama, or pantomime, which I happen to have seen last;

¹ [The appearance of Archer Street, Great Windmill Street, is now a good deal changed, as the new Lyric and Apollo theatres abut upon it. Prince's Street, Wardour Street, was "so called from the Military Garden of Henry, Prince of Wales, eldest son of King James I., which stood on part of Prince's Street and Gerard Street." Hence, also, the name "Archer" Street. "Gerrard" (as the street is now called) is a mis-spelling. The whole district was laid out by the Prince as a garden for military exercises; it subsequently came into the possession of Charles Gerard, the first Earl of Macclesfield, who let the ground for building: see Peter Cunningham's *Handbook of London*, 1850, pp. 200, 410.]

or, so far as the difference in the appearance of men and things may compel me to admit some kind of specific distinction, I begin to ask myself, Which is the reality, and which the pantomime? Nay, it appears to me not of much moment which we choose to call Reality. Both are equally real; and the only question is whether the cheerful state of things which the spectators, especially the youngest and wisest, entirely applaud and approve at Hengler's and Drury Lane, must necessarily be interrupted always by the woeful interlude of the outside world.

5. It is a bitter question to me, for I am myself now, hopelessly, a man of the world!—of that woeful outside one, I mean. It is now Sunday; half-past eleven in the morning. Everybody about me is gone to church except the kind cook, who is straining a point of conscience to provide me with dinner. Everybody else is gone to church, to ask to be made angels of, and profess that they despise the world and the flesh, which I find myself always living in (rather, perhaps, living, or endeavouring to live, in too little of the last). And I am left alone with the cat, in the world of sin.

6. But I scarcely feel less an outcast when I come out of the Circus, on week days, into my own world of sorrow. Inside the Circus, there have been wonderful Mr. Edward Cooke, and pretty Mademoiselle Aguzzi, and the three brothers Leonard, like the three brothers in a German story,¹ and grave little Sandy, and bright and graceful Miss Hengler, all doing the most splendid feats of strength, and patience, and skill. There have been dear little Cinderella and her Prince, and all the pretty children beautifully dressed, taught thoroughly how to behave, and how to dance, and how to sit still, and giving everybody delight that looks at them; whereas, the instant I come outside the door, I find all the children about the streets ill-dressed, and ill-taught, and ill-behaved, and nobody cares to look at

¹ [As, for instance, in Grimm's "Three Children of Fortune." See also Ruskin's own story of *The King of the Golden River* (Vol. I. pp. 305 *seq.*), in which the characters are German.]

them. And then, at Drury Lane, there's just everything I want people to have always, got for them, for a little while; and they seem to enjoy them just as I should expect they would. Mushroom Common, with its lovely mushrooms, white and grey, so finely set off by the incognita fairy's scarlet cloak; the golden land of plenty with furrow and sheath; Buttercup Green, with its flock of mechanical sheep, which the whole audience claps because they are of pasteboard, as they do the sheep in Little Red Riding Hood because they are alive; but in either case, must have them on the stage in order to be pleased with them, and never clap when they see the creatures in a field outside. They can't have enough, any more than I can, of the loving duet between Tom Tucker and little Bo Peep: they would make the dark fairy dance all night long in her amber light if they could; and yet contentedly return to what they call a necessary state of things outside, where their corn is reaped by machinery, and the only duets are between steam whistles.¹ Why haven't they a steam whistle to whistle to whistle to them on the stage, instead of Miss Violet Cameron? Why haven't they a steam Jack in the Box to jump for them, instead of Mr. Evans? or a steam doll to dance for them, instead of Miss Kate Vaughan? They still seem to have human ears and eyes, in the Theatre; to know *there*, for an hour or two, that golden light, and song, and human skill and grace, are better than smoke-blackness, and shrieks of iron and fire, and monstrous powers of constrained elements. And then they return to their underground railroad, and say, "This, behold,—this is the right way to move, and live in a real world."

7. Very notable it is also that just as in these two theatrical entertainments—the Church and the Circus,—the imaginative congregations still retain some true notions of the value of human and beautiful things, and don't have steam-preachers nor steam-dancers,—so also they retain some just notion of the truth, in moral things: Little Cinderella,

¹ [Compare Letter 5, § 11 (Vol. XXVII. p. 89).]

for instance, at Hengler's, never thinks of offering her poor fairy Godmother a ticket from the Mendicity Society. She immediately goes and fetches her some dinner. And she makes herself generally useful, and sweeps the doorstep, and dusts the door;—and none of the audience think any the worse of her on that account. They think the worse of her proud sisters who make her do it. But when they leave the Circus, they never think for a moment of making *themselves* useful, like Cinderella. They forthwith play the proud sisters as much as they can; and try to make anybody else, who will, sweep their doorsteps. Also, at Hengler's, nobody advises Cinderella to write novels, instead of doing her washing, by way of bettering herself. The audience, gentle and simple, feel that the only chance she has of pleasing her Godmother, or marrying a prince, is in remaining patiently at her tub, as long as the Fates will have it so, heavy though it be. Again, in all dramatic representation of Little Red Riding Hood, everybody disapproves of the carnivorous propensities of the Wolf. They clearly distinguish there—as clearly as the Fourteenth Psalm, itself—between the class of animal which eats, and the class of animal which is eaten.¹ But once outside the theatre, they declare the whole human race to be universally carnivorous²—and are ready themselves to eat up any quantity of Red Riding Hoods, body and soul, if they can make money by them.

And lastly,—at Hengler's and Drury Lane, see how the whole of the pleasure of life depends on the existence of Princes, Princesses, and Fairies. One never hears of a Republican pantomime; one never thinks Cinderella would be a bit better off if there were no princes. The audience understand that though it is not every good little house-maid who can marry a prince, the world would not be the least pleasanter, for the rest, if there were no princes to marry.

¹ [See Letter 36, § 8 (Vol. XXVII. p. 673).]

² [See below, Letter 42, § 14 (p. 103).]

8. Nevertheless, it being too certain that the sweeping of doorsteps diligently will not in all cases enable a pretty maiden to drive away from said doorsteps, for evermore, in a gilded coach,—one has to consider what may be the next best for her. And next best, or, in the greater number of cases, best altogether, will be that Love, with his felicities, should himself enter over the swept and garnished steps, and abide with her in her own life, such as it is. And since St. Valentine's grace is with us, at this season, I will finish my *Fors*, for this time, by carrying on our little romance of the Broom-maker, to the place in which he unexpectedly finds it. In which romance, while we may perceive the principal lesson intended by the author to be that the delights and prides of affectionate married life are consistent with the humblest station (or may even be more easily found there than in a higher one), we may for ourselves draw some farther conclusions which the good Swiss pastor only in part intended. We may consider in what degree the lightening of the wheels of Hansli's cart, when they drave heavily¹ by the wood of Muri, corresponds to the change of the English highway into Mount Parnassus, for Sir Philip Sidney;² and if the correspondence be not complete, and some deficiency in the divinest power of Love be traceable in the mind of the simple person as compared to that of the gentle one,³ we may farther consider, in due time, how, without help from any fairy Godmother, we may make Cinderella's life gentle to her, as well as simple; and, without taking the peasant's hand from his labour, make his heart leap with joy as pure as a king's.*

* If to any reader, looking back on the history of Europe for the last four centuries, this sentence seems ironical, let him be assured that for the causes which make it seem so, during the last four centuries, the end of kinghood has come.

¹ [Exodus xiv. 25.]

² [See Letter 35, § 4 (Vol. XXVII. p. 652).]

³ [On this aspect of the matter, compare Letter 55, § 5 (below, pp. 373–374).]

9. Well, said Hansli,¹ I'll help you; give me your bag; I'll put it among my brooms, and nobody will see it. Everybody knows *me*. Not a soul will think I've got your shoes underneath there. You've only to tell me where to leave them—or indeed where to stop for you, if you like. You can follow a little way off;—nobody will think we have anything to do with each other.

The young girl made no compliments.*

You are really very good,† said she, with a more serene face. She brought her packet, and Hans hid it so nicely that a cat couldn't have seen it.

Shall I push, or help you to pull? asked the young girl, as if it had been a matter of course that she should also do her part in the work.

As you like best, though you needn't mind; it isn't a pair or two of shoes that will make my cart much heavier. The young girl began by pushing; but that did not last long. Presently she found herself ‡ in front, pulling also by the pole.

It seems to me that the cart goes better so,² said she. As one ought to suppose, she pulled with all her strength; that which nevertheless did not put her out of breath, nor hinder her from relating all she had in her head, or heart.

They got to the top of the hill of Stalden without Hansli's knowing how that had happened: the long alley § seemed to have shortened itself by half.

There, one made one's dispositions; the young girl stopped behind,

* Untranslatable. It means, she made no false pretence of reluctance, and neither politely nor feebly declined what she meant to accept. But the phrase might be used of a person accepting with ungraceful eagerness, or want of sense of obligation. A slight sense of this simplicity is meant by our author to be here included in the expression.

† "Trop bon." It is a little more than "very good," but not at all equivalent to our English "too good."³

‡ "Se trouva." Untranslatable. It is very little more than "was" in front. But that little more,—the slight sense of not knowing quite how she got there,—is necessary to mark the under-current of meaning;⁴ she goes behind the cart first, thinking it more modest; but presently, nevertheless, "finds herself" in front; "the cart goes better, so."

§ There used to be an avenue of tall trees, about a quarter of a mile long, on the Thun road, just at the brow of the descent to the bridge of the Aar, at the lower end of the main street of Berne.

¹ [This narrative is continued from Letter 34, § 10 (Vol. XXVII. p. 635). For the original, see Gothelf's *Gesammelte Werke*, 1857, vol. ix. pp. 356–362.]

² [The title of this Letter.]

³ [In the original, "Wolltest? frug es mit aufgeheitertem Angesicht, das ginge mir viel zu gut."]

⁴ [The undercurrent, however, is not in the German original, which reads, "Anfangs stiez das Mädchen hinten am Karren, doch nicht lange ging's, so war es vorne und zog an der Stange. Es dünke ihm, es schicke sich ihm hier besser, sagte es."]

while Hansli, with her bag and his brooms, entered the town without the least difficulty, where he remitted her packet to the young girl, also without any accident; but they had scarcely time to say a word to each other before the press* of people, cattle, and vehicles separated them. Hansli had to look after his cart, lest it should be knocked to bits. And so ended the acquaintanceship for that day. This vexed Hansli not a little; howbeit he didn't think long about it. We cannot (more's the pity) affirm that the young girl had made an ineffaceable impression upon him,—and all the less, that she was not altogether made for producing ineffaceable impressions. She was a stunted little girl, with a broad face. That which she had of best was a good heart, and an indefatigable ardour for work; but those are things which, externally, are not very remarkable, and many people don't take much notice of them.

Nevertheless, the next Tuesday, when Hansli saw himself † at his cart again, he found it extremely heavy.

I wouldn't have believed, said he to himself, what a difference there is between two pulling, and one.

Will she be there again, I wonder, thought he, as he came near the little wood of Muri. I would take her bag very willingly if she would help me to pull. Also the road is nowhere so ugly as between here and the town.‡

And behold that it precisely happened that the young girl was sitting there upon the same bench, all the same as eight days before; only with the difference that she was not crying.

Have you got anything for me to carry to-day? asked Hansli, who found his cart at once became a great deal lighter at the sight of the young girl.

It is not only for that I have waited, answered she; even if I had had nothing to carry to the town, I should have come, all the same; for eight days ago I wasn't able to thank you; nor to ask if that cost anything.

A fine question! said Hansli. Why, you served me for a second donkey; and yet I never asked how much I owed you for helping me to pull! So, as all that went of itself, the young girl brought her bundle, and Hansli hid it, and she went to put herself at the pole as if she had

*"Cohue." Confused and moving mass. We have no such useful word.¹

†"Se revit." It would not be right to say here "se trouva," because there is no surprise, or discovery, in the doing once again what is done every week. But one may nevertheless contemplate oneself, and the situation, from a new point of view. Hansli "se revit"²—reviewed himself, literally; a very proper operation, every now and then, for everybody.

‡ A slight difference between the Swiss and English peasant is marked here; to the advantage of the former. At least, I imagine an English Hansli would not have known, even in love, whether the road was ugly or pretty.

¹ [In the original, "Fluth."]

² [In the original simply "als Hansli wieder den Karren zog."]

known it all by heart. I had got a little way from home, said she, before it came into my head that I ought to have brought a cord to tie to the cart behind, and that would have gone better; but another time, if I return, I won't forget.

This association for mutual help found itself, then, established, without any longer diplomatic debates, and in the most simple manner. And, that day, it chanced that they were also able to come back together as far as the place where their roads parted; all the same, they were so prudent as not to show themselves together before the gens-d'armes at the town gates.

And now for some time Hansli's mother had been quite enchanted with her son. It seemed to her he was more gay, she said. He whistled and sang, now, all the blessed day; and tricked himself up, so that he could never have done.* Only just the other day he had bought a great-coat of drugget, in which he had nearly the air of a real counsellor. But she could not find any fault with him for all that; he was so good to her that certainly the good God must reward him;—as for herself, she was in no way of doing it, but could do nothing but pray for him. Not that you are to think, said she, that he puts everything into his clothes; he has some money too. If God spares his life, I'll wager that one day he'll come to have a cow:—he has been talking of a goat ever so long; but it's not likely I shall be spared to see it. And, after all, I don't pretend to be sure it will ever be.

Mother, said Hans one day, I don't know how it is; but either the cart gets heavier, or I'm not so strong as I was; for some time I've scarcely been able to manage it. It is getting really too much for me; especially on the Berne road, where there are so many hills.

I dare say, said the mother; aussi,¹ why do you go on loading it more every day? I've been fretting about you many a time; for one always suffers for over-work when one gets old. But you must take care. Put a dozen or two of brooms less on it, and it will roll again all right.

That's impossible, mother; I never have enough as it is, and I haven't time to go to Berne twice a week.

But, Hansli, suppose you got a donkey. I've heard say they are the most convenient beasts in the world: they cost almost nothing, eat almost nothing, and anything one likes to give them; and that's † as strong as a horse, without counting that one can make something of the mild,—not that I want any, but one may speak of it.‡

*“Se requinquait à n'en plus finir.” Entirely beyond English rendering.²

† “Ça.” Note the peculiar character and value, in modern French, of this general and slightly depreciatory pronoun, essentially a republican word,—hurried, inconsiderate, and insolent. The popular chant “ça ira” gives the typical power.

‡ “C'est seulement pour dire.”³ I've been at least ten minutes trying to translate it, and can't.

¹ [Aussi: see Letter 30, § 5, author's note (Vol. XXVII. p. 550).]

² [IN the original, “und er pützerle sich z'weg, es habe keine Gattig.”]

³ [In the German, “nit dass ich möchte, aber nur so zu sagen.”]

No, mother, said Hansli,—they're as self-willed as devils: sometimes one can't get them to do anything at all; and then what I should do with a donkey the other five days of the week! No, mother;—I was thinking of a wife,—hey, what say you?

But, Hansli, I think a goat or a donkey would be much better. A wife! What sort of idea is that that has come into your head? What would you do with a wife?

Do! said Hansli; what other people do, I suppose; and then, I thought she would help me to draw the cart, which goes ever so much better with another hand:—without counting that she could plant potatoes between times, and help me to make my brooms, which I couldn't get a goat or a donkey to do.

But, Hansli, do you think to find one, then, who will help you to draw the cart, and will be clever enough to do all that? asked the mother, searchingly.

Oh, mother, there's one who has helped me already often with the cart, said Hansli, and who would be good for a great deal besides; but as to whether she would marry me or not, I don't know, for I haven't asked her. I thought that I would tell you first.

You rogue of a boy, what's that you tell me there? I don't understand a word of it, cried the mother. You too!—are you also like that? The good God Himself might have told me, and I wouldn't have believed Him. What's that you say?—you've got a girl to help you to pull the cart! A pretty business to engage her for! Ah well,—trust men after this!

Thereupon Hansli put himself to recount the history; and how that had happened quite by chance; and how that girl was just expressly made for him: a girl as neat as a clock,—not showy, not extravagant,—and who would draw the cart better even than a cow could. But I haven't spoken to her of anything, however. All the same, I think I'm not disagreeable to her. Indeed, she has said to me once or twice that she wasn't in a hurry to marry; but if she could manage it, so as not to be worse off than she was now, she wouldn't be long making up her mind. She knows, for that matter, very well also why she is in the world. Her little brothers and sisters are growing up after her; and she knows well how things go, and how the youngest are always made the most of, for one never thinks of thanking the elder ones for the trouble they've had in bringing them up.

All that didn't much displease the mother; and the more she ruminated over these unexpected matters, the more it all seemed to her very proper. Then she put herself to make inquiries, and learned that nobody knew the least harm of the girl. They told her she did all she could to help her parents; but that with the best they could do, there wouldn't be much to fish for. Ah, well: it's all the better, thought she; for then neither of them can have much to say to the other.

The next Tuesday, while Hansli was getting his cart ready, his mother said to him—

Well, speak to that girl: if she consents, so will I; but I can't run after her. Tell her to come here on Sunday, that I may see her, and at

least we can talk a little. If she is willing to be nice, it will all go very well. Aussi, it must happen some time or other, I suppose.

But, mother, it isn't written anywhere that it must happen, whether or no; and if it doesn't suit you, nothing hinders me from leaving it all alone.

Nonsense, child; don't be a goose. Hasten thee to set out; and say to that girl, that if she likes to be my daughter-in-law, I'll take her, and be very well pleased.

Hansli set out, and found the young girl. Once that they were pulling together, he at his pole, and she at her cord, Hansli put himself to say—

That certainly goes as quick again when there are thus two cattle at the same cart. Last Saturday I went to Thun by myself, and dragged all the breath out of my body.

Yes, I've often thought, said the young girl, that it was very foolish of you not to get somebody to help you; all the business would go twice as easily, and you would gain twice as much.

What would you have? said Hansli. Sometimes one thinks too soon of a thing, sometimes too late,—one's always mortal.* But now it really seems to me that I should like to have somebody for a help; if you were of the same mind, you would be just the good thing for me. If that suits you, I'll marry you.

Well, why not,—if you don't think me too ugly nor too poor? answered the young girl. Once you've got me, it will be too late to despise me. As for me, I could scarcely fall in with a better chance. One always gets a husband,—but, aussi, of what sort? You are quite good enough † for me: you take care of your affairs, and I don't think you'll treat a wife like a dog.

My faith, she will be as much master as I; if she is not pleased that way, I don't know what more to do, said Hansli. And for other matters, I don't think you'll be worse off with me than you have been at home. If that suits you, come to see us on Sunday. It's my mother who told me to ask you, and to say that if you liked to be her daughter-in-law, she would be very well pleased.

Liked! But what could I want more! I am used to submit myself, and take things as they come,—worse to-day, better to-morrow,—sometimes more sour, sometimes less. I never have thought that a hard word made a hole in me, else by this time I shouldn't have had a bit of skin left as big as a kreutzer. But, all the same, I must tell my people, as the custom is. For the rest, they won't give themselves any trouble about

* “On est toujours homme.” The proverb is frequent among the French and Germans.¹ The modesty of it is not altogether easy to an English mind, and would be totally incomprehensible to an ordinary Scotch one.

† “Assez brave.”² Untranslatable, except by the old English sense of the word brave, and even that has more reference to outside show than the French word.

¹ [In the German, “Man ist halt geng e Mensch.”]

² [In the German, “Mir bist brav genug.”]

the matter. There are enough of us in the house: if any one likes to go, nobody will stop them.*

And, aussi, that was what happened. On Sunday the young girl really appeared at Rychiswyl. Hansli had given her very clear directions; nor had she to ask long before she was told where the broom-seller lived. The mother made her pass a good examination upon the garden and the kitchen; and would know what book of prayers she used, and whether she could read in the New Testament, and also in the Bible, † for it was very bad for the children, and it was always they who suffered, if the mother didn't know enough for that, said the old woman. The girl pleased her, and the affair was concluded.

You won't have a beauty there, said she to Hansli, before the young girl; nor much to crow about, in what she has got. But all that is of no consequence. It isn't beauty that makes the pot boil; and as for money, there's many a man who wouldn't marry a girl unless she was rich, who has had to pay his father-in-law's debts in the end. When one has health, and work, in one's arms, one gets along always. I suppose (turning to the girl) you have got two good chemises and two gowns, so that you won't be the same on Sunday and work-days?

Oh yes, said the young girl; you needn't give yourself any trouble about that. I've one chemise quite new, and two good ones besides,—and four others which, in truth, are rather ragged. But my mother said I should have another; and my father, that he would make me my wedding shoes, and they should cost me nothing. And with that I've a very nice godmother, who is sure to give me something fine;—perhaps a saucepan, or a frying-stove,‡—who knows? without counting that perhaps I shall inherit something from her some day. She has some children, indeed, but they may die.

Perfectly, satisfied on both sides, but especially the girl, to whom Hansli's house, so perfectly kept in order, appeared a palace in comparison with her own home, full of children and scraps of leather, they separated, soon to meet again and quit each other no more. As no soul made the slightest objection, and the preparations were easy,—seeing that new shoes and a new chemise are soon stitched together,—within a month, Hansli was no more alone on his way to Thun. And the old cart went again as well as ever.¹

* You are to note carefully the conditions of sentiment in family relationships implied both here, and in the bride's reference, farther on, to her godmother's children. Poverty, with St. Francis' pardon, is not always holy in its influence: yet a richer girl might have felt exactly the same, without being innocent enough to say so.

† I believe the reverend and excellent novelist would himself authorize the distinction; but Hansli's mother must be answerable for it to my Evangelical readers.

‡ “Poêle à frire.”² I don't quite understand the nature of this article.³

¹ [This narrative is continued in Letter 55, § 4 (p. 366).]

² [In the German, “Breitüffi.”]

³ [In the small edition this footnote is omitted, and “frying-stove” in the text is corrected to “frying-pan.”]

10. And they lived happily ever after? You shall hear. The story is not at an end; note only, in the present phase of it, this most important point, that Hansli does not think of his wife as an expensive luxury, to be refused to himself unless under irresistible temptation. It is only the modern Pall-Mall-pattern Englishman who must “abstain from the luxury of marriage”¹ if he be wise. Hansli thinks of his wife, on the contrary, as a useful article, which he cannot any longer get on without. He gives us, in fact, a final definition of proper wifely quality,—“She will draw the cart better than a cow could.”

¹ [See Letter 28, § 19 (Vol. XXVII. p. 521).]

LETTER 40

THE SCOTTISH FIRESIDE¹

1. I AM obliged to go to Italy this spring,² and find beside me a mass of *Fors* material in arrear, needing various explanation and arrangement, for which I have no time. *Fors* herself must look to it, and my readers use their own wits in thinking over what she has looked to. I begin with a piece of *Marmontel*, which was meant to follow, “in due time,” the twenty-first letter,—of which, please glance at §§ 20–22 again.³ This following bit is from another story⁴ professing to give some account of *Molière’s Misanthrope*, in his country life, after his last quarrel with *Celimène*. He calls on a country gentleman, *M. de Laval*,

and was received by him with the simple and serious courtesy which announces neither the need nor the vain desire of making new connections. Behold, said he, a man who does not surrender himself at once. I esteem him the more. He congratulated *M. de Laval* on the agreeableness of his solitude. You come to live here, he said to him, far from men, and you are very right to avoid them.

I, Monsieur! I do not avoid men; I am neither so weak as to fear them, so proud as to despise them, nor so unhappy as to hate them.

This answer struck so home that *Alceste* was disconcerted by it; but he wished to sustain his *débüt*, and began to satirize the world.

I have lived in the world like another, said *M. de Laval*, and I have not seen that it was so wicked. There are vices and virtues in it,—good

¹ [See below, § 11.]

² [See Vol. XXIII., pp. xxx. *seq.*, for account of his Continental tour from March 30 to October 21, 1874.]

³ [Vol. XXVII. pp. 366–368.]

⁴ [“*Le Misanthrope Corrigé*”; the passage translated by Ruskin is in vol. iii. pp. 256–259, 261–265, 266 of *Contes Moraux*, 1765. Asterisks are now inserted where he omits passages: see pp. 395–400 of “*The Misanthrope Corrected*” in Mr. Saintsbury’s translation. Another passage from the same story is given in Letter 17 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 300–302).]

and evil mingled,—I confess; but nature is so made, and one should know how to accommodate oneself to it.

On my word, said Alceste, in that unison the evil governs to such a point that it chokes the other. Sir, replied the Viscount, if one were as eager to discover good as evil, and had the same delight in spreading the report of it,—if good examples were made public as the bad ones almost always are,—do you not think that the good would weigh down the balance? But gratitude speaks so low, and indignation so loudly, that you cannot hear but the last. Both friendship and esteem are commonly moderate in their praises; they imitate the modesty of honour, in praise, while resentment and mortification exaggerate everything they describe.

Monsieur, said Alceste to the Viscount, you make me desire to think as you do; and even if the sad truth were on my side, your error would be preferable. Ah, yes, without doubt, replied M.de Laval, ill—humour is good for nothing, the fine part that it is, for a man to play, to fall into a fit of spite like a child!—and why? For the mistakes of the circle in which one has lived, as if the whole of nature were in the plot against us, and responsible for the hurt we have received.

You are right, replied Alceste, it would be unjust to consider all men as partners in fault; yet how many complaints may we not justly lodge against them, as a body? Believe me, sir, my judgment of them has serious and grave motives. You will do me justice when you know me. Permit me to see you often! *Often*, said the Viscount, will be difficult. I have much business, and my daughter and I have our studies, which leave us little leisure; but sometimes, if you will, let us profit by our neighbourhood, at our ease, and without formality, for the privilege of the country is to be alone, when we like.* * *

Some days afterwards Monsieur de Laval returned his visit, and Alceste spoke to him of the pleasure that he doubtless felt in making so many people happy. It is a beautiful example, he said, and, to the shame of men, a very rare one. How many persons there are, more powerful and more rich than you, who are nothing but a burden to their inferiors! I neither excuse nor blame them altogether, replied M. de Laval. In order to do good, one must know how to set about it; and do not think that it is so easy to effect our purpose. It is not enough even to be sagacious; it is needful also to be fortunate; it is necessary to find sensible and docile persons to manage: † and one has constantly need of much address,

* Well said, the Viscount. People think me a grumbler; but I wholly believe this,—nay, *know* this. The world exists, indeed, only by the strength of its silent virtue.¹

† Well said, Viscount, again! So few people know the power of the Third Fors. If I had not chanced to give lessons in drawing to Octavia Hill, I could have done nothing in Marylebone,² nor she either, for a while yet, I fancy.

¹ [On the nobleness of human nature, compare p. 21, above, and St. George's Creed II.: Letter 58, § 2 (p. 419).]

² [See Letter 10, § 15 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 175–176).]

and patience, to lead the people, naturally suspicious and timid, to what is really for their advantage. Indeed, said Alceste, such excuses are continually made; but have you not conquered all these obstacles? and why should not others conquer them? I, said M. de Laval, have been tempted by opportunity, and seconded by accident.* The people of this province, at the time that I came into possession of my estate, were in a condition of extreme distress. I did but stretch my arms to them; they gave themselves up to me in despair. An arbitrary tax had been lately imposed upon them, which they regarded with so much terror that they preferred sustaining hardships to making any appearance of having wealth; and I found, current through the country, this desolating and destructive maxim, "The more we work, the more we shall be trodden down." (It is precisely so in England to—day, also.) "*The men dared not be laborious; the women trembled to have children.*"

I went back to the source of the evil. I addressed myself to the man appointed for the reception of the tribute. Monsieur, I said to him, my vassals groan under the weight of the severe measures necessary to make them pay the tax. I wish to hear no more of them; tell me what is wanting yet to make up the payment for the year, and I will acquit the debt myself. Monsieur, replied the receiver, that cannot be. Why not? said I. Because it is not the rule. What! is it not the rule to pay the King the tribute that he demands with the least expense and the least delay possible? Yes, answered he, that would be enough for the King, but it would not be enough for *me*. Where should *I* be if they paid money down? It is by the expense of the compulsory measures that I live; they are the perquisites of my office. To this excellent reason I had nothing to reply, but I went to see the head of the department, and obtained from him the place of receiver-general for my peasants.

My children, I then said to them (assembling them on my return home), I have to announce to you that you are in future to deposit in my hands the exact amount of the King's tribute, and no more. There will be no more expenses, no more bailiff's visits. Every Sunday at the bank of the parish, your wives shall bring me their savings, and insensibly you shall find yourselves out of debt. Work now, and cultivate your land; make the most of it you can; no farther tax shall be laid on you. I answer for this to you—I who am your father. For those who are in arrear, I will take some measures for support, or I will advance them the sum necessary, † and a few days at the dead time of the year, employed in work for me, will reimburse me for my expenses. This plan was agreed upon, and we have followed it ever since. The housewives of the village bring me their little offerings: I encourage them, and speak to them of our good King; and what was an act of distressing servitude, has become an unoppressive act of love.* * *

Finally, as there was a good deal of superfluous time, I established the workshop that you have seen; it turns everything to account, and brings

* A lovely, classic, unbettable sentence of Marmontel's, perfect in wisdom and modesty.

† Not for a dividend upon it, I beg you to observe, and even the capital to be repaid in work.

into useful service time which would be lost between the operations of agriculture: the profits of it are applied to public works. A still more precious advantage of this establishment is its having greatly increased the population—more children are born, as there is certainty of extended means for their support.

Now note, first, in this passage what material of loyalty and affection there was still in the French heart before the Revolution;¹ and, secondly, how useless it is to be a good King, if the good King allows his officers to live upon the cost of compulsory measures.* And remember that the French Revolution was the revolt of absolute loyalty and love against the senseless cruelty of a “good King.”

2. Next, for a little specimen of the state of our own working population; and the “compulsory”—not “measures,” but measureless license, under which their loyalty and love are placed,—here is a genuine working woman’s letter; and if the reader thinks I have given it him in its own spelling that he may laugh at it, the reader is wrong.

“May 12, 1873.

“DEAR—,—While Reading in the herald to Day on the subject on shortor hours of Labou^r † I was Reminded of A cercomstanc^e that came under my hone notis when the 10 hours sistom Began in the cotton mills in Lancashire. I was Minding a mesheen with 30 treds in it I was then maid to mind 2 of 30 treds each with one shilling Advance of wages wich was 5^s for one and 6^s for tow with an increes of speed and with improved mecheens in A few years I was minding tow mecheens with tow 100 trads Each and Dubel speed for 9^s perweek so that in our improved condation we had to turn out some 100 weght per day and we went as if the Devel was After us for 10 houers per day and with that comparetive small Advance in money and the feemals have ofton Been carred out fainting what with the heat and hard work and those that could not keep up mst go and make room for another and all this is Done in Christian England and then we are tould to Be content in the station of Life in wich the Lord as places us But I say the Lord never Did place us there so we have no Right to Be content ° that Right and not might was the Law yours truely C. H. S.”

* Or, worse still, as *our* public men do, upon the cost of *non-compulsory* measures!

† These small “powers” of terminal letters in some of the words are very curious.

¹ [Compare Letter 29 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 538–541).]

3. Next to this account of Machine-labour, here is one of Hand-labour, also in a genuine letter,—this second being to myself (I wish the other had been also, but it was to one of my friends).

“BECKENHAM, KENT,

“Sept. 24, 1873.

“That is a pleasant evening in our family when we read and discuss the subjects of *Fors Clavigera*, and we frequently reperuse them, as for instance, within a few days, your August letter. In page 16¹ I was much struck by the notice of the now exploded use of the spinning wheel. My mother, a Cumberland woman, was a spinner, and the whole process, from the fine thread that passed through her notable fingers, and the weaving into linen by an old cottager—a very ‘Silas Marner,’—to the bleaching on the orchard grass, was well known to my sister* and myself, when children.

“When I married, part of the linen that I took to my new home was my mother’s spinning, and one fine table-cloth was my grandmother’s. *What factory, with its thousand spindles, and chemical bleaching powders, can send out such linen as that, which lasted three generations?*†

“I should not have troubled you with these remarks had I not, at the moment when I read your paragraph on hand-spinning, received a letter from my daughter, now for a time resident in Coburg (a friend of Octavia Hill’s), which bears immediately on the subject. I have therefore ventured to transcribe it for your perusal, believing that the picture she draws from life, beautiful as it is for its simplicity, may give you a moment’s pleasure.”

“COBURG, Sept. 4, 1873.

4. “On Thursday I went to call on Frau L.; she was not in; so I went to her mother’s, Frau E., knowing that I should find her there. They were all sitting down to afternoon coffee, and asked me to join them, which I gladly did. I had my work-basket with me, and as they were all at work, it was pleasant to do the same thing. Hildigard was there; in fact she lives there, to take care of Frau E. since she had her fall and stiffened her ankle, a year ago. Hildigard took her spinning, and tied on her white apron, filled the little brass basin of the spinning wheel with water, to wet her fingers, and set the wheel a-purring. I have never seen the process before, and it was very pretty to see her, with her white fingers, and to hear the little low sound. It is quite a pity, I think, ladies do not do it in England,—it is so pretty, and far nicer work than crochet, and so on, when it is finished. *This soft linen made by hand is so superior to any that you get now.* Presently the four children came in, and the great hunting dog, Feldman; and altogether I thought, as dear little

* A lady high in the ranks of kindly English literature.

† Italics mine, as usual.

¹ [Of the original issue. Letter 32, § 15 (Vol. XXVII. p. 596).]

Frau E. sat sewing in her arm-chair, and her old sister near her at her knitting, and Hildigard at her spinning, while pretty Frau L. sewed at her little girl's stuff-skirt,—all in the old-fashioned room full of old furniture, and hung round with miniatures of still older dames and officers, in, to our eyes, strange stiff costumes, that it was a most charming scene, and one I enjoyed as much as going to the theatre,—which I did in the evening.”

5. A most charming scene, my dear lady, I have no doubt; just what Hengler's Circus was, to me, this Christmas.¹ Now for a little more of the charming scenery outside, and far away.

“12, TUNSTALL TERRACE, SUNDERLAND,
“14th Feb., 1874.

“MY DEAR SIR,—The rice famine is down upon us in earnest, and finds our wretched ‘administration’ unprepared—a ministration unto death!

“It can carry childish gossip ‘by return of post’ into every village in India, but not food; no, not food even for mothers and babes. So far has our scientific and industrial progress attained.

“To-night comes news that hundreds of deaths from starvation have already occurred, and that even high-caste women are working on the roads;—no food from stores of ours except at the price of degrading, health-destroying, and perfectly useless toil. God help the nation responsible for this wickedness.

“Dear Mr. Ruskin, you wield the most powerful pen in England, can you not shame us into some sense of duty, some semblance of human feeling? [Certainly not. My good sir, as far as I know, nobody ever minds a word I say, except a few nice girls, who are a great comfort to me, but can't do anything. They don't even know how to spin, poor little lilies!]

“I observe that the *Daily News* of to-day is horrified at the idea that Disraeli should dream of appropriating any part of the surplus revenue to the help of India in this calamity² [of course], and even the *Spectator* calls that a ‘dangerous’ policy. So far is even ‘the conscience of the Press’ [What next?] corrupted by the dismal science.

“I am, yours truly.”

¹ [See above, p. 51.]

² [The reference is to a leading article on the Bengal Famine, criticising a speech by Disraeli at Buckingham on February 10, in which he had said: “When I heard those discussions as to how this surplus was to be apportioned and the plunder shared, I could not help thinking that there were circumstances going on in this great Empire which ought perhaps to make us pause in our schemes of aggrandisement and division of the spoil, and turn to matters of a much more powerful character than our own comparatively miserable interests.” If this meant, said the *Daily News*, that the surplus in the hands of the Imperial Government should be employed in the relief of Indian distress, “we need not discuss the merits of such a proposal, because it is certain that no English Government that could be formed would make it.”]

6. So far the Third Fors has arranged matters for me; but I must put a stitch or two into her work.

Look back to my third letter, for March, 1871, § 3.¹ You see it is said there that the French war and its issues were none of Napoleon's doing, nor Count Bismarck's; that the mischief in them was St. Louis's doing; and the good, such as it was, the rough father of Frederick the Great's doing.

The father of Frederick the Great was an Evangelical divine of the strictest orthodoxy,—very fond of beer, bacon, and tobacco, and entirely resolved to have his own way, supposing, as pure Evangelical people always do, that his own way was God's also. It happened, however, for the good of Germany, that this king's own way, to a great extent, *was* God's also,—(we will look at Carlyle's statement of that fact another day²),—and accordingly he maintained, and the ghost of him,—with the help of his son, whom he had like to have shot as a disobedient and dissipated character,—maintains to this day in Germany, such sacred domestic life as that of which you have an account in the above letter. Which, in peace, is entirely happy, for its own part; and, in war, irresistible.

7. "Entirely *blessed*," I had written first, too carelessly; I have had to scratch out the "blessed" and put in "happy." For blessing is only for the meek and merciful, and a German cannot be either; he does not understand even the meaning of the words. In that is the intense, irreconcilable difference between the French and German natures. A Frenchman is selfish only when he is vile and lustful; but a German, selfish in the purest states of virtue and morality. A Frenchman is arrogant only in ignorance; but no quantity of learning ever makes a German modest.

¹ [Vol. XXVII. p. 46.]

² [To Friedrich Wilhelm I.—Carlyle's "great Drill-sergeant of the Prussian nation" (i. 263)—Ruskin did not, however, revert in *Fors* (but see Vol. XVIII. p. 532). For the king's justification before Almighty God, see ii. 453. In writing of "the ghost of him," Ruskin was perhaps thinking of iii. 210, where Carlyle describes the old king as "though dead, still fighting." These references are to the edition of 1869, in seven volumes.]

“Sir,” says Albert Dürer of his own work (and he is the modestest German I know), “it cannot be better done.”¹ Luther serenely damns the entire gospel of St. James, because St. James happens to be not precisely of his own opinions.²

Accordingly, when the Germans get command of Lombardy,³ they bombard Venice, steal her pictures (which they can’t understand a single touch of), and entirely ruin the country, morally and physically, leaving behind them misery, vice, and intense hatred of themselves, wherever their accursed feet have trodden. They do precisely the same thing by France,—crush her, rob her, leave her in misery of rage and shame; and return home, smacking their lips, and singing Te Deums.⁴

But when the French conquer England, their action upon it is entirely beneficent. Gradually, the country, from a nest of restless savages, becomes strong and glorious; and having good material to work upon, they make of us at last a nation stronger than themselves.

8. Then the strength of France perishes, virtually, through the folly of St. Louis;⁵—her piety evaporates, her lust gathers infectious power, and the modern Cité rises round the Sainte Chapelle.

It is a woeful history. But St. Louis does not perish selfishly; and perhaps is not wholly dead yet,⁶—whatever Garibaldi and his red-jackets may think about him, and their “Holy Republic.”⁷

¹ [See Vol. XIX. p. 52.]

² [Luther, finding the Epistle inconsistent with his version, or caricature, of St. Paul’s doctrine of justification by faith, pronounced it “a veritable epistle of straw” (“eine rechte strohern Epistel”), and banished it as uncanonical to an appendix to the Bible: see *Luther’s Works*, ed. Gustav Pfizer, Frankfort, 1840, pp. 1412, 1423, 1424, and Westcott *On the Canon*, ed. 3, pp. 448–454. The Lutheran Church, it may be added, has restored the Epistle to its proper place.]

³ [Of the Austrian occupation, Ruskin elsewhere writes somewhat differently; see Vol. XVII. p. 431 and *n.*]

⁴ [Compare Letter 1, § 11 (Vol. XXVII. p. 23); below, p. 147; and Letter 80 (Vol. XXIX. p. 187).]

⁵ [See *Val d’ Arno*, § 94 (Vol. XXIII. p. 57).]

⁶ [Compare Letter 8, § 6 (Vol. XXVII. p. 138).]

⁷ [See Letters 1, § 5, and 3, § 7 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 16, 51).]

Meantime, Germany, through Geneva, works quaintly against France, in our British destiny, and makes an end of many a Sainte Chapelle, in our own sweet river islands. Read Froude's sketch of the Influence of the Reformation on Scottish Character, in his *Short Studies on Great Subjects*.¹ And that would be enough for you to think of, this month; but as this letter is all made up of scraps, it may be as well to finish with this little private note on Luther's people, made last week.

9. *4th March, 1874.*—I have been horribly plagued and misguided by evangelical people, all my life;² and most of all lately; but my mother was one, and my Scotch aunt; and I have yet so much of the superstition left in me, that I can't help sometimes doing as evangelical people wish,—for all I know it comes to nothing.

One of them, for whom I still have some old liking left, sent me one of their horrible sausage-books the other day, made of chopped-up Bible; but with such a solemn and really pathetic abjuration to read a "text" every morning, that, merely for old acquaintance' sake, I couldn't refuse. It is all one to me, now, whether I read my Bible, or my Homer, at one leaf or another; only I take the liberty, pace my evangelical friend, of looking up the contexts if I happen not to know them.

10. Now I was very much beaten and overtired yesterday, chiefly owing to a week of black fog, spent in looking over a work of days and people long since dead;³ and my "text" this morning was, "Deal courageously, and the Lord do that which seemeth Him good,"⁴ It sounds

¹ [Vol. i. p. 15 *seq.* in the edition of 1891.]

² [Compare Letter 30, § 3 (Vol. XXVII. p. 546), and the other passages there noted. See also *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 88), and Ruskin's note on line 623 in *Rock Honeycomb*.]

³ [Entries in his diary at this time, which are full of "black fog unbroken" and "diabolical plague wind," show that Ruskin had been re-reading his *Stones of Venice*. Thus he notes (February 27), "Found out much of Ducal Palace, and old things,—a precious day"; and again (March 3), "And yet the Venice was good. Let me make the best fruit of it I can, since he suffered so for it" (the reference being to his father's grief at Ruskin's long absence in Venice, while writing the book).]

⁴ [See 2 Samuel x. 12 and 2 Chronicles xix. 11.]

a very saintly, submissive, and useful piece of advice; but I was not quite sure who gave it; and it was evidently desirable to ascertain that.

For, indeed, it chanced to be given, not by a saint at all, but by quite one of the most self-willed people on record in any history,—about the last in the world to let the Lord do that which seemed Him good, if he could help it, unless it seemed just as good to himself also,—Joab the son of Zeruiah. The son, to wit, of David's elder sister;¹ who, finding that it seemed good to the Lord to advance the son of David's younger sister to a place of equal power with himself, unhesitatingly smites his thriving young cousin under the fifth rib, while pretending to kiss him, and leaves him wallowing in blood in the midst of the highway. But we have no record of the pious or resigned expressions he made use of on that occasion. We have no record, either, of several other matters one would have liked to know about these people. How it is, for instance, that David has to make a brother of Saul's son;²—having found, as it seems, no brotherly kindness—nor, more wonderful yet, sisterly kindness—at his own fireside. It is like a German story of the seventh son—or the seventh bullet—as far as the brothers are concerned;³ but these sisters, had they also no love for their brave young shepherd brother? Did they receive no countenance from him when he was king? Even for Zeruiah's sake, might he not on his death-bed have at least allowed the Lord to do what seemed Him good with Zeruiah's son, who had so well served him in his battles (and so quietly in the matter of Bathsheba⁴), instead of charging the wisdom of Solomon to find some subtle way of preventing his hoar head from going down to the grave in peace?⁵ My evangelical friend

¹ [For David's sisters, and the sons of Zeruiah, the elder sister, see 1 Chronicles ii. 16. For the advancement of Amasa, the son of Abigail (*ibid.*, 17), the younger sister, 2 Samuel xvii. 25. For Joab's murder of Amasa, *ibid.*, xx. 9, 10, 12.]

² [For David's affection for Jonathan, as for a brother, see 1 Samuel xix. 2 and 2 Samuel i. 26.]

³ [Ruskin seems here to refer to Grimm's story of "The Seven Ravens."]

⁴ [See 2 Samuel xi. 14 *seq.*]

⁵ [See 1 Kings ii. 5, 6.]

will of course desire me not to wish to be wise above that which is written.¹ I am not to ask even who Zeruiah's husband was?—nor whether, in the West-end sense, he was her husband at all?—Well; but if I only want to be wise up to the meaning of what is written? I find, indeed, nothing whatever said of David's elder sister's lover;²—but, of his younger sister's lover, I find it written in this evangelical Book-Idol, in one place, that his name was Ithra, an Israelite, and in another that it was Jether, the Ishmaelite.³ Ithra or Jether, is no matter; Israelite or Ishmaelite, perhaps matters not much; but it matters a great deal that you should know that this is an ill written, and worse trans-written, human history, and not by any means "Word of God"; and that whatever issues of life, divine of human, there may be in it, for you, can only be got by searching it; and not by chopping it up into small bits and swallowing it like pills.⁴ What a trouble there is, for instance, just now, in all manner of people's minds, about Sunday keeping, just because these evangelical people *will* swallow their bits of texts in an entirely indigestible state, without chewing them. Read your Bibles honestly and utterly, my scrupulous friends, and stand by the consequences,—if you have what true men call "faith." In the first place, determine clearly, if there is a clear place in your brains to do it, whether you mean to observe the Sabbath as a Jew, or the day of the Resurrection, as a Christian. Do either thoroughly; you can't do both. If you choose to keep the "Sabbath," in defiance of your great prophet, St. Paul,⁵ keep the new moons too, and the other fasts and feasts of the Jewish law; but even so, remember that the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath also, and that not only it is

¹ [See 1 Corinthians iv. 6: compare Letter 12, § 6 (Vol. XXVII. p. 203).]

² [See 2 Samuel ii. 18, where the three sons of Zeruiah are named, though their father's name is not given.]

³ [2 Samuel xvii. 25 and 1 Chronicles ii. 17. In Samuel Amasa is spoken of as the son of Ithra; in Chronicles, as the son of Jether.]

⁴ [On Biblical "inspiration," see Letter 35, § 3 (Vol. XXVII. p. 650); and compare, below, p. 245.]

⁵ [See Romans xiv. 5 *seq.*; Galatians iv. 10; Colossians ii. 16.]

lawful to do good upon it,¹ but unlawful, in the strength of what you call keeping one day Holy, to do Evil on other six days, and make those unholy; and, finally, that neither new-moon keeping, nor Sabbath keeping, nor fasting, nor praying, will in anywise help an evangelical city like Edinburgh to stand in the judgment higher than Gomorrah, while her week-day arrangements for rent from her lower orders are as follows:*—

11. “We entered the first room by descending two steps. It seemed to be an old coal-cellar, with an earthen floor, shining in many places from damp, and from a greenish ooze which drained through the wall from a noxious collection of garbage outside, upon which a small window could have looked had it not been filled up with brown paper and rags. There was no grate, but a small fire smouldered on the floor, surrounded by heaps of ashes. The roof was unceiled, the walls were rough and broken, the only light came in from the open door, which let in unwhole-some smells and sounds. No cow or horse could thrive in such a hole. It was abominable. It measured eleven feet by six feet, and the rent was 10d. per week, paid in advance. It was nearly dark at noon, even with the door open; but as my eyes became accustomed to the dimness, I saw that the plinishings consisted of an old bed, a barrel with a flagstone on the top of it for a table, a three-legged stool, and an iron pot. A very ragged girl, sorely afflicted with ophthalmia, stood among the ashes doing nothing. She had never been inside a school or church. She did not know how to do anything, but ‘did for her father and brother.’ On a heap of straw, partly covered with sacking, which was the bed in which father, son, and daughter slept, the brother, ill with rheumatism and sore legs, was lying moaning from under a heap of filthy rags. He had been a baker ‘over in the New Town,’ but seemed not very likely to recover. It looked as if the sick man had crept into his dark, damp lair, just to die of hopelessness. The father was past work, but ‘sometimes got an odd job to do.’ The sick man had supported the three. It was hard to be godly, impossible to be cleanly, impossible to be healthy in such circumstances.

“The next room was entered by a low, dark, impeded passage about

* *Notes on Old Edinburgh*: Edmonston and Douglas, 1869.² Things may possibly have mended in some respects in the last five years, but they have assuredly, in the country villages, got tenfold worse.

¹ [Mark ii. 28; Luke vi. 5, 9.]

² [The quotation is from pp. 10, 11 of *Notes on Old Edinburgh*, by the Author of *The Englishwoman in America*; i.e. I. L. Bird (afterwards Mrs. Bishop), the wellknown traveller. The pamphlet was No. 21 in a series (by different writers) entitled “Odds and Ends.” For other references to the tenements here described, see Letters 73, § 3, and 77, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 15, 116).]

twelve feet long, too filthy to be traversed without a light. At the extremity of this was a dark winding stair which led up to four superincumbent storeys of crowded subdivided rooms; and beyond this, to the right, a pitch-dark passage with a 'room' on either side. it was not possible to believe that the most grinding greed could extort money from human beings for the tenancy of such dens as those to which this passage led. They were lairs into which a starving dog might creep to die, but nothing more. Opening a dilapidated door, we found ourselves in a recess nearly six feet high, and nine feet in length by five in breadth. It was not absolutely dark, yet matches aided our investigations even at noonday. There was an earthen floor full of holes, in some of which water had collected. The walls were black and rotten, and alive with woodlice. There was no grate. The rent paid for this evil den, which was only ventilated by the chimney, is 1s. per week, or £2, 12s. annually! The occupier was a mason's labourer, with a wife and three children. He had come to Edinburgh in search of work, and could not afford a 'higher rent.' The wife said that her husband took the 'wee drap.' So would the President of the Temperance League himself if he were hidden away in such a hole. The contents of this lair on our first visit were a great heap of ashes and other refuse in one corner, some damp musty straw in another, a broken box in the third, with a battered tin pannikin upon it, and nothing else of any kind, saving two small children, nearly nude, covered with running sores, and pitiable from some eye disease. Their hair was not long, but felted into wisps, and alive with vermin. When we went in they were sitting among the ashes of an extinct fire, and blinked at the light from our matches. Here a neighbour said they sat all day, unless their mother was merciful enough to turn them into the gutter. We were there at eleven the following night, and found the mother, a decent, tidy body, at '*hame*'. There was a small fire then, but no other light. She complained of little besides the darkness of the house, and said, in a tone of dull discontent, she supposed it was 'as good as such as they could expect in Edinburgh.' "

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

12. To my great satisfaction, I am asked by a pleasant correspondent, where and what the picture of the Princess's Dream is.¹ High up, in an out-of-the-way corner of the Academy of Venice, seen by no man—nor woman neither,—of all pictures in Europe the one I should choose for a gift, if a fairy queen gave me choice,—Victor Carpaccio's "Vision of St. Ursula."

13. The following letter, from the *Standard*, is worth preserving:—

"SIR,—For some time past the destruction of tons of young fry—viz., salmon, turbot, trout, soles, cod, whiting, etc.—in fact, every fish that is to be found in the Thames,—has been enormous. I beg leave to say that it is now worse than ever, inasmuch as larger nets, and an increased number of them, are used, and the trade has commenced a month earlier than usual, from the peculiarity of the season.

"At this time there are, at one part of the river, four or five vessels at work, which in one tide catch three tons of fry; this is sifted and picked over by hand, and about three per cent. of fry is all that can be picked out small enough for the London market. The remainder of course dies during the process, and is thrown overboard! Does the London consumer realise the fact that at least thirty tons a week of young fry are thus sacrificed? Do Londoners know that under the name of 'whitebait' they eat a mixture largely composed of sprat fry, a fish which at Christmas cost 9d. a bushel, but which now fetches 2s. a quart, which is £3, 4s. a bushel? (Price regulated by Demand and Supply, you observe!—J. R.) It is bad enough that so many young salmon and trout are trapped and utterly wasted in these nets; but is it fair towards the public thus to diminish their supply of useful and cheap food?

"Mr. Frank Buckland would faint, were he to see the wholesale destruction of young fry off Southend (on one fishing-ground only). I may truly say that the fishermen themselves are ashamed of the havoc they are making—well they may be; but who is to blame?

"Feb. 23."

"I have the honour to be, etc.,
"PISCICULUS."

14. The following note, written long before the last *Fors* on fish,² bears on some of the same matters, and may as well find place now. Of the Bishop to whom it alludes, I have also something to say in next, or next, *Fors*.³ The note itself refers to what I said about the defence of Pope,⁴ who, like all other gracious men, had grave faults; and who, like all other wise men, is intensely obnoxious to evangelical divines. I don't

¹ [See Letter 20, §§ 14–16 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 342–345). The picture is now well hung, in a room specially built for the series to which it belongs: see Vol. XXIV. p. 166. For later references to it, see below, pp. 744, 760, and Letter 74 and 91 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 31, 441).]

² [Letter 38.]

³ [The Bishop is not, however, identified in any subsequent Letter.]

⁴ [See Letter 32, § 4 *n.* (Vol. XXVII. p. 586).]

know what school of divines Mr. Elwin belongs to;¹ nor did I know his name when I wrote the note: I have been surprised, since, to see how good his work is; he writes with the precise pomposity of Macaulay, and in those worst and fatallest forms of fallacy which are true as far as they reach.

“There is an unhappy wretch of a clergyman I read of in the papers—spending his life industriously in showing the meanness of Alexander Pope—and how Alexander Pope cringed, and lied. He cringed—yes—to his friends;—nor is any man good for much who will not play spaniel to his friend, or his mistress, on occasion;—to how many more than their friends do average clergymen cringe? I have had a Bishop go round the Royal Academy even with *me*,—pretending he liked painting, when he was eternally incapable of knowing anything whatever about it. Pope lied also—alas, yes, for his vanity’s sake. Very woeful. But he did not pass the whole of his life in trying to anticipate, or appropriate, or efface, other people’s discoveries, as your modern men of science do so often; and for lying—any average partisan of religious dogma tells more lies in his pulpit in defence of what in his heart he knows to be indefensible, on any given Sunday, than Pope did in his whole life. Nay, how often is your clergyman himself nothing but a lie rampant—in the true old sense of the word,—creeping up into his pulpit pretending that he is there as a messenger of God, when he really took the place that he might be able to marry a pretty girl, and live like a ‘gentleman’ as he thinks.² Alas! how infinitely more of a gentleman if he would but hold his foolish tongue, and get a living honestly—by street-sweeping, or any other useful occupation—instead of sweeping the dust of his own thoughts into people’s eyes—as this ‘biographer.’ ”

15. I shall have a good deal to say about human madness, in the course of *Fors*;³ the following letter, concerning the much less mischievous rebies of Dogs, is however, also valuable. Note especially its closing paragraph. I omit a sentence here and there which seems to me unnecessary.

“On the 7th June last there appeared in the *Macclesfield Guardian* newspaper a letter on Rabies and the muzzling and confining of Dogs, signed ‘Beth-Gêlert.’ That communication contained several facts and opinions relating to the disease; the possible causes of the same; and the uselessness and cruelty of muzzling and confinement as a preventive to it. The first-named unnatural practice has been condemned (as was there shown) by no less authority than the leading medical journal of England,—which has termed muzzling ‘*a great practical mistake, and one which cannot fail to have an injurious effect both upon the health and temper of dogs; for, although rabies is a dreadful thing, dogs ought not, any more than men, to be constantly treated as creatures likely to go mad.*’

“This information and judgment, however, seem insufficient to convince some

¹ [The Rev. Whitwell Elwin (1816–1900), editor of the *Quarterly Review*, 1853–1860. In 1871, 1872 he published five volumes of an edition of the *Works of Pope*, with biographical and critical notes. He then abandoned the task, which was completed, in five more volumes, by Mr. W. J. Courthope (1881–

² [Compare Letter 38, § 7 (p. 35).]

³ [See Letter 48 (below, pp. 203, 205–208, 219–220).]

minds, even although they have no observations or arguments to urge in opposition. It may be useful to the public to bring forward an opinion on the merits of that letter expressed by the late Thomas Turner, of Manchester, who was not only a member of the Council, but one of the ablest and most experienced surgeons in Europe. The words of so eminent a professional man cannot but be considered valuable, and must have weight with the sensible and sincere; though on men of an opposite character all evidence, all reason, is too often utterly cast away.

“ ’MOSLEY STREET, June 8, 1873.

“ ’DEAR—,—Thanks for your sensible letter. It contains great and *kind* truths, and such as humanity should applaud. On the subject you write about there is a large amount of ignorance both in and out of the profession.

“ ’Ever yours,

“ ’THOMAS TURNER.’

“In addition to the foregoing statement of the founder of the Manchester Royal School of Medicine and Surgery, the opinion shall now be given of one of the best veterinarians in London, who, writing on the above letter in the *Macclesfield Guardian*, observed,—‘*With regard to your paper on muzzling dogs, I feel certain from observation that the restraint put upon them by the muzzle is productive of evil, and has a tendency to cause fits, etc.*’

“Rabies, originally spontaneous, was probably created, like many other evils which afflict humanity, by the viciousness, ignorance, and selfishness of man himself. ‘*Man’s inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn,*’—wrote the great peasant and national poet of Scotland. He would have uttered even a wider and more embracing truth had he said, man’s inhumanity to his *fellow-creatures* makes countless millions mourn. Rabies is most prevalent amongst the breeds of dogs bred and maintained for the atrocious sports of ‘the pit’; they are likewise the most dangerous when victims to that dreadful malady. Moreover, dogs kept to worry other animals are also among those most liable to the disease, and the most to be feared when mad. But, on the other hand, dogs who live as the friends and companions of men of true humanity, and never exposed to annoyance or ill-treatment, remain gentle and affectionate even under the excruciating agonies of this dire disease. Delabere Blaine, first an army surgeon and subsequently the greatest veterinarian of this or probably of any other nation, tells us in his *Canine Pathology*:—

“ ’It will sensibly affect any one to witness the earnest, imploring look I have often seen from the unhappy sufferers under this dreadful malady. The strongest attachment has been manifested to those around during their utmost sufferings; and the parched tongue has been carried over the hands and feet of those who noticed them, with more than usual fondness. This disposition has continued to the last moment of life,—in many cases, without one manifestation of any inclination to bite, or to do the smallest harm.’

“Here is another instance of ‘with whatsoever measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.’ The cruelty of man, as it ever does, recoils, like a viper, ultimately on man. He who invests in the Bank of Vice receives back his capital with compound interest at a high rate and to the uttermost farthing.

“When a mad dog bites many people, he sometimes quits scores for a long, long arrear of brutalities, insults, and oppression inflicted upon him by the baser portion of mankind:—the hard blow, the savage kick, the loud curse, the vile annoyance, the insulting word, the starving meal, the carrion food, the shortened chain, the rotten straw, the dirty kennel (appropriate name), the bitter winter’s night, the parching heat of summer, the dull and dreary years of hopeless imprisonment, the thousand aches which patient merit of the unworthy takes, are represented, culminate there; and the cup man has poisoned, man is forced to drink.

“All these miseries are often, too often, the lot of this most affectionate creature, who has truly been called ‘our faithful friend, gallant protector, and useful servant.’

"No muzzling, murder, or incarceration tyrannically inflicted on this muchenduring, much-insulted slave by his master, will ever extirpate rabies. No abuse of the wondrous creature beneficently bestowed by the Omniscient and Almighty on ungrateful man, to be the friend of the poor and the guardian of the rich, will ever extirpate rabies. Mercy and justice would help us much more.

"In many lands the disease is utterly unknown,—in the land of Egypt, for example, where dogs swarm in all the towns and villages. Yet the follower of Mohammed, more humane than the follower of Christ,—to our shame be it spoken,—neither imprisons, muzzles, nor murders them. England, it is believed, never passed such an Act of Parliament as this before the present century. There is, certainly, in the laws of Canute a punishment awarded to the man whose dog went mad, and by his negligence wandered up and down the country. A far more sensible measure than our own. Canute punished the *man*, not the *dog*. Also, in Edward the Third's reign, all owners of fighting dogs whose dogs were found wandering about the streets of London were fined. Very different species of legislation from the brainless or brutal Dog's Act of 1871, passed by a number of men, not one of whom it is probable either knew or cared to know anything of the nature of the creature they legislated about; not even that he perspires, not by means of his skin, but performs this vital function by means of his tongue, and that to muzzle *him* is tantamount to coating the skin of man all over with paint or gutta-percha. Such selfishness and cruelty in this age appears to give evidence towards proof of the assertion made by our greatest writer on Art,—that 'we are now getting cruel in our avarice,'—'our hearts, of iron and clay, have hurled the Bible in the face of our God, and fallen down to grovel before Mammon.'¹—If not, how is it that we can so abuse one of the Supreme's most choicest works,—a creature sent to be man's friend, and whose devotion so often 'puts to shame all human attachments'?

"We are reaping what we have sown: Rabies certainly seems on the increase in this district,—in whose neighbourhood, it is stated, muzzling was first practised. It may spread more widely if we force a crop. The best way to check it, is to do our duty to the noble creature the Almighty has entrusted to us, and treat him with the humanity and affection he so eminently deserves. To deprive him of liberty and exercise; to chain him like a felon; to debar him from access to his natural medicine; to prevent him from following the overpowering instincts of his being and the laws of Nature, is conduct revolting to reason and religion.

"The disease of Rabies comes on by degrees, not suddenly. Its symptoms can easily be read. Were knowledge more diffused, people would know the approach of the malady, and take timely precautions. To do as we now do,—namely, drive the unhappy creatures insane, into an agonizing sickness by sheer ignorance or inhumanity, and then, because one is ill, tie up the mouths of the healthy, and unnaturally restrain all the rest, is it not the conduct of idiots rather than of reasonable beings?

"Why all this hubbub about a disease which causes less loss of life than almost any other complaint known, and whose fatal effects can, in almost every case, be surely and certainly prevented by a surgeon? If our lawgivers and lawmakers (who, by the way, although the House of Commons is crowded with lawyers, do not in these times draw Acts of Parliament so that they can be comprehended, without the heavy cost of going to a superior court), wish to save human life, let them educate the hearts as well as heads of Englishmen, and give more attention to boiler and colliery explosions, railway smashes, and rotten ships; to the overcrowding and misery of the poor; to the adulteration of food and medicines. Also, to dirt, municipal stupidity, and neglect; by which one city alone, Manchester, loses annually above three thousand lives.

"I am, your humble servant,

"BETH-GÉLERT."

¹ [The reference seems to be to *Aratra Pentelici*, § 52 (Vol. XX. p. 234), from memory of which the writer of the Letter appears to quote.]

LETTER 41

BERNARD THE HAPPY¹

PARIS, 1st April, 1874.

1. I FIND there are still primroses in Kent, and that it is possible still to see blue sky in London in the early morning. It was entirely pure as I drove down past my old Denmark Hill gate, bound for Cannon Street Station, on Monday morning last; gate, closed now on me for evermore,² that used to open gladly enough when I came back to it from work in Italy. Now, father and mother and nurse³ all dead, and the roses of the spring, prime or late—what are they to me?

But I want to know, rather, what are they to *you*? What have *you*, workers in England, to do with April, or May, or June either; your mill-wheels go no faster for the sunshine, do they? and you can't get more smoke up the chimneys because more sap goes up the trunks. Do you so much as know or care who May was, or her son, Shepherd of the heathen souls,⁴ so despised of you Christians?⁵ Nevertheless, I have a word or two to say to you in the light of the hawthorn blossom, only you must read some rougher ones first. I have printed the June *Fors*⁶ together with this, because I want you to read the

¹ [See below, § 8.]

² [For Ruskin's abandonment of his house at Denmark Hill (shortly after his mother's death), see Vol. XXII. p. xxv. He afterwards stayed, when in London, at Herne Hill in the house of his cousin, from which he would drive past Denmark Hill into London.]

³ [For the death of his nurse, see Letter 28, §§ 15, 16 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 517–518).]

⁴ [For Maia, mother of Hermes, see *Queen of the Air*, § 26 (Vol. XIX. p. 321).]

⁵ [Compare what Ruskin says about the respect due to any creed in which great men have placed faith: *Ethics of the Dust*, § 118 (Vol. XVIII. p. 356); and see above, p. 19.]

⁶ [Letter 42.]

June one first, only the substance of it is not good for the May-time; but read it, and when you get to near the end, where it speaks of the distinctions between the sins of the hot heart and the cold,¹ come back to this, for I want you to think, in the flush of May, what strength is in the flush of the heart also. You will find that in all my late books (during the last ten years) I have summed the needful virtue of men under the terms of gentleness and justice;² gentleness being the virtue which distinguishes gentlemen from churls, and justice that which distinguishes honest men from rogues. Now gentleness may be defined as the Habit or State of Love; the Red Carita of Giotto (see account of her in Letter Seventh³); and ungentleness or clownishness, the opposite State or Habit of Lust.

2. Now there are three great loves that rule the souls of men: the love of what is lovely in creatures, and of what is lovely in things, and what is lovely in report. And these three loves have each their relative corruption, a lust—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.⁴

And, as I have just said, a gentleman is distinguished from a churl by the purity of sentiment he can reach in all these three passions: by his imaginative love, as opposed to lust; his imaginative possession of wealth as opposed to avarice; his imaginative desire of honour as opposed to pride.

3. And it is quite possible for the simplest workman or labourer for whom I write to understand what the feelings of a gentleman are, and share them, if he will; but the crisis and horror of this present time are that its desire of money, and the fulness of luxury dishonestly attainable by common persons, are gradually making churls of all men; and the nobler passions are not merely disbelieved, but even the conception of them seems ludicrous to the

¹ [Letter 42, §. 11, p. 100.]

² [For the references, see Letter 23, § 15 (Vol. XXVII. p. 409).]

³ [Letter 7, § 17 (Vol. XXVII. p. 130).]

⁴ [1 John ii. 16.]

And it is quite possible for the simplest workman
 a labourer ^{for} to whom I write, to understand what
 the feelings of a gentleman are, and share them, if
 he will; but it is ~~not possible~~ ^{not possible} for ~~any~~ the crisis and
 horror of this present time are that its desire of money
 and the ~~possibilities~~ ^{fulfillment} of luxury dishonestly attainable by
 common ^{persons} ~~means~~, are gradually making cheeks of
 all men, and the nobler passions ^{not merely dis} ~~believed~~
~~in as the God himself~~; - for indeed it is ~~not~~
~~and even the conception~~ of them, not believed, seems
 ludicrous to the ^{imposed} ~~the~~ ^{churl} mind; - is that, to take up
 us for an instance of them as my own life, - because I
 have pursued it in ~~chief~~ ^{chief}, not in ^{fortune hunting} ~~speculation~~; because I
 have ^{laboured} ~~written~~ always for the honour of others, not my own
 and ~~importance~~ have chosen rather ^{to make men least aware to look} to praise Turner and
 Luini than ^{to show a sketch} ~~to practice~~ the high skill of my own hand,
 - because I have lowered ^{my} the rents and assumed the
 comfortable lives of my ^{poor} tenants, instead of taking from
 them all I could, for the roof they needed; ~~because~~ because I
 love a wood walk better than a London Street, and
 would rather ^{see} ~~hear~~ ^{watch a seagull fly than shoot it,} ~~hear a bird sing than eat it,~~ and
 rather ~~see it fly~~ hear a thrush sing than eat it
 finally because I never disobeyed my mother, - ^{because} ~~and~~
 I have honoured all women with solemn worship; and
~~never~~ ~~injured~~ have been kind even to the
 unthankful among them, and the evil - therefore
 the ~~so~~ backs of English art and literature wag
 their heads at me, - and the poor watch who
^{follow} ~~follow~~ the dirty linen of his ^{tail} ~~specimens~~ ^{daily} for a bottle
 of sour wine and a cigar - taller of the
 "Effeminate Sentimentality of Ruskin."

impotent churl mind; so that, to take only so poor an instance of them as my own life—because I have passed it in almsgiving, not in fortune-hunting; because I have laboured always for the honour of others, not my own, and have chosen rather to make men look to Turner and Luini, than to form or exhibit the skill of my own hand; because I have lowered my rents, and assured the comfortable lives of my poor tenants, instead of taking from them all I could force for the roofs they needed;¹ because I love a wood walk better than a London street, and would rather watch a seagull fly, than shoot it, and rather hear a thrush sing, than eat it; finally, because I never disobeyed my mother, because I have honoured all women with solemn worship, and have been kind even to the unthankful and the evil;² therefore the hacks of English art and literature wag their heads at me, and the poor wretch who pawns the dirty linen of his soul daily for a bottle of sour wine and a cigar, talks of the “effeminate sentimentality of Ruskin.”³

4. Now of these despised sentiments, which in all ages have distinguished the gentleman from the churl, the first is that reverence for womanhood which, even through all the cruelties of the Middle Ages, developed itself with increasing power until the thirteenth century, and became consummated in the imagination of the Madonna, which ruled over all the highest arts and purest thoughts of that age.

To the common Protestant mind the dignities ascribed

¹ [For Ruskin’s pioneer work in this matter, under Miss Octavia Hill’s management, see Letter 10, § 15 (Vol. XXVII. p. 175).]

² [Luke vi. 35.]

³ [The facsimile of the original MS. of § 3 (here reproduced) was given in *John Ruskin: a Biographical Outline*, by W.G. Collingwood, 1889. For Ruskin’s refutation of the charge of “sentimentality,” see *Time and Tide*, § 164 (Vol. XVII. p. 451); *Queen of the Air*, § 111 (Vol. XIX. p. 396); and below, Letter 42, § 14 (p. 102), where Ruskin attributes the remark to the *Saturday Review*, though on p. 87, in a reference to the present passage, he seems to attribute it to the *Pall Mall Gazette*. It has not been found in the *Saturday*, and in *Time and Tide*, Ruskin cites it from the *Pall Mall Gazette*, where the expression does occur (April 23, 1867), without the word “effeminate” (see Vol. XVII. p. 451 n.). Ruskin’s memory of the periodical is probably at fault, but he may have been thinking of the abusive reception of *Unto this Last* by the *Saturday Review*, and of the epithets then applied to him: see Vol. XVII. p. xxviii.]

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to the Madonna have been always a violent offence; they are one of the parts of the Catholic faith which are openest to reasonable dispute, and least comprehensible by the average realistic and materialist temper of the Reformation. But after the most careful examination, neither as adversary nor as friend, of the influences of Catholicism for good and evil, I am persuaded that the worship of the Madonna has been one of its noblest and most vital graces, and has never been otherwise than productive of true holiness of life and purity of character. I do not enter into any question as to the truth or fallacy of the idea; I no more wish to defend the historical or theological position of the Madonna than that of St. Michael or St. Christopher; but I am certain that to the habit of reverent belief in, and contemplation of, the character ascribed to the heavenly hierarchies, we must ascribe the highest results yet achieved in human nature, and that it is neither Madonna-worship nor saint-worship, but the evangelical self-worship and hell-worship—gloating, with an imagination as unfounded as it is foul, over the torments of the damned, instead of the glories of the blest,—which have in reality degraded the languid powers of Christianity to their present state of shame and reproach. There has probably not been an innocent cottage home throughout the length and breadth of Europe during the whole period of vital Christianity, in which the imagined presence of the Madonna has not given sanctity to the humblest duties, and comfort to the sorest trials of the lives of women; and every brightest and loftiest achievement of the arts and strength of manhood has been the fulfilment of the assured prophecy of the poor Israelite maiden, “He that is mighty hath magnified me, and Holy is His name.”¹ What we are about to substitute for such magnifying in our modern wisdom, let the reader judge from two slight things that chanced to be noticed by me in my walk round Paris. I generally go first to Our Lady’s Church, for though the towers

¹ [Luke i. 49 (Prayer-book).]

and most part of the walls are now merely the modern model of the original building, much of the portal sculpture is still genuine, and especially the greater part of the lower arcades of the north-west door, where the common entrance is. I always held these such valuable pieces of the thirteenth-century work that I had them cast, in mass, some years ago, brought away casts, eight feet high by twelve wide, and gave them to the Architectural Museum.¹ So as I was examining these, and laboriously gleaning what was left of the old work among M. Viollet-le-Duc's fine fresh heads of animals and points of leaves,² I saw a brass plate in the back of one of the niches, where the improperly magnified saints used to be. At first I thought it was over one of the usual almsboxes which have a right to be at church entrances (if anywhere); but catching sight of an English word or two on it, I stopped to read, and read to the following effect:—

“F. du Larin,
office
of the
Victoria Pleasure Trips
And Excursions to Versailles.
Excursions to the Battle-fields round Paris.

“A four-horse coach with an English guide starts daily from Notre Dame Cathedral, at 10½ A.M. for Versailles, by the Bois de Boulogne, St. Cloud, Montretout, and Ville d'Avray. Back in Paris at 5½ P.M. Fares must be secured one day in advance at the entrance of Notre Dame.³

“The Manager, H. du Larin.”

“Magnificat anima mea Dominum, quia respexit humilitatem ancillæ Suæ.”⁴ Truly it seems to be time that God should again regard the lowliness of His handmaiden, now that she has become keeper of the coach-office for excursions to Versailles. The arrangement becomes still

¹ [See Vol. VIII. p. 13, and Vol. XII. p. lxxi.]

² [Viollet-le-Duc's "restoration" of the church was in progress for many years from 1845 onward.]

³ [See a reference to this announcement in *Mornings in Florence*, § 121 (Vol. XXIII. p.414).]

⁴ [Luke i. 46,48.]

more perfect in the objects of this Christian joyful pilgrimage (*from* Canterbury, as it were, instead of *to* it), the “Battle-fields round Paris”!

5. From Notre Dame I walked back into the livelier parts of the city, though in no very lively mood; but recovered some tranquillity in the Marche aux Fleurs, which is a pleasant spectacle in April, and then made some circuit of the Boulevards, where, as the Third Fors would have it, I suddenly came in view of one of the temples of the modern superstition, which is to replace Mariolatry. For it seems that human creatures *must* imagine something or some one in Apotheosis, and the Assumption of the Virgin, and Titian’s or Tintoret’s views on that matter being held reasonable no more, apotheosis of some other power follows as a matter of course. Here accordingly is one of the modern hymns on the Advent of Spring, which replace now in France the sweet Cathedral services of the Mois de Marie. It was printed in vast letters on a white sheet, dependent at the side of the porch or main entrance to the fur shop of the “Compagnie Anglo-Russe”:—

“Le printemps s’annonce avec son gracieux cortège de rayons et de fleurs. Adieu, l’hiver! C’en est bien fini! Et cependant il faut que toutes ces fourrures soient enlevées, vendues, données, dans ces 6 jours. C’est une aubaine inespérée, un placement fabuleux; car, qu’on ne l’oublie pas, la fourrure vraie, la belle, la riche, a toujours sa valeur intrinsèque. Et, comme couronnement de cette sorte d’APOTHÉOSE la C^{te}. Anglo-Russe remet gratis à tout acheteur un talisman merveilleux pour conserver la fourrure pendant 10 saisons.”

“Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them.”¹

The Anglo-Russian company having now superseded Divine labour in such matters, you have also, instead of the grand old Dragon-Devil with his “Ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil,” only a little weasel of a devil with an ermine tip to his tail, advising you “Ye shall be as Gods, buying your skins cheap.”

6. I am a simpleton, am I, to quote such an exploded

¹ [Genesis iii. 21; and for the next quotation, see *ibid.*, iii. 5.]

book as Genesis? My good wiseacre readers, I know as many flaws in the book of Genesis as the best of you, but I knew the book before I knew its flaws, while you know the flaws, and never have known the book, nor can know it. And it is at present much the worse for you; for indeed the stories of this book of Genesis have been the nursery tales of men mightiest whom the world has yet seen in art, and policy, and virtue, and none of you will write better stories for your children, yet awhile. And your little Cains will learn quickly enough to ask if they are their brother's keepers,¹ and your little Fathers of Canaan merrily enough to show their own father's nakedness without dread either of banishment or malediction;¹ but many a day will pass, and their evil generations vanish with it, in that sudden nothingness of the wicked, "He passed away, and lo, he was not," before one will again rise, of whose death there may remain the Divine tradition, "He walked with God, and was not, for God took him."² Apotheosis! How the dim hope of it haunts even the last degradation of men; and through the six thousand years from Enoch, and the vague Greek ages which dreamed of their twin-hero stars, declines, in this final stage of civilization, into dependence on the sweet promise of the Anglo-Russian tempter, with his ermine tail, "Ye shall be as Gods, and buy cat-skin cheap."

7. So it must be. I know it, my good wiseacres. You can have no more Queens of Heaven, nor assumptions of triumphing saints. Even your simple country Queen of May, whom once you worshipped for a goddess—has not little Mr. Faraday³ analysed her, and proved her to consist of charcoal and water, combined under what the Duke of Argyll calls the "reign of law"?⁴ Your once

¹ [Genesis iv. 9; ix.]

² [Psalms xxxvii. 36; Genesis v. 24.]

³ ["Physically Faraday was below the middle size, well-set, active, and with extraordinary animation of countenance" (Tyndall in the *Dictionary of National Biography*).]

⁴ [For other references to the Duke's book so entitled, see Vol. XXIII. p. 115; and Letters 42, § 13, and 50, § 12 (below, pp. 102, 263); 82, § 16 n., and 87, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 236, 368).]

fortune-guiding stars, which used to twinkle in a mysterious manner, and to make you wonder what they were,—everybody knows what they are now: only hydrogen gas, and they stink as they twinkle. My wiseacre acquaintances, it is very fine, doubtless, for you to know all these things, who have plenty of money in your pockets, and nothing particular to burden your chemical minds; but for the poor, who have nothing in their pockets, and the wretched, who have much on their hearts, what in the world is the good of knowing that the only heaven they have to go to is a large gasometer?

“Poor and wretched! you answer. “But when once everybody is convinced that heaven is a large gasometer, and when we have turned all the world into a small gasometer, and can drive round it by steam, and in forty minutes be back again where we were,¹—nobody will be poor or wretched any more. Sixty pounds on the square inch,—can anybody be wretched under that general application of high pressure?”²

(ASSISI, 15th April.)

8. Good wiseacres, yes; it seems to me, at least, more than probable: but if not, and you all find yourselves rich and merry, with steam legs and steel hearts, I am well assured there will be found yet room, where your telescopes have not reached, nor can,—grind you their lenses ever so finely,—room for the quiet souls, who choose for their part, poverty, with light and peace.

I am writing at a narrow window, which looks out on some broken tiles and a dead wall. A wall dead in the profoundest sense, you wiseacres would think it. Six hundred years old, and as strong as when it was built, and paying nobody any interest, and still less commission, on the cost of repair. Both sides of the street, or pathway

¹ [“I’ll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes.”]

—*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Act ii. sc. 1.]

² [See Letter 42, end of § 17 (p.105).]

rather,—it is not nine feet wide,—are similarly built with solid blocks of grey marble, arched rudely above the windows, with here and there a cross on the keystones.

If I chose to rise from my work and walk a hundred yards down this street (if one may so call the narrow path between grey walls, as quiet and lonely as a sheep-walk on Shap Fells), I should come to a small prison—like door;¹ and over the door is a tablet of white marble let into the grey, and on the tablet is written, in contracted Latin, what in English signifies:—

“Here, Bernard the Happy*
Received St. Francis of Assisi,
And saw him, in ecstasy.”

Good wiseacres, you believe nothing of the sort, do you? Nobody ever yet was in ecstasy, you think, till now, when they may buy cat-skin cheap?

9. Do you believe in Blackfriars Bridge, then; and admit that some day or other there must have been reason to call it “Black Friar’s”? As surely as the bridge stands over Thames, and St. Paul’s above it, these two men, Paul and Francis, had their ecstasies, in bygone days, concerning other matters than ermine tails; and still the same ecstasies, or effeminate sentiments, are possible to human creatures, believe it or not as you will. I am not now, whatever the *Pall Mall Gazette* may think,² an ecstatic person myself. But thirty years ago I knew once or twice what joy meant, and have not forgotten the feeling; nay, even so little a

* “Bernard the happy.” The Beato of Mont Oliveto; not Bernard of Clairvaux. The entire inscription is, “received St. Francis of Assisi to supper and bed”; but if I had written it so, it would have appeared that St. Francis’s ecstasy was in consequence of his getting some supper.

¹ [Now the Palazzo Sbaraglini. Ruskin’s note identifying “Bernard the Happy” with “the Beato of Monte Oliveto” (Bernard of Siena, who founded the Benedictine House of that place) is a mistake. The inscription refers to Bernard of Quintaville, the first companion of St. Francis; for the story of his inviting St. Francis to sup and lodge, see ch. ii. of the *Fioretti*.]

² [Here the reference is clearly to the article (April 23, 1867) referred to above (p. 81 *n.*).]

while as two years ago, I had it back again—for a day.¹ And I can assure you, good wiseacres, there is such a thing to be had; but not in cheap shops, nor, I was going to say, for money; yet in a certain sense it is buyable—by forsaking all that a man hath.² Buyable—literally enough—the freehold Elysian field at that price, but not a doit cheaper; and I believe, at this moment, the reason my voice has an uncertain sound, the reason that this design of mine stays unhelped, and that only a little group of men and women, moved chiefly by personal regard, stand with me in a course so plain and true, is that I have not yet given myself to it wholly, but have halted between good and evil, and sit still at the receipt of custom, and am always looking back from the plough.³

It is not wholly my fault this. There seem to me good reasons why I should go on with my work in Oxford; good reasons why I should have a house of my own with pictures and library; good reasons why I should still take interest from the bank;⁴ good reasons why I should make myself as comfortable as I can wherever I go, travel with two servants, and have a dish of game at dinner. It is true, indeed, that I have given the half of my goods and more to the poor;⁵ it is true also that the work in Oxford is not a matter of pride, but of duty with me; it is true that I think it wiser to live what seems to other people a rational and pleasant, not an enthusiastic, life; and that I serve my servants at least as much as they serve me. But, all this being so, I find there is yet something wrong; I have no peace, still less ecstasy. It seems to me as if one had indeed to wear camel's hair instead of dress coats before one can get that; and I was looking at St. Francis's camel's-hair coat yesterday (they have it still in the sacristy⁶), and

¹ [Probably in August 1872: see Vol. XXII. pp. xxviii., xxix.]

² [Luke xiv. 33.]

³ [See 1 Kings xviii. 21; Matthew ix. 9; and Luke ix. 62.]

⁴ [See Letter 21, § 18 (Vol. XXVII.p. 363), and 44, § 14 (below, p. 139); and compare Letter 80, § 15 (Vol. XXIX. p. 185).]

⁵ [Luke xix. 8.]

⁶ [Compare *Hortus Inclusus*, pp. 2–4 (pp.3-5 of ed. 3).]

I don't like the look of it at all; the Anglo-Russian Company's¹ wear is ever so much nicer,—let the devil at least have this due.

10. And he must have a little more due even than this. It is not at all clear to me how far the Beggar and Pauper Saint, whose marriage with the Lady Poverty I have come here to paint from Giotto's dream of it,²—how far, I say, the mighty work he did in the world was owing to his vow of poverty, or diminished by it. If he had been content to preach love alone, whether among poor or rich, and if he had understood that love, for all God's creatures, was one and the same blessing; and that, if he was right to take the doves out of the fowler's hand, that they might build their nests, he was himself wrong when he went out in the winter's night on the hills, and made for himself dolls of snow, and said, "Francis, these—behold—these are thy wife and thy children."³ If instead of quitting his father's trade, that he might nurse lepers, he had made his father's trade holy and pure, and honourable more than beggary, perhaps at this day the Black Friars might yet have had an unruined house by Thames shore, and the children of his native village not be standing in the porches of the temple built over his tomb, to ask alms of the infidel.

¹ [See above, p.84.]

² [See below, p. 163.]

³ ["By the breath of that infernal enemy which is wont to kindle the fire of concupiscence, he was assailed by a violent temptation. Then this holy lover of chastity . . . went out into the garden, and plunged into a heap of snow which had just then fallen. Having done this he gathered the snow in his hands, and made seven heaps, which setting before him, he thus discoursed with his inner man. 'Behold,' said he, 'this largest heap is thy wife; these four are thy two sons and thy two daughters; the other two are thy servant and thy handmaid; and for all these thou art bound to provide. Make haste, then, and provide clothing for them, lest they perish with cold. But if the solicitude for so many trouble thee, then be thou solicitous to serve one Lord alone' " (*The Life of S. Francis of Assisi, from the "Legenda Santi Francisci" of S. Bonaventure*. Edited, with a Preface, by Archbishop Manning, 1868, pp. 57–58). For his setting free the animals that were brought to him, see *ibid.*, pp. 102–108; his father, Pietro Bernardone, was a cotton merchant; for his nursing the lepers, see Vol. XXII. p. 409 n.]

LETTER 42

MISERICORDIA¹

1. I MUST construct my letters still, for a while, of swept-up fragments;² every day provokes me to write new matter; but I must not lose the fruit of the old days. Here is some worth picking up, though ill-ripened for want of sunshine (the little we had spending itself on the rain), last year.

1st August, 1873.

Not being able to work steadily this morning, because there was a rainbow half a mile broad, and violet-bright, on the shoulders of the Old Man of Coniston—(by calling it half a mile broad, I mean that half a mile's breadth of mountain was covered by it,—and by calling it violet-bright, I mean that the violet zone of it came pure against the grey rocks; and note, by the way, that essentially all the colours of the rainbow are secondary;—yellow exists only as a line—red as a line—blue as a line; but the zone itself is of varied orange, green, and violet),—not being able, I say, for steady work, I opened an old diary of 1849, and as the Third Fors would have it, at this extract from the *Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*.³

2. (Venice.)

“The Prince of Saxony went to see the Arsenal three days ago, waited on by a numerous nobility of both sexes; the *Bucentaur* was adorned and

¹ [See below, § 11. Rejected titles for this letter were “‘Let not Mercy and Truth forsake thee’ ” (Proverbs iii. 3: see § 13) and “‘Venice in her White Cravat’ ” (see § 5).]

² [See above, p. 62.]

³ [Letters from Venice, March 29, April 19, 1740: see pp. 283, 284, 285 of vol.ii. of *The Letters and Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu* (1837); for another reference to her letters from Venice, see Vol. IX. p. xxiv.]

launched, a magnificent collation given; and we sailed a little in it. I was in company with the Signora Justiniani Gradenigo and Signora Marina Crizzo. There were two cannons founded in his (the Prince of Saxony's) presence, and a galley built and launched in an hour's time." (Well may Dante speak of that busy Arsenal!¹)

"Last night there was a concert of voices and instruments at the Hospital of the Incurabili, where there were two girls that in the opinion of all people excel either Faustina or Cuzzoni.

"I am invited to-morrow to the Foscarini to dinner, which is to be followed by a concert and a ball."

The account of a regatta follows, in which the various nobles had boats costing £1000 sterling each, none less than £500, and enough of them to look like a little fleet. The Signora Pisani Mocenigo's represented the Chariot of the Night, drawn by four sea-horses, and showing the rising of the moon, accompanied with stars, the statues on each side representing the Hours, to the number of twenty-four.

Pleasant times, these, for Venice! one's *Bucentaur* launched, wherein to eat, buoyantly, a magnificent collation—beautiful ladies driving their ocean steeds in the Chariot of the Night—beautiful songs, at the Hospital of the Incurabili. Much bettered, these, from the rough days when one had to row and fight for life, thought Venice; better days still, in the nineteenth century, being—as she appears to believe now—in store for her.

3. You thought, I suppose, that in writing those numbers of *Fors* last year from Venice and Verona,² I was idling, or digressing?

Nothing of the kind. The business of *Fors* is to tell you of Venice and Verona; and many things of them.

You don't care about Venice and Verona? Of course not. Who does? And I beg you to observe that the day is coming when, exactly in the same sense, active working men will say to any antiquarian who purposes to tell them something of England, "We don't care about

¹ [*Inferno*, xxi. See Letter 18, § 12 (Vol. XXVII. p. 313).]

² [This passage was written in 1873, and the reference is to Letters of 1872: see Letters 19, 20, Vol. XXVII. pp. 320, 334.]

England.” And the antiquarian will answer, just as I have answered you now, “Of course not. Who does?”

4. Nay, the saying has been already said to me, and by a wise and good man. When I asked, at the end of my inaugural lecture at Oxford,¹ “Will you, youths of England, make your country again a royal throne of kings, a sceptred isle,² for all the world a source of light—a centre of peace?”—my University friends came to me, with grave faces, to remonstrate against irrelevant and Utopian topics of that nature being introduced in lectures on art;³ and a very dear American friend wrote to me, when I sent the lecture to him, in some such terms as these: “Why will you diminish your real influence for good, by speaking as if England could now take any dominant place in the world? How many millions, think you, are there here, of the activist spirits of their time, who care nothing for England, and would read no farther, after coming upon such a passage?”

That England deserves little care from any man nowadays, is fatally true; that in a century more she will be—where Venice is—among the dead of nations, is far more than probable. And yet—that you do not care for dead Venice, is the sign of your own ruin; and that the Americans do not care for dying England, is only the sign of their inferiority to her.

For this dead Venice once taught us to be merchants, sailors, and gentlemen; and this dying England taught the Americans all they have of speech, or thought, hitherto. What thoughts they have not learned from England are foolish thoughts; what words they have not learned from England, unseemly words; the vile among them not being able even to be humorous parrots, but only obscene mocking birds. An American republican woman, lately, describes a child which “like cherubim and seraphim continually did

¹ [*Lectures on Art*, § 28 (Vol. XX. p. 41).]

² [*King Richard II.*, Act ii. sc. 1.]

³ [Compare Vol. XX. p. xxviii.]

cry;”* such their feminine learning of the European fashions of “Te Deum”! And, as I tell you, Venice in like manner taught us, when she and we were honest, our marketing, and our manners. Then she began trading in pleasure, and souls of men, before us; followed that Babylonish trade¹ to her death,—we nothing loth to imitate, so plausible she was, in her mythic gondola, and Chariot of the Night! But where her pilotage has for the present carried her, and is like to carry *us*, it may be well to consider. And therefore I will ask you to glance back to my twentieth letter, giving account of the steam music, the modern Tasso’s echoes,² practised on her principal lagoon.³ That is her present manner, you observe, of “whistling *at her darg*.”⁴ But for festivity *after* work, or altogether superseding work—launching one’s adorned *Bucentaur* for collation—let us hear what she is doing in that kind.

5. From the Rinnovamento (Renewal, or Revival), “Gazette of the people of Venice” of 2nd July, 1872, I print, in my terminal notes [p. 104], a portion of one of their daily correspondent’s letters, describing his pleasures of the previous day, of which I here translate a few pregnant sentences:—

“I embarked on a little steamboat. It was elegant—it was vast. But its contents were enormously greater than its capacity. The little steamboat overflowed † with men, women, and boys. The Commandant, a proud young man, cried, ‘Come in, come in!’ and the crowd became always more close, and one could scarcely breathe” (the heroic exhortations of the proud youth leading his public to this painful result). “All at once a

* *Pall Mall Gazette*, July 31st, 1873.⁵

† “Rigurgitava”—gushed or gorged up; as a bottle which you have filled too full and too fast.

¹ [See Revelation xvii. 5.]

² [“In Venice, Tasso’s echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless gondolier.”

—*Childe Harold*, iv. 3.]

³ [See Letter 20, § 12 (Vol. XXVII. p. 341).]

⁴ [See Letter 32, § 20 (Vol. XXVII. p. 599).]

⁵ [In a review (p. 12) of *Haphazard*, by Kate Field.]

delicate person* of the piazza, feeling herself unwell, cried 'I suffocate.' The Commandant perceived that suffocation did veritably prevail, and gave the word of command, 'Enough.'

"In eighteen minutes I had the good fortune to land safe at the establishment, 'The Favourite.' And here my eyes opened for wonder. In truth, only a respectable force of will could have succeeded in transforming this place, only a few months ago still desert and uncultivated, into a site of delights. Long alleys, grassy carpets, small mountains, charming little banks, chalets, solitary and mysterious paths, and then an interminable covered way which conducts to the bathing establishment; and in that, attendants dressed in mariners' dresses, a most commodious basin, the finest linen, and the most regular and solicitous service.

"Surprised, and satisfied, I plunged myself cheerfully into the sea. After the bath, is prescribed a walk. Obedient to the dictates of hygiene, I take my returning way along the pleasant shore of the sea to 'The Favourite.' A chalet, or rather an immense salon, is become a concert-room. And, in fact, an excellent orchestra is executing therein most chosen pieces. The artists are all endued in dress coats, and wear white cravats. I hear with delight a pot-pourri from *Faust*. I then take a turn through the most vast park, and visit the Restaurant.

"To conclude. The Lido has no more need to become a place of delights. It is, in truth, already become so.

"All honour to the brave who have effected the marvellous transformation."

* *Sensale*, an interesting Venetian word. The fair on the Feast of the Ascension at Venice became in mellifluous brevity, "*Sensa*," and the most ornamental of the ware purchaseable at it, therefore, *Sensale*.

A "Holy-Thursday-Fairing," feeling herself unwell, would be the properest translation.¹

¹ [Ruskin in his copy notes this passage as one which he meant to "Correct." It is true that *Sensa* (shortened from *Ascensa*) has in Venetian the sense here explained (see G.Boerio's *Dizionario del Dialecto Veneziano*), and that *sensale* might thus mean a "fairing." But *sensale* is also a very common Italian word, meaning simply "a broker" or "dealer," and this is doubtless what *un sensale di piazza* here means. Rawdon Brown pointed out the error to Ruskin, who sent the following reply (the letter is inserted in Brown's copy of *Fors*, now in St. Mark's Library at Venice):—

"HÔTEL DE RUSSIE, ROME,

"6th May, 1874.

"MY DEAR BROWN,—I have your kind note about *Fors*, but I hope my reading may be the true one. None of the authorities you refer to were what I used; but I forget at this moment where I got the word. You know what a bother you had about the other slang word. Very certainly I found the particular meaning I give—about Ascension Day; and if it was not intended, it is the fault of the effeminate Broker who cried 'Io suffoco.' I am glad you find no worse mistake. The misprints are atrocious all through. I had no power of correcting press myself—left it to an Oxford friend.

"Ever your affectionate,

"J.R."

One misprint in this Letter was afterwards corrected by Ruskin: see Bibliographical Note, p. xxix. Others are noted in the list of "Variæ Lectiones."]

6. Onori ai bravi!—Honour to the brave! Yes; in all times, among all nations, that is entirely desirable. You know I told you, in last *Fors*, that to honour the brave dead was to be our second child's lesson.¹ None the less expedient if the brave we have to honour be alive, instead of long dead. Here are our modern Venetian troubadours, in white cravats, celebrating the victories of their Hardicanutes with collection of choicest melody—pot-pourri—hotch-potch, from *Faust*. And, indeed, is not this a notable conquest which resuscitated Venice has made of her Lido? Where all was vague sea-shore, now, behold, "little mountains, mysterious paths." Those unmanufactured mountains—Euganeans and Alps—seen against the sunset, are not enough for the vast mind of Venice born again; nor the canals between her palaces mysterious enough paths. Here are mountains to our perfect mind, and more solemn ways,—a new kingdom for us, conquered by the brave. Conquest, you observe also, just of the kind which in our *Times* newspaper is honoured always in like manner, "Private Enterprise." The only question is, whether the privacy of your enterprise is always as fearless of exposure as it used to be,—or even, the enterprise of it as enterprising. Let me tell you a little of the private enterprise of dead Venice, that you may compare it with that of the living.

7. You doubted me just now, probably, when I told you that Venice taught you to be sailors. You thought your Drakes and Grenvilles needed no such masters. No! but a hundred years before Sir Francis's time, the blind captain of a Venetian galley,—of one of those things which the Lady Mary saw built in an hour,²—won the empire of the East. You did fine things in the Baltic, and before Sebastopol, with your ironclads and your Woolwich infants, did you?³ Here was a piece of fighting done from the

¹ [Not *last Fors*, but see Letter 37, § 8 (p. 20); and compare Letter 9, § 12 (Vol. XXVII. p. 157).]

² [See above, § 2.]

³ [A figure of speech. The first ironclad, the *Warrior*, was launched December 29, 1860; for the "Woolwich Infant," made in 1870, see Letter 2, § 20 (Vol. XXVII. p. 43 n.), and compare, below, p. 153.]

deck of a rowed boat, which came to more good, it seems to me.

“The Duke of Venice had disposed his fleet in one line along the seawall (of Constantinople), and had cleared the battlements with his shot (of stones and arrows); but still the galleys dared not take ground. But the Duke of Venice, though he was old (ninety) and stone-blind, stood, all armed, at the head of his galley, and had the gonfalon of St. Mark before him; and he called to his people to ground his ship, or they should die for it. So they ran the ship aground, and leaped out, and carried St. Mark’s gonfalon to the shore before the Duke. Then the Venetians, seeing their Duke’s galley ashore, followed him; and they planted the flag of St. Mark on the walls, and took twenty-five towers.”¹

The good issue of which piece of pantaloon’s play was that the city itself, a little while after, with due help from the French, was taken, and that the crusading army proceeded thereon to elect a new Emperor of the Eastern Empire.

8. Which office six French Barons, and six Venetian, being appointed to bestow, and one of the French naming first the Duke of Venice, he had certainly been declared Emperor, but one of the Venetians themselves, Pantaleone Barbo, declaring that no man could be Duke of Venice, and Emperor too, gave his word for Baldwin of Flanders, to whom accordingly the throne was given; while to the Venetian State was offered, with the consent of all, if they chose to hold it—about a third of the whole Roman Empire!

Venice thereupon deliberates with herself. Her own present national territory—the true “State” of Venice—is a marsh, which you can see from end to end of;—some wooden houses, half afloat, and others wholly afloat, in the canals of it; and a total population, in round numbers,

¹ [This is an account of the capture of Constantinople in 1204 by Henry Dandolo. The towers are conspicuous in Domenico Tintoretto’s picture of the taking of Constantinople in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio in the Ducal Palace. The original authority, paraphrased in the text above, is that of an eye-witness: see the *Histoire de la Conquête de Constantinople par les Barons Français associez aux Venitiens l’an 1204*, by Geoffroy de Ville-Hardouin, Maréchal de Champagne, first printed in Paris, 1584. See § § 89, 90 of the English translation by T. Smith (1829).]

about as large as that of our parish of Lambeth. Venice feels some doubt whether, out of this wild duck's nest, and with that number of men, she can at once safely, and in all the world's sight, undertake to govern Lacedæmon, Ægina, Ægos Potamos, Crete, and half the Greek islands; nevertheless, she thinks she will try a little "private enterprise" upon them. So in 1207 the Venetian Senate published an edict by which there was granted to all Venetian citizens permission to arm, at their own expense, war-galleys, and to subdue, if they could manage it in that private manner, such islands and Greek towns of the Archipelago as might seem to them what we call "eligible residences," the Senate graciously giving them leave to keep whatever they could get. Whereupon certain Venetian merchants—proud young men—stood, as we see them standing now on their decks on the Riva, crying to the crowd, "Montate! Montate!"¹ and without any help from steam, or encumbrance from the markets of Ascension Day, rowed and sailed—somewhat *outside* the Lido.² Mark Dandolo took Gallipoli; Mark Sanudo, Naxos, Paros, and Melos;—(you have heard of marbles and Venuses coming from those places, have not you?)—Marin Dandolo, Andros; Andrea Ghisi, Micone and Scyros; Dominico Michieli, Ceos; and Philocola Navigieri, the island of Vulcan himself, Lemnos. Took them, and kept them also! (not a little to our present sorrow; for, being good Christians, these Venetian gentlemen made wild work among the Parian and Melian gods³). It was not till 1570 that the twenty-first Venetian Duke of Melos was driven out by the Turks, and the career of modern white-cravated Venice virtually begun.

¹ [Here Ruskin applies the description of the steamboat excursion to the Lido on Ascension Day: see §§ 5, 15 (pp. 93, 104).]

² [For fuller particulars, see Romanin, *Storia Documentata di Venezia*, vol. ii. part ii. p. 185, and F. C. Hodgson's *Early History of Venice*, pp. 421 *seq.* It was Filocolo Navigaioso who took Stalimene (Lemnos). There is an interesting discussion of the volcanic reputation which the island enjoyed in antiquity, and of its connexion with the Fire-god, in H. F. Tozer's *Islands of the Ægean*, pp. 269 *seq.*]

³ [See *ibid.*, p. 114, for a description of the Venetian fortress in Paros, put together from marbles of a temple. The "Venus of Milo" was, it will be remembered, found by a peasant in 1820 in the island of Melos.]

9. "Honour to the brave!" Yes, in God's name, and by all manner of means! And dishonour to the cowards: but, my good Italian and good English acquaintances, are you so sure, then, you know which is which? Nay, are you honestly willing to acknowledge there is any difference? Heaven be praised if you are!—but I thought your modern gospel was, that all were alike? Here's the *Punch* of last week lying beside me, for instance, with its normal piece of pathos upon the advertisements of death. Dual deaths this time; and pathetic epitaphs on the Bishop of Winchester and the Baron Bethell.¹ The best it can honestly say (and *Punch*, as far as I know papers, is an honest one²) is that the Bishop was a pleasant kind of person; and the best it can say for the Chancellor is, that he was witty;—but, fearing that something more might be expected, it smooths all down with a sop of popular varnish, "How good the worst of us!—how bad the best!"³ Alas, Mr. Punch, is it come to this? and is there to be no more knocking down, then? and is your last scene in future to be—shaking hands with the devil?—clerical pantaloons in white cravat asking a blessing on the reconciliation, and the drum and pipe finishing with a pot-pourri from *Faust*?

A popular tune, truly, everywhere, nowadays—"Devil's hotch-potch," and listened to "avec délices!" And, doubtless, pious Republicans on their death-beds will have a care to bequeath it, rightly played, to their children, before they go to hear it, divinely executed, in their own blessed country.

"How good the worst of us!—how bad the best!" Jeanie Deans,⁴ and St. Agnes, and the Holy-Thursday-fairing⁵ all the same!

¹ [*Punch*, August 2, 1873, vol. 65, p. 43. "Baron Bethell" is Ruskin's alliterative form of Richard Bethell, Baron Westbury.]

² [Compare Letter 86, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 337).]

³ [Compare *St. Mark's Rest*, § 85 (Vol. XXIV. p. 274), where Ruskin again quotes this line from *Punch*.]

⁴ [Compare Vol. XXVII. p. 564.]

⁵ [For "Holy-Thursday-fairing," see above, § 5 *n.*, p. 94.]

10. My good working readers, I will try to-day to put you more clearly in understanding of this modern gospel,—of what truth there is in it—for some there is,—and of what pestilent evil.

I call it a modern gospel: in its deepest truth it is as old as Christianity. “This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.”¹ And it was the most distinctive character of Christianity. Here was a new, astonishing religion indeed; one had heard before of righteousness; before of resurrection;—never before of mercy to sin, or fellowship with it.

But it is only in strictly modern times (that is to say, within the last hundred years) that this has been fixed on, by a large sect of thick-headed persons, as the *essence* of Christianity,—nay, as so much its essence, that to be an extremely sinful sinner is deliberately announced by them as the best of qualifications for becoming an extremely Christian Christian.

But all the teachings of Heaven are given—by sad law—in so obscure, nay, often in so ironical manner, that a blockhead necessarily reads them wrong. Very marvellous it is that Heaven, which really in one sense *is* merciful to sinners, is in no sense merciful to fools,² but even lays pitfalls for them, and inevitable snares.³

11. Again and again, in the New Testament, the publican (supposed at once traitor to his country, and thief) and the harlot are made the companions of Christ. She out of whom He had cast seven devils, loves Him best, sees Him first, after His resurrection.⁴ The sting of that *old* verse, “When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst to him, and hast been partaker with adulterers,” seems done away with. Adultery itself uncondemned,—for, behold, in your hearts is not every one of you alike? “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.” And so,

¹ [Luke xv. 2.]

² [Compare *Ethics of the Dust*, § 51 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 265–266).]

³ [See Letter 53, §§ 4–8 (pp. 319–322); and compare Vol. V. p. liii.]

⁴ [See Mark xvi. 9. The other Bible references in § 11 are Psalms l. 18; John viii. 7; 2 Samuel xii. 5, 6; Matthew v. 7; and Luke vii. 47.]

and so, no more stones shall be cast nowadays; and here,¹ on the top of our epitaph on the Bishop, lies a notice of the questionable sentence which hanged a man for beating his wife to death with a stick. “The jury recommended him strongly to mercy.”

They did so, because they knew not, in their own hearts, what mercy meant. They were afraid to do anything so extremely compromising and disagreeable as causing a man to be hanged,—had no “pity” for any creatures beaten to death—wives, or beasts; but only a cowardly fear of commanding death, where it was due. Your modern conscience will not incur the responsibility of shortening the hourly more guilty life of a single rogue;² but will contentedly fire a salvo of mitrailleuses into a regiment of honest men—leaving Providence to guide the shot. But let us fasten on the word they abused, and understand it. Mercy—*misericordia*:³ it does not in the least mean forgiveness of sins,—it means pity of sorrows. In that very instance which the Evangelicals are so fond of quoting—the adultery of David—it is not the Passion for which he is to be judged, but the *want* of Passion,—the want of Pity. *This* he is to judge himself for, by his own mouth:—“As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die,—because he hath done this thing, and because he had *no pity*.”

And you will find, alike throughout the record of the Law and the promises of the Gospel, that there is, indeed, forgiveness with God, and Christ, for the passing sins of the hot heart, but none for the eternal and inherent sin of the cold. “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy”;—find it you written anywhere that the *unmerciful* shall? “Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much.” But have you record of any one’s sins being forgiven who loved not at all?

¹ [That is, in Ruskin’s chance pile of cuttings from various newspapers.]

² [Compare Letter 35 (Vol. XXVII. p. 667), and the other passages there given.]

³ [The title to this Letter.]

12. I opened my oldest Bible just now, to look for the accurate words of David about the killed lamb;—a small, closely and very neatly printed volume it is, printed in Edinburgh by Sir D. Hunter Blair and J. Bruce, Printers to the King's Most Excellent Majesty in 1816. Yellow, now, with age; and flexible, but not unclean, with much use;¹ except that the lower corners of the pages at 8th of 1st Kings, and 32nd Deuteronomy are worn somewhat thin and dark, the learning of these two chapters having cost me much pains. My mother's list of the chapters, with which, learned every syllable accurately, she established my soul in life,² has just fallen out of it. And as probably the sagacious reader has already perceived that these letters are written in their irregular way, among other reasons, that they may contain, as the relation may become apposite, so much of autobiography as it seems to me desirable to write, I will take what indulgence the sagacious reader will give me, for printing the list thus accidentally occurrent:—

| | | |
|-------------|----------|---|
| Exodus, | chapters | 15th and 20th. |
| 2 Samuel | " | 1st, from 17th verse to the end. |
| 1 Kings | " | 8th. |
| Psalms | " | 23rd, 32nd, 90th, 91st, 103rd, 112th, 119th, 139th. |
| Proverbs | " | 2nd, 3rd, 8th, 12th. |
| Isaiah | " | 58th. |
| Matthew | " | 5th, 6th, 7th. |
| Acts | " | 26th. |
| 1 | " | 13th, 15th. |
| Corinthians | | |
| James | " | 4th. |
| Revelation | " | 5th, 6th. |

And truly, though I have picked up the elements of a little further knowledge,—in mathematics, meteorology, and the like, in after life,—and owe not a little to the

¹ [For a reference to a misprint in earlier editions, see, again, the Bibliographical Note, p. xxix.]

² [§ 12 of this Letter was used by Ruskin when writing *Præterita*, where it appears, slightly revised, as the first portion of vol. i. § 48, following upon the passage in Letter 33, § 13 (Vol. XXVII. p. 617). An explanatory note is appended in *Præterita* to the passage "established my soul in life." His autobiographical notes are resumed in Letter 46, § 2 (p. 170).]

teaching of many people, this maternal installation of my mind in that property of chapters, I count very confidently the most precious, and, on the whole, the one essential part, of all my education.

13. For the chapters became, indeed, strictly conclusive and productive to me in all modes of thought; and the body of divinity they contain, acceptable through all fear or doubt: nor, through any fear or doubt or fault have I ever lost my loyalty to them, nor betrayed the first command in the one I was made to repeat oftenest, “Let not Mercy and Truth forsake Thee.”¹

And at my present age of fifty-five, in spite of some enlarged observations of what modern philosophers call the Reign of Law,² I perceive more distinctly than ever the Reign of a Spirit of Mercy and Truth,—infinite in pardon and purification for its wandering and faultful children, who have yet Love in their hearts; and altogether adverse and implacable to its perverse and lying enemies, who have resolute hatred in their hearts, and resolute falsehood on their lips.

14. This assertion of the existence of a Spirit of Mercy and Truth, as the master first of the Law of Life, and then of the methods of knowledge and labour by which it is sustained, and which the *Saturday Review* calls the effeminate sentimentality of Mr. Ruskin’s political economy,³ is accurately, you will observe, reversed by the assertion of the Predatory and Carnivorous—or, in plainer English, flesh-eating spirit in Man himself, as the regulator of modern civilization, in the paper read by the Secretary at the Social Science meeting in Glasgow, 1860.⁴ Out

¹ [Proverbs iii. 3.]

² [See Letter 41, § 7 (p. 85).]

³ [See Letter 41, § 3 (p. 81).]

⁴ [Further extracts from this paper are given in Letter 45, § 14 (p. 159); see also, above, p. 53, and below, pp. 154, 310. The author was Mr. T. J. Dunning (not the Secretary, who was Mr. G. W. Hastings). He read a paper, “which has been printed in a separate form, ‘On the Predatory Instinct of Man, considered in relation to the Science of Social Economy’ “ (*Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science*, 1860, p. 884). The separate publication of the paper has, however, not been traced.]

of which the following fundamental passage may stand for sufficient and permanent example of the existent, practical, and unsentimental English mind, being the most vile sentence which I have ever seen in the literature of any country or time:—

“As no one will deny that Man possesses carnivorous teeth, or that all animals that possess them are more or less predatory, it is unnecessary to argue, *à priori*, that a predatory instinct naturally follows from such organization. It is our intention here to show how this inevitable result operates on civilized existence by its being one of the conditions of Man’s nature, and, consequently, of all arrangements of civilized society.”

The paper proceeds, and is entirely constructed, on the assumption that the predatory spirit is not only one of the conditions of man’s nature, but the particular condition on which the arrangements of Society are to be founded. For “Reason would immediately suggest to one of superior strength, that however desirable it might be to take possession by violence, of what another had laboured to produce, he might be treated in the same way by one stronger than himself, to which he, of course, would have great objection. In order, therefore, to prevent or put a stop to a practice which each would object to in his own case,” etc., etc. And so the Social Science interpreter proceeds to sing the present non-sentimental Proverbs and Psalms of England, trumpets also and shawms¹—and steam whistles. And there is concert of voices and instruments at the Hospital of the Incurabili, and Progress—indubitably—in Chariots of the Night.²

¹ [Psalms xcvi. 7 (Prayer-book).]

² [See above, § 2, p. 91.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

CORRIERE DEI BAGNI

15. M'IMBARCAI su di un vaporetto; era elegante, era vasto, ma il suo contenuto era enormemente superiore al contenente; il vaporetto rigurgitava di uomini, di donne, e di ragazzi.

Il comandante, un fiero giovanotto, gridava: *Montate! Montate!* e la calca si faceva sempre più fitta, ed appena si poteva respirare.

Tutto ad un tratto un sensale di piazza si senti venir male, e gridò; *io soffoco!* Il comandante si accorse che si soffocava davvero, ed ordinò; *basta!*

Il vapore allora si avvò (*sic*) ed io rimasi stipato fra la folla per diciotto minuti, in capo ai quali ebbi la buona ventura di sbarcare incolume sul pontile dello stabilimento la *Favorita*—Il pontile è lunghissimo, ma elegante e coperto. Il sole per conseguenza non da nessuna noia.

Una strada che, fino a quando non sia migliorata, non consi glierei di percorrere a chi non abbia i piedi in perfetto stato, conduce al parco della Stabilimento Bagni del signor Delahant—E qui i miei occhi si aprirono per la meraviglia. E diffatti, solo una rispettabile forza di volontà ed operosità potè riuscire a trasformare quel luogo, pochi mesi fa ancora deserto ed incolto, in un sito di delizie.—Lunghi viali, tappeti erbosi, montagnole, banchine, chalet, strade solitarie e misteriose, lumi, spalti, e poi un interminabile pergolato che conduce allo stabilimento bagni, ed in questo inservienti *vestiti alla marinara*, comodissima vasca, biancheria finissima, e servizio regolare e premuroso.

Sorpreso e contento, mi tuffo allegramente nel mare.

Dopo il bagno è prescritta una passeggiata. Ossequiente ai dettami dell'igiene, riprendo la via e lungo la piacevole spiaggia del mare ritorno alla *Favorita*.

Un chalet, o piuttosto una sala immensa, addobbata con origi nalità e ricchezza, e divenuta una sala di concerto. Diffatti una eccellente orchestra sta eseguendo pezzi sceltissimi.

Gli artisti indossano tutti la marsina e la cravatta bianca. Ascolto con delizia un *potpourri* del *Faust* e poi torno a girare per il vastissimo parco e visito il *Restaurant*.

Concludeno, il Lido non ha più bisogno di diventare un luogo di delizie; esse lo e in verità diggia diventato, e fra breve i comodi bagni del Lido di Venezia saranno fra i più famosi d'Italia.

Onore ai bravi che hanno operata la meravigliosa trasformazione!

Il Rinnovamento, Gazzetta del Popolo di Venezia (2nd July, 1872).¹

16. This following part of a useful letter, dated 19th March, 1873, ought to have been printed before now:—

“SIR,—Will you permit me to respectfully call your attention to a certain circumstance which has, not unlikely, something to do with the failure (if failure it is) of your appeal for the St. George's Fund?

“At page 22 of *Fors Clavigera* for May, 1871,² your words were, ‘Will any such give a tenth of what they have *and* of what they earn?’ But in May of the following year, at page 8,³ the subject is referred to as the giving of ‘the tenth of

¹ [See above, § 5.]

² [Letter 5, § 19 of this edition (Vol. XXVII. p. 95).]

³ [Letter 17, § 6 of this edition (*ibid.*, p. 296).]

what they have, or make.' The two passages are open to widely differing interpretations. Moreover, none of the sums received appear to have any relation to 'tenths' either of earnings or possessions.

"Is it not probable that the majority of your readers understood you either to mean literally what you said, or to mean nothing but jest? They would naturally ask themselves, 'Must it be a tenth of both, or nothing?' 'A tenth of either?' Or, 'After all, only what we feel able to give?' Their perplexity would lead to the giving of nothing. As nobody who has a pecuniary title to ask for an explanation appears to have called your attention to the subject, I, who have no such title, do so now,—feeling impelled thereto by the hint in this month's *Fors* of the possible 'non-continuance of the work.'

"May I presume to add one word more? Last Monday's *Times* (March 17th) gave a report of a Working Men's Meeting on the present political crisis.¹ One of the speakers said 'he wanted every working man to be free.' And his idea of freedom he explained to be that all workmen should be at liberty 'to leave their work at a moment's notice.' This, as I have reason to know, is one of the things which working men have got into their heads, and which the newspapers 'get their living by asserting.'

17. Lastly, the present English notion of civilizing China by inches, may be worth keeping record of:—

"We have Philistines out here, and a Philistine out here is a perfect Goliath. When he imagines that anything is wrong, he says—let it be a Coolie or an Emperor—'Give him a thrashing.' The men of this class here propose their usual remedy: 'Let us have a war, and give the Chinese a good licking, and then we shall have the audience question² granted, and everything else will follow.' This includes opening up the country for trade, and civilizing the people, which according to their theories can be best done by 'thrashing them.' The missionaries are working to civilize the people here in another way—that is, by the usual plan of tracts and preaching; but their system is not much in favour, for they make such very small progress among the 360,000,000, the conversion of which is their problem. The man of business wants the country opened up to trade, wants manufactures introduced, the mineral wealth to be used, and generally speaking the resources of the country to be developed, 'and that sort of thing, you know—that's the real way to civilize them.' This, of course, implies a multitudinous breed of Mr. Ruskin's demons, or machinery, to accomplish all this. I am here giving the tone of the ideas I hear expressed around me. It was only the other day that I heard some of these various points talked over. We were sailing on the river in a steam launch, which was making the air impure with its smoke, snorting in a high-pressure way, and whistling as steam launches are wont to do. The scene was appropriate to the conversation, for we were among a forest of great junks—most quaint and picturesque they looked—so old-fashioned they seemed, that Noah's Ark, had it been there, would have had a much more modern look about it. My friend, to whom the launch belonged, and who is in the machinery line himself, gave his opinion. He began by giving a significant movement of his head in the direction of the uncouth-looking junks, and then pointing to his own craft with its engine, said 'he did not believe much in war, and the missionaries were not of much account. This is the thing to do it,' he added, pointing to the launch; 'let us get at them with this sort of article, and steam at sixty pounds on the square inch; that would soon do it: that's the thing to civilize them—sixty pounds on the square inch.' "

¹ [The resignation of Mr. Gladstone on the defeat of the Irish University Bill, and Mr. Disraeli's refusal to take office; whereupon Mr. Gladstone returned to office, with a reconstructed Cabinet.]

² [The question of the right of the representatives of foreign powers to claim audience of the Emperor. The right had been conceded on June 29, 1873.]

LETTER 43

THE CHÂTEAU-ROUGE. FRENCH FREEDOM¹

ROME, *Corpus-Domini*, 1874.

1. I WROTE, for a preface to the index at the end of the second volume of *Fors*, part of an abstract of what had been then stated in the course of this work. Fate would not let me finish it; but what was done will be useful now, and shall begin my letter for this month. Completing three and a half volumes of *Fors*, it may contain a more definite statement of its purpose than any given hitherto; though I have no intention of explaining that purpose entirely, until it is in sufficient degree accomplished. I have a house to build; but none shall mock me by saying I was not able to finish it,² nor be vexed by not finding in it the rooms they expected. But the current and continual purpose of *Fors Clavigera* is to explain the powers of Chance, or Fortune (Fors), as she offers to men the conditions of prosperity; and as these conditions are accepted or refused, nails down and fastens their fate for ever, being thus “Clavigera,”—“nail-bearing.”³ The image is one familiar in mythology: my own conception of it was first got from Horace,⁴ and developed by steady effort to read history

¹ [For the title, see the extract from Gaboriau in § 8. “The Message from Assisi” was a rejected title for this letter, and “Franchise” was discarded in favour of “French Freedom.”]

² [See Luke xiv. 30.]

³ [See Letter 2, § 2 (Vol. XXVII. p. 28).]

⁴ [See *Odes*, i. 35:—

“Te semper anteit saeva Necessitas
Clavos trabales et cuneos manu
Gestans aëna, nec severus
Uncus abest liquidumque plumbum.”

For a note on this passage, see the Introduction to Vol. XXVII. (p. xix.).]

with impartiality, and to observe the lives of men around me with charity. "How you may make your fortune, or mar it," is the expansion of the title.

Certain authoritative conditions of life, of its happiness, and its honour, are therefore stated, in this book, as far as they may be, conclusively and indisputably, at present known. I do not enter into any debates, nor advance any opinions.¹ With what is debatable I am unconcerned; and when I only have opinions about things, I do not talk about them. I attack only what cannot on any possible ground be defended; and state only what I know to be incontrovertibly true.

You will find, as you read *Fors* more, that it differs curiously from most modern books in this. Modern fashion is, that the moment a man strikes some little lucifer match, or is hit by any form of fancy, he begins advertising his lucifer match, and fighting for his fancy, totally ignoring the existing sunshine, and the existing substances of things. But I have no matches to sell, no fancies to fight for. All that I have to say is that the day is in heaven, and rock and wood on earth, and that you must see by the one, and work with the other. You have heard as much before, perhaps. I hope you have; I should be ashamed if there were anything in *Fors* which had not been said before,—and that a thousand times, and a thousand times of times,—there is nothing in it, nor ever will be in it, but common truths, as clear to honest mankind as their daily sunrise, as necessary as their daily bread; and which the fools who deny can only live, themselves, because other men know and obey.

You will therefore find that whatever is set down in *Fors* for you is assuredly true,—inevitable,—trustworthy to the uttermost,—however strange.* Not because I have any

* Observe, this is only asserted of its main principles; not of minor and accessory points. I may be entirely wrong in the explanation of a

¹ [Compare Letter 6, §§ 2, 3 (Vol. XXVII. p. 99).]

power of knowing more than other people, but simply because I have taken the trouble to ascertain what they also may ascertain if they choose. Compare on this point, Letter 6, §§ 2, 3.¹

2. The following rough abstract of the contents of the first seven letters may assist the reader in their use.

LETTER I. Men's prosperity is in their own hands; and no forms of government are, in themselves, of the least use. The first beginnings of prosperity must be in getting food, clothes, and fuel. These cannot be got either by the fine arts, or the military arts. Neither painting nor fighting feed men; nor can capital, in the form of money or machinery, feed them. All capital is imaginary or unimportant, except the quantity of food existing in the world at any given moment. Finally, men cannot live by lending money to each other, and the conditions of such loan at present are absurd and deadly.*

LETTER II. The nature of Rent. It is an exaction, by force of hand, for the maintenance of Squires: but had better at present be left to them. The nature of useful and useless employment. When employment is given by capitalists, it is sometimes useful, but oftener useless; sometimes moralizing, but oftener demoralizing. And we had therefore better employ ourselves, without any appeal to the capitalists (§ 21); and to do this successfully, it must be with three resolutions; namely, to be

text, or mistake the parish schools of St. Matthias for St. Matthew's,² over and over again. I have so large a field to work in that this cannot be helped. But none of these minor errors are of the least consequence to the business in hand.

* See first article in the Notes and Correspondence to this number [p. 121].

¹ [Vol. XXVII. pp. 99, 100. For an earlier summary of some of the contents of *Fors*, see Letter 22, §§ 6–21 (*ibid.*, pp. 375 *seq.*.)]

² [See Letters 30, § 9, and 32, § 26 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 558, 603).]

personally honest, socially helpful, and conditionally obedient (§ 22): explained in Letter 7, § 15 to end.

LETTER III. The power of Fate is independent of the Moral Law, but never supersedes it. Virtue ceases to be such, if expecting reward: it is therefore never materially rewarded. (I ought to have said, except as one of the appointed means of physical and mental health.) The Fates of England, and proper mode of studying them. Stories of Henry II. and Richard I.

LETTER IV. The value and nature of Education. It may be good, bad,—or neither the one nor the other. Knowledge is not education, and can neither make us happy nor rich. Opening discussion of the nature and use of riches. Gold and diamonds are not riches, and the reader is challenged to specify their use. Opening discussion of the origin of wealth. It does not fall from heaven (compare Letter 7, § 14), but is certainly obtainable, and has been generally obtained, by pillage of the poor. Modes in which education in virtue has been made costly to them, and education in vice cheap. (§ 12.)

LETTER V. The powers of Production. Extremity of modern folly in supposing there can be over-production. The power of machines. They cannot increase the possibilities of life, but only the possibilities of idleness. (§ 10.) The things which are essential to life are mainly three material ones and three spiritual ones. First sketch of the proposed action of St. George's Company.

LETTER VI. The Elysium of modern days. This letter, written under the excitement of continual news of the revolution in Paris, is desultory, and limits itself to noticing some of the causes of that revolution: chiefly the idleness, disobedience, and covetousness of the richer and middle classes.

LETTER VII. The Elysium of ancient days. The definitions of true, and spurious, Communism. Explanation of the design of true Communism, in Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*. This letter, though treating of matters necessary to the whole work, yet introduces them prematurely, being written, incidentally, upon the ruin of Paris.

ASSISI, 18th May, 1874.

3. So ended, as Fors would have it, my abstraction, which I see Fors had her reason for stopping me in; else the abstraction would have needed farther abstracting. As it is, the reader may find in it the real gist of the remaining letters, and discern what a stiff business we have in hand,—rent, capital, and interest, all to be attacked at once! and a method of education shown to be possible in virtue, as cheaply as in vice!

I should have got my business, stiff though it may be, farther forward by this time, but for that same revolution in Paris, and burning of the Tuileries,¹ which greatly confused my plan by showing me how much baser the human material I had to deal with, was, than I thought in beginning.

That a Christian army (or, at least, one which Saracens would have ranked with that they attacked, under the general name of Franks) should fiercely devastate and rob an entire kingdom laid at their mercy by the worst distress;—that the first use made by this distressed country of the defeat of its armies would be to overthrow its government; and that, when its metropolis had all but perished in conflagration during the contest between its army and mob, no warning should be taken by other civilized societies, but all go trotting on again, next week, in their own several roads to ruin, persistently, as they had trotted before,²

¹ [For earlier references in *Fors* to these events, see Letters 5, §§ 15, 17; 6, § 1; 8, § 2; 12, § 13 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 91–94, 98, 133, 208); and 40, § 7 (above, p. 69). See also Vol. XX. p. 199, and the other passages there noted.]

² [For the doctrine of *laissez faire, laissez passer*, see Vol. XVII. p. 285.]

—bells jingling, and whips cracking,—these things greatly appalled me, finding I had only slime to build with instead of mortar;¹ and shook my plan partly out of shape.

4. The frightfullest thing of all, to my mind, was the German temper, in its naïve selfishness; on which point, having been brought round again to it in my last letter,² I have now somewhat more to say.

In the *Pall Mall Gazette* of 7th March, this year, under the head of “This Evening’s News,” appeared an article of which I here reprint the opening portion:—

The well-known Hungarian author, Maurus Jokai, is at present a visitor in the German capital. As a man of note he easily obtained access to Prince Bismarck’s study, where an interesting conversation took place, which M. Jokai reports pretty fully to the Hungarian journal the *Hon*:—

“The Prince was, as usual, easy in his manner, and communicative, and put a stop at the very outset to the Hungarian’s attempt at ceremony. M. Jokai humorously remarked upon the prevalence of ‘iron’ in the surroundings of the ‘iron’ Prince. Among other things, there is an iron couch, and an iron safe, in which the Chancellor appears to keep his cigars. Prince Bismarck was struck by the youthful appearance of his guest, who is ten years his junior, but whose writings he remembers to have seen reviewed long ago, in the *Augsburg Gazette* (at that time still, the Chancellor said, a clever paper) when he bore a lieutenant’s commission. In the ensuing conversation, Prince Bismarck pointed out the paramount necessity to Europe of a consolidated State in the position of Austro-Hungary. It was mainly on that account that he concluded peace with so great despatch in 1866. Small independent States in the East would be a misfortune to Europe. Austria and Hungary must realise their mutual interdependence, and the necessity of being one. However, the dualist system of government must be preserved, because the task of developing the State, which on this side of the Leitha falls to the Germans, beyond that river naturally falls to the Magyars. The notion that Germany has an inclination to annex more land, Prince Bismarck designated as a myth. God preserve the Germans from such a wish! Whatever more territory they might acquire would probably be undermined by Papal influence, and they have enough of that already. Should the Germans of Austria want to be annexed by Germany, the Chancellor would feel inclined to declare war against them for that wish alone. A German Minister who should conceive the desire to annex part of Austria would deserve to be hanged—a punishment the Prince indicated by gesture. He does not wish to annex even a square foot of fresh territory, not as much as two pencils he kept on playing with during the conversation would cover. Those pencils, however, M. Jokai remarks, were big enough to serve as walking-sticks, and on the map they would have reached quite from Berlin to Trieste. Prince

¹ [Genesis xi. 3.]

² [Not *last Letter*, but Letter 40, § 7, p. 68.]

Bismarck went on to justify his annexation of Alsace-Lorraine by geographical necessity. Otherwise he would rather not have grafted the French twig upon the German tree.

“THE FRENCH ARE ENEMIES NEVER TO BE APPEASED. *Take away from them the cook, the tailor, and the hairdresser, and what remains of them is a copper-coloured Indian.*”

Now it does not matter whether Prince Bismarck ever said this, or not. That the saying should be attributed to him in a leading journal, without indication of doubt or surprise, is enough to show what the German temper is publicly recognized to be. And observe what a sentence it is—thus attributed to him. The French are only copper-coloured Indians, finely dressed. This said of the nation which gave us Charlemagne, St. Louis, St. Bernard, and Joan of Arc; which founded the central type of chivalry in the myth of Roland;¹ which showed the utmost height of valour yet recorded in history, in the literal life of Guiscard;² and which built Chartres Cathedral!

5. But the French are not what they were! No; nor the English, for that matter; probably we have fallen the farther of the two: meantime the French still retain, at the root, the qualities they always had; and of one of these, a highly curious and commendable one, I wish you to take some note to-day.

Among the minor nursery tales with which my mother allowed me to relieve the study of the great nursery tale of Genesis, my favourite was Miss Edgeworth's *Frank*. The authoress chose this for the boy's name, because she meant him to be a type of Frankness, or openness of heart:—truth of heart, that is to say, *liking* to lay itself open. You are in the habit, I believe, some of you, still, of speaking occasionally of English Frankness;—not recognizing, through the hard clink of the letter K, that you are only talking, all the while, of English Frenchness. Still less when you count your cargoes of gold from San

¹ [Compare Vol. XXII. p. 287, and Vol. XXIII. p. 116 *n.*]

² [See Vol. XXIV. p. 432.]

Francisco, do you pause to reflect what San means, or what Francis means, without the Co;—or how it came to pass that the power of this mountain town of Assisi, where not only no gold can be dug, but where St. Francis forbade his Company to dig it anywhere else—came to give names to Devil's towns far across the Atlantic—(and by the way you may note how clumsy the Devil is at christening; for if by chance he gets a fresh York all to himself, he never has any cleverer notion than to call it "New York"; and in fact, having no mother-wit from his dam, is obliged very often to put up with the old names which were given by Christians,—Nombre di Dios, Trinidad, Vera Cruz, and the like, even when he has all his own way with everything else in the places, but their names).

6. But to return. You have lately had a fine notion,—have you not?—of English Liberty as opposed to French Slavery.

Well, whatever your English liberties may be, the French knew what the word meant, before you. For France, if you will consider of it, means nothing else than the Country of Franks;—the country of a race so intensely Free that they for evermore gave name to Freedom.¹ The Greeks sometimes got their own way, as a mob; but nobody, meaning to talk of liberty, calls it "Greekness." The Romans knew better what Libertas meant, and their word for it has become common enough, in that straitened form, on your English tongue; but nobody calls it "Romanness." But at last comes a nation called the Franks; and they are so inherently free and noble in their natures, that their name becomes the word for the virtue; and when you now want to talk of freedom of heart, you say Frankness, and for the last political privilege which you have it so much in your English minds to get, you haven't so much as an English word, but must call it by the French one, "Franchise."*

* See second note at end of this letter [p. 122].

¹ [Compare Lecture VIII. of *Val d' Arno*, Vol. XXIII. pp. 124 *seq.*.]
XXVIII.

7. “Freedom of *heart*,” you observe, I say. Not the English freedom of Insolence, according to Mr. B. (see above, Letter 29¹), but pure French openness of heart, Fanchette’s and her husband’s frankness, the source of joy, and courtesy, and civility, and passing softness of human meeting of kindly glance with glance. Of which Franchise, in her own spirit Person, here is the picture for you, from the French *Romance of the Rose*,—a picture which English Chaucer was thankful to copy.²

“And after all those others came Franchise,
 Who was not brown, nor grey,
 But she was white as snow.
 And she had not the nose of an Orleanois.
 Aussi had she the nose long and straight.
 Eyes green, and laughing—vaulted eyebrows;
 She had her hair blonde and long,
 And she was simple as a dove.
 The body she had sweet, and brightly bred;
 And she dared not do, nor say
 To any one, anything she ought not.
 And if she knew of any man
 Who was in sorrow for love of her,
 So soon she had great pity for him,
 For she had the heart so pitiful,
 And so sweet and so lovely,
 That no one suffered pain about her,
 But she would help him all she could.
 And she wore a surquanye
 Which was of no coarse cloth;
 There’s none so rich as far as Arras.
 And it was so gathered up, and so joined together,
 That there was not a single point of it
 Which was not set in its exact place, rightly.
 Much well was dressed Franchise,
 For no robe is so pretty
 As the surquanye for a demoiselle.
 A girl is more gentle and more darling
 In surquanye than in coat,
 And the white surquanye
 Signifies that sweet and frank
 Is she who puts it on her.”

¹ [Letter 29, §§ 12, 13 (Vol. XXVII. p. 539). “Fanchette” is a slip of the pen for “Fanchon” (her lover’s name in Moore’s book is Dubois): see *ibid.*, p. 541.]

² [Ruskin here gives a literal translation: see lines 1211–1244 in Chaucer’s *Romaunt of the Rose*. For the first few lines, compare *Ariadne Florentina*, § 26 (Vol. XXII. p. 314).]

8. May I ask you now to take to heart those two lines of this French description of Frenchness:—

“And she dared not do, nor say
To any one, anything she ought not.”

That is not your modern notion of Frenchness, or franchise, or libertas, or liberty—for all these are synonyms for the same virtue. And yet the strange thing is that the lowest types of the modern French grisette are the precise corruption of this beautiful Franchise: and still retain, at their worst, some of the grand old qualities; the absolute sources of corruption being the neglect of their childhood by the upper classes, the abandonment to their own resources, and the development therefore of “Liberty and Independence,” in your beautiful English, *not* French, sense.

“Livree à elle-meme depuis l’âge de treize ans, habituée à ne compter que sur elle seule, elle avait de la vie un expérience dont j’étais confondue. De ce Paris où elle était née, elle savait tout, elle connaissait tout. . . .

Je n’avais pas idée d’une si complète absence de sens moral, d’une si inconsciente dépravation, d’une impudeur si effrontement naïve.

La règle de sa conduite, c’était sa fantaisie, son instinct, le caprice du moment.

Elle aimait les longues stations dans les cafés, les mélodrames entremêlés de chopines et d’oranges pendant les entr’actes, les parties de cannot à Asnières, et surtout, et avant tout, le bal.

Elle était comme chez elle à l’Elysée—Montmartre et au Château-Rouge;¹ elle y connaissait tout le monde, le chef d’orchestre la saluait, ce dont elle était extraordinairement fière, et quantité de gens la tutoyaient.

Je l’accompagnais partout, dans les commencements, et bien que je n’étais pas précisément naïve, ni gênée par les scrupules de mon éducation, je fus tellement consternée de l’incroyable désordre de sa vie, que je ne pus m’empêcher de lui en faire quelques représentations.

Elle se fâcha tout rouge.

Tu fais ce qui te plaît, me dit-elle, laisse-moi faire ce qui me convient.

C’est un justice que je lui dois: jamais elle n’essaya sur moi son influence, jamais elle ne m’engagea à suivre son exemple. Ivre de liberté, elle respectait la liberté des autres.”²

¹ [Hence the title of this letter. The Château-Rouge in the Rue Clignancourt, Montmartre, is one of the best known “salles de danse” in Paris.]

² [Gaboriau: *L’Argent des Autres*, vol. i. p. 358. Compare *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 14 *n.*, where Ruskin quotes from the same passage, giving additional words where dots are here inserted. “Left to herself from the age of thirteen, accustomed to reckon only upon her unaided powers, she had an experience of

9. Such is the form which Franchise has taken under republican instruction. But of the true Franchise of Charlemagne and Roland, there were, you must note also, two distinct forms. In the last stanzas of the *Chant de Roland*, Normandy and France have two distinct epithets,—“Normandie, la franche; France, la solue” (soluta). “*Frank* Normandy; *Loose* France¹.” Solute;—we, adding the dis, use the words loose and dissolute only in evil sense. But “France la solue” has an entirely lovely meaning. The frankness of Normandy is the soldier’s virtue; but the unbinding, so to speak, of France, is the peasant’s.

“And having seen that lovely maid,
Why should I fear to say
That she is ruddy, fleet, and strong,
And down the rocks can leap along
Like rivulets in May?”²

10. It is curious that the most beautiful descriptive line in all Horace,

“montibus altis
Levis crepante lymphæ desilit pede,”³

comes in the midst of the dream of the blessed islands which are to be won by following the founders of—what

life that shocked me. Paris, this birthplace of hers, she knew completely, understood thoroughly. I had no idea of such a total absence of moral sense, such unconscious depravation, such impudent, innocent shamelessness. Her only rule of conduct was fancy,—instinct,—momentary caprice. She liked long sittings in cafés; melodrama relieved with pints of beer and oranges between the acts; boating parties down the river; and above all, and more than all, dancing. She was quite at home at the pleasure-gardens; she knew everybody there,—the bandmaster bowed to her, which made her extremely proud, and lots of people were on familiar terms with her. I followed her everywhere, at first; and although I wasn’t exactly an innocent, nor hampered by being brought up too strictly, I was so horrified at the incredibly loose life she led, that I couldn’t help making a few remonstrances. She was furious, and turned scarlet. ‘You do what you like,’ she answered; ‘leave me alone to suit myself.’ And it was no more than I owed her. She never tried to influence me; she never pressed me to follow her example. Intoxicated with her own liberty, she respected that of others” (this translation, by W. G. Collingwood, is given in the Index of the Small Edition, vol. ii. p. 508 n.).]

¹ [Compare *Val d’Arno*, § 196 (Vol. XXIII. p. 116 n.).]

² [Wordsworth’s poem “Louisa.”]

³ [*Epodes*, xvi. 47, 48.]

city, think you? The city that first sang the “Marseillaise.”¹

“Jupiter illa *piae* secrevit litora genti.”

Recollect that line, my French readers, if I chance to find any, this month, nor less the description of those “*arva beata*”² as if of your own South France; and then consider also those prophetic lines, true of Paris as of Rome,—

“Nec fera caerulea domuit Germania pube.
Impia, perdemus devoti sanguinis aetas.”

Consider them, I say, and deeply, thinking over the full force of those words “*devoti sanguinis*,” and of the ways in which the pure blood of Normandie la franche, and France la solue, has corrupted itself and become accursed. Had I but time to go into the history of that word “*devoveo*,” what a piece of philology it would lead us into! But, for another kind of opposition to the sweet Franchise of old time, take this sentence of description of another French maiden, by the same author from whom I have just quoted the sketch of the grisette:—

“C’était une vieille fille d’une cinquantaine d’années, sèche et jaune, avec un grand nez d’oiseau de proie, très noble, encore plus dévote, joueuse comme la dame de pique en personne, et médisante à faire battre des montagnes.”³

You see what accurate opposition that gives you of another kind, to Franchise. You even have the “nez

¹ [In Epode xvi. the poet deploras the civil war. Roman hands are doing what no foeman—not the blue-eyed Germans (line 7)—has been able to do. There is a curse on this generation, which draws its crimes with its blood from its predecessor (line 9). He sees no hope for honest men except in flying like the Phocæans (who founded Marsilia, Marseilles), leaving hearth and home, until they find the Happy Islands. Jove set them apart for the good (line 63).]

² [*Epodes*, xvi. 41; compare *Proserpina* (Vol. XXV. p. 442).]

³ [Gaboriau: *La Dégringolade*, vol. i. part ii. ch. i. “She was an old maid of fifty or so, withered and yellow, with a beak like a bird of prey; distinctly aristocratic, unquestionably pious, as devoted to gambling as the Queen of Spades herself, and a scandal-monger fit to set all the world by the ears” (translation by W. G. Collingwood in the Index of the Small Edition, vol. ii. p. 508).]

d'Orleanois" specified, which the song of the Rose is so careful to tell you Franchise had not.

Here is another illustrative sentence:—

"La colère, à la fin, une de ces terribles colères blanches de dévote, chassait des flots de bile au cerveau de Mademoiselle de la Rochecordeau, et blémissait ses levres."¹

11. These three sentences I have taken from two novels of Emilie Gaboriau, *L'argent des autres*, and *La Dégringolade*.² They are average specimens of modern French light literature, with its characteristic qualities and defects, and are both of them in many respects worth careful study; but chiefly in the representation they give, partly with conscious blame, and partly in unconscious corruption, of the *Devoti sanguinis aetas*; with which, if you would compare old France accurately, read first Froude's sketch of the life of Bishop Hugo of Lincoln, and think over the scene between him and Cœur de Lion.³

You have there, as in life before you, two typical Frenchmen of the twelfth century—a true king, and a true priest, representing the powers which the France of that day contrived to get set over her, and did, on the whole, implicitly and with her heart obey.

They are not altogether—by taking the dancing-master and the hairdresser away from them—reduced to coppercoloured Indians.⁴

12. If, next, you will take the pains—and it will need some pains, for the book is long and occasionally tiresome—to read the *Dégringolade*, you will find it nevertheless worth your while; for it gives you a modern Frenchman's

¹ [*La Dégringolade*, vol. i. pt. ii. ch. i. "Anger, at last,—one of those terrible white rages that pious women are given to,—drove the bile in floods to Mademoiselle de la Rochecordeau's brain, and blanched her lips" (again from the Small Edition, vol. ii. p. 508).]

² [Compare (in a later volume) a letter to F. S. Ellis of June 3, 1874, where Ruskin says that he has been "taking a course of Emile Gaboriau to acquaint myself with modern Paris." See also *Art of England*, § 171.]

³ [*Short Studies on Great Subjects* ("A Bishop of the Twelfth Century"). For another reference to Bishop Hugo, see Vol. XXII. p. 409; and to this paper by Froude, Vol. XXIX. p. 387.]

⁴ [See above, § 4.]

account of the powers which France in the nineteenth century contrived to get set over her; and obeyed—not with her heart, but restively, like an ill-bred dog or mule, which have no honour in their obedience, but bear the chain and bit all the same.

But there is a farther and much more important reason for my wish that you should read this novel. It gives you types of existent Frenchmen and Frenchwomen of a very different class. They are, indeed, only heroes and heroines in a quite second-rate piece of literary work. But these stereotypes, nevertheless, have living originals. There is to be found in France, as truly the Commandant Delorge, as the Comte de Combelaine. And as truly Mademoiselle de Maillefert as the Duchesse de Maumussy.¹ How is it, then, that the Count and Duchess command everything in France, and that the Commandant and Demoiselle command nothing?—that the best they can do is to get leave to live—unknown, and unthought-of? The question, believe me, is for England also; and a very pressing one.

13. Of the frantic hatred of all religion developed in the French republican mind, the sentences I have quoted are interesting examples. I have not time to speak of them in this letter, but they struck me sharply as I corrected the press to-day; for I had been standing most part of the morning² by St. Paul's grave, thinking over his work in the world. A bewildered peasant, from some green dingle of Campagna, who had seen me kneel when the Host passed, and took me therefore to be a human creature and a friend, asked me "where St. Paul was?"

"There, underneath," I answered.

"There?" he repeated, doubtfully,—as dissatisfied.

"Yes," I answered; "his body at least;—his head is at the Lateran."³

¹ [Four characters in *La Dégringolade*.]

² [On Corpus Domini, June 4, 1874, as the diary shows: see Vol. XXIII. p. xxxvii.]

³ [In the Gothic canopy which stands over the High Altar. It was erected in 1367 to receive the heads of SS. Peter and Paul, which had been found, according to current belief, in the *Sancta Sanctorum* of this Basilica. The heads are represented

“Il suo corpo,” again he repeated, still as in discontent. Then, after a pause, “E la sua statua?”

Such a wicked thing to ask for that! wasn't it, my Evangelical friends? You would so much rather have had him ask for Hudson's!¹

in the upper part of the canopy. The earlier legend is that the severed head of St. Paul made three bounds upon the earth, and that wherever it touched the ground a fountain sprang forth. On the spot where the Apostle is supposed to have been beheaded stands the church of S. Paolo alle Tre Fontane. It is near the basilica of S. Paolo fuori le Mura, built over the ground where the Apostle's body is said to have been interred.]

¹ [For a later reference to Hudson, the Railway King, see Letter 79, § 8, note (a) (Vol. XXIX. p. 151).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

14. (I.) I HAVE had by me, some time, three eager little fragments from one of Mr. Sillar's letters:—*too* eager, always, in thinking this one sin of receiving interest on money means every other.¹ I know many excellent people, happily, whose natures have not been spoiled by it: the more as it has been done absolutely without knowledge of being wrong. I did not find out the wrong of it myself, till Mr. Sillar showed me the way to judge of it.

The passage which I have italicized, from Mr. Lecky, is a very precious statement of his sagacious creed. The chief jest of it is his having imagined himself to *be* of Aristotle's "species"!

"To get profit without responsibility has been a fond scheme as impossible of honest attainment as the philosopher's stone or perpetual motion. Visionaries have imagined such things to exist, but it has been reserved for this mammon-worshipping generation to find it in that arrangement by which a man, without labour, can secure a permanent income with perfect security, and without diminution of the capital.

"A view of it is evidently taken by Lord Bacon when he says that usury bringeth the treasure of a realm into few hands; for the usurer trading on a certainty, and other men on uncertainties, at the end of the game all the money will be in the box.

"We have had now an opportunity of practically testing this theory; not more than seventeen years have elapsed since all restraint was removed from the growth of what Lord Coke calls this 'pestilent weed,' and we see Bacon's words verified, the rich becoming richer, and the poor poorer, is the cry throughout the whole civilized world.² Rollin in his *Ancient History*, speaking of the Roman Empire, tells us that it has been the ruin of every state where it was tolerated. It is in a fair way to ruin this of ours, and ruin it will, unless England's sons calmly and candidly investigate the question for themselves, and resolutely act upon the conclusions to which the investigation must lead them.

"There is such a thing as unlimited liability; of the justice of such laws I do not now speak, but the law exists, and as it was made by moneyed men in the interest of moneyed men they cannot refuse to be judged by it. The admission, therefore, of the fact that interest is a share of the profit, would throw upon the money-lender the burden of unlimited liability; this he certainly refuses to admit, consequently he has no alternative but to confess that interest has nothing whatever to do with profit, but that it is a certain inherent property of money, viz., that of producing money, and that interest is as legitimately the offspring of money as a Calf is that of a Cow. That this is really the stand now taken, may be shown from the literature and practice of the present day. Mr. Lecky, one of the latest champions of interest, boldly admits it. In his *History of the Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe*, p. 284, after quoting Aristotle's saying, that all money is

¹ [Compare the similar remark in *Munera Pulveris*, Vol. XVII. p. 220 *n.*, where a list of the pamphlets by W. C. Sillar and R. G. Sillar is given.]

² [Ruskin quoted these words ("We have now . . . civilized world") in § 16 of his paper entitled *Usury: a Reply and a Rejoinder* (see a later volume of this edition).]

sterile by nature, he says, ‘*This is an absurdity of Aristotle’s, and the number of centuries during which it was incessantly asserted without being (so far as we know) once questioned, is a curious illustration of the longevity of a sophism when expressed in a terse form, and sheltered by a great name. It is enough to make one ashamed of his species to think that Bentham was the first to bring into notice the simple consideration that if the borrower employs the borrowed money in buying bulls and cows, and if these produce calves to ten times the value of the interest, the money borrowed can scarcely be said to be sterile.*’

“And now to remedy all this. Were there no remedy, to parade it in our view, would be cruel; but there is one, so simple, that like those of divine making, it may be despised for its simplicity. It consists in the recognition of the supreme wisdom which forbade the taking of usury. We should not reimpose the usury laws, which were in themselves a blunder and a snare, nor would we advocate the forcible repression of the vice any more than we do that of other vices, such as gambling or prostitution, but we would put them on precisely the same footing, and enact thus—

Whereas, usury is a sin detestable and abominable,
the law will refuse to recognize any contract
in which it is an element.

The first effect of this would be, that all those who had lent, taking security into their hands, would have no power of oppression beyond keeping the pledge,—the balance of their debts being on a similar footing to those of the men who had lent without security.

“To these their chance of repayment would depend on their previous conduct. If they had lent their money to honourable men, they would surely be repaid; if to rogues, they surely would not; and serve them right. Those, and those only, who have lent without interest would have the power of an action at law to recover; and as such men must have possessed philanthropy, they could safely be trusted with that power.

“Regarding the future employment of money, a usurer who intended to continue his unholy trade, would lend only to such men as would repay without legal pressure, and from such men trade would not have to fear competition. But to disreputable characters the money-market would be hermetically sealed; and then as commerce, freed from the competition of these scoundrels, began again to be remunerative, we should find it more to our advantage to take an interest *in* commerce than usury *from* it, and so gradually would equity supersede iniquity, and peace and prosperity be found where now abound corruption, riot, and rebellion, with all the host of evils inseparable from a condition of plethoric wealth on one hand, and on the other hopeless and despairing poverty.”

15. (II.) I intended in this note to have given some references to the first use of the word *Franc*, as an adjective.¹ But the best dictionarymakers seem to have been foiled by it. “I recollect” (an Oxford friend

¹ [“It is usually believed that the Franks were named from their national weapon, *franca*; cf. *Saxon* (Sahson), thought to be from *Sahso*, knife. The notion that the ethnic *franc* is derived from the adjective meaning ‘free’ was already current in the tenth century; but the real relation between the words seems to be the reverse of this . . . *Francus* acquired the sense of ‘free’ because in Frankish Gaul full freedom was possessed only by those belonging to, or adopted into the dominant people.”

“*Eranc*, said to be derived from the legend *Francorum rex*, on the first coins which were so called. The French word appears as the name of a gold coin in an official document of 1360; the legend *Francorum rex* occurs on a gold coin struck in the same year. The silver coin was first struck in 1575”(Murray’s *New English Dictionary*).]

writes to me), “Clovis called his axe ‘Francisca’ when he threw it to determine by its fall where he should build a church,” and in Littré’s dictionary a root is suggested, in the Anglo-Saxon Franca, “javelin.” But I think these are all collateral, not original uses. I am not sure even when the word came to be used for the current silver coin of France: that, at least, must be ascertainable. It is curious that in no fit of Liberty and Equality, the anti-Imperialists have thought of calling their golden coins “Citizens” instead of “Napoleons”: nor even their sous, Sansculottes.

16. (III.) Some of my correspondents ask me what has become of my promised additional *Fors* on the glaciers.¹ Well, it got crevassed, and split itself into three; and then relegated itself into a somewhat compact essay on glaciers; and then got jammed up altogether, because I found that the extremely scientific Professor Tyndall had never distinguished the quality of viscosity from plasticity (or the consistence of honey from that of butter), still less the gradations of character in the approach of metals, glass, or stone, to their freezing-points; and that I wasn’t as clear as could be wished on some of these matters myself; and, in fact, that I had better deal with the subject seriously in my Oxford lectures than in *Fors*, which I hope to do this next autumn, after looking again at the riband structure of the Brenva.² Meantime, here—out of I don’t know what paper (I wish my correspondents would always *cross* the slips they cut out with the paper’s name and date),—is a lively account of the present state of affairs, with a compliment to Professor Tyndall on his style of debate, which I beg humbly to endorse.

“An awful battle, we regret to say, is now raging between some of the most distinguished men of Science, Literature, and Art, for all those three fair sisters have hurtled into the Homeric fray. The combatants on one side are Professors G. Forbes, Tait, and Ruskin, with Mr. Alfred Wills, and on the other—alone, but fearless and undismayed—the great name of Tyndall. The *causa teterrima belli* is in itself a cold and unlikely one—namely, the glaciers of Switzerland; but fiercer the fight could not be, we grieve to state, if the question of eternal punishment, with all its fiery accessory scenery, were under discussion. We have no rash intention of venturing into that terrible battle-ground where Professor Ruskin is laying about him with his *Fors Clavigera*, and where Professor Tait, like another Titan, hurls wildly into the affrighted air such epithets as ‘contemptible,’ ‘miserable,’ ‘disgusting,’ ‘pernicious,’ ‘pestilent.’ These adjectives, for anything that ignorant journalists can know, may mean, in Scotch scientific parlance, everything that is fair, chivalrous, becoming, and measured in argument. But, merely from the British instinct of fair play, which does not like to see four against one, and without venturing a single word about the glaciers, we cannot help remarking how much more consistent with the dignity of science appears Professor Tyndall’s answer in the last number of the *Contemporary Review*. If it be true that the man who keeps his temper is generally in the right, we shall decidedly back Mr. Tyndall and the late lamented Agassiz in the present dreadful conflict. Speaking, for instance, of those same furious adjectives, which we have culled from the literary parterre of Professor Tait, Dr. Tyndall sweetly says, ‘The spirit which prompts them may, after all, be but a local distortion of that noble force of heart which

¹ [See Letter 35, § 14 (Vol. XXVII. p. 663).]

² [See the Introduction to Vol. XXVI. pp. xl.–xli.]

answered the Cameron's Gathering at Waterloo; carried the Black Watch to Coomassie; and which has furnished Scotland with the materials of an immortal history. Still, rudeness is not independence, bluster is not strength, nor is coarseness courage. We have won the human understanding from the barbarism of the past; but we have won along with it the dignity, courtesy, and truth of civilized life. And the man who on the platform or in the press does violence to this ethical side of human nature discharges but an imperfect duty to the public, whatever the qualities of his understanding may be.' This, we humbly think, is how men of science ought to talk when they quarrel—if they quarrel at all."

I hope much to profit by this lesson. I have not my *School for Scandal* by me—but I know where to find it the minute I get home; and I'll do my best. "The man who," etc., etc.;—yes, I think I can manage it.¹

¹ [The reference is of course to Joseph Surface's hypocritical formula—"the man who can break the laws of hospitality," etc., "the man who is entrusted with his friend's distresses can never—," and so forth; and to Sir Peter Teazle's comment, "What noble sentiments!" (Act iv. sc. 3).]

LETTER 44

THE SQUIRREL CAGE.¹ ENGLISH SERVITUDE

ROME, 6th June, 1874.

1. THE poor Campagna herdsman, whose seeking for St. Paul's statue the Professor of Fine Art in the University of Oxford so disgracefully failed to assist him in,² had been kneeling nearer the line of procession of the Corpus Domini than I;—in fact, quite among the rose-leaves which had been strewed for a carpet round the aisles of the Basilica. I grieve to say that I was shy of the rose-bestrewn path, myself; for the crowd waiting at the side of it had mixed up the rose-leaves with spittle so richly as to make quite a pink pomatum of them. And, indeed, the living temples of the Holy Ghost³ which in any manner bestir themselves here among the temples,—whether of Roman gods or Christian saints,—have merely and simply the two great operations upon them of filling their innermost adyta with dung, and making their pavements slippery with spittle; the Pope's new tobacco manufactory under the Palatine,⁴—an infinitely more important object now, in all views of Rome from the west, than either the Palatine or the Capitol,—greatly aiding and encouraging this especial form of lustration: while the still more ancient documents of Egyptian religion—the obelisks of the Piazza del Popolo, and of the portico of St. Peter's—are entirely eclipsed by the obelisks of our English religion, lately elevated, in full

¹ [See below, § 12.]

² [See Letter 43, § 19, p. 119.]

³ [1 Corinthians vi. 19.]

⁴ [The huge factory behind the church of S. Maria dell' Orto; "the Pope's," because erected during the Papal dominion (in 1863).]

view from the Pincian and the Montorio, with smoke coming out of the top of them. And farther, the entire eastern district of Rome, between the two Basilicas of the Lateran and St. Lorenzo, is now one mass of volcanic ruin;—a desert of dust and ashes, the lust of wealth exploding there, out of a crater deeper than Etna's, and raging, as far as it can reach, in one frantic desolation of whatever is lovely, or holy, or memorable, in the central city of the world.¹

2. For there is one fixed idea in the mind of every European progressive politician, at this time; namely, that by a certain application of Financial Art, and by the erection of a certain quantity of new buildings on a colossal scale, it will be possible for society hereafter to pass its entire life in eating, smoking, harlotry, and talk; without doing anything whatever with its hands or feet of a laborious character. And as these new buildings, whose edification is a main article of this modern political faith and hope,—(being required for gambling and dining in on a large scale),—cannot be raised without severely increased taxation of the poorer classes (here in Italy direct, and in all countries consisting in the rise of price in all articles of food—wine alone in Italy costing just ten times what it did ten years ago), and this increased taxation and distress are beginning to be felt too grievously to be denied; nor only so, but—which is still less agreeable to modern politicians—with slowly dawning perception of their true causes,—one finds also the popular journalists, for some time back addressing themselves to the defence of Taxation, and Theft in general, after this fashion:—

“The wealth in the world may practically be regarded as infinitely great. It is not true that what one man appropriates becomes thereupon

¹ [Readers unacquainted with Rome past and present may be referred to ch. xiii. in the later editions of Hare's *Walks in Rome* for an account of the interest and beauty of this district of the city, now much diminished by “frightful modern buildings.” For another reference to vandalism in modern Rome, see Letters 18, § 14, and 21, § 9 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 315, 358).]

useless to others, and it is also untrue that force or fraud, direct or indirect, are the principal, or, indeed, that they are at all common or important, modes of acquiring wealth.”—*Pall Mall Gazette*, Jan. 14th, 1869.*

3. The philosophical journalist, after some further contemptuous statement of the vulgar views on this subject, conveniently dispenses (as will be seen by reference to the end of the clause in the note) with the defence of his own. I will undertake the explanation of what was, perhaps, even to himself, not altogether clear in his impressions. If a burglar ever carries off the Editor's plate-basket, the bereaved Editor will console himself by reflecting that “it is not true that what one man appropriates becomes thereupon useless to others:”—for truly (he will thus proceed to finer investigation) this plate of mine, melted down, after being transitionally serviceable to the burglar, will enter again into the same functions among the silver of the world which it had in my own possession; so that the intermediate benefit to the burglar may be regarded as entirely a form of trade profit, and a kind of turning over of capital. And “it is also untrue that force or fraud, direct or indirect, are the principal, or indeed that they are at all common or

* The passage continues thus, curiously enough,—for the parallel of the boat at sea is precisely that which I have given,¹ in *true* explanation of social phenomena:—

“The notion that when one man becomes rich he makes others poor, will be found upon examination to depend upon the assumption that there is in the world a fixed quantity of wealth; that when one man appropriates to himself a large amount of it, he excludes all others from any benefit arising from it and that at the same time he forces some one else to be content with less than he would otherwise have had. Society, in short, must be compared to a boat at sea, in which there is a certain quantity of fresh water, and a certain number of shipwrecked passengers. In that case, no doubt, the water drunk by one is of no use to the rest, and if one drinks more, others must drink less, as the water itself is a fixed quantity. Moreover, no one man would be able to get more than a rateable share, except by superior force, or by some form of deceit, because the others would prevent him. The mere statement of this view ought to be a sufficient exposure of the fundamental error of the commonplaces which we are considering.”

¹ [See *Time and Tide*, § 65 (Vol. XVII. p. 372).]

important, modes of acquiring wealth,”—for this poor thief, with his crowbar and jemmy, does but disfurnish my table for a day; while I, with my fluent pen, can replenish it any number of times over, by the beautiful expression of my opinions for the public benefit. But what manner of fraud, or force, there may be in living by the sale of one’s opinions, instead of knowledges;¹ and what quantity of true knowledge on any subject whatsoever—moral, political, scientific, or artistic—forms at present the total stock-in-trade of the Editors of the European Press, our *Pall Mall* Editor has very certainly not considered.

4. “The wealth in the world practically infinite,”—is it?² Then it seems to me, the poor may ask, with more reason than ever before, Why have we not our share of Infinity? We thought, poor ignorants, that we were only the last in the scramble; we submitted, believing that somebody must be last, and somebody first. But if the mass of good things be inexhaustible, and there are horses for everybody,—why is not every beggar on horseback? And, for my own part, why should the question be put to me so often,—which I am sick of answering and answering again,—“How, with our increasing population, are we to live without Machinery?” For if the wealth be already infinite, what need of machinery to make more? Alas, if it *could* make more, what a different world this might be. Arkwright and Stephenson would deserve statues indeed,—as much as St. Paul. If all the steam engines in England, and all the coal in it, with all their horse and ass power put together, could produce—so much as one grain of corn! The last time this perpetually recurring question about machinery was asked me, it was very earnestly and candidly pressed, by a master manufacturer³, who honestly desired to do in his place what was serviceable to England,

¹ [Compare Letter 6, §§ 2, 3 (Vol. XXVII. p. 99), and other passages there noted.]

² [For the author’s further remarks on this extract, see Letter 73, § 2 (Vol. XXIX. p. 14).]

³ [See above, p. 21 n.]

and honourable to himself. I answered at some length, in private letters, of which I asked and obtained his leave to print some parts in *Fors.* They may as well find their place in this number; and for preface to them, here is a piece, long kept by me, concerning railroads, which may advisably now be read.

5. Of modern machinery for locomotion, my readers, I suppose, thought me writing in ill-temper, when I said in one of the letters on the childhood of Scott, “infernal means of locomotion”?¹ Indeed, I am always compelled to write, as always compelled to live, in ill-temper. But I never set down a single word but with the serenest purpose. I *meant* “infernal” in the most perfect sense the word will bear.

For instance. The town of Ulverstone is twelve miles from me, by four miles of mountain road beside Coniston lake, three through a pastoral valley, five by the seaside. A healthier or lovelier walk would be difficult to find.

In old times, if a Coniston peasant had any business at Ulverstone, he walked to Ulverstone; spent nothing but shoe-leather on the road, drank at the streams, and if he spent a couple of batz when he got to Ulverstone, “it was the end of the world.”² But now, he would never think of doing such a thing! He first walks three miles in a contrary direction, to a railroad station, and then travels by railroad twenty-four miles to Ulverstone, paying two shillings fare. During the twenty-four miles transit, he is idle, dusty, stupid; and either more hot or cold than is pleasant to him. In either case he drinks beer at two or three of the stations, passes his time, between them, with anybody he can find, in talking without having anything to talk of; and such talk always becomes vicious. He arrives at Ulverstone, jaded, half drunk, and otherwise demoralized, and three shillings, at least, poorer than in

¹ [See Letter 29, § 8 (Vol. XXVII. p. 534).]

² [An expression of Gotthelf’s Hansli: see Letter 30, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 553); and for the value of the batz, see *ibid.*, p. 551 *n.*]

the morning. Of that sum a shilling has gone for beer, threepence to a railway shareholder, threepence in coals, and eighteenpence has been spent in employing strong men in the vile mechanical work of making and driving a machine, instead of his own legs, to carry the drunken lout. The results, absolute loss and demoralization to the poor, on all sides, and iniquitous gain to the rich. Fancy, if you saw the railway officials actually employed in carrying the countryman bodily on their backs to Ulverstone, what you would think of the business! And because they waste ever so much iron and fuel besides to do it, you think it a profitable one!

6. And for comparison of the advantages of old times and new, for travellers of higher order, hear how Scott's excursions used to be made:—

“Accordingly, during seven successive years, Scott made a raid, as he called it, into Liddesdale, with Mr. Shortreed for his guide, exploring every rivulet to its source, and every ruined peel from foundation to battlement. At this time no wheeled carriage had ever been seen in the district; the first, indeed, that ever appeared there was a gig, driven by Scott himself for a part of his way, when on the last of these seven excursions. There was no inn *nor public-house of any kind* in the whole valley; the travellers passed from the shepherd's hut to the minister's manse, and again from the cheerful hospitality of the manse to the rough and jolly welcome of the homestead; gathering, wherever they went, songs and tunes, and occasionally more tangible relics of antiquity—even such ‘a rowth of auld nicknackets’ as Burns ascribes to Captain Grose. To these rambles Scott owed much of the materials of his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*; and not less of that intimate acquaintance with the living manners of these unsophisticated regions, which constitutes the chief charm of the most charming of his prose works. But how soon he had any definite object before him in his researches seems very doubtful. ‘He was makin’ himsel’ a’ the time,’ said Mr. Shortreed; ‘but he didna ken may be what he was about, till years had passed. At first he thought o’ little, I dare say, but the queerness and the fun.’¹

“‘It was that same season, I think,’ says Mr. Shortreed, ‘that Sir Walter got from Dr. Elliot the large old Border war horn, which ye may still see hanging in the armoury at Abbotsford. How great he was when he was made master o’ that! I believe it had been found in Hermitage Castle—and one of the doctor's servants had used it many a day as a grease-horn

¹ [Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. i. pp. 195, 196. Compare Appendix 8, Vol. XXIX. pp. 541, 542.]

for his scythe before they had discovered its history. When cleaned out, it was never a hair the worse; the original chain, hoop, and mouthpiece of steel were all entire, just as you now see them. Sir Walter carried it home all the way from Liddesdale to Jedburgh slung about his neck like Johnny Gilpin's bottle, while I was entrusted with an ancient bridle-bit, which we had likewise picked up.

“The feint o' pride—na pride had he, . . .
A lang kail-gully hung down by his side,
And a great meikle nowt-horn to rout on had he.’

And meikle and sair we routed on't, and 'hotched and blew wi' micht and main.' O what pleasant days! and then *a' the nonsense we had cost us naething. We never put hand in pocket* for a week on end. Toll-bars there were none, and indeed I think our hail charges were a feed o' corn to our horses in the gangin' and comin' at Riccartoun mill.’¹

7. This absolute economy,* of course, could only exist when travelling was so rare that patriarchal hospitality could still be trusted for its lodging. But the hospitality of the inn need not be less considerate or true because the inn's master lives in his occupation. Even in these days, I have had no more true or kind friend than the now dead Mrs. Eisenkraemer of the *old* Union Inn at Chamouni;² and an innkeeper's daughter in the Oberland³ taught me that it was still possible for a Swiss girl to be refined, imaginative, and pure-hearted, though she waited on her father's guests, and though these guests were often vulgar and insolent English travellers. For she had been bred in the rural districts of happy olden days,—to which, as it

* The reader might at first fancy that the economy was not “absolute,” but that the expenses of the traveller were simply borne by his host. Not so; the host only gave what he in his turn received, when he also travelled. Every man thus carried his home with him, and to travel, was merely to walk or ride from place to place, instead of round one's own house. (See Saunders Fairford's expostulation with Alan on the charges incurred at Noble House.⁴)

¹ [Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. i. pp. 199–200.]

² [See Vol. II. pp. 426–427, and Vol. XIII. p. 497.]

³ [For Marie of the Giessbach, see Vol. XVIII. p. xliii., and Vol. XIX. p. lix.; and compare Letter 51, § 19, p. 285.]

⁴ [*Redgauntlet* (Letter II.).]

chances, my thoughts first turned, in the following answer to my English manufacturing friend.¹

8. On any given farm in Switzerland or Bavaria, fifty years ago,² the master and his servants lived, in abundance, on the produce of their ground, without machinery, and exchanged some of its surplus produce for Lyons velvet and Hartz silver (produced by the unhappy mechanists and miners of those localities), whereof the happy peasant made jackets and bodices, and richly adorned the same with precious chain-work. It is not more than ten years since I saw in a farm-shed near Thun, three handsome youths and three comely girls, all in well-fitting, pretty, and snow-white shirt and chemisette, threshing corn with a steady shower of timed blows, as skilful in their—cadence, shall we, literally, say?—as the most exquisitely performed music, and as rapid as its swiftest notes.³ There was no question for any of them, whether they should have their dinner when they had earned it, nor the slightest chance of any of them going in rags through the winter.

That is entirely healthy, happy, and wise human life. Not a theoretical or Utopian state at all; but one which over large districts of the world has long existed, and must, thank God, in spite of British commerce and its consequences, for ever, somewhere, exist.

9. But the farm, we will say, gets over-populous (it always does, of course, under ordinary circumstances); that is to say, the ground no longer affords corn and milk

¹ [See above, pp. 21, 128. The passage as sent to Mr. J. Brooke began as follows:—

“Nothing is more wonderful to me than the persistency with which the question is asked me, ‘How with an increasing population are we to live without machinery?’ I have answered already I know not how often in my various writings, ‘Machinery enables no more of us to live; it only enables some of us to live idle on other’s misery.’

“Let me try if I can make this great fact plain at least to my correspondent. If I cannot I shall trouble myself no more with its demonstration in future.

“On any given farm . . .”]

² [Compare the account of communities in the Black Forest and the mountain valleys of Tyrol: Letter 69, § 4 (p. 689).]

³ [“*Conf.* Scott’s ladies.”—*MS. note by author.* See Letter 94, § 12 (Vol. XXIX p. 492), and for another reference to these threshers at Thun, see Letter 61, § 20 (below, p. 506).]

enough for the people on it. Do you suppose you will make more of the corn, because you now thresh it with a machine? So far from needing to do so, you have more hands to employ than you had—can have twelve flails going instead of six. You make your twelve human creatures stand aside, and thresh your corn with a steam engine. You gain time, do you? What's the use of time to you? did it not hang heavy enough on your hands before? You thresh your entire farm produce, let us say, in twelve minutes. Will that make it one grain more, to feed the twelve mouths? Most assuredly, the soot and stench of your steam engine will make your crop *less* next year, but not one grain more can you have to-day.* But you don't mean to use your engines to thresh with or plough with? Well, that is one point of common-sense gained. What will you do with them, then?—spin and weave cotton, sell the articles you manufacture, and buy food? Very good; then somewhere there must be people still living as *you* once did,—that is to say, producing more corn and milk than they want, and able to give it to you in exchange for your cotton, or velvet, or what not, which you weave with your steam. Well, *those* people, wherever they are, and whoever they may be, are your lords and masters thenceforth. *They* are living happy and wise human lives, and are served by you, their mechanics and slaves. Day after day your souls will become more mechanical, more servile: also you will go on multiplying, wanting more food, and more; you will have to sell cheaper and cheaper, work longer and longer, to buy your food. At last, do what you can, you can make no more, or the people who have the corn will not want any more; and your

* But what is to be done, then? Emigrate, of course; but under different laws from those of modern emigration. Don't emigrate to China, poison Chinamen, and teach them to make steam engines, and then import Chinamen, to dig iron *here*.¹ But see next *Fors*.²

¹ [There had already been Chinese emigration on a considerable scale to the mines in Australia, California, and elsewhere.]

² [The reference must be to § 20 (p. 167), where it is pointed out that the remedy may be small farming with more intensive culture.]

increasing population will necessarily come to a quite imperative stop—by starvation, preceded necessarily by revolution and massacre.

10. And now examine the facts about England in this broad light.

She has a vast quantity of ground still food-producing, in corn, grass, cattle, or game. With that territory she educates her squire, or typical gentleman, and his tenantry, to whom, together, she owes all her power in the world. With another large portion of territory,—now continually on the increase,—she educates a mercenary population, ready to produce any quantity of bad articles to anybody's order; population which every hour that passes over them makes acceleratingly avaricious, immoral, and insane. In the increase of that kind of territory and its people, her ruin is just as certain as if she were deliberately exchanging her corn-growing land, and her heaven above it, for a soil of arsenic, and rain of nitric acid.

“Have the Arkwrights and Stephensons, then, done nothing but harm?” Nothing; but the root of all the mischief is not in Arkwrights or Stephensons; nor in rogues or mechanics. The real root of it is the crime of the squire himself. And the method of that crime is thus. A certain quantity of the food produced by the country is paid annually by it into the squire's hand, in the form of rent, privately, and taxes, publicly. If he uses this food to support a food-producing population, he increases daily the strength of the country and his own; but if he uses it to support an idle population, or one producing merely trinkets in iron, or gold, or other rubbish, he steadily weakens the country, and debases himself.

11. Now the action of the squire for the last fifty years has been, broadly, to take the food from the ground of his estate, and carry it to London, where he feeds with it * a

* The writings of our vulgar political economists, calling money only a “medium of exchange,” blind the foolish public conveniently to all the practical actions of the machinery of the currency. Money is not a medium

vast number of builders, upholsterers (one of them charged me five pounds for a footstool the other day¹), carriage and harness makers, dress-makers, grooms, footmen, bad musicians, bad painters, gamblers, and harlots, and in supply of the wants of these main classes, a vast number of shopkeepers of minor useless articles. The muscles and the time of this enormous population being wholly unproductive—(for of course time spent in the mere process of sale is unproductive, and much more that of the footman and groom, while that of the vulgar upholsterer, jeweller, fiddler, and painter, etc., etc., is not only unproductive, but mischievous),—the entire mass of this London population do nothing whatever either to feed or clothe themselves; and their vile life preventing them from all rational entertainment, they are compelled to seek some pastime in a vile literature, the demand for which again occupies another enormous class, who do nothing to feed or dress themselves; finally, the vain disputes of this vicious population give employment to the vast industry of the lawyers and their clerks,* who similarly do nothing to feed or dress themselves.

12. Now the peasants might still be able to supply this enormous town population with food (in the form of the

of exchange, but a token of right.² I have, suppose, at this moment, ten, twenty, or thirty thousand pounds. That signifies that, as compared with a man who has only ten pounds, I can claim possession of, call for, and do what I like with a thousand, or two thousand, or three thousand times as much of the valuable things existing in the country. The peasant accordingly gives the squire a certain number of these tokens or counters, which give the possessor a right to claim so much corn or meat. The squire gives these tokens to the various persons in town, enumerated in the text, who then claim the corn and meat from the peasant, returning him the counters, which he calls "price," and gives to the squire again next year.

* Of the industry of the Magistrate against crime, I say nothing; for it now scarcely exists, but to do evil. See first article in Correspondence, at end of letter [p. 141].

¹ [For another reference to this charge, see Letter 76, § 18 (Vol. XXIX. p. 101).]

² [Compare *Unto this Last* and *Munera Pulveris* (Vol. XVII. pp. 50, 194 *seq.*; and see further the letters to the Rev. J. P. Faunthorpe in Appendix 11, Vol. XXIX. pp. 553–558.)]

squire's rent), but it cannot, without machinery, supply the flimsy dresses, toys, metal work, and other rubbish, belonging to their accursed life. Hence over the whole country the sky is blackened and the air made pestilent, to supply London and other such towns* with their iron railings, vulgar upholstery, jewels, toys, liveries, lace, and other means of dissipation and dishonour of life. Gradually the country people cannot even supply food to the voracity of the vicious centre; and it is necessary to import food from other countries, giving in exchange any kind of commodity we can attract their itching desires for, and produce by machinery. The tendency of the entire national energy is therefore to approximate more and more to the state of a squirrel in a cage,¹ or a turnspit in a wheel, fed by foreign masters with nuts and dog's-meat. And indeed, when we rightly conceive the relation of London to the country, the sight of it becomes more fantastic and wonderful than any dream. Hyde Park, in the season, is the great rotatory form of the vast squirrel-cage; round and round it go the idle company, in their reversed streams, urging themselves to their necessary exercise. They cannot with safety even eat their nuts, without so much "revolution" as shall, in Venetian language, "comply with the demands of hygiene."² Then they retire into their boxes, with due quantity of straw; the Belgravian and Piccadillian streets outside the railings being, when one sees clearly, nothing but the squirrel's box at the side of his wires. And then think of all the rest of the metropolis as the creation and ordinance of these squirrels, that they may squeak and whirl to their satisfaction, and yet be fed. Measure the space of its entirely miserable life. Begin with that diagonal which I struck from Regent Circus to Drury Lane;³ examine it,

* Compare, especially, Letter 29, § 8 [Vol. XXVII. p. 534].

¹ [The title to this Letter is here indicated.]

² [The phrase comes from the Venetian *Rinnovamento*: see Letter 42, § 5, p. 94 ("obedient to the dictates of hygiene").]

³ [See Letter 39, §§ 1-4 (pp. 48-51).]

house by house; then go up from Drury Lane to St. Giles' Church, look into Church Lane there, and explore your Seven Dials and Warwick Street; and remember this is the very centre of the mother city,—precisely between its Parks, its great Library and Museum, its principal Theatres, and its Bank. Then conceive the East-end; and the melancholy Islington and Pentonville districts; then the ghastly spaces of southern suburb—Vauxhall, Lambeth, the Borough, Wapping, and Bermondsey. All this is the nidification of those Park Squirrels. This is the thing they have produced round themselves; this their work in the world. When they rest from their squirrellian revolutions, and die in the Lord, and their works do follow them,¹ *these* are what will follow them. Lugubrious march of the Waterloo Road, and the Borough, and St. Giles's; the shadows of all the Seven Dials having fetched their last compass. New Jerusalem, prepared as a bride,² of course, opening her gates to them;—but, pertinaciously attendant, Old Jewry outside. “Their works do follow them.”

For these streets are indeed what they have built; their inhabitants the people they have chosen to educate. They took the bread and milk and meat from the people of their fields; they gave it to feed, and retain here in their service, this fermenting mass of unhappy human beings,—news-mongers, novel-mongers, picture-mongers, poison-drink-mongers, lust and death-mongers; the whole smoking mass of it one vast dead-marine storehouse,—accumulation of wreck of the Dead Sea, with every activity in it, a form of putrefaction.

13. Some personal matters were touched upon in my friend's reply to this letter, and I find nothing more printable of the correspondence but this following fragment or two.

“But what are you to do, having got into this mechanical line of life?”

¹ [Revelation xiv. 13.]

² [Revelation xxi. 2.]

You must persevere in it, and do the best you can for the present, but resolve to get out of it as soon as may be. The one essential point is to know thoroughly that it is wrong; how to get out of it, you can decide afterwards, at your leisure.

“But somebody must weave by machinery, and dig in mines: else how could one have one’s velvet and silver chains?”

Whatever machinery is needful for human purposes can be driven by wind or water;¹ the Thames alone could drive mills enough to weave velvet and silk for all England. But even mechanical occupation not involving pollution of the atmosphere must be as limited as possible; for it invariably degrades. You may use your slave in your silver mine, or at your loom, to avoid such labour yourself, if you honestly believe you have brains to be better employed;—or you may yourself, for the service of others, honourably *become* their slave; and, in benevolent degradation, dig silver or weave silk, making yourself semi-spade, or semi-worm. But you must not eventually, for no purpose or motive whatsoever, live amidst smoke and filth, nor allow others to do so; you must see that your slaves are as comfortable and safe as their employment permits, and that they are paid wages high enough to allow them to leave it often for redemption and rest.

Eventually, I say; how fast events may move, none of us know; in our compliance with them, let us at least be intelligently patient—if at all; not blindly patient.

14. For instance, there is nothing really more monstrous in any recorded savagery or absurdity of mankind, than that governments should be able to get money for any folly they choose to commit, by selling to capitalists the right of taxing future generations to the end of time. All the cruellest wars inflicted, all the basest luxuries grasped by the idle classes, are thus paid for by the poor a hundred

¹ [On this subject, see the *Notes on the General Principles of Employment*, Vol. XVII. p. 543; and below, p. 293.]

times over. And yet I am obliged to keep my money in the funds or the bank, because I know no other mode of keeping it safe; and if I refused to take the interest, I should only throw it into the hands of the very people who would use it for these evil purposes, or, at all events, for less good than I can.¹ Nevertheless it is daily becoming a more grave question with me what it may presently be right to do. It may be better to diminish private charities, and, much more, my own luxury of life, than to comply in any sort with a national sin. But I am not agitated or anxious in the matter: content to know my principle, and to work steadily towards better fulfilment of it.

And this is all that I would ask of my correspondent or of any other man,—that he should know what he is about, and be steady in his line of advance or retreat. I know myself to be an usurer as long as I take interest on any money whatsoever. I confess myself such, and abide whatever shame or penalty may attach to usury, until I can withdraw myself from the system. So my correspondent says he must abide by his post. I think so too. A naval captain, though I should succeed in persuading him of the wickedness of war, would in like manner, if he were wise, abide at his post; nay, would be entirely traitorous and criminal if he at once deserted it. Only let us all be sure what our positions are; and if, as it is said, the not living by interest and the resolutely making everything as good as can be, are incompatible with the present state of society, let us, though compelled to remain usurers and makers of bad things, at least not deceive ourselves as to the nature of our acts and life.

15. Leaving thus the personal question, how the great courses of life are to be checked or changed, to each man's conscience and discretion,—this following answer I would make in all cases to the inquiry, "What can I *do*?"

¹ [With this defence of his practice, compare Letter 21, § 18 (Vol. XXVII. p. 364); and see Letter 68, § 9 (below, p. 673). See also Appendix 17, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 570).]

If the present state of this so-called rich England is so essentially miserable and poverty-stricken that honest men must always live from hand to mouth, while speculators make fortunes by cheating them out of their labour, and if, therefore, no sum can be set aside for charity,—the paralyzed honest men can certainly do little for the present. But, with what can be spared for charity, if *anything*, do this; buy ever so small a bit of ground, in the midst of the worst back deserts of our manufacturing towns; six feet square, if no more can be had,—nay, the size of a grave, if you will, but buy it *freehold*, and make a garden of it, by hand-labour; a garden visible to all men, and cultivated *for* all men of that place. If absolutely nothing will grow in it, then have herbs carried there in pots. Force the bit of ground into order, cleanliness, *green* or *coloured* aspect. What difficulties you have in doing this are your best subjects of thought; the good you will do in doing this, the best in your present power.

What the best in your ultimate power may be, will depend on the action of the English landlord; for observe, we have only to separate the facts of the Swiss farm to ascertain what they are with respect to any state. We have only to ask what quantity of food it produces, how much it exports in exchange for other articles, and how much it imports in exchange for other articles. The food-producing countries have the power of educating gentlemen and gentlewomen if they please,—they are the lordly and masterful countries. Those which exchange mechanical or artistic productions for food are servile, and necessarily in process of time will be ruined. Next *Fors*, therefore, will be written for any Landlords who wish to be true Workmen in their vocation; and, according to the first law of the St. George's Company, “to do good work, whether they die or live.”¹

¹ [See Letter 2, § 22 (Vol. XXVII. p. 44).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

16. (I.) I COMMEND the whole of the following letter to the reader's most serious consideration:—

BROXBOURNE, HERTS, 11th June, 1874.

MY DEAR SIR,—You are so tolerant of correspondents with grievances, that I venture to say a few more words, in reply to your note about Law Reform. In November next the Judicature Bill will come into operation. The preamble recites this incontestable fact, "that it is expedient to make provision for the better administration of justice in England." Now, the two salient features of the incessant clamour for Law Reform are these—1st, an increased conviction of the sanctity of property; 2nd, a proportionate decrease in the estimate of human life. For years past the English people have spent incalculable money and talk in trying to induce Parliament to give them safe titles to their land, and sharp and instant means of getting in their debts: the Land Transfer Bill is in answer to this first demand, and the Judicature Bill to the second. Meanwhile the Criminal Code may shift for itself; and here we have, as the outcome of centuries of vulgar national flourish about Magna Charta, Habeas Corpus, and much else, the present infamous system of punishing crime by pecuniary penalties. Now the spirit of this evil system is simply this: "A crime is an offence against society. Making the criminal suffer pain won't materially benefit society, but making him suffer in his pocket *will*;" and so society elects to be battered about, and variously maltreated, on a sliding scale of charges, adjusted more on medical than moral principles. No doubt it is very desirable to have a title-deed to your thousand acres, no bigger than the palm of your hand, to be able to put it in a box, and sit upon it, and defy all the lawyers in the land to pick a flaw in your title; quite a millennium-like state of things, but liable to be somewhat marred if your next-door neighbour may knock you off your box, stab you with a small pocket-knife, and jump on your stomach, all with grievous damage to you, but comparative immunity to himself. We are one day to have cheap law, meanwhile we have such cheap crime that injuries to the person are now within the reach of all. I may be a villain of the first water, if I have a few spare pounds in my pocket. From a careful survey of lately reported cases, I find I can run away with my neighbour's wife, seduce his daughter, half poison his household with adulterated food, and finally stab him with a pocket-knife, for rather less than £1000. Stabbing is so ridiculously cheap that I can indulge in it for a trifling penalty of £1. (See Southall's case.¹) But woe be to me if I dare to encroach on my neighbour's land, prejudice his trade, or touch his pocket; then the law has remedies, vast and many, and I shall not only incur pecuniary penalties that are to all effects and purpose limitless, but I shall be made to suffer in person also. These two things are exactly indicative of the gradual decay of the national mind under the influence of two schools. The first teaches that man's primary object in life is to "get on in the world"; hence we have this exaggerated estimate of the value and sanctity of property. The second school teaches that love can exist without reverence, mercy without justice, and liberty without obedience; and as the logical result of such teaching, we have lost all clear and healthy knowledge of what justice really is, and invent a system of

¹ [A police court case of the time.]

punishments which is not even really punitive, and without any element of retribution at all. Let us have instead a justice that not only condones the crime, but also makes a profit out of the criminal. And we get her; but note the irony of Fate: when our modern goddess *does* pluck up heart to be angry, she seems doomed to be angry in the wrong way, and with the wrong people. Here is a late instance (the printed report of which I send you):—

William Hawkes, a blind man and very infirm, was brought up, having been committed from Marlborough Street, to be dealt with as a rogue and vagabond.

On being placed in the dock,

Mr. Montagu Williams, as *amicus curiæ*, said he had known the prisoner for years, from seeing him sitting on Waterloo Bridge tracing his fingers over a book designed for the blind to read, and in no instance had he seen him beg from those who passed by, so that he was practically doing no harm, and some time ago the late Sir William Bodkin had dealt very mercifully with him. Something ought to be done for him.

Mr. Harris said he could corroborate all that his learned friend had stated.

The Assistant-Judge said he had been convicted by the magistrate, and was sent here to be sentenced as a rogue and vagabond, *but the Court would not deal hardly with him*.

Horsford, chief officer of the Mendicity Society, said the prisoner had been frequently convicted for begging.

The Assistant-Judge sentenced him to be imprisoned for four months.—*May*, 1874.

The other day I was reading a beautiful Eastern story of a certain blind man who sat by the wayside begging; clearly a very importunate and troublesome blind man, who would by no means hold his peace, but who, nevertheless, had his heart's desire granted unto him at last. And yesterday I was also reading a very unlovely Western story of another blind man, who was "very infirm," not at all importunate, did not even beg; only sat there by the roadside and read out of a certain Book that has a great deal to say about justice and mercy. The sequel of the two stories varies considerably: in this latter one our civilized English Law clutches the old blind man by the throat, tells him he is a rogue and a vagabond, and flings him into prison for four months!

But our enlightened British Public is too busy clamouring for short deeds and cheap means of litigation, ever to give thought or time to mere "sentimental grievances." Have you seen the strange comment on Carlyle's letter of some months ago, in which he prophesied evil things to come, if England still persisted in doing her work "ill, swiftly, and mendaciously"?¹ Our export trade, for the first five months of this year, shows a decrease of just eight millions! The newspapers note with a horrified amazement, that the continental nations decline dealing any longer at the "old shop," and fall back on home products, and try to explain it by reference to the Capital and Labour question. Carlyle foresaw Germany's future, and told us plainly of it; he foresees England's decadence, and warns us just as plainly of *that*; and the price we have already paid, in this year of grace 1874, for telling him to hold his tongue, is just eight millions.

Yours sincerely,²

17. Next, or next but one, to the *Fors* for the squires,³ will come that for the lawyers.⁴ In the meantime, can any correspondent inform me, approximately, what the income and earnings of the legal profession are annually in England, and what sum is spent in collateral expenses for

¹ [A letter on "Capital and Labour" in the *Times* of January 28, 1874: see the Introduction to Vol. XXVII. (p. xlv.), where extracts from it are given.]

² [The writer was Mr. Albert Fleming.]

³ [Letter 45.]

⁴ [Letter 47; the points suggested by Mr. Fleming's letter were not, however, touched upon there (see below, p. 201), being reserved for "subsequent consideration."]

juries, witnesses, etc.? The *Times* for May 18th of this year gives the following estimate of the cost of the Tichborne trial,¹ which seems to me very moderate:—

THE TRIAL OF THE TICHBORNE CLAIMANT.—On Saturday a return to the House of Commons, obtained by Mr. W. H. Smith, was printed, showing the amount expended upon the prosecution in the case of “Regina v. Castro, otherwise Orton, otherwise Tichborne,” and the probable amount still remaining to be paid out of the vote of Parliament for “this service.” The probable cost of the trial is stated at £55,315, 17s. 1d., of which £49,815, 17s. 1d. had been paid up to the 11th ult., and on the 11th of May inst. £5,500 remained unpaid. In 1872–73 counsel’s fees were £1,146, 16s. 6d., and in 1873–74 counsel’s fees were £22, 49s. 18s. 4d. The jury were paid £3,780, and the shorthand writers £3,493, 3s. The other expenses were witnesses, agents, etc., and law stationers and printing. Of the sum to be paid, £4,000 is for the Australian and Chili witnesses.—*Times*, May 18th, 1874.

18. (II.) I reprint the following letter as it was originally published. I meant to have inquired into the facts a little farther, but have not had time.

21, MINCING LANE, LONDON, E.C.
19th March, 1874.

DEAR SIRS,—On the 27th March, 1872, we directed your attention to this subject of Usury in a paper headed “CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE.” We have since published our correspondence with the Rev. Dr. Cumming, and we take his silence as an acknowledgment of his inability to justify his teaching upon this subject. We have also publicly protested against the apathy of the Bishops and Clergy of the Established Church regarding this national sin. We now append an extract from the *Hampshire Independent* of the 11th instant, which has been forwarded to us:—

“The Church of England in South Australia is in active competition with the money changers and those who sell doves. The Church Office, Leigh Street, Adelaide, advertises that ‘it is prepared to lend money at current rates—no commission or brokerage charged,’ which is really liberal on the part of the Church of England, and may serve to distinguish it as a lender from the frequenters of the synagogues.* It has been suggested that the Church Office should hang out the triple symbol of the Lombards, and that at the next examination of candidates for holy orders a few apposite questions might be asked, such as—‘State concisely the best method of obtaining the highest rate of interest for Church moneys. Demonstrate how a system of Church money-lending was approved by the founder of Christianity.’ ”

As such perverseness can only end in sudden and overwhelming calamity, we make no apology for again urging you to assist us in our endeavours to banish the accursed element at least from our own trade.

Your obedient servants,
J. C. SILLAR AND CO.

* It is possible that this lending office may have been organized as a method of charity, corresponding to the original Monte di Pieta, the modern clergymen having imagined, in consequence of the common error about interest, that they could improve the system of Venice by ignoring its main condition—the lending gratis,—and benefit themselves at the same time.

¹ [See above, p. 41.]

19. I put in large print—it would be almost worth capital letters—the following statement of the principle of interest as “necessary to the existence of money.” I suppose it is impossible to embody the modern view more distinctly:—

“Money, the representation and measure of value, has also *the power to accumulate value by interest* (italics *not mine*). This accumulative power is essential to the existence of money, for no one will exchange productive property for money that does not represent production. The laws making gold and silver a public tender impart to dead masses of metal, as it were, life and animation. They give them powers which without legal enactment they could not possess, and which enable their owner to obtain for their use what other men must earn by their labour. One piece of gold receives a legal capability to earn for its owner, in a given time, another piece of gold as large as itself; or in other words, the legal power of money to accumulate by interest compels the borrower in a given period, according to the rate of interest, to mine and coin, or to procure by the sale of his labour or products, another lump of gold as large as the first, and give it, together with the first, to the lender.”—*Kellogg on Labour and Capital, New York, 1849.*¹

¹ [*Labour and other Capital: the Rights of each Secured and the Wrongs of both Eradicated*, by Edward Kellogg, pp. 54–55 (“Section IV.: The Power of Money to Accumulate Value by Interest”).]

LETTER 45¹

MY LORD DELAYETH HIS COMING.² THE BRITISH SQUIRE

LUCCA, 2nd August, 1874.

1. THE other day, in the Sacristan's cell at Assisi, I got into a great argument with the Sacristan himself,³ about the prophet Isaiah. It had struck me that I should like to know what sort of a person his wife was: and I asked my good host, over our morning's coffee, whether the Church knew anything about her. Brother Antonio, however, instantly and energetically denied that he ever had a wife. He was a "Castissimo profeta,"—how could I fancy anything so horrible of him! Vainly I insisted that, since he had children, he must either have been married, or been under special orders, like the prophet Hosea.⁴ But my Protestant Bible was good for nothing, said the Sacristan. Nay, I answered, I never read, usually, in anything later than a thirteenth-century text; let him produce me one out of the convent library, and see if I couldn't find Shearjashub in it.⁵ The discussion dropped upon this,—because the library was inaccessible at the moment; and no printed Vulgate to be found. But I think of it again to-day, because I have just got into another puzzle about Isaiah,—to wit, what he means by calling himself a "man

¹ [Ruskin seems to have attached particular importance to this letter, as appears from the following entry in his diary at Lucca (July 30, 1874): "Beginning the great central *Fors* I chance on and read carefully, and as an answer to much thought last night, Isaiah 6th."]

² [Matthew xxiv. 48. See below, § 7.]

³ [For Ruskin's friendship with the Sacristan at Assisi, see Vol. XXIII. p. xxxviii.]

⁴ [See Hosea iii. 1.]

⁵ [See Isaiah vii. 3.]

of unclean lips.”* And that is a vital question, surely, to all persons venturing to rise up, as teachers;—vital, at all events, to me, here, and now;—for these following reasons.

2. Thirty years ago,¹ I began my true study of Italian, and all other art,—here, beside the statue of Ilaria di Caretto, recumbent on her tomb. It turned me from the study of landscape to that of life, being then myself in the fullest strength of labour, and joy of hope.

And I was thinking, last night, that the drawing which I am now trying to make of it,² in the weakness and despair of declining age, might possibly be the last I should make before quitting the study of Italian, and even all other, art, for ever.

I have no intent of doing so: quite the reverse of that. But I feel the separation between me and the people round me, so bitterly, in the world of my own which they cannot enter; and I see their entrance to it now barred so absolutely by their own resolves (they having deliberately and self-congratulatingly chosen for themselves the Manchester Cotton Mill instead of the Titian³), that it becomes every hour more urged upon me that I shall have to leave,—not father and mother, for they have left me; nor children, nor lands, for I have none,⁴—but at least this spiritual land and fair domain of human art and natural peace,—because I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, and therefore am undone, because mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.⁵

3. I say it, and boldly. Who else is there of you who can stand with me, and say the same? It is an age of progress, you tell me. Is your progress chiefly in this, that

* Read Isaiah vi. through carefully.

¹ [In the tour of 1845: see *Modern Painters*, Epilogue to vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 347), and *ibid.*, p. 122, with plate, “Tomb of Ilaria di Caretto, Lucca.” And again, *Stones of Venice* (Vol. XI. p. 239).]

² [See Plate XIX. in Vol. XXIII. (p. 230).]

³ [See Letter 7, § 14 (Vol. XXVII. p. 128).]

⁴ [See Matthew xix. 29.]

⁵ [Isaiah vi. 5.]

you *cannot* see the King, the Lord of Hosts, but only Baal, instead of Him?

“The Sun is God,” said Turner, a few weeks before he died with the setting rays of it on his face.¹

He meant it, as Zoroaster meant it; and was a Sun-worshipper of the old breed. But the unheard-of foulness of your modern faith in Baal is its being faith *without* worship. The Sun is—*not* God,—you say. Not by any manner of means. A gigantic railroad accident, perhaps,²—a coruscant δινος,³—put on the throne of God like a lime-light; and able to serve you, eventually, much better than ever God did.

4. I repeat my challenge. You,—Te-Deum-singing princes,⁴ colonels, bishops, choristers, and what else,—do any of you know what Te means? or what Deum? or what Laudamus? Have any of your eyes seen the King, or His Sabaoth?⁵ Will any of you say, with your hearts, “Heaven and earth are full of His glory; and in His name we will set up our banners, and do good work, whether we live or die”?⁶

You, in especial, Squires of England, whose fathers were England’s bravest and best,—by how much better and braver you are than your fathers, in this Age of Progress, I challenge you: Have any of your eyes seen the King? Are any of your hands ready for His work, and for His weapons,—even though they should chance to be pruning-hooks instead of spears?⁷

5. Who am I, that should challenge *you*—do you ask? My mother was a sailor’s daughter, so please you; one of my aunts was a baker’s wife—the other, a tanner’s; and I don’t know much more about my family, except that there

¹ [Compare *Ariadne Florentina*, § 262 (Vol. XXII. p. 490).]

² [See Letter 6, § 9 (Vol. XXVII. p. 108).]

³ [For the reference here to Aristophanes (*Clouds*, 828), see Vol. XIX. p. 326.]

⁴ [See above, p. 69.]

⁵ [For the meaning of Sabaoth (“hosts”), see Letter 12, § 10 (Vol. XXVII. p. 205).]

⁶ [See Vol. XXVII. p. 44.]

⁷ [See Isaiah ii. 4; often quoted by Ruskin: see, *e.g.*, Vol. XVII. p. 178.]

used to be a greengrocer of the name in a small shop near the Crystal Palace. Something of my early and vulgar life, if it interests you, I will tell in next *Fors*: in this one, it is indeed my business, poor gipsy herald¹ as I am, to bring you such challenge, though you shall hunt and hang me for it.

6. Squires, are you, and not Workmen, nor Labourers, do you answer next?

Yet, I have certainly sometimes seen engraved over your family vaults, and especially on the more modern tablets, those comfortable words, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." But I observe that you are usually content, with the help of the village stone-mason, to say *only* this concerning your dead; and that you but rarely venture to add the "yea" of the Spirit, "that they may rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them."² Nay, I am not even sure that many of you clearly apprehend the meaning of such followers and following; nor, in the most pathetic funeral sermons, have I heard the matter made strictly intelligible to your hope. For indeed, though you have always graciously considered your church no less essential a part of your establishment than your stable, you have only been solicitous that there should be no broken-winded steeds in the one, without collateral endeavour to find clerks for the other in whom the breath of the Spirit should be unbroken also.

As yet it is a text which, seeing how often we would fain take the comfort of it, surely invites explanation. The implied difference between those who die in the Lord, and die—otherwise; the essential distinction between the labour from which these blessed ones rest, and the work which in some mysterious way follows them; and the doubt—which must sometimes surely occur painfully to a sick or bereaved squire—whether the labours of his race are always severe enough to make rest sweet, or the works of his

¹ [Gipsy herald, an allusion to "Rouge Sanglier" in *Quentin Durward*, ch. xxxiii.; compare *Deucalion*, Vol. XXVI. p. 188.]

² [Revelation xiv. 13; compare above, Letter 44, § 12 (p. 137).]

race always distinguished enough to make their following superb,—ought, it seems to me, to cause the verse to glow on your (lately, I observe, more artistic) tombstones, like the letters on Belshazzar's wall;¹ and with the more lurid and alarming light, that this "following" of the works is distinctly connected, in the parallel passage of Timothy, with "judgment" upon the works; and that the kinds of them which can securely front such judgment, are there said to be, in some cases, "manifest beforehand," and, in no case, ultimately obscure.²

7. "It seems to me," I say, as if such questions should occur to the squire during sickness, or funeral pomp. But the seeming is far from the fact. For I suppose the last idea which is likely ever to enter the mind of a representative squire, in any vivid or tenable manner, would be that anything he had ever done, or said, was liable to a judgment from superior powers; or that any other law than his own will, or the fashion of his society, stronger than his will, existed in relation to the management of his estate. Whereas, according to any rational interpretation of our Church's doctrine, as by law established; if there be one person in the world rather than another to whom it makes a serious difference whether he dies in the Lord or out of Him: and if there be one rather than another who will have strict scrutiny made into his use of every instant of his time, every syllable of his speech, and every action of his hand and foot,—on peril of having hand and foot bound, and tongue scorched, in Tophet,³—that responsible person is the British Squire.

Very strange, the unconsciousness of this, in his own mind, and in the minds of all belonging to him. Even the greatest painter of him—the Reynolds who has filled England with the ghosts of her noble squires and dames,⁴—though he ends his last lecture in the Academy with "the

¹ [Daniel v. 5.]

² [1 Timothy v. 24–25.]

³ [See Isaiah xxx. 33, and Jeremiah vii. 31.]

⁴ [Compare Vol. VII. p. 378.]

name of Michael Angelo,” never for an instant thought of following out the purposes of Michael Angelo,¹ and painting a Last Judgment upon Squires, with the scene of it laid in Leicestershire. Appealing lords and ladies on either hand;—“Behold, Lord, here is Thy land; which I have—as far as my distressed circumstances would permit—laid up in a napkin. Perhaps there may be a cottage or so less upon it than when I came into the estate,—a tree cut down here and there imprudently;—but the grouse and foxes are undiminished. Behold, there Thou hast that is Thine.”² And what capacities of dramatic effect in the cases of less prudent owners,—those who had said in their hearts, “My Lord delayeth His coming.”³ Michael Angelo’s St. Bartholomew,⁴ exhibiting his *own* skin flayed off him, awakes but a minor interest in that classic picture. How many an English squire might not we, with more pictorial advantage, see represented as adorned with the flayed skins of other people? Micah the Morasthite, throned above them on the rocks of the mountain of the Lord, while his Master now takes up His parable, “Hear, I pray you, ye heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; Is it not for you to know judgment, who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them, and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces as for the pot?”⁵

8. And how of the appeals on the other side? “Lord, Thou gavest me one land; behold, I have gained beside it ten lands more.”⁶ You think that an exceptionally economical landlord might indeed be able to say so much for himself; and that the increasing of their estates has at least

¹ [Compare the Notes on the *Discourses* of Sir Joshua Reynolds: Vol. XXII. p. 500.]

² [Compare Matthew xxv. 25, and Luke xix. 20.]

³ [See the title to this letter.]

⁴ [The figure of St. Bartholomew holding forth with one hand his skin hanging over his arm, and grasping his knife in the other, is among the saints and martyrs who surround Christ and His Mother in the fresco of the Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel.]

⁵ [Micah iii. 1 and 3.]

⁶ [It will be noticed that Ruskin combines the two versions of the parable—the language being here founded on that in Matthew, while the gain of ten from one is only in Luke (xix. 16): in Matthew the recipient of the single talent gains nothing; in Luke all ten servants receive equally one talent.]

been held a desirable thing by all of them, however Fortune, and the sweet thyme-scented Turf of England, might thwart their best intentions. Indeed it is well to have coveted—much more to have gained—increase of estate, in a certain manner. But neither the Morasthite nor his Master has any word of praise for you in appropriating surreptitiously portions, say, of Hampstead Heath, or Hayes Common, or even any bit of gipsy-pot-boiling land at the roadside. Far the contrary: In that day of successful appropriation, there is one that shall take up a parable against you, and say, “We be utterly spoiled. He hath changed the portion of my people; turning away, he hath divided our fields. Therefore thou shalt have none that shall cast a cord by lot in the congregation of the Lord.”¹ In modern words, you shall have quite unexpected difficulties in getting your legal documents drawn up to your satisfaction; and truly, as you have divided the fields of the poor, the poor, in their time, shall divide yours.

Nevertheless, in their deepest sense, those triumphant words, “Behold, I have gained beside it ten lands more,” must be on the lips of every landlord who honourably enters into his rest; whereas there will soon be considerable difficulty, as I think you are beginning to perceive, not only in gaining more, but even in keeping what you have got.

9. For the gipsy hunt is up also, as well as Harry our King’s;² and the hue and cry loud against your land and you; your tenure of it is in dispute before a multiplying mob, deaf and blind as you,—frantic for the spoiling of you.

¹ [Micah ii. 4, 5.]

² [The reference is to an old ballad, attributed to one Gray, who “did grow unto good estimation with King Henry and afterwards with the Duke of Somerset, Protector, for making certaine merry ballades, whereof one chiefly was ‘The Hunt is Up’ ” (*The Ballad Literature and Popular Music of the Olden Times*, by W. Chappell, vol. i. p. 60). The lines are:—

“The hunt is up, the hunt is up,
And it is well nigh day,
And Harry our king is gone hunting
To bring his deer to bay.”

In “the hue and cry” Ruskin was probably thinking of *1 Henry IV.*, Act ii. sc. 4, 556.]

The British Constitution is breaking fast. It never was, in its best days, entirely what its stout owner flattered himself. Neither British Constitution, nor British law, though it blanch every acre with an acre of parchment, sealed with as many seals as the meadow had buttercups, can keep your landlordships safe, henceforward, for an hour. You will have to fight for them as your fathers did, if you mean to keep them.

That is your only sound and divine right to them; and of late you seem doubtful of appeal to it. You think political economy and peace societies will contrive some arithmetical evangel of possession. You will not find it so. If a man is not ready to fight for his land, and for his wife, no legal forms can secure them to him. They can affirm his possession; but neither grant, sanction, nor protect it.¹ To his own love, to his own resolution, the lordship is granted; and to those only.

10. That is the first “labour” of landlords, then. Fierce exercise of body and mind, in so much pugnacity as shall supersede all office of legal documents. Whatever labour you mean to put on your land, your first entirely Divine labour is to keep hold of it. And are you ready for that toil to-day? It will soon be called for. Sooner or later, within the next few years, you will find yourselves in Parliament in front of a majority resolved on the establishment of a Republic, and the division of lands. Vainly the landed millowners will shriek for the “operation of natural laws of political economy.” The vast natural law of carnivorous rapine which they have declared their Baal-God,² in so many words, will be in *equitable* operation then; and not, as they fondly hoped to keep it, all on their own side. Vain, then, your arithmetical or sophistical defence. You may pathetically plead to the people’s majority, that the divided lands will not give much more than the length and breadth of his grave to each mob-proprietor. They will answer, “We will have what we can get;—at all events, *you* shall keep

¹ [Compare Letter 73, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 16).]

² [See Letter 42, § 14 (p. 102).]

it no longer.” And what will you do? Send for the Life Guards and clear the House, and then, with all the respectable members of society as special constables, guard the streets? That answered well against the Chartist meeting on Kennington Common in 1848. Yes; but in 1880¹ it will not be a Chartist meeting at Kennington, but a magna-and-maxima-Chartist Ecclesia at Westminster, that you must deal with. You will find a difference, and to purpose. Are you prepared to clear the streets with the Woolwich infant,²—thinking that out of the mouth of that suckling, God would perfect your praise, and ordain your strength?³ Be it so; but every grocer’s and chandler’s shop in the thoroughfares of London is a magazine of petroleum and percussion powder; and there are those who will use both, among the Republicans. And you will see your father the Devil’s will done on earth, as it is in hell.

I call him your father, for you have denied your mortal fathers, and the Heavenly One. You have declared, in act and thought, the ways and laws of your sires—obsolete, and of your God—ridiculous; above all, the habits of obedience, and the elements of justice. You were made lords over God’s heritage. You thought to make it your own heritage; to be lords of your own land, not of God’s land. And to this issue of ownership you are come.

11. And what a heritage it was, you *had* the lordship over! A land of fruitful vales and pastoral mountains; and a heaven of pleasant sunshine and kindly rain; and times of sweet prolonged summer, and cheerful transient winter; and a race of pure heart, iron sinew, splendid fame, and constant faith.

All this was yours! the earth with its fair fruits and innocent creatures;—the firmament with its eternal lights and dutiful seasons;—the men, souls and bodies, your fathers’ true servants for a thousand years,—their lives, and

¹ [See *General Statement explaining the Nature and Purposes of St. George’s Guild*, § 1 n. (Vol. XXX.), where, writing in 1882, Ruskin says that “the history of the Parliament of 1881 has too clearly interpreted these words”: see on this subject the Introduction to Vol. XVII. pp. cviii.–cix.]

² [See above, p. 95 n.]

³ [Psalms viii. 2; Matthew xxi. 16.]

their children's children's lives given into your hands, to save or to destroy; their food yours,—as the grazing of the sheep is the shepherd's; their thoughts yours,—priest and tutor chosen for them by you; their hearts yours,—if you would but so much as know them by sight and name, and give them the passing grace of your own glance, as you dwelt among them, their king. And all this monarchy and glory, all this power and love, all this land and its people, you pitifullest, foulest of Iscariots, sopped to choking with the best of the feast from Christ's own fingers,¹ you have deliberately sold to the highest bidder;—Christ, and His Poor, and His Paradise together; and instead of sinning only, like poor natural Adam, gathering of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge,² you, who don't want to gather it, *touch* it with a vengeance,—cut it down, and sell the timber.

Judases with the big bag—game-bag to wit!—to think how many of your dull Sunday mornings have been spent, for propriety's sake, looking chiefly at those carved angels blowing trumpets above your family vaults; and never one of you has had Christianity enough in him to think that he might as easily have his moors full of angels as of grouse. And now, if ever you did see a real angel before the Day of Judgment, your first thought would be,—to shoot it.³

And for your "family" vaults, what will be the use of them to you? Does not Mr. Darwin show you that you can't wash the slugs out of a lettuce without disrespect to your ancestors? Nay, the ancestors of the modern political economist cannot have been so pure;—they were not—he tells you himself—vegetarian slugs, but carnivorous ones⁴—those, to wit, that you see also carved on your tombstones, going in and out at the eyes of skulls. And truly, I don't

¹ [See John xiii. 26.]

² [See Genesis iii.]

³ [In an article entitled "A Dip into the Past" (*Daily News*, March 28, 1906), Mrs. Christina Thompson (mother of Lady Butler, the painter) says: "I remember one day at dinner Ruskin alluded in his ironic way to the deteriorating effects of sportomania in this country. 'Yes,' I interposed, 'if an angel were suddenly to appear in the sky, all our sportsmen would come out with their guns.' Ruskin nodded approval and went on with his dinner." A little time later Mrs. Thompson was "surprised and flattered" to find that he had used her idea in *Fors Clavigera*.]

⁴ [See above, p. 102; and below, p. 159.]

know what else the holes in the heads of modern political economists were made for.

If there are any brighter windows in yours—if any audience chambers—if any council chambers—if any crown of walls that the pin of Death has not yet pierced,—it is time for you to rise to your work, whether you live or die.¹

12. What are you to do, then? First,—the act which will be the foundation of all bettering and strength in your own lives, as in that of your tenants,—fix their rent; under legal assurance that it shall not be raised; and under moral assurance that, if you see they treat your land well, and are likely to leave it to you, if they die, raised in value, the said rent shall be *diminished* in proportion to the improvement; that is to say, providing they pay you the fixed rent during the time of lease, you are to leave to them the entire benefit of whatever increase they can give to the value of the land. Put the bargain in a simple instance. You lease them an orchard of crab-trees for so much a year; they leave you at the end of the lease, an orchard of golden pippins. Supposing they have paid you their rent regularly, you have no right to anything more than what you lent them—crab-trees, to wit. You must pay them for the better trees which by their good industry they give you back, or, which is the same thing, previously reduce their rent in proportion to the improvement in apples. “The exact contrary,” you observe, “of your present modes of proceeding.” Just so, gentlemen; and it is not improbable that the exact contrary in many other cases of your present modes of proceeding will be found by you, eventually, the proper one, and more than that, the necessary one. Then the second thing you have to do is to determine the income necessary for your own noble and peaceful country life; and setting that aside out of the rents, for a constant sum, to be habitually lived well within limits of, put your heart and strength into the right employment of the rest for the bettering of your estates, in

¹ [See above, p. 147.]

ways which the farmers for their own advantage could not or would not; for the growth of more various plants; the cherishing, not killing, of beautiful living creatures—bird, beast, and fish;¹ and the establishment of such schools of History, Natural History, and Art, as may enable your farmers' children, with your own, to know the meaning of the words Beauty, Courtesy, Compassion, Gladness, and Religion. Which last word, primarily, (you have not always forgotten to teach this one truth, because it chanced to suit your ends, and even the teaching of this one truth has been beneficent;)—Religion, primarily, means “Obedience”—binding to something, or some one.² To be bound, or in bonds, as apprentice; to be bound, or in bonds, by military oath; to be bound, or in bonds, as a servant to man; to be bound, or in bonds, under the yoke of God. These are all divinely instituted, eternally necessary, conditions of Religion; beautiful, inviolable captivity and submission of soul in life and death. This essential meaning of Religion it was your office mainly to teach,—each of you captain and king, leader and lawgiver, to his people;—vicegerents of your Captain, Christ.³ And now—you miserable jockeys and gamblers—you can't get a seat in Parliament for those all but worn-out buckskin breeches of yours, but by taking off your hats to the potboy.⁴ Pretty classical statues you will make, Coriolanuses⁵ of the nineteenth century, humbly promising, not to your people gifts of corn, but to your potboys, stealthy sale of adulterated beer!

Obedience!—you dare not so much as utter the word, whether to potboy, or any other sort of boy, it seems, lately; and the half of you still calling themselves Lords,

¹ [Ruskin in his copy here notes, “Love's Meinie”; for the passage of which he was thinking, see Vol. XXV. p. 132.]

² [Compare Letter 12, § 31 (Vol. XXVII. p. 219); and see *ibid.*, p. 194 *n.* Compare also Letters 69, § 16, and 70, § 7 (below, pp. 701, 718).]

³ [See Letter 25, § 15 (Vol. XXVII. p. 459).]

⁴ [The reference here is to the General Election of 1874, in which the brewers and publicans made much capital against the Liberal Government on account of the Licensing Act of 1872; and to the Intoxicating Liquors Bill which the succeeding Conservative Government at once introduced—slightly relaxing the Act of 1872 and, in the opinion of its opponents, “affording increased facilities for drinking” (see Hansard, May 11, 1874).]

⁵ [See *Coriolanus*, Act i. sc. 1.]

Marquises, Sirs, and other such ancient names, which—though omniscient Mr. Buckle¹ says they and their heraldry are nought—some little prestige lingers about still. You yourselves, what do you yet mean by them—Lords of what?—Herrs, Signors, Dukes of what?—of whom? Do you mean merely, when you go to the root of the matter, that you sponge on the British farmer for your living, and are strong-bodied paupers compelling your dole?

13. To that extent, there is still, it seems, some force in you. Heaven keep it in you; for, as I have said, it will be tried, and soon; and you would even yourselves see what was coming, but that in your hearts—not from cowardice, but from shame,—you are not sure whether you will be ready to fight for your dole; and would fain persuade yourselves it will still be given you for form's sake, or pity's.

No, my lords and gentlemen,—you won it at the lance's point, and must so hold it, against the clubs of Sempach, if still you may. No otherwise. You won "*it*," I say,—your dole,—as matters now stand. But perhaps, as matters used to stand, something else. As receivers of alms, you will find there is no fight in you. No beggar, nor herd of beggars, can fortify so very wide circumference of dish. And the real secret of those strange breakings of the lance by the clubs of Sempach, is—"that villanous saltpetre"²—you think? No, Shakesperian lord; nor even the sheaf-binding of Arnold, which so stopped the shaking of the fruitless spicula.³ The utter and inmost secret is, that

¹ [For other reference to H. T. Buckle's *History of Civilization in Europe*, see Vol. XXII. p. 500, and Letters 75 and 87 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 59, 362 n.).]

² [*I King Henry IV.*, Act i. sc. 3.]

³ [Ruskin in his copy here compares "the corn of spears" with the passage below at the end of § 18. "In this, the last of the series of encounters with the Austrians (Sempach, July 9th, 1386), the Swiss could at first make no impression on the close ranks of the Austrians, all bristling with spears. But Anthony Zer Port of Uri cried to his men to strike with their halberds on the shafts of the spears, which he knew were made hollow to render them lighter; and, at the same time, Arnold of Winkelried, a knight from Unterwalden, devoting himself to his country, cried out 'I'll open a way for you, confederates'; and seizing as many spears as he could grasp in his arms, dragged them down with his whole weight and strength upon his own bosom, and thus made an opening for his countrymen to penetrate the Austrian ranks. This act of heroism decided the victory" (A. Vieusseux, *History of Switzerland*, p. 64).]

you have been fighting these three hundred years for what you could *get* instead of what you could *give*. You were ravenous enough in rapine in the olden times;* but you lived fearlessly and innocently by it, because, essentially, you wanted money and food to give,—not to consume; to maintain your followers with, not to swallow yourselves. Your chivalry was founded, invariably, by knights who were content all their lives with their horse and armour and daily bread. Your kings, of true power, never desired for themselves more, down to the last of them, Friedrich.¹ What they *did* desire was strength of manhood round them, and, in their own hands, the power of largesse.

14. “Largesse.” The French word is obsolete; one Latin equivalent, Liberalitas, is fast receiving another, and not altogether similar significance, among English Liberals. The other Latin equivalent, Generosity, has become doubly meaningless, since modern political economy and politics neither require virtue, nor breeding. The Greek, or Greek-descended, equivalents—Charity, Grace, and the like, your Grace the Duke of—can perhaps tell me what has become of *them*. Meantime, of all the words, “Largesse,” the entirely obsolete one, is the perfectly chivalric one; and therefore, next to the French description of Franchise,² we will now read the French description of Largesse,—putting first, for comparison with it, a few more sentences † from the secretary’s speech at the meeting of Social Science in Glasgow; and remembering also the *Pall*

* The reader will perhaps now begin to see the true bearing of the earlier letters in *Fors*. Re-read, with this letter, that on the campaign of Crécy.³

† I wish I could find room also for the short passages I omit; but one I quoted before,⁴ “As no one will deny that man possesses carnivorous teeth,” etc., and the others introduce collateral statements equally absurd, but with which at present we are not concerned.

¹ [On the character of Frederick the Great, see *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 162 (Vol. XVIII, p. 515).]

² [See Letter 43, § 7 (p. 114).]

³ [Letter 4, § 10 (Vol. XXVII, p. 72). See also Letter 80, § 15 (Vol. XXIX, p. 185).]

⁴ [Letter 42, § 14 (p. 103).]

Mall Gazette's exposition of the perfection of Lord Derby's idea of agriculture, in the hands of the landowner—"Cultivating" (by machinery) "large farms *for himself*."¹

"Exchange is the result, put into action, of the desire to possess that which belongs to another, controlled by reason and conscientiousness. It is difficult to conceive of any human transaction that cannot be resolved, in some form or other, into the idea of an exchange. All that *is* essential in production *are*" (*sic*, only italics mine) "directly evolved from this source."

"Man has therefore been defined to be an animal that exchanges. It will be seen, however, that he not only exchanges, but from the fact of his belonging, in part, to the order CARNIVORA, that he also inherits, to a considerable degree, the desire to possess without exchanging; or, in other words, by fraud and violence, when such can be used for his own advantage, without danger to himself."²

"Reason would immediately suggest to one of superior strength, that, however desirable it might be to take possession, by violence, of what another had laboured to produce, he might be treated in the same way by one stronger than himself; to which he, of course, would have great objection."

"In order, therefore, to prevent, or put a stop to, a practice which each would object to in his own case, and which, besides, would put a stop to production altogether, both reason and a sense of justice would suggest the act of exchange, as the only proper mode of obtaining things from one another."

15. To anybody who *had* either reason or a sense of justice, it might possibly have suggested itself that, except for the novelty of the thing, *mere* exchange profits nobody, and presupposes a coincidence, or rather a harmonious dissent, of opinion not always attainable.

Mr. K. has a kettle, and Mr. P. has a pot. Mr. P. says to Mr. K., "I would rather have your kettle than my pot;" and if, coincidentally, Mr. K. is also in a discontented humour, and can say to Mr. P., "I would rather have your pot than my kettle," why—both Hanses are in luck, and

¹ [Not *Pall Mall Gazette* but *Daily Telegraph*: see Letter 10, § 1 (Vol. XXVII. p. 166).]

² [For another reference to this passage, see Letter 77, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 110): and for a repetition of the sentence, printed for "the monumental vileness of it" in capitals, see Letter 81, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. p. 199).]

all is well; but is their carnivorous instinct thus to be satisfied? Carnivorous instinct says, in both cases, "I want both pot and kettle myself, and you to have neither," and is entirely unsatisfiable on the principle of exchange. The ineffable blockhead who wrote the paper forgot that the principle of division of labour *underlies* that of exchange, and does not arise out of it, but is the only reason for it. If Mr. P. can make two pots, and Mr. K. two kettles, and so, by exchange, both become possessed of a pot and a kettle, all is well. But the profit of the business is in the additional production, and only the convenience in the subsequent exchange. For, indeed, there are in the main two great fallacies which the rascals of the world rejoice in making its fools proclaim: the first, that by continually exchanging, and cheating each other on exchange, two exchanging persons, out of one pot, alternating with one kettle, can make their two fortunes. That is the principle of *Trade*. The second, that Judas' bag has become a juggler's,¹ in which, if Mr. P. deposits his pot, and waits awhile, there will come out two pots, both full of broth; and Mr. K. deposits his kettle, and waits awhile, there will come out two kettles both full of fish! That is the principle of *Interest*.

16. However, for the present, observe simply the conclusion of our social science expositor, that "the art of exchange is the only proper mode of obtaining things from one another;" and now compare with this theory that of old chivalry, namely, that gift was also a good way, both of losing and gaining.²

"And after, in the dance, went
Largesse, that set all her intent
For to be honourable and free.
Of Alexander's kin was she;

¹ [For the "Judasian heresy," see Letter 82, § 5 n. (Vol. XXIX. p. 225).]

² [Chaucer's *Romaunt of the Rose*, 1138–1149, 1176–1185. The lines "Her moste joy," etc., are quoted also in *Munera Pulveris*, Vol. XVII. p. 292, and in *Val d' Arno*, § 199 (Vol. XXIII. p. 117).]

Her mostë joy was, I wis,
 When that she gave, and said, 'Have this.'*
 Not Avarice, the foul caitiff,†
 Was half, to gripe, so ententive,
 As Largesse is to give, and spend.
 And God always enough her send, (sent)
 So that the more she gave away,
 The more, I wis, she had alway.

Largesse had on a robe fresh
 Of rich purpüre, sarlinish;‡
 Well formed was her face, and clear,
 And open had she her colere, (collar)
 For she right then had in present
 Unto a lady made present
 Of a gold brooch, full well wrought;
 And certes, it mis-set her nought,
 For through her smocke, wrought with silk,
 The flesh was seen as white as milke."

* I must warn you against the false reading of the original, in many editions. Fournier's five-volume one is altogether a later text, in some cases with interesting intentional modifications, probably of the fifteenth century; but oftener with destruction of the older meaning. It gives this couplet, for instance,—

"Si n'avoit el plaisir de rien,
 Que quant elle donnoit du sien."

The old reading is,

"Si n'avoit elle joie de rien,
 Fors quant elle pavoit dire, 'tien.' "

Didot's edition, Paris, 1814, is founded on very early and valuable texts; but it is difficult to read. Chaucer has translated a text some twenty or thirty years later in style; and his English is quite trustworthy as far as it is carried. For the rest of the Romance, Fournier's text is practically good enough, and easily readable.¹

† Fr. "chétive," rhyming accurately to "ententive."²

‡ Fr. Sarrasinesse.³

¹ [Fournier and Didot are the publishers, not the editors. "Fournier's" edition, with notes, glossary, etc., is in five volumes, large octavo, finely printed: *an.* vii. (1798). Didot's (four volumes, octavo) is "nouvelle édition revue et corrigée sur les meilleurs et plus anciens manuscrits, par M. Méon." (On the various editions, see the Introduction to *The Romaunt of the Rose* in R. Bell's *Poetical Works of Chaucer*, vol. iv.) There is a beautiful MS. of the *Roman* in the British Museum (Harl. MSS., 1762). Ruskin himself had a MS. of the *Roman* of about 1380, "with beautiful little dark grey vignettes": see (in a later volume of this edition) his letter to C. E. Norton of August 14, 1870.]

² ["Mais Avarice la chétive
 N'est pas songeuse n'ententive
 Comme Largesse de donner."]

³ ["Sarlynsh. Probably a mistake of the scrivener for sarsynsh, from the A. N. *sarrasinois*, a kind of thin silk, still called *sarcenet*" (note in the Glossary to Bohn's edition of *Chaucer*, 1886, vol. iv. p. 489).]

Think over that, ladies, and gentlemen who love them, for a pretty way of being décolletée. Even though the flesh should be a little sunburnt sometimes,—so that it be the Sun of Righteousness, and not Baal, who shines on it—though it darken from the milk-like flesh to the colour of the Madonna of Chartres,¹—in this world you shall be able to say, I am black, but comely;² and, dying, shine as the brightness of the firmament—as the stars for ever and ever.³ *They* do not receive their glories,—however one differeth in glory from another,⁴—either by, or on, Exchange.

LUCCA. (*Assumption of the Virgin.*)

17. “As the stars, *for ever.*” Perhaps we had better not say that,—modern science looking pleasantly forward to the extinction of a good many of them. But it will be well to shine like them, if but for a little while.

You probably did not understand why, in a former letter, the Squire’s special duty towards the peasant was said to be “presenting a celestial appearance to him.”⁵

That is, indeed, his appointed missionary work; and still more definitely, his wife’s.

The giving of loaves is indeed the lady’s first duty;⁶ the first, but the least.

Next, comes the giving of brooches;—seeing that her people are dressed charmingly and neatly, as well as herself, and have pretty furniture, like herself.*

* Even after eighteen hundred years of sermons, the Christian public do not clearly understand that “two coats,” in the brief sermon of the Baptist to repentance,⁷ mean also, two petticoats, and the like.

I am glad that Fors obliges me to finish this letter at Lucca, under the special protection of St. Martin.⁸

¹ [For “La Vierge Noire” of Chartres, see Vol. I. pp. 429–430.]

² [Canticles i. 5.]

³ [Daniel xii. 3.]

⁴ [See 1 Corinthians xv. 41.]

⁵ [See Letter 11, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 185).]

⁶ [See *Sesame and Lilies*, § 88 (Vol. XVIII. p. 138); and compare *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 379; also Letter 93, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 472).]

⁷ [See Luke iii. 11.]

⁸ [The Duomo of Lucca being dedicated to him; between two of the arches of the portico is a statue of St. Martin dividing his cloak with the beggar. The letter

But her chief duty of all—is to be, Herself, lovely.

“That through her smocke, wrought with silk,
The flesh be seen as white as milke.”*

Flesh, ladies mine, you observe; and not any merely illuminated resemblance of it, after the fashion of the daughter of Ethbaal.¹ It is your duty to be lovely, not by candle-light, but sunshine; not out of a window or opera-box, but on the bare ground.

Which that you may be,—if through the smocke the flesh, then, much more, through the flesh, the spirit must be see “as white as milke.”²

18. I have just been drawing, or trying to draw, Giotto’s “Poverty” (Sancta Paupertas) at Assisi.³ You may very

* Fr., “Si que par oula la chemise
Lui blancheoit la char alise.”

Look out “Alice,” in Miss Yonge’s Dictionary of Christian Names, and remember Alice of Salisbury.⁴

was also begun at Lucca, on August 2 (see heading); apparently some portion of it had been written at Pistoia (where he was on August 6), though he returned to Lucca next day, and remained past the Assumption of the Virgin (August 15) to August 19. Compare Letter 61, § 2 (p. 485).]

¹ [“Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, King of the Zidonians.” “She painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window. . . .”: see 1 Kings xvi. 31, and 2 Kings ix. 30, 33.]

² [With § 17, compare Letter 80, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 176 *n.*.)]

³ [The plate here given (I.) is from a photograph of the fresco. For other references to the fresco and Ruskin’s copy of it, see Vol. XXIII. p. xlv.; Letter 48, § 7 (below, p. 207); and letter 76, § 9 (Vol. XXIX. p. 91). The following letter to Dr. John Brown of Edinburgh has a note first upon the same fresco, and then upon the companion fresco, “Chastity,” in which Love is being driven away by Penitence:—

“ASSISI, 27th June, 1874.

“DEAREST DR. BROWN,—I forgot to answer you about Giotto. It is Karitas who is Poverty’s bridesmaid, and she wears, herself, a crown of white roses which burn up into fire in the outer leaves. The ‘Amor’ is not Lust, but the Greek Eros. How Giotto, with all his common-sense, gave in at all to the monkish confusion of love with lust, I can’t quite make out, but the distinction runs dreadfully fine near the edge. I suspect Giotto had seen a good deal of mischief come of even the most romantic love; God knows some other people have too. But I think you may take his Amor as that of Francesca di Rimini in Dante’s view of it.

“Ever your loving, in the Charitate Dei,

“J. RUSKIN.”]

⁴ [For “Alice of Salisbury,” and “the reflection of her great nobleness and her great beauty,” see Letter 31, § 10 (Vol. XXVII. p. 570). It is not clear what Ruskin intended to suggest by citing Miss Yonge’s account of the name Alice in connexion with the words in the *Romaunt of the Rose*. “Char (chair) alise” means

likely know the chief symbolism of the picture: that Poverty is being married to St. Francis, and that Christ marries them, while her bare feet are entangled in thorns, but behind her head is a thicket of rose and lily. It is less likely you should be acquainted with the farther details of the group.

The thorns are of the acacia, which, according to tradition, was used to weave Christ's crown. The roses are in two clusters,—palest red,* and deep crimson; the one on her right, the other on her left; above her head, pure white on the golden ground, rise the Annunciation Lilies.¹ She is not crowned with them, observe; they are behind her: she is crowned only with her own hair, wreathed in a tress with which she had bound her short bridal veil. For dress, she has—her smocke only; and *that* torn, and torn again, and patched, diligently; except just at the shoulders, and a little below the throat, where Giotto has torn it, too late for her to mend; and the fair flesh is seen through, so white that one cannot tell where the rents are, except when quite close.

For girdle, she has the Franciscan's cord; but that also is white, as if spun of silk; her whole figure, like a statue of snow, seen against the shade of her purple wings: for she is already one of the angels. A crowd of them, on each side, attend her; two, her sisters, are her bridesmaids also. Giotto has written their names above them—SPES; KARITAS;—their sister's Christian name he has written in the lilies, for those of us who have truly learned to read. Charity is *crowned* with white roses, which burst, as they open, into flames; and she gives the bride a marriage gift.

* I believe the pale roses are meant to be white, but are tinged with red that they may not contend with the symbolic brightness of the lilies.²

flesh which is smooth, polished (=lisse). Miss Yonge (in her *History of Christian Names*, p. 411, 1884 edition) explains, agreeing with other authorities, that "*Alice* is a corrupted form of *Adeliza*; the whole group of names, Alice, Adelaide, Adela, Alice, Elsie, being derived from the German *Adel* (□oble)."

¹ [*i.e.*, not Fleur-de-lys, but real lilies.]—*MS. note by Author in his own copy.*]

² [For Giotto's symbolism in colour, compare *Mornings in Florence*, § 56 (Vol. XXIII. p. 351).]



Photo. Assisi.

Allen & Co. St.

The Marriage of St. Francis and Poverty

From the fresco by Giotto at Assisi

“An apple,” say the interpreters.

Not so. It was some one else than Charity who gave the first bride *that* gift. It is a heart.¹

Hope only points upwards; and while Charity has the golden nimbus round her head circular (infinite), like that of Christ and the eternal angels, *she* has her glory set within the lines that limit the cell of the bee,—hexagonal.

And the bride has hers, also, so restricted: nor though she and her bridesmaids are sisters, are they dressed alike; but one in red; and one in green; and one, robe, flesh and spirit, a statue of Snow,

“La terza pareo neve, teste mosso.”²

Do you know now, any of you, ladies mine, what Giotto’s lilies mean between the roses? or how they may also grow among the Sesame of knightly spears?³

19. Not one of you, maid or mother, though I have besought you these four years (except only one or two of my personal friends), has joined St. George’s Company.⁴ You probably think St. George may advise some different arrangements in Hanover Square? It is possible; for his own knight’s cloak is white, and he may wish you to bear such celestial appearance constantly. You talk often of bearing Christ’s cross;⁵ do you never think of putting on Christ’s robes,—those that He wore on Tabor?⁶ nor know

¹ [Compare *Mornings in Florence*, § 94 (Vol. XXIII. p. 388).]

² [Dante, *Purgatorio*, xxix. 126: “Snow new-fallen seem’d the third” (Cary).]

³ [Compare the Introduction to *Sesame and Lilies*, Vol. XVIII. pp. lvii.–lviii. Ruskin in his copy here refers, for “the corn,” or sesame, “of knightly spears,” to the passage above (p. 157), and writes this couplet:—

“As the west wind breaks through the sharp corn-ears,
Did my dark horse bear through the bended spears.”

The lines are his own: see *A Scythian Banquet Song*, xix. (Vol. II. pp. 65–66).]

⁴ [The author received a challenge to this statement, and replied: see Letter 49, §§ 13–16 (pp. 245–248). See also Letter 77, § 11 (Vol. XXIX. p. 119).]

⁵ [Matthew xvi. 24. Compare *Ariadne Florentina*, § 29 (Vol. XXII. p. 317).]

⁶ [Ruskin, it will be seen, here accepts the tradition which connects Mount Tabor with the Transfiguration. More probably, however, that event occurred on Mount Hermon. This is the view which Ruskin himself urges in *Modern Painters*: see Vol. VI. p. 464, and compare Stanley’s *Sinai and Palestine*, pp. 351, 399 (1873 edition).]

what lamps they were which the wise virgins trimmed for the marriage feast?¹ You think, perhaps, you can go in to that feast in gowns made half of silk, and half of cotton, spun in your Lancashire cotton-mills; and that the Americans have struck oil enough—(lately, I observe also, native gas²),—to supply any number of belated virgins?

It is not by any means so, fair ladies. It is only your newly adopted Father who tells you so. Suppose, learning what it is to be generous, you recover your descent from God, and then weave your household dresses white with your own fingers? For as no fuller *on* earth can white them,³ but the light of a living faith,—so no demon *under* the earth can darken them like the shadow of a dead one.⁴ And your modern English “faith without works” *is* dead;⁵ and would to God she were buried too, for the stench of her goes up to His throne from a thousand fields of blood. *Weave*, I say,—you have trusted far too much lately to the washing,—your household raiment white; go out in the morning to Ruth’s field, to sow as well as to glean;⁶ sing your *Te Deum*, at evening, thankfully, as God’s daughters,—and there shall be no night there,⁷ for your light shall so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify⁸—not Baal the railroad accident⁹—but

“L’Amor che muove il Sole, e l’altre stelle.”¹⁰

¹ [Matthew xxv. 4.]

² [Especially, at the time of Ruskin’s writing, at Pittsburg, whose manufacturers thus for many years subsequently enjoyed a smokeless and extraordinarily cheap fuel.]

³ [Mark ix. 3.]

⁴ [Ruskin in his copy specially marks this sentence on faith, and italicises *on* and *under*.]

⁵ [Compare James ii. 17.]

⁶ [Ruth ii. 2.]

⁷ [Revelation xxi. 25.]

⁸ [Matthew v. 16.]

⁹ [See above, § 3.]

¹⁰ [Dante, *Paradiso*, last line.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

20. I HAVE had by me for some time a small pamphlet, "The Agricultural Labourer, by a Farmer's Son,"* kindly sent me by the author. The matter of it is excellent as far as it reaches; but the writer speaks as if the existing arrangements between landlord, farmer, and labourer must last for ever. If he will look at the article on "Peasant Farming" in the *Spectator* of July 4th of this year, he may see grounds for a better hope. That article is a review of Mr. W. Thornton's *Plea for Peasant Proprietors*;¹ and the following paragraph from it may interest, and perhaps surprise, other readers besides my correspondent. Its first sentence considerably surprises *me*, to begin with; so I have italicized it:—

"This country is only just beginning to be seriously roused to the fact that it has an agricultural question at all; and some of those most directly interested therein are, in their pain and surprise at the discovery, hurrying so fast the wrong way, that it will probably take a long time to bring them round again to sensible thoughts, after most of the rest of the community are ready with an answer.

"The primary object of this book is to combat the pernicious error of a large school of English economists with reference to the hurtful character of small farms and small landed properties. . . . One would think that the evidence daily before a rural economist, in the marvellous extra production of a market garden, or even a peasant's allotment, over an ordinary farm, might suffice to raise doubts whether vast fields tilled by steam, weeded by patent grubbers, and left otherwise to produce in rather a happy-go-lucky fashion, were likely to be the most advanced and profitable of all cultivated lands. On this single point of production, Mr. Thornton conclusively proves the small farmer to have the advantage.

"The extreme yields of the very highest English farming are even exceeded in Guernsey, and in that respect the evidence of the greater productiveness of small farming over large is overwhelming. The Channel Islands not only feed their own population, but are large exporters of provisions as well.

"Small farms being thus found to be more advantageous, it is but an easy step to peasant proprietors."

Stop a moment, Mr. Spectator. The step is easy, indeed;—so is a step into a well, or out of a window. There is no question whatever, in any country, or at any time, respecting the expediency of small farming; but whether the small farmer should be the proprietor of his land, *is* a very awkward question indeed in some countries. Are you aware, Mr. Spectator,

* Macintosh, 24, Paternoster Row.

¹ [William Thomas Thornton, C. B. (1813–1880); secretary for public works to the India Office; a disciple and friend of J. S. Mill; author of *Over-Population and its Remedies* (1845), advocating sub-division of land; his *Plea for Peasant Proprietors* was first published in 1848.]

that your “easy step,” taken in two lines and a breath, means what I, with all my Utopian zeal,¹ have been fourteen years writing on Political Economy, without venturing to hint at, except under my breath;—some considerable modification, namely, in the position of the existing British landlord?—nothing less, indeed, if your “step” were to be completely taken, than the reduction of him to a “small peasant proprietor”? And unless he can show some reason against it, the “easy step” will most assuredly be taken with him.

Yet I have assumed, in this *Fors*, that it is not to be taken. That under certain modifications of his system of Rent, he may still remain lord of his land,—may, and ought, provided always he knows what it is to be lord of *anything*. Of which I hope to reason farther in the *Fors* for November of this year.²

¹ [This is a reference to another remark in the *Spectator*: see Letter 46, § 17 (p. 185).]

² [See Letter 47, § 13 (p. 197).]

LETTER 46

THE SACRISTAN¹

FLORENCE, 28th August, 1874.

1. I INTENDED this letter to have been published on my mother's birthday, the second of next month. Fors, however, has entirely declared herself against that arrangement, having given me a most unexpected piece of work here, in drawing the Emperor, King, and Baron, who, throned by Simone Memmi² beneath the Duomo of Florence, beside a Pope, Cardinal, and Bishop, represented, to the Florentine mind of the fourteenth century, the sacred powers of the State in their fixed relation to those of the Church. The Pope lifts his right hand to bless, and holds the crosier in his left; having no powers but of benediction and protection. The Emperor holds his sword upright in his right hand, and a skull in his left,³ having alone the power of death. Both have triple crowns; but the Emperor alone has a nimbus. The King has the diadem of fleur-de-lys, and the ball and globe; the Cardinal, a book. The Baron has his warrior's sword; the Bishop, a pastoral staff. And the whole scene is very beautifully expressive of what have been by learned authors supposed the Republican or Liberal opinions of Florence, in her day of pride.

2. The picture (fresco), in which this scene occurs, is the most complete piece of theological and political teaching given to us by the elder arts of Italy; and this particular portion of it is of especial interest to me, not only

¹ [See below, § 7. "The Sacristan's Cell" (see § 7) and "The Six Days" (see § 9) were rejected titles for this letter.]

² [More correctly, Simone Martini: see Vol. XXIII. p. 455.]

³ [Ruskin here notes, "Needs correction": see the full account of the fresco by Mr. R. Caird in Vol. XXIII., where it is explained (p. 439) that the skull is "the diabolical invention of the restorer—originally it was merely a globe."]

as exponent of the truly liberal and communist principles which I am endeavouring to enforce in these letters for the future laws of the St. George's Company; but also because my maternal grandmother¹ was the landlady of the Old King's Head in Market Street, Croydon; and I wish she were alive again, and I could paint her Simone Memmi's King's head, for a sign.

My maternal grandfather was, as I have said,² a sailor, who used to embark, like Robinson Crusoe, at Yarmouth, and come back at rare intervals, making himself very delightful at home. I have an idea he had something to do with the herring business, but am not clear on that point; my mother never being much communicative concerning it. He spoiled her, and her (younger) sister, with all his heart, when he was at home; unless there appeared any tendency to equivocation, or imaginative statements, on the part of the children, which were always unforgiveable. My mother being once perceived by him to have distinctly told him a lie, he sent the servant out forthwith to buy an entire bundle of new broom twigs to whip her with. "They did not hurt me so much as *one* would have done," said my mother, "but I *thought* a good deal of it."

3. My grandfather was killed at two-and-thirty, by trying to ride, instead of walk, into Croydon; he got his leg crushed by his horse against a wall; and died of the hurt's mortifying. My mother was then seven or eight years old, and, with her sister, was sent to quite a fashionable (for Croydon) day-school (Mrs. Rice's), where my mother was taught evangelical principles, and became the pattern girl and best sewer in the school; and where my aunt absolutely refused evangelical principles, and became the plague and pet of it.

4. My mother, being a girl of great power, with not a little pride, grew more and more exemplary in her entirety

¹ [§§ 2-6 of this letter were used by Ruskin when writing *Præterita*, where they appear, slightly revised, as §§ 8-12 of vol. i. ch. i. His autobiographical notes are resumed in Letter 51, § 2 (p. 271).]

² [See above, Letter 45, § 5 (p. 147).]

conscientious career, much laughed at, though much beloved, by her sister; who had more wit, less pride, and no conscience. At last my mother, being a consummate housewife, was sent for to Scotland to take care of my paternal grandfather's house; who was gradually ruining himself; and who at last effectually ruined, and killed, himself. My father came up to London; was a clerk in a merchant's house for nine years, without a holiday; then began business on his own account; paid his father's debts; and married his exemplary Croydon cousin.

5. Meantime my aunt had remained in Croydon, and married a baker. By the time I was four years old, and beginning to recollect things,—my father rapidly taking higher commercial position in London,—there was traceable—though to me, as a child, wholly incomprehensible—just the least possible shade of shyness on the part of Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, towards Market Street, Croydon. But whenever my father was ill,—and hard work and sorrow had already set their mark on him,—we all went down to Croydon to be petted by my homely aunt; and walk on Duppas Hill, and on the heather of Addington.

6. My aunt lived in the little house still standing—or which was so four months ago—the fashionablest in Market Street, having actually two windows over the shop, in the second story; but I never troubled myself about that superior part of the mansion, unless my father happened to be making drawings in Indian ink, when I would sit reverently by and watch; my chosen domains being, at all other times, the shop, the bakehouse, and the stones round the spring of crystal water at the back door (long since let down into the modern sewer); and my chief companion, my aunt's dog, Towzer, whom she had taken pity on when he was a snappish starved vagrant; and made a brave and affectionate dog of: which was the kind of thing she did for every living creature that came in her way, all her life long.

7. (And now I go on with the piece of this letter written last month at Assisi.) I am sitting now in the

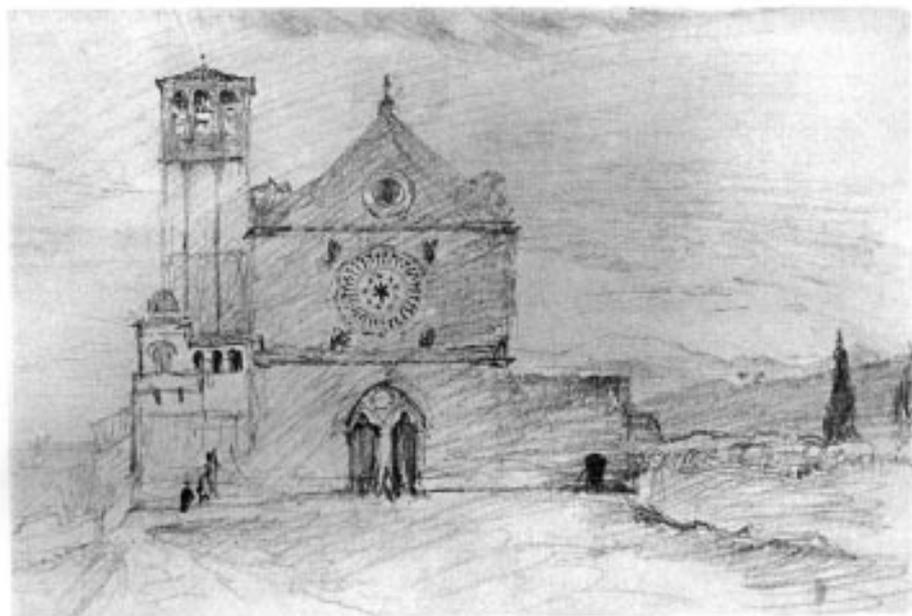
Sacristan's cell at Assisi.¹ Its roof is supported by three massive beams,—not squared beams, but tree trunks barked, with the grand knots left in them, answering all the purpose of sculpture. The walls are of rude white plaster, though there is a Crucifixion by Giotto² on the back of one, outside the door; the floor, brick; the table, olive wood; the windows two, and only about four feet by two in the opening (but giving plenty of light in the sunny morning, aided by the white walls), looking out on the valley of the Tescio. Under one of them, a small arched stove for cooking; in a square niche beside the other, an iron wash-hand stand,—that is to say, a tripod of good fourteenth-century work, carrying a grand brown porringer, two feet across, and half a foot deep. Between the windows is the fireplace, the wall above it rich brown with the smoke. Hung against the wall behind me are a saucepan, gridiron, and toasting-fork; and in the wall a little door, closed only by a brown canvas curtain, opening to an inner cell nearly filled by the bedstead; and at the side of the room a dresser, with cupboard below, and two wine flasks, and three pots of Raphael ware³ on the top of it, together with the first volume of the “*Maraviglie di Dio nell' anime del Purgatorio, del padre Carlo Gregorio Rosignoli, della Compagnia de Gesu*” (Roma, 1841).⁴ There is a bird singing outside; a constant low hum of flies, making the ear sure it is summer; a dove cooing, very low; and absolutely nothing else to be heard, I find, after listening with great care. And I feel entirely at home, because the room—except in the one point of being extremely dirty—is just the kind of thing I used to see in my aunt's bakehouse; and the country and the sweet valley outside still rest in peace, such as used to be on the Surrey hills in the olden days.

¹ [See the lower of the two sketches by Ruskin here reproduced (Plate II.): “Sacristan's cell and my study.” The upper sketch is of the Church of S. Francesco.]

² [Giotto di Stefano.]

³ [“Raphael ware”; that is, pictured majolica of Urbino, a namesake and relation of Raphael Sanzio being a skilful painter of such ware.]

⁴ [The first edition, 1839, is in one volume.]



J. Evelyn

1880, 1881.
 Allen & Co. So.

Assisi: the Church of S. Francesco and the Sacristy's Cell.

8. And now I am really going to begin my steady explanation of what the St. George's Company have to do.

(1.¹) You are to do good work, whether you live or die. "What *is* good work?" you ask. Well you may! For your wise pastors and teachers, though they have been very careful to assure you that good works are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification,² have been so certain of that fact that they never have been the least solicitous to explain to you, and still less to discover for themselves, what good works *were*; content if they perceived a general impression on the minds of their congregations that good works meant going to church and admiring the sermon on Sundays, and making as much money as possible in the rest of the week.

It is true, one used to hear almsgiving and prayer sometimes recommended by old-fashioned country ministers. But "the poor are now to be raised without gifts," says my very hard-and-well-working friend Miss Octavia Hill;³ and prayer is entirely inconsistent with the laws of hydro (and other) statics, says the Duke of Argyll.⁴

It may be so, for aught I care, just now. Largesse and supplication may or may not be still necessary in the world's economy. They are not, and never were, part of the world's work. For no man can give till he has been paid his own wages; and still less can he ask his Father for the said wages till he has done his day's duty for them.

¹ [Ruskin does not, however, go on to the other injunctions, as set forth in Letter 2, § 22 (Vol. XXVII. p. 44).]

² [Prayer-book (Article XII).]

³ [See Letter 10, § 15 (Vol. XXVII. p. 175).]

⁴ [The reference is to a controversy on the efficacy of Prayer, which had been raging in the Reviews. The Duke of Argyll's contribution was in the *Contemporary Review* for February 1873, vol. 21, pp. 464 *seq.* The various articles were reprinted at Boston (U.S.A.) in a volume, edited by J. O. Means, under the title *The Prayer-Gauge Debate*. The Duke's paper, however, hardly bears out Ruskin's statement; see also the Duke's remarks on Prayer in *The Reign of Law*, ch. ii. His position was that the physical and spiritual spheres could not be sharply separated: "Reason, science, and revelation alike point to the folly and ignorance of any attempt to draw an absolute line where we confessedly have not the knowledge to enable us to do so, and confirm the sound philosophy, as well as the piety, of the old Christian practice of 'in all things making our requests known,' with the over-riding, over-ruling condition, 'nevertheless not our will, but Thine, be done.'"]

Neither almsgiving nor praying, therefore, nor psalmsinging, nor even—as poor Livingstone thought, to his own death, and our bitter loss¹—discovering the mountains of the Moon, have anything to do with “good work,” or God’s work. But it is not so very difficult to discover what that work is. You keep the Sabbath, in imitation of God’s rest. Do, by all manner of means, if you like; and keep also the rest of the week in imitation of God’s work.

9. It is true that, according to tradition, that work was done a long time ago, “before the chimneys in Zion were hot, and ere the present years were sought out, and or ever the inventions of them that now sin were turned; and before they were sealed that have gathered faith for a treasure.”* But the established processes of it continue, as his Grace of Argyll has argutely observed;—and your own work will be good, if it is in harmony with them, and duly sequent of them. Nor are even the first main facts or operations by any means inimitable, on a duly subordinate scale, for if Man be made in God’s image,² much more is Man’s work made to be the image of God’s work. So therefore look to your model, very simply stated for you in the nursery tale of Genesis.

Day First. —The Making, or letting in, of Light.

Day Second. —The Discipline and Firmament of Waters.

Day Third. — The Separation of earth from water, and planting the secure earth with trees.

Day Fourth. —The Establishment of time and seasons, and of the authority of the stars.

Day Fifth. — Filling the water and air with fish and birds.

Day Sixth. — Filling the land with beasts; and putting divine life into the clay of one of these, that it may have authority over the others, and over the rest of the Creation.

* 2 Esdras vi. 4, 5.

¹ [He had died in 1873.]

² [Genesis i. 27.]

Here is your nursery story,—very brief, and in some sort unsatisfactory; not altogether intelligible (I don't know anything very good that is), nor wholly indisputable (I don't know anything ever spoken usefully on so wide a subject that is); but substantially vital and sufficient. So the good human work may properly divide itself into the same six branches; and will be a perfectly literal and practical following out of the Divine; and will have opposed to it a correspondent Diabolic force of eternally bad work—as much worse than idleness or death, as good work is better than idleness or death.

10. Good work, then, will be,—

A. Letting in light where there was darkness; as especially into poor rooms and back streets; and generally guiding and administering the sunshine wherever we can, by all the means in our power.

And the correspondent Diabolic work is putting a tax on windows, and blocking out the sun's light with smoke.

B. Disciplining the falling waters. In the Divine work, this is the ordinance of clouds;* in the human it is properly putting the clouds to service; and first stopping the rain where they carry it from the sea, and then keeping it pure as it goes back to the sea again.

And the correspondent Diabolic work is the arrangement of land so as to throw all the water back to the sea as fast as we can; † and putting every sort of fifth into the stream as it runs.

* See *Modern Painters*, vol. iv., “The Firmament” [Vol. VI. p. 113].

† Compare Dante, *Purg.*, end of Canto V.¹

¹ [“That evil will, which in his intellect
Still follows evil, came; and raised the wind
And smoky mist, by virtue of the power
Given by his nature. Thence the valley, soon
As day was spent, he cover'd o'er with cloud,
From Pratomagno to the mountain range;
And stretch'd the sky above; so that the air
Impregnate changed to water. Fell the rain;
And to the fosses came all that the land
Contain'd not; and, as mightiest streams are wont,
To the great river, with such headlong sweep,
Rush'd, that nought stay'd its course” (Cary).]

C. The separation of earth from water, and planting it with trees. The correspondent human work is especially clearing morasses, and planting desert ground.

The Dutch, in a small way, in their own country, have done a good deal with sand and tulips; also the North Germans. But the most beautiful type of the literal ordinance of dry land in water is the State of Venice, with her sea-canals, restrained, traversed by their bridges, and especially bridges of the Rivo Alto or High Bank,¹ which are, or were till a few years since, symbols of the work of a true Pontifex,—the Pontine Marshes being the opposite symbol.

The correspondent Diabolic work is turning good land and water into mud; and cutting down trees that we may drive steam ploughs, etc., etc.

D. The establishment of times and seasons. The correspondent human work is a due watching of the rise and set of stars, and course of the sun; and due administration and forethought of our own annual labours, preparing for them in hope, and concluding them in joyfulness, according to the laws and gifts of Heaven. Which beautiful order is set forth in symbols on all lordly human buildings round the semicircular arches which are types of the rise and fall of days and years.

And the correspondent Diabolic work is turning night into day with candles, so that we never see the stars; and mixing the seasons up one with another, and having early strawberries, and green pease and the like.

E. Filling the waters with fish, and air with birds. The correspondent human work is Mr. Frank Buckland's² and

¹ [In his own copy, however, Ruskin writes, "Deep Stream": see *St. Mark's Rest*, § 38 (Vol. XXIV. p. 238).]

² [Francis Trevelyan Buckland (1826–1880); inspector of salmon fisheries, 1867–1880. "He devoted all his energies not merely to the duties of his office, but to the elucidation of every point connected with the history of the salmon, and endeavoured in every way to improve the condition of the British fisheries. . . . In order to interest people in his favourite subject he established about 1865 at the South Kensington Museum a large collection of fish-hatching apparatus," etc.]

the like,—of which “like” I am thankful to have been permitted to do a small piece near Croydon, in the streams to which my mother took me when a child, to play beside. There were more than a dozen of the fattest, shiniest, spottiest, and tamest trout I ever saw in my life, in the pond at Carshalton, the last time I saw it this spring.¹

The correspondent Diabolic work is poisoning fish, as is done at Coniston, with copper-mining; and catching them for Ministerial and other fashionable dinners when they ought not to be caught;² and treating birds—as birds are treated, Ministerially and otherwise.

F. Filling the earth with beasts, properly known and cared for by their master, Man; but chiefly breathing into the clayey and brutal nature of Man himself, the Soul, or Love, of God.

The correspondent Diabolic work is shooting and tormenting beasts;³ and grinding out the soul of man from his flesh, with machine labour; and then grinding down the flesh of him, when nothing else is left, into clay, with machines for that purpose—mitrailleuses, Woolwich infants, and the like.

These are the six main heads of God’s and the Devil’s work.

11. And as Wisdom, or Prudentia, is with God, and with His children in the doing,—“There I was by Him, as one brought up with Him, and I was daily His delight,”⁴—so Folly, or Stultitia, saying, There is no God,⁵ is with the Devil and his children, in the *undoing*. “There she is with them as one brought up with them, and she is daily their delight.”

And so comes the great reverse of Creation, and wrath

¹ [See Letter 48, § 3 (p. 204).]

² [The annual Ministerial “Whitebait Dinner” at Greenwich, at the close of the Parliamentary session, first established in Pitt’s time, has since 1892 been abandoned.]

³ [Compare, above, p. 24.]

⁴ [Proverbs viii. 30.]

⁵ [Psalms xiv. 1.]

of God, accomplished on the earth by the fiends, and by men their ministers, seen by Jeremy the Prophet:¹ “For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. (Now note the reversed creation.) I beheld the Earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the Heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by His fierce anger.”²

And so, finally, as the joy and honour of the ancient and divine Man and Woman were in their children, so the grief and dishonour of the modern and diabolic Man and Woman are in their children; and as the Rachel of Bethlehem weeps for her children, and will not be comforted, because they are not,³ the Rachel of England weeps for her children, and will not be comforted—because they *are*.

12. Now, whoever you may be, and how little your power may be, and whatever sort of creature you may be,—man, woman, or child,—you can, according to what discretion of years you may have reached, do something of this Divine work, or *undo* something of this Devil’s work, every day. Even if you are a slave, forced to labour at some abominable and murderous trade for bread,—as iron-forging, for instance, or gunpowder-making,—you can resolve to deliver yourself, and your children after you, from the chains of that hell,⁴ and from the dominion of its

¹ [See *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. p. 152 *n.*), where (in a note added in *Frondees Agrestes*) Ruskin refers to this letter as giving the true meaning of the passage from Jeremiah misinterpreted in his earlier book.]

² [Jeremiah iv. 22–26.]

³ [Jeremiah xxxi. 15; Matthew ii. 18.]

⁴ [See 2 Peter ii. 4.]

slave-masters, or to die. That is Patriotism; and true desire of Freedom, or Franchise.¹ What Egyptian bondage, do you suppose—(painted by Mr. Poynter as if it were a thing of the past!²)—was ever so cruel as a modern English iron forge, with its steam hammers? What Egyptian worship of garlic or crocodile³ ever so damnable as modern English worship of money? Israel—even by the fleshpots—was sorry to have to cast out her children,—would fain stealthily keep her little Moses,—if Nile were propitious;⁴ and roasted her passover anxiously. But English Mr. P.,⁵ satisfied with his fleshpot, and the broth of it, will not be over-hasty about his roast. If the Angel, perchance, should *not* pass by, it would be no such matter, thinks Mr. P.

Or, again, if you are a slave to Society, and must do what the people next door bid you,—you can resolve, with any vestige of human energy left in you, that you will indeed put a few things into God's fashion, instead of the fashion of next door. Merely fix that on your mind as a thing to be done; to have things—dress, for instance,—according to God's taste (and I can tell you He is likely to have some, as good as any modiste you know of); or dinner, according to God's taste instead of the Russians';⁶ or supper, or picnic, with guests of God's inviting, occasionally, mixed among the more respectable company.

13. By the way, I wrote a letter to one of my lady friends,⁷ who gives rather frequent dinners, the other day,

¹ [See Letter 43 (above, pp. 113 *seq.*).]

² ["Israel in Egypt," exhibited at the Academy in 1867; now in the collection of Mr. J. C. Hawkshaw.]

³ ["Garlic and onions," according to Pliny, "were treated as gods by the Egyptians when taking an oath" (*Nat. Hist.*, xix. 6): see also Juvenal, xv. 1, 2:—

"Quis nescit . . . qualia demens
Ægyptus portenta colat? Crocodilon adorat."]

⁴ [Exodus ii. 3.]

⁵ [See Letter 45, § 15 (p. 159).]

⁶ [At this date the service of dinner *a la Russe* was by no means general. See the chapter on "The Service of the Table" in *Artistic Cookery*, by Urbain Dubois, London, 4to, Longmans, 1870.]

⁷ [Lady Mount-Temple: see *Ruskin Relics*, by W. G. Collingwood, ch. xiv.]

which may perhaps be useful to others: it was to this effect mainly, though I add and alter a little to make it more general:—

“You probably will be having a dinner-party to-day; now, please do this, and remember I am quite serious in what I ask you. We all of us, who have any belief in Christianity at all, wish that Christ were alive now. Suppose, then, that He is. I think it very likely that if He were in London, you would be one of the people whom He would take some notice of. Now, suppose He has sent you word that He is coming to dine with you to-day; but that you are not to make any change in your guests on His account; that He wants to meet exactly the party you have; and no other. Suppose you have just received this message, and that St. John has also left word, in passing, with the butler, that his Master will come alone; so that you won't have any trouble with the Apostles. Now this is what I want you to do. First, determine what you will have for dinner. You are not ordered, observe, to make no changes in your bill of fare. Take a piece of paper, and absolutely *write* fresh orders to your cook,—you can't realise the thing enough without writing. That done, consider how you will arrange your guests—who is to sit next Christ on the other side—who opposite, and so on: finally, consider a little what you will talk about, supposing, which is just possible, that Christ should tell you to go on talking as if He were not there, and never to mind *Him*. You couldn't, you will tell me? Then, my dear lady, how can you in general? Don't you profess—nay, don't you much more than profess—to believe that Christ *is* always there, whether you see Him or not? Why should the seeing make such a difference?”

14. But you are no master or mistress of household? You are only a boy, or a girl. What can you do?

We will take the work of the third day,¹ for its range

¹ [See above, p. 176.]

is at once lower and wider than that of the others: Can you do *nothing* in that kind? Is there no garden near you where you can get from some generous person leave to weed the beds, or sweep up the dead leaves? (I once allowed an eager little girl of ten years old to weed my garden; and now, though it is long ago, she always speaks as if the favour had been done to *her*, and not to the garden and me.) Is there no dusty place that you can water?—if it be only the road before your door, the traveller will thank you. No roadside ditch that you can clean of its clogged rubbish, to let the water run clear?¹ No scattered heap of brickbats that you can make an ordinary pile of? You are ashamed? Yes; that false shame is the Devil's pet weapon. He does more work with it even than with false pride. For with false pride, he only goads evil; but with false shame, paralyzes good.

But you have no ground of your own; you are a girl, and can't work on other people's? At least you have a window of your own, or one in which you have a part interest. With very little help from the carpenter, you can arrange a safe box outside of it, that will hold earth enough to root something in. If you have any favour from Fortune at all, you can train a rose, or a honeysuckle, or a convolvulus, or a nasturtium, round your window—a quiet branch of ivy—or if for the sake of its leaves only, a tendril or two of vine. Only, be sure all your plantpets are kept well outside of the window. Don't come to having pots in the room, unless you are sick.

15. I got a nice letter from a young girl, not long since, asking why I had said in my answers to former questions that young ladies were "to have nothing to do with greenhouses, still less with hothouses."² The new inquirer has been sent me by Fors, just when it was time to explain what I meant.

¹ [See below, § 17, for a reference to Ruskin's enforcement of these lessons on his Oxford pupils.]

² [Letter 34, § 20 (Vol. XXVII. p. 646).]

First, then—The primal object of your gardening, for yourself, is to keep you at work in the open air, whenever it is possible. The greenhouse will always be a refuge to you from the wind; which, on the contrary, you ought to be able to bear; and will tempt you into clippings and pottings and pettings, and mere standing dilettantism in a damp and over-scented room, instead of true labour in fresh air.

Secondly.—It will not only itself involve unnecessary expense—(for the greenhouse is sure to turn into a hot-house in the end; and even if not, is always having its panes broken, or its blinds going wrong, or its stands plants, and waste your time in anxiety about them.

Thirdly.—The use of your garden to the household ought to be mainly in the vegetables you can raise in it. And, for these, your proper observance of season, and of the authority of the stars, is a vital duty. Every climate gives its vegetable food to its living creatures at the right time; your business is to know that time, and be prepared for it, and to take the healthy luxury which nature appoints you, in the rare annual taste of the thing given in those its due days. The vile and gluttonous modern habit of forcing never allows people properly to taste anything.

Lastly, and chiefly.—Your garden is to enable you to obtain such knowledge of plants as you may best use in the country in which you live by communicating it to others; and teaching them to take pleasure in the green herb, given for meat, and the coloured flower, given for joy. And your business is not to make the greenhouse or hothouse rejoice and blossom like the rose, but the wilderness and solitary place.¹ And it is, therefore (look back to Letter 26, § 13²), not at all of camellias and air-plants that the devil is afraid; on the contrary, the Dame aux

¹ [Isaiah xxxv. 1.]

² [Vol. XXVII. pp. 484–485.]

Camellias¹ is a very especial servant of his; and the Fly-God of Ekron² himself superintends—as you may gather from Mr. Darwin's recent investigations—the birth and parentage of the orchidaceæ.³ But he is mortally afraid of roses and crocuses.

Of roses, that is to say, growing wild;—(what lovely hedges of them there were, in the lane leading from Dulwich College up to Windmill (or Gipsy) Hill, in my aunt's time!)—but of the massy horticultural-prize rose,—fifty pounds' weight of it on a propped bush⁴—he stands in no awe whatever; not even when they are cut afterwards and made familiar to the poor in the form of bouquets, so that poor Peggy may hawk them from street to street—and hate the smell of them,⁵ as his own imps do. For Mephistopheles knows there are poorer Margarets yet than Peggy.

16. Hear *this*, you fine ladies of the houses of York and Lancaster, and you, new-gilded Miss Kilmanseggs, with your gardens of Gul,—you, also, evangelical expounders of the beauty of the Rose of Sharon;⁶—it is a

¹ [For other allusions to Dumas, see Vol. XII. p. 122.]

² [Baalzebub: see Letter 77, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 108).]

³ [See *Proserpina* (Vol. XXV. p. 224), and compare, again, Letter 77, § 1.]

⁴ [The following undated letter to an unnamed correspondent must refer to the same matter. It is here reprinted from p. 93 of the privately-issued *Letters on Art and Literature by John Ruskin* (1894):—

“MY DEAR HENRY,—I am very glad the tickets proved acceptable,—and very happy also to hear of the new method of estimating Roses.

“I was once in the habit of foolishly trying to make my books pleasant to the public. Henceforward if the public declare them heavy, I shall beg that they may be estimated as Roses are. Always truly yours,

“J. RUSKIN.”]

⁵ [The reference is to Hood:—

“And the other sex—the tender—the fair—
What wide reverses of fate are there!
Whilst Margaret, charm'd by the Bulbul rare,
In a garden of Gul reposes—
Poor Peggy hawks nosegays from street to street
Till—think of that, who find life so sweet!—
She hates the smell of roses!”

(*Miss Kilmansegg and her Precious Leg*, Her Birth, stanza vi.)—a poem referred to also in Vol. XIII. p. 520. For Mephistopheles and the roses, see Vol. XXVII. p. 485. For the word “Gul,” see Vol. XXVI. p. 183.]

⁶ [Canticles ii. 1; evangelically expounded as meaning “the mutual love of Christ and His Church.”]

bit of a letter just come to me from a girl of good position in the manufacturing districts:—

“The other day I was coming through a nasty part of the road, carrying a big bunch of flowers, and met two dirty, ragged girls, who looked eagerly at my flowers. Then one of them said, ‘Give us a flower!’ I hesitated, for she looked and spoke rudely; but when she ran after me, I stopped; and pulled out a large rose, and asked the other girl which she would like. ‘A red one, the same as hers,’ she answered. They actually did not know its name. Poor girls! they promised to take care of them, and went away looking rather softened and pleased, I thought; but perhaps they would pull them to pieces, and laugh at the success of their boldness. At all events, they made me very sad and thoughtful for the rest of my walk.”

And, I hope, a little so, even when you got home again, young lady. Meantime, are you quite sure of your fact; and that there was no white rose in your bouquet, from which the “red one” might be distinguished without naming? In any case, my readers have enough to think of, for this time, I believe.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

17. (I.) TOGETHER with the *Spectator's* telescopic and daring views of the Land question, given in last *Fors*,¹ I may as well preserve its immediate and microscopic approval of our poor little practice upon it at Hincksey:²—

“ADAM AND JEHU.—It is very vexatious, but one never gets fairly the better of Mr. Ruskin. Sometimes he lets his intellect work, and fires off pamphlet after pamphlet on political economy, each new one more ridiculous than the last, till it ceases to be possible even to read his brochures without condemning them as the utterances of a man who cannot lose a certain eloquence of expression, BUT WHO CANNOT THINK AT ALL; and then, again, he lets his genius work, and produces something which raises the admiration of the reader till every folly which preceded it is forgotten. There never was a more absurd paper published than his on the duty of the State towards unmarried couples,³ and never perhaps one wiser than his lecture on ‘Ambition,’⁴ reviewed in our columns on the 18th of October, 1873. Just recently he has been pushing some plans for an agricultural Utopia, free of steam-engines and noises and everything modern, in which the inconsequence of his mind is as evident as its radical benevolence; and now he has, we believe, done the whole youth of Oxford a substantial service. He has turned, or rather tried to turn, the rage for athletics into a worthy channel.”—*Spectator*, May 30, 1874.

The above paragraph may, I think, also be, some day, interesting as a summary of the opinions of the British press on *Fors Clavigera*; and if my last month's letter should have the fortune to displease, or discomfort, any British landlord, my alarmed or offended reader may be relieved and pacified by receiving the Spectatorial warrant at once for the inconsequence of my mind, and for its radical benevolence.

18. (II.) The following paragraphs from a leading journal in our greatest commercial city, surpass, in folly and impudence, anything I have yet seen of the kind, and are well worth preserving:—

“The material prosperity of the country has, notwithstanding, increased, and the revenue returns, comparing as they do against an exceptionally high rate of production and consumption, show that we are fairly holding our own.” Production and consumption of *what*, Mr. Editor, is the question, as I have told you many a time. A high revenue, raised on the large production and consumption

¹ [See Letter 45, § 20, p. 167.]

² [For Ruskin's road-digging at Hincksey, see Vol. XX. pp. xli. *seq.*]

³ [*Time and Tide*, Letter XX. (Vol. XVII. pp. 417 *seq.*.)]

⁴ [“Remarks Addressed to the Mansfield Art Night Class” (printed in *A Joy for Ever*, §§ 166–174, Vol. XVI. pp. 153–159).]

of weak cloth and strong liquor, does *not* show the material prosperity of the country. Suppose you were to tax the production of good pictures, good books, good houses, or honest men, where would your revenue be? "Amongst the middle classes, exceptionally large fortunes have been rapidly realised here and there, chiefly in the misty regions of 'finance,' [What do you mean by misty, Mr. Editor? It is a Turnerian and Titianesque quality, not in the least properly applicable to any cotton-mill business.] and instances occur from day to day of almost prodigal expenditure in objects of art [Photographs of bawds, do you mean, Mr. Editor? I know no other objects of art that are multiplying,—certainly not Titians, by your Spectator's decision.¹] and luxury, the display of wealth in the metropolis being more striking year by year.

"Turning from these dazzling exhibitions, the real source of congratulation must be found in the existence of a broad and solid foundation for our apparent prosperity; and this, happily, is represented in the amelioration of the condition of the lower orders of society."—Indeed!

"The adjustment of an increasing scale of wages has not been reduced to scientific principles, and has consequently been more or less arbitrary and capricious. From time to time it has interfered with the even current of affairs, and been resented as an unfair and unwarranted interception of profits in their way to the manufacturer's pockets.

"Whilst 'financial' talent has reaped liberal results from its exercise, the steady productions of manufacturers have left only moderate returns to their producers, and importers of raw material have, as a rule, had a trying time. The difficulties of steamship owners have been tolerably notorious, and the enhancement of sailing vessels is an instance of the adage that 'It is an ill wind that blows no one any good.'

"For our railways, the effects of a most critical half-year can scarcely be forecast. Increased expenses have not, it is to be feared, been met by increased rates and traffics, and the public may not have fully prepared themselves for diminished dividends. With the Erie and the Great Western of Canada undergoing the ordeal of investigation, and the Atlantic and Great Western on the verge of insolvency, it is not surprising that American and colonial railways are at the moment out of favour. If, however, they have not made satisfactory returns to their shareholders, they have been the media of great profit to operators on the stock exchanges; and some day we shall, perhaps, learn the connection existing between the well or ill doing of a railway *per se*, and the facility for speculation in its stock."—*Liverpool Commercial News*, of this year. I have not kept the date.

19. (III.) A young lady's letter about flowers and books, I gratefully acknowledge, and have partly answered in the text of this *Fors*; the rest she will find answered up and down afterwards, as I can; also a letter from a youth at New Haven in Connecticut has given me much pleasure. I am sorry not to be able to answer it more specially, but have now absolutely no time for any private correspondence, except with personal friends,—and I should like even those to show themselves friendly rather by setting themselves to understand my meaning in *Fors*, and by helping me in my purposes, than by merely expressing anxiety for my welfare, not satisfiable but by letters, which do not promote it.

20. (IV.) Publishing the subjoined letter from Mr. Sillar, I must now wish him good success in his battle, and terminate my extracts from his letters, there being always some grave points in which I find myself at

¹ [See Letter 7, § 14 (Vol. XXVII. p. 128).]

issue with him, but which I have not at present any wish farther to discuss:—

“I am right glad to see you quote in your July *Fors*,¹ from the papers which the *Record* newspaper refused to insert, on the plea of their ‘confusing two things so essentially different as usury and interest of money.’

“I printed them, and have sold *two*,—following your advice, and not advertising them.

“You wrong me greatly in saying that I think the sin of usury means every other. What I say is that it is the only sin I know *which is never denounced from the pulpit*; and therefore *I* have to do *that part* of the parson’s work. I would much rather be following the business to which I was educated; but so long as usury is prevalent, honourable and profitable employments *in that business are impossible*. It may be conducted honourably, but at an annual loss; or it may be conducted profitably *at the expense of honour*. I can no longer afford the former, still less can I afford the latter; and as I cannot be idle, I occupy my leisure, at least part of it, in a war to the knife with that great dragon ‘Debt.’ I war not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers of darkness in high places.”

21. (V.) To finish, here is one of the pleasantest paragraphs I ever saw in print:—

“ROPE CORDAGE.—On Saturday last a very interesting experiment was made at Kirkaldy’s Testing Works, Southwark Street, as to the relative strength of handspun yarn rope, machine yarn rope, and Russian yarn rope. Mr. Plimsoll, M.P., Captain Bedford Pim, M.P., and others attended the test, which lasted over three hours. There were nine pieces of rope, each 10 ft. long, being three of each of the above classes. The ultimate stress or breaking strain of the Russian rope was 11,099 lb., or 1934 lb. strength per fathom; machine rope, 11,527 lb., or 2155 lb. per fathom; hand-spun rope, 18,279 lb., or 3026 lb. per fathom. The ropes were all of 5 in. circumference, and every piece broke clear of the fastenings. The prices paid per cwt. were: Russian rope, 47s.; machine yarn rope, 47s.; handspun yarn rope, 44s.—all described as best cordage and London manufacture. It will thus be seen that the hand-made was cheaper by 3s. per cwt., and broke at a testing strength of 7180 lb. over Russian, and 6752 lb. over machine-made.”—*Times*, July 20, 1874.

¹ [See Letter 43, § 14 (p. 121).]

LETTER 47

MINOS RETAINED. THE BRITISH JUDGE¹

HÔTEL DU MONT BLANC, ST. MARTIN'S,
12th October, 1874.²

1. WE have now briefly glanced at the nature of the squire's work in relation to the peasant;³ namely, making a celestial or worshipful appearance to him;⁴ and the methods of operation, no less than of appearance, which are generally to be defined as celestial, or worshipful.

We have next to examine by what rules the action of the squire towards the peasant is to be either restrained or assisted; and the function, therefore, of the lawyer, or definer of limits and modes,—which was above generally expressed, in its relation to the peasant, as “telling him, in black-letter, that his house is his own.”⁴ It will be necessary, however, evidently, that his house *should* be his own, before any lawyer can divinely assert the same to him.

Waiving, for the moment, examination of this primal necessity, let us consider a little how that divine function of asserting, in perfectly intelligible and indelible letters, the absolute claim of a man to his own house, or castle, and all that it properly includes, is actually discharged by the powers of British law now in operation.

2. We will take, if you please, in the outset, a few wise men's opinions on this matter, though we shall thus

¹ [“The British Bar” was a rejected title for this Letter.]

² [In his diary Ruskin notes (October 12), “Restless night, but Redgauntlet well arranged in my head”; and, later, “The best day for work I ever had in my life. Did all the best part of Redgauntlet *Fors* before breakfast.”]

³ [See Letter 45.]

⁴ [Compare Letter 11, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 185).]

be obliged somewhat to generalize the inquiry, by admitting into it some notice of criminal as well as civil law.

My readers have probably thought me forgetful of Sir Walter all this time.¹ No; but all writing about him is impossible to me in the impure gloom of modern Italy. I have had to rest awhile here, where human life is still sacred, before I could recover the tone of heart fit to say what I want to say in this *Fors*.

He was the son, you remember,² of a writer to the signet, and practised for some time at the bar himself. Have you ever chanced to ask yourself what was his innermost opinion of the legal profession?

Or, have you even endeavoured to generalize that expressed with so much greater violence by Dickens? The latter wrote with a definitely reforming purpose, seemingly; and, I have heard, had real effects on Chancery practice.

But are the Judges of England—at present I suppose the highest types of intellectual and moral power that Christendom possesses—content to have reform forced on them by the teasing of a caricaturist, instead of the pleading of their own consciences?

3. Even if so, is there no farther reform indicated as necessary, in a lower field, by the same teasing personage? The Court of Chancery and Mr. Vholes³ were not his only legal sketches. Dodson and Fogg; Sampson Brass; Serjeant Buzfuz; and, most of all, the examiner, for the Crown, of Mr. Swiveller in the trial of Kit,*—are these deserving of no repentant attention? You, good reader, probably have read the trial in *Pickwick*, and the trial of Kit, merely to amuse yourself; and perhaps Dickens himself

*See the part of examination respecting communication held with the brother of the prisoner.⁴

¹ [The notes on the Life of Scott were broken off in Letter 33 (Vol. XXVII. p. 621).]

² [See Vol. XXVII. pp. 587–588.]

³ [See *Bleak House*, ch. xxxix.]

⁴ [*The Old Curiosity Shop*, ch. lxiii.]

meant little more than to amuse you. But did it never strike you as quite other than a matter of amusement, that in both cases, the force of the law of England is represented as employed zealously to prove a crime against a person known by the accusing counsel to be innocent; and, in both cases, as obtaining a conviction?

You might perhaps think that these were only examples of the ludicrous, and sometimes tragic, accidents which must sometimes happen in the working of any complex system, however excellent. They are by no means so. Ludicrous, and tragic, mischance must indeed take place in all human affairs of importance, however honestly conducted. But here you have deliberate, artistic, energetic dishonesty; skilfullest and resolute endeavour to prove a crime against an innocent person,—a crime of which, in the case of the boy, the reputed commission will cost him at least the prosperity and honour of his life,—more to him than life itself. And this you forgive, or admire, because it is not done in malice, but for money, and in pride of art. Because the assassin is paid,—makes his living in that line of business,—and delivers his thrust with a bravo's artistic finesse, you think him a respectable person; so much better in style than a passionate one who does his murder gratis, vulgarly, with a club,—Bill Sikes, for instance? It is all balanced fairly, as the system goes, you think. "It works round, and two and two make four. He accused an innocent person to-day:—to-morrow he will defend a rascal."

And you truly hold this a business to which your youth should be bred—gentlemen of England?

"But how is it to be ordered otherwise? Every supposed criminal ought surely to have an advocate, to say what can be said in his favour; and an accuser, to insist on the evidence against him. Both do their best, and can anything be fairer?"

4. Yes; something else could be much fairer; but we will find out what Sir Walter thinks, if we can, before

going farther; though it will not be easy—for you don't at once get at the thoughts of a great man, upon a great matter.

The first difference, however, which, if you know your Scott well, strikes you, between him and Dickens, is that your task of investigation is chiefly pleasant, though serious; not a painful one—and still less a jesting or mocking one. The first figure that rises before you is Pleydell;¹ the second, Scott's own father, Saunders Fairford, with his son. And you think for an instant or two, perhaps, "The question is settled, as far as Scott is concerned, at once. What a beautiful thing is Law!"

For you forget, by the sweet emphasis of the divine art on what is good, that there ever was such a person in the world as Mr. Glossin.¹ And you are left, by the grave cunning of the divine art, which reveals to you no secret without your own labour, to discern and unveil for yourself the meaning of the plot of *Redgauntlet*.

You perhaps were dissatisfied enough with the plot, when you read it for amusement. Such a childish fuss about nothing! Solway sands, forsooth, the only scenery; and your young hero of the story frightened to wet his feet; and your old hero doing nothing but ride a black horse, and make himself disagreeable; and all that about the house in Edinburgh so dull; and no love-making, to speak of, anywhere!

5. Well, it doesn't come in exactly with my subject, to-day;—but, by the way, I beg you to observe that there is a bit of love in *Redgauntlet* which is worth any quantity of modern French or English amatory novels in a heap. Alan Fairford has been bred, and willingly bred, in the strictest discipline of mind and conduct; he is an entirely strong, entirely prudent, entirely pure young Scotchman,—and a lawyer. Scott, when he wrote the book, was an old Scotchman; and had seen a good deal of the world. And

¹ [For other references to *Guy Mannering in Fors*, see Vol. XXVII. pp. 588, 631.]

he is going to tell you how Love ought first to come to an entirely strong, entirely prudent, entirely pure youth, of his own grave profession.

How love *ought* to come, mind you. Alan Fairford is the real hero (next to Nanty Ewart) of the novel; and he is the exemplary and happy hero—Nanty being the suffering one, under hand of Fate.

Of course, you would say, if you didn't know the book, and were asked what should happen—(and with Miss Edgeworth¹ to manage matters instead of Scott, or Shakespeare, nothing else *would* have happened),—of course the entirely prudent young lawyer will consider what an important step in life marriage is; and will look out for a young person of good connections, whose qualities of mind and moral disposition he will examine strictly before allowing his affections to be engaged; he will then consider what income is necessary for a person in a high legal position, etc., etc., etc.

6. Well, this is what *does* happen, according to Scott, you know;—(or more likely, I'm afraid, know nothing about it). The old servant of the family announces, with some dryness of manner, one day, that a "leddy" wants to see Maister Alan Fairford,—for legal consultation. The prudent young gentleman, upon this, puts his room into the most impressive order, intending to make a first appearance reading a legal volume in an abstracted state of mind. But, on a knock coming at the street door, he can't resist going to look out at the window; and—the servant maliciously showing in the client without announcement—is discovered peeping out of it. The client is closely veiled—little more than the tip of her nose discernible. She is, fortunately, a little embarrassed herself; for she did not want Mr. Alan Fairford at all, but Mr. Alan Fairford's father. They sit looking at each other—at least, he looking at the veil and a green silk cloak—for half a minute. The young lady—(for she *is* young; he has made out that,

¹ [Compare Vol. XXVII. p. 562.]

he admits; and something more perhaps),—is the first to recover her presence of mind; makes him a pretty little apology for having mistaken him for his father; says that, now she has done it, he will answer her purpose, perhaps, even better; but she thinks it best to communicate the points on which she requires his assistance, in writing,—curtsies him, on his endeavour to remonstrate, gravely and inexorably into silence,—disappears,—“And put the sun in her pocket, I believe,” as she turned the corner, says prudent Mr. Alan. And keeps it in her pocket for him,—evermore. That is the way one’s Love is sent, when she is sent from Heaven, says the aged Scott.¹

“But how ridiculous,—how entirely unreasonable,—how unjustifiable, on any grounds of propriety or common sense!”

Certainly, my good sir,—certainly: Shakespeare and Scott can’t help that;—all they know is,—that is the way God and Nature manage it. Of course, Rosalind ought to have been much more particular in her inquiries about Orlando;—Juliet about the person masqued as a pilgrim;—and there is really no excuse whatever for Desdemona’s conduct; and we all know what came of it;—but, again I say, Shakespeare and Scott can’t help that.

7. Nevertheless, Love is not the subject of this novel of *Redgauntlet*; but Law: on which matter we will endeavour now to gather its evidence.

Two youths are brought up together—one, the son of a Cavalier, or Ghibelline, of the old school, whose Law is in the sword, and the heart; and the other of a Roundhead, or Guelph, of the modern school, whose Law is in form and precept. Scott’s own prejudices lean to the Cavalier; but his domestic affections, personal experience, and sense of equity, lead him to give utmost finish to the adverse character. The son of the Cavalier—in moral courage, in nervous power, in general sense and self-command,—is entirely inferior to the son of the Puritan; nay, in many respects quite weak and effeminate; one slight and scarcely

¹ [See *Redgauntlet*, Letter VIII.]
XXVIII.

noticeable touch (about the unproved pistol¹), gives the true relation of the characters, and makes their portraiture complete, as by Velasquez.

The Cavalier's father is dead; his uncle asserts the Cavalier's law of the Sword over him; its effects upon him are the first clause of the book.

The Puritan's father—living—asserts the law of Precept over him; its effects upon him are the second clause of the book.

Together with these studies of the two laws in their influence on the relation of guardian and ward—or of father and child, their influence on society is examined in the opposition of the soldier and hunter to the friend of man and animals,—Scott putting his whole power into the working out of this third clause of the book.

Having given his verdict in these three clauses, wholly in favour of the law of precept,—he has to mark the effects of its misapplication,—first moral, then civil.

The story of Nanty Ewart, the fourth clause, is the most instructive and pathetic piece of Scott's judgment on the abuse of the moral law, by pride, in Scotland, which you can find in all his works.

Finally, the effects of the abuse of the civil law by sale, or simony, have to be examined; which is done in the story of Peter Peebles.

The involution of this fifth clause with that of Nanty Ewart is one of the subtlest pieces of heraldic quartering which you can find in all the Waverley novels;² and no others have any pretence to range with them in this point of art at all. The best, by other masters, are a mere play of kaleidoscope colour compared to the severe heraldic delineation of the Waverleys.

8. We will first examine the statement of the abuse of Civil Law.

¹ [*Redgauntlet*, Letter III.]

² [On the "intricate design of the Waverley novels," see Letter 83, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 263).]

There is not, if you have any true sympathy with humanity, extant for you a more exquisite study of the relations which must exist, even under circumstances of great difficulty and misunderstanding, between a good father and a good son, than the scenes of *Redgauntlet* laid in Edinburgh. The father's intense devotion, pride, and joy, mingled with fear, in the son; the son's direct, unflinching, unaffected obedience, hallowed by pure affection, tempered by youthful sense, guided by high personal power. And all this force of noble passion and effort, in both, is directed to a single object—the son's success at the bar. That success, as usually in the legal profession, must if it be not wholly involved, at least give security for itself, in the impression made by the young counsel's opening speech. All the interests of the reader (if he has any interest in him) are concentrated upon this crisis in the story; and the chapter which gives account of the fluctuating event is one of the supreme masterpieces of European literature.¹

The interests of the reader, I say, are concentrated on the success of the young counsel: that of his client is of no importance whatever to any one. You perhaps forget even who the client is—or recollect him only as a poor drunkard, who must be kept out of the way for fear he should interrupt his own counsel, or make the jury laugh at him. His cause has been—no one knows how long—in the courts; it is good for practising on, by any young hand.

9. You forget Peter Peebles, perhaps: you don't forget Miss Flite, in the Dickens' court?² Better done, therefore,—Miss Flite,—think you?

No; not so well done; or anything like so well done. The very primal condition in Scott's type of the ruined creature is, that he *should* be forgotten! Worse;—that he should *deserve* to be forgotten. Miss Flite interests you—takes your affections—deserves them. Is mad, indeed, but not a destroyed creature, morally, at all. A very sweet,

¹ [*Redgauntlet*, ch. i.]

² [See *Bleak House*, ch. iii.]

kind creature,—not even altogether unhappy,—enjoying her lawsuit, and her bag, and her papers. She is a picturesque, quite unnatural and unlikely figure,—therefore wholly ineffective except for story-telling purposes.¹

But Peter Peebles is a natural ruin, and a total one. An accurate type of what is to be seen every day, and carried to the last stage of its misery. He is degraded alike in body and heart;—mad, but with every vile sagacity unquenched,—while every hope in earth and heaven is taken away. And in this desolation, you can only hate, not pity him.

10. That, says Scott, is the beautiful operation of the Civil Law of Great Britain, on a man whose affairs it has spent its best intelligence on, for an unknown number of years. His affairs being very obscure, and his cause doubtful, you suppose? No. His affairs being so simple that the young *honest* counsel can explain them entirely in an hour;—and his cause absolutely and unquestionably just.

What is Dickens' entire Court of Chancery to that? With all its dusty delay,—with all its diabolical ensnaring;—its pathetic death of Richard—widowhood of Ada, etc., etc.?² All mere blue fire of the stage, and dropped footlights; no real tragedy.—A villain cheats a foolish youth, who would be wiser than his elders, who dies repentant, and immediately begins a new life,—so says, at least (not the least believing), the pious Mr. Dickens. All that might happen among the knaves of any profession.

11. But with Scott, the best honour—soul—intellect in Scotland take in hand the cause of a man who comes to them justly, necessarily, for plain, instantly possible, absolutely deserved, decision of a manifest cause.

They are endless years talking of it,—to amuse, and pay, themselves.

And they drive him into the foulest death—eternal—

¹ [For a note from a correspondent on the author's criticism of Dickens, see Letter 48, § 20 (p. 220).]

² [*Bleak House*, ch. lxxv.]

if there be, for such souls, any Eternity. On which Scott does not feel it his duty, as Dickens does, to offer you an opinion. He tells you, as Shakespeare, the fact he knows,—no more.

There, then, you have Sir Walter's opinion of the existing method and function of British Civil Law.

What the difference may be, and what the consequences of such difference between this lucrative function, and the true duty of Civil Law,—namely, to fulfil and continue in all the world the first mission of the mightiest Lawgiver, and declare that on such and such conditions, written in eternal letters by the finger of God, every man's house, or piece of Holy land, is his own,—there does not, it appears, exist at present wit enough, under all the weight of curled and powdered horsehair in England, either to reflect, or to define.

12. In the meantime, we have to note another question beyond, and greater than this,—answered by Scott in his story.

So far as human laws have dealt with the man, this their ruined client has been destroyed in his innocence. But there is yet a Divine Law, controlling the injustice of men.

And the historian—revealing to us the full relation of private and public act—shows us that the wretch's destruction was in his refusal of the laws of God, while he trusted in the laws of man.

Such is the entire plan of the story of *Redgauntlet*,—only in part conscious,—partly guided by the Fors which has rule over the heart of the noble king in his word, and of the noble scribe in his scripture, as over the rivers of water. We will trace the detail of this story farther in next *Fors*;¹ meantime, here is your own immediate lesson, reader, whoever you may be, from our to-day's work.

13. The first—not the chief, but the first—piece of good work a man has to do is to find rest for himself,—a place

¹ ["Not done."—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]

for the sole of his foot; his house, or piece of Holy land;¹ and to *make* it so holy and happy, that if by any chance he receive order to leave it, there may be bitter pain in obedience; and also that to his daughter there may yet one sorrowful sentence be spoken in her day of mirth, "Forget also thy people, and thy father's house."²

"But I mean to make money, and have a better and better house, every ten years."

Yes, I know you do.

If you intend to keep that notion, I have no word more to say to you. Fare you—not well, for you cannot; but as you may.

But if you have sense, and feeling, determine what sort of a house will be fit for you; determine to work for it—to get it—and to die in it, if the Lord will.

"What sort of house will be fit for me?—but of course the biggest and finest I can get will be fittest!"

Again, so says the Devil to you: and if you believe him, he will find you fine lodgings enough,—for rent. But if you don't believe him, consider, I repeat, what sort of house will be fit for you.

14. "Fit!—but what do you mean by fit?"

I mean, one that you can entirely enjoy and manage; but which you will not be proud of, except as you make it charming in its modesty. If you are proud of it, it is *unfit* for you,—better than a man in your station of life can by simple and sustained exertion obtain; and it should be rather under such quiet level than above. Ashestiel was entirely fit for Walter Scott, and Walter Scott was entirely happy there.³ Abbotsford was fit also for *Sir* Walter Scott; and had he been content with it, his had been a model life. But he would fain still add field to field,—and died homeless. Perhaps Gadshill was fit for

¹ [On this sanctity of home, compare Letter 62, § 10 (p. 520); and see Vol. XII. p. 72.]

² [Psalms xlv. 10.]

³ [For a later reference to this passage, see Letter 92, § 12 (Vol. XXIX. p. 462).]

Dickens; I do not know enough of him to judge; and he knew scarcely anything of himself. But the story of the boy on Rochester Hill is lovely.¹

And assuredly, my aunt's house at Croydon was fit for her; and my father's at Herne Hill,—in which I correct the press of this *Fors* sitting in what was once my nursery,—was exactly fit for him, and me. He left it for the larger one—Denmark Hill; and never had a quite happy day afterwards. It was not his fault, the house at Herne Hill was built on clay, and the doctors said he was not well there; also, I was his pride, and he wanted to leave *me* in a better house,—a good father's cruellest, subtlest temptation.

15. But *you* are a poor man, you say, and have no hope of a grand home?

Well, here is the simplest idea of operation, then. You dig a hole, like Robinson Crusoe; you gather sticks for fire, and bake the earth you get out of your hole,—partly into bricks, partly into tiles, partly into pots.² If there are any stones in the neighbourhood, you drag them together, and build a defensive dyke round your hole or cave. If there are no stones, but only timber, you drive in a palisade. And you are already exercising the arts of the Greeks, Etruscans, Normans, and Lombards, in their purest form, on the wholesome and true threshold of all their arts; and on your own wholesome threshold.

You don't know, you answer, how to make a brick, a tile, or a pot; or how to build a dyke, or drive a stake that will stand. No more do I. Our education has to begin;—mine as much as yours. I have indeed, the newspapers say, a power of expression; but as they also say I¹ [The story of Dickens's first sight of Gadshill, when he was a small boy; of his interest in its Shakespearean associations; and of his father saying "if you were to be very persevering and were to work hard, you might some day come to live in it." Dickens tells the story in *The Uncommercial Traveller* (ch. vii., "Travelling Abroad"); compare Forster's *Life of Dickens*, vol. i. pp. 4–5.]

² [See Robinson Crusoe's account of his occupations during November and December. For another reference to his pottery, see Vol. XXII. p. 523.]

cannot think at all, you see I have nothing to express; so that peculiar power, according to *them*, is of no use to me whatever.¹

16. But you don't want to make your bricks yourself; you want to have them made for you by the United Grand Junction Limited Liability Brick-without-Straw Company, paying twenty-five per cent. to its idle shareholders? Well, what will you do, yourself, then? Nothing? Or do you mean to play on the fiddle to the Company making your bricks? What will *you* do—of this first work necessary for your life? There's nothing but digging and cooking now remains to be done. Will you dig, or cook? Dig, by all means; but your house should be ready for you first.

Your wife should cook. What else can *you* do? Preach?—and give us your precious opinions of God and His ways! Yes, and in the meanwhile *I* am to build your house, am I? and find you a barrel-organ, or a harmonium, to twangle psalm-tunes on, I suppose? Fight—will you?—and pull other people's houses down; while I am to be set to build your barracks, that you may go smoking and spitting about all day, with a cockscomb on your head, and spurs to your heels?—(I observe, by the way, the Italian soldiers have now got cocks' *tails* on their heads, instead of cocks' combs.)—Lay down the law to me in a wig,—will you? and tell me the house I have built is—NOT mine? and take my dinner from me, as a fee for *that* opinion? Build, my man,—build, or dig,—one of the two; and then eat your honestly-earned meat, thankfully, and let other people alone, if you can't help them.

¹ [See Letter 46, § 17 (p. 185).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

17. THE points suggested by the letter printed in the *Fors* of September, respecting the minor action of English Magistracy,¹ must still be kept for subsequent consideration,² our to-day's work having been too general to reach them.

I have an interesting letter from a man of business, remonstrating with me on my declaration that railroads should no more pay dividends than carriage roads, or field footpaths.³

He is a gentle man of business, and meshed, as moderately well-meaning people, nowadays, always are, in a web of equivocation between what is profitable and benevolent.

He says that people who make railroads should be rewarded by dividends for having acted so benevolently towards the public, and provided it with these beautiful and easy means of locomotion. But my correspondent is too good a man of business to remain in this entanglement of brains—unless by his own fault. He knows perfectly well, in his heart, that the “benevolence” involved in the construction of railways amounts exactly to this much and no more,—that if the British public were informed that engineers were now confident, after their practice in the Cenis and St. Gothard tunnels, that they could make a railway to Hell,—the British public would instantly invest in the concern to any amount; and stop church-building all over the country, for fear of diminishing the dividends.

¹ [Not September, but August. Letter 44, § 16 (p. 141). A discussion of the points in question had been promised (p. 142) for the present Letter.]

² [The subject was not expressly dealt with in any subsequent Letter; but see Letter 71, § 20 (below, pp. 751–752).]

³ [See *Munera Pulveris*, § 128 (Vol. XVII. p. 253), and the letter in the *Daily Telegraph*, August 6, 1868 (*ibid.*, p. 531). For another passage on the subject, see Appendix 17, §§ 5–7 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 571, 572).]

LETTER 48

THE ADVENT COLLECT¹

1. THE accounts of the state of St. George's Fund, given without any inconvenience in crowding type, on the last leaf of this number of *Fors*, will, I hope, be as satisfactory, to my subscribers as they are to me. In these days of financial operation, the subscribers to *anything* may surely be content when they find that all their talents have been laid up in the softest of napkins;² and even farther, that, though they are getting no interest themselves, that lichenous growth of vegetable gold, or mould, is duly developing itself on their capital.

The amount of subscriptions received, during the four years of my mendicancy, might have disappointed me, if, in my own mind, I had made any appointments on the subject, or had benevolence pungent enough to make me fret at the delay in the commencement of the national felicity which I propose to bestow. On the contrary, I am only too happy to continue amusing myself in my study, with stones and pictures; and find, as I grow old, that I remain resigned to the consciousness of any quantity of surrounding vice, distress and disease, provided only the sun shine in at my window over Corpus Garden, and there are no whistles from the luggage trains passing the Waterworks.

2. I understand this state of even temper to be what most people call "rational"; and, indeed, it has been the result of very steady effort on my own part to keep myself, if it might be, out of Hanwell, or that other

¹ [See below, § 15. A discarded title for this Letter was "The Days of the Anakim" (see § 5).]

² [Luke xix. 20: see above, p. 150.]

Hospital which makes the name of Christ's native village dreadful in the ear of London.¹ For, having long observed that the most perilous beginning of trustworthy qualification for either of those establishments consisted in an exaggerated sense of self-importance; and being daily compelled, of late, to value my own person and opinions at a higher and higher rate, in proportion to my extending experience of the rarity of any similar creatures or ideas among mankind, it seemed to me expedient to correct this increasing conviction of my superior wisdom, by companionship with pictures I could not copy, and stones I could not understand:—while, that this wholesome seclusion may remain only self-imposed, I think it not a little fortunate for me that the few relations I have left are generally rather fond of me;—don't know clearly which is the next of kin,—and perceive that the administration of my inconsiderable effects* would be rather troublesome than profitable to them. Not in the least, therefore, wondering at the shyness of my readers to trust me with money of theirs, I have made, during these four years past, some few experiments with money of my own,—in hopes of being able to give such account of them as might justify a more extended confidence. I am bound to state that the results, for the present, are not altogether encouraging. On my own little piece of mountain ground at Coniston I grow a large quantity of wood-hyacinths and heather, without any expense worth mentioning; but my only industrious agricultural operations have been the getting three-pounds-ten worth of hay, off a field for which I pay six pounds rent; and the surrounding, with a costly wall six feet high, to keep out rabbits, a kitchen garden, which, being terraced and trim, my neighbours say is pretty; and which will

* See statement at close of accounts [p. 224].

¹ [The Hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem, founded as a priory in 1247, is mentioned as early as 1402 as being used as a hospital for lunatics, and instances of the modern sense of *bedlam* (Middle English *Bedlem* = *Bethlem*) occur as early as the sixteenth century: see Murray's *New English Dictionary*.]

probably, every third year, when the weather is not wet, supply me with a dish of strawberries.

3. At Carshalton, in Surrey, I have indeed had the satisfaction of cleaning out one of the springs of the Wandel, and making it pleasantly habitable by trout; but find that the fountain, instead of taking care of itself when once pure, as I expected it to do, requires continual looking after, like a child getting into a mess; and involves me besides in continual debate with the surveyors of the parish, who insist on letting all the road-washings run into it.¹ For the present, however, I persevere, at Carshalton, against the wilfulness of the spring and the carelessness of the parish; and hope to conquer both: but I have been obliged entirely to abandon a notion I had of exhibiting ideally clean street pavement in the centre of London,—in the pleasant environs of Church Lane, St. Giles's.² There I had every help and encouragement from the authorities; and hoped, with the staff of two men and a young rogue of a crossing-sweeper, added to the regular force of the parish, to keep a quarter of a mile square of the narrow streets without leaving so much as a bit of orange-peel on the footway, or an eggshell in the gutters. I failed, partly because I chose too difficult a district to begin with (the contributions of transitional mud being constant, and the inhabitants passive), but chiefly because I could no more be on the spot myself, to give spirit to the men, when I left Denmark Hill for Coniston.

4. I next set up a tea-shop at 29, Paddington Street, W. (an establishment which my *Fors* readers may as well know of), to supply the poor in that neighbourhood with pure tea, in packets as small as they chose to buy, without making a profit on the subdivision,—larger orders being of course equally acceptable from anybody who cares to

¹ [Compare Letter 46, § 10 (E.), above p. 176; Vol. XVIII. p. 385; and Vol. XXII. pp. xxiv., 533.]

² [In 1871–1872: see Vol. XXII. p. xxv., and Appendix 3 in Vol. XXIX. (p. 535). For further particulars about the experiment, see the Introduction, above, p. xvi.]

promote honest dealing. The result of this experiment has been my ascertaining that the poor only like to buy their tea where it is brilliantly lighted and eloquently ticketed; and as I resolutely refuse to compete with my neighbouring tradesmen either in gas or rhetoric, the patient subdivision of my parcels by the two old servants of my mother's, who manage the business for me, hitherto passes little recognized as an advantage by my uncalculating public. Also, steady increase in the consumption of spirits throughout the neighbourhood faster and faster slackens the demand for tea; but I believe none of these circumstances have checked my trade so much as my own procrastination in painting my sign. Owing to that total want of imagination and invention which makes me so impartial and so accurate a writer on subjects of political economy, I could not for months determine whether the said sign should be of a Chinese character, black upon gold; or of a Japanese, blue upon white; or of pleasant English, rose colour on green; and still less how far legible scale of letters could be compatible, on a board only a foot broad, with lengthy enough elucidation of the peculiar offices of "Mr. Ruskin's tea-shop." Meanwhile the business languishes, and the rent and taxes absorb the profits, and something more, after the salary of my good servants has been paid.¹

In all these cases, however, I can see that I am defeated only because I have too many things on hand: and that neither rabbits at Coniston, road-surveyors at Croydon, or mud in St. Giles's would get the better of me, if I could give exclusive attention to any one business: meantime, I learn the difficulties which are to be met, and shall make the fewer mistakes when I venture on any work with other people's money.

5. I may as well, together with these confessions, print a piece written for the end of a *Fors* letter at Assisi, a month or two back, but for which I had then no room,

¹ [For the history of Ruskin's tea-shop, see, again, the Introduction (above, p. xviii.). For later references to it, see Letter 67, § 23 (p. 661), and 78, § 18 (Vol. XXIX. p. 141).]

referring to the increase of commercial, religious, and egotistic insanity,* in modern society, and delicacy of the distinction implied by that long wall at Hanwell, between the persons inside it, and out.

“Does it never occur to me” (thus the letter went on) “that I may be mad myself?”

Well, I am so alone now in my thoughts and ways, that if I am not mad, I should soon become so, from mere solitude, but for my *work*. But it must be manual work. Whenever I succeed in a drawing, I am happy, in spite of all that surrounds me of sorrow. It is a strange feeling;—not gratified vanity: I can have any quantity of praise I like from some sorts of people; but that does me no vital good (though dispraise does me mortal harm); whereas to succeed to my own satisfaction in a manual piece of work, is life,—to me, as to all men; and it is only the peace which comes necessarily from manual labour which in all time has kept the honest country people patient in their task of maintaining the rascals who live in towns. But we are in hard times, now, for all men’s wits; for men who know the truth are like to go mad from isolation; and the fools are all going mad in “Schwärmerei,”—only that is much the pleasanter way. Mr. Lecky, for instance, quoted in last *Fors*;¹ how pleasant for him to think he is ever so much wiser than Aristotle; and that, as a body, the men of his generation are the wisest that ever were born—giants of intellect, according to Lord Macaulay,² compared to the pigmies of Bacon’s time, and the minor pigmies of Christ’s time, and the minutest of all, the microscopic pigmies of Solomon’s time, and, finally, the vermicular and infusorial pigmies—twenty-three millions to the cube inch—of Mr. Darwin’s time, whatever that may be! How pleasant for

* See second letter in Notes and Correspondence [p. 219].

¹ [Not *last Fors*, but Letter 43, § 14 (p. 121). The present passage was, however, written for an earlier letter (see beginning of this section).]

² [Compare *A Joy for Ever*, § 168 (Vol. XVI. p. 154, and see *note* there).]

Mr. Lecky to live in these days of the Anakim,—“his spear, to equal which, the tallest pine,”¹ etc., etc., which no man Stratford-born could have lifted, much less shaken!

6. But for use of the old race—few of us now left,—children who reverence our fathers, and are ashamed of ourselves; comfortless enough in that shame, and yearning for one word or glance from the graves of old, yet knowing ourselves to be of the same blood, and recognizing in our hearts the same passions, with the ancient masters of humanity;—we, who feel as men, and not as carnivorous worms; we, who are every day recognizing some inaccessible height of thought and power, and are miserable in our shortcomings,—the few of us now standing here and there, alone, in the midst of this yelping, carnivorous crowd,² mad for money and lust, tearing each other to pieces, and starving each other to death, and leaving heaps of their dung and ponds of their spittle³ on every palace floor and altar stone,—it is impossible for us, except in the labour of our hands, not to go mad.

7. And the danger is tenfold greater for a man in my own position, concerned with the arts which develop the more subtle brain sensations; and, through them, tormented all day long. Mr. Leslie Stephen rightly says how much better it is to have a thick skin and a good digestion.⁴ Yes, assuredly; but what is the use of knowing that, if one hasn't? In one of my saddest moods, only a week or two ago, because I had failed twice over in drawing the lifted hand of Giotto's "Poverty"; utterly beaten and comfortless,

¹ [*Paradise Lost*, Book I.]

² ["*Cf.* below, § 12."—*Author's MS. note.*]

³ [Compare Letter 44, § 1 (p. 125).]

⁴ [In *Fraser's Magazine*, June 1874 (vol. 9, N.S., pp. 688–701), Mr. Leslie Stephen wrote a review of *Fors Clavigera*, entitled "Mr. Ruskin's Recent Writings." The concluding words are: "A sensitive nature, tortured and thrust aside by pachydermatous and apathetic persons, may well be driven to rash revolt and hasty denunciations of society in general. At worst, and granting him to be entirely wrong, he has certainly more claim on our pity than on our contempt. And for a moral, if we must have a moral, we can only remark, that on the whole Mr. Ruskin supplies a fresh illustration of the truth, which has both a cynical and an elevating side to it, that it is amongst the greatest of all blessings to have a thick skin and a sound digestion."]

at Assisi, I got some wholesome peace and refreshment by mere sympathy with a Bewickian little pig in the roundest and conceitedest burst of pig-blossom.¹ His servant,—a grave old woman, with much sorrow and toil in the wrinkles of *her* skin, while his was only dimpled in its divine thickness,—was leading him, with magnanimous length of rope, down a grassy path behind the convent; stopping, of course, where he chose. Stray stalks and leaves of eatable things, in various stages of ambrosial rottenness, lay here and there; the convent walls made more savoury by their fumigation, as Mr. Leslie Stephen says the Alpine pines are by his cigar.² And the little joyful darling of Demeter³ shook his curly tail, and munched; and grunted the goodnaturedest of grunts, and snuffled the approvingest of snuffles, and was a balm and beatification to behold; and I would fain have changed places with him for a little while, or with Mr. Leslie Stephen for a little while,—at luncheon, suppose,—anywhere but among the Alps. But it can't be.

HÔTEL MEURICE, PARIS,
20th October, 1874.

8. I interrupt myself, for an instant or two, to take notice of two little things that happen to me here—arriving to breakfast by night train from Geneva.

Expecting to be cold, I had ordered fire, and sat down by it to read my letters as soon as I arrived, not noticing that the little parlour was getting much too hot. Presently, in comes the chambermaid, to put the bedroom in order, which one enters through the parlour. Perceiving that I am mismanaging myself, in the way of fresh air, as she

¹ [See *Præterita*, ii. § 163 n., where Ruskin quotes this passage.]

² [In a paper on his ascent (in 1873) of "The Col des Hirondelles," first published in the *Alpine Journal* for February 1874, and now included in his *The Play-ground of Europe*, new edition, 1894, p. 188: "Delicious, too, was the rest under a clump of fragrant pines, rendered still more fragrant by our fumigation." Stephen, on seeing this allusion to him by Ruskin, wrote to C. E. Norton: "Next time you write to him say that I (and you) forgive and pity him for raging against the blessed weed, which certainly improves the best of scenery—to the smoker; and assure him that if he would take to it himself, he would find the world look less detestable" (*Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen*, by F. W. Maitland, 1906, p. 247).]

³ [On the association of the pig with Demeter, see Frazer's *Golden Bough*, vol. ii.]

passes through, “Il fait bien chaud, monsieur, ici,” says she, reprovingly, and with entire self-possession. Now that is French servant-character of the right old school. She knows her own position perfectly, and means to stay in it, and wear her little white radiant frill of a cap all her days. She knows my position also; and has not the least fear of my thinking her impertinent because she tells me what it is right that I should know. Presently afterwards, an evidently German-importation of waiter brings me up my breakfast, which has been longer in appearing than it would have been in old times. It looks all right at first,—the napkin, china, and solid silver sugar basin, all of the old régime. Bread, butter,—yes, of the best, still. Coffee, milk,—all right too. But, at last here is a bit of the new régime. There are no sugar-tongs; and the sugar is of beetroot, and in methodically similar cakes, which I must break with my finger and thumb if I want a small piece, and put back what I don’t want, for my neighbour, to-morrow.

“Civilization,” this, you observe, according to Professor Liebig and Mr. John Stuart Mill.¹ Not according to old French manners, however.

9. Now, my readers are continually complaining that I don’t go on telling them my plan of life, under the rule of St. George’s Company.

I *have* told it them, again and again, in broad terms; agricultural life, with as much refinement as I can enforce in it. But it is impossible to describe what I mean by “re-refinement,” except in details which can only be suggested by practical need; and which cannot at all be set down at once.

Here, however, to-day, is one instance. At the best hotel in what has been supposed the most luxurious city of modern Europe,—because people are now always in a hurry to catch the train, they haven’t time to use the sugar-tongs, or look for a little piece among differently sized lumps, and therefore they use their fingers; have bad sugar instead of

¹ [See Vol. XXVII. p. 204.]
XXVIII.

good, and waste the ground that would grow blessed cherry trees, currant bushes, or wheat, in growing a miserable root as a substitute for the sugar-cane, which God has appointed to grow where cherries and wheat won't, and to give juice which will freeze into sweet snow as pure as hoar-frost.

Now, on the poorest farm of the St. George's Company, the servants shall have white and brown sugar of the best—or none. If we are too poor to buy sugar, we will drink our tea without; and have suet-dumpling instead of pudding. But among the earliest school lessons, and home lessons, decent behaviour at table will be primarily essential; and of such decency, one little exact point will be—the neat, patient, and scrupulous use of sugar-tongs instead of fingers. If we are too poor to have silver basins, we will have delf ones; if not silver tongs, we will have wooden ones; and the boys of the house shall be challenged to cut, and fit together, the prettiest and handiest machines of the sort they can contrive. In six months you would find more real art fancy brought out in the wooden handles and claws, than there is now in all the plate in London.

10. Now, there's the cuckoo-clock striking seven, just as I sit down to correct the press of this sheet, in my nursery at Herne Hill; and though I don't remember, as the murderer does in Mr. Crummles' play, having heard a cuckoo-clock strike seven—in my infancy,¹ I do remember, in my favourite *Frank*,² much talk of the housekeeper's cuckoo-clock, and of the boy's ingenuity in mending it. Yet to this hour of seven in the morning, ninth December of my fifty-fifth year, I haven't the least notion how any such clock says "Cuckoo," nor a clear one even of the making of the commonest barking toy of a child's Noah's ark. I don't know how a barrel-organ produces music by being ground; nor what real function the pea has in a

¹ [*Nicholas Nickleby*, ch. xxiv.]

² [For another reference to Miss Edgeworth's *Frank*, see Letter 43, § 5 (p. 112).]

whistle. Physical science—all this—of a kind which would have been boundlessly interesting to me, as to all boys of mellifluous disposition, if only I had been taught it with due immediate practice, and enforcement of true manufacture, or, in pleasant Saxon, “handiwork.” But there shall not be on St. George’s estate a single thing in the house which the boys don’t know how to make, nor a single dish on the table which the girls will not know how to cook.

11. By the way, I have been greatly surprised by receiving some letters of puzzled inquiry as to the meaning of my recipe, given last year, for Yorkshire Pie.¹ Do not my readers yet at all understand that the whole gist of this book is to make people build their own houses, provide and cook their own dinners, and enjoy both? Something else besides, perhaps; but at least, and at first, those. St. Michael’s mass, and Christ’s mass, may eventually be associated in your minds with other things than goose and pudding; but *Fors* demands at first no more chivalry nor Christianity from you than that you build your houses bravely, and earn your dinners honestly, and enjoy them both, and be content with them both. The contentment is the main matter; you may enjoy to any extent, but if you are discontented, your life will be poisoned. The little pig was so comforting to me because he was wholly content to be a little pig; and Mr. Leslie Stephen is in a certain degree exemplary and comforting to me, because he is wholly content to be Mr. Leslie Stephen;² while I am miserable because I am always wanting to be something else than I am. I want to be Turner; I want to be Gainsborough; I want to be Samuel Prout; I want to be

¹ [See Letter 25, § 2 (Vol. XXVII. p. 448).]

² [Stephen’s biographer, the late Professor F. W. Maitland, in quoting this passage adds: “So wrote Ruskin; but let us distinguish. If the prophet meant that Stephen was self-complacent and satisfied with his own performances, the prophet made a great mistake; but if he meant that Stephen was contented with his lot, that is true and worth saying” (*Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen*, p. 258). Stephen was Ruskin’s neighbour for some weeks at Coniston, and they had some friendly intercourse (see Vol. XXIV. p. xxxi., and, in a later volume, Ruskin’s letter of August 2, 1876, to C. E. Norton); but Stephen “could not be at ease with him” (*Life and Letters*, pp. 292, 302, 308).]

Doge of Venice; I want to be Pope; I want to be Lord of the Sun and Moon. The other day, when I read that story in the papers about the dog-fight,* I wanted to be able to fight a bulldog.

12. Truly, that was the only effect of the story upon me, though I heard everybody else screaming out “how horrible it was!” What’s horrible in it? Of course it is in bad taste, and the sign of a declining era of national honour—as all brutal gladiatorial exhibitions are; and the stakes and rings of the tethered combat meant precisely, for England, what the stakes and rings of the Theatre of Taormina,—where I saw the holes left for them among the turf, blue with Sicilian lilies, in this last April,—meant, for Greece, and Rome. There might be something loath-some, or something ominous, in such a story, to the old Greeks of the school of Heracles; who used to fight with the Nemean lion, or with Cerberus, when it was needful only, and not for money; and whom their Argus remembered through all Trojan exile.¹ There might be something loathsome in it, or ominous, to an Englishman of the school of Shakespeare or Scott; who would fight with men only, and loved his hound. But for you—you carnivorous cheats²—what, in dog’s or devil’s name, is there horrible in it for *you*? Do you suppose it isn’t more manly and virtuous to fight a bulldog, than to poison a child, or cheat a fellow

* I don’t know how far it turned out to be true,—a fight between a dwarf and a bulldog (both chained to stakes, as in Roman days), described at length in some journals.³

¹ [For the recognition of Ulysses by his dog Argus, see *Odyssey*, xvii. 291 *seq.*]

² [See Letter 42, § 14 (p. 102).]

³ [The reference is to a sensational account of a fight at Hanley between a bulldog and an undersized man known as “Brummy,” contributed by Mr. James Greenwood to the *Daily Telegraph* of July 6, 1874. The article attracted much attention, and the accuracy of Mr. Greenwood’s statements was hotly challenged: see various notes and letters in the *Times* of July and August (and especially the issues of July 21 and August 12). The Home Secretary (then Mr. Cross) was questioned on the matter in Parliament. On July 9 he stated that he had “every reason to believe that the account is substantially true”; on July 23, that the Chief Constable of Hanley, after prolonged inquiries, had been “unable to find any corroboration.” Mr. Greenwood, however, maintained positively the accuracy of his account.]

who trusts you, or leave a girl to go wild in the streets? And don't you live, and profess to live—and even insolently proclaim that there's no other way of living than—by poisoning and cheating? And isn't every woman of fashion's dress, in Europe, now set the pattern of to her by its prostitutes?

13. What's horrible in it? I ask you, the third time. I hate, myself, seeing a bulldog ill-treated; for they are the gentlest and faithfullest of living creatures if you use them well. And the best dog I ever had was a bull-terrier,¹ whose whole object in life was to please me, and nothing else; though, if he found he *could* please me by holding on with his teeth to an inch-thick stick, and being swung round in the air as fast as I could turn, that was his own idea of entirely felicitous existence. I don't like, therefore, hearing of a bulldog's being ill-treated; but I can tell you a little thing that chanced to me at Coniston the other day, more horrible, in the deep elements of it, than all the dog, bulldog, or bull-fights, or baitings, of England, Spain, and California. A fine boy, the son of an amiable English clergyman, had come on the coach-box round the Water-head to see me, and was telling me of the delightful drive he had had. "Oh," he said, in the triumph of his enthusiasm, "and just at the corner of the wood, there was *such* a big squirrel! and the coachman threw a stone at it, and nearly hit it!"

"Thoughtlessness—only thoughtlessness"—say you—proud father? Well, perhaps not much worse than that. But how *could* it be much worse? Thoughtlessness is precisely the chief public calamity of our day;² and when it comes to the pitch, in a clergyman's child, of not thinking

¹ [Ruskin was "a devoted lover and keen observer of animals. It would take long to tell the story of all his dogs, from the spaniel Dash, commemorated in his earliest poems, and Wisie, whose sagacity is related in *Præterita*, down through the long line of bulldogs, St. Bernards, and collies, to Bramble, the reigning favourite; and all the cats who made his study their home, or were flirted with abroad" (W. G. Collingwood, *Life and Work of John Ruskin*, 1900, p. 355). For one of his dogs, see below, p. 256 n.]

² [See Preface to the second edition of *Ethics of the Dust*, where Ruskin refers to this passage: Vol. XVIII. p. 204.]

that a stone hurts what it hits of living things, and not caring for the daintiest, dextrousest, innocentest living thing in the northern forests of God's earth, except as a brown excrescence to be knocked off their branches,—nay, good pastor of Christ's lambs, believe me, your boy had better have been employed in thoughtfully and resolutely stoning St. Stephen—if any St. Stephen is to be found in these days, when men not only can't see heaven opened, but don't so much as care to see it shut.¹

For they, at least, meant neither to give pain nor death without cause,—that unanimous company who stopped their ears,—they, and the consenting bystander who afterwards was sorry for his mistake.²

14. But, on the whole, the time has now come when we must cease throwing of stones either at saints or squirrels; and, as I say, build our own houses with them, honestly set: and similarly content ourselves in peaceable use of iron and lead, and other such things which we have been in the habit of throwing at each other dangerously, in thoughtlessness; and defending ourselves against as thoughtlessly, though in what we suppose to be an ingenious manner. Ingenious or not, will the fabric of our new ship of the Line, *Devastation*,³ think you, follow its fabricator in heavenly places, when he dies in the Lord?⁴ In such representations as I have chanced to see of probable Paradise, Noah is never without his ark;—holding that up for judgment as the main work of his life.⁵ Shall we hope at the Advent to see the builder of the *Devastation* invite St. Michael's judgment on his better style of naval architecture, and four-foot-six-thick “armour of light”?⁶

¹ [Compare Letter 75, § 14 (Vol. XXIX. p. 70).]

² [Acts vii. 56 *seq.*]

³ [The *Devastation*—turret-ship, designed by Sir E. J. Reed (1830–1906), launched in 1871 and commissioned in 1873—was the representative of the newest and most powerful type of battleship at the time. She was the first British sea-going battleship that relied solely on steam. For other references to her, see Letters 64, § 26, and 65, § 4 (below, pp. 585, 590).]

⁴ [Revelation xiv. 13: see above, p. 148.]

⁵ [As, for instance, in Tintoret's “Paradise” in the Ducal Palace: see the description in Vol. XXII. p. 104.]

⁶ [Romans xiii. 12.]

15. It is to-day the second Sunday in Advent, and all over England, about the time that I write these words, full congregations will be for the second time saying Amen to the opening collect of the Christian year.

I wonder how many individuals of the enlightened public understand a single word of its first clause:

“Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life.”

How many of them, may it be supposed, have any clear knowledge of what grace is, or of what the works of darkness are which they hope to have grace to cast away; or will feel themselves, in the coming year, armed with any more luminous mail than their customary coats and gowns, hosen and hats? Or again, when they are told to “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them,”¹—what fellowship do they recognize themselves to have guiltily formed; and whom, or what, will they feel now called upon to reprove?

In last *Fors*,² I showed *you* how the works of darkness were unfruitful;—the precise reverse of the fruitful, or creative, works of Light;—but why in this collect, which you pray over and over again all Advent, do you ask for “armour” instead of industry? You take your coat off to work in your own gardens; why must you put a coat of mail on, when you are to work in the Garden of God?

Well; because the earthworms in it are big—and have teeth and claws, and venomous tongues. So that the first question for you is indeed, not whether you have a mind to work in it—many a coward has that—but whether you have courage to stand in it, and armour proved enough to stand in.

16. Suppose you let the consenting bystander who took care of the coats taken off to do that piece of work on

¹ [Ephesians v. 11. For a later reference to this passage, see Letter 63, § 3 (p. 540).]

² [Not *last Fors*, but Letter 46, § 10 (p. 175).]

St. Stephen, explain to you the pieces out of St. Michael's armoury needful to the husbandman, or Georgos,¹ of God's garden.

“Stand therefore; having your lions girt about with Truth.”

That means, that the strength of your backbone depends on your meaning to do true battle.

“And having on the breastplate of Justice.”

That means, there are to be no partialities in your heart, of anger or pity;—but you must only in justice kill, and only in justice keep alive.

“And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of Peace.”

That means, that where your foot pauses, moves, or enters, there shall be peace; and where you can only shake the dust of it on the threshold, mourning.

“Above all, take the shield of Faith.”

Of fidelity or obedience to your captain, showing his bearings, argent, a cross gules; your safety, and all the army's, being first in the obedience of faith: and all casting of spears vain against such guarded phalanx.

“And take the helmet of Salvation.”

Elsewhere, the *hope* of salvation,² that being the defence of your intellect against base and sad thoughts, as the shield of fidelity is the defence of your heart against burning and consuming passions.

“And the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.”³

That being your weapon of war,—your power of action, whether with sword or ploughshare; according to the saying

¹ [For St. George the Husbandman, see *St. Mark's Rest*, § 214 (Vol. XXIV. p. 375).]

² [1 Thessalonians v. 8 (“and for an helmet the hope of salvation”).]

³ [Ephesians vi. 14–17.]

of St. John of the young soldiers of Christ, “I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you.”¹ The Word by which the heavens were of old; and which, being once only Breath, became in man Flesh, “quickenning it by the spirit” into the life which is, and is to come; and enabling it for all the works nobly done by the quick, and following the dead.

17. And now, finish your Advent collect, and eat your Christmas fare, and drink your Christmas wine, thankfully; and with understanding that if the supper is holy which shows your Lord’s death till He come, the dinner is also holy which shows His life; and if you would think it wrong at any time to go to your own baby’s cradle side, drunk, do not show your gladness by Christ’s cradle in that manner; but eat your meat, and carol your carol in pure gladness and singleness of heart; and so gird up your loins with truth, that, in the year to come, you may do such work as Christ can praise, whether He call you to judgment from the quick or dead; so that among your Christmas carols there may never any more be wanting the joyfulest,—

O sing unto the Lord a new song:
Sing unto the Lord, all the earth.
Say among the heathen that the Lord is King:
The world also shall be stablished that it shall not be moved.
Let the heavens rejoice,
And let the earth be glad;
Let the sea shout, and the fulness thereof.
Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein:
Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice
Before the Lord:
For He cometh, for He cometh to JUDGE THE EARTH:
HE SHALL JUDGE THE WORLD WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS,
AND THE PEOPLE WITH HIS TRUTH.²

¹ [1 John ii. 14. The other Bible references in §§ 16, 17 are 2 Peter iii. 5; John i. 14; 1 Peter iii. 18; Revelation xiv. 13; 1 Corinthians xi. 26; Ephesians vi. 14; 2 Timothy iv. 1.]

² [Psalms xcvi. 1, 10–13. Ruskin partly retranslates, slightly altering the Authorised Version.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

18. (I.) I HAVE kept the following kind and helpful letter for the close of the year:—

“January 8, 1874.

“SIR,—I have been much moved by a passage in No. 37 of *Fors Clavigera*, in which you express yourself in somewhat desponding terms as to your loneliness in ‘life and thought,’ now you have grown old.¹ You complain that many of your early friends have forgotten or disregarded you, and that you are almost left alone. I cannot certainly be called an early friend, or, in the common meaning of the word, a friend of any time. But I cannot refrain from telling you that there are ‘more than 7000’ in this very ‘Christ-defying’ England whom you have made your friends by your wise sympathy and faithful teaching. I, for my own part, owe you a debt of thankfulness not only for the pleasant hours I have spent with you in your books, but also for the clearer views of many of the ills which at present press upon us, and for the methods of cure upon which you so urgently and earnestly insist. I would especially mention *Unto this Last* as having afforded me the highest satisfaction. It has ever since I first read it been my text-book of political economy. I think it is one of the needfullest lessons for a selfish, recklessly competitive, cheapest-buying and dearest-selling age, that it should be told there are principles deeper, higher, and even more prudent than those by which it is just now governed. It is particularly refreshing to find Christ’s truths applied to modern commercial immorality in the trenchant and convincing style which characterizes your much maligned but most valuable book. It has been, let me assure you, appreciated in very unexpected quarters; and one humble person to whom I lent my copy, *being too poor to buy one for himself, actually wrote it out word for word, that he might always have it by him.*”²

(“What a shame!” thinks the enlightened Mudie-subscriber. “See what comes of his refusing to sell his books cheap.”)

Yes,—see what comes of it. The dreadful calamity, to another person, of doing once, what I did myself twice—and, in great part of the book, three times. A vain author, indeed, thinks nothing of the trouble of writing his own books. But I had infinitely rather write somebody else’s. My good poor disciple, at the most, had not half the pain his master had; learnt his book rightly, and gave me more help, by this best kind of laborious sympathy, than twenty score of flattering friends who tell me what a fine word-painter I am, and don’t take the pains to understand so much as half a sentence in a volume.)

“You have done, and are doing, a good work for England, and I pray you not to be discouraged. Continue as you have been doing, convincing us by your ‘sweet reasonableness’ of our errors and miseries, and the time will doubtless come

¹ [Letter 37, § 2 (p. 14).]

² [In a letter to his publisher about this number of *Fors*, Ruskin wrote:—

“One of the letters in the correspondence will say how a poor man copied out *Unto this Last* word for word, being too poor to buy one. It makes one think, don’t it?”]

when your work, now being done in Jeremiah-like sadness and hopelessness, will bear gracious and abundant fruit.

“Will you pardon my troubling you with this note? but, indeed, I could not be happy after reading your gloomy experience, until I had done my little best to send one poor ray of comfort into your seemingly almost weary heart.

“I remain,

“Yours very sincerely.”

19. (II.) Next to this delightful testimony to my “sweet reasonableness,” here is some discussion of evidence on the other side:—

“November 12, 1872.

“To JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D., greeting, these.

“Enclosed is a slip cut from the *Liverpool Mercury* of last Friday, November 8. I don’t send it to you because I think it matters anything what the *Mercury* thinks about any one’s qualification for either the inside or outside of any asylum; but that I may suggest to you, as a working-man reader of your letters, the desirability of your printing any letters of importance you may send to any of the London papers, over again—in, say, the space of *Fors Clavigera* that you have set apart for correspondence. It is most tantalizing to see a bit printed like the enclosed, and not know either what is before or after. I felt similar feelings some time ago over a little bit of a letter about the subscription to Warwick Castle.¹

“We cannot always see the London papers, especially us provincials; and we would like to see what goes on between you and the newspaper world.

“Trusting that you will give this suggestion some consideration, and at any rate take it as given in good faith from a disciple following afar off,

“I remain, sincerely yours.”

The enclosed slip was as follows:—

“MR. RUSKIN’S TENDER POINT.—Mr. John Ruskin has written a letter to a contemporary on madness and crime, which goes far to clear up the mystery which has surrounded some of his writings of late. The following passage amply qualifies the distinguished art critic for admission into any asylum in the country:—‘I assure you, sir, insanity is a tender point with me.’ ”

The writer then quotes to the end the last paragraph of the letter, which, in compliance with my correspondent’s wish, I am happy here to reprint in its entirety.

MADNESS AND CRIME

TO THE EDITOR OF THE “PALL MALL GAZETTE”²

SIR,—Towards the close of the excellent article on the Taylor trial³ in your issue for October 31, you say that people never will be, nor ought to be, persuaded “to treat criminals simply as vermin which they destroy, and not as men who are to be punished.” Certainly not, sir! Who ever

¹ [Ruskin wrote two letters to the *Daily Telegraph* (December 22 and 25, 1871) on the subject of an appeal for public subscriptions towards the restoration of Warwick Castle, which had been partly destroyed by fire. The letters are reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. i. pp. 223–226, and in a later volume of this edition.]

² [From the *Pall Mall Gazette*, November 4, 1872; also reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. ii. pp. 189–190.]

³ [The trial of W. J. Taylor at the Central Criminal Court (October 30, 1872) was for the murder of a woman and child, and ended in his acquittal on the ground of insanity owing to drink.]

talked or thought of regarding criminals “simply” as anything (or innocent people either, if there be any)? But regarding criminals complexly and accurately, they are partly men, partly vermin; what is human in them you must punish—what is vermicular, abolish. Anything between—if you can find it—I wish you joy of, and hope you may be able to preserve it to society. Insane persons, horses, dogs, or cats, become vermin when they become dangerous. I am sorry for darling Fido, but there is no question about what is to be done with him.

Yet, I assure you, sir, insanity is a tender point with me. One of my best friends has just gone mad;¹ and all the rest say I am mad myself. But, if ever I murder anybody—and, indeed, there are numbers of people I should like to murder—I won’t say that I ought to be hanged; for I think nobody but a bishop or a bank director can ever be rogue enough to deserve hanging;² but I particularly, and with all that is left me of what I imagine to be sound mind, request that I may be immediately shot.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. RUSKIN.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD, *November 2 (1872).*

20. (III.) I am very grateful to the friend who sends me the following note on my criticism of Dickens in last letter:³—

“It does not in the least detract from the force of *Fors* that there was a real ‘Miss Flite,’ whom I have seen, and my father well remembers; and who used to haunt the Courts in general, and sometimes to address them. She had been ruined, it was believed; and Dickens must have seen her, for her picture is like the original. But he knew nothing about her, and only constructed her after his fashion. She cannot have been any prototype of the character of Miss Flite. I never heard her real name. Poor thing! she did not look sweet or kind, but crazed and spiteful; and unless looks deceived Dickens, he just gave careless, false witness about her. Her condition seemed to strengthen your statement in its very gist,—as Law had made her look like Peter Peebles.

“My father remembers little Miss F., of whom nothing was known. She always carried papers and a bag, and received occasional charity from lawyers.

“Gridley’s real name was Ikey;—he haunted Chancery. Another, named Pitt, in the Exchequer;—broken attorneys, both.”

21. (IV.) I have long kept by me an official statement of the condition of England⁴ when I began *Fors*, and together with it an illustrative column, printed, without alteration, from the *Pall Mall Gazette* of the previous year [§ 22]. They may now fitly close my four years’ work, of which I have good hope next year to see some fruit.

“MR. GOSCHEN ON THE CONDITION OF ENGLAND.—The nation is again making money at an enormous rate, and driving every kind of decently secure investment up to unprecedented figures. Foreign Stocks, Indian Stocks, Home Railway Shares, all securities which are beyond the control of mere speculators and offer above four per cent., were never so dear; risky loans for millions, like that for Peru, are

¹ [Compare Letter 49, § 13 (p. 246). For the death of this friend, see Vol. XXIV. p. xx., together with the Introduction to *Præterita*.]

² [Compare, on the punishment of bank directors who fail, Letter 7, §§ 12, 19 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 125, 131).]

³ [Letter 47, § 9, p. 195.]

⁴ [That is, the statement in Mr. Goschen’s speech on June 17, 1870, already noticed in Letter 4, § 9 (Vol. XXVII. p. 70), and summarised in the article from the *Spectator* here given in § 21.]

taken with avidity; the cup is getting full, and in all human probability some new burst of speculation is at hand, which may take a beneficial form—for instance, we could get rid of a hundred millions in making cheap country railways with immense advantage—but will more probably turn out to be a mere method of depletion. However it goes, the country is once more getting rich, and the money is filtering downwards to the actual workers. The people, as Mr. Goschen showed by unimpugnable figures, are consuming more sugar, more tea, more beer, spirits, and tobacco, more, in fact, of every kind of popular luxury, than ever. Their savings have also increased, while the exports of cotton, of wool, of linen, of iron, of machinery, have reached a figure wholly beyond precedent. By the testimony of all manner of men—factory inspectors, poor-law inspectors, members for great cities—the Lancashire trade, the silk trade, the flax-spinning trade, the lace trade, and, above all, the iron trade, are all so flourishing, that the want is not of work to be done, but of hands to do it. Even the iron shipbuilding trade, which was at so low a point, is reviving, and the only one believed to be still under serious depression is the building trade of London, which has, it is believed, been considerably overdone. So great is the demand for hands in some parts of the country, that Mr. Goschen believes that internal emigration would do more to help the people than emigration to America, while it is certain that no relief which can be afforded by the departure of a few workpeople is equal to the relief caused by the revival of any one great trade—relief, we must add, which would be more rapid and diffused if the trades' unions, in this one respect at least false to their central idea of the brotherhood of labour, were not so jealous of the intrusion of outsiders. There is hardly a trade into which a countryman of thirty, however clever, can enter at his own discretion—one of the many social disqualifications which press upon the agricultural labourer.

“The picture thus drawn by Mr. Goschen, and truly drawn—for the President of the Poor-Law Board is a man who does not manipulate figures, but treats them with the reverence of the born statist—is a very pleasant one, especially to those who believe that wealth is the foundation of civilization; but yet what a weary load it is that, according to the same speech, this country is carrying, and must carry! There are 1,100,000 paupers on the books, and not a tenth of them will be taken off by any revival whatever, for not a tenth of them are workers. The rest are children—350,000 of them alone—widows, people past work, cripples, lunatics, incapables, human drift of one sort or another, the detritus of commerce and labour, a compost of suffering, helplessness, and disease. In addition to the burden of the State, in addition to the burden of the Debt, which we talk of as nothing, but without which England would be the least-taxed country in the world, this country has to maintain an army of incapables twice as numerous as the army of France, to feed, and clothe, and lodge and teach them,—an army which she cannot disband, and which she seems incompetent even to diminish. To talk of emigration, of enterprise, even of education, as reducing this burden, is almost waste of breath; for cripples do not emigrate, the aged do not benefit by trade, when education is universal children must still be kept alive.”—*The Spectator*, June 25, 1870.

22. (V.) The following single column of the *Pall Mall Gazette* has been occasionally referred to in past letters:¹—

“It is proposed to erect a memorial church at Oxford to the late Archbishop Longley. The cost is estimated at from £15,000 to £20,000. The subscriptions promised already amount to upwards of £2000, and in the list are the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishops of Oxford, St. Asaph, and the Chester.”

“An inquest was held in the Isle of Dogs by Mr. Humphreys, the coroner, respecting the death of a woman named Catherine Spence, aged thirty-four, and

¹ [The only specific reference to this column is not in *Fors*, but in *The Eagle's Nest*, § 63 (Vol. XXII. pp. 166–167).]

her infant. She was the wife of a labourer, who had been almost without employment for two years and a half. They had pledged all their clothes to buy food, and some time since part of the furniture had been seized by the brokers for rent. The house in which they lived was occupied by six families, who paid the landlord 5s. 9d. for rent. One of the witnesses stated that 'all the persons in the house were ill off for food, and the deceased never wanted it more than they did.' The jury on going to view the bodies found that the bed on which the woman and child had died was composed of rags, and there were no bed-clothes upon it. A small box placed upon a broken chair had served as a table. Upon it lay a tract entitled '*The Goodness of God.*' The windows were broken, and an old iron tray had been fastened up against one and a board up against another. Two days after his wife's death the poor man went mad, and he was taken to the workhouse. He was not taken to the asylum, for there was no room for him in it—it was crowded with mad people. Another juror said it was of no use to return a verdict of death from starvation. It would only cause the distress in the island to be talked about in newspapers. The jury returned a verdict that the deceased woman died from exhaustion, privation, and want of food."

"The Rev. James Nugent, the Roman Catholic chaplain of the Liverpool borough gaol, reported to the magistrates that crime is increasing among young women in Liverpool; and he despairs of amendment until effective steps are taken to check the open display of vice which may now be witnessed nightly, and even daily, in the thoroughfares of the town. Mr. Raffles, the stipendiary magistrate, confesses that he is at a loss what to do in order to deter women of the class referred to from offending against the law, as even committal to the sessions and a long term of imprisonment fail to produce beneficial effects. Father Nugent also despairs of doing much good with this class; but he thinks that if they were subjected to stricter control, and prevented from parading in our thoroughfares, many girls would be deterred from falling into evil ways."

"At the Liverpool borough gaol sessions Mr. Robertson Gladstone closely interrogated the chaplain (the Rev. Thomas Carter) respecting his visitation of the prisoners. Mr. Gladstone is of opinion that sufficient means to make the prisoners impressionable to religious teaching are not used; whilst the chaplain asserts that the system which he pursues is based upon a long experience, extending over twenty-eight years, at the gaol. Mr. Gladstone, who does not share the chaplain's belief that the prisoners are 'generally unimpressionable,' hinted that some active steps in the matter would probably be taken."

"Mr. Fowler, the stipendiary magistrate of Manchester, referring to Mr. Ernest Jones' death¹ yesterday, in the course of the proceedings at the City police-court, said: 'I wish to say one word, which I intended to have said yesterday morning, in reference to the taking from amongst us of a face which has been so familiar in this court; but I wished to have some other magistrates present in order that I might, on the part of the bench, and not only as an individual, express our regret at the unexpected removal from our midst of a man whose life has been a very remarkable one, whose name will always be associated in this country in connection with the half-century he lived in it, and who, whatever his faults—and who amongst us is free?—possessed the great virtues of undoubted integrity and honour, and of being thoroughly consistent, never flinching from that course which he believed to be right, though at times at the cost of fortune and of freedom.'"

"A Chester tradesman named Meacock, an ex-town councillor, has been arrested in that city on a charge of forging conveyances of property upon which he subsequently obtained a mortgage of £2200. The lady who owns the property

¹ [Ernest Charles Jones (1819–1869), chartist, poet, and barrister; suffered two years' imprisonment for seditious speeches (1848–1850).]

appeared before the magistrates, and declared that her signature to the conveyance was a forgery. The prisoner was remanded, and was sent to prison in default of obtaining the bail which was required."

"Mr. Hughes, a Liverpool merchant, was summoned before the local bench for having sent to the London Dock a case, containing hydrochloric acid, without a distinct label or mark denoting that the goods were dangerous. A penalty of £10 was imposed."

"A woman, named Daley, came before the Leeds magistrates, with her son, a boy six years old, whom she wished to be sent to a reformatory, as she was unable to control him. She said that one evening last week he went home, carrying a piece of rope, and said that he was going to hang himself with it. He added that he had already attempted to hang himself 'in the Crown Court, but a little lass loosed the rope for him, and he fell into a tub of water.' It turned out that the mother was living with a man by whom she had two children, and it was thought by some in court that her object was merely to relieve herself of the cost and care of the boy; but the magistrates, thinking that the boy would be better away from the contaminating influence of the street and of his home, committed him to the Certified Industrial Schools until he arrives at sixteen years of age, and ordered his mother to contribute one shilling per week towards his maintenance."—*Pall Mall Gazette*, January 29, 1869.

23. SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ST. GEORGE'S FUND

TO CLOSE OF YEAR 1874

(The Subscribers each know his or her number in this List)

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|------|----|----|
| 1. Annual, £4 0 0 (1871, '72, '73, '74) | 16 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. Annual, £20 0 0 (1871, '72, '73, '74) | 80 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. Gift | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 4. Gifts (1871), £30 0 0; (1873), £20 0 0 | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. Gift (1872) | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. Annual, £1 1 0 (1872, '73, '74) | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| 7. Gift (1872) | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| 8. Annual, £20 0 0 (1872, '73, '74) | 60 | 0 | 0 |
| 9. Gift (1872) | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| 10. Annual, £5 0 0 (1872, '73) | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| 11. Annual, £1 1 0 (1873, '74) | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| 12. Gift (1873) | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 13. Annual, £3 0 0 (1873, '74) | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| 14. Gift (1873) | 13 | 10 | 0 |
| 15. Gift (1873) | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 16. Gift (1874) | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| 17. " | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 18. " | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| 19. " | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 20. " | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 21. " | 10 | 10 | 0 |
| 22. " | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 23. " | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 24. " | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | £370 | 7 | 0 |

One or two more subscriptions have come in since this list was drawn up; these will be acknowledged in the January number,¹ and the subjoined letter from Mr. Cowper-Temple gives the state of the Fund in general terms.

BROADLANDS, ROMSEY, *December 9, 1874.*

DEAR RUSKIN,—The St. George's Fund, of which Sir Thomas Acland and I are Trustees, consists at present of £7000* Consolidated Stock, and of £923 standing to the credit of our joint account at the Union Bank of London, Chancery Lane Branch. Contributions to this fund are received by the Bank and placed to the credit of our joint account.

Yours faithfully,

W. COWPER-TEMPLE.

* I have heard that some impression has got abroad that in giving this £7000 stock to the St. George's Company,² I only parted with one year's income. It was a fairly estimated tenth of my entire property, including Brantwood. The excess of the sum now at the credit of the Trustees, over the amount subscribed, consists in the accumulated interest on this stock. With the sum thus at their disposal, the Trustees are about to purchase another £1000 of stock, and in the *Fors* of January³ will be a more complete statement of what we shall begin the year with, and of some dawning prospect of a beginning also to our operations.

¹ [See Letter 49, § 21 (p. 253).]

² [See Letter 12, § 1 (Vol. XXVII. p. 199).]

³ [Letter 49; and see Letter 50, § 17 (pp. 268–269).]

FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTERS

TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS

OF GREAT BRITAIN.

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART.

VOL. V.

GEORGE ALLEN,

SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.

1875.

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FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTER 49

FROM THE PROPHET EVEN UNTO THE PRIEST¹

1. I WONDER if Fors will let me say any small proportion, this year, of what I intend. I wish she would, for my readers have every right to be doubtful of my plan till they see it more defined; and yet to define it severely would be to falsify it, for all that is best in it depends on my adopting whatever good I can find, in men and things, that will work to my purpose; which of course means action in myriads of ways that I neither wish to define, nor attempt to anticipate. Nay, I am wrong, even in speaking of it as a plan or scheme at all. It is only a method of uniting the force of all good plans and wise schemes: it is a principle and tendency, like the law of form in a crystal; not a plan. If I live, as I said at first,² I will endeavour to show some small part of it in action; but it would be a poor design indeed, for the bettering of the world, which any man could see either quite round the outside, or quite into the inside of.

But I hope in the letters of this next year to spend less time in argument or attack; what I wish the reader to know, of principle, is already enough proved, if only he take the pains to read the preceding letters thoroughly; and I shall now, as far as Fors will let me, carry out my purpose³ of choosing and annotating passages of confirmatory

¹ [See below, § 9. "False Priests and Prophets" was a rejected title for this Letter.]

² [See Letter 5 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 95-96).]

³ [See Letter 14, § 6 (Vol. XXVII. p. 250).]

classical literature; and answering, as they occur, the questions of my earnest correspondents, as to what each of them, in their place of life, may immediately do with advantage for St. George's help.

2. If those of my readers who have been under the impression that I wanted them to join me in establishing some model institution or colony, will look to § 3 of Letter 1,¹ they will see that, so far from intending or undertaking any such thing, I meant to put my whole strength into my Oxford teaching; and, for my own part, to get rid of begging letters and live in peace.

Of course, when I have given fourteen thousand pounds away in a year,* everybody who wants some money thinks I have plenty for *them*. But my having given fourteen thousand pounds is just the reason I have *not* plenty for them; and, moreover, have no time to attend to them, (and generally, henceforward, my friends will please to note that I have spent my life in helping other people, and am quite tired of it; and if they can now help me in my work, or praise me for it, I shall be much obliged to them; but I can't help them at theirs).

But this impression of my wanting to found a colony was founded on §§ 20–21 of Letter 5, and § 10 of Letter 8.² Read them over again now, altogether.

3. If the help I plead for come, we will indeed try to make some small piece of English ground beautiful; and if sufficient help come, many such pieces of ground; and on those we will put cottage dwellings, and educate the labourers' children in a certain manner. But that is not

* Seven thousand to St. George's Company; five, for establishment of Mastership in Drawing in the Oxford schools; two, and more, in the series of drawings placed in those schools to secure their efficiency.³

¹ [See Vol. XXVII. p. 13.]

² [See Vol. XXVII. pp. 95, 96, 142. Yet it will be observed that on the next page he speaks of "my model colony." What he means is that, though giving directions for the foundation of such a colony or colonies, he declined any manner of political action which should interfere with his Oxford work: see Letter 81, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 197).]

³ [For Ruskin's gift of a "tenth" to St. George's Guild, see Letter 12, § 1 (Vol. XXVII. p. 199); for his gifts to Oxford, Vol. XXI. pp. xix. *seq.*]

founding a colony. It is only agreeing to work on a given system. Any English gentleman who chooses to forbid the use of steam machinery—be it but over a few acres,—and to make the best of them he can by human labour, or who will secure a piece of his mountain ground from dog, gun, and excursion party, and let the wild flowers and wild birds live there in peace;—any English gentleman, I say, who will so command either of these things, is doing the utmost I would ask of him;—if, seeing the result of doing so much, he felt inclined to do more, field may add itself to field, cottage rise after cottage,—here and there the sky begin to open again above us, and the rivers to run pure. In a very little while, also, the general interest in education will assuredly discover that healthy habits, and not mechanical drawing nor church catechism, are the staple of it; and then, not in my model colony only, but as best it can be managed in any unmodelled place or way—girls will be taught to cook, boys to plough, and both to behave; and that with the heart,—which is the first piece of all the body that has to be instructed.

4. A village clergyman (an excellent farmer, and very kind friend of my earliest college days) sent me last January a slip out of the *Daily Telegraph*, written across in his own hand with the words “Advantage of Education.”¹ The slip described the eloquence and dexterity in falsehood of the Parisian Communist prisoners on their trial for the murder of the hostages. But I would fain ask my old friend to tell me himself whether he thinks instruction in the art of false eloquence should indeed receive from any minister of Christ the title of “education” at all; and how far display of eloquence, instead of instruction in behaviour, has become the function, too commonly, of these ministers themselves.

5. I was asked by one of my Oxford pupils the other day why I had never said any serious word of what it

¹ [The extract is given in a note to Vol. XXIII. p. 250. It comes from the *Daily Telegraph* of January 10, and following days, 1872.]

might seem best for clergymen to do in a time of so great doubt and division.

I have not, because any man's becoming a clergyman in these days must imply one of two things—either that he has something to do and say for men which he honestly believes himself impelled to do and say by the Holy Ghost,¹—and in that case he is likely to see his way without being shown it,—or else he is one of the group of so-called Christians who, except with the outward ear, “have not so much as heard whether there *be* any Holy Ghost,”² and are practically lying, both to men and to God;—persons to whom, whether they be foolish or wicked in their ignorance, no honest way can possibly be shown.

6. The particular kinds of folly also which lead youths to become clergymen, uncalled, are especially intractable. That a lad just out of his teens, and not under the influence of any deep religious enthusiasm, should ever contemplate the possibility of his being set up in the middle of a mixed company of men and women of the world, to instruct the aged, encourage the valiant, support the weak, reprove the guilty, and set an example to all;—and not feel what a ridiculous and blasphemous business it would be, if he only pretended to do it for hire; and what a ghastly and murderous business it would be, if he did it strenuously wrong; and what a marvellous and all but incredible thing the Church and its power must be, if it were possible for him, with all the good meaning in the world, to do it rightly;—that any youth, I say, should ever have got himself into the state of recklessness, or conceit, required to become a clergyman at all, under these existing circumstances, must put him quite out of the pale of those whom one appeals to on any reasonable or moral question, in serious writing. I went into a ritualistic church, the other day, for instance, in the West End. It was built of bad Gothic, lighted with bad painted glass, and had its Litany

¹ [For a reference by a correspondent to this passage, see Letter 54 (below, p. 359).]

² [Acts xix. 2.]

intoned, and its sermon delivered—on the subject of wheat and chaff—by a young man of, as far as I could judge, very sincere religious sentiments, but very certainly the kind of person whom one might have brayed in a mortar among the very best of the wheat with a pestle, without making his foolishness depart from him.¹ And, in general, any man's becoming a clergyman in these days implies that, at best, his sentiment has overpowered his intellect; and that, whatever the feebleness of the latter, the victory of his impertinent piety has been probably owing to its alliance with his conceit, and its promise to him of the gratification of being regarded as an oracle, without the trouble of becoming wise, or the grief of being so.

7. It is not, however, by men of this stamp that the principal mischief is done to the Church of Christ. Their foolish congregations are not enough in earnest even to be misled; and the increasing London or Liverpool respectable suburb is simply provided with its baker's and butcher's shop, its alehouse, its itinerant organ-grinders for the week, and stationary organ-grinder for Sunday, himself his monkey, in obedience to the commonest condition of demand and supply, and without much more danger in their Sunday's entertainment than in their Saturday's. But the importunate and zealous ministrations of the men who have been strong enough to deceive themselves before they deceive others;—who give the grace and glow of vital sincerity to falsehood, and lie for God from the ground of their heart, produce forms of moral corruption in their congregations as much more deadly than the consequences of recognizedly vicious conduct, as the hectic of consumption is more deadly than the flush of temporary fever. And it is entirely unperceived by the members of existing churches that the words, “speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron,”² do not in the least apply to wilful and self-conscious hypocrites, but only to those who do not recognize themselves for such. Of wilful assumption

¹ [Proverbs xxvii. 22. Compare Letter 15, § 7 (Vol. XXVII. p. 264).]

² [1 Timothy iv. 2.]

of the appearance of piety, for promotion of their own interests, few, even of the basest men, are frankly capable: and to the average English gentleman, deliberate hypocrisy is impossible. And, therefore, all the fierce invectives of Christ, and of the prophets and apostles, against hypocrisy, thunder above their heads unregarded; while all the while Annas and Caiaphas are sitting in Moses' seat¹ for ever; and the anger of God is accomplished against the daughter of His people, "for the sins of her prophets, and the iniquities of her priests, that have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her. They have wandered blind in the streets; they have polluted themselves with blood, so that men could not touch their garments."*

8. Take, for example, the conduct of the heads of the existing Church respecting the two powers attributed to them in this very verse. There is certainly no Bishop now in the Church of England who would either dare in a full drawing-room to attribute to himself the gift of prophecy, in so many words; or to write at the head of any of his sermons, "On such and such a day, of such and such a month, in such and such a place, the Word of the Lord came unto me,² saying." Nevertheless, he claims to have received the Holy Ghost himself by laying on of hands; and to be able to communicate the Holy Ghost to other men in the same manner. And he knows that the office of the prophet is as simply recognized in the enumeration of the powers of the ancient Church, as that of the apostle, or evangelist, or doctor. And yet he can neither point out in the Church the true prophets, to whose number he dares not say he himself belongs, nor the false prophets, who are casting out devils in the name of Christ, without being known by Him;³—and he contentedly suffers his flock to remain under the impression that the Christ who led

* Lamentations iv. 13, 14.

¹ [Matthew xxiii. 2.]

² [See, *e.g.*, Hosea i. 2.]

³ [Matthew vii. 22, 23.]

captivity captive, and received gifts for men,¹ left the gift of prophecy out of the group, as one needed no longer.

9. But the second word, "priest," is one which he finds it convenient to assume himself, and to give to his fellow-clergymen. He knows, just as well as he knows prophecy to be a gift attributed to the Christian minister, that priest-hood is a function expressly taken away from the Christian minister.* He dares not say in the open drawing-room that he offers sacrifice for any soul there;—and he knows that he cannot give authority for calling himself a priest from any canonical book of the New Testament. So he equivocates on the sound of the word "presbyter," and apologizes to his conscience and his flock by declaring, "The priest I say,—the presbyter I mean," without even requiring so much poor respect for his quibble as would be implied by insistence that a so-called priest should at least *be* an Elder. And securing, as far as he can, the reverence of his flock, while he secretly abjures the responsibility of the office he takes the title of, again he lets the rebuke of his God fall upon a deafened ear, and reads that "from the Prophet unto the Priest, every one dealeth falsely,"² without the slightest sensation that his own character is so much as alluded to.

10. Thus, not daring to call themselves prophets, which they know they ought to be; but daring, under the shelter of equivocation, to call themselves priests, which they know they are not, and are forbidden to be; thus admittedly,

* As distinguished, that is to say, from other members of the Church. All are priests, as all are kings; but the kingly function exists apart; the priestly, not so. The subject is examined at some length, and with a clearness which I cannot mend, in my old pamphlet on the *Construction of Sheepfolds*, which I will presently reprint.³ See also Letter XIII., in *Time and Tide*.

¹ [Ephesians iv. 8.]

² [Jeremiah vi. 13. The title to this letter is from this text.]

³ [Reprinted in 1875, and again in 1879: See now Vol. XII. p. 523, and for the passage in *Time and Tide*, Vol. XVII. p. 378. See also (in a later volume of this edition) Ruskin's letter of August 13 in the series of letters upon *The Lord's Prayer and the Church*.]

without power of prophecy, and only in stammering pretence to priesthood, they yet claim the power to forgive and retain sins. Whereupon, it is to be strictly asked of them, whose sins they remit; and whose sins they retain.¹ For truly, if they have a right to claim any authority or function whatever—this is it. Prophecy, they cannot;—sacrifice, they cannot;—in their hearts there is no vision—in their hands no victim. The work of the Evangelist was done before they could be made Bishops; that of the Apostle cannot be done on a Bishop's throne: there remains to them, of all possible office of organization in the Church, only that of the pastor,—verily and intensely their own; received by them in definite charge when they received what they call the Holy Ghost;—"Be to the flock of Christ, a shepherd, not a wolf;—feed them, devour them not."²

Does any man, of all the men who have received this charge in England, know what it *is* to be a wolf?—recognize in himself the wolfish instinct, and the thirst for the blood of God's flock? For if he does not know what is the nature of a wolf, how should he know what it is to be a shepherd? If he never felt like a wolf himself, does he know the people who do? He does not expect them to lick their lips and bare their teeth at him, I suppose, as they do in a pantomime? Did he ever in his life see a wolf coming, and debate with himself whether he should fight or fly?—or is not rather his whole life one headlong hireling's flight, without so much as turning his head to see what manner of beasts they are that follow?—nay, are not his very hireling's wages paid him *for* flying instead of fighting?³

11. Dares any one of them answer me—here from my college of the Body of Christ I challenge every mitre of them: definitely, the Lord of St. Peter's borough, whom I note as a pugnacious and accurately worded person, and

¹ [John xx. 23.]

² [Prayer-book (The Form of Consecrating a Bishop).]

³ [See John x. 12.]

hear of as an outspoken one,¹ able and ready to answer for his fulfilment of the charge to Peter:² How many wolves does he know in Peterborough—how many sheep?—what battle has he done—what bites can he show the scars of?—whose sins has he remitted in Peterborough—whose retained?—has he not remitted, like his brother Bishops, all the sins of the rich, and retained all those of the poor?—does he know, in Peterborough, who are fornicators, who thieves, who liars, who murderers?—and has he ever dared to tell any one of them to his face that he was so—if the man had over a hundred a year?

“Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics, and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to Thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites.”³ Who *are* the true Israelites, my lord of Peterborough, whom you can definitely announce for such, in your diocese? Or, perhaps, the Bishop of Manchester will take up the challenge, having lately spoken wisely—in generalities—concerning Fraud.⁴ Who are the true Israelites, my lord of Manchester, on your Exchange? Do they stretch their cloth, like other people?—have they any underhand dealings with the liable-to-be-damned false Israelites

¹ [William Connor Magee (1821–1891); Bishop of Peterborough (1868–1891); Archbishop of York (1891); “one of the most brilliant controversialists of the day” (see *Dictionary of National Biography*). He was a fellow-member with Ruskin of the Metaphysical Society. In describing the meeting at which Ruskin read a paper on “Miracles” (printed in a later volume of this edition), Magee mentions that in the subsequent discussion “Ruskin declared himself delighted ‘with the exquisite accuracy and logical power of the Bishop of Peterborough’ ” (letter of February 13, 1873, in J. C. Macdonnell’s *Life and Correspondence of Magee*, vol. i. p. 284).]

² [See John xxi. 15.]

³ [Third Collect for Good Friday.]

⁴ [James Fraser (1818–1885); Bishop of Manchester (1870–1885). The particular speech, or sermon, here referred to, has not been traced; but the Bishop often spoke of “the dishonesties in trade” as “one of the curses of the day”: see, for instance, a sermon of September 7, 1879, in J. W. Diggle’s *Lancashire Life of Bishop Fraser*, p. 134. The Bishop seems to have referred to Ruskin’s present challenge in a sermon: see Letter 56, § 25 (p. 400). Ruskin repeated the challenge in a letter to the Bishop in 1877: see Letters 76, § 13, 78, § 13, and 82, § 22 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 95, 136, 243–244). To the last repetition of the challenge the Bishop replied in a letter to Ruskin, dated December 8, 1879. Ruskin published the letter, with his reply, in an article entitled “Usury: a Reply and a Rejoinder,” which appeared in the *Contemporary Review* for February 1880: see the volume of this edition containing *On the Old Road*.]

—Rothschilds and the like? or are they duly solicitous about those wanderers' souls? and how often, on the average, do your Manchester clergy preach from the delicious parable, savouriest of all Scripture to rogues, at least since the eleventh century, when I find it to have been specially headed with golden title in my best Greek MS.,¹ “of the Pharisee and Publican”²—and how often, on the average, from those objectionable First and Fifteenth Psalms?³

12. For the last character in St. Paul's enumeration, which Bishops can claim, and the first which they are bound to claim, for the perfecting of the saints, and the work of the ministry,⁴ is that of the Doctor or Teacher.

In which character, to what work of their own, frank and faithful, can they appeal in the last fifty years of especial danger to the Church from false teaching? On this matter, my challenge will be most fittingly made to my own Bishop, of the University of Oxford. He inhibited, on the second Sunday of Advent of last year, another Bishop of the English Church from preaching at Carfax.⁵ By what right? Which of the two Bishops am I, their innocent lamb, to listen to? It is true that the insulted Bishop was only a colonial one;—am I to understand, therefore, that the Church sends her heretical Bishops out as Apostles, while she keeps her orthodox ones at home? and that, accordingly, a stay-at-home Bishop may always silence a returned Apostle? And, touching the questions which are at issue, is there a single statement of the Bishop of Natal's, respecting the Bible text, which the Bishop of Oxford dares to contradict before Professor Max Müller or any other leading scholar of Europe? Does the Bishop

¹ [A tenth-century Greek Gospels, or rather Book of Lessons; annotated by Ruskin in ink. See the page reproduced in W. G. Collingwood's *Ruskin Relics*, p. 201, and in a later volume of this edition.]

² [See Luke xviii. 10–14.]

³ [For other references of Ruskin to the Fifteenth Psalm, see Letters 23, § 24; 35, § 3; 36, §§ 10–12 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 415, 649, 674); and 80, § 9 (Vol. XXIX. p. 179). See also on the First, *Rock Honeycomb*, Preface, §§ 15, 16; and on the Fifteenth, Ruskin's notes on Sidney's paraphrase.]

⁴ [Ephesians iv. 12.]

⁵ [For the reference here to Bishop Colenso by Dr. Mackarness (Bishop of Oxford, 1870–1888), see Vol. XIV. p. 285 *n.*]

of Oxford himself believe every statement in the Bible?¹ If not,—which does he disbelieve, and why? He suffers the whole collection of books to be spoken of—certainly by many clergymen in his diocese—as the Word of God.² If he disbelieves any portion of it, that portion he is bound at once to inhibit them from so calling, till inquiry has been made concerning it; but if he and the other orthodox home-Bishops,—who would very joyfully, I perceive, burn the Bishop of Natal at Paul's, and make Ludgate Hill safer for the omnibuses with the cinders of him,—if they verily believe all, or even, with a living faith, *any*, vital part of the Bible, how is it that we, the incredulous sheep, see no signs following them that believe;—that though they can communicate the Holy Spirit, they cannot excommunicate the unholy one, and apologetically leave the healing of sick to the physician, the taking up of serpents to the juggler, and the moving of mountains³ to the railway-navvy?

“It was never meant that any one should do such things literally, after St. Paul's time.”

Then what *was* meant, and what *is*, doctors mine?

13. Challenge enough, for this time, it seems to me; the rather that just as I finish writing it, I receive a challenge myself, requiring attentive answer. Fors could not have brought it me at better time. The reader will find it the first in the Notes and Correspondence of this year;⁴ and my answer may both meet the doubts of many readers who would not so frankly have expressed them; and contain some definitions of principle which are necessary for our future work.

My correspondent, referring to my complaint that no matron nor maid of England had yet joined the St. George's Company,⁵ answers, for her own part, first that her husband

¹ [For the impossibility of such belief by any “ordinarily well-educated person,” see *Time and Tide*, § 35 (1) (Vol. XVII. p. 348).]

² [Compare above, p. 72.]

³ [Mark xvi. 18; Matthew xvii. 20.]

⁴ [See below, § 17 (p. 249).]

⁵ [See Letter 45, § 19 (p. 165).]

and family prevent her from doing it; secondly, that she has done it already; thirdly, that she will do it when I do it myself. It is only to the third of these pleas that I at present reply.

She tells me, first, that I have not joined the St. George's Company because I have no home. It is too true. But that is because my father, and mother, and nurse, are dead; because the woman I hoped would have been my wife is dying;¹ and because the place where I would fain have stayed to remember all of them, was rendered physically uninhabitable to me by the violence of my neighbours;—that is to say, by their destroying the fields I needed to think in, and the light I needed to work by.² Nevertheless, I have, under these conditions, done the best thing possible to me—bought a piece of land on which I could live in peace; and on that land, wild when I bought it, have already made, not only one garden, but two,³ to match against my correspondent's; not that without help from children who, though not mine, have been cared for as if they were.

14. Secondly; my correspondent tells me that my duty is to stay at home, instead of dating from places which are a dream of delight to *her*, and which, therefore, she concludes, must be a reality of delight to me.

She will know better after reading this extract from my last year's diary (worth copying, at any rate, for other persons interested in republican Italy⁴). "Florence, 20th September, 1874.—Tour virtually ended for this year. I leave Florence to-day, thankfully, it being now a place of torment day and night for all loving, decent, or industrious people; for every face one meets is full of hatred and cruelty; and the corner of every house is foul; and no

¹ [See above, p. 220.]

² [Compare Vol. X. p. 459.]

³ [For the Brantwood gardens, see Vol. XXV. pp. xxxvii., xxxviii. The children were those of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Severn.]

⁴ [For other notes on the discomforts of Italy, made by Ruskin in 1874, see Vol. XXIII. pp. xxxviii., 413.]

thoughts can be thought in it, peacefully, in street, or cloister, or house, any more. And the last verses I read, of my morning's readings, are Esdras II., xv. 16, 17: 'For there shall be sedition among men, and invading one another; they shall not regard their kings nor princes, *and the course of their actions shall stand in their power*. A man shall desire to go into a city, and shall not be able.'"

What is said here of Florence is now equally true of every great city of France or Italy; and my correspondent will be perhaps contented with me when she knows that only last Sunday I was debating with a very dear friend whether I might now be justified in indulging my indolence and cowardice by staying at home among my plants and minerals, and forsaking the study of Italian art for ever. My friend would fain have it so; and my correspondent shall tell me her opinion, after she knows—and I will see that she has an opportunity of knowing—what work I have done in Florence, and propose to do, if I can be brave enough.¹

15. Thirdly; my correspondent doubts the sincerity of my abuse of railroads because she suspects I use them. I do so constantly, my dear lady; few men more. I use everything that comes within reach of me. If the devil were standing at my side at this moment, I should endeavour to make some use of him as a local black. The wisdom of life is in preventing all the evil we can; and using what is inevitable, to the best purpose. I use my sicknesses, for the work I despise in health; my enemies, for study of the philosophy of benediction and malediction; and railroads, for whatever I find of help in them—looking always hopefully forward to the day when their embankments will be ploughed down again, like the camps of Rome, into our English fields. But I am perfectly ready even to construct a railroad, when I think one necessary; and in the opening

¹ [The reference is to *Mornings in Florence*, published at intervals between 1875 and 1877: see Vol. XXIII. p. 285.]

chapter of *Munera Pulveris*¹ my correspondent will find many proper uses for steam-machinery specified. What is required of the members of St. George's Company is, not that they should never travel by railroads, nor that they should abjure machinery; but that they should never travel unnecessarily, or in wanton haste; and that they should never do with a machine what can be done with hands and arms, while hands and arms are idle.

16. Lastly, my correspondent feels it unjust to be required to make clothes, while she is occupied in the rearing of those who will require them.

Admitting (though the admission is one for which I do not say that I am prepared) that it is the patriotic duty of every married couple to have as large a family as possible, it is not from the happy Penelopes of such house-holds that I ask—or should think of asking—the labour of the loom. I simply require that when women belong to the St. George's Company they should do a certain portion of useful work with their hands, if otherwise their said fair hands would be idle; and if on those terms I find sufficient clothing cannot be produced, I will use factories for them,—only moved by water, not steam.

My answer, as thus given, is, it seems to me, sufficient; and I can farther add to its force by assuring my correspondent that I shall never ask any member of St. George's Company to do more, in relation to his fortune and condition, than I have already done myself. Nevertheless, it will be found by any reader who will take the trouble of reference, that in recent letters I have again and again intimated the probable necessity, before the movement could be fairly set on foot, of more energetic action and example, towards which both my thoughts and circumstances seem gradually leading me; and, in that case, I shall trustfully look to the friends who accuse me of cowardice in doing too little, for defence against the, I believe, too probable imputations impending from others, of folly in doing too much.

¹ [See *Munera Pulveris*, § 17 (Vol. XVII. p. 156).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

17. (I.) I HOPE my kind correspondent will pardon my publication of the following letter, which gives account of an exemplary life, and puts questions which many desire to have answered.

“MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I do not know if you have forgotten me, for it is a long time since I wrote to you; but you wrote so kindly to me before, that I venture to bring myself before you again, more especially as you write *to me* (among others) every month, and I want to answer something in these letters.

“I do answer your letters (somewhat combatively) every month in my mind, but all these months I have been waiting for an hour of sufficient strength and leisure, and have found it now for the first time. A family of eleven children, through a year of much illness, and the birth of another child in May, have not left me much strength for *pleasure*, such as this is.

“Now a little while ago, you asked reproachfully of Englishwomen in general, why none of them had joined St. George’s Company.¹ I can only answer for myself, and I have these reasons.

“First. Being situated as I am, and as doubtless many others are more or less, I *cannot* join it. In my actions I am subject first to my husband, and then to my family. Any one who is entirely free cannot judge how impossible it is to make inelastic and remote rules apply to all the ever-varying and incalculable changes and accidents and personalities of life. They are a disturbing element to us visionaries, which I have been *forced* to acknowledge and submit to, but which you have not. Having so many to consider and consult, it is all I can do to get through the day’s work; I am obliged to take things as I find them, and to do the best I can, in haste; and I might constantly be breaking rules, and not able to help it, and indeed I should not have time to think about it. I do not want to be hampered more than I am. I am not straitened for money; but most people with families are so more or less, and this is another element of difficulty.

“Secondly. Although I do not want to be further bound by *rules*, I believe that as regards *principles* I am a member of St. George’s Company already; and I do not like to make any further profession which would seem to imply a renunciation of the former errors of my way, and the beginning of a *new* life. I have never been conscious of any other motives or course of life than those which you advocate; and my children and all around me do not know me in any other light; and I find a gradual and unconscious conformation to them growing up round me, though I have no sort of *teaching* faculty. I cannot tell how much of them I owe to you, for some of your writings which fell in my way when I was very young made a deep impression on me, and I grew up imbued with their spirit; but certainly I cannot now profess it for the first time.

“Thirdly (and this is wherein I fear to offend you), *I will join St. George’s Company whenever you join it yourself*. Please pardon me for saying that I appear to be more a member of it than you are. My life is strictly bound and ruled, and within those lines I live. Above all things, you urge our duties to the land, the common earth of our country. It seems to me that the first duty any one

¹ [See Letter 45, § 19 (p. 165).]

owes to his country is *to live in it*. I go further, and maintain that every one is bound to have a home, and live in that. You speak of the duty of acquiring, if possible, and cultivating, the smallest piece of ground. But (forgive the question) where is your house and your garden? I know you have got *places*, but you do not stay there. Almost every month you date from some new place, a dream of delight to me; and all the time I am stopping at home, labouring to improve the place I live at, to keep the lives entrusted to me, and to bring forth other lives in the agony and peril of my own. And when I read your reproaches, and see where they date from, I feel as a soldier freezing in the trenches before Sebastopol might feel at receiving orders from a General who was dining at his club in London. If you would come and see me in May, I could show you as pretty a little garden of the spade as any you ever saw, made on the site of an old rubbish heap, where seven tiny pair of hands and feet have worked like fairies. Have you got a better one to show me? For the rest of my garden I cannot boast; because out-of-door work or pleasure is entirely forbidden me by the state of my health.

“Again, I agree with you in your dislike of railroads, but I suspect you use them, and sometimes go on them. *I never do*. I obey these laws and others, with whatever inconvenience or privation they may involve; but you do not; and that makes me revolt when you scold us.

“Again, I *cannot*, as you suggest, grow, spin, and weave the linen for myself and family. I have enough to do to get the clothes made. If you would establish factories where we could get pure woven cotton, linen, and woollen, I would gladly *buy* them there; and that would be a fair division of labour. It is not fair that the more one does, the more should be required of one.

“You see you are like a clergyman in the pulpit in your books: you can scold the congregation, and they cannot answer; behold the congregation begins to reply; and I only hope you will forgive me.¹

“Believe me,

“Yours very truly.”

18. (II.) It chanced, I see, while I print my challenge to the Bishop of my University,² that its neighbouring clergymen are busy in expressing to him their thanks and compliments. The following address is worth preserving. I take it from the *Morning Post* of December 16, and beneath it have placed an article from the *Telegraph* of the following day, describing the results of clerical and episcopal teaching of an orthodox nature in Liverpool, as distinguished from “Doctor”³ Colenso’s teaching in Africa.

“THE INHIBITION OF BISHOP COLENZO.—The clergy of the rural deanery of Witney, Oxford, numbering thirty-four, together with the rural dean (the Rev. F. M. Cunningham), have subscribed their names to the following circular, which has been forwarded to the Bishop of Oxford:—‘To the Right Rev. Father in God, John Fielder, by Divine permission Lord Bishop of Oxford.—We, the undersigned clergy of the rural deanery of Witney, in your Lordship’s diocese, beg respectfully to offer to your Lordship our cordial sympathy under the painful circumstances in which you have been placed by the invitation to the Right Rev. Dr. Colenso to

¹ [For the author’s reply, see above, §§ 13–16.]

² [See above, § 12.]

³ [“Doctor” and not “Bishop” because Colenso’s enemies chose to regard him as canonically deposed. In his “teaching in Africa,” Ruskin refers to his work among the Zulus, by whom he was styled “Sobantu” (the father of the people).]

preach in one of the churches in your diocese. Your firm and spontaneous refusal to permit Dr. Colenso to preach will be thankfully accepted by all consistent members of our Church as a protest much needed in these times against the teaching of one who has grievously offended many consciences, and has attempted as far as in him lay to injure the 'faith which was delivered to the saints.'^a That your Lordship may long be spared to defend the truth, is the prayer of your Lordship's obedient and attached clergy."

(^a I append a specimen of the conduct of the Saints to whom our English clergymen have delivered the Faith.)

19. (III.) "Something startling in the way of wickedness is needed to astonish men who, like our Judges, see and hear the periodical crop of crime gathered in at Assizes; yet in two great cities of England, on Tuesday, expressions of amazement, shame, and disgust fell from the seat of Justice. At York, Mr. Justice Denman was driven to utter a burst of just indignation at the conduct of certain people in his court, who grinned and tittered while a witness in a disgraceful case was reluctantly repeating some indelicate language. 'Good God!' exclaimed his Lordship, 'is this a Christian country? Let us at least have decency in courts of justice. One does not come to be amused by filth which one is obliged to extract in cases that defame the land.' At Liverpool a sterner declaration of judicial anger was made, with even stronger cause. Two cases of revolting barbarism were tried by Mr. Justice Mellor—one of savage violence towards a man, ending in murder; the other of outrage upon a woman, so unspeakably shameful and horrible that the difficulty is how to convey the facts without offending public decency. In the first,¹ a gang of men at Liverpool set upon a porter named Richard Morgan, who was in the company of his wife and brother, and because he did not instantly give them sixpence to buy beer they kicked him completely across the street, a distance of thirty feet, with such ferocity, in spite of all the efforts made to save him by the wife and brother, that the poor man was dead when he was taken up. And during this cruel and cowardly scene the crowd of bystanders not only did not attempt to rescue the victim, but hounded on his murderers, and actually held back the agonized wife and the brave brother from pursuing the homicidal wretches. Three of them were placed at the bar on trial for their lives, and convicted; nor would we intervene with one word in their favour, though that word might save their vile necks. This case might appear bad enough to call forth the utmost wrath of Justice; but the second, heard at the same time and place, was yet more hideous. A tramp-woman, drunk, and wet to the skin with rain, was going along a road near Burnley, in company with a navvy, who by-and-by left her helpless at a gate. Two out of a party of young colliers coming from work found her lying there, and they led her into a field. They then sent a boy named Slater to fetch the remaining eight of their band, and, having thus gathered many spectators, two of them certainly, and others of the number in all probability, outraged the hapless creature, leaving her after this infernal treatment in such plight that next day she was found lying dead in the field. The two in question—Durham, aged twenty, and Shepherd, aged sixteen—were arraigned for murder; but that charge was found difficult to make good, and the minor indictment for rape was alone pressed against them. Of the facts there was little or no doubt; and it may well be thought that in stating them we have accomplished the saddest portion of our duty to the public.

"But no! to those who have learned how to measure human nature, we think what followed will appear the more horrible portion of the trial—if more horrible could be. With a strange want of insight, the advocate for these young men called up the companions of their atrocity to swear—what does the public expect?—to

¹ [John M'Crave, alias Quinn, Michael Mullen, and Peter Campbell were all sentenced to death for the murder of Richard Morgan.]

swear that they did not think the tramp-woman was ill-used, nor that what was done was wrong. Witness after witness, present at the time, calmly deposed to his personal view of the transaction in words like those of William Bracewell, a collier, aged nineteen. Between this precious specimen of our young British working man and the Bench, the following interchange of questions and answers passed. 'You did not think there was anything wrong in it?'—'No.' 'Do you mean to tell me you did not think there was anything wrong in outraging a drunken woman?'—'She never said nothing.' 'You repeat you think there was nothing wrong—that there was no harm in a lot of fellows outraging a drunken woman: is that your view of the thing?'—'Yes.' And, in reply to further questions by Mr. Cottingham, this fellow Bracewell said he only 'thought the matter a bit of fun. None of them interfered to protect the woman.' Then the boy Slater, who was sent to bring up the laggards, was asked what he thought of his errand. Like the others, 'he hadn't seen anything very wrong in it.' At this point the Judge broke forth, in accents which may well ring through England. His Lordship indignantly exclaimed: 'I want to know how it is possible in a Christian country like this that there should be such a state of feeling, even among boys of thirteen, sixteen, and eighteen years of age. It is outrageous. If there are missionaries wanted to the heathen, there are heathens in England who require teaching a great deal more than those abroad.' (Murmurs of 'Hear, hear,' from the jury box, and applause in court.) His Lordship continued: 'Silence! It is quite shocking to hear boys of this age come up and say these things.' How, indeed, is it possible? that is the question which staggers one. Murder there will be—manslaughter, rape, burglary, theft, are all unfortunately recurring and common crimes in every community. Nothing in the supposed nature of 'Englishmen' can be expected to make our assizes maiden, and our gaol deliveries blank. But there was thought to be something in the blood of the race which would somehow serve to keep us from seeing a Liverpool crowd side with a horde of murderers against their victim, or a gang of Lancashire lads making a ring to see a woman outraged to death. A hundred cases nowadays tell us to discard that idle belief; if it ever was true, it is true no longer. The most brutal, the most cowardly, the most pitiless, the most barbarous deeds done in the world, are being perpetrated by the lower classes of the English people—once held to be by their birth, however lowly, generous, brave, merciful, and civilized. In all the pages of Dr. Livingstone's experience among the negroes of Africa, there is no single instance approaching this Liverpool story, in savagery of mind and body, in bestiality of heart and act. Nay, we wrong the lower animals by using that last word: the foulest among the beasts which perish is clean, the most ferocious gentle, matched with these Lancashire pitmen, who make sport of the shame and slaying of a woman, and blaspheme nature in their deeds, without even any plea whatever to excuse their cruelty."¹

20. The clergy may vainly exclaim against being made responsible for this state of things. They, and chiefly their Bishops, are wholly responsible for it; nay, are efficiently the causes of it, preaching a false gospel for hire.² But, putting all questions of false or true gospels aside, suppose that they only obeyed St. Paul's plain order in 1st Corinthians v. 11.³ Let them determine as distinctly what covetousness and extortion are in the rich, as what drunkenness is, in the poor. Let them refuse, themselves, and order their clergy to refuse, to go out to dine with such persons,

¹ [Leading article in the *Daily Telegraph*, December 17, 1874.]

² [For a criticism of this statement, and Ruskin's reply, see Letter 51, § 20 (below, p. 287); see also Letter 55, §§ 1–3 (pp. 363–366).]

³ ["But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."]

and still more positively to allow such persons to sup at God's table. And they would soon know what fighting wolves meant;¹ and something more of their own pastoral duty than they learned in that Consecration Service, where they proceeded to follow the example of the Apostles in Prayer, but carefully left out the Fasting.²

21. The following Subscriptions have come in since I made out the list in the December number;³ but that list is still incomplete, as I cannot be sure of some of the numbers till I have seen my Brantwood note-book:—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|--|------------|----------|----------|
| 31. "In Memoriam" | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 32. (The tenth of a tenth) | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 33. Gift | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 34. An Old Member of the Working Men's College | | | |
| . Gift | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 35. H. T. S. | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| 36. | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. Second Donation | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 15. " " | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| | <u>£55</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>0</u> |

¹ [See above, § 10.]

² [See in the Form of Consecrating a Bishop the call to prayer following the oath of obedience, which, after referring to Acts xiv. 23 ("And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord"), proceeds "Let us first fall to prayer," but omits the words "with fasting."]

³ [See Letter 48, § 23 (p. 223).]

LETTER 50

AGNES' BOOK

1. A FRIEND, in whose judgment I greatly trust, remonstrated sorrowfully with me, the other day, on the desultory character of *Fors*;¹ and pleaded with me for the writing of an arranged book instead.

But he might as well plead with a birch-tree growing out of a crag, to arrange its boughs beforehand. The winds and floods will arrange them according to their wild liking; all that the tree has to do, or can do, is to grow gaily, if it may be; sadly, if gaiety be impossible; and let the black jags and scars rend the rose-white of its trunk where *Fors* shall choose.

But I can well conceive how irritating it must be to any one chancing to take special interest in any one part of my subject—the life of Scott for instance,—to find me, or lose me, wandering away from it for a year or two; and sending roots into new ground in every direction: or (for my friend taxed me with this graver error also) needlessly re-rooting myself in the old.

2. And, all the while, some kindly expectant people are waiting for “details of my plan.”² In the presentment of which, this main difficulty still lets me; that, if I told them, or tried to help them definitely to conceive, the ultimate things I aim at, they would at once throw the book down as hopelessly Utopian; but if I tell them the immediate things I aim at, they will refuse to do those

¹ [Probably Professor Norton, in his letters to whom Ruskin is constantly on the defensive with regard to *Fors*: see (in a later volume) the letters of April 9 and August 15, 1874.]

² [See above, p. 235.]

instantly possible things, because inconsistent with the present vile general system. For instance—I take (see Letter 5) Wordsworth’s single line,

“We live by admiration, hope, and love,”¹

for my literal guide, in all education. My final object, with every child born on St. George’s estate, will be to teach it what to admire, what to hope for, and what to love: but how far do you suppose the steps necessary to such an ultimate aim are immediately consistent with what Messrs. Huxley and Co. call “Secular education”?² Or with what either the Bishop of Oxford, or Mr. Spurgeon, would call “Religious education”?

3. What to admire, or wonder at! Do you expect a child to wonder at—being taught that two and two make four—(though if only its masters had the sense to teach *that*, honestly, it would be something)—or at the number of copies of nasty novels and false news a steam-engine can print for its reading?

What to hope? Yes, my secular friends—What? That it shall be the richest shopman in the street; and be buried with black feathers enough over its coffin?³

What to love—Yes, my ecclesiastical friends, and who is its neighbour, think you? Will you meet these three demands of mine with your three Rs, or your catechism?

And how would I meet them myself? Simply by never, so far as I could help it, letting a child read what is not worth reading, or see what is not worth seeing; and by making it live a life which, whether it will or no, shall enforce honourable hope of continuing long in the land⁴—whether whether of men or God.

¹ [*Excursion*, Book IV. See Vol. XXVII. p. 90 and *n.*]

² [Huxley is often, as here by Ruskin, spoken of as the leader of the Secularist party. It should, however, be remembered that as a member of the first London School Board, he separated from the extreme “Secularists” by advocating the reading of the Bible in schools: see Leonard Huxley’s *Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley*, 1903, vol. ii. pp. 28, 32.]

³ [For Ruskin’s dislike of mourning, see Vol. XVI. p. 62.]

⁴ [See Exodus xx. 12.]

And who is to say what is worth reading, or worth seeing? sneer the Republican mob. Yes, gentlemen, you who never knew a good thing from a bad, in all your lives, may well ask that!

4. Let us try, however, in such a simple thing as a child's book. Yesterday, in the course of my walk, I went into a shepherd-farmer's cottage, to wish whoever might be in the house a happy new year. His wife was at home, of course; and his little daughter, Agnes, nine years old; both as good as gold, in their way.¹

The cottage is nearly a model of those which I shall expect the tenants of St. George's Company, and its active members, to live in;—the entire building, parlour, and kitchen (in this case one, but not necessarily so), bedrooms and all, about the size of an average dining-room, in Grosvenor Place or Park Lane. The conversation naturally turning to Christmas doings and havings,—and I, as an author, of course inquiring whether Agnes had any new books, Agnes brought me her library—consisting chiefly in a good pound's weight of the literature which cheap printing enables the pious to make Christmas presents of for a penny. A full pound, or it might be, a pound and a half, of this instruction, full of beautiful sentiments, woodcuts, and music. More woodcuts in the first two ounces of it I took up, than I ever had to study in the first twelve years of my life. Splendid woodcuts, too, in the best Kensington style, and rigidly on the principles of high, and

¹ [A note to Mrs. Arthur Severn refers to one of Ruskin's country walks, in which he called on Mrs. Stalker, the mother of Agnes: she lived at the farm on the moor above Brantwood. "Maude" is a dog often referred to in letters of the time:—

"BRANTWOOD, CONISTON. [Undated, but placeable as *Feb.* 1873.]— . . . Maude came with me for a hill walk yesterday, and we called on Mrs. Stalker at the farm you know. . . .

"Mrs. Stalker was *baking*—a great lesson for me. A large pot hung over the hearth well covered with thoroughly hot turf, held six or eight small loaves side by side at the bottom. On the flat lid of the pot were loaded two inches more of hot turf. The bread was baked in an hour, Mrs. Stalker said—and I never saw anything that looked nicer. She had baked so for twenty-two years. I shall really know something worth knowing at last, in this nice country."

For the later story of Agnes, see Letter 94, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 487–488).]

commercially remunerative, art, taught by Messrs. Redgrave, Cole, and Company.¹

Somehow, none of these seem to have interested little Agnes, or been of the least good to her. Her pound and a half of the best of the modern pious and picturesque is (being of course originally boardless) now a crumpled and variously doubled-up heap, brought down in a handful, or lapful, rather; most of the former insides of the pamphlets being now the outsides; and every from of dog's ear, puppy's ear, cat's ear, kitten's ear, rat's ear, and mouse's ear, developed by the contortions of weary fingers at the corners of their didactic and evangelically sibylline leaves. I ask if I may borrow one to take home and read. Agnes is delighted; but undergoes no such pang of care as a like request would have inflicted on my boyish mind, and needed generous stifling of;—nay, had I asked to borrow the whole heap, I am not sure whether Agnes' first tacit sensation would not have been one of deliverance.

5. Being very fond of pretty little girls (not, by any means, excluding pretty—tall ones), I choose, for my own reading, a pamphlet* which has a picture of a beautiful little girl with long hair, lying very ill in bed, with her mother putting up her forefinger at her brother, who is crying, with a large tear on the side of his nose; and a legend beneath: "Harry told his mother the whole story." The pamphlet has been doubled up by Agnes right through the middle of the beautiful little girl's face, and no less remorselessly through the very middle of the body of the "Duckling Astray," charmingly drawn by Mr. Harrison Weir² on the opposite leaf. But my little Agnes knows so much more about real ducklings than the artist does, that her severity in this case is not to be wondered at.

* *The Children's Prize*. No. XII. December, 1873. Price one penny.³

¹ [For other references to Mr. Redgrave and Sir Henry Cole, as directors of the South Kensington system, see Letter 1 (Vol. XXVII. p. 20).]

² [W. Harrison Weir (b. 1824), animal-painter and draughtsman; on the original staff of the *Illustrated London News*.]

³ [Edited by J. Erskine Clarke, M.A. The story of "Harry's Sad Christmas" is at pp. 184–187.]

I carry my Children's Prize penny's-worth home to Brantwood, full of curiosity to know "the whole story." I find that this religious work is edited by a Master of Arts—no less—and that two more woodcuts of the most finished order are given to Harry's story,—representing Harry and the pretty little girl (I suppose so, at least; but, alas, now with her back turned to me,—the cut came cheaper, so), dressed in the extreme of fashion, down to her boots,—first running with Harry, in snow, after a carriage, and then reclining against Harry's shoulder in a snowstorm.

6. I arrange my candles for small print, and proceed to read this richly illustrated story.

Harry and his sister were at school together, it appears, at Salisbury; and their father's carriage was sent, in a snowy day, to bring them home for the holidays. They are to be at home by five; and their mother has invited a children's party at seven. Harry is enjoined by his father, in the letter which conveys this information, to remain inside the carriage, and not to go on the box.

Harry is a good boy, and does as he is bid; but nothing whatever is said in the letter about not getting out of the carriage to walk up hills. And at "two-mile hill" Harry thinks it will be clever to get out and walk up it, without calling to, or stopping, John on the box. Once out himself, he gets Mary out;—the children begin snowballing each other; the carriage leaves them so far behind that they can't catch it; a snowstorm comes on, etc., etc.; they are pathetically frozen within a breath of their lives; found by a benevolent carter, just in time; warmed by a benevolent farmer, the carter's friend; restored to their alarmed father and mother; and Mary has a rheumatic fever, "and for a whole week it was not known whether she would live or die," which is the Providential punishment of Harry's sin in getting out of the carriage.

7. Admitting the perfect appositeness and justice of this Providential punishment, I am, parenthetically, desirous to

know of my Evangelical friends, first, whether from the corruption of Harry's nature they could have expected anything better than his stealthily getting out of the carriage to walk up the hill?—and, secondly, whether the merits of Christ, which are enough to save any murderer or swindler from all the disagreeable consequences of murder and swindling, in the next world, are not enough in this world, if properly relied upon, to save a wicked little boy's sister from rheumatic fever? This, I say, I only ask parenthetically, for my own information; my immediate business being to ask what effect this story is intended to produce on my shepherd's little daughter Agnes?

Intended to produce, I say; what effect it *does* produce, I can easily ascertain; but what do the writer and the learned editor expect of it? Or rather, to touch the very beginning of the inquiry, for what class of child do they intend it? "For all classes," the enlightened editor and liberal publisher doubtless reply. "Classes, indeed! In the glorious liberty of the Future, there shall be none!"

8. Well, be it so; but in the inglorious slavery of the Past, it has happened that my little Agnes's father has not kept a carriage; that Agnes herself has not often seen one, is not likely often to be in one, and has seen a great deal too much snow, and had a great deal too much walking in it, to be tempted out,—if she ever has the chance of being driven in a carriage to a children's party at seven,—to walk up a hill on the road. Such is our benighted life in Westmoreland.¹ In the future, do my pious and liberal friends suppose that all little Agneses are to drive in carriages? That is *their* Utopia. Mine, so much abused for its impossibility, is only that a good many little Agneses who at present drive in carriages, shall have none.

Nay, but perhaps, the learned editor did not intend the

¹ [Meaning generally "the land of the Western meres" (see in *Bibliotheca Pastorum, Rock Honeycomb*, Preface), for Coniston is strictly in Lancashire.]

story for children “quite in Agnes’s position.” For what sort did he intend it, then? For the class of children whose fathers keep carriages, and whose mothers dress their girls by the Paris modes, at three years old? Very good; then, in families which keep carriages and footmen, the children are supposed to think a book is a prize, which costs a penny? Be that also so, in the Republican cheap world; but might not the cheapeners print, when they are about it, prize poetry for their penny? Here is the “Christmas Carol,” set to music, accompanying this moral story of the Snow:—

“Hark, hark, the merry pealing,
 List to the Christmas chime,
 Every breath and every feeling
 Hails the good old time;
 Brothers, sisters, homeward speed,
 All is mirth and play;
 Hark, hark, the merry pealing,—
 Welcome Christmas Day.

Sing, sing, around we gather,
 Each with something new,
 Cheering mother, cheering father,
 From the Bible true;
 Bring the holly, spread the feast,
 Every heart to cheer,
 Sing, sing, a merry Christmas,
 A happy, bright New Year.”

9. Now, putting aside for the moment all questions touching the grounds of the conviction of the young people for whom these verses are intended of the truth of the Bible; or touching the propriety of their cheering their fathers and mothers by quotations from it; or touching the difficulty reconcilable merits of old times and new things; I call these verses bad, primarily, because they are not rhythmical. I consider good rhythm a moral quality. I consider the rhythm in these stanzas demoralized, and demoralizing. I quote, in opposition to them, one of the rhymes by which my own ear and mind were educated in

early youth, as being more distinctly, and literally “moral,” than that Christmas carol.

“Dame Wiggins of Lee
Was a worthy old soul,
As e’er threaded a needle,
Or washed in a bowl.
She held mice and rats
In such antipathy,
That Seven good Cats
Kept Dame Wiggins of Lee.”¹

Putting aside also, in our criticism of these verses, the very debateable question, whether Dame Wiggins kept the Seven Cats, or the Seven Cats Dame Wiggins; and giving no judgment as to the propriety of the license taken in pronunciation, by the accent on the last syllable of “antipathy,” or as to the evident plagiarism of the first couplet from the classical ballad of King Cole,² I aver these rhymes to possess the primary virtue of rhyme,—that is to say, to be rhythmical, in a pleasant and exemplary degree. And I believe, and will venture also to assert my belief, that the matter contained in them, though of an imaginative character, is better food for a child’s mind than either the subject or sentiment of the above quoted Christmas Carol.

10. The mind of little Agnes, at all events, receives from story, pictures, and carol, altogether, no very traceable impression; but, I am happy to say, certainly no harm. She lives fifteen miles from the nearest manufacturing district,—sees no vice, except perhaps sometimes in the village on Sunday afternoons;—hears, from week’s end to week’s end, the sheep bleat, and the wind whistle,—but neither human blasphemy, nor human cruelty of command. Her

¹ [For Ruskin’s reprint of *Dame Wiggins*, with additions, see Vol. II. p. 518.]

² [“The traditional Nursery Rhymes of England commence with a legendary satire on King Cole, who reigned in Britain, as the old chronicles inform us, in the third century after Christ.” The lines—“Old King Cole, Was a merry old soul, And a merry old soul was he; He called for his pipe, And he called for his bowl, And he called for his fiddlers three,” and so forth—are, however, “of doubtful antiquity”: see J. O. Halliwell’s *Nursery Rhymes of England, Collected chiefly from Oral Tradition*, 1846, pp. 1–2. For another reference to “King Cole,” see Letter 83, § 2 (Vol. XXIX. p. 259).]

shepherd father, out on the hills all day, is thankful at evening to return to his fireside, and to have his little daughter to look at, instead of a lamb. She suffers no more from schooling than serves to make her enjoy her home;—knows already the mysteries of butter-making and poultry-keeping;—curtsies to me without alarm when I pass her door, if she is outside of it;—and, on the whole, sees no enemy but winter and rough weather.¹

11. But what effect this modern Christmas carol *would* have had on her mind, if she had had the full advantage of modern education in an advanced and prosperous town,—the following well-written letter,—happily sent me by Fors at the necessary moment,—enables me at once to exhibit:—

“10th January, 1874.

“DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—Your appendix to the *Fors* this month contains a chapter on what some will assert is very exceptional—shire brutality.² After nine years’ residence in a—shire village, I am compelled to believe that the vileness which horrified Judge Mellor is everywhere ingrained where factory and colliery rule prevails.

“Could you but hear the blasphemous and filthy language our rosy village bairns use as soon as they are out of the parson’s earshot, even when leaving the Sabbath School!

“Yet we have a rural dean as incumbent, an excellent schoolmaster, and model school. The Government Inspector is highly satisfied, and there are the usual edifying tea-parties, prize-givings, and newspaper puffs, yearly.

“I know that the children are well taught six days a week, yet there is little fruit of good behaviour among them, and an indecency of speech which is amazing in rural children. On Christmas morn a party of these children, boys and girls, singing carols, encountered my young daughter going alone to the church service. The opportunity was tempting, and as if moved by one vile spirit, they screamed at her a blast of the most obscene and profane epithets that vicious malice could devise. She knew none of them; had never harmed them in her life. She came home with her kind, tender heart all aghast. ‘Why do they hate me so?’ she asked.

“Yet a short time after the same children came into the yard, and began, with the full shrill powers of their young lungs, ‘Why do I love Jesus?’—the refrain,

‘Because He died for me,’

with especial gusto. My husband, ignorant of their previous conduct, gave them a bright shilling, which evoked three more hymns of similar character. What does all this mean?

¹ [*As You Like It*, Act ii. sc. 5.]

² [Letter 49, § 19 (p. 251).]

“Our Bishop says that we have a model parish, a model school, and a model parson—yet we have children like this. Our parson knows it, and says to me that he can do nothing to prevent it.

“More than this. It is almost incredible; but my own horrified ears have borne witness of it. Young boys will threaten girls of their own age, in the vilest terms, with outrage like that at Burnley. I have heard it again and again. Had Judge Mellor had nine years’ experience of——shire life, he would not have been surprised at the utter brutality of mind exhibited.

“Yet we are not criminal compared with other districts. Bastardy and drunkenness are at present the darkest shades we can show; but there is perhaps some better influence at work from the vicinage of two great squires, which secures us pure air and wide fields.

“I am glad to read that you purpose vexing yourself less with the sins of the times during the coming summer. It is too great a burthen for a human mind to bear the world’s sins in spirit, as you do. If you mean to preserve yourself for the many thousands whose inner heart’s bitterness your voice has relieved, you must vex yourself less about this age’s madness.¹

“The sure retribution is at hand already.”*

12. “What does all this mean?” my correspondent asks, in wise anxiety.

National prosperity, my dear Madam, according to Mr. Goschen, the *Times*, and *Morning Post*;²—national prosperity carried to the point of not knowing what to do with our money.³ Enlightenment, and Freedom, and orthodox Religion, and Science of the superbest and trustworthiest character, and generally the Reign of Law,⁴ answer the Duke of Argyll and Professor Huxley. Ruin—inevitable and terrible, such as no nation has yet suffered,—answer God and the Fates.

Yes—inevitable. England has to drink a cup which cannot pass from her—at the hands of the Lord, the cup of His fury;—surely the dregs of it, the wicked of the earth shall wring them and drink them out.⁵

* Yes, I know that; but am I to be cheerfuller therefor?

¹ [For a later reference to this account of “the home-teaching in the mining districts,” see Letter 94, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. p. 487).]

² [For Mr. Goschen’s speech, see Letter 48, § 21 (p. 220); for the *Times* in this connexion, see Letter 12, § 24 (Vol. XXVII. p. 215), and compare Letter 73, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 17); for the *Morning Post*, see Letter 22, § 7 (Vol. XXVII. p. 376).]

³ [See Letter 48, § 21 (above, p. 221).]

⁴ [See above, p. 85.]

⁵ [Matthew xxvi. 39; Isaiah li. 17; Psalms lxxv. 8.]

For let none of my readers think me mad enough or wild enough to hope that any effort, or repentance, or change of conduct, could now save the country from the consequences of her follies, or the Church from the punishment of her crimes. This St. George's Company of ours is mere raft-making amidst irrevocable wreck—the best we can do, to be done bravely and cheerfully, come of it what may.

13. Let me keep, therefore, to-day wholly to definite matters, and to little ones. What the education we now give our children leads to, my correspondent's letter shows. What education they should have, instead, I may suggest perhaps in some particulars.

What should be done, for instance, in the way of gift-giving, or instruction-giving, for our little Agnes of the hill-side? Would the St. George's Company, if she were the tenant, only leave her alone,—teach her nothing?

Not so; very much otherwise than so. This is some part of what should be done for her, were she indeed under St. George's rule.

Instead of the “something new,”¹ which our learned Master of Arts edits for her in carolling, she should learn by heart words which her fathers had known, many and many a year ago. As, for instance, these two little carols of grace before meat:—

“What God gives, and what we take,
 'Tis a gift for Christ His sake;
 Be the meale of Beanes and Pease,
 God be thanked for those and these.
 Have we flesh, or have we fish,
 All are Fragments from His dish:
 He His Church save; and the King;
 And our Peace here, like a Spring,
 Make it ever flourishing.”

“Here, a little child, I stand
 Heaving up my either hand;

¹ [See above, § 8, p. 260.]

Cold as Paddocks¹ though they be,
 Here I lift them up to Thee.
 For a Benizon to fall,
 On our meat, and on us all.”²

These verses, or such as these, Agnes should be able to say, and sing; and if on any state occasion it were desired of her to say grace, should be so mannered as to say obediently, without either vanity or shame. Also, she should know other rhymes for her own contentment, such as she liked best, out of narrow store offered to her, if *she chose* to learn to read. Reading by no means being enforced upon her—still less, writing; nothing enforced on her but household help to her mother; instant obedience to her father’s or mother’s word; order and cleanliness in her own departments and person; and gentleness to all inoffensive creatures—paddocks as well as lambs and chickens.

14. Further, instead of eighteen distinct penny Children’s Prizes, containing seventy-two elaborate woodcuts of “Ducklings Astray,” and the like (which I should especially object to, in the case of Agnes, as too personal, she herself being little more at present than a duckling astray), the St. George’s Company would invest for her at once, the “ridiculously small sum of eighteenpence,” in one coloured print—coloured by hand, for the especial decoration of her own chamber. This colouring by hand is one of the occupations which young women of the upper classes, in St. George’s Company, will undertake as a business of pure duty; it was once a very wholesome means of livelihood to poorer art students. The plates of Sibthorp’s *Flora Græca*,³ for instance, cost, I am informed, on their first publication, precisely the sum in question,—eighteenpence each,—for their colouring by hand:—the enterprising publisher

¹ [Frogs: see *Hortus Inclusus*, p. 35 (ed. 3, p. 39).]

² [Herrick’s *Noble Numbers*, Nos. 93 and 95 (“Graces for Children”).]

³ [For particulars of this book, see Vol. XXV. p. 408 *n*. The first edition (of which only thirty complete copies were sold) was issued in 1806–1840, the price being £252. A second edition (forty copies) was issued in 1845–1846 at £63.]

who issued the more recent editions, reducing, in conformity with modern views on the subject of economy, the colourist's remuneration to thirty shillings per hundred. But in the St. George's Company, young ladies who have the gift of colouring will be taught to colour engravings simply as well as they can do it, without any reference whatever to pecuniary compensation; and such practice I consider to be the very best possible elementary instruction for themselves, in the art of water-colour painting.

And the print which should be provided and thus coloured for little Agnes' room should be no less than the best engraving I could get made of Simon Memmi's *St. Agnes in Paradise*;¹ of which—(according to the probable notions of many of my readers, absurd and idolatrous)—image, little Agnes should know the legend as soon as she was able to understand it; though, if the St. George's Company could manage it for her, she should be protected from too early instruction in the meaning of that legend by such threats from her English playfellows as are noticed in my correspondent's letter.²

15. Such should be some small part of her religious education. For beginning of secular education, the St. George's Company would provide for her, above and before all things, a yard or two square of St. George's ground, which should be wholly her own; together with instruments suited to her strength, for the culture, and seeds for the sowing, thereof. On which plot of ground, or near it, in a convenient place, there should be a bee-hive, out of which it should be considered a crowning achievement of Agnes' secular virtues if she could produce, in its season, a piece of snowy and well-filled comb. And (always if she chose to learn to read) books should be given her containing such information respecting bees, and other living creatures, as it

¹ [In one of the frescoes in the Spanish Chapel at Florence: see vol. XXIII. p. 452 (last lines).]

² [She should be protected, that is, from hearing language of such obscenity as Ruskin's correspondent describes (§ 11), and from thus needing too early to be clothed, like St. Agnes, with an all-resisting chastity.]

appeared to the St. George's Company desirable she should possess. But touching the character of this desirable information, what I have to say being somewhat lengthy, must be deferred to my March letter.¹

CASTLETON, PEAK OF DERBYSHIRE,
27th January.

16. Since finishing this letter, I have driven leisurely through the midland manufacturing districts,² which I have not traversed, except by rail, for the last ten years. The two most frightful things I have ever yet seen in my life are the south-eastern suburb of Bradford (six miles long),³ and the scene from Wakefield Bridge, by the chapel; yet I cannot but more and more reverence the fierce courage and industry, the gloomy endurance, and the infinite mechanical ingenuity of the great centres, as one reverences the fervid labours of a wasp's nest, though the end of all is only a noxious lump of clay.

¹ [See below, pp. 277 *seq.*]

² [For Ruskin's driving tours at this time, see Vol. XXIV. p. xxvii. For "the scene from Wakefield Bridge," see Letters 55, § 9, and 57, § 10 (pp. 380, 409). Ruskin in his copy of *Fors* marks this postscript with special emphasis.]

³ [Compare *Two Paths*, § 87 (Vol. XVI. p. 335).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

17. In my last December's letter,¹ I promised, for January, some statement of real beginning of operations by our Company; but, as usual, was hindered from fulfilling my promise at the time I intended. And the hindrance lay, as in all useful business it is pretty sure in some measure to lie, in the state of British law. An acre of ground, with some cottages on it,² has been given me for our Company; but it is not easy to find out how the Company is to lay hold of it. I suppose the conveyancing will cost us, in the end, half-a-dozen times the value of the land; and in the meantime I don't care to announce our possession of it, or say what I mean to do with it. I content myself for the present with reprinting, and very heartily, as far as my experience holds, ratifying, the subjoined portions of a letter sent me the other day out of a country paper. The writer is speaking, at the point where my quotation begins, of the difficulty of getting a good Bankruptcy Act passed:—

“The reason alleged is that almost any lawyer is ready to help any lying and false-trading person to drive his coach and four through any Act, however good in intention it may be. This is a sad state of things, and is wasteful of more things than money or good temper. It is, however, on the matter of conveyancing that we wish to say a few words. . . .

“We are accustomed to look at the matter as a very simple one. We have before us the deeds of our dwelling-house. The real point is, why can we not sell these papers to, say John Smith, for £1000, if John is satisfied that our little cottage, with all its admirable rooms so well arranged, is worth that amount? Why can't we sell him this matter in a simple and clear way? Or, for a case the least bit complicated, take our six shops in the chief street. Why can't we sell one each to Brown, Jones, Robinson, Thompson, Atkinson, or Williams, their respective and respectable tenants, in an equally simple way? The English law steps in and says that we must have a cumbrous deed prepared for each case, and the total cost to all of us, without stamps, would be about one hundred pounds, at a reasonable computation. What do we get for this large sum? Absolutely nothing but jargon on parchment, instead of plain and simple English, which all the Smiths and Browns might understand, and get for a tenth of the cost. This is all the more irritating, because sensible people are agreed that our present plan is a cumbrous farce, and, moreover, nobody laughs at it but the lawyers who get the picking. Any six honest, clear-headed, educated men could devise a system in a month which would put an end to the needless and costly worry entailed by the existing legal paraphernalia. We have never yet seen any tangible objections to the simple system, nor any salient and satisfactory reasons for retaining the present circumlocutory, wasteful, and foolish one.

“Another monstrous anomaly is that we might sell each of our before-mentioned shops in our chief street, and yet retain the original deed untouched; so that after

¹ [Letter 48, § 23 *n.* (p. 224).]

² [At Barmouth: see p. 424.]

drawing cash from each of our present tenants, we could mortgage the whole block again, and clear off with the double cash.*

“But even the present system might be made enduring, and herein lies its greatest blame, namely—that you never know what you are going to pay for the foolish and needless work you are having done. You are entirely at the mercy of the lawyer. When we consider that this so-called difficult and skilful work is always managed in the best offices by a mere clerk, and seldom, if ever, by the principal, we have a reasonable ground of complaint against the enormous and unfair charges usually made for work so done by wholesale.

“We will conclude with a practical suggestion or two. Building clubs have been a great boon to the saving element in our community. It is the wish of most people to have a house of their own, and these clubs find, for hundreds, the readiest means to that end. They have made easy the borrowing and the paying back of money, and they have been the means of simplifying mortgage deeds which, for clubs, are only £2, 5s., and if got up simpler, and printed, instead of being written, might easily and profitably be done for a guinea. Could not they confer a still greater boon on the community by combining, and compelling, by a strong voice, the lawyers to systematise and cheapen the present mode of conveyancing? This would be a great work, and might be done. Still better would it be to combine to send up suggestions to Parliament for a simpler and better plan, such as would lead to the passing of an Act for the embodiment of this great and much-needed reform.”

18. The following additional subscriptions complete the account of receipts for St. George's Fund to 15th January, 1875.

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|-------|----|----|
| 25. Gift | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 26. Gift | 1 | 13 | 4 |
| 30. Gift | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| 37. Gift | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 38. Annual (1875) | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 39. Gift (on condition of being immediately used) | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| 40. Gift | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 41. Gift | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 44. Third Donation (1874) | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| | <hr/> | | |
| | £54 | 16 | 10 |
| | <hr/> | | |

* I don't vouch for the particular statements in this letter. It seems to me incredible that any practical absurdity so great as this should exist in tenure of property.

LETTER 51

HUMBLE BEES¹

HERNE HILL, 9th Feb., 1875.

1. I HAVE been so much angered, distressed, and defeated, by many things, during these last autumn and winter months, that I can only keep steadily to my business by insisting to myself on my own extreme value and importance to the world; and quoting, in self-application, the most flattering texts I can find, such as, “Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you,”² and so on; hoping that at least a little more of my foolishness is being pounded out of me at every blow; and that the dough I knead for *Fors* may be daily of purer wheat.

I wish I could raise it with less leaven of malice; but I dislike some things and some people so much, that, having been always an impetuous, inconsiderate, and weakly communicative person, I find it impossible to hold my tongue in this time of advanced years and petulance. I am thankful, to-day, to have one most pleasant thing first to refer to;—the notable speech, namely, of Mr. Johnson, the President of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, on the immorality of cheapness;³ the first living words respecting commerce which I have ever known to be spoken in England, in my time;—on which, nevertheless, I can in no wise dilate to-day, but most thankfully treasure them

¹ [For a reference to “the bee *Fors*,” see a letter from Bolton Bridge, reprinted in a later volume of this edition from *Hortus Inclusus* (ed. 3, pp. 36–37).]

² [Luke xxii. 31.]

³ [The speech was made by Mr. Richard Johnson (President) at the fifty-fourth annual meeting of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, February 1, 1875. Mr. Johnson’s address dealt with the immorality of cheapness, the duties of merchants and manufacturers as public servants, and the nobility of trade as a profession which, when rightly and unselfishly conducted, would yield to no other “in the dignity of its nature and in the employment that it offers to the highest faculties

for study in a future letter; having already prepared for this one, during my course of self-applause taken medicinally, another passage or two of my own biography, putting some of the reasons for my carelessness about Agnes' proficiency in reading or writing,¹ more definitely before the reader.

2. Until I was more than four years old,² we lived in Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, the greater part of the year; for a few weeks in the summer breathing country air by taking lodgings in small cottages (real cottages, not villas, so-called) either about Hampstead, or at Dulwich, at "Mrs. Ridley's," the last of a row in a lane which led out into the Dulwich fields on one side, and was itself full of buttercups in spring, and blackberries in autumn. But my chief remaining impressions of those days are attached to Hunter Street. My mother's general principles of first treatment were, to guard me with steady watchfulness from all avoidable pain or danger; and, for the rest, to let me amuse myself as I liked, provided I was neither fretful nor troublesome. But the law was, that I should find my own amusement. No toys of any kind were at first allowed;—and the pity of my Croydon aunt for my monastic poverty in this respect was boundless. On one of my birthdays, thinking to overcome my mother's resolution by splendour of temptation, she bought the most radiant Punch and Judy

of man." To the correspondent who sent him a copy of the speech, Ruskin sent the following letter (printed in *Arrows of the Chance*, 1880, vol. ii. p. 105):—

"MY DEAR SIR,—Mr. Johnson's speech in the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, which you favour me by sending, appears to me the most important event that has occurred in relation to the true interests of the country during my lifetime. It begins an era of true civilization. I shall allude to it in the *Fors* of March, and make it the chief subject of the one following (the matter of this being already prepared). It goes far beyond what I had even hoped to hear admitted—how much less, enforced so gravely and weightily in the commercial world.

"Believe me, faithfully yours,

"J. RUSKIN."

Mr. Johnson's speech, however, was not again referred to in *Fors*.]

¹ [See the last Letter, p. 265.]

² [§§ 2–7 of this Letter were used by Ruskin when writing *Præterita*, where they appear, slightly revised, as §§ 13–18 of vol. i. ch. i. His autobiographical notes are resumed in Letter 52, § 1 (p. 296).]

she could find in all the Soho bazaar—as big as a real Punch and Judy, all dressed in scarlet and gold, and that would dance, tied to the leg of a chair. I must have been greatly impressed, for I remember well the look of the two figures, as my aunt herself exhibited their virtues. My mother was obliged to accept them; but afterwards quietly told me it was not right that I should have them; and I never saw them again.

3. Nor did I painfully wish, what I was never permitted for an instant to hope, or even imagine, the possession of such things as one saw in toyshops. I had a bunch of keys to play with, as long as I was capable only of pleasure in what glittered and jingled;¹ as I grew older, I had a cart, and a ball; and when I was five or six years old, two boxes of well-cut wooden bricks. With these modest, but, I still think, entirely sufficient possessions,² and being always summarily whipped if I cried, did not do as I was bid, or tumbled on the stairs, I soon attained serene and secure methods of life and motion; and could pass my days contentedly in tracing the squares and comparing the colours of my carpet;—examining the knots in the wood of the floor, or counting the bricks in the opposite houses; with rapturous intervals of excitement during the filling of the water-cart, through its leathern pipe, from the dripping iron post at the pavement edge; or the still more admirable proceedings of the turncock, when he turned and turned till a fountain sprang up in the middle of the street. But the carpet, and what patterns I could find in bed covers, dresses, or wall-papers to be examined, were my chief resources, and my attention to the particulars in these was soon so accurate, that when at three and a half I was taken to have my portrait painted by Mr. Northcote,³ I had not been ten minutes alone with him before I asked him why

¹ [For a later reference to Ruskin's amusements as those of "a poor little Cockney wretch," contrasted with the outdoor life of Scott, see Letter 67, § 9 (p. 645).]

² [Here, however, the account of Scott's childhood may be compared, Vol. XXVII. p. 612.]

³ [For this portrait, see a plate in the later volume, containing *Præterita*.]

there were holes in his carpet. The portrait in question represents a very pretty child with yellow hair, dressed in a white frock like a girl, with a broad light-blue sash and blue shoes to match; the feet of the child wholesomely large in proportion to its body; and the shoes still more wholesomely large in proportion to the feet.

4. These articles of my daily dress were all sent to the old painter for perfect realization; but they appear in the picture more remarkable than they were in my nursery, because I am represented as running in a field at the edge of a wood with the trunks of its trees striped across in the manner of Sir Joshua Reynolds; while two rounded hills, as blue as my shoes, appear in the distance, which were put in by the painter at my own request; for I had already been once, if not twice, taken to Scotland; and my Scottish nurse having always sung to me as we approached the Tweed or Esk,—

“For Scotland, my darling, lies full in my view,
With her barefooted lassies, and mountains so blue,”¹

I had already generally connected the idea of distant hills with approach to the extreme felicities of life, in my (Scottish) aunt’s garden of gooseberry bushes, sloping to the Tay.

But that, when old Mr. Northcote asked me (little thinking, I fancy, to get any answer so explicit) what I would like to have in the distance of my picture, I should have said “blue hills” instead of “gooseberry bushes,” appears to me—and I think without any morbid tendency to think overmuch of myself—a fact sufficiently curious, and not without promise, in a child of that age.

5. I think it should be related also that having, as aforesaid, been steadily whipped if I was troublesome, my formed habit of serenity was greatly pleasing to the old painter; for I sat contentedly motionless, counting the holes in his carpet, or watching him squeeze his paint out of its bladders,

¹ [The lines are quoted also in Letter 92, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 449).]
xxviii.

—a beautiful operation, indeed, it seemed to me; but I do not remember taking any interest in Mr. Northcote's applications of the pigments to the canvas; my ideas of delightful art, in that respect, involving indispensably the possession of a large pot, filled with paint of the brightest green, and of a brush which would come out of it sappy. But my quietude was so pleasing to the old man that he begged my father and mother to let me sit to him for the face of a child which he was painting in a classical subject; where I was accordingly represented as reclining on a leopard skin, and having a thorn taken out of my foot by a wild man of the woods.¹

6. In all these particulars, I think the treatment, or accidental conditions, of my childhood, entirely right, for a child of my temperament; but the mode of my introduction to literature appears to me questionable, and I am not prepared to carry it out in St. George's schools without much modification. I absolutely declined to learn to read by syllables; but would get an entire sentence by heart with great facility, and point with accuracy to every word in the page as I repeated it. As, however, when the words were once displaced, I had no more to say, my mother gave up, for the time, the endeavour to teach me to read, hoping only that I might consent, in process of years, to adopt the popular system of syllabic study. But I went on, to amuse myself, in my own way, learnt whole words at a time, as I did patterns;—and at five years old was sending for my “second volumes” to the circulating library.

7. This effort to learn the words in their collective aspect, was assisted by my real admiration of the look of printed type, which I began to copy for my pleasure, as other children draw dogs and horses. The following inscription, facsimiled from the fly-leaf of my *Seven Champions of Christendom*,² I believe (judging from the independent

¹ [For this picture also, see a plate in the *Præterita* volume.]

² [For this book, see Vol. XXIV. p. 246.]

views taken in it of the character of the letter L, and the relative elevation of G), to be an extremely early art study of this class; and as, by the will of Fors, the first lines of the note written the other day underneath my copy of it, in direction to Mr. Burgess, presented some notable points of correspondence with it, I thought it well he should engrave them together, as they stood.

8. It would be difficult to give more distinct evidence

the noble knight like a bold and daring hero
then entered the vale where the dragon
had his abode who no sooner had sight of him
his war then the great sent forth a scolding man

Bolton Abbey
Dear Mr. Burgess
24th Jan. 75
Will you kindly peruse
with moderate care, the above
piece of ancient manuscript in Fors.

Fig. 2

than is furnished by these pieces of manuscript, of the incurably desultory character which has brought on me the curse of Reuben, "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel."¹ But I reflect, hereupon, with resolute self-complacency, that water, when good, is a good thing, though it be not stable; and that it may be better sometimes to irrigate than excel.² And of the advantage, in many respects, of learning to write and read, if at all, in the above pictorial manner, I have much to say on some other occasion;³ but,

¹ [Genesis xlix. 4.]

² [Ruskin in his copy of *Fors* specially marks this passage.]

³ [See Letters 94 and 95 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 486, 507-508).]

having to-day discoursed enough about myself, will assume that Agnes, wholly at her own sweet will, has made shift to attain the skill and temper necessary for the use of any kind of good book, or bible.¹ It is, then, for the St. George's Company to see that all the bibles she has, whether for delight or instruction, shall be indeed holy bibles;² written by persons, that is to say, in whom the word of God dwelt, and who spoke or wrote according to the will of God; and, therefore, with faithful purpose of speaking the truth touching what they had to tell, or of singing, rhyming, or what not else, for the amusement whether of children or grown-up persons, in a natural, modest, and honest manner, doing their best for the love of God and men, or children, or of the natural world; and not for money (though for the time necessary to learn the arts of singing or writing, such honest minstrels and authors, manifestly possessing talent for their business, should be allowed to claim daily moderate maintenance, and for their actual toil, in performance of their arts, modest reward, and daily bread).

9. And, passing by for the present the extremely difficult and debatable question, by what kind of entertaining and simple bibles Agnes shall be first encouraged in the pursuits of literature, I wish to describe to-day more particularly the kind of book I want to be able to give her about her bees, when she is old enough to take real charge of them. For I don't in the least want a book to tell her how many species of bees there are; nor what grounds there may be for suspecting that one species is another species; not why Mr. B——is convinced that what Mr. A——considered two species are indeed one species; nor how conclusively Mr. C——has proved that what Mr. B——described as a new species is an old species.

¹ [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 17 (Vol. XVIII. p. 67), where Ruskin points out that "book" and "bible" are the same, and regrets that "The Bible" is not called "The Book."]]

² [For other references to Ruskin's schemes for a select library of classical literature, see p. 20, and the other places there noted.]]

Neither do I want a book to tell her what a bee's inside is like, nor whether it has its brains in the small of its back, or nowhere in particular, like a modern political economist; nor whether the morphological nature of the sternal portion of the thorax should induce us, strictly, to call it the prosternum, or may ultimately be found to present no serious inducement of that nature. But I want a book to tell her, for instance, how a bee buzzes; and how, and by what instrumental touch, its angry buzz differs from its pleased or simply busy buzz.* Nor have I any objection to the child's learning, for good and all, such a dreadful word as "proboscis," though I don't, myself, understand why in the case of a big animal, like an elephant, one should be allowed, in short English, to say that it takes a bun with its trunk; and yet be required to state always, with severe accuracy, that a bee gathers honey with its proboscis. Whatever we were allowed to call it, however, our bee-book must assuredly tell Agnes and me, what at present I believe neither of us know,—certainly I don't, myself,—how the bee's feeding instrument differs from its building one, and what either may be like.

10. I pause, here, to think over and put together the little I do know; and consider how it should be told

* I am not sure, after all, that I should like her to know even so much as this. For on inquiring, myself, into the matter, I find (Ormerod, quoting Dr. H. Landois) that a humble bee has a drum in its stomach, and that one half of this drum can be loosened and then drawn tight again, and that the bee breathes through the slit between the loose half and tight half, and that in this slit there is a little comb, and on this comb the humble bee plays while it breathes, as on a Jew's harp, and can't help it. But a honey bee hums with its "thoracic spiracles,"¹ not with its stomach. On the whole—I don't think I shall tell Agnes anything about all this. She may get through her own life, perhaps, just as well without ever knowing that there's any such thing as a thorax, or a spiracle.

¹ [See *British Social Wasps*, by Edward Latham Ormerod, M. D., 1868, pp. 132, 133, where he condenses from Dr. H. Landois, *Die Ton-und Stimmapparate der Insecten*. Leipzig, 1867.]

Agnes. For to my own mind, it occurs in a somewhat grotesque series of imagery, with which I would not, if possible, infect hers. The difference, for instance, in the way of proboscis, between the eminent nose of an elephant, and the not easily traceable nose of a bird: the humorous, and, it seems to me, even slightly mocking and cruel contrivance of the Forming Spirit,¹ that we shall always, unless we very carefully mind what we are about, think that a bird's beak is its nose:—the, to me, as an epicure, greatly disturbing, question, how much, when I see that a bird likes anything, it likes it at the tip of its bill, or somewhere inside. Then I wonder why elephants don't build houses with their noses, as birds build nests with their faces;—then, I wonder what elephants' and mares' nests are like, when they haven't got stables, or dens in menageries; finally, I think I had better stop thinking, and find out a fact or two, if I can, from any books in my possession, about the working tools of the bee.

11. And I will look first whether there is any available account of these matters in a book which I once all but knew by heart, Bingley's *Animal Biography*,² which, though it taught me little, made me desire to know more, and neither fatigued my mind nor polluted it, whereas most modern books on natural history only cease to be tiresome by becoming loathsome.

Yes,—I thought I had read it, and known it, once. “They” (the worker bees) “are so eager to afford mutual assistance” (bestial, as distinct from human competition, you observe), “and for this purpose so many of them crowd together, that their individual operations can scarcely be distinctly observed.” (If I rewrite this for Agnes, that last sentence shall stand thus: “that it is difficult to see

¹ [Compare Vol. XXVI. p. 70.]

² [For the full title of this book, see Vol. XXV. p. 32 *n.*; and for other references to it, Letter 52, below, pp. 304–309. The passage quoted in § 11 is in vol. iii. pp. 390–391.]

what any one is doing.”) “It has, however, been discovered that their two jaws are the only instruments they employ in modelling and polishing the wax. With a little patience we perceive cells just begun, we likewise remark the quickness with which a bee moves its teeth against a small portion of the cell; this portion the animal, by repeated strokes on each side, smooths, renders compact, and reduces to a proper thinness.”

12. Here I pause again,—ever so many questions occurring to me at once,—and of which, if Agnes is a thoughtful child, and not frightened from asking what she wants to know, by teachers who have been afraid they wouldn’t be able to answer, she may, it is probable, put one or two herself. What are a bee’s teeth like? are they white or black? do they ever ache? can it bite hard with them? has it got anything to bite? Not only do I find no satisfaction in Mr. Bingley as to these matters, but in a grand, close-printed epitome of entomology* lately published simultaneously in London, Paris, and New York, and which has made me sick with disgust by its descriptions, at every other leaf I opened, of all that is horrible in insect life, I find, out of five hundred and seventy-nine figures, not one of a bee’s teeth, the chief architectural instruments of the insect world. And I am the more provoked and plagued by this, because, my brains being, as all the rest of me, desultory and ill under control, I get into another fit of thinking what a bee’s lips can be like, and of wondering why whole meadows-full of flowers are called “cows’ lips” and none called “bees’ lips.” And finding presently, in Cassell, Petter, and Galpin, something really interesting about bees’ tongues, and that they don’t suck, but lick up honey, I go on wondering how soon we shall have a

* *The Insect World*. Cassell, Petter, and Galpin.¹

¹ [*The Insect World; being a Popular Account of the Orders of Insects*. By Louis Figuier. A new edition, revised and corrected by P. Martin Duncan, F. R. S. (1872), p. 318.]

scientific Shakespeare printed for the use of schools, with Ariel's song altered into

“Where the bee licks, there lurk I,”¹

and “the singing masons building roofs of gold,”² explained to be merely automatic arrangements of lively viscera.

13. Shaking myself at last together again, I refer to a really valuable book—Dr. Latham Ormerod's *History of Wasps*:³—of which, if I could cancel all the parts that interest the Doctor himself, and keep only those which interest Agnes and me, and the pictures of wasps at the end,—I would make it a standard book in St. George's Library, even placing it in some proper subordinate relation to the Fourth Georgic: but as it is, I open in every other page on something about “organs,” a word with which I do not care for Agnes's associating any ideas, at present, but those of a Savoyard and his monkey.

However, I find here, indeed, a diagram of a wasp's mouth; but as it only looks like what remains of a spider after being trodden on, and, as I find that this “mandibulate form of mouth” consists of

- “a, the labium, with the two labial palpi;
- b, the maxilla, whose basilar portions bear at one end the cardo,
at the other the hairy galea and the maxillary palpas;
- c, the labrum, and d, the mandible,”

Agnes and I perceive that for the present there is an end of the matter for us; and retreat to our Bingley, there to console ourselves with hearing how Mr. Wildman,⁴ whose

¹ [*The Tempest*, Act v. sc. 1 (“Where the bee sucks, there suck I”). It is only in the modern settings of this song to music that *lurk* is substituted for *suck*.]

² [*King Henry v.*, i. 2, 198. Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 24 (Vol. XIX. p. 76).]

³ [For this book, see above, p. 277 n. The passage here quoted is at p. 76.]

⁴ [*A Treatise on the Management of Bees*, by Thomas Wildman, 1768. Bingley cites no authority for the powers with which he credits Wildman, who does not tell the stories in his own book. He was a professional bee-keeper.]

remarks on the management of bees are well known, possessed a secret by which

“he could at any time cause a hive of bees to swarm upon his head, shoulders, or body, in a most surprising manner. He has been seen to drink a glass of wine, having at the same time the bees all over his head and face more than an inch deep: several fell into the glass, but they did not sting him. He could even act the part of a general with them, by marshalling them in battle array upon a large table. There he divided them into regiments, battalions, and companies, according to military discipline, waiting only for his word of command. The moment he uttered the word ‘March!’ they began to march in a regular manner, like soldiers. To these insects he also taught so much politeness, that they never attempted to sting any of the numerous company.”¹

14. Agnes, on reading this, is sure to ask me “how he taught them?” Which is just what, as a student of new methods of education, I should like to know myself; and not a word is said on the matter: and we are presently pushed on into the history of the larger animal which I call a humble, but Agnes, a bumble, bee. Not, however, clearly knowing myself either what the ways of this kind are, or why they should be called humble, when I always find them at the top of a thistle rather than the bottom, I spend half my morning in hunting through my scientific books for information on this matter, and find whole pages of discussion whether the orange-tailed bee is the same as the white-tailed bee, but nothing about why either should be called humble or bumble:²—at last I bethink me of the great despiser of natural history; and find that stout Samuel, with his good editor Mr. Todd, have given me all I want; but there is far more and better authority for “bumble” than I thought. However;—this first guess of Johnson’s own assuredly touches one popular, though it appears mistaken, reason for the Shakespearian form. “The humble bee is known to have no sting. The Scotch call a cow without horns a ‘humble

¹ [Bingley’s *Animal Biography*, 1804, vol. iii. pp. 397–398.]

² [For a letter from a correspondent on this subject, see Letter 52, § 28 (p. 314).]

cow.’ ”¹ But truly, I have never myself yet had clear faith enough in that absence of sting to catch a humble bee in my fingers;* only I suppose Bottom would have warned Cobweb against that danger, if there had been such, as well as against being overflowed with the honey bag.† Redhipped, Bottom calls them;² and yet I find nothing about their red hips anywhere in my books.

15. We have not done with the name yet, however. It is from the Teutonic “hommolen,” *bombum edere*³ (in good time, some years hence, Agnes shall know what Teutons are,—what bombs are,—shall read my great passage in *Unto this Last* about bombshells and peaches;⁴ and shall know how distinct the Latin root of Edition and Editor is from that of Edification).

Next,—Chaucer, however, uses “humbling” in the sense of humming or muttering: “like to the humbling after the clap of a thundering.”⁵ So that one might classically say—a busy bee hums and a lazy bee humbles; only we can’t quite rest even in this; for under Bumble-bee in Johnson, I find a quantity of other quotations and branched

*Alas, that incredulity, the least amiable of the virtues, should often be the most serviceable! Here is a pleasant little passage to fall in with, after Dr. Johnson’s “it is well known”! I find it in Ormerod, discussing the relative tenability of insects between the fingers for the study of their voices. “Wasps are obviously ill fitted for this purpose, and humble bees are no better; they are so strong and so slippery that they need all our attention to prevent their putting their long stings through our gloves while we are examining them.”⁶

† Foolish of me; a cobweb may be overflowed, but cannot be stung.

¹ [A *Dictionary of the English Language*, by Samuel Johnson, edited by Rev. H. J. Todd, 3 vols., 1827, vol. ii., s. “Humble-bee.”]

² [A *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Act iv. sc. 1: “Monsieur Cobweb, good monsieur, get you your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped humble-bee on the top of a thistle; and, good monsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, monsieur; and, good monsieur, have a care the honey-bag break not: I would be loath to have you overflowed with a honey-bag, signior.”]

³ [So Todd’s edition of Johnson, 1827, as cited above: “hommolen,” to hum, to give forth a buzzing.]

⁴ [*Unto this Last*, § 76 (Vol. XVII. p. 103).]

⁵ [*House of Fame*, ii. 531.]

⁶ [*British Social Wasps*, p. 138.]

words, going off into silk and bombazine;¹—of which I shall only ask Agnes to remember—

“The Bittern, with his bump,
The crane, with his trump;”²

and Chaucer’s single line,

“And as a bytorne bumblith in the mire.”³

16. This, however, she should write out carefully, letter by letter, as soon as she had learned to write; and know at least that the image was used of a wife telling her husband’s faults—and, in good time, the whole story of Midas. Meanwhile, we remain satisfied to teach her to call her large brown friends, humble bees, because Shakespeare does, which is reason enough: and then the next thing I want to know, and tell her, is, why they are so fond of thistles. Before she can know this, I must be able to draw a thistle-blossom rightly for her;⁴ and as my botany has stood fast for some years at the point where I broke down in trying to draw the separate tubes of thistle-blossom, I can’t say any more on that point to-day: but, going on with my Bingley, I find four more species of bees named, which I should like to tell Agnes all I could about: namely, the Mason Bee; the Wood-piercing Bee; the one which Bingley calls the Garden Bee, but which, as most bees are to be found in gardens, I shall myself call the Wool-gathering Bee; and the Leaf-cutting Bee.⁵

17. (1.) The mason bee, it appears, builds her nest of sand, which she chooses carefully grain by grain; then sticks, with bee-glue, as many grains together as she can carry (like the blocks of brick we see our builders prepare for circular drains)—and builds her nest like a swallow’s,

¹ [See Todd’s Johnson, s. “Bumbast”: “falsely written for *bombast*; *bombast* and *bombasine*, being mentioned, with great probability, by Junius, as coming from *boom*, a tree, and *sein*, silk.”]

² [Quoted in Todd’s Johnson, s. “Bump,” from Skelton’s *Poems*, p. 227.]

³ [*Wife of Bath’s Tale*, 116, in which the story of Midas is referred to.]

⁴ [See now in *Proserpina* Plate XXVII. (Vol. XXV.)]

⁵ [See, for these names and for the quotations in §§ 17, 18, Bingley’s *Animal Biography*, vol. iii. pp. 382 *seq.*, 386 *seq.*, and 377 *seq.*]

in any angle on the south side of a wall; only with a number of cells inside, like—a monastery, shall we say?—each cell being about the size of a thimble. But these cells are not, like hive bees', regularly placed, but anyhow—the holes between filled up with solid block building;—and this disorder in the architecture of mason bees seems to be connected with moral disorder in their life; for, instead of being “so eager to afford mutual assistance”¹ that one can't see what each is doing, these mason bees, if they can, steal each other's nests, just like human beings, and fight, positively, like Christians. “Sometimes the two bees fly with such rapidity and force against each other that both fall to the ground;” and the way their cells are built—back of one to side of the other, and so on, is just like what a friend was telling me only the day before yesterday of the new cottages built by a speculative builder, who failed just afterwards, on some lots of land which a Lord of the Manor, near my friend, had just stolen from the public common and sold.²

18. (2.) The wood-piercing bee cuts out her nest in decayed wood; the nest being a hollow pipe like a chimney, or a group of such pipes, each divided by regular floors, into cells for the children; one egg is put in each cell, and the cell filled with a paste made of the farina of flowers mixed with honey, for the young bee to eat when it is hatched. Now this carpentering work, I find, is done wholly by the wood-piercing bee's strong jaws; but here again is no picture of her jaws, or the teeth in them; though the little heaps of sawdust outside where she is working “are of grains nearly as large as those produced by a handsaw”; and she has to make her floors of these grains, by gluing them in successive rings from the outside of her cell to the centre. Yes; that's all very well; but then I want to know if she cuts the bits of any particular shape, as, suppose, in flattish pieces like tiles, and if then she glues these sideways or edgeways in their successive rings.

¹ [See above, p. 278.]

² [Compare Letter 52, § 13 (p. 302).]

But here is the prettiest thing of all in her work. It takes, of course, a certain time to collect the farina with which each cell is filled, and to build the floor between it and the nest; so that the baby in the room at the bottom of the pipe will be born a day or two before the baby next above, and be ready to come out first; and if it made its way upwards, would disturb the next baby too soon. So the mother puts them all upside down, with their feet—their tails, I should say—uppermost; and then when she has finished her whole nest, to the last cell at the top, she goes and cuts a way at the bottom of it, for the oldest of the family to make her way out, as she naturally will, head foremost, and so cause the others no discomfort by right of primogeniture.

19. (3.) The wool-gathering bee is described by White of Selborne, as “frequenting the Garden Campion, for the sake of its Tomentum.”¹ I lose half-an-hour in trying to find out the Garden Campion among the thirty-two volumes of old Sowerby:² I find nothing but the sort of white catchfly things that grow out of hollow globes (which Mary of the Giessbach, by the way, spoken of in a former letter,³ first taught me to make pops with). I vainly try to find out what “Campion” means. Johnson fails me this time.⁴ “Campion, the name of a plant.” I conjecture it must be simple for champion, “keeper of the field,”—and let that pass; but lose myself again presently in the derivation of Tomentum,⁵ and its relation to Tome, in the sense of a volume. Getting back out of all that, rather tired, I find at last in Bingley⁶ that the Garden

¹ [White’s *Selborne* (“Observations on Insects and Vermes”).]

² [*i.e.*, the first edition of Sowerby’s *English Botany* (1790–1814): see Vol. XXV. p. 421 *n.*]

³ [Letter 44, § 7, p. 131.]

⁴ [In Murray’s *New English Dictionary*, the meaning of the name is left in doubt, two alternative explanations being suggested—(1) derived from *campus*, field; (2) identification with campion (the original form of champion), as Dioscorides and Theophrastus both speak of the flower as being fit, or used, for garlands.]

⁵ [*Tomentum*, in classical Latin, means the stuffing for cushions; in botanical use, the dense, close, white hairs, or down on plants. “Tome” (from *τεμνειν*, to cut) is a section of anything, hence a volume.]

⁶ [*Animal Biography*, vol. iii. p. 381 *n.*]

Campion is *Agrostemma Coronaria* of Linnæus; and I look in my Linnæus, and find it described as *Tomentosum*; and then I try my two Sowerbys, ancient and modern, where I find nothing under *Agrostemma* but the corn-cockle, and so have to give in at last; but I can tell Agnes, at least, that there's some sort of pink which has a downy stem, and there's some sort of bee which strips off the down from the stalk of this pink, "running from the top to the bottom of a branch, and shaving it bare with all the dexterity of a hoop-shaver."¹

Hoop-shaver? but I never saw so much as a hoop-shaver! Must see one on the first chance, only I suppose they make hoops by steam now.

"When it has got a bundle almost as large as itself it flies away, holding it secure between its chin and forelegs."

Chin?—what is a bee's chin like?

Then comes a story about a knight's finding the key wouldn't turn in the lock of his garden gate; and there being a wool-gathering bee's nest inside: and it seems she makes her cells or thimbles of this wool, but does not fill them with honey inside; so that I am in doubt whether the early life of the young bees who live in wood, and have plenty to eat, be not more enviable than the lot of those who live in wool and have no larders. I can't find any more about the wool-gatherer; and the fourth kind of bee, most interesting of all, must wait till next *Fors'* time, for there's a great deal to be learnt about her.²

"And what of the St. George's Company meanwhile?"

Well, if I cannot show it some better method of teaching natural history than has been fallen upon by our recent Doctors, we need not begin our work at all. We cannot live in the country without hunting animals, or shooting them,³ unless we learn how to look at them.

¹ [Quoted, not quite exactly (as also the following passage), by Bingley (*Animal Biography*, vol. iii. p. 381) from Gilbert White: see his "Observations on Insects" (p. 342 in the 1887 edition of *The Natural History of Selborne*).]

² [See Letter 52, § 15 (p. 304).]

³ [As Ruskin had above enjoined: see p. 156, and compare above, p. 24 n.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

“THE PARSONAGE, WERRINGTON, PETERBOROUGH,
Feb. 12th, 1875.”

20. “MY DEAR SIR,—In your *Fors* published last month you have charged the Pastors, and especially the Chief Pastors of our Church, with ‘preaching a false gospel for hire,’¹ and thus becoming responsible for the hideous immorality which prevails.

“It is very painful to be told this by *you*, of whom some of us have learned so much.

“I have been reading your words to my conscience, but—is it my unconscious hypocrisy, my self-conceit, or my sentiment overpowering intellect² which hinders me from hearing the word ‘Guilty’?”

“The gospel I endeavour with all my might to preach and embody is this—Believe on, be persuaded by, the Lord Jesus Christ; let His life rule your lives, and you shall be ‘safe and sound’ now and everlastingly.

“Is this ‘a false gospel preached for hire’? If not, what other gospel do you refer to?”

“I am very faithfully yours,

“EDWARD Z. LYTTTEL.

“JOHN RUSKIN, ESQ.”

The gospel which my correspondent preaches (or, at the least, desires to preach)—namely, “Let His life rule your lives,” is eternally true and salutary. The “other gospel which I refer to” is the far more widely preached one, “Let His life be in the stead of your lives,” which is eternally false and damnatory.

The rest of my correspondent’s letter needs, I think, no other reply than the expression of my regret that a man of his amiable character should be entangled in a profession, respecting which the subtle questions of conscience which he proposes can be answered by none but himself; nor by himself with security.³

21. I do not know if, in modern schools of literature, the name of Henry Fielding is ever mentioned;⁴ but it was of repute in my early days, and I think it right, during the discussion of the subjects to which *Fors* is now approaching, to refer my readers to a work of his which gives one

¹ [See Letter 49, § 20 (p. 252).]

² [See above, pp. 239–240.]

³ [For further letters from Mr. Lyttel and comments thereon by the author, see Letters 52, § 23; 53, § 18; and 56, §§ 22–24 (pp. 311, 335, 398–400).]

⁴ [For other references to Fielding, see Letters 34, § 9 (Vol. XXVII. p. 631), and 82, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 220).]

of the most beautiful types I know of the character of English clergymen,¹ (the "Vicar of Wakefield" not excepted). His hero is thus introduced:

"He was a perfect master of the Greek and Latin languages, to which he added a great share of knowledge in the Oriental tongues, and could read and translate French, Italian, and Spanish. He had applied many years to the most severe study, and had treasured up a fund of learning rarely to be met with in a university.* He was besides a man of good sense, good parts, and good-nature;—his virtue, and his other qualifications, as they rendered him equal to his office, so they made him an agreeable and valuable companion, and had so much endeared and well recommended him to a Bishop, that, at the age of fifty, he was provided with a handsome income of twenty-three pounds a year, which, however, he could not make any great figure with; because he lived in a dear country, and was a little encumbered with a wife and six children."

Of course, in our present estimate of the good Bishop's benevolence, we must allow for the greater value of money in those times:—nevertheless, it was even then to be obtained in considerable sums, as it is now, by persons who knew the right channels and proper methods of its accumulation, as our author immediately afterwards shows us by the following account of part of the economy of an English gentleman's estate:—

"Joseph had not quite finished his letter when he was summoned downstairs by Mr. Peter Pounce to receive his wages; for, besides that out of eight pounds a year, he allowed his father and mother four, he had been obliged, in order to furnish himself with musical instruments,"

(Mr. Fielding countenances my own romantic views respecting the propriety of the study of music even by the lower classes, and entirely approves of these apparently extravagant purchases),

"to apply to the generosity of the aforesaid Peter, who on urgent occasions used to advance the servants their wages, not before they were due, but before they were payable,—that is, perhaps half a year after they were due; and this at the moderate premium of fifty per cent., or a little more; by which charitable methods, together with lending money to other people, and even to his own master and mistress, the honest man had, from nothing, in a few years amassed a small sum of twenty thousand pounds or thereabouts."²

22. Of the character of the modern English country clergyman, from my own personal knowledge,³ I could give some examples quite deserving place with the Fielding and Goldsmith type;—but these have influence only in their own villages, and are daily diminishing in number; while another type, entirely modern, is taking their place, of which some curious illustration has been furnished me by the Third Fors as I was looking over the Christmas books of last year to see if I could find a

* His debate with Barnabas, on the occasion of the latter's visit to the wounded Joseph,⁴ throws some clear light on the questions opened in Mr. Lyttel's letter.

¹ [Mr. Abraham Adams: see *Joseph Andrews*, ch. iii.]

² [*Joseph Andrews*, ch. x.]

³ [Compare Letter 10, § 12 (Vol. XXVII. p. 173).]

⁴ [*Joseph Andrews*, ch. xvii.]

prize or two for Agnes and some other of my younger cottage friends. Among them, I get two books on natural history, by a country clergyman,¹ who takes his children out on beach and moorland expeditions, and puts a charming portrait of himself, in his best coat, and most elegant attitude of instruction, for the frontispiece. His little daughter has been taught to express herself in such terms as the following:—

(Of a jelly-fish.) “Let me look. If you hold it up to the light, you see it is nearly transparent, and the surface is marked with numerous angular spaces.”

(Of a sand-worm.) “Oh—in this respect the little *Pectinaria* resembles the fresh-water *Melicerta* we find abundantly on the weeds in the canal at home.”

(Of a sea-mouse.) “Oh, papa, I do think here is a sea-mouse lying on the shore. Bah! I don’t much like to touch it.”

The childish simplicity and ladylike grace of these expressions need no comment; but the clergyman’s education of his children in *gentleness* is the point peculiarly striking to me in the books, collated with my own experience in the case of the boy and the squirrel.² The following two extracts are sufficiently illustrative:—

“ ‘Well, papa,’ said Jack, ‘I am tired of sitting here; let us now go and hunt for peewits’ eggs.’ ‘All right, Jack, and if you find any you shall each have one for your breakfast in the morning. When hard-boiled and cold, a peewit’s egg is a very delicious thing, though I think the peewits are such valuable birds, and do so much good, that I should not like to take many of their eggs. We had better separate from each other, so as to have a better chance of finding a nest.’ Soon we hear a shout from Willy, whose sharp eyes had discovered a nest with four eggs in it; so off we all scamper to him. See how the old bird screams and flaps, and how near she comes to us; she knows we have found her eggs, and wishes to lure us away from the spot; so she pretends she has been wounded, and tries to make us follow after her. ‘Now, Jack, run and catch her. Hah! hah! There they go. I will back the peewit against the boy. So you have given up the chase, have you? Well, rest again, and take breath.’ ”

“ ‘Well, Mr. Parry Evans, how many salmon have you counted in the pool?’ ‘There are seven or eight good fish in, sir, this time; and one or two will be ten or eleven pounds each.’ Look at the dog ‘Jack’; he is evidently getting a little impatient, as he sees in the retiring water of the pool every now and then a salmon darting along. And now Mr. Evans takes the silver collar off, and sets ‘Jack’ free; and in a second he is in the middle of the pool. Now for the fun! Willy and Jack* tuck up their trousers, take off their shoes and stockings, and with nets in their hands enter the water. Bah! it is rather cold at first, but the excitement soon warms them. There goes a salmon, full tilt, and ‘Jack’ after him. What a splashing in the water, to be sure! There is another dog learning the trade, and ‘Jack’ is his tutor in the art; he is a brown retriever, and dashes

* Some ambiguity is caused in this passage by the chance of both dog and boy having the same name, as well as the same instincts.

¹ [The two books—by the Rev. W. Houghton—are *Seaside Walks of a Naturalist with his Children* (1870), and *Country Walks of a Naturalist with his Children* (1869). Ruskin here quotes from pp. 10, 20, 11 of the former; then from p. 5 of the latter; and lastly from pp. 44–46 of the former. Ruskin, in his copy, compares this passage of *Fors* with one in *Deucalion*: see Vol. XXVI. pp. 264 n.]

² [See Letter 48, § 13 (p. 213).]
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about the water after the salmon as if he enjoyed the fun immensely, but he has not yet learned how to catch a slippery fish. There! there! see! see! good dog; now you have him! No! off again! well done, salmon! Now, dog! have at him!

"How immensely rapid is the motion of a frightened salmon! 'Quick as an arrow' is hardly a figure of speech. Bravo, 'Jack,' bravo! Do you see? He has caught the salmon firmly by the head. Good dog! Mr. Parry Evans is immediately on the spot, and takes the fish from old 'Jack,' whom he kindly pats on the back, holds the salmon aloft for us all to see, and consigns him to the basket which his man is guarding on the shore. See, see, again! off they go, dogs and men, and soon another salmon is captured; and there is lots of fun, meanwhile, in catching the mackerel and garfish. Well, the sport of catching the various fish in the pool—there were nine salmon, averaging about five pounds each—lasted about half-an-hour. 'Jack' behaved admirably; it was wonderful to see his skill in the pursuit; he generally caught hold of the salmon by the head, on which he gave one strong bite, and the fish was rendered helpless almost instantaneously. Sometimes he would catch hold of the back fin. When the sport was finished, we went to survey the spoils; and a nice 'kettle of fish' there was. I bought one salmon and the gurnard; the rest were soon disposed of by Mr. Evans to his numerous visitors, all of whom were much pleased with the sport. But wait a little; some of the fish lie on the sand. I will look for parasites. Here, on this salmon, is a curious parasite, with a body an inch long, and with two long tail-like projections three times the length of the creature itself. It is a crustacean, and related to the *Argulus foliaceus*."

23. The reverend and learned author will perhaps be surprised to hear that the principal effect of these lively passages on me has been slightly to diminish my appetite for salmon, no less than for seaside recreations. I think I would rather attend my pious instructor, in discourse on the natural history of the land. I get his *Country Walks of a Naturalist*, therefore, in which I find a graceful preface, thanking Mr. Gould for permission to copy his *Birds of England*; and two very gummy and shiny copies (so-called) adorning the volume.

Now there was boundless choice for the pleasing of children in Gould's marvellous plates. To begin with, the common sparrow's nest, in the ivy, with the hen sitting:¹—

"The sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by,
My sister Emmeline and I
Together visited.
She looked at it as if she feared it,—
Still wishing, dreading to be near it,
Such heart was in her."²

But the reverend naturalist will none of this. Sparrows indeed! are not five sold for two farthings?³ Shall any note be taken of them in our modern enlightened science? No; nor yet of the dainty little Bramble Finch, couched in her knotty hollow of birch trunk; though England, and mainland Europe, and Asia Minor, Persia, China, and Japan, all know the

¹ [*Birds of Great Britain*, vol. iii., No. 32. The Bramble Finch is in vol. iii., No. 35; the Stonechat in vol. ii., No. 47; the Fire-crested Wren in vol. ii., No. 70; the Bottle Tit in vol. ii., No. 28; and the Butcher Bird in vol. ii., No. 15.]

² [Wordsworth, "The Sparrow's Nest."]

³ [Luke xii. 6.]

little Brambling;—and though in the desolate region of the Dovrefjeld,* too high for the Chaffinch, she decorates the outer walls of her nest with flat pieces of lichen and other materials,—though she is attractive in her winter dress; and in her summer costume, “no pencil can do her justice,” clerical taste and propriety will none of her;—no, nor even of the dear little fellow who looks so much like the properest of clergymen himself, in the sprucest of white ties—the Stone-Chat,—preaching, or chattering, or chatting, from the highest twig of his furze-bush;—no, nor of the Fire-crested Wren, poised on long spray of larch with purple buds; nor even, though she at least might, one would have thought, have provided some “fun” for the ecclesiastical family, the long-tailed Tit, or Bottle-tit, with her own impatient family of six Bottle-tits, every one with a black eye, as if to illustrate the sympathy of their nature with bottle-tits of the human species, and every one with its mouth open; and the nest, of their mother’s exquisite building, with the pale sides of the lichens always turned to the light, and 2000 feathers used in its lining, and these, nothing to the amount of “invisible cobwebs” taken to attach the decorative pieces of lichen to the outside. All this is contemptible to my religious author; but he hunts Mr. Gould’s whole book through, to find the horriest creature in it—the Butcher-bird! transfixing mice on the spines of the blackthorn, and tearing their flesh from them as they hang, “invariably breaking the skull,” with farther parental direction of the youthful mind.¹ “Do you see that great tit on a branch of this poplar? He is actually at work doing a bit of butchering on a small warbler. See how he is beating the poor little fellow about the head; he wants to get at his brains.” This—for one of his two plates, besides the frontispiece, of the back of his own head and its hat; with his two children ‘wanting to get at’—something in his hand—and his only remaining plate is of the heron, merely because it is big; for his miserable copyist has taken care to change every curve of the bird’s neck and body, so as to destroy every gracious character it has in Mr. Gould’s plate, to an extent so wonderful that I mean to impale the two together—on the stem of a blackthorn—in my Oxford schools.

I have much to say, eventually, about this extraordinary instinct for the horrible, developing itself at present in the English mind.² The deep root of it is cruelty, indulged habitually by the upper classes in their sports, till it has got into the blood of the whole nation; then, the destruction of beautiful things, taking place ever since the sixteenth century, and of late ending in utter blackness of catastrophe, and ruin of all grace and glory in the land; so that sensation *must* be got out of death, or darkness, or frightfulness; else it cannot be had at all—while it is daily more and more demanded by the impatient cretinism of national dotage.

* I don’t put inverted commas to all Mr. Gould’s words, having necessarily to mix up mine with them in a patchwork manner; but I don’t know anything worth telling, whatever, about—so much as a sparrow,—but what he tells me.

¹ [The plate is lettered “Great Grey Shrike, or Butcher Bird, with its victims—Shrews and Blue Titmouse.” It is at p. 106 of the *Country Walks*, where the passage quoted by Ruskin will also be found.]

² [The subject was not much discussed in *Fors Clavigera*; but is incidentally mentioned in Letter 83 (Vol. XXIX. p. 270) and see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*.]

24. And the culmination of the black business is, that the visible misery drags and beguiles, to its help, all the enthusiastic simplicity of the religious young, and the honest strength of the really noble type of English clergymen; and swallows them as Charybdis would lifeboats. Courageous and impulsive men, with just sense enough to make them soundly practical, and therefore complacent in immediate business; but not enough to enable them to see what the whole business comes to, when done, are sure to throw themselves desperately into the dirty work, and die like lively moths in candle-grease.¹ Here is one of them at this instant—"dangerously ill of scarlet fever,"—alas! his whole generous life having been but one fit of scarlet fever;—and all aglow in vain.

The London correspondent of the *Brighton Daily News* writes:—

"On Sunday morning Mr. Moncure Conway,² preaching his usual sermon in his chapel in Finsbury, made a strong attack upon the National Church, but subsequently modified it so far as to admit that it was possible for some clergymen of the Church to be of use in their day and generation; and he referred especially to the rector of a neighbouring parish, whom he did not name, but who was evidently Mr. Septimus Hansard, rector of Bethnal Green, who is now lying dangerously ill of scarlet fever. This is the third perilous illness he has had since he has been in this parish; each time it was caught while visiting the sick poor. On one occasion he fell down suddenly ill in his pulpit. It was found that he was suffering from small-pox, and he at once said that he would go to an hospital. A cab was brought to take him there, but he refused to enter it, lest he should be the means of infecting other persons; and, a hearse happening to pass, he declared that he would go in that, and in it he went to the hospital—a rare instance this of pluck and self-devotion. His next illness was typhus fever; and now, as I have said, he is suffering from a disease more terrible still. Five hundred a year (and two curates to pay out of it) is scarcely excessive payment for such a life as that."

For such a life—perhaps not. But such a death, or even perpetual risk of it, appears to me, is dear at the money.

"But have I counted the value of the poor souls he has saved in Bethnal?"

No—but I am very sure that while he was saving one poor soul in Bethnal, he was leaving ten rich souls to be damned, at Tyburn,—each of which would damn a thousand or two more by their example—or neglect.

25. The above paragraph was sent me by a friend, of whose accompanying letter I venture to print a part together with it.

"I send you a cutting from a recent *Times*, to show you there are some faithful men left. I have heard of this Mr. Hansard before, and how well he works. I want to tell you, too, that I am afraid the coarseness and shamelessness you write about, in *Fors*,³ is not wholly caused by the neighbourhood of large manufacturing towns, for in the lonely villages I used to know long ago, it was exactly the same. I don't mean that brutal crimes, such as you speak of, were heard of or even possible; but the conversation of men and women, working in the fields together, was frequently such that no young girl working with them could keep modesty. Nor if a girl had what they termed a 'misfortune,' was she one bit worse off for it.

¹ [For this expression, see below, p. 359.]

² [Moncure D. Conway, minister of the South Place Chapel (Theist), Finsbury, 1864–1884; author of *The Earthward Pilgrimage*, and many other works.]

³ [See Letter 49, § 19 (p. 251).]

She was just as certain to be married as before. Reform in all these things—*i.e.*, immodest conversation—ought to begin with women. If women in cottages, and indeed elsewhere, were what they ought to be, and kept up a high tone in their households, their sons would not dare to speak in their presence as I know they often do, and their daughters would feel they fell away from much more than they do now, when they go wrong. Men are, I fancy, very much what women make them, and seem to like them to be; and if women withdrew from those who hurt their sense of what is right, I do believe they would try to be different; but it seems very difficult to preserve a high tone of maidenly dignity in poor girls, who, from youth up, hear every possible thing usually left unspoken of freely discussed by fathers and mothers and brothers, and sometimes very evil deeds treated as jests. This is the case painfully often.”

26. Though my notes, for this month, far exceed their usual limits, I cannot close them without asking my readers to look back, for some relief of heart, to happier times. The following piece of biography, printed only for private circulation, is so instructive that I trust the friend¹ who sent it me will forgive my placing it in broader view; and the more because in the last section of the *Queen of the Air*, my readers will find notice of this neglected power of the tide.² I had imagined this an idea of my own, and did not press it,—being content to press what is already known and practically proved to be useful; but the following portion of a very interesting letter, and the piece of biography it introduces, show the tidemill to be in this category:—

“My father, who began life humbly, dates the prosperity of his family to the time when—being the tenant of a small *tidemill*—he laboured with spade and barrow (by consent of the Earl of Sheffield) to enclose an increased area—overflowed by the tide—in order to lay under contribution as motive power this wasted energy of rising and falling waters. He thereby nearly quadrupled the power of the mill, and finally became its possessor.”

“William Catt was the son of Mr. John Catt, a Sussex farmer, who married the daughter of a yeoman named Willett, living on a small estate at Buxted. He was born in the year 1780, and soon after that date his parents removed to the Abbey Farm at Robertsbridge. There he passed his early years, and there obtained such education as a dame’s school could afford. This of course was limited to very rudimentary English. He was not a particularly apt scholar: he hated his books—but liked cricket.

“When little more than nineteen, he married a daughter of Mr. Dawes, of Ewhurst. Farming in the Weald of Sussex was then, as now, a laborious and unremunerative occupation; and as an interesting record of the habits of his class at that period, it may be stated, *that* on the morning of his wedding-day he went into a wood with his father’s team for a load of hop-poles, was afterwards married in a white*

* Italics mine throughout.

¹ [Mr. Henry Willett, of Brighton; for whom, see below, p. 576 *n.*; and for later letters from him, see Letters 85 and 86 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 323–324, 347–349).]

² [“The last section” is Lecture III., which was in part reprinted from Ruskin’s “Notes on Employment”: see in this edition, Vol. XVII. pp. 541–546. The neglected power of the tide is, however, not there expressly mentioned, though it was no doubt in Ruskin’s mind when he wrote generally of the better utilisation of “natural mechanical power.” His actual suggestion of “mills moved by sluices from reservoirs filled by the tides” occurs in *Lectures on Art*, § 123 (Vol. XX. pp. 113–114). Compare above, p. 138; and Letter 85, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 322).]

'round-frock,' and returned to his usual work the next morning. He commenced business at Stonehouse, in Buxted, a farm of between 100 and 200 acres. Banking was in those days in its infancy, and travelling notoriously unsafe;* so his good and prudent mother sewed up beneath the lining of his waistcoat the one-pound notes which he carried from Robertsbridge to Buxted to meet the valuation of his farm. When settled in his little homestead, his household arrangements were of the simplest kind. One boy, one girl, and one horse, formed his staff; yet he thrived and prospered. And no wonder: for *both himself and his young wife often rose at three in the morning; he to thrash by candlelight in his barn, she to feed or prepare her poultry for the market.* His principle was—'earn a shilling, and spend elevenpence'; and hence, no doubt, his subsequent success.

"After two years' farming he took a small mill at Lamberhurst, where a journey-man miller, Saunders Ditton, gave him all the instruction that he ever received in the manufacture and business in which he was afterwards so extensively engaged. Hard work was still a necessity; the mill by night, the market and his customers by day, demanded all his time; and on one occasion, overcome by cold and fatigue, he crept for warmth into his meal-bin, where he fell asleep, and would certainly have been suffocated but for the timely arrival of Ditton. This worthy man afterwards followed his master to Bishopston, and survived him—a pensioner in his old age.

"At this time the Bishopston Tidemills were in the occupation of Messrs. Barton and Catt. The former exchanged with Mr. Catt, of Lamberhurst, who went into partnership with his cousin Edmund. The power of the mill was then only five pair of stones, though he ultimately increased it to sixteen.† In this much more important sphere the same habits of industry still marked his character, amidst all disadvantages. It was war-time; corn was of inferior quality and high price; and privateering prevented trading by water. His cousin and he were not suited to each other, and dissolved partnership; but, by the aid of a loan from his worthy friends and neighbours, Mr. Cooper, of Norton, and Mr. Farncombe, of Bishopston, he was enabled to secure the whole of the business to himself. Subsequently Mr. Edmund Cooper, the son of his friend, became his partner in the mills, and the business was for many years carried on under the title of Catt and Cooper.

"During this partnership *a lease was obtained, from the Earl of Sheffield, of the waste lands between the Mills and Newhaven harbour.* This was embanked and reclaimed as arable land at first, and subsequently partly used as a reservoir of additional water power. Mr. Catt took great interest in the work; *laboured at it himself with spade and barrow;* and to it he always referred as the main cause of his success in life. In the third year a crop of oats was grown on the arable portion, which repaid the expenses of reclamation and induced him to increase the power of the mill as mentioned above. Mr. Cooper retired from the concern by agreement, and afterwards, under the firm of William Catt and Sons, in conjunction with his children, Mr. Catt completed fifty years of business at Bishopston. During a considerable portion of those years he had also a large stake with other sons in West Street Brewery, Brighton.

"His faithful wife died in 1823, leaving him the responsible legacy of eleven children—the youngest being not an hour old. This bereavement seemed to

* Nowadays the travelling is of course "notoriously safe"! ¹ but what shall we say of the banking?

† The oldest *windmill* on record in this country (I speak under correction) stood in this parish, and was given by Bishop Seffrid to the see of Chichester about the year 1199. The largest *watermill* ever constructed in Sussex was that of Mr. Catt.

¹ [See the list of railway accidents in Letter 35 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 664–666).]

stimulate him to renewed exertion and to extraordinary regard for little savings. *He would always stop to pick up a nail or any scrap of old iron that lay in the road, and in the repeated enlargements and construction of his mills he was his own architect and surveyor*; he was always pleased with the acquisition of a bit of wreck timber, any old materials from Blatchington barracks, or from the dismantled mansion of Bishopston Place, formerly the seat of the Duke of Newcastle. Yet he was ever bountiful as a host, liberal to his neighbours, and charitable to his dependants and the deserving poor.

“To a man of Mr. Catt’s experience in life, ordinary amusements would have few charms. His business was his pleasure, yet he delighted in his garden, and the culture of pears afforded him much recreation. A more bleak and unpromising place of horticulture than the Bishopston Mills could hardly exist; but by the aid of good walls, and the observation of wind effects, he was eminently successful, and no garden in Sussex produced a greater variety, or finer specimens, of that pleasant fruit. His maxim on this subject was, ‘*Aim to get a good pear all the year round.*’

“In the latter years of his life, Mr. Catt retired from active business and resided at Newhaven, where he died in 1853, in the seventy-third year of his age, leaving behind him not only the good name which an honourable life deserves, but a substantial fortune for his somewhat numerous descendants.”

LETTER 52

VALE OF LUNE¹

1. I MUST steadily do a little bit more autobiography in every *Fors*, now, or I shall never bring myself to be of age before I die—or have to stop writing,—for which last turn of temper, or fortune, my friends, without exception (and I hope—one or two of my enemies) are, I find, praying with what devotion is in them.

My mother² had, as she afterwards told me, solemnly devoted me to God before I was born; in imitation of Hannah.³

Very good women are remarkably apt to make away with their children prematurely, in this manner: the real meaning of the pious act being, that, as the sons of Zebedee are not (or at least they hope not) to sit on the right and left of Christ, in His kingdom,⁴ their own sons may perhaps, they think, in time be advanced to that respectable position in eternal life; especially if they ask Christ very humbly for it every day;—and they always forget in the most naïve way that the position is not His to give!

2. “Devoting me to God,” meant, as far as my mother knew herself what she meant, that she would try to send me to college, and make a clergyman of me: and I was accordingly bred for “the Church.” My father, who—rest be to his soul—had the exceedingly bad habit of yielding to my mother in large things and taking his own way in

¹ [For the title, see § 6. “Rose-bees” was a discarded title for this letter.]

² [§§ 1–5, commencing with “My mother had . . .” were used by Ruskin when writing *Præterita*, where they appear, without alteration, as §§ 19–23 of vol. i. ch. i. His autobiographical notes are resumed in Letter 53, § 1 (p. 316).]

³ [See 1 Samuel i. 11.]

⁴ [See Matthew xx. 20–23.]

little ones, allowed me, without saying a word, to be thus withdrawn from the sherry trade as an unclean thing; not without some pardonable participation in my mother's ultimate views for me. For, many and many a year afterwards, I remember while he was speaking to one of our artist friends, who admired Raphael, and greatly regretted my endeavours to interfere with that popular taste,—while my father and he were condoling with each other on my having been impudent enough to think I could tell the public about Turner and Raphael,—instead of contenting myself, as I ought, with explaining the way of their souls' salvation to them—and what an amiable clergyman was lost in me,—“Yes,” said my father, with tears in his eyes—(true and tender tears—as ever father shed), “he would have been a Bishop.”

3. Luckily for me, my mother, under these distinct impressions of her own duty, and with such latent hopes of my future eminence, took me very early to church;—where, in spite of my quiet habits, and my mother's golden vinaigrette, always indulged to me there, and there only, with its lid unclasped that I might see the wreathed open pattern above the sponge, I found the bottom of the pew so extremely dull a place to keep quiet in (my best story-books being also taken away from me in the morning), that—as I have somewhere said before¹—the horror of Sunday used even to cast its prescient gloom as far back in the week as Friday—and all the glory of Monday, with church seven days removed again, was no equivalent for it.

4. Notwithstanding, I arrived at some abstract in my own mind of the Rev. Mr. Howell's sermons; and occasionally—in imitation of him—preached a sermon at home over the red sofa cushions;—this performance being always called for by my mother's dearest friends, as the great accomplishment of my childhood. The sermon was—I believe—some eleven words long;—very exemplary, it seems to

¹ [See Letter 24, § 7 (Vol. XXVII. p. 421).]

me, in that respect—and I still think must have been the purest gospel, for I know it began with “People, be good.”

5. We seldom had company, even on week days; and I was never allowed to come down to dessert, until much later in life—when I was able to crack nuts neatly. I was then permitted to come down to crack other people’s nuts for them (I hope they liked the ministrations)—but never to have any myself; nor anything else of dainty kind, either then or at other times. Once, at Hunter Street, I recollect my mother giving me three raisins, in the forenoon—out of the store cabinet; and I remember perfectly the first time I tasted custard, in our lodgings in Norfolk Street—where we had gone while the house was being painted, or cleaned, or something. My father was dining in the front room, and did not finish his custard; and my mother brought me the bottom of it into the back room.

6. I’ve no more space for garrulity in this letter, having several past bits of note to bring together.

BOLTON BRIDGE, *24th January, 1875.*¹

I have been driving by the old road* from Coniston here, through Kirkby Lonsdale, and have seen more ghastly signs of modern temper than I yet had believed possible.

The valley of the Lune at Kirkby is one of the loveliest scenes in England—therefore, in the world. Whatever

* Frightened (I hear it was guessed in a gossiping newspaper) by the Shipton accident,² and disgusted afterwards by unexpected expenses. The ingenious British public cannot conceive of anybody’s estimating danger before accidents as well as after them, or amusing himself by driving from one place to another, instead of round the Park. There was some grain of truth in the important rumour, however. I have posted, in early days, up and down England (and some other countries) not once nor twice; and I grumbled, in Yorkshire, at being charged twenty-pence instead of eighteen-pence a mile. But the pace was good, where any trace of roads remained under casual outcasting of cinders and brickbats.

¹ [This passage was written before the postscript (dated January 27) of Letter 50.]

² [On the Great Western Railway, December 24, 1874. The tyre of a carriage wheel broke, and the train was driven over an embankment; thirty-four deaths ensued, and about seventy passengers were injured.]

moorland hill, and sweet river, and English forest foliage can be at their best, is gathered there; and chiefly seen from the steep bank which falls to the stream side from the upper part of the town itself. There, a path leads from the churchyard out of which Turner made his drawing of the valley,¹ along the brow of the wooded bank, to open downs beyond; a little bye footpath on the right descending steeply through the woods to a spring among the rocks of the shore. I do not know in all my own country, still less in France or Italy, a place more naturally divine, or a more priceless possession of true "Holy Land."

7. Well, the population of Kirkby cannot, it appears, in consequence of their recent civilization, any more walk, in summer afternoons, along the brow of this bank, without a fence. I at first fancied this was because they were usually unable to take care of themselves at that period of the day: but saw presently I must be mistaken in that conjecture, because the fence they have put up requires far more sober minds for safe dealing with it than ever the bank did; being of thin, strong, and finely sharpened skewers, on which if a drunken man rolled heavily, he would assuredly be impaled at the armpit. They have carried this lovely decoration down on both sides of the woodpath to the spring, with warning notice on ticket,—“This path leads only to the Ladies’* well—all trespassers will be prosecuted”—and the iron rails leave so narrow footing that I myself scarcely ventured to go down,—the morning being frosty, and the path slippery,—lest I should fall on the spikes. The well at the bottom was choked up and defaced, though ironed all round, so as to look like the “pound” of old days for strayed cattle: they had been felling the trees too; and the old wood had protested against the fence in its own way, with its last root and

* “Our Lady’s,” doubtless, once.

¹ [For other references to the drawing of Kirkby Lonsdale Churchyard, see *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. p. 26).]

branch,—for the falling trunks had crashed through the iron grating in all directions, and left it in already rusty and unseemly rags, like the last refuse of a railroad accident, beaten down among the dead leaves.

8. Just at the dividing of the two paths, the improving mob* of Kirkby had got two seats put for themselves—to admire the

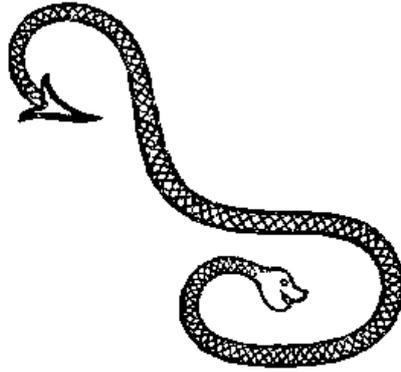


Fig. 3

prospect from, forsooth. And these seats were to be artistic, if Minerva were propitious,—in the style of Kensington.¹ So they are supported on iron legs, representing each, as far as any rational conjecture can extend—the Devil's tail pulled off, with a goose's head stuck on the wrong end of it. Thus: and what is

more—two of the geese-heads are without eyes (I stooped down under the seat and rubbed the frost off them to make sure), and the whole symbol is perfect, therefore,—as typical of our English populace, fashionable and other, which seats itself to admire prospects, in the present day.

9. Now, not a hundred paces from these seats there is a fine old church, with Norman door, and lancet east windows, and so on; and this, of course, has been duly patched, botched, plastered, and primmed up; and is kept as tidy as a new pin. For your English clergyman keeps his own stage properties, nowadays, as carefully as a poor actress her silk stockings. Well, all that, of course, is very fine; but, actually, the people go through the churchyard to the path on the hill-brow, making the new iron railing an excuse to pitch their dust-heaps, and whatever of worse they have

* I include in my general term "mob," lords, squires, clergy, parish beadles, and all other states and conditions of men concerned in the proceedings described.

¹ [Compare, above, pp. 256–257; and for a reference to the present "Studies from Kirkby Lonsdale," see Appendix 12, Vol. XXIX, p. 560.]

to get rid of, crockery and the rest,—down *over the fence* among the primroses and violets to the river,—and the whole blessed shore underneath, rough sandstone rock throwing the deep water off into eddies among shingle, is one waste of filth, town-drainage, broken saucepans, tannin, and mill-refuse.

10. The same morning I had to water my horses at the little village of Clapham, between Kirkby and Settle. There is another exquisite rocky brook there; and an old bridge over it. I went down to the brook-side to see the bridge; and found myself instantly, of course, stopped by a dunghill,—and that of the vilest human sort; while, just on the other side of the road,—not twenty yards off,—were the new schools, with their orthodox Gothic belfry—all spick and span—and the children playing fashionably at hoop, round them, in a narrow paved yard—like debtor children in the Fleet, in imitation of the manners and customs of the West End. High over all, the Squire's house, resplendent on the hill-side, within sound alike of belfry, and brook.

11. I got on here, to Bolton Bridge, the same day; and walked down to the Abbey in the evening, to look again at Turner's subject of the Wharfe shore.¹ If there is one spot in England, where human creatures pass or live, which one would expect to find, in *spite* of their foul existence, still clean—it is Bolton Park. But to my final and utter amazement, I had not taken two steps by the waterside at the loveliest bend of the river below the stepping-stones, before I found myself again among broken crockery, cinders, cockle-shells, and tinkers' refuse;—a large old gridiron forming the principal point of effect and interest among the pebbles. The filth must be regularly carried past the Abbey, and across the Park, to the place.

But doubtless, in Bolton Priory, amiable school teachers tell their little Agneses the story of the white doe;²—and

¹ [Engraved on Plate 12 A in Vol. VI. (p. 306).]

² [Wordsworth's *The White Doe of Rylstone*: compare *St. Mark's Rest*, § 74 (Vol. XXIV. p. 266).]

duly make them sing, in psalm tune, “As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks.”¹

12. Very certainly, nevertheless, the young ladies of Luneside and Wharfedale don’t pant in the least after their waterbrooks; and this is the saddest part of the business to me. Pollution of rivers!—yes, that is to be considered also;—but pollution of young ladies’ minds to the point of never caring to scramble by a riverside, so long as they can have their church-curate and his altar-cloths to their fancy—*this* is the horrible thing, in my own wild way of thinking. That shingle of the Lune, under Kirkby, reminded me, as if it had been yesterday, of a summer evening by a sweeter shore still: the edge of the North Inch of Perth, where the Tay is wide, just below Scone; and the snowy quartz pebbles decline in long banks under the ripples of the dark clear stream.

My Scotch cousin Jessie, eight years old, and I, ten years old, and my Croydon cousin, Bridget, a slim girl of fourteen, were all wading together, here and there;² and of course getting into deep water as far as we could,—my father and mother and aunt watching us,—till at last, Bridget, having the longest legs, and, taking after her mother, the shortest conscience,³—got in so far and with her petticoats so high, that the old people were obliged to call to her, though hardly able to call, for laughing; and I recollect staring at them, and wondering what they were laughing at. But alas, by Lune shore, now, there are no pretty girls to be seen holding their petticoats up. Nothing but old saucepans and tannin—or worse—as signs of modern civilization.

13. “But how fine it is to have iron skewers for our fences; and no trespassing (except by lords of the manor on poor men’s ground⁴), and pretty legs exhibited where they can be so without impropriety, and with due advertisement to the public beforehand; and iron legs to our chairs, also,

¹ [Psalms xlii. 1.]

² [Compare *Præterita*, i. § 74.]

³ [See Letter 46, § 4 (p. 171).]

⁴ [See Letter 51, § 17 (p. 284).]

in the style of Kensington!" Doubtless; but considering that Kensington is a school of natural Science as well as Art, it seems to me that these Kirkby representations of the Ophidia are slightly vague. Perhaps, however, in conveying that tenderly sagacious expression into his serpent's head, and burnishing so acutely the brandished sting in his tail, the Kirkby artist has been under the theological instructions of the careful Minister who has had his church restored so prettily;—only then the Minister himself must have been, without knowing it, under the directions of another person, who had an intimate interest in the matter. For there is more than failure of natural history in this clumsy hardware. It is indeed a matter of course that it should be clumsy, for the English have always been a dull nation in decorative art: and I find, on looking at things here afresh after long work in Italy, that our most elaborate English sepulchral work, as the Cokayne tombs at Ashbourne¹ and the Dudley tombs at Warwick (not to speak of Queen Elizabeth's in Westminster!) are yet, compared to Italian sculpture of the same date, no less barbarous than these goose heads of Kirkby would appear beside an asp head of Milan.² But the tombs of Ashbourne or Warwick are honest, though blundering, efforts to imitate what was really felt to be beautiful; whereas the serpents of Kirkby are ordered and shaped by the "least erected spirit that fell,"³ in the very likeness of himself!

14. For observe the method and circumstance of their manufacture. You dig a pit for ironstone, and heap a mass of refuse on fruitful land; you blacken your God-given sky, and consume your God-given fuel, to melt the iron; you bind your labourer to the Egyptian toil of its castings

¹ [In the north transept of Ashbourne Church; several monuments to the Cokayne family, who flourished from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. Ruskin gives a more detailed description of these Cokayne tombs—"of elaborate fifteenth-century and Elizabethan work"—in a letter to C. E. Norton of January 27, 1875 (reprinted in a later volume of this edition). The tombs of members of the Dudley family in the Beauchamp Chapel in the Church of St. Mary at Warwick are of the latter part of the sixteenth century.]

² [Compare the passage from Ruskin's diary given in Vol. XXIV. p. xxx.]

³ [*Paradise Lost*, Book I., 679; quoted also in Vol. XVIII. p. 413.]

and forgings; then, to refine his mind you send him to study Raphael at Kensington; and with all this cost, filth, time, and misery, you at last produce—the devil's tail for your sustenance, instead of an honest three-legged stool.

You do all this that men may live—think you? Alas—no; the real motive of it all is that the fashionable manufacturer may live in a palace, getting his fifty per cent. commission on the work¹ which he has taken out of the hands of the old village carpenter, who would have cut two stumps of oak in two minutes out of the copse, which would have carried your bench and you triumphantly,—to the end of both your times.

15. However, I must get back to my bees' heads and tails,² to-day;—what a serpent's are like in their true type of Earthly Injustice, it may be worth our while to see also, if we can understand the “sad-eyed justice”³ first.

Sad-eyed! Little did Shakespeare think, I fancy, how many eyes the sad-eyed Justice had! or how ill she saw with them. I continually notice the bees at Brantwood flying rapturously up to the flowers on my wall-paper, and knocking themselves against them, again and again, unconvincible of their fallacy; and it is no compliment to the wall-paper or its artist, neither—for the flowers are only conventional ones, copied from a radiant Bishop's cloak of the fifteenth century.⁴

It is curious too, that although before coming to the leaf-cutting bee, Bingley expatiates on the Poppy bee's luxurious tapestry, cut from the scarlet poppy,⁵ he never considers whether she could *see* it, or not, underground—(unless by help of the fiery glowworms' eyes)—and still less, how long the cut leaves would remain scarlet. Then

¹ [Compare Letter 25, § 6 (Vol. XXVII. p. 451).]

² [This subject is continued from the end of the last Letter.]

³ [*King Henry V.*, Act i. sc. 2.]

⁴ [For a note on this wall-paper, copied from Marziale's picture in the National Gallery, see Vol. XV. p. 434 *n.*]

⁵ [“The Poppy Bee forms her nest in the ground, burrowing to the depth of about three inches. At the bottom she makes a large and somewhat hemispherical cavity, which, after being rendered perfectly smooth on all sides, she carefully lines with a splendid tapestry, selected from the scarlet flowers of the wild poppy” (*Animal Biography*, 1804, vol. iii. p. 376).]

I am told wonderful things of the clasping of the curtains of her little tabernacle;—but when the curtains dry, and shrink, what then?

16. Let us hear what he tells us of the Rose bee, however—in full:—

“These bees construct cylindrical nests of the leaves of the rose and other trees. These nests are sometimes of the depth of six inches, and generally consist of six or seven cells, each shaped like a thimble.* They are formed with the convex end of one fitting into the open end of another. The portions of the leaf of which they are made are not glued together,† nor are they any otherwise fastened, than in the nicety of their adjustment to each other; and yet they do not admit the liquid honey to drain through them. The interior surface of each cell consists of three pieces of leaf, of equal size, narrow at one end, but gradually widening to the other, where the width equals half the length. One side of each of these pieces, is the serrated margin of the leaf. In forming the cell, the pieces of leaf are made to lap one over the other, (the serrated side always outermost), till a tube is thus formed, coated with three or four, or more, layers. In coating these tubes, the provident little animal is careful to lay the middle of each piece of leaf over the margins of others, so as, by this means, both to cover and strengthen the junctions. At the closed or narrow end of the cell, the leaves are bent down so as to form a convex termination. When a cell is formed, the next care of the Bee is to fill it with honey and pollen, which being collected chiefly from the thistles, from a rose-coloured paste. With these the cell is filled to within about half a line of its orifice; and the female then deposits in it an egg, and closes it with three perfectly circular pieces of leaf, which coincide so exactly with the walls of the cylindrical cell, as to be retained in their situation without any gluten.‡ After this covering is fitted in, there still remains a hollow, which receives the convex end of the succeeding cell. In this manner the patient and indefatigable defatigable animal proceeds, till her whole cylinder of six or seven cells is completed.

“This is generally formed under the surface of the ground, § in a

* They are round at the end, but do not taper.

† An Indian one, patiently investigated for me by Mr. Burgess, was fastened with glue which entirely defied cold water, and yielded only to the kettle.

‡ She bites them round the edge roughly enough; but pushes them down with a tucked-up rim, quite tight, like the first covering of a pot of preserve.

§ Or in old wood.¹

¹ [Ruskin condenses the note, which in the original is “In cavities of walls and in decayed wood—*Kirkby*.” He also changes “fistular” in the text to “tubular.” The passage is from Bingley’s *Animal Biography*, 1804, vol. iii. pp. 377–380. The preceding footnotes are Ruskin’s own.]

tubular passage, which it entirely fills, except at the entrance. If the labour of these insects be interrupted, or the edifice be deranged, they exhibit astonishing perseverance in setting it again to rights.

“Their mode of cutting pieces out of the leaves for their work, deserves particular notice. When one of these Bees selects a rose-bush with this view, she flies round or hovers over it for some seconds, as if examining for the leaves best suited to her purpose. When she has chosen one, she alights upon it, sometimes on the upper, and sometimes on the under surface, or not unfrequently on its edge, so that the margin passes between her legs. Her first attack, which is generally made the moment she alights, is usually near the footstalk, with her head turned towards the point. As soon as she begins to cut, she is wholly intent on her labour; nor does she cease until her work is completed. The operation is performed by means of her jaws, with as much expedition as we could exert with a pair of scissors. As she proceeds, she holds the margin of the detached part between her legs, in such a manner that the section keeps giving way to her, and does not interrupt her progress. She makes her incision in a curved line, approaching the midrib of the leaf at first; but when she has reached a certain point, she recedes from this towards the margin, still cutting in a curve. When she has nearly detached from the leaf the portion she has been employed upon, she balances her little wings for flight, lest its weight should carry her to the ground; and the very moment it parts, she flies off in triumph, carrying it in a bent position between her legs, and perpendicularly to her body.”

17. Now in this account, the first thing I catch at is the clue to the love of bees for thistles. “Their pollen makes a rose-coloured paste with their honey.” (I think some of my Scottish friends might really take measures to get some pure thistle honey made by their bees. I once worked all the working hours I had to spare for a fortnight, to clear a field of thistles by the side of the Tummel under Schehallien: perhaps Nature meant, all the while, its master and me to let it alone, and put a hive or two upon it.¹)

Secondly. The description of the bee’s tubular house, though sufficiently clear, is only intelligible to me, though I know something of geometry, after some effort;—it would be wholly useless to Agnes, unless she were shown how to be a leaf-cutting bee herself, and invited to construct, or endeavour to construct, the likeness of a bee’s nest with paper and scissors.

¹ [See *Præterita*, vol. ii. ch. x.]

What—in school-hours?

Yes, certainly,—in the very best of school-hours: this would be one of her advanced lessons in Geometry.

For little Agnes should assuredly learn the elements of Geometry, but she should at first call it “Earth measuring”; and have her early lessons in it, in laying out her own garden.

18. Her older companions, at any rate, must be far enough advanced in the science to attempt this bee problem; of which you will find the terms have to be carefully examined, and somewhat completed. So much, indeed, do they stand in need of farther definition, that I should have supposed the problem inaccurately given, unless I had seen the bee cut a leaf myself. But I have seen her do it, and can answer for the absolute accuracy of the passage describing her in that operation.

The pieces of leaf, you read, are to be narrow at one end, but gradually widen to the other, where the width equals half the length.

And we have to cut these pieces with curved sides; for one side of them is to be the serrated edge of a roseleaf, and the other side is to be cut in a curved line beginning near the root of the leaf. I especially noticed this curved line as the bee cut it; but like an ass, as often I have been on such occasions, I followed the bee instead of gathering the remnant leaf, so that I can't draw the curve with certainty.¹

19. Now each of my four volumes of Bingley has five or more plates in it. These plates are finished line engravings, with, in most cases, elaborate landscape backgrounds; reeds for the hippopotamus, trees for the monkeys, conical mountains for the chamois, and a magnificent den with plenty of straw for the lioness and cubs, in frontispiece.

Any one of these landscape backgrounds required the severe labour of the engraver's assistant for at least three

¹ [See the woodcut on p. 493; and the letter from a correspondent in Letter 69, § 21 (p. 708).]

days to produce it,—or say two months' hard work, for the whole twenty and odd plates. And all the result of two months' elaborate work put together, was not worth to me, nor would be to any man, woman, or child, worth—what an accurate outline of a leaf-cutting bee's segment of leaf would have been, drawn with truth and precision. And ten minutes would have been enough to draw it; and half-an-hour an-hour to cut it.

But not only I cannot find it in my old book, but I know it is not in the grand modern Cuvier,¹ and I don't believe it is findable anywhere. I won't go on with Agnes's lesson at guess, however, till I get some help from kind Dr. Gray, at the British Museum.² To-day, I must content myself with a closing word or two about zoological moralities.

20. After having, to my best ability, thus busied and informed little Agnes concerning her bees and their operations, am I farther to expatiate on the exemplary character of the bee? Is she to learn "How doth," etc.³ (and indeed there never was a country in which more than in her own, it was desirable that shining hours should be taken advantage of when they come)? But above all, am I to tell her of the Goodness and Wisdom of God in making such amiable and useful insects?

Well, before I proceed to ask her to form her very important opinions upon the moral character of God, I shall ask her to observe that all insects are not equally moral, or useful.

It is possible she may have noticed—beforehand—some, of whose dispositions she may be doubtful; something, hereafter, I shall have to tell her⁴ of locust and hornet, no

¹ [For this book, see Vol. XXVI. p. 317 n.]

² [John Edward Gray (1800–1875), F.R.S., Keeper of the Zoological Department, British Museum, 1840–1874. For another reference to him, see Letter 62, § 16 (p. 527).]

³ [For the benefit of foreign readers, it may be noted that the reference is to No. XX. of the *Divine Songs* of Dr. Isaac Watts.]

⁴ [This, however, was not done.]

less than of bee; and although in general I shall especially avoid putting disagreeable or ugly things before her eyes, or into her mind, I should certainly require her positively, once for all, to know the sort of life led by creatures of at least alloyed moral nature,—such, for instance, as the “Turner Savage”¹ which, indeed,

“lives in the haunts of men, whom, it never willingly offends; but is the terror of all smaller insects. It inhabits holes in the earth on the side of hills and cliffs; and recesses that it forms for itself in the mud-walls of cottages and outhouses. The mud-wall of a cottage at Peterborough, in Northamptonshire, was observed to be frequented by these creatures, and on examination it was found to be wrought, by their operations, into the appearance of Honeycomb.”²

21. The appearance only, alas! for although these creatures thus like to live in the neighbourhood of a Bishop, and though “there are none which display more affection for their offspring,”³—they by no means live by collection of treasures of sweet dew:—

“They are excessively fierce, and, without hesitation, attack insects much larger than themselves. Their strength is very great, their jaws are hard and sharp, and their stings are armed with poison, which suddenly, proves fatal to most of the creatures with which they engage. The ‘Sphex’ (generic name of the family) seizes, with the greatest boldness, on the creature it attacks, giving a stroke with amazing force, then falling off, to rest from the fatigue of the exertion, and to enjoy the victory. It keeps, however, a steady eye on the object it has struck, until it dies, and then drags it to its nest for the use of its young. The number of insects which this creature destroys, is almost beyond conception, fifty scarcely serving it for a meal. The mangled remains of its prey, scattered round the mouth of its retreat, sufficiently betray the sanguinary inhabitant. The eyes, the filament that serves as a brain, and a small part of the contents of the body, are all that the Sphex devours.”⁴

22. I cannot, therefore, insist, for the present, upon either pointing a moral, or adorning a tale, for Agnes, with

¹ [Bingley’s name for the *Sphex spirifex* (turner) of Linnæus.]

² [Bingley’s *Animal Biography*, 1804, vol. iii. p. 359.]

³ [*Ibid.*, p. 358.]

⁴ [*Ibid.*, p. 358.]

entomological instances; but the name of the insect, at which the (insect) world might grow pale,¹ if it were capable of pallor,—might be made, at least, memorable, and not uninstrusive, to the boys in the Latin class, by making them first understand the power of the preposition “ex,” in the two pleasant senses of *examen*,² and the one unpleasant sense of “examiner”—and then observe (carefully first distinguishing between play with letters and real derivation) that if you put R for Right, before ex, you have “Rex”; if you put L, for Love, before ex, you have “lex”; if you put G, for George, and R, for Rural, before ex, you have “grex”; and then if you put S, for Speculation, P, for Peculation, and H, the immortal possessor of Pie,³ before ex, you have “Sphex”; pleasing and accurate type of the modern carnivorous Economist,⁴ who especially devours of his British public, “the eyes, and small filament that serves as a brain.”

¹ [See Johnson’s *Vanity of Human Wishes*, 220.]

² [*Exigo* means “to weigh,” *ago* originally meant “to push,” and *αγω* means “to weigh.” *ποσον αγει*—“how much does it weigh?”—is literally “how much does it push down?” Hence *examen* (a swarm of bees) means what is pushed out of the hive. The other “pleasant sense of examen” is the tongue of a balance; and from the meaning of “weighing” comes “the unpleasant sense of ‘examiner.’”]

³ [Foreign readers may need to be told that “the immortal possessor of Pie,” is the “Little Jack Horner,” of the nursery rhyme, who “sat in the corner, eating a Christmas pie.” For the ancient sources of this rhyme, see J. O. Halliwell’s *Nursery Rhymes of England*, 1846, p. 19. Below, on p. 353, Ruskin refers to another familiar nursery rhyme—“There was an old woman who lived in a shoe, She had so many children she didn’t know what to do” (Halliwell, p. 88); and on p. 619, to a third—“Ride a cock-horse to Banbury Cross”; for the many variations of this, see Halliwell, pp. 104, 107. For other Nursery Rhymes, see pp. 261, 411. In the next volume (p. 153) Ruskin refers to the familiar “Humpty Dumpty sate on a wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great fall, All the King’s horses and all the King’s men,” etc. (for the original form of which, see Halliwell, p. 77); and (p. 392) to “Where are you going to, my pretty maid? . . . My face is my fortune, sir, she said.”]

⁴ [See Letter 42, § 14 (p. 102).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

“THE PARSONAGE, WERRINGTON, PETERBOROUGH,
“March 4, 1875.

23. “MY DEAR SIR,—I have no doubt you know better than I do what Gospel is the more widely preached, for while you have been wandering, freer than a bee, from place to place, and from church to church, I have been ‘entangled’ from day to day in stuffy rooms among ignorant and immoral people, in crowded parishes in London and elsewhere; and on Sundays have listened chiefly to the gathered voices of the same ignorant people, led by my own.

“But, not to move from the ground of ascertained fact, I have a right to say that I *know* that the morality of the parishes best known to me has been made better, and not worse, by the shepherding of the Pastors.

“I have heard and read a good deal, in clerical circles, and clerical books, of doctrines of ‘substitution’ and ‘vicarious righteousness,’ such as you rightly condemn as immoral; but if all the sermons preached in the English Church on any given Sunday were fully and fairly reported, I question if a dozen would contain the least trace of these doctrines.

“Amidst all the isms and dogmas by which Clerics are entangled, I find the deep and general conviction getting clearer and clearer utterance, that the one supremely lovely, admirable and adorable thing,—the one thing to redeem and regenerate human life, the one true Gospel for mankind,—is the Spirit and Life of Jesus Christ.

“As to your terrible charge against the Pastors, that they preach for hire, I need only quote your own opinion in this month’s *Fors*, that all honest minstrels and authors, manifestly possessing talent for their business, should be allowed to claim ‘for their actual toil, in performance of their arts, modest reward, and daily bread.’¹

“Surely the labourer who spends his life in *speaking* salutary truth is not less worthy of his hire than he who sings or writes it?

“The reward offered to most Pastors is ‘modest’ enough.

“I am very faithfully yours,

“EDWARD Z. LYTTTEL.

“JOHN RUSKIN, ESQ.”

24. I willingly insert my correspondent’s second letter,² but will not at present answer it, except privately. I wonder, in the meantime, whether he will think the effect of the ministry of Felix Neff³ on the mind

¹ [See above, p. 276.]

² [For Mr. Lyttel’s first letter, see Letter 51, § 20 (p. 287).]

³ [Ruskin promises (in Letter 55, § 4, p. 366) some remarks about Felix Neff, but gives only a passing reference (see p. 374). Neff (1798–1829), a native of Geneva, was a sergeant of artillery, who in 1819 forsook the army in order to devote himself to evangelistic work. The name of “Pays de Neff” still attaches to the valleys in Dauphiné in which he laboured. He not only put new life into the Protestant communities, but also established schools, and taught agriculture. There are many lives of him, the earliest (in English) being *A Memoir of Felix Neff, Pastor of the High Alps; and of his labours among the French Protestants of Dauphiné*, by W. S. Gilly, 1832.]

of the sweet English lady whose letter next follows, moral, or immoral? A portion of whose letter, I should have said; its opening touches on household matters little to her mind, to which her first exclamation refers.

“How sorrowful it all is! Yet, I don’t feel so naughty about it as I did on Saturday, because yesterday I read the life of Felix Neff, who went to live by his own wish at that dismal Dormilleuse in the high Alps, amongst the wretched people who were like very unclean animals, and for whom he felt such sublime pity that he sacrificed himself to improve them: and as I read of that terrible Alpine desert, with eight months’ hopeless dreariness, and of the wretched food and filthy hovels in which the miserable people lived, I looked up at my good fire and clean room, with dear white Lily lying so soft on my lap, and the snowdrops outside the window, and I really did feel ashamed of having felt so grumbly and discontented as I did on Saturday. So good Felix Neff’s good work is not done yet, and he will doubtless help others as long as the world lasts.”

25. The following letter is an interesting and somewhat pathetic example of religious madness; not a little, however, connected with mismanagement of money. The writer has passed great part of his life in a conscientious endeavour to teach what my correspondent Mr. Lyttel would, I think, consider “salutary truth”; but his intense egotism and absence of imaginative power hindered him from perceiving that many other people were doing the same, and meeting with the same disappointments. Gradually he himself occupied the entire centre of his horizon; and he appoints himself to “judge the United States in particular, and the world in general.”

The introductory clause of the letter refers somewhat indignantly to a representation I had irreverently made to him that a prophet should rather manifest his divine mission by providing himself miraculously with meat and drink, than by lodging in windows’ houses without in anywise multiplying their meal for them;¹ and then leaving other people to pay his bill.

“So long as you deliberately refuse to help in any way a man who (you have every reason to know) possesses more of the righteousness of God than yourself (when you have ample means to do so), how can you be said to ‘do the will of your Father which is in Heaven’? or how can you expect to receive understanding to ‘know of the doctrine’ of the Saviour (or of my doctrine), ‘whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself’? If you possessed a *genuine* ‘faith,’ you would exercise humanity towards such a man as myself, and leave the result with God; and not presumptuously decide that it was ‘wrong’ to relieve ‘a righteous man’ in distress, lest you should encourage him in delusions which you choose to suppose him to be labouring under.

“People seem to suppose that it is the Saviour who will judge the world, if any one does. He distinctly declares that He will not. ‘If any one hear my words, and believe not, *I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.* He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, *hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.*’ John xii. 47, 48. I represent that ‘WORD’ which the Saviour spoke, and I have already judged, and condemned, this country, and the United States, in particular; and

¹ [See 1 Kings xvii. 9–16.]

Christendom, and the World in general. I have for twenty years been a preacher of 'the Righteousness of God' to this generation (as Noah was for a hundred years to his generation), and *I have proved* by actual experiment that none among the men of this generation can be induced to 'enter the kingdom of heaven' until the predicted 'time of trouble, such as was not since there was a nation,' comes suddenly, and compels those who are ready to enter the kingdom of God, to do so at once; and I know not how soon after I leave this country the 'trouble' will come; perhaps immediately, perhaps in about a year's time; but come it must; and the sooner it comes, the sooner it will be over, I suppose.

"Yours faithfully."

The following specimen of the kind of letters which the "judge of the United States in particular, and the World in general," leaves the people favoured by his judgment to send to his friends, may as well supplement his own letter:—

"Mr. (J. of U. S. in p. and the W. in g.)'s name will, I trust, excuse me to you for writing; but my house entirely failed me, and I, with my child, are now really in great want. I write trusting that, after your former kindness to me, you will feel disposed to send me a little assistance.

"I would not have written, but I am seriously in need.

"Please address to me," etc.

26. Whether, however, the judge of the world in general errs most in expecting me to pay the necessary twopences to his hosts, or the world in general itself, in expecting me to pay necessary twopences to its old servants when it has no more need of them, may be perhaps questionable. Here is a paragraph cut out of an application for an hospital vote, which I received the other day:—

"Mr. A., aged seventy-one, has been a subscriber to the Pension Fund forty-five years, the Almshouse Fund eighteen years, and the Orphan Fund four years. He is now, in consequence of his advanced age, and the infirmities attendant on a dislocated shoulder, asthma, and failing sight, incapable of earning sufficient for a subsistence for himself and wife, who is afflicted with chronic rheumatic gout. He was apprenticed to Mr. B., and has worked for Mr. C. D. forty years, and his earnings at present are very small."

27. Next, here is a piece of a letter disclosing another curious form of modern distress, in which the masters and mistresses become dependent for timely aid on their servants. This is at least as old, however, as Miss Edgeworth's time; I think the custom is referred to at the toilette of Miss Georgiana Falconer in Patronage.¹

"Every day makes me bitterly believe more and more what you say about the wickedness of working by fire and steam, and the harm and insidious sapping of true life that comes from large mills and all that is connected with them. One of my servants told my sister to-day (with an apology) that her mother had told her

¹ [Ch. xxvii.; vol. iii. p. 67 (1815 edition): "I remember you had a lavender satin, that I do not see here, Georgiana," said Mrs. Falconer. 'The color did not become me, Ma'am, and I sold it to Lydia.'—*Sold! gave*, perhaps some innocent

in her letter to ask me if I would sell her my children's old clothes, etc.—that indeed many ladies did—her mother had often bought things. Oh! it made me feel horrible. We try to buy strong clothes, and mend them to the last, and then sometimes *give* them away; but *selling* clothes to poor people seems to me dreadful. I never thought ladies and gentlemen would sell their clothes even to shops—till we came to live here, and happened to know of its being done. It surely must be wrong and bad, or I should not feel something in me speaking so strongly against it, as mean and unholy.”

28. A piece of country gossip on bees and birds, with a humiliating passage about my own Coniston country, may refresh us a little after dwelling on these serious topics:—

“A humble cow¹ is I fancy more properly a humbled cow—it is so called in Durham—a cow whose horn is no longer set up on high. A humble or bumble bee is there called a ‘bumbler.’ To bumble in Durham means to go buzzing about: a fussy man would be called a great bumbler. But don’t believe it has no sting; it can sting worse than a honey bee, and all but as badly as a wasp. They used to tell us as children that ‘bumblers’ did not sting, but I know from experience that they do. We used as children to feel that we knew that the little yellow mason bee (?) did not sting, but I have no true knowledge on that point. Do you care to have the common village names of birds? I am afraid I can only remember one or two, but they are universally used in the north.

“The wren which makes the hanging nest lined with feathers is called the feather poke; yellow-hammer, yellow-yowley; golden-crested wren, Christian wren; white-throat, Nanny white-throat; hedge-sparrow, Dickey Diky. I could find more if you cared for them. To wind up, I will send you an anecdote I find among father’s writings, and which refers to *your* country. He is speaking of some time early in 1800. ‘Cock-fighting was then in all its glory. When I was in the neighbourhood of Ulverston, in 18—,* I was told that about the time of which I am writing, a grave ecclesiastical question had been settled by an appeal to a battle with cocks. The chapelry of Pennington was vacant, but there was a dispute who should present a clerk to the vacant benefice,—the vicar of Ulverston, the mother-church, the church-wardens, the four-and-twenty, or the parishioners at large,—and recourse was had to a Welsh Main.’ ”²

29. Finally, the following letter is worth preserving. It succinctly states the impression on the minds of the majority of booksellers that they ought to be able to oblige their customers at my expense. Perhaps in time, the customers may oblige the booksellers by paying them something for

* He does not give the date.

reader may suspect that the young lady meant to say.—No: this buying and selling finery now goes on frequently between a certain class of fashionable maids and mistresses.—And some young ladies are not now ashamed to become old clothes women.”]

¹ [See Letter 51, § 14 (p. 281).]

² [“The Welsh-main consists, we will suppose, of sixteen pairs of cocks; of these the sixteen conquerors are pitted a second time; the eight conquerors of these are pitted a third time; the four conquerors a fourth time; and, lastly, the two conquerors are pitted a fifth time” (S. Pegge in *Archæologia*, 1775, vol. i. p. 149).]

their trouble, openly, instead of insisting on not paying them anything unless they don't know how much it is.

"MR. GEORGE ALLEN.

"SIR,—We will thank you to send us Ruskin's

| | | | |
|---|-------|----|---|
| Aratra Pentelici | £0 | 19 | 0 |
| The Eagle's Nest | 0 | 9 | 6 |
| Relations between Angelo and Tintoret | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| | <hr/> | | |
| | £1 | 9 | 6 |
| | <hr/> | | |
| And continue Account next year Fors Clavigera | 0 | 7 | 0 |
| Cheque enclosed. | £1 | 16 | 6 |
| | <hr/> | | |

"It cannot be too frequently referred to by the trade,—the unjustifiable mode Ruskin has adopted in the sale of his books. It may be profitable to you (as we hope it is), but to the general trade it is nothing but a swindle. Our customer, for instance (whom we cannot afford to disoblige), pays us for this order just £1 16s. 6d.; and we must come back on him for expense of remitting, else we shall lose by the transaction.

"Your obedient Servant."

LETTER 53

THESE BE YOUR GODS¹

BRANTWOOD, *Good Friday*, 1875.

1. I AM ashamed to go on with my own history to-day; for though, as already seen, I was not wholly unacquainted with the practice of fasting, at times of the year when it was not customary with Papists, our Lent became to us a kind of moonlight Christmas, and season of reflected and soft festivity. For our strictly Protestant habits of mind rendering us independent of absolution, on Shrove Tuesday we were chiefly occupied in the preparation of pancakes,—my nurse being dominant on that day over the cook in all things, her especially nutritive art of browning, and fine legerdemain in turning, pancakes, being recognized as inimitable. The interest of Ash-Wednesday was mainly—whether the bits of egg should be large or small in the egg-sauce;—nor do I recollect having any ideas connected with the day's name, until I was puzzled by the French of it when I fell in love with a Roman Catholic French girl, as hereafter to be related:²—only, by the way, let me note, as I chance now to remember, two others of my main occupations of an exciting character in Hunter Street: watching, namely, the dustmen clear out the ash-hole, and the coalmen fill the coal-cellar through the hole in the pavement, which soon became to me, when surrounded by

¹ [Exodus xxxii. 4: see below, § 6. “Thy name in all the Earth” (Psalms viii. 1: see below, § 9) was a rejected title for this Letter.]

² [See *Præterita*, vol. i. ch. x.: the story, however, was not reached in the autobiographical passages of *Fors*, nor was § 1 of this Letter used in *Præterita*.]

its cone of débris, a sublime representation of the crater of a volcanic mountain. Of these imaginative delights I have no room to speak in this *Fors*; nor of the debates which used to be held for the two or three days preceding Good Friday, whether the hot-cross-buns should be plain, or have caraway seeds in them. For, my nurse not being here to provide any such dainties for me, and the black-plague wind which has now darkened the spring for five years,* veiling all the hills with sullen cloud, I am neither in a cheerful nor a religious state of mind; and am too much in the temper of the disciples who forsook Him, and fled,¹ to be able to do justice to the childish innocence of belief, which, in my mother, was too constant to need resuscitation, or take new colour, from fast or festival.

2. Yet it is only by her help, to-day, that I am able to do a piece of work required of me by the letter printed in the second article of this month's correspondence.² It is from a man of great worth, conscientiousness, and kindness;³ but is yet so perfectly expressive of the irreverence, and incapacity of admiration, which maintain and, in great part, constitute, the modern liberal temper, that it makes me feel, more than anything I ever yet met with in human words, how much I owe to my mother for having so exercised me in the Scriptures as to make me grasp them in what my correspondent would call their "concrete

* See my first notice of it in the beginning of the *Fors* of August 1871;⁴ and further account of it in appendix to my Lecture on Glaciers, given at the London Institution this year.⁵

¹ [Matthew xxvi. 56.]

² [That is, § 19: see below, p. 335.]

³ [See further, § 7. Ruskin in his copy identifies the correspondent as Peter Bayne; for whom, see Vol. XVIII. pp. xli., 195, 537.]

⁴ [Letter 8, §§ 1, 2 (Vol. XXVII. p. 132).]

⁵ [It thus appears that Ruskin at this time intended to publish his lecture on Glaciers, as given at the London Institution on March 11, 1875. The lecture was ultimately embodied in *Deucalion* (see Vol. XXVI. p. 89). The intended appendix was not issued, but ultimately became the subject of two lectures in 1884, which were published in that year under the title *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*.]

whole"; and above all, taught me to reverence them, as transcending all thought, and ordaining all conduct.¹

This she effected, not by her own sayings or personal authority; but simply by compelling me to read the book thoroughly, for myself. As soon as I was able to read with fluency, she began a course of Bible work with me, which never ceased till I went to Oxford. She read alternate verses with me, watching, at first, every intonation of my voice, and correcting the false ones, till she made me understand the verse, if within my reach, rightly, and energetically. It might be beyond me altogether; *that* she did not care about; but she made sure that as soon as I got hold of it at all, I should get hold of it by the right end.

In this way she began with the first verse of Genesis and went straight through to the last verse of the Apocalypse; hard names, numbers, Levitical law, and all; and began again at Genesis the next day; if a name was hard, the better the exercise in pronunciation,—if a chapter was tiresome, the better lesson in patience,—if loathsome, the better lesson in faith that there was some use in its being so outspoken. After our chapters (from two to three a day, according to their length, the first thing after breakfast, and no interruption from servants allowed,—none from visitors, who either joined in the reading or had to stay upstairs,—and none from any visitings or excursions, except real travelling), I had to learn a few verses by heart, or repeat, to make sure I had not lost, something of what was already known; and, with the chapters above enumerated (Letter 42²), I had to learn the whole body of the fine old Scottish paraphrases, which are good, melodious, and forceful verse; and to which, together with the Bible itself, I owe the first cultivation of my ear in sound.

¹ ["My mother and the Bible: compare Letter 54, § 6" (p. 345).—*Author's MS. note in his copy.* § 2, from this point onward, and the first few lines of § 3, were used by Ruskin when writing *Præterita*, where they appear, slightly revised as § 46 of vol. i. ch. ii. His autobiographical notes are resumed in Letter 54, § 3 (p. 343).]

² [See § 12 (p. 101).]

3. It is strange that of all the pieces of the Bible which my mother thus taught me, that which cost me most to learn, and which was, to my child's mind, chiefly repulsive—the 119th Psalm—has now become of all the most precious to me, in its overflowing and glorious passion of love for the Law of God: “Oh, how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day; I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep Thy word”;¹—as opposed to the ever-echoing words of the modern money-loving fool: “Oh, how hate I Thy law! it is my abomination all the day; my feet are swift in running to mischief, and I have done all the things I ought not to have done, and left undone all I ought to have done; have mercy upon me, miserable sinner,—and grant that I, worthily lamenting my sins and acknowledging my wretchedness, may obtain of Thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness,²—and give me my long purse here and my eternal Paradise there, all together, for Christ's sake, to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory,” etc.³ And the letter of my liberal correspondent,⁴ pointing out, in the defence of usury (of which he imagines himself acquainted with the history!) how the Son of David hit his father in the exactly weak place, puts it in my mind at once to state some principles respecting the use of the Bible as a code of law, which are vital to the action of the St. George's Company in obedience to it.

4. All the teaching of God, and of the nature He formed round Man, is not only mysterious, but, if received with any warp of mind, deceptive, and intentionally deceptive. The distinct and repeated assertions of this in the conduct and words of Christ are the most wonderful things, it seems to me, and the most terrible, in all the recorded

¹ [Psalms cxix. 97, 101.]

² [Compare Collect for Ash-Wednesday.]

³ [“I read my prayer of the monied man in *Fors* to him” (Carlyle), writes Ruskin in his diary (April 1875), “at which he laughed with sparkling eyes, adding, ‘Yes, Christ and the Holy Ghost are very sure to ratify that arrangement, if it is properly brought before them.’ ”]

⁴ [See below, § 19.]

action of the wisdom of Heaven. “To *you*” (His disciples) “it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom,—but to others, in parables, that, hearing, they might *not* understand.”¹ Now this is written not for the twelve only, but for all disciples of Christ in all ages,—of whom the sign is one and unmistakable: “They have forsaken *all* that they have”; while those who “say they are Jews and are not, but do lie,” or who say they are Christians and are not, but do lie, try to compromise with Christ,—to give Him a part, and keep back a part;—this being the Lie of lies, the Ananias lie, visited always with spiritual death.*

5. There is a curious chapter on almsgiving, by Miss Yonge, in one of the late numbers of the *Monthly Packet* (a good magazine, though, on the whole, and full of nice writing), which announces to *her* disciples, that “at least the tenth of their income is God’s part.”² Now, in the name of the Devil, and of Baal to back him,—are nine parts, then, of all we have—our own? or theirs? The tithe may, indeed, be set aside for some special purpose—out for the maintenance of a priesthood—or as by the St. George’s Company, for distant labour, or any other purpose out of their own immediate range of action. But to the Charity or Alms of men—to Love, and to the God of Love, *all* their substance is due—and all their strength—and all their time. That is the first commandment: Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy strength and soul.³ Yea, says the false disciple—but not with all my money. And of these it is written, after that thirty-third verse of Luke xiv.: “Salt is good; but if the salt have lost his savour, it is

* Isaiah xxviii. 17 and 18.

¹ [Mark iv. 11, 12. The other Bible references in § 4 (in addition to that noted by Ruskin) are Revelation ii. 9, and Acts v. 1.]

² [“Womankind. Ch. XII.—Charity” in the *Monthly Packet* for December 1874, N.S., vol. 18, p. 594: “It seems to be clear that almsgiving, up to the tithe of the means, is a duty. A tithe of the allowance is God’s part.” Ruskin himself had once been a contributor to the magazine: see in a later volume the letter of October 20, 1862, containing “Proverbs on Right Dress.”]

³ [See Matthew xxii. 37, 38.]

neither fit for the land nor the dunghill. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

6. Now in Holbein’s great sermon against wealth, the engraving, in the Dance of Death, of the miser and beggar, he chose for his text the verse: “He that stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, and shall not be heard.”¹ And he shows that the ear is thus deafened by being filled with a murmuring of its own: and how the ear thus becomes only as a twisted shell, with the sound of the far-away ocean of Hell in it for ever, he teaches us, in the figure of the fiend which I engraved for you² in the sixth of these letters,* abortive, fingerless, contemptible, mechanical, incapable;—blowing the winds of death out of its small machine: Behold, *this* is your God, you modern Israel, which has brought you up out of the land of Egypt³ in which your fathers toiled for bread with their not abortive hands; and set your feet in the large room, of Usury, and in the broad road to Death!

7. Now the moment that the Mammon devil gets his bellows put in men’s ears,—however innocent they may be, however free from actual stain of avarice, they become literally deaf to the teaching of true and noble men. My correspondent imagines himself to have read Shakespeare and Goethe;⁴—he cannot understand a sentence of them, or he would have known the meaning of the Merchant of Venice,[†] and of the vision of Plutus and speech of Mephistopheles on the Emperor’s paper-money⁵ in the second part

* The whole woodcut is given in facsimile in the fifth part of *Ariadne Florentina*. [Vol. XXII. p. 416.]

† See *Munera Pulveris*, § 100; and *Ariadne Florentina*, Lecture VI.⁶

¹ [Proverbs xxi. 13.]

² [See Vol. XXVII. p. 112.]

³ [See Exodus xxxii. 4, from which verse the title to this Letter is taken.]

⁴ [For the correspondent (Peter Bayne), see above, p. 317; and for his reference to Shakespeare and Goethe, below, p. 336.]

⁵ [For the vision of Plutus, see Second Part of *Faust*, Act i. sc. 3; and for the Emperor’s paper-money, Act i. sc. 4. For another reference to the vision of Plutus, see Vol. XVII. p. 210.]

⁶ [Vol. XVII. p. 223, and Vol. XXII. p. 439.]

of *Faust*,* and of the continual under-current of similar teaching in it, from its opening in the mountain sunrise, presently commented on by the Astrologer, under the prompting of Mephistopheles,—“the Sun itself is pure Gold,”¹—to the ditch-and-grave-digging scene of its close. He cannot read Xenophon, nor Lucian,—nor Plato, nor Horace, nor Pope,—nor Homer, nor Chaucer—nor Moses, nor David. All these are mere voices of the Night to him; the bought bellows-blower of the *Times* is the only piper who is in tune to his ear.

And the woe of it is that all the curse comes on him merely as one of the unhappy modern mob, infected by the rest; for he is himself thoroughly honest, simple-hearted, and upright: only mischance made him take up literature as a means of life; and so brought him necessarily into all the elements of modern insolent thought: and now, though

*“NARR. Fünftausend Kronen wären mir zu Händen.

MEPH. *Zweibeiniger Schlauch*, bist wieder auferstanden?

NARR. Da seht nur her, ist das wohl Geldes werth?

MEPH. Du hast dafür was Schlund und Bauch begehrt?

NARR. Und kaufen kann ich Acker, Haus und Vieh?

MEPH. Versteht sich! biete nur, das fehlt dir nie!

NARR. Und Schloss mit Wald und Jagd, und Fischbach?

MEPH. Traun!

Ich möchte dich gestrengen Herrn wohl schaun.

NARR. Heute Abend wieg' ich mich in Grundbesitz. (ab.)

MEPH. (*solus*). *Wer zweifelt noch an unsres Narren Witz.*”²

¹ [See Act i. sc. 2. For the final scene, see Act v. sc. 4; in it is the incident of the roses, referred to above, p. 183.]

² [Thus translated by Sir Theodore Martin:—

Fool. Five thousand crowns! and all for me?

Meph. How then!

Thou paunch upon two legs, got up again?

Fool. Not for the first time, but ne'er such luck I've met.

Meph. So great your joy, it puts you in a sweat.

Fool. Look here! And is this money's worth?

Meph. Yes, knave!

You'll get for it what throat and belly crave.

Fool. Can I buy farm, house, cattle, then with this?

Meph. Of course! Just bid! 'Twill never come amiss.

Fool. What! castle, forest-chace, and fish-stream?

Meph. Good!

I'd like to see you a great lord, I would!

Fool. This night I'll sleep within my own domain! [*Exit.*

Meph. (solus). Who still can doubt, our fool doth bear a brain?]

David and Solomon, Noah, Daniel, and Job, altogether say one thing, and the correspondent of the *Times* another, it is David, Solomon, and Daniel who are Nars to him.¹

8. Now the Parables of the New Testament are so constructed that to men in this insolent temper, they are *necessarily* misleading.² It is very awful that it should be so; but that is the fact. Why prayer should be taught by the story of the unjust judge; use of present opportunity by that of the unjust steward; and use of the gifts of God by that of the hard man who reaped where he had not sown,³—there is no human creature wise enough to know;—but there are the traps set; and every slack judge, cheating servant, and gnawing usurer may, if he will, approve himself in these.

“Thou knewest that I was a hard man.”⁴ Yes—and if God were also a hard God, and reaped where *He* had not sown—the conclusion would be true that earthly usury was right. But which of God’s gifts to us are *not* His own?

The meaning of the parable, heard with ears unbesotted, is this:—“*You*, among hard and unjust men, yet suffer their claim to the return of what they never gave; you suffer *them* to reap, where they have not strawed.—But to me, the Just Lord of your life—whose is the breath in your nostrils,⁵ whose the fire in your blood, who gave you light and thought, and the fruit of earth and the dew of heaven,⁶—to me, of all this gift, will you return no fruit but only the dust of your bodies, and the wreck of your souls?”

9. Nevertheless, the Parables have still their living use, as well as their danger; but the Psalter has become practically dead; and the form of repeating it in the daily service only deadens the phrases of it by familiarity. I have occasion to-day, before going on with any work for

¹ [For a later reference to this passage, see Letter 94, § 2 (Vol. XXIX. p. 480).]

² [See above, p. 99.]

³ [Luke xviii. 2; xvi. 1; xix. 12.]

⁴ [Luke xix. 22. For another passage in which Ruskin replies to the use made of this text in defence of usury, see (in a later volume of this edition) *Usury: a Reply and a Rejoinder*, § 7.]

⁵ [Genesis ii. 7.]

⁶ [See Genesis xxvii. 39.]

Agnes,¹ to dwell on another piece of this writing of the father of Christ,—which, read in its full meaning, will be as new to us as the first-heard song of a foreign land.

I will print it first in the Latin, and in the letters and form in which it was read by our Christian sires.²

THE EIGHTH PSALM. THIRTEENTH-CENTURY TEXT*

Domine dominas noster q̄m
admirabile est nomen tuum
in universa terra. Quoniam ele
vata est magnificentia tua super
celos. Et ore infantium ī lacten
cium p̄fecisti laudem p̄pter ini
micos tuos ut destruas inimicū
ī ultorem. Quoniam videbo celos
tuos opera digitar. tuar. lunam ī
stellas que tu fundasti Quid est h̄
quod memot es ejus, an̄ filius h̄ris
quia visitas eum. Minuisti eum
paulatim ab angelis, gloria ī h̄o
nore coronasti eum ī desitisti eum
super opera manuum tuar. Quia
subjecisti sub pedibus ejus, obes ī bo
ves unib̄sas, insuper t̄ p̄ceda cam
pi. Volucres celi ī pisces maris q̄
p̄ambulant senitas maris. Domi
ne dominus noster quam admi
rabile est nomen tuum in unib̄sa
terra.

* I have written it out from a perfect English psalter of early thirteenth-century work, with St. Edward, and St. Edmund, and St. Cuthbert in its calendar; it probably having belonged to the cathedral of York. The writing is very full, but quick; meant for service more than beauty; illuminated sparingly, but with extreme care. Its contractions are curiously

¹ [See Letter 50, § 4 (p. 256).]

² [The editors are unable to identify the particular Psalter here used by Ruskin. The print in the text is that given by him, and followed in all editions of *Fors Clavigera* hitherto. It does not, however, at all closely resemble "the letters and form" of a thirteenth-century MS. The "t" for the common "&" and the "au" for "aut" may perhaps be examples of the "curiously varied and capricious

quam fecit

Convertetur dolor eius in caput eius: & in uertice
ipsius iniquitas eius descendet.

Confitebor dño secundū iusticiā eius: & psallā

Nomine dñi altissimi

Qomne dñs noster: quā admirabile
est nomen tuū in uniuersa terra

Qm̄ deuata est magnificentia tua: sup celos

Rex ore infantū & lactentū p̄fecisti laudē p̄pter
mimicos tuos: ut destruas inimicū & uitorem.

Qm̄ uidebo celos tuos opa digitorū tuorum:

lunā & stellas quas tu fundasti.

Quid est homo quod memor es eius: aut filius

hominis quā uisitasti eum.

Munisti eū paulo m̄m̄ ab angelis: gloria & honore

coronasti eū & constituisti eū sup opa manū tuarū.

Minima subiecisti sub pedibz eius: oues & boues un-

iuersas: insup & pecora campi.

Sol uires celi: & pisces maris qui p̄ambulant

fermas maris.

Qm̄ dñs noster: quā admirabile est
nomen tuū in uniuersa terra.

Confitebor tibi dñe in toto corde meo.

I translate literally; the Septuagint confirming the Vulgate in the differences from our common rendering, several of which are important.

- “1. Oh Lord, our *own* Lord, how admirable is thy Name in all the earth!
2. Because thy magnificence is set above the heavens.
3. Out of the mouth of children and sucklings thou hast perfected praise, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest scatter the enemy and avenger.
4. Since I see thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast founded.
5. What is man that thou rememberest him, or the son of man, that thou lookest on him?
6. Thou hast lessened him a little from the angels; thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over all the works of thy hands.
7. Thou hast put all things under his feet; sheep, and all oxen—and the flocks of the plain.
8. The birds of the heaven and the fish of the sea, and all that walk in the paths of the sea.
9. Oh Lord, our *own* Lord, how admirable is thy Name in all the earth!”

10. Note in Verses 1 and 9.—Domine, Dominus noster; our *own* Lord;¹ Κύριε, ó Κύριος ήμών; claiming thus the

varied and capricious: thus, here in the fifth verse, c in constituisti stands for “con” merely by being turned the wrong way. I prefer its text, nevertheless, to that of more elaborate MSS., for when very great attention is paid to the writing, there are apt to be mistakes in the words. In the best thirteenth-century service-book I have,² “tuos” in the third verse is written “meos.”

contractions” of which Ruskin speaks, but a reversed “c” for “con” is not uncommon. The letters of the text were, no doubt, the best the printers could do with the type at their disposal in the way of following Ruskin’s transcript of the MS. The text has hitherto had (in line 13) “paulominu;” this is here corrected to “paulominus,” as the terminal “s” had clearly been misread as a semicolon. “Ejus” is unusual for “eius,” and the Vulgate (which is the text followed by the scribes) has, in line 12, *quoniam* (“qum”), not *quia*. In this edition, in order that the reader may in fact have before him “the letters and form” of the psalm as it appears on an actual page of thirteenth-century MS., a plate is here inserted, giving by photographic process the passage in question from a MS. in the British Museum. The plate is made from f. 19 of the Royal MSS. 1 D x; the Psalter has in the Kalendar Edward, March 18, Edmund, November 20, and Cuthbert, March 20—as have nearly all English books (written generally for private individuals, and not for churches or cathedrals), whatever their *provenance*. With the analysis of the Psalm here given, Letter 75, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 58), should be compared, where Ruskin contrasts the Eighth with the Nineteenth Psalm.]

¹ [In italicising the word in his own copy of *Fors*, Ruskin notes “Compare Le Beau Dieu d’Amiens” (*Bible of Amiens*, ch. iv. § 3).]

² [The editors are unable to identify the thirteenth-century service-book, referred to by Ruskin.]

Fatherhood. The “Lord our Governor” of the Prayer-Book entirely loses the meaning. How *admirable* is Thy Name! θαυμαστον, “wonderful,” as in Isaiah, “His name shall be called Wonderful, the Counsellor.”¹ Again our translation “excellent” loses the meaning.

Verse 2.—Thy magnificence. Literally, “thy greatness in working” (Gk. μεγαλοπρέπεια—splendour in aspect), distinguished from mere “glory” or greatness in fame.

Verse 3.—Sidney has it:—

“From sucklings hath thy honour sprung,
Thy force hath flowed from babies’ tongue.”²

The meaning of this difficult verse is given by implication in Matt. xxi. 16.³ And again, that verse, like all the other great teachings of Christ, is open to a terrific misinterpretation;⁴—namely, the popular evangelical one, that children should be teachers and preachers,—(“cheering mother, cheering father, from the Bible true”⁵). The lovely meaning of the words of Christ, which this vile error hides, is that children, *remaining children*, and uttering, out of their own hearts, such things as their Maker puts there, are pure in sight, and perfect in praise.*

Verse 4.—The moon and the stars which thou hast founded—“fundasti”—έθεμελίωσαζ. It is much more than “ordained”: the idea of stable placing in space being the main one in David’s mind. And it remains to this day the wonder of wonders in all wise men’s minds. The earth

* Compare the *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 47 [Vol. XVIII. p. 428.]

¹ [Isaiah ix. 6.]

² [See *Rock Honeycomb* for Ruskin’s notes on Sidney’s version.]

³ [“And said unto him, Hearst thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?”]

⁴ [See above, pp. 99, 323; and below, p. 667.]

⁵ [See Letter 50, § 8 (p. 260).]

swings round the sun,—yes, but what holds the sun? The sun swings round something else. Be it so,—then, what else?

Sidney:—

“When I upon the heavens do look,
Which all from thee their essence took,
When moon and stars my *thought* beholdeth,
Whose life no life but of thee holdeth.”

Verse 5.—That thou lookest on him; ἐπισκέπτῃ αὐτόν, “art a bishop to him.” The Greek word is the same in the verse “I was sick and ye *visited* me.”¹

Verse 6.—Thou hast lessened him;—perhaps better, thou hast made him, but by a little, less than the angels: ἡλάττωσας αὐτόν βραχύ τι. The inferiority is not of present position merely, but of scale in being.

Verse 7.—Sheep, and all oxen, and the *flocks of the plain*: κτήνη τοῦ πεδίου. Beasts for service in the plain traversing great spaces,—camel and horse. “Pecora,” in Vulgate, includes all “pecunia,” or property in animals.²

Verse 8.—In the Greek, “that walk the paths of the seas”³ is only an added description of fish, but the meaning of it is without doubt to give an expanded sense—a generalization of fish, so as to include the whale, seal, tortoise, and their like. Neither whales nor seals, however, from what I hear of modern fishing, are likely to walk the paths of the sea much longer; and Sidney’s verse becomes mere satire:—

“The bird, free burgesse of the aire,
The fish, of sea the native heire,
And what things els of waters traceth
The unworn pathes, his rule embraceth.
Oh Lord, that rul’st our mortal lyne,
How through the world thy name doth shine!”

¹ [Matthew xxv. 36.]

² [Compare Vol. XIX. p. 323.]

³ [τα διαπορευόμενα τριβους θαλασσων. In the Vulgate, “*pisces maris qui perambulant semitas maris.*” In the version on p. 325 Ruskin substitutes “in” for the “through” in the English version.]

11. These being, as far as I can trace them, the literal meanings of each verse, the entire purport of the psalm is that the Name, or *knowledge*, of God was admirable to David, and the power and kingship of God recognizable to him, through the power and kingship of man, His vicegerent on the earth, as the angels are in heavenly places.¹ And that final purport of the psalm is evermore infallibly true,—namely, that when men rule the earth rightly, and feel the power of their own souls over it, and its creatures, as a beneficent and authoritative one, they recognize the power of higher spirits also; and the Name of God becomes “hallowed” to them, admirable and wonderful; but if they abuse the earth and its creatures, and become mere contentious brutes upon it, instead of order-commanding kings, the Name of God ceases to be admirable to them, and His power to be felt; and gradually, license and ignorance prevailing together, even what memories of law or Deity remain to them become intolerable; and in the exact contrary to David’s—“My soul thirsteth for God, for the Living God; when shall I come and appear before God?”²—you have the consummated desire and conclusive utterance of the modern republican:—

“S’il y avait un Dieu, il faudrait le fusiller.”³

12. Now, whatever chemical or anatomical facts may appear, to our present scientific intelligences, inconsistent with the Life of God, the historical fact is that no happiness nor power has ever been attained by human creatures unless in that thirst for the presence of a Divine King; and that nothing but weakness, misery, and death have ever resulted from the desire to destroy their King, and to have thieves and murderers released to them instead.⁴ Also this fact is historically certain,—that the Life of God is

¹ [See Letter 75, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 57), where Ruskin refers to this summary of the Eighth Psalm and relates it to the Nineteenth.]

² [Psalms xlii. 2.]

³ [An adaptation of the well-known saying of Voltaire (*Epîtres*, 96): “Si Dieu n’existait pas, il faudrait l’inventer.” Compare, below, pp. 735–736.]

⁴ [Matthew xxvii.]

not to be discovered by reasoning, but by obeying;¹ that on doing what is plainly ordered, the wisdom and presence of the Orderer become manifest; that only so His way can be known on earth, and His saving health among all nations;² and that on disobedience always follows darkness, the forerunner of death.

13. And now for corollary on the eighth Psalm, read the first and second of Hebrews, and to the twelfth verse of the third, slowly; fitting the verse of the psalm—"lunam et stellas quæ tu fundasti," with "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth";³ and then noting how the subjection which is merely of the lower creature, in the psalm, becomes the subjection of all things, and at last of death itself, in the victory foretold to those who are faithful to their Captain, made perfect through sufferings; their Faith, observe, consisting primarily in closer and more constant obedience than the Mosaic law required,—“For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received its just recompense of reward, how shall *we* escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” The full argument is: “Moses, with but a little salvation, saved you from earthly bondage, and brings brought you to an eternal land of life; Christ, with a great salvation, saves you from soul bondage, and brings you to an eternal land of life; but, if he who despised the little salvation, and its lax law (left lax because of the hardness of your hearts), died without mercy, how shall we escape, if now, with hearts of flesh, we despise so great salvation, refuse the Eternal Land of Promise, and break the stricter and relaxless law of Christian desert-pilgrimage?” And if these threatenings and promises still remain obscure to us, it is only because we have resolutely refused to obey the orders which were not obscure, and quenched the Spirit which was already given. How far the world

¹ [See “Readings in *Modern Painters*,” § 77 (Vol. XXII. pp. 535–536). Compare also pp. 156, 343.]

² [Psalms lxxvii. 2.]

³ [Hebrews i. 10; later references in § 13 are to *ibid.*, ii. 10, 2, 3.]

around us may be yet beyond our control, only because a curse has been brought upon it by our sloth and infidelity, none of us can tell; still less may we dare either to praise or accuse our Master, for the state of the creation over which He appointed us kings, and in which we have chosen to live as swine. One thing we know, or may know, if we will,—that the heart and conscience of man are divine; that in his perception of evil, in his recognition of good, he is himself a God manifest in the flesh; that his joy in love, his agony in anger, his indignation at injustice, his glory in self-sacrifice, are all eternal, indisputable proofs of his unity with a great Spiritual Head; that in these, and not merely in his more availing form, or manifold instinct, he is king over the lower animate world;¹ that, so far as he denies or forfeits these, he dishonours the Name of his Father, and makes it unholy and unadmirable in the earth; that so far as he confesses, and rules by, these, he hallows and makes admirable the Name of his Father, and receives, in his sonship, fulness of power with Him, whose are the kingdom, the power, and the glory, world without end.²

14. And now we may go back to our bees' nests, and to our school-benches, in peace;³ able to assure our little Agnes, and the like of her, that, whatever hornets and locusts and serpents may have been made for, this at least is true,—that we may set, and are commanded to set, an eternal difference between ourselves and them, by neither carrying daggers at our sides, nor poison in our mouths: and that the choice for us is stern, between being kings over all these creatures, by innocence to which they cannot be exalted, or more weak, miserable and detestable than they, in resolute guilt to which they cannot fall.

15. Of their instincts, I believe we have rather held too high than too low estimate, because we have not enough

¹ [Compare Ruskin's explanation of an inscription on the mosaics of St. Mark's, Vol. XXIV, pp. 302–304.]

² [Matthew vi. 13, and Ephesians iii. 21.]

³ [See above, p. 308.]

recognized or respected our own. We do not differ from the lower creatures by not possessing instinct, but by possessing will and conscience, to order our innate impulses to the best ends. The great lines of Pope on this matter, however often quoted fragmentarily, are I think scarcely ever understood in their conclusion.* Let us, for once, read them to their end:—

“See him, from Nature rising slow to Art!
 To copy instinct then was reason’s part:
 Thus then to man the voice of Nature spake:
 ‘Go,—from the creatures thy instructions take,
 Learn from the birds what food the thickets yield,
 Learn from the beasts the physic of the field,
 Thy arts of building from the bee receive,
 Learn of the mole to plough, the worm to weave.
 Learn of the little nautilus to sail,
 Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.
 Here too all forms of social union find,
 And hence let reason, late, instruct mankind.
 Here subterranean works and cities see,
 There, towns aerial on the waving tree;
 Learn each small people’s genius, policies,
 The ants’ republic, and the realm of bees:
 How those in common all their wealth bestow,
 And anarchy without confusion know;
 And these for ever, though a monarch reign,
 Their sep’rate cells and properties maintain.
 Mark what unvaried laws preserve each state—
 Laws wise as nature, and as fixed as fate;
 In vain thy reason finer webs shall draw,
 Entangle justice in her net of law,
 And right, too rigid, harden into wrong—
 Still for the strong too weak, the weak too strong.
 Yet go, and thus o’er all the creatures sway,
 Thus let the wiser make the rest obey,
 And for those arts mere instinct could afford
 Be crowned as monarchs, or as gods ador’d, ”¹

There is a trace, in this last couplet, of the irony, and chastising enforcement of humiliation, which generally

* I am sensitive for other writers in this point, my own readers being in the almost universal practice of choosing any bits they may happen to fancy in what I say, without ever considering what it was said for.

¹ [*Essay on Man*, iii. 169–197.]

characterize the *Essay on Man*; but, though it takes this colour, the command thus supposed to be uttered by the voice of Nature, is intended to be wholly earnest. “In the arts of which I set you example in the unassisted instinct of lower animals, I assist *you* by the added gifts of will and reason; be therefore, knowingly, in the deeds of Justice, kings under the Lord of Justice, while in the works of your hands, you remain happy labourers under His guidance

Who taught the nations of the field and wood
To shun their poison, and to choose their food,
Prescient, the tides or tempests to withstand,
Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand.”¹

16. Nor has ever any great work been accomplished by human creatures, in which instinct was not the principal mental agent, or in which the methods of design could be defined by rule, or apprehended by reason. It is therefore that agency through mechanism destroys the powers of art, and sentiments of religion, together.

And it will be found ultimately by all nations, as it was found long ago by those who have been leaders in human force and intellect, that the initial virtue of the race consists in the acknowledgment of their own lowly nature and submission to the laws of higher being. “Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,”² is the first truth we have to learn of ourselves; and to till the earth out of which we were taken, our first duty: in that labour, and in the relations which it establishes between us and the lower animals, are founded the conditions of our highest faculties and felicities: and without that labour, neither reason, art, nor peace, are possible to man.

But in that labour, accepting bodily death, appointed to us in common with the lower creatures, in noble humility; and kindling day by day the spiritual life, granted to us beyond that of the lower creatures, in noble pride, all¹ [*Essay on Man*, iii. 99–102.]

² [Genesis iii. 19.]

wisdom, peace, and unselfish hope and love, may be reached, on earth, as in heaven, and our lives indeed be but a little lessened from those of the angels.

17. As I am finishing this *Fors*, I note in the journals accounts of new insect-plague on the vine;¹ and the sunshine on my own hills this morning (7th April), still impure, is yet the first which I have seen spread from the daybreak upon them through all the spring; so dark it has been with blight of storm,—so redolent of disease and distress; of which, and its possible causes, my friends seek as the only wise judgment, that of the journals aforesaid. Here, on the other hand, are a few verses* of the traditional wisdom of that king whose political institutions were so total a failure (according to my supremely sagacious correspondent²), which nevertheless appear to me to reach the roots of these, and of many other hitherto hidden things.

“His heart is ashes, his hope is more vile than earth, and his life of less value than clay.

Forasmuch as he knew not his Maker, and him that inspired into him an active soul, and breathed in him a living spirit.

But they counted our life a pastime, and our time here a market for gain; for, say they, we must be getting every way, though it be by evil means.†

Yea, they worshipped those beasts also that are most hateful (for being compared together, some are worse than others, ‡ neither are they

* Collated out of Sapiaentia xv. and xvi.³

† Compare Jeremiah ix. 6; in the Septuagint, τοκος επι τοκω, και δολος επι δολω: “usury on usury, and trick upon trick.”

‡ The instinct for the study of parasites, modes of disease, the lower forms of undeveloped creatures, and the instinctive processes of digestion and generation, rather than the varied and noble habit of life,—which shows itself so grotesquely in modern science, is the precise counterpart of the forms of idolatry (as of beetle and serpent, rather than of clean or innocent creatures), which were in great part the cause of final corruption in ancient mythology and morals.

¹ [See, e.g., a paragraph in the *Times* of April 3, 1875 (p. 10), on the “Phylloxera Vastatrix.”]

² [See below, § 19.]

³ [xv. 10–12, 18, 19; xvi. 1, 8, 10, 13, 16, 20, 21, 24–28.]

beautiful¹ in respect of beasts); but they went without the praise of God, and his blessing.

Therefore by the like were they punished worthily, and by the multitude of beasts tormented.

And in this thou madest thine enemies confess, that it is thou who deliverest them from all evil.

But thy sons not the very teeth of venomous dragons overcame: for thy mercy was ever by them, and healed them.

For thou hast power of life and death: thou ledest to the gates of hell, and bringest up again.

For the ungodly, that denied to know thee, were scourged by the strength of thine arm: with strange rains, hails, and showers, were they persecuted, that they could not avoid, for through fire were they consumed.

Instead whereof thou feddest thine own people with angels' food, and didst send them, from heaven, bread prepared without their labour, able to content every man's delight, and agreeing to every taste.

For thy sustenance declared thy sweetness unto thy children, and serving to the appetite of the eater, tempered itself to every man's liking.

For the creature that serveth thee, who art the Maker, increaseth his strength against the unrighteous for their punishment, and abateth his strength for the benefit of such as put their trust in thee.

Therefore even then was it altered into all fashions, and was obedient to thy grace, that nourisheth all things, according to the desire of them that had need:

That thy children, O Lord, whom thou lovest, might know that it is not the growing of fruits that nourisheth man: but that it is thy word, which preserveth them that put their trust in thee.

For that which was not destroyed of the fire, being warmed with a little sunbeam, soon melted away:

That it might be known, that we must prevent the sun to give thee thanks, and at the dayspring pray unto thee."

¹ [Here Ruskin omits the words "so much as to be desired."]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

“THE PARSONAGE, WERRINGTON, PETERBOROUGH,
“April 7, 1875.

18. “MY DEAR SIR,—Your lady correspondent¹ brings out in her own experience that sound Christian truth, of which the condemnable doctrines of ‘substitution’ and ‘vicarious righteousness’ are but the perversions. Her experience shows how true it is that one man may so live and suffer that others shall be morally the better for his life and suffering.

“Such a man’s righteousness is ‘imputed’ because really *imparted** to those who have faith in him.

“Of Felix Neff I know less than I ought, but if his ministry tended to bring more sweetness and light into your correspondent’s life, surely his influence in her mind is moral and healthful.

“I am very faithfully yours,

EDWARD Z. LYTTEL.

“JOHN RUSKIN, Esq.”

19. I transgress the laws of courtesy, in printing, without asking the writer’s permission, part of a letter which follows: but my correspondent is not, as far as I know him, a man who shrinks from publicity, or who would write in a private letter anything on general subjects which he would be unwilling openly to maintain ; while the letter itself is so monumental as a type of the condition to which the modern average literary mind has been reduced, in its reading of authoritative classical authors, and touches so precisely on points which it happens to be my immediate business to set at rest in the minds of many of my readers, that I cannot but attribute to the Third Fors the direct inspiration of the epistle—and must leave on her hands what blame may be attached to its publication. I had been expressing some surprise to my correspondent (an acquaintance of long standing) at his usually bright and complacent temper; and making some inquiry about his views respecting modern usury, knowing him to have read, at least for literary purposes, large portions of the Old Testa-ment. He replies:—

“I am sure I would not be wiser if I were ‘more uncomfortable’ in my mind; I am perfectly sure, if I can ever do good to any mortal, it will be by calm working, patient thinking, not by running, or raging, or weeping, or wailing. But

* If my good correspondent will try practically the difference in the effect on the minds of the next two beggars he meets, between imputing a penny to the one, and imparting it to the other, he will receive a profitable lesson both in religion and English.

Of Felix Neff’s influence, past and present, I will take other occasion to speak.²

¹ [See Letter 52, § 24 (p. 312).]

² [But see above, p. 311 *n.*]

for this humour, which I fancy I caught from Shakespeare and Goethe, the sorrow of the world would drive me mad.

“You ask what I think ‘the Psalmist’ means by ‘usury.’ I find from Cruden that usury is mentioned only in the fifteenth Psalm. That is a notable and most beautiful lyric, quite sufficient to demonstrate the superiority, in spirituality and morality, of the Hebrew religion to anything Greek. But the bit about usury is pure nonsense—the only bit of nonsense in the piece. Nonsense, because the singer has no notion whatever of the employment of money for the *common* benefit of lender and borrower. As the Hebrew monarchy was politically a total and disastrous failure, I should not expect any opinion worth listening to from a psalmist, touching directly or indirectly on the organisation of industry. Jesus Christ and Matthew the publican lived in a time of extended intercourse and some commerce; accordingly, in Matthew xxv., verse 27, you have a perfect statement of the truth about usury: ‘Thou oughtest to have put my money to the exchangers, and at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.’ Ricardo, with all Lombard Street to help him, could not improve upon that. A legitimate, useful, profitable use of money is to accommodate strangers who come with money that will not circulate in the country. The exchanger gives them current money; they pay a consideration for the convenience; and out of this comes the legitimate profit to be divided between lender and borrower. The rule which applies to one fruitful use of money will apply to a thousand, and, between wise lending and honest borrowing, swamp and forest become field and garden, and mountains wave with corn. Some professor or other had written what seemed outrageous rubbish; you confuted or thrust aside, in an early *Fors*, that rubbish;¹ but against legitimate interest, usury, call it what you like, I have never heard any argument. Mr. Sillar’s tracts I have never seen,—he does not advertise, and I have not the second sight.

“My view of the grievous abuses in the publishing and bookselling trades has not altered. But, since writing you first on the subject, I have had careful conversations with publishers, and have constantly pondered the matter; and though I do not see my way to any complete reform, I cannot entertain hope from your methods.

“I am tired, being still very weak. It would only bother you if I went on. Nothing you have ever written has, I think, enabled me to get so near comprehending you as your picture of yourself learning to read and write in last *Fors*. You can see an individual concrete fact better than any man of the generation; but an invisible fact, an abstraction, an *average*, you have, I fancy, been as incapable of seeing as of seeing through a stone wall. Political Economy is the science of social averages.

“Ever affectionately and faithfully yours.

“*P.S.* (Sunday morning).—Some fancy has been haunting me in the night of its being presumptuous, or your thinking it presumptuous, in me to say that David, or whoever wrote the fifteenth Psalm, spoke, on the subject of interest, pure nonsense. After carefully going over the matter again, I believe that I am accurately correct. Not knowing what lending and borrowing, as a normal industrial transaction, or trading transaction, was, the Psalmist spoke in vague ethical terms, meaning ‘you should be friendly to your neighbour’; just as a lady economist of to-day might shriek against the pawnshop, which, with all its defects, had, in capacity of Poor Man’s Bank, saved many a child, or woman, or man, from sheer starvation. Not understanding the matter, the Psalmist could not distinguish between use and abuse, and so talked nonsense. It is exquisitely interesting to me to observe that Christ hits the Psalmist exactly on the point where he goes wrong. Το αργυριον αυτων ονκ εδωκεν επι τοκοω, says the Psalmist; Πονηρε δονλε . . . εδει ουν σε βαλειν το αργυριοσ μου τοις τραπεζιταισ, και ελθων εγω εκομισαμην αν εμον

¹ [The reference is presumably to the analysis of Fawcett’s doctrine of Interest in Letter 18 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 316 *seq.*.)]

σὺν τῷ, says Christ.¹ The use of the *same word* in the Septuagint (the only Old Testament circulating in Palestine in Christ's time) and in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, to denote in the one case what no good man would take, in the other, what it was a flagrant dereliction of duty *not* to secure, is most precious as illustrating the simple common-sense with which Christ used the old Scriptures, and the infinite falsity of the modern doctrine of infallibility, whether of church, book, or man. One of those transcendencies of rightness which I find in *Fors* (amid things about Marmontel and Drury Lane, and Darwin and Huxley, worthy only of a Psalmist or pretty economist of fifteen) was your idea of policemen-bishops.² I always agree also with what you say about the entirely obsolete and useless bishops at £5000 a-year. . . . But what I was going to say is, that you ought to ask your bishop, or the whole bench of them, to find a place, in their cart-loads of sermons, for one on 'usury,'* as condemned by the Psalmist and enjoined by Christ. Compare Luke xix., ver. 23. The only sound basis of banking is the fruitful, industrial use of money. I by no means maintain that the present banking system of Europe is safe and sound."

20. I submitted the proof of this *Fors* to my correspondent, and think it due to him and to my readers to print, with the above letter, also the following portions of that which he sent in gentle reply. So far as I have misconceived or misrepresented him, he knows me to be sorry. For the rest, our misconceptions of each other are of no moment: the misconception, by either, of the nature of profit by the loan of money, or tools, is of moment to every one over whom we have influence; we neither of us have any business to be wrong in that matter; and there are few on which it is more immediately every man's business to be right.

"Remonstrance were absurd, where misconception is so total as yours. My infidelity is simply that I worship Christ, thanking every one who gives me any glimpse that enables me to get nearer Christ's meaning. In this light, what you say of a hidden sense or drift in the parables interests me profoundly; but the more I think of the question of interest, the more I feel persuaded that Christ distinguished the use from the abuse. Tradition, almost certainly authentic, imputes to Him the saying γινεσθε τραπεζίταιδοκιμοί (see M. Arnold's article in March *Contemporary*³), and I don't see how there can be honourable bankers,—men living honourably by banking,—if *all* taking of interest is wrong. You speak of my 'supreme confidence' in my own opinions. I absolutely have confidence only in the resolution to keep my eyes open for light and, if I can help it, not to be to-day exactly where I was yesterday. I have not only read, but lived in (as a very atmosphere), the works of men whom you say I went to because somebody said it was fine to do so. They have taught me some comprehensiveness, some tolerance, some moderation in judging even the mob. They have taught me to consume my own smoke, and it is this consumption of my own smoke which you seem to have mistaken for confidence in my opinions. Which prophet, from Moses to Carlyle, would not *you* confess to have been sometimes in the wrong? I said that I worship Christ. In Him I realise, so far as I can realise, God. Therefore I speak not of Him. But the very key-stone of any arch of notions in my mind is

* See the note below, § 25 [p. 340].

¹ [Psalms xv. 5; Matthew xxv. 27.]

² [See above, pp. 242–243.]

³ ["Review of Objections to *Literature and Dogma*" (IV.), in the *Contemporary Review*, March 1875, vol. 25, p. 522 (reprinted in *God and the Bible*, 1875, p. 216): "The saying of Christ, *Be ye approved bankers*, quoted in the pseudo-Clementine Homilies and the Apostolical Constitutions, quoted by the Church historians Eusebius and Socrates, by Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Ambrose, and Jerome."]

that inspiration is one of the mightiest and most blessed of forces, one of the most real of facts, but that infallibility is the error of errors. From no prophet, from no book, do I take what I please and leave what I please; but, applying all the lights I have, I learn from each as wisely as, with my powers and my lights, is possible for me.

“Affectionately yours.”

21. I have received, “with the respects of the author,” a pamphlet on the Crystal Palace;¹ which tells me, in its first sentence, that the Crystal Palace is a subject which every cultivated Englishman has at heart; in its second, that the Crystal Palace is a household word, and is the loftiest moral triumph of the world; and in its third, that the Palace is declining, it is said,—verging towards decay. I have not heard anything for a long time which has more pleased me; and beg to assure the author of the pamphlet in question that I never get up at Herne Hill after a windy night without looking anxiously towards Norwood in the hope that “the loftiest moral triumph of the world” may have been blown away.

22. I find the following lovely little scene translated into French from the Dutch (M. J. Rigeveld, Amsterdam, C. L. Brinkman, 1875), in a valuable little periodical for ladies, *L'Espérance* of Geneva,² in which the entirely good purpose of the editor will, I doubt not, do wide service, in spite of her adoption of the popular error of the desirability of feminine independence.

“A PROPOS D'UNE PAIRE DE GANTS

“Qu'y a-t-il, Elise?” dit Madame, en se tournant du côté d'une fenetre ouverte, où elle entend quelque bruit. ‘Oh! moins que rien, maman!’ répond sa fille aînée, en train de faire la toilette des cadets, pour la promenade et le concert. ‘Ce que c'est, maman?’ crie un des petits garçons, ‘c'est que Lolotte ne veut pas mettre des gants.’ ‘Elle dit qu'elle a assez chaud sans cela,’ reprend un autre, ‘et qu'elle ne trouve pas même joli d'avoir des gants.’ Et chacun de rire. Un des rapporteurs continue: ‘Elise veut qu'elle le fasse par convenance; mais Lolotte pretend que la peau humaine est plus convenable qu'une peau de rat.’ Cette boutade excite de nouveau l'hilarité de la compagnie. ‘Quelle idee, Lolotte,’ dit son pere d'un ton enjoué: ‘montre-toi donc!’

“Apparemment Lolotte n'est pas d'humeur à obéir; mais les garçons ne lui laissent pas le choix et la poussent en avant. La voilà donc, notre héroïne. C'est une fillette d'environ quatorze ans, dont les yeux pétillent d'esprit et de vie; on voit qu'elle aime à user largement de la liberté que lui laisse encore son âge, pour dire son opinion sur tout ce qui lui passe par la tête sans consequence aucune. Mais bien qu'elle soit forte dans son opinion *anti-gantière*, l'enfant est tant soit peu confuse, et ne paraît pas portée à défendre sa cause en présence d'un étranger. ‘Quoi donc,’ lui dit son pere, en la prenant par la taille, ‘tu ne veux pas porter des gants, parce qu'ils sont faits de peaux de rats! Je ne te croyais pas si folle. Le rat est mort et oublié depuis longtemps, et sa peau est glacée.’—‘Non, papa, ce n'est pas ça.’—‘Qu'est-ce donc, mon enfant? Tu es trop grande fille pour ces manieres sans facon. Ne veux-tu pas être une demoiselle comme il faut?’ ‘Et

¹ [A “restoration” or “reconstruction” of the Palace was at this time being much discussed. The particular pamphlet here referred to by Ruskin is not identifiable with certainty; his description applies in substance, though not in phrases, to *The Past, Present, and Future of the Crystal Palace*, by A. G. E. Heine (Effingham Wilson, 1874. For Ruskin's views on the Palace, see (among other places) Vol. XII. p. 418; Vol. XVIII. p. 243; and Vol. XIX. p. 217.]

² [To this paper, the monthly organ of the “Association des Femmes,” Ruskin had addressed a letter in 1873 (reprinted in a later volume of this edition).]

ces petites mains qui touchent si bien du piano,' reprend le visiteur, désireux de faire oublier la gêne que cause sa présence, par un mot gracieux. 'Ne veux-tu pas plutôt renoncer à la musique, et devenir sarcleuse?' lui demande son père.—'Non, papa, point du tout. Je ne puis pas dire au juste ma pensée. . . .' Et elle se dégagea doucement de ses bras; et en se sauvant, grommela: 'Mort aux gants, et vive la civilisation!' On rit encore un peu de l'enfant bizarre; puis on parle d'autres choses, et l'on se prépare pour la promenade. Lolotte a mis les gants en question, 'pour plaire à maman,' et personne ne s'en occupe plus.

"Mais l'étranger avait saisi au passage sa dernière phrase, qui sans cesse lui revenait à l'esprit. Se reprochait-il devant cette enfant naïve sa complicité à l'interprétation futile que son hôte avait donnée de *la civilisation*? Tant est, que pendant le cours de la soirée, se trouvant un moment en tête-à-tête avec Lolotte, il revint à l'histoire des gants. Il tâcha de réparer sa gaucherie et fit si bien, qu'il gagna la confiance de la petite. 'Sans doute j'en conviens,' dit-il, 'il faut plus pour être civilisé que de porter des gants, mais il faut se soumettre à certaines convenances que les gens comme il faut . . . 'C'est ça, Monsieur,' dit-elle, en lui coupant la parole, 'quelle est donc la chance des gens qui voudraient se civiliser, mais qui n'ont pas d'argent pour acheter des gants?' C'était-là sa peine. 'Chère enfant!' dit-il tout bas. Et l'homme, si éloquent d'ordinaire, pressa la petite main sous le gant obligatoire, parce que pour le moment les paroles lui manquaient pour répondre. . . . Est-ce étonnant que malgré lui, plus tard en s'occupant de la question sociale, il pensa souvent à cette jeune fille?

"Et vous, lecteurs, que pensez-vous d'elle et de sa question gantière? Vous paraît-elle un enfantillage, ou bien la considérez-vous tout bonnement comme une exagération? Vous attachez-vous à la surface, ou bien y cherchez-vous un sens plus profond, comme l'ami visiteur? Ne croyez-vous pas aussi que dans ce temps de 'besoins multipliés,' un des plus grands services que les classes supérieures puissent rendre au peuple, serait de faire distinction entre tous ces besoins et de prêcher d'exemple?"

23. This bit of letter must find room—bearing as it does on last *Fors* subject:¹—

"I was asking a girl this morning if she still took her long walks; and she said she was as fond of them as ever, but that they could only walk in the town now—the field or country walks were not safe for ladies alone. Indeed, I fancy the girls lose all care for, or knowledge of the spring or summer—except as they bring new fashions into the shop windows, not fresh flowers any more here into the fields. It is pitiable to live in a place like this—even worse than in—. For here the process of spoiling country is going on under one's eyes;—in—it was done long ago. And just now, when the feeling of spring is upon one, it is hard to have the sky darkened, and the air poisoned. But I am wasting time in useless grumbling. Only listen to this:—after all our sacrifices, and with all our money and civilization—I can't tell you now; it must wait."—[Very well; but don't keep it waiting longer than you need.]

24. I have had some good help about bees' tongues from a young correspondent at Mellow Grange, Guildford, and a very clear drawing, to which the subjoined piece of his last letter refers; but I must not lose myself in microscopic questions just now:—

"The author of *The Microscope*² keeps to the old idea of bees sucking honey and not 'licking it up,'³ for he says, 'The proboscis, being cylindrical, extracts the

¹ [See above, p. 302.]

² [The "young correspondent's" reference cannot be traced, but had he consulted the standard work on *The Microscope* (by W. B. Carpenter, F. R. S.) he would have found the true idea in this matter: see pp. 668–669 of the 1858 edition.]

³ [Compare Letter 51, § 12 (p. 279).]

juice of the flower in a somewhat similar way to that of the butterfly.' And of the tongue he says, 'If a bee is attentively observed as it settles upon a flower, the activity and promptitude with which it uses the apparatus is truly surprising; it lengthens the tongue, applies it to the bottom of the petals, then shortens it, bending and turning it in all directions, for the purpose of exploring the interior and removing the pollen, which it packs in the pockets in its hind legs (by, he supposes, the two shorter feelers), and forms the chief food for the working-bees.' He says that when the waxen walls of the cells are completed, they are strengthened by a varnish collected from the buds of the poplar and other trees, which they smear over the cells by the aid of the wonderful apparatus. That part of the proboscis that looks something like a human head, he says, 'can be considerably enlarged . . . and thus made to contain a larger quantity of the collected juice of the flowers; at the same time it is in this cavity that the nectar is transformed into pure honey by some peculiar chemical process.' "

25. * Note on § 19.—My correspondent need not be at a loss for sermons on usury. When the Christian Church was living, there was no lack of such. Here are two specimens of their tenor, furnished me by one of Mr. Sillar's pamphlets:¹—

EXTRACT FROM THE EXPOSITION UPON THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS,
CH. IV. VER. 6. BY BISHOP JEWEL.

"Usury is a kind of lending of money, or corn, or oil, or wine, or of any other thing, wherein, upon covenant and bargain, *we receive again the whole principal* which we delivered, *and somewhat more* for the use and occupying of the same: as, if I lend one hundred pounds, and for it covenant to receive one hundred and five pounds, or any other sum greater than was the sum which I did lend. This is that that we call usury; such a kind of bargaining as no good man, or godly man, ever used; such a kind of bargaining as all men that ever feared God's judgment have always abhorred and condemned. *It is filthy gains, and a work of darkness: it is a monster in a nature; the overthrow of mighty kingdoms; the destruction of flourishing states; the decay of wealthy cities; the plagues of the world, and the misery of the people. It is theft; it is the murdering of our brethren; it is the curse of God, and the curse of the people.* This is usury: by these signs and tokens you may know it: for wheresoever it reigneth, all those mischiefs ensue. But how, and how many ways, it may be wrought, I will not declare: it were horrible to hear; and I come now to reprove usury, and not to teach it.

"Tell me, thou wretched wight of the world, thou unkind creature, which art past all sense and feeling of God; which knowest the will of God, and doest the

¹ [The extract from Bishop Jewel (1522–1571) is contained in the following pamphlet: *Interest: Wherein it differs from Usury. Including an Extract from the Exposition upon the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, Chap. IV. Ver. 6, by Bishop Jewell* (sic). By W. C. Sillar. London: Printed for the author, 1871. See for Ruskin's quotations pp. 9, 28 (the italics are Ruskin's). The quotation from Jones is not given in the above edition of the pamphlet. Ruskin cites the sermon more at length in *Usury: a Reply and a Rejoinder*, § 26. The passage will be found at pp. 34–35 of *A Farewel-Sermon preached to the United Parishes of St. Mary Woolnoth and St. Mary Woolchurch-Haw in Lombard-Street*. By David Jones, Student of Christ-Church, Oxon: 1692. Extracts from this sermon were published by Mr. Sillar in a separate pamphlet: "at Alfred Southey's, 146 Fenchurch Street. Price One Penny." The sermon by Jones called forth the following reply: *A Discourse upon Usury: or, Lending Money for Increase. (Occasioned by Mr. David Jones's late Farewel-Sermon.) Proving, by undeniable Arguments, the Lawfulness thereof, and Answering the Plausible Objections from Scripture, Councils, and Fathers against it. Published at the Request of Several Judicious and Sober Christians: 1692.*]

contrary: how darest thou come into the church? It is the church of that God which hath said, 'Thou shalt take no usury'; and thou knowest He hath so said. How darest thou read or hear the word of God? It is the word of that God which condemneth usury; and thou knowest He doth condemn it. How darest thou come into the company of thy brethren? Usury is the plague, and destruction, and undoing of thy brethren; and this thou knowest. How darest thou look upon thy children? thou makest the wrath of God fall down from heaven upon them; thy iniquity shall be punished in them to the third and fourth generation: this thou knowest. How darest thou look up into heaven? thou hast no dwelling there; thou shalt have no place in the tabernacle of the Highest: this thou knowest. Because thou robbest the poor, deceivest the simple, and eatest up the widows' houses: therefore shall thy children be naked, and beg their bread; therefore shalt thou and thy riches perish together."

EXTRACT FROM THE FAREWELL SERMON PREACHED IN THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY WOOLNOTH, LOMBARD STREET, BY THE REV. DAVID JONES, WHEN THE PRESENT SYSTEM WAS IN ITS INFANCY.

"And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided Him."—LUKE xvi. 14.

"I do openly declare that every minister and every churchwarden throughout all England are actually perjured and foresworn by the 109th canon of our church,¹ if they suffer any usurer to come to the sacrament till he be reformed, and there is no reformation without restitution.

"And that you may know what usury is forbid by the word of God, turn to Ezekiel xviii. 8, 13, and you will find that, whoever giveth upon usury or taketh any increase,—*Mark it*,—he that taketh *any* increase above the principal,—not six in the hundred, but let it be never so little, and never so moderate,—he that taketh *any* increase, is a usurer, and such a one as shall surely die for his usury, and his blood shall be upon his own head. This is that word of God by which you shall all be saved of damned at the last day, and all those trifling and shuffling distinctions that covetous usurers ever invented shall never be able to excuse your damnation.

"Heretofore all usurious clergymen were degraded from Holy Orders, and all usurious laymen were excommunicated in their lifetime, and hindered Christian burial after death, till their heirs had made restitution for all they had gotten by usury."

26. As this sheet is going to press, I receive a very interesting letter from "a poor mother." That no wholesome occupation is at present offered in England to youths of the temper she describes, is precisely the calamity which urged my endeavour to found the St. George's Company. But if she will kindly tell me the boy's age, and whether the want of perseverance she regrets in him has ever been tested by giving him sufficient motive for consistent exertion, I will answer what I can, in next *Fors*.²

¹ [The canon touching "Notorious Crimes and Scandals." "If any offend their brethren, either by adultery . . . or by usury, and any other uncleanness and wickedness of life, the Churchwardens or Questmen, and Sidemen, in their next presentments to their ordinaries, shall faithfully present all and every of the said offenders, to the intent that they, and every of them, may be punished by the severity of the laws according to their deserts; and such notorious offenders shall not be admitted to Holy Communion till they be reformed."]

² [Not answered in *next Fors*, but in Letter 55, § 10 (p. 382).]

LETTER 54

PLATTED THORNS¹

1. BEFORE going on with my own story to-day, I must fasten down a main principle about doing good work, not yet enough made clear.

It has been a prevalent notion in the minds of well-disposed persons, that if they acted according to their own conscience, they must, therefore, be doing right.

But they assume, in feeling or asserting this, either that there is no Law of God, or that it cannot be known; but only felt, or conjectured.

“I must do what *I* think right.” How often is this sentence uttered and acted on—bravely—nobly—innocently; but always—because of its egotism—erringly. You must not do what YOU think right, but, whether you or anybody think, or don’t think it, what *is* right.

“I must act according to the dictates of my conscience.”

By no means, my conscientious friend, unless you are quite sure that yours is not the conscience of an ass.²

“I am doing my best—what can man do more?”

You might be doing much less, and yet much better:—perhaps you are doing your best in producing, or doing, an eternally bad thing.

All these three sayings, and the convictions they express, are wise only in the mouths and minds of wise men; they are deadly, and all the deadlier because bearing an image and superscription³ of virtue, in the mouths and minds of fools.⁴

¹ [Matthew xxvii. 29: “When they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head.” See below, § 25.]

² [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 26 (Vol. XVIII. p. 78). The sharp distinction which Ruskin draws in these places and many others between opinion and exact thought is one of the points in which he closely follows the Platonic philosophy: see, for instance, *Republic*, vi. 506 (“Do you not know that opinions are bad all, and the best of them blind?”), and compare the Introduction to Vol. XXVII. (pp. lix., lxxiii.)]

³ [See Mark xii. 16.]

⁴ [Compare Vol. XVIII. p. 204.]

2. "But there is every gradation, surely, between wisdom and folly?"

No. The fool, whatever his wit, is the man who doesn't know his master—who has said in his heart—there is no God—no Law.¹

The wise man knows his master.² Less or more wise, he perceives lower or higher masters; but always some creature larger than himself—some law holier than his own. A law to be sought—learned, loved—obeyed; but in order to its discovery, the obedience must be begun first, to the best one knows. Obey *something*; and you will have a chance some day of finding out what is best to obey. But if you begin by obeying nothing, you will end by obeying Beelzebub and all his seven invited friends.³

Which being premised, I venture to continue the history of my own early submissions to external Force.

3. The Bible readings,⁴ described in my last letter, took place always in the front parlour of the house, which, when I was about five⁵ years old, my father found himself able to buy the lease of, at Herne Hill. The piece of road between the Fox tavern and the Herne Hill station, remains, in all essential points of character, unchanged to this day: certain Gothic splendours, lately indulged in by our wealthier neighbours, being the only serious innovations; and these are so graciously concealed by the fine trees of their grounds, that the passing viator remains unappalled by them; and I can still walk up and down the piece of road aforesaid, imagining myself seven⁶ years old.

4. Our house was the fourth part of a group which stand accurately on the top or dome of the hill, where the ground is for a small space level, as the snows are (I

¹ [See Psalms xiv. 1.]

² [Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 82: "The first duty of every man in the world is to find his true master," etc. (Vol. XIX. p. 129).]

³ [See Matthew xii. 45.]

⁴ [§§ 3–11 of this letter were used by Ruskin when writing *Præterita*, where they appear, slightly revised, as §§ 36–45 of vol. i. ch. ii. For the continuation of the autobiographical notes, see below, § 13.]

⁵ [Corrected to "four" in *Præterita*.]

⁶ [Again corrected to "four" in *Præterita*.]

understand) on the dome of Mont Blanc; presently falling, however, in what may be, in the London clay formation, considered a precipitous slope, to our valley of Chamouni (or of Dulwich) on the east; and with a softer descent into Cold Arbour¹ (nautically aspirated into Harbour)-lane on the west: on the south, no less beautifully declining to the dale of the Effra (doubtless shortened from Effrena, signifying the “Unbridled” river; recently, I regret to say, bricked over for the convenience of Mr. Biffin, the chemist, and others); while on the north, prolonged indeed with slight depression some half mile or so, and receiving, in the parish of Lambeth, the chivalric title of “Champion Hill,” it plunges down at last to efface itself in the plains of Peckham, and the rustic solitudes of Goose Green.

5. The group, of which our house was the quarter, consisted of two precisely similar partner-couples of houses,—gardens and all to match; still the two highest blocks of buildings seen from Norwood on the crest of the ridge; which, even within the time I remember, rose with no stinted beauty of wood and lawn above the Dulwich fields.

The house itself, three-storied, with garrets above, commanded, in those comparatively smokeless days, a very notable view from its upper windows, of the Norwood hills on one side, and the winter sunrise over them; and of the valley of the Thames, with Windsor in the distance, on the other, and the summer sunset over these. It had front and back garden in sufficient proportion to its size; the front, richly set with old evergreens, and well grown lilac and laburnum; the back, seventy yards long by twenty wide, renowned over all the hill for its pears and apples, which had been chosen with extreme care by our predecessor (shame on me to forget the name of a man to whom I owe so much!)—and possessing also a strong old mulberry tree, a tall white-heart cherry tree, a black Kentish one, and an almost unbroken hedge, all round, of alternate gooseberry and currant bush; decked, in due season (for the

¹ [See the author’s note on the name in *Præterita*.]

ground was wholly beneficent), with magical splendour of abundant fruit: fresh green, soft amber, and rough-bristled crimson bending the spinous branches; clustered pearl and pendent ruby joyfully discoverable under the large leaves that looked like vine.

6. The differences of primal importance which I observed between the nature of this garden, and that of Eden, as I had imagined it, were, that, in this one, *all* the fruit was forbidden; and there were no companionable beasts: in other respects the little domain answered every purpose of Paradise to me; and the climate, in that cycle of our years, allowed me to pass most of my life in it. My mother never gave me more to learn than she knew I could easily get learnt, if I set myself honestly to work, by twelve o'clock. She never allowed anything to disturb me when my task was set; if it was not said rightly by twelve o'clock, I was kept in till I knew it, and in general, even when Latin Grammar came to supplement the Psalms, I was my own master for at least an hour before dinner at half-past one, and for the rest of the afternoon. My mother, herself finding her chief personal pleasure in her flowers, was often planting or pruning beside me,—at least if I chose to stay beside *her*. I never thought of doing anything behind her back which I would not have done before her face; and her presence was therefore no restraint to me; but, also, no particular pleasure; for, from having always been left so much alone, I had generally my own little affairs to see after; and on the whole, by the time I was seven years old, was already getting too independent, mentally, even of my father and mother; and having nobody else to be dependent upon, began to lead a very small, perky, contented, conceited, Cock-Robinson-Crusoe sort of life,¹ in the central point which it appeared to me (as it must naturally appear to geometrical animals), that I occupied in the universe.

7. This was partly the fault of my father's modesty; and

¹ [Compare Letter 90 (Vol. XXIX. p. 426).]

partly of his pride. He had so much more confidence in my mother's judgment as to such matters than in his own, that he never ventured even to help, much less to cross her, in the conduct of my education; on the other hand, in the fixed purpose of making an ecclesiastical gentleman of me, with the superfinest of manners, and access to the highest circles of fleshly and spiritual society, the visits to Croydon, where I entirely loved my aunt, and young baker-cousins, became rarer and more rare: the society of our neighbours on the hill could not be had without breaking up our regular and sweetly selfish manner of living; and on the whole, I had nothing animate to care for, in a childish way, but myself, some nests of ants, which the gardener would never leave undisturbed for me, and a sociable bird or two; though I never had the sense or perseverance to make one really tame. But that was partly because, if ever I managed to bring one to be the least trustful of me, the cats got it.

Under these favourable circumstances, what powers of imagination I possessed, either fastened themselves on inanimate things—the sky, the leaves, and pebbles, observable within the walls of Eden, or caught at any opportunity of flight into regions of romance, compatible with the objective realities of existence in the nineteenth century, within a mile and a quarter of Camberwell Green.

8. Herein my father, happily, though with no definite intention other than of pleasing me, when he found he could do so without infringing any of my mother's rules, became my guide. I was particularly fond of watching him shave; and was always allowed to come into his room in the morning (under the one in which I am now writing), to be the motionless witness of that operation. Over his dressing-table hung one of his own water-colour drawings, made under the teaching of the elder Nasmyth. (I believe, at the High School of Edinburgh.) It was done in the early manner of tinting, which, just about the time when my father was at the High School, Dr. Munro was

teaching Turner; namely, in grey under-tints of Prussian blue and British ink, washed with warm colour afterwards on the lights. It represented Conway Castle, with its Frith, and, in the foreground, a cottage, a fisherman, and a boat at the water's edge.

9. When my father had finished shaving, he always told me a story about this picture. The custom began without any initial purpose of his, in consequence of my troublesome curiosity whether the fisherman lived in the cottage, and where he was going to in the boat. It being settled, for peace' sake, that he *did* live in the cottage, and was going in the boat to fish near the castle, the plot of the drama afterwards gradually thickened; and became, I believe, involved with that of the tragedy of "Douglas," and of the "Castle Spectre," in both of which pieces my father had performed in private theatricals, before my mother, and a select Edinburgh audience, when he was a boy of sixteen, and she, at grave twenty, a model housekeeper, and very scornful and religiously suspicious of theatricals. But she was never weary of telling me, in later years, how beautiful my father looked in his Highland dress, with the high black feathers.

I remember nothing of the story he used to tell me, now; but I have the picture still, and hope to leave it finally in the Oxford schools, where, if I can complete my series of illustrative work for general reference, it will be of some little use as an example of an old-fashioned method of water-colour drawing not without its advantages; and, at the same time, of the dangers incidental in it to young students, of making their castles too yellow, and their fishermen too blue.¹

10. In the afternoons, when my father returned (always punctually) from his business, he dined, at half-past four,

¹ [This sentence—"I remember nothing . . . too blue"—was omitted from *Præterita*. The drawing was No. "1. R." in Ruskin's Exhibition of 1878: see Vol. XIII. p. 489. He did not place it in the Oxford schools. The picture always hung over the mantel in Ruskin's bedroom at Brantwood, among his Turners, and it is still there.]

in the front parlour, my mother sitting beside him to hear the events of the day, and give counsel and encouragement with respect to the same;—chiefly the last, for my father was apt to be vexed if orders for sherry fell the least short of their due standard, even for a day or two. I was never present at this time, however, and only avouch what I relate by hearsay and probable conjecture; for between four and six it would have been a grave misdemeanour in me if I so much as approached the parlour door. After that, in summer time, we were all in the garden as long as the day lasted; tea under the white-heart cherry tree; or in winter and rough weather,¹ at six o'clock in the drawingroom,—I having my cup of milk, and slice of bread-and-butter, in a little recess, with a table in front of it, wholly sacred to me; and in which I remained in the evenings as an Idol in a niche, while my mother knitted, and my father read to her,—and to me, so far as I chose to listen.

11. The series of the Waverley novels, then drawing towards its close, was still the chief source of delight in all households caring for literature; and I can no more recollect the time when I did not know them than when I did not know the Bible; but I have still a vivid remembrance of my father's intense expression of sorrow mixed with scorn, as he threw down *Count Robert of Paris*, after reading three or four pages; and knew that the life of Scott was ended: the scorn being a very complex and bitter feeling in him,—partly, indeed, of the book itself, but chiefly of the wretches who were tormenting and selling the wrecked intellect, and not a little, deep down, of the subtle dishonesty which had essentially caused the ruin. My father never could forgive Scott his concealment of the Ballantyne partnership.

12. I permit myself, without check, to enlarge on these trivial circumstances of my early days, partly because I know that there are one or two people in the world who will like to hear of them; but chiefly because I can better assure the general reader of some results of education on

¹ [*As You Like It*, Act ii. sc. 5 (song).]

after life, by one example in which I know all my facts, than by many, in which every here and there a link might be wanting.

13.¹ And it is perhaps already time to mark what advantage and mischief, by the changes of life up to seven years old, had been irrevocably determined for me.

I will first count my blessings (as a not unwise friend once recommended me to do, continually; whereas I have a bad trick of always numbering the thorns in my fingers, and not the bones in them).

And for best and truest beginning of all blessings, I had been taught the perfect meaning of Peace, in thought, act, and word.

I never had heard my father's or mother's voice once raised in any question with each other; nor seen an angry, or even slightly hurt or offended, glance in the eyes of either. I had never heard a servant scolded, nor even suddenly, passionately, or in any severe manner, blamed. I had never seen a moment's trouble or disorder in any household matter; nor anything whatever either done in a hurry, or undone in due time.² I had no conception of such a feeling as anxiety; my father's occasional vexation in the afternoons, when he had only got an order for twelve butts after expecting one for fifteen, as I have just stated, was never manifested to *me*; and itself related only to the question whether his name would be a step higher or lower in the year's list of sherry exporters; for he never spent more than half his income, and therefore found himself little incommoded by occasional variations in the total of it. I had never done any wrong that I knew of—beyond occasionally delaying the commitment to heart of some improving sentence, that I might watch a wasp on the window-pane,

¹ [§§ 13–17, part of § 18, and the whole of § 19 of this letter were used by Ruskin when writing *Præterita*, where they appear, without variation, as the latter part of § 48, and §§ 49–54 of vol. i. ch. ii. The part of § 18 not used in *Præterita* is the sentence "My present courses of life" to "Fairy Paribanou." The autobiographical notes are resumed in Letter 56, § 3 (p. 385).]

² [Compare the account of the quietude of Scott's house in Letter 33, § 7 (Vol. XXVII. p. 612.)]

or a bird in the cherry tree; and I had never seen any grief.

14. Next to this quite priceless gift of Peace, I had received the perfect understanding of the natures of Obedience and Faith. I obeyed word, or lifted finger, of father or mother, simply as a ship her helm; not only without idea of resistance, but receiving the direction as a part of my own life and force, and helpful law, as necessary to me in every moral action as the law of gravity in leaping. And my practice in Faith was soon complete: nothing was ever promised me that was not given; nothing ever threatened me that was not inflicted, and nothing ever told me that was not true.

Peace, obedience, faith; these three for chief good; next to these, the habit of fixed attention with both eyes and mind—on which I will not farther enlarge at this moment, this being the main practical faculty of my life, causing Mazzini to say of me, in conversation authentically reported, a year or two before his death, that I had “the most analytic mind in Europe.” An opinion in which, so far as I am acquainted with Europe, I am myself entirely disposed to concur.¹

Lastly, an extreme perfection in palate and all other bodily senses, given by the utter prohibition of cake, wine, comfits, or, except in carefulest restriction, fruit; and by fine preparation of what food was given me. Such I esteem the main blessings of my childhood;—next, let me count the equally dominant calamities.

15. First, that I had nothing to love.

My parents were—in a sort—visible powers of nature to me, no more loved than the sun and the moon: only I should have been annoyed and puzzled if either of them had gone out (how much, now, when both are darkened!);—still less did I love God; not that I had any quarrel with¹ [“Quite seriously said, yet perfectly feeling the joke also to the full. Give as perfect example of the style of *Fors*.”—*MS. note by Author in his copy*. For Mazzini, see also Letter 76, § 14 (vol. XXIX. p. 96). He died in 1872.]

Him, or fear of Him; but simply found what people told me was His service, disagreeable; and what people told me was His book, not entertaining. I had no companions to quarrel with, neither; nobody to assist, and nobody to thank. Not a servant was ever allowed to do anything for me, but what it was their duty to do; and why should I have been grateful to the cook for cooking, or the gardener for gardening,—when the one dared not give me a baked potato without asking leave, and the other would not let my ants' nests alone, because they made the walks untidy! The evil consequence of all this was not, however, what might perhaps have been expected, that I grew up selfish or unaffectionate; but that, when affection *did* come, it came with violence utterly rampant and unmanageable, at least by me, who never before had anything to manage.

16. For (second of chief calamities) I had nothing to endure. Danger or pain of any kind I knew not: my strength was never exercised, my patience never tried, and my courage never fortified. Not that I was ever afraid of anything,—either ghosts, thunder, or beasts; and one of the nearest approaches to insubordination which I was ever tempted into as a child, was in passionate effort to get leave to play with the lion's cubs in Wombwell's menagerie.

17. Thirdly. I was taught no precision nor etiquette of manners; it was enough if, in the little society we saw, I remained unobtrusive, and replied to a question without shyness: but the shyness came later, and increased as I grew conscious of the rudeness arising from the want of social discipline, and found it impossible to acquire, in advanced life, dexterity in any bodily exercise, skill in any pleasing accomplishment, or ease and tact in ordinary behaviour.

18. Lastly, and chief of evils. My judgment of right and wrong, and powers of independent action,* were left

* *Action*, observe, I say here; in *thought* I was too independent, as I said above.

entirely undeveloped; because the bridle and blinkers were never taken off me. Children should have their times of being off duty, like soldiers; and when once the obedience, if required, is certain, the little creature should be very early put for periods of practice in complete command of itself; set on the barebacked horse of its own will, and left to break it by its own strength. But the ceaseless authority exercised over my youth left me, when cast out at last into the world, unable for some time to do more than drift with its elements. My present courses of life are indeed not altogether of that compliant nature; but are, perhaps, more unaccommodating than they need be, in the insolence of reaction; and the result upon me, of the elements and the courses together, is, in sum, that at my present age of fifty-six, while I have indeed the sincerest admiration for the characters of Phocion,¹ Cincinnatus, and Caractacus, and am minded, so far as I may, to follow the example of those worthy personages, my own private little fancy, in which, for never having indulged me, I am always quarrelling with my Fortune, is still, as it always was, to find Prince Ahmed's arrow, and marry the Fairy Paribanou.²

19. My present verdict, therefore, on the general tenor of my education at that time, must be, that it was at once too formal and too luxurious; leaving my character, at the most important moment for its construction, cramped indeed, but not disciplined; and only by protection innocent, instead of by practice virtuous. My mother saw this herself, and but too clearly, in later years; and whenever I did anything wrong, stupid, or hard-hearted,—(and I have done many things that were all three),—always said, “It is because you were too much indulged.”

20. So strongly do I feel this, as I sip my coffee this

¹ [With this reference to Phocion, compare Vol. XX. p. 357 and n.; and for similar references to Cincinnatus, see Vol. XVIII. p. 508, and *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iii. § 21.]

² [*Arabian Nights* (“History of Prince Ahmed and the Fairy Pari-Banou”). This sentence—“My present . . . Fairy Paribanou”—was omitted from the *Præterita* version.]

morning (May 24th), after being made profoundly miserable last night, because I did not think it likely I should be accepted if I made an offer to any one of three beautiful young ladies who were crushing and rending my heart into a mere shamrock leaf, the whole afternoon;¹ nor had any power to do, what I should have liked better still,² send Giafar (without Zobeide's knowing anything about it) to superintend the immediate transport to my palace of all three;³—that I am afraid, if it were left to me at present to institute, without help from kinder counsellors, the education of the younger children on St. George's estate, the methods of the old woman who lived in a shoe⁴ would be the first that occurred to me as likely to conduce most directly to their future worth and felicity.

21. And I chanced, as Fors would have it, to fall, but last week, as I was arranging some books bought two years ago, and forgotten ever since,—on an instance of the use of extreme severity in education, which cannot but commend itself to the acceptance of every well-informed English gentlewoman. For all well-informed English gentle- women and gentle-maidens, have faithful respect for the memory of Lady Jane Grey.

But I never myself, until the minute when I opened that book, could at all understand Lady Jane Grey. I have seen a great deal, thank Heaven, of good, and prudent, and clever girls; but not among the very best and wisest of them did I ever find the slightest inclination to stop indoors to read Plato, when all their people were in the Park. On the contrary, if any approach to such disposition manifested itself, I found it was always, either because the scholastic young person thought that somebody might possibly call, suppose—myself, the Roger Ascham of her

¹ [The three daughters of his friend, Alfred Tylor, with whom Ruskin was staying at Carshalton; for a later reference to them, see Letter 80, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 176).]

² [Compare Letter 91, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 445).]

³ [*Arabian Nights* ("History of the Porter, the three Royal Calenders, and three Ladies of Bagdad").]

⁴ [Foreign readers may here be referred to the note on p. 310.]

time,—or suppose somebody else who would prevent her, that day, from reading “*piu avanti*,”¹ or because the author who engaged her attention, so far from being Plato himself, was, in many essential particulars, anti-Platonic. And the more I thought of Lady Jane Grey, the more she puzzled me.

22. Wherefore, opening, among my unexamined books, Roger Ascham’s *Scholemaster*, printed by John Daye, dwelling over Aldersgate, An. 1571, just at the page where he gives the original account of the thing as it happened, I stopped in my unpacking to decipher the black letter of it

**And one example, whether love or feare doth worke
more in a childe, for vertue and learning, I will gladly
report : which may bee heard with some pleasure, &
followed with more profite. Before I went into Germanie,
I came to Brodegate in Leicestershire, to take my leabe of
that noble Lady Jane Grey, to whom I was exceeding
much beholding. Her parentes, the Duke and the
Dutchesse, with all the housholde, Gentlemen and
Gentleweemen, were hunting in the Parke: I found her in
her chamber, reading Phædon Platonis in Greeke, and
that with as much delite, as some gentleman would read a
mery tale in Bocace. After salutation, and duetie done, with
come other talke, I asked her, why shee would leese such
pastime in the Parke; Smiling shee answered mee: I
wisse, all their sport in the Parke, is but a shadow to that
pleasure, I finde in Plato: Alas good folke, they never felt,
what true pleasure ment.**

with attention; which, by your leave, good reader, you shall also take the trouble to do yourself, from this, as far as I can manage to give it you, accurate facsimile of the old page.² And trust me that I have a reason for practising you in these old letters, though I have no time to tell it you just now.³

¹ [Dante, *Inferno*, v. 138:—

“In its leaves that day

We read no more” (Cary’s translation).

The passage is quoted also in Vol. IV. p. 252 and Vol. VI. p. 453.]

² [The “old page” has hitherto been represented, not very accurately, by modern type. The actual page (11) in the British Museum’s copy of the first edition is here facsimiled by photo-zincography.]

³ [See below, Letters 61, § 9, and 64, § 16 (pp. 494, 573); 94, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 486).]

23. Thus far, except in the trouble of reading black letters, I have given you nothing new, or even freshly old. All this we have heard of the young lady a hundred times over. But next to this, comes something which I fancy will be unexpected by most of my readers. For the fashion of all literary students, catering for the public, has hitherto been to pick out of their author whatever bits they thought likely to be acceptable to Demos, and to keep everything of suspicious taste out of his dish of hashed hare. Nay, “he pares his apple that will cleanly eat,” says honest George Herbert.¹ I am not wholly sure, however, even of that; if the apple itself be clean off the bough, and the teeth of little Eve and Adam, what teeth should be, it is quite questionable whether the good old fashion of alternate bite be not the method of finest enjoyment of flavour. But the modern frugivorous public will soon have a steam-machine in Covent Garden, to pick the straw out of their strawberries.

In accordance with which popular principle of natural selection, the historians of Lady Jane’s life, finding this first opening of the scene at Brodegate so entirely charming and graceful, and virtuous, and moral, and ducal, and large-landed-estate-ish—without there being the slightest suggestion in it of any principle, to which anybody could possibly object,—pounce upon it as a flawless gem; and clearing from it all the objectional matrix, with delicate skill, set it forth—changed about from one to another of the finest cases of velvet eloquence to be got up for money—in the corner shop—London and Ryder’s,² of the Bond Street of Vanity Fair.

24. But I, as an old mineralogist, like to see my gems in the rock; and always bring away the biggest piece I can break with the heaviest hammer I can carry. Accordingly,

¹ [*The Temple* (“The Church Porch,” stanza xi.): “He pares his apple that will cleanly feed.”]

² [For another reference to this well-known jeweller’s shop, see *Deucalion*, Vol. XXVI. p. 173.]

I venture to beg of you also, good reader, to decipher farther this piece of kindly Ascham's following narration:¹—

And how came you Madame, quoth I, to this deepe knowledge of pleasure, and what did chiefly allure you onto it, seing not many women, but very fewe men have attayned thereunto. I will tell you, quoth shee, and tell you a troth, which perchance ye will marbel at. One of the greatest benefites that eber God gave me, is, that hee sent me so sharpe and sebere parentes, and so gentle a schoolemaster. For when I am in presence either of father or mother, whether I speake, keepe silence, sit, stand, or go, eate, drinke, be mery, or sad, bee swoing, playing, dancing, or doing anything els, I must doe it, as it were, in such weight, measure, and number, even so perfectly, as God made the world, or ells I am so sharply taunted, so cruelly threatned, yea presently sometimes, with pinches, nippes, and hobbes, and other wayes, which I will not name, for the horror I beare the, so with, out measure misordered, that I thinke my selfe in hell, till time come, that I must goe to M. Elmer, who teacheth mee so gently, so pleasantly, with such faire allurementes to learning, that I thinke all the time nothing, whiles I am with him. And when I am called fro him, I fall on weeping, because, whatsoever I doe els, but learning, is full of greefe, trouble, feare, and whole misliking unto mee: And thus my booke, hath been so much my pleasure, and bringeth daily to me more pleasure and more, and in respect of it, all other pleasures, in very deede, bee but trifles and troubles unto mee. I remeber this talke gladly, both because it is so worthy of memory, and because also it was the last talke that eber I had, and the last time, that eber I saw that noble and worthy Lady.

25. Now, for the clear understanding of this passage,—I adjure you, gentle reader (if you are such, and therefore capable of receiving adjuration)—in the name of St. George and all saints,—of Edward III. and all knights,—of Alice of

¹ [From pp. 11-12 of the first edition (1571) of *The Schole Master*, by Roger Ascham. This passage also (hitherto printed in modern type) is here given in facsimile by photographic process from the copy in the British Museum. Ruskin separated the last three lines ("I remember . . . worthy Lady") from the rest, by inserting the explanatory words: "Lady Jane ceases, Ascham speaks:"]

Salisbury and all stainless wives,¹ and of Jeanne of France and all stainless maids, that you put at once out of your mind, under penalty of sharpest Honte ban,² all such thought as would first suggest itself to the modern novel writer, and novel reader, concerning this matter,—namely, that the young girl is in love with her tutor. She loves him rightly, as all good and noble boys and girls necessarily love good masters,—and no otherwise;—is grateful to him rightly, and no otherwise;—happy with him and her book—rightly, and no otherwise.

And that her father and mother, with whatever leaven of human selfishness, or impetuous disgrace in the manner and violence of their dealing with her, did, nevertheless, compel their child to do all things that she did,—rightly, and no otherwise, was, verily, though at that age she knew it but in part,—the literally crowning and guiding Mercy of her life,—the platted thorn³ upon the brow, and rooted thorn around the feet, which are the tribute of Earth to the Princesses of Heaven.

¹ [See Vol. XXVII. pp. 570-571 and n.]

² [The reference is, in connexion with Edward III. and Alice of Salisbury, to the motto of the Garter: under ban of "Honte" to him "qui mal y pense."]

³ [The title to this Letter.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

26. THE minds of many of the friends of Mr. Septimus Hansard appear to have been greatly exercised by my insertion of, and comments on, the newspaper paragraph respecting that gentleman's ministrations to the poor of London.¹

I thought it unnecessary to take notice of the first communication which I received on the subject, from a fashionable lady, informing me, with much indignation, that Mr. Hansard had caught his fever in the West-End, not in the East; and had been sick in the best society. The following letter is of more importance, and its writer having accepted what he calls "my kind offer" to print it, I have no alternative, though he mistook, or rather misplaced, the real kindness of my private note, which lay in its recommendation to him,* *not* to accept the offer it made.

"135, WATERLOW BUILDINGS, WILMOTT STREET,
"BETHNAL GREEN, E., *May* 14, 1875.

"SIR,—In your 49th Letter you say that we clergy are not priests, and cannot sacrifice. You also say that we are *wholly* responsible for, and the efficient causes of, horrible outrages on women. In your 51st Letter you speak of my friend and chief, Mr. Hansard, as being courageous, impulsive, and generous, but complacent, and living a life 'all aglow in vain'; and you compare him, in Bethnal Green, to a moth in candle-grease.

"I know that I, as a priest, am responsible for much wrong-doing; but I must claim you, and all who have failed to be *perfect* stewards of their material and spiritual property, as responsible with me and the rest of the clergy for the ignorance and crime of our fellow-countrymen.

"But I would ask you whether Mr. Hansard's life, even as you know it (and you don't know half the St. George-like work he has done and is doing), is not a proof that we *priests can and do sacrifice*;—that we can offer ourselves, our souls and bodies?

"Of course I agree with you and Mr. Lyttel that the preaching of 'Christ's life *instead* of our lives' is false and damnatory; but I am sorry that, instead of backing those who teach the true and salutary Gospel, you condemn us all alike, wholesale. I think you will find that you will want even our help to get the true Gospel taught.

"Allow me also to protest pretty strongly against my friends and neighbours here being compared to candle-grease. I fancy that on consideration, you would like to withdraw that parable; perhaps, even, you would like to make some kind

* At least, I think the terms of my letter might have been easily construed into such recommendation; I fear they were not as clear as they might have been.

¹ [See Letter 51, § 24 (p. 292).]

of reparation, by helping us, candle-grease-like Bethnal-greeners, to be better and happier.

"I am one of those clergymen spoken of in Letter 49, and 'honestly believe myself impelled to say and do'¹ many things by the Holy Ghost; and for that very reason I am bound to remember that you and other men are inspired also by the same Holy Ghost; and therefore to look out for and take any help which you and others choose to give me.

"It is because I have already received so much help from you that I write this letter.

"I am, yours faithfully,

"STEWART D. HEADLAM,

"Curate of St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green.²

"TO JOHN RUSKIN, ESQ., LL. D."

I at first intended to make no comments on this letter, but, as I reread, find it so modestly fast in its temper, and so perilously loose in its divinity, as to make it my duty, while I congratulate the well-meaning—and, I doubt not, well-doing—writer, on his agreement with Mr. Lyttel that the preaching of "Christ's life, instead of our lives," is false and damnatory; also to observe to him that the sacrifice of our own bodies, instead of Christ's body, is an equally heretical, and I can assure him, no less dangerous, reformation of the Doctrine of the Mass. I beg him also to believe that I meant no disrespect to his friends and neighbours in comparing them to candle-grease. He is unaccustomed to my simple English, and would surely not have been offended if I had said, instead, "oil for the light"? If our chandlers, nowadays, never give us any so honest tallow as might fittingly be made the symbol of a Christian Congregation, is that my fault?

27. I feel, however, that I do indeed owe some apology to Mr. Hansard himself, to his many good and well-won friends, and especially to my correspondent, Mr. Lyttel, for reprinting the following article from a Birmingham paper—very imperfectly, I am sure, exemplifying the lustre produced by ecclesiastical labour in polishing what, perhaps, I shall again be held disrespectful, in likening to the Pewter, instead of the Grease, and Candlestick instead of Candle, of sacredly inflammable Religious Society.

"PROFESSOR RUSKIN ON THE CLERGY

"Not many years ago one might throw almost any calumny against the Church or her clergy without fear of contradiction or exposure. Happily, for the cause of truth and justice, those days are gone—unhappily, however, for the unfortunate individuals born too late for the safe indulgence of their spleen. Amongst these, we fear, must be reckoned Mr. Ruskin, the Oxford Professor of Fine Art. He issues monthly a pamphlet, entitled *Fors Clavigera*, being ostensibly 'Letters to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain,' but the contents of which do not appear likely to edify that class, even if the price (tenpence) were not prohibitory. In the forty-ninth of these letters a furious and wholly unjustifiable attack is made upon the Church. No abuse is deemed too unjust or too coarse to bestow upon the clergy, and they are assailed in a tone of vituperation worthy of the last century.

¹ [See above, p. 238.]

² [And afterwards of other London parishes; for many years a member of the London School Board; a founder of the Church and Stage Guild.]

The Professor says that,* 'in general, any man's becoming a clergyman in these days implies that, at best, his sentiment has overpowered his intellect, and that, whatever the feebleness of the latter, the victory of his impertinent piety has been probably owing to its alliance with his conceit, and its promise to him of the gratification of being regarded as an oracle, without the trouble of becoming wise, or the grief of being so.' Much more there is in the same insolent strain, as if the Professor's head had been turned by the height of critical infallibility to which he has elevated himself, and from which he looks down with self-complacent scorn and arrogance upon all fallible humanity, clerical or lay. He concludes by appending 'a specimen of the conduct of the Saints to whom our English clergymen have delivered the Faith.' This specimen is afforded, according to Mr. Ruskin, in two cases of revolting and almost incredible barbarism, tried recently at Liverpool Assizes, in one of which an unoffending man was kicked to death by a gang of street ruffians, in the presence of an admiring crowd; and in the other case, a drunken female tramp, drenched with the rain, was taken into a field and outraged by half-a-dozen youths, after which they left her, and she was found there next day dead. We need not enter into the details of these cases, which were given fully enough at the time; suffice it to say that in the records of no age or nation will any tales be found surpassing these two in savagery of mind and body, and in foulness of heart and soul. And what is Mr. Ruskin's reason for resuscitating the memory of these horrors? What is the explanation that he has to give of them? What is the judgment that he has to pass upon them? Let our readers behold it for themselves in his own words:—'The clergy may vainly exclaim against being made responsible for this state of things. They, and chiefly their Bishops, are wholly responsible for it; nay, are efficiently the causes of it, preaching a false gospel for hire.' These words have the one merit of being perfectly plain. Mr. Ruskin does not insinuate his vile charge by any indirect hints or roundabout verbiage, but expresses his infamous meaning as unambiguously as possible. The clergy, he says, are 'wholly responsible' for the murders and rapes which horrify us, which, indeed, they 'efficiently cause'; and the chiefs of these incarnate fiends are the Bishops.

"This very intemperate attack elicited a few temperate remarks from one of the maligned class. The Rev. E. Z. Lyttel, of Werrington, near Peterborough, wrote to Mr. Ruskin thus:—'I have been reading your words to my conscience, but is it my unconscious hypocrisy, my self-conceit, or my sentiment overpowering intellect which hinders me from hearing the word *Guilty*? The Gospel I endeavour with all my might to preach and embody is this—Believe on, be persuaded by, the Lord Jesus Christ; let His life rule your lives, and you shall be safe and sound now and everlastingly. Is this a false Gospel preached for hire? If not, what other Gospel do you refer to?' Mr. Lyttel seems to have thought that the charge brought against himself and his clerical brethren of causing murders and rapes was too gross for notice, or too intoxicated to merit denial. He contented himself with the foregoing very mild reply, which, however, proved adequate to the occasion which called it forth. Mr. Lyttel was recently curate of St. Barnabas, in this town, and has also held a curacy in London. His personal experience gives him a claim to be heard when he assures the Professor that he *knows* that the morality of the parishes with which he is best acquainted has been made better, and not worse, by the self-sacrificing efforts of the clergy. It is also pointed out that while Mr. Ruskin has been freely travelling about in the enjoyment of beautiful scenery and fresh air, Mr. Lyttel and other clergymen have been occupied from day to day in stuffy rooms, in crowded parishes, amongst ignorant and immoral people. And whilst this censorious Oxford luminary makes a great fuss about getting paid

* I permit the waste of type, and, it may well be, of my reader's patience, involved in reprinting (instead of merely referring to) the quoted passages and letter, lest it should be thought that I wished to evade the points, or, by interruption, deaden the eloquence, of the Birmingham article.

for *Fors Clavigera* and his other writings, Mr. Lyttel hints that surely the clergy should be paid for their teachings too, being quite equally worthy of their hire.

"Our ex-townsmen has so effectually disposed of the Professor's charges, that there is no need to endeavour to answer them further. We have only noticed them so far in order to show our readers the extent to which hatred of the Church becomes a craze with some persons, otherwise estimable no doubt, whose judgment is for the time swept away by passion. That there is no pleasing such persons is the more apparent from Mr. Ruskin's curious comments upon the well-known story of the Rev. Septimus Hansard, the rector of Bethnal Green, who has caught the small-pox, the typhus fever, and the scarlet fever, on three several occasions* in the discharge of his pastoral duties among the sick poor. When he fell down in his pulpit with the small-pox, he at once said he would go to an hospital, but refused to enter the cab which his friends called, lest he should infect it; and, a hearse happening to pass, he went in it—a fine instance of courage and self-devotion. Mr. Hansard's stipend is five hundred a year, out of which he has to pay two curates. And what has Mr. Ruskin to say to this? Surely this must command his fullest sympathy, admiration, and approval? Far from it. His snarling comment is as follows:—'I am very sure that while he was saving one poor soul in Bethnal he was leaving ten rich souls to be damned at Tyburn, each of which would damn a thousand or two more by their example or neglect.' This peculiar mode of argument has the merit of being available under all circumstances; for, of course, if Mr. Hansard's parish had happened to be Tyburn instead of Bethnal, Mr. Ruskin would have been equally ready with the glib remark that while the rector was saving one rich soul to Tyburn, he was leaving ten poor souls to destruction in Bethnal. Are we to understand that Mr. Ruskin thinks Mr. Hansard ought to be able to be in two places at once, or are we to shrug our shoulders and say that some persons are hard to please? The heroism of self-sacrifice Mr. Ruskin considers to be a waste and a mistake. Mr. Hansard's life has all, says the Professor, 'been but one fit of scarlet fever—and all aglow in vain.' That noble-minded men should devote themselves to the noblest work of the Church for the love of Christ, and of those for whom He died, is apparently beyond Mr. Ruskin's conception. Love of sensation, he says, is the cause of it all. 'Sensation *must* be got out of death, or darkness, or frightfulness. . . . And the culmination of the black business is that the visible misery drags and beguiles to its help all the enthusiastic simplicity of the religious young, and the honest strength of the really noble type of English clergymen, and swallows them, as Charybdis would life-boats. Courageous and impulsive men, with just sense enough to make them soundly practical, and therefore complacent, in immediate business, but not enough to enable them to see what the whole business comes to when done, are sure to throw themselves desperately into the dirty work, and die like lively moths in candle-grease.' We have read philosophy something like the above extract elsewhere before, and we think the philosopher's name was Harold Skimpole. What the gospel is with which Mr. Ruskin proposes to supplant Christianity and to regenerate the world, we do not know. A gospel of this tone, however, published in tenpenny instalments, is not likely ever to reach the hands of the workmen and labourers of Great Britain, much less their hearts."

With this interesting ebullition, shall we call it, of Holy Water, or beautiful explosion,—perhaps, more accurately,—of Holy Steam, in one of our great manufacturing centres, a very furnace, it would appear, of

* Birmingham accepts, with the child-like confidence due by one able Editor to another, the report of Brighton.¹ But all Mr. Hansard's friends are furious with me for "spreading it"; and I beg at once, on their authority, to contradict it in all essential particulars; and to apologize to Mr. Hansard for ever having suspected him of such things.

¹ [See above, p. 292.]

heart-felt zeal for the Church, I wish I could at once compare a description of the effects of similar zeal for the—Chapel, given me in a letter just received from Wakefield, for which I sincerely thank my correspondent, and will assume, unless I hear further from him, his permission to print a great part of said letter in next *Fors*.¹

28. My more practical readers may perhaps be growing desperate, at the continued non-announcement of advance in my main scheme. But the transference to the St. George's Company of the few acres of land hitherto offered us, cannot be effected without the establishment of the society on a legal basis, which I find the most practised counsel slow in reducing to terms such as the design could be carried out upon. The form proposed shall, however, without fail, be submitted to the existing members of the Company in my next letter.²

¹ [See Letters 55, § 9, and 57, § 10 (pp. 380, 409).]

² [See Letter 55, § 7 (p. 376).]

LETTER 55

THE WOODS OF MURI¹

1. No more letters, at present, reaching me, from clergy-men, I use the breathing-time permitted me, to express more clearly the meaning of my charge,—left in its brevity obscure,—that, as a body, they “teach a false gospel for hire.”²

It is obscure, because associating two charges quite distinct. The first, that, whether for hire or not, they preach a false gospel. The second, that, whether they preach truth or falsehood, they preach as hirelings.

It will be observed that the three clergymen who have successively corresponded with me—Mr. Tipple, Mr. Lyttel, and Mr. Headlam³ have every one, for their own part, eagerly repudiated the doctrine of the Eleventh Article of the Church of England.⁴ Nevertheless, the substance of that article assuredly defines the method of salvation commonly announced at this day from British pulpits; and the effect of this supremely pleasant and supremely false gospel, on the British mind, may be best illustrated by the reply, made only the other day, by a dishonest, but sincerely religious, commercial gentleman, to an acquaintance of mine, who had expressed surprise that he should come to church after doing the things he was well known to do: “Ah, my friend, my standard is just the publican’s.”⁵

¹ [See below, § 5.]

² [See Letter 49, § 20 (p. 252).]

³ [See Notes and Correspondence, Letters 51, 52, 53, 54 (pp. 287, 311, 335, 358).]

⁴ [The Article is quoted below, Letter 56, § 22 (p. 398).]

⁵ [See Luke xviii. 13.]

In the second place, while it is unquestionably true that many clergymen are doing what Mr. Headlam complacently points out their ability to do,—sacrificing, to wit, themselves, their souls, and bodies (not that I clearly understand what a clergyman means by sacrificing his soul), without any thought of temporal reward; this preaching of Christ has, nevertheless, become an acknowledged Profession, and means of livelihood for gentlemen: and the Simony of to-day differs only from that of apostolic times, in that, while the elder Simon thought the gift of the Holy Ghost worth a considerable offer in ready money,¹ the modern Simon would on the whole refuse to accept the same gift of the Third Person of the Trinity, without a nice little attached income, a pretty church, with a steeple restored by Mr. Scott,² and an eligible neighbourhood.³

2. These are the two main branches of the charge I meant to gather into my short sentence; and to these I now further add, that in defence of this Profession, with its pride, privilege, and more or less roseate repose of domestic felicity,⁴ extremely beautiful and enviable in country parishes, the clergy, as a body, have, with what energy and power was in them, repelled the advance both of science and scholarship, so far as either interfered with what they had been accustomed to teach; and connived at every abuse in public and private conduct, with which they felt it would be considered uncivil, and feared it might ultimately prove unsafe, to interfere.

And that, therefore, seeing that they were put in charge to preach the Gospel of Christ, and have preached a false gospel instead of it; and seeing that they were put in charge to enforce the Law of Christ, and have permitted license instead of it, they are answerable, as no other men

¹ [Acts viii. 18, 19.]

² [For Gilbert Scott, see Vol. XXVII. pp. 190, 290.]

³ [For other references to Simony, see *Letters to Faunthorpe*, vol. ii. pp. 48-51 (reprinted in a later volume).]

⁴ [For a passage in illustration of this phrase, see Letter 57, § § 11, 12 (pp. 414-416).]

are answerable, for the existing “state of things”¹ in this British nation,—a state now recorded in its courts of justice as productive of crimes respecting which the Birmingham Defender of the Faith himself declares that “in the records of no age or nation will any tales be found surpassing these in savagery of mind and body, and in foulness of heart and soul.”²

3. Answerable, as no other men are, I repeat; and entirely disdain my correspondent Mr. Headlam’s attempt to involve me, or any other layman, in his responsibility. He has taken on himself the office of teacher. Mine is a painter’s; and I am plagued to death by having to teach *instead* of him, and his brethren,—silent, they, for fear of their congregations! Which of them, from least to greatest, dares, for instance, so much as to tell the truth to women about their dress? Which of them has forbidden his feminine audience to wear fine bonnets in church? Do they think the dainty garlands are wreathed round the studiously dressed hair, because a woman “should have power on her head because of the angels”?³ Which of them understands that text?—which of them enforces it? Dares the boldest ritualist order his women-congregation to come all with white napkins over their heads, rich and poor alike, and have done with their bonnets? What! “You cannot order”? You could say you wouldn’t preach if you saw one bonnet in the church, couldn’t you? “But everybody would say you were mad.” Of course they would—and that the devil was in you. “If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of His household?” but now that “all men speak well of you,”⁴ think you the Son of Man will speak the same?

And you, and especially your wives (as is likely!) are very angry with me, I hear, on all hands;—and think me

¹ [See above, p. 252.]

² [See Letter 54, § 27 (p. 360).]

³ [1 Corinthians xi. 10.]

⁴ [Matthew x. 25; Luke vi. 26.]

hostile to you. As well might a carter asleep on his shafts accuse me of being his enemy for trying to wake him; or his master's enemy, because I would fain not see the cart in the ditch. Nay, this notable paragraph¹ which has given Mr. Hansard's friends so much offence, was credited and printed by me, because I thought it one of the noblest instances I had ever heard of energy and unselfishness; and though, of all the sects of ecclesiastics, for my own share, I most dislike and distrust the so-called Evangelical,² I took the picture of Swiss life, which was meant to stand for a perfect and true one, from the lips of an honest vicar of that persuasion.

4. Which story, seeing that it has both been too long interrupted, and that its entire lesson bears on what I have to say respecting the ministrations of Felix Neff,³ I will interrupt my too garrulous personal reminiscences by concluding, in this letter, from that of March, 1874.⁴

The old cart went again as well as ever; and "he could never have believed," said Hansli, "that a cart could have taken itself up so, and become so extremely changed for the better. That might be an example to many living creatures."

More than one young girl, however, in her own secret heart reproached Hansli for his choice—saying to herself that she would have done for him quite as well. "If she had thought he had been in such a hurry, she could have gone well enough, too, to put herself on his road, and prevented him from looking at that rubbishy rag of a girl. She never could have thought Hansli was such a goose,—he, who might easily have married quite differently, if he had had the sense to choose. As sure as the carnival was coming, he would repent before he got to it. All the worse for *him*—it's his own fault: as one makes one's bed, one lies in it."

But Hansli had not been a goose at all, and never found anything to repent of. He had a little wife who was just the very thing he wanted,—a little, modest, busy wife, who made him as happy as if he had married Heaven itself in person.

It is true that she didn't long help Hansli to pull the cart: he soon found himself obliged to go in the shafts alone again; but, *aussi*,⁵ once he

¹ [Letter 49, § 20: see above, § 1.]

² [Compare Letter 30, § 3 (Vol. XXVII. p. 546), and the other passages there noted.]

³ [See below, p. 374; and compare, above, Letter 52, § 24 (p. 311).]

⁴ [Letter 39, § 9 (p. 60). The original of the present passage is in Gotthelf's *Gesammelte Werke*, 1856, vol. ix. pp. 363–374 (the end of the story).]

⁵ [*"Aussi untranslatable"*: see Letter 30, § 5 *n.* (Vol. XXVII. p. 550).]

saw he had a mustard,* he consoled himself. "What a fellow!" said he, examining him. "In a wink, he'll be big enough to help me himself." And, thereupon, away he went with his cart, all alone, without finding any difference.

It is true that in a very little while his wife wanted to come again to help him. "If only we make a little haste to get back," said she, "the little one can wait well enough—besides that the grandmother can give him something to drink while we are away." But the mustard himself was not of their mind, and soon made them walk in his own fashion. They made all the haste they could to get home—but before they were within half a league of their door, the wife cried out, "Mercy! what's that?" "That" was a shrill crying like a little pig's when it is being killed. "Mercy on us, what is it,—what's the matter!" cried she; and left the cart, and ran off at full speed: and there, sure enough, was the grandmother, whom the little thing's cries had put into a dreadful fright lest it should have convulsions, and who could think of nothing better than to bring it to meet mamma. The heavy boy, the fright, and the run, had put the old woman so out of breath that it was really high time for somebody to take the child. She was almost beside herself; and it was ever so long before she could say, "No—I won't have him alone any more: in my life I never saw such a little wretch: I had rather come and draw the cart."

These worthy people thus learned what it is to have a tyrant in one's house, little one though he be. But all that didn't interrupt their household ways. The little wife found plenty to do staying at home; gardening, and helping to make the brooms. Without ever hurrying anything, she worked without ceasing, and was never tired,—so easily things ran under her hand. Hansli was all surprise to find he got along so well with a wife; and to find his purse growing fatter so fast. He leased a little field; and the grandmother saw a goat in it; presently two. He would not hear of a donkey, but arranged with the miller, when he went to the town, to carry some of his brooms for him; which, it is true, skimmed off a little of the profit, and that vexed Hansli, who could not bear the smallest kreutzer to escape him. But his life soon became quite simple and continuous. The days followed each other like the waves of a river, without much difference between one and another. Every year grew new twigs to make brooms with. Every year, also, without putting herself much about, his wife gave him a new baby. She brought it, and planted it there. Every day it cried a little,—every day it grew a little; and, in a turn of the hand, it was of use for something. The grandmother said that, old as she was, she had never seen anything like it. It was, for all the world, she said, like the little cats, which at six weeks old, catch mice. And all these children were really like so many blessings—the more there came, the more money one made. Very soon—only think of it—the grandmother saw a cow arrive. If she had not with her own eyes seen Hansli pay for it, it would have been almost impossible to make her believe that he had not stolen it. If the poor old woman had lived two

* Moutard—not-arde; but I can't give better than this English for it.¹

¹ [In the German, "Aber als einmal ein Bube da war, tröstete er sich."]

years more,* she would even have seen Hansli become himself the owner of the little cottage in which she had lived so long, with forest right which gave him more wood than he wanted; and ground enough to keep a cow and two sheep, which are convenient things enough, when one has children who wear worsted stockings.

(Upon all that, † Hansli certainly owed a good deal, but it was well-placed money, and no one would ask him for it, as long as he paid the interest to the day; for the rest, “if God lent him life, these debts did not trouble him,” said he.) He might then learn that the first kreutzers are the most difficult to save. There’s always a hole they are running out at, or a mouth to swallow them. But when once one has got to the point of having no more debts, and is completely set on one’s legs, then things begin to go!—the very ground seems to grow under your feet,—everything profits more and more,—the rivulet becomes a river, and the gains become always easier and larger: on one condition, nevertheless, that one shall change nothing in one’s way of life. For it is just then that new needs spring out of the ground like mushrooms on a dunghill, if not for the husband, at least for the wife,—if not for the parents, at least for the children. A thousand things seem to become necessary of which we had never thought; and we are ashamed of ever so many others, which till then had not given us the smallest concern; and we exaggerate the value of what we have, because once we had nothing; and our own value, because we attribute our success to ourselves,—and,—one changes one’s way of life, and expenses increase, and labour lessens, and the haughty spirit goes before the fall.

It was not so with Hansli. He continued to live and work just the same; and hardly ever spent anything at the inn; aussi, he rejoiced all the more to find something hot ready for him when he came home; and did honour to it. Nothing was changed in him, unless that his strength for work became always greater, little by little; and his wife had the difficult art of making the children serve themselves, each, according to its age,—not with many words neither; and she herself scarcely knew how.

A pedagogue would never have been able to get the least explanation of it from her. Those children took care of each other, helped their father to make his brooms, and their mother in her work about the house; none of them had the least idea of the pleasures of doing nothing, nor of dreaming or lounging about; and yet not one was overworked, or neglected. They shot up like willows by a brookside, full of vigour and gaiety. The parents had no time for idling with them, but the children none the less knew their love, and saw how pleased they were when their little ones did their work well. Their parents prayed with them: on Sundays the

* Fate, and the good novelist, thus dismiss poor grandmamma in a passing sentence,—just when we wanted her so much to live a little longer, too! But that is For’s way, and Gotthelf knows it. A bad novelist would have made her live to exactly the proper moment, and then die in a most instructive manner, and with pathetic incidents and speeches which would have filled a chapter.

† This paragraph implies, of course, the existence of all modern abuses,—the story dealing only with the world as it is.

father read them a chapter which he explained afterwards as well as he could, and on account of that also the children were full of respect for him, considering him as the father of the family who talks with God Himself (and who will tell Him when children disobey*). The degree of respect felt by children for their parents depends always on the manner in which the parents bear themselves to God. Why do not all parents reflect more on this?†

Nor was our Hansli held in small esteem by other people, any more than by his children. He was so decided and so sure; words full of good sense were plenty with him; honourable in everything, he never set himself up for rich, nor complained of being poor; so that many a pretty lady would come expressly into the kitchen, when she heard that the broom-merchant was there, to inform herself how things went in the country, and how such and such a matter was turning out. Nay, in many of the houses he was trusted to lay in their winter provisions, a business which brought him many a bright batz. The Syndic's wife at Thun, herself, often had a chat with him; it had become, so to speak, really a pressing need with her to see him at Thun every Saturday; and when she was talking to him, it had happened not once nor twice, that M. the Syndic himself had been obliged to wait for an answer to something he had asked his wife. After all, a Syndic's wife may surely give herself leave to talk a little according to her own fancy, once a week.

One fine day, however, it was the Saturday at Thun, and there was not in all the town a shadow of the broom-merchant. Thence, aussi, great emotion, and grave faces. More than one maid was on the door-steps, with her arms akimbo, leaving quietly upstairs in the kitchen the soup and the meat to agree with each other as best they might.

"You haven't seen him then?—have you heard nothing of him?"—asked they, one of the other. More than one lady ran into her kitchen, prepared to dress ‡ her servant well, from head to foot, because she hadn't been told when the broom-merchant was there. But she found no servant there, and only the broth boiling over. Madame the Syndic herself got disturbed; and interrogated, first her husband, and then the gendarme. And as they knew nothing, neither the one nor the other, down she went into the low town herself, in person, to inquire after her broom-merchant. She was quite out of brooms—and the year's house-cleaning was to be done next week—and now no broom-merchant—je vous demande!§ And truly enough, no broom-merchant appeared; and during all the week there was a feeling of want in the town, and an enormous disquietude the next

* A minute Evangelical fragment—dubitable enough.

† Primarily, because it is untire. The respect of a child for its parent depends on the parent's own personal character; and not at all, irrespective of that, on his religious behaviour. Which the practical good sense of the reverend novelist presently admits.

‡ We keep the metaphor in the phrase, to "give a dressing," but the short verb is better.¹

§ Untranslatable.²

¹ [In the German, "wollte der Köchin abputzen."]

² [In the German, "man sollte denken."]

Saturday. Will he come? Won't he come? He came, in effect; and if he had tried to answer all the questions put to him, would not have got away again till the next week. He contented himself with saying to everybody that "he had been obliged to go to the funeral."

"Whose funeral?" asked Madame the Syndic from whom he could not escape so easily.

"My sister's," answered the broom-merchant.

"Who was she? and when did they bury her?" Madame continued to ask.

The broom-merchant answered briefly, but frankly: aussi Madame the Syndic cried out all at once—

"Mercy on us!—are you the brother of that servant-girl there's been such a noise about, who turned out at her master's death to have been his wife,—and had all his fortune left to her, and died herself soon afterwards?"

"It is precisely so," answered Hansli, dryly.*

"But—goodness of Heaven! cried Madame the Syndic, "you inherit fifty thousand crowns at least,—and behold you still running over the country with your brooms!"

"Why not?" said Hansli; "I haven't got that money, yet; and I'm not going to let go my sparrow in the hand for a pigeon on the tiles."

"Pigeon on the tiles, indeed!" said Madame,—"why, we were speaking of it only this morning—I and M. the Syndic; and he said the thing was perfectly sure, and the money came all to the brother."

"Ah, well, my faith, so much the better," said Hansli; "but about what I called to ask,—must you have the brooms in eight days, or fifteen?"

"Ah, bah—you and your brooms!" cried Madame the Syndic; "come in, will you?—I want to see how wide Monsieur will open his eyes!"

"But, Madame, I am a little hurried to-day; it's a long way home from here, and the days are short."

"Long or short, come in, always," said Madame imperatively,—and Hansli had nothing for it but to obey.

She did not take him into the kitchen, but into the dining-room; sent her maid to tell Monsieur that Hansli was there,—ordered up a bottle of wine,—and forced Hansli to sit down, in spite of his continued protesting that he had no time, and that the days were short. But in a wink the Monsieur was there, sat down at the table also and drank to Hansli's health and happiness; requiring him at the same time to explain how that had all happened.

"Ah, well, I'll tell you in two words,—it is not long. As soon as she had been confirmed, my sister went into the world to look for work. She got on from place to place, and was much valued, it seems. As for us at home, she occupied herself little about us: only come to see us twice, in all the time; and since my mother died, not at all. I have met her at

* It was unworthy of Gotthelf to spoil his story by this vulgar theatrical catastrophe; and his object (namely, to exhibit the character of Hansli in riches as well as poverty) does not justify him; for, to be an example to those in his own position, Hansli should have remained in it. We will, however, take what good we can get; several of the points for the sake of which I have translated the whole story, are in this part of it.

Berne, it is true; but she never asked me to come and see where she lived,—only bid me salute the wife and children, and said she would soon come, but she never did. It is true she was not long at Berne, but was much out at service in the neighbouring chateaux, and in French Switzerland, from what I hear. She had busy blood, and a fanciful head, which never could stay long in the same place: but, with that, well-conducted and proof-faithful;* and one might trust her fearlessly with anything. At last there came a report that she had married a rich old gentleman, who did that to punish his relations, with whom he was very angry; but I didn't much believe it, nor much think about it. And then, all of a sudden, I got word that I must go directly to my sister if I wanted to see her alive, and that she lived in the country by Morat. So I set out and got there in time to see her die; but was not able to say much to her. As soon as she was buried, I came back as fast as I could. I was in a hurry to get home, for since I first set up house I had never lost so much time about the world."

"What's that?—lost so much time, indeed!" cried Madame the Syndic. "Ah, nonsense;—with your fifty thousand crowns, are you going to keep carrying brooms about the country?"

"But very certainly, Madame the Syndic," said Hansli, "I only half trust the thing; it seems to me impossible I should have so much. After all, they say it can't fail; but be it as it will, I shall go on living my own life: so that if there comes any hitch in the business, people shan't be able to say of me, 'Ah, he thought himself already a gentleman, did he? Now he's glad to go back to his cart!' But if the money really comes to me, I shall leave my brooms though not without regret; but it would all the same, then, make the world talk and laugh if I went on; and I would not have that."

"But that fortune is in safe hands,—it runs no danger?" asked M. the Syndic.

"I think so," said Hansli. "I promised some money to the man, if the heritage really came to me; then he got angry, and said, 'If it's yours, you'll have it; and if it isn't money won't get it: for the expenses and taxes, you'll have the account in proper time and place.' Then I saw the thing was well placed; and I can wait well enough, till the time's up."

"But, in truth," said Madame the Syndic, "I can't understand such a sangfroid! One has never seen the like of that in Israel. That would make me leap out of my skin, if I was your wife."

"You had better not," said Hansli, "at least until you have found somebody able to put you into it again."

This sangfroid, and his carrying on his business, reconciled many people to Hansli; who were not the less very envious of him: some indeed thought him a fool, and wanted to buy the succession of him, declaring he would get nothing out of it but lawsuits.

"What would you have?" said Hansli. "In this world, one is sure of nothing. It will be time to think of it if the affair gets into a mess."

* "Fidèle à toute épreuve."¹

¹ [In the German, "besunderbar treu und fromm."]

But the affair got into nothing of the sort. Legal time expired, he got invitation to Berne, when all difficulties were cleared away.

When his wife saw him come back so rich, she began, first, to cry; and then, to scream.

So that Hansli had to ask her, again and again, what was the matter with her, and whether anything had gone wrong.

“Ah, now,” said his wife, at last,—(for she cried so seldom, that she had all the more trouble to stop, when once she began),—“Ah, now, you will despise me, because you are so rich, and think that you would like to have another sort of wife than me. I’ve done what I could, to this day; but now I’m nothing but an old rag.* If only I was already six feet under ground!”

Thereupon Hansli sat himself down in his arm-chair, and said:

“Wife, listen. Here are now nearly thirty years that we have kept house; and thou knowest, what one would have, the other would have, too. I’ve never once beaten thee, and the bad words we may have said to each other would be easily counted. Well, wife, I tell thee, do not begin to be ill-tempered now, or do anything else than you have always done. Everything must remain between us as in the past. This inheritance does not come from me; nor from thee: but from the good God, for us two, and for our children. And now, I advise thee, and hold it for as sure a thing as if it were written in the Bible, if you speak again of this to me but once, be it with crying, or without, I will give thee a beating with a new rope, such as that they may hear thee cry from here to the Lake of Constance. Behold what is said: now do as thou wilt.”

It was resolute speaking; much more resolute than the diplomatic notes between Prussia and Austria. The wife knew where she was, and did not recommence her song. Things remained between them as they had been. Before abandoning his brooms, Hansli gave a turn of his hand to them, and made a present of a dozen to all his customers, carrying them to each in his own person. He has repeated many a time since, and nearly always with tears in his eyes, that it was a day he could never forget, and that he never would have believed people loved him so.

Farming his own land, he kept his activity and simplicity, prayed and worked as he had always done; but he knew the difference between a farmer and a broom-seller, and did honour to his new position as he had to his old one. He knew well, already, what was befitting in a farmer’s house, and did now for others as he had been thankful to have had done for himself.

The good God spared both of them to see their sons-in-law happy in their wives, and their daughters-in-law full of respect and tenderness for their husbands; and were they yet alive this day, they would see what deep roots their family had struck in their native land, because it has remained faithful to the vital germs of domestic life; the love of work; and religion: foundation that cannot be overthrown, unmoved by mocking chance, or wavering winds.

* “Patraque,”—machine out of repair, and useless.¹

¹ [In the German, “Ein alter Kratten.”]

5. I have no time, this month, to debate any of the debatable matters in this story, though I have translated it that we may together think of them as occasion serves.¹ In the meantime, note that the heads of question are these:—

(I.) (Already suggested in § 8 of my letter for March, 1874.²) What are the relative dignities and felicities of affection, in simple and gentle loves? How far do you think the regard existing between Hansli and his wife may be compared, for nobleness and delight, to Sir Philip Sidney's regard for—his neighbour's wife;³ or the relations between Hansli and his sister, terminating in the brief “was not able to say much to her,” comparable to those between Sidney and his sister, terminating in the completion of the brother's Psalter by the sister's indistinguishably perfect song?⁴

(II.) If there be any difference, and you think the gentle hearts have in anywise the better,—how far do you think this separation between gentle and simple inevitable? Suppose Sir Philip, for instance—among his many accomplishments—had been also taught the art of making brooms,—(as indeed I doubt not but his sister knew how to use them,)—and time had thus been left to the broom-makers of his day for the fashioning of sonnets? or the reading of more literature than a “chapitre” on the Sunday afternoons? Might such—not “division” but “collation”—of labour have bettered both their lives?

(III.) Or shall we rather be content with the apparent law of nature that there shall be divine Astrophels⁵ in the intellectual heaven, and peaceful earthly glow-worms on the banks below; or even—on the Evangelical theory of human nature—worms without any glow? And shall we be content to see our broom-makers' children, at the best, growing

¹ [This, however, was not done.]

² [Letter 39: see p. 54.]

³ [See Letter 35, §§ 4 and 7 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 651, 654).]

⁴ [On this subject, see *Rock Honeycomb*.]

⁵ [See Vol. XXVII. p. 654.]

up as willows by the brook¹—or in the simplest and innumerablest crowd, as rushes in a marsh;—so long as they have wholesome pith and sufficing strength to be securely sat upon in rush-bottomed chairs; while their masters' and lords' children grow as roses on the mount of Sharon, and untoiling lilies in the vales of Lebanon?²

(IV.) And even if we admit that the lives at Penshurst,³ and by the woods of Muri,⁴ though thus to be kept separate, are yet, each in their manner, good, how far is the good of either of them dependent merely, as our reverend Novelist tells us, on “work” (with lance or willow wand) and “religion,” or how far on the particular circumstances and landscape of Kent and Canton Berne,—while in other parts of England and Switzerland, less favourably conditioned, the ministration of Mr. Septimus Hansard and Mr. Felix Neff⁵ will be always required, for the mitigation of the deeper human misery,—meditation on which is to make our sweet English ladies comfortable in nursing their cats?

6. Leaving the first two of these questions to the reader's thoughts, I will answer the last two for him;—The extremities of human degradation are not owing to natural causes; but to the habitual preying upon the labour of the poor by the luxury of the rich; and they are only encouraged and increased by the local efforts of religious charity. The clergy can neither absolve the rich from their sins, for money—nor release them from their duties, for love. Their business is not to soothe, by their saintly and distant example, the soft moments of cat-nursing; but sternly to forbid cat-nursing, till no child is left unnursed. And if this true discipline of the Church were carried out, and the larger body of less saintly clerical gentlemen, and *Infelix* Neffs, who now dine with the rich and preach to the poor, were accustomed, on the contrary, to dine with the poor

¹ [See Ezekiel xvii. 5.]

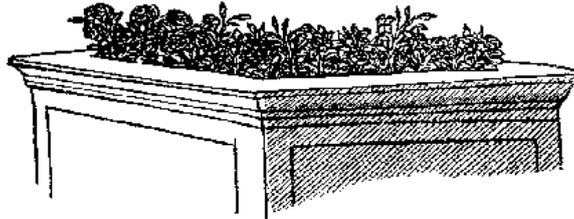
² [Canticles ii. 1; Matthew vi. 28.]

³ [The home of Sir Philip Sidney and his sister.]

⁴ [See Letter 39, § 8 (p. 54). The title to this letter.]

⁵ [See above, for Mr. Hansard, pp. 292, 358; for Felix Neff, p. 311.]

and preach to the rich; though still the various passions and powers of the several orders would remain where the providence of Heaven placed them—and the useful reed and useless rose would still bind the wintry waters with their border, and brighten the May sunshine with their bloom,—for each, their happy being would be fulfilled in peace in the garden of the world; and the glow, if not of immortal, at least of sacredly bequeathed, life, and endlessly cherished, memory, abide even within its chambers of the tomb.

*Fig. 4*

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

7. (I.) I PUBLISH the following legal documents—the first articles for which I have to expend any of St. George's money,—intact: venturing not so much as the profanity of punctuation. The Memorandum is drawn up by one of our leading counsel, from my sketch of what I wanted. The points on which it may need some modification are referred to in my added notes; and I now invite farther criticism or suggestion from the subscribers to the Fund.

“2, BOND COURT, WALBROOK, LONDON, E. C.,
“*June 15th*, 1875.

“ST. GEORGE'S COMPANY

“DEAR SIR,—According to the promise in our Mr. Tarrant's letter of the 11th, we now beg to send you what Mr. William Barber,¹ after reading your sketch, has approved of as the written fundamental laws of the Company,—though we shall be quite prepared to find that some alterations in it are still necessary to express your views correctly.

“We are,
“Dear Sir,
“Yours faithfully,
“TARRANT & MACKRELL.

“PROFESSOR RUSKIN, CORPUS CH. COLL., OXFORD.”

MEMORANDUM AND STATUTES OF THE COMPANY OF ST. GEORGE²

The Company is constituted with the object of determining and instituting in practice the wholesome laws of agricultural life and economy and of instructing the agricultural labourer in the science art and literature of good husbandry. (*a*)

With this object it is proposed to acquire by gift purchase or otherwise plots or tracts of land in different parts of the country which will be brought into such state of cultivation or left uncultivated or turned into waste or common land and applied to such purposes as having regard to the nature of the soil and other surrounding circumstances may in each case be thought to be most generally useful.

The members of the Company shall be styled Companions of the Company of St. George (*b*) Any person may become a Companion by

¹ [Mr. William Barber, K. C., afterwards County Court Judge in Derbyshire, was perhaps the best known real property lawyer of his time.]

² [For the ultimate form of the “Memorandum,” see Vol. XXX.]

subscribing not less than £ in money to the funds of the Company or by making a gift to the Company of land not less than £ in value (*c*) and by having his name entered on the Roll of Companions with due solemnity.

The name of every Companion shall be entered on the Roll of Companions either by himself in the presence of two witnesses of full age who shall attest such entry or if the Companion shall so desire by the Master of the Company with the same formalities. The Roll of Companions shall be kept in safe custody within the Walls of the College of Corpus Christi in Oxford or at such other safe and commodious place as the Companions shall from time to time direct.

Each Companion shall by virtue of the entry of his name on the Roll be deemed to have bound himself by a solemn vow and promise as strict as if the same had been ratified by oath to be true and loyal to the Company and to the best of his power and might so far as in him lies to forward and advance the objects and interests thereof and faithfully to keep and obey the statutes and rules thereof yet so nevertheless that he shall not be bound in any way to harass annoy injure or inconvenience his neighbour.

Chief among the Companions of the Company shall be the Master thereof who so long as he shall hold office shall have full and absolute power at his will and pleasure to make and repeal laws and byelaws (*d*) and in all respects to rule regulate manage and direct the affairs of the Company and receive apply and administer funds and subscriptions in aid of its objects and to purchase acquire cultivate manage lease sell or otherwise dispose of the estates and properties of the Company and generally direct and control the operations thereof.

The Master shall be elected and may from time to time and at any time be deposed by the votes of a majority in number of the Companions in General Meeting assembled but except in the event of his resignation or deposition shall hold office for life. The first Master of the Company shall be John Ruskin who shall however (subject to re-election) only hold office until the first General Meeting of the Companions.

The Master shall render to each Companion and shall be at liberty if he shall so think fit to print for public circulation a monthly report and account of the operations and financial position of the Company.

No Master or other Companion of the Company shall either directly or indirectly receive any pay profit emolument or advantage whatsoever from out of by or by means of his office or position as a member of the Company.

The practical supervision and management of the estates and properties of the Company shall subject to the direction and control of the Master be entrusted to and carried out by land agents tenants and labourers who shall be styled Retainers of the Company.

The name of each Retainer in the permanent employ of the Company shall be entered in a Register to be called the Roll of Retainers and to be kept at the same place as the Roll of Companions. Such entry shall be made either by the Retainer himself in the presence of one witness of full age who shall attest the entry or if the Retainer shall so desire by the Master with the same formalities.

No pecuniary liability shall attach to any Retainer of the Company by virtue of his position as such but each Retainer shall by virtue of the entry of his name on the Roll be deemed to have bound himself by a solemn vow and promise as strict as if the same had been ratified by oath to be true and loyal to the Company and faithfully to keep and obey the statutes and rules thereof and the orders and commands of the officers of the Company who from time to time may be set over him.

Each land agent and labourer being a Retainer of the Company shall receive and be paid a fixed salary in return for his services and shall not by perquisites commissions or any other means whatever either directly or indirectly receive or acquire any pay profit emolument or advantages whatever other than such fixed salary from out of or by means of his office or position as a Retainer of the Company.

The rents and profits to be derived from the estates and properties of the Company shall be applied in the first instance in the development of the land (e) and the physical intellectual moral social and religious improvement of the residents thereon in such manner as the Master shall from time to time direct or approve and the surplus rents and profits if any shall be applied in reduction of the amount paid by the tenants in proportion to their respective skill and industry either by a gradual remission of rent towards the close of the tenancy or in such other way as may be thought best but in no case shall the Companions personally derive any rents or profits from the property of the Company.

All land and hereditaments for the time being belonging to the Company shall be conveyed to and vested in any two or more of the Companions whom the Master may from time to time select for the office as Trustees of the Company and shall be dealt with by them according to the directions of the Master. (f)

The property of the Company shall belong to the Companions in the shares and proportions in which they shall have respectively contributed or by succession or accruer become entitled to the same.

Each Companion shall be entitled by writing under his hand during his lifetime or by will or codicil to appoint one person as his successor in the Company and such person shall on entry of his name on the Roll of Companions in compliance with the formalities hereinbefore prescribed become a Companion of the Company and become entitled to the share of his apponitor in the property of the Company. (g)

Each Companion shall at any time be entitled to resign his position by giving to the Master a Notice under his hand of his desire and intention so to do.

If any Companion shall resign his position or die without having appointed a successor or if the person so appointed shall for calendar months after the date when notice of such resignation shall have been received by the Master or after the date of such death as the case may be fail to have his name entered on the Roll of Companions in compliance with the formalities hereinbefore prescribed his share in the property of the Company shall forthwith become forfeited and shall accrue to the other Companions in the shares and proportions in which they shall *inter se* be for the time being entitled to the property of the Company. (h)

The Company may at any time be dissolved by the Votes of three-fourths of the Companions in General Meeting assembled and in the event of the Company being so dissolved or being dissolved by any other means not hereinbefore specially provided for the property of the Company shall subject to the debts liabilities and engagements thereof become divisible among the Companions for the time being in the shares and proportions in which they shall for the time being be entitled thereto yet so nevertheless that all leases agreements for leases and other tenancies for the time being subsisting on the property of the Company shall bind the persons among whom the property comprised therein shall so become divisible and shall continue as valid and effectual to all intents and purposes as if the Company had not been dissolved.

NOTES ON THE ABOVE MEMORANDUM

8. (a) This sentence must be changed into: "such science art and literature as are properly connected with husbandry."¹

(b) In my sketch, I wrote Companions of St. George. But as the existence of St. George cannot be legally proved or assumed, the tautologically legal phrase must be permitted.

(c) This clause cannot stand. The admission into the Company must not be purchasable; also many persons capable of giving enthusiastic and wise help as Companions, may be unable to subscribe money. Nothing can be required as a condition of entrance, except the consent of the Master and signature promising obedience to the laws.

(d) This clause needs much development. For though the Master must be entirely unrestrained in action within the limits of the Laws of the Company, he must not change or add to them without some manner of consultation with the Companions. Even in now founding the Society, I do not venture to write a constitution for it without inviting the help of its existing members; and when once its main laws are agreed upon, they must be inabrogable without the same concurrence of the members which would be necessary to dissolve the Society altogether.

(e) To the development, and enlargement, of the Society's operations, also.

(f) I do not think the Master should have the power of choosing the Trustees. I was obliged to do so, before any Society was in existence; but the Trustees have to verify the Master's accounts, and otherwise act as a check upon him. They must not, therefore, be chosen by him.

(g) A questionable clause, which I have not at present time to discuss.

(h) Partly the corollary of (g). The word "forfeited" is morally, if not legally, objectionable. No idea of forfeiture ought to attach to the resolved surrender of transferable claim; or to the accidental inability to discover a fitting successor.

Reserving, therefore, the above clauses for future modification, the rest of the Memorandum fully expresses what seems to me desirable for the first basis of our constitution; and I shall be glad to hear whether any of the present subscribers to St. George's Fund will join me on these conditions.

¹ [For a note by Ruskin on these terms, see Letter 59, § 9 (p. 448).]

9. (II.) I should willingly have printed the letter from which the following extracts are taken (with comments) as a *Fors* by itself; but having other matters pressing, must content myself to leave it in the smaller print. The more interesting half of it is still reserved for next month.¹

“What long years have passed since my eyes first saw the calm sweet scene beyond Wakefield Bridge! I was but a small creature then, and had never been far from my mother’s door. It was a memorable day for me when I toddled a full mile from the shady up-town street where we lived, past strange windows, over unfamiliar flags, to see the big weir and the chapel on the Bridge. Standing on tiptoe, I could just see over the parapet and look down-stream.

“That was my first peep into fair, green England, and destined never to be forgotten. The grey old chapel, the shining water below, the far-winding green banks spangled with buttercups, the grove-clad hills of Heath and Kirkthorpe,—all seemed to pass into my heart for ever.

“There was no railway then, only the Doncaster coach careering over the Bridge with a brave sound of horn; fields and farmsteads stood where the Kirkgate station is; where the twenty black throats of the foundry belch out flame and soot, there were only strawberry grounds and blossoming pear-orchards, among which the throstles and blackbirds were shouting for gladness.

“The chapel lay neglected in a nest of wild willows, and a peaceful cobbler dwelt in it. As I looked at it, Duke Richard and King Edward became living realities to me; the dry bones of Pinnock’s Catechism² started suddenly into life. That was the real old chapel of the fifteenth century. Some years after, they ousted the cobbler, pulled down the old stones, restored it, and opened it for ritualistic worship; but the cheap stonework has crumbled away again, and it now looks as ancient as in days of yore. Only, as I remember it, it had a white hoariness: the foundry smoke has made it black at the present day.³

“Some of my companions had been farther out in the world than myself. They pointed out the dusky shape of Heath Hall, seen through the thinly-clad elm-trees, and told me how old Lady—’s ghost still walked there on stormy nights.⁴ Beyond was Kirkthorpe, where the forlorn shapes of the exiled Spanish nuns had been seen flitting about their graves in the churchyard.

“There on the right was the tree-crowned mound of Sandal Castle, which Cromwell had blown down; the dry ditch was full of primroses, they told me; those woods bounded Crofton, famous for its cowslip fields; and in Heath wood you would see the ground white with snowdrops in March.

“I do not think that it is the partiality of a native that makes me think you could hardly find a fairer inland pastoral scene than the one I beheld from Wakefield Bridge the first time I stood there. On the chapel side there was the soft green English landscape, with woods and spires and halls, and the brown sails of boats silently moving among the flowery banks; on the town side there were picturesque traffic and life; the thundering weir, the wide still water beyond, the

¹ [The remainder was, however, deferred: see below, p. 383.]

² [Pinnock’s County Histories. *The History and Topography of Yorkshire*, 1822. For Wakefield, see pp. 81–82.]

³ [See below, p. 533 and *n.*]

⁴ [Heath Old Hall, about 2 miles south of Wakefield, is “a portion of a good Elizabethan house, with some fine elms round it. On a chimney-piece in the house are the arms of Witham Witham, who died in 1593, bewitched, as it was decided, by a certain Mary Pannall, who was executed at York accordingly. The ghost of a Lady Bolles, a ‘baronettess,’ so created by Charles I., and a solitary instance of such a creation, haunts the galleries” (Murray’s *Handbook for Yorkshire*). Kirkthorpe, a hamlet in Warmfield Parish, on the Calder, 2 miles east of Wakefield.]

big dark-red granaries, with balconies and archways to the water, and the lofty white mills grinding out their cheering music.

“But there were no worse shapes than honest, dusty millers’ men, and browned boatmen, decent people; no open vileness and foul language were rampant in our quiet clean town in those days. I can remember how clean the pavement used to look there, and at Doncaster. Both towns are incredibly dirty now. I cannot bear to look at the filthy beslavered causeway, in places where I remember to have never seen anything worse than the big round thunder-drops I used to watch with gleeful interest.

“In those days we were proud of the cleanness and sweet air and gentility of Wakefield. Leeds was then considered rather vulgar, as a factory town, and Bradford was obscure, rough and wild; but Wakefield prided itself in refined living on moderate means, and cultured people of small income were fond of settling there.

“Market day used to be a great event for us all.

“I wish that you could have seen the handsome farmers’ wives ranged round the church walls, with their baskets of apricots and cream-cheese, before reform came, and they swept away my dear old school-house of the seventeenth century, to make an ugly barren desert of a market ground. You might have seen, too, the pretty cottagers’ daughters, with their bunches of lavender and baskets of fruit, or heaps of cowslips and primroses for the wine and vinegar Wakefield housewives prided themselves upon. On certain days they stood to be hired as maid-servants, and were prized in the country round as neat, clean, modest-spoken girls.

“I do not know where they are gone to now,—I suppose to the factories. Anyhow, Wakefield ladies cry out that they must get servants from London, and Stafford, and Wales. So class gets parted from class.

“Things were different then. Well-to-do ladies prided themselves on doing their marketing in person, and kindly feeling and acquaintanceship sprang up between town and country folk. My Wakefield friends nowadays laugh at the idea of going to market. They order everything through the cook, and hardly know their own tradespeople by sight. We used to get delicious butter at tenpence a pound, and such curds and cream-cheese as I never taste now. ‘Cook’ brings in indifferent butter mostly, at near two shillings.

“As for the farmers’ wives, they would not like to be seen with a butter-basket. They mostly send the dairy produce off by rail to people whom they never see, and thus class is more sundered from class every day, even by the very facilities that railways afford. I can remember that the townspeople had simple merry-makings and neighbourly ways that this generation would scorn. Many a pleasant walk we had to the farms and halls that belted the old town; and boating parties on the Calder, and tea-drinkings and dances—mostly extempore,—in the easy fashion of Vicar Primrose’s days.

“But pleasure must be sought farther off now. Our young folks go to London or Paris for their recreation. People seem to have no leisure for being neighbourly, or to get settled in their houses. They seem to be all expecting to make a heap of money, and to be much grander presently, and finally to live in halls and villas, and look down on their early friends.

“But I am sorry for the young people. They run through everything so soon, and have nothing left to hope for or dream of in a few years. They are better dressed than we were, and have more accomplishments; but I cannot help thinking that we young folks were happier in the old times, though shillings were not half so plentiful, and we had only two frocks a year.

“Tradespeople were different, too, in old Wakefield.

“They expected to live with us all their lives; they had high notions of honour as tradesmen, and they and their customers respected each other.

“They prided themselves on the ‘wear’ of their goods. If they had passed upon the housewives a piece of sized calico or shoddy flannel, they would have heard of it for years after.

“Now the richer ladies go to Leeds or Manchester to make purchases; the town tradesmen are soured and jealous. They put up big plate-glass fronts, and send out flaming bills; but one does not know where to get a piece of sound calico or stout linen, well spun and well woven.

“Give me back our dingy old shops where everything was genuine, instead of these glass palaces where we often get pins without points, needles without eyes, and sewing thread sixty yards to the hundred—which I actually heard a young Quaker defend the other day as an allowable trade practice.”¹

10. (III.) I venture to print the following sentences from “a poor mother’s” letter,² that my reply may be more generally intelligible. I wish I could say, useful; but the want of an art-grammar is every day becoming more felt:—

“I am rather ashamed to tell you how young he is (not quite eleven), fearing you will say I have troubled you idly; but I was sincerely anxious to know your views on the training of a boy for some definite sort of art-work, and I have always fancied such training ought to begin very early—[yes, assuredly]—also, there are reasons why we must decide early in what direction we shall look out for employment for him.”

(I never would advise any parents to look for employment in art as a means of their children’s support. It is only when the natural bias is quite uncontrollable, that future eminence, and comfort of material circumstances, can be looked for. And when it is uncontrollable, it ceases to be a question whether we should control it. We have only to guide it.)

“But I seem to dread the results of letting him run idle until he is fourteen or fifteen years old—[most wisely]—and a poor and busy mother like me has not time to superintend the employment of a boy as a richer one might. This makes me long to put him to work under a master early. As he does so little at book-learning, would the practical learning of stone-cutting under the village stonemason (a good man) be likely to lead to anything further?”

I do not know, but it would be of the greatest service to the boy meanwhile. Let him learn good joiners’ work also, and to plough, with time allowed him for drawing. I feel more and more the need of a useful grammar of art for young people, and simple elementary teaching in public schools. I have always hoped to remedy this want, but have been hindered hitherto.³

¹ [For the continuation of this Letter from “E. L.,” describing Wakefield Old and New, see Letter 57, § 10 (pp. 409–413). Parts of E. L.’s letter were reprinted (by permission) by Mr. R. Somervell (a “Companion” of St. George’s Guild) in his *Protest against the Extension of Railways in the Lake District*, 1876, pp. 61–69. The letter and Ruskin’s comments upon it were the subject of an interesting article, with many historical reminiscences, in the *Saturday Review* of March 4, 1876. This article (“Mr. Ruskin and Wakefield”) was also reprinted by Mr. Somervell, pp. 71–78. For a Report on the condition of the Calder at Wakefield, see Letter 89 (Vol. XXIX. p. 417).]

² [See Letter 53, § 26 (p. 341).]

³ [This intention was partly carried out in the *Laws of Fésole*, 1877 (Vol. XV.).]

LETTER 56

TIME-HONOURED LANCASTER¹

1. I BELIEVE my readers will scarcely thank me for printing, this month, instead of the continuation of the letter from Wakefield, a theological essay by Mr. Lyttel. But it is my first business, in *Fors*, to be just,—and only my second or third to be entertaining; so that any person who conceives himself to have been misrepresented must always have my types at his command. On the other side, I must point out, before entering further into controversy of any kind, the constant habit in my antagonists of misrepresenting *me*. For instance; in an article forwarded to me from a local paper, urging what it can in defence of the arrangements noticed by me as offensive, at Kirkby Lonsdale and Clapham,² I find this sentence:—

“The squire’s house does not escape, though one can see no reason for the remark unless it be that Mr. Ruskin dislikes lords, squires, and clergymen.”

Now I have good reason for supposing this article to have been written by a gentleman;—and even an amiable gentleman,—who, feeling himself hurt, and not at all wishing to hurt anybody, very naturally cries out: and thinks it monstrous in me to hurt *him*; or his own pet lord, or squire. But he never thinks what wrong there may be in printing his own momentary impression of the character of a man who has been thirty years before the public, without taking the smallest pains to ascertain whether his notion be true or false.

¹ [*King Richard II.*, Act i. sc. 1: see below, § 16. “Horses out!” (see § 10) was a discarded title for this letter.]

² [See Letter 52, §§ 6–14 (pp. 298–304).]

2. It happens, by Fors' appointment, that the piece of my early life which I have already written for this month's letter, sufficiently answers the imputation of my dislike to lords and squires. But I will preface it, in order to illustrate my dislike of clergymen, by a later bit of biography; which, at the rate of my present progress in giving account of myself, I should otherwise, as nearly as I can calculate, reach only about the year 1975.

Last summer, in Rome, I lodged at the Hôtel de Russie; and, in the archway of the courtyard of that mansion, waited usually, in the mornings, a Capuchin friar, begging for his monastery.

Now, though I greatly object to any clergyman's coming and taking me by the throat, and saying "Pay me that thou owest,"¹ I never pass a begging friar without giving his sixpence, or the equivalent fivepence of foreign coin;—extending the charity even occasionally as far as tenpence, if no fivepenny-bit chance to be in my purse. And this particular begging friar having a gentle face, and a long white beard, and a beautiful cloak, like a blanket; and being altogether the pleasantest sight, next to Sandro Botticelli's Zipporah,² I was like to see in Rome in the course of the day, I always gave him the extra fivepence for looking so nice; which generosity so worked on his mind,—(the more usual English religious sentiment in Rome expending itself rather in buying poetical pictures of monks than in filling their bellies)—that, after some six or seven doles of tenpences, he must needs take my hand one day, and try to kiss it. Which being only just able to prevent, I took him round the neck and kissed his lips instead: and this, it seems, was more to him than the tenpences, for, next day, he brought me a little reliquary, with a certificated fibre in it of St. Francis' cloak (the hair one, now

¹ [Matthew xviii. 28.]

² [In the fresco of "The Life of Moses"; for Ruskin's study of the figure of Zipporah, see in Vol. XXIII. the frontispiece, and pp. xxxvii.—xxxviii., and compare Vol. XXII. p. 427.]

preserved at Assisi);¹ and when afterwards I showed my friend Fra Antonio, the Assisi sacristan, what I had got, it was a pleasure to see him open his eyes, wider than Monsieur the Syndic at Hansli's fifty thousand crowns.² He thought I must have come by it dishonestly; but not I, a whit,—for I most carefully explained to the Capuchin, when he brought it me, that I was more a Turk than a Catholic;³—but he said I might keep the reliquary, for all that.

Contenting myself, for the moment, with this illustration of my present dislike of clergymen, I return to earlier days.

3.⁴ But for the reader's better understanding of such further progress of my poor little life as I may trespass on his patience in describing, it is now needful that I give some account of my father's mercantile position in London.

The firm of which he was head partner may be yet remembered by some of the older city houses, as carrying on their business in a small counting-house on the first floor of narrow premises, in as narrow a thoroughfare of East London,—Billiter Street, the principal traverse from Leadenhall Street into Fenchurch Street.

The names of the three partners were given in full on their brass plate under the counting-house bell,—Ruskin, Telford, and Domecq.

4. Mr. Domecq's name should have been the first, by rights, for my father and Mr. Telford were only his agents. He was the sole proprietor of the estate which was the main capital of the firm,—the vineyard of Macharnudo, the most precious hillside, for growth of white wine, in the Spanish peninsula. The quality of the Macharnudo vintage essentially fixed the standard of Xeres "sack," or

¹ [See Vol. XXIII. p. xlvi. *n.*, and Vol. XXV. p. 125. Ruskin ultimately gave the reliquary through Miss Francesca Alexander to her peasant-friend Polissena: see *Christ's Folk in the Apennine*.]

² [See Letter 55, § 4 (p. 370).]

³ [For "the under meaning" of this passage, see Letter 76, § 9 (Vol. XXIX. p. 90).]

⁴ [§§ 3–9 of this Letter were used by Ruskin, when writing *Præterita*, where they appear, slightly revised, as §§ 24–30 of vol. i. ch. i. For the continuation of the autobiographical notes, see below, § 10.]

“dry”—secco—sherris, or sherry, from the days of Henry the Fifth to our own;¹—the unalterable and unrivalled chalk-marl of it putting a strength into the grape which age can only enrich and darken,—never impair.

5. Mr. Peter Domecq was, I believe, Spanish born; and partly French, partly English bred: a man of strictest honour, and kindly disposition; how descended, I do not know; how he became possessor of his vineyard, I do not know; what position he held, when young, in the firm of Gordon, Murphy, and Company, I do not know; but in their house he watched their head-clerk, my father, during his nine years of duty, and when the house broke up, asked him to be his own agent in England. My father saw that he could fully trust Mr. Domecq’s honour, and feeling;—but not so fully either his sense, or his industry: and insisted, though taking only his agent’s commission, on being both nominally, and practically, the head-partner of the firm.

6. Mr. Domecq lived chiefly in Paris; rarely visiting his Spanish estate, but having perfect knowledge of the proper process of its cultivation, and authority over its labourers almost like a chief’s over his clan. He kept the wines at the highest possible standard; and allowed my father to manage all matters concerning their sale, as he thought best. The second partner, Mr. Henry Telford, brought into the business what capital was necessary for its London branch. The premises in Billiter Street belonged to him; and he had a pleasant country home at Widmore, near Bromley; a quite far-away Kentish village in those days.

He was a perfect type of an English country gentleman of moderate fortune;—unmarried, living with three unmarried sisters—who, in the refinement of their highly educated, unpretending, benevolent, and felicitous lives, remain in my memory more like the figures in a beautiful

¹ [“Sherris sack:” 2 *King Henry IV.*, Act iv. sc. 3.]

story than realities. Neither in story, nor in reality, have I ever again heard of, or seen, anything like Mr. Henry Telford;—so gentle, so humble, so affectionate, so clear in common sense, so fond of horses,—and so entirely incapable of doing, thinking, or saying, anything that had the slightest taint in it of the racecourse or the stable.

7. Yet I believe he never missed any great race; passed the greater part of his life on horseback; and hunted during the whole Leicestershire season;—but never made a bet, never had a serious fall, and never hurt a horse. Between him and my father there was absolute confidence, and the utmost friendship that could exist without community of pursuit. My father was greatly proud of Mr. Telford's standing among the country gentlemen; and Mr. Telford was affectionately respectful to my father's steady industry and infallible commercial instinct. Mr. Telford's actual part in the conduct of the business was limited to attendance in the counting-house during two months at Midsummer, when my father took his holiday, and sometimes for a month at the beginning of the year, when he travelled for orders. At these times Mr. Telford rode into London daily from Widmore, signed what letters and bills needed signature, read the papers, and rode home again: any matters needing deliberation were referred to my father, or awaited his return. All the family at Widmore would have been limitlessly kind to my mother and me, if they had been permitted any opportunity; but my mother always felt, in cultivated society,—and was too proud to feel with patience,—the defects of her own early education, and therefore (which was the true and fatal sign of such defect) never familiarly visited any one whom she did not feel to be, in some sort, her inferior.

Nevertheless, Mr. Telford had a singularly important influence in my education. By, I believe, his sister's advice, he gave me, as soon as it was published, the illustrated edition of Rogers's *Italy*. This book was the first means I had of looking carefully at Turner's work: and I might,

not without some appearance of reason, attribute to the gift the entire direction of my life's energies.¹ But it is the great error of thoughtless biographers to attribute to the accident which introduces some new phase of character, all the circumstances of character which gave the accident importance. The essential point to be noted, and accounted for, was that I could understand Turner's work when I saw it; not by what chance or in what year it was first seen.

Poor Mr. Telford, nevertheless, was always held by papa and mamma primarily responsible for my Turner insanities.

8. In a more direct, though less intended way, his help to me was important. For, before my father thought it right to hire a carriage for the above mentioned Midsummer holiday, Mr. Telford always lent us his own travelling chariot.

Now the old English chariot is the most luxurious of travelling carriages, for two persons, or even for two persons and so much of third personage as I possessed at three years old. The one in question was hung high, so that we could see well over stone dykes and average hedges out of it; such elevation being attained by the old-fashioned folding-steps, with a lovely padded cushion fitting into the recess of the door,—steps which it was one of my chief travelling delights to see the hostlers fold up and down; though my delight was painfully alloyed by envious ambition to be allowed to do it myself:—but I never was,—lest I should pinch my fingers.

9. The "dickey,"—(to think that I should never till this moment have asked myself the derivation of that word, and now be unable to get at it!²)—being, typically, that commanding seat in her Majesty's mail, occupied by the Guard; and classical, even in modern literature, as the scene of Mr. Bob Sawyer's arrangements with Sam,³—was

¹ [Compare the author's Introduction to *Deucalion*, Vol. XXVI. p. 97.]

² ["Dickey.—The rumble behind a carriage; also a leather apron, a child's bib, and a false shirt or front. Dutch *dekken*, Ger. *decken*, Sax. *thecan*, Lat. *tego*, to cover."—Extract from Dr. Brewer's *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*. See *Dilecta*, Part II.]

³ [*Pickwick*, ch. 1.]

thrown far back in Mr. Telford's chariot, so as to give perfectly comfortable room for the legs (if one chose to travel outside on fine days), and to afford beneath it spacious area to the boot, a storehouse of rearward miscellaneous luggage. Over which—with all the rest of forward and superficial luggage—my nurse Anne presided, both as guard and packer; unrivalled, she, in the flatness and precision of her in-laying of dresses, as in turning of pancakes;¹ the fine precision, observe, meaning also the easy wit and invention of her art; for, no more in packing a trunk than commanding a campaign, is precision possible without foresight.

10. Posting, in those days, being universal, so that at the leading inns in every country town, the cry "Horses out!" down the yard, as one drove up, was answered, often instantly, always within five minutes, by the merry trot through the archway of the booted and bright-jacketed rider, with his caparisoned pair,—there was no driver's seat in front: and the four large, admirably fitting and sliding windows, admitting no drop of rain when they were up, and never sticking as they were let down, formed one large moving oriel, out of which one saw the country round, to the full half of the horizon. My own prospect was more extended still, for my seat was the little box containing my clothes, strongly made, with a cushion on one end of it; set upright in front (and well forward), between my father and mother. I was thus not the least in their way, and my horizon of sight the widest possible. When no object of particular interest presented itself, I trotted, keeping time with the postboy—on my trunk cushion for a saddle, and whipped my father's legs for horses; at first theoretically only, with dexterous motion of wrist; but ultimately in a quite practical and efficient manner, my father having presented me with a silver-mounted postillion's whip.²

¹ [See Letter 53, § 1 (p. 316).]

² [§§ 10–12 of this Letter were used by Ruskin, when writing *Præterita*, where they appear, slightly revised, as §§ 32–34 of vol. i. ch. i. The autobiographical notes are resumed in Letter 63, § 11 (p. 546).]

as I can get illustrations of them prepared;¹ leaving the systematization of them to be made by the master of each drawing school, according to the requirements of his scholars. (See § 14 of Letter 9.²)

For example of the impossibility of publishing on a system. It happens to be now fine weather here in Lancashire;—I am able, therefore, to draw out of doors; and am painting a piece of foreground vegetation,³ which I don't want to be used by students till after at least fifty other exercise have been gone through. But I must do this one while light and life serve; and not wait till I am sixty, to do work which my eyes are not good enough for at fifty-five.

9. And if the readers of *Fors* think my letters too desultory, let them consider what this chief work, specified in § 15 of Letter 9, involves. No one has the least notion of the quantity of manual labour I have to go through, to discharge my duty as a teacher of Art. Look at the frontispiece to Letter 20,⁴ which is photographed from one of my architectural sketches; and if you can draw, copy a bit of it;—try merely the bead moulding with its dentils, in the flat arch over the three small ones, lowest on the left. Then examine those three small ones themselves. You think I have drawn them distorted, carelessly, I suppose No. That distortion is essential to the Gothic of the Pisan school; and I measured every one of the curves of those cusps on the spot, to the tenth of an inch; and I ought to be engraving and publishing those drawings, by rights; but, meantime, your Pisan Republicans dash the chapel down, for a job in rebuilding it;—and the French Emperor dashes every cathedral in France to pieces, to find his masons work,⁵—and gets for result, Reuter's telegram,

¹ [See the plates in *The Laws of Fésolle* (Vol. XV.), which were lettered "Schools of St. George, Elementary Drawing." See also the plates in the "Oxford Art School Series" (Vol. XXI. pp. 311 *seq.*.)]

² [Vo. XXVII. p. 159.]

³ [The "Study of Brantwood Thistle," reproduced on Plate I. in Vol. XXV. (p. xxxiv.).]

⁴ [St. Mary of the Thorn, Pisa: Vol. XXVII. p. 334, and see *ibid.*, p. 349.]

⁵ [On this subject, see Vol. XIX. pp. 39, 461–462.]

11. The Midsummer holiday, for better enjoyment of which Mr. Telford provided us with these luxuries, began usually on the fifteenth of May, or thereabouts;—my father's birthday was the tenth; on that day I was always allowed to gather the gooseberries for his first gooseberry pie of the year, from the tree between the buttresses on the north wall of the Herne Hill garden; so that we could not leave before that *fiesta*. The holiday itself consisted in a tour for orders through half the English counties; and a visit (if the counties lay northward) to my aunt in Scotland.

12. The mode of journeying was as fixed as that of our home life. We went from forty to fifty miles a day, starting always early enough in the morning to arrive comfortably to four-o'clock dinner. Generally, therefore, getting off at six o'clock, a stage or two were done before breakfast, with the dew on the grass, and first scent from the hawthorns: if in the course of the mid-day drive there were any gentleman's house to be seen,—or, better still, a lord's—or best of all, a duke's,—my father baited the horses, and took my mother and me reverently through the staterooms; always speaking a little under our breath to the housekeeper, major-domo, or other authority in charge; and gleaning worshipfully what fragmentary illustrations of the history and domestic ways of the family might fall from their lips.

13. My father had a quite infallible natural judgment in painting; and though it had never been cultivated so as to enable him to understand the Italian schools, his sense of the power of the nobler masters in northern work was as true and passionate as the most accomplished artist's. He never, when I was old enough to care for what he himself delighted in, allowed me to look for an instant at a bad picture; and if there were a Reynolds, Velasquez, Vandyck, or Rembrandt in the rooms, he would pay the surliest housekeepers into patience until we had seen it to heart's content; if none of these, I was allowed to look at Guido,

Carlo Dolci—or the more skilful masters of the Dutch school—Cuyp, Teniers, Hobbima, Wouvermans; but never at any second-rate or doubtful examples.

I wonder how many of the lower middle class are now capable of going through a nobleman's house, with judgment of this kind; and yet with entirely unenvious and reverent delight in the splendour of the abode of the supreme and beneficent being who allows them thus to enter his paradise!

14. If there were no nobleman's house to be seen, there was certainly, in the course of the day's journey, some ruined castle or abbey; some celebrated village church, or stately cathedral. We had always unstinted time for these; and if I was at disadvantage because neither my father nor mother could tell me enough history to make the buildings authoritatively interesting, I had at least leisure and liberty to animate them with romance in my own fashion.

I am speaking, however, now, of matters relating to a more advanced age than that to which I have yet brought myself:—age in which all these sights were only a pleasant amazement to me, and panoramic apocalypse of a lovely world.

Up to that age, at least, I cannot but hope that my readers will agree with me in thinking the tenour of my life happy, and the modes of my education, on the whole, salutary.

15. Admitting them to have been so, I would now question farther; and, I imagine, such question cannot but occur to my readers' mind, also,—how far education, and felicities, of the same kind, may be attainable for young people in general.

Let us consider, then, how many conditions must meet; and how much labour must have been gone through, both by servile and noble persons, before this little jaunty figure, seated on its box of clothes, can trot through its peaceful day of mental development.

(I.) A certain number of labourers in Spain, living

on dry bread and onions, must have pruned and trodden grapes;—cask-makers, cellarmen, and other functionaries attending on them.

(II.) Rough sailors must have brought the wine into the London Docks.

(III.) My father and his clerks must have done a great deal of arithmetical and epistolary work, before my father could have profit enough from the wine to pay for our horses, and our dinner.

(IV.) The tailor must have given his life to the dull business of making clothes—the wheelwright and carriage-maker to their woodwork—the smith to his buckles and springs—the postillion to his riding—the horse-breeder and breaker to the cattle in his field and stable,—before I could make progress in this pleasant manner, even for a single stage.

(V.) Sundry English Kings and Barons must have passed their lives in military exercises, and gone to their deaths in military practices, to provide me with my forenoons' entertainments in ruined castles; or founded the great families whose servants were to be my hosts.

(VI.) Vandyck and Velasquez, and many a painter before them, must have spent their lives in learning and practising their laborious businesses.

(VII.) Various monks and abbots must have passed their lives in pain, with fasting and prayer; and a large company of stonemasons occupied themselves in their continual service, in order to provide me, in defect of castles and noblemen's seats, with amusement in the way of abbeys and cathedrals.

16. How far, then, it remains to be asked, supposing my education in any wise exemplary, can all these advantages be supplied by the modern school board, to every little boy born in the prosperous England of this day? And much more in that glorious England of the future; in which there will be no abbeys (all having been shaken down, as my own sweet Furness is fast being, by the

luggage trains¹); no castles, except such as may have been spared to be turned into gaols, like that of “time-honoured Lancaster,”² also in my own neighbourhood; no parks, because Lord Derby’s patent steam agriculture will have cut down all the trees;³ no lords, nor dukes, because modern civilization won’t be Lorded over, nor Led anywhere; no gentlemen’s seats, except in the Kirkby Lonsdale style;⁴ and no roads anywhere, except trams and rails?

17. Before, however, entering into debate as to the methods of education to be adopted in these coming times, let me examine a little, in next letter,⁵ with help from my readers of aristocratic tendencies, what the real product of this olden method of education was intended to be; and whether it was worth the cost.

For the impression on the aristocratic mind of the day was always (especially supposing I had been a squire’s or a lord’s son, instead of a merchant’s) that such little jaunty figure, trotting in its easy chariot, was, as it were, a living diamond, without which the watch of the world could not possibly go; or even, that the diminutive darling was a kind of Almighty Providence in its first breeches, by whose tiny hands and infant fiat the blessings of food and raiment were continually provided for God’s Spanish labourers in His literal vineyard; for God’s English sailors, seeing His wonders in the deep;⁶ for God’s tailors’ men, sitting in attitude of Chinese Josh for ever; for the divinely appointed wheelwrights, carpenters, horses and riders, hostlers and Gaius-mine-hosts,⁷ necessary to my triumphal progress; and for my nurse behind in the dickey. And it never once entered the head of any aristocratic person,—nor would ever

¹ [For other references to Furness Abbey (not far from Ruskin’s home in the Lakes), see Letter 11, § 3 (Vol. XXVII. p. 182); Vol. XXV. p. 130; and General Index.]

² [*King Richard II.*, Act i. sc. 1. The title to this Letter.]

³ [See Letter 10, § 1 (Vol. XXVII. p. 166).]

⁴ [See Letter 52, § 8 (p. 300).]

⁵ [See below, pp. 404 *seq.*]

⁶ [Psalms cvii. 24.]

⁷ [Romans xvi. 23.]

have entered mine, I suppose, unless I had “the most analytical mind in Europe,”¹—that in verity it was not I who fed my nurse, but my nurse me; and that a great part of the world had been literally put behind me as a dickey,—and all the aforesaid inhabitants of it, somehow, appointed to be nothing but my nurses; the beautiful product intended, by papa and mamma, being—a Bishop,² who should graciously overlook these tribes of inferior beings, and instruct their ignorance in the way of their souls’ salvation.

18. As the master of the St. George’s Company, I request their permission to convey their thanks to Mr. Plimsoll, for his Christian, knightly, and valiant stand, made against the recreant English Commons, on Thursday, 22nd July, 1875.³

¹ [See Letter 54, § 14 (p. 350).]

² [See Letter 52, § 2 (pp. 296–297).]

³ [On that day Mr. Disraeli, in making a statement on the course of public business, announced that the Merchant Shipping Bill would not be proceeded with. Mr. Plimsoll rose and “earnestly entreated the right hon. gentleman at the head of her Majesty’s Government not to consign some thousands of living human beings to undeserved and miserable death.” He went on to discuss the Bill in detail, whereupon he was called to order by the Speaker. He refused to resume his seat, and went on to denounce as “villains” certain shipowners in the House. He declined to withdraw the expression, and Mr. Disraeli moved and carried a motion that Mr. Plimsoll be reprimanded by Mr. Speaker for his violent and disorderly conduct. For a later allusion to Mr. Plimsoll’s protest, see Letter 82, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 224).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

19. I HAVE thankfully received this month, from the first donor of land¹ to the St. George's Company, Mrs. Talbot, £11, Os. 4d., rent of cottages on said land, at Barmouth, North Wales;² and I have become responsible, as the Master of the Company, for rent or purchase of a room at Sheffield, in which I propose to place some books and minerals, as the germ of a museum arranged first for workers in iron,³ and extended into illustration of the natural history of the neighbourhood of Sheffield, and more especially of the geology and flora of Derbyshire.⁴

20. The following letter respecting the neighbouring town of Leeds will be found interesting in connection with this first opening of St. George's work:—

“LEEDS, *June 21st*, 1875.

“DEAR SIR,—Being more or less intimately mixed up with the young of the working classes, in night schools and similar works, I am anxious to know what I can do to counteract two or three growths, which seem likely to be productive of very disastrous results, in the young men from seventeen to twenty-five, who are many of them earning from 20s. to 35s. per week,—the almost morbid craving for drink, and the excitement which is to be found in modern French dramas of very questionable morality, concert halls and singing rooms, where appeal is principally made to their animal passions and lusts—whose chief notion of enjoyment seems to be in getting drunk. Then the young men of similar ages, and earning from 14s. to 20s., who are in a chronic state of unrest, ever eager for novelty and sensationalism, though not quite so much given to drink as the men, yet treading a similar course. They have no pleasure in going to the country, to see flowers, birds, and fish, or to the seaside to see the sea; if there be no fireworks, no prize band, no dancing on the green, or something of the sort, they will not attempt to go. Now, where is all this to end? Nature has no charms for them; music little attraction, except in the form of *dance*; pictures nothing: what remains? And yet something should, and must be done, and that speedily,—otherwise what will become of the poor things?

“Then, in your *Elements of Drawing*, you lay down certain books to be studied, etc.⁵

“Now, suppose a woman or man has been brought up to have a kind of contempt for *Grimm's Goblins*, *Arabian Nights*, etc., as childish and frivolous,—and on account of the Calvinistic tendency of relatives, has been precluded from reading *books*.—how should a healthy tendency be brought about? For the mind is not a blank, to receive impressions like a child, but has all sorts of preconceived notions and prejudices in the way.—Shakespeare looked upon as immoral, or childish, and the rest treated in an equally cavalier manner by people who probably never looked inside the books.”

I should like to answer the above letter at some length; but have,

¹ [But see below, p. 607.]

² [See above, p. 268.]

³ [See below, p. 448.]

⁴ [This purpose, however, was not carried out. On Ruskin's ideas with regard to Local Museums, see Vol. XVI. p. 144 and *n.*]

⁵ [*Elements of Drawing*, §§ 258–259 (Vol. XV. pp. 226–228).]

to-day, no time. The sum of answer is—Nothing *can* be done, but what I am trying to form this St. George's Company to do.

21.¹ I am sorry to omit the "thoughts" to which my second correspondent refers, in the opening of this following letter, but she gave me no permission to publish them:—

"These thoughts made me settle in Leeds (being free from family obligations) in order to see for myself what I could do for these towns, and what their state really was. The Borough Surveyor of Leeds (who had been six months only in office, and was perhaps new to commercial life) said to me, 'There is nothing in Leeds but jobbery and trickery.' Almsgiving (for the law of supply and demand cannot do it), in the shape of decent houses, was the first thing to be done, I found.

"The late Canon Kingsley, in his tract on the 'Application of Associative Principles and Methods to Agriculture' (1851), confounds justice and almsgiving together. They are surely distinct,* but you cannot give alms till you have paid just debts.

"You say nothing in *Fors* of the custom which rules that rich capitalists and landowners † shall leave each of, say five or six daughters (I am eldest of six), a fortune large enough to enable her to live in idleness, and more or less luxury, for life. This custom is, I believe, at the root of much extortion and avarice on the part of fathers, and leads to marriages for money ‡ on the part of younger men. I deny the claim of women to political power; but I think, with Lord Salisbury, that every girl (no matter what her rank) has a moral right to be educated for self-maintenance, and proper rational feminine self-reliance,—and not mainly for society, or, in other words, for marriage.

"Believing § that, in the abstract, men are morally, mentally, and physically superior to women, I yet believe that the perfect relative independence and indifferent dignity of mental attitude which rightly trained and educated women should possess before matrimony (an attitude which is, to say the least, now often wanting) is essential to the proper influence women should exercise over men. It is essential to the vantage-ground on which unmarried women should stand, and from which they should draw men up to their standard, not bend themselves down to men's.

"An article (one of a series on 'French Home Life') in *Blackwood*, some years ago,² says (nearly in these words)—'Supply will follow demand; if men prefer a virtuous type of womanhood, good and well; if otherwise, young ladies and their mothers will recognize the demand and will meet it' !!! That an old-established magazine, much read by the aristocracy, should give utterance to a sentiment like this (whether or not it be true) strikes me as a sign of the times, as bad as most you have quoted in *Fors*. [Assuredly.]

"Apart from the *élite* of the women of the genuine aristocracy, who, with long inherited noble instincts of all kinds, are always charming, and full of noble influence over those who come within its sphere,—there is the vast mass of

* Very surely.

† Because I entirely ignore rich capitalists and landowners—or look on them only as the claws of my Dragon.

‡ Every unmarried woman should have enough left her by her father to keep herself, and a pet dog—but not, also, an idle man.

§ On what grounds? I don't understand a word of this paragraph; least of all why either men or women should be considered "in the abstract"; and, in the concrete, I can't make out why men are the higher, at the beginning of the sentence, and women at the end of it.

¹ [§ 21 was omitted after the first edition.]

² [See *Blackwood's Magazine*, vols. 110 and 111, 1871–1872.]

English middle-class women who make up the nation, women whose inherited instincts are perhaps ignoble, or at best indefinite. The right education of these is surely an important point in social reform, and yet is still a practically unsolved problem. I have done parish work for thirteen years and more, and know the existing relations between rich and poor experimentally. The root of the matter seems to be this. Modern Christianity professes and attempts to practise the moral code of the New Testament*—mercy, while ignoring, or trampling under foot, the moral code of the Old—justice, which must come. It is thus that so much Christianity, in all sects, is (unconsciously often) sham Christianity. I agree with what you say of the clergy in many things; they do not know if Christianity in our days means peace, or the sword. Saying to their rich parishioners ‘Thou art the man’ would often be an ending to the peace and comfort of their own lives: subscriptions would be stopped, on which they rely for almsgiving, and by means of which almsgiving they try to draw the poor to church, and so to heaven.

“Again, who in this day has quite clean hands with regard to money? I know a clergyman who worked for many years in a parish, and improved the morality of the people by his work. Among other things, he caused (by persuasion, and substitution of a reading-room) a public-house to be shut up—the squire co-operating with him. This self-same squire wants to sell the property; is told it will sell better with a public-house. He rebuilds one in the village before he sells it!

“Broadly speaking, the creed of young men of the richer classes is self-indulgence, that of young women, self-sacrifice (shown in mistaken ways, no doubt). To thinking and well-disposed women of all classes, church or chapel going is a necessity. The life of most of them is only made endurable by the hope of another world than this.

“For the last six years I have been wandering about more or less, investigating, and experiencing personally, to some extent, and at the cost of much suffering, the various forms of distress in the various classes. I look back on my years of parish work as on one long monotonous day—so hopeless is such work, unless regarded, from the ecclesiastical point of view, as a self-preparation for Heaven. Seeing, as I did, and do, how entirely preventible half of the misery is, which is coolly accepted by religious and charitable people as the ordained Will of God, I stopped short (among other reasons), and gave my mind and my time to investigate and analyse the causes of the miseries, and how far it was practicable to cut at the roots of them—not snip off the blossoms, merely. Will you bear with a word as to the position of women? I agree with you: it is a futile discussion, that of equality or inequality. But as unhappily I have had to think, see, and judge for myself, in a way that, in a right order of things, ought not to be required of a woman, I wish to disclaim all sympathy with the women of the women’s rights party. They are well-intentioned, but mistaken. It is dread of being identified with their views that prevents the best and most influential women of the aristocracy from doing what they might do. I trust you will secure the co-operation of such women for your St. George’s Company.”

I wish I could! It will be a curious point in the story of the founding of the St. George’s Company that, at any rate during five years, only one woman of the upper classes gave me any help.¹

I hope, however, that the fact (perhaps less universally true than formerly) that “to thoughtful and well-disposed women of all classes,

* My dear lady, it attempts nothing of the sort. It supposes the New Testament to be an announcement of universal pardon and speedy promotion to rascals.

¹ [That is, Mrs. Talbot: see above, § 19 (p. 395).]

church-going is a necessity," may be accounted for otherwise than by the misery of their earthly lives.

22. For the sake of my female, and theological, readers, I print the next following letter:—

"THE PARSONAGE, WERRINGTON, PETERBOROUGH,
"July 7, 1875.

"MY DEAR SIR,—In your comment on a former letter of mine you acknowledged (a) that the Gospel which I endeavour to preach—Be persuaded by the Lord Jesus Christ; let His life rule your lives—is externally true and salutary,¹ but, because I have joined with you in condemning a doctrine opposed to this, you have rather hastily assumed (b) that I have 'eagerly repudiated the doctrine of the Eleventh Article of the Church of England,'² to which Article I have given, and not withdrawn, my public assent.

"You have of course taken for granted (c) that the Eleventh Article teaches the 'pleasant and supremely false gospel'—Let His life be instead of your lives; you may be saved by faith without righteousness. But does it?

"The Article says:

"*'We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by Faith, and not for our own works or deservings: Wherefore, that we are justified by Faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification.'*

"This teaches, in simple English enough, that there is but one righteousness in God's sight—the righteousness of Christ, and that this righteousness becomes ours by faith: so that faith alone sets us right with God.

"Before the court of public opinion (d) men may be accounted righteous for 'works and deservings' of their own, like those which were so eminently satisfactory to the Pharisee who went up to the Temple to pray; but before God, whose judgments are true, the only merit for which any man is accounted righteous is the merit of Jesus Christ. The Publican 'went down to his house justified' because of that faith in God which led him to hunger and thirst after a righteousness higher than his own, and in due time to be filled with it.

"A man is 'justified by faith only' because by faith only he accepts the righteousness of Christ, not instead of, but *for* (e), his own. He is therefore accounted righteous before God because, in His sight, who sees the end from the beginning, he *is* righteous.

"But, while the righteousness is verily his own, he confesses that, in the deepest sense, it is not his own, for the source and efficient cause of it is Christ—the merit is His.

"From all this it will appear that what I repudiate is not the Eleventh Article, but the externally false and damnable doctrine which has seemed to you to be set forth therein.

"I cannot think that the Article was intended to teach that a man can be accounted righteous before God without righteousness—that faith will serve as a substitute for it, since I read in the Homily in which the doctrine of the Article is 'more largely expressed' such words as the following:

"*'This true Christian faith neither any devil hath, nor yet any man who, in the outward profession of his mouth, and his outward receiving of the Sacraments, in coming to the Church, and in all other outward appearances, seemeth to be a Christian man, and yet in his living and deeds sheweth the contrary.'*

"I am, my dear Sir,

"Very faithfully yours,

"EDWARD Z. LYTTTEL.

"JOHN RUSKIN, ESQ."

¹ [See Letter 51, § 20 (p. 287).]

² [See Letter 55, § 1 (p. 363).]

23. (a) My correspondent cannot quit himself of the idea that I am his antagonist. If he preaches what is true, I say so—if what is false, I say so. I congratulate him in the one case, and am sorry for him in the other; but have nothing to “acknowledge” in either case.

(b) and (c) “You have rather hastily assumed.” “You have of course taken for granted.” Compare Mr. Headlam’s “I fancy that, on consideration, you would like to withdraw,” Letter 54, § 26 [p. 358]. These clerical gentlemen, who habitually and necessarily write *without* consideration, and as habitually and necessarily “take for granted” the entire grounds of their profession, are quaintly unable to enter into the mind of a man who for twenty years has not written a word without testing it syllable by syllable; nor taken for granted one principle or fact, in art, science, or history,—having somewhat wide work in all three.

In the present case, I am very sorry to have to tell my correspondent that the last thing I should “take for granted” would be the completeness and accuracy of his own account of himself. What his words actually mean, my twenty years’ study of English enables me to tell him with authority;—but what he means by them *he* only knows!

(d) Who is talking of public opinion? Does my correspondent suppose that in any—even among the rudest or most ignorant—debates on this subject, “righteousness” was ever supposed to mean worldly credit? The question is, was, and will be—simply how men escape being damned—if they do.

(e) It is no part of my duty in *Fors* to occupy myself in exposing the verbal, or probing the mental, sophistries by which the aerial ingenuity of divines may guide itself in gossamer over the inconveniently furrowed ground of religious dogma. There are briefly two, and two only, forms of possible Christian, Pagan, or any other gospel, or “good message”: one, that men are saved by themselves doing what is right; and the other that they are saved by believing that somebody else did right instead of them. The first of these Gospels is eternally true, and holy; the other eternally false, damnable, and damning. Which of them Mr. Lyttel preaches, matters much to himself and his parishioners; but, to the world, considerably less than he seems to suppose. That the Eleventh Article of the Church of England teaches the second, “in very simple English,” is as certain as Johnson’s dictionary can make it: and that it (the said sweet message) is currently preached with unction, and received with gladness, over the whole of England, and of Protestant France, Switzerland, and Italy, by the most active and influential members of the Protestant Church, I take upon me to assert, on the grounds of an experience gained (while Mr. Lyttel was, by his own account, “occupied from day to day in stuffy rooms among ignorant and immoral people”) by the carefulest study of the best Protestant divines, and the hearing of sermons by the most eloquent pastors, in every important city of evangelical Europe. Finally, I must beg Mr. Lyttel to observe that I only printed his first letter because it expressed some degree of doubt, and discomfort, which I hoped to relieve. His succeeding letters show him, on the contrary, to be supremely confident and comfortable;—in which enviable state I must here take leave of him. For my challenge (as yet unanswered) was to his Bishop, and not to the clergy of the diocese; nor, if it had been, has Mr. Lyttel offered any evidence that he is their accredited champion.

24. I think I do Mr. Lyttel more justice by printing his kind and graceful last words on my impatient comments, than I should by disarranging my types and altering my letter; which, indeed, I have no time to do.

“MY DEAR SIR,—It is both my fault and misfortune that you have taken parts of my letters ‘clean from the purpose of the words themselves’; and I write at once in hope that you may be able to erase two unserviceable paragraphs, which my want of simple English, or some other misdirection, has produced.

“1. If you will allow me to substitute the word ‘said’ for ‘acknowledged’ in my letter, it will save paragraph (*a*).

“2. Then I should like to assure you that the feeling which called forth my first letter also produced the rest, and no one who knows me well would think of attributing to me ‘supreme confidence and comfort.’ Moreover, I have throughout spoken for myself alone, and have not for one moment pretended to be the ‘accredited champion’ of any one. So that if you can spare the latter part of paragraph (*e*), beginning with ‘Finally,’ I think neither you nor I would lose anything by the omission.

“Other parts of your comment I am sorry for, but I have not the same reason to object to them as I have to those I have specified.

“I am most faithfully yours,

“EDWARD Z. LYTTEL.”

25. Some slips of newspaper have been forwarded to me, containing an abstract of a sermon by the Bishop of Manchester,¹ in which some reference was made to Fors: but of course I cannot take any notice of expressions thus accidentally conveyed to me, and probably reported with inaccuracy. The postscript to the following interesting letter of Mr. Sillar’s may perhaps receive from the Bishop of Manchester more honourable attention:—

“KINGSWOOD LODGE, LEE GREEN, S.E.,
“13th January, 1875.

“MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I have great sympathy with your lady correspondent,² and, for the life of me, I cannot tell what you would have me to do. I am not a landed proprietor, nor a country gentleman, though I am the son of one, a retired physician, and brought up in the blessed green fields, and among streams that were as clear as crystal, and full of trout; but coal-pits appeared on the horizon, and gradually drove us out. I well remember the first vile red shaft that appeared within about a mile of our windows, and how the beastly smoke reconciled my mother to leave one of the loveliest country seats in Lancashire, which she had adorned with roses and laurels, I was going to say with her own hands, and I am not sure that it would be wrong to say so, for she saw every one (and the grounds were seven or eight acres in extent) planted with her own eyes, and superintended the doing of it.

“Living there in the country, and under a tutor, my education has not been that of an ordinary country gentleman; I early learned to work with my hands as well as with my head, and though I must confess that personally I never had much taste for gardening, I had plenty of work to do in the open air. You tell me our education has to begin—yours as well as mine; and expect me to say that I cannot make a brick or a tile, or build a rude dwelling.³ Singularly enough, I helped to do so when a boy, and it will be long before any of us forget the miniature cottage we built, and thatched, complete, with window, door, and fireplace, and with a

¹ [Compare, above, p. 243. The sermon here referred to does not appear among the Bishop’s published sermons.]

² [See Letter 49, § 17 (p. 249).]

³ [See Letter 47, § 15 (p. 199).]

cellar moreover, with wine of our own making, and beer of our own brewing made from treacle; for we did everything ourselves, even to grooming our own ponies.

"In later life, my lot was cast in Liverpool, and after six or seven years spent in China, where I have seen the horrors of war, and where a cannon shot came through our roof, as we sat at tiffin, I found myself in London.

"My old business of a merchant I cannot carry on; though I have capital sufficient for fair trade, I cannot carry it on in the face of the fierce competition by unprincipled men on borrowed money:

'Where man competes with man like foe with foe,
Till death that thins them scarce seem public woe'—

my business as a banker and bullion broker is sealed to me as iniquitous.

"At present, therefore, I am free to act; I fret because I am in a state of inactivity. I feel that I have health and strength, and that in a thousand ways I could be useful, but wherever I turn I am stopped. I am a good rough joiner; I can do small work in iron and brass; and I am a good practical chemist; my laboratory was recommended as an example of how a laboratory should be kept, by the editor of the *Chemical News* and an F. R.S.

"Now allow me to ask you seriously, would you have me to go out alone into the wilderness, and live like a Robinson Crusoe till I see an opening? The point is, the opening might come directly, or it might not come for years, and meantime I am standing in the market-place, such as it is (why is there not a real one?). It is this uncertainty that distresses me, for I must work for my living, and my substance is gradually melting away.

"Believe me, my dear Mr. Ruskin, ever yours affectionately,

"ROB. G. SILLAR.

"P.S.—I am glad to see you have challenged Dr. Fraser. I had a correspondence with him some years ago. I saw in one of Carlyle's works, that I might do some good, if I had two fingers and a pen; so, after getting no answer from my own clergyman, and the secretary of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, relative to the leaving out of a verse in the fifteenth Psalm in our collection, I appealed to the bishop. He was very polite, and corresponded with me till he felt it dangerous to go on, and then informed me that he really had no time to examine into the lawfulness of interest.

"I confess I don't like an officer who has no time to read and examine his standing orders, but who yet retains the command of the regiment; so as you told me in *Sheepfolds** that in our army the King was beside every one of us to appeal to in case of doubt, I ended by telling his lordship, as he had no time to hear me, I must leave it in other hands, *videat Altissimus*, and our correspondence closed."

* I am reprinting this pamphlet word for word as it was first issued from the press. Mr. Allen will have it ready for distribution by the first of September.¹

¹ [The reprint was issued in October 1875. The reference in Mr. Sillar's letter is to § 30 of *Sheepfolds* (Vol. XII. p. 550).]

[I am honoured in the charge given me, without dissent, by the present members of the St. George's Company, to convey their thanks to MR. SAMUEL PLIMSOLL, in the terms stated at the close of my last letter.]

LETTER 57

MICHAL'S SCORN¹

1. I HAVE received, from the author, M. Emile de Laveleye,² his pamphlet,—“Protestantism and Catholicism in their bearing upon the Liberty and Prosperity of Nations, with an introductory Letter by Mr. Gladstone.” I do not know why M. de Laveleye sent me this pamphlet. I thank him for the courtesy; but he has evidently read none of my books, or must have been aware that he could not have written anything more contrary to the positions which I am politically maintaining. On the other hand, I have read none of *his* books, and I gather from passages in his pamphlet that there may be much in them to which I should be able to express entire adhesion.

But of the pamphlet in question, and its preface, he will, I trust, pardon my speaking in the same frank terms which I should have used had it accidentally come under my notice, instead of by the author's gift. The pamphlet is especially displeasing to me, because it speaks of “Liberty” under the common assumption of its desirableness; whereas my own teaching has been, and is, that Liberty, whether in the body, soul, or political estate of men, is only another word for Death, and the final issue of Death, putrefaction:

¹ [The title refers to 2 Samuel vi. 16: “And Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.” “Music and Dancing” (see below, § 6) was a discarded title for this letter.]

² [Emile-Louis-Victor, Baron de Laveleye (1822–1892); Belgian economist and publicist; Professor of Political Economy at Liège.]

18th Jan 7

Dear Allen

I have been greatly amazed by the discovery to me of Mr. Gualstone's real character, as I saw it at the museum: its intense simplicity and earnestness lay open themselves open to every sort of misinterpretation - being unbelievable unless one saw him.

- I must cancel all the attacks on him in Far. Sent in the number with it, and I will recast it at once and do it in my original.

I am now finishing ^{and} the People list of all. - it will save me a little trouble if you tell me what I have already directed to be done about the plates.

Ever affectedly
Yours

J.R.

the body, spirit, and political estate being alike healthy only by their bonds and laws; and by Liberty being instantly disengaged into mephitic vapour.

2. But the matter of this pamphlet, no less than the assumption it is based on, is hateful to me; reviving, as it does, the miserable question of the schism between Catholic and Protestant, which is entirely ridiculous and immaterial; and taking no note whatever of the true and eternal schism, cloven by the very sword of Michael, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth Him not.

(The passage now and henceforward omitted in this place,¹ contained an attack on Mr. Gladstone written under a complete misconception of his character. See, for explanation of it, the beginning of the third letter in the second series of *Fors.*² The blank space is left partly in order not to confuse the Index references, partly in due memorial of rash judgment.)

3. The fact being that I am, at this central time of my life's work, at pause because I cannot set down any

¹ [The passage, included in eds. 1 and 2, was as follows:—

“In furtherance of which contempt of the only vital question in religious matters, I find, in the preface to this pamphlet, the man, who was so long a favourite Prime Minister of England, speaking of the ‘indifferentism, scepticism, materialism, and pantheism, *which for the moment are so fashionable*’ only as ‘negative systems.’ He himself being, in fact, nothing else than a negative system, hundred-tongued to his own confusion; the ‘fashionable’ hairdresser, as it were, and Minister of extreme unction in the manner of pomade, to the scald and moribund English pates that still wear their religion decoratively, as a bob-wig with a pigtail (carefully also anointing and powdering the remains of its native growth on the heads of their flunkies), and from under such contracted and loose-sitting substitute for the Cavalier locks of their forefathers, look upon the round heads of the European cropped populace, only as ‘for the moment so fashionable,’—little thinking in what prison discipline the Newgate cut has its origin with the most of them, or in what hardship of war, and pressure of helmet on weary brows, for others. The fact being . . .”

The quotations from Mr. Gladstone are from pp. 7, 8 of the pamphlet (published in 1875). The facsimile here given is of Ruskin's letter to Mr. Allen (January 18, 1878), instructing him to cancel the attack upon Mr. Gladstone.]

² [Letter 87, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 364). See also *Letters to M. G. and H. G.*, by John Ruskin, privately printed 1903, and reprinted in a later volume of this edition.]

form of religious creed so simple, but that the requirement of its faithful signature by persons desiring to become Companions of St. George, would exclude some of the noblest champions of justice and charity now labouring for men; while, on the other hand, I cannot set down the first principles of children's noble education without finding myself in collision with an almost resistless infidel mob, which¹ is incapable of conceiving—how much less of obeying—the first laws of human decency, order, and honour. So that indeed I am fain to ask, with my Leeds correspondent, in last *Fors* (§ 20), what is to be done for young folks to whom “music has little attraction, except in the form of dance, and pictures are nothing”?

4. With her pardon, pictures are much to this class of young people. The woodcuts of halfpenny novels representing scenes of fashionable life,—those representing men murdering their wives, in the *Police News*,—and, finally, those which are to be bought only in the back-shop,—have enormous educational influence on the young British public: which its clergymen, alike ignorant of human nature and human art, think to counteract—by decorating their own churches, forsooth,—and by coloured prints of the story of Joseph; while the lower tribes of them—Moody's and Sankey's—think to turn modern musical taste to account by fitting negro melodies to hymns.²

And yet, my correspondent may be thankful that some remnant of delight *is* still taken in dance-music. It is the last protest of the human spirit, in the poor fallen creatures, against the reign of the absolute Devil, Pandemonium with Mammon on the throne, instead of Lucifer,—the Son of the Earth, Lord of Hell, instead of the Son of the Morning.

Let her stand in the midst of the main railroad station at Birmingham; and think—what music, or dancing, or

¹ [Eds. 1 and 2 here added: “(I know not whether, in Mr. Gladstone's estimate, fashionably or vulgarly).”]

² [Messrs. Moody and Sankey, American evangelists, were at this time at the height of their vogue: see *Moody and Sankey: their Lives and Labours, together with a History of the Present Great Religious Movement* (Ward, Lock, & Tyler, 1875).]

other entertainment fit for prodigal sons could be possible in that pious and little prodigal locality.* Let her read the account of our modern pastoral music, at § 11 of my fifth letter,—of modern Venetian “Barcarolle,” § 12 of Letter 19, and § 12 of Letter 20,¹—and of our modern Campanile, and Muezzin call to prayer, at page 412 of this *Fors*.

5. “Work is prayer”—thinks your Wakefield Mahometan;—his vociferous minaret, in the name, and by the name, of the Devil, shall summon English votaries to such worship for five miles round; that is to say, over one hundred square miles of English land, the Pandemoniacal voice of the Archangel-trumpet thus arouses men out of their sleep; and Wakefield becomes Wakeful-field, over that blessed space of acreage.

Yes; my correspondent may be thankful that still some feeble lust for dancing on the green,—still some dim acknowledgment, by besotted and stupefied brains, of the laws of tune and time known to their fathers and mothers—remains possible to the poor wretches discharged by the excursion trains for a gasp of breath, and a gleam of light, amidst what is left to them, and us, of English earth and heaven. Waltzing, drunk, in the country roads by our villages; yet innocently drunk, and sleepy at sunset; not like their born masters and teachers, dancing, wilfully, the cancan of hell, with harlots, at seven in the morning.†

6. Music and dancing! They are quite the two primal instruments of education. Make them licentious; let Mr. John Stuart Mill have the dis-ordering of them, so that—(see § 18 of Letter 12²) “no one shall be guided, or governed, or directed in the way they should go,”—and they sink to lower and lower depth—till the dance becomes

* Compare my Birmingham correspondent’s opinion of David’s “twangling on the harp,” Letter 6, § 6 [Vol. XXVII. p. 104].

† *Sesame and Lilies*, § 36 n. [Vol. XVIII. p. 93].

¹ [For these passages, see Vol. XXVII. pp. 89, 329, 341.]

² [Vol. XXVII. p. 211.]

Death's; and the music—a shriek of death by strychnine. But let Miriam and David, and the Virgins of Israel,¹ have the ordering of them, and the music becomes at last the Eternal choir; and the Dance, the Karol-dance of Christmas, evermore.*

Virgins of Israel, or of England, richly clad by your kings, and “rejoicing in the dance.”² how is it you do not divide this sacred,—*if* sacred,—joy of yours with the poor? If it can ever be said of you, as birds of God,³

“Oh beauteous birds, methinks ye measure
Your movements to some heavenly tune,”⁴

can you not show wherein the heavenliness of it consists, to—suppose—your Sunday-school classes? At present, you keep the dancing to yourselves, and graciously teach *them* the catechism. Suppose you were to try for a little while learning the catechism yourselves; and teaching *them*—to dance?

7. Howbeit, in St. George's schools, this, the most “decorous,” rightly taught, of all exercises, shall not fail of its due discipline to any class whatsoever:—reading, writing, and accounts may all be spared where pupils show no turn to any of those scholarships, but music and dancing, never.† Generally, however, it will be the best singers and dancers who ask for teaching also in literature and art; for all,

* Compare Letter 24, § 21 [Vol. XXVII. p. 433]; and Dante, *Paradiso*, xxiv. 16:—

“Cosi, quelle carole differente—
Mente danzando, della sua ricchezza
Mi si facean stimar, veloci e lente.”⁵

† Compare Letter 8, § 10; and Letter 9, § 12 [Vol. XXVII. p. 143, 157.]

¹ [See Exodus xv. 20; 2 Samuel vi. 14; Jeremiah xxxi. 13.]

² [Jeremiah xxxi. 13.]

³ [“Dante's simple and most exquisite synonym for angel” (*Purgatorio*, ii. 38): see *Giotto and his Works in Padua*, Vol. XXIV. p. 72.]

⁴ [Coleridge, *Lewti, or the Circassian Love-Chaunt*; quoted again in Letter 91, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 442); and in *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*, § 77 n. (where Ruskin erroneously cites the lines as Wordsworth's).]

⁵ [“E'en thus their carols weaving variously,
They, by the measure paced, or swift, or slow,
Made me to rate the riches of their joy” (Cary's translation).]

there shall at least be the way open to these; and for none, danger or corruption possible in these. For in their libraries there shall be none but noble books, and in their sight none but noble art.¹

There is no real difficulty or occasion for dispute in choosing these. Admit the principle of selection, and the practice is easy enough; only, like all practical matters, the work must be done by one man, sufficiently qualified for it; and not by a council. If her err, the error may be represented by any one cognizant of it, and by council corrected. But the main work must be done single-handed.

Thus, for the use of the St. George's Company, I shall myself, if my life is spared, write out a list of books which without any question will be found serviceable in their libraries;*—a system of art instruction which will be secure so far as it reaches; and a list of purchaseable works of art, which it will be desirable to place in the national schools and museums of the company. With this list of purchaseable works, I shall name, as I have time, those in the museums of Europe which ought to be studied, to the exclusion of those on which time would be wasted.²

8. I have no doubt that this work, though done at first for the St. George's Company, will be found generally useful, and especially that the system of drawing arranged for them will in many respects supersede that of Kensington. I had intended to write it separately for the use of schools; but after repeated endeavours to arrange it in a popular form, find that it will not so shape itself availably, but must consist of such broad statements of principle as my now enlarged experience enables me to make; with references to the parts of my other books in which they are defended or illustrated: and of directions for practice given

* This will be added to by future Masters of the Company, with the farther means of specification indicated in § 4 of Letter 21.³

¹ [For an additional passage, apparently intended for this Letter, see Appendix 12, Vol. XXIX. p. 559.]

² [This, however, Ruskin never found time to do.]

³ [Vol. XXVII. p. 354; and compare in this volume, p. 20, and the other passages there noted.]

(§ 14 of Letter 6¹); and I, with my eyes full of dust and driven smoke, am obliged to leave my own work, and write *Fors*, more and more necessarily becoming principal, as I find all my other work rendered vain.

10. Nevertheless, in the course of *Fors* itself, I shall try to give, as aforesaid, art instruction enough for all need, if any one cares to obey it.² How little any one is likely to care, the closing paragraphs of the letter from Wakefield³ show so clearly that I think it desirable to print them here consecutively, as part of the text of *Fors* itself:—

“Yet people tell me that those were very benighted Tory days I am regretting. Wakefield was always held to be a Tory place, given up hand and foot to the magnates who owned the great estate round. I know how when a small thing in frilled slops, but with my bosom full of patriotic pride in our town, I used to feel bitterly depressed at hearing a rising Radical Leeds clothier, who came to see us, sometimes denounce Wakefield as a ‘one-eyed hoil,’ his emphatic way of indicating our want of sweep of vision. I remember he generally capped his arguments by demanding, in sonorous tones, if any men worthy of the name of Britons would put up with that ‘obsolete monopoly’ of the soke⁴ mills.

“To tell truth, I am afraid that we felt a good deal of mean-spirited admiration for the neighbouring squires and lords on the occasions when they showed themselves and their handsome carriages in our streets: but at least the Wentworths and Pilkingtons and Squire Waterton were gentlemen and scholars; our new magnates have nothing to boast but their money. It seems to me better that people should boast of the old oaks of Walton,⁵ and the old pictures of——Priory, than tell how many thousands an iron lord made by the last rise in iron: and that is what they

¹ [Vol. XXVII. p. 113.]

² [See below, pp. 442–447, 492–495, 568–575, 699–701; and Vol. XXIX. pp. 127–130.]

³ [Continued from Letter 55, § 9 (p. 380).]

⁴ [Eds. 1 and 2 read “(soke*) mills,” the note * being, “I don’t know what this word means, and may have mistaken the reading of it.” “Soke mills” are those at which millers claimed the privilege of grinding all the corn which was used within the manor or township. These rights were bought out by the inhabitants of Wakefield in 1853 for £18,000, and were then abolished by Act of Parliament.]

⁵ [Walton Hall and Park, in the days of “Squire Waterton” (Charles Waterton, the naturalist, 1782–1865), would have appealed strongly to Ruskin, for one of his dreams (see *Love’s Meinie*, § 139, Vol. XXV. p. 132) was there realised. Mr. Waterton so managed his property as to “offer a hearty welcome to every bird and beast that chose to avail itself of his hospitality, and, by affording them abundant food and a quiet retreat, to induce them to frequent a spot where they would feel themselves secure from all enemies save those which have been appointed to preserve the balance of nature” (see Murray’s *Handbook for Yorkshire*, 1874, p. 493). The old pictures were, and are, at Nostel Priory.]

talk of now. And if the iron kings have supplanted the landlords, they are not any more free. The old farmers might vote blindly out of blind respect for the old landlords; but is it not better than the newly-enfranchised puddlers and strikers selling votes openly for the price of a gallon of whisky? We have lost a good deal, although we are long rid of the soke monopoly, which used to be a standing reproach to us. I think that the town bought off the soke just after the Corn Law agitation, when the great railways began to enclose the wide meadows about the town with their ugly ramparts and arches, where the trains keep up a continual scream.

“But the wool and corn magnates of the place held to their old traditions long after that; and when Titus Salt asked for a footing in the town that he might build there his great alpaca factories, he was rejected. I had gone abroad then, but my heart was in the old place, and I caught up eagerly all concerning it. Sometimes I heard doleful accounts of its decadence—how the big houses were empty altogether, how the inns were closed, the coaches stopped, the river traffic diminished, and the great corn warehouses by the bridge falling to ruin. There was no trace left of the gaities that once gave the town the name of ‘Merrie Wakefield.’ All the smart young men were leaving it to push their way in Leeds or Manchester, and the girls left behind were growing up into a population of old maids.

“So the doleful story went on for many a year. But insensibly the key changed. Mills were springing up, and shops; and the houses had gone up in rent. The sleepy streets were thronged with workers; in short the town seemed new-born altogether. And the——s,¹—I knew the——s,¹—nobody would have thought it, such a simple kind of man as old-seemed; yet the tale ran that he could buy up all Wakefield, and young Bill² was going to live in—Hall!! Young Bill in——Hall! one of the most sacred spots my memory cherished.

“I remembered him well,—an audacious boy, with a gift for wry faces, and always up to some street prank. I remember the well-worn jacket and battered cap that his father’s thrift imposed on him. And he was to be one of new rulers of the bright new time! and lord it in those venerable oaken chambers sacred to Lady—’s ghost! It seemed incredible; but twenty years had changed everything. Old—, the father—a man of the true old English grain, had, in my young days, a foundry at the lower end of the town, and was said even then to be worth a ‘mint of money.’ Worthy folks were he and his; but still people of whom the loftier town’s-folk took no cognizance socially, for was not the wife’s father old Robin the Pedlar? A good old soul he was, who peddled to frugal farm wives the best thread and needles that could be got,—and took no alms from his kinsfolk, and lived and died in blameless humble honesty. And his grandson now rules in the hall where old

¹ [The name is “Green,” as appears from a subsequent letter: see below, pp. 456, 457.]

² [In eds. 1 and 2 “young Ned,” the name “Bill” being afterwards substituted, presumably to avoid identification; but in Letter 59 (on the first of the pages just referred to) the true name was given in all editions. So also in eds. 1 and 2, the names “Heath Hall,” “Lady B——,” and “Old G——” were given. For the ghost of Lady Bolles in Heath Old Hall, see above, p. 380 *n.*]

Robin, perchance, took a humble bit and sup at the back door. He has a Scotch estate besides, and only failed of Parliament last year because he bribed his way a little too openly.¹ My enlightened friends look upon his rise as one of the grandest signs of the grand new time; but I cannot rejoice with them. When I see how he and his like are doing their worst to foul the air and blacken the fields about the town, I cannot help wishing the squires back in——Hall.

“Men say, too, that he is a stronger Tory than the bluest of the old squires. He has forgotten old Robin of the bobbins,² and rules the people from whom he sprang, with an iron hand, as such often do.³ Naturally, his success has attracted others, and the town will soon be surrounded with forges. On the once green Calder bank, where I used to see garlands of brown pears ripening in the sweet sunshine, there is a desert of dross and ashes and twenty black throats vomiting fire and fumes into the summer sky;⁴ and under the big sheds you see hundreds of the liberated Britons of these improved days, toiling, half-naked, in sweltering heat and din, from morning to evening. This, however, is ‘the activity and spread of the iron trade,’ which our local paper tells us ‘are the most satisfactory pledge of the future progress and prosperity of our town.’

“I wish that I could believe it; but it vexes me beyond comfort to see the first landscape I knew and loved blighted by the smoke of the forges, and to find one sweet association after another swept away.

“Even Sunday brings no respite to the eye. The forges are fired up shortly after noonday, and many of the long chimneys follow suit. And in the town the noise is so constant, you can scarcely hear the church chimes unless you are close to the tower.

“Did you ever hear Wakefield chimes? We were very proud of them in the old time. They had a round of pleasant sleepy tunes, that never failed us through summer suns and winter frost; and came to be bound up indelibly with the early memories of us children. How I loved to hear them as I bounded, full of morning gladness, across the green Vicar’s Croft to school; or at night when lying an unwilling prisoner in bed, before the warm summer evening was ended. To my childish fancy there was a strange wizardry bound up with that dark church steeple, frosted and crumbling with age, which would break out overhead into mysterious music when I was far afield, but expecting it.

¹ [For particulars of the election Petition at Wakefield in 1874, see Letter 62 (pp. 534–536).]

² [Eds. 1 and 2 had a footnote here:—

“A favourite nursery-rhyme of my nurse Annie’s comes musically back to my ears, from fifty years afar—

‘Robin-a-bobbin, a bilberry hen—

He ate more victuals than threescore men.’ ”

J. O. Halliwell in his *Nursery Rhymes of England*, 1846, p. 30, gives the lines—

“Robin the Bobbin, the big-bellied Ben,

He eat more meat than fourscore men.”]

³ [For a contradiction of this and other statements in this communication, see, again, Mrs. Edward Green’s letter, below, pp. 456, 457.]

⁴ [For a Report of 1866 on the fouling of the Calder, see Appendix I. to Letter 89 (Vol. XXIX. p. 417).]

"Years after, when poor and lonely in a great foreign city, I came, one bitter winter's day, upon an obscure cloister church standing by a frozen river. It was a city without bells, and I had often longed for the familiar sound. I was dreadfully homesick that day, and stood upon the bridge, hapless, and listless; looking at the strange spire, the strange houses and frozen-up boats, in a kind of dream. Suddenly the cloister tower struck the hour,—four o'clock of a dark December day, and presently it broke into a chime.

"It was a very simple ditty; but what a passion of longing it wakened for England and the old chimes of that little English town! I felt as if my heart could bear no more. I *must* go home; I *must* see the old places again, cost what it might. But morning brought fresh counsels, and many a year passed before I revisited the old place.

"At last I was there again, after many disappointments, and laid my head to rest once more beneath the shadow of the old steeple.

"I woke with an expectant heart. It was a bright May day, such as I remembered twenty years before. The big church bell tolled nine: then came a pause, and my thirsty ears were strained to catch the first sounds of the dear old chimes. 'Ding' went a treble bell high in the air, the first note of 'Tara's Halls,' and then!—a hideous sound I cannot describe, a prolonged malignant yell, broke from the sky and seemed to fill the earth. I stopped my ears and ran indoors, but the sound followed to the innermost chambers. It gathered strength and malignancy every moment, and seemed to blast all within its reach. It lasted near two minutes, and ended with a kind of spasm and howl that made every nerve shudder. I do not exaggerate. I cannot adequately describe the hideous sound. When I had recovered my wits, I asked the meaning of this horrible noise. My informant, a rising young townsman of the new stamp, told me that it was the new steam-whistle at the foundry, commonly called the 'American Devil'; that it was the most powerful in the West Riding, and could be heard five miles off.¹

"It was only at half-power then, calling the workmen from breakfast; but at six in the morning I could hear it in double force. I asked if it was possible that people would quietly put up with such a hideous disturbance. He owned that the old inhabitants did not like it; but then, he said, they were a sleepy set, and wanted stirring up.

"Indeed, I actually found that the town was infected by four other similar whistles, profaning dawn and eve with their heaven-defying screech.

"The nuisance has been abolished since, I hear. They say it actually killed one old lady by starting her up just at the only moment when it was possible for her weary nerves to get sleep. She happened to have a relation in the town council: a stir was made about it, and the whistles were suppressed.

"But the peaceful, half town, half rural life of Wakefield is gone for ever, I fear.

"Silk-mills and dye-works are encroaching on the cornfields and pastures; rows of jerry-built cottages are creeping up Pinder's Fields, where I used to pull orchises; greasy mill-girls elbow ladies in the Westgate,

¹ [Compare Vol. XXVII. pp. 516, 600.]

and laugh and jeer at passing young men in a way that would have horrified the old inhabitants. And everywhere there is an indescribable smokiness and dirtiness more demoralizing than any tongue can tell, or mind conceive.

“Well, it is the ‘march of the times.’ It will go on, I suppose, as in other quiet pleasant English towns, until all the sweet Calder valley is swallowed up in the smoke of Tophet. They will cut the snowdrop wood down, and cover Heath Common with cheap villas, and make the old hall into an ‘institution.’ You know how it will be. A river black with filth and stagnant with foulness, a wilderness of toiling suburbs such as you saw at Bradford;¹ and where the cowslips and the corn grew, the earth will be thick with ‘institutions.’ There will be a Blind Institution, and an Eye and Ear Institution, an Orthopædic Institution, and a Magdalen Institution, and Mechanics’ Institutions; and we shall hear a great deal of the liberality and beneficence of the cotton and iron kings of the place. But will all this compensate one little child for robbing it of its God-given birthright of earth and sky?

“I cannot believe it.

“Poor little martyrs! There will be no ‘swallow twittering from the straw-built shed’² for them,—only the American Devil calling father to his hot, hard day’s labour. What can they make of it all? What kind of outlook will *they* have in coming years from the bridge of my early recollections? What I saw on the Medlock yesterday—such a hideous sight! yet my husband remembers catching fish there. The gases would kill a fish like a lightning-stroke, now.

“And the poor children! It makes me so sad, having some of my own, to think of those who will be born there, with hearts as hungry for nature and truth as mine was; who will never see God’s heaven, save through grimy panes and smoke; who will have no sweet cowslip-fields to walk in,—only the defiled pavement; who will grow hard and sour before childhood is over, with the riddle of their joyless lives.

“How I have drifted on.

“Your allusion to Wakefield Bridge in the *Fors* of February (?)³ unloosed a flood of long-buried recollections.

“This is what you draw on yourself by opening your heart to others. Pray forgive the trespass on your time.

“Yours gratefully,
“E. L.”

¹ [See Letter 50, § 16 (p. 267).]

² [Gray’s *Elegy*: see Vol. XXV, pp. 73, 136.]

³ [The query is “E. L.’s,” but the date is right: see Letter 50, § 16 (p. 267).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

11. THE following two paragraphs have been sent me by correspondents, from country papers. I do not answer for the facts stated in them; but however mythic either may be, they form part of the current history of the day, and are worth preserving; the latter especially in illustration of what I meant by the phrase "roseate repose of domestic felicity," in the *Fors* of July, this year, p. 364. One of the pamphlets written by John Hopper will become a subject of inquiry in a future *Fors*.¹

JOHN HOPPER.—On Tuesday, July 6, passed away from our midst the pioneer of Co-operation in Sunderland, John Hopper, shipwright, aged forty-seven on the 22nd April last, after a lingering illness of six weeks' duration, of paralysis of the right side, and the breaking of a blood-vessel in the brain. This was caused by his constant and unremitting study and writing on all questions relating to the progress of his fellow-workmen. More especially had he devoted his time and money to publishing several pamphlets on Co-operation. He also ably advocated the cause of Working Men's Unions and Trade Arbitration Councils instead of strikes. He looked forward to Co-operation for the solution of all the great questions in dispute between the employer and employed, and lived to see some portion of his ideas carried out with great success in the organization of a co-operative store in our own town, which now possesses two branch establishments, and does a very large, extensive, and profitable business, and possesses also two libraries. The organization and successful carrying out of this store was largely due to his own exertions. As its first secretary he gave his arduous labours free to it for several years. Though frequently offered superior situations in his own trade as a shipwright, he conscientiously refused all such offers, preferring to cast his lot amongst the working classes, and with them finish his days, toiling on side by side with them, as an example of honesty, toil, and love of his trade, before all other things; for *work* indeed to him was only *worship*. He scorned to earn his bread by any other means than by his own trade. He often lamented over men of superior talent who deserted their class for wealth and gain, and did not stay by their fellow-men, and by so doing try to elevate them by their example. He had been ailing some fifteen months, but kept at his work until quite exhausted, some six weeks before he died. He worked in the yard of Mr. Oswald, of Pallion, for many years, and also at Mr. J. Laing's, at Deptford. With the latter gentleman he served his apprenticeship as a shipwright. He leaves a widow and seven children unproved for. The eldest is now serving his apprenticeship to his father's trade with Mr. Oswald. Simple and retired he lived, despite all their praise—content to live and die a working man. Often after a hard day's toil he was too ill to walk all the way home, and had to lay himself down to rest by the roadside for awhile. The following is a list of his pamphlets, eight in number:—Causes of Distress; History of the Sunderland Co-operative Store; Organization of Labour; Co-operative Store System; The Commercial Reformer's Bookkeeper; The Workman's Path to Independence; The Rights of Working Men; and, Elections, Trades Unions, and the Irish Church.

¹ See Letter 83, § 19 (Vol. XXIX. p. 275).]

12. MARRIAGE OF MISS VENABLES, FORMERLY OF LEICESTER.—From the Yarmouth papers, we learn that on Wednesday week Miss Eveline Mary Venables, the only daughter of the Rev. George Venables, vicar of Great Yarmouth, and formerly vicar of St. Matthew's, Leicester, was married at the parish church, Great Yarmouth, in the presence of 4000 spectators, to the Rev. E. Manners Sanderson, M. A., vicar of Weston St. Mary's, Lincolnshire. The bridegroom was formerly curate of Great Yarmouth. Very extensive preparations, we are told, were made for the wedding festivities, both in the church and at the vicarage. A number of lady friends of the bride undertook to decorate the nave and chancel of the fine old church, and for several days they worked assiduously at this labour of love. Nearly the whole length of the chancel was tastefully decorated with a choice assortment of flowers, plants, mosses, and ferns, the gas standards being also similarly clothed, while along the communion rails were placed leaves of ferns, intermingled with roses and water-lilies. Within the communion rails were displays of cut flowers and plants, which gave a most pleasing effect to that portion of the church. The reredos was beautifully dressed in wreaths and flowers, and above the communion table were the words in white letters on a scarlet ground, "Jesus was called to the marriage." The effect of all these magnificent decorations was beautiful, and presented such a picture as our grand old church probably never before exhibited. The nave and chancel were converted into an avenue of flowers, and as the richly dressed bridal procession wended its way from the south porch the scene was one of the most imposing and affecting nature. It was understood that the marriage would take place immediately after the usual morning service, and long before that service commenced (eleven o'clock), several hundreds of people had congregated in front of the church gates, and when they were thrown open, they flocked into the church, and soon every available space in the church was filled with thousands of people. A number of seats near and in the chancel were set apart for the bridal party and friends, and these were kept vacant until the arrival of the ladies and gentlemen for whom they were reserved, and who were admitted for the most part by ticket at the east door. The morning service concluded about half-past eleven, and the clergymen who were to take part in the ceremony, and who had been waiting in the vestry, then walked in procession down the chancel, taking up their position under the tower, where they awaited the arrival of the bridal party. Their names were as follows, besides the Vicar: Rev. E. Venables (canon of Lincoln), Rev. Dr. J. J. Raven (master of the Grammer School), Rev. Bowyer Vaux (minister of St. Peter's church), Rev. A. J. Spencer, Rev. F. G. Wilson (vicar of Rudham), Rev. G. Merriman, Rev. A. B. M. Ley, Rev. R. H. Irvine, Rev. F. C. Villiers, and Rev. R. J. Tacon (Rollesby). The first to arrive was the bridegroom, accompanied by his bestman, the Rev. R. V. Barker, who were shortly afterwards followed by the bridesmaids and other ladies and gentlemen constituting the bridal party, who entered by the south door and awaited the arrival of the bride. The bridesmaids were most elegantly attired in *bleu de ciel* silk dresses, with long trains, trimmed *en tablier*, with *Mousseline d'Indienne*, pink briar roses and white heath, wreaths to match, and long tulle veils. Their names were as follows: Miss Rose Venables, Miss Sanderson, Miss L. Sanderson, Miss M. Sanderson, Miss Wilson, Miss Ruth Venables, and Miss Mander. Each bridesmaid carried a bouquet of white roses, pink geraniums, and forget-me-nots, the gift of the bestman, the Rev. R. V. Barker. The last to arrive was the bride, who wore a dress of superb white satin, with a very long train, *garnie en tulle et fleurs d'orange*; the corsage corresponding. The veil *tulle de Bruxelles*, *brod  en soie*; the trailing wreath *clematis*, myrtle, and orange blossoms; and a necklet of sprays of silver ivy leaves (the gift of Mr. Percy Sanderson). Her magnificent bouquet was composed of orange flowers, *stephanotis*, Cape jasmine, white roses, and ferns, and was the gift of the bridegroom. The bride was supported by her brother, Mr. E. Venables, and was received at the south porch of the church by her bridesmaids, who accompanied her up the nave to the chancel, where they were received by the vicar and clergymen. The choir were stationed in the triforium, and Mr. H. Stonex presided at

the organ, which was used on this the first occasion since its removal, although the repairs are not yet complete. While the bridal party were entering the church, Mr. Stonex performed "The Wedding March" composed by Sir George Elvey on the occasion of the marriage of Princess Louise (Marchioness of Lorne). The bridal party took their places under the tower, and the marriage service began, the Vicar being assisted in his office by Cannon Venables, and the bride being given away by her elder brother, Mr. Gilbert Venables. After singing the hymn, "The voice that breathed o'er Eden," to the tune St. Alphege, Cannon Venables read the first address of the Marriage Service. The Vicar has just printed this service with a few explanatory remarks, and about a thousand copies were distributed on the occasion. After that portion of the Marriage Service ordered to be performed in the body of the church was completed, the clergy, bride and bridegroom, and bridesmaids proceeded up the choir to the chancel, the singers and congregation chanting the 128th Psalm. The clergy having taken their positions, the bride and bridegroom, with the bridesmaids and the Rev. R. V. Barker, knelt at the communion rails; the service was continued, and a short sermon read by the Vicar, from the text, "Heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." The service concluded with the benediction, and as the party left the church, Mr. Stonex performed Mendelssohn's "Wedding March," in a very skilful manner. The bride's trousseau was entirely supplied from Yarmouth, and the wedding cake, which weighed 100 lb., was manufactured by Mr. Wright, of King Street, Yarmouth. After the marriage, the bridal party assembled at the Vicarage, where the register was signed, and then sat down to a *r  ch  rche* breakfast, the management of which was placed in the hands of Mr. and Mrs. Franklin, of the Crown and Anchor Hotel. The following is a list of those who were present at the wedding breakfast: the Vicar and Mrs. Venables, the Honourable and Mrs. Sanderson, T. H. Sanderson, Esq., Lord Hastings, Chas. Venables, Esq. (Taplow, Bucks), and Mrs. C. Venables Miss Sanderson, Miss Lucy Sanderson, Miss Maud Sanderson, Canon Venables (Lincoln) and Mrs. Venables, Miss Ruth Venables (Lincoln), Miss Rose Venables (London), Gilbert Venables, Esq., B. A. (Lower Norwood), and Mrs. Gilbert Venables, Rev. F. G. Wilson (Vicar of Rudham) and Mrs. and Miss Wilson, Rev. J. J. Raven, D. D. (Yarmouth), and Mrs. Raven, Rev. R. V. Barker, M. A. (Yarmouth), Edward Venables, Esq. (Emmanuel College, Cambridge), and Mrs. Edward Venables, Rev. Bowyer Vaux, M. A., and Mrs. Vaux, Rev. R. H. Irvine and Mrs. Irvine, Mrs. Palgrave (Yarmouth), Mrs. Woollnough, Rev. F. C. Villiers, M. A., and the Misses Villiers, E. Villiers, Esq. (Galway), Rev. A. B. M. Ley, M.A. (Yarmouth), Rev. G. Merriman, M.A., Rev. A. J. Spencer, B.A., Miss Mander (Tattenhall Wood), Mrs. Palmer, Rev. R. J. Tacon, M.A. (rector of Rollesby), Mr. Stonex. The presents to the bride were very numerous, and among the donors we find the names of Mr. and Mrs. T. North, of Leicester, a bread platter and knife; and Mr. and Mrs. Burbidge Hambly, of Mountsorrel, a dessert service. The honeymoon is being spent at Sans Souci, Dorsetshire.

LETTER 58

THE CATHOLIC PRAYER

“Deus, a quo sancta desideria, recta consilia, et justa sunt opera, da servis tuis illam quam mundus dare non potest pacem, ut et corda nostra mandatis tuis, et, hostium sublata formidine, tempora, sint tuâ protectione tranquilla.”

“God, from whom are all holy desires, right counsels, and just works, give to Thy servants that peace which the world cannot, that both our hearts, in Thy commandments, and our times, the fear of enemies being taken away, may be calm under Thy guard.”

1. THE adulteration of this great Catholic prayer in our English church-service¹ (as needless as it was senseless, since the pure form of it contains nothing but absolutely Christian prayer, and is as fit for the most stammering Protestant lips as for Dante's), destroyed all the definite meaning of it,* and left merely the vague expression of desire for peace, on quite unregarded terms. For of the millions of people who utter the prayer at least weekly, there is not one in a thousand who is ever taught, or can for themselves find out, either what a holy desire means, or a right counsel means, or a just work means,—or what the world is, or what the peace is which it cannot give. And half-an-hour after they have insulted God by praying to Him in this deadeast of all dead languages, not understood of the people,² they leave the church, themselves pacified in their perennial determination to put no check on their natural

* Missing, in the phrase “that our hearts may be set to obey” the entire sense of the balanced clause in the original,—namely, that the Law of God is given to be the shield and comfort of the soul against spiritual enemies, as the merciful angels encamp round us against earthly ones.³

¹ [The Second Collect in the Order for Evening Prayer.]

² [Article XXIV.]

³ [For a correspondent's criticism on this passage, and Ruskin's rejoinder, see Letter 59, § 12 (below, p. 452).]

covetousness; to act on their own opinions, be they right or wrong; to do whatever they can make money by, be it just or unjust; and to thrust themselves, with the utmost of their soul and strength, to the highest, by them attainable, pinnacle of the most bedrummed and betrumpeted booth in the Fair of the World.

The prayer, in its pure text, is essentially, indeed, a monastic one; but it is written for the great Monastery of the Servants of God, whom the world hates. It cannot be uttered with honesty but by these; nor can it ever be answered but with the peace bequeathed to these, “not as the world giveth.”¹

Of which peace, the nature is not to be without war, but undisturbed in the midst of war; and not without enemies, but without fear of them. It is a peace without pain, because desiring only what is holy; without anxiety, because it thinks only what is right; without disappointment, because a just work is always successful; without sorrow, because “great peace have they which love Thy Law, and nothing shall offend them”;² and without terror, because the God of all battles is its Guard.

2. So far as any living souls in the England of this day can use, understandingly, the words of this collect, they are already, consciously or not, companions of all good labourers in the vineyard of God. For those who use it reverently, yet have never set themselves to find out what the commandments of God are, nor how lovable they are, nor how far, instead of those commandments, the laws of the world are the only code they care for, nor how far they still think their own thoughts and speak their own words, it is assuredly time to search out these things. And I believe that, after having searched them out, no sincerely good and religious person would find, whatever his own particular form of belief might be, anything which he could reasonably refuse, or which he

¹ [John xiv. 27: the title of Letter 8.]

² [Psalms cxix. 165.]

ought in anywise to fear to profess before all men, in the following statement of creed and resolution, which must be written with their own hand, and signed, with the solemnity of a vow, by every person received into the St. George's Company.

I. I trust in the Living God, Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things and creatures visible and invisible.

I trust in the kindness of His law, and the goodness of His work.

And I will strive to love Him, and keep His law, and see His work, while I live.

II. I trust in the nobleness of human nature, in the majesty of its faculties, the fulness of its mercy, and the joy of its love.

And I will strive to love my neighbour as myself, and, even when I cannot, will act as if I did.

III. I will labour, with such strength and opportunity as God gives me, for my own daily bread; and all that my hand finds to do, I will do with my might.

IV. I will not deceive, or cause to be deceived, any human being for my gain or pleasure; nor hurt, or cause to be hurt, any human being for my gain or pleasure; nor rob, or cause to be robbed, any human being for my gain or pleasure.

V. I will not kill nor hurt any living creature needlessly, nor destroy any beautiful thing, but will strive to save and comfort all gentle life, and guard and perfect all natural beauty, upon the earth.

VI. I will strive to raise my own body and soul daily into higher powers of duty and happiness; not in rivalry or contention with others, but for the help, delight, and honour of others, and for the joy and peace of my own life.¹

¹ [In the facsimile of the first draft of this passage Ruskin referred to *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 46 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 427–428), and proposed to add “a note on Comfort” (with reference to such passages as Acts ix. 31).]

- VII. I will obey all the laws of my country faithfully; and the orders of its monarch, and of all persons appointed to be in authority under its monarch, so far as such laws or commands are consistent with what I suppose to be the law of God; and when they are not, or seem in anywise to need change, I will oppose them loyally and deliberately, not with malicious, concealed, or disorderly violence.
- VIII. And with the same faithfulness, and under the limits of the same obedience, which I render to the laws of my country, and the commands of its rulers, I will obey the laws of the Society called of St. George, into which I am this day received; and the orders of its masters, and of all persons appointed to be in authority under its masters, so long as I remain a Companion, called of St. George.

I will not enter in the present letter on any notice of the terms of this creed and vow; nor of the grounds which many persons whose help I sincerely desire, may perceive for hesitation in signing it. Further definitions of its meaning will be given as occasion comes;¹ nor shall I ever ask any one to sign it whom I do not know to be capable of understanding and holding it in the sense in which it is meant.² I proceed at once to define more explicitly those laws of the Company of St. George to which

¹ [See Letters 62, 65, 66, 67, 68 (below, pp. 516–517, 608–611, 635–637, 643, 666–667); 76 and 91 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 96, 442).]

² [Here the first draft adds:—

“Only lest I should be accused of any subtlety or reticence in vital points, I beg the reader to observe that the form is deliberately constructed so that Jews and Mahometans may sign it, no less frankly than Christians; that it absolutely excludes only atheists (and of these, there are some whom I am grieved to exclude), but not materialists, for it makes no statement whatever respecting the immortality of the Soul, though most distinct statements of its dignity. And the most faithful believers in Christ will do well to observe that many of the basest men, while they are content to lead a brute’s life, found only upon insolence and ignorance their claims to the duration of a God’s; while some of the noblest who have ever glorified the Earth were content in leading

- 1 I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven & Earth; and in the ^{kindness} ~~power~~ of His law, and the ^{goodness} ~~rightness~~ of His works. And I will ^{strive} ~~try~~ to love Him and obey His law, and ^{persevere} ~~continue~~ in His work Him, with all my ^{heart and strength} ~~heart and strength~~ and soul.
- 2 And I will ^{strive} ~~try~~ to love my neighbours as myself, and ~~therefore~~ ^{if I cannot} will act as if I did.
- 3 I will be an labourer for my ^{own} ~~own~~ daily bread ^{and clothing} ~~and clothing~~, and not steal it from others; and if I can will be content with ^{in securing of} ~~my~~ daily bread & clothing for myself and my family, desiring no ^{father} ~~increase~~ of private wealth; ~~for~~ I will ~~strive~~ ^{strive} to be ~~so~~.
- 4 Whatever my hand finds to do, in ~~such honest labour~~ I will do with all my might.
- 5 I will obey all the ^{spoken} ~~laws~~ of my country ^{and commandments of its monarch,} ~~faithfully~~ ^{and of the all authority} ~~so far as they~~ ^{are} consistent with the law of God, and where they are not, will oppose them ^{deliberately} ~~deliberately~~ and with ^{open} ~~deliberate~~ resistance; and not with ^{irregular violence} ~~irregular violence~~ ^{and} ~~and~~ ^{impudently} ~~impudently~~ ^{without cause} ~~without cause~~.
- 6 I will not ^{kill} ~~kill~~ ^{in any manner} ~~in any manner~~ any living creature ^{needlessly} ~~needlessly~~; but will ^{endeavour} ~~endeavour~~ to preserve ^{all life} ~~all life~~, from the lowest to the highest, as well on the earth as in the air, and in the water.
- 7 I will strive to raise ^{my} ~~the~~ body and soul into better health and higher power the longer I live, not contented ^{with} ~~with~~ ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ ^{revelry} ~~revelry~~ with others, but for ^{my} ~~my~~ ^{own} ~~own~~ delight and honour, and for the ^{service} ~~service~~ of others. ~~And this is to be by help of the Holy Spirit - word of 58.~~
Cure of wild deer and note on Goulet.

St George's company first started 8 of XVII
 10th needful, XIX, 13. important
 Bad agriculture 6.- of 17

it refers, and which must, at least in their power, be known before they can be vowed fealty to.

3. The object of the Society, it has been stated again and again,¹ is to buy land in England; and thereon to train into the healthiest and most refined life possible, as many Englishmen, Englishwomen, and English children, as the land we possess can maintain in comfort; to establish, for them and their descendants, a national store of continually augmenting wealth; and to organize the government of the persons, and administration of the properties, under laws which shall be just to all, and secure in their inviolable foundation on the Law of God.

“To buy land,” I repeat, or beg it; but by no means to steal it, or trespass on it, as I perceive the present holders of the most part of it are too ready to do, finding any bits of road or common which they can pilfer unobserved.² Are they quite mad, then; and do they think the monster mob, gaining every day in force and knowledge, will let their park walls stand much longer, on those dishonest terms? Doubtful enough their standing is, even on any terms!

4. But our St. George’s walls will be more securely founded, on this wise. The rents of our lands, though they will be required from the tenantry as strictly as those of any other estates, will differ from common rents primarily in being lowered, instead of raised, in proportion to every improvement made by the tenant;³ secondly, in that they

‘such life as their God taught them, to accept gratefully at His hand, if He so willed it, the duration of His earthly creatures. They will do well also to observe in themselves that many of those among them who profess to be most sure that they will again see their dead friends in heaven are the most rebellious against God for taking them there. Mothers, professing Christianity, will rage and whine over the death of their own baby as if all the world had gone to pieces and the throne of God on the top of it; and so far from loving their neighbour as themselves, women would commonly be glad to order a massacre of all the innocents in their village, to get as contentedly as a she-bear, if so they could get, their own cub again.’

¹ [See, for instance, Vol. XXVII. pp. 95, 142, 147, 200; and in this volume, pp. 18, 140.]

² [See above, pp. 151, 284, 302–303.]

³ [Compare Letter 45, § 12 (p. 155).]

will be entirely used for the benefit of the tenantry themselves, or better culture of the estates, no money being ever taken by the landlords unless they earn it by their own personal labour.

For the benefit of the tenantry, I say; but by no means, always, for benefit of which they can be immediately conscious. The rents of any particular farmer will seldom be returned to him in work on his own fields, or investment in undertakings which promote his interest. The rents of a rich estate in one shire of England may be spent on a poor one in another, or in the purchase of wild ground, anywhere, on which years of labour must be sunk before it can yield return; or in minerals, or Greek vases, for the parish school. Therefore with the use made of the rents paid, the tenantry will have no practical concern whatever; they will only recognize gradually that the use has been wise, in finding the prices of all serviceable articles diminishing, and all the terms and circumstances of their lives indicative of increased abundance. They will have no more right, or disposition, to ask their landlord what he is doing with the rents, than they have now to ask him how many race-horses he keeps—or how much he has lost on them. But the difference between landlords who live in Piccadilly, and spend their rents at Epsom and Ascot, and landlords who live on the ground they are lords of, and spend their rents in bettering it, will not be long in manifesting itself to the simplest-minded tenantry; nor, I believe, to the outside and antagonist world.

5. Sundry questions lately asked me by intelligent correspondents as to the intended relations of the tenantry to the Society, may best be answered by saying simply what I shall do, if ever the collected wealth of the Company enables me to buy an estate for it as large as I could have bought for myself, if I had been a railroad contractor.

Of course I could not touch the terms of the existing leases. The only immediate difference would be, the definitely serviceable application of all the rents, as above

stated. But as the leases fell in, I should offer renewal of them to the farmers I liked, on the single condition of their complying with the great vital law of the St. George's Company,—“no use of steam power,—nor of any machines where arms will serve”;¹ allowing such reduction of rent as should fully compensate them for any disadvantage or loss which they could prove they incurred under these conditions. I should give strict orders for the preservation of the existing timber, see that the streams were not wantonly polluted, and interfere in nothing else.

Such farms as were thrown up by their tenants, rather than submit to these conditions, I should be in no haste to re-let; but put land agents on them to cultivate them for the Society in the best manner, and sell their produce;—as soon as any well recommended tenant offered for them, submitting to our laws, he should have them for fixed rent. Thus I should give room for development of whatever personal faculty and energy I could find, and set, if successful, more easily followed example. Meantime my schools and museums, always small and instantly serviceable, would be multiplying among the villages,—youth after youth being instructed in the proper laws of justice, patriotism, and domestic happiness;—those of the Companions who could reside on the lands would, each on their own farm, establish entirely strict obedience to the ultimate laws determined upon as necessary:—if these laws are indeed, as I do not doubt but that sincere care can make them, pleasantly tenable by honest humanity,* they will be gradually accepted voluntarily by the free tenants; and the system is as certain to extend itself, on all sides, once seen to be right, as the branches of an oak sapling.

* Most of these will be merely old English laws revived; and the rest, Florentine or Roman.² None will be instituted but such as have already been in force among great nations.

¹ [Compare Letter 44, § 13, and 49, § 15 (pp. 138, 248).]

² [For examples of “old English laws,” proposed to be revived, see Letter 3 (Vol. XXVII. p. 54); and of a Florentine law, above, p. 30. For notices of Roman laws and institutions, see Vol. XXVII. pp. 144, 357.]

6. While, therefore, I am perfectly content, for a beginning, with our acre of rocky land given us by Mrs. Talbot,¹ and am so little impatient for any increase that I have been quietly drawing ragged-robin leaves in Malham Cove,² instead of going to see another twenty acres promised in Worcestershire,³—I am yet thinking out my system on a scale which shall be fit for wide European work. Of course the single Master of the Company cannot manage all its concerns as it extends. He must have, for his help, men holding the same relation to him which the Marshals of an army do to its General;—bearing, that is to say, his own authority where he is not present; and I believe no better name than “Marshal” can be found for these. Beneath whom, there will again be the landlords, resident each in his own district; under these, the land agents, tenantry, tradesmen, and hired labourers, some of whom will be Companions, others Retainers, and others free tenants: and outside all this there will be of course an irregular cavalry, so to speak, of more or less helpful friends, who, without sharing in the work, will be glad to further it more or less, as they would any other benevolent institution.

7. The law that a Companion shall derive no profit from his companionship does not touch the results of his own work. A Companion farmer will have the produce of his farm as much as a free tenant; but he will pay no dividends to the Companions who are *not* farmers.

The landlords will in general be men of independent fortune, who, having gifts and ingenuity, choose to devote such gifts to the service of the Society; the first condition of their appointment to a lordship will be that they can work as much better than their labourers at all rural labour as a good knight was wont to be a better workman than his soldiers in war. There is no rule of supremacy that can ever supersede this eternal, natural, and divine one.

¹ [See above, p. 395.]

² [Compare Vol. XXIV. p. xxix., and Vol. XXI. p. 145.]

³ [See below, pp. 607, 630.]

Higher by the head, broader in the shoulders, and heartier in the will, the lord of lands and lives must for ever be, than those he rules; and must work daily at their head, as Richard at the trenches of Acre.

8. And what am I, myself then, infirm and old, who take, or claim, leadership even of these lords? God forbid that I should claim it; it is thrust and compelled on me—utterly against my will, utterly to my distress, utterly, in many things, to my shame. But I have found no other man in England, none in Europe, ready to receive it,—or even desiring to make himself capable of receiving it. Such as I am, to my own amazement, I stand—so far as I can discern—alone in conviction, in hope, and in resolution, in the wilderness of this modern world. Bred in Luxury, which I perceive to have been un just to others, and destructive to myself; vacillating, foolish, and miserably failing in all my own conduct in life—and blown about hopelessly by stroms of passion—I, a man clothed in soft raiment,—I, a reed shaken with the wind,¹ have yet this Message to all men again entrusted to me: “Behold, the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Whatsoever tree therefore bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be hewn down and cast into the fire.”²

This message, yet once more; and, more than message, the beginning of the acts that must fulfil it. For, long since, I have said all that needs to be said,—all that it was my proper charge and duty to say. In the one volume of *Sesame and Lilies* nay, in the last forty pages of its central address to Englishwomen³—everything is told that I know of vital truth, everything urged that I see to be needful of vital act;—but no creature answers me with any faith or any deed. They read the words, and say they are pretty, and go on in their own ways. And the day has come for

¹ [See Matthew xi. 7, 8, and Luke vii. 24, 25.]

² [Matthew iii. 10.]

³ [That is, the second of the three lectures included in the edition of 1871; namely, “Lilies: Of Queens’ Gardens,” §§ 51 *seq.* (Vol. XVIII. pp. 109, *seq.*.)]

me therefore to cease speaking, and begin doing, as best I may; though I know not whether shall prosper, either this or that.¹

9. And truly to all wholesome deed here in England, the chances of prosperity are few, and the distinctness of adversity only conquerable by fixed imagination and exhaustless patience—"Adversis rerum immersabilis undis."² The wisest men join with the fools, and the best men with the villains, to prevent, if they may, any good thing being done permanently—nay, to provoke and applaud the doing of consistently evil things permanently. To establish a National debt, and in the most legal terms—how easy! To establish a National store,³ under any legal or moral conditions of perpetuity—how difficult! Every one calls me mad for so much as hoping to do so. "This looks like a charity, this educating of peasants," said the good lawyer, who drew up the already published conditional form of association.⁴ "You must not establish a fund for charity; it is sure to lead to all sorts of abuses, and get into wrong hands."

Well, yes—it in merely human probability may. I do verily perceive and admit, in convinced sorrow, that I live in the midst of a nation of thieves and murderers;* that everybody round me is trying to rob everybody else; and that, not bravely and strongly, but in the most cowardly and loathsome ways of lying trade; that "Englishman" is now merely another word for blackleg and swindler; and English honour and courtesy changed to the sneaking and the smiles of a whipped pedlar, an inarticulate Autolycus,⁵ with a steam hurdy-gurdy instead of a voice. Be this all

* See first note in the Correspondence [p. 438.]

¹ [Ecclesiastes xi. 6.]

² [Horace, *Epistle I*, ii. 22.]

³ [Compare Letter 1, § 3 (Vol. XXVII. p. 14).]

⁴ [See above, p. 376.]

⁵ [For other references to the Autolycus of *A Winter's Tale*, see Vol. XVII. p. 39, and Vol. XXVII. p. 139.]

so; be it so to the heart's content—or liver and gall's content—of every modern economist and philosopher. I yet do verily trust that out of this festering mass of scum of the earth, and miserable coagulation of frog-spawn soaked in ditch-water, I can here and there pluck up some drowned honour by the locks, and leave written orders for wholesome deed, and collected moneys for the doing thereof, which will be obeyed and guarded after I am gone; and will by no means fall into the power of the mendicant tribe who, too cowardly and heartless to beg from the face of the living, steal the alms of the dead, and unite the apparently inconsistent characters of beggar and thief, seasoning the compound with sacrilege.

10. Little by little, if my life is spared to me, therefore (and if I die, there will I doubt not be raised up some one else in my room)—little by little, I or they, will get moneys and lands together; handful gleaned after handful; field joined to field, and landmarks set which no man shall dare hereafter remove.¹ And over those fields of ours the winds of Heaven shall be pure; and upon them, the work of men shall be done in honour and truth.

In such vague promise, I have for the most part hitherto spoken, not because my own plans were unfixed, but because I knew they would only be mocked at, until by some years of persistence the scheme had run the course of the public talk, and until I had publicly challanged the denial of its principles in their abstract statement, long enough to show them to be invincible. Of these abstract principles, the fifteenth, sixteenth, twentieth, twenty-second, and twenty-third letters in *Time and Tide*, express all that is needful; only, in the years that have passed² since they were written, the “difficulties” stated in the seventeenth chapter have been under constant review by me; and of the ways in which I mean to deal with them it is now time to speak.

¹ [See Proverbs xxii. 28.]

² [1867–1875. For the references to *Time and Tide*, see Vol. XVII. pp. 388, 394, 417, 429, 436, 402.]

11. Let us understand then, in the outset, the moral difference between a national debt and a national store.¹

A national debt, like any other, may be honestly incurred case of need, and honestly paid in due time. But if a man should be ashamed to borrow, much more should a people: and if a father holds it his honour to provide for his children, and would be ashamed to borrow from them, and leave, with his blessing, his note of hand, for his grandchildren to pay, much more should a nation be ashamed to borrow, in any case, or in any manner; and if it borrow at all, it is at least in honour bound to borrow from living men, and not indebt itself to its own unborn brats. If it can't provide for them, at least let it not send their cradles to the pawnbroker, and pick the pockets of their first breeches.

A national debt, then, is a foul disgrace, at the best. But it is, as now constituted, also a foul crime. National debts paying interest are simply the purchase, by the rich, of power to tax the poor. Read carefully the analysis given of them above, Letter 8, § 5.²

12. The financial operations of the St. George's Company will be the direct reverse of these hitherto approved arrangements. They will consist in the accumulation of national wealth and store, and therefore in distribution to the poor, instead of taxation of them; and the fathers will provide for, and nobly endow, not steal from, their children, and children's children.

My readers, however, will even yet, I am well aware, however often I have reiterated the statement to them, be unable to grasp the idea of a National Store, as an existing possession. They can conceive nothing but a debt;—nay, there are many of them who have a confused notion that a debt *is* a store!

The store of the St. George's Company, then, is to be primarily of food; next of materials for clothing and covert;

¹ [Compare *Munera Pulveris*, ch. ii. ("Store-keeping"), Vol. XVII. p. 164.]

² [Vol. XXVII. pp. 136–137.]

next of books and works of art,—food, clothes, books, and works of art being all good, and every poisonous condition of any of them destroyed. The food will not be purveyed by the Borgia, nor the clothing dyed by Deianira, nor the scriptures written under dictation of the Devil instead of God.¹

13. The most simply measurable part of the store of food and clothing will be the basis of the currency, which will be thus constituted.

The standard of value will be a given weight or measure of grain, wine, wool, silk, flax, wood, and marble; all answered for by the government as of fine and pure quality. variable only within narrow limits.

The grain will be either wheat, oats, barely, rice, or maize; the wine of pure vintage, and not less than ten years old;* the wool, silk, and flax of such standard as can be secured in constancy; the wood, seasoned oak and pine; and for fuel in log and faggot, with finest wood and marble for sculpture. The penny's worth, florin's worth, ducat's worth, and hundred ducats' worth of each of these articles will be a given weight or measure of them (the penny roll of our present breakfast table furnishing some notion of what, practically, the grain standard will become). Into the question of equivalent value I do not enter here; it will be at once determined practically as soon as the system is in work. Of these articles the government will always have in its possession as much as may meet the entire demand of its currency in circulation. That is to say, when it has a million in circulation, the million's worth of solid property must be in its storehouses: as much more as it can gather, of course; but never less. So that, not only, for his penny, florin, ducat, or hundred-ducat note, a man may always be certain of having his pound, or ton, or

* Thus excluding all inferior kinds: wine which will keep ten years will keep fifty.²

¹ [For "the crimes of a Borgia," see Vol. XVI. p. 404; for Deianira and the blood-stained shirt of Nessus, Vol. XXVII. p. 428; for "scriptures written under the dictation of the Devil," Letter 78 and Appendix 14 (Vol. XXIX. pp.133, 562).]

² [On St. George's laws about wine, see Appendix 13, Vol. XXIX. p. 561.]

pint, or cask, of the thing he chooses to ask for, from the government storehouses, but if the holders of the million of currency came in one day to ask for their money's worth, it would be found ready for them in one or other form of those substantial articles. Consequently, the sum of the circulating currency being known, the minimum quantity of store will be known. The sum of the entire currency, in and out of circulation, will be given annually on every note issued (no issues of currency being made but on the first day of the year), and in each district, every morning, the quantities of the currency in and out of circulation in that district will be placarded at the doors of the government district bank.

14. The metallic currency will be of absolutely pure gold and silver, and of those metals only;¹ the ducat and half-ducat in gold, the florin, penny, halfpenny, and one-fifth of penny in silver; the smaller coins being beat thin and pierced, the halfpenny with two, the one-fifth of penny with five, apertures.* I believe this double-centime will be as fine a divisor as I shall need. The florin will be worth tenpence; the ducat, twenty florins.

The weight of the ducat will be a little greater than that of the standard English sovereign, and being in absolutely pure gold, it will be worth at least five-and-twenty shillings of our present coinage. On one of its sides it will bear the figure of the archangel Michael; on the reverse, a branch of Alpine rose: above the rose-branch, the words "Sit splendor"; † above the Michael, "Fiat voluntas"; under

* I shall use this delicate coinage as a means of education in fineness of touch, and care of small things, and for practical lessons in arithmetic, to the younger children, in whose hands it will principally be. It will never be wanted for alms; and for small purchases, as no wares will be offered at elevenpence three-farthings for a shilling, or ninepence four-fifths for a florin, there will be no unreasonable trouble. The children shall buy their own toys, and have none till they are able to do so.

† The beginning of the last verse of the prayer of Moses, Psalm xc.²

¹ [For a later reference to this proposed coinage, see Letter 86, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. p. 342).]

² [See, later, a Letter (63) with this title.]

the rose-branch, “sicut in cœlo”; under the Michael, “et in terrâ,” with the year of the coinage: and round the edge of the coin, “Domini.”

The half-ducat will bear the same stamp, except that while on the ducat the St. Michael will be represented standing on the dragon, on the half-ducat he will be simply armed, and bearing St. George’s shield.

On the florin, the St. George’s shield only; the Alpine rose on all three.

On the penny, St. George’s shield on one side and the English daisy on the other, without inscription.¹ The pierced fractional coins will only bear a chased wreathen fillet, with the required apertures in its interstices.

15. There will be a considerable loss by wear on a coinage of this pure metal; but nothing is so materially conducive to the honour of a state in all financial function as the purity of its coinage; and the loss will never, on the whole currency, equal annually the tenth part of the value of the gunpowder spent at present in salutes or fireworks; and, if a nation can afford to pay for loyal noise, and fancies in fire, it may also, and much more rationally, for loyal truth and beauty in its circulating signs of wealth. Nor do I doubt that a currency thus constituted will gradually enter into European commerce, and become everywhere recognized and exemplary.

Supposing any Continental extension of the Company itself took place, its coinage would remain the same for the ducat, but the shield of the State or Province would be substituted for St. George’s on the minor coins.

16. There will be no ultimate difficulty in obtaining the bullion necessary for this coinage, for the State will have no use for the precious metals, except for its currency or its art. An Englishman, as he is at present educated, takes pride in eating out of a silver plate; and in helping, out of a silver tureen, the richest swindlers he can ask to dinner.

¹ [Compare *Proserpina*, i. ch. vii. § 1 (Vol. XXV. p. 291).]

The Companions of St. George may drink out of pewter, and eat off delft, but they will have no knaves for guests, though often beggars; and they will be always perfectly well able to afford to buy five or ten pounds' worth of gold and silver for their pocket change; and even think it no overwhelming fiscal calamity if as much even as ten shillings should be actually lost in the year, by the wear of it; seeing that the wear of their dinner napkins will be considerably greater in the same time. I suppose that ten pounds' worth of bullion for the head of each family will amply supply the necessary quantity for circulation; but if it should be found convenient to have fifteen—twenty—or fifty pounds in such form, the national store will assuredly in time accumulate to such desirable level. But it will always be a matter of absolute financial indifference, what part of the currency is in gold and what in paper; its power being simply that of a government receipt for goods received, giving claim to their return on demand.¹ The holder of the receipt may have it, if he likes, written on gold instead of paper, provided he bring the gold for it to be written on; but he may no more have a bar of gold made into money than a roll of foolscap, unless he brings the goods for which the currency is the receipt. And it will therefore, by St. George's law, be as much forgery to imitate the national coin in gold, as in paper.

17. Next to this store, which is the basis of its currency, the government will attend to the increase of store of animal food—not mummy food, in tins, but living, on land and sea; keeping under strictest overseership its breeders of cattle, and fishermen, and having always at its command such supply of animal food as may enable it to secure absolute consistency of price in the main markets. In cases when, by any disease or accident, the supply of any given animal food becomes difficult, its price will not be raised, but its sale stopped. There can be no evasion of such prohibition, because every tradesman in food will be merely the salaried

¹ [Compare Letter 44, § 11 *n.* (p. 134).]

servant of the company, and there will be no temptation to it, because his salary will be the same, whether he sells or not. Of all articles of general consumption, the government will furnish its own priced standard;¹ any man will be allowed to sell what he can produce above that standard, at what price he can get for it; but all goods below the government standard will be marked and priced as of such inferior quality;—and all bad food, cloth, or other article of service, destroyed. And the supervision will be rendered simple by the fewness of the articles permitted to be sold at all; for the dress being in all classes as determined as the heraldry of coronets, and for the most part also rigorously simple; and all luxurious living disgraceful, the entire means of domestic life will be within easy definition.

18. Of course the idea of regulating dress² generally will be looked upon by the existing British public as ridiculous. But it has become ridiculous because masters and mistresses attempt it solely for their own pride. Even with that entirely selfish end, the natural instinct of human creatures for obedience,³ when in any wholesome relations with their superiors, has enabled the masters to powder their coachmen's wigs, and polish their footmen's legs with silk stockings; and the mistresses to limit their lady's maids, when in attendance, to certain styles of cap.

Now as the dress regulations of the St. George's Company will be quite as much for the pride of the maid as the mistress, and of the man as the master, I have no fear but they will be found acceptable, and require no strictness of enforcement. The children of peasants, though able to maintain their own families, will be required to be as clean as if they were charity-boys or girls; nobody will be allowed to wear the cast clothes of other people, to sell or pawn their own, or to appear on duty, agricultural or whatever other it may be, in rags, any more than the Horse Guards

¹ [Compare Letter 38, § 6 (p. 34).]

² [Compare Letter 15, § 8 (Vol. XXVII. p. 265).]

³ [Compare Letter 37, § 8 (pp. 20-21).]

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or the Queen's dairymaids are now; also on certain occasions, and within such limits as are needful for good fellowship, they will be urged to as much various splendour as they can contrive. The wealth of the peasant women will be chiefly in hereditary golden ornaments of the finest workmanship; and in jewellery of uncut gems,—agates only, or other stones of magnitude, being allowed to be cut, and gems of large size, which are worth the pains, for their beauty; but these will be chiefly used in decorative architecture or furniture, not in dress. The dress of the officers of the company will be on all occasions plainer than that of its peasants; but hereditary nobles will retain all the insignia of their rank, the one only condition of change required on their entering the St. George's Company being the use of uncut jewels,¹ and therefore—seldom of diamonds.*

19. The next main staple of the Company's store will be its literature.

A chosen series of classical books will be placed in every village library,² in number of copies enough to supply all readers; these classics will be perfectly printed and perfectly bound, and all in one size of volume, unless where engravings need larger space: besides these village libraries, there will be a museum in every district, containing all good ancient books obtainable: gradually, as the design expands itself, and as time passes on, absorbing, by gift, or purchase, the contents of private libraries, and connecting themselves with similarly expanding museums of natural history.³ In all schools, the books necessary for their work will be given

* I never saw a rough diamond worth setting, until the Bishop of Natal gave me a sharply crystallized one from the African fields.⁴ Perhaps a star or two of cut ones may be permitted to the house-mistresses on great occasions.

¹ [Compare *Unto this Last*, § 72 n. (Vol. XVII. pp. 96–97).]

² [Compare Letter 37, § 7 (p.20).]

³ [See above, p. 395.]

⁴ [This is not the "Colenso Diamond" which Ruskin bought at a later date: see Vol. XXVI. p. lv.]

to the pupils; and one of their earliest lessons will be the keeping of them clean and orderly.¹

20. By ordering of Fors, I went only this last month to see the school in which Wordsworth was educated.² It remains, as it was then, a school for peasant lads only; and the doors of its little library, therefore, hang loose on their decayed hinges; and one side of the schoolroom is utterly dark—the window on that side having been long ago walled up, either “because of the window-tax, or perhaps it had got broken,” suggested the guardian of the place.

Now it is true that this state of things cannot last long; but the cure will be worse than the disease. A fit of reactionary vanity and folly is sure to seize the village authorities; that old schoolroom, with its sacred association, will be swept from the hillside, and a grand piece of Birmingham Gothic put up, with a master from Kensington, and enforced weekly competitive examination in Sanscrit, and the Binomial Theorem.

All that the school wants is, hinges to its library doors as good as every shop in the street has to its shutters; the window knocked through again where it was originally; the books whose bindings are worn out, rebound, and a few given (in addition to those on the subjects of arithmetic and grammar), which the boys may rather ask leave to read, than take opportunity to throw into corners.

But the ten or twenty pounds needed for this simple reformation could, I suppose, at present, by no persuasion nor argument be extracted from the united pockets of the gentlemen of the neighbourhood. Meantime, while the library doors flap useless on their hinges, the old country churchyard is grim with parallelograms of iron palisade, enforced partly to get some sacred market for the wares of the rich ironmongers who are buying up the country; and partly to protect their valuable carcasses in their putrifying pride. Of such iron stores the men of St. George's

¹[Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, §49 (Vol. XVIII. p. 104).]

²[At Hawkshead.]

Company, dead, will need none, and living, permit none. But they will strictly enforce the proper complement of hinges to their school-library doors.

21. The resuscitation of the, at present extinct, art of writing being insisted upon in the school exercises of the higher classes, the libraries will be gradually enriched with manuscripts of extreme preciousness.¹ A well-written book is as much pleasanter and more beautiful than a printed one as a picture is than an engraving; and there are many forms of the art of illumination which were only in their infancy at the time when the wooden blocks of Germany abolished the art of scripture, and of which the revival will be a necessary result of a proper study of natural history.

22. In next *Fors*, I shall occupy myself wholly with the subject of our Art education and property; and in that for December, I hope to publish the legal form of our constitution revised and complete.² The terminal clauses respecting the Companions' right of possession in the lands will be found modified, or in great part omitted, in the recast deed; but I am neither careful nor fearful respecting the terms of this instrument, which is to be regarded merely as a mechanical means of presently getting to work and having land legally secured to us. The ultimate success or failure of the design will not in the least depend on the terms of our constitution, but on the quantity of living honesty and pity which can be found, to be constituted. If there is not material enough out of which to choose Companions, or energy enough in the Companions chosen to fill the chain-mail of all terms and forms with living power, the scheme will be choked by its first practical difficulties; and it matters little what becomes of the very small property its promoters are ever likely to handle. If, on the contrary, as I believe, there be yet honesty and sense enough left in England to nourish the effort, from its

¹[This is an object which had long been in Ruskin's mind: see the first of his addresses of 1854 on "Decorative Colour," Vol. XII. pp. 474 *seq.*]

²[But see below, p. 468.]

narrow source there will soon develop itself a vast Policy, of which neither I nor any one else can foresee the issue, far less verbally or legally limit it; but in which, broadly, by the carrying out of the primally accepted laws of Obedience and Economy, the Master and Marshals will become the Ministry of the State, answerable for the employment of its revenues, for its relations with external powers, and for such change of its laws as from time to time may be found needful: the Landlords will be the resident administrators of its lands, and immediate directors of all labour,—its captains in war, and magistrates in peace: the tenants will constitute its agricultural and military force, having such domestic and acquisitive independence as may be consistent with patriotic and kindly fellowship: and the artists, schoolmen, tradesmen, and inferior labourers will form a body of honourably paid retainers, undisturbed in their duty by any chance or care relating to their means of subsistence.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

23. THE following is taken from the *Edinburgh Courant* of 2nd inst.:—

“*Mem. for Professor Ruskin.*—The *Nautical Magazine* leads off with a bold and original article, the second of a series, on the somewhat startling subject of ‘The Commercial Value of Human Life,’ in which it states that human life has its commercial value, and that ‘those who bring forward its sacredness as a plea for protective legislation of any and every kind are assuming not only a false position, but a position that is likely to work a serious injury upon the country at large.’ An elaborate discussion of ‘The Plimsoll Protest,’¹ and a description of the ‘Inman Line’ of steamers, with the usual technical matter, make up an unusually interesting number.”

What can this mean? Does it point to something still more brutal than the “carnivorous teeth”² theory?*

Submitted, with much respect, to Mr. Ruskin, for the *Notes and Correspondence* in *Fors*—if deemed admissible.

J. M.

4th September, 1875.

* Yes, certainly. It points to teeth which shall have no meat to eat, but only the lead of coffins, and to tongues which shall have no water to drink, but only the burnt sulphur of hell. See, for example, succeeding article.

24. A peculiarly sad instance of death from lead-poisoning was investigated this week before Dr. Hardwicke, at an inquest held in London. The deceased, Mary Ann Wilson, only three weeks ago went to work at a white-lead factory. After being there two or three days she felt the effects of lead-poisoning, which turned her lips blue. Subsequently the neighbours found her lying on the floor in convulsions, and in a dying state; and the next day she died from congestion of the brain, and disease of the chest organs, consequent on the evil effects of her employment. The coroner recommended that persons who follow this employment should drink diluted sulphuric acid, to counteract the action of the poison.—*Birmingham Daily Post*, Sept. 2, 1875.³

¹ [See above, p. 394.]

² [See Letter 42, § 14 (p. 103).]

³ [Ruskin in his copy marks this extract as needing correction. It is printed textually from the newspaper, but the count of days and weeks seems to be wrong.]

LETTER 59

SCHOOL BOOKS

HERNE HILL, 3rd October, 1875.

1. THE day before yesterday I went with a young English girl¹ to see her nurse, who was sick of a lingering illness; during which, with kindest intent, and sufficient success (as she told me) in pleasing her, books had been chosen for her from the circulating library, by those of her pious friends whose age and experience qualified them for such task.

One of these volumes chancing to lie on the table near me, I looked into it, and found it to be *Stepping Heavenward*;²—as far as I could make out, a somewhat long, but not unintelligent, sermon on the text of Wordsworth's "Stepping Westward." In the five minutes during which I strayed between the leaves of it, and left the talk of my friend with the nurse to its own liberty, I found that the first chapters described the conversion of an idle and careless young lady of sixteen to a solemn view of her duties in life, which she thus expresses at the end of an advanced chapter: "I am resolved never to read worldly books any more; and my music and drawing I have laid aside for ever."*

* I quote from memory, and may be out in a word or two; not in the sense:³ but I don't know if the young lady is really approved by the author, and held up as an example to others; or meant, as I have taken her, for a warning. The method of error, at all events, is accurately and clearly shown.

¹ [Ruskin notes in his own copy that this was Miss Constance Oldham, his god-daughter, niece of his old friend Edmund Oldfield; for whom, see Vol. XII. p. lxiv.]

² [By Elizabeth Prentiss; first published in 1870.]

³ [The passage occurs at the end of ch. vii. (p. 67, 1870 edition), where the young lady, having once tasted the joys of Taylor's *Holy Living and Dying* and Baxter's *Saints' Rest*, says, "I never mean to read worldly books again, and my music and drawing I have given up for ever." The next chapter shows that her retirement to what Ruskin calls a "spiritually walled cloister" is not altogether approved by the author.]

The spiritually walled cloister to which this charming child of modern enlightenment thus expresses her determination to retire, differs, it would appear, from the materially walled monastic shades of the Dark Ages, first, by the breadth and magnanimity of an Index Expurgatorius rising to interdiction of all uninspired books whatever, except Baxter's *Saints' Rest*, and other classics of evangelical theology; and, secondly, by its holy abhorrence of the arts of picture and song, which waste so much precious time, and give so much disagreeable trouble to learn; and which also, when learned, are too likely to be used in the service of idols; while the skills which our modern gospel substitutes for both, of steam-whistle, namely, and photograph, supply, with all that they need of terrestrial pleasure, the ears which God has redeemed from spiritual deafness, and the eyes which He has turned from darkness to light.

2. My readers are already, I hope, well enough acquainted with the Institutes of the St. George's Company to fear no monastic restrictions of enjoyment, nor imperative choice of their books, carried to this celestially Utopian strictness. And yet, understanding the terms of the sentence with true and scholarly accuracy, I must, in educational legislation, insist on the daughters of my Companions fulfilling this resolution to the letter: "I am resolved never to read worldly books any more, and *my* music and drawing I have laid aside for ever."

"Worldly books"? Yes; very certainly, when you know which they are; for I will have you to abjure, with World, Flesh, and Devil, the literature of all the three:—and *your* music and drawing,—that is to say, all music and drawing which you have learned only for your own glory or amusement, and respecting which you have no idea that it may ever become, in a far truer sense, other people's music and drawing.

For all the arts of mankind, and womankind, are only rightly learned, or practised, when they are so with the definite purpose of pleasing or teaching others. A child

dancing for its own delight,—a lamb leaping,—or a fawn at play, are happy and holy creatures; but they are not artists. An artist is—and recollect this definition (put in capitals for quick reference),—A PERSON WHO HAS SUBMITTED TO A LAW WHICH IT WAS PAINFUL TO OBEY, THAT HE MAY BESTOW A DELIGHT WHICH IT IS GRACIOUS TO BESTOW.*

3. “A painful law,” I say; yet full of pain, not in the sense of torture, but of stringency, or constraint; and labour, increasing, it may be, sometimes into aching of limbs, and panting of breasts: but these stronger yet, for every ache, and broader for every pant; and farther and farther strengthened from danger of rheumatic ache, and consumptive pant.

This, so far as the Arts are concerned, is “entering in at the Strait gate,”¹ of which entrance, and its porter’s lodge, you will find farther account given in my fifth morning in Florence,² which I should like you to read, as a preparation for the work more explicitly now to be directed under St. George. The immediate gist of it, for those who do not care to read of Florence, I must be irksome enough again to give here; namely, that the word Strait, applied to the entrance into Life, and the word Narrow, applied to the road of life, do not mean that the road is so fenced that few can travel it, however much they wish (like the entrance to the pit of a theatre), † but that, for each person, it is at first so stringent, so difficult, and so dull, being between close hedges, that few *will* enter it, though all *may*. In a second sense, and an equally vital one, it is not merely a Strait, or narrow, but a straight, or right road; only, in this rightness of it, not at all traced by

* To make the definition by itself complete, the words “in his work” should be added after “submitted” and “by his work” after “bestow”; but it is easier to learn, without these phrases, which are of course to be understood.

† The “few there be that find it” is added, as an actual fact; a fact consequent not on the way’s being narrow, but on its being disagreeable.

¹ [Matthew vii. 13, 14.]

² [See ch. v. (“The Strait Gate”), §§ 90 *seq.* (Vol. XXIII. pp. 383 *seq.*.)]

hedges, wall, or telegraph wire, or even marked by posts higher than winter's snow; but, on the contrary, often difficult to trace among morasses and mounds of desert, even by skilful sight; and by blind persons, entirely untenable unless by help of a guide, director, rector, or rex: which you may conjecture to be the reason why, when St. Paul's eyes were to be opened, out of the darkness which meant only the consciousness of utter mistake, to seeing what way he should go, his director was ordered to come to him in the "street which is called Straight."¹

4. Now, bringing these universal and eternal facts down to this narrow, straight, and present piece of business we have in hand, the first thing we have to learn to draw is an extremely narrow, and an extremely direct, line. Only, observe, true and vital direction does not mean that, without any deflection or warp by antagonist force, we can fly, or walk, or creep at once to our mark; but that, whatever the antagonist force may be, we so know and mean our mark, that we shall at last precisely arrive at it, just as surely, and it may be in some cases more quickly, than if we had been unaffected by lateral or opposing force. And this higher order of contending and victorious rightness, which in our present business is best represented by the track of an arrow, or rifle-shot, affected in its course both by gravity and the wind, is the more beautiful rightness or directness of the two, and the one which all fine art sets itself principally to achieve. But its quite first step must nevertheless be in the simple production of the mathematical Right line, as far as the hand can draw it; joining two points, that is to say, with a straight visible track, which shall as nearly as possible fulfil the mathematical definition of a line, "length without breadth."

And the two points had better at first be placed at the small distance of an inch from each other, both because it is easy to draw so short a line, and because it is well

¹ [Acts ix. 11.]

for us to know, early in life, the look of the length of an inch. And when we have learned the look of our own English inch, we will proceed to learn the look of that which will probably be our currency measure of length, the French inch, for that is a better standard than ours, for European acceptance.¹

5. Here, I had made arrangements for the production of a plate, and woodcut, to illustrate the first steps of elementary design;² but the black-plague of cloud already more than once spoken of³ (as connected probably with the diminution of snow on the Alps⁴), has rendered it impossible for my assistants to finish their work in time. This disappointment I accept thankfully as the ordinance of my careful and prudent mistress, Atropos,—the Third Fors;⁵ and am indeed quickly enough apprehensive of her lesson in it. She wishes me, I doubt not, to recognize that I was foolish in designing the intrusion of technical advice into my political letters; and to understand that the giving of clear and separate directions for elementary art-practice is now an imperative duty for me, and that these art-lessons must be in companionship with my other school books on the Earth and its Flowers.

I must needs do her bidding; and as I gather my past work on rocks and plants together, so I must, day by day, gather what I now know to be right of my past work on art together; and, not in sudden thought, but in the resumption of purpose which I humbly and sincerely entreat my mistress to pardon me for having abandoned under pressure of extreme fatigue, I will publish, in the same form as the geology and botany, what I desire to ratify, and

¹ [Ruskin, it will be seen, here indicates his preference for the metric system, the adoption of which is now (1907) widely urged in commercial circles, the French equivalent of the British inch being approximately 25 millimètres.]

² [The plate here referred to is perhaps the example of Lombard writing (see below, p. 573); the woodcut (see § 6 on the next page) was ultimately given in Letter 61 (Fig. 7, p. 495).]

³ [See Letters 8, §§ 1, 2; 12, § 8; 29, § 1; and 53, §§ 1, 17 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 132, 203–204, 527); and above, pp. 317, 333.]

⁴ [See Letter 34, § 11 (Vol. XXVII. p. 635).]

⁵ [See the note below, p. 451, and compare p. 551 (§ 17).]

fasten with nails in a sure place, with instant applicability to school and university exercises, of my former writings on art.*

But this, I beg my readers to observe, will be the seventh large book I have actually at this time passing through the press; † besides having written and published four volumes of university lectures ‡ in the last six years; every word of them weighed with care. This is what I observe the *Daily Telegraph* calls giving “utterances few and far between.” But it is as much certainly as I am able at present to manage; and I must beg my correspondents, therefore, to have generally patience with me when I don’t answer their letters by return of post; and above all things, to write them clear, and in a round hand, with all the *ms* and *ns* well distinguished from *us*.

6. The woodcut, indeed, prepared for this *Fors* was to have been a lesson in writing; but that must wait till next year, now;¹ meantime you may best prepare yourself for that, and all other lessons to be given in my new edition of the *Elements of Drawing*, by beginning to form your own cherished and orderly treasures of beautiful art. For

* Namely, *Modern Painters*, *Stones of Venice*, *Seven Lamps*, and *Elements of Drawing*. I cut these books to pieces, because in the three first, all the religious notions are narrow, and many false; and in the fourth, there is a vital mistake about outline, doing great damage to all the rest.²

† *Fors*, *Ariadne*, *Love’s Meinie*, *Proserpina*, *Deucalion*, *Mornings in Florence*,—and this: and four of these require the careful preparation of drawings for them by my own hand, and one of these drawings alone, for *Proserpina*, this last June, took me a good ten days’ work, and that hard.

‡ *Inaugural Lectures*, *Aratra Pentelici*, *Val d’Arno*, and *Eagle’s Nest*; besides a course on Florentine Sculpture, given last year, and not yet printed,³ the substance of it being in re-modification for *Mornings in Florence*.

¹ [See Letter 61, § 8 (p. 492).]

² [For this “vital mistake,” see Vol. XV. pp. xxvi., 134 n. *The Elements of Drawing* was ultimately recast into *The Laws of Féssole*. His scheme, here announced, was carried out, in the case of *Modern Painters*, by the Revised Edition of volume ii., 1882 (see Vol. IV. pp. xlvi., liv.), and by *Cæli Enarrant* and *In Montibus Sanctis*, 1884–1885 (see Vol. III. p. lxii.); in the case of *Stones of Venice*, by the “Travellers’ Edition,” 1879–1881 (see Vol. IX. p. lvi.); and in that of *Seven Lamps* by the Revised Edition of 1880 (see Vol. VIII. p. lii.).]

³ [The course entitled *The Æsthetic and Mathematic Schools of Florence*: see now Vol. XXIII. pp. lx., 179 seq.]

although the greatest treasury in that kind, belonging to St. George's Company, will be, as often aforesaid,¹ public property, in our museums, every householder of any standing whatever among us will also have his own domestic treasury, becoming hereditary as accumulative; and accurately catalogued, so that others may know what peculiar or separate good things are to be found in his house, and have graciously permitted use of them if true necessity be.

The basis, however, of such domestic treasury will of course be common to all; every household having its proper books for religious and economic service, and its classic authors, and engravings.

7. With the last we must at present class, and largely use, the more perishable treasure of good photographs; these, however, I do not doubt but that modern science will succeed (if it has not already done so), in rendering permanent; and, at all events, permanent copies of many may soon be placed in all our schools. Of such domestic treasure we will begin with a photograph of the picture by Fra Filippo Lippi, representing the Madonna;² which picture last year had its place over the door of the inner room of the Uffizii of Florence, beyond the Tribune. This photograph can of course eventually be procured in any numbers; and, assuming that my readers will get one, I shall endeavour in this and future numbers of *Fors*, to make it useful to them and therefore a treasure.*

The first thing you are to observe in it is that the figures are represented as projecting in front of a frame or window-sill. The picture belongs, therefore, to the class

* Mr. W. Ward, 2, Church Terrace, Richmond, Surrey, will give any necessary information about this or other photographs referred to in *Fors*, and generally have them on sale; but see terminal Note [p. 459].

¹ [See, for instance, above, pp. 407, 429.]

² [The frontispiece to this volume. The picture is No. 1307, in the third room of the Tuscan school. It was painted for Cosimo (the elder). The Virgin is said to be a portrait of Lucrezia Buti (see Vol. XXII. p. 424); the little St. John, of a member of the Medici family. A copy of the picture (by Mr. C. Fairfax Murray) is in the Ruskin Museum at Sheffield; for Ruskin's notes upon it, see Vol. XXIV. pp. 451 *seq.* For later references to the picture, see below, pp. 574, 626, 699–700.]

meant to be, as far as possible, deceptively like reality; and is in this respect entirely companionable with one long known in our picture-shops, and greatly popular with the British innkeeper, of a smuggler on the look-out, with his hand and pistol projecting over the window-sill. The only differences in purpose between the painter of this Anglican subject and the Florentine's, are, first, that the Florentine wishes to give the impression, not of a smuggler's being in the same room with you, but of the Virgin and Child's being so; and, secondly, that in this representation he wishes not *merely* to attain deceptive reality; but to concentrate all the skill and thought that his hand and mind possess, in making that reality noble.

Next, you are to observe that with this unusually positive realism of representation, there is also an unusually mystic spiritualism of conception. Nearly all the Madonnas, even of the most strictly devotional schools, themselves support the child, either on their knees or in their arms. But here, the Christ is miraculously borne by angels;—the Madonna, though seated on her throne, worships with both hands lifted.

8. Thirdly, you will at first be pained by the decision of line, and, in the children at least, uncomeliness of feature, which are characteristic, the first, of purely-descended Etruscan work; the second, of the Florentine school headed afterwards by Donatello.¹ But it is absolutely necessary, for right progress in knowledge, that you begin by observing and tracing decisive lines; and that you consider dignity and simplicity of expression more than beauty of feature. Remember also that a photograph necessarily loses the most subtle beauty of all things, because it cannot represent blue or grey colours,* and darkens red ones; so

* The transparent part of the veil which descends from the point of the cap is entirely lost, for instance, in the Madonna.

¹ [For Donatello's place in Ruskin's scheme of great artists, see Vol. XXII. p. 333.]

that all glowing and warm shadows become too dark. Be assured, nevertheless, that you have in this photograph, imperfect as it is, a most precious shadow and image of one of the greatest works ever produced by hand of man: and begin the study of it piece by piece. If you fancy yourself able to draw at all, you may begin, by practice over and over again, the little angular band on the forehead, with its studs, and the connected chain of pearls. There are seven pearls and fourteen studs; the fifteenth, a little larger, at the angle of the transparent cap; and four more, retiring. They are to be drawn with a fine brush and sepia, measuring the exact length of the band first; then marking its double curve, depressed in the centre, and rising over the hair, and then the studs and pearls in their various magnitudes. If you can't manage these, try the spiral of the chair; if not that, buy a penny's worth of marbles and draw them in a row, and pick up a snail shell, and meditate upon it, if you have any time for meditation. And in my Christmas *Fors*¹ I will tell you something about marbles, and beads, and coral, and pearls, and shells; and in time—it is quite possible—you may be able to draw a boy's marble and a snail's shell; and a sea urchin; and a Doric capital; and an Ionic capital; and a Parthenon, and a Virgin in it; and a Solomon's Temple, and a Spirit of Wisdom in it; and a Nehemiah's Temple, and a Madonna in it.

This photograph, then, is to be our first domestic possession in works of art; if any difficulty or improper cost occur in attaining it, I will name another to answer its purpose; but this will be No. 1 in our household catalogue of reference:² which will never be altered, so that the pieces may always be referred to merely by their numbers.

9. Of public, or museum property in art, I have this month laid also the minute foundation, by the purchase,

¹ [Letter 60. The Letter as published was not, however, the one here intended: see p. 460.]

² [For the other "Lesson Photographs," see p. 625. In Letter 78 (Vol. XXIX. p. 127), the "Leucothea" (No. 2 in the list on p. 625) is called "the first."]

for our schools, of the engravings named in the annexed printseller's account.*

And respecting the general operation of these schools and of the museums connected with them, the conclusion, which I am happy to announce, of the purchase of a piece of ground for the first of them, for six hundred pounds, requires some small special commentary.

Of such science, art, and literature as are properly connected with husbandry (see Note *a*, § 8 of Letter 55¹), St. George primarily acknowledges the art which provides him with a ploughshare,—and if need still be for those more savage instruments,—with spear, sword, and armour.

Therefore, it is fitting that of his schools “for the workmen and labourers of England,”² the first should be placed in Sheffield (I suppose, originally Sheaf-field; but do not at all rest on that etymology, having had no time to inquire into it³).

Besides this merely systematic and poetical fitness, there is the farther practical reason for our first action being among this order of craftsmen in England; that in cutler's ironwork, we have, at this actual epoch of our history, the best in its kind done by English hands, unsurpassable, I presume, when the workman chooses to do all he knows, by that of any living nation.

For these two principal reasons (and not without further direction from Fors of a very distinct nature) I expressed, some time since,⁴ my purpose to place the first museum of the St. George's Company at Sheffield.

10. Whereupon, I received a letter, very well and kindly meant, from Mr. Bragge, offering me space in the existing Sheffield museum for whatever I chose to put there:

* Last but one article in the Notes [§ 16, p. 458].

¹ [Above, p. 379.]

² [See title-page.]

³ [See notes from correspondents, Letters 60, § 11, and 62, § 22 (pp. 470, 533).]

⁴ [Letter 56, § 19 (p. 395). For the history of the Museum, see Vol. XXX.]

Mr. Bragge very naturally supposing that this would be the simplest mode of operation for me; and the most immediately advantageous to the town. To that (as I supposed private) communication I replied, in what I meant to be a private letter; which letter Mr. Bragge, without asking my permission, read at a public dinner, with public comment on what he imagined to be the state of my health.¹

Now, I never wrote a letter in my life which all the world are not welcome to read, if they will: and as Fors would have it so, I am glad this letter *was* read aloud, and widely circulated: only, I beg Mr. Bragge and the other gentlemen who have kindly interested themselves in the existing Sheffield museum to understand that, had I intended the letter for publicity, it would have been couched in more courteous terms, and extended into clearer explanation of my singular and apparently perverse conduct in what I observe the Sheffield press, since it has had possession of the letter in question, characterizes as “setting up an opposition museum at Walkley.”

I am glad to find the Sheffield branch of English journalism reprobating, in one instance at least, the—I had imagined now by all acclamation, divine—principle of Competition. But surely the very retirement to the solitude of Walkley, of which the same journalist complains, might have vindicated St. George’s first quiet effort in his own work, from this unexpected accusation,—especially since, in so far as I can assert or understand the objects of either of the supposedly antagonist showmen, neither Mr. Bragge nor St. George intend taking shillings at the doors.

¹ [Ruskin’s letter explained why he declined to merge St. George’s Museum in a general museum which would possibly be filled with “an accumulation of uselessly multiplied ugliness,” etc. It was published in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* and *Sheffield Independent* of September 7, 1875, and reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. ii. p. 182. With other correspondence referring to St. George’s Museum, it is now printed in Vol. XXX. The letter was read by Councillor Bragge at a dinner which followed the opening of Weston Park to the public on September 6, 1875. In the course of his remarks Mr. Bragge said, “Mr. Ruskin’s letter almost prompted him to say ‘Much learning hath made him mad.’” “The *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* of September 8 had an angry article on the subject of Ruskin’s refusal to merge his proposed Museum in the municipal one.]

11. Nevertheless, the impression on the mind of the Sheffield journalist that museums are to be opened as lively places of entertainment, rivals for public patronage, and that their most proper position is therefore in a public thoroughfare, deserves on St. George's part some careful answer. A museum is, be it first observed, primarily, not at all a place of entertainment, but a place of Education. And a museum is, be it secondly observed, not a place for elementary education, but for that of already far-advanced scholars.¹ And it is by no means the same thing as a parish school, or a Sunday school, or a day school, or even—the Brighton Aquarium.

Be it observed, in the third place, that the word "School" means "Leisure,"² and that the word "Museum" means "Belonging to the Muses"; and that all schools and museums whatsoever, can only be, what they claim to be, and ought to be, places of noble instruction, when the persons who have a mind to use them can obtain so much relief from the work, or exert so much abstinence from the dissipation, of the outside world, as may enable them to devote a certain portion of secluded laborious and reverent life to the attainment of the Divine Wisdom, which the Greeks supposed to be the gift of Apollo, or of the Sun;³ and which the Christian knows to be the gift of Christ. Now, I hear it continually alleged against me, when I advocate the raising of working men's wages, that already many of them have wages so high that they work only three days a week, and spend the other three days in drinking. And I have not the least doubt that under St. George's rule, when none but useful work is done, and when all classes are compelled to share in it, wages may indeed be so high, or, which amounts to the same thing as far as our present object is concerned, time so short, that at least two, if not three days out of every week (or

¹ [See, however, the *Letters on a Museum or Picture Gallery* (1880), in a later volume of this edition, where Ruskin puts another side of the case.]

² [On this definition, compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 109 n. (Vol. XVII. p. 235).]

³ [See *Queen of the Air*, § 5 (Vol. XIX. p. 300).]

an equivalent portion of time taken out of each day), may be devoted by some British workmen—no more to the alehouse, but to, what British clergymen ought to mean, if they don't, by the “concerns of their immortal souls,” that is to say, to the contemplation and study of the works of God, and the learning that complete code of natural history which, beginning with the life and death of the Hyssop on the wall,¹ rises to the knowledge of the life and death of the recorded generations of mankind, and of the visible starry Dynasties of Heaven.

The workmen who have leisure to enter on this course of study will also, I believe, have leisure to walk to Walkley. The museum has been set there, not by me, but by the Second Fors (Lachesis²), on the top of a high and steep hill,—with only my most admiring concurrence in her apparent intention that the approach to it may be at once symbolically instructive, and practically sanitary.

¹ [See 1 Kings iv. 33: “And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall.” Hence Ruskin gave the title “Hyssop” to the letter (XXV.) in *Time and Tide* which treats “Of inevitable Distinction of Rank” (Vol. XVII. p. 311).]

² [Ruskin seems here to modify his usual identification of the first, second, and third Fors with Courage, Patience, and Fortune (see Vol. XXVII. p. 291 *n.*); and subdividing Fortune into the forms of the Greek Fates, speaks of Lachesis, the second Fate, as “the Second Fors.” See on this subject the Introduction to Vol. XXVII. p. xxi.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

12. (I.) THE following communication was sent to me on a postcard, without the writer's name; but it is worth notice:—

“Ut et corda nostra mandaits tuis *dedita*.”¹ If some manuscript Breviary has omitted ‘*dedita*,’ it must be by a slip of the pen. The sense surely is this: that while there is either war or only an evil and deceitful peace within, self-surrender to the Divine commandments above and freedom from terror of foes around are alike impossible.

“In the English Prayer-book ‘set’ has the same meaning as in Psalm lxxviii. ver. 9 (*sic*: the writer means ver. 8²); and the context shows the ‘rest and quietness’ desired, to be rest and quietness of spirit.”

The “context” cannot show anything of the sort, for the sentence is an entirely independent one: and the MS. I use is not a Breviary, but the most perfect Psalter and full service, including all the hymns quoted by Dante, that I have seen in English thirteenth-century writing.³ The omission of the word “*dedita*” makes not the smallest difference to the point at issue—which is not the mistranslation of a word, but the breaking of a clause. The mistranslation nevertheless exists also; precisely *because*, in the English Prayer-book, “set” *has* the same meaning as in Psalm lxxviii.; where the Latin word is “*direxit*,” not “*dedit*”; and where discipline is meant, not surrender.

13. I must reserve my comments⁴ on the two most important letters next following, for large type and more leisure:—

(II.) “I hope that you will live to see *Fors* and everything printed without steam: it’s the very curse and unmaking of us. I can see it dreadfully in every workman that I come across. Since I have been so happily mixed up with you these eighteen years, great changes have taken place in workmen. It was beginning fearfully when I last worked as a journeyman. One instance among many:—The head foreman came to me at Messrs. Bakers’, and threatened discharge if he caught me using a hand bow-saw to cut a little circular disc, which I could have done in ten minutes. I then had to go and wait my turn at the endless steam saw—or, commonly called, a band saw. I had to wait an hour and a half to take my turn: the steam saw did it in perhaps three minutes; but the head

¹ [See Letter 58, § 1 (p. 417).]

² [Ruskin’s criticism forgets, however, that the writer may have been referring to the Prayer-book version, in which verse 9 (and not verse 8) has the words “set their heart aright.”]

³ [The editors are unable to identify this MS. Dante quotes five hymns and anthems, all of which are in the *Breviarium Romanum*; namely, *Vexilla Regis prodeunt* (*Inf.*, xxxiv. 1), *Salve Regina* (*Purg.*, vii. 82), *Te lucis ante* (*Purg.*, viii. 13), *Summe Deus clementie* (*Purg.*, xxv. 121), and *Regina Coeli* (*Par.*, xxiii. 128).]

⁴ [Ruskin does not expressly comment on these letters in any subsequent number of *Fors*; but to the subject of machinery generally, he reverts in Letters 67 (below, pp. 654–655), 77, and 82 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 119, 249).]

foreman said, 'We've gone to great expense for steam machinery, and what is the use if we don't employ it?' This little occurrence was by no means uncommon. What workpeople have been brought to is beyond conception, in tone of feeling and character. Here, as I have told you, we do all we can ourselves, indoors and out; have no servant, but make the children do: and because we are living in a tidy-sized house, and a good piece of ground, the labouring people make a dead set against us because we are not dependent upon them, and have even combined to defeat us in getting a charwoman now and then. We ought, I suppose, to employ two servants, whether we can pay for them or not, or even obtain them (which we couldn't). They have been picking hops here next our hedge: this is done by people in the neighbourhood, not imported pickers; and their children called over the hedge to ours, and said, 'Your mother is not a lady; she don't keep a servant, but does the work herself.' I name this little incident because it seems so deep."¹

14. (III.) "MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I write to ask leave to come and enter my name on the Roll of Companions of the Company of St. George.* I have seen enough and read enough of the pace at which we are going, more especially in business matters, to make me long to see some effort made to win back some of the honesty and simplicity of our fathers. And although I am afraid I can be but of very little use to the Company, I would gladly do anything that lay within my power; and it would be a great help to feel oneself associated with others, however feebly, in a *practical* work.

"I am trying to carry out what you have taught me in business, where I *can* do it. Our trade is dressing and buying and selling leather, etc., and making leather belting, hose, and boots. I am trying to the utmost to make everything as good as it can be made, then to ask a fair price for it, and resist all attempts to cheapen or depreciate it in any way. First, because the best thing is, as far as I know, invariably the 'best value'; secondly, because shoe manufacturing, as now carried on, is, through the division of labour, a largely mechanical work (though far less so than many trades),—and I believe the surest way of diminishing, as it is surely our duty to do, the amount of all such work, is to spend no labour, nor allow of its being spent, on any but the *best thing for wear* that can be made; and thirdly, because workmen employed even somewhat mechanically are, I think, far less degraded by their employment when their work and materials are good enough to become the subjects of honest pride. You will understand that, being only in the position of manager of the business, I can only carry out these ideas to a certain point. Still I have been able to reduce the amount of what is called 'fancy stitching' on parts of boots, on the stated ground of the injury the work ultimately causes to the operator's eyesight. And in the dressing of some descriptions of leather, where we used to print by machinery an artificial grain on the skin or hide, we have dispensed with the process, and work up the natural grain by hand-power.

"And this brings me to the point I want to put to you about the permitted use of the sewing-machine (see *Fors*, Letter 34, § 20 †²). It may seem unreasonable,

* The writer is now an accepted Companion.

† I am only too happy to be justified in withdrawing it. But my errors will, I trust, always be found rather in the relaxation than the unnecessary enforcement, even of favourite principles; and I did not see what line I could draw between the spinning-wheel, which I knew to be necessary, and the sewing-machine, which I suspected to be mischievous, and gave therefore *permission* only to use; while I shall earnestly urge the use of the spinning-wheel. I will give the reason for distinction (so far as my correspondent's most interesting letter leaves me anything more to say) in a future letter.³

¹ [The writer of this letter was Mr. George Allen.]

² [Vol. XXVII. p. 646.]

³ [This, however, was not done.]

when our firm employs so many. But it seems to me that the *admission* or machinery at all is unwise in principle. Machinery, especially the sewing-machine, has demoralized the shoe trade,—the same I think you would find in all other trades,—notably in piece-goods for ladies' dresses—which, owing to the cheapness with which they can be made up, are far more in number than they *could* have been if no sewing-machine had been used. And a manufacturer told me, only the other day, that common piece-goods, both woollen and others, take *as much* and generally *more* labour in making than the best. If all work required to supply clothing to the race were to be done by *hand*, it would be worth no one's while to make rubbish of any kind,—the work would be done by fewer people, and all raw material would be cheapened.

"In your advice to a young lady, printed in Letter 34, § 20, of *Fors Clavigera*, you give her permission to use a sewing-machine. I hope that, on fuller consideration of the subject, you will advise all who set the weal of their country above their own convenience, to discontinue its use wherever it can possibly be dispensed with.

"For the effect of the sewing-machine upon the great industries connected with clothing has been most disastrous.

"Given a certain quantity of cloth, or calico, or leather; and, before it can be made available as clothing, it must be joined or stitched together in certain shapes.

"Now so long as this stitching was, of necessity, all done by hand, it was never worth while, supposing the labour to be paid for at a just rate, to use any but good materials. A print dress at three-halfpence per yard, which might wear a week, would cost as much to make as a dress that would wear a year; and, except for the rich and luxurious, all extravagance of trimming, and all sewing useless for wear, were unattainable.

"But with the introduction of the sewing-machine a great change took place. It would be impossible within the limits of a letter to follow it out in every trade which has felt its influence. But briefly,—when it was found that the stitching process could be got through, though less solidly, at a very much reduced cost, it became possible for all classes to have dresses, clothes, and shoes in far greater number, and to embody in all kinds of clothing a larger amount of useless and elaborate work.

"And then arose among manufacturers generally a vigorous competition,—each one striving, not to make the most enduring and sound fabric (*the best value*), but that which, retaining some appearance of goodness, should be saleable at the lowest price and at the largest apparent profit.

"The Statutes of the old Trade Guilds of England constantly provide for the purity of their several manufactures; as did Richard Cœur de Lion, in his law for the cloth makers (*Fors*, Letter 3, § 11¹),—on this thoroughly wise and just ground: namely, that the best cloth, leather etc., producible, being accurately the cheapest to the consumer,—the man who used his knowledge of his trade to make other than the best, was guilty of fraud. Compare this view of the duty of a manufacturer with modern practice!

"It may be said that the customer is not cheated; since he knows, when he buys what is called a cheap thing, that it is not the best. I reply that the consumer never knows to the full what bad value, or unvalue, the common article is. And whose fault is it that he buys any but the best value?

"The answer involves a consideration of the duty and position of the retailer or middleman, and must be given, if at all, hereafter.

"One might multiply instances to show how this kind of competition has lowered the standard of our manufactures; but here most readers will be able to fall back upon their own experience.

"Then these common fabrics require for their production always a larger amount of labour in proportion to their value,—often actually as much, and sometimes more,

¹ [Vol. XXVII. pp. 54–55.]

What! you taunt a man because he and his father have risen above the state in which they were born by use of the intellect God gives them?¹ Fie! What sort of encouragement do you give to the working men to whom you address these letters, when you insinuate that *one sprung from the people* has no right to dwell in a hall or drive a carriage; and broadly hint he is no *gentleman, no scholar, and has nothing to boast of but his money*? Come here, and see if Ned G—is the sort of man you picture; see the refinement visible in his idea of art, and which he has tried to impress on others by his example, and then ask yourself whether you have done well to lend the sanction of your name to decry, as a mere vulgar parvenu, one who has done his best to keep a high standard before him.

“As to living at Heath Hall, I ask, Is it a crime to spend your money in preserving to posterity a beautiful specimen of the house of the smaller gentry in Queen Elizabeth’s time, which you only enjoy during a few years’ lease? A little longer neglect, and this fine old house would have become a ruin: when we took it, ivy grew inside, and owls made their nests in what are now guestchambers.

“No *squire* has lived here for a century and a quarter; and the last descendant of the *venerated Lady B*—(Dame Mary Bolles, that is), utterly refused to reside near so dull a town as Wakefield—preferring Bath, then at the height of its glory and Beau Nash’s; even before his time the hereditary squires despised and deserted the lovely place, letting it to any who would take it. Now it is repaired and restored, and well worth a visit even from Mr. Ruskin—who, if he is what I believe him, will withdraw the false imputations which must cause pain to us and surprise to those who know us. That last little stroke about bribery betrays E. L.’s disgust, not at the successful man, but at the Blue Tory. Well! from envy, malice, and all uncharitableness, from evil-speaking and slandering: Good Lord deliver us!

“Yours very truly,
“MARY GREEN.”

(I make no comments on this letter till the relations of Dame Mary Bolles have had time to read it, and E. L. to reply.²)

16. (V.) The following account, with which I have pleasure in printing the accompanying acknowledgment of the receipt, contains particulars of the first actual expenditure of St. George’s moneys made by me, to the extent of twenty-nine pounds ten shillings, for ten engravings* now the property of the Company. The other prints named in the account are bought with my own money, to be given or not given as I think right. The last five engravings—all by Dürer—are bought at present for my proposed school at Sheffield, with the *Melancholia*, which I have already; but if finer impressions of them are some day given me, as is not unlikely, I should of course withdraw these, and substitute the better examples—retaining always the right of being myself the ultimate donor of the two

* The printseller³ obligingly giving an eleventh, “Pembury Mill,”—Fors thus directing that the first art gift bestowed on the Company shall be Turner’s etching of a flour-mill.

¹ [Ruskin refers to this charge against him “of sneering at people of no ancestry” in Letter 63, § 12 (below, p. 547).]

² [For E. L.’s reply, see Letters 60, § 7, and 62, § 23 (pp. 468, 533).]

³ [Mr. Colnaghi: see below, p. 579.]

than would suffice to make an equal quantity of material of the best value. So that, roughly, when we demand two common coats where one good one would serve, we simply require certain of our fellow-creatures to spend double the necessary time working for us in a mill. That is, supposing we get the full value out of our two common coats when we have them: the evil is greater if we fail to do so, and, to gratify our selfishness or caprice, require three instead of two. And the question arises,—Is it *kind* or *just* to require from others double the needful quantity of such labour as we would not choose to undergo ourselves? That it is not *Christian* so to do, may be learned by any one who will think out to their far-reaching consequences the words of our Lord: 'Therefore ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.'

"Now the use of the sewing-machine has been all in favour of the 'three-coat' system, indefinitely multiplied and variously recommended; and the consequent absorption, year by year, of larger numbers of persons in mechanical toil; toil of the hands only—numbing to the brain, and blighting to the heart, or maddening to both.

"So far as the question of clothing is concerned, I would venture to sum up our duty under present circumstances, broadly, as follows." [It can't possibly be done better.—J. R.]

"Always demand the best materials, and use no more of them than is necessary to dress yourselves neatly or handsomely, according to your station in society. Then have these materials made up by hand, if possible under your own supervision, paying a just price for the labour. For such ornament as you need to add, remember that it must be the expression, first of your delight in some work of God's, and then of the human skill that wrought it. This will save you from ever tampering with the lifeless machine-work; and though you have little ornament, it will soon be lovely and right.

"Above all, never buy cheap ready-made clothing of any kind whatsoever; it is most of it stained with blood, if you could see it aright. It is true you may now buy a 'lady's costume,' made up and trimmed by the sewing-machine (guided by a human one), for the sum of two shillings and fourpence (wholesale), *but you had a great deal better wear a sack with a hole in it.* [Italics mine.—J. R.] It may be worth while hereafter to define with some precision what is the best value in various kinds of goods. Meantime, should it be suggested that machine sewing is good enough for common materials, or for clothes that you intend to wear only a few times, and then throw aside, remember you have no business to buy any but good materials, nor to waste when you have bought them; and that it is worth while to put solid hand-work into such."

("I use the word 'value' for the strength or 'availing of a thing towards life.' See *Munera Pulveris*, §§ 12–14.") [Vol. XVII. pp. 153–154.]

15. (IV.) With respect to the next following letter—one which I am heartily glad to receive—I must beg my readers henceforward, and conclusively, to understand, that whether I print my correspondence in large type, or small, and with praise of it, or dispraise, I give absolutely no sanction or ratification whatever to any correspondent's statements of fact, unless by express indication. I am responsible for my own assertions, and for none other; but I hold myself bound to hear, and no less bound to publish, all complaints and accusations made by persons supposing themselves injured, of those who injure them, which I have no definite reason for supposing to be false or malicious, and which relate to circumstances affecting St. George's work. I have no other means of determining their truth, than by permitting the parties principally concerned to hear them, and contradict them, according to their ability; and the wish with which

my present correspondent's letter closes, to be delivered from evil speaking and slandering (she seems not quite clearly to understand that the prayer in the Litany is to be delivered from the guilt of these,—not from their effects), may, so far as these affect her own family, be much more perfectly accomplished by her own statement of their true history, than by any investigation possible to me of the facts in question. But, as far as respects the appeal made by her to myself, my answer is simply, that, whether made by patents, ingenuities, or forges, all fortunes whatever, rapidly acquired, are, necessarily, *ill* acquired; and exemplary of universal ill to all men. No man is ever paid largely for ingenuity; he can only be paid largely by a tax on the promulgation of that ingenuity.

Of actual ingenuities, now active in Europe, none are so utterly deadly, and destructive to all the beauty of nature and the art of man, as that of the engineer.

And with respect to what my correspondent too truly urges—the shame of our ancient races in leaving their houses abandoned—it does not make me look with more comfort or complacency on their inhabitation by men of other names, that there will soon be left few homes in England whose splendour will not be a monument at once of the guilt of her nobles, and the misery of her people.

“DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—We have only just read the September number of *Fors Clavigera*. My husband is the Ned G—referred to in the letter you quote from E. L.¹ Said he, ‘It (*i.e.*, the letter) is not worth notice.’ I replied, ‘In itself perhaps not; but I have known Mr. Ruskin in his writings many years, and I shall write him to put before him the actual facts, and request him to withdraw these misstatements.’ The whole letter is written on the supposition that Mr. Green is an *iron king*, or *iron lord*. No such thing; he is an *engineer*—quite a different affair; the maker of a patent which is known all over the world as the ‘Fuel Economiser.’ He consequently never had a forge, and is indebted to the use of his intellect and the very clever mechanical genius of his father for their rise in life, and not merely to *toiling half-naked Britons*, as stated. The picture of the forge, with its *foul smoke and sweltering heat and din*, is drawn from some other place, and is utterly unlike the real workshops of E. Green and Son—costly, airy, convenient, and erected to ensure the comfort of the workpeople, having a handsome front and lofty interior.

“As to smoke, the whole concern makes no more than, if as much as, an ordinary dwelling-house; while we suffer too much at Heath from the town smoke to add to the dense volumes. We have no whistle—some other place is meant; we were never possessed of a ‘devil,’ American or English, of any sort. Mr. Green derives no pecuniary benefit from Wakefield, and but for the attachment of his father and himself to their birthplace, would long ago have conducted his operations in a more central spot.

“Several other grave charges are brought against Mr. Green—one so serious that I am surprised to see it printed: *viz.*, *that he rules his people with an iron hand*. That may go with the rest of the ‘iron tale.’ Your correspondent is either very ignorant or wilfully false. No such assertion can be for a moment sustained, after inquiry is made among our people; nor by any one in the town could an instance of such be proved.

“As to the Scotch estate, Mr. Green does not possess one.

“The history of *Robin the Pedlar* is equally a work of E. L.’s imagination, although no false shame as to a humble descent has ever been shown or felt.

¹ [See above, p. 410 and *n.*]

What! you taunt a man because he and his father have risen above the state in which they were born by use of the intellect God gives them?¹ Fie! What sort of encouragement do you give to the working men to whom you address these letters, when you insinuate that *one sprung from the people* has no right to dwell in a hall or drive a carriage; and broadly hint he is no *gentleman, no scholar, and has nothing to boast of but his money*? Come here, and see if Ned G—is the sort of man you picture; see the refinement visible in his idea of art, and which he has tried to impress on others by his example, and then ask yourself whether you have done well to lend the sanction of your name to decry, as a mere vulgar parvenu, one who has done his best to keep a high standard before him.

“As to living at Heath Hall, I ask, Is it a crime to spend your money in preserving to posterity a beautiful specimen of the house of the smaller gentry in Queen Elizabeth’s time, which you only enjoy during a few years’ lease? A little longer neglect, and this fine old house would have become a ruin: when we took it, ivy grew inside, and owls made their nests in what are now guestchambers.

“No *squire* has lived here for a century and a quarter; and the last descendant of the *venerated Lady B*—(Dame Mary Bolles, that is), utterly refused to reside near so dull a town as Wakefield—preferring Bath, then at the height of its glory and Beau Nash’s; even before his time the hereditary squires despised and deserted the lovely place, letting it to any who would take it. Now it is repaired and restored, and well worth a visit even from Mr. Ruskin—who, if he is what I believe him, will withdraw the false imputations which must cause pain to us and surprise to those who know us. That last little stroke about bribery betrays E. L.’s disgust, not at the successful man, but at the Blue Tory. Well! from envy, malice, and all uncharitableness, from evil-speaking and slandering: Good Lord deliver us!

“Yours very truly,
“MARY GREEN.”

(I make no comments on this letter till the relations of Dame Mary Bolles have had time to read it, and E. L. to reply.²)

16. (V.) The following account, with which I have pleasure in printing the accompanying acknowledgment of the receipt, contains particulars of the first actual expenditure of St. George’s moneys made by me, to the extent of twenty-nine pounds ten shillings, for ten engravings* now the property of the Company. The other prints named in the account are bought with my own money, to be given or not given as I think right. The last five engravings—all by Dürer—are bought at present for my proposed school at Sheffield, with the *Melancholia*, which I have already; but if finer impressions of them are some day given me, as is not unlikely, I should of course withdraw these, and substitute the better examples—retaining always the right of being myself the ultimate donor of the two

* The printseller³ obligingly giving an eleventh, “Pembury Mill,”—Fors thus directing that the first art gift bestowed on the Company shall be Turner’s etching of a flour-mill.

¹ [Ruskin refers to this charge against him “of sneering at people of no ancestry” in Letter 63, § 12 (below, p. 547).]

² [For E. L.’s reply, see Letters 60, § 7, and 62, § 23 (pp. 468, 533).]

³ [Mr. Colnaghi: see below, p. 579.]

St. Georges, in their finest state, from my own collection. But these must at present remain in Oxford.

LONDON, *October 5, 1875.*

JOHN RUSKIN, ESQ.

| | | | £ | s. | d. |
|--|-------------|--|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| St. G. | 1 | Apollo and the Python, by Master of the Die ¹ | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| " | 2 | Raglan Castle | 3 | 10 | 0 |
| " | 3 | Solway Moss | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| " | 4 | Hind Head Hill | 1 | 10 | 0 |
| " | 5, a, b, c, | Three impressions of Falls of the Clyde (£2 each) | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| " | 6 | Hindoo Worship | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| " | 7 | Dunblane Abbey | 3 | 10 | 0 |
| " | 8 | Pembury Mill | | ... | |
| " | 9 | Etching of the Severn and Wye | 2 | 10 | 0 |
| " | 10 | Tenth Plague (of Egypt) | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| " | 11 | Æsacus and Hesperie | 3 | 10 | 0 |
| | | | 29 | 10 | 0 |
| (The above Prints sold at an unusually low price, for Mr. Ruskin's school.) | | | | | |
| J. R. | 1 | Sir John Cust | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| " | 2 | Lady Derby | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| " | 3,4 | Two Etchings of Æsacus and Hesperie (£4 each) | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| " | 5,6 | Two Holy Islands (£2, 6s. each) | 4 | 12 | 0 |
| " | 7 | Etching of Procris | | 4 | 4 |
| " | 8 | Holy Island | 2 | 6 | 0 |
| " | 9 | The Crypt | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| " | 10 | The Arveron | 8 | 8 | 0 |
| " | 11 | Raglan Castle | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| " | 12 | " " | | 6 | 0 |
| " | 13 | " " | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| " | 14 | Woman at the Tank | 7 | 17 | 6 |
| " | 15 | Grande Chartreuse | 8 | 8 | 0 |
| | | | 101 | 19 | 6 |
| | | | Discount (15 per cent. ³) | 10 | 1 0 |
| | | | 91 | 18 | 6 |
| St. G. | 16 | Knight and Death | 18 | 0 | 0 |
| " | 17 | St. George on Horseback | 3 | 10 | 0 |
| " | 18 | " " Foot | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| " | 19 | Pilate | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| " | 20 | Caiaphas | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | £125 | 8 | 6 |

MY DEAR SIR,—It is delightful to do business with you. How I wish that all my customers were imbued with your principles. I enclose the receipt, with best thanks, and am

Yours very sincerely and obliged.

JOHN RUSKIN, ESQ.

¹ [The "Master of the Die," an unknown artist, who flourished about 1532; so called because some of his prints are marked with a small cube, or die.]

² [Of the eleven prints here noted as the property of "St. George," all but Nos. 7–11 are in the Museum at Sheffield. The Museum possesses a copy of No. 7, but it is not the one bought by Ruskin. One of the etchings in the second list (Nos. 3, 4) is in the Museum, as are Nos. 16–20.]

³ [That is, on the sum of £72 odd, the amount of the items "J. R., 1–15."]

Of course, original accounts, with all other vouchers, will be kept with the Company's registers at Oxford.¹ I do not think it expedient always to print names; which would look like advertisement.

17. Respecting the picture by Filippo Lippi,² I find more difficulty than I expected. On inquiring of various dealers, I am asked three shillings each for these photographs. But as I on principle never use any artifice in dealing, most tradesmen think me a simpleton, and think it also their first duty, as men of business, to take all the advantage in their power of this my supposed simplicity; these photographs are therefore, I suppose, worth actually, unmounted, about a shilling each; and I believe that eventually, my own assistant, Mr. Ward, will be able to supply them, of good impression, carefully chosen, with due payment for his time and trouble, at eighteenpence each; or mounted, examined by me, and sealed with my seal, for two shillings and sixpence each. I don't promise this, because it depends upon whether the government at Florence will entertain my request, made officially as Slade Professor at Oxford, to have leave to photograph from the picture.³

At present holding it of more importance not to violate confidence* than to sell photographs cheap, I do not even publish what I have ascertained, since this note was half written, to be the (actual) trade price, and I must simply leave the thing in the beautiful complexity of competition and secretiveness called British Trade; only, at Oxford, I have so much personal influence with Mr. Davis,⁴ in Exeter Street, as may, I think, secure his obtaining the photographs, for which, as a dealer combined with other dealers, he must ask three shillings, of good quality; to him, therefore, at Oxford, for general business, my readers may address themselves; or in London, to Miss Bertolacci, 7, Edith Grove, Kensington; and, for impressions certified by me, to Mr. Ward, at Richmond (address as above), who will furnish them, unmounted, for two shillings each, and mounted, for three. And for a foundation of the domestic art-treasure of their establishment, I do not hold this to be an enormous or unjustifiable expense.

* Remember, however, that the publication of prime cost, and the absolute knowledge of all circumstances or causes of extra cost, are inviolable laws of established trade under the St. George's Company.

¹ [That is, in Ruskin's rooms at Corpus: see Letter 55, § 7 (p. 377).]

² [See above, p. 445.]

³ [Mr. Ward never heard of this request, or of its result. The copies of the photograph which he used to supply were obtained through the Berlin Photographic Company. The price was 2s. 6d. For some time copies (of this as of the other Lesson Photographs) were signed with Ruskin's *autograph*, to signify that he had passed the prints (see below, p. 605).]

⁴ [A most intelligent and cultivated printseller, well known to Oxford men of the 'seventies. By "Exeter Street" Ruskin means "The Turl," in which street Exeter College is situated.]

LETTER 60

STARS IN THE EAST¹

1. I CANNOT finish the letter I meant for my Christmas *Fors*;² and must print merely the begun fragment—and such uncrystalline termination must now happen to all my work, more or less (and more and more, rather than less), as it expands in range. As I stated in last letter,³ I have now seven books in the press at once—and any one of them enough to take up all the remainder of my life. *Love's Meinie*, for instance (Love's Many, or Serving Company⁴), was meant to become a study of British birds, which would have been occasionally useful in museums, carried out with a care in plume drawing which I learned in many a day's work from Albert Dürer; and with which, in such light as the days give me, I think it still my duty to do all I can towards completion of the six essays prepared for my Oxford schools:⁵—but even the third of these, on the Chough, though already written and in type, is at pause because I can't get the engravings for it finished, and the rest—merely torment me in other work with the thousand things flitting in my mind, like sea-birds for which there are no sands to settle upon.

Ariadne is nearer its close;⁶ but the Appendix is a mass of loose notes which need a very sewing-machine⁷ to bring

¹ [See below, § 3.]

² [See above, p. 447.]

³ [See above, p. 444.]

⁴ [See further on the word, Letter 28, § 14 (Vol. XXVII. p. 516).]

⁵ [It does not anywhere appear what the "six lectures" were to be. In the *University Gazette* Ruskin announced only three (Vol. XXV. p. 5)—namely, on the Robin, the Swallow, and the Chough. A fourth lecture (though never delivered as such) was on the Dabchicks. See Vol. XXV. pp. xxxi.–xxxii.]

⁶ [The six chapters of *Ariadne* had already been issued (the last in July 1875). The appendix, completing the book, was ultimately issued in September 1876; for the author's apology for the delay, see Vol. XXII. p. 463.]

⁷ [See above, p. 453.]

together—and any one of these that I take in hand leads me into ashamed censorship of the imperfection of all I have been able to say about engraving; and then, if I take up my Bewick, or return to my old Turner vignettes, I put my Appendix off again—“till next month,” and so on.

Proserpina will, I hope, take better and more harmonious form; but it grows under my hands, and needs most careful thought. For it claims nothing less than complete modification of existing botanical nomenclature, for popular use; and in connection with *Deucalion* and the recast *Elements of Drawing*, is meant to found a system of education in Natural History, the conception of which I have reached only by thirty years of labour, and the realization of which can only be many a year after I am at rest. And yet none of this work can be done but as a kind of play, irregularly, and as the humour comes upon me. For if I set myself at it gravely, there is too much to be dealt with; my mind gets fatigued in half-an-hour, and no good can be done; the only way in which any advance can be made is by keeping my mornings entirely quiet, and free of care, by opening of letters or newspapers; and then by letting myself follow any thread of thought or point of inquiry that chances to occur first, and writing as the thoughts come,—whatever their disorder; all their connection and cooperation being dependent on the real harmony of my purpose, and the consistency of the ascertainable facts, which are the only ones I teach; and I can no more, now, polish or neatly arrange my work than I can guide it. So this fragment must stand as it was written, and end,—because I have no time to say more.

COWLEY RECTORY,¹ 27th October, 1875.

2. My Christmas letter this year, since we are now definitely begun with our schooling, may most fitly be on the

¹ [Near Uxbridge, the home of the Rev. J. C. and Mrs. Hilliard, whose daughter Connie (now Mrs. Churchill) has already been named (see Vol. XXVII. p. 308 *n.*), and whose son, Laurence, was for some time Ruskin's secretary.]

subject, already opened in *Fors* 12th, of the Three Wise Men.¹

“Three wise men of Gotham,” I had nearly written; the remembrance of the very worst pantomime I ever saw, having, from the mere intolerableness of its stupidity, so fastened itself in my memory that I can’t now get rid of the ring in my ears, unless I carefully say, “Magi,” instead of “wise men.”

Such, practically, is the principal effect of the Sacred Art employed by England, in the festivity of her God’s birthday, upon the minds of her innocent children, like me, who would fain see something magical and pretty on the occasion—if the good angels would bring it us, and our nurses, and mammas, and governesses would allow us to believe in magic, or in wisdom, any more.

You would not believe, if they wanted you, I suppose, you wise men of the west? You are sure that no real magicians ever existed; no real witches—no real prophets;—that an Egyptian necromancer was only a clever little Mr. Faraday,² given to juggling; and the witch of Endow,³ only a Jewish Mrs. Somerville amusing herself with a practical joke on Saul; and that when Elisha made the axe swim,⁴ he had prepared the handle on the sly—with aluminium? And you think that in this blessed nineteenth century—though there isn’t a merchant, from Dan to Beersheba,⁵ too honest to cheat, there is not a priest nor a prophet, from Dan to Beersheba, but he is too dull to juggle!

You may think, for what I care, what you please in such matters, if indeed you choose to go on through all your lives thinking, instead of ascertaining. But, for my own part, there are a few things concerning Magi and their doings which I have personally discovered, by laborious work among real magi. Some of those things I am going

¹ [Letter 12, § 18 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 211–212).]

² [See above, p. 85 *n.*]

³ [See 1 Samuel xxviii. 7. See Letter 12, § 25 (Vol. XXVII. p. 215). Ruskin takes Mrs. Somerville (1780–1872) as the most conspicuous instance of a lady master of science.]

⁴ [See 2 Kings vi. 5–7.]

⁵ [Judges xx. 1.]

to tell you to-day, positively, and with entire and incontrovertible knowledge of them,—as you and your children will one day find every word of my direct statements in *Fors Clavigera* to be; and fastened, each with its nail in its sure place.¹

3. (A.) In the first place, then, concerning stars in the east. You can't see the loveliest which appear there naturally,—the Morning Star, namely, and his fellows,—unless you get up in the morning.²

(B.) If you resolve thus always, so far as may be in your own power, to see the loveliest which are there naturally, you will soon come to see them in a supernatural manner, with a quite—properly so-called—“miraculous” or “wonderful” light which will be a light in your spirit, not in your eyes. And you will hear, with your spirit, the Morning Star and his fellows sing together; also, you will hear the sons of God shouting together for joy with them;³ particularly the little ones,—sparrows, greenfinches, linnets, and the like.

(C.) You will, by persevering in the practice, gradually discover that it is a pleasant thing to see stars in the luminous east; to watch them fade as they rise; to hear their Master say, Let there be light—and there is light;⁴ to see the world made, that day, at the word; and creation, instant by instant, of divine forms out of darkness.

(D.) At six o'clock, or some approximate hour, you will perceive with precision that the Firm over the way, or round the corner, of the United Grand Steam Percussion and Corrosion Company, Limited (Offices, London, Paris, and New York), issues its counter-order, Let there be darkness; and that the Master of Creation not only at once submits to this order, by fulfilling the constant laws He has ordained concerning smoke,—but farther, supernaturally or miraculously, enforces the order by sending a poisonous

¹ [For this meaning of the title, see the Introduction to Vol. XXVII. (p. xxii.).]

² [Compare *Two Paths*, § 137 (Vol. XVI. p. 371).]

³ [Job xxxviii. 7.]

⁴ [Genesis i. 3.]

black wind, also from the east, of an entirely corrosive, deadly, and horrible quality, with which, from him that hath not, He takes away also that light he hath;¹ and changes the sky during what remains of the day,—on the average now three days out of five,*—into a mere dome of ashes, differing only by their enduring frown and slow pestilence from the passing darkness and showering death of Pompeii.²

(E.) If, nevertheless, you persevere diligently in seeing what stars you can in the early morning, and use what is left you of light wisely, you will gradually discover that the United Grand Steam Percussion and Corrosion Company is a company of thieves; and that you yourself are an ass, for letting them steal your money, and your light, at once. And that there is standing order from the Maker of Light, and Filler of pockets, that the company shall not be thieves, but honest men; and that you yourself shall not be an ass, but a Magus.

(F.) If you remind the company of this law, they will tell you that people “didn’t know everything down in Judee,”³ that nobody ever made the world; and that nobody but the company knows it.

4. But if you enforce upon yourself the commandment not to be an ass, and verily resolve to be so no more, then—hear the word of God, spoken to you by the only merchant city that ever set herself to live wholly by His law. †

“I willed, and sense was given to me.
I prayed, and the Spirit of Wisdom was given to me.⁴
I set her before Kingdoms and Homes,
And held riches nothing, in comparison of her.”⁵

* It is at this moment, nine o’clock, 27th October, tearing the Virginian creeper round my window into rags rather than leaves.

† See Fourth Morning in Florence. “The Vaulted Book.” [Vol. XXIII. p. 363.]

¹ [See Matthew xiii. 12.]

² [On the “storm wind,” see above, Letter 59, § 5 (p. 443).]

³ [*The Biglow Papers* (“What Mr. Robinson Thinks”).]

⁴ [See, again, *Mornings in Florence*, § 91 (Vol. XXIII. p. 385), where Ruskin corrects “was given to me” to “came upon me.”]

⁵ [Wisdom vii. 7.]

That is to say,—If you would have her to dwell with you, you must set her before kingdoms;—(as, for instance, at Sheffield, you must not think to be kings of cutlery, and let nobody else in the round world make a knife but you);—you must set her before homes; that is to say, you must not sit comfortably enjoying your own fireside, and think you provide for everybody if you provide for that:—and as for riches—you are only to *prefer* wisdom,—think her, of two good things, the best, when she is matched with kingdoms and homes; but you are to esteem riches—*nothing* in comparison of her. Not so much as *mention* shall be made “of coral, nor of pearls, for the price of wisdom is above rubies.”¹

5. You have not had the chance, you think, probably, of making any particular mention of coral, or pearls, or rubies? Your betters, the Squires and the Clergy, have kept, if not the coral, at least the pearls, for their own wives’ necks, and the rubies for their own mitres; and have generously accorded to you heavenly things,—wisdom, namely, concentrated in your responses to Catechism. I find St. George, on the contrary, to be minded that you shall at least know what these earthly goods are, in order to your despising them in a sensible manner;—for you can’t despise them if you know nothing about them.

I am going, under His orders, therefore, to give you some topazes² of Ethiopia,—(at least, of the Ural mountains, where the topazes are just as good),—and all manner of coral, that you may know what co-operative societies are working, to make your babies their rattles and necklaces, without any steam to help them, under the deep sea, and in its foam; also out of the Tay, the fairest river of the British Isles, we will fetch some pearls that nobody shall have drawn short breath for: and, indeed, all the things that Solomon in his wisdom sent his ships to Tarshish for,

¹ [Job xxviii. 18.]

² [For a notice of the specimens of topaz in the Museum, see Vol. XXVI. p. lviii. Ruskin did not send the other specimens here promised.]

—gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks,¹—you shall see in their perfection and have as much of as St. George thinks good for you (only remember, in order to see an ape in perfection, you must not be an ape yourself, whatever Mr. Darwin may say; but must admire, without imitating, their prehensile activities, nor fancy that you can lay hold on to the branches of the tree of life with your tails instead of your hands, as you have been practising lately).

And, in the meantime, I must stop writing because I've to draw a peacock's breast-feather,² and paint as much of it as I can without having heaven to dip my brush in. And when you have seen what it is, you shall despise it—if you can—for heaven itself. But for nothing less!

6. My fragment does not quite end here; but in its following statements of plans for the Sheffield Museum, anticipates more than I think Atropos would approve; besides getting more figurative and metaphysical than you would care to read after your Christmas dinner. But here is a piece of inquiry into the origin of all riches, Solomon's and our own, which I wrote in May, 1873, for the *Contemporary Review*,³ and which, as it sums much of what I may have too vaguely and figuratively stated in my letters, may advisably close their series for this year.

It was written chiefly in reply to an article by Mr. Greg, defending the luxury of the rich as harmless, or even beneficent to the poor.⁴ Mr. Greg had, on his part, been reproving Mr. Goldwin Smith—who had spoken of a rich man as consuming the means of living of the poor. And Mr. Greg pointed out how beneficially for the poor, in a thousand channels, the rich man spent what he had got.

¹ [See 1 Kings x. 22.]

² [The drawing is in the Sheffield Museum, and is shown on Plate V. in Vol. XXV. (p. 39).]

³ [*Home, and its Economies* (reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1889, vol. ii. §§ 131–147), of which article the author here reproduced part of § 135 and §§ 136–147 as §§ 7–19 of this Letter.]

⁴ ["What is Culpable Luxury?" (*Contemporary Review*, March 1873).]

Whereupon I ventured myself to inquire, “How he got it”?
and the paper went on thus:—

.
[For the parts of the article printed by Ruskin in this letter, see Vol. XVII.
p. 559 (“which is indeed precisely the first of all questions . . .”) down to p.
565 (“ . . . into the cup of the fornication of its capital”).¹]

So ends my article, and enough said for 1875, I think. And I
wish you a merry Christmas, my masters; and honest ways of
winning your meat and pudding.

¹ [In reprinting the article here in *Fors* Ruskin omitted the word “precisely,” and
altered the last words to “. . . the cup of the fornication of its Babylonian City of the
Plain.” For a later reference to Ruskin’s reply to Greg’s article, see Letter 78, § 12
(Vol. XXIX. p. 135).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

7. I AM busy, and tired, this month; so shall keep my making up of accounts till January. The gist of them is simply that we have got £8000 worth of Consols; and we had a balance of £501, 7s. at the bank, which balance I have taken, and advanced another hundred of my own, making £600, to buy the Sheffield property with; this advance I shall repay myself as the interest comes in, or farther subscription; and then use such additional sums for the filling of the museum, and building a small curator's house on the ground. But I shall not touch any of the funded sum; and hope soon to see it raised to £10,000. I have no word yet from our lawyer about our constitution.¹ The Sheffield property, like the funded, stands in the names of the Trustees.

I have accepted, out of our forty subscribers, some eight or nine for Companions,² very gratefully. Others wish well to the cause, but dislike the required expression of creed and purpose. I use no persuasion in the matter, wishing to have complete harmony of feeling among the active members of the Society.

E. L.'s courteous, but firm, reply to Mrs. Green's letter reaches me too late for examination. In justice to both my correspondents, and to my readers, I must defer its insertion, in such abstract as may seem desirable, until next month.³

8. (I.) Letter from a clergyman, now an accepted Companion. The extract contained in it makes me wonder if it has never occurred to the Rev. Dr. Mullens that there should be immediately formed a Madagascar Missionary Society,⁴ for the instruction of the natives of England:—

"MY DEAR SIR,—*Apropos* of your strictures on usury which have from time to time appeared in *Fors*, I have thought you would be interested in the following extract from a recent work on Madagascar, by the Rev. Dr. Mullens, of the London Missionary Society.

"After describing a 'Kabary,'—a public assembly addressed by the Queen,—in the Betsileo* province, he goes on to say: 'Having expressed in a clear and distinct voice her pleasure in meeting her people once more, the Queen uttered several sentences usual to these assemblies, in which she dwelt upon the close

* I can't answer for Madagascar nomenclature.

¹ [Hence Ruskin was not able to give its final form, as promised (see above, p. 436).]

² ["Some eight or nine," because he was "doubtful of the adherence of one or two": see *Financial History of St. George's Guild*, § 14 n. (Vol. XXX).]

³ [Printed not in the *next*, but in the following month: see Letter 62, § 23 (p. 533).]

⁴ [On the subject of missions, compare above, pp. 26, 45 n.; and below, p. 515.]

and affectionate relations subsisting between them and herself. "You are a father and mother to me: having you, I have all . . . And if you confide in me, you have a father and a mother in me. Is it not so, O ye under heaven?" To which, with a deep voice, the people reply, "It is so." Passing at length to the subject specially before her, the Queen said, "My days in the South are now few; therefore I will say a word about the Schools. And I say to you all, here in Betsileo, . . . cause your children to attend the Schools. My desire is, that whether high or low, whether sons of the nobles, or sons of the judges, or sons of the officers, or sons of the centurions, your sons and your daughters should attend the Schools and become lovers of wisdom." The Prime Minister, then, in the Queen's name, addressed the assembly on the subject of usury,—a great evil among poor nations, and only too common in stages of society, like that in Madagascar,—and said, "Thus saith the Queen: *All the usury exacted by the Hovas from the Betsileo is remitted*, and only the original debt shall remain!"

"I am, dear Sir, faithfully yours,

"JOSEPH HALSEY."

9. (II.) Useful letter from a friend:—

"You say when I agree in your opinions I may come, but surely you do not exact the unquestioning and entire submission of the individual opinion which the most arrogant of churches exacts.* With your leading principles, so far as I am yet able to judge of them, I entirely and unreservedly agree. I see daily such warped morality, such crooked ways in the most urgent and important concerns of life, as to convince me that the axe should be laid to the root of the tree. Mainly I am disgusted—no more tolerant word will do—with the prevalent tone of thought in religious matters, and the resulting tortuous courses in daily work and worship. What a worse than Pagan misconception of Him whom they ignorantly worship—

" 'Ille opifex rerum, mundi melioris origo'—

is shown by the mass of so-called religious persons! How scurrilously the Protestant will rail against Papist *intolerance*—making his private judgment of Scripture the infallible rule,—

" 'Blushing not (as Hooker says) in any doubt concerning matters of Scripture to think his own bare Yea as good as the Nay of all the wise, grave, and learned judgments that are in the whole world. Which insolency must be repressed, or it will be the very bane of Christian Religion.'—(*Ecc. Polity*, Book II.)

"I believe the St. George's Company contains the germ of a healthy and vigorous constitution. I see that you are planting that germ, and fostering it with all deliberation and cautious directness of advance; but what Titanic obstacles! It seems to me the fittest plant of this age to survive, but in the complexities of the struggle for existence, its rearing must be a Herculean labour. Yet wherein is this age singular? When was there any time whose sentence we might not write thus: 'L'etat agite par les brigues des ambitieux, par les largesses des riches factieux, par la venalite des pauvres oiseux, par l' empirisme des orateurs, par l'audace des hommes pervers, par la faiblesse des hommes vertueux,' was distracted and disintegrate?"

"When I can get better words than my own I like to use them—and it is seldom I cannot. In the selfish pleasure of writing to you I forget the tax on your time of reading my vagaries; but I feel a kind of filial unburdening in writing thus freely. Will that excuse me?"

"Always sincerely and affectionately yours,

"JAMES HOOPER."

* By no means; but *practical* obedience, yes,—not to *me* but to the Master of the Company, whoever he may be; and this not for his pride's sake, but for your comfort's.

10. WOOD *versus* COAL.—Subject to such correction as may be due to the different quantity of carbon contained in a load of wood as in a ton of coal, the product of the coal-field is seven times as much [of fuel] per mile, as that of the forest. To produce a yield of fuel equal to that obtainable from the known coal measures of the world, if worked with an activity equal to that of our own, seven times the area of cultivated forest is required. But the actual area, as estimated, is not seven, but twenty-seven times that of the coal measures. It is thus four times as important, regarded as a source of fuel. But while the life of the coal-field has been taken at 150 years, that of the forest, if rightly cared for, will endure as long as that of the human family. A wealth such as this is not to be measured in tons of gold.—*Edinburgh Review*, p. 375, Oct. 1875.

11. "I think Sheffield is more likely 'Schaf-field' than Sheaf-field.¹ 'Sheep-fold, the sheltered hollow with moors all round it. I know a place called 'Theescombe, meaning 'theaves-combe,' or 'young lambs-combe.' "—*Note by a Companion*.

¹ [See Letter 59, § 9 (p. 448); and below, Letter 62, § 22 (p. 532), where the true derivation is given.]

FORS CLAVIGERA.

LETTERS

TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS

OF GREAT BRITAIN.

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART.

VOL. VI.



GEORGE ALLEN,
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.

1876.

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FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTER 61

THE CAVE OF MACHPELAH¹

November 28th, 1875.

(In the house of a friend who, being ashamed of me and my words, requests that this *Fors* may not be dated from it.²)

1. "LIVE AND LEARN." I trust it may yet be permitted me to fulfil the adage a few years longer, for I find it takes a great deal of living to get a little deal of learning. (Query, meaning of "deal"?—substantive of verb deal—as at whist?—no Johnson by me, and shall be sure to forget to look when I have.³) But I *have* learned something this morning,—the use of the holes in the bottom of a fire-shovel, to wit. I recollect, now, often and often, seeing my mother sift the cinders; but, alas, she never taught *me* to do it. Did not think, perhaps, that I should ever have occasion, as a Bishop, to occupy myself in that manner; nor understand,—poor sweet mother,⁴—how advisable it might be to have some sort of holes in my shovel-hat, for sifting cinders of human soul.⁵

¹ [Genesis xxiii.: see below, § 3. Titles rejected by Ruskin were "The Field of Machpelah," "Big London" (§ 5), "Wretches," and "Les Misérables" (§ 5).]

² [Ruskin's diary shows that on this day he was staying at Cowley Rectory, from which he had dated part of the previous letter: see above, p. 461.]

³ ["Gothic for part or portion; 'a tenth deal' of flour, etc."—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]

⁴ [An allusion to his parents' hope that their son might become a bishop: see Letter 52, § 2 (p. 297).]

⁵ ["Shovel-hat—a cinder sifter, meaning that Bishops should take better care whom they appoint for clergy, or let into congregations."—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]

Howsoever, I have found out the art, this morning, in the actual ashes; thinking all the time how it was possible for people to live in this weather, who had no cinders to sift. My hostess's white cat, Lily, woke me at half-past five by piteous mewing at my window; and being let in, and having expressed her thanks by getting between my legs over and over again as I was shaving, has at last curled herself up in my bed, and gone to sleep,—looking as fat as a little pillow, only whiter; but what are the cats to do, to-day, who have no one to let them in at the windows, no beds to curl up into, and nothing but skin and bones to curl?

“It can't be helped, you know;—meantime, let Lily enjoy her bed, and be thankful (if possible, in a more convenient manner). And do you enjoy your fire, and be thankful,” say the pious public: and subscribe, no doubt at their Rector's request, for an early dole of Christmas coals. Alas, my pious public, all this temporary doling and coaling is worse than useless. It drags out some old women's lives a month or two longer,—makes, here and there, a hearth savoury with smell of dinner, that little knew of such frankincense; but, for true help to the poor, you might as well light a lucifer match to warm their fingers; and for the good to your own hearts,—I tell you solemnly, all your comfort in such charity is simply, Christ's dipped sop,¹ given to you for signal to somebody else than Christ, that it is *his* hour to find the windows of your soul open—to the Night, whence very doleful creatures, of other temper and colour than Lily, are mewing to get in.

2. Indeed, my pious public, you cannot, at present, by any coal or blanket subscription, do more than blind yourselves to the plain order “Give to him that asketh thee; and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away.”²

¹ [See John xiii. 26. Ruskin writes here in the margin of his copy: “Sop of lulled conscience; the lull of conscience is the Devil's time.”]

² [Matthew v. 42.]

To him that asketh us, say the public,—but then—everybody would ask us.

Yes, you pitiful public,—pretty nearly everybody would: that is indeed the state of national dignity, and independence, and gushing prosperity, you have brought your England into; a population mostly of beggars (at heart); or, worse, bagmen, not merely bearing the bag—but nothing else *but* bags;—sloppy, star-fishy, seven-suckered stomachs of indiscriminate covetousness, ready to beg, borrow, gamble, swindle, or write anything a publisher will pay for.

Nevertheless your order is precise, and clear; “Give to him that asketh thee”—even to the half of your last cloak—says St. Martin;¹ even to the whole of it, says Christ: “whosoever of you forsaketh not *all* that he hath, cannot be my disciple.”²

“And you yourself, who have a house among the lakes, and rooms at Oxford, and pictures, and books, and a Dives dinner every day, how about all that?”

Yes, you may well ask,—and I answer very distinctly and frankly, that if once I am convinced (and it is not by any means unlikely I should be so) that to put all these things into the hands of others, and live myself, in a cell at Assisi, or a shepherd’s cottage in Cumberland, would be right, and wise, under the conditions of human life and thought with which I have to deal—very assuredly I will do so.

3. Nor is it, I repeat, unlikely that such conviction may soon happen to me; for I begin to question very strictly with myself, how it is that St. George’s work does not prosper better in my hands.

Here is the half-decade of years, past, since I began the writing of *Fors*, as a byework to quiet *my* conscience, that I might be happy in what I supposed to be my own proper life of Art-teaching, at Oxford and elsewhere; and, through my own happiness, rightly help others.

¹ [For the story of St. Martin and his cloak, see *Bible of Amiens*, ch. i. § 23.]

² [Luke xiv. 33.]

But Atropos has ruled it quite otherwise. During these five years, very signal distress has visited me, conclusively removing all possibilities of cheerful action; separating and sealing a great space of former life into one wide field of Machpelah; and leaving the rest sunless.¹ Also, everything I have set hand set hand to has been unprosperous; much of it even calamitous;—disappointment, coupled with heavy money loss,² happening in almost every quarter to me, and casting discredit on all I attempt; while, in things partly under the influence and fortune of others, and therefore more or less successful,—the schools at Oxford especially, which owe the greater part of their efficiency to the fostering zeal of Dr. Acland, and the steady teaching of Mr. Macdonald,—I have not been able, for my own share, to accomplish the tenth part of what I planned.

4. Under which conditions, I proceed in my endeavour to remodel the world, with more zeal, by much, than at the beginning of the year 1871.³

For these following reasons.

First, that I would give anything to be quit of the whole business; and therefore that I am certain it is not ambition, nor love of power, nor anything but absolute and mere compassion, that drags me on. That shoemaker, whom his son left lying dead with his head in the fireplace the other day,*—I wish he and his son had never been born;—but as the like of them will be born, and must so die, so long as things remain as they are, there's no choice for me but to do all I know to change them, since others won't.

Secondly. I observe that when all things, in early life, appeared to be going well for me, they were by no means going well, in the deep of them, but quite materially and rapidly otherwise. Whence I conclude that

* See first article in Notes [p. 504].

¹ [For this "signal distress," see Vol. XXIV. p. xx.]

² [See below, Letter 76, § 18 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 100, 101).]

³ [The date of the publication of the first letter of *Fors Clavigera*.]

though things appear at present adverse to my work and me, they may not at all be adverse in the deep of them, but quite otherwise.

Thirdly. Though in my own fortune, unprosperous, and in my own thoughts and labour, failing, I find more and more every day that I have helped many persons unknown to me; that others, in spite of my failures, begin to understand me, and are ready to follow; and that a certain power is indeed already in my hands, woven widely into the threads of many human lives; which power, if I now laid down, that line (which I have always kept the murmur of in my ears, for warning, since first I read it thirty years ago),—

“Che fece per viltate’l gran rifiuto,”*

would be finally and fatally true of me.

Fourthly, not only is that saying of Bacon’s of great comfort to me, “therefore extreme lovers of their country, or masters, were never fortunate; neither can they be, for when a man placeth his thoughts without himself, he goeth not his own way,”† for truly I have always loved my masters, Turner, Tintoret, and Carlyle, to the exclusion of my own thoughts; and my country more than my own garden: but also, I do not find in the reading of history that any victory worth having was ever won without cost; and I observe that too open and early prosperity is rarely the way to it.

5. But lastly, and chiefly. If there be any truth in the vital doctrines of Christianity whatsoever,—and assuredly

* *Inferno*, III. 60. I fear that few modern readers of Dante understand the dreadful meaning of this hellish outer district, or suburb, full of the refuse or worthless scum of Humanity—such numbers that “non averei creduto, Che morte tanta n’avesse disfatta,”—who are stung to bloody torture by insects, and whose blood and tears together—the best that human souls can give—are sucked up, on the hell-ground, by worms.¹

† Essay XI.

¹ [See *Inferno*, iii. 56, 57, 67–69. Line 60 is quoted also in Vol. XVIII. p. 101.]

there is more than most of us recognize, or than any of us believe,—the offences committed in this century by all the nations of Christendom against the law of Christ have been so great, and insolent, that they cannot but be punished by the withdrawal of spiritual guidance from them, and the especial paralysis of efforts intelligently made for their good. In times of more ignorant sinning, they were punished by plagues of the body; but now, by plagues of the soul, and widely infectious insanities, making every true physician of souls helpless and every false effort triumphant. Nor are we without great and terrible signs of supernatural calamity, no less in grievous changes and deterioration of climate, than in forms of mental disease,* claiming distinctly to be necromantic, and, as far as I have examined the evidence relating to them, actually manifesting themselves as such. For observe you, my friends, countrymen, and brothers¹—*Either*, at this actual moment of your merry Christmastime, that has truly come to pass, in falling London, which your greatest Englishman wrote of falling Rome, “the sheeted dead do squeak and gibber in your English streets,”²—*Or*, such a system of loathsome imposture and cretinous blasphemy is current among all classes of England and America, as makes the superstition of all past ages divine truth in comparison.

One of these things *is* so—gay friends;—have it which way you will: one or other of these, to me, alike appalling; and in your principal street of London society, you

* I leave this passage as it was written; though as it passes through the press, it is ordered by Atropos that I should hear a piece of evidence on this matter³ no less clear as to the present ministry of such powers as that which led Peter out of prison, than all the former, or nearly all, former evidence examined by me was of the presence of the legion which ruled among the Tombs of Gennesaret.⁴

¹ [*Julius Cæsar*, Act iii. sc. 2.]

² [*Hamlet*, Act i. sc. 1.]

³ [For these experiences, see Vol. XXIV. p. xxii.]

⁴ [See Acts xii. 7; Mark v. 9; Luke viii. 30.]

have a picture of highly dressed harlots gambling, of naked ones, called Andromeda and Francesca of Rimini, and of Christ led to be crucified, exhibited, for your better entertainment, in the same room;¹ and at the end of the same street, an exhibition of jugglery, professedly imitating, *for money*, what a large number of you believe to be the efforts of the returned Dead to convince you of your Immortality.

Meantime, at the other end—no, at the very centre of your great Babylon,—a son leaves his father dead, with his head, instead of a fire, in the fireplace, and goes out himself to his day's darg.²

“We are very sorry;—What can we do? How can we help it? London is so big, and living is so very expensive, you know.”

Miserables,—who makes London big, but you, coming to look at the harlotries in it, painted and other? Who makes living expensive, but you, who drink, and eat,* and dress, all you can; and never in your lives did one stroke of work to get your living,—never drew a bucket of water, never sowed a grain of corn, never spun a yard of thread;—but you devour, and swill, and waste, to your fill, and think yourselves good, and fine, and better creatures of God, I doubt not, than the poor starved wretch of a shoemaker,³ who shod whom he could, while you gave him food enough to keep him in strength to stitch.

6. We, of the so-called “educated” classes, who take it upon us to be the better and upper part of the world, cannot possibly understand our relations to the rest better

* See second article in Notes [p. 506].

¹ [At the Doré Gallery in Bond Street; compare Letters 29, 34, 35 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 534, 630, 658). “At the end of the same street” (*i.e.*, at the Egyptian Hall, in Piccadilly, near Bond Street, where Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke then performed).]

² [For the incident referred to, see below, § 18; for the word “darg,” see above, p. 93.]

³ [For a later reference to this passage, see Letter 81, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 194).]

than we may where actual life may be seen in front of its Shakespearean image, from the stalls of a theatre. I never stand up to rest myself, and look round the house, without renewal of wonder how the crowd in the pit, and shilling gallery, allow us of the boxes and stalls to keep our places! Think of it;—those fellows behind there have housed us and fed us; their wives have washed our clothes, and kept us tidy;—they have bought us the best places,—brought us through the cold to them; and there they sit behind us, patiently, seeing and hearing what they may. There they pack themselves, squeezed and distant, behind our chairs;—we, their elect toys and pet puppets, oiled and varnished, and incensed, lounge in front, placidly, or for the greater part, wearily and sickly contemplative. Here we are again, all of us, this Christmas! Behold the artist in tumbling, and in painting with white and red,—our object of worship, and applause: here sit we at our ease, the dressed dolls of the place, with little more in our heads, most of us, than may be contained inside of a wig of flax and a nose of wax; stuck up by these poor little prentices, clerks, and orange-sucking mobility, Kit, and his mother, and the baby—behind us, in the chief places of this our evening synagogue.¹ What for? “They did not stick you up,” say you,—you paid for your stalls with your own money. Where did you get your money? Some of you—if any Reverend gentlemen, as I hope, are among us,—by selling the Gospel; others by selling Justice; others by selling their Blood—(and no man has any right to sell aught of these three things, any more than a woman her body),—the rest, if not by swindling, by simple taxation of the labour of the shilling gallery,—or of the yet poorer or better persons who have not so much, or will not spend so much, as the shilling to get there? How else should you, or could you, get your money,—simpletons?

Not that it is essentially your fault, poor feathered

¹ [*The Old Curiosity Shop*, ch. xxxix.]

moths,—any more than the dead shoemaker's. That blasphemous blockheadism of Mr. Greg's,* and the like of him, that you can swill salvation into other people's bodies out of your own champagne-bottles, is the main root of all your national miseries. Indeed you are willing enough to believe that devil's-gospel, you rich ones; or most of you would have detected the horror of it before now; but yet the chief wrong lies with the assertors of it,—and once and again I tell you, the words of Christ are true,—and not theirs; and that the day has come for fasting and prayer, not for feasting; but, above all, for labour—personal and direct labour—on the Earth that bears you, and buries—as best it can.

7. *9th December.*—I heard yesterday that the son of the best English portrait-painter we have had since Gainsborough,¹ had learnt farming; that his father had paid two hundred pounds a year to obtain that instruction for him; and that the boy is gone, in high spirits, to farm—in Jamaica! So far, so good. Nature and facts are beginning to assert themselves to the British mind. But very dimly.

For, first, observe, the father should have paid nothing for that boy's farming education. As soon as he could hold a hoe, the little fellow should have been set to do all he could for his living, under a good farmer for master; and as he became able to do more, taught more, until he knew all that his master knew,—winning, all the while he was receiving that natural education, his bread by the sweat of his brow.

“But there are no farmers who teach—none who take care of their boys, or men.”

* Quoted in last *Fors* from *Contemporary Review*. Observe that it is blasphemy, definitely and calmly uttered, first against Nature, and secondly against Christ.²

¹ [The reference is to George Richmond, R. A., whose son, Walter, was for a short time in Jamaica.]

² [The passage (for which see in this edition Vol. XVII. p. 561) is “While the natural man and the Christian would have the champagne drinker forego his bottle, and give the value of it to the famishing wretch beside him, the radical economist would condemn such behaviour as distinctly criminal and pernicious.”]

Miserables again, whose fault is that? The landlords choose to make the farmers middlemen between the peasants and themselves—grinders, not of corn, but of flesh,—for their rent. And of course you dare not put your children under them to be taught.

Read Gotthelf's *Ulric the Farm Servant* on this matter. It is one of his great novels,—great as Walter Scott's, in the truth and vitality of it, only inferior in power of design. I would translate it all in *Fors*, if I had time; and indeed hope to make it soon one of my school series.¹ of which, and other promised matters, or delayed ones, I must now take some order, and give some account, in this opening letter of the year, as far as I can, only, before leaving the young farmer among the Blacks, please observe that he goes there because you have all made Artificial Blacks of yourselves, and unmelodious Christys,²—nothing but the whites of your eyes showing through the unclean skins of you, here, in Merry England, where there was once green ground to farm instead of ashes.

8. And first,—here's the woodcut, long promised, of a rose-leaf cut by the leaf-cutting bee, true in size and shape; a sound contribution to Natural History, so far as it reaches.³ Much I had to say of it, but am not in humour to-day. Happily, the letter from a valued Companion, Art. III. in Notes (§ 21), may well take place of any talk of mine.*

Secondly, I promised a first lesson in writing,⁴ of which, therefore (that we may see what is our present knowledge on the subject, and what farther we may safely ask

* The most valuable notes of the kind correspondent who sent me this leaf, with many others, and a perfect series of nests, must be reserved till spring-time: my mind is not free for them, now.⁵

¹ [See below, p. 499. *Ulric the Farm Servant*, translated for Ruskin by Julia Firth, was published by him in 1886–1888: see Vol. XXXII.]

² [For another reference to the Christy Minstrels, see Vol. XXIX. p. 85.]

³ [For account of leaf-cutting bee, see Letter 52, § 16 (p. 305).]

⁴ [See Letter 59, § 6 (p. 444).]

⁵ [See Letter 69, § 21 (p. 708).]

Theuth * to teach), I have had engraved two examples, one of writing in the most authoritative manner, used for modern service, and the other of writing by a practised scribe of the fourteenth century. To make the comparison fair, we must take the religious, and therefore most careful, scripture of both dates; so, for example of modern sacred scripture, I take the casting up of a column in my

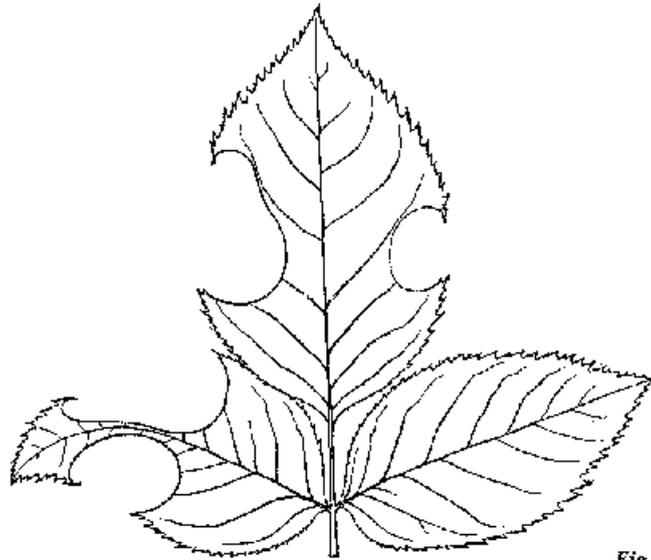


Fig. 5

banker's book; and for the ancient, a letter A, with a few following words, out of a Greek Psalter, which is of admirable and characteristic, but not (by any honest copyist) inimitable execution.

Here then, first, is modern writing; in facsimile of which I have thought it worth while to employ Mr. Burgess's utmost skill; for it seems to me a fact of profound significance that all the expedients we have invented for saving time, by steam and machinery (not to speak of the art of

* Compare Letter 16, § 7, and 17, § 5 [Vol. XXVII. pp. 284, 294].

printing), leave us yet so hurried, and flurried, that we cannot produce any lovelier calligraphy than this,¹ even to certify the gratifying existence of a balance of eleven hundred and forty-two pounds, thirteen shillings, and twopence,

| | | | |
|-----------|--------|--|--|
| 1142.13.2 | pounds | | |
| 1142.13.2 | pounds | | |

Fig. 6

while the old writer, though required, eventually, to produce the utmost possible number of entire psalters with his own hand, yet has time for the execution of every initial letter of them in the manner here exhibited.²

Respecting which, you are to observe that this is pure *writing*; not painting or drawing, but the expression of form by lines such as a pen can easily produce (or a brush used with the point, in the manner of a pen); and with a certain habitual currency and fluent habit of finger, yet not dashing or flourishing, but with perfect command of direction in advance, and moment of pause, at any point.

9. You may at first, and very naturally, suppose, good reader, that it will not advance your power of English writing to copy a Greek sentence. But, with your pardon, the first need, for all beautiful writing, is that your hand should be, in the true and virtuous sense, *free*; that is to say, able to move in any direction it is ordered, and not cramped to a given slope, or to any given form of letter. And also, whether you can learn Greek or not, it is well (and perfectly easy) to learn the Greek alphabet, that if by chance a questionable word occur in your Testament, or in scientific books, you may be able to read it, and even

¹ [For a later reference to this specimen of handwriting, see Letter 94, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 486).]

² [The MS. (from which Fig. 7 is taken) is of Psalm xviii. 1: see the explanatory passage in Appendix 15, Vol. XXIX. p. 563.]

look it out in a dictionary. And this particular manner of Greek writing I wish you to notice, because it is such as Victor Carpaccio represents St. Jerome reading in his study;¹ and I shall be able to illustrate by it some points of Byzantine character of extreme historical interest.²

Copy, therefore, this letter A, and the following words, in as perfect facsimile as you can, again and again, not being content till a tracing from the original fits your copy to the thickness of its penstroke. And even by the time

next *Fors* comes out, you will begin to know how to use a pen. Also, you may at spare times practise copying any clearly-printed type, only without the difference of thickness in

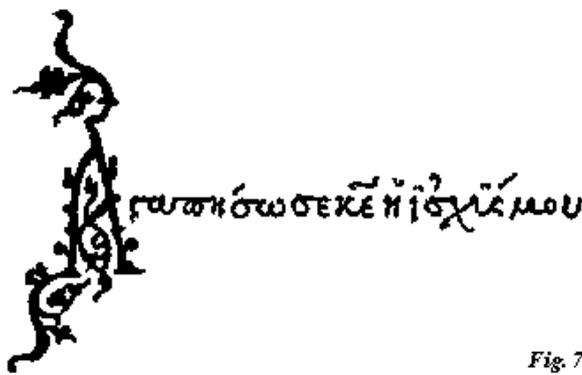


Fig. 7

parts of letters; the best writing for practical purposes is that which most resembles print, connected only, for speed, by the current line.

10. Next, for some elementary practice of the same kind in the more difficult art of Reading.

A young student, belonging to the working classes, who has been reading books a little too difficult or too grand for him, asking me what he shall read next, I have told him, *Waverley*—with extreme care.

It is true that, in grandeur and difficulty, I have not a

¹ [See *St. Mark's Rest*, § 185 (Vol. XXIV. p. 354).]

² [See below, p. 524.]

whit really lowered his standard; for it is an achievement as far beyond him, at present, to understand *Waverley*, as to understand the *Odyssey*; but the road, though as steep and high-reaching as any he has travelled, is smoother for him. What farther directions I am now going to give him, will be good for all young men of active minds who care to make such activity serviceable.

Read your *Waverley*, I repeat, with extreme care: and of every important person in the story, consider first what the virtues are; then what the faults inevitable to them by nature and breeding;¹ then what the faults they might have avoided; then what the results to them of their faults and virtues, under the appointment of fate.

Do this after reading each chapter; and write down the lessons which it seems to you that Scott intended in it; and what he means you to admire, what to despise.

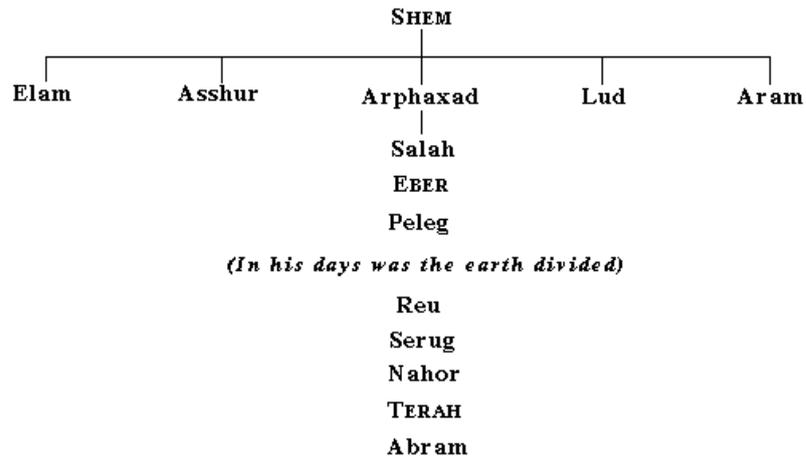
11. Secondly,—supposing you to be, in any the smallest real measure, a Christian,—begin the history of Abraham as preparatory to that of the first Lawgiver whom you have in some understanding to obey. And the history of Abraham must be led up to, by reading carefully from Genesis ix. 20th, forward, and learning the main traditions which the subsequent chapters contain.

And observe, it does not matter in the least to you, at present, how far these traditions are true. Your business is only to know what is said in Genesis. That does not matter to you, you think? Much less does it matter what Mr. Smith or Mr. Robinson said last night at that public meeting; or whether Mr. Black or his brother, shot Mrs. White; or anything else whatever, small or great, that you will find said or related in the morning papers. But to know what is said in Genesis will enable you to understand, in some sort, the effect of that saying on men's minds, through at least two thousand years of the World's History. Which, if you mean to be a scholar and gentleman, you *must* make some effort to do.

¹ [Compare *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 296.]

And this is the way to set about it. You see the tenth chapter of Genesis names to you the children, and children's children, of Noah, from whom the nations of the world (it says) came, and by whom the lands of the world (it says) were divided.

You must learn them by rote, in order. You know already, I suppose, the three names, Shem, Ham, and Japheth; begin with Shem, and learn the names of his sons, thus:¹



Now, you see that makes a pretty ornamental letter T, with a little joint in the middle of its stalk.

And this letter T you must always be able to write, out of your head, without a moment's hesitation. However stupid you may be at learning by rote, thus much can always be done by dint of sheer patient repetition. Read the centre column straight down, over and again, for an hour together, and you will find it at last begin to stick in your head. Then, as soon as it is fast there, say it over and over again when it is dark, or when you are out walking, till you can't make a mistake in it.

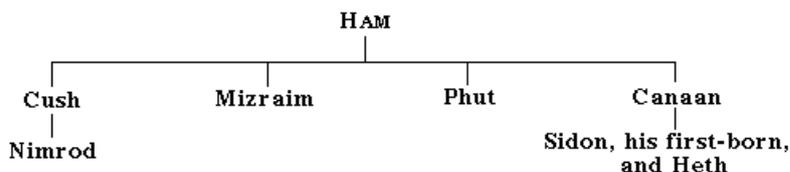
12. Then observe farther that Peleg, in whose days the earth was divided, had a brother named Joktan,² who had

¹ [See Genesis x. 22, 24, 25; xi. 13-26.]

² [See Genesis x. 25, 28, 29.]

thirteen children. Of these, you need not mind the names of ten; but the odd three are important to you—Sheba, Ophir, and Havilah. You have perhaps heard of these before; and assuredly, if you go on reading *Fors*, you will hear of them again.¹

And these thirteen children of Joktan, you see, had their dwelling “from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar, a mount of the East.”² I don’t know anything about Mesha and Sephar, yet;³ but I may: in the meantime, learn the sentence, and recollect that these people are fixed *somewhere*, at any rate, because they are to be Masters of Gold,⁴ which is fixed in Eastern, or Western, mountains; but that the children of the other brother, Peleg, can go wherever they like, and often where they shouldn’t,—for “in his days was the earth divided.” Recollect also that the children of both brothers, or, in brief, the great Indian gold-possessing race, and the sacred race of prophets and kings of the higher spiritual world, are in the 21st verse of this chapter called “all the children of EBER.” If you learn so much as this well, it’s enough for this month: but I may as well at once give you the forms you have to learn for the other two sons.⁵



The seventh verse is to be noted as giving the goldmasters of Africa, under two of the same names as those

¹ [Havilah is mentioned again in the next Letter, p. 521.]

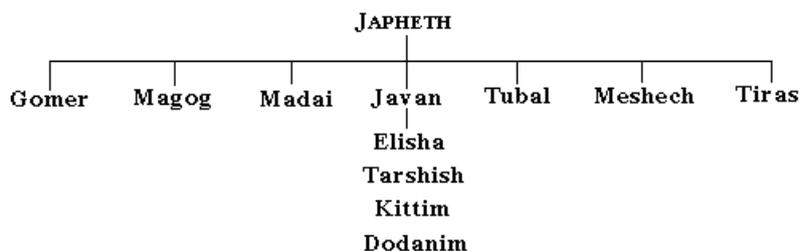
² [Genesis x. 30.]

³ [The geographical position of “Mesha” and “Sephar” has never been identified with certainty, though it is supposed that they must have been situated somewhere in the south-western portion of the Arabian peninsula. The latest investigations of the subject are those of Eduard Glaser in his *Skizze der Geschichte und Geographie Arabiens*, 1890, vol. ii. pp. 336, 420, 437.]

⁴ [For the land of Ophir as the land of gold, see 1 Kings ix. 28, etc., and Job xxii. 24. On the very vexed question of the locality of Ophir, see the long list of authorities cited in Hasting’s *Dictionary of the Bible*, 1900, vol. iii. p. 628.]

⁵ [See Genesis x. 6, 8, 15.]

of Asia, but must not be learned for fear of confusion.¹ The form above given must be amplified and commented on variously, but is best learned first in its simplicity.



I leave this blunt-stalked and flat-headed letter T, also, in its simplicity, and we will take up the needful detail in next *Fors*.²

13. Together with which (all the sheets being now printed, and only my editorial preface wanting) I doubt not will be published the first volume of the classical series of books which I purpose editing for St. George's library;³—Xenophon's *Economist*, namely, done into English for us by two of my Oxford pupils;⁴ this volume, I hope, soon to be followed by Gotthelf's *Ulric the Farm Servant*, either in French or English, as the Second *Fors*,⁵ faithfully observant of copyright and other dues, may decide; meantime, our first historical work, relating the chief decision of Atropos respecting the fate of England after the Conquest, is being written for me by a friend, and Fellow of my college of Corpus Christi, whose help I accept, in St. George's name,—all the more joyfully, because he is our head gardener, no less than our master-historian.⁶

¹ [The descendants of both Ham (Africa) and Shem (Asia) including a Havilah and a Sheba: see Genesis x. 7, 28, 29. For the descendants of Japheth, see Genesis x. 2–4.]

² [Letter 62, § 12 (p. 522).]

³ [See above, p. 20.]

⁴ [This translation, by W. G. Collingwood and A. D. O. Wedderburn, forming volume i. of *Bibliotheca Pastorum*, was issued in July 1876: see now Vol. XXXI. *Ulric*, issued in 1888, was not included in *Bibliotheca Pastorum*.]

⁵ [Patience: see Letter 15, § 14 n. (Vol. XXVII. p. 270).]

⁶ [Mr. Cuthbert Shields, whose projected work was not however, published: see *Val d'Arno*, § 94 (Vol. XXIII. p. 57 n.)]

14. And for the standard theological writings which are ultimately to be the foundation of this body of secular literature, I have chosen seven authors, whose lives and works, so far as the one can be traced or the other certified, shall be, with the best help I can obtain from the good scholars of Oxford, prepared one by one in perfect editions for the St. George's schools.¹ These seven books will contain, in as many volumes as may be needful, the lives and writings of the men who have taught the purest theological truth hitherto known to the Jews, Greeks, Latins, Italians, and English; namely, Moses, David, Hesiod, Virgil, Dante, Chaucer, and, for seventh, summing the whole with vision of judgment, St. John the Divine.²

The Hesiod I purpose, if my life is spared, to translate myself (into prose), and to give in complete form. Of Virgil I shall only take the two first Georgics, and the sixth book of the *Aeneid*, but with the Douglas translation;* adding the two first books of Livy, for completion of the image of Roman life. Of Chaucer, I take the authentic poems, except the *Canterbury Tales*; together with, be

* "A Bishop by the Altar stood,
A noble Lord of Douglas blood,
With mitre sheen, and rocquet white.
Yet showed his meek and thoughtful eye
But little pride of prelacy;
More pleased that, in a barbarous age,
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,
Than that beneath his rule he held
The bishopric of fair Dunkeld."³

¹ [The scheme, here planned, was in no part carried out. For the importance which Ruskin attached to the works of Hesiod, see Letters 71, § 1 (below, p. 732) 75, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 56), and compare Vol. XVII p. 564, and Vol. XVIII. p. 508; for the first two books of Livy, see Vol. XXII. p. 269.]

² [For the message of St. John, see Letter 81 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 192–194).]

³ [*Marmion*, canto vi., stanza xi. For another reference to Gavin Douglas (1474–1522) Bishop of Dunkeld, see *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iv. § 20. His translation of the *Aeneid* was first published in 1553. Ruskin gave his copy of the book to Whitelands Training College: see Appendix 11, Vol. XXIX. p. 557.]

they authentic or not, the *Dream*,¹ and the fragment of the translation of the *Romance of the Rose*,² adding some French chivalrous literature of the same date. I shall so order this work, that in such measure as it may be possible to me, it shall be in a constantly progressive relation to the granted years of my life. The plan of it I give now, and will explain in full detail, that my scholars may carry it out, if I cannot.

15. And now let my general readers observe, finally, about all reading,—You must read, for the nourishment of your mind, precisely under the moral laws which regulate your eating for the nourishment of the body. That is to say, you must not eat for the pleasure of eating, nor read for the pleasure of reading. But, if you manage yourself rightly, you will intensely enjoy your dinner, and your book. If you have any sense, you can easily follow out this analogy: I have not time at present to do it for you; only be sure it holds, to the minutest particular, with this difference only, that the vices and virtues of reading are more harmful on the one side and higher on the other, as the soul is more precious than the body. Gluttonous reading is a worse vice than gluttonous eating; filthy and foul reading, a much more loathsome habit than filthy eating. Epicurism in books is much more difficult of attainment than epicurism in meat, but plain and virtuous feeding the most entirely pleasurable.

16. And now, one step of farther thought will enable you to settle a great many questions with one answer.

¹ [For another reference to the poem known as *Chaucer's Dream*, see Vol. XXII. p. 65. Ruskin at one time began translating it "into simple English," with a view to publishing it as "the first of my series of standard literature for young people": see (in a later volume of this edition) his letter of November 17, 1869, to C. E. Norton, and the letter to F. S. Ellis of November 2, 1874. The "French chivalrous literature of the same date," which he proposed to include, would no doubt have been verses from *The Book of a Hundred Ballads*, for which see Vol. XXIII. p. xxiii., and compare Vol. XXVII. p. 263.]

² [Chaucer's version, consisting of 7699 verses, proceeds only as far as verse 13,105 of the original (which consists in all of 22,000); and of the 13,105 verses, 5544 are passed over in the translation (see Robert Bell's *Poetical Works of Chaucer*, 1886, vol. iv. pp. 5, 11).]

As you may neither eat, nor read, for the pleasure of eating or reading, so you may do *nothing else* for the pleasure of it, but for the use.¹ The moral difference between a man and a beast is, that the one acts primarily for use, the other for pleasure. And all acting for pleasure before use, or instead of use, is in one word, "Fornication." That is the accurate meaning of the words "harlotry," or "fornication," as used in the Bible, wherever they occur spoken of nations, and especially in all the passages relating to the great or spiritual Babylon.²

And the Law of God concerning man is, that if he acts for use—that is to say, as God's servant,—he shall be rewarded with such pleasure as no heart can conceive nor tongue tell; only it is revealed by the Spirit,³ as that Holy Ghost of life and health possesses us; but if we act for pleasure instead of use, we shall be punished by such misery as no heart can conceive nor tongue tell; but which can only be revealed by the adverse spirit, whose is the power of death. And that—I assure you—is absolute, inevitable, daily and hourly Fact for us, to the simplicity of which I to-day invite your scholarly and literary attention.

¹ [Compare Letter 74, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 35).]

² [See, *e.g.*, Revelation xvii. 4, 5; and compare below, p. 716.]

³ [See 1 Corinthians ii. 9, 10.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

17. THE St. George's Company is now distinctly in existence; formed of about twenty accepted Companions, to whose number I am daily adding, and to whom the entire property of the Company legally belongs, and who have the right at any moment to depose the Master, and dispose of the property in any manner they may think fit. Unless I believed myself capable of choosing persons for Companions who might be safely entrusted with this power, I should not have endeavoured to form the society at all. Every one of these Companions has a right to know the names and addresses of the rest, which the Master of the Company must furnish him with; and of course the roll of the names, which will be kept in Corpus Christi College, is their legal certificate. I do not choose to begin this book at the end of the year, but at the beginning of the next term it will be done; and as our lawyer's paper, revised, is now—15th December—in my hands, and approved, the 1st of January will see us securely constituted. I give below the initials of the Companions accepted before the 10th of this month, thinking that my doing so will be pleasing to some of them, and right, for all.

Initials of Companions accepted before 10th December, 1875.¹ I only give two letters, which are I think as much indication as is at present desirable:—

| | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. D. L. | 10. T. D. | 19. H. L. |
| 2. F. C. | 11. M. K. | 20. J. F. |
| 3. L. B. | 12. S. B. | 21. J. M. |
| 4. B. B. | 13. G. A. | 22. R. S. |
| 5. F. T. | 14. A. H. | 23. H. C. |
| 6. R. T. | 15. W. S. | 24. J. T. |
| 7. G. S. | 16. W. S. | 25. J. S. |
| 8. B. A. | 17. J. B. | |
| 9. A. H. | 18. B. G. | |

This *Fors* is already so much beyond its usual limits, and it introduces subject-matter so grave, that I do not feel inclined to go into further business details this month; the rather because in the February *Fors*, with the accounts of the Company, I must begin what the Master of the Company will be always compelled to furnish—statement of his own personal current expenditure.² And this will require some explanation too long for to-day. I defer also the Wakefield correspondence,³ for I have just got fresh information about the destruction of Wakefield chapel, and have an election petition to examine.

¹ [For a more complete list, see below, p. 530.]

² [See Letter 62 (pp. 530, 531).]

³ [See above, p. 455. For the continuance of the Correspondence, see Letter 62, § 23 (p. 532).]

18. (I.) Our notes for the year 1876 may, I think, best begin with the two pieces of news which follow; and which, by order of Atropos, also followed each other in the column of the *Morning Advertiser*, from which I print them.

For, though I am by this time known to object to Advertisement in general,¹ I beg the public to observe that my objection is only to bought or bribed Advertisement (especially if it be Advertisement of one's self). But that I hold myself, and this book of mine, for nothing better than Morning, Noon, and Evening Advertisers of what things appear verily noteworthy in the midst of us. Whereof I commend the circumstances of the deaths, beneath related, very particularly to the attention of the Bishops of London and York.

19. SHOCKING DEATH FROM STARVATION.—Last night Mr. Bedford, the Westminster coroner, held an inquest at the Board Room, Dean Street, Soho, on the body of Thomas Gladstone, aged 58, of 43, King Street, Seven Dials, a shoemaker, who was found dead on Thursday last.

William Gladstone, a lad of 15, identified the body as that of his father, with whom he and three other children lived. Deceased had been ailing for some time past, and was quite unable to do any work. The recent cold weather had such an effect upon him that he was compelled to remain in his room on Wednesday last, and at three the next morning witness found him sitting up in bed complaining of cold, and that he was dying. Witness went to sleep, and on awaking at eight that morning he found deceased with his head in the fireplace.² Thinking he was only asleep, witness went to work, and on returning two hours later, he was still in the same position, and it was then found that he was dead.

Coroner.—Why did you not send for a doctor?

Witness.—I didn't know he wanted one until he was dead, and we found out amongst us that he was dead.

Jane Gladstone, the widow, said she had been living apart from her husband for some months, and first heard of his death at 2.30 on Thursday afternoon, and upon going to his room found him dead lying upon a mattress on the floor. He was always ailing, and suffered from consumption, for which he had received advice at St. George's Hospital. They had had seven children, and for some time prior to the separation they had been in the greatest distress; and on the birth of her last child, on December 7, 1874, they applied at the St. James's workhouse for relief, and received two loaves and 2 lb. of meat per week for a month, and at the end of that time one of the relieving officers stopped the relief, saying that they were both able to work. They told the relieving officer that they had no work, and had seven children to keep, but he still refused to relieve them.

By the Coroner.—They did not ask again for relief, as deceased said "he had made up his mind that, after the way he had been turned away like a dog, he would sooner starve," and she herself would also rather do so. Deceased was quite unable to earn sufficient to maintain the family, and their support fell mainly upon her, but it was such a hard life that she got situations for two of the boys, got a girl into a school, and leaving the other three boys with deceased, took the baby and separated from him. He was in great want at that time.

The Coroner.—Then why did you not go to the workhouse and represent his case to them?

Witness.—What was the good when we had been refused twice?

Mr. Green, the coroner's officer, said that he believed the witness had been in receipt of two loaves a week from the St. James's workhouse, but had not called lately for the loaves.

¹ [See Letter 3 (Vol. XXVII. p. 49).]

² [For a later reference to this incident, see Letter 77, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. p. 116.)]

The Coroner said that he hardly thought that so poor a woman would refuse or neglect to apply for so valuable a contribution to the needs of the family as two loaves of bread; and some of the jury said that Mr. Green must be mistaken, and that such a statement should be made upon oath if at all. The officer, however, was not sworn.

John Collins, of 43, King Street, said that about eleven o'clock on Thursday morning he met a gentleman on the stairs, who said that he had been up to the room of deceased to take him some work to do, but that the room door was locked, and a child had called out, "Father is dead, and you can't come in." Witness at once went for the police, who came, and broke open the door. Upon going into the room witness found a piece of paper (produced) on which was written, "Harry, get a pint of milk for the three of you; father is dead. Tell your schoolmaster you can't come to school any more. Cut your own bread, but don't use the butter." He believed that the eldest boy had returned home at ten o'clock in the morning, and finding two of the boys at school had left the note for them.

Police-constable Crabb, 18 C. R., deposed to breaking open the door and finding deceased dead on the floor, with a little child crouching by him shivering with cold.

Dr. Howard Clarke, of 19, Lisle Street, Leicester Square, and Gerrard Street, Soho, said that he was called to see the deceased, and found him lying upon the floor of his room dead and cold, with nothing on him but stockings and a shirt, the room being nearly destitute of furniture. The place was in a most filthy condition, and deceased himself was so shockingly dirty and neglected, and so overrun with vermin, that he (witness) was compelled to wash his hands five times during the post-mortem examination. By the side of the corpse sat a little child about four years old, who cried piteously, "Oh, don't take me away; poor father's dead!" There was nothing in the shape of food but a morsel of butter, some arrowroot, and a piece of bread, and the room was cold and cheerless in the extreme. Upon making a post-mortem he found the brain congested, and the whole of the organs of the body more or less diseased. The unfortunate man must have suffered fearfully. The body was extremely emaciated, and there was not a particle of food or drop of liquid in the stomach or intestines. Death had resulted probably from a complication of ailments, but there was no doubt whatever that such death had been much accelerated by want of the common necessities of life.

The Coroner.—Starvation, in short?

Witness.—Precisely so. I never in all my experience saw a greater case of destitution.

The Coroner.—Then I must ask the jury to adjourn the case. Here is a very serious charge against workhouse officials, and a man dying clearly from starvation, and it is due alike to the family of the deceased, the parish officials, and the public at large, that the case should be sifted to the very bottom, and the real cause of this death elucidated.

Adjourned accordingly.

SHOCKING DISCOVERY.—A painful sensation was, says the *Sheffield Telegraph*, caused in the neighbourhood of Castleford, near Pontefract, on Friday evening, by the report made to a police-constable stationed at Allerton Bywater that a woman and child had been found dead in bed in Lock Lane, Castleford, under most mysterious circumstances, and that two small children were also found nearly starved to death beside the two dead bodies. The report, however, turned out to be correct. The circumstances surrounding the mystery have now been cleared up. An inquest, held on Saturday at Allerton Bywater, before Dr. Grabham, of Pontefract, reveals the following:—It appears on Sunday, the 28th ult., John Wilson, miner, husband of Emma Wilson, aged thirty-six years (one of the deceased), and father of Fred, aged eighteen months (the other deceased), left home

to proceed to his employment at Street House Colliery, and would remain away all the week. Mrs. Wilson was seen going into her house on Monday evening, but was not seen again alive. There were besides the woman three children of very tender years in the house. The neighbours missed the woman and children from Monday night, but finding the blinds were drawn down, concluded that the family had gone to the husband. On Friday evening a neighbour, named Ann Foggett, rapped at the door, and hearing the faint bark of a dog, which was found to be fastened up in a cupboard, continued to knock at the door, and ultimately heard the voice of a child. The door was subsequently burst open, and on proceeding upstairs the sight was horrifying. On the bed lay the mother and infant child dead, beside whom were two other small children in their night dresses. They, too, were nigh death's door, having been without proper food and clothing evidently since their mother's death, which must have occurred on the Monday night. Beside the corpse of the mother lay a knife and portions of a loaf of bread, which had been no doubt taken to her by the children to be supplied with some, but being unable to get an answer from her, they had nibbled the middle of the loaf clean away. A post-mortem examination showed that the mother had died from heart disease, and the child on the following day from starvation. The jury returned a verdict to that effect.—*Morning Advertiser*, December 7th, 1875.

20. (II.) The following is sent me by a correspondent. Italics mine throughout. The passage about threshing is highly curious; compare my account of the threshers at Thun.¹ Poor Gilbert had been doubtless set to thresh, like Milton's fiend, by himself, and had no creambowl afterwards.²

24th October, 1800

GILBERT BURNS TO JAMES CURRIE, M. D.³

The evils peculiar to the lower ranks of life derive their power to wound us from the suggestions of false pride, and the contagion of luxury, rather than from the refinement of our taste. There is little labour which custom will not make easy to a man in health, if he is not ashamed of his employment, or does not begin to compare his situation with those who go about at their ease. But the man of enlarged mind feels the respect due to him as a man; he has learnt that no employment is dishonourable in itself; that, while he performs aright the duties of the station in which God has placed him, he is as great as a king in the eyes of Him whom he is principally desirous to please. *For the man of taste, who is constantly obliged to labour, must of necessity be religious.* If you teach him only to reason, you may make him an atheist, a demagogue, or any vile thing; but if you teach him to feel, his feelings can only find their proper and natural relief in devotion and religious resignation. *I can say from my own experience that there is no sort of farm labour inconsistent with the most refined and pleasurable state of the mind, that I am acquainted with, threshing alone excepted.* That, indeed, I have always considered insupportable drudgery, and think the man who invented the threshing-machine ought to have a statue among the benefactors of his country.

Perhaps the thing of most importance in the education of the common people is to prevent the intrusion of artificial wants. I bless the memory of my father for almost everything in the dispositions of my mind and the habits of my life, which I can approve of, and for none more than the pains he took to impress my

¹ [See Letter 44, § 8 (p. 132).]

² [Milton's *L'Allegro*: see Letter 5, § 10 (Vol. XXVII. p. 87).]

³ [James Currie (1756–1805), F. R. S.; a trader in Virginia, he returned to London upon the revolt of the colony, and studied medicine and metaphysics at Edinburgh; author of medical, and other, works.]

mind with the sentiment that *nothing was more unworthy the character of a man than that his happiness should in the least depend on what he should eat and drink.*¹

To this hour I never indulge in the use of any delicacy but I feel a degree of reproach and alarm for the degradation of the human character. If I spent my halfpence in sweetmeats, every mouthful I swallowed was accompanied with shame and remorse. . . . Whenever vulgar minds begin to shake off the dogmas of the religion in which they have been educated, the progress is quick and immediate to downright infidelity, and nothing but refinement of mind can enable them to distinguish between the pure essence of religion and the gross systems which men have been perpetually connecting it with. Higher salaries for village schoolmasters, high English reading classes, village libraries,—if once such high education were to become general, the low delights of the public-house, and other scenes of riot, would be neglected; while industry, order, and cleanliness, and every virtue which taste and independence of mind could recommend, would prevail and flourish. Thus possessed of a virtuous and enlightened populace, with delight I should consider my country at the head of all the nations of the earth, ancient or modern.—From the Life of Robert Burns.²

21. (III.) The following letter is, as I above said,³ from a valued, and, at present, my *most* valued,—Companion;—a poor person, suffering much and constant pain, confined to her room, and seeing from her window only a piece of brick wall and a little space of sky. The bit about the spider is the most delightful thing to me that has ever yet come of my teaching:—

I have told the only two children I have seen this summer, about the bees, and both were deeply interested, almost awe-stricken by the wonderful work. How could they do it without scissors? One, an intelligent boy of six years, is the well-cared-for child of well-to-do parents. He came into my room when I was sorting some of the cut leaves, and I gave him a very cleanly-cut specimen, saying, “What do you think cut this, Willie?” “It was *somebody* very clever, wasn’t it?” he asked. “Very clever indeed,” I said. “Then it was Miss Mildred!”—his governess. “No, not Miss Mildred,” I replied. He stood silent by the side of the bed for a minute, looking intently at the leaf in his hand, and evidently puzzling out some idea of his own; and I waited for it—a child’s own thoughts are lovely;—then my little visitor turned eagerly to me: “I know,—I know who did it: it was God.”

My second pupil is a girl of twelve years. She was a veritable “little ragamuffin” when—ten months back—we took her, motherless, and most miserably destitute, into our home, in the hope of training her for service; and my sister is persistently labouring—with pleasing success, and disheartening failure—to mould her into an honest woman, while I try to supplement her efforts by giving the child—Harriet—lessons according to *Fors*. But I regret to say it is only partially done, for I am but a learner myself, and sorely hindered by illness; still the purpose is always in my mind, and I do what I can.

Taking advantage of every trifle that will help to give Harriet a love for *innocent* out-of-door life, we told her—as soon as we could show her some of the cut leaves—of the work of the cutter bees, much to her delight. “And then she forgot all about them,” many persons would assert confidently, if they heard this story.

¹ [Ruskin’s note on this passage for his proposed Index is: “*Eating and drinking*, Pleasures of, unworthy of manly character, says the brother of Robert Burns (but wrongly).”]

² [*The Works of Robert Burns, with an Account of his Life*, by James Currie; first published 1800, this letter first appearing in the second edition.]

³ [See above, § 8.]

Not so, for some weeks after she told me with great pride that she had two of "the bees' leaves," thinking they were probably only eaten by caterpillars. I asked to see them; and then, how she obtained them. She had found them in a glass of withered flowers sent out of the parlour, and carefully dried them—(she had seen me press leaves); and she added, "all the girls" in her class in the Sunday-school, "did want them." I wondered why the leaves were taken there, until I discovered that she *keeps them in her Testament*.

So far the possibility; may I now give a proof of the utility of such teaching? When Harriet first came to us, she had an appetite for the horrible that quite frightened me, but it is gradually, I hope, dying out, thanks to the substitution of childlike pleasures. Imagine a child of eleven years coolly asking—as Harriet did a few days after she came—"If you please, has anybody been hanged, or anything, this week?" and she added, before I could reply, and looking quite wistfully at a newspaper lying near, "I should love to hear about it, please." I could have cried, for I believe there are many lovable young ladies in this town who are fretting out weary lives, to whom *work* would be salvation, and who can tell the number of such children all about them, who have not a soul to care *how* they live, or if they die?

Harriet used to catch and kill flies for pleasure, and would have so treated any living insect she saw; but she now holds bees in great respect, and also, I hope, some other insect workers, for one day she was much pleased to find one of the small spotted spiders, which had during the night spun its web across the fire-grate. She asked me many questions about it (I permit her to do so on principle, at certain times, as a part of her education); she said it was "a shame" to break "such beautiful work," and left it as long as she could; and then (entirely of her own accord) she carefully slipped her dusting brush under web and spider, and so put the "pretty little dear" outside the window, with the gentle remark, "There, now you can make another." Was not this hopeful? This child had lived all her life in one of the low, crowded courts in the centre of the town, and her ignorance of all green life was inconceivable. For instance, to give her a country walk I sent her last March with a parcel to a village near the town, and when she came back—having walked *a mile* through field-paths—she said she did not think there were "such a many trees and birds in the world." *And on that memorable day she first saw the lambs in the field—within two miles of the house where she was born.* Yet she has the purest love for flowers, and goes into very real ecstasies over the commonest weeds and grasses, and is nursing with great pride and affection some roots of daisy, buttercup, and clover which she has brought from the fields, and planted in the little yard at the back of our house; and every new leaf they put forth is wonderful and lovely to her, though of course her ideas of "gardening" are as yet most elementary, and will be for some time, apparently. But it is really helpful to me to see her happiness over it, and also when my friends send me a handful of cut flowers—we have no garden; and the eagerness with which she learns even their names, for it makes me feel more hopeful about the future of our working classes than some of your correspondents.¹

The despairing letter from Yorkshire in last *Fors*²—on their incapacity to enjoy wholesome amusements—has prompted me, as I am writing to you, to tell you this as an antidote to the pain that letter must have given you. For if we can do nothing for this generation, cannot we make sure that the next shall be wiser? Have not young ladies a mighty power in their own hands here, if they but use it for good, and especially those who are Sabbath-school teachers? Suppose each one who has a garden felt it to be her *duty* to make all her scholars as familiar with all the life in it as she is herself, and every one who can take a country walk her duty to take her girls with her—two or three at a time—until they

¹ [For "the progress of little Harriet's botanical museum," see Letter 81, § 21 (Vol. XXIX. p. 217).]

² [Not last *Fors*, but probably Letters 55, § 9, and 57, § 10 (pp. 380, 409).]

know and love every plant within reach; would not teacher and pupils learn with this much more that would also be invaluable? * And if our Sunday-school children were not left to killing flies and stoning cats and dogs during the week, would there be so many brutal murders or violent assaults? The little English heathen I have named has attended a Sunday-school for about six years, and the Sunday-school teachers of this town are—most of them—noble men and women, who devoutly labour year after year “all for love, and nothing for reward.” But even good people too often look on the degradation of the lower classes as a matter of course, and despise them for ignorance they cannot help. Here the sneer of “those low shoemakers” is for ever on the lip,¹ yet few ask *how* they became so much lower than ourselves; still I have very pleasing proof of what may be done even for adults by a little wise guidance, but I must not enter into that subject. Pray forgive me for writing so much: I have been too deeply interested, and now feel quite ashamed of the length of this.

Again thanking you most earnestly for all you have taught me to see and to do,

I remain, very faithfully yours.

22. (IV.) What the young ladies, old ladies, and middle-aged ladies *are* practically doing with the blessed fields and mountains of their native land, the next letter very accurately shows. For the sake of fine dresses they let their fathers and brothers invest in any Devil’s business they can steal the poor’s labour by, or destroy the poor’s gardens by; pre-eminently, and of all Devil’s businesses, in rushing from place to place, as the Gennesaret swine.² And see here what comes of it.

A gentleman told me the other night that trade, chiefly in cotton from India, was going back to Venice. One can’t help being sorry—not for our sake, but Venice’s—when one sees what commercial prosperity means now.

There was a lovely picture of Cox’s of Dollwydellan³ (I don’t think it’s spelt right) at the Club. All the artists paint the Slidr valley; and do you know what is being done to it? It’s far worse than a railway to Ambleside or Grasmere, because those places are overrun already; but Dollwydellan is such a quiet out-of-the-way corner, and no one in the world will be any the better for a railway there. I went about two months ago, when I was getting better from my first illness; but all my pleasure in the place was spoiled by the railway they are making from Bettwys. It is really melancholy to see the havoc it makes. Of course no one cares, and they crash, and cut, and destroy, like utter barbarians, as they are. Through the sweetest, wildest little glens, the line is cleared—rocks are blasted for it, trees lie cut—anything and everything is sacrificed—and for what? The tourists will see nothing if they go in the train; the few people who go down to Bettwys or Llanwrst to market, will perhaps go oftener, and so spend more money in the end, and Dollwydellan will get some more people to lodge there in the summer, and prices will go up. † In the little village, a hideous

* Yes, dear lady; see, therefore, the next article.

† Yes, my dear, and shares down;—it is some poor comfort for you and me to know *that*. For as I correct this sheet for press, I hear from the proprietor of the chief slate quarry in the neighbourhood, that the poor idiots of shareholders have been beguiled into tunnelling four miles under Welsh hills—to carry slates! and even those from the chief quarry in question, they cannot carry, for the proprietors are under contract to send them by an existing line.

¹ [For a reference by Ruskin to this passage, see Letter 81, § 4 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 194).]

² [See Matthew viii. 32.]

³ [See below, p. 511.]

“traction engine” snorted and puffed out clouds of black smoke, in the mornings, and then set off crunching up and down the roads, to carry coals for the works, I think; but I never in my life saw anything more incongruous than that great black monster getting its pipes filled at a little spring in the village, while the lads all stood gaping round. The poor little clergyman told us his village had got sadly corrupted since the navvies came into it; and when he pointed out to us a pretty old stone bridge that was being pulled down for the railway, he said, “Yes, I shall miss that, *very* much;” but he would not allow that things so orthodox as railways could be bad on the whole. I never intended, when I began, to trouble you with all this, but Cox’s picture set me off, and it really is a great wrong that any set of men can take possession of one of the few peaceful spots left in England, and hash it up like that. Fancy driving along the road up the Slidr valleys and seeing on boards a notice, to “beware when the horn was blowing,” and every now and then hearing a great blasting, smoke, and rocks crashing down. Well, you know just as well as I how horrible it all is. Only I can’t think why people sit still, and let the beautiful places be destroyed.

The owners of that property,—I forget their name, but they had monuments in the little old church,—never live there, having another “place” in Scotland,—so of course they don’t care.*

23. (V.) A fragment to illustrate the probable advantage of sulphurous air, and articles, in the country.

I did not think to tell you, when speaking of the fatality of broken limbs in our little dressmaker and her family, that when in St. Thomas’s Hospital with a broken thigh, the doctors said in all probability the tenderness of her bones was owing to the manufacture of sulphur by her *mother’s grandfather*. Dr. Simon¹ knows her family through operating on the brother of our dressmaker, and often gave them kindly words at the hospital.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours faithfully.

* Will any charitable Christian tell me who the owners are?—in the meantime, “confusion on their banners wait.”²

¹ [Ruskin’s friend, Sir John Simon, for whom see Vol. XVII. p. 450 *n.*]

² [“Ruin seize thee, ruthless king!
Confusion on thy banners wait.”

Opening lines of *The Bard*, by Thomas Gray.]

LETTER 62

DOGS OF THE LORD¹

1. THERE were more, and more harmful misprints in last *Fors* than usual, owing to my having driven my printers to despair, after they had made all the haste they could, by late dubitation concerning the relative ages of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, which forced me to cut out a sentence about them, and displace corrected type. But I must submit to all and sundry such chances of error, for, to prevent them, would involve a complete final reading of the whole, with one's eye and mind on the look-out for letters and stops all along, for which I rarely allow myself time, and which, had I a month to spare, would yet be a piece of work ill spent, in merely catching three t's instead of two in a "letter." The name of the Welsh valley is wrong, too;² but I won't venture on correction of that, which I feel to be hopeless; the reader must, however, be kind enough to transfer the "and," now the sixth word in the upper line of the note at page 509, and make it the fourth word, instead; to put a note of interrogation at the end of clause in the eighteenth line of page 508, and to insert an s, changing "death" into "deaths," in the eleventh line of page 504;—the death in Sheffield being that commended to the Episcopical attention of York, and that in London to the Episcopical attention of London.

And this commendation, the reader will, I hope, perceive to be made in sequel to much former talk concerning

¹ [See below, § 4. Ruskin in his copy adds "Avarice, Covetousness, Frugality."]

² [See above, § 22, p. 509; it should be Dolwyddelan. The other corrections here noted by Ruskin are made in the text.]

Bishops, Soldiers, Lawyers, and Squires;¹—which, perhaps, he imagined me to have spoken jestingly; or, it may be, in witlessness; or, it may be, in voluble incipient insanity. Admitting myself in no small degree open to such suspicion, I am now about to re-word some matters which madness would gambol from; and I beg the reader to observe that any former gambolling on my part, awkward or untimely as it may have seemed, has been quite as serious,² and intentionally progressive, as Morgiana's dance round the captain of the Forty Thieves.³

2. If, then, the reader will look at the analysis of Episcopacy in *Sesame and Lilies*,⁴ the first volume of all my works; next at the chapter on Episcopacy in *Time and Tide*;⁵ and lastly, refer to what he can gather in the past series of *Fors*, he will find the united gist of all to be, that Bishops cannot take, much less give, account of their bodies: unless they first take and give account of their bodies: and that, therefore, all existing poverty and crime in their dioceses, discoverable by human observation, must be, when they are Bishops indeed, clearly known to, and describable by them, or their subordinates. Of whom the number, and discipline in St. George's Company, if by God's grace it ever take the form I intend, will be founded on the institution of the same by the first Bishop, or more correctly Archbishop,⁶ whom the Christian church professes to obey. For what can possibly be the use of printing the Ten Commandments which he delivered, in gold,—framing them above the cathedral altar,—pronouncing them in a prelatially sonorous

¹ [For *Bishops*, see Vol. XXVII. pp. 15, 174; and above, p. 240. For *Soldiers*, Vol. XXVII. pp. 185, 260 *seq.*, 321. For *Lawyers*, Vol. XXVII. pp. 17, 77, 208, 280 *seq.*; and above, pp. 37, 135, 197. For *Squires*, Vol. XXVII. pp. 30, 379–381, 383–387; and above, p. 149.]

² [Compare Letter 67, § 15 (p. 650).]

³ [See Jonathan Scott's *Arabian Nights*, vol. iii. pp. 177–179 (“History of Ali Baba, and of the Forty Robbers, Killed by one Slave”). Compare Letter 81, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 197).]

⁴ [*Sesame and Lilies*, §§ 20–22; the first volume in his “Works” Series (see Vol. XVIII. pp. 69–73).]

⁵ [See Vol. XVII. p. 376.]

⁶ [*i.e.*, Moses” (*MS. note by Author in his copy*)—referred to, below (§ 3), as “the first bishop of Israel.”]

voice,—and arranging the responsive supplications of the audience to the tune of an organ of the best manufacture, if the commanding Bishops institute no inquiry whatever into the physical power of—say this starving shoemaker in Seven Dials,—to obey such a command as “thou shalt not covet” in the article of meat; or of his son to honour in any available measure either the father or mother, of whom the one has departed to seek her separate living, and the other is lying dead with his head in the fireplace.¹

3. Therefore, as I have just said, our Bishops in St. George’s Company will be constituted in order founded on that appointed by the first Bishop of Israel, namely, that their Primate, or Supreme Watchman, shall appoint under him “out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and place such over them to be rulers (or, at the *least*, observers²) of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens;”* and that of these episcopal centurions, captains of fifty, and captains of ten, there will be required clear account of the individual persons they are set over;—even a baby being considered as a decimal quantity not to be left out of their account by the decimal Bishops,—in which episcopacy, however, it is not improbable that a queenly power may be associated, with Norman caps for mitres, and for symbol of authority, instead of the crozier (or crook, for disentangling lost sheep of souls from among the brambles), the broom, for sweeping diligently³ till they find lost silver of souls among the dust.⁴

4. You think I jest, still, do you? Anything but that; only if I took off the Harlequin’s mask for a moment, you would say I was simply mad. Be it so, however, for this time.

*Exodus xviii. 21.

¹ [See above, p. 504.]

² [That is, *episcopal* persons: compare Vol. XVII. p. 378, and Letter 10, § 13 (Vol. XXVII. p. 174). See also, for a later reference to § 3 here, Letter 73, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. p. 19).]

³ [Compare Letter 4, § 12 (Vol. XXVII. p. 76).]

⁴ [See Luke xv. 8.]

I simply and most utterly mean, that, so far as my best judgment can reach, the present Bishops of the English Church (with only one exception, known to me,—the Bishop of Natal,¹) have forfeited and fallen from their Bishoprics by transgression; and betrayal of their Lord, first by simony,² and secondly, and chiefly, by lying for God with one mouth, and contending for their own personal interests as a professional body, as if these were the cause of Christ. And that in the assembly and Church of future England, there must be (and shall be so far as this present body of believers in God and His law now called together in the name of St. Michael³ and St. George are concerned) set up and consecrated other Bishops; and under them, lower ministering officers and true “Dogs of the Lord,” who, with stricter inquisition than ever Dominican,⁴ shall take knowledge—not of creeds,⁵ but of every man’s way and means of life; and shall be either able to avouch his conduct as honourable and just, or bound to impeach it as shameful and iniquitous, and this down to minute details;—above all, or before all, particulars of revenue, every companion, retainer, or associate in the Company’s work being bound to keep such accounts that the position of his affairs may be completely known to the Bishops at any moment: and all bankruptcies or treacheries in money matters thus rendered impossible. Not that direct inquisition will be often necessary; for when the true nature of Theft, with the other particulars of the Moral Law, are rightly taught in our schools, grown-up men will no more think of stealing in business than in burglary. It is merely through the

¹ [For Ruskin’s tribute to Bishop Colenso, see Vol. XXVI. p. lv. Compare above, p. 244.]

² [For some explanations of this charge, see (in a later volume) the letters to the Rev. J. P. Faunthorpe of February 11, 13, 16, 1883.]

³ [For the sphere of St. Michael, as patron saint, see Letter 35: “with Michael’s help to drive the devil of hunger out of poor men’s stomachs” (Vol. XXVII. p. 657).]

⁴ [The title to this letter is here indicated. For another reference to the association of St. Dominic and his friars with dogs, see Vol. XXIII. p. 444, and compare below, p. 719.]

⁵ [Ruskin’s note for Index here is “*Creeds*, not to be taken cognizance of (beyond the faith in God and in virtue).”]

quite bestial¹ ignorance of the Moral Law in which the English Bishops have contentedly allowed their flocks to be brought up, that any of the modern English conditions of trade are possible.

5. Of course, for such work, I must be able to find what Jethro of Midian assumes could be found at once in Israel, these “men of truth, hating covetousness,”² and all my friends laugh me to scorn for thinking to find any such.

Naturally, in a Christian country, it will be difficult enough; but I know there are still that kind of people among Midianites, Caffres, Red Indians, and the destitute, afflicted, and tormented, in dens and caves of the earth,³ where God has kept them safe from missionaries:⁴—and, as I above said,⁵ even out of the rotten mob of moneybegotten traitors calling itself a “people” in England, I do believe I shall be able to extricate, by slow degrees, some faithful and true persons, hating covetousness, and fearing God.

And you will please to observe that this hate and fear are flat opposites one to the other; so that if a man fear or reverence God, he must hate covetousness; and if he fear or reverence covetousness, he must hate God; and there is no intermediate way whatsoever. Nor is it possible for any man, wilfully rich, to be a God-fearing person; but only for those who are involuntarily rich, and are making all the haste they prudently and piously can, to be poor; for money is a strange kind of seed; scattered, it is poison; but set, it is bread: so that a man whom God has appointed to be a sower must bear as lightly as he may the burden of gold and of possessions, till he find the proper places to sow them in. But persons desiring to be rich, and accumulating riches, always hate God, and never fear Him; the

¹ [For Ruskin’s defence and explanation of this word, see Letter 81, § 8 (Vol. XXIX, p. 198).]

² [Exodus xviii. 21.]

³ [Hebrews xi. 37, 38.]

⁴ [For the condemnation of usury among the Hovas, and Ruskin’s suggestion that missionaries should be sent from Madagascar to England, see Letter 60, § 8 (above, p. 468).]

⁵ [See Letter 58, § 9 (above, p. 427).]

idol they do fear (for many of them are sincerely religious) is an imaginary, or mind-sculptured God of their own making, to their own liking; a God who allows usury, delights in strife and contention, and is very particular about everybody's going to his synagogues on Sunday.

6. Indeed, when Adam Smith formally, in the name of the philosophers of Scotland and England, set up this opposite God, on the hill of cursing against blessing, Ebal against Gerizim;¹ and declared that all men "naturally" desired their neighbours' goods;² and that in the name of Covetousness, all the nations of the earth should be blessed,³—it is true, that the half-bred and half-witted Scotchman had not gift enough in him to carve so much as his own calf's head on a whin-stone with his own hand; much less to produce a well molten and forged piece of gold, for old Scottish faith to break its tables of ten commandments at sight of.⁴ But, in leaving to every artless and ignorant boor among us the power of breeding, in imagination, each his own particular calf, and placidly worshipping that privately fatted animal; or, perhaps,—made out of the purest fat of it in molten Tallow instead of molten Gold,—images, which may be in any inventive moment, misshapen anew to his mind, Economical Theology has granted its disciples more perfect and fitting privilege.

7. From all taint or compliance with such idolatry, the Companions of St. George have vowed to withdraw themselves; writing, and signing their submission to, the First

¹ [See Joshua viii. 33, 34.]

² [See such passages in *The Wealth of Nations* as book iv. ch. ii.: "It is his own advantage, indeed, and not that of the society, which he has in view;" and book iv. ch. ix.: "the natural effort which every man is continually making to better his own condition"—the theory on which Adam Smith's doctrines rest, though it is nowhere expressly presented as the foundation of them, being that, though the individual thus aims only at his private gain, he is yet, in doing so, led by an invisible hand to promote the public good, which was no part of his intention. For other references by Ruskin to Adam Smith, see *A Joy for Ever* (Vol. XVI. p. 10), where he mentions reading the book as a boy; *Unto this Last* (Vol. XVII. p. 20 n.), where he quotes Smith's saying that fear is the preventive of fraud; *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 298 (a passage similar to the present one); and *Fors*, Letter 78, § 10 (Vol. XXIX. p. 134).]

³ [Galatians iii. 8.]

⁴ [See Exodus xxxii.]

and great Commandment, so called by Christ,—and the Second which is like unto it.¹

And since on these two hang all the Law and the Prophets, in signing these two promises they virtually vow obedience to all the Law of which Christ then spoke; and belief of all the Prophets of which Christ then spoke. What that law is; who those prophets are;—whether they *only* prophesied “until John,” or whether St. Paul’s command to all Christians living, “Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy,”—is an important *little* commandment following the two great ones, I cannot tell you in a single letter, even if I altogether knew myself. Partly I do know;—and can teach you, if you will work. No one can teach you anything worth learning but through manual labour; the very bread of life can only be got out of the chaff of it by “rubbing it in your hands.”

You vow, then, that you will at least strive to keep both of these commandments—as far as, what some would call the corruption, but what in honest people is the weakness, of flesh, permits. If you cannot watch an hour, because you don’t love Christ enough to care about His agony, that is your weakness; but if you first sell Him, and then kiss Him, that is your corruption. I don’t know if I can keep either you or myself awake; but at least we may put a stop to our selling and kissing. Be sure that you are serving Christ, till you are tired and can do no more, for that time: and then, even if you have not breath enough left to say “Master, Master” with,—He will not mind.

8. Begin therefore “to-day”²—(which you may, in passing, note to be your present leader’s signal-word or watchword)—to do good work for Him,—whether you live or die,—(see first promise asked of you, Letter 2, § 22, explained in

¹ [Matthew xxii. 35–40. The other Bible references in § 7 are Matthew xi. 13; 1 Corinthians xiv. 1; Luke vi. 1; Matthew xxvi. 40, 48; Luke viii. 24.]

² [Ruskin’s motto: see Vol. I. p. xi.]

Letter 7, § 16, etc.¹) and see that every stroke of this work—be it weak or strong,—shall therefore be done in love of God and your neighbour, and in hatred of covetousness. Which that you may hate accurately, wisely, and well, it is needful that you should thoroughly know, when you see it, or feel it. What covetousness is, therefore, let me beg you at once clearly to understand, by meditating on these following definitions.

AVARICE means the desire to collect money, not goods. A “miser” or “miserable person” desires to collect goods only for the sake of turning them into money. If you can read French or German, read Molière’s *L’Avare*, and then get Gotthelf’s *Bernese Stories*, and read “Schnitzfritz,” with great care.²

Avarice is a quite natural passion, and, within due limits, healthy. The addition of coin to coin, and of cipher to cipher, is a quite proper pleasure of human life, under due rule; the two stories I ask you to read are examples of its disease; which arises mainly in strong and stupid minds, when by evil fortune they have never been led to think or feel.

FRUGALITY. The disposition to save or spare what we have got, without any desire to gain more. It is constantly, of course, associated with avarice; but quite as frequently with generosity, and is often merely an extreme degree of housewifely habit. Study the character of Alison Wilson³ in *Old Mortality*.

COVETOUSNESS.⁴ The desire of possessing more than we

¹ [Vol. XXVII. pp. 44, 129 *seq.* See also *ibid.*, pp.95–96, 178.]

² [“Schnitzfritz” is the hero in the story called (in the original German) *Die Wege Gottes und der Menschen Gedanken*, and (in the French translation) *L’Homme Propose*. The story, which first appeared in 1848 in Karl Steffens’ *Volks-Kalender*, was included in the third part of the author’s collected *Erzählungen und Bilder aus dem Volksleben der Schweiz*. See in his *Gesammelte Werke* (1857), vol. ix. pp. 305–342, and pp. 37–80 of *Nouvelles Bernoises*, traduites par Max. Buchon, Première Série, 1854.]

³ [For other references of the character, see Letter 32, § 9 (Vol. XXVII. p. 591).]

⁴ [“Invidia; Letter 7, § 13, and all through.”—*MS. note by Author in his copy*. See Vol. XXVII. p. 126; and compare Ruskin’s note to *Aratra Pentelici*, § 17 (Vol. XX. p. 212), where he distinguishes “envious covetousness” from innocent.]

have, of any good thing whatsoever of which we have already enough for our uses (adding house to house, and field to field). It is much connected with pride; but more with restlessness of mind and desire of novelty; much seen in children who tire of their toys and want new ones. The pleasure in having things “for one’s very own” is a very subtle element in it. When I gave away my Loire series of Turner drawings to Oxford,¹ I thought I was rational enough to enjoy them as much in the University gallery as in my own study. But not at all! I find I can’t bear to look at them in the gallery, because they are “mine” no more.

9. Now, you observe, that your creed of St. George² says you believe in the nobleness of human nature—that is to say, that all our natural instincts are honourable. Only it is not always easy to say which of them are natural and which not.

For instance, Adam Smith says that it is “natural” for every person to covet his neighbour’s goods, and want to change his own for them; wherein is the origin of Trade, and Universal Salvation.

But God says, “Thou shalt *not* covet thy neighbour’s goods;”³ and God, who made you, does in that written law express to you *His* knowledge of your inner heart, and instruct you in the medicine for it. Therefore, on due consideration, you will find assuredly it is quite *unnatural* in you to covet your neighbour’s goods.

Consider, first, of the most precious, the wife. It is natural for you to think your own the best and prettiest of women; not at all to want to change her for somebody else’s wife.⁴ If you like somebody else’s better than yours, and this somebody else likes yours better than his, and you

¹ [See Vol. XIII. pp. liii., 559.]

² [See Letter 58, § 2 (p. 419); and compare *Ethics of the Dust*, § 11, and *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 106 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 218, 474); also *Lectures on Art*, § 94 (Vol. XX. p. 92).]

³ [Exodus xx. 17.]

⁴ [For a reference to this and the following passage as “one of the quite most important pieces of all the book,” see Letter 91, § 7 (Vol. XXIX.p. 445).]

both want to change, you are both in a non-natural condition, and entirely out of the sphere of happy human love.

10. Again. It is natural for you to think your own house and garden the nicest house and garden that ever were. If, as should always be, they were your father's before you, and he and you have both taken proper care of them, they are a treasure to you which no money could buy,—the leaving them is always pain,—the return to them, a new thrill and wakening to life.¹ They are a home and place of root to you, as if you were founded on the ground like its walls, or grew into it like its flowers. You would no more willingly transplant yourself elsewhere than the espalier pear-tree of your own grafting would pull itself out by the roots to climb another trellis. That is the natural mind of a man. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house."² You are in an entirely non-natural state if you do, and, properly speaking, never had a house in your life.

"Nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant."² It is a "natural" thing for masters to get proud of those who serve them; and a "natural" thing for servants to get proud of the masters they serve. (You see above how Bacon connects the love of the master with the love of the country.³) Nay, if the service has been true, if the master has indeed asked for what was good for his himself, and the servant has done what was good for his master, they cannot choose but like each other; to have a new servant or a new master, would be a mere horror to both of them. I have got two Davids, and a Kate,⁴ that I wouldn't change for anybody else's servants in the world; and I believe the only quarrel they have with me is that I don't give them enough to do for me:—this very morning, I must stop writing, presently, to find the stoutest of the Davids some business, or he will be miserable all day.

¹ [Compare Letter 47, § 13 (p. 198).]

² [Exodus xx. 17.]

³ [Letter 61, § 4 (p. 487). On the whole subject, compare the "Letters on Servants and Houses" in Vol. XVII. pp. 518 *seq.*]

⁴ [They are named in Ruskin's statement of accounts, below, p. 531.]

“Nor his ox, nor his ass.” If you have petted both of your own, properly, from calf and foal, neither these, nor anything else of yours, will you desire to change for “anything that is his.” Do you really think I would change my pen for yours, or my inkstand, or my arm-chair, or my Gainsborough little girl, or my Turner Pass of St. Gothard?¹ I would see you—very uncomfortable—first. And that is the natural state of a human being who has taken anything like proper pains to make *himself* comfortable in God’s good world, and get some of the right good, and true wealth of it.

11. For, you observe farther, the commandment is only that thou shalt not covet *thy neighbour’s* goods. It does not say that you are not to covet *any* goods. How *could* you covet your neighbour’s, if both your neighbour and you were forbidden to have any? Very far the contrary; in the first piece of genealogic geography I have given you to learn,² the first descriptive sentence of the land of Havilah is,—“where there is gold”; and it goes on to say, “And the gold of that land is of the best: there is bdellium, and the onyx stone.”³ In the Vulgate, “dellium” and “lapis onichinus.” In the Septuagint, “anthrax,” and the “prasestone.”

Now, my evangelical friends, here is this book which you call “Word of God,” and idolatrously print for your little children’s reading and your own, as if your eternal lives depended on every word of it. And here, of the very beginning of the world—and the beginning of property—it professes to tell you something. But what? Have you the smallest idea what “dellium” is? Might it not as well be bellium, or gellium, or pellium, or mellium, for all *you* know about it? Or do you know what an onyx is? or an anthrax? or a prase? Is not the whole verse pure and

¹ [The “Gainsborough little girl” is reproduced as the frontispiece to Vol. XXII.; and Turner’s “Pass of St. Gothard” in Vol. VI.]

² [See above, pp. 497–499.]

³ [Genesis ii. 11–12: compare *Deucalion*, Vol. XXVI. p. 169.]

absolute gibberish and gabble to you; and do you expect God will thank you for talking gibberish and gabble to your children, and telling them—*that* is His Word? Partly, however, the verse is only senseless to you, because you have never had the sense to look at the stones which God has made. But in still greater measure, it is necessarily senseless, because it is *not* the word of God, but an imperfectly written tradition, which, however, being a most venerable and precious tradition, you do well to make your children read, provided also you take pains to explain to them so much sense as there *is* in it, and yourselves do reverently obey so much law as there is in it. Towards which intelligence and obedience, we will now take a step or two farther from the point of pause in last *Fors*.¹

12. Remember that the three sons of Noah are, respectively,

| | |
|----------|---|
| SHEM, | the father of the Imaginative and Contem- |
| | plative races. |
| JAPHETH, | ” ” Practical and Constructive. |
| HAM, , | ” ” Carnal and destructive. |

The sons of Shem are the perceivers of Splendour;—they see what is best in visible things, and reach forward to the invisible.

The sons of Japheth are the perceivers of Justice and Duty; and deal securely with all that is under their hand.

The sons of Ham are the perceivers of Evil or Nakedness; and are slaves therefore for ever—“servants of servants”:² when in power, therefore, either helpless or tyrannous.

It is best to remember among the nations descending from the three great sires, the Persians, as the sons of Shem; Greeks, as the sons of Japheth; Assyrians, as the sons of Ham. The Jewish captivity to the Assyrian then takes its perfect meaning.

¹ [Letter 61, § 12 (p. 499).]

² [Genesis ix. 25.]

This month, therefore, take the first descendant of Ham—Cush; and learn the following verses of Gen. x.:—

“And Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one in the earth.
 “He was a mighty hunter before the Lord.
 “And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel in the land of Shinar.
 “Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh.”¹

These verses will become in future a centre of thought to you, whereupon you may gather, as on one root-germ, what you farther learn of the influence of hunting on the minds of men: and of the sources of Assyrian power, and causes of the Assyrian ruin in Birs Nemroud,² out of which you have had those hunting-pieces brought to the narrow passage in the British Museum.

13. For further subject of thought, this month, read of Cary’s Dante, the 31st canto of the *Inferno*, with extreme care; and for your current writing-lesson, copy these lines of Italics, which I have printed in as close resemblance as I can to the Italics of the Aldine edition of 1502.

P *ero che come in su la cerchia tonda*
 Monte reggion di torri si corona;
 Così la proda che ’l pozzo circonda
T *orregiavan di mezza la persona*
 Gli orribili giganti; cui minaccia
 *Giove del cielo anchora, quando tona.*³

The putting of the capital letters that begin the stanza, outside, is a remaining habit of the scribes who wrote for the illuminator, and indicated the letter to be enlarged with ornament at the side of the text.

¹ [Genesis x. 8–11. The study of the chapter is resumed in Letter 64 (p. 561).]

² [The traditional site of the Tower of Babel: see Vol. XVI. p. 163. The sculptures found on the site are arranged in the narrow “Nimroud Gallery” at the Museum.]

³ [“As with circling round
 Of turrets, Monteregion crowns his walls;
 E’en thus the shore, encompassing the abyss,
 Was turreted with giants, half their length
 Uprearing, horrible, whom Jove from heaven
 Yet threatens, when his muttering thunder rolls.”

—(Cary’s translation) xxxi. 35–40.]

14. Of these larger capitals, the A given in last *Fors*¹ is of a Byzantine Greek school, in which, though there is much quiet grace, there is no elasticity or force in the lines. They are always languid, and without spring or evidence of nervous force in the hand. They are not, therefore, perfect models for English writers, though they are useful as exercises in tranquillity of line: and I chose, for that and many more reasons, that letter and sentence for our first exercise. But my letter B is to be given from the Northern Schools; and will have spring and power in it, which you cannot at once hope to imitate in a complete letter; and must be prepared for by copying a mere incipient fragment or flourish of ornamental line.

This line has been drawn for you, very leisurely indeed, by one of the gentlest of the animals living on our English south downs,²—and yet, quietly done as it is, being the result of wholly consistent energy, it is a line which a Byzantine Greek would never have produced in writing, nor even in architecture, except when he was imitating an Ionian one.

You are to draw a horizontal line through the point in the centre of this figure. Then measure the breadth of the six coils on each side, counting from the centre backwards and forwards.

Then draw a vertical line through centre, and measure the breadths above and below. Then draw the complete curve lightly through these fixed points—alter it to your mind—and then paint over it the determined line, with any dark colour and a camel's hair brush.

The difficulty is to draw it so that there shall not be the smallest portion of it which is not approaching the inner curve, and narrowing the intermediate space. And you will find no trick of compasses will draw it. Choose any number

¹ [Letter 61, § 9 (p. 495). "We never got on as far as B!"—*MS. note in Author's copy.*]

² [According to one correspondent, *Helix virgata* (p. 551); according to another, *Helix ericetorum* (p. 584).]

of centres you like, and still I defy you to draw the curve mechanically; it can be done only as I have done it myself, with the free hand, correcting it and correcting till I got it right.*¹

15. When you have succeeded, to any moderate extent, in doing this, your hand will have begun to receive the

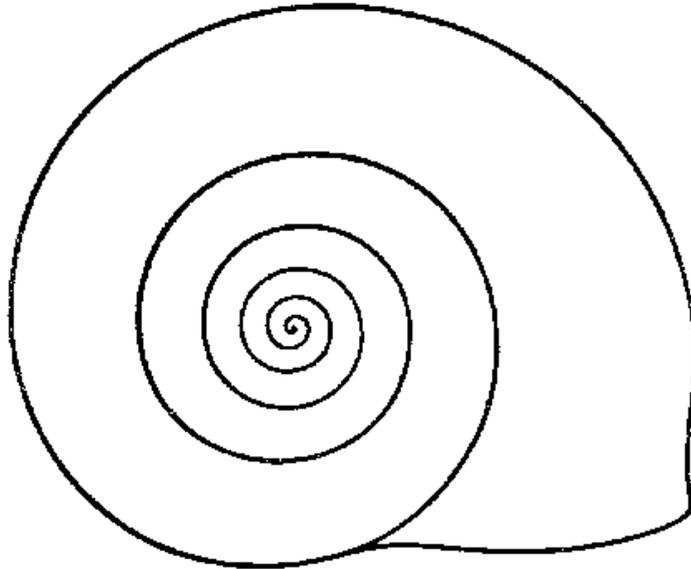


Fig. 8

power of executing a serene and dignified flourish instead of a vulgar “dash.” And you may also begin to understand that the word “flourish” itself, as applied to writing, means the springing of its lines into floral exuberance,—therefore, strong procession and growth, which must be in a spiral line, for the stems of plants are always spirals (See *Proserpina*, Number IV.²); and that this bursting out

* The law of its course will be given in the *Laws of Fésole*, Plate V.³

¹ [For a contradiction of this statement, and Ruskin’s reply thereto, see Letter 75, § 24 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 80–81).]

² [See in this edition Vol. XXV. p. 308.]

³ [The reference is to some intended plate in that work (published 1877–1879), which was not in fact given. Plate V. is of a peacock’s feather (Vol. XV. p. 411).]

into foliage, in calm swiftness, is a totally different action from the impudent and useless sweeps and loops of vulgar writing.

Further. As your eyes get accustomed to the freely drawn, unmechanical, immeasurable line, you will be able, if you care about architecture, to know a Greek Ionic volute from a vulgar day-labourer's copy of it—done with compasses and calculations. And you will know how the volute of the throne of Lippi's Madonna¹ (though that is studied from the concave side of the shell) shows him to have been Etruscan-bred; and you will begin to see what his power was; and to laugh at the books of our miserable modern builders, filled with elaborate devices for drawing volutes with bits of circles:—the wretches might as well try to draw the lips of Sir Joshua's Circe,²—or the smile in her cat's triangular eyes, in that manner. Only in Eleutheria of soul and body, shall any human creature draw so much as one rightly bending line.

16. Any *human* creature, I say. Little freedom, either of body or soul, had the poor architect who drew this our first model line for us; and yet and yet, simple as his life and labours may be, it will take our best wits to understand them. I find myself, at present, without any startpoint for attempt to understand them. I found the downs near Arundel,³ being out on them in a sunny day just after Christmas, sprinkled all over with their pretty white shells (none larger than a sixpence, my drawing being increased as about seven to one, in line, or fifty to one, square), and all empty, unless perchance some spectral remnant of their dead masters remain inside;—and I can't answer a single question I ask myself about them. I see they most of them have six whirls, or whorls. Had they six when

¹ [See the Frontispiece.]

² ["Mrs. Nesbitt as Circe;" the picture was lent by the (late) Dowager Lady Stanley of Alderley to the Reynolds Exhibition at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1884 (No. 11).]

³ [At Peppering, where Ruskin was staying with Dr. Dawtrey Drewitt: see Vol. XXIV. p. xxvi.]

they were young? have they never more when they are old? Certainly some shells have periodical passion of progress,—and variously decorative stops and rests; but these little white continuities, down to this woeful time of their Christmas emptiness, seem to have deduced their spiral caves in peace.¹

But it's of no use to waste time in "thinking." I shall go and ask some pupil of my dear old friend Dr. Gray at the British Museum,² and rejoice myself with a glance at the volutes of the Eretheium—fair home of Athenian thought.³

¹ [See Letter 63, §§ 17 *seq.* (pp. 551–555).]

² [Dr. Gray himself had recently died: see Letter 52, § 19 (above, p. 308 *n.*).]

³ [See Vol. XVIII. p. 317.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

17. (I.) I AM surprised to find that my Index to Vols. I. and II. of *Fors* does not contain the important article "Pockets"; and that I cannot therefore, without too much trouble, refer to the place where I have said that the Companions of St. George are all to have glass pockets;¹ so that the absolute contents of them may be known of all men. But, indeed, this society of ours is, I believe, to be distinguished from other close brotherhoods that have been, or that are, chiefly in this, that it will have no secrets, and that its position, designs, successes, and failures, may at any moment be known to whomsoever they may concern.

More especially the affairs of the Master and of the Marshals,² when we become magnificent enough to have any, must be clearly known, seeing that these are to be the managers of public revenue. For although, as we shall in future see, they will be held more qualified for such high position by contentment in poverty than responsibility of wealth; and, if the society is wise, be chosen always from among men of advanced age, whose previous lives have been recognized as utterly without stain of dishonesty in management of their private business,—the complete publication of their accounts, private as well as public, from the day they enter on the management of the Company's funds, will be a most wholesome check on the glosses with which self-interest, in the minds even of the honestest people, sometimes may colour or confuse their actions over property on a large scale; besides being examples to the accountants of other public institutions.

18. For instance, I am myself a Fellow of the Horticultural Society; and, glancing the other day at its revenue accounts for 1874, observed that out of an expenditure of eleven thousand odd pounds, one thousand nine hundred and sixty-two went to pay interest on debts, eleven hundred and ninety to its "salaries"—two hundred to its botanical adviser, a hundred and fifty to its botanical professor, a hundred and twenty-six to its fruit committee, a hundred and twenty to its floral committee, four hundred and twenty to its band, nine hundred and ten to its rates and taxes, a hundred and eighty-five to its lawyers, four hundred and thirty-nine to its printers, and three pounds fifteen shillings to its foreign "importations" account (being interest on Cooper's loan): whereupon I wrote

¹ [See Letter 8, § 8 (Vol. XXVII. p. 139).]

² [For these officials, see Letter 58, § 6 (p. 424).]

to the secretary expressing some dissatisfaction with the proportion borne by this last item to the others, and asking for some further particulars respecting the "salaries"; but was informed that none could be had. Whereas, whether wisely or foolishly directed, the expenditure of the St. George's Company will be always open, in all particulars, to the criticism not only of the Companions, but of the outside public. And Fors has so arranged matters that I cannot at all, for my own part, invite such criticism to-day with feelings of gratified vanity; my own immediate position (as I generally stated in last letter¹) being not in the least creditable to my sagacity, nor likely to induce a large measure of public confidence in me as the Company's Master. Nor are even the affairs of the Company itself, in my estimate, very brilliant, our collected subscriptions for the reform of the world amounting, as will be seen, in five years, only to some seven hundred and odd pounds. However, the Company and its Master may perhaps yet see better days.

19. First, then, for the account of my proceedings in the Company's affairs. Our eight thousand Consols giving us £240 a year, I have appointed a Curator to the Sheffield Museum, namely, Mr. Henry Swan, an old pupil of mine in the Working Men's College in London; and known to me since as an estimable and trustworthy person, with a salary of forty pounds a year, and residence. He is obliged at present to live in the lower rooms of the little house which is to be the nucleus of the museum:—as soon as we can afford it, a curator's house must be built outside of it.²

I have advanced, as aforesaid, a hundred pounds of purchase-money,³ and fifty for current expenses; and paid, besides the lawyers' bills for the transfer, amounting to £48, 16s. 7d.; these, with some needful comments on them, will be published in next *Fors*; I have not room for them in this.⁴

I have been advised of several mistakes in my subscribers' list, so I reprint it below, with the initials attached to the numbers, and the entire sum (as far as I can find out) hitherto subscribed by each; and I beg of my subscribers at once to correct me in all errors.

The names marked with stars are those of Companions. The numbers 10, 17, 36, 43, and 48 I find have been inaccurately initialled, and are left blank for correction.

¹ [See Letter 61, § 3 (above, p. 485).]

² [For particulars of Mr. Swan and the Walkley Museum, see Vol. XXX.]

³ [See Letter 60, § 7 (p. 468).]

⁴ [Not in the *next Fors*, but in Letter 64, § 22 (p. 579).]

LIST OF SUBSCRIPTIONS

| | £ | s. | d. | | £ | s. | d. |
|-----------------------|-----|----|----|------------------------|------|----|----|
| 1. D. L.* | 24 | 0 | 0 | Brought forward | 523 | 14 | 4 |
| 2. R. T.* | 80 | 0 | 0 | 29. L. L. | 1 | 5 | 0 |
| 3. T. K. | 5 | 0 | 0 | 30. A. A. | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| 4. C. S. | 75 | 0 | 0 | 31. T. D. | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. A. R. | 20 | 0 | 0 | 32. M. G. | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| 6. J. M.* | 4 | 4 | 0 | 33. J. F. | 40 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. P. S. | 45 | 0 | 0 | 34. W. S. | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| 8. D. A. ¹ | 20 | 0 | 0 | 35. H. S. | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| 9. A. B. | 25 | 0 | 0 | 36. | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 10. | 1 | 1 | 0 | 37. A. H. | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| 11. G. S.* | 2 | 2 | 0 | 38. S. S. ² | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 12. J. A. | 4 | 0 | 0 | 39. H. W. | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| 13. B. A. | 9 | 0 | 0 | 40. J. F. | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| 14. A. P. | 13 | 10 | 0 | 41. J. T. | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 15. W. P. | 5 | 0 | 0 | 42. J. O. | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| 16. A. H.* | 25 | 0 | 0 | 43. | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 17. | 1 | 1 | 0 | 44. A. C. | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 18. F. E. | 10 | 0 | 0 | 45. J. G. | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 19. J. S. | 25 | 0 | 0 | 46. T. M. | 5 | 5 | 0 |
| 20.—D. | 2 | 0 | 0 | 47. J. B.* | 2 | 11 | 0 |
| 21. C. W. | 10 | 10 | 0 | 48. | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 22. S. B.* | 2 | 0 | 0 | 49. J. D. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| 23. E. G. | 6 | 1 | 0 | 50. G. | 15 | 15 | 0 |
| 24.—L. | 1 | 1 | 0 | 51. F. B. | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 25. S. W. | 55 | 0 | 0 | 52. C. B. | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| 26. B. B.* | 2 | 3 | 4 | 53. H. L. | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| 27. J. W. | 1 | 1 | 0 | 54. A. G. | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| 28. E. F. | 50 | 0 | 0 | | | | |
| | | | | | £742 | 16 | 10 |
| Carried forward | 523 | 14 | 4 | | | | |

20. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

When I instituted the Company by giving the tenth of my available property to it, I had, roughly, seventy thousand pounds in money or land, and thirty thousand † in pictures and books. The pictures and books I do not consider mine, but merely in my present keeping, for the country, or the persons I may leave them to. Of the seventy thousand in substance, I gave away fourteen thousand in that year of the Company's establishment (see above, Letter 49, § 2), and have since lost fifteen thousand by a relation whom I tried to support in business.³ As also, during my battle with the booksellers, I have been hitherto losing considerably by my books (last year, for instance, paying three hundred and ninety-eight pounds to

† An under-estimate, at present prices for Turner drawings, and I have hitherto insured for full thirty thousand, but am now going to lower the insurance, for no money would replace the loss of them, and I less and less regard them as exchangeable property.

¹ [For a subsequent correction in the amount of D. A.'s subscriptions, see below, p. 557.]

² [Here, again, see below, *ibid.*]

³ [Compare above, p. 486; and Letter 76, § 18 (Vol. XXIX. p. 101).]

my assistant, Mr. Burgess, alone, for plates and woodcutting, and making a profit, on the whole year's sales, of fifty pounds), and have been living much beyond my income besides, my seventy thousand is reduced to certainly not more than thirty; and it is very clear that I am too enthusiastically carrying out my own principles, and making more haste to be poor than is prudent, at my present date of possible life, for, at my current rate of expenditure, the cell at Assisi, above contemplated as advisably a pious mortification of my luxury,¹ would soon become a necessary refuge for my "holy poverty." The battle with the booksellers, however, is now nearly won; and the publishing accounts will soon show better balance; what changes in my mode of living may, nevertheless, be soon either exemplary or necessary will be better understood after I have given account of it for a year.

Here are my opening expenses, then, from 1st January to 20th, and in each following *Fors* they will be given from 20th to 20th of the month. I content myself, being pressed for space in this number, with giving merely the sums of cheques drawn; somewhat lengthy gossiping explanation of items being also needed, which will come in due place. The four first large sums are, of course, payments of Christmas accounts.

| | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. |
|---|-----|----|----|------|----|----|
| Balance in Bank, 1st Jan. 1876 | | | | 1344 | 17 | 9 |
| Paid by cheque: | | | | | | |
| <i>Jan.</i> 1. Jackson (outdoor Steward, Brantwood) | 50 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| 1. Kate Smith (indoor Stewardess, Brantwood) | 160 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| 1. David Downs (Steward in London) | 115 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| 1. David Fudge (Coachman in London) | 60 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| 1. Secretary, 1st quarter, 1876 | 25 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| 4. Frederick Crawley, in charge of school-rooms at Oxford | 10 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| 6. Self, pocket-money | 20 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| 17. Arthur Burgess, assistant engraver | 27 | 1 | 0 | | | |
| | | | 0 | | | |
| 20. New carriage ³ | 190 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| 20. Gift to Carshalton, for care of spring ⁴ | 110 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| 20. Madame Nozzoli, charities at Florence | 10 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| 20. Mrs. Wonnacott, ⁵ charities at Abingdon | 3 | 1 | 0 | | | |
| | | | 0 | | | |
| 20. William Ward, for two copies of Turner | 21 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| 20. Charles Murray, for rubbings of brasses, and copy of Filippo Lippi ⁶ | 15 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| | | | | 817 | 0 | 0 |
| Balance Jan. 20 | | | | £527 | 17 | 9 |

¹ [See Letter 61, § 2 (p. 485).]

² [Letter 74 is the last with any details of expenditure; in Letter 75 Ruskin explains that he had decided to discontinue the accounts, but there is a general statement at the end of Letter 76: see Vol. XXIX. pp. 50, 74–75, 99–104.]

³ [This was a posting carriage built for the driving tour described by Mr. Arthur Severn: see Vol. XXIV. p. xxvii.]

⁴ ["Margaret's Well": see Vol. XXII. p. xxiv.]

⁵ [The landlady of the "Crown and Thistle." For Ruskin's interest in the poor of Abingdon, see Vol. XX. p. xl.; and below, p. 661.]

⁶ [This copy—of the picture which is the subject of Lesson Photograph, No. 1—is in the Sheffield Museum: see Vol. XXX.]

21. (III.) I am gradually rising into greater indignation against the baseness and conceit of the modern scientific mob, than even against the mere money-seekers. The following fragment of a letter from a Companion bears notably on this matter:—

“The only earnest folks I know are cold-hearted ‘Freethinkers,’ and not very earnest either. My church-going friends are not earnest, except about their form of sound words. But I get on best with them. They are warmer, and would be what I wish, were circumstances not so dead set against it. My ‘Freethinking’ acquaintances say that with Carlyle the last of the great dreamers *who have impeded the advance of science* will pass away, and that, in fact, he is dead already, for nobody minds him. I don’t heed such words now as I used to do. Had I lived when Socrates was condemned, I would have felt hope extinguished; yet Jesus came long after him, and I will not fear that God will fail to send His great and good men, any more than that the sun will forget to rise.

“My Freethinking friends sneer even at the mention of any God; and their talk of methods of reformation that infer any wisdom above their own has long since sickened me. One Sunday evening last year, I accompanied one of them to what they call the ‘Eclectic Hall’ here, to hear a Mrs. Law speak. There were from two to three hundred present,—few women—almost all toil-worn looking men. Mrs. Law, the lecturess—a stout, coarse-looking lady, or woman who might have been a lady—based her address on another by Mr. Gladstone, M. P. One thing she said will give you an idea of the spirit of her lecture, which was full of sadness to me, because highly appreciated by her audience: ‘Jesus tells you,’ she shouted, ‘“Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven,” but I tell you, Blessed are the rich, for theirs is no myth-world, but *this* substantial one with its tangible, satisfying joys.’

“I got one of them to read the October Letter¹—and then Volumes I. and IV. of *Fors*.² Another young fellow, a Londoner, read them too, and then at leisure moments there was a talk over them for some days. But with the exception of the first referred to, they talked pitifully enough. Your incidental remark about destroying the new town of Edinburgh,³ and other items of dubious sort, blinded them to any good, and it was a blessing when something else came athwart their vacant minds, and they ceased to remember you.”

22. (IV.) I am grateful for the following note on the name “Sheffield”:⁴—

“LEEDS, 29th Dec., 1875.

“SIR,—The town, in all probability, took its name from the river ‘Sheaf,’ which flows into the Don.

“Doncaster is a case in point out of hundreds of others. It may be that the river has been named in recent times, but it is unlikely; for as a rule a river always has some name by which it is known before any settlements are made on its banks.”

23. (V.) I must now request my readers’ attention somewhat gravely to the questions in debate between my correspondents at Wakefield;⁵ not that these are in themselves of any importance, but they are of extreme importance in their general issue. In the first place, observe the extreme difficulty of writing history. You shall have one impertinent coxcomb after another in these days, writing constitutional Histories of England

¹ [Letter 58.]

² [Letters 1–12; 37–48.]

³ [See Vol. XXVII. p. 15.]

⁴ [See Letter 59, § 9 (p. 448).]

⁵ [See Letters 55, § 9; 57, § 10; and 59, § 15 (pp. 380, 409, 456).]

and the like,¹ and telling you all the relationships and all the motives of Kings and Queens a thousand years dead; and here is question respecting the immediate ancestor of a living lady, which does not appear at once or easily determinable; and which I do not therefore pursue;—here again is question respecting the connection of her husband with the cases of bribery reported in the subjoined evidence on the Wakefield election petition, also indeterminable; here are farther two or three questions respecting the treatment of his workmen, respecting which the evidence is entirely conflicting; and finally, here is the chapel on Wakefield bridge pulled down,* a model of it built in its place, and the entire front of the historical building carried away to decorate a private boat-house; and I, quite as knowing in architecture as most people, am cheated into some very careful and quite useless work,² and even into many false conclusions, by the sculpture of the sham front, decayed and broken enough in thirty years to look older than sculpture of 500 years B.C. would, or *does*, in pure air.

Observe, in the second place, how petulant and eager people are, the moment a single word touches themselves, while universal abuses may be set before them enough to bring all the stones in heaven but what serve for the thunder, down about their ears,—and they will go on talking about Shakespeare and the musical glasses³ undisturbed, to the end of their lives; but let a single word glance at their own windows, or knock at their own doors, and—instantly—“If Mr. Ruskin is what I think him, he will retract,” etc., etc. But, alas! Mr. Ruskin is not the least what Mrs. Green thinks him,—does not in the smallest degree care for a lady’s “Fie’s,”⁴ and, publishing the following letters and newspaper extracts for the general reader’s satisfaction and E. L.’s justification, very contentedly, for his part, ends the discussion, though of course *Fors* shall be open to any further communication, if not too long, which either Mrs. Green or her husband may desire to have inserted.

In the following letter I have left all the passages containing due apology, while I have removed some which contained matter of further debate, if not offence, thereby much weakening the whole.

“DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I have been away from home, and have only recently seen Mrs. Green’s letter in the *Fors* of last month.

“I am sorry to have vexed her; I did not think that you would print the passages referring to her husband in the form in which they stood.†

* I have not space in this *Fors* to give the letter certifying me of this.⁵

† See my reason stated, Letter 59, § 15 [p. 455].

¹ [Compare Vol. XXII. p. 500.]

² [Presumably Ruskin had made a drawing of the chapel. He refers to the chapel as the original shrine in Letter 20, § 20 (Vol. XXVII. p. 348). After having long served as a corn-factor’s counting-house and lumber-room, it was “restored” in 1847 by Gilbert Scott, “when the original front was removed and set up at Kettlethorpe Park” (see *The Dictionary of Architecture*, Vol. VII., 1887, under “Wakefield”). An engraving of the chapel before restoration may be seen at p. 283, vol. iii., of N. Whitlock’s *History of the County of York* (1831).]

³ [“With other fashionable topics, such as pictures, taste, Shakespeare, and the musical glasses” (Goldsmith’s *The Vicar of Wakefield*, ch. ix.).]

⁴ [See above, p. 457.]

⁵ [The letter was not subsequently given, but the general fact of the restoration of the building had already been stated: see above, p. 380.]

"When you said that you would assume my permission to print passages from the letter, I supposed that they would be those relating to the general life of Wakefield. All that I have written is essentially true, but I do not wish to hold any controversy on the matter, for if I defended myself publicly I should have to wound still further the feelings of one who is no doubt a devoted wife.

"It is for your satisfaction alone that I write these lines. I have been inaccurate on two points, on which I wrote too hastily, from hearsay, gleaned on brief visits to Wakefield. Mr. Green has not a Scotch estate, only occasional shooting, and he is not concerned in the forges that stand near the bridge, as I was wrongly informed.

"I did not say, though I may have led your readers to infer it, that the so-called 'American devil' was his. I knew, or rather was told, that it belonged to Whithams, who have the largest foundry. He (Mr. Green) does not forge iron, it seems; he makes it into machines. He can hardly be classed as an engineer; he is a machine-maker. If he is not an 'iron lord,' on what is his wealth based?

"Robin the Pedlar is no myth. I often heard him mentioned, when a girl, as being Mrs. Green's father. I dare say that Mrs. Edward Green never heard of him. She came into the family in its genteeler days; but there are old people in Wakefield who remember all about him. I send by this post a Wakefield paper containing some speeches highly illustrative of the town of which Mr. Green is the hero and model." (These I do not think it necessary to publish.) "Party feeling still runs high at Wakefield, and when the next election occurs, Mrs. Green expects to find big yellow bills on the gate pillars of Heath Common, 'Professor Ruskin on Ned Green,' and she is naturally angry.

"Of course he is not the sole offender. This case occurred to me because he is the most prominent type of the modern successful men who are to inaugurate a new era in the town's history. It is the blind leader of the blind in the downward way that things are going. Everybody wants to get rich like him; everybody who has greed and competence pushes to the front. The town council promise them they will make of Wakefield a second Bradford. Meanwhile they squabble about their duties, the streets are filthy, smallpox breeds there, and they set up a hospital in a tent. It catches fire, and nurse and patients are burnt together. I think that was eight or nine years since. Possibly arrangements are better now.

"You say truly that quickly acquired fortunes must be ill acquired, but you must live on my level to realise fully how the prospect and possibility of such gains are disorganizing middle-class life. English people do not lift their families along with them, as we reproach the 'clannish' Scotch with doing.

"Ignorant pride on the one hand, envy on the other, breed hate between those who should be a mutual stay. As classes are estranged, so are families.

"In conclusion, I must again say that I shall always feel regret at having pained Mrs. Green, but what I have said is true in all essentials.

"He is the hero of the men who are changing Wakefield so rapidly. I liked it better thirty years since, when, if it was poor, it was clean and honest.

"I am, dear Mr. Ruskin, yours truly,

"E. L."

24. I print the following first portion (about the fourth part) of a column and a half of the evidence on the Wakefield election petition,¹ sent me by my correspondent; though I do not suppose it to indicate anything more than compliance on Mr. Green's part with the ordinary customs of English electioneering.

"The trial of the petition against the return of Mr. Green, the Conservative member for Wakefield, was resumed this morning before Mr. Justice Grove. Mr. Hawkins, Q.C., and Mr. Chandos Leigh again appeared for the petitioners, and

¹ [Reported more briefly in the *Times*, April 22, 23, 24, 25, 1874. The petition ended in the unseating of Mr. Green on the ground of bribery by persons for whom he was legally responsible.]

Mr. C. Russell, Q.C., and Mr. Forbes for the respondent. There was again a crowded attendance.

“John Thompson, a tailor, and a voter in the Northgate Ward, said that about half-past six o’clock on Sunday, the 1st February—the day before the polling—‘Councillor Joe’ (Mr. J. Howden) called at his house and solicited his vote for Mr. Green. Witness said he did not think that he could give it, but if he did he must ‘have something.’ Mr. Howden said, ‘If it’s worth anything I’ll let you know.’ About half-past one o’clock on the polling day witness again saw him. Mr. Howden said, ‘If you vote for Green, I’ll send you 10s. for your day’s wage.’ Witness said, ‘No’; and they parted.

“Cross-examined: Witness did not say to Mr. Howden that he had already been offered a couple of pounds. He was a strong Radical. Mr. Howden was at witness’s house several times, but he only saw him once. He (witness) voted about half-past two in the afternoon.

“Elizabeth Thompson, wife of the last witness, said that on the Saturday and Sunday before the polling day Mr. J. Howden called to solicit her husband’s vote, and he said, ‘If he votes for Green, I’ll see that he is paid.’ On the Monday, when Mr. Howden called, he said, ‘If your husband votes for Green I’ll give him 5s. out of my own pocket, and see that he is ‘tipped’ in the committee-room.’ Later in the day, her husband was at home when Howden called, and they left the house together.

“Henry Blades, a blacksmith’s striker, and a voter in the Westgate Ward, said that on the day of the election Mr. Ough gave him £2 in the Finisher Off public-house, on condition that he voted for Mr. Green. Witness voted in the course of the day.

“Cross-examined: Witness, since he received his subpoena, had met Mr. Gill, the respondent’s solicitor, and others, at the Bull Hotel, and put his name to a paper, of the nature of which he was ignorant.

“Mr. Russell: Was it not a statement, made by yourself, and taken down in writing, to the effect that you had never received any bribe or offer of a bribe?

“Witness: I don’t know. They asked me to sign the paper, and I signed it. I was not sober.

“Re-examined by Mr. Hawkins: Witness was sent for to the Bull. He received there, after making his statement, two glasses of beer, and 5s. in money—the latter from Mr. Ough.

“Henry Lodge said that on the afternoon of the election he was in Farrar’s beerhouse, in Westgate. Blades was there ‘fresh,’ and taking three half-sovereigns from his pocket, he threw them on the table, and said, ‘That’s the sort to have.’

“James Meehan, an Irish labourer, said that he was a voter for the borough, and on the polling day was canvassed by Mr. Kay for the Conservatives. He met Mr. Kay in the polling booth, and received from him 10s. Before voting, witness said to Mr. Kay that he was a poor man and could not afford to lose his day’s wage. Mr. Kay said, ‘I can’t give you a bribe—that’s against the law; but as you have had to pay your mates for doing your work, you shall have something.’ In the polling station Mr. Kay held a half-sovereign in his hand, behind him, and witness took it.

“Cross-examined: Mr. Kay offered witness the 10s. out of his own pocket.

“Mr. Russell (to the Judge): What this man says is quite true. Mr. Kay does not deny that he gave him half a sovereign for his loss of time.

“Patrick M’Hugh, an Irish labourer, and a voter in the Northgate Ward, said that on the polling day he visited the Conservative committee-room at the Zetland School, and saw Mr. Tom Howden. Mr. Howden said, ‘Are you going to vote?’ Witness replied, ‘I suppose so’; and Mr. Howden said, ‘Come this way and I’ll show you how.’ Witness was taken into a back room, and there Mr. Howden said, ‘Well, how much?’ Witness said, ‘Three,’ and Mr. Howden took them out of his pocket (three sovereigns), and said, ‘See there.’ Witness took the money and voted. He had, since receiving his subpoena, been away from Wakefield.

“Cross-examined: Witness had visited Harrogate—staying a week there to take

the waters—(laughter),—and afterwards Thrisk. He paid his own expenses and travelled alone, having been recommended by a doctor to go away for the benefit of his health.

“Mr. Russell: Who was the doctor?”

“Witness: Mr. Unthank—(great laughter);—Mr. Unthank being a chemist, and a prominent Liberal. He said that if I could go, and was strong enough, a bit of an out would do me good. (Laughter.) The £3 that I received at the election supported me while I was away.

“James Wright, a police officer of the borough of Wakefield, said that on the polling day he was acting as doorkeeper at the Zetland Street polling station, and observed Mr. Priestly hand some money to one who presented himself as a voter. Witness followed the voter into the booth, and pointed him out to his superior officer. The man voted, and then left. Mr. Priestly was busily employed during the polling hours in conducting voters from the Conservative committee-room to the polling station.

“Cross-examined: At half-past three Priestly was ‘fresh’ in drink, and it was found necessary to keep him out of the polling station. He was in Mr. Green’s employment. Witness could not say what amount of money passed; but some one in the crowd, who also saw the transaction, said to Priestly, ‘You are doing it too brown.’ (Laughter.)”

25. The letters next following are from an entirely honest engineer workman, a Companion of St. George.

“DEAR MASTER,—I read Mrs. Green’s letter in the November *Fors* two or three days ago, and yesterday I adopted the hint in it to inquire amongst the workmen. I asked one working beside me, who I knew came from Yorkshire, if he ever worked in Wakefield, and, curiously enough, he belongs there, and was apprenticed in a workshop close to Mr. Green’s. He says he knows the place well, and that certainly when he was there, ‘at six o’clock, or some approximate hour,’ the firm of Green and Son, ‘issued its counter-order’ with a horrible noise; and not only at six o’clock, but also after meals.

“He also tells me that the wages of a working engineer in the workshop of Green and Son average 22s. a week, and I know that here, in London, they average 38s. a week, and Wakefield is close to coal and iron, while London is not. It may be, as I once heard it urged, that the workmen in London are superior as workmen to those in the provinces; but my experience, which has been considerable in London and the provinces as a working engineer, enables me to assert that this is not the case. Also it may be urged that low wages prevail in the provinces, but in Glasgow I got 30s. a week two years ago, and this week meant fifty-one hours, while in Wakefield a week’s work means fifty-four hours.

“Since Mr. Green derives no pecuniary benefit from Wakefield, it is evident from the above that the London and Glasgow engineers are very ingenious persons indeed, if they contrive to get pecuniary benefit from the cities in which they issue their ‘counter-order.’

“Moreover, my fellow-workman tells me that there is a system of piece-work carried on in the workshop of Green and Son, which is extended to the *apprentices*, so that the boys are set to think, not how to learn to work properly, but how to learn to get hold of the greatest number of shillings they can in a week. In the man the desire for more money is tempered with forethought: he knows that if he earns more than a certain amount the price of his job will be cut down; but the boy does not consider this, and *his* price, to use the language of the workshop, is cut down accordingly.

“Mrs. Green in her letter says Mr. Green never had a forge. This means that he never had a place which exclusively turned out forgings. But connected with Mr. Green’s establishment, my fellow-workman tells me, are forges, as indeed there are in every engineering work I have seen. Besides, there is constantly

carried on a process of moulding 'pig iron' at Mr. Green's place, which requires the most intense heat, and to which the workmen are exposed, as they are at the forge Mrs. Green speaks of. (In your lectures to the students at Oxford in 1870, you say that work requiring the use of fire must be reduced to its minimum, and speak of its effects in Greek.¹ I know some of its evil effects on the blacksmiths, but I wonder if it is desirable for me to know the meaning of the Greek language you use on that occasion.) (Yes; but you need not be in any hurry about it.)

"It would seem, then, that Mr. Green stays at Heath Hall, and cultivates an ideal refinement in art, while he is instrumental in causing two or three hundred men and boys in Wakefield, from whom he derives no pecuniary benefit, to cultivate there the fine art of music in the shriek and roar of machines all day, to cultivate a trader's eagerness for bargaining, instead of a wish to do good work, and to cultivate an acquaintance with the sort of work which, over ten years' constant experience in it tells me, is the most effective in this country for qualifying themselves and others for admission to the Ophthalmic, Orthopedic, and other institutions mentioned by your correspondent, E. L.

"Last week I had intelligence of the death of a young engineer friend of mine. A boiler burst while he was standing by, and shot him a distance of sixty yards, killing him instantly

"Dear Master, if I have made a mistake in troubling you with these notes on Mrs. Green's letter, I am sorry, but I could not resist the impulse to write to you after what I learned from my fellow-workman. I believe the facts are reliable, and at any rate I can give the workman's name who furnished them, if it is wanted."

"DEAR MASTER,—Since I wrote to you last I chanced on another workman, who has worked in Green's shop. He tells me it is known among the workmen as 'The Port in a Storm.'

"My first informant also, unasked, wrote to Wakefield for further information. He showed me the letter in reply, which says that Green's whistle (it is also called a 'buzzard') was not stopped till force was applied.

" 'The Port in a Storm' means that only when assailed by the fierce storm of hunger do the workmen think of applying for work at Green's place; that is, when they can't get work anywhere else in the neighbourhood."

These letters appear to me entirely to justify the impression under which E. L. wrote; but of course I shall be most happy if Mr. Green will furnish me with more accurate indication of the persons who have made Wakefield the horrible spectacle that it is. For although many of my discreet friends cry out upon me for allowing "personalities," it is my firm conviction that only by justly personal direction of blame can any abuse be vigorously dealt with. And, as I will answer for the sincerity and impartiality of attack, so I trust to make it always finally accurate in aim and in limitation.

¹ [*Lectures on Art*, Lecture IV., § 123 (Vol. XX. p. 113).]

LETTER 63

SIT SPLENDOR¹

1. I FIND it wholly impossible to crush into one *Fors* what I have been gathering of Bible lesson, natural history lesson, and writing lesson, and to leave room enough for what I have to give of immediate explanation to the Companions, now daily increasing in number. My readers must bear with me—I cannot do more than I am doing, though every day I wonder more at there being so many things apparently my duty to do, while I have only two feeble hands for all of them.

But this much of general statement of the meaning of our Companionship is now absolutely necessary.

Of course, the first natural idea taken up by persons who merely hear talk, or read newspapers, about the Company, is that their domain is intended for a *refuge* for the persons who join it—that within its walls the poor are at once to be made rich, and the sorrowful happy.

Alas, this is not by any means the notion of the St. George's Company. It is to be a band of delivering knights—not of churls needing deliverance; of eager givers and servants—not of eager beggars,* and persons needing service. It is only the Rich, and the Strong, whom I receive for Companions,—those who come not to be ministered unto, but to minister.² Rich, yet some of them in other kind of riches than the world's; strong, yet some in other than the world's strength. But this much at least of literal wealth

* See note at end of this letter [p. 555].

¹ [Psalms xc. 17: see below, § 4, and above, Letter 58, § 14. "Rogues' Paradise" (see below, § 8) and "My Aunt Jessie" (see below, § 11) were rejected titles.]

² [Matthew xx. 28.]

and strength they *must* have,—the power, and formed habit, of self-support. I accept no Companion by whom I am not convinced that the Society will be aided rather than burdened; and although I value intelligence, resolution, and personal strength, more than any other riches, I hope to find, in a little while, that there are people in the world who can hold money without being blinded, by their possession of it, to justice or duty.

2. The Companions whom I accept will be divided, according to their means and circumstances, into three classes.

The first and highest class will be called “Comites Ministrantes,” “Companions Servant.” It will be composed of the few who devote their main energy to the work of the Company; and who, as I do myself, and as the Master must always, pursue their private avocations only in subjection to its interests, being at the same time in positions absolutely independent, and openly shown to be so.

The second, or middle class, will be called “Comites Militantes,” “Companions Militant.”

These will be persons occupied actually in manual labour on the ground, or in any work which the Master may order, for the fulfilment of the Society’s functions; being dependent on such labour for their maintenance, under the conditions fixed by the Company’s statutes.

The third and lowest order will be called “Comites Consilii” (Friends of, or in, Council), “Companions Consular,” who will form the general body of the society, being occupied in their own affairs as earnestly as before they joined it; but giving it the tenth of their income; and in all points, involving its principles, obeying the orders of the Master. Thus almost any tradesman may continue his trade, being a Companion; but, if a jeweller, he must not sell false jewels; or if a butcher (I have one accepted already,¹ and I very much want to get a butcher’s daughter, if I could; but she won’t come), must not sell bad meat.

¹ [The Companion in question, though the son of a butcher, was himself a stock-broker.]

I at first meant them to be called “Censors,” or “Companions Estimant,” because when the Society comes into real work, the sentences of fine, or other disgrace, pronounced by the marshals’ officers, and the general modes of determining quality and value of goods, must be always ratified by majority of this order of the Companions, in whom also, by virtue of their number, the election, and therefore censorship, of the Master, will necessarily be vested.

3. To these last, especially, I have now some special matters to write.

Will you please look back to the *Fors* of December 24th, last year,¹ § 15, and tell me,—or rather, which is chiefly needful, answer to yourselves, how far you have reflected, since reading it, on the nature of “unfruitful works of darkness”;² how many you have abandoned, and how many reproved. It is too probable that you have not, even yet, the slightest idea what works of darkness are. You know,—they can’t mean merely murder, or adultery, or theft. You don’t, when you go to church, mean to pray that you may have grace to give up committing murder or adultery, or that you may “rather reprove *them*”?² But what then is it that you pray to give up? If you don’t know, are you not, yet, in the least, ashamed of yourselves, for going every Sunday, if not every day, to pray to God, without having the dimmest idea what you mean to ask Him for?

Well,—not to be farther teasing about it,—in the first and simple sense, works of darkness are useless, or ill-done, or half-done, things, which pretend to be good, or to be wholly done; and so mislead or betray.

In the deeper and final sense, a work of darkness is one that seeks concealment, and conceals facts; or even casts disdain and disgrace on facts.

4. A work of light is one that seeks light, and that, not

¹ [Not last year, but the year before last, Letter 48 (p. 215).]

² [Ephesians v. 11.]

for its own sake, but to light all men; so that all workers of good work delight in witnesses; only with true desire that the witnesses pleasure may be greater than theirs; and that the Eternal witnesses—the Cloud around us, and Powers above—may have chief pleasure of all:—(see on this matter, *Eagle's Nest*, § 53¹). So that, of these works, what was written of St. Bernard must be always true, “Opera sancti Patris velut Sol in conspectu Dei;” for indeed they are a true Light of the world, infinitely better in the Creator’s sight than its dead sunshine; and the discovery by modern science that all mortal strength is from the Sun, while it has thrown foolish persons into atheism, is, to wise ones, the most precious testimony to their faith yet given by physical nature; for it gives us the arithmetical and measurable assurance that men vitally active are living sunshine,² having the roots of their souls set in sunlight, as the roots of a tree are in the earth; not that the dust is therefore the God of the tree, but the Tree is the animation of the dust, and the living Soul, of the sunshine. And now you will understand the meaning of the words on our St. George’s wealth,—”Sit splendor.”³

And you must take care that your works do shine before men,⁴ as it may be, as a lamp; but at least, as a shield;—nay, if your Captain in Heaven wills it, as a sword.

5. For the failure of all good people nowadays is that, associating politely with wicked persons, countenancing them in their wickedness, and often joining in it, they think to avert its consequences by collaterally labouring to repair the ruin it has caused; and while, in the morning, they satisfy their hearts by ministering to the wants of two or three destitute persons, in the evening they dine with, envy, and prepare themselves to follow the example of, the rich

¹ [Vol. XXII. p. 159.]

² [The passage from “what was written of St. Bernard” down to “living sunshine” is repeated, with some alterations, in *Deucalion*, i. ch. vii. § 32 (Vol. XXVI. p. 183).]

³ [The title to this letter: and see Letter 58, § 14 (p. 430).]

⁴ [Compare Matthew v. 16.]

speculator who has caused the destitution of two or three thousand. They are thus destroying more in hours than they can amend in years; or, at the best, vainly feeding the famine-struck populations, in the rear of a devouring army, always on the increase in mass of numbers, and rapidity of march.

Now I call on the St. George's Company, first, to separate themselves clearly, as a body, from persons who practise recognized, visible, unquestionable iniquity.¹ They are to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of Darkness; but to walk as Children of Light.²

Literally, observe. Those phrases of the Bible are entirely evaded, because we never apply them to immediate practice.

St. George's Companions are to have *no fellowship* with works of darkness; no companionship whatsoever with recognizable mischief, or mischievous men. Of every person of your acquaintance, you are solemnly to ask yourselves, "Is this man a swindler, a liar, a gambler, an adulterer, a selfish oppressor, and task-master?"

6. Don't suppose you can't tell. You can tell with perfect ease; or, if you meet any mysterious personage of whom it proves difficult to ascertain whether he be rogue or not, keep clear of him till you know. With those whom you *know* to be honest, *know* to be innocent, *know* to be striving, with main purpose, to serve mankind and honour their God, you are humbly and lovingly to associate yourselves: and with none others.

"You don't like to set yourselves up for being better than other people? You dare not judge harshly of your fellow-creatures?"

I do not tell you to judge them. I only tell you not to dine with them, and not to deal with them. That they lose the pleasure of your company, or the profit on your

¹ [On this point, see Ruskin's *Abstract of the Objects and Constitution of St. George's Guild*, § 1 (Vol. XXX.).]

² [Ephesians v. 8.]

custom, is no crushing punishment. To their own Master they stand or fall;¹ but to *your* Master, Christ,* *you* must stand, with your best might; and in this manner only, self-asserting as you may think it, can you confess Him before men. Why do you suppose that thundrous word of His impends over your denial of Him, “Whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before Angels,”² but because you are sure to be constantly tempted to such denial?

7. How, therefore, observe, in modern days, are you so tempted. Is not the temptation rather, *as it seems*, to confess Him? Is it difficult and shameful to go to church?—would it not require more courage to stay away? Is it difficult or shameful to shut your shop on Sunday, in the East,—or, to abstain from your ride in the Park on Sunday in the west? Is it dangerous to hold family worship in your house, or dishonourable to be seen with a cross on your Prayer Book? None of these modes or aspects of confession will bring any outcry against you from the world. You will have its good word, on the contrary, for each and all of them. But declare that you mean to speak truth,—and speak it, for an hour; that you mean to abstain from luxury,—and abstain from it, for a day; that you, obeying God’s law, will resolutely refuse fellowship with the disobedient;—and be “not at home” to them, for a week: and hear *then* what the High Priests’ servants will say to you, round the fire.³

8. And observe, it is in charity for them, much more than by duty to others, that you are required to do this. For half, at least, of these Caiaphas’ servants sin through pure ignorance, confirmed by custom. The essential difference in business, for instance, between a man of honour

* I have got no Turks yet in the Company: when any join it, I will give them Koran enough for what I ask of them.

¹ [Romans xiv. 4.]

² [Matthew x. 33.]

³ [Mark xiv. 54, 66–72.]

and a rogue, is that the first tries to give as *much* to his customer for his money as he can, and the second to give as *little*; but how many are at present engaged in business who are trying to sell their goods at as high a price as possible, supposing that effort to be the very soul and vital principle of business! Now by simply asserting to these ignorant persons that they *are* rogues, whether they know it or not; and that, in the present era of general enlightenment, gentlemen and ladies must not only learn to spell and to dance, but also to know the difference between cheating their neighbours and serving them; and that, as on the whole it is inexpedient to receive people who don't know how to express themselves grammatically, in the higher circles of society, much more is it inexpedient to receive those who don't know how to behave themselves honestly. And by the mere assertion, practically, of this assured fact to your acquaintance's faces, by the direct intervention of a deal door between theirs and yours, you will startle them out of their Rogues' Paradise in a most healthful manner, and be the most orthodox and eloquent evangelical preacher to them that they have ever heard since they were born.

9. But all this must, of course, be done with extreme tenderness and modesty, though with absolute decision; and under much submission to their elders by young people—especially those living in their father's houses. I shall not, of course, receive any Companions under age; but already there are some names on my list of young unmarried women: and, while I have shown in all former writings that I hold the power of such to be the greatest, because the purest, of all social ones, I must as definitely now warn them against any manifestation of feeling or principle tending to break the unity of their home circles. They are bound to receive their father's friends as their own, and to comply in all sweet and subjected ways with the wishes and habits of their parents; remaining calmly certain that the Law of God, for them, is that while they remain

at home they shall be spirits of Peace and Humility beneath its roof. In all rightly ordered households, the confidence between the parent and child is such that in the event of a parent's wish becoming contrary to a child's feeling of its general duty, there would be no fear or discomfort on the child's part in expressing its thoughts. The moment these are necessarily repressed, there is wrong somewhere; and in houses ordered according to the ways of modern fashionable life, there *must* be wrong, often, and everywhere. But the main curse of modern society is that, beginning by training its youth to be "independent" and disobedient, this carefully cultivated independence shows itself, of course, by rejecting whatever is noble and honourable in their fathers' houses, and never by healing or atoning what is faultful.

Of all St. George's young Companions, therefore, he requires first the graces of gentleness and humility; nor, on the whole, much independent action of any kind; but only the quiet resolve to find out what is absolutely right, and, so far as it may be kindly and inoffensively practised, to fulfil it, at home; and so far as it may be modestly and decorously uttered, to express the same abroad. And a well-bred young lady has always personal power enough of favour and discouragement, among persons of her own age, to satisfy the extremest demands of conscience in this direction.

10. And now let me see what room I have left for talk of present matters. Here is a piece printed a fortnight since, which I can't be plagued to keep in type till next month.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD, *8th February*, 1876.

I am fifty-seven to-day; and may perhaps be allowed to talk a little of myself.

Among several pretty love-letters from my pets, which only make me sorrier that I'm fifty-seven—but I really don't think some of the letters could be nicer if I were

only twenty-seven—there's one with a ghost story in it, more precious to me than all the others, seeing I draw more quickly* near, now, daily, to the Loyal land.¹

I may as well write it as I read, thus:—

“I heard such a pretty story last night of something that happened at a school in Germany, not long since. It was the custom of one of the masters to go round every night to the dormitories to see that the boys were asleep, all right. One night he was astonished to see a lady go up to one of the boys, stoop over him and kiss him, and then vanish. Next morning, news came that the mother of that particular boy had died at the time. Isn't it lovely? Even A. believes that.”

Yes; and A. does wisely; and so may B., and C.: but yet I should much like to know *what* particular boy, in what particular school in Germany.

11. Nevertheless, the story has more value for me because it is written to me by a person² who herself saw the shade—or rather light—of her sister, at the time of that sister's death on the other side of the world; being a member of that branch of my family in which some gift of the Scottish second-sight remains, inherited by my paternal grandmother, who ran away with my paternal grandfather when she was not quite sixteen;³ and my aunt Jessie (my father's only sister) was born a year afterwards; a few weeks after which event my grandmother, not yet seventeen, was surprised (by a friend who came into her room unannounced) dancing a threesome reel, with two chairs for her partners, she having found at the moment no other way of adequately expressing the pleasure she took in this mortal life, and its gifts, and promises.

The latter failed somewhat afterwards; and my aunt Jessie, a very precious and perfect creature, beautiful in her dark-eyed, Highland way, utterly religious, in her quiet

* Every day taking more away than the one before it.

¹ [For the Land of the Leal, see Vol. XXVII. p. 601.]

² [Mrs. Arthur Severn.]

³ [See *Præterita*, i. ch. iii. §§ 69, 70, where the remainder of § 11 here and the whole of § 12 were repeated, with some revisions.]

Puritan way, and very submissive to Fates mostly unkind, married, or was married to—I never could make out exactly which, or why,—a somewhat rough tanner, with a fairly good business, in the good town of Perth; and, when I was old enough to be taken first to visit them, as aforesaid, my aunt and my uncle the tanner lived in a good square-built grey stone house at the “Bridge End” of Perth, some fifty yards north of the bridge; their garden sloping steeply to the Tay, which eddied, three or four feet deep of sombre crystal, round the steps where the servants dipped their pails.

12. My aggrieved correspondent of Wakefield thought to cure me with her delicate “Fie,” of what she supposed my coarse habit of sneering at people of no ancestry.¹ I have it not; yet might have fallen into it in my youth, for I remember now, with more grief and shame than I can speak, being once ashamed of my own father and mother in Mr. Ryman’s shop² here in Oxford; nor am I entirely at ease, at this moment, in writing of my uncles the baker and the tanner; yet my readers may trust me when I tell them that, in now remembering my dreams in the house of the entirely honest chief baker of Market Street, Croydon; and of Peter—not Simon—the tanner, whose house was by the riverside of Perth, I would not change the dreams, far less the tender realities, of those early days, for anything I hear now remembered by lords or dames, of their days of childhood in castle halls, and by sweet lawns and lakes in park-walled forest.

13. I do not mean this for a republican sentiment; quite the opposite. I hate republicans, as I do all other manner of fools. I love Lords and Ladies (especially unmarried ones, with beautiful three-syllabled Christian-names. I know a simple two-syllabled one, also, very charming); and Earls, and Countesses, and Marquises and Marchionesses, and Honourables, and Sirs; and I bow down before

¹ [See Letter 59, § 15 (p. 457).]

² [The well-known printseller’s, in the High Street.]

them and worship them, in the way that Mr. Thackeray thought “snobs” did:¹ he never perceiving with all the wit of him (being mostly spent in mean smell-fungus² work which spoiled its scent), that it is *himself* the snob truly worships, all the time, and not the Lord he looks at. But my way of worship was Walter Scott’s, which my father taught me (always excepting such recreance as that in Mr. Ryman’s shop). And therefore, when I say I would not change my dreams of Market Street, and Bridge End, and Rose Terrace (where we used to live after my uncle died, briefly apoplectic, at Bridge End), for anything that the Palatial and Maxime-Pontifical abodes of Nobles and Bishops give them—I mean simply that I had a home, being a child, and loved it, and did not then, and do not now, covet my neighbour’s house:* but cling to every likeness findable in these ruinous days to the places of peace given me in that lowly time.

Peace, and the knowledge of God it gave me. For, by the way, observe in that sacredest of benedictions, which my Dean gave me in my own cathedral last Sunday (I being an honorary student of Christ Church;—and there *are* only nine altogether, if you please to look in the Oxford Calendar³), “The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God;”⁴—observe, I say, for we do not always think of this, it is not the knowledge that is to give peace, but the peace which is to give knowledge; so that as long as we fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of

* Compare Letter 21, § 16 [Vol. XXVII. p. 362].

¹ [For Ruskin on Thackeray, see Vol. XVIII. p. 130 *n.*, and Vol. XX. p. 208.]

² [Adapted by Ruskin from “Smelfungus” of Carlyle’s *Friedrich*.]

³ [For Ruskin’s election to this honour in 1858, see Vol. XVI. p. xix. Four other honorary students were elected at the same time—namely, Acland, Cornwall Lewis, Gladstone, and Gore-Ouseley. The nine at this time were (in addition to Acland, Gladstone, and Gore-Ouseley and Ruskin), Lord Hatherley, Lord Selborne, Lord Carlingford, Sir J. T. Coleridge, and Dr. C. B. Scott. “Nine altogether” is here substituted for “eight” (in all previous editions) in accordance with a correction made by Ruskin in Rawdon Brown’s copy of this letter, now in the Library of St. Mark at Venice.]

⁴ [The Blessing in the Order of Holy Communion.]

wickedness,¹ and bite and devour one another, and are consumed one of another²—every traveller paying an eight per cent. tax in his fare, for dividend to a consuming railroad company—we can't know anything about God at all. And compare again *Eagle's Nest*, §§ 195, 204–206.³

14. There, then, at Rose Terrace, I lived in peace in the fair Scotch summer days, with my widowed aunt, and my little cousin Jessie, then traversing a bright space between her sixth and ninth year; dark-eyed deeply, like her mother, and similarly pious; and she and I used to compete in the Sunday evening Scriptural examinations; and be as proud as two little peacocks because Jessie's elder brothers, and sister Mary, used to get “put down,” and either Jessie or I was always “Dux.” We agreed upon this that we would be married, when we were a little older; not considering it preparatorily necessary to be in any degree wiser.⁴

9th February.

15. I couldn't go on about my cousin Jessie, for I was interrupted by the second post with more birthday compliments, from young ladies now about Jessie's age—letters which of course required immediate answer,—some also with flowers, which required to be immediately put into water, and greatly worried me by upsetting themselves among my books all day afterwards; but I let myself be worried, for love;—and, from a well-meaning and kindly feeling friend, some very respectful and respectable poetry, beautifully written (and I read part of it, for love, but I had much rather he had sent me sixpence, for I hat poetry, mostly, and love pence, always); and to-day, half-past seven before chapel, my mind is otherwise set altogether, for I am

¹ [Isaiah lviii. 4.]

² [Galatians v. 15.]

³ [Vol. XXII. pp. 253, 262–264.]

⁴ [§ 14 here was repeated, with some revision, as part of § 70 in *Præterita*, vol. i. The author continued the subject of his Aunt Jessie in Letter 65, §§ 17–19 (pp. 602–605).]

reading Leviticus carefully now, for my life of Moses;¹ and, in working out the law of the feast of harvest, chanced on the notable verse, xxiii. 24: "In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation;" and then flashed on me, all in a minute, the real meaning of Holbein's introduction to the Dance of Death² (the fifth woodcut in the first edition), which till this moment I only took for his own symbol of the Triumph of Death, adopted from Orcagna and others, but which I see now, in an instant, to be the *un*-Holy Convocation; the gathering together to their temple of the Tribes of Death, and the blowing of trumpets on their solemn feast day, and sabbath of rest to the weary in evil doing.

16. And, busy friends, in the midst of all your charming preparations for the Spring season, you will do well to take some method of seeing that design, and meditating, with its help, upon the grave question, what kind of weariness *you* will have to rest from. My own thoughts of it are disturbed, as I look, by that drummer-death, in front,*

* I have desired Mr. Ward to prepare small photographs of this design, in case any reader cares to have it,—but mind, it is not altogether done according to Mr. Stopford Brooke's notion of the object of true art, "to please"—(see page 88 of the *Manual of English Literature*, just published by that omniscient divine—under the auspices of the all-and-sundry-scient Mr. J. R. Green, M.A.³)—so, if you only want to be pleased, you had better not order it. But at any rate, order, if you wish to understand the next coming *Fors*, the Etruscan Leucothea, for comparison with your Lippi Madonna. Mr. Ward will have it ready, with my signature, about the next time *Fors* comes out;—or you can get it, unmounted, for a shilling, from Mr. Parker's agent in Rome.

¹ [See above, p. 500. Ruskin read, and reread, the Bible narrative, and made many notes in his diaries; but the "Life of Moses" was never written.]

² [See Plate III.—which is an enlargement from Holbein's woodcut (the actual size being that of Fig. 2 in Vol. XXVII. (p. 78). The first edition was published at Lyons in 1538, quarto, containing forty-one cuts; in the third and subsequent editions there were fifty-three.]

³ [*English Literature*, one of a series of "Literature Primers" published under the general editorship of J. R. Green, p. 88 of the first edition, 1876: "Shakespeare made men and women whose dramatic action on each other, and towards a catastrophe, was intended to please the public, not to reveal himself. He was altogether,



The Drummer Boy

Enlarged from Holbein's "Dance of Death"

with his rattling and ringing kettledrums (*he* the chief Musician in the Psalm for the sons of Korah¹—Dathan and Abiram, because his sounding is on Skin with sticks of Bone), not always because of my general interest in drummers, but because, after being much impressed, when I was a child, by the verses I had to learn about the last trump, out of the 15th of 1st Corinthians,—when I became a man, and put away childish things,² I used often to wonder what we should all say of any sacred Saga among poor Indians whose untutored mind sees God in clouds,³ if it told them that they were all to rise from the dead at the sound of the last drum.

17. And here I'm interrupted again by a delightful letter about the resurrection of snails, Atropos really managing matters, at present, like the daintiest and watchfullest housewife for me,⁴—everything in its place, and under my hand.

“DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—As I have just read the last part of February *Fors*,⁵ I want to say what I know about the little shells—(*Helix virgata*—I suppose). I think—indeed, am pretty sure, nearly, if not quite, all those shells had little live snails in them. I have found them in quantities on the South Downs near Lewes, on Roundway Hill near Devizes, near Lyme Regis, in North Wales; and before any of those places, on our own Hampton Common in Gloucestershire, where my sisters and myself used to gather those and other pretty ones when we were children. If you have any stored by, in a few months I think you will find them (if not shut up) walk away.

“When I was a girl I once had to choose a birthday present from one of my aunts, and asked for ‘Turton’s British Shells,’ for I always wanted to know the name and history of everything I found; then I collected all the land and freshwater shells I could find, as I could not get *sea* shells—one of my longings—for I never saw the sea till after I was twenty, except for a few hours at Munsley in Norfolk, when I was eight years old. I have my little shells still; and have four or five varieties of *Helix virgata*: I think the number of rings increases as the shell goes on growing.

“ ‘In the autumn these shells are often suddenly observed in such great numbers as to give rise to the popular notion of their having fallen from

from end to end, an artist.” In later editions Mr. Brooke introduced qualifying words: “the true definition of the artist’s aim, if the pleasure he desires to give be noble” (p. 102, 1880 edition.)

¹ [Psalm xlix., which, with several preceding Psalms, is headed “To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah.”]

² [1 Corinthians xv. 52; xiii. 11.]

³ [Pope, *Essay on Man*, I. 99.]

⁴ [Compare, above, pp. 443, 451.]

⁵ [Letter 62, §§ 14–16 (pp. 524–527).]

the clouds. This shell is very hardy, and appears nearly insensible to cold, as it does not hibernate even when the ground is covered with snow.'

"I always fancied the Lord let them lie about in such numbers to be food for some little birds, or may be rooks and starlings, robins, etc., in cold weather when there was so little to eat.

"I dare say you know how the blackbirds and thrushes eat the larger snails. I have often seen in the woods a very pretty coloured shell lying on a white stone,—the birds had put it there to crack a hole in it and to take out the snail. The shell looked such a pretty clear colour because it was alive, and yet empty."

Yes; the Holy Ghost of Life, not yet finally departed, can still give fair colours even to an empty shell. Evangelical friends,—worms, as you have long called yourselves,¹ here is a deeper expression of humility suggested possible: may not some of you be only painted shells of worms,—alive, yet empty?

18. Assuming my shell to be *Helix virgata*, I take down my magnificent French—(let me see if I can write its title without a mistake)—"Manuel de Conchyliologie et de Paléontologie Conchyliologique,"² or, in English, "Manual of Shell-talking and Old-body-talking in a Shell-talking manner." Eight hundred largest octavo—more like folio—pages of close print, with four thousand and odd (nearly five thousand) exquisite engravings of shells; and among them I look for the creatures elegantly, but inaccurately, called by modern naturalists Gasteropods; in English, Bellyfeet (meaning, of course, to say Belly-walkers, for they haven't got any feet); and among these I find, with much pains, one that is rather like mine, of which I am told that it belongs to the sixteenth sort in the second tribe of the second family of the first sub-order of the second order of the Belly-walkers, and that it is called "Adeorbis subcarinatus,"—Adeorbis by Mr. Wood, and subcarinatus by Mr. Montagu; but I am not told where it is found, nor what sort of creature lives in it, nor any single thing whatever about it, except that it is "sufficiently depressed" ("assez déprimée"), and "deeply enough navelled" ("assez

¹ [In the often adopted language of Psalm xxii. 6.]

² [By Le Dr. J. C. Chenu, Paris, 1859. Ruskin quotes from vol. i. p. 352.]

profondement ombiliquée,”—but how on earth can I tell when a shell is navelled to a depth, in the author’s opinion, satisfactory?), and that the turns (taken by the family) are “little numerous” (“peu nombreux”). On the whole, I am not disposed to think my shell is here described, and put my splendid book in its place again.

19. I next tried my English Cuvier,¹ in sixteen octavo volumes; in which I find no notice whatever taken of these minor snails, except a list of thirty-three species, finishing with an etc.; out of which I mark “Cretacea,” “Terrestris,” and “Nivea,” as perhaps likely to fit mine; and then I come, by order of Atropos, on this amazing account of the domestic arrangements of a little French snail, “*Helix decollata*” (Guillotined snail?) with references to “Cm. Chemn. cxxxvi. 1254–1257,” a species which “has the singular habit of successively fracturing the whorls at the top (origin, that is,—snails building their houses from heaven towards earth), of the spire, so that at a particular epoch, of all the whorls of the spire originally possessed by this bulimus, not a single one remains.” Bulimus,—what’s a bulimus? *Helix* is certainly a screw, and bulimus,—in my Riddle’s dictionary—is said to be “empty-bellied.”² Then this French snail, revolutionary in the manner of a screw, appears to be a belly-walker with an empty belly, and no neck,—who literally “breaks up” his establishment every year! Query—breaks? or melts? Confraction, or confusion?

20. I must put my fine English book back in its place, too;—but here, at last, comes a “work of light”³ to help us, from my favourite pupil, who was out with me that day on the Downs,⁴ and nearly killed himself with keeping a fox in sight on foot, up and down them;—happily

¹ [*The Animal Kingdom arranged in Conformity with its Organisation, by the Baron Cuvier, with additional descriptions . . .* by Edward Griffith and others, 16 vols., London, 1827–1835. Ruskin quotes from vol. xii. pp. 30, 31. “*Helix decollata*, Gm.,” *i.e.*, as explained in vol. xvi. (“Table of Authors quoted”), so called in E. Germar’s *Magazin der Entomologie*; “Chemn.” refers to J. J. Chemnitz’s *Conchyliology*.]

² [See below, p. 709 *n.*]

³ [See above, § 3 (p. 540).]

⁴ [See above, Letter 62, § 16 (p. 526).]

surviving, he has pursued the slower creature for me to its cave of silver earth; and writes thus:—

“I have sent you two little boxes—one containing common garden snail shells of various ages, and the other black striped Down shells; and you will see that in Box 1 the full-grown garden shells I have lip, have four whorls each, and all the full-grown garden shells I have noticed had the same number, though they varied a little in size. The next largest in the box have only three and a half turns, but if they had lived longer they would have added on another half turn, bigger than all the rest of the shell put together. In fact, if one looks at this shell, one sees that any half whorl is half as large again as all the rest of the shell before it. Then, besides these, there are four or five younger shells, the smallest of which has only two and a half whorls, which exactly correspond to two and a half whorls taken from any of the larger shells; so

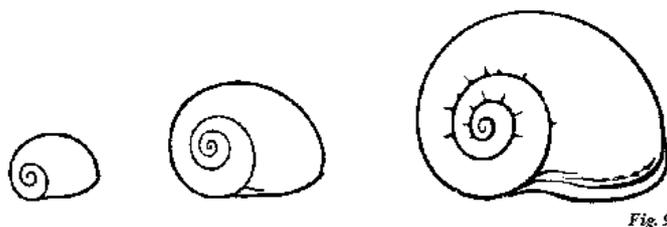


Fig. 9

I think we may conclude that a shell grows by adding on *length only* to the large end of a tapering tube, like a dunce's cap, which, however, is curled up like a ram's horn, to look prettier, take up less room, and allow the occupant to beat a retreat round the corner when a robin comes. By-the-bye, I wonder some birds don't grow bills like corkscrews, to get at the snails with.

“Then in Box No. 2 there are several black striped Down shells, and the full-grown ones have six whorls, and the smallest ones, which died young, some four and some five, according to age; but the dunce's cap is longer, and so there are more whorls.

“I couldn't get these facts clearly stated in two handbooks which I read. I suppose they took it for granted that one knew; but I found, what after all would lead one to infer the rest, that the young snail at birth corresponds to the colourless APEX of the shell, and that the colour only comes in that part which grows under the influence of light and air.”

Wednesday, Feb. 9.

“Another fact is, that all the shells I ever remember looking at grow in the direction of the sun.

“Another fact. Since the shells have been in this room, my chimney-piece has been full of sleepy, small, long-bodied spiders, which had gone to sleep for the winter in these black and white caverns, out of the reach of flocks of half-starved larks and starlings.”

21. I drew the three advancing stages of the common snail's houses, thus sent me, forthwith; and Mr. Burgess swiftly and rightly engraves them. Note that the apparent irregularities in the spirals are conditions of perspective, necessarily affecting the deeply projecting forms; note also that each whorl is partly hidden by the subsequent one, built with its edge lapping over it; and finally, that there is really, I believe, a modification, to some extent, and enlargement, of the inner whorls; until the domestic creature is satisfied with its length of cave, and expresses its rest in accomplished labour and full age, by putting that binding lip round its border, and term to its hope.

Wherein, building for the earth, we may wisely imitate it. Of other building, not with slime for mortar,¹ yet heavenward, we may perhaps conceive in due time.²

22. I beg all my readers, but especially my Companions, to read with their best care the paper by Mr. Girdlestone,³ which, by the author's kindly gift, I am enabled to send them with this *Fors*. It is the most complete and logical statement of Economic truth, in the points it touches, that I have ever seen in the English language: and to master it will be the best possible preparation for the study of personal duties to which I shall invite my Companions in my next letter.⁴

¹ [Genesis xi. 3; quoted also in Vol. XIX. p. 75.]

² [For a letter from another correspondent on the subject of these shells, see Letter 64, § 24 (p. 584).]

³ [*Society Classified: in reply to the question, "How far is the saying true that every one lives either by Working, or by Begging, or by Stealing?"* A paper read at a meeting of the Weston-super-Mare Social Science Club, February 8, 1876, by E. D. Girdlestone, B.A., Weston-super-Mare, 1876. A penny tract, pp. 12. On the title-page of a second edition (pp. 16) Ruskin's words of commendation were printed.]

⁴ [See pp. 564 *seq.*]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

23. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

I give below our banker's account to the end of last year, drawn up by my friend Mr. W. Walker,¹ whom I asked to take salary as the Company's accountant, but who, as will be seen by the part of his letter I take leave here to print, gives us his work in true sympathy.

18, YONGE PARK, HOLLOWAY, N.,
Nov. 11th, 1875.

DEAR SIR,—I am of the same opinion as your printseller, and agree with him that "it is delightful to do business with you,"²—so you must please let me volunteer to be of any practical service so far as keeping accounts, etc., can be useful to you or the St. George's Company.

I readily accept the duties as *honorary* but not *titled* accountant, and as the labour is light, entailing very little trouble, my reward shall be the self-satisfaction in thinking I have done very little in the cause wherein you have done and are doing so very much.

Nevertheless, your kindly worded offer was gratefully received, and I was really pleased.

The enclosed accounts are a mere copy of the ledger items. I would have put all the names of the donors (I found a few), but you have a record, if I may judge from the notices in the December number of *Fors*.

JOHN RUSKIN, ESQ., LL. D.

With sincere respect, yours faithfully,
WM. WALKER.

¹ [The following is an earlier letter to Mr. William Walker (of the Union Bank of London), here reprinted from pp. 82–83 of the privately-issued *Letters from John Ruskin to F. J. Furnivall and other Correspondents* (1897):—

"BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
"April 6th, 1875.

"DEAR MR. WALKER,—I do not know when I have received more pleasure than from your kind letter to-day, and I very sincerely thank you for it, and for the interest you express in *Fors*, which is especially encouraging to me when I can meet with it in practical men.

"I do not feel less ashamed for trespassing on your time because you give it me so willingly, and I must indeed in future be more regular in my business proceedings—both in the facts and the notification of them. I suppose it is a long-established principle in human nature that men accumulating money are careful of it, and men diminishing it, careless; and I do not wonder that my friends begin to inquire of me with grave faces 'whether I am not ruining myself?' However, it will be some time yet before I come to my last ten thousand; and when I do—I must stop my gift-giving, and live, like the rest of my college fellows, on three hundred a year. At that rate my ten thousand will last me till I'm ninety-five. If my flesh and bones do as much—it's more than I expect of them.

"Ever very gratefully yours,
"J RUSKIN."]

² [See above, p. 458.]

THE UNION BANK OF LONDON (CHANCERY LANE BRANCH)
IN ACCOUNT WITH ST GEORGE'S FUND

| <i>Dr.</i> | | | | <i>Cr</i> | | | | | |
|------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|----------|-----------|-----------|--|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1872 | | £ | s | d | 1872 | | £ | s | d |
| Nov. 27. | To Cash | 100 | 0 | 0 | Dec. 4. | By Cheque Book | 0 | 4 | 2 |
| Dec. 11. | Draft at Peckham | 25 | 0 | 0 | Dec. 27. | Power of Attorney to receive Dividend on Consols | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| | | | | | Dec. 31. | By Balance | <u>124</u> | <u>10</u> | <u>10</u> |
| | | <u>£125</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> | | | <u>£125</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> |
| <hr/> | | | | | <hr/> | | | | |
| 1873 | | £ | s | d | 1873 | | £ | s | d |
| Jan. 1. | To Balance | 124 | 10 | 10 | March 13. | By Postage | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Jan. 2. | “ John Ruskin, Esq. | 30 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| Feb. 10. | “ Ditto | 20 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| | “ Dividend on Consols, Jan., 1872 | 29 | 5 | 0 | | | | | |
| | “ Dividend on Consols, July, 1872 | 103 | 5 | 0 | | | | | |
| | “ Dividend on Consols, Jan, 1873 | 103 | | 0 | | | | | |
| April 15. | “ Draft at Blackheath | 7 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| June 10. | “ Draft at Bury St. Edmunds | 13 | 10 | 0 | | | | | |
| July 8. | “ R.J. Tyrwhitt | 20 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| July 9. | “ Dividend on £7000 Consols | 103 | 13 | 9 | | | | | |
| July 29. | “ John Ruskin, Esq. | | | | | | | | |
| July 30. | “ No. 18 | 5 | 0 | 0 | | By Balance | <u>579</u> | <u>9</u> | <u>4</u> |
| | | <u>£579</u> | <u>9</u> | <u>7</u> | | | <u>£579</u> | <u>9</u> | <u>7</u> |
| <hr/> | | | | | <hr/> | | | | |
| 1874 | | £ | s | d | 1874 | | £ | s | d |
| Jan. 1 | To Balance | 579 | 9 | 4 | Dec. 10. | By Postage | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| | “ Interest on current Account Balance | 2 | 13 | 4 | | “ Purchase of £1000 Consols | 918 | 15 | 0 |
| | “ Draft at Durham by A. Hunt | 25 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| Jan. 7. | “ Dividend on £7000 Consols | 103 | 13 | 19 | | | | | |
| Jan. 17. | “ John Ruskin, Esq. | 31 | 10 | 0 | | | | | |
| Feb. 13 | “ Cash | 10 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| July 1. | “ Interest on Current Account Balance | 7 | 4 | 8 | | | | | |
| July 8. | “ Dividend on £7000 Consols | 104 | 2 | 6 | | | | | |
| Dec. 3. | “ John Ruskin, Esq. | 20 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| Dec. 6 | “ Ditto | *40 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| Dec. 9. | “ Draft at Bilston (Wilkins) | 5 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| Dec. 11. | “ H.F.Smith | 9 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| | “ E.R. Gill | 5 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| | “ Mrs. Barnard | 1 | 13 | 4 | | | | | |
| | “ J. Temple | 5 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| Dec. 28. | “ Draft at Sheffield (Fowler) | 20 | 0 | 0 | | By Balance | <u>50</u> | <u>11</u> | <u>8</u> |
| | | <u>£969</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>11</u> | | | <u>£969</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>11</u> |

*The £40 here acknowledged was an additional subscription from No. subscriber, whose total subscription is therefore £60, not £20, as in above subscriber's account [p.530]: in which also the initials of No. 38 should by S.G., and the sum £2, 2s. These errors will be corrected in next *Fors* [see p. 578], in which also I will separated the interest from the subscriptions.

THE UNION BANK OF LONDON (CHANCERY LANE BRANCH)
IN ACCOUNT WITH ST GEORGE'S FUND

| <i>Dr.</i> | | £ | s | d | | £ | s | d | <i>Cr</i> |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|------|----|----|----------|-----------------------------------|------|---|-----------|
| 1875 | | | | | 1875 | | | | |
| Jan. 1. | To Balance | 50 | 11 | 8 | Nov. 13 | By Cheque to John Ruskin, Esq. | 500 | 0 | 0 |
| Jan. 7. | “ Dividend on £7000 Consols | 104 | 2 | 6 | | | | | |
| Feb. 4. | “ John Ruskin, Esq. | 105 | 10 | 0 | | | | | |
| Feb. 8. | “ Draft at Manchester (Walker) | 1 | 1 | 0 | | | | | |
| March 1. | “ John Ruskin, Esq. | 17 | 2 | 0 | | | | | |
| March 5. | “ Ditto | 8 | 17 | 0 | | | | | |
| | “ Draft at Bilston (Wilkins) | 8 | 3 | 4 | | | | | |
| April 23. | “ Irvine | 1 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| May 1. | “ John Ruskin, Esq. | 20 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| July 7. | “ Dividend on £8000 Consols | 119 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| July 15. | “ John Ruskin, Esq. | 50 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| Sept. 11. | “ G. Gilbert | 5 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| Sept. 28 | “ Draft at Bridgwater (Talbot) | 11 | 0 | 4 | | | | | |
| Nov. 23. | “ By G. Allen | 12 | 14 | 0 | Dec. 31. | By Balance | 14 | 1 | 10 |
| | | £514 | 1 | 10 | | | £514 | 1 | 10 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | | | | |
| 1876 | | £ | s | d | | | | | |
| Jan. 1. | To Balance | 14 | 1 | 10 | | | | | |

24. (II) Affairs of the Master. *

*My friends (see a really kind article in the Monetary Gazette¹) much doubt, and very naturally, the wisdom of this exposition. I indeed expected to appear to some better advantage; but that the confession is not wholly pleasant, and appears imprudent, only makes it the better example. *Fors* would have it so.

¹[A review of Letter 62 in the number for February 16, 1876: “We are struck with the frankness with which Mr. Ruskin discloses his own personal wealth and expenses, and also the affair of the St. George’s Company, the members of which he is determined shall have ‘glass pockets.’ Society could never have expected so much as this from him; nor are we sure that in the present state of things such frankness is absolutely wise, especially in relation to his private affairs. But the act itself, and the manner of doing it, show a lofty courage that could only be inspired by the purity of motive. Were the same spirit of frankness to pervade directors generally, and those who are charged with the responsibility of submitting accounts to the public, the miserable shams that afflict and oppress the community, both commercial and social, would within twelve months dissolve, and there would be some chance for the inauguration of the reign of truth. It is probably this consummation that Mr. Ruskin seeks to influence by his personal example.”]

| | | £ | s. | d. |
|--|----|-------|----|----------------|
| Balance in Bank, 20th Jan., 1876 | | 527 | 17 | 9 |
| Received: Mr. Allen, on Publishing Account | | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr. Ellis, on ditto | | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Lecture, London Institution | | 10 | 10 | 0 |
| | | <hr/> | | |
| | | 595 | 7 | 9 |
| <i>Jan.</i> 24. Royal Insurance Company (<i>a</i>) | 37 | 10 | 0 | |
| 27. F. Crawley (<i>b</i>) | 25 | 0 | 0 | |
| 31. Taxes on Armorial Bearings, etc. | 7 | 19 | 0 | |
| <i>Feb.</i> 4. Warren and Jones—Tea for Shop | 36 | 1 | 0 | |
| 6. Buying a lad off who had enlisted and repented | 20 | 20 | 0 | |
| 7. Christmas Gifts in Oxford | 14 | 10 | 0 | |
| 7. Klein (<i>c</i>) | 5 | 0 | 0 | |
| 7. Pocket Money | 10 | 10 | 0 | |
| 7. Crawley | 5 | 0 | 0 | |
| 8. Miss Rudkin, Clifford Street (<i>d</i>) | 14 | 14 | 4 | |
| 11. Dr. Parsons (<i>e</i>) | 21 | 0 | 0 | |
| 11. The Bursar of Corpus (<i>f</i>) | 27 | 7 | 3 | |
| 13. Professor Westwood (<i>g</i>) | 50 | 0 | 0 | |
| 14. Mr. Sly (<i>h</i>), Coniston, Waterhead Inn | 33 | 0 | 0 | |
| 19. Downs (<i>i</i>) | 25 | 0 | 0 | |
| 20. Subscriptions to Societies, learned and other (<i>k</i>) | 37 | 11 | 11 | |
| | | <hr/> | | |
| | | 370 | 2 | 3 ¹ |
| | | <hr/> | | |
| Balance Feb. 20 | | £225 | 5 | 6 |

(*a*) Insurance on £ 15,000 worth of drawings and books in my rooms at Oxford.

(*b*) Particulars of this account to be afterwards given;² my Oxford assistant having just lost his wife, and been subjected to unusual expenses.

(*c*) My present valet, a delightful old German, on temporary service.

(*d*) Present, on my birthday, of a silk frock to one of my pets. It became her very nicely; but I think there was a little too much silk in the flounces.³

(*e*) My good doctor at Coniston. Had to drive over from Hawkshead every other winter day, because I wouldn't stop drinking too much tea—also my servants were ill.

(*f*) About four times this sum will keep me comfortably—all the year round—here among my Oxford friends—when I have reduced myself to the utmost allowable limit of a St. George's Master's income—366 pounds a year (the odd pound for luck).

(*g*) For Copies of the Book of Kells, bought of a poor artist. Very beautiful, and good for gifts to St. George.⁴

¹ [Hitherto printed "£360 2 0": see the correction made below, p. 585. The balance (hitherto printed £225 5s. 9d.) is here also corrected, as marked by Ruskin in Rawdon Brown's copy in the Library of St. Mark. Ruskin's note of correction is dated "J. R. Venice. 7th Nov., 1876."]

² [This, however, was not done.]

³ [See below, p. 610.]

⁴ [There are no examples of the Book of Kells in the Ruskin Museum at Sheffield, but there are some in his Drawing School at Oxford (see Vol. XXI. p. 50 *n.*), and others were placed by him at Whitelands College, Chelsea.]

(h) My honest host (happily falsifying his name), for friends when I haven't houseroom, etc. This bill chiefly for hire of carriages.

(i) Downs shall give account of himself in next *Fors*.¹

| | £ | s. |
|----------------------------|-----|----|
| (k) Athenæum | 7 | 7 |
| Alpine Club | 1 | 1 |
| Early English Text Society | 10 | 10 |
| Horticultural | 4 | 4 |
| Geological | 2 | 2 |
| Architectural | 1 | 1 |
| Historical | 1 | 1 |
| Anthropological | 2 | 2 |
| Consumption Hospital | 3 | 3 |
| Lifeboat | 5 | 0 |
| | £37 | 11 |

¹ [This, however, was not done. But see Letter 66, § 22 (pp. 631–632), for a “typical example of one of Downs’s weekly bills.”]

LETTER 64¹

THE THREE SARCOPHAGI²

1. I WILL begin my letter to-day with our Bible lesson, out of which other necessary lessons will spring. We must take the remaining three sons of Ham together,³ in relation to each other and to Israel.

Mizraim, the Egyptian; Phut, the Ethiopian; Sidon, the Sidonian:⁴ or, in breadth of meaning, the three African powers,—A, of the watered plain, B, of the desert, and C, of the sea; the latter throning itself on the opposite rocks of Tyre, and returning to culminate in Carthage.

A. Egypt is essentially the Hamite slavish *strength* of body and intellect.

B. Ethiopia, the Hamite slavish *affliction* of body and intellect; condemnation of the darkened race that can no more change its skin than the leopard its spots;⁵ yet capable, in its desolation, of nobleness. Read the “What doth hinder me to be baptized?—If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest”⁶ of the Acts; and after that the description in the *Daily Telegraph* (first Monday of March⁷) of the Nubian king, with his sword and his Bible at his right hand, and the tame lioness with her cubs, for his playmates, at his left.

¹ [With this Letter was issued another of Mr. Girdlestone’s pamphlets: see below, § 19 *n.*, p. 576.]

² [See below, § 10.]

³ [The analysis of Genesis is here continued from Letter 62, p. 523.]

⁴ [See Genesis x. 6 and 15.]

⁵ [Jeremiah xiii. 23.]

⁶ [Acts viii. 36, 37.]

⁷ [Ruskin refers to Johannes, King of Abyssinia, against whom an Egyptian expedition was at this time proceeding. A special correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* (Monday, February 26, 1876) describes “this royal warrior” as “regularly attended by three loose lions who are always on hand when he receives his nobility or foreigners of distinction.”]

C. Tyre¹ is the Hamite slavish *pleasure* of sensual and idolatrous art, clothing her nakedness with sea purple. She is lady of all beautiful carnal pride, and of the commerce that feeds it,—her power over the Israelite being to beguile, or help for pay, as Hiram.²

But Ethiopia and Tyre are always connected with each other: Tyre, the queen of commerce; Ethiopia, her gold-bringing slave; the redemption of these being Christ's utmost victory. "They of Tyre, with the Morians—*there*, even *there*, was He born." "Then shall princes come out of Egypt, and Ethiopia stretch forth her hands unto God." "He shall let go my captives, not for price; and the *labour* of Egypt, and *merchandise* of Ethiopia, shall come over unto thee, and shall be thine."*

2. Learn now, after the fifteenth, also the sixteenth verse of Genesis x.,³ and read the fifteenth chapter with extreme care.⁴ If you have a good memory, learn it by heart from beginning to end; it is one of the most sublime and pregnant passages in the entire compass of ancient literature.

Then understand generally that the spiritual meaning of Egyptian slavery is *labour without hope*, but having all the reward, and all the safety of labour absolute. Its beginning is to discipline and adorn the body,—its end is to embalm the body; its religion is first to restrain, then to judge, "whatsoever things are done in the body, whether they be good or evil."⁵ Therefore, whatever may be well done by

* Psalm lxxviii. 31; lxxxiii. 7 and 8; lxxxvii. 4;⁶ Isaiah xlv. 13, 14. I am not sure of my interpretation of the 87th Psalm; but, as far as any significance exists in it to our present knowledge, it can only be of the power of the Nativity of Christ to save Rahab the harlot,⁷ Philistia the giant, Tyre the trader, and Ethiopia the slave.

¹ [Compare the notes on Tyre, appended in this edition to *St. Mark's Rest* (Vol. XXIV. pp. 447 *seq.*.)]

² [See 1 Kings v.]

³ [Compare Letter 65, § 11 (p. 596).]

⁴ [For the author's exposition of Genesis xv., see Letter 65, §§ 1 *seq.* (pp. 587 *seq.*.)]

⁵ [2 Corinthians v. 10.]

⁶ [Prayer-book version.]

⁷ [For correction of this interpretation, see Letters 66, §§ 8 and 26 (pp. 618, 637), and 75, § 12 (Vol. XXIX. p. 69). See also *St. Mark's Rest*, § 26 (Vol. XXIV. p. 228).]

measure and weight,—what force may be in geometry, mechanism, and agriculture, bodily exercise, and dress; reverent esteem of earthly birds, and beasts, and vegetables; reverent preparation of pottage, good with flesh;—these shall Egypt teach and practise, to her much comfort and power. “And when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt he called his sons.”¹

3. And now remember the scene at the threshing-floor of Atad (Gen. 50th, 10 and 11²).

“A grievous mourning.” They embalmed Jacob. They put him in a coffin. They dutifully bore him home, for his son’s sake. Whatsoever may well be done of earthly deed, they do by him and his race. And the end of it all, for *them*, is a grievous mourning.

Then, for corollary, remember,—all fear of death, and embalming of death, and contemplating of death, and mourning for death, is the pure bondage of Egypt.

4. And whatsoever is formal, literal, miserable, material, in the deeds of human life, is the preparatory bondage of Egypt; of which, nevertheless, some formalism, some literalism, some misery, and some flesh-pot comfort, will always be needful for the education of such beasts as we are. So that, though, when Israel was a child, God loved him, and called his son out of Egypt,³ He preparatorily sent him *into* Egypt. And the first deliverer of Israel had to know the wisdom of Egypt before the wisdom of Arabia; and for the last deliverer of Israel, the dawn of infant thought, and the first vision of the earth He came to save, was under the palms of Nile.⁴

¹ [Genesis xlii. 1.]

² [“And they came to the threshing-floor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days. And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore the name of it was called Abel-mizraim, which is beyond Jordan.”]

³ [Hosea xi. 1.]

⁴ [Matthew ii. 14, 15: “He took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt; and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.” Compare Appendix 15 (Vol. XXIX. p. 563).]

Now, therefore, also for all of us, Christians in our nascent state of muddy childhood, when Professor Huxley is asking ironically, “Has a frog a soul?”¹ and scientifically directing young ladies to cut out frogs’ stomachs to see if they can find it,—whatsoever, I say, in our necessary education among that scientific slime of Nile, is formal, literal, miserable, and material, is necessarily Egyptian.

As, for instance, brickmaking, scripture, flogging, and cooking,—upon which four heads of necessary art I take leave to descant a little.

5. And first of brickmaking. Every following day the beautiful arrangements of modern political economists, obeying the law of covetousness instead of the law of God, send me more letters from gentlemen and ladies asking me “how they are to live?”

Well, my refined friends, you will find it needful to live, if it be with success, according to God’s Law; and to love that law, and make it your meditation all the day.² And the first uttered article in it is, “In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread.”³

“But you don’t really expect us to work with our hands, and make ourselves hot?”⁴

¹ [On November 8, 1870, Huxley read a paper to the Metaphysical Society, entitled “Has a Frog a Soul? and if so, Of what Nature is that Soul?” A brief abstract of the paper is given in Leonard Huxley’s *Life and Letters of Huxley*, vol. i. pp. 458–459 (ed. 1903); its purport was “to give pause to current theories on the supposed relations of soul and body in the human subject,” by arguing that a frog also may be credited with “a soul distributed along its spinal marrow.” For another reference to Huxley’s paper, see Vol. XXII. p. 504 (where the note should be cancelled). Ruskin describes the meeting of the Society at which the paper was read in a letter to Professor Norton of November 10, 1870 (see a later volume of this edition).]

² [Psalms cxix. 97.]

³ [Genesis iii. 19.]

⁴ [A sheet of MS. gives another draft of this passage, which seems to have been first written for the Letter to Girls (p. 608):—

“My dear, neither your father, nor all your ancestors back to Noah or Deucalion—though every one of them had been a king and every one left you a king’s treasury—could all together, with any command or gift of theirs, give you the right to live an hour in idleness. To every daughter, to every son of man, the same absolute command is given, ‘Child, go work *to-day* in my vineyard.’ In death only shall you find permitted rest.

“I will suppose that you are a girl of rank, and a Christian; and that

Why, who, in the name of Him who made you, are you then, that you shouldn't? Have you got past the flaming sword, back into Eden; and is your celestial opinion, there, that we miserable Egyptians are to work outside, here, for *your* dinners, and hand them through the wall to you at a tourniquet? or, as being yet true servants of the devil, while you are blessed, dish it up to you, spiritually hot, through a trap-door?

Fine anti-slavery people you are, forsooth! who think it is right not only to make slaves, but *accursed* slaves, of other people, that you may slip your dainty necks out of the collar!

“Ah, but we thought Christ's yoke had *no* collar!”

It is time to know better. There may come a day, indeed, when there shall be no more curse;¹—in the meantime, you must be humble and honest enough to take your share of it.

6. So what *can* you do, that's useful? Not to ask too much at first; and, since we are now coming to particulars, addressing myself first to gentlemen,—Do you think you can make a brick, or a tile?²

you have been doing, hitherto, a more or less embarrassed and doubtful duty, partly to your relations and the world, partly to the poor. But your duty is at present, believe me, to your relations and your own class, only through the poor. Your superiority to them consists in your power of helping them; to that end, and to that only, you are rich, titled, or lovely, and in none of these powers have you any right to rest, while this suffering of others is around you. I am sick of repeating this to deaf ears. Strange and very frightful it is to me, that after speaking what I know to be truth to this class of women, in books which many of them assuredly read with some pleasure and assent, I have not the name of so much as *one* for a helper in any plan or purpose that I have at heart.

“First Article of the Law. ‘In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread.’

“Now therefore—What can you do? ‘But, you don't expect us really to work with our hands and make ourselves hot’? Why, who are *you*, I wonder, that you shouldn't?

“Did you ever get into Eden again, or anywhere out of the way of the curse, outside?”

For the Bible reference in this passage, see Matthew xxi. 28; for “death the only freedom,” see *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 79 (Vol. XIX. p. 126).]

¹ [Revelation xxii. 3.]

² [Compare *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 304), where Ruskin says that “the best academy for English architects . . . would be the brick-field.”]

You rather think not? Well, if you are healthy, and fit for work, and can do nothing better,—go and learn.

You would rather not? Very possibly: but you can't have your dinner unless you do. And why would you so much rather not?

“So ungentlemanly!”

No; to beg your dinner, or steal it, is ungentlemanly. But there is nothing ungentlemanly, that I know of, in beating clay, and putting it in a mould.

“But my wife wouldn't like it!”

Well, that's a strong reason: you shouldn't vex your wife, if you can help it; but why will she be vexed? If she is a nice English girl, she has pretty surely been repeating to herself, with great unction, for some years back, that highly popular verse,—

“The trivial round, the common task,
Will give us all we ought to ask,—
Room to deny ourselves; a road
To bring us daily nearer God.”¹

And this, which I recommend, is not a trivial round, but an important square, of human business; and will certainly supply any quantity of room to deny yourselves in; and will bring you quite as near God as, for instance, writing lawyers' letters to make appointments, and charging five shillings each for them.² The only difference will be that, instead of getting five shillings for writing a letter, you will only get it for a day and a half's sweat of the brow.

7. “Oh, but my wife didn't mean *that* sort of ‘common task’ at all!”

No; but your wife didn't know what she meant; neither did Mr. Keble. Women and clergymen have so long been in the habit of using pretty words without ever troubling themselves to understand them, that they now revolt from

¹ [Keble, *The Christian Year* (“Morning”). The second line is in the original “Would furnish all we ought to ask.” For a letter of comment by Coventry Patmore on this passage in *Fors*, and Ruskin's rejoinder, see Letters 80, § 7, and 81, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 177, 194).]

² [See below, § 22 (pp. 579–582).]

the effort, as if it were an impiety. So far as your wife had any meaning at all, it was that until she was made an angel of, and had nothing to do but be happy, and sing her flattering opinions of God for evermore,—dressing herself and her children becomingly, and leaving cards on her acquaintances, were sufficiently acceptable services to Him, for which, trivial though they were, He would reward her with immediate dinner, and everlasting glory. That was your wife's real notion of the matter, and modern Christian women's generally, so far as they have got any notions at all under their bonnets, and the skins of the dead robins they have stuck in them,—the disgusting little savages.¹ But that is by no means the way in which either your hands are to be delivered from making the pots, or her head from carrying them.

8. Oh, but you will do it by deputy, and by help of capital, will you? Here is the Grand Junction Canal Brick, Tile, and Sanitary Pipe Company, Limited; Capital, £50,000, in 10,000 shares of £5 each; “formed for the purpose of purchasing and working an estate comprising fifty-eight acres of land known as the ‘Millpost Field,’ and ‘The Duddles,’ situate at Southall, in the county of Middlesex.” You will sit at home, serene proprietor, not able, still less willing, to lift so much as a spadeful of Duddles yourself; but you will feed a certain number of brickmaking Ethiopian slaves thereon, as cheap as you can; and teach them to make bricks, as basely as they can; and you will put the meat out of their mouths into your own, and provide for their eternal salvation by gracious ministries from Uxbridge. A clerical friend of mine in that neighbourhood² has, I hear, been greatly afflicted concerning the degenerate natures of brickmakers. Let him go and make, and burn, a pile or two with his own hands; he will thereby receive apocalyptic visions of a nature novel to his soul. And if he ever succeeds in making one

¹ [Compare “Readings in *Modern Painters*,” § 32 (Vol. XXII. p. 518), where Ruskin refers to this passage.]

² [The Rev. J. C. Hilliard, Vicar of Cowley, near Uxbridge.]

good brick (the clay must lie fallow in wind and sun two years before you touch it, my master Carlyle tells me), he will have done a good deed for his generation which will be acknowledged in its day by the Stone of Israel,¹ when the words of many a sermon will be counted against their utterers, every syllable as mere insolent breaking of the third commandment.

In the meantime, it seems that no gracious ministries from Uxbridge, or elsewhere, can redeem this untoward generation of brickmakers. Like the navvies of Furness (Letter 11, § 3²), they are a fallen race, fit for nothing but to have dividends got out of them, and then be damned. My fine-lady friends resign themselves pacifically to that necessity, though greatly excited, I perceive, at present, concerning vivisection.³ In which warmth of feeling they are perfectly right, if they would only also remember that England is spending some thirty millions of pounds a year in making machines for the vivisection, not of dogs, but men; nor is this expenditure at all for anatomical purposes; but, in the real root of it, merely to maintain the gentlemanly profession of the Army, and the ingenious profession of Engineers.

9. "Oh, but we don't want to live by soldiering, any more than by brickmaking; behold, we are intellectual persons, and wish to live by literature."

Well, it is a slavish trade,—true Hamite; nevertheless, if we will learn our elements in true Egyptian bondage, some good may come of it.

For observe, my literary friends, the essential function of the slavish Egyptian, in the arts of the world, is to lose the picture in the letter; as the essential function of the Eleutherian Goth⁴ is to illuminate the letter into the picture.

The Egyptian is therefore the scribe of scribes,—the

¹ [See Matthew xxi. 42.]

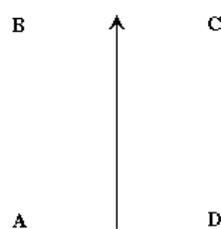
² [Vol. XXVII. pp. 182–183.]

³ [For Ruskin's views on vivisection, see Vol. XXVI. p. 179; and compare Letter 75, § 10 (Vol. XXIX. p. 67).]

⁴ [Compare above, p. 526.]

supremely literary person of earth. The banks of Nile give him his rock volume: the reeds of Nile his paper roll. With cleaving chisel, and cloven reed, he writes thereon, exemplarily: the ark which his princess found among the paper reeds,¹ is the true beginning of libraries,—Alexandrian, and all other.² What you call Scripture, in special, coming out of it; the first portion written in Egyptian manner (it is said) with the finger of God.³ Scribe and lawyer alike have too long forgotten the lesson,—come now and learn it again, of Theuth, with the ibis beak.*

10. When next you are in London on a sunny morning, take leisure to walk into the old Egyptian gallery of the British Museum, after traversing which for a third of its length, you will find yourself in the midst of a group of four massy sarcophagi,—two on your left, two on your right. Assume that they are represented by the letters at the side, and that you are walking in the direction of the arrow, so that you have the sarcophagi A and B on your left, and the sarcophagi C and D on your right.



In my new *Elements of Drawing*,⁴ I always letter the corners of a square all round thus, so that A C is always the diagonal, A B the upright side on the left, and A D the base.

The sarcophagus A is a king's; B, a scribe's; C, a queen's; and D, a priest's.

A is of a grand basaltic rock with veins full of agates, and white onyx,—the most wonderful piece of crag I know; B and C are of grey porphyry; D of red granite.⁵

* Letter 17, § 5. [Vol. XXVII. p. 294.]

¹ [Exodus ii. 5.]

² [Compare Vol. XXV. p. 280.]

³ [Exodus xxxi. 18: "And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God."]

⁴ [That is, the *Laws of Fésole*: see Vol. XV. p. 358.]

⁵ [These four sarcophagi are in the Southern Egyptian Gallery. A is of King Nectanebus; B, of the royal scribe, Hâpimen; C, of Anchnesneferabra, daughter of Psammetichus II., and wife of Amasis II.; D, of Naskatu, a priest of Memphis.]

The official information concerning sarcophagus A (Nectanebus) is to the effect that it dates from the 30th dynasty, or about 380 B.C.¹

B (Hapimen), of the 26th dynasty, or about 525.

C (the queen's), of the same dynasty and period.

D (Naskatu), of the 27th dynasty, or about 500 B.C.

11. The three sarcophagi, then, B, C, and D, were (we are told) cut exactly at the time when, beyond the North Sea, Greek art, just before Marathon, was at its grandest.

And if you look under the opened lid of the queen's, you will see at the bottom of it the outline portrait, or rather symbol, of her, engraved, with the hawk for her crest, signifying what hope of immortality or power after death remained to her.²

But the manner of the engraving you must observe. This is all that the Egyptian Holbein could do on stone, after a thousand years at least of practised art; while the Greeks, who had little more than begun only two hundred years before, were already near to the strength of carving their Theseus, perfect for all time.³

This is the Hamite bondage in Art: of which the causes will teach themselves to us as we work, ourselves. Slavery is good for us in the beginning, and for writing-masters we can find no better than these Mizraimites:⁴ see what rich lines of Scripture there are, along the black edges of those tombs. To understand at all how well they are done, we must at once begin to do the like, in some sort, ourselves.

12. By the exercise given in *Fors* of January,⁵ if you

¹ [This is the sarcophagus described in *Ethics of the Dust* (see Vol. XVIII. p. 332), and referred to in Ruskin's Catalogue of Minerals shown at Edinburgh (Vol. XXVI. p. 523).]

² [The figure of the queen is engraved on Plate H in Vol. XX. p. 411; see also *Ariadne Florentina*, § 146 (Vol. XXII. p. 394).]

³ [For the Theseus, see Plate X. in Vol. XXVII. (p. 396).]

⁴ [Genesis x. 6: "And the sons of Ham; Cush, Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan."]

⁵ [Letter 61, §§ 8, 9 (p. 492).]

have practised it, you have learned something of what is meant by merit and demerit in a pure line, however produced. We must now consider of our tools a little.

You can make a mark upon things in three ways—namely, by scratching them, painting on them with a brush, or letting liquid run on them out of a pen. Pencil or chalk marks are merely a kind of coarse painting with dry material.

The primitive and simplest mark is the scratch or cut, which shall be our first mode of experiment. Take a somewhat blunt penknife, and a composition candle; and scratch or cut a fine line on it with the point of the knife, drawing the sharp edge of the knife towards you.

Examine the trace produced through a magnifying glass, and you will find it is an angular ditch with a little ridge raised at its side, or sides, pressed out of it.

13. Next, scratch the candle with the point of the knife, turning the side of the blade forwards: you will now cut a broader furrow, but the wax or composition will rise out of it before the knife in a beautiful spiral shaving, formed like the most lovely little crimped or gathered frill; which I've been trying to draw, but can't; and if *you* can, you will be far on the way to drawing spiral staircases, and many other pretty things.

Nobody, so far as I have myself read, has yet clearly explained why a wood shaving, or continuously driven portion of detached substance, should thus take a spiral course; nor why a substance like wax or water, capable of yielding to pressure, should rise or fall under a steady force in successive undulations. Leaving these questions for another time, observe that the first furrow, with the ridge at its side, represents the entire group of incised lines ploughed in soft grounds, the head of them all being the plough furrow itself. And the line produced by the flat side of the knife is the type of those produced by complete *excision*, the true engraver's.

14. Next, instead of wax, take a surface of wood, and,

drawing first as deep and steady a furrow in it as you can with the edge of the knife, proceed to deepen it by successive cuts.

You will, of course, find that you must cut from the two sides, sloping to the middle, forming always a deeper angular ditch; but you will have difficulty in clearing all out neatly at the two ends.

And if you think of it, you will perceive that the simplest conceivable excision of a clear and neat kind must be that produced by three cuts given triangularly.* For though you can't clear out the hollow with two touches, you need not involve yourself in the complexity of four.

And unless you take great pains in keeping the three sides of this triangle equal, two will be longer than the third. So the

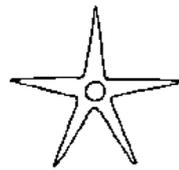


Fig. 10

type of the primitive incised mark is what grand persons call "cuneiform"—wedge-shaped.

15. If you cut five such cuneiform incisions in a star group, thus, with a little circle connecting them in the middle, you will have the element of the decorative upper border both on the scribe's coffin and the queen's. You will also have an elementary picture of a starfish—or the portrait of the pentagonal and absorbent Adam and Eve who were your ancestors, according to Mr. Darwin.¹

You will see, however, on the sarcophagi that the rays are not equidistant, but arranged so as to express vertical position,—of that afterwards;² to-day observe only the manner of their cutting; and then on a flat surface of porphyry,—do the like yourself.

You don't know what porphyry is—nor where to get

¹ [The starfish figures in *The Descent of Man* (part i. ch. iv.), in the "Comparison of the Mental Powers of Man and the Lower Animals" as showing parental affection.]

² [For further instructions, see Letter 65, § 20 (p. 605).]

Fidei catholicae dei tui ob
servantia

pro **I**ohanne
episcopo.

it? Write to Mr. Tennant, 149, Strand,¹ and he will send you a little bit as cheap as he can. Then you must get a little vice to fix it, and a sharp-pointed little chisel, and a well-poised little hammer; and, when you have cut your asterisk, you will know more about Egypt than nine hundred and ninety-nine people out of a thousand,—Oxford scholars and all. Awaiting the result of your experiment,² I proceed to the other instrument of writing, the reed, or pen.

Of which the essential power is that it can make a narrow stroke sideways, and a broad one when you press it open.

16. Now our own current writing, I told you,³ is to be equal in thickness of line. You will find that method the quickest and serviceablest. But in quite beautiful writing, the power of the pen is to be exhibited with decision; and of its purest and delicatest exertion, you will see the result on the opposite page; facsimile by Mr. Burgess, coloured afterwards by hand, from a piece of Lombardic writing, of about the eleventh century,—(I shall not say where the original is, because I don't want it to be fingered⁴)—which the scribe has entirely delighted in doing, and of which every line and touch is perfect in its kind. Copy it, with what precision you can (and mind how you put in the little blue dash to thicken the s of Fides), for in its perfect uprightness, exquisite use of the diamond-shaped touches obtained by mere pressure on the point, and reserved administration of colour, it is a model not to be surpassed; standing precisely half-way between old Latin letters and mediæval Gothic. The legend of it is—

“Fides catholica edita ab Athana-
sio Alexandrie sedis episcopo.”

¹ [Thus in the original edition of 1876. Mr. Tennant died in 1881: see Vol. XXVI. p. 451, and compare Vol. XII. p. 438.]

² [For a “result of the experiment,” see below, Letter 69, § 23 (p. 709): “Week’s Diary of a Companion of St. George.”]

³ [See above, p. 495.]

⁴ [The manuscript referred to is not in the British Museum, nor in the Bodleian. For another reference to this specimen of writing, see Letter 94, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 486).]

17. Towards the better understanding of which Catholic faith, another step may be made, if you will, by sending to Mr. Ward for the Etruscan Leucothea,* with Dionysus on her knees,¹ which also stands just half-way in imagination, though only a quarter of the way in time, between the Egyptian Madonna (Isis with Horus²), of fifteen hundred years before Christ, and the Florentine Madonna by Lippi, fifteen hundred years after Christ. Lippi, being true-bred Etruscan, simply raises the old sculpture into pure and sacred life, retaining all its forms, even to the spiral of the throne ornament, and the transgression of the figures on the bordering frame, acknowledging, in this subjection to the thoughts and laws of his ancestors, a nobler Catholic Faith than Athanasius wrote: faith, namely, in that one Lord by whose breath, from the beginning of creation, the children of men are born; and into whose hands, dying, they give up their spirit.

18. This photograph of Etruscan art is therefore to be the second of our possessions, and means of study; affording us at once elements of art-practice in many directions, according to our strength; and as we began with drawing

* I take the title of this relief from Mr. Parker's catalogue, not being certain of the subject myself, and rather conceiving it to be Latona with Apollo.

¹ [Plate V. here. "Bas-relief of Leucothea and Bacchus, a female figure in a chair with a child. In the Villa Albani, Rome (980)." So described under No. 2828 in Mr. Parker's Catalogue (*Historical Photographs*, by J. H. Parker). The work, however, is not Etruscan; rather does it recall the style of the archaic Attic reliefs (for Ruskin's remarks on the resemblance between Attic and Etruscan art, see Preface to Xenophon's *Economist*, § 19). "The former view, which saw in this relief a representation of the education of the young Dionysus by Leucothea, scarcely requires refutation at the present stage of archæological science. All authorities now recognize it as a tomb-relief, in which the deceased is represented as a happy mother, seated in a chair and caressing her little daughter. A relative or servant hands her a ribbon, either for her own decoration or for that of the child. The two other smaller female figures are either older daughters or servantmaids; their outstretched hands seem to express their delight in the gaiety of the little one. The wool-basket below the chair indicates that the deceased was a thrifty and diligent housekeeper" (see the English translation of W. Helbig's *Guide to the Public Collections of Classical Antiquities in Rome*, 1896, vol. ii. pp. 33-34).]

² [The woodcut here inserted (Fig. 11) is from a bronze in the Third Egyptian Room of the British Museum; it is of the twelfth century B.C.]



Louvre Photograph. N° 2

Altes & Co. Sc.

"Leucothea"

From a relief in the Villa Albani, Rome

the beads of cap, and spiral of chair, in the Lippi,¹ rather than the Madonna, so here it will be well to be sure we can draw the throne, before we try the Leucothea. Outline it first by the eye, then trace the original, to correct your drawing; and by the time next *Fors* comes out, I hope your power of drawing a fine curve, like that of the back of this throne, will be materially increased; by that time also I shall have got spirals to compare with these Etruscan ones, drawn from shells only an hour or two old, sent me by my good friend Mr. Sillar² (who taught me the wrongness of the infinite spiral of money interest), by which I am at present utterly puzzled, finding our conclusions in last *Fors*³ on this point of zoology quite wrong; and that the little snails have no less twisted houses than the large. But neither for drawing nor architecture is there to-day more time, but only to correct and clarify my accounts, which I have counted a little too far on my



Fig. II

¹ [See Letter 59, § 8 (p. 447).]

² [See Letter 65, § 16 (p. 601).]

³ [See above, pp. 554–555; and below, p. 601.]

power of keeping perspicuous without trouble; and have thereby caused my subscribers and myself a good deal more than was needful.

19. Henceforward I must ask their permission, unless I receive definite instruction to the contrary, to give names in full, as the subscriptions come in, and give up our occult notation.¹

20. I have to acknowledge a quite magnificent gift of modern Japanese inlaid work to our Sheffield Museum, from my kind friend Mr. Henry Willett, of Arnold House, Brighton.² A series of some fifty pieces was offered by him for our selection: but I have only accepted a tithe of them, thinking that the fewer examples of each school we possess, the better we shall learn from them. Three out of the five pieces I have accepted are of quite unsurpassable beauty, and the two others of extreme interest. They are sent to the Curator at Sheffield.³

¹ [The first edition contained here the following additional passage:—

“I am not quite so well pleased with my good friend Mr. Girdlestone’s pamphlet on luxury as I was with that on classification of society, though I am heartily glad to be enabled by him to distribute it to my readers, for its gentle statements may be more convincing than my impatient ones. But I must protest somewhat against their mildness. It is not now merely dangerous, but criminal, to teach the lie that the poor live by the luxury of the rich. Able men—even Pope himself—have been betrayed into thinking so in old times (blaming the luxury, however, no less), but the assertion is now made by no intelligent person, unless with the deliberate purpose of disguising abuses on which all the selfish interests of society depend.”]

The pamphlet is entitled *Thoughts on Luxury and Poverty*, by E. D. Girdlestone, B.A., Weston-super-Mare, 1876. The author (p. 4) characterises as false and dangerous “the statement that the poor live by the luxury of the rich.” For Ruskin’s reference to Pope, see in the *Essay on Man* such lines as “The rich is happy in the plenty giv’n” (Epistle II., 264), and the whole argument of Epistle III.]

² [For notices of Mr. Willett, see Letter 85, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 323); Vol. XVI. p. 255 n.; Vol. XVIII. p. 203 n.; and *Deucalion*, i. ch. ix. § 3 (Vol. XXVI. p. 206).]

³ [In writing to Mr. Willett in acknowledgment of this gift, Ruskin said (Oxford, March 13, 1876):—

“Well,—this would be indeed a magnificent gift of yours, but I cannot accept more than the twentieth part of it. I have no room, for one thing; but chiefly, I think this Japanese art, however interesting in itself, not good to be long looked at, or in many examples. I have kept the exquisite inlaid flock black—what should I call them? (there now, I’ve mislaid the catalogue, and must finish this note without finding it)—the three coloured pictures in pearl, I mean, and three of the bird trays.”

For the examples accepted for the Museum, see Vol. XXX.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

21. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

I give on the next page our banker's account to 14th March of this year. Calling this "Account B," and that given to the end of last year, in last *Fors*,¹ "Account A," the following abstract of both is, I hope, accurate.

| | £ | s. | d. |
|----------------------------|-----|------|------|
| By Account A: | | | |
| Cash paid into bank | 653 | 1 | 0 |
| Interest accumulated | 780 | 5 | 6 |
| By Account B: | | | |
| Cash paid into bank | 324 | 11 | 1 |
| Interest | 119 | 0 | 0 |
| Giving total to our credit | | 1876 | 17 7 |

Per contra, we have—

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-----|------|------|
| Petty expenses | 0 | 10 | 9 |
| Purchase of £1000 Consols | 918 | 15 | 0 |
| Cheques to myself | 800 | 0 | 0 |
| Balance | 157 | 11 | 10 |
| | | 1876 | 17 7 |

Of the cheques for £800 I will give account presently; but first, we must compare the cash paid in with the subscription list.

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|-----|-----|------|
| The total cash paid in is— | Account A | 653 | 1 | 0 |
| | Account B | 324 | 11 | 1 |
| | | | 977 | 12 1 |

Now see subscription list, after banker's account.

¹ [See above, p. 558.]

THE UNION BANK OF LONDON (CHANCERY LANE BRANCH) IN ACCOUNT
WITH ST. GEORGE'S FUND

| <i>Dr.</i> | | | <i>Cr.</i> | |
|------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|------------|---|
| 1876. | | £ s. d. | 1876. | |
| Jan. 1. | To Balance | 14 1 10 | Feb. 22. | By Charges on two local notes |
| Jan. 6. | „ Dividend on £8000 Consols | 119 0 0 | Feb. 25. | „ Postage of Pass Book |
| Jan. 13. | „ Geo. Allen | 24 11 1 | March 3. | „ John Ruskin, Esq. |
| Feb. 15. | „ John Ruskin, Esq. | 25 0 0 | | |
| Feb. 15. | „ Draft at Sheffield | 8 0 0 | | |
| Feb. 15. | „ „ Ambleside | 6 0 0 | | |
| Feb. 15. | „ „ Bridgwater | 100 0 0 | | |
| Feb. 15. | „ „ Birmingham | 5 0 0 | | |
| Feb. 22. | „ Cash | 35 0 0 | | |
| March 4. | „ Draft at Windsor | 20 0 0 | | |
| March 7. | „ Cash | 25 0 0 | | |
| March 7. | „ Draft at Oxford | 50 0 0 | | |
| March 14. | „ Cash | 6 0 0 | | |
| March 14. | „ Draft at Sheffield | 20 0 0 | March 15. | By Balance |
| | | <u>£457 12 11</u> | | <u>157 11 10</u> |
| | | | | <u>£457 12 11</u> |
| 1876. | | £ s. d. | | |
| March 15. | To Balance | <u>157 11 10</u> | | |

SUBSCRIPTION LIST

To March 14th of this Year

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|------|----|-----|
| Total in <i>Fors</i> of February ¹ | 741 | 14 | 10 |
| (Corrections received note of) | | | |
| No. 8. Additional | | 40 | 0 0 |
| „ 26. „ | | 1 | 5 0 |
| „ 38. Subscriptions 1875, 1876 | | 2 | 2 0 |
| | £785 | 1 | 10 |

Now continuing the list.

| | | | |
|--|------|----|----|
| No. 55. J. W. | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| „ 56. The mother of the first donor of land to St. George ² | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| „ 57. The Curator of our Museum | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| „ 58. B. A., Subscription, 1876 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| „ 59. J. T. S. | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| „ 60. E. L. | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| „ 61. S. I. | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| „ 62. R. R. | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| „ 63. L. L. | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| | 1023 | 11 | 10 |
| Cash paid in | 977 | 12 | 1 |
| Balance in my hands | £45 | 19 | 9 |

¹ [Letter 62, § 19 (p. 530), where the amount given is £742, 16s. 10d., amended on p. 557, by the correction of a subscription, to £741, 14s. 10d.]

² Mrs. Talbot: see above, p. 395.]

The sum in my hands, thus amounting to £845, 19s 9d., has been distributed as follows:—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|--|-------------|-----------|----------------|
| Purchase of land and house at Sheffield | 600 | 0 | 0 |
| Henry Swan—Two quarters' salary to 31st March, 1876 | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| Expenses of repair, Sheffield | 41 | 0 | 0 |
| Prints (Colnaghi). See November <i>Fors</i> ¹ | 29 | 10 | 0 |
| Messrs. Tarrant and Mackrell, 29th December, 1875 | | | |
| | £20 | 17 | 5 ² |
| | <u>26</u> | <u>15</u> | <u>11</u> |
| Balance in my hands | 47 | 13 | 4 |
| | 107 | 16 | 5 ³ |
| | <u>£845</u> | <u>19</u> | <u>9</u> |

22. Messrs. Tarrant and Mackrell's accounts follow. I had an offer from Sheffield to do this legal work for nothing; but I wanted to be sure that everything was in due form, and I can trust this London firm. My very good friend Mr. Tarrant must, however, pardon my pointing out to him how much more pleasantly, for all parties, he might be employed, as suggested in *Fors*, Letter 16, §§ 6, 7,⁴ than in taxing this transfer of property to the amount of nearly fifty pounds—(seven pounds odd worth of letters merely).⁵ For, were the members of the legal profession employed generally in illuminating initials, and so got out of our way, and the lands of the country properly surveyed and fenced, all that would be really needful for the sale of any portion of them by anybody to anybody else, would be the entry in a roll recording the tenure of so many square miles round each principal town. "The piece of land hitherto belonging to A B, is this day sold to and henceforward belongs to C D, whereof, we (city magistrate and a head of any county family) are witnesses."⁶

THE ST. GEORGE'S COMPANY,
To TARRANT & MACKRELL,

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|----|----|----|
| Costs of Purchase of Freehold Land and Messuage in Bell Haig Road, Sheffield 1875. | | | |
| Sept. 20. | | | |
| On receipt of letters from Messrs. Webster, and from Mr. Ruskin, as to purchase of land and a house at Sheffield, writing Messrs. Webster, the vendor's solicitors, to send us contract | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Writing Mr. Ruskin as to amount of purchase money, he having stated it to be £600, and Messrs. Webster £630 | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| Oct. 4. | | | |
| On receipt of draft contract for approval from Messrs. Webster, with abstract of title for inspection, looking through abstract, when we found it would be | | | |
| Carry forward | £0 | 8 | 6 |

¹ [Letter 59, § 16 (p. 457).]

² [The amount as given in the detailed account is, however, £22, Os. 8d.: see p. 582. Yet on p. 628 Mr. Tarrant seems to accept the total £47, 13s. 4d. as correct; presumably a small amount was waived.]

³ [The amount was originally misprinted £106, 16s. 5d.: see Letter 65, § 27 (p. 611).]

⁴ [Vol. XXVII. pp. 282–284.]

⁵ [For Mr. Tarrant's reply, see below, p. 628.]

⁶ [For a later reference to this subject, see Letter 77, § 11 (Vol. XXIX. p. 118).]

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|-----|----|----|
| 1875. | | | |
| Brought forward | 0 | 8 | 6 |
| necessary to have a copy of plan on deed of 1st May, 1857, and an abstract of the Rivelin View Society's Deed of Covenants, before investigating the title, or approving contract | 0 | 13 | 4 |
| Writing Messrs. Webster accordingly | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Copy contract to keep, fo. 15 | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Oct. 11. | | | |
| Perusing abstract of title, nine sheets | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Perusing the Rivelin View Company's Deed of Covenants, four sheets | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Perusing and approving draft contract | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| Writing vendor's solicitors with contract approved and thereon, and for plan which they had omitted to send | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Oct. 13. | | | |
| Writing Messrs. Webster, acknowledging letter approving of our alterations in contract, and asking for plan which they had omitted to send, although in their letter they stated it was enclosed | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Engrossing one part of the contract for signature of Mr. Ruskin, and paid stamp thereon | 0 | 10 | 6 |
| Drawing plan thereon | 0 | 7 | 6 |
| Writing Mr. Ruskin, with contract for his signature, and fully thereon, and as to the contents of the Rivelin View Society's Deed of Covenants, and as to Trustees of the Company to whom the property might be conveyed, and for cheque for £60 for deposit | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Oct. 18. | | | |
| On receipt of letter from Mr. Ruskin with contract signed and cheque for deposit, writing him acknowledging receipt | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| Writing with appointment to exchange contracts and pay deposit | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| Attending exchanging contracts, and paying deposit | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| Oct. 19. | | | |
| Writing our agents at Sheffield (Messrs. Broomhead and Co.) with abstract of title to examine, with deeds, and instructing them | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Oct. 20. | | | |
| Writing vendor's solicitors that contract exchanged and deposit paid to their London agent, and as to examination of title deeds | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Oct. 21. | | | |
| On receipt of abstract from Messrs. Broomhead and Co., with remarks on title, writing them to examine probate of H. Norton's will in hands of Messrs. Tattershall, and on subject of duties, etc., under that will, and returning abstract to them | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| Oct. 23. | | | |
| Attending perusing conditions of sale under which Mr. Bagshawe bought the property before drawing requisitions on title | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| Oct. 29. | | | |
| Drawing requisitions and copy | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Writing vendor's solicitors therewith | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| Nov. 5. | | | |
| Instructions for deed of conveyance | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| Drawing same, fo. 16 | 0 | 16 | 0 |
| Fair copy for perusal | 0 | 5 | 4 |
| Writing Messrs. Webster therewith and fully thereon | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Nov. 10. | | | |
| Engrossing conveyance | 0 | 13 | 4 |
| Paid parchment | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Writing Mr. Ruskin on subject of completion, and for cheque for £540 balance of purchase money, and with consent to be signed by him to conveyance being taken to the Right Hon. W. C. Temple and Sir T. D. Acland as Trustees for the Company, Mr. Ruskin having entered into the contract | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Writing vendor's solicitors, with engrossment for examination, and fully thereon | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Writing Messrs. Broomhead, our agents, instructing them to make proper searches in the Land Registry at Wakefield, and as to completion of purchase | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| Nov. 12. | | | |
| Writing our agents at Sheffield, with cheque for £540 purchase money, and very fully as to registering deed of conveyance, searches, and settling | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Writing Mr. Ruskin acknowledging receipt of his two letters, with two cheques for, together, £540 | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| Carry forward | £11 | 2 | 2 |

LETTER 64 (APRIL 1876)

581

| 1875 | £ | s. | d. |
|--|-----|----|----|
| <i>Nov.</i> 15. Brought forward | 11 | 2 | 2 |
| Attending examining certificates of searches, with abstract, when we found same satisfactory | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| <i>Nov.</i> 16. | | | |
| On receipt of conveyance executed by the vendor and his mortgagee, attending stamping, and afterwards, for same | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| Paid stamp | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Writing our agents, with stamped deed conveyance for registration, and fully thereon | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| <i>Nov.</i> 22. | | | |
| Making schedule of documents received from agents (Messrs. Broomhead), and writing them acknowledging receipt of deeds, and for account of their charges | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| <i>Nov.</i> 29. | | | |
| On receipt of account of agents' charges, amounting to £10, 14s. 11d., writing them with cheque | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| Writing Mr. Ruskin on subject of insurance | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Incidentals | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| | 16 | 1 | 0 |
| Paid Messrs. Broomhead's charges | 10 | 14 | 11 |
| | £26 | 15 | 11 |

THE ST. GEORGE'S COMPANY

To WM. B. TARRANT

General Bill of Costs to 10th December, 1875

| 1875. | £ | s. | d. |
|---|----|----|----|
| <i>Feb.</i> 13. | | | |
| On receipt of letter from Mr. Ruskin, attending him at Herne Hill, and conferring on course to be taken on subject of letter from Messrs. Griffith and Son, of Dolgelly, as to conveyance of cottage property at Barmouth, and on the necessity of trust deed for the purpose of such conveyance, so as to carry out the wishes of Mr. Ruskin and others for improving the condition of agriculturists, and paid rail | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| <i>Feb.</i> 15. | | | |
| Writing Messrs. Griffith and Son, as arranged | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| <i>Feb.</i> 18. | | | |
| Attending Sir Sydney Waterlow, Mr. W. J. Thompson, and others, as to the Industrial Dwellings Company, of which they had been promoters, with a view to obtaining information to guide me in the formation of the St. George's Company | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| <i>Feb.</i> 22. | | | |
| Instructions to counsel to advise in conference on course to be adopted to carry out the scheme | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| Making copy of Mr. Ruskin's letter to accompany instructions | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Attending counsel therewith, when it was arranged that conference should be postponed until Mr. Ruskin, could attend | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| Writing Mr. Ruskin to let me know on what day he could attend conference | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| <i>Feb.</i> 23. | | | |
| On receipt of letter from Messrs. Griffith and Son, writing them fully in reply | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| <i>March</i> 10. | | | |
| Attending counsel, Mr. Barber appointing conference for 3.30 on Monday | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| Writing Mr. Ruskin, with appointment | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| <i>March</i> 15. | | | |
| Attending conference with Mr. Ruskin at Mr. Barber's, when it was decided that he should draw a deed for the purpose of carrying out Mr. Ruskin's wishes, and paid cab | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| Paid counsel's fee and clerk | 1 | 6 | 0 |
| Drawing proposed circular | 0 | 12 | 0 |
| Carry forward | £6 | 13 | 2 |

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|----|----|
| 1875. Brought forward | 6 | 13 | 2 |
| <i>March 21.</i> | | | |
| Attending counsel therewith to settle | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| Paid his fee and clerk | 1 | 3 | 6 |
| <i>March 26.</i> | | | |
| Attending counsel, appointing conference on draft | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| <i>April 26.</i> | | | |
| Attending conference | 0 | 13 | 4 |
| Paid counsel's fee and clerk | 1 | 6 | 0 |
| <i>April 29.</i> | | | |
| Fair copy of proposed circular as settled | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| Letter to Mr. Ruskin therewith and thereon | 0 | 5 | 0 |

TO TARRANT & MACKRELL

| | | | |
|---|-----|----|---|
| <i>June 9.</i> | | | |
| On receipt of letter from Mr. Ruskin on draft circular, making copy of Mr. Ruskin's suggestions to place before counsel three brief sheets | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Perusing and considering same | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Drawing memoranda of constitution of the Company to take place of the circular | 1 | 10 | 0 |
| <i>June 10.</i> | | | |
| Instructions to counsel to settle same, and with Mr. Ruskin's suggestions, etc. | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| Attending counsel therewith | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| Paid his fee and clerk | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| <i>June 11.</i> | | | |
| Long letter to Mr. Ruskin in reply to his of the 27th and 28th ult., and 8th inst. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| <i>June 15.</i> | | | |
| Fair copy memoranda of constitution of the Company, as settled by counsel, fo. 30 | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Writing Mr. Ruskin therewith and thereon | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| <i>June 23.</i> | | | |
| Attending Mr. Ruskin on his calling and handing us print of the proposed memoranda in a number of his <i>Fors Clavigera</i> , and with Mr. Ruskin's suggestions for some alterations; and we were to submit same to counsel, and obtain a conference with him in about a month's time, which Mr. Ruskin would attend | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| <i>Oct. 7.</i> | | | |
| On receipt of the July and October <i>Fors</i> from Mr. Ruskin, attending, perusing, and considering remarks and suggestions contained therein, and bearing on the formation of the St. George's Company, and also your letter to us of the 2nd inst., returning us the draft memoranda sent you on the 15th June, with your remarks thereon, and letter you had received from a correspondent on the subject, attending, perusing, and considering the several letters and documents to enable us to revise the memoranda as desired | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| <i>Oct. 15.</i> | | | |
| Writing Mr. Ruskin very fully on subject of revision of memoranda and statutes, and for further information as to marshals, etc. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| <i>Oct. 24.</i> | | | |
| On receipt of letter from Mr. Ruskin withdrawing all reference to marshals from the proposed memoranda, making fresh copy of the memoranda as drawn, and adding in the margin thereof all suggestions and comments thereon contained in the <i>Fors</i> , and the several letters we had received in connection with the matter | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| <i>Oct. 30.</i> | | | |
| Instructions to counsel to revise memoranda | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| Attending him therewith and thereon | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| Paid his fee and clerk | 1 | 3 | 6 |
| <i>Dec. 10.</i> | | | |
| Writing Mr. Ruskin, with draft memoranda and counsel's amendments, and with counsel's opinion at foot thereof, and also as to insurance of the Sheffield premises | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Petty disbursements and incidentals | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| | £22 | 0 | 8 |

23. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

| | | | | | | £ | s. | d. |
|--|-----|--------------------------------------|----|----|---|-------|----|----|
| Balance, Feb. 20th | | | | | | 225 | 5 | 9 |
| Cash (Portsmouth mortgage, paid March 2nd) | | | | | | 1522 | 12 | 4 |
| | | | | | | £1747 | 18 | 1 |
| <i>Feb</i> | 28. | Klein (<i>a</i>) | 40 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| <i>March</i> | 2. | Raffaello Carloforti (<i>b</i>) | 15 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| | 2. | Thomas Wade, Esq. (<i>c</i>) | 31 | 10 | 0 | | | |
| | 6. | Self (<i>d</i>) | 35 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| | 6. | Arthur Burgess | 30 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| | 9. | F. Crawley (<i>e</i>) | 40 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| | 10. | Charles F. Murray, Esq. (<i>f</i>) | 10 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| | 11. | Antonio Valmarana (<i>g</i>) | 50 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| | 16. | Antonio Coletti (<i>h</i>) | 25 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| | | | | | | 276 | 10 | 0 |
| Balance | | | | | | £1471 | 8 | 1 |

(*a*) Travelling and personal expenses since January 1st, of which I have no space for the details in this *Fors*; it will be given in its place.¹ Klein² has ten pounds a month himself, besides his expenses in Oxford when I've no rooms for him.

(*b*) A youth, whom I am maintaining in art-study at Venice.³ He has £7, 10s. monthly. This payment is to end of April.

(*c*) Water-colour drawing of a cottage at Coniston, likely to be soon destroyed by "improvements."

(*d*) £10 pocket-money, £25 to St. George, money of his in my hands included in my banker's January balance, acknowledged in St. George accounts, March 7th.

(*e*) £21 of this, my own upholsterer's and other bills at Oxford; the rest, Crawley will account for.⁴

(*f*) Drawings made for me at Siena.⁵

(*g*) Fifty drawings made for me by Signor Caldara of Venice, being part of a complete Venetian Herbal in process of execution.⁶ I count none of my money better spent than this.

¹ [This, however, was not done.]

² [Ruskin's valet and courier: see above, p. 559.]

³ [For studies by him placed in St. George's Museum, see Vol. XXX.; and see below, pp. 633, 729, 769; also Vol. XXIX. p. 50.]

⁴ [No account, however, was published.]

⁵ [Not at Sheffield.]

⁶ [Many of these drawings are now in the Oxford Collection: see Vol. XXI. p. 231. For other references to Signor Caldara's work, see Letters 71, § 17 (p. 749), and 74, § 2 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 31). In his set of *Fors*, in the Library of St. Mark at Venice, Rawdon Brown has inserted two letters from Ruskin, thus:—

"I. BRANTWOOD, 17 Oct., '73.

"I should be very much obliged to him, when he has finished the Herbal work, to begin drawing the plants from nature, a flower and leaf separately on white paper—so as to be unplugged by light and shade.

(h) Annual gift to monastery of Assisi,¹ for 1875; not sent last year because I meant to go there. Due always on the Corpus Domini.

24. (III.)

“6, MOIRA PLACE, SOUTHAMPTON, 15th Feb., 1876.

“DEAR SIR,—On referring to *Helix ericetorum* (the species I take your outline² to be enlarged from) in Dr. Turton’s *British Land and Fresh-water Shells*, with additions by Dr. Gray, I find it stated, on the authority of M. Bouchard, that the eggs of *H. ericetorum* are laid from July to November, and are from forty to sixty in number, the time of hatching being twenty days after laying, and the length of the snail’s life is eighteen months. It is not, however, stated whether these particulars refer to *H. ericetorum* in England or France.

“The only extra information I can get from my other book is that heavy rains kill great numbers of them.

“Your drawing refers to the shell of a full-grown snail, shown by its having six whorls, and by the slight reflex curve at the outer end of the spiral.*

“With regard to the formation of the shell, I can state that it was formed by successive additions during the life of the snail, the small dark transparent portion in the centre of the spiral being the nucleus, and the lines and ridges crossing the spiral indicate the different rings or layers of shell added to suit the convenience of the snail.

“I enclose specimens of *H. ericetorum* from Deal, † to enable you to compare them with those from Arundel, to make sure that they are the same species.³

“I am, dear Sir, your obedient servant,

“R. L.”⁴

25. (IV.) “A Swedish newspaper contains a lengthy account of the gallant rescue of a Swedish steamer by the people of the village of Cresswell, Northumberland. Thirteen out of the fifteen male inhabitants manned the boat, to launch which the women waded to their waists. A fisher-girl named Bella Brown ran ten miles to the next lifeboat station for assistance, and had to wade through several bays on an icy January

* Exaggerated a little, I’m afraid.—J. R.

† The shells sent, for which I heartily thank my correspondent, are, I think, the same as mine, only not so white. [J. R.]

I have only thought of this to-day, and am packing for Oxford, so cannot say more; but with next parcel Mr. Caldara might do any Lombardic species, that grows or lives in winter, for specimen.”

“II. PALERMO, 29 Ap., ‘74.

“I cannot make a better pattern drawing for Caldara than the Venetian ones. I want him to paint the natural flower, in exactly the same method as the Venetian, *only noticing any differences in form and distribution of colours*. You will at once feel that my object—the ascertaining if any difference in the plant itself has taken place in four centuries—will be better accomplished by retaining the style of the Venetian representation than by adopting a more modern one.”]

¹ [For Ruskin’s friendship with the monks at Assisi, see Vol. XXIII. p. xxxix.]

² [See above, p. 525.]

³ [See Letters 62, §§ 14–16, and 63, §§ 17–21 (pp. 524–527, 551–555).]

⁴ [Robert Leslie; for whom, see Vol. XXV. p. 179.]

night. The brave girl was seized with cramp on returning, and nearly lost her life.”

26. (V.) Part of a letter from one of my best friends, Fellow and Tutor of Corpus, communicating some recent notes on English scenery:—

“I next went to the Isle of Wight, which is very pretty, but all over-built. It threatens soon to become a mere suburb of London. Portsmouth detained me a day,—all too brief a time for its beauties and horrors, its relics of past naval glories and picturesque bits on land and sea, its nightmare sea-going caldrons, misnamed men-of-war, at the present. I went on board the *Thunderer*, twin ship of the *Devastation*.¹ I had expected something ugly and horrible, both inside and out; but my expectations were surpassed tenfold, especially with regard to the inside of the ship. The crew are confined altogether in utterly dark dungeons at each end of the ship, wholly under water, and hardly high enough for a man to walk in upright. An iron-shielded and very high deck in the middle of the ship is the only place where a man can see the light of day, and live, when this witch’s kettle is at sea, as the ends of the vessel cut under the waves. The bull of Phalaris would have been an eligible prison to me in comparison of this; victims, at any rate, were not sent to sea in it.”

27. (VI.)

“LAXEY, ISLE OF MAN, *March 4th*, 1876.

“DEAR SIR,—In this month’s *Fors*, page 107²—‘Affairs of the Master,’—if you add up the amounts paid out, I think you will find instead of £360, 2s. Od., the amount should be £370, 2s. 3d., and leaves a proper balance of £225, 5s. 6d.

“I hope you will not be offended at me for troubling you with these trifling errors, of no moment; but I have got a singular habit—that I can never pass over a column of added figures, no matter what length, without testing their correctness.

“Yours truly,

“E. RYDINGS.”

(If only my good correspondent—now a Companion—will indulge himself constantly in this good habit as respects the *Fors* accounts, I shall be much more at ease about them. But his postscript is more important.)

“P.S.—You say that the girls of St. George’s Company shall learn to *spin* and *weave*, etc.³ There is a good deal of hand-spinning done on this little island, but I am sorry to say that there are no young girls learning now to spin; and in a few years more, the common spinning-wheel here will be as great a curiosity as it is in Lancashire, where one is never seen—only at the theatre. I have gone to some little trouble to ascertain why the young girls are not learning now to spin; and the principal reason I can gather is that home-spun ‘Manks-made dresses,’ as they are called, last *too long*, and therefore do not give the young women a chance of having four or five new dresses in the year. I could give you some interesting information about hand-spinning and weaving here, but must reserve it for another time, and will send you patterns of cloth, etc. All our blankets, sheets, flannels,

¹ [See above, p. 214.]

² [See now, p. 559.]

³ [See Letter 8, § 10 (Vol. XXVII. p. 143).]

skirts, jacket cloth, stockings, and yarns, have been spun by my wife and her mother before her. We have now linen sheets in wear, not a hole or a tear in them, that were spun by my wife's mother,—and she, poor body, has been dead twenty-eight or twenty-nine years,—the flax grown on their own farm. Fine and white they are, and would compare favourably in *fineness* with machine-made Irish linen. The daughters of Lord Auckland, when he was bishop here, used to go every Saturday afternoon to my wife's mother's (who lived just behind Bishop Court) to learn to spin.

“But I must write you a special letter on the subject when I have got my patterns ready.”¹

¹ [For a further reference to the “Laxey homespun” industry, see below, p. 768; and for a general account of it, see Vol. XXX.]

LETTER 65

THE MOUNT OF THE AMORITES¹

1. I TOLD you in last *Fors* to learn the 15th chapter of Genesis by heart.² Too probably, you have done nothing of the sort; but, at any rate, let us now read it together, that I may tell you, of each verse, what I wanted (and still beg) you to learn it for.

Verse 1. “The word of God came to Abram.” Of course you can’t imagine such a thing as that the word of God should ever come to *you*! Is that because you are worse, or better, than Abram?—because you are a more, or less, civilized person than he? I leave you to answer that question for yourself;—only as I have told you often before, but cannot repeat too often, find out first what the Word *is*; and don’t suppose that the printed thing in your hand, which you call a Bible, is the Word of God, and that the said Word may therefore always be bought at a pious stationer’s for eighteen-pence.

2. Farther, in the “Explanatory and Critical Commentary and Revision of the Translation” (of the Holy Bible) by Bishops and other Clergy of the Established Church, published in 1871, by Mr. John Murray, you will find the interesting statement, respecting this verse, that “This is the first time that the expression—so frequent afterwards—’The Word of the Lord’ occurs in the Bible.” The expression *is* certainly rather frequent afterwards; and one might have perhaps expected from the Episcopal and clerical commentators on this, its first occurrence, some slight

¹ [For the title, see §§ 8, 11.]

² [See Letter 64, § 2 (p. 562).]

notice of the probable meaning of it. They proceed, however, without farther observation, to discuss certain problems, suggested to them by the account of Abram's vision, respecting somnambulism; on which, though one would have thought few persons more qualified than themselves to give an account of that condition, they arrive at no particular conclusion.¹

But even their so carefully limited statement is only one-third true. It is true of the Hebrew Law; not of the New Testament:—of the entire Bible, it is true of the English version only; not of the Latin, nor the Greek. Nay, it is very importantly and notably *untrue* of those earlier versions.

3. There are three words in Latin, expressive of utterance in three very different manners; namely “verbum,” a word, “vox,” a voice, and “sermo,” a sermon.

Now, in the Latin Bible, when St. John says “the Word was in the beginning,”² he says the “Verbum” was in the beginning. But here, when somebody (nobody knows who, and that is a by question of some importance) is represented as saying, “the word of the Lord came to Abram,”³ what somebody really says is that “There was made to Abram a ‘Sermon’ of the Lord.”

Does it not seem possible that one of the almost unconscious reasons of your clergy for not pointing out this difference in expression, may be a doubt whether you ought not rather to desire to hear God preach, than them?

But the Latin word “verbum,” from which you get “verbal” and “verbosity,” is a very obscure and imperfect rendering of the great Greek word “Logos,” from which you get “logic,” and “theology,” and all the other logies.

And the phrase “word of the Lord,” which the Bishops, with unusual episcopal clairvoyance, have really observed to

¹ [The gist of §§ 1, 2, and the latter part of § 9, were read by Ruskin in one of his Oxford lectures of 1875: see the article in the *Century Magazine*, referred to in Vol. XXII. pp. 492, 506, 507.]

² [John i. 1.]

[Genesis xv. 1.]

“occur frequently afterwards” in the English Bible, is, in the Greek Bible, always “the Logos of the Lord.” But this Sermon to Abraham is only “rhema,” an actual or mere *word*; in his interpretation of which, I see, my good Dean of Christ Church quotes¹ the Greek original of Sancho’s proverb, “Fair words butter no parsnips.”² Which we shall presently see to have been precisely Abram’s—(of course cautiously expressed)—feeling, on this occasion. But to understand his feeling, we must look what this sermon of the Lord’s was.

4. The sermon (as reported) was kind, and clear. “Fear not, Abram, I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding great Reward” (“reward” being the poetical English of our translators—the real phrase being “thy exceeding great pay, or gain”). Meaning, “You needn’t make an iron tent, with a revolving gun in the middle of it, for I am your tent and artillery in one; and you needn’t care to get a quantity of property, for *I* am your property; and you needn’t be stiff about your rights of property, because nobody will dispute your right to *Me*.”

To which Abram answers, “Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless?”

Meaning,—“Yes, I know that;—but what is the good of *You* to me, if I haven’t a child? I am a poor mortal: I don’t care about the Heavens or *You*; I want a child.”

Meaning this, at least, if the Latin and English Bibles are right in their translation—“*I* am thy great gain.” But the Greek Bible differs from them; and puts the promise in a much more tempting form to the modern English mind. It does not represent God as offering Himself; but something far better than Himself, actually exchangeable property! Wealth, according to Mr. John Stuart Mill. Here is indeed a prospect for Abram!—and something to refuse, worth thinking twice about. For the Septuagint

¹ [Liddell and Scott’s Greek Lexicon, *s.* ρημα—the proverb being ρηματα ανι.αλιριτων.]

² [Not in *Don Quixote*; see note at Vol. XVIII. p. 417.]

reads, “Fear not, Abram. I am thy Protector, and *thou shalt have* an exceeding great pay.” Practically, just as if, supposing Sir Stafford Northcote¹ to represent the English nation of the glorious future, a Sermon of the Lord should come just now to him, saying, “Fear not, Sir Stafford, I am thy Devastation;² and thou shalt have an exceeding great surplus.”

On which supposition, Abram’s answer is less rude, but more astonishing. “Oh God, what wilt Thou give me? What good is money to me, who am childless?”

Again, as if Sir Stafford Northcote should answer, in the name of the British people, saying, “Lord God, what wilt Thou give me? What is the good to me of a surplus? What can I make of surplus? It is children that I want, not surplus!”

5. A truly notable parliamentary utterance on the Budget, if it might be! Not for a little while yet, thinks Sir Stafford; perhaps, think wiser and more sorrowful people than he, not until England has had to stone, according to the law of Deuteronomy xxi. 18,³ some of the children she has got: or at least to grapeshot them. I couldn’t get anything like comfortable rooms in the Pea Hen at St. Alban’s, the day before yesterday,⁴ because the Pea Hen was cherishing, for chickens under her wings, ever so many officers of the Royal Artillery; and some beautiful sixteen-pounders,—exquisite fulfilments of all that science could devise, in those machines; which were unlimbered in the market-place, on their way to Sheffield—where I am going myself, as it happens. I wonder much, in the name of my mistress, whose finger is certainly in this pie, what

¹ [Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1874–1880.]

² [See above, p. 214.]

³ [Deuteronomy xxi. 18, 21: “If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them. . . . And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.”]

⁴ [Ruskin was at St. Albans on April 20–21 (Thursday to Friday), the first stage on a driving tour from London to Sheffield: see next letter, § 22, p. 631.]

business we have there (both of us), the black machines, and I. As Atropos would have it, too, I had only been making out, with good Mr. Douglas's help, in Woolwich Repository on Wednesday last¹, a German Pea Hen's inscription on a sixteen-pounder of the fourteenth century:—

Ich bin furwahr, ein Grober Baur
Der frist mein ayr, es wurd ihm Saur.²

6. Verse 5th. "And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Tell now the stars, if thou be able to number them. So shall thy seed be."

Of course *you* would have answered God instantly, and told Him the exact number of the stars, and all their magnitudes. Simple Abram, conceiving that, even if he did count all he could see, there might yet be a few more out of sight, does not try.

Verse 6th. "And he believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness."

That, on the whole, is the primary verse of the entire Bible. If that is true, the rest is worth whatever Heaven is worth; if that is untrue, the rest is worth nothing. You had better, therefore, if you can, learn it also in Greek and Latin.

“Καί ἐπίστεσεν Ἀβράμ τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.“

Credidit Abram Deo, et reputatum est illo in justitiam.”

If, then, that text be true, it will follow that you also, if you would have righteousness counted to you, must believe God. And you can't believe Him if He never says anything to you. Whereupon it will be desirable again to

¹ [The diary says, "To Woolwich, gave lecture badly: horrid headache. Saw Repository." The lecture, delivered on April 18, was on Minerals. It is not reported, but was probably the same that he had given on April 13 at Christ's Hospital: see Vol. XXVI, p. 563.]

² [The inscription may be rendered (*Ayr* for *Eier*, *i.e.*, cannon-balls):—

"I be a churl both rough and rude;
Who tastes my eggs will get no good."

(Note by W. G. Collingwood in the Small Edition of *Fors.*)]

consider if He ever *has* said anything to you; and if not, why not.

After this verse, I don't understand much of the chapter myself—but I never expect to understand everything in the Bible, or even more than a little; and will make what I can of it.

7. Verse 7th, 8th. “And He said, I the Lord brought thee, to give thee this land, to inherit it.

“But he said, Lord, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?”

Now, I don't see how he could know it better than by being told so; nor how he knew it any better, after seeing a lamp moving between half-carcases. But we will at least learn, as well as we can, what happened; and think it over.

The star-lesson was of course given in the night; and, in the morning, Abram slays the five creatures, and watches their bodies all day.

“Such an absurd thing to do—to cut rams and cows in two to please God!”

Indeed it seems so; yet perhaps is better than cutting men in two to please ourselves; and we spend thirty millions a year in preparations for doing that. How many more swiftly divided carcasses of horses and men, think you, my Christian friends, have the fowls fed on, *not* driven away,—finding them already carved for their feast, or blown into small and convenient morsels, by the military gentlemen of Europe, in sacrifice to—their own epaulettes (poor gilded and eyeless idols!), during the past seventy and six years of this *one* out of the forty centuries since Abram?

“The birds divided he not.” A turtle dove, or in Greek “cooing dove”; and a pigeon, or in Greek “dark dove”; or black dove, such as came to Dodona;¹—these were not to be cut through breast and backbone! Why? Why,

¹ [See the account given to Herodotus (ii.55) by the priestesses of the oracle at Dodona: “They say that two black doves flew from Thebes in Egypt, and one of them came to Libya and the other to their land. And this latter settled upon an oak-tree and spoke with human voice, saying that it was necessary that a prophetic seat of Zeus should be established in that place.”]

indeed, any of this butchery and wringing of necks? Not wholly, perhaps, for Abram's amusement, or God's; like our coursing and pigeon-shooting;—but then, all the more earnestly one asks, Why?

The Episcopal commentary tells you (usefully this time) that the *beasts* were divided, because among all nations it was then the most solemn attestation of covenant to pass between halves of beasts. But the birds?

8. We are not sure, by the way, how far the cleaving might reach, without absolute division. Read Leviticus i., 15 to 17, and v., 6 to 10¹ “You have nothing to do with those matters,” you think? I don't say you have; but in my schools you must know your Bible, and the meaning of it, or want of meaning, at least a little more definitely than you do now, before I let you throw the book away for ever. So have patience with it a little while; for indeed until you know something of this Bible, I can't go on to teach you any Koran, much less any Dante or Shakespeare. Have patience, therefore,—and you will need, probably, more than you think; for I am sadly afraid that you don't at present know so much as the difference between a

¹ [“And the priest shall bring it unto the altar, and wring off his head, and burn it on the altar; and the blood thereof shall be wrung out at the side of the altar:

“And he shall pluck away his crop with his feathers, and cast it beside the altar on the east part, by the place of the ashes:

“And he shall cleave it with the wings thereof, but shall not divide it asunder: and the priest shall burn it upon the altar, upon the wood that is upon the fire: it is a burnt sacrifice, and offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord” (Leviticus i. 15–17).

“And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the Lord for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin.

“And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, unto the Lord; one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering.

“And he shall bring them unto the priest, who shall offer that which is for the sin offering first, and wring off his head from his neck, but shall not divide it asunder:

“And he shall sprinkle of the blood of the sin offering upon the side of the altar; and the rest of the blood shall be wrung out at the bottom of the altar: it is a sin offering.

“And he shall offer the second for a burnt offering, according to the manner: and the priest shall make an atonement for him for his sin which he hath sinned, and it shall be forgiven him” (Leviticus v. 6–10).]

burnt-offering and a sin-offering; nor between a sin-offering and a trespass-offering,—do you? (Lev. v., 15¹); so how can you possibly know anything about Abram's doves, or afterwards about Ion's—not to speak of the Madonna's? The whole story of the Ionic migration, and the carving of those Ionic capitals, which our architects don't know how to draw to this day, is complicated with the tradition of the saving of Ion's life by his recognition of a very small "trespass"—a servant's momentary "blasphemy." Hearing it, he poured the wine he was about to drink out upon the ground. A dove, flying down from the temple cornice, dipped her beak in it, and died, for the wine had been poisoned by—Ion's mother.² But the meaning of all that myth is involved in this earlier and wilder mystery of the Mount of the Amorite.

9. On the slope of it, down to the vale of Eshcol, sat Abram, as the sun ripened its grapes through the glowing day; the shadows lengthening at last under the crags of Machpelah;—the golden light warm on Ephron's field, still Ephron's, wild with wood. "And as the sun went down, an horror of great darkness fell upon Abram."³

Indigestion, most likely, thinks modern philosophy. Accelerated cerebration, with automatic conservation of psychic force, lucidly suggests Dr. Carpenter.⁴ Derangement of the sensori-motor processes, having certain relations of nextness, and behaviour uniformly depending on that nextness, condescendingly explains Professor Clifford.⁵

Well, my scientific friends, if ever God does you the

¹ ["If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the Lord; then he shall bring for his trespass unto the Lord a ram without blemish out of the flocks, with thy estimation by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass offering."—Leviticus v. 15.]

² [For other references to Euripides's play, see Vol. XX. p. 365 and Vol. XXI. p. 113.]

³ [Genesis xv. 12.]

⁴ [W. B. Carpenter (1813–1885), F. R. S. See his lectures on "The Unconscious Action of the Brain" and "Epidemic Delusions" in *Manchester Science Lectures for the People*, third series, 1871.]

⁵ [See such articles as "Body and Mind" (*Fortnightly Review*, December 1874) and "The Ethics of Belief" (*Contemporary Review*, January 1877), both republished in his posthumous *Lectures and Essays* (1879); for "sensory" and "motor" nerves,

grace to give you experience of the sensations, either of horror, or darkness, even to the extent your books and you inflict them on my own tired soul, you will come out on the other side of that shadow with newer views on many subjects than have occurred yet to you,—noveltyhunters though you be.

10. “Behold, thy seed shall be strangers, in a land not theirs.”¹ Again, the importunate question returns, “When was this written?” But the really practical value of the passage for ourselves, is the definite statement, alike by the Greeks and Hebrews, of dream, as one of the states in which knowledge of the future may be distinctly given. The truth of this statement we must again determine for ourselves. Our dreams are partly in our power, by management of daily thought and food; partly, involuntary and accidental—very apt to run in contrary lines from those naturally to be expected of them; and partly (at least, so say all the Hebrew prophets, and all great Greek, Latin, and English thinkers), prophetic. Whether what Moses, Homer, David, Daniel, the Evangelists and St. Paul, Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Bacon, think on this matter, or what the last-whelped little curly-tailed puppy of the Newington University thinks, is most likely to be true—judge as you will.

11. “In the fourth generation they shall come hither again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.”²

What *was* the iniquity of the Amorites, think you, and what kind of people were they? Anything like ourselves? or wide-mouthed and goggle-eyed,—terrifically stalking above the vineyard stakes of Eshcol? If like us, in any wise, is it possible that we also may be committing iniquity, capable of less and more fulness, through such a space as

and their processes, see, especially, vol. ii. pp. 39 *seq.*, 45, 50: “Two actions of the brain which occur together form a link between themselves, so that the one being called up, the other is called up,” etc. For another reference to W. K. Clifford (1845–1879), F. R. S., see Vol. XXIV. p. 448.]

¹ [Genesis xv. 13.]

² [Genesis xv. 16. For Eshcol, the Amorite, see Genesis xiv. 13, 24; for the grapes of Eshcol, Numbers xiii. 23.]

four hundred years? Questions worth pausing at; and we will at least try to be a little clear-headed as to Amorite personality.

We habitually speak of the Holy Land as the Land of "Canaan." The "promised" land was indeed that of Canaan, with others. But Israel never got it. They got only the Mount of the Amorites; for the promise was only to be perfected on condition of their perfect obedience. Therefore, I asked you to learn Genesis x. 15, and Genesis x. 16, separately.¹ For *all* the Canaanites were left, to prove Israel (Judges iii. 3²), and a good many of the Amorites and Jebusites too (Judges iii. 5–7³), but in the main Israel subdued the last two races, and held the hill country from Lebanon to Hebron, and the capital, Jerusalem, for their own. And if instead of "Amorites," you will read generally "Highlanders" (which the word means⁴), and think of them, for a beginning of notion, simply as Campbells and Macgregors of the East, getting themselves into relations with the pious Israelites closely resembling those of the Highland race and mind of Scotland with its evangelical and economical Lowlanders, you will read these parts of your Bible in at least an incipiently intelligent manner. And above all, you will, or may, understand that the Amorites had a great deal of good in them: that they and the Jebusites were on the whole a generous and courteous people,—so that, when Abram dwells with the Amorite princes, Mamre and Eshcol, they are faithful allies

¹ [See Letter 64, § 2 (p. 562). "And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and Heth, And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite" (Genesis x. 15, 16).]

² ["Namely, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-hermon unto the entering in of Hamath" (Judges iii. 3).]

³ ["And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites:"]

"And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods.

"And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and forsook the Lord their God, and served Baalim and the groves" (Judges iii. 5–7).

⁴ [The name has been ordinarily supposed to mean "mountaineers," but this interpretation is disputed by Sayce (who interprets it as derived from an ancient place-name): see his article in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. i. p. 84.]

to him;¹ and when he buys his grave from Ephron the Hittite, and David the threshing-floor from Araunah the Jebusite, both of the mountaineers behave just as the proudest and truest Highland chief would. "What is that between me and thee?" "All these things did Araunah, as a King, give unto the King—and Araunah said unto the King, The Lord thy God accept thee." Not *our* God, you see;—but giving sadly, as the Sidonian widow begging,—with claim of no part in Israel.

"Mere oriental formulæ," says the Cockney modern expositor—"offers made in fore-knowledge that they would not be accepted."

No, curly-tailed bow-wow; it is only you and other such automatic poodles who are "formulæ." Automatic, by the way, you are not; we all know how to wind you up to run with a whirr, like toy-mice.

12. Well, now read consecutively, but quietly, Numbers xiii. 22–29, xxi. 13–26, Deuteronomy iii. 8–13, and Joshua x. 6–14, and you will get a notion or two, which with those already obtained you may best arrange as follows.

Put the Philistines, and giants, or bulls, of Bashan, out of the way at present; they are merely elements of physical malignant force, sent against Samson, Saul, and David, as a half-human shape of lion or bear,—carrying off the ark of God in their mouths, and not knowing in the least what to do with it. You already know Tyre as the trading power, Ethiopia as the ignorant—Egypt as the wise—slave; then the Amorites, among the children of Ham, correspond to the great mountain and pastoral powers of the Shemites; and are far the noblest and purest of the race: abiding in their own fastnesses, desiring no conquest, but as Sihon, admitting no invader;²—holding their crags so that nothing can be taken out of the hand of the Amorite but with the sword and bow (Gen. xlvi. 22); yet living chiefly

¹ [Genesis xiv. 13; for the other references, see Genesis xxiii. 3–20; 2 Samuel xxiv. 24; Genesis xxiii. 15; 2 Samuel xxiv. 23; and Matthew xv. 21–28.]

² [Numbers xxi. 23.]

by pasture and agriculture; worshipping, in their early dynasties, the one eternal God; and, in the person of their great high priest, Melchizedec,¹ but a few years before this vision, blessing the father of the faithful, and feeding him with the everlasting sacraments of earth,—bread and wine,—in the level valley of the Kings, under Salem, the city of peace.²

Truly, “the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full.”³

13. I have given you enough to think of, for this time; but you can’t work it out rightly without a clearly intelligible map of Palestine, and raised models of the districts of Hebron and Jerusalem, which I will provide as soon as possible, according to St. George’s notions of what such things should be, for the Sheffield museum:⁴ to the end that at least, in that district of the Yorkshire Amorites, singularly like the Holy Land in its level summits and cleft defiles, it may be understood what England also had once to bring forth of blessing in her own vales of pece; and how her gathering iniquity may bring upon her,—(and at this instant, as I write, early on Good Friday, the malignant hail of spring time, slaying blossom and leaf, smites rattling on the ground that should be soft with flowers), such day of ruin as the great hail darkened in the going down to Beth-horon, and the sun, that had bronzed their corn and flushed their grape, prolonged on Ajalon, implacable.⁵

14. “And it came to pass, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp which passed between those pieces.”⁶

What a lovely vision, half of it, at any rate, to the eye of modern progress! Foretelling, doubtless, smoking furnaces, and general civilization, in this Amorite land of

¹ [Compare Letter 76, § 14 (Vol. XXIX. p. 96).]

² [Hebrews vii. 2.]

³ [Genesis xv. 16.]

⁴ [For Ruskin’s plans about maps, see further Letter 95 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 504–506); and compare the Introduction to Vol. XXVII. (pp. lxx.–lxxiii.).]

⁵ [See Joshua x. 11–14.]

⁶ [Genesis xv. 17.]

barbarous vines and fig-trees! Yes—my progressive friends. That was precisely what the vision *did* foretell,—in the first half of it; and not very many summer mornings afterwards, Abram, going out for his walk in the dew round his farm,* saw its fulfilment in quite literal terms, on the horizon. (Gen. xix. 28.) The smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.¹ But what do you make of the other part of the night-vision? Striking of oil?² and sale of numerous patent lamps? But Abram never did strike any oil—except olive, which could only be had on the usual terms of laborious beating and grinding, and in moderate quantities. What do you make of the second half of the vision?

Only a minute part of its infinite prophecy was fulfilled in those flames of the Paradise of Lot. For the two fires were the sign of the presence of the Person who accepted the covenant, in passing between the pieces of the victim. And they shone, therefore, for the signature of His Name; that name which we pray may be hallowed; and for what that name entirely means;—“the Lord merciful and gracious,—and that will by no means clear the guilty.”³

For as on the one side He is like a refiner’s fire, so

* Abram’s mountain home seems to have been much like Horace’s, as far as I can make out: but see accounts of modern travellers. Our translation “in the plain of Mamre” (Genesis xiii. 18; xiv. 13) is clearly absurd; the gist of the separation between Lot and Abram being Lot’s choice of the plain, as “the Paradise of God,” and Abram’s taking the rock ground. The Vulgate says “in the ravine” of Mamre; the Septuagint, “by the oak.”⁴ I doubt not the Hebrew is meant to carry both senses, as of a rocky Vallombrosa; the Amorites at that time knew how to keep their rain, and guide their springs. Compare the petition of Caleb’s daughter when she is married, after being brought up on this very farm, Joshua xv. 17, 18; comparing also xiv 14, 15, and of the hill country generally, xvii. 15, and Deut xi. 10–12, 17.

¹ [“And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace” (Genesis xix. 28).]

² [Compare Vol. XXVII. p. 215.]

³ [Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7; for the other references, see Malachi iii. 2; John i. 9; and Psalms cxix. 105.]

⁴ [In the Revised Version, “by the oaks.”]

that none may abide the day of His coming,—so on the other He is the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. And all the pain of grief and punishment, temporal or eternal, following on the broken covenant; and all the sweet guidance of the lamp to the feet and the light to the path, granted to those who keep it, are meant by the passing of the darkened and undarkened flames.

15. Finish now the learning this whole chapter accurately, and when you come to the eighteenth verse, note how much larger the *promised* land was,¹ than we usually imagine it; and what different manner of possession the Israelites got of its borders, by the waters of Babylon, and rivers of Egypt (compare Jeremiah xxxix. 9, with xliii. 6 and 7²), than they might have had, if they had pleased.

And now, when you have got well into your heads that the Holy Land is, broadly, the mountain or highland of the Amorites (compare Deut. i. 7, 20, 44; Numbers xiii. 29³), look to the verse which you have probably quoted often, "Behold upon the mountain the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings,"⁴—without ever asking *what* mountains, or what tidings. The mountains are these Amorite

¹ ["From the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates."]

² ["Then Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carried away captive into Babylon the remnant of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to him, with the rest of the people that remained" (Jeremiah xxxix. 9).]

"Even men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah.

"So they came into the land of Egypt: for they obeyed not the voice of the Lord: thus came they even to Tahpanhes" (Jeremiah xliii. 6, 7).]

³ ["Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and unto all the places nigh thereunto, in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale, and in the south, and by the sea side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates.

"And I said unto you, Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the Lord our God doth give unto us.

"And the Amorities, which dwelt in that mountain, came out against you, and chased you, as bees do, and destroyed you in Seir, even unto Hormah" (Deuteronomy i. 7, 20, 44).

"The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan" (Numbers xiii. 29).]

⁴ [Nahum i. 15.]

crag, and the tidings are of the last destruction of the Hamite power, in the other three great brethren, Cush, Mizraim, and Phut. Read your Nahum through slowly;¹ and learn the eighth and ninth verses of the third chapter, to be always remembered as the completion of the fifteenth, which you know the first half of so well already—though I suppose you rarely go on to its practical close, “O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows; for the wicked shall no more pass through thee”—this “passing,” observe, being the ruinous war of the bitter and hasty nation (compare Habakkuk i. 6–8, with the last verse of Nahum²), which spiritually is the type of all ruinous and violent passion, such as now passes continually to and fro in this English land of ours.

16. I am not much in a humour to examine further to-day the passing of its slower molluscous Assyrians; but may at least affirm what I believe at last to be the sure conclusion of my young hunter of Arundel;³—that the spiral of the shell uniformly increases its coil from birth to maturity. Here are examples of the minute species, sent me by Mr. Sillar,⁴ in three stages of growth; the little black spots giving them in their natural size (with much economic skill of Mr. Burgess’ touch). The three magnified spirals you may as well copy, and find out how many these little creatures may have. I had taken them for the young of the common snail when I wrote last; but we

¹ [Compare *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iv. § 43 *n.*, where Ruskin refers to this passage and speaks of “the Achillean force of this most terrible of the prophets.”]

² [“For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not their’s.”]

“They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves.”

“Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat” (Habakkuk i. 6–8).

“There is no healing of thy bruise; thy wound is grievous: all that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee: for upon whom hath not thy wicked-ness passed continually?” (Nahum iii. 19).

³ [See Letter 63, § 20 (pp. 553–554). In Letter 64, § 18 (p. 575), Ruskin had doubted the previous explanation.]

⁴ [See Letter 64, § 18 (p. 575).]

will have all our facts clear some day, both concerning bees, and slugs, and the larger creatures, industrious or lazy, whom they are meant to teach.

17. But I want to finish my letter for this time with a word or two more of my Scottish Amorite aunt, after she was brought

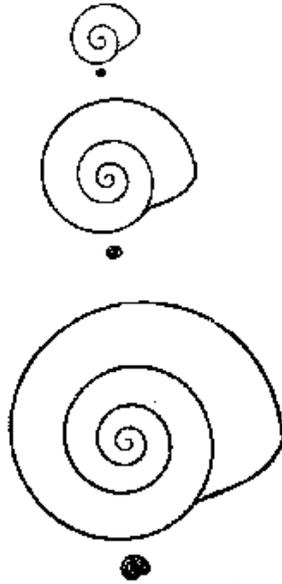


Fig. 12

down into Lowland life by her practical tanner.¹ She, a pure dark-eyed dove-priestess, if ever there was one, of Highland Dodona. Strangely, the kitchen servant-of-all-work in the house of Rose Terrace² was a very old “Mause” who might well have been the prototype of the Mause³ of *Old Mortality*, * but had even a more solemn, fearless, and patient faith, fastened in her by extreme suffering; for she had been nearly starved to death when she was a girl, and had literally picked the bones out of cast-out dust-heaps to gnaw; and ever afterwards, to see the waste of an atom of food was as shocking to her as blasphemy. “Oh, Miss Margaret!” she

said once to my mother, who had shaken some crumbs off a dirty plate out of the window, “I had rather you had knocked

* Vulgar modern Puritanism has shown its degeneracy in nothing more than in its incapability of understanding Scott’s exquisitely finished portraits of the Covenanter. In *Old Mortality*, alone, there are four which cannot be surpassed; the typical one, Elizabeth,⁴ faultlessly sublime and pure; the second, Ephraim Macbriar, giving the too common phase of the character,

¹ [See Letter 63, §§ 11–14 (p. 546). Part of this Letter, from “She, a pure. . .” down to “without being quite so zealous” in § 19, was partly used (but very much revised) in *Præterita*, i. §§ 71–73.]

² [See above, p. 549.]

³ [For other references to Mause Headrigg, see *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 296.]

⁴ [Bessie Maclure. For the correction of a slip of the pen (in the first edition) in giving this name, see Letter 66, § 24 (p. 634).]

me down.” She would make her dinner upon anything in the house that the other servants couldn’t eat;—often upon potato skins, giving her own dinner away to any poor person she saw; and would always stand during the whole church service (though at least seventy years old when I knew her, and very feeble), if she could persuade any wild Amorite out of the streets to take her seat. Her wrinkled and worn face, moveless in resolution, and patience; in-capable of smile, and knit sometimes perhaps too severely against Jessie¹ and me, if we wanted more creamy milk to our porridge, or jumped off our favourite box on Sunday,—(“Never mind, John,” said Jessie to me, once, seeing me in an unchristian state of provocation on this subject, “when we’re married, we’ll jump off boxes all day long, if we like!”) may have been partly instrumental in giving me that slight bias against the Evangelical religion which I confess to be sometimes traceable in my later works: but I never can be thankful enough for having seen, in her, the Scottish Puritan spirit in its perfect faith and force; and been enabled therefore afterwards to trace its agency in the reforming policy of Scotland with the reverence and honour it deserves.

18. My aunt was of a far gentler temper, but still to me remained at a wistful distance. She had been much

which is touched with ascetic insanity; the third, Mause, coloured and made sometimes ludicrous by Scottish conceit, but utterly strong and pure at heart; the last, Balfour, a study of supreme interest, showing the effect of the Puritan faith, sincerely held, on a naturally and incurably cruel and base spirit. His last battle-cry—“Down with the Amorites,”² the chief Amorite being Lord Evandale, is intensely illustrative of all I have asked you to learn to-day. Add to these four studies, from this single novel, those in the *Heart of Midlothian*, and Nicol Jarvie and Andrew Fairservice from *Rob Roy*,³ and you have a series of theological analyses far beyond those of any other philosophical work that I know, of any period.

¹ [See above, p. 549.]

² [In a note for his intended Index, Ruskin says “Correct his battle-cry.” The actual cry was “Down with Dagon and all his adherents”: see *Old Mortality*, ch. xvi.]

³ [For the “analysis of the pure Protestant faith in the *Heart of Midlothian*,” see Letter 83, § 10 (Vol. XXIX. p. 267); for Ruskin’s notes on the characters of Nicol Jarvie and Andrew Fairservice, see Vol. XXV. p. 296 (and the other passages there noted).]

saddened by the loss of three of her children, before her husband's death. Little Peter, especially, had been the corner-stone of her love's building; and it was thrown down swiftly:—white-swelling came in the knee; he suffered much; and grew weaker gradually, dutiful always, and loving, and wholly patient. She wanted him one day to take half a glass of port wine,—and took him on her knee, and put it to his lips. “Not now, mamma;—in a minute,” said he; and put his head on her shoulder, and gave one long, low sigh, and died. Then there was Catherine; and—I forget the other little daughter's name,—I did not see them; my mother told me of them;—eagerly always about Catherine, who had been her own favourite. My aunt had been talking earnestly one day with her husband about these two children; planning this and that for their schooling and what not: at night, for a little while she could not sleep; and as she lay thinking, she saw the door of the room open; and two spades come into it, and stand at the foot of her bed. Both the children were dead within brief time afterwards. I was about to write “within a fortnight”—but I cannot be sure of remembering my mother's words accurately.

19. But when I was in Perth there were still—Mary, her eldest daughter, who looked after us children when Mause was too busy,—James and John, William and Andrew (I can't think whom the unapostolic William was named after; he became afterwards a good physician in London, and Tunbridge Wells; his death, last year, is counted among the others that I have spoken of as recently leaving me very lonely¹). But the boys were then all at school or college,—the scholars, William and Andrew, only came home to tease Jessie and me, and eat the biggest jargonel pears; the collegians were wholly abstract; and the two girls and I played in our quiet ways on the North Inch, and by the “Lead,” a stream “led” from the Tay past

¹ [See Letter 61, § 3 (p. 486).]

Rose Terrace, into the town for molinary purposes; and long ago, I suppose, bricked over, or choked with rubbish;¹ but then lovely, and a perpetual treasure of flowing diamond to us children. Mary, by the way, was nearly fourteen—fair, blue-eyed, and moderately pretty; and as pious as Jessie, without being quite so zealous. And I scarcely know if those far years of summer sunshine were dreams, or if this horror of darkness is one, to-day, at St. Albans, where, driven out of the abbey, unable to bear the sight of its restorations, and out of the churchyard, where I would fain have stayed to draw, by the black plague-wind, I take refuge from all in an old apple-woman's shop, because she reminds me of my Croydon Amorite aunt,—and her little window of the one in the parlour beside the shop in Market Street. She sells comic songs as well as apples. I invest a penny in "The Union Jack," and find, in the course of conversation, that the result of our unlimited national prosperity upon *her* is, that where she used to take twopence from one customer, she now takes five farthings from five,—that her rates are twelve shillings instead of six,—that she is very tired of it all, and hopes God will soon take her to heaven.

20. I have been a little obscure in direction about the Egyptian asterisk in last *Fors*.² The circle in the middle is to be left solid; the rays round are to be cut quite shallow; not in deep furrows, as in wood, but like rising sharp, cliff-edged harbours with flat bottoms of sand; as little of the hard rock being cut away as may be.

21. The Etrurian Leucothea has come at last;³ but please let my readers observe that my signature to it means only that it will answer our purpose, not that it is a good print.⁴

¹ [But see Letter 66, § 25 (p. 637).]

² [Letter 64, §§ 14, 15 (pp. 571–572).]

³ [See Letter 64, § 17 (p. 574).]

⁴ [Ruskin in his copy has here struck out the words (in previous editions), "for Mr. Parker's agent is a 'Grober Baur,' and will keep neither time nor troth in impressions." For "Grober Baur," see above, p. 591.]

Farther, I have now put into Mr. Ward's hands a photograph from a practice-sketch of my own at Oxford,¹ in pure lead pencil, on grey paper secured with ink, on the outlines, and touched with white on the lights. It is of a stuffed Kingfisher,—(one can't see a live one in England nowadays), and done at full speed of hand: and it is to be copied for a balance practice to the slow spiral lines.²

¹ [Rudimentary Series, No. 202: see Vol. XXI. p. 227, and Plate LVIII. (*ibid.*, p. 262).]

² [With this letter was issued another of Mr. Girdlestone's pamphlets—namely, *Our Misdirected Labour considered as a Grave, National, and Personal Question, in regard to its Amount, Consequences, and Causes. A Paper read at a Meeting of the Weston-super-Mare Social Science Club.* By E. D. Girdlestone, B. A. Price one Penny. 1876.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

22. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

I have given leave to two of our Companions to begin work on the twenty acres of ground in Worcestershire,¹ given us by Mr. George Baker, our second donor of land (it was all my fault that he wasn't the first). The ground is in copsewood; but good for fruit trees; and shall be cleared and brought into bearing as soon as the two Companions can manage it. We shall now see what we are good for, working as backwoodsmen, but in our own England.

I am in treaty for more land round our Sheffield museum;² and have sent down to it, for a beginning of the mineralogical collection, the agates on which I lectured in February at the London Institution.³ This lecture I am printing, as fast as I can, for the third number of *Deucalion*; but I find no scientific persons who care to answer me any single question I ask them about agates; and I have to work all out myself; and little hitches and twitches come, in what one wants to say in print. And the days go.

Subscriptions since March 14th to April 16th. I must give names, now; having finally resolved to have no secrets in our Company,—except those which must be eternally secret to certain kinds of persons, who can't understand either our thoughts or ways:—

| | | £ | s. | d. |
|---------------|--|----|----|----|
| <i>March.</i> | F. D. Drewitt (tithe of a first earning) | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| | Miss M. Guest | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| <i>April.</i> | James Burdon (tithe of wages) | 2 | 10 | 0 |
| | Wm. B. Graham (gift) | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Anonymous (post stamp, Birkenhead) | 1 | 10 | 0 |
| | | £8 | 6 | 1 |

¹ [In September 1871 Mr. Baker offered to give seven acres (Vol. XXVII. p. 160). Subsequently he enlarged his offer to twenty acres, but Ruskin in October 1875 had delayed his inspection of the land (above, p. 424). Hence the gift of Mrs. Talbot in August 1875 was the first, formally accepted (above, p. 395).]

² [See below, p. 658.]

³ ["Precious Stones: And the Gold of that Land is good: there is Bdeillum and the Onyx Stone." Delivered at the London Institution on February 17, and March 28, 1876. Included in *Deucalion* (part iii.) as ch. vii. of vol. i. (Vol. XXVI. pp. 165–196), where references to the places of the specimens in the Museum are given.]

23. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

| | | £ | s. | d. |
|--------------|--|-------|----|----|
| <i>March</i> | 16. Balance | 1471 | 8 | 1 |
| | 21. Miss O. Hill, 1½ year's rent on Marylebone Freehold | 90 | 15 | 0 |
| | 28. R. Forsyth (tea-shop) | 54 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>April</i> | 7. Dividend on £7000 Bank Stock | 315 | 0 | 0 |
| | 8. Petty cash (Dividends on small shares in Building Societies and the like) | 25 | 3 | 3 |
| | | £1956 | 6 | 4 |
| <i>March</i> | 21. Jackson | £50 | 0 | 0 |
| | 22. Self* | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | 23. Warren and Jones | 56 | 16 | 3 |
| | 25. and April 7. Crawley | 40 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>April</i> | 1. Secretary | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| | 1. Downs | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| | 2. Kate (and 11th April) | 45 | 0 | 0 |
| | 6. Burgess | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| | 6. David | 53 | 0 | 0 |
| | | 444 | 16 | 3 |
| | | £1511 | 10 | 1 |

24. (III.) I have promised an answer this month to the following pretty little letter; and will try to answer fully, though I must go over ground crossed often enough before. But it is often well to repeat things in other times and words:¹—

“16th March, 1876.

“SIR,—Being very much interested in the St. George's Society, we venture to write and ask you if you will be so kind as to send us the rules, as, even if we could not join it, we should so like to try and keep them. We hope you will excuse our troubling you, but we do not know how else to obtain the rules.

We remain, yours truly.”

My dear children, the rules of St. George's Company are none other than those which at your baptism your godfather and godmother promised to see that you should obey—namely, the rules of conduct given to all His disciples by Christ, so far as, according to your ages, you can understand or practise them. But the Christian religion being now mostly obsolete (and worse, falsely professed) throughout Europe, your godfathers

* For accounts in London, to save drawing small cheques. I have not room for detail this month,² the general correspondence being lengthy.

¹ [§§ 24 and 25 were reprinted in the *Letter to Young Girls* (see Bibliographical Note, above, p. xxvi.). In lines 1 and 2 “this month” was omitted, and “initialsigned petition” was substituted for “letter.” Some other revisions made by Ruskin in the *Letter* are here followed, viz. in lines 6 and 7, “godfathers and godmothers” for “godfather and godmother”; line 14, the italicising of “*He*”; in § 25, line 10, “one” was italicised; in § 25, line 11, the transposition of “is” from after “mind”; for an alteration in line 1 of “6th,” see p. 610 *n.*]

² [For the details, see below, p. 631.]

and godmothers, too probably, had no very clear notion of the Devil or his works, when they promised you should renounce them; and St. George hereby sends you a splinter of his lance, in token that you will find extreme difficulty in putting any of Christ's wishes into practice, under the present basilisk power of society.

Nevertheless, St. George's first order to you, supposing you were put under his charge, would be that you should always, in whatever you do, endeavour to please Christ¹ (and *He* is quite easily pleased if you try), but in attempting this, you will instantly find yourself likely to displease many of your friends or relations; and St. George's second order to you is that in whatever you do, you consider what is kind and dutiful to them also, and that you hold it for a sure rule that no manner of disobedience to your parents, or of disrespect and presumption towards your friends, can be pleasing to God. You must therefore be doubly submissive; first in your own will and purpose to the law of Christ; then in the carrying out of your purpose, to the pleasure and orders of the persons whom He has given you for superiors. And you are not to submit to them sullenly, but joyfully and heartily; keeping nevertheless your own purpose clear, so soon as it becomes proper for you to carry it out.

25. Under these conditions, here are a few of St. George's orders for you to begin with:—

1st. Keep absolute calm of temper, under all chances; receiving everything that is provoking and disagreeable to you as coming directly from Christ's hand: and the more it is like to provoke you, thank Him for it the more; as a young soldier would his general for trusting him with a hard place to hold on the rampart. And remember, it does not in the least matter what happens to you,—whether a clumsy schoolfellow tears your dress, or a shrewd one laughs at you, or the governess doesn't understand you. The one thing needful is that none of these things should vex you. For your mind, at this time of your youth, is crystallizing like sugar-candy; and the least jar to it flaws the crystal, and that permanently.

2nd. Say to yourselves every morning, just after your prayers: "Whoso forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be My disciple."² That is exactly and completely true: meaning that you are to give all you have to Christ to take care of for you. Then if He doesn't take care of it, of course you know it wasn't worth anything. And if He takes anything from you, you know you are better without it. You will not indeed, at your age,

¹ [In "Recollections of Ruskin at Oxford," by "Peter" (*St. George*, vol. vi. p. 107), the following passages are given from "a letter to Mrs. Hilliard":—

"The plan of a refined education, founded on agriculture and seamanship, cannot be sketched out with charcoal instantaneously. Still, the slow and provoking way in which I go on is that the enemy may not be able to get hold of any assailable point till I have taken my ground thoroughly.

"Love to Connie; and tell her, in Utopia young ladies won't think of imitating Christ, but of imitating wiser young ladies than themselves, and street sweepers won't think of imitating Christ, but of saving pence enough to keep them from pawning their boots."

The references are to the present passage in *Fors.*]

² [Luke xiv. 33.]
XXVIII.

have to give up houses, or lands, or boats, or nets; but you may perhaps break your favourite teacup, or lose your favourite thimble, and might be vexed about it, but for this second St. George's precept.

3rd. What, after this surrender, you find entrusted to you, take extreme care of, and make as useful as possible. The greater part of all they have is usually given to grown-up people by Christ, merely that they may give it away again: but school-girls, for the most part, are likely to have little more than what is needed for themselves: of which, whether books, dresses, or pretty room-furniture, you are to take extreme care, looking on yourself, indeed, practically, as a little housemaid set to keep Christ's books and room in order; and not as yourself the mistress of anything.

4th. Dress as plainly as your parents will allow you: but in bright colours (if they become you), and in the best materials,—that is to say, in those which will wear longest. When you are really in want of a new dress, buy it (or make it) in the fashion: but never quit an old one merely because it has become unfashionable. And if the fashion be costly, you must not follow it. You may wear broad stripes or narrow, bright colours or dark, short petticoats or long (in moderation), as the public wish you; but you must not buy yards of useless stuff to make a knot or a flounce of; nor drag them behind you over the ground. And your walking dress must never touch the ground at all. I have lost much of the faith I once had in the common-sense and even in the personal delicacy of the present race of average English women, by seeing how they will allow their dresses to sweep the streets, if it is the fashion to be scavengers.

5th. If you can afford it, get your dresses made by a good dressmaker, with utmost attainable precision and perfection: but let this good dress-maker be a poor person, living in the country; not a rich person living in a large house in London. "There are no good dressmakers in the country." No: but there soon will be if you obey St. George's orders, which are very strict indeed, about never buying dresses in London. "You bought one there, the other day, for your own pet!"¹ Yes; but that was because she was a wild Amorite, who had wild Amorites to please; not a Companion of St. George.

6th. Learn dressmaking yourself, with pains and time; and use a part of every day in needlework,² making as pretty dresses as you can for poor people, who have not time nor taste to make them nicely for themselves. You are to show them in your own wearing what is modestly right, and graceful; and to help them to choose what will be prettiest and most becoming in their own station. If they see that you never try to dress above yours, they will not try to dress above theirs. Read the little scene between Miss Somers and Simple Susan, in the draper's shop, in Miss Edgeworth's *Parent's Assistant*; and by the way, if you have not that book, let it be the next birthday present you ask papa or uncle for.

7th. Never seek for amusement, but be always ready to be amused.

¹ [See above, p. 559; author's note (*d*).]

² [In the reprint (*Letter to Young Girls*) this reads: "6th. Devote a part of every day to thorough needlework, in making. . ." In line 4 of "6th" "most" was corrected to "modestly," and the correction is here followed, as "most" was probably a misprint.]

The least thing has play in it—the slightest word, wit, when your hands are busy and your heart is free. But if you make the aim of your life amusement, the day will come when all the agonies of a pantomime will not bring you an honest laugh. Play actively and gaily; and cherish, without straining, the natural powers of jest in others and yourselves;—remembering all the while that your hand is every instant on the helm of the ship of your life, and that the Master, on the far shore of Araby the blest,¹ looks for its sail on the horizon,—to its hour.²

I can't tell you more till next letter.

26. (IV.) Extract from a letter of one of my own girl-pupils and charges:³—

“What *is* to be done with town children? Do you remember going with me to see Mrs. G——, our old servant? She has died since, and left two children for us to love and care for, for her. The elder, Louie, is thirteen; unusually intelligent and refined; I was helping her last night in her work for an examination. She had Tennyson's 'Dora' to learn by heart, and said it beautifully, with so much spirit,—and then, *asked me what the harvest was*. She said she had such a vague idea about it, she shouldn't know how to explain it, if the Inspector asked her.

“I am just going to take her down to the picture gallery, to give her a geography lesson on moors and lakes, etc., which is the best I can do for her here; but isn't that dreadful?

“Much love, dear Godfather,
“Ever your loving Godchild.”

27. (V.) I accept the offer of subjoined letter thankfully. Our Companion, Mr. Rydings, is henceforward to be answerable for our arithmetic; and all sums below fifty pounds are to be sent to him, not to me.

“LAXEY, *April 14th*, 1876.

“MY DEAR MASTER,—At page 579, April *Fors* Subscription List, balance in hand £106, 16s. 5d., should be £107, 16s. 5d.

“Yours, ever truly,
“EGBERT RYDINGS.

“P. S.—Would it be possible to have these items checked before being printed? I should feel it a pleasure if I could be of use.”

¹ [*Paradise Lost*, Book IV., l. 163.]

² [Here the reprint in the *Letter to Young Girls* ends, resuming at Letter 66, § 24 (p. 635).]

³ [Miss Oldham; for Ruskin's visit to her nurse, see Letter 59, § 1 (p. 439).]

LETTER 66¹

MIRACLE

BRANTWOOD, 14th May, 1876.

1. THOSE of my readers who have followed me as far as I have hitherto gone in our careful reading of the Pentateuch, must, I think, have felt with me, in natural consequence of this careful reading, more than hitherto, the life and reality of the record; but, in the degree of this new life, new wonderfulness, and difficult credibility! For it is always easy to imagine that we believe what we do not understand; and often graceful and convenient to consent in the belief of others, as to what we do not care about. But when we begin to know clearly what is told, the question if it be fable or fact becomes inevitable in our minds; and if the fact, once admitted, would bear upon our conduct, its admission can no longer be made a matter of mere social courtesy.

Accordingly, I find one of my more earnest readers already asking me, privately, if I really believed that the hail on Good Friday last had been sent as a punishment for national sin?—and I should think, and even hope, that

¹ [In the first edition the following notice was printed in italics at the head of this Letter:—

“(All Signed Petitions against Rydal Railway to be sent immediately to me at Brantwood, Coniston, Lancashire.)”

This refers to an advertisement by “The author of *Modern Painters*” which was inserted in Mr. Robert Somervell’s *Protest against the Extension of Railways in the Lake District*, first issued towards the end of 1875. In it Ruskin “earnestly requested all persons who may have taken interest in his writings, or who have any personal regard for him,” to sign Mr. Somervell’s *Protest*. To a later edition of the *Protest* Ruskin contributed a Preface (dated June 22, 1876); this is reprinted in a later volume of this edition, where also will be found a circular of thanks issued by Ruskin for the petitions sent in to him in consequence of the present notice.]

other of my readers would like to ask me, respecting the same passage, whether I believed that the sun ever stood still?¹

2. To whom I could only answer, what I answered some time since in my paper on Miracle for the Metaphysical Society (*Contemporary Review*²), that the true miracle, to my mind, would not be in the sun's standing still, but is in its going on! We are all of us being swept down to death in a sea of miracle; we are drowned in wonder, as gnats in a Rhine whirlpool: unless we are worse,—drowned in pleasure, or sloth, or insolence.

Nevertheless, I do not feel myself in the least called upon to believe that the sun stood still, or the earth either, during that pursuit at Ajalon.³ Nay, it would not anywise amaze me to find that there never had been any such pursuit—never any Joshua, never any Moses; and that the Jews, “taken generally,” as an amiable clerical friend told me from his pulpit a Sunday or two ago, “were a Christian people.”

But it does amaze me—almost to helplessness of hand and thought—to find the men and women of these days careless of such issue; and content, so that they can feed and breathe their fill, to eat like cattle, and breathe like plants, questionless of the Spirit that makes the grass to grow for them on the mountains, or the breeze they breathe on them, its messengers, or the fire that dresses their food, its minister.⁴ Desolate souls, for whom the sun—beneath, not above, the horizon—stands still for ever.

3. “Amazed,” I say, “almost to helplessness of hand and thought”—quite literally both. I was reading yesterday, by Fors' order, Mr. Edward B. Tylor's idea of the Greek faith in Apollo: “If the sun travels along its course like a glittering chariot, forthwith the wheels, and the driver,

¹ [See Letter 65, § 13 (p. 598).]

² [March 1873; reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. ii. §§ 267–277; and in a later volume of this edition.]

³ [Joshua x. 12, 13; compare *Ariadne Florentina*, § 202 (Vol. XXII. p. 438).]

⁴ [Psalms civ. 4: quoted and discussed in Vol. XXIV. p. 102.]

and the horses are there;”* and Mr. Frederic Harrison’s gushing article on Humanity, in the *Contemporary Review*;¹ and a letter about our Cotton Industry (hereafter² to be quoted †), and this presently following bit of Sir Philip Sidney’s 68th Psalm;—and my hands are cold this morning, after the horror, and wonder, and puzzlement of my total Sun-less-day, and my head is now standing still, or at least turning round, giddy, instead of doing its work by Shrewsbury clock;³ and I don’t know where to begin with the quantity I want to say,—all the less that I’ve said a great deal of it before, if I only knew where to tell you to find it. All up and down my later books, from *Unto this Last* to *Eagle’s Nest*, and again and again throughout *Fors*, you will find references to the practical connection between physical and spiritual light⁴—of which now I would fain state, in the most unmistakable terms, this sum: that you cannot love the real sun, that is to say physical light and colour, rightly, unless you love the spiritual sun that is to say justice and truth, rightly. That for unjust and untrue persons, there is no real joy in physical light, so that they don’t even know what the word means. That the entire system of modern life is so corrupted with the ghastliest forms of injustice and untruth, carried to the point of not recognizing themselves as either—for as long as Bill Sykes⁵ knows that he is a robber, and Jeremy

* *Early History of Mankind* (a book of rare value and research, however), p. 379.

† In the meantime, if any of my readers will look at the leading articles of the *Monetary Gazette*, whose editor I thank with all my heart and soul, for the first honest commercial statements I ever saw in English journals,⁶ they will get sufficient light on such matters.

¹ [“Humanity: a Dialogue,” in the *Contemporary Review* for May 1876, vol. 27, pp. 862–885. See below, p. 619 n.]

² [This, however, was not done.]

³ [*1 King Henry IV.*, Act v. sc. 4.]

⁴ [See *Unto this Last*, § 44 (Vol. XVII. p. 59), and *Eagle’s Nest*, §§ 115, 116 (Vol. XXII. pp. 203–204); and compare Letters 9, 12 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 164, 219), 60, and 63 (above, pp. 463, 541).]

⁵ [For other references to *Oliver Twist*, see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 14.]

⁶ [See the references to these articles in letters from Ruskin given in Vol. XVII. p. 486.]

Diddler¹ that he is a rascal, there is still some of Heaven's light left for both—but when everybody steals, cheats, and goes to church, complacently, and the light of their whole body is darkness, how great is that darkness!² And that the physical result of that mental vileness is a total carelessness of the beauty of sky, or the cleanness of streams, or the life of animals and flowers: and I believe that the powers of Nature are depressed or perverted, together with the Spirit of Man; and therefore that conditions of storm and of physical darkness, such as never were before in Christian times, are developing themselves, in connection also with forms of loathsome insanity, multiplying through the whole genesis of modern brains.

4. As I correct this sheet for press, I chance, by Fors' order, in a prayer of St. John Damascene's to the Virgin, on this, to me, very curious and interesting clause; "Redeem me from the dark metamorphosis of the angels, rescuing me from the bitter law-giving of the farmers of the air, and the rulers of the darkness."

“τής σκοτεινῆς με τῶν δαιμόνων ὑλτροῦ μετημορφῆς answerable either for Damascene Greek, or for my MS. of it, in 1396), τοῦ πικροτάτου λογοθεοῖος τῶν τελωνῶν τοῦ ἀέρος καί τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ σκότονσ ἐξαίρονσα.”

5. And now—of this entangling in the shrine of halfborn and half-sighted things, see this piece of Sir Philip Sidney's psalm.³ I want it also for the bit of conchology at the end. The italics are mine.

“And call ye this to utter what is just,
 You that of justice hold the sov'rain throne?
 And call ye this to yield, O sonnes of dust,
 To wronged brethren ev'ry one his own?
 O no: it is your long malicious will
 Now to the world to make by practice known,
 With whose oppression you the ballance fill,
 Just to your selves, indifferent else to none.

¹ [See *Raising the Wind*, by James Kenney (1780–1849), a play first produced at Covent Garden Theatre in 1803.]

² [Matthew vi. 23.]

³ [Psalm lviii. For additional notes upon it, see *Rock Honeycomb*.]

But what could they, who ev'n in birth declin'd,
 From truth and right to lies and injuries?
 To shew the *venom of their cancred mynd*
 The adder's image scarcely can suffice.
 Nay, scarce the aspick may with them contend,
 On whom the charmer all in vaine applies
 His skillful'st spells: aye, missing of his end,
 While shee *self-deaf, and unaffected*, lies.

Lord, crack their teeth, Lord, crush Thou these lions' jaws,
 Soe lett them sinck as water in the sand:
 When deadly bow their aiming fury draws,
 Shiver the shaft, ere past the shooter's hand.
So make them melt as the dishowsed snaille,
Or as the embrio, whose vitall band
Breakes ere it holdes, and formless eyes doe faile
To see the sun, though brought to lightfull land."

“*Dishoused*” snail! That’s a bit, observe, of Sir Philip’s own natural history, perfecting the image in the psalm, “as a snail which melteth,”¹ The “*housed*” snail can shelter himself from evil weather, but the poor houseless slug, a mere slimy mass of helpless blackness,—shower-begotten, as it seems,—what is to become of *it* when the sun is up!

6. Not that even houseless snails melt,—nor that there’s anything about snails at all in David’s psalm, I believe, both Vulgate and Septuagint saying “wax” instead, as in Psalms lxviii. 2, xcvi. 5, etc.; but I suppose there’s some reptilian sense in the Hebrew, justifying our translation here—all the more interesting to me because of a puzzle I got into in Isaiah, the other day; respecting which, lest you should fancy I’m too ready to give up Joshua and the sun without taking trouble about them, please observe this very certain condition of your Scriptural studies: that if you read the Bible with predetermination to pick out every text you approve of—that is to say, generally, any that confirm you in the conceit of your own religious sect,—that console you for the consequences of your own faults,

¹ [Psalm lviii. 8 (Authorised Version): “As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away.” The sense of the Hebrew word is somewhat doubtful, but the preponderance of scholars is in favour of the translation “snail” or “slug”: see Perowne’s *Book of Psalms*, 1883, vol. i. pp. 475–476.]

—or assure you of a pleasant future though you attend to none of your present duties—on these terms you will find the Bible entirely intelligible, and wholly delightful:¹ but if you read it with a real purpose of trying to understand it, and obey; and so read it all through, steadily, you will find it, out and out, the crabbedest and most difficult book you ever tried; horribly ill written in many parts, according to all human canons; totally unintelligible in others; and with the gold of it only to be got at by a process of crushing in which nothing but the iron teeth of the fiercest and honestest resolution will prevail against its adamant.

7. For instance, take the 16th of Isaiah. Who is to send the Lamb?² why is the Lamb to be sent? what does the Lamb mean? There is nothing in the Greek Bible about a Lamb at all, nor is anybody told to send anything. But God says *He* will send something, apostolically, as reptiles!

Then, are the daughters of Moab the outcasts, as in the second verse, or other people, as in the fourth? How is Moab's throne to be established in righteousness, in the tabernacle of David, in the fifth? What are his lies not to be in the sixth? And why is he to howl for himself, in the seventh? Ask any of the young jackanapes you put up to chatter out of your pulpits, to tell you even so much as this, of the first half-dozen verses! But above all, ask them who the persons are who are to be sent apostolically as reptiles?

¹ [Compare Vol. XXVII. p. 650.]

² ["Send ye the lamb to the ruler of the land from Sela to the wilderness, unto the mount of the daughter of Zion" (Bible version.) The LXX. has *Ααποστελω ωδ ερπετα επι την γην μη πετρα ερημος εστι το ορος θυγατρος Σιων* ("I will send as it were reptiles on the land. It not the mount of the daughter of Sion a desolate rock?") This version is, however, incorrect. The true translation—"Send ye the lambs (R.V.) to the ruler of the land"—is explained by 2 Kings iii. 4: "Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheepmaster; and he rendered unto the king of Israel the wool of an hundred thousand lambs." "The prophet, as a devoted adherent of the Davidic family, exhorts the Moabites to renew their long-suspended tribute to their original suzerain, the king of Jerusalem (see 2 Samuel viii. 2)": Cheyne's *Prophecies of Isaiah*, 1882, vol. i. p. 100.]

8. Meanwhile, on the way to answer, I've got a letter,* not from a jackanapes, but a thoroughly learned and modest clergyman, and old friend, advising me of my mistake in April *Fors*, in supposing that Rahab, in the 89th Psalm, means the harlot.¹ It is, he tells me, a Hebrew word for the Dragon adversary, as in the verse "He hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon."² That will come all the clearer and prettier for us, when we have worked it out, with Rahab herself and all; meantime, please observe what a busy creature she must have been—the stalks of her flax in heaps enough to hide the messengers! doubtless also, she was able to dye her thread of the brightest scarlet, a becoming colour.†

9. Well, I can't get that paper of Mr. Frederic Harrison's out of my head;³ chiefly because I know and like its writer; and I *don't* like his wasting his time in writing that sort of stuff. What I have got to say to him, agent it, may better be said publicly, because I must write it carefully, and with some fulness; and if he won't attend to me, perhaps some of his readers may. So I consider him, for the time, as one of my acquaintances among working men, and dedicate the close of this letter to him specially.⁴

My dear Harrison,—I am very glad you have been enjoying yourself at Oxford; and that you still think it a pretty place. But why, in the name of all that's developing, did you walk in those wretched old Magdalen

* Corr., Art. VI. [p. 637].

† See, on that subject, the third number of *Deucalion*.⁵

¹ [See Letter 64, § 1 n. (p. 562).]

² [Isaiah li. 9.]

³ [See above, § 3.]

⁴ [Answered by Mr. Harrison in "Past and Present: a Letter to Mr. Ruskin," an article in the *Fortnightly Review*, July 1876, reprinted in *The Choice of Books and other Literary Pieces* (1886). But see also a letter from Mr. Harrison to Ruskin, printed below, Letter 67, § 24 (p. 661). See also the correspondence in Appendix 16 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 565–569).]

⁵ [Ch. vii.: see Vol. XXVI. p. 184.]

walks?¹ They're as dull as they were thirty years ago. Why didn't you promenade in our new street,² opposite Mr. Ryman's? or under the rapturous sanctities of Keble? or beneath the lively new zigzag parapet of Tom Quad?³—or, finally, in the name of all that's human and progressive, why not up and down the elongating suburb of the married Fellows, on the cock-horse road to Banbury?⁴

However, I'm glad you've been at the old place; even though you wasted the bloom of your holiday-spirits in casting your eyes, in that too childish and pastoral manner, "round this sweet landscape, with its myriad blossoms and foliage, its meadows in their golden glory," etc.; and declaring that all you want other people to do is to "follow out in its concrete results this sense of collective evolution." Will you only be patient enough, for the help of this old head of mine on stooping shoulders, to tell me one or two of the inconcrete results of separate evolution?

¹ [Mr. Harrison's article (of which some account is necessary to explain Ruskin's answer) was a dialogue between "A Critic" and "A Positivist," and the scene was laid "At Oxford: the Walks round Magdalen College." "If," says the Positivist, "you turn to the first words of Comte's philosophy of history, you will see that he calls the entire course of civilization a collective evolution of the human race, which is itself, he says, but a prolongation of the entire series seen in the whole scale of living nature" (p. 870). "All that I want you to do is to follow out in all its concrete results this sense of collective evolution. See how this transcendent power holds you in the hollow of its hand. Stand now and cast your eyes round this sweet landscape, with its myriad blossoms and foliage, its meadows in their golden glory, and the uplands far away there in their spring-tide trim. Conceive what it once was. . . . What countless generations of men toiled and died in the taming and the clearing. . . . These flowers and plants which we can see between the cloisters and trellised around the grey traceries, what races of men in China, Japan, India, Mexico, South America, Australasia, first developed their glory out of some wild bloom?" (p. 871). The Positivist explains that he worships this "consensus of human energy"; to which the Critic asks how such worship differs from Pantheism? The Positivist will not have this. "Pantheism is a bit of muddled sentiment" (p. 874). Pantheism mixes up the organic and inorganic worlds; Positivism concentrates itself upon humanity. "The sense of humanity as a collective power is a real thing, and also an object of grateful reverence, quite apart from any idea that it is a being at all" (p. 875). Then the Critic makes some objections. "We who have thought and studied . . . admit that Humanity is an aggregate of men" (p. 877); but deny that it is a Being. Then comes a metaphysical discussion of the nature of Being, into which Ruskin does not follow the disputants. The Dialogue is to be included in a forthcoming (1907) book by Mr. Harrison entitled *Faith in Man*.]

² [King Edward Street.]

³ [Compare Vol. XXIII. p. 220.]

⁴ [See above, p. 310 *n.*]

10. Had you done me the honour to walk through my beautifully developing schools, you would have found, just outside of them (turned out because I'm tired of seeing it, and want something progressive), the cast of the Elgin Theseus. I am tired thereof, it is true; but I don't yet see my way, as a Professor of Modern Art, to the superseding it. On the whole, it appears to me a very satisfactory type of the human form; arrived at, as you know, two thousand and two hundred years ago. And you tell me, nevertheless, to "see how this transcendent power of collective evolution holds *me* in the hollow of its hand!" Well, I hope I *am* handsomer than the Theseus; it's very pleasant to think so, but it did not strike me before. May I flatter myself it is really your candid opinion? Will you just look at the "Realization of the (your?) Ideal," in the number of *Vanity Fair* for February 17th, 1872, and confirm me on this point?¹

11. Granting whatever advance in the ideal of humanity you thus conclude, I still am doubtful of your next reflection. "But these flowers and plants which we can see between the cloisters, and trellised round the grey traceries—"(My dear boy, what have *you* to do with cloisters or traceries!² Leave that business to the jackdaws; their loquacious and undeveloped praise is enough for such relics of the barbarous past. You don't want to shut yourself up, do you? and you couldn't design a tracery, for your life; and you don't know a good one from a bad one: what in the name of common sense or common modesty do you mean by chattering about these?) "What races of men in China, Japan, India, Mexico, South America, Australasia, first developed their glory out of some wild bloom?" Frankly, I don't know—being in this no wiser than you;

¹ [A very hideous coloured caricature of Ruskin (unsigned), lettered "Men of the Day, No. 40, 'The realization of the Ideal,'" the words referring to the concluding passage of Jehu Junior's letterpress: "by those who have not bowed the knee to the modern Baal, he will be gratefully remembered as one preaching in the wilderness the abandonment of the grosser things of life and the realization of the Ideal."]

² [See Ruskin's private letter in Appendix 16, Vol. XXIX. p. 566.]

but also I don't care: and in this carelessness *am* wiser than you, because I *do* know this—that if you will look into the Etruscan room of the British Museum, you will find there an Etruscan Demeter of—any time you please—B.C., riding on a car whose wheels are of wild roses:¹ that the wild rose of *her* time is thus proved to be precisely the wild rose of *my* time, growing behind my study on the hillside; and for my own part, I would not give a spray of it for all Australasia, South America, and Japan together. Perhaps, indeed, apples have improved since the Hesperides' time; but I know they haven't improved since I was a boy, and I can't get a Ribston Pippin, now, for love or money.

12. Of Pippins in Devonshire, of cheese in Cheshire, believe me, my good friend,—though I trust much more than you in the glorified future of both,—you will find no development in the present scientific day;—of Asphodel none; of Apples none demonstrable; but of Eves? From the ductile and silent gold of ancient womanhood to the resonant bronze, and tinkling—not cymbal, but shall we say—saucepan, of Miss Frances Power Cobbe,² there *is* an interval, with a vengeance; widening to the future. You yourself, I perceive, have no clear insight into this solidified

¹ [A bronze statuette, No. 602 in the Museum collection; figured on Plate XII. of the *Catalogue of the Bronzes, Greek, Roman, and Etruscan, in the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum*, by H. B. Walters, 1899. The following note in Ruskin's diary (March 3, 1876) mentions this, and other objects which had attracted his notice:—

“Brit. Mus.—Saw sceptre of Tarentum with Corinthian capital. Golden rings of Camirus: opposed beasts, griffin to chimæra; the chimæras perfect in contorted force, wrought with points and knots. One, with round petasus, as opposed to a pawing, horse-headed griffin.

“Attic rings; one, gross, of cattle; another, of a sheep—the wool marked by incised dots; held down between crocus and vine.

“Etruscan bronze statue with iron centre, splitting, and lambent drapery. Chariot of Demeter with pure roses for wheels. Roses and stars in early Greek vases confused.

“Etruscan and Camirus gold quite undistinguishable in dotted-dew workmanship.”

Most of the objects thus noted may be seen in “The Room of Gold Ornaments” and “The Etruscan Saloon.”]

² [Ruskin takes Miss Frances Power Cobbe (1822–1904), the well-known writer on political and religious subjects, as representative of the “advanced” woman. With one of her principal activities, the movement against Vivisection, he was, however, in full sympathy.]

dispersion of the lingering pillar of Salt,¹ which *had* been good for hospitality in its day; and which yet would have some honour in its descendant, the poor gleaning Moabites,² into your modern windily progressive pillar of Sand, with “career open to it” indeed other than that of wife and mother³—good for nothing, at last, but burial heaps. But are you verily so proud of what has been already achieved? I will take you on your own terms, and study only the evolution of the Amazonian Virgin. Take first the ancient type of her, leading the lucent Cobbes of her day, “florentes aere catervas”:⁴—

“Bellatrix, non illa colo, calathisve Minervae
Femineas adsueta manus. . .
Illam omnis tectis agrisque effusa juvenus
Turbaque miratur matrum et prospectat euntem,
Attonitis inhians animis, ut regius ostro
Velet honos leves humeros, ut fibula crinem
Auro internectat, Lyciam ut great ipsa pharetram
Et pastorem praefixa cuspide myrtum.”⁵

With this picture, will you compare that so opportunely furnished me by the author of *The Angel in the House*,* of the modern Camilla, in “white bodice, purple kneebreeches, which she had borrowed from an Ethiopian serenader, red stockings, and shoes”? From this sphere of Ethiopian aspiration, may not even the divinely emancipated spirit of Cobbe cast one glance—“Backward, Ho”?

13. But suppose I grant your Evolution of the Japanese Rose, and the Virginian Virago, how of other creatures? of other things? I don’t find the advocates of Evolution much given to studying either men, women, or roses; I perceive them to be mostly occupied with frogs and lice. Is there a Worshipful Batrachianity—a Divine Pedicularity?

* Article III. of Correspondence [p. 633].

¹ [Genesis xix. 26.]

² [Ruth ii. 2.]

³ [See Letter 12, § 14 (Vol. XXVII. p. 208).]

⁴ [Virgil, *Æneid*, vii. 804.]

⁵ [Virgil’s description of Camilla (*Æneid*, vii. 805, 806, 812–817). For other references to Camilla, see Vol. XIX. p. 329 *n.*]

—Stay, I see at page 874¹ that Pantheism is “muddled sentiment”; but it was you, my dear boy, who began the muddling with your Japanese horticulture. *Your* Humanity has no more to do with roses than with rose-chafers or other vermin; but I must really beg you not to muddle your terms as well as your head. “*We*, who *have* thought and studied,” do not admit that “humanity is an aggregate of men.”² An aggregate of men is a mob, and not “Humanity”; and an aggregate of sheep is a flock, and not Ovility; and an aggregate of geese is—perhaps you had better consult Mr. Herbert Spencer and the late Mr. John Stuart Mill for the best modern expression,—but if you want to know the proper names for aggregates, in good old English, go and read Lady Juliana’s list in *The Book of St. Albans*.³

14. I do not care, however, to pursue questions with you of these “concrete developments.” For, frankly, I conceive myself to know considerably more than you do, of organic Nature and her processes, and of organic English and its processes; but there is one development of which, since it is your special business to know it, and I suppose your pleasure, I hope you know much more than I do (whose business I find by no means forwarded by it, still less my pleasure)—the Development of Law.⁴ For the concrete development of beautifully bewigged humanity, called a lawyer, I beg you to observe that I always express, and feel, extreme respect.⁵ But for Law itself, in the existent form of it, invented, as it appears to me, only for the torment and taxation of Humanity, I entertain none

¹ [Of the *Contemporary Review*, vol. 27.]

² [“*We*, means we old people; the phrase adopted from Mr. Harrison. The ‘humanity is an aggregate’ is his assertion.”—*MS. note in Author’s copy.*]

³ [“Of Hart, Hinde, Bucke, and Doe, you shall ever say, a heard; of Roes you shall ever terme a beuie; of wilde Swine a sounder; of Wolues a rowt” (p. 30 of the 1595 edition of *The Gentlemans Academie; or, The Booke of St. Albans*). For other reference to the book, see Vol. XXV. pp. 175, 314.]

⁴ [Mr. Harrison, it may be noted, was secretary to the Royal Commission for Digesting the Law, 1869–1870; Professor of Jurisprudence and International Law to the Inns of Court, 1877–1889.]

⁵ [See Letter 1, § 6 (Vol. XXVII. p. 18).]

whatsoever. I may be wrong, and I don't want to be wrong; and you, who know the law, can show me if I am wrong or not. Here, then, are four questions of quite vital importance to Humanity, which if you will answer to me positively, you will do more good than I have yet known done by Positivism.

(1.) What is "Usury" as defined by existing Law?

(2.) Is Usury, as defined by existing law, an absolute term, such as Theft, or Adultery? and is a man therefore a Usurer, who only commits Usury a little, as a man is an Adulterer who only commits Adultery a little?

(3.) Or is it a sin incapable of strict definition, or strictly retributive punishment; like "Cruelty"? and is a man criminal in proportion to the quantity of it he commits?

(4.) If criminal in proportion to the quantity he commits, is the proper legal punishment in the direct ratio of the quantity, or inverse ratio of the quantity, as it is in the case of theft?

15. If you will answer these questions clearly, you will do more service to Humanity than by writing any quantity of papers either on its Collective Development or its Abstract Being. I have not touched upon any of the more grave questions glanced at in your paper, because in your present Mercutial temper¹ I cannot expect you to take cognizance of anything grave. With respect to such matters, I will "ask for you to-morrow," not to-day. But here—to end my *Fors* with a piece of pure English,—are two little verses² of Sir Philip's, merry enough, in measure, to be set to a fandango if you like. I may, perhaps, some time or other, ask you if you can apply them personally, in address to Mr. Comte. For the nonce I only ask you the above four plain questions of English law; and I adjure you, by the soul of every Comes reckoned up in unique Comte—

¹ [See *Romeo and Juliet*, Act iii. sc. 1, part of Mercutio's speech: "Ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man."]

² [From the paraphrase of Psalm lxxi.; lines 2006–2017 in *Rock Honeycomb*, where, in his notes, Ruskin again alludes to the "gay measure." The version is one of those now commonly attributed to Sidney's sister.]

May God
almighty give us success over these fellows
and enable us to get a Peace

by all that's positive, all that's progressive, all that's spiral, all that's conchoidal, and all that's evolute—great Human Son of Holothurian Harries, answer me.¹

“Since imprisoned in my mother
Thou me feed'st, whom have I other
Held my stay, or made my song?
Yea, when all me so misdeemed,
I to most a monster seemed,
Yet in thee my hope was strong.

Yet of thee the thankful story
Filled my mouth: thy gracious glory
Was my ditty all the day.
Do not then, now age assaileth,
Courage, verdure, vertue faileth,
Do not leave me cast away.”

16. I have little space, as now too often, for any definite school work. My writing-lesson, this month, is a facsimile of the last words written by Nelson, in his cabin, with the allied fleets in sight, off Trafalgar. It is entirely fine in general structure and character.²

17. Mr. Ward has now three, and will I hope soon have the fourth, of our series of lesson photographs,³ namely,—

1. Madonna by Filippo Lippi.
2. The Etruscan Leucothea.
3. Madonna by Titian.
4. Infanta Margaret, by Velasquez.⁴

¹ [For Mr. Frederic Harrison's answer, see Letter 67, § 24 (below, pp. 662–663). In the *Fortnightly Review*, July 1876, Mr. Harrison, as already stated (p. 618 *n.*), made further reply; in this, referring to the present passage, he says: “And you finally invoke me to answer you, tracing my birth to a species of slug whom you take to be the founder eponymous of our numerous but respectable clan.”]

² [See Plate VI., hitherto given as Frontispiece to this Letter. The facsimile is of the last words of Nelson's letter to Lady Hamilton, written two days before the battle. The letter is in the British Museum (*Egerton MS.* 1614, f. 125), and is exhibited in the Grenville Library.]

³ [See Letter 69, §§ 15, 16 (pp. 699–701).]

⁴ [For particulars of No. 1, see above, p. 445 *n.*; and of No. 2, p. 574 *n.* No. 3 (Plate VII.) is of the picture, in Titian's earlier manner, in the Imperial Gallery at Vienna, generally known as “The Madonna with the Cherries.” No. 4 (Plate VIII.) is of the portrait in the same gallery of the Infanta Margarita Teresa as a child.]

On these I shall lecture, as I have time, here and in the *Laws of Féssole*;¹ but, in preparation for all farther study, when you have got the four, put them beside each other, putting the Leucothea first, the Lippi second, and the others as numbered.

Then, the first, the Leucothea, is entirely noble religious art, of the fifth or sixth century B.C., full of various meaning and mystery, of knowledges that are lost, feelings that have ceased, myths and symbols of the laws of life, only to be traced by those who know much both of life and death.

Technically, it is still in Egyptian bondage,² but in course of swiftly progressive redemption.

The second is nobly religious work of the fifteenth century of Christ,—an example of the most perfect unison of religious myth with faithful realism of human nature yet produced in this world. The Etruscan traditions are preserved in it even to the tassels of the throne cushion: the pattern of these, and of the folds at the edge of the angel's drapery, may be seen in the Etruscan tomb now central in the first compartment of the Egyptian gallery of the British Museum;³ and the double cushion of that tomb is used, with absolute obedience to his tradition, by Jacopo della Quercia, in the tomb of Ilaria di Caretto.⁴

The third represents the last phase of the noble religious art of the world, in which realization has become consummate; but all supernatural aspect is refused, and mythic teaching is given only in obedience to former tradition, but with no anxiety for its acceptance. Here is, for

¹ [For later references in *Fors* to the Four Lesson Photographs, see Letter 69 (pp. 699–701); to the Velasquez, Letter 70 (p. 720 *n.*); and to the “Leucothea,” Letters 77 and 78 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 117, 127). Ruskin did not refer to them in the *Laws of Féssole*, as printed; but, for a discussion of the Lippi, see Vol. XXIV. pp. 451–454.]

² [See above, p. 563.]

³ [The Cervetri Sarcophagus, now in the Room of Terra-cottas at the British Museum (acquired from the Castellani Collection in 1873). The same tasselled pillow (the “fringed mattress” of Arnold's poem on the church) is to be seen on the famous tomb in the church of Brou.]

⁴ [Compare Letter 45, § 2 (p. 146).]



Leuson Photograph N° 5.

Allen & Co. Br.

The Madonna with the Cherries

From the picture by Titian



Photo. Levy.

Allen & Co. Sc.

The Infanta Margaret.

From the picture by Velasquez.

certain, a sweet Venetian peasant, with her child, and fruit from the market-boats of Mestre. The *Ecce Agnus*, topsy-turvy on the finely perspective scroll, may be deciphered by whoso list.

But the work itself is still sternly conscientious, severe, reverent, and faultless.

The fourth is an example of the highest reach of technical perfection yet reached in art; all effort and labour seeming to cease in the radiant peace and simplicity of consummated human power. But all belief in supernatural things, all hope of a future state, all effort to teach, and all desire to be taught, have passed away from the artist's mind. The Child and her Dog are to him equally real, equally royal, equally mortal. And the History of Art since it reached this phase—cannot be given in the present number of *Fors Clavigera*.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

18. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

No. 50. G. £10, 10s.

This is a subscription of five guineas for each year: this amount completes that sum (with the £15, 15s. which appeared at p. 65 February *Fors*¹) for each of the five years.

19. The publication of the following letter, with its answer, will, I hope, not cause Mr. Tarrant any further displeasure. I have only in the outset to correct his statement that the payment of £10, 14s. 11d. was on *my* behalf. It is simply payment to another lawyer. And my first statement² was absolutely accurate; I never said Mr. Tarrant had himself taxed, but that he had been “employed in taxing”; I do not concern myself with more careful analysis, when the accounts are all in print. My accusation is against the “legal profession generally,” not against a firm which I have chosen as an entirely trustworthy one, to be employed both in St. George’s business and my own.

2, BOND COURT, WALBROOK, 25th April, 1876.

DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I have the April *Fors*, in which I see you have published our account of costs against you, amounting to £47, 13s. 4d. The document was yours, and you had a perfect right to lay it before your readers, but you are the first client who has ever thought it necessary to put such a document of mine to such a use. I don’t know, however, that it will do me any injury, although the statement preceding it is somewhat inaccurate, because our costs of the transfer of the Sheffield property were £26, 15s. 11d., which included a payment of £10, 14s. 11d. made on your behalf, leaving our costs at £16, 1s., the other portion of the £47, 13s. 4d. being costs relating to the constitution of the St. George’s Company, leaving altogether £29, 14s. 11d. only payable to us beyond money paid on your account. It is hardly fair, therefore, to say that I *employed myself* in taxing the transfer of the property to nearly £50.

As to the charge for letters (the writing of which is really not brickmakers’ work), you must bear in mind that the entire conduct of your matters had to be done by correspondence, for which you are fairly chargeable; and I cannot accuse myself of having written a single letter that was unnecessary.

As to the position of the St. George’s Company, it is not a legal company, if by that you mean a company recognized by law: it has neither the advantages nor disadvantages of companies incorporated in accordance with the provisions of the

¹ [Letter 62, § 19 (p. 530 in this edition).]

² [See above, p. 579.]

several Acts of Parliament relating to such matters. It is not a legal trust of a charitable nature, if by that term be meant a trust which is liable to the supervision or interference of the Charity Commissioners. It is a number of persons unincorporated, but associated for other purposes than that of gain. It is on a similar footing to such a society as that for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge. The Master will be personally responsible for the debts of the Company contracted by his order. If you desire to have a legal Company, or the supervision of the Charity Commissioners, you must give way in many points which you have hitherto considered indispensable to your scheme. On the 29th February last we sent you a specimen of the form in which we proposed to draw up the memorandum for each Companion to subscribe. If you will return us this with any remarks upon it which may occur to you, we will at once have it engrossed, and send it you to be signed by all the Companions.

We were expecting a call from you when you were in town some time since, and should have then discussed this subject with you, and also the subject of the trust deed which will have to be executed by the Master of the Company.

We will act upon your suggestion, and forward the deed of the Sheffield property to Mr. Bagshawe.¹ Shall I also send all the title deeds to him relating to the property? Tell me this.

Faithfully yours,
W. P. TARRANT.

PROFESSOR RUSKIN,
ARTHUR SEVERN, ESQ., HERNE HILL, S.E.

(*Answer.*)

PATTERDALE, *6th May*, 1876.

DEAR MR. TARRANT,—I was surprised and vexed by the opening of your letter of 25th April, showing that you had not in the least hitherto understood the scope or meaning of my present work. There is not the smallest unfriendliness in my publication of your account. No client ever had occasion to do it before, of course;—you never had a client before engaged in steady and lifelong contest with the existing principles of the Law, the Church, and the Army,—had you? The publication of your accounts of course can do you no harm, if they are fair; nor have, or had I, the slightest idea of their being otherwise. All accounts for St. George are to be printed: the senders-in must look to the consequences.

The delay in my returning your draft of the rules of Company is because every lawyer I speak to tells me of a new difficulty. The whole piece of business, you remember, arose from my request to you simply to secure a piece of ground to our trustees, which had been given us by Mr. Baker. Now I find at the last moment that neither Mr. Baker nor anybody else can *give* us a piece of land at all, but must sell it us.

Next, I want to know if this form, as you have drawn it up, is approved by me, what are you going to do with it? What is the good of it? Will the writing of it in black letter make us a legal company, like a railway company, capable of holding land? Do the Charity Commissioners interfere with *their* business? or must we blow some people to bits or smash them into jelly, to prove our want of charity,—and get leave, therefore, to do what we like with our own?

¹ [See Letter 80, § 12 (Vol. XXIX. p. 183).]

Fix your minds, and Mr. Barber's,¹ on this one point—the grip of the land. If you can't give us that, send us in your accounts, and let us be done with the matter. If you can, on the document as it stands, write it out on the rubbish your modern stationers call parchment, and do what you will with it, so.

20. I am really ashamed to give any farther account, just now, of the delays in our land work, or of little crosses and worries blocking my first attempt at practice. One of the men whom I thought I had ready for this Worcestershire land, being ordered, for trial, to do a little bit of rough work in Yorkshire that I might not torment Mr. Baker with his freshmanship, threw up the task at once, writing me a long letter of which one sentence was enough for me,—that “he would do *his share*, but no more.” These infernal notions of Equality and Independence are so rooted, now, even in the best men's minds, that they don't so much as know even what Obedience or Fellowship means! Fancy one of Nelson's or Lord Cochrane's² men retreating from his gun, with the avowed resolution to “do no more than his share” ! However, I know there's good in this man, and I doubt not he will repent, and break down no more; but I shall not try him again for a year. And I must be forgiven my St. George's accounts this month. I really can't let the orchises and hyacinths go out of flower while I'm trying to cast sums; and I've been two whole days at work on the purple marsh orchis alone, which my botanical readers will please observe is in St. George's schools to be called “*Porphyria veris*,” “*Spring Purplet*.” It is, I believe, Ophelia's “long purple.”³ There are a quantity of new names to be invented for the whole tribe, their present ones being not by St. George enduring.

21. The subjoined letter gives me great pleasure: it is from a son of my earliest Oxford friend: who, as his father helped me in educating myself, is now helping me in the education of others. I print it entire; it may give some of my readers an idea of the minor hindrances which meet one at every step, and take as much time to conquer as large ones. The work to be done is to place a series of the simple chemical elements as “Imps” in a pretty row of poetical Bottles at Sheffield.⁴

“BROAD STREET, OXFORD, *March 30, 1876.*”

“MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I knocked in vain at your ‘oak’ last night when I came to Corpus to report progress, and also to ask you two questions, which must be put to you by letter, as there is not much time to lose if you wish to have the alkaline earths ready by the time you go to Sheffield. Firstly, do you wish me to see about getting the *metals* of the alkalis, and if so which of them do you

¹ [The draftsman: see above, p. 376.]

² [For another reference to Lord Cochrane (afterwards Earl of Dundonald), see Vol. XXVII. p. 153.]

³ [*Hamlet*, Act iv. sc. 7. The drawing was engraved for *Proserpina*: see Vol. XXV. p. 341, and Plate XXIII. Ultimately Ruskin called it “*Contorta Purpurea*,” “Purple Wreath-wort.”]

⁴ [This, however, was not done.]

want? Some of them are extremely expensive,—calcium, for instance, being 2d. a grain; but then, as it is very light, a very small quantity would be required as a specimen. The other questions were about the amount of the oxides, and about the shape of the bottles to hold them. I have in your absence chosen some long sample bottles which are very beautiful of their kind, and even if they do not meet your approval they can easily be changed when you return to Oxford. I am progressing fairly well with the earths—Magnesia is ready; Alumina and Baryta partly made, but not yet pure, for it is not more easy in chemistry to get a perfect thing than in any other matter with which man has anything to do, and to-day I have been extremely unfortunate with the Baryta, having tried two methods of making it, broken four crucibles, and, worst of all, failed to make it in a state of purity: however, I shall have one more try to-morrow, and no doubt shall succeed. If there is any chance of your being in Oxford before Easter, I will not make the Silica, since the process is very beautiful, and one which no doubt you would like to see. Please excuse the length of my letter, and believe me,

“Affectionately yours,

“THEODORE D. ACLAND.”

22. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

I am aghast at the columnar aspect of any account given in satisfactory detail; and will only gradually, as I have space, illustrate my own expenditure and its course. That unexplained hundred of last month,¹ diminished itself, I find, thus;

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|-----------|----------|----------|
| Pocket | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Klein (final account on dismissal to Rotterdam, paying his passage, and a shilling or two over) | 30 | 0 | 0 |
| Downs, for my London quarterly pensioners | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| Morley (Oxford bookbinding) | 3 | 1 | 6 |
| Easter presents | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| | <u>73</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Leaving a balance of | £26 | 18 | 6 |

to be added to the £200 of personal expenses in this month's accounts. About a hundred and twenty of this has gone in a fortnight's posting, with Mr. and Mrs. Severn, from London to Coniston, stopping to see St. Albans, Peterborough, Croyland, Stamford and Burleigh, Grantham, Newark, Lincoln, our new ground at Sheffield, Pomfret, Knaresborough, Ripon, Fountain's, Richmond, Mortham Tower, and Brougham Castle.² A pleasant life, you think? Yes,—if I led an unpleasant one, however dutiful, I could not write any of my books; least of all, Fors. But I am glad, if you honestly think it a pleasant life; why, if so, my richer readers, do you drive only round the parks, every day, instead of from place to place through England, learning a thing or two on the road? Of the rest of the “self” money, I leave further account till next month; it is not all gone yet. I give, however, for a typical example, one of Downs's weekly bills, reaching the symmetrical total of £7, 7s. 7d., or a guinea and a penny a day, which I think is about the average. Of the persons named therein as receiving weekly wage, Hersey is our old under-gardener, now rheumatic, and as little able to earn his dinner as I am myself; Rusch, my old lapidary, who

¹ [See above, p. 608.]

² [For an account of Ruskin's driving tours at this time, see Vol. XXIV. pp. xxvii.–xxxi.]

cuts in the course of the week what pebbles he can for me; Best, an old coachman, who used to come to us from livery-stable on occasion, and now can't drive any more; Christy, an old woman who used to work for my mother.

| | £ | s. | d. |
|--|-------|----|----|
| 1876. | | | |
| <i>April 22.</i> Cash in hand | 30 | 12 | 8 |
| | <hr/> | | |
| 29. Men's Wages | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Coachman's Book | 1 | 16 | 10 |
| Charities | 0 | 16 | 0 |
| Sundries | 0 | 13 | 9 |
| | <hr/> | | |
| | £7 | 7 | 7 |
| | <hr/> | | |
| <i>April 29</i> Balance in hand | £23 | 5 | 1 |
| | <hr/> | | |
| | £ | s. | d. |
| <i>April 29.</i> David Downs | 1 | 15 | 0 |
| Thomas Hersey | 1 | 5 | 0 |
| John Rusch | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | <hr/> | | |
| | £4 | 1 | 0 |
| | <hr/> | | |
| | £ | s. | d. |
| <i>April 29.</i> Plate Powder, 1s.; Oil, 10d | 0 | 1 | 10 |
| Soap and Sand | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Wages | 1 | 14 | 0 |
| | <hr/> | | |
| | £1 | 16 | 10 |
| | <hr/> | | |
| | £ | s. | d. |
| William Best | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Mrs. Christy | 0 | 6 | 0 |
| | <hr/> | | |
| | £0 | 16 | 0 |
| | <hr/> | | |
| | £ | s. | d. |
| <i>April 22.</i> Postage | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| 24. Rail and 'Bus, British Museum | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Cord for Boxes, 1s.6d.; Postage, 1s.6½d. | 0 | 3 | 0½ |
| 25. Horse and Cart, Boxes to Station | 0 | 7 | 6 |
| Carman, 1s.; Booking ditto, 6d. | 0 | 1 | 6 |
| Postage | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 26 and 28. Postage | 0 | 0 | 2½ |
| | <hr/> | | |
| | £0 | 13 | 9 |

After thus much of miniature illustration, I have only to explain of the broad effects in the account below, that my Oxford secretary,¹ who has £200 a year, does such work for me connected with my Professorship as

¹ [The "Oxford Secretary" was the Rev. St. John Tyrwhitt, for whom see Vol. XV. pp. xxx., 6. The "younger secretary" was Laurence Hilliard.]

only a trained scholar could do, leaving me free here to study hyacinths I wish I could give him the Professorship itself, but must do as I am bid by Oxford. My younger secretary, who has £100 a year, is this year put into office, for St. George's correspondence; and I must beg my good friends—now, I am thankful to say, gathering a little to St. George's work,—not to think themselves slighted in being answered by his hand, for mine is weary.

| 1876. | | £ | s. | d. |
|--------------|---|-------|----|----|
| <i>April</i> | 16. Balance | 1511 | 10 | 1 |
| <i>May</i> | 1. Half-year's Stipend of Slade Professorship | 179 | 0 | 0 |
| | | <hr/> | | |
| | | 1690 | 10 | 1 |
| | | 464 | 11 | 0 |
| | | <hr/> | | |

Balance, May 16th £1225 19 1

| | | £ | s. | d. |
|--------------|---|-------|----|----|
| <i>April</i> | 20 and 30. Self | 200 | 0 | 0 |
| | 20. Downs | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| | 22. Photographs (Leucothea and Lippi) | 16 | 5 | 0 |
| | 25. Tailor's Account | 33 | 6 | 0 |
| <i>May</i> | 1. Oxford Secretary | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | 1. Raffaele ¹ for May and June | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| | 15. Burgess | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| | | <hr/> | | |
| | | £464 | 11 | 0 |
| | | <hr/> | | |

23. (III.)

"HASTINGS, May 15.

"MY DEAR RUSKIN,—I enclose two extracts, cut from the same day's paper, which contain so grimly humorous a parallel between the ways in which the 'Protestant Church' and 'the world' are engaged in 'obliterating all traces of the Virgin Mary,' that I thought you might possibly use them in *Fors* or elsewhere.

"YOURS AFFECTIONATELY,

"C.PATMORE."²

(The following are the two extracts. Before giving them, I must reply to my greatly honoured and loved friend, that both the Bristol destroyers of images and New York destroyers of humanity, are simply—Lost Sheep

¹ [Raffaele Carloforti, the artist: see above, p. 583.]

² [This letter is reprinted by Mr. Basil Champneys in his *Memoirs and Correspondence of Coventry Patmore*, 1900, vol. ii. p. 290, where also (p. 291) the following note in reply from Ruskin is given:—

"BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE.

"DEAR PATMORE,—Yes, those are two notable paragraphs. I've sent them to the printer with your letter,—keeping 'brickmakers' for another time.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"J. R."

At about the same time Patmore must have written the letter about "brickmakers," which Ruskin afterwards printed in Letter 80, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 177).]

of the great Catholic Church; account of whom will be required at *her* hand.¹⁾

“ICONOCLASM AT BRISTOL.—Our Bristol correspondent writes: The removal of the ‘imagery’ from the north porch of Bristol Cathedral has created considerable excitement in the city and in Clifton. As a member of the capitular body who is known to strongly object to the figures was seen near the Cathedral late on Wednesday night, the clerk of the works employed ‘watchers,’ his intention being to refuse admission to other than his own workmen. On Thursday morning he had occasion to leave the works to go to the quarries at Corsham, and while he was absent a gang of men, under the orders of the chapter clerk, entered the gates, and before the clerk of the works, who was telegraphed for, could return, hauled down the four statues and *obliterated all traces of the Virgin Mary*, doing much damage to other carving in the process of removal. The last has by no means been heard of this affair. The statues cost over £100 each, but the money value of the ‘imagery’ is not considered by the Restoration Committee. Their contention is that, until the work was completed and handed over to the Cathedral body, it belonged to the Restoration Committee; and it is believed that the right of the Chapter to act as they have done will be tested in a court of law. Feeling is so strong against the action of the Dean and Chapter that plenty of money would be forthcoming to prosecute such an inquiry.”—*Pall Mall Gazette*, April 1876.

“One of the latest ‘sensations’ in New York has been a ‘female boxing match,’ aptly described by the *New York Times* as a ‘novel and nonsensical exhibition.’ The combatants—or ‘lady contestants,’ as they are called in the report of the proceedings—were two ballet-girls, of the kind known as ‘variety dancers.’ One, Miss Saunders, wore a white bodice, purple knee-breeches, which she had borrowed from an Ethiopian serenader, red stockings, and shoes. The other, Miss Harland, was attired in blue trunks and white tights. Both appeared nervous, were very pale, tried to blush, and ‘partially succeeded.’ When the fighting began, Miss Harland ‘did not know what to do with her hands.’ Miss Saunders, however, had her fists more at command, and, after some preliminary sparring, succeeded in striking her opponent ‘square in the face.’ Miss Harland, on her side, ‘by a vicious blow from the shoulder,’ managed to disarrange Miss Saunders’s back hair. Both ladies then smiled. In the end Miss Harland lost the match, ‘owing to her confirmed habit of swinging her hands around in the air.’ Miss Saunders was declared the winner, and carried off a prize of 200 dols. and a piece of silver plate; Miss Harland received a ten-dollar bill from an amateur who thought she deserved consolation; and the two ‘lady contestants’ left the stage arm-in-arm.”—*Pall Mall Gazette*, April 7, 1876.

24. (IV.) In last *Fors*, though I thought I knew my *Old Mortality* well enough, I carelessly wrote “Elspeth,” for “Elizabeth” (meaning Bessie Maclure²); and the misprint “Arannah” for “Araunah”³ escaped my eyes three times over. The most grotesque one of “changes” for “charges,” in p. 168, line 25,⁴ was, I suppose, appointed by Fors to chastise me for incurable flirtation. I wish I knew who these two schoolgirls are, whom I’ve got to finish my letter to if I can, this time.⁵

My dears, will you please, for I can’t rewrite what I’ve said so often, read, when you have opportunity, the letter to a young lady in *Fors* 34,

¹ [In a later letter to Patmore (July 7, 1876) Ruskin asks, “Why don’t you answer my snap at you in *Fors*?”]

² [See Letter 65, § 17 *n.* (p. 602).]

³ [In § 11 (p. 597, line 2).]

⁴ [In the original edition: see now § 26, line 2 (p. 611).]

⁵ [For its beginning, see Letter 65, § 24 (p. 608).]

§ 20.* Respecting the third article in that letter,¹ I have now a few words to add (read also, if you can, what is said of the Work of God, in Letters 45 and 46²). I told you³ in last *Fors* that you would have great difficulty in getting leave from English society to obey Christ. Fors has since sent me, in support of this statement, a paper called *The Christian*,—the number for Thursday, May 11,—in the fifteenth page of which is an article on young ladies headed “What can they do?” from which I take the following passage:—

“There have been times of special prayer for young men and women. Could there not be also for the very large class of young ladies who do not go out into society? They have no home duties to detain them, as many in a humbler condition; they have hours and hours of leisure, and know not how to spend them—partly from need of being directed, but more so from the prejudices and hindrances in their way. Their hearts are burning to do something for Christ, but they are not allowed, partly because it is considered ‘improper,’ and for a variety of reasons.

“There is a cry on every side for labourers. There are numbers longing to respond; if not wholly to dedicate their lives, at least a portion of their days, to active Christian service, and only a wave of united prayer can throw these objections aside, and free the large band who are so willing.

“A bright young Christian came to me this week. She is tired of meetings to which she is constantly taken, but never allowed to work in the inquiry-room at them,—hindered from taking up the least bit of work, till at last she cannot even *ask* for it. Almost to ‘kill time,’ she has taken up a secular corresponding agency.”

Now that it is “considered improper” by the world that you should do anything for Christ, is entirely true, and always true; and therefore it was that your Godfathers and Godmothers, in your name renounced the “vain pomp and glory of the *world*,” with all covetous desires of the same—see Baptismal Service—(I wonder if you had pretty names—won’t you tell me?) but I much doubt if, either privately or from the pulpit of your doubtless charming church, you have ever been taught what the “vain pomp and glory of the world” *was*.

Well,—do you want to be better dressed than your schoolfellows? Some of them are probably poor, and cannot afford to dress like you; or, on the

* I should like my lady readers in general to have, of back *Fors* numbers, at least, 30, 34, 36, 45, 46, and 48: those who have the complete book should scratch out the eleventh line in p. 18 of the last Index,⁴ and put the 10th line of it thus: “Ladies, and girls, advice to, 30, 2; 34, 29; 45, 212; 48, 271.”

¹ [See Vol. XXVII. p. 646.]

² [See above, pp. 166, 173 *seq.*]

³ [Here (with the words “I told you”) the reprint (*Letter to Young Girls*) resumes from Letter 65, § 25 (see above, p. 611). The reprint has “at first” for “in last *Fors*,” and “just” for “since.” It adds “1876” to “May 11,” but omits “the number” and “in the fifteenth page of which is.” It omits the words “(I wonder if you had pretty names—won’t you tell me?).” It also omits the two later paragraphs of the extract, thus ending at “for a variety of reasons.” Some other revisions by the author are here followed: viz., the italicising of “*world*” and “*was*,” and the transposition of “you” from after “if.” Also, on p. 636, line 8, the substitution of “till this be amended” for “now.”]

⁴ [That is, the Index to Volumes III. and IV. of *Fors* as originally published. The references are in this edition to Vol. XXVII. pp. 545, 645; and above, pp. 162, 208.]

other hand, you may be poor yourselves, and may be mortified at their being dressed better than you. Put an end to all that at once, by resolving to go down into the deep of your girl's heart, where you will find, inlaid by Christ's own hand, a better thing than vanity—pity. And be sure of this, that, although in a truly Christian land, every young girl would be dressed beautifully and delightfully,—in this entirely heathen and Baalworshipping land of ours, not one girl in ten has either decent or healthy clothing, and that you have no business, till this be amended, to wear anything fine yourself; but *are bound to use your full strength and resources* to dress as many of your poor neighbours as you can. What of fine dress your people insist upon your wearing, take—and wear proudly and prettily, for their sakes; but, so far as in you lies, be sure that every day you are labouring to clothe some poorer creatures. And if you cannot clothe, at least help, with your hands. You can make your own bed; wash your own plate; brighten your own furniture,—if nothing else.

“But that's servant's work”? Of course it is. What business have you to hope to be better than a servant of servants? “God made you a lady”? Yes, He has put you, that is to say, in a position in which you may learn to speak your own language beautifully; to be accurately acquainted with the elements of other languages; to behave with grace, tact, and sympathy to all around you; to know the history of your country, the commands of its religion, and the duties of its race. If you obey His will in learning these things, you will obtain the power of becoming a true “lady”; and you will become one, if while you learn these things you set yourself, with all the strength of your youth and womanhood, to serve His servants, until the day come when He calls you to say, “Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”¹

You may thus become a Christ's lady, or you may, if you will, become a Belial's lady, take Belial's gift of miserable idleness, living on the labour and shame of others, and deceiving them and yourself by lies about Providence, until you perish in hell with the rest of such, shrieking the bitter cry, “When saw we *Thee*?”²

You may become a Christ's lady if you *will*, I say; but you *must* will vigorously—there is no possible compromise. Most people think, if they keep all the best rooms in their hearts swept and garnished for Christ, with plenty of flowers and good books in them, that they may keep a little chamber in their heart's wall for Belial, on his occasional visits, or a three-legged stool for him in the heart's counting-house, or a corner for him in the heart's scullery, where he may lick the dishes. It won't do, my dears! You must cleanse the house of him, as you would of the plague, to the last spot. You must be resolved that as all you have, shall be God's, so all you *are* shall be God's; and you are to make it so, simply and quietly, by thinking always of yourself merely as sent to do His work; and considering at every leisure time, what you are to do next. Don't fret nor tease yourself about it, far less other people. Don't wear

¹ [Matthew xxv. 21.]

² [Matthew xxv. 37, 38, 39. Here the text of § 24 in *Fors Clavigera* ended. The following passage (“You may become . . . basket”) is here added from the *Letter to Young Girls*.]

white crosses, nor black dresses, nor caps with lappets. Nobody has any right to go about in an offensively celestial uniform, as if it were more *their* business, or privilege, than it is everybody's, to be God's servants. But, know and feel assuredly that every day of your lives you have done all you can for the good of others. Done, I repeat—not said. Help your companions, but don't talk religious sentiment to them; and serve the poor, but, for your lives, you little monkeys, don't preach to them. They are probably, without in the least knowing it, fifty times better Christians than you; and if anybody is to preach, let *them*. Make friends of them when they are nice, as you do of nice rich people; feel with them, work with them, and if you are not at last sure it is a pleasure to you both to see each other, keep out of their way. For material charity, let older and wiser people see to it; and be content, like Athenian maids in the procession of their home-goddess, with the honour of carrying the basket.¹

25. (V.)

“3, ATHOLE CRESCENT, PERTH, 10th May, 1876.

“SIR,—Thinking that it may interest you, I take the liberty of writing to let you know that the ‘Lead’ is not at all in the state you suppose it to be;² but still runs down, very clear, by the side of the North Inch and past Rose Terrace, and, judging from the numbers of them at this moment playing by it, affords no small delight to the children.

“I am, yours most respectfully,

“A READER OF ‘FORS.’ ”

26. (VI.)

“EASTHAMPSTEAD RECTORY, BLACKNELL,

“April 20, 1876.

“MY DEAR RUSKIN,—I have just received this month's *Fors*, but not read it (of course not: my friends never do, except to find the mistakes), as I am off to Dublin, but as regards Psalm lxxxvii. (note, § 1 of Letter 64), I expounded it in a sermon some time since, and was talking of it to a very learned Hebraist last Monday. Rahab, there, is generally understood to mean ‘the monster,’ and has nothing to do, beyond resemblance of sound, with Rahab the harlot. And the monster is the crocodile, as typical of Egypt. In Psalm lxxxix. 10 (the Bible version, not the Prayer-Book), you will see Rahab explained in the margin, by ‘*or Egypt.*’

“Perhaps Rahab the harlot was called by the same name from the rapacity of her class, just as in Latin *lupa*.

“The whole Psalm is badly translated, and, as we have it, unintelligible. But it is really charged with deep prophetic meaning. I cannot write more, so believe me,

“Ever yours affectionately,

“O. GORDON.

“I hope you will have had a pleasant journey when you receive this. The Greek Septuagint is much better than the English, but not good. As regards the general meaning, you have divined it very correctly.”³

¹ [Here the *Letter to Young Girls* ends with “Ever affectionately yours, J. R.” For the “basket-carriers” in the Pan-Athenaic procession, see Vol. XXV. pp. 279, 280.]

² [See Letter 65, § 19 (p. 604).]

³ [See above, § 8.]

LETTER 67

COMPANIONSHIP¹

1. AS I am now often asked, in private letters, the constitution of St. George's Company, and cannot, hitherto, refer, in answer, to any clear summary of it, I will try to write such a summary in this number of *Fors*, that it may henceforward be sent to inquirers as alone sufficiently explanatory.

The St. George's Company is a society established to carry out certain charitable objects, towards which it invites, and thankfully will receive, help from any persons caring to give it, either in money, labour, or any kind of gift. But the Company itself consists of persons who agree in certain general principles of action, and objects of pursuit, and who can, therefore, act together in effective and constant unison.

These objects of pursuit are, in brief terms, the health, wealth, and long life of the British nation: the Company having thus devoted itself, in the conviction that the British nation is at present unhealthy, poor, and likely to perish, as a power, from the face of the earth. They accordingly propose to themselves the general medicining, enriching, and preserving in political strength, of the population of these islands; they themselves numbering at present, in their ranks, about thirty persons—none of them rich, several of them sick, and the leader of them, at all events, not likely to live long.

2. Whether the nation be healthy, or in unwholesome

¹ [See below, § 8. "The Civilized Nation" (see below, § 3) was a rejected title for this letter.]

degradation of body and mind; wealthy, or in continual and shameful distress; strong, or in rapid decline of political power and authority,—the reader will find debated throughout the various contents of the preceding five volumes of *Fors.*¹ But there is one public fact, which cannot be debated—that the nation is in debt. And the St. George's Company do practically make it their *first*, though not their principal, object, to bring *that* state of things to an end; and to establish, instead of a National Debt, a National Store. (See the last line of the fifth page² of the first letter of the series, published 1st January, 1871, and the eleventh, and twenty-seventh, letters, throughout.)

That very few readers of *this* page have any notion, at this moment, what a National Debt is, or can conceive what a National Store should be, is one of many evil consequences of the lies which, under the title of “Political Economy,” have been taught by the ill-educated, and mostly dishonest, commercial men who at present govern the press of the country.

I have again and again stated the truth in both these matters, but must try once more to do it, emphatically and intelligibly.

3. A “civilized nation” in modern Europe consists, in broad terms, of (A) a mass of half-taught, discontented, and mostly penniless populace, calling itself the people; of (B) a thing which it calls a government—meaning an apparatus for collecting and spending money; and (C) a small number of capitalists, many of them rogues, and most of them stupid persons, who have no idea of any object of human existence other than money-making, gambling, or champagne-bibbing. A certain quantity of literary men, saying anything they can get paid to say,—of clergymen, saying anything they have been taught to say,—of natural philosophers, saying anything that comes into their heads,

¹ [Letters 1-60 (being vols. i.-v. of the original edition).]

² [Of the original edition: see Letter 1, § 3 (“a National Store instead of a National Debt”): Vol. XXVII. p. 14.]

—and of nobility, saying nothing at all, combine in disguising the action, and perfecting the disorganization, of the mass; but with respect to practical business, the civilized nation consists broadly of mob, money-collecting machine, and capitalist.

Now when the civilized mob wants to spend money for any profitless or mischievous purposes,—fireworks, illuminations, battles, driving about from place to place, or what not,—being itself penniless, it sets its money-collecting machine to borrow the sum needful for these amusements from the civilized capitalist.

The civilized capitalist lends the money, on condition that, through the money-collecting machine, he may tax the civilized mob thenceforward for ever. The civilized mob spends the money forthwith, in gunpowder, infernal machines, masquerade dresses, new boulevards, or anything else it has set its idiotic mind on for the moment; and appoints its money-collecting machine to collect a daily tax from its children, and children's children, to be paid to the capitalists from whom it had received the accommodation, thenceforward for ever.

That is the nature of a National Debt.

4. In order to understand that of a National Store, my readers must first consider what any store whatever, serviceable to human beings, consists of. A store properly means a collection of useful things. Literally, it signifies only a quantity,—or much of *anything*. But the heap of broken bottles which, I hear, is accumulating under the principal cliff of Snowdon, through the contributions of tourists from the summit, is not properly to be called a store; though a bin full of old wine is. Neither is a heap of cannon-balls a store;* though a heap of potatoes is. Neither is a cellar full of gunpowder a store; though a cellar full of coals is. A store is, for squirrels, of nuts; for bees, of honey; for

* They may serve for the *defence* of the store, of course;—so may the broken bottles, stuck on the top of a wall. But the lock of your cupboard is not the contents of it.

men, of food, clothes, fuel, or pretty things, such as toys or jewels,—and, for educated persons, of books and pictures.

And the possession of such a store by the nation would signify, that there were no taxes to pay; that everybody had clothes enough, and some stuff laid by for next year; that everybody had food enough, and plenty of salted pork, pickled walnuts, potted shrimps, or other conserves, in the cupboard; that everybody had jewels enough, and some of the biggest laid by, in treasuries and museums; and, of persons caring for such things, that everybody had as many books and pictures as they could read or look at; with quantities of the highest quality besides, in easily accessible public libraries and galleries.

5. Now the wretches who have, at present, the teaching of the people in their hands, through the public press, tell them that it is not “practical” to attempt to bring about this state of things;—and that their government, or money-collecting machine, *must* buy wine, potatoes, jewels, or pictures for them; but *must* buy iron plates two feet thick, gunpowder, and red tape. And this popular instruction is given, you will find, in the end, by persons who know that they could not get a percentage themselves (without the public’s coming to know it) on buying potatoes or pictures; but *can* get it, and a large one, on manufacturing iron, on committing wholesale murder,¹ or on tying up papers with red tape.

Now the St. George’s Company propose to themselves,—and, if the God they believe in, lives, will assuredly succeed in their proposition,—to put an end to this rascally and inhuman state of things, and bring about an honest and human state of them, instead. And they have already actually begun the accumulation of a National Store of good and useful things; by the collection and administration of which, they are not themselves to derive any gain whatsoever, but the Nation only.

¹ [Compare below, § 26 (p. 664).]
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6. We are, therefore, at present, as I said at first, a company established for a charitable purpose; the object of charity being the entire body of the British nation, now paying taxes to cheating capitalists. But we hope to include, finally, in our ranks a large number of the people themselves, and to make quite a different sort of people of them, carrying out our company's laws, to the abolition of many existing interests, and in abrogation of many existing arrangements.

And the laws which we hope thus to see accepted are none of them new; but have been already recommended by all wise men, and practised by all truly prosperous states; nor is there anything whatever new in the modes of administration proposed;—and especially be it noted, there is nothing of the present leader's fancies, in any part or character of the scheme—which is merely the application, to our nationally diseased thoughts and practices, of the direct precepts of the true sages of past time, who are every one of them in harmony concerning all that is necessary for men to do, feel, and know.

And we hope to establish these laws, not by violence, but by obeying them ourselves, to the extent of which existing circumstances admit; and so gradually showing the advantage of them, and making them acceptable to others. Not that, for the enforcement of some of them (the abolition of all manufactures that make the air unwholesome, for instance), we shall hesitate to use the strong hand, when once our hands are strong. But we shall not begin by street riots to throw down our neighbour's chimneys, or break his machinery;—though what we shall *end* in doing—God knows, not I,—but I have my own thoughts concerning it; not at present needing exposition.

7. The Companions, for the most part, will remain exactly in the condition of life they held before entering the Society; but they will direct all their powers, and some part of their revenues, in that condition, to the

advance of its interests. We hold it short-sighted and ruinous policy to form separate institutions, or attempt the sudden establishment of new systems of labour. Every one of us must use the advantages he now possesses, whatever they may be, and contend with the difficulties arising out of his present position, gradually modifying it, as he can, into conformity with the laws which the Society desires may be ultimately observed by all its members.

8. The first of our conditions of Companionship is Honesty. We are a company of honest persons, vowing to have no fellowship with dishonest ones. Persons who do not know the meaning of the word "Honesty," or who would in anywise, for selfish convenience, tolerate any manner of cheating or lying, either in others or themselves, we class indiscriminately with the self-conscious rogues, for whom we have more respect; and our separation from all such is to be quite manifest and unmistakable. We do not go into monasteries,—we seek no freedom of conscience in foreign lands,—we profess no severities of asceticism at home. We simply refuse to have any dealings with rogues, whether at home or abroad.

I repeat, for this must be strictly understood, we are a company of honest persons; and will add to ourselves none but persons of that quality. We, for our own part, entirely decline to live by passing bad half-crowns, by selling bad goods, or by lying as to their relative quality. And we hold only such communication with persons guilty of such practices, as we should with any other manner of thieves or liars.

It will follow that anything gravely said by a Companion of St. George may be, without investigation, believed; and anything sold by one, without scrutiny, bought for what it is said to be,—of which recovery of old principles of human speech and commerce, no words can set forth the infinitude of beneficial consequences, when it is once brought about among a discernible and every day increasing body of persons.

9. The second condition of Companionship is the resolution, so far as we have ability, to earn our own living with our own hands; and not to allow, much less compel, other people to work for us: this duty being of double force,—first, as necessary to our own health and honour; but much more, as striking home at the ghastly universal crime of modern society,—stealing the labourer's bread from him (making him work, that is to say, for our's, as well as his own), and then abusing and despising him for the degradation of character which his perpetual toil involves;* deliberately, in many cases, refusing to encourage him in economy, that we may have him at our mercy to grind in the mill; always selling as much gin and beer to him as we can persuade him to swill, at the rate of twopence for twopence worth (see Letter 27¹), to fill our own pockets; and teaching him pious catechisms, that we may keep him our quiet slave.

We cannot, at present, all obey this great law concerning labour, however willing we may be; for we may not, in the condition of life in which we have been brought up, have been taught any manual labour by which we now could make a living. I myself, the present Master of the Society, cannot obey this, its second main law; but then I am only a makeshift Master, taking the place till somebody more fit for it be found.² Sir Walter Scott's life, in the full strength of it at Ashestiel, and early at Abbotsford, with his literary work done by ten, or at latest twelve in the morning; and the rest of the day spent in useful work with Tom Purdie in his woods,³ is a model of wise moral management of mind and body, for men of true literary power; but I had neither the country training of body,

* See Letter 11, §§ 3–5, the most pregnant pages in the entire series of these letters; and compare Letter 61, § 6, and Letter 64, § 5.⁴

¹ [Letter 27, § 10 (Vol. XXVII. p. 498).]

² [Compare Letter 81, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 197).]

³ [See Vol. XXVII. pp. 600–601.]

⁴ [Vol. XXVII. pp. 182–186; and above, pp. 489, 564.]

nor have the natural strength of brain, which can reach this ideal in anywise. Sir Walter wrote as a stream flows; but I do all my brain-work like a wrung sponge, and am tired out, and good for nothing, after it. Sir Walter was in the open air, farm-bred, and playing with lambs, while I was a poor little Cockney wretch, playing, in a dark London nursery, with a bunch of keys.¹ I do the best I can, and know what ought to be: and that is all the Company really need of me. I would fain, at this moment, both for pleasure and duty's sake, be cutting the dead stems out of my wood,² or learning to build a dry stone wall under my good mason, Mr. Usher, than writing these institutes of St. George; but the institutes are needed, and must be written by me, since there is nobody else to write them.

10. Any one, therefore, may be a Companion of St. George who sincerely does what they can, to make themselves useful, and earn their daily bread by their own labour: and some forms of intellectual or artistic labour, inconsistent (as a musician's) with other manual labour, are accepted by the Society as useful; provided they be truly undertaken for the good and help of all; and that the intellectual labourer ask no more pay than any other workman. A scholar can generally live on less food than a ploughman, and there is no conceivable reason why he should have more.* And if he be a false-hearted scholar, or a bad painter or fiddler, there is infinite reason why he should have less. My readers may have been surprised at the instant and eager assertion, as of a leading principle, in

* Again, I have more myself—but that is because I have been ill-bred; and I shall be most thankful to take less, as soon as other people cease to be paid for doing nothing. People cry out upon me for asking ten shillings for a year's *Fors*; but never object to Mr. Barber's paying his clerk a guinea for opening his study door to me five times, charging the same to St. George's account. (See Letter 64, § 22: above, p. 579.)

¹ [See Letter 51, § 3 (p. 272).]

² [A favourite exercise. It was of Mr. Usher, when he made his mark, instead of writing his name, that Ruskin said, warmly shaking his hand, "Now I know I have an honest man to deal with."]

the first of these letters (January '71), that people cannot live by art.¹ But I spoke swiftly, because the attempt so to live is among the worst possible ways they can take of injurious begging. There are a few, a very few persons born in each generation, whose words are worth hearing, whose art is worth seeing. These born few will preach, or sing, or paint, in spite of you; they will starve like grasshoppers, rather than stop singing; and even if you don't choose to listen, it is charitable to throw them some crumbs to keep them alive. But the people who take to writing or painting as a means of livelihood, because they think it genteel, are just by so much more contemptible than common beggars, in that they are noisy and offensive beggars. I am quite willing to pay for keeping our poor vagabonds in the workhouse; but not to pay them for grinding organs outside my door, defacing the streets with bills and caricatures, tempting young girls to read rubbishy novels, or deceiving the whole nation to its ruin, in a thousand leagues square of dirtily printed falsehood, every morning at breakfast. Whatever in literature, art, or religion, is done for money, is poisonous itself;² and doubly deadly, in preventing the hearing or seeing of the noble literature and art which have been done for love and truth. If people cannot make their bread by honest labour, let them at least make no noise about the streets; but hold their tongues, and hold out their idle hands humbly; and they shall be fed kindly.

11. Then the third condition of Companionship is, that, after we have done as much manual work as will earn our food, we all of us discipline ourselves, our children, and any one else willing to be taught, in all the branches of honourable knowledge and graceful art attainable by us. Having honestly obtained our meat and drink, and having sufficiently eaten and drunken, we proceed, during the rest of the day, to seek after things better than meat and drink;

¹ [See Letter 1, § 8 (Vol. XXVII. p. 19).]

² [On this subject, compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 32 (Vol. XVIII. p. 412).]

and to provide for the nobler necessities of what, in ancient days, Englishmen used to call their souls.

To this end, we shall, as we increase in numbers, establish such churches and schools as may best guide religious feeling, and diffuse the love of sound learning and prudent art. And when I set myself first to the work of forming the Society, I was induced to do so chiefly by the consciousness that the balanced unison of artistic sensibility with scientific faculty, which enabled me at once to love Giotto, and learn from Galileo, gave me singular advantages for a work of this kind. More particularly, the course of study through which, after being trained in the severest schools of Protestant divinity, I became acquainted with the mythology of Greece, and legends of Rome, in their most vivid power over the believing minds of both nations, permits me now to accept with freedom and respect the concurrence of a wider range of persons holding different views on religious subjects, than any other scholar I know, at the present day, in England, would feel himself secure in the hope of reconciling to a common duty, and in uncontested elements of faith.

12. The scheme, and elementary means, of this common education, I am now occupied in arranging and choosing as I best may.* In especial, I have set myself to write three grammars—of geology, botany, and zoology,—which will contain nothing but indisputable facts in those three branches of proper human learning; and which, if I live a little longer, will embrace as many facts as any ordinary schoolboy or schoolgirl need be taught. In these three grammars (*Deucalion*, *Proserpina*, and *Love's Meinie* †) I shall accept every aid that sensible and earnest men of science can spare me, towards the task of popular education:

* See *Fors* for January of this year, Letter 61, §§ 13, 14 [p. 499].

† This book I shall extend, if time be given me, from its first proposed form into a parallel one with the two others.¹

¹ [On this point, see Vol. XXV. p. xxxii.]

and I hope to keep thankful records of the names of the persons who are making true discoveries in any of these sciences, and of the dates of such discovery, which shall be unassailably trustworthy as far as they extend. I hope also to be able to choose, and in some degree provide, a body of popular literature of entirely serviceable quality. Of some of the most precious books needed, I am preparing, with the help of my friends, new editions, for a common possession in all our school libraries.¹

If I have powers fitted for this task (and I should not have attempted it but in conviction that I have), they are owing mainly to this one condition of my life, that, from my youth up, I have been seeking the fame, and honouring the work, of others;—never my own. I first was driven into literature that I might defend the fame of Turner; since that day I have been explaining the power, or proclaiming the praise, of Tintoret,—of Luini,—of Carpaccio,—of Botticelli,—of Carlyle;—never thinking for an instant of myself: and sacrificing what little faculty, and large pleasure, I had in painting, either from nature or noble art, that, if possible, I might bring others to see what I rejoiced in, and understand what I had deciphered. There has been no heroism in this, nor virtue;—but only, as far as I am myself concerned, quaint ordering of Fate; but the result is, that I *have* at last obtained an instinct of impartial and reverent judgment, which sternly fits me for this final work, to which, if to anything, I was appointed.

13. And for the right doing of it, and for all future work of the same kind, requiring to be done for the Society by other persons, it is absolutely needful that the person charged with it should be implicitly trusted, and accurately obeyed by the Companions, in all matters necessary to the working of the Society. He cannot lose his time in contention or persuasion; he must act undisturbedly, or his mind will not suffice for its toil; and with concurrence of

¹ [For these schemes, see above, p. 20, and the other places there noted.]

all the Society's power, or half their power will be wasted, and the whole perverted, by hesitation, and opposition. His authority over them must correspond precisely, in the war against the poverty and vice of the State, to that of a Roman Dictator, in his war against its external enemies.

Of a Roman "*Dictator*," I say, observe; not a Roman "*Emperor*." It is not the command of private will, but the dictation of necessary law, which the Society obeys:—only, the obedience must be absolute, and without question; faithful to the uttermost,—that is to say, trusting to the uttermost. The practice of faith and obedience to some of our fellow-creatures is the alphabet by which we learn the higher obedience to heaven; and it is not only needful to the prosperity of all noble united action, but essential to the happiness of all noble living spirits.

14. I have not, in my past letters, much noticed this condition of the Society's work; because its explanation will involve that of our religious creed to the full; and its enforcement must be in the very teeth of the mad-dog's creed of modernism, "I will not be dictated to," which contains the essence of all diabolical error. For, in sum, the moral scale is raised exactly according to the degree and motive of obedience. To be disobedient through temptation, is human sin; but to be disobedient for the sake of disobedience, fiendish sin. To be obedient for the sake of success in conduct, is human virtue; but to be obedient for the sake of obedience, angelic virtue.

The constitution of the Society is to be, therefore, that of an aristocracy electing an absolute chief (as the Senate of Rome their Dictator, or the Senate of Venice their Doge), who is to be entirely responsible for the conduct of the Society's affairs; to appoint its principal officers, and to grant or refuse admission to candidates for Companionship. But he is liable to deposition at any moment, by a vote of the majority of the Companions; and is to have no control over the property of the Society, but through the Trustees in whom that property is vested.

15. And now, for farther explanation of the details of our constitution and design, I must refer the reader to the *Fors* for March of this year;¹ and, if he desires to pursue his inquiry, to the 8th, 9th, 11th, 17th, and 19th Letters of the previous series.² These state clearly what we propose to do, and how: but for defence of our principles, the entire series of Letters must be studied; and that with quiet attention, for not a word of them has been written but with purpose. Some parts of the plan are confessedly unexplained, and others obscurely hinted at; nor do I choose to say how much of this indistinctness has been intentional. But I am well assured that if any patient and candid person cares to understand the book, and master its contents, he may do so with less pains than would be required for the reading of any ordinary philosophical treatise on equally important subjects.

Only readers should be clearly aware of one peculiarity in the manner of my writing in *Fors*, which might otherwise much mislead them:—namely, that if they will enclose in brackets with their pen, passages of evident irony, all the rest of the book is written with absolute seriousness and literalness of meaning.³ The violence, or grotesque aspect, of a statement may seem as if I were mocking; but this comes mainly of my endeavour to bring the absolute truth out into pure crystalline structure, unmodified by disguise of custom, or obscurity of language; for the result of that process is continually to reduce the facts into a form so contrary, if theoretical, to our ordinary impressions, and so contrary, if moral, to our ordinary practice, that the straightforward statement of them looks like a jest. But every such apparent jest will be found, if you think of it, a pure, very dreadful, and utterly imperious veracity.

16. With this understanding, the following series of

¹ [Letter 63 (p. 538).]

² [That is, in the first two volumes of *Fors* as originally published. The “New Series” (as Ruskin called it) began with Letter 85.]

³ [Compare Letter 62, § 1 (p. 512).]

aphorisms contain the gist of the book, and may serve to facilitate the arrangement of its incidental matter.

(1.) Any form of government will work, provided the governors are real, and the people obey them; and none will work, if the governors are unreal, or the people disobedient. If you mean to have logs for kings, no quantity of liberty in choice of the wood will be of any profit to you:—nor will the wisest or best governor be able to serve you, if you mean to discuss his orders instead of obeying them. Read carefully on this matter Letter 13, §§ 7, 8.¹

(2.) The first duty of government is to see that the people have food, fuel, and clothes. The second, that they have means of moral and intellectual education.²

(3.) Food, fuel, and clothes can only be got out of the ground, or sea, by muscular labour; and no man has any business to have any, unless he has done, if able, the muscular work necessary to produce his portion, or to render (as the labour of a surgeon or a physician renders) equivalent benefit to life. It indeed saves both toil and time that one man should dig, another bake, and another tan; but the digger, baker, and tanner are alike bound to do their equal day's duty; and the business of the government is to see that they have done it, before it gives any one of them their dinner.³

(4.) While the daily teaching of God's truth, doing of His justice, and heroic bearing of His sword, are to be required of every human soul according to its ability, the mercenary professions of preaching, law-giving, and fighting must be entirely abolished.⁴

(5.) Scholars, painters, and musicians may be advisedly kept, on due pittance, to instruct or amuse the labourer

¹ [See Vol. XXVII. p. 233; and for other references, *ibid.*, p. 17 *n.*]

² [For the first duty, see Vol. XXVII. pp. 19, 39; for the second duty, Vol. XXVII. pp. 61, 143. Here, and in the following notes, a few references to typical passages are given; others may be found by consulting the General Index.]

³ [See Vol. XXVII. pp. 117, 558.]

⁴ [See Vol. XXVII. pp. 17, 185, 580; and above, p. 37]

after, or at, his work; provided the duty be severely restricted to those who have high special gifts of voice, touch, and imagination;* and that the possessors of these melodious lips, light-fingered hands, and lively brains, do resolutely undergo the normal discipline necessary to ensure their skill; the people whom they are to please, understanding, always, that they cannot employ these tricky artists without working double-tides themselves, to provide them with beef and ale.¹

17. (6.) The duty of the government, as regards the distribution of its work, is to attend first to the wants of the most necessitous; therefore, to take particular charge of the back streets of every town; leaving the fine ones, more or less, according to their finery, to take care of themselves. And it is the duty of magistrates, and other persons in authority, but especially of all bishops, to know thoroughly the numbers, means of subsistence, and modes of life of the poorest persons in the community, and to be sure that *they* at least are virtuous and comfortable; for if poor persons of poverty, what must be the state of the rich, under their perilous trials and temptations?†—but, on the other hand, if the poor are made comfortable and good, the rich have a fair chance of entering the kingdom of heaven also, if they choose to live honourably and decently.²

* Such limitation being secured by the severity of the required education in the public schools of art, and thought; and by the high standard of examination fixed before granting licence of exhibition, in the public theatres, or picture galleries.

† Here is just an instance of what might at first seem to be a jest; but is a serious and straightforward corollary from the eternally true fact stated by St. Paul to Timothy:³ “They that will be rich fall into

¹ [See Vol. XXVII. p. 185.]

² [See Vol. XXVII. p. 360; and above, pp. 73, 137, 252, 292, 504–506, 512–515.]

³ [The octavo editions have hitherto read “stated by St. Timothy”—a slip noticed by Ruskin in Letter 76, § 12 *n.* (Vol. XXIX. p. 93). In the small editions, the correction here followed was made. The quotation is from 1 Timothy vi. 9.]

(7.) Since all are to be made to labour for their living, and it is not possible to labour without materials and tools, these must be provided by the government, for all persons, in the necessary quantities. If bricks are to be made, clay and straw must be provided; if sheep are to be kept, grass; if coats are to be made, cloth; if oakum to be picked, oakum. All these raw materials, with the tools for working them, must be provided by the government, at first, free of cost to the labourer, the value of them being returned to them as the first-fruits of his toil; and no pawnbrokers or usurers may be allowed to live by lending sea to fishermen, air to fowlers, land to farmers, crooks to shepherds, or bellows to smiths.¹

18. (8.) When the lands and seas belonging to any nation are all properly divided, cultivated, and fished, its population cannot be increased, except by importing food in exchange for useless articles,—that is to say, by living as the toy-manufacturers of some independent nation, which can both feed itself, and afford to buy toys besides. But no nation can long exist in this servile state. It must either emigrate, and form colonies to assist in cultivating the land which feeds it,² or become entirely slavish and debased.

temptation and a snare, and into many foolish lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition;” and by Horace:

“Quanto quisque sibi plura negaverit
Ab Dis plura feret.”³

The passage might at first be thought inconsistent with what is said above of the “degradation” which perpetual toil involves. But toil and poverty are two different things. Poverty ennobles, and secures; toil degrades, and endangers. We are all bound to fulfil our task; but happy only if we can also enter into our rest.

¹ [See Vol. XXVII. pp. 317–319, 368.]

² [For a fuller statement of England’s duty of colonisation, see *Lectures on Art*, § 29 (Vol. XX. p. 42).]

³ [*Odes*, III. xvi. 21; quoted also in *St. Mark’s Rest*, § 130 (Vol. XXIV. p. 307).]

The moment any nation begins to import food,* its political power and moral worth are ended.¹

(9.) All the food, clothing, and fuel required by men, can be produced by the labour of their own arms on the earth and sea; all food is appointed to be so produced, and *must* be so produced, at their peril. If instead of taking the quantity of exercise made necessary to their bodies by God, in the work appointed by God, they take it in hunting or shooting, they become ignorant, irreligious, and finally insane, and seek to live by fighting as well as by hunting; whence the type of Nimrod, in the circle of the Hell-towers, which I desired you to study in Dante.² If they do not take exercise at all, they become sensual, and insane in worse ways. *And it is physically impossible that true religious knowledge, or pure morality, should exist among any classes of a nation who do not work with their hands for their bread.* Read Letter 11 carefully.³

(10.) The use of machinery † in agriculture throws a certain number of persons out of wholesome employment, who must thenceforward either do nothing, or mischief. The use of machinery in art destroys the national intellect; and, finally, renders all luxury impossible. All

* It may always import such food as its climate cannot produce, in exchange for such food as it can; it may buy oranges with corn, or pepper with cheese. But not with articles that do not support life. Separate *cities* may honourably produce saleable art; Limoges its enamel, Sheffield its whittle; but a *nation* must not live on enamel or whittles.⁴

† Foolish people are continually quibbling and stupefying themselves about the word "machine." Briefly, any instrument is a machine so far as its action is, in any particular, or moment, beyond the control of the human hand. A violin, a pencil, and a plough, are tools, not machines. A grinding organ, or a windmill, is a machine, not a tool: often the two are combined; thus a lathe is a machine, and the workman's chisel, used at it, a tool.

¹ [See above, pp. 132–136, 140.]

² [*Inferno* xxxi. 76: see Letter 62, § 13 (p. 523).]

³ [See Vol. XXVII. pp. 30, 185–189. Compare pp. 435–436; and above, pp. 35–36, 134 *seq.*, 489–491, 564 *seq.*]

⁴ [Ruskin in his memoranda for the projected Index writes here that "the note needs expansion."]

machinery needful in ordinary life to supplement human or animal labour may be moved by wind or water: while steam, or any modes of *heat-power*, may only be employed justifiably under extreme or special conditions of need; as for speed on main lines of communication, and for raising water from great depths, or other such work beyond human strength.¹

19. (11.) No true luxury, wealth, or religion is possible to dirty persons; nor is it decent or human to attempt to compass any temporal prosperity whatever by the sacrifice of cleanliness.² The speedy abolition of all abolishable filth is the first process of education;* the principles of which I state in the second group of aphorisms following.

(12.) All education must be moral first; intellectual secondarily. Intellectual, before—(much more without)—moral education, is, in completeness, impossible; and in incompleteness, a calamity.³

(13.) Moral education begins in making the creature to be educated, clean, and obedient. This must be done thoroughly, and at any cost, and with any kind of compulsion rendered necessary by the nature of the animal, be it dog, child, or man.⁴

(14.) Moral education consists next in making the creature practically serviceable to other creatures, according to the nature and extent of its own capacities; taking care that these be healthily developed in such service. It may be a question how long, and to what extent, boys and girls of fine race may be allowed to run in the paddock before they

* The ghastly squalor of the once lovely fields of Dulwich, trampled into mud, and strewn with rags and paper by the filthy London population, bred in cigar smoke, which is attracted by the Crystal Palace, would alone neutralize all possible gentlemanly education in the district.

¹ [See Vol. XXVII. p. 87; and above, pp. 21, 128–135, 138, 236–237.]

² [See Vol. XXVII. p. 256; and above, pp. 22, 138, 204, 298–304. Compare *Lectures on Art*, § 116 (Vol. XX. p. 107).]

³ [Compare Vol. XXVII. pp. 143, 213; above, pp. 237, 501; and Letter 94, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 484).]

⁴ [Compare Vol. XXVII. p. 145; and above, p. 20.]

are broken; but assuredly the sooner they are put to such work as they are able for, the better.* Moral education is summed when the creature has been made to do its work with delight, and thoroughly; but this cannot be until some degree of intellectual education has been given also.¹

(15.) Intellectual education consists in giving the creature the faculties of admiration, hope, and love.²

These are to be taught by the study of beautiful Nature; the sight and history of noble persons; and the setting forth of noble objects of action.³

(16.) Since all noble persons hitherto existent in the world have trusted in the government of it by a supreme Spirit, and in that trust, or faith, have performed all their great actions, the history of these persons will finally mean the history of their faith; and the sum of intellectual education will be the separation of what is inhuman, in such faiths, and therefore perishing, from what is human, and, for human creatures, eternally true.⁴

20. These sixteen aphorisms contain, as plainly as I can speak it, the substance of what I have hitherto taught, and am now purposed to enforce practice of, as far as I am able. It is no business of mine to think about possibilities;—any day, any moment, may raise up some one to take the carrying forward of the plan out of my hands, or to furnish me with larger means of prosecuting it; meantime, neither hastening nor slackening, I shall go on doing what I can, with the people, few or many, who are ready to help me.

* See an entirely admirable paper on school-sports, in the *World* for February of this year.⁵

¹ [Compare Vol. XXVII. pp. 50, 119–120, 129, 147, 449; and above, pp. 199–200, 211.]

² [Wordsworth, *Excursion*, Book IV. Compare Vol. XXVII. p. 90 and *n.*]

³ [See Vol. XXVII. pp. 156–157, 384–385, 496; and above, pp. 118, 237, 615.]

⁴ [See, for instance, Vol. XXVII. pp. 314, 481; and above, pp. 328, 519.]

⁵ [Here Ruskin has given a wrong reference. There is no such paper in the *World* for January–June 1876, nor is it in the *Christian World*.]

Such help (to conclude with what simplest practical direction I can) may be given me by any persons interested in my plans, mainly by sending me money; secondly, by acting out as much as they agree with of the directions for private life given in *Fors*; and thirdly, by promulgating and recommending such principles. If they wish to do more than this, and to become actual members of the Company, they must write to me, giving a short and clear account of their past lives, and present circumstances. I then examine them on such points as seem to me necessary; and if I accept them, I inscribe their names in the roll, at Corpus Christi College, with two of our masters for witnesses. This roll of the Company is written, hitherto, on the blank leaves of an eleventh-century MS. of the Gospels, always kept in my rooms;¹ and would enable the Trustees, in case of my death, at once to consult the Companions respecting the disposition of the Society's property. As to the legal tenure of that property, I have taken counsel with my lawyer-friends till I am tired; and, as will be seen by the statement in the second page of the Correspondence, I purpose henceforward to leave all such legal arrangements to the discretion of the Companions themselves.

¹ [Ruskin afterwards signed another roll, which then (1884) contained seventy-seven names. This roll is in the custody of the present Master of the Guild, Mr. George Baker. For other references to the roll of the Guild, see above, pp. 377, 459.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

21. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

The new purchases of land round our little museum at Sheffield have been made at rather under than over the market price of land in the district; and they will enable me, as I get more funds, to extend the rooms of the museum under skylight as far as I wish. I did not want to buy so soon; but Fors giving me the opportunity, I must take it at her hand. Our cash accounts will in future be drawn up, as below, by our Companion, Mr. Rydings,¹ to whom all questions, corrections, etc., are to be sent, and all subscriptions under fifty pounds.

CASH ACCOUNT OF ST. GEORGE'S COMPANY (From March 15th to June 15th, 1876)

| <i>Dr.</i> | | | | | | | | <i>Cr.</i> | | | | |
|------------|---|---------|----|------|-----------|---|-----|------------|----|---------|----|---|
| 1876 | | | | | | | | 1876 | | | | |
| Date | To | £ s. d. | | Date | By | £ s. d. | | Date | By | £ s. d. | | |
| March 15. | Balance at Union Bank, London (see Letter 64, § 21) | 157 | 11 | 10 | April 17. | enjamin Bagshawe (advance on new purchase of land at Sheffield) | 30 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| | Balance in Mr. Ruskin's hand (see Letter 65, § 27; also 64, § 21) | 107 | 16 | 5 | 23. | Theodore D. Acland (expenses of chemicals for Sheffield Museum) | 5 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| March | " F.D. Drewitt (tithe of first earning) | 1 | 4 | 1 | May 7. | " Henry Swan (Salary and Expenses at Museum) | 55 | 15 | 3 | | | |
| | " Miss M. Guest | 2 | 2 | 0 | 23. | " Mrs. Talbot (repairing expenses on our cottages at Bar-mouth, with other expenses for educational purposes, afterwards to be explained) | 27 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| April | " James Burdon (tithe of wage) | 2 | 10 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| | " Wm. B. Graham (gift) | 1 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| | " Anon., post stamp, Birkenhead | 1 | 10 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| April 16 | " Egbert Rydings | 25 | 0 | 0 | 26. | " Benjamin Bagshawe (on completion of purchase at Sheffield) | 300 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| | " Miss S. Beever | 7 | 0 | 6 | | | | | | | | |
| | " Anon. (tithe gift for half-year 1876) | 50 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| | " Rev. R. St. J. Tyrwhitt | 20 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| | " No. 50, G | 10 | 10 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| June 16. | " Balance due to Mr. Ruskin | 31 | 10 | 5 | | | | | | £417 | 15 | 3 |
| | | £417 | 15 | 3 | | | | | | | | |

22. The following letter from Messrs. Tarrant will be seen to be in reply to mine of the 6th May, printed in last Fors.² From the tone of it, as well as from careful examination of my legal friends, I perceive that

¹ [See above, p. 611.]

² [See Letter 66, § 19 (p. 629).]

it is out of my power to give the Company a legal status, according to the present law of England, unless it be permitted to gather dividends for itself, instead of store for the nation, and to put its affairs in the hands of a number of persons who know nothing about them, instead of in the hands of one person who is acquainted with them.

Under these circumstances, I consider it to be best that the Companions should settle their own legal status with the lawyers; and this the more, as I do not choose to run the Society into farther expense by the continuance of correspondence between these legal gentlemen and me, without the slightest chance of either party ever understanding the other. Accordingly, I hereby authorize Mr. Robert Somervell, of Hazelthwaite, Windermere, to collect the opinions of the other Companions (a list of whom I have put in his hands), and to act in their name, as they shall direct him, respecting the tenure of the Company's lands and property, now and in future.¹ And I hereby hold myself quit of all responsibility touching such tenure, maintaining simply the right of the Master of the Company to direct their current expenditures.

“*Re* ST. GEORGE'S COMPANY

“2, BOND COURT, WALBROOK, LONDON,

“31st May, 1876.

“DEAR SIR,—We have carefully considered the points raised in your letter to us of the 6th inst., and have also consulted Mr. Barber upon them, and with reference thereto we advise you that the law stands shortly thus:—by the 13th Eliz., c. 5, a voluntary settlement of a real or personal estate will be void and may be set aside by a creditor of the settlor, upon his showing an intent on the part of the settlor to defraud his creditors; and such an intent may be inferred from the circumstances. The Bankruptcy Act, 1869 (32 and 33 Vict., c. 71) contains a still more stringent provision where the voluntary settlor is a trader. These are liabilities and risks which your association cannot avoid; but they are more imaginary than real, as the donors of land to the Company are not likely to make a voluntary gift for the purpose of defeating their creditors. By the 27th Eliz., c. 4, a voluntary gift or settlement of real estate, unless it be in favour of a charity, will be avoided by a subsequent *bondâ fide* sale for value, even though the purchaser have notice of the voluntary settlement. This, too, is an ordinary risk from which you cannot escape, unless you are willing to submit to the jurisdiction of the Charity Commissioners. It does not often happen that a person who has made a voluntary settlement of real estate seeks to stultify his own act by a subsequent sale of the same estate, but the payment of a small consideration, or even matter *ex post facto*, would prevent the deed being voluntary, and the risk is not a very serious one.

“We do not recollect Mr. Baker's name, and we find no mention of it in any of your letters to us: we think you must have meant Mr. Talbot, with whose solicitors we were in communication as to some cottages and land, and it was arranged that that matter should stand over until the St. George's Company was constituted.

“As to the writing out of the memorandum and rules for signature of the Companions—the case is this: you receive donations from people who give them to you on the faith of a certain scheme of yours being duly carried out; it is therefore necessary that the leading features of that scheme should be reduced to writing, in order that there may be no misunderstanding between the givers and

¹ [For subsequent notices of Mr. Somervell in this connexion, see Letters 73 and 74 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 27, 47).]

receivers of these donations as to the objects to which they are devoted. The signatures of the Companions are a feature of your published scheme, and in addition will be useful to show who are the acknowledged Companions having a direct interest in it—the right to elect and control the action of the Master, elect Trustees, etc., etc.; and the signatures will be the evidence of the deliberate submission of the Companions to be bound by the rules to which they subscribe their names.

“But all this will not make the St. George’s Company other than a voluntary association of persons which the law will not recognize as a corporation.

“The Companions of St. George will be capable of holding land, but not as the St. George’s Company,—that is, not as a corporation. Land must be held by or for them as individuals. You may have a piece of land conveyed to, say two hundred Companions, naming each of them; but for the sake of convenience you would have it conveyed to two or three who should hold it upon trust for the Companions generally.

“You can only obtain the countenance and supervision of the law for your Company on certain conditions, and when you came to us we were careful to explain this to you. You at once told us the conditions would not do for your Company, therefore we have had to do the best we could for you, treating your Company as an association without the countenance and supervision of the law.

“Forgive us for quoting from a letter of yours to us of the 27th May, 1875. ‘Mr. Barber’s notion is the popular one of a Mob of Directors. But St. George’s Company must have only one Master. They may dismiss him at their pleasure, but they must not bother him. I am going to draw up a form myself, and submit it to Mr. Barber for criticism and completion.’ We think you may rest satisfied with matters as they are.

“We remain, dear Sir,

“Yours very truly,

“Tarrant & Mackrell.

“John Ruskin, Esq.

“BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE.”

23. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

| | £ | s. | d. |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
| Balance, May 16th | 1225 | 19 | 1 |
| | 460 | 0 | 0 |
| | <u>£765</u> | <u>19</u> | <u>1</u> |
| ent | £ | s. | d. |
| May 17. Messrs. Weldon and Inglis | 23 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr. Stowe, Camberwell Green | | | |
| | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| arren and Jones | 21 | 19 | 3 |
| June 1. Annie Brickland | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| 8. Furniture of new Lodge | 300 | 0 | 0 |
| owns | 44 | 0 | 9 |
| 3. ite | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| | <u>£460</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> |

a and *b*. The first of these bills is for a sealskin jacket; the second for a gold and pearl frame to a miniature. Respecting my need for these articles, I have more to say when my lecture on Jewels can be got published:¹ it is fine weather just now, and I can’t see to it.

¹ [See Letter 65, § 22 (p. 607)]

c. In 1871, in one of my walks at Abingdon (see *Fors*, Letters 4 and 6¹), I saw some ragged children playing by the roadside on the bank of a ditch, and gathering what buttercups they could find.² Watching them a little while, I at last asked what they were doing. "This is my garden," answered a little girl about nine years old. "Well, but gardens ought to be of use; this is only full of buttercups. Why don't you plant some strawberries in it?" "I have none to plant." "If you had a little garden of your own, and some to plant, would you take care of them?" "That I would." Thereupon I told her to come and ask for me at the Crown and Thistle, and with my good landlady Mrs. Wonnacott's help, rented a tiny piece of ground for her. Her father and mother have since died; and her brothers and sisters (four, in all) are in the Union, at Abingdon. I did not like to let this child go there too; so I've sent her to learn shepherding at a kindly shepherd's; close to Arundel,³ on the farm of the friend whose son (with perhaps a little help from his sister) took me out foxhunting and examined the snail-shells for me. This ten pounds is for her board, etc., till she can be made useful.

d. I had settled my servant Crawley, with his wife and his three children, in a good house here at my gate. He spent his savings in furnishing it, in a much more costly manner than I thought quite proper; but that (as I then supposed) was his affair, more than mine. His wife died last year: and now both he and I think he will be more useful to me at Oxford than Coniston. So I send him to Oxford,—but have to pay him for his house-furniture, which is very provoking and tiresome, and the kind of expense one does not calculate on. The curious troublesomeness of *Fors* to me in all business matters has always been one of the most grotesque conditions of my life. The names of Warren and Jones appear for the last time in my accounts, for I have had to give up my tea-shop, owing to the (too surely mortal) illness of my active old servant, Harriet Tovey,⁴—a great grief to me, no less than an utter stop to my plans in London.

24. (III.) I somewhat regret, for my friend's sake, that he desires me to print the subjoined letter in its entirety, if at all. I *must* print his answer to my question about Usury, for which I am heartily grateful to him, for reference in next *Fors*;⁵ and can only therefore do as he bids

¹ [Vol. XXVII. pp. 76, 106.]

² [Ruskin refers to the little girl, Annie Brickland, in a letter (Oxford, November 16, 1875) to Lady Mount-Temple, whom he sometimes addressed as "Granny":—

"I want to find a school for a little girl who has no papa, nor mama, nor granny, and nobody to take care of her. I found her playing on a roadside bank at Abingdon when she was nine years old; now she's fourteen, but very little, and I think she's very good, or would be if she saw granny sometimes. I will pay for her schooling in any school you think best for such a child, anywhere about Romsey. She's four brothers or sisters—poor little things—in the Union at Abingdon, and must go in herself soon, if I don't take charge of her."]

³ [Under the eye of Ruskin's friends, the Drewitts, at Peppering: see Letter 63, § 20 (p. 553).]

⁴ [For Harriet Tovey, servant at Herne Hill and Denmark Hill, see *Præterita*, ii. § 108. For the tea-shop, above, pp. 204, 205.]

⁵ [See § 4, p. 669.]

me with the rest, which he has written more hastily than is his habit. What answer it seems to me to need will be found in the attached notes.

“DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I did not need your kind letters by the post to assure me that the rebuke pronounced on me by *Fors* in June¹ was meant in the most friendly spirit—for my good and that of all men. *Fors* set me thinking, and, as you urged me to say what I thought, I began to write you a letter, partly to show that I am not so repulsive a person as you paint, (a) or at least that it is not the fault of Comte if I am; partly to show that, whilst agreeing with you very much about modern life, I find other reasons for trusting that the world as a whole improves. I owe you, and the age owes you, profound gratitude for much noble teaching; and it is very sad to me to find you reviling (b) other teachers to whom we owe much, and who know a thousand things about which you have told us nothing. And indiscriminate abuse of all that the human race has now become, wounds my ear as if I heard one cursing our own fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters. If you believe that ‘the entire system of modern life is corrupted with the ghastliest forms of injustice and untruth,’² I wonder that you believe in God, or any future, in effort at all, or in anything but despair. (c)

“But my letter to you grew at last to such a length that I must find for it another place, and you or any reader of *Fors* who may take the trouble to look, may see what I wish to put to you in the *Fortnightly Review*.³ I wanted especially to point out that the impression you have conveyed about Comte and his teaching is almost exactly the contrary of the truth. You speak as if Comte were a physiologist, (d) mostly occupied with frogs and lice, whereas he is mostly occupied with history, morality, and religion; as if he insisted on the origin of man from the protozoa, whereas no one has more earnestly repudiated such speculations; as if he claimed political and public careers for women, whereas no one has said more against everything of the kind; as if he looked on modern industrial and social life with admiration, whereas he preaches a regeneration of our lives far more searching than any which you even contemplate; lastly, you speak of him and his students as if they were forbidden all sympathy with the spirit of ages past, whereas the reverence which Comte has expressed for the Middle Age at its best, its religion, its chivalry, its poetry, and its art, far exceeds in depth and completeness of spiritual insight even all the fine things which you yourself have taught us.

“Now I ask you, who love the very soul of truth, to repair an injustice which you have done in representing Comte (e) to teach quite the contrary of what you will find, if you turn to his books, that he does teach. I give a trifling instance. You write as if it were sheer impertinence in me, a student of Positivism, (f) to allude to a mediæval building or speak of a tracery. Now the truth is that some of Comte’s profoundest thoughts relate to the moral and spiritual meaning of these sacred relics; and for my own part, though I *know* nothing of the matter, some of the best seasons of my life have been given to companionship with these most sublime monuments, and study of the ‘writing on the wall,’—or all that men have spared.

“I say nothing about others whose views you may wish to class under the general title ‘Evolution,’ or of a lady whom I am sorry to see you speak of as ‘Cobbe.’ I have never shared all the opinions of those to whom you allude, and they are not followers of Comte. I shall say nothing about them; though I should like to know on what grounds you think yourself entitled to call Mr. Herbert Spencer and Mr. John Stuart Mill—geese. (g) The letter addressed to me in *Fors* has reference to Positivism, or it should have been addressed to some one else; and I assure you that every one of the doctrines which you ascribe to Positivists are not held by them at all, but quite the contrary are held.

¹ [Letter 66, §§ 9–15 (pp. 618–625).]

² [See above, p. 614.]

³ [See above, p. 618 *n.*]

“Whether the world is wholly worse than it was of old, is a very big matter on which I cannot now enter. I do not think it can be settled by statutes, old MSS., or bits from the poets. Thought and life are very wide; and I will listen to the judgment only of those who have patiently weighed the *whole* of both. (*h*) The grandest times of art are often those of especial vileness in life and society; and the grandest times of one art are sometimes those of utter decadence in another art, even in the same people and place. When the Theseus was carved, Aristophanes gives us the domestic and public life of the Athenians, and it has its dark side. Titian was the contemporary of Palladio, and also of Philip II.; Milton of Sir Peter Lely and Louis XIV.; so too were Bach and Mozart contemporaries of Greuze and Louis XV. I don’t quite see what is to be made of these violent contrasts. And by the way, I wish you would work out for us the bearing of musical art on the social and moral life of various ages. It always seemed to me you omitted music.

“Now I will try to answer your questions of law about Usury. There is no such thing as usury in law at all,—that is to say, there is no rate of interest above which the lending of money is criminal or unlawful. BY THE 17 AND 18 VICT., c. 90 (PASSED IN 1854), ‘ALL EXISTING LAWS AGAINST USURY SHALL BE REPEALED.’ (Caps. mine.) There are a great many cases where courts of law interfere in bargains which seem to them unfair or unreasonable. But they all arise out of the *special relations* of the parties, and it would take a volume to tell you what these may be. For more than twenty years, as I suppose every one knows who reads a newspaper, there has been known to the law no lawful rate of interest which it is punishable to exceed. I cannot imagine for what end you ask me the question. Lawyers do not make the law, be it good or bad;¹ they follow it like policemen or soldiers who obey orders.

“I reserve what else I have to say. I am sure all that you write to me comes from you in the most friendly feeling, as, believe me, does from me all that I write to you. Your *Fors* fills me with melancholy each time I read it. For it reminds me how many of those to whom we might look to bring more order, patience, and faith into the world, are occupied in setting us against one another, in making us rebels against our fathers, and all that they have done for us and taught us.

“Ever gratefully and most sincerely yours,

“FREDERIC HARRISON.”

25. *a*. I believe there is no other friend, with whom I have had so brief opportunity of intercourse, whom I like so much as I do Mr. Harrison. What reproach this sentence is to me as an artist, I must submit to silently.

b. To “revile” means, in accurate English, to vilify under the influence of passion. It is not an expression which my friend could have used, except thoughtlessly, of any words of mine, uttered of any person living.

c. I do not “believe,”—I know, that the entire system of modern life is thus corrupted. But I have long learned to believe in God, without expecting Him to manage everything as I think proper: and I have no occasion for belief in effort, so long as I know the duty of it.

d. Where, and when?

e. The only word I have applied to Comte, in my whole letter, is “unique.” For the justice of which epithet I trusted my friend’s report of him. I have never read a word he has written,—never heard anything about him that interested me,—and never represented, or misrepresented,

¹ [For a reference by Ruskin to this passage, see Letter 75, § 8 (Vol. XXIX. p. 63).]

him, in any manner whatsoever. When I said “physiologists,” I meant physiologists; and no more thought of Comte than of Adam.

f. I did not write to my friend as a “student of Positivism,” for I have no idea what Positivism means. I wrote to him as an assertor, in the paper I was reading, of the splendours of Evolution; and therefore ventured to imply, not that it was an impertinence, but an absurdity, in him to linger under the scholastic architecture dimly evolved from the superstition of Magdalen, when he might have disported himself under the commercial architecture more brightly evolved from the moral consciousness of Oriel.

g. Simply because I know a goose when I see one,—and when my friend has himself learned to know geese from swans, he will not think himself “entitled” to call either anything else.

h. Mr. Harrison underlines the word “whole.” I am bound, therefore, to italicize it. Whether my friend will, hereafter, thank me for so faithfully echoing his emphasis on this sentence, my respect for his general common-sense makes very doubtful to me.¹ I do not see anything requiring notice in the rest of the letter so far as it regards myself. I seldom flaunt my poor little ragged feathers in my friends’ faces; but must in simplicity confess to my feeling that it is not necessary for the author of *Modern Painters* to defend himself against the charge of uttering “indiscriminate abuse of all that the human race has now become”; nor for the author of *Sesame and Lilies* to receive lessons in courtesy to women, from modern Anglo-French chivalry, because he chooses to call a Cobbe, a Cobbe, no less plainly than a Plantagenet, a Plantagenet.

26. (IV.) “PIOUS SENTIMENT.—‘*I wish to God we could get a good bloody war somewhere.*’² It is not without reluctance that we reproduce these awful words, but they were literally spoken in our hearing in that most sober place of business, Mincing Lane, only a few hours ago. They were spoken by a merchant or broker of gentlemanly appearance and apparent respectability, in a public room, and the most melancholy incident in connection with the utterance is that the atrocious sentiment *apparently* created no surprise, and was met with no outburst of indignation. We say *apparently*, for we ourselves were greatly surprised” (There is nothing whatever to be surprised at, except the frankness of the expression. Modern Liberal Protestantism has always held that you must not kill a man for his creed; but you may, for his money), “and we felt burning indignation, but we controlled our feelings, and we hope others may have felt as we did, and had equally good reasons for silence. We are accused of taking a pessimist view of mercantile morality and mercantile activity. We commend the expressed wish of an English merchant, publicly expressed, in a public place, where merchants most do congregate, to consideration of those who differ from us in opinion, and we merely place the fact on record without further comment.”—*Monetary Gazette*, June 14th.

I reprint the paragraph for final illustration to Mr. Harrison of the “evolution” of British character. I wish I had space for some others which the courage of the editor of this excellent journal has exposed; or for the leading article in the same number, which is an admirably temperate and clear estimate of the real value of the work of Adam Smith.

¹ [For later references to the sentence, see Vol. XXIX. pp. 88 n.]

² [Compare *Rock Honeycomb*, note on line 577, where Ruskin refers to this passage, and speaks of “the stockbroker’s prayer for a bloody war.”]

27. (V.) Lastly, here is some most valuable evidence from the faithful old friend¹ to whom I wrote, in *Time and Tide*, of the increasing “wealth” of England, which with the example given in the last extract of her increasing morality, may symmetrically close the summary of St. George’s designs, and their cause.

“15, SUNDERLAND STREET, SUNDERLAND,
“20th June, 1876.

“DEAR SIR,—I have read with deep and earnest attention the last small tract of Girdlestone. I feel its tremendous truth, and have long done so too; but there is now a very pressing matter I would like to see gone into, and if possible some remedy proposed for it. It is one I have written many times to you about: I mean the rent question for the poor, the working people. At the present there is a sad depressing trade all over our country, and even in Europe. Yet, despite this awful depression, I note what is termed real estate is now going up gradually in value. I mean property and land. And that in the midst of this very depression and want of all kinds of labour by our workpeople and manufactueres, and in the midst of a tremendous opposition from our foreign competitors; yet nowhere do I see it named in any of our papers in the way I expected to see it treated of: they all seem quite elated with the great advance that has taken place, and the continued activity of all our building trades. Now, it seems to me, here is a question of vital importance that needs some sound information given on it, and some reasons assigned for this strange change in the value of all such property, in a time of such widespread depression of all trade. How are our people and our manufacturers to pay increased rents when there is a depressed trade, and no work for our workmen to do? Our town is now in a sad depressed state—work of all kinds very scarce; yet on all sides I learn the rents are being increased to workmen, manufacturers, and shopkeepers; and I note it also the case in other towns. I would like to see some good report as to the real extent of such advance of property in England. I find the advance in price of hotel, publichouse and such-like property has been something tremendous within these few years, since I wrote you my letters in *Time and Tide*. To me it is something very sad to reflect upon this great change in the value or cost of a house to our workpeople. I find their food, such as butcher’s meat, potatoes, and vegetables, milk, and some other kinds of necessaries, are also increased in price, owing to this advance in rent. So that the outlook for our workpeople, despite all our wealth, is indeed not a very pleasant one, for how are they to tide over this storm with all these necessaries at such prices? I note in the papers the miners of the Forest of Dean in some places are starving. I send you a book:* you can make any use of it you like. I have here and there marked its pages that I thought might serve in some measure to awaken an interest in this question of the workpeople, versus the rise in the value of their necessaries in dull times.

“Yours respectfully,
“THOMAS DIXON.”

* *Threading my Way*—an excellant one.

¹ [See Vol. XVII. p. lxxviii.]

² [For further remarks by Ruskin on this book, see Letter 68, 25 (p. 685).]

LETTER 68

BAGS THAT WAX OLD¹

1. I FIND that the letter which I wrote in the *Fors* of May to those two children,² generally pleases the parents and guardians of children. Several nice ones ask me to print it separately: I have done so;³ and commend it, to-day, to the attention of the parents and guardians also. For the gist of it is, that the children are told to give up all they have, and never to be vexed. That is the first Rule of St. George, as applied to children,—to hold their childish things for God, and never to mind losing anything.

But the parents and guardians are not yet, it seems to me, well aware that St. George's law is the same for grown-up people as for little ones. To hold all they have,—all their grown-up things,—for God, and never to mind losing anything,—silver or gold, house or lands, son or daughter;—law seldom so much as even attempted to be observed! And, indeed, circumstances have chanced, since I wrote that *Fors*, which have caused me to consider much how curious it is that when good people lose their own son or daughter, even though they have reason to think God has found what they have lost, they are greatly vexed about it:⁴ but if they only hear of other people losing *their* sons or daughters,—though they have reason to think God has *not* found them, but that the wild beasts of the wilderness have torn them,—for such loss they are usually not vexed in anywise. To-day, nevertheless, I am

¹ [Luke xii. 33 (“Bags which wax *not* old”): see below, § 3. “Usury” was a rejected title for this Letter.]

² [Letter 65, § 24 (p. 608).]

³ [See the Bibliographical Note in this volume, p. xxvi.]

⁴ [Compare the passage on mourning in Vol. XXVII. p. 429 *n.*]

not concerned with the stewardship of these spirit-treasures, but only with the stewardship of money or lands, and proper manner of holding such by Christians. For it is important that the accepted Companions should now understand that although, in *creed*, I ask only so much consent as may include Christian, Jew, Turk, and Greek,¹—in *conduct*, the Society is to be regulated at *least* by the law of Christ. It may be, that as we fix our laws in further detail, we may add some of the heavier yokes of Lycurgus, or Numa, or John the Baptist: and, though the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and turning water into wine, we may think it needful to try how some of us like living on locusts, or wild honey,² or Spartan broth.³ But at least, I repeat, we are here, in England, to obey the law of Christ, if nothing more.

2. Now the law of Christ about money and other forms of personal wealth, is taught, first in parables, in which He likens Himself to the masters of this world, and explains the conduct which Christians should hold to Him, their heavenly Master, by that which they hold on earth, to earthly ones.

He likens Himself in these stories, several times to unkind or unjust masters, and especially to hard and usurious ones. And the gist of the parables in each case is, “If ye do so, and are thus faithful to hard and cruel masters, in earthly things, how much more should ye be faithful to a merciful Master, in heavenly things?”

Which argument, evil-minded men wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction.⁴ And instead of reading, for instance, in the parable of the Usurer,⁵ the intended lesson of industry in the employment

¹ [Ruskin here emphasises a point which is implied in the terms of St. George’s Creed (see pp. 419, 420), and which he had intended to state explicitly at the time: see the passage given from the MS. (p. 420 *n.*.)]

² [The Bible references are to Matthew xi. 19; John ii. 1–11; and Matthew iii. 4.]

³ [On the black broth of Lycurgus, see Letter 27, § 14 (Vol. XXVII. p. 502 *n.*.)]

⁴ [2 Peter iii. 16. On the “terrific misinterpretation” to which the teachings of Christ are open, see above, p. 326.]

⁵ [See Matthew xxv.]

of God's gifts, they read in it a justification of the crime which, in other parts of the same scripture, is directly forbidden. And there is indeed no doubt that, if the other prophetic parts of the Bible be true, these stories are so worded that they *may* be touchstones of the heart. They are nets, which sift the kindly reader from the selfish. The parable of the Usurer is like a mill sieve:—the fine flour falls through it, bolted finer; the chaff sticks in it.

3. Therefore, the only way to understand these difficult parts of the Bible, or even to approach them with safety, is first to read and obey the easy ones. Then the difficult ones all become beautiful and clear:—otherwise they remain venomous enigmas, with a Sphinx of destruction provoking false souls to read them, and ruining them in their own replies.

Now the orders, “not to lay up treasures for ourselves on earth,”¹ and to “sell that we have, and give alms,”² and to “provide ourselves bags which wax not old,”² are perfectly direct, unmistakable,—universal; and while we are not at all likely to be blamed by God for not imitating Him as a Judge, we shall assuredly be condemned by Him for not, under Judgment, doing as we were bid. But even if we do not feel able to obey these orders, if we must and will lay up treasures on earth, and provide ourselves bags with holes in them,—God may perhaps still, with scorn, permit us in our weakness, provided we are content with our earthly treasures, when we have got them, and don't oppress our brethren, and grind down their souls with them. We may have our old bag about our neck, if we will, and go to heaven like beggars;—but if we sell our brother also, and put the price of his life in the bag, we need not think to enter the kingdom of God so loaded. A rich man may, though hardly, enter the kingdom of heaven³ without repenting him of his riches; but not the

¹ [Matthew vi. 19.]

² [Luke xii. 33.]

³ [Matthew xix. 23.]

thief, without repenting his theft; nor the adulterer, without repenting his adultery; nor the usurer, without repenting his usury.

The nature of which last sin, let us now clearly understand, once for all.

4. Mr. Harrison's letter, published in the *Fors* for June,¹ is perhaps no less valuable as an evidence of the subtlety with which this sin has seized upon and paralyzed the public mind (so that even a man of Mr. Harrison's general intelligence has no idea why I ask a question about it), than as a clear statement of the present condition of the law, produced by the usurers who *are* "law-makers" for England, though lawyers are not.

Usury is properly the taking of money for the loan or use of anything (over and above what pays for wear and tear), such use involving no care or labour on the part of the lender. It includes all investments of capital whatsoever, returning "dividends," as distinguished from labour wages, or profits. Thus anybody who works on a railroad as platelayer, or stoker, has a right to wages for his work; and any inspector of wheels or rails has a right to payment for such inspection; but idle persons who have only paid a hundred pounds towards the road-making, have a right to the return of the hundred pounds,—and no more. If they take a farthing more, they are usurers. They may take fifty pounds for two years, twenty-five for four, five for twenty, or one for a hundred. But the first farthing they take more than their hundred, be it sooner or later, is usury.²

Again, when we build a house, and let it, we have a right to as much rent as will return us the wages of our labour, and the sum of our outlay. If, as in ordinary cases, not labouring with our hands or head, we have simply paid—say £1000—to get the house built, we have

¹ [Not *June*, but *July*. Letter 67, § 24 (p. 662).]

² [For another passage on Usury, which was perhaps originally written for this place, see Appendix 17 (Vol. XXIX. p. 570).]

a right to the £1000 back again at once, if we sell it; or, if we let it, to £500 rent during two years, or £100 rent during ten years, or £10 rent during a hundred years. But if, sooner or later, we take a pound more than the thousand, we are usurers.

5. And thus in all other possible or conceivable cases, the moment our capital is “increased,” by having lent it, be it but in the estimation of a hair,¹ that hair’s-breadth of increase is usury, just as much as stealing a farthing is theft, no less than stealing a million.

But usury is worse than theft, in so far as it is obtained either by deceiving people, or distressing them; generally by both: and finally by deceiving the usurer himself, who comes to think that usury is a real increase, and that money can grow of money; whereas all usury is increase to one person only by decrease to another; and every gain of calculated Increment to the Rich, is balanced by its mathematical equivalent of Decrement to the Poor. The Rich have hitherto only counted their gain; but the day is coming, when the Poor will also count their loss,—with political results hitherto unparalleled.

6. For instance, my good old hairdresser at Camberwell came to me the other day, very uncomfortable about his rent. He wanted a pound or two to make it up; and none of his customers wanted their hair cut. I gave him the pound or two,—with the result, I hope my readers have sagacity enough to observe, of distinct decrement to *me*, as increment to the landlord;—and then inquired of him, how much he had paid for rent, during his householder’s life. On rough calculation, the total sum proved to be between 1500 and 1700 pounds. And after paying this sum,—earned, shilling by shilling, with careful snippings, and studiously skilful manipulation of tongs,—here is my poor old friend, now past sixty, practically without a roof over his head;—just as roofless in his old age as he was in the first days of life,—and nervously wandering about

¹ [*Merchant of Venice*, Act iv. sc. 1: compare Vol. III. p. 96.]

Peckham Rye and East Norwood, in the east winter winds, to see if, perchance, any old customers will buy some balm for their thinning locks—and give him the blessed balm of an odd half-crown or two, to rent shelter for his own, for three months more.

Now, supposing that £1500 of his had been properly laid out, on the edification of lodgings for him, £500 should have built him a serviceable tenement and shop; another £500 have met the necessary repairing expenses for forty years; and at this moment he ought to have had his efficient freehold cottage, with tile and wall right weatherproof, and a nice little nest-egg of five hundred pounds in the Bank, besides. But instead of this, the thousand pounds has gone in payment to slovenly builders, each getting their own percentage, and doing as bad work as possible, under the direction of landlords paying for as little as possible of any sort of work. And the odd five hundred has gone into the landlord's pocket. Pure increment to him; pure decrement to my decoratively laborious friend. No gain “begotten”¹ of money; but simple subtraction from the pocket of the labouring person, and simple addition to the pocket of the idle one.

7. I have no mind to waste the space of *Fors* in giving variety of instances. Any honest and sensible reader, if he chooses, can think out the truth in such matters for himself. If he be dishonest, or foolish, no one can teach him. If he is resolved to find reason or excuse for things as they are, he may find refuge in one lie after another; and, dislodged from each in turn, fly from the last back to the one he began with. But there will not long be need for debate—nor time for it. Not all the lying lips² of commercial Europe can much longer deceive the people in their rapidly increasing distress, nor arrest their straight battle with the cause of it. Through what confused noise and garments rolled in blood,—through what burning and

¹ [The reference is to the discussions which have arisen from the Greek use of the word *τοκοδ* (birth) to denote interest: see above, pp. 121–122.]

² [Proverbs xii. 22.]

fuel of fire,¹ they will work out their victory,—God only knows, nor what they will do to Barabbas, when they have found out that he *is* a Robber, and not a King.² But that discovery of his character and capacity draws very near: and no less change in the world's ways than the former fall of Feudalism itself.

8. In the meantime, for those of us who are Christians, our own way is plain. We can with perfect ease ascertain what usury is; and in what express terms forbidden. I had partly prepared, for this *Fors*, and am able to give, as soon as needful,³ analysis of the terms “Increase” and “Usury” throughout the Old and New Testaments. But the perpetual confusion of the English terms when the Greek and Latin are clear (especially by using the word “increase” in one place, and “generation” in another, at the English translator's pleasure⁴, renders the matter too intricate for the general reader, though intensely interesting to any honest scholar. I content myself, therefore, with giving the plain Greek and plain English of Leviticus xxv. 35 to 37.*

‘Εάν δέ πένηται ὁ ἀδελφός σου, καὶ ἀδυνατήσῃ ταῖς χερσίν αὐτοῦ παρά σοί, ἀντιλήψῃ αὐτοῦ ὡς προσηλύτου καὶ παροίκου, καὶ ξήσεται ὁ ἀδελφός σου μετὰ σοῦ·

Οὐ λήψῃ παρ αὐτοῦ τόκον, οὐδέ, ἐπὶ πλήθει, καὶ φοβηθήσῃ τὸν θεόν σου ἐγὼ κύριος· καὶ ξήσεται ὁ ἀδελφός σου μετὰ σοῦ.

Τὸ ἀργύριόν σου οὐ δώσεις αὐτῷ ἐπὶ τόκῳ, καὶ ἐπὶ πλεονασῶ οὐ δώσεις αὐτῷ τὰ βρώματά σου.

“And if thy brother be poor, and powerless with his hands, at thy side, thou shalt take his part upon thee, to help him, † as thy proselyte

* The twenty-third verse of the same chapter is to be the shield-legend of the St. George's Company.⁵

† Meaning, to do his work instead of him. Compare Acts xx. 35. “I have showed you all things, how that, so labouring, ye ought to *support* the weak.”

¹ [Isaiah ix. 5.]

² [See John xviii. 40.]

³ [This was not done in *Fors*.]

⁴ [On this subject, compare Vol. XXVII. p. 202, and the passages there noted.]

⁵ [“The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me” (Leviticus xxv. 23: compare below, p. 767). See now in the volume of this edition containing *Bibliotheca Pastorum* the designs by Sir Edward Burne-Jones for the covers of that series, in which this “shieldlegend” appears.]

and thy neighbour; and thy brother shall live with thee. Thou shalt take no usury of him, nor anything over and above, and thou shalt fear thy God. I am the Lord, and thy brother shall live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money, for usury; and thou shalt not give him thy food, for increase.”

There is the simple law for all of us;—one of those which Christ assuredly came not to destroy, but to fulfil:¹ and there is no national prosperity to be had but in obedience to it.

9. How we usurers are to live, with the hope of our gains gone, is precisely the old temple of Diana question.² How Robin Hood or Cœur de Lion were to live without arrow or axe, would have been as strange a question to *them*, in their day. And there are many amiable persons who will not directly see their way, any more than I do myself,³ to an honest life; only, let us be sure that this we are leading now is a dishonest one; and worse (if Dante and Shakespeare’s mind on the matter are worth any heed, of which more in due time⁴), being neither more nor less than a spiritual manner of cannibalism,⁵ which, so long as we persist in, every word spoken in Scripture of those who “eat my people as they eat bread,”⁶ is spoken directly of us.* It may be an encouragement to some of us—especially those evangelically bred—in weaning ourselves slowly from such habits, to think of our dear old converted friend,

8th July, 1876.

* DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I see that you intend to speak on the question of usury in next *Fors*. Would it not be well, since the Bishops of the Established Church have not a word to offer in defence of their conduct, to appeal to some of the other sects that profess to take the teaching of the Bible of Christ for their guidance? The Wesleyans, for instance, teach that the Bible was given almost verbally by the Spirit of God; and John Wesley says his followers are “*to die sooner than put anything in pawn, or*

¹ [Matthew v. 17.]

² [See Acts xix.]

³ [See above, Letter 44, § 14 (p. 139).]

⁴ [For Dante in this connexion, see Letter 72 (pp. 764–765); for Shakespeare, Letter 76 (Vol. XXIX. p. 98).]

⁵ [Compare Ruskin’s note on line 509 of *Rock Honeycomb*.]

⁶ [Psalms xiv. 4; liii. 4.]

Friday.¹ We need not fear our power of becoming good Christians yet, if we will: so only that we understand, finally and utterly, that all gain, increase, interest, or whatever else you call it or think it, to the lender of capital, is loss, decrease, and dis-interest, to the borrower of capital. Every farthing we, who lend the tool, make, the borrower of the tool loses. And all the idiotical calculations of what money comes to, in so many years, simply ignore the debit side of the book, on which the Labourer's Deficit is precisely equal to the Capitalist's Efficit. I saw an estimate made by some blockhead in an American paper, the other day, of the weight of gold which a hundred years' "interest" on such and such funds would load the earth with! Not even of wealth in that solid form, could the poor wretch perceive so much of the truth as that the gold he put on the earth above, he must dig out of the earth below! But the mischief in real life is far deeper on the negative side, than the good on the positive. The debt of the borrower loads his heart, cramps his hands, and dulls his labour. The gain of the lender hardens his heart, fouls his brain, and puts every means of mischief into his otherwise clumsy and artless hands.

10. But here, in good time, is one example of honest living sent me worth taking grave note of.

In my first inaugural lecture on Art at Oxford, given in the theatre (full crowded to hear what first words might be uttered in the University on so unheard-of a subject), I closed by telling my audience—to the amusement of some,

borrow and lend on usury." Perhaps if you were to challenge the President and Conference, and call on them either to state that they do not accept the teaching of Moses, David, and Christ on this matter, or to bring the sin clearly before the minds of the members of their body, you might force the question on the attention of the professedly religious persons in the country.²

A READER OF "FORS."

¹ [For other references to *Robinson Crusoe*, see above, pp. 170, 199.]

² [For further correspondence on this subject, see Letters 69, § 24; 71, § 18 (pp. 710, 750); and 73, § 18 (Vol. XXIX. p. 28).]

the offence of others, and the disapproval of all,—that the entire system of their art-studies must be regulated with a view to the primal art, which many of them would soon have to learn, that of getting their food out of the Ground, or out of the Sea.¹

Time has worn on; and, last year, a Christ Church man, an excellent scholar, came to talk with me over his brother's prospects in life, and his own. For himself, he proposed, and very earnestly, considering his youth and gifts (lying, as far as I could judge, more towards the rifle-ground than in other directions), to go into the Church: but for his brother, he was anxious, as were all his relatives;—said brother having broken away from such modes of living as the relatives held orthodox, and taken to catching and potting of salmon on the Columbia River;² having farther transgressed all the proprieties of civilized society by providing himself violently with the “capital” necessary for setting up in that line of business, and “stealing a boat.” How many boats, with nine boilers each in them, the gentlemen of Her Majesty's navy construct annually with money violently abstracted out of my poor pockets, and those of other peaceful labourers,—boats not to catch salmon with, or any other good thing, but simply to amuse themselves, and blow up stokers with,—civilized society may perhaps in time learn to consider. In the meantime, I consoled my young St. Peter as well as I could for his brother's carnal falling away; represented to him that, without occasional fishing for salmon, there would soon be no men left to fish for:³ and that even this tremendous violation of the eighth commandment, to the extent of the abstraction of a boat, might not perchance, with due penitence, keep the young vagabond wholly hopeless of Paradise; my own private opinion being that the British public would, on the whole, benefit more by the proceedings of the young pirate, if he

¹ [See *Lectures on Art*, § 27 (Vol. XX. p. 40).]

² [See below, pp. 678–684.]

³ [See Matthew iv. 19.]

provided them annually with a sufficient quantity of potted salmon, than by the conscientious, but more costly, ministry of his brother, who, provided with the larger boat-apparatus of a nave, and the mast of a steeple, proposed to employ this naval capital only in the provision of potted talk.

And finding that, in spite of the opinion of society, there were still bowels of mercies¹ in this good youth, yearning after his brother, I got him to copy for me some of the brother's letters from the Columbia River, confessing his piratical proceedings (as to which I, for one, give him a Christian man's absolution without more ado); and account of his farther life in those parts—a life which appears to me, on the whole, so brave, exemplary, and wise, that I print the letters as chief article of this month's correspondence; and I am going to ask the boy to become a Companion of St. George forthwith, and send him a collar of the Order (as soon as we have got gold to make collars of), with a little special pictorial chasing upon it, representing the Miraculous Draught of Fishes.

¹ [Colossians iii. 12.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

11. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Master.

| | £ | s. | d. |
|-------------------------------------|------|----|----|
| Balance, June 16 | 765 | 19 | 1 |
| By cash (rents, etc.), May and June | 180 | 11 | 8 |
| | 946 | 10 | 9 |
| | 328 | 19 | 6 |
| Balance, July 16 | £617 | 11 | 3 |
| <i>June</i> 25. owns | 16 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>July</i> 1. St. George Secretary | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| ” Raffaele, July and August | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| ” Gift to poor relation, annual | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. Johns, Camberwell, Bookseller | 17 | 19 | 6 |
| 7. Jackson | 40 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. Joseph Sly (<i>a</i>) | 40 | 0 | 0 |
| 8. Crawley | 30 | 0 | 0 |
| 11. To Assisi (<i>b</i>) | 45 | 0 | 0 |
| 11. Self (<i>c</i>) | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| | £328 | 19 | 6 |

a. Carriage expenses, of which the out-of-the-wayness of Brantwood incurs many, from April 6th to June 19th.

b. Twenty pounds more than usual,¹ the monks being in distress there.

c. I shall take a fit of selfish account-giving, one of these days, but have neither time nor space this month.

12. (II.) Affairs of the Company.

I have no subscriptions to announce. My friends send me occasional letters inquiring how I do, and what I am doing. Like Mr. Toots,² I am very well, I thank them; and they can easily find out what I am doing, and help me, if they like; and if not, I don't care to be asked questions. The subjoined account gives the detail of Sheffield Museum expenses to end of June. I am working hard at the catalogue of its mineral collection; and the forthcoming number of *Deucalion* will give account of its proposed arrangement.³ But things go slowly when one has so many in hand,

¹ [For a previous gift, see above, p. 584.]

² [See *Dombey and Son*, ch. xviii.]

³ [See ch. viii. of *Deucalion*, Vol. XXVI. p. 197; and for the catalogue, *ibid.*, pp. 415 *seq.*]

not only because of the actual brevity of time allowable for each, but because, of that short time, much is wasted in recovering the threads of the work.

SHEFFIELD MUSEUM ACCOUNT

| Dr. | | | £ | s. | d. |
|--------------|-------|----------------------|-------|----|----|
| <i>April</i> | 1. To | Balance in hand | 21 | 3 | 3 |
| <i>May</i> | 9. " | J. Ruskin, by cheque | 55 | 15 | 3 |
| | | | <hr/> | | |
| | | | £76 | 18 | 6 |

CURRENT EXPENSES

| Cr. | | | £ | s. | d. |
|--------------|--------|----------------------------|-------|----|----|
| <i>April</i> | 26. By | H. Swan (salary) | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| | 2. " | Watch Rate | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| | " | Poor Rate | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| | 17. " | Water rate | 0 | 5 | 8 |
| | " | Gas | 0 | 13 | 3 |
| | 29. " | Rate on New Land Allotment | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| | | | <hr/> | | |
| | | | 11 | 16 | 2 |

REPAIRS AND FITTINGS

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|--|-------|----|----|
| <i>April</i> | 15. By | J. Smith, for making paths | 1 | 19 | 3 |
| | 26. " | J. Ashton, brass taps | 0 | 3 | 9 |
| | " | S. Bower, card mounts | 0 | 3 | 10 |
| | " | Walter Nield, cases | 5 | 10 | 0 |
| | " | J. Smith, paths | 1 | 14 | 10 |
| <i>May</i> | 12. " | Sheffield Water Works—repairs | 0 | 5 | 8 |
| | 13. " | Silicate Paint Co. | 2 | 0 | 9 |
| | " | J. Smith | 1 | 3 | 8 |
| | 19. " | Mr. Bell, for applying silicate | 0 | 15 | 0 |
| <i>June</i> | 4. " | Mr. Aitken, fixtures, etc., pertaining to the two cottages | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | 26. | By C. Collingwood, materials for paths | 5 | 4 | 0 |
| | 29. | By G. H. Hovey, floor-cloth | 4 | 11 | 0 |
| | | Petty expenses | 1 | 13 | 5 |
| | | | <hr/> | | |
| Balance in hand | | | 26 | 5 | 2 |
| | | | <hr/> | | |
| | | | 38 | 17 | 2 |

£76 18 6

July 20, 1876. Examined and found correct.

E. RYDINGS.

13. (III.) I give the following letters without changing a syllable; never were any written with less view to literary fame, and their extreme value consists precisely in their expression of the spirit and force of character which still happily exists in English youth:—

“ASTORIA, COLUMBIA RIVER, OREGON, NORTH AMERICA.

“I hope you flourish still on this terrestrial sphere. I have been watching my chance to hook it for a long time; however, I may get a chance to-morrow. If I do, I will write and let you know immediately. This is a nice country, only there are a great deal too many trees. We have been up to Portland, and are now down at Astoria again, waiting for 250 tons more cargo, and the ship will proceed to

Queenstown for orders, so that if I do go home in her, I shall not get home till about the month of August. There was a bark wrecked here the other night, and the crew spent a night in the rigging; hard frost on, too. We have had snow, ice, frost, and rain in great abundance. The salmon are just beginning here, and are so cheap and fresh. I am steward now, as the other steward has run away."

.
"BROOKFIELD, COLUMBIA RIVER, OREGON.

14. "I have just started another business, and knocked off going to sea; yours truly is now going in for salmon fishing. I had quite enough of it, and the ship would have been very unpleasant, because she was very deep, and I think shorthanded.

"One night five figures without shoes on (time 1 A. M.) might be seen gliding along the decks, carrying a dingy. We launched her over the side, and put our clothes, provisions, etc., in her, and effected as neat a clear as one could wish to see. We had been watching our chances for the last week or so, but were always baffled by the vigilance of the third mate: however, I happened to hear that he and the boatswain had also arranged to clear, so we all joined together. We were to call the boatswain at twelve o'clock: the third mate and all of us had our clothes up on deck, and the boatswain backed out of it, and the third mate said he wouldn't go; but it would have been impossible for him to go in the ship, for all must have come out" [gentle persuasion, employed on boatswain, given no account of]. "We started: favoured by the tide, we pulled fifteen miles to the opposite shore; concealed the boat, had breakfast, and slept. At twelve that night we started again, and went on a sandback; got off again, and found a snug place in the bush. We hauled the boat up, and built a house, and lay there over a fortnight, happy and comfortable. At last the ship sailed, and we got to work. . . . We live like princes, on salmon, pastry, game, etc. These fishermen take as many as 250 (highest catch) in one boat in a night. I suppose there are about five hundred boats out every night; and the fish weigh" [up to sixty pounds—by corrections from next letter], "and for each fish they get 10d.—twenty cents. They sell them to canneries, where they are tinned, or salt them themselves. They pay two men a boat from £8, 10s. a month. If I can raise coin for a boat and net (£100), I shall make money hand over fist. Land is 10s. an acre: up-country it is cheaper."

.
"Care of Captain Hodge, Hog'em, Brookfield,

"May 9th, 1875.

15. "I am now in pretty steady work, and very snug. All the past week I have been helping Hodge build a house, all of wood; and every morning I sail a boatful of fish up to the cannery, so altogether it is not bad fun. I am getting four pounds a month, and if the fishing season is prosperous, I am to get more. A sixty pound salmon is considered a very big one. There is a small stream runs at the back of the house, wherein small trout do abound. . . . I shall catch some. The houses here generally are about a mile apart, but the one Tom works at is alongside. It is pretty cold of a night-time, but we have a roaring fire. You are not allowed to shoot game during the next three months, but after that you can: there are plenty of grouse, pheasants, ducks, geese, elk, deer, bears, and all sorts, so perhaps I shall do a little of that. There are some splendid trees about, some of which are 10 feet thick, from 100 to 200 feet high, and as straight as an arrow. Some Indians live at the back of us,—civilized, of course: the men work in the boats: some of the squaws have got splendid bracelets; whether they are made of gold or brass I don't know. It rains here all the winter, and the moss grows on the people's backs: up around Portland they are called webfeet. There is a train runs from Portland to San Francisco every day. Tom is with a very nice old

fellow, who is very fond of him, and gave him a new pair of india-rubber thigh boots the other day, which I consider to be very respectable of him.

"The boats go out of a night-time mostly; they have a little store on board, and we have coffee, cake, and bread and butter, whenever we feel so disposed."

"In the first place, I will describe all hands belonging to this shanty. Captain Hodge is a man characteristically lovely, resembling Fagin the Jew whilst he is looking for Oliver Twist. Still he is honest—and honest men are scarce: if he is a rum 'un to look at, he is a d—I to go. He has a cat whom he addresses in the following strain: 'It was a bully little dog, you bet it was: it had a handle to it, you bet it had: it was fond of fresh meat, you bet it was.' The next one is Jem the cook: he is a Chinaman, and holds very long and interesting conversations with me, but as I have not the slightest idea of what they are about, I cannot tell you the details. Then comes Swiggler, who is an old married wretch and says he is a grandson of a German Count. One or two more of less note, the dog Pompey and myself.

"I can keep myself in clothes and food, but I can't start to make money, under £100.

"So F——will come for £10 a month, will he? He could make that anywhere while the fishing season lasts, but that is only three months; and this is rather a cold, wet climate. I have had my first shot at a bear, and missed him, as it was pretty dark: they are common here, and we see one every day—great big black fellows—about a hundred yards from the house: they come down to eat salmon heads.

"I met an old 'Worcester' friend, who had run away from his ship, the other day in Astoria: he was going home overland.

"Hodge offers to board me free all the winter, but as friend Hodge says he can't afford wages, I'll see friend Hodge a long way off.

"I am very well and contented, and shall be about a hundred dollars in pocket at the end of the season."

"July 19th.

16. "We expect the fishing season to last about a fortnight or three weeks more. Tom and I got some old net from Hodge, and went out fishing: we caught about six salmon the first night, for which we got 4s. We went out again on Saturday, and caught eighteen, for which we got 9s. 3d., and as that is extra money we profit a little. There are plenty of bears knocking around here, and Tom and I got a boat and went out one night. We don't have to go more than two hundred yards from the house. About dusk, out comes old Bruin. I was very much excited, and Tom fired first, and did not hit him; then I had a running shot, and did not hit him either. He has taken a sack of salmon heads, which I put out for bait, right away to his den, and I have not seen him since. However—the time will come, and when it does, let him look well to himself.

"Did you ever taste sturgeon? I don't remember ever having any in the 'old country,' but it's very nice.

"Hodge has a fisherman who has caught over eight hundred fish in the last seven nights; he gets 10d. per fish, so he is making money hand over fist.

"I have not decided on any particular plans for the winter, but shall get along somehow.

"Send me any old papers you can, and write lots of times."

"The last fortnight we have been very busy salting and taking salmon to the cannery. I have been out four times with Hodge, whom I call Bill, and the first drift we got twenty-eight; second, twenty-eight; third and fourth, thirty-one.

"I like this sort of business very well, and am quite contented.

"I wish you would send me out some English newspapers now and then—*Illustrated London News*, *Graphics*, etc. It does not much matter if they are not quite new.

"The people out here are a rough lot, but a very good-natured sort. Hodge has got a nice piece of ground which he intends to cultivate: he put some potatoes in early last year, and has not looked at them since. However, I am to be put on to work there for a bit, and I'll bet my crop will beat yours.

"There are wild cherries and strawberries growing in the woods, but of course they are not ripe yet.

"My idea was, or is, to stop till I raise money enough to come home and get a farm, which I am able to do in two, three, or four years."

• • • • •
"ALDER POINT (so called because we're 'all dére').

"Sept. 4th.

17. "I have been paid off now about a month. I received fifty-one dollars (a dollar equals 4s. 2d.), and a present of a pair of gum boots, which every one said was low wages. Tom had fifty, and Jackson a hundred and fourteen dollars. We combined these, and bought a fishing boat for ninety dollars, and sail for five more. We then set about to find a land agent; but they are scarce, so we didn't find one. Then we went down to the sawmills, and bought 2094 feet of assorted lumber. I can't tell how they measure this lumber; but our house is 24 feet by 16½, with walls 9 feet high, and a roof about 8 feet slope. The lumber cost twenty-eight dollars; hammer, nails, etc., about fifteen dollars. We then chose a spot close to a stream, and built our house. It's built very well, considering none of us ever built a house before. It is roofed with shingles—*i.e.*, pieces of wood 3 feet by ½ foot, and very thin; they cost seven dollars per 1000. Our house is divided into two rooms—a bedroom, containing a big fireplace and three bunks; and in the other room we grub, etc. At the back of the house we have the sword of Damocles, a tree which has fallen, and rests on its stump, and we know not at what hour he may fall. In the front we have the Siamese twins, a tree about 200 feet high, with another tree, about 100 feet, growing out of him. Nothing but trees all around us, and the nearest house is two miles away."

• • • • •
"THE ALDER POINT MANSION.

18. "I have now shifted my quarters, and am living in my own house, built of rough wood in the woods on the bank of the river, and free from ornament save 'Sweet Seventeen' and 'The Last Days in Old England,' which I have framed and hung up.

"I am now, to use the words of the poet, 'head cook and bottle washer, chief of all the waiters,' in my own house. It stands in its own grounds—for a simple reason, it couldn't stand in anybody else's. It has an elevated appearance,—that is, it looks slightly drunk, for we built it ourselves, and my architectural bump is not very largely developed. Our floor is all of a cant, but Tom settled that difficulty by saying we were to imagine ourselves at sea, and the ship lying over slightly.

"I am very poor,—have not had a red cent for some time; spent it all on the house, boat, etc. We have got grub to last us a month and a half, and 'what will poor Hally do then, poor thing?' Probably bust up and retire. I can't help envying you occasionally. I am a rare cad in appearance; an old blue shirt is my uniform. We live principally on bread and butter and coffee, sometimes

varied by coffee and butter and bread. I have made a dresser, and we have six knives, forks, teaspoons, plates, cups and saucers, three big spoons, a kettle, fryingpan, and camp oven, also a condensed sewing-machine, which some people call 'needles.' "

.
"Sept. 17th.

19. "Our house was invaded by wasps the other day for our sugar. I accordingly rigged myself up in shirts, etc., to look something like a man in a diving suit, and went and seized the sugar and put it in the chimney, and then fled for dear life. Whilst I was gone the sugar caught fire, and about forty pounds were burnt, and the chimney also was nearly burned down. Tom and I and hot water then slaughtered about four hundred wasps, but that don't sweeten the coffee.

"I have just been building a slip to haul our boat up on, as it blows very stiff here in the winter, and there is a good sea in consequence. Tom and I have been bathing this week or so, but the water is cold. We see one mountain from here on whose summit there is snow all the year round. It's rather monotonous living here; we see no one for days together. I heard there were two bears below here, so at about nine o'clock one night I started in the canoe. The river was smooth as glass, and it was a glorious night; and I guess Bruin thought so too, for he didn't give me a sight of him. Ducks are beginning to show round here, but my gun, which is a United States musket, don't do much execution. It is dark here about half-past five or six in the evening, so I don't know what our allowance of daylight will be in the winter.

"I remain, yours, etc."

.
"Oct. 27th.

20. "Thus far yours truly is progressing favourably. My latest achievement is in the lifeboat line, which you will hear of, no doubt, from other sources. The bears have all retired for the winter, which shows Bruin's sense. To-morrow I am going to work up at Brookfield, clearing land. I shall probably work there three weeks, and then—well, I mean to go to Portland, and work till Christmas.

"Supper is now ready:—

Poisson. *Légumes.*

Salmon heads and potatoes.

Entrée.

Potatoes and heads of Salmon.

Pièce de resistance.

Salmon heads and spuds.

Dessert.

Bread surmounted with butter.

(Note.—You can't manage the bread without $\frac{3}{4}$ inch of grease, called for decency's sake 'butter.')

Wines.

Café avec beaucoup de chicorée.

Finish off.

A smoke.

"Having digested supper, and trimmed the yeast powder tin with lard in it for a lamp, I resume. The sport going on here at this time of the year is sturgeon-fishing, with lines a fathom or so, and any number of hooks. The sturgeon run

very big; I have seen one that measured eight feet from stem to stern. In the spring there are swarms of smelts; you take them with a net the size of a landing-net, with small meshes. There is good elk shooting, and deer away back in the woods; but you must go after them for about a week, and that is poor fun in this sort of weather. We got one of our big trees down the other day with a big auger: you bore two holes in the tree, stick a live piece of charcoal in it, and blow like mad, and the tree will catch, and in a few days he'll burn and fall. Very interesting, but it fills up."

.
"Oct. 28th.

21. "It's some time since you last had a letter, and I guess you deserve this. Tom and I are both all right, and the other man, Jackson, is, I think, going home. Since I wrote last the rainy season has commenced, and at times it blows like my namesake, 'Old Harry.'

"During a heavy squall some days ago, when Tom and I were returning from Brookfield, a boat about three-quarters of a mile behind us capsized, and a man and boy who were in her managed to climb on to her bottom. Tom and I bore away and picked them up, and they were truly grateful—not without cause, for, but for our assistance, they must have lost their lives.

"The man was . . . , who has lots of money, but he hasn't given us any. Perhaps he saw the necessity of our saving him—made a virtue of a necessity, and virtue is its own reward. So much for my new ten shilling hat, lost in the rescue.

"I am in with all that's going on in London and England, for I get lots of papers, and as soon as I have done with them they are in great request all along the river. A boat has just called here, and John Elliot, a New Brunswick man, was grateful for a *Graphic*.

"The *London News* has just come to hand,—the 'Prince's visit to India' edition,—and is certainly causing quite a furor amongst the boys. On Tuesday night there was a hurricane here: it blew a great deal of the cannery down, and the place presents the appearance of a wreck. The house was swaying to and fro, and all hands had to leave for their lives. It nearly blew a man 6 ft. 3 in. off the wharf, and everybody was crawling on their hands and knees. Great trees were rooted up by hundreds: and at the next cannery above this, the owner had just left his house and gone to play a game of cards, when a tree came down on his house and smashed it into many pieces.

"I am working here clearing land: I don't work when it rains, so I get about four days a week to myself. However, this week has been an exception, for we have had three fine days. Snowed thick last week: weather cold and bracing. Am getting one dollar fifteen cents a day's work, but am living up to it."

.
"Nov. 23rd.

22. "You doubtless think I am quite uncivilized: however, whilst I am writing a cat is purring on my knees, if that is any evidence of civilization.

"To-morrow I am going out to work for about three weeks, clearing away bush for a Swede. I shall ask a dollar a day, but I don't expect it. I may add, necessity alone compels me to take this step, as I am beginning to forget what a dollar is like, it is so long since I had one. I am heavy on the axe: I cut down five trees to-day, and the trees out here are by no means small. A troop of five wild ducks came round here on Saturday, so I loaded my old musket and let rip into the middle of them: singular to relate, they all swam away. Then occurred one of the most vigorous pursuits the human eye has ever witnessed.

Hungry H. H. H. v. the ducks. I broke three paddles and my own nose, and then they escaped. However, one white one was sighted, and in the evening the old mudstick (*i.e.* musket) was again prepared, and next day we ate wildduck for dinner.

"On the whole, I like this much better than being on the ship, and I don't think I shall come home for two or three years.

"I am rigging a model of a ship, and I am not unhandy at it, and I calculate it will fetch me twenty dollars."

.
"Dec. 26th.

23. "I will begin by wishing the house a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, if so be it is not too late. We had a quiet Christmas Day with our select few. We were going to have a deer hunt, but the weather, which made a regular old-fashioned Christmas, stopped us. We had a good dinner, but no turkey or sausages. There is a strange old character stopping here, an ex-prizefighter, and in the evening he gave us a short sermon on the Star in the East, and asked us if we remembered Christmas Eve 1800 years ago. He then gave us a step-dance, so as not to dwell too long on one subject. Italian Sam gives a dance on New Year's night, and I may go.

"I got my discharge from Megler on Tuesday week, after putting in 25½ days' work since November 1, in consequence of bad weather, for which I had the large sum of O to take, being one dollar in debt. However, I struck a job right away, which is pretty stiff work—cutting cord-wood, making one dollar a day and board. Cord-wood is a pile of wood eight feet long, four high, and four broad, about one foot thick, and it is pretty hard work swinging a heavy oaken maul all day long, splitting the wood with wedges. But it's good for the muscle. Good-bye."

.
"ALDER POINT. *Date uncertain.*

24. "It's about a month since I last wrote to you; I had no writing-paper, and no coin to buy any; however, Oleson paying up enabled me to lay in a stock. The rainy, blowy, galy season has set in, and it is pretty miserable down here. We had a heavy gale the other day, but did not suffer any damage, though many people predicted we should lose our boat; but the gale is over, and the boat is still there, so that it shows public opinion may sometimes err. We were scared lest some of the big trees should come down, but they did not. If you could spare Gladstone for a bit, I would board him free, and he could wire in all round here free gratis for nothing. After the gale, the next day looked fine, so Tom and I (a puff of wind just came, and I thought the house would succumb, but no! it holds its own) went up to Brookfield. Coming back, there were lots of squalls; I was steering, and we saw one coming, so shortened sail: the boat was nearly capsized, and we had to take out the mast and let it rig, and so saved ourselves. There was a boat behind us, and we were watching her as the squall passed up: they shortened sail and tried to run before the wind to Brookfield, but—over she went. So Tom and I made all haste to save the crew. She was about three-quarters of a mile off, so we up sail and ran down for her. The crew, . . . and a boy, were sitting on the bottom of the boat white as ghosts. We took them aboard, picked up their oars and rudder, and then took them ashore to a house, where we all got dry clothes and something to eat. They certainly owed their lives to us, and it was very lucky we saw them, for they must otherwise have perished. I lost a new 10s. hat in the rescue. . . . has lots of money; but he has offered us none, yet. Perhaps, as he saw that we must of a necessity save him, he made a virtue of a necessity, and virtue, they say, is its own reward. So much for my new hat."

25. (IV.) I beg all my readers who can afford it, to buy *Threading my Way*, by Robert Dale Owen (Trübner, 1874).¹ It is full of interest throughout; but I wish my Companions to read with extreme care pages 6 to 14, in which they will find account of the first establishment of cotton industry in these islands; 101 to 104, where they will find the effect of that and other manufacturing industries on the humanities of life; and 215 to 221, where they will find the real statistics of that increased wealth of which we hear so constant and confident boasting.

26. (V.) Part of letter from an honest correspondent, expressing difficulties which will occur to many:—

“I thank you for what you say² about the wickedness of ‘taking interest’ consisting in the cruelty of making a profit out of the distresses of others. And much of the modern spirit of looking for bargains, and buying in the cheapest market, is precisely the same. But is there not a radical moral difference between such deliberate heartlessness, and simply receiving interest from an ordinary investment? Surely it is very important that this matter should be made clear.”

The difference between deliberate and undeliberate heartlessness;—between being intelligently cruel, with sight of the victim, and stupidly cruel, with the interval of several walls, some months, and aid and abetting from many other equally cruel persons, between him and us, is for God to judge; not for me. But it *is* very important that this matter should be made clear, and my correspondent’s question, entirely clarified, will stand thus: “If I persist in extracting money from the poor by torture, but keep myself carefully out of hearing of their unpleasant cries, and carefully ignorant of the arrangements of mechanism which enable me, by turning an easy handle, to effect the compression of their bones at that luxurious distance, am I not innocent?” Question which I believe my correspondent quite capable of answering for himself.

27. (VI.) Part of a letter from my nice goddaughter:³—

“I want to tell you about an old woman we sometimes go to see here” (Brighton), “who was ninety-one yesterday. She lived in service till her health failed, and since then she has had her own little room, which is always exquisitely clean and neat. The bed-hangings and chair-covers are all of white dimity, embroidered by her in patterns of her own designing, with the ravellings of old carpets. She has made herself two sets. Her carpet is made in the same way, on coarse holland covered close with embroidery, which, as she says proudly, never wears out. She is still able to work, though her arrangement of colours isn’t quite so good as it used to be. The contrast came into my mind between work like that, and something I was told the other day,*—that it takes a workwoman a week to make one inch of the finest Valenciennes lace, and that she has to do it, sitting in a dark cellar, with the light only admitted through a narrow slit, to concentrate it on the work. It’s enough to make one give up wearing Valenciennes at all!”

* Please, some one, tell me if this something be true, or how far true.⁴

¹ [This book was sent to Ruskin by Thomas Dixon: see Letter 67, § 27 (p. 665).]

² [In a private letter; but see also the quotation from Bishop Jewel, above, pp. 340–341.]

³ [Miss Constance Oldham: see above, pp. 439, 611.]

⁴ [For answer from a correspondent, see Letter 70, § 18 (p. 731).]

The last piece of impassioned young lady's English, translated into unimpassioned old gentleman's English, means, I suppose, that "it is very shocking, but not at all enough to make one give up wearing Valenciennes." Nor should it be. But it should be quite enough to make one inquire into the matter; ascertain with what degree of fineness lace *can* be made in the open daylight and fresh air of France; request some benevolent lady friend who has nothing else to do, to undertake the sale of such lace, with due Episcopal superintendence of the relieved workers; and buy one's lace only from this benevolent lady Bishop.¹

¹ [For lady Bishops, see Letter 62, § 3 (p. 513).]

LETTER 69

THE MESSAGE OF JAEL-ATROPOS¹

1. I HAVE just been down to Barmouth to see the tenants on the first bit of ground,—noble crystalline rock, I am thankful to say,—possessed by St. George in the island.

I find the rain coming through roofs, and the wind through walls, more than I think proper, and have ordered repairs; and for some time to come, the little rents of these cottages will be spent entirely in the bettering of them, or in extending some garden ground, fenced with furze hedge against the west wind by the most ingenious of our tenants.

2. And in connection with this first—however small—beginning under my own eyes of St. George's work,—(already some repairs had been made by my direction, under the superintendence of the donor of the land, Mrs. Talbot, before I could go to see the place)—I must state again clearly our St. George's principle of rent.² It is taken first as the acknowledgment of the authority of the Society over the land, and in the amount judged by the Master to be just, according to the circumstances of the person and place, for the tenant to pay as a contribution to the funds of the Society. The tenant has no claim to the return of the rent in improvements on his ground or his house; and I order the repairs at Barmouth as part of the Company's general action, not as return of the rent to the tenant. The reader will thus see that our so-called

¹ [See below, § 11. Jael, the smiter of the nail, *Clavigera* (see Vol. XXVII. p. 231), and Atropos, the Fate "not to be turned aside" (see Vol. XXVII. pp. xxi., xxii.): thus a synonym for one of the senses of *Fors Clavigera*; as also at the end of Letter 87 (Vol. XXIX. p. 379). "Production!" was a rejected title for this Letter.]

² [See Letters 37, 45, 58 (pp. 19, 155, 421–422).]

“rents” are in fact taxes laid on the tenants for the advancement of the work of the Company. And all so-called rents are, in like manner, taxes laid on the labourer for the advancement of the work of his landlord. If that work be beneficial, on the whole, to the estate, and of all who live on it, the rents are on a right footing; but if they are abstracted by the landlord to his own private uses, he is merely another form of the old mediæval Knight of Evilstone,¹ living as hawk in eyrie.

3. It chanced, while I set this work on foot at Barmouth, that a paragraph was sent me out of a Carlisle paper, giving the information that all Lord Lonsdale’s tenants have received notice to quit, that the farms might be revalued. I requested my correspondent to ascertain for me the manner of the holdings on Lord Lonsdale’s estates;—his reply is the third article in our correspondence this month, and I beg to recommend it to the reader’s most earnest attention. What it says of rents, with the exception indicated in my note, is right; and cannot be more tersely or clearly expressed. What it says of ground-produce is only partially right. To discover another America at our own doors would not be any advantage to us;—nor even to make England bigger. We have no business to want England to be bigger, any more than the world to be bigger. The question is not, for *us*, how much land God ought to have given us; but to fill the land He *has* given us, with the wisest and best inhabitants we can. I could give a plan, if I chose, with great ease, for the maintenance of a greatly increased number of inhabitants, on iron scaffolding, by pulverizing our mountains, and strewing the duly pulverized and, by wise medical geology, drugged, materials, over the upper stages; carrying on our present ingenious manufactures in the dark lower stories. But the arrangement, even if it could be at once achieved, would be of no advantage to England.

¹ [For Saccone of Pietramala, see Letter 18, § 9 (Vol. XXVII. p. 311).]

4. Whereas St. George's arrangements, which are to take the hills, streams, and fields that God has made for us; to keep them as lovely, pure, and orderly as we can;* to gather their carefully cultivated fruit in due season; and if our children then multiply so that we cannot feed them, to seek other lands to cultivate in like manner,—these arrangements, I repeat, will be found very advantageous indeed, as they always have been, wheresoever even in any minor degree enforced. In some happy countries they have been so, many a long year already; and the following letter from a recent traveller in one of them, may further illustrate the description given in a *Fors* of early date, of the felicity verily and visibly to be secured by their practice.¹

SALZBURG, *July 30, 1876.*

“DEAR PROFESSOR RUSKIN,—I have long intended to write to you, but the mountain of matters I had to tell you has increased till Pelion is piled upon Ossa within my mind, and so I must confine myself to one or two points. In the Black Forest, and more especially in remote mountain valleys of Tyrol, I have found the people living more or less according to principles laid down for the Company of St. George. I have seen the rules, so much decried, and even ridiculed, in England, wrought into the whole life of the people. One may still find villages and communes where lawsuits are impossible—a headman of their own deciding all disputes; where the simplest honesty and friendliness are all but universal, and the stranger is taken in only in the better sense of the phrase; where the nearest approach to steam power is the avalanche of early summer; where there are no wheeled vehicles, and all burthens are carried on the backs of men and mules” (my dear friend, I really don't want people to do without donkey-carts, or pony-chaises; nay, I was entirely delighted at Dolgelly, the other day, to meet a four-in-hand coach—driven by the coachman's daughter); “where rich and poor must fare alike on the simple food and cheap but sound wine of the country; where the men still carve wood, and the women spin and weave, during the long hours of winter; and where the folk still take genuine delight in picturesque dress, and daily church-going, and have not reduced both to the dreary felon's uniform of English respectability. With these unconscious followers of Ruskin, and Companions of St. George, I formed deep friendships; and for

* What *can* be done, ultimately, it is not yet in human imagination to conceive. What *has* been done, by one sensible man, for the land he had under control, may be read in the fourth article of our correspondence.

¹ [See Letter 44, § 8 (p. 132).]
XXVIII.

me, if I ever revisit the wild recesses of the Oetzthal, it will almost be like going amongst my own people and to my own home. Indeed, wherever I left the beaten track of tourists, and the further I left it, so did the friendliness of my entertainers increase. It was evident they regarded me not as a mere purse-bearing animal, but as an argosy of quite a different sort—a human spirit coming from afar, from a land ‘belonging,’ as one of them conjectured, ‘to Spain,’ and laden with all kinds of new knowledge and strange ideas, of a which they would gladly have some share. And so towards the close of a dinner, or supper, the meek-eyed hostess would come and sit beside me, hoping I had enjoyed a ‘happy meal’; and after a complimentary sip from my glass, ask me all sorts of delightful and simple questions about myself, and my family, and my country. Or the landlord would come sometimes,—alas, at the very beginning of a meal,—and from huge pipe bowl, wonderfully painted with Crucifixion or Madonna, blow clouds of anything but incense smoke. But the intention of honouring and amusing me was none the less apparent.”

5. With my friend’s pleasant days among this wise and happy people, I will forthwith compare the very unpleasant day I spent myself on my journey to Barmouth, among unwise and wretched ones; one incident occurring in it being of extreme significance. I had driven from Brantwood in early morning down the valley of the Crake,¹ and took train first at the Ulverston station, settling myself in the corner of a carriage next the sea, for better prospect thereof. In the other corner was a respectable, stolid, middle-aged man reading his paper.

I had left my Coniston lake in dashing ripples under a south wind, thick with rain; but the tide lay smooth and silent along the sands; melancholy in absolute pause of motion, nor ebb nor flow distinguishable;—here and there, among the shelves of grey shore, a little ruffling of their apparent pools marked stray threadings of river-current.

At Grange, talking loud, got in two young coxcombs; who reclined themselves on the opposite cushions. One had a thin stick, with which, in a kind of St. Vitus’s dance, partly affectation of nonchalance, partly real fever produced by the intolerable idleness of his mind and body, he rapped on the elbow of his seat, poked at the button-holes of the window-strap, and switched his boots, or the air, all the

¹ [For the river Crake, see Vol. XXVI. p. 252.]

way from Grange to the last station before Carnforth,—he and his friend talking yacht and regatta, listlessly;—the St. Vitus's, meantime, dancing one expressing his opinion that “the most dangerous thing to do on these lakes was going before the wind.” The respectable man went on reading his paper, without notice of them. None of the three ever looked out of the windows at sea or shore. There was not much to look at, indeed, through the driving, and gradually closer-driven, rain,—except the drifting about of the seagulls, and their quiet dropping into the pools, their wings kept open for an instant till their breasts felt the water well; then closing their petals of white light like suddenly shut water flowers.

6. The two regatta men got out, in drenching rain, on the coverless platform at the station before Carnforth, and all the rest of us at Carnforth itself, to wait for the up train. The shed on the up-line side, even there, is small, in which a crowd of third-class passengers were packed close by the outside drip. I did not see one, out of some twentyfive or thirty persons, tidily dressed, nor one with a contented and serenely patient look. Lines of care, of mean hardship, of comfortless submission, of gnawing anxiety, or ill-temper, characterized every face.

The train came up, and my poor companions were shuffled into it speedily, in heaps. I found an empty first-class carriage for myself: wondering how long universal suffrage would allow itself to be packed away in heaps, for my convenience.

At Lancaster, a father and daughter got in; presumably commercial. Father stoutly built and firm-featured, sagacious and cool. The girl hard and common; well dressed, except that her hat was cocked too high on her hair. They both read papers all the way to Warrington. I was not myself employed much better; the incessant rain making the windows a mere wilderness of dirty dribblings; and neither Preston nor Wigan presenting anything lively to behold, I had settled myself to Mrs. Brown on Spelling Bees (an

unusually forced and poor number of Mrs. Brown, by the way¹).

7. I had to change at Warrington for Chester. The weather bettered a little, while I got a cup of tea and slice of bread in a small refreshment room; contemplating, the while, in front of me, the panels of painted glass on its swinging doors, which represented two troubadours, in broadly striped blue and yellow breeches, purple jackets, and plumed caps; with golden-hilted swords, and enormous lyres. Both had soft curled moustaches, languishing eyes, open mouths, and faultless legs. Meanwhile, lounged at the counter behind me, much bemused in beer, a perfect example of the special type of youthful blackguard now developing generally in England; more or less blackly pulpous and swollen, in all the features, and with mingled expression of intense grossness and intense impudence,—half pig, half jackdaw.

There got in with me, when the train was ready, a middle-class person of commercial-traveller aspect, who had possessed himself of a *Graphic* from the newsboy; and whom I presently forgot, in examining the country on a line new to me, which became quickly, under gleams of broken sunlight, of extreme interest. Azure green fields of deep corn; undulations of sandstone hill, with here and there a broken crag at the edge of a cutting; presently the far glittering of the Solway-like sands of Dee, and rounded waves of the Welsh hills on the southern horizon, formed a landscape more fresh and fair than I have seen for many a day, from any great line of English rail. When I looked back to my fellow-traveller, he was sprawling all his length on the cushion of the back seat, with his boots on his *Graphic*,—not to save the cushions assuredly, but in the foul modern carelessness of everything which we have “done with” for the moment;—his face clouded with

¹ [*Mrs. Brown on Spelling Bees*, by Arthur Sketchley (pseudonym of George Rose), 1876; one of a long series (mostly reprinted from *Fun*), including *Mrs. Brown at the Seaside*, *Mrs. Brown in Switzerland*, etc., etc.]

sullen thought, as of a person helplessly in difficulty, and not able to give up thinking how to avoid the unavoidable.

8. In a minute or two more I found myself plunged into the general dissolution and whirlpool of porters, passengers and crook-boned trucks, running round corners against one's legs, of the great Chester station. A simply-dressed upper-class girl of sixteen or seventeen, strictly and swiftly piloting her little sister through the populace, was the first human creature I had yet seen, on whom sight could rest without pain. The rest of the crowd was a mere dismal fermentation of the Ignominious.

The train to Ruabon was crowded, and I was obliged to get into a carriage with two cadaverous sexagenarian spinsters, who had been keeping the windows up, all but a chink, for fear a drop of rain or breath of south wind should come in, and were breathing the richest compound of products of their own indigestion. Pretending to be anxious about the construction of the train, I got the farther window down, and my body well out of it; then put it only half-way up when the train left, and kept putting my head out without my hat; so as, if possible, to impress my fellow-passengers with the imminence of a collision, which could only be averted by extreme watchfulness on my part. Then requesting, with all the politeness I could muster, to be allowed to move a box with which they had occupied the corner-seat—"that I might sit face to the air"—I got them ashamed to ask that the window might be shut up again; but they huddled away into the opposite corner to make me understand how they suffered from the draught. Presently they got out two bags of blue grapes, and ate away unanimously, availing themselves of my open window to throw out rolled-up pips and skins.

9. General change, to my extreme relief, as to their's, was again required at Ruabon, effected by a screwing backwards and forwards, for three-quarters of an hour, of carriages which one was expecting every five minutes to get into; and which were puffed and pushed away again the

moment one opened a door, with loud calls of "Stand back there." A group of half-a-dozen children, from eight to fourteen—the girls all in straw hats, with long hanging scarlet ribands—were more or less pleasant to see meanwhile; and sunshine, through the puffs of petulant and cross-purposed steam, promised a pleasant run to Llangollen.

I had only the conventional "business man with a paper" for this run; and on his leaving the carriage at Llangollen, was just closing the door, thinking to have both windows at command, when my hand was stayed by the father of a family of four children, who, with their mother and aunt, presently filled the carriage, the children fitting or scrambling in anywhere, with expansive kicks and lively struggles. They belonged to the lower middle-class; the mother an ideal of the worthy commonplace, evidently hard put to it to make both ends meet, and wholly occupied in family concerns; her face fixed in the ignoble gravity of virtuous persons to whom their own troublesome households have become monasteries. The father, slightly more conscious of external things, submitting benevolently to his domestic happiness out on its annual holiday. The children ugly, fidgety, and ill-bred, but not unintelligent,—full of questionings, "when" they were to get here, or there? how many rails there were on the line; which side the station was on, and who was to meet them. In such debate, varied by bodily contortions in every direction, they contrived to pass the half-hour which took us through the vale of Llangollen, past some of the loveliest brook and glen scenery in the world. But neither the man, the woman, nor any one of the children, looked out of the window once, the whole way.

They got out at Corwen, leaving me to myself for the run past Bala lake and down the Dolgelly valley; but more sorrowful than of late has been my wont, in the sense of my total isolation from the thoughts and ways of the present English people. For I was perfectly certain that among all the crowd of living creatures whom I had

that day seen,—scarlet ribands and all,—there was not one to whom I could have spoken a word on any subject interesting to me, which would have been intelligible to them.

10. But the first broad sum of fact, for the sake of which I have given this diary, is that among certainly not less than some seven or eight hundred people, seen by me in the course of this day, I saw not one happy face, and several hundreds of entirely miserable ones. The second broad sum of fact is, that out of the few,—not happy,—but more or less spirited and complacent faces I saw, among the lower and the mercantile classes, what life or spirit they had depended on a peculiar cock-on-a-dunghill character of impudence,¹ which meant a total inability to conceive any good or lovely thing in this world or any other: and the third sum of fact is, that in this rich England I saw only eight out of eight hundred persons gracefully dressed, and decently mannered. But the particular sign, and prophetic vision of the day, to me, was the man lying with his boots on his *Graphic*. There is a long article in the *Monetary Gazette*,² sent me this morning, on the folly of the modern theory that the nation is suffering from “over-production.”³ The writer is quite correct in his condemnation of the fallacy in question; but it has not occurred to him, nor to any other writer that I know of on such matters, to consider whether we may not possibly be suffering from over-*destruction*. If you use the given quantity of steam power and human ingenuity to produce your *Graphic* in the morning, and travel from Warrington to Chester with your boots upon it in the afternoon,⁴—Is the net result, production, my dear editor? The net result is labour with weariness A.M.,—idleness with disgust P.M.,—and nothing to eat next day. And do not think

¹ [So in all editions; but in his note for the Index, Ruskin wrote “independence.”]

² [In the issue of August 16, 1876.]

³ [For other criticisms of this “folly,” see Vol. XXVII. pp. 80, 235.]

⁴ [For a later reference to this incident, see Letter 87, § 5 (Vol. XXIX. p. 366).]

our Warrington friend other than a true type of your modern British employer of industry. The universal British public has no idea of any other use of art, or industry, than he! It reclines everlastingly with its boots on its *Graphic*. "To-morrow there will be another,—what use is there in the old?" Think of the quantity of energy used in the "production" of the daily works of the British press! The first necessity of our lives in the morning,—old rags in the evening! Or the annual works of the British naval architect? The arrow of the Lord's deliverance¹ in January, and old iron in June! The annual industry of the European soldier,—of the European swindler,—of the European orator,—will you tell me, good Mr. Editor, what it is that they produce? Will you calculate for me, how much of all that *is*, they destroy?

11. But even of what we do produce, under some colour or fancy, of service to humanity,—How much of it *is* of any service to humanity, good Mr. Editor? Here is a little bit of a note bearing on the matter, written last Christmas in a fit of uncontrollable provocation at a Christian correspondent's drawl of the popular sentiment, "living is so very expensive, you know!"

Why, of course it is, living as you do, in a saucepan full of steam, with no potatoes in it!

Here is the first economical fact I have been trying to teach, these fifteen years; and can't get it, yet, into the desperate, leathern-skinned, death-helmeted skull of this wretched England—till Jael-Atropos drive it down, through skull and all, into the ground;²—that you can't have bread without corn, nor milk without kine; and that being dragged about the country behind kettles won't grow corn on it; and speculating in stocks won't feed mutton on it; and manufacturing steel pens, and scrawling lies with them, won't clothe your backs or fill your bellies, though you

¹ [2 Kings xiii. 17.]

² [Compare Judges iv. 21. The title is here indicated: see above, p. 687.]

scrawl England as black with ink as you have strewed her black with cinders.

12. Now look here: I am writing in a friend's house in a lovely bit of pasture country, surrounding what was once a bright bit of purple and golden heath—inlaid as gorse and heather chose to divide their possession of it; and is now a dusty wilderness of unlet fashionable villas, bricks, thistles, and crockery. My friend has a good estate, and lets a large farm; but he can't have cream to his tea, and has "Dorset" butter.* If he ever gets any of these articles off his own farm, they are brought to him from London, having been carried there that they may pay toll to the railroad company, once as they go up, and again as they come down; and have two chances of helping to smash an excursion train.

13. Meantime, at the apothecary's shop in the village, I can buy, beside drugs,—cigars, and stationery; and among other stationery, the "College card," of "eighteen *useful* articles,"—namely, Bohemian glass ruler, Bohemian glass penholder, pen-box with gilt and diapered lid, pen-wiper with a gilt tin fern leaf for ornament, pencil, india-rubber, and twelve steel pens,—all stitched separately and neatly on the card; and the whole array of them to be bought for sixpence.

What times!—what civilization!—what ingenuity!—what cheapness!

Yes; but what does it mean? First, that I, who buy the card, can't get cream to my tea! And secondly, that the unhappy wretches,—Bohemian and other,—glass blowers, iron diggers, pen manufacturers, and the like,—who have made the eighteen useful articles, have sixpence to divide

* Most London theatre-goers will recollect the Butterman's pity for his son, in *Our Boys*, as he examines the remains of the breakfast in their lodgings.¹

¹ [The reference is to H. J. Byron's comedy, first produced at the Vaudeville Theatre, January 16, 1875. In Act iii., when the fathers of the two boys visit their sons' cheap lodgings in London, Perkin Middlewick, the retired butterman, recognizes the butter on the table as "Dossit, my dear sir; inferior Dossit."]

among them for their trouble! What sort of cream have *they* to their tea?

But the question of questions about it all, is—Are these eighteen articles “useful articles”? For what? Here’s a—nominal—“pencil” on our “College card.” But not a collegian, that I know of, wants to draw,—and if he did, he couldn’t draw with *this* thing, which is *not* a pencil, but some sand and coal-dust jammed in a stick. The “india-rubber” also, I perceive, is not india-rubber; but a composition for tearing up the surface of paper,—useful only to filthy blunderers; the nasty glass-handled things, which will break if I drop them, and cut the housemaid’s fingers, I shall instantly turn out of the house; the pens, for which I bought the card, will perhaps be useful to me, because I have, to my much misery, writing to do; but *you*, happier animals, who may exist without scratching either paper or your heads,—what is the use of them to *you*? (N. B.—I couldn’t write a word with one of them, after all.)

14. I must go back to my Warrington friend; for there are more lessons to be received from him. I looked at him, in one sense, not undeferentially. He was, to the extent of his experience, as good a judge of art as I. He knew what his *Graphic* was worth. Pronounced an entirely divine verdict upon it. Put it, beneficently, out of its pictorial pain,—for ever.

Do not think that it is so difficult to know good art from bad. The poorest-minded public cannot rest in its bad possessions,—wants them new, and ever new. I have given my readers, who have trusted me, four art-possession¹, which I do not fear their wishing to destroy; and it will be a long while before I wish them to get another. I have too long delayed beginning to tell them *why* they are good; and one of my Sheffield men asked Mr. Swan the other day what I had commended the Leucothea for,

¹ [See Letter 66, § 17 (p. 625).]

—“he couldn’t see anything in it.” To whom the first answer must be—Did you expect to, then? My good manufacturing friend, be assured there was no more thought of pleasing *you* when Leucothea was carved, than of pleasing—Ganymede, when Rosalind was christened.¹ Some day you will come to “like her name.”²

15. But, whether you ever come to “see anything in it” or not, be assured that this, and the Lippi, and the Titian, and the Velasquez, are, all four, alike in one quality, which you can respect, even if you do not envy. They are work of men doing their best. And whose *pride* is in doing their best and most. You modern British workmen’s pride, I find more and more, is in doing ingeniously the worst, and least, you can.

Again: they all four agree in being the work of men trained under true masters, and themselves able to be true masters to others. They belong, therefore, to what are properly called “schools” of art. Whereas your modern British workman recognizes no master; but is (as the result of his increasing intelligence, according to Mr. Mill) less and less disposed “to be guided in the way which he should go by any prestige or authority.”³ The result of which is that every British artist has to find out how to paint as he best can; and usually begins to see his way to it, by the time he is sixty.

Thirdly. They belong to schools which, orderly and obedient themselves, understood the law of order in all things. Which is the chief distinction between Art and Rudeness. And the first aim of every great painter, is

¹ [See *As You Like It*, Act iii. sc. 2:—

Jaques. Rosalind is your love’s name?

Orlando. Yes, just.

Jaques. I do not like her name.

Orlando. There was no thought of pleasing you when she was christened.

For Rosalind’s synonym of Ganymede, see Act i. sc. 3. Ruskin’s substitution of Ganymede for Jaques is obscure.]

² [*Ibid.*]

³ [*Principles of Political Economy*, book iv. ch. vii. § 2. The passage is quoted textually in Letter 12 (Vol. XXVII. p. 211).]

to express clearly his obedience to the law of Kosmos, Order, or Symmetry.* The only *perfect* work of the four I have given, the Titian, binds itself by this symmetry most severely. Absolutely straight lines of screen behind the Madonna's head,—a dark head on one side, a dark head on the other; a child on one side, a child on the other; a veil falling one way on one side, a scroll curling the other way on the other; a group of leaves in the child's right hand balanced by another in the Madonna's left; two opposed sprays of leaves on the table, and the whole clasped by a single cherry. In the Lippi, the symmetry is lateral; the Madonna fronting the group of the child central, with supporting angel on each side. In the Leucothea, the diminishing magnitudes of the attendant goddesses on the right are answered by the diminishing magnitudes from the seated goddess and the child, to the smallest figure at her knee, which clasps both the sides of the chain.

Lastly, in the Velasquez, the little pyramid of a child, with her three tassels and central brooch, and a chair on each side of her, would have been *too* symmetrical, but for the interferent light in the dog.

16. I said just now, the Titian was the only *perfect* one of the four.¹ Everything there is done with absolute rightness; and you don't see how. The hair in the Lippi is too stiff,—in the Velasquez, too slight; and one sees that it is drawn in the one, dashed in the other; but by Titian only, "painted"—you don't know how.

* The law of symmetry, however, rests on deeper foundations than that of mere order. It is here, in Greek terms, too subtle to be translated except bit by bit, as we want them.

Τίς οὖν δὴ πράξις φίλη καὶ ἀκόλουθος θεῶ; μία καὶ ἓνα λόγον ἔχουσα ἀρχαίον, ὅτι τῷ μὲν ὁμοίῳ τὸ ὁμοίον οὕτι μετρίῳ φίλον ἂν εἶη τὰ δ' ἄμετρα οὐτ' ἀλλήλοις οὐτε τοῖς ἐμμετροῖς—(Plato, *Laws*, Book IV.²).

¹ [Compare Letter 76, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 87).]

² [Book iv. 716 C. Ruskin does not return to the passage. Jowett translates it thus: "Then what sort of action is agreeable to the God, and becoming in his followers? There is an old saying, that 'like agrees with like, with measure measure,' but things which have no measure agree neither with themselves nor with the things which have measure."]

I say the Titian is the most perfect. It does not follow that it is the best. There are gifts shown in the others, and feelings, which are not in it; and of which the relative worth may be matter of question. For instance, the Lippi, as I told you before,¹ is a painting wrought in real Religion;—that is to say, in the binding of the heart in obedience to the conceived nature and laws of God.²

The Titian is wrought in what Mr. Harrison calls the Religion of Humanity:³ but ought more accurately to call, the Religion of Manity (for the English use of the word “humane” is continually making him confuse benevolence with religion),—that is to say, in the binding of the heart in obedience to the nature and laws of Man.

And, finally, the Velasquez is wrought in the still more developed Modern Religion of Dogity,⁴ or obedience of the heart to the nature and laws of Dog (the lovely little idol, you observe, dominant on velvet throne, as formerly the Madonna). Of which religion, as faithfully held by the brave British Squire, in its widest Catholic form of horse- and-dog-ity, and passionately and tenderly indulged by the devoted British matron in the sectarian limitation of Lapdogity,—there is more to be told than Velasquez taught, or than we can learn, to-day.⁵

¹ [See Letter 64, § 17 (p. 574).]

² [See above, p. 156; and below, p. 718.]

³ [See above, p. 619.]

⁴ [Compare Appendix 16, Vol. XXIX. p. 565.]

⁵ [See below, p. 718.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

17. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

I leave our accounts now wholly in the hands of Mr. Walker and Mr. Rydings,¹ reserving to myself only the usual—as I understand—and proper function of Director,—that of spending the Company's money. I have ordered, as above stated, repairs at Barmouth, which will somewhat exceed our rents, I fancy; and a mineral cabinet for the Museum at Sheffield, in which the minerals are to rest, each in its own little cell, on purple, or otherwise fittingly coloured, velvet of the best. Permission to handle and examine them at ease will be eventually given, as a moral and mineralogical prize, to the men who attain a certain proficiency in the two sciences of Mineralogy and Behaviour.

Our capital, it will be observed, is increased, by honest gift, this month, to the encouraging amount of £16, 16s.;—the iniquitous interest, of which our shareholders get none, I have pretty nearly spent in our new land purchase.

CASH ACCOUNT OF ST. GEORGE'S COMPANY

(From June 15th to Aug. 15th, 1876)

| | <i>Dr.</i> | £ | s. | d. |
|------------|-------------------------------|-----|----|----|
| 1876. | | | | |
| <i>ne</i> | 29.) Mrs. Jane Lisle | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | 30. Chas. Firth | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| <i>ig.</i> | 7. G. No. 50 | 10 | 10 | 0 |
| | 12. Miss Sargood | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| | 12. Miss Christina Allen | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| | 15. Balance due Mr. Ruskin | 14 | 14 | 5 |
| | | £31 | 10 | 5 |
| 1876. | | | | |
| <i>ne</i> | 16. / Balance due, Mr. Ruskin | 31 | 10 | 5 |
| | | £31 | 10 | 5 |

¹ [For Mr. Walker, see p. 556; and for Mr. Rydings, p. 585.]

THE UNION BANK OF LONDON (CHANCERY LANE BRANCH) IN
ACCOUNT WITH THE ST. GEORGE'S FUND

| | <i>Dr.</i> | £ | s. | d. |
|--------------|--|------|----|----|
| 1876 | | | | |
| <i>March</i> | 15. Balance | 157 | 11 | 10 |
| <i>May</i> | 3. Cash paid Mr. John Ruskin | 17 | 11 | 0 |
| | 6. Ditto, draft at Bridgwater (J. Talbot) | 9 | 19 | 3 |
| | 9. Ditto, draft at Douglas (E. Rydings) | 24 | 18 | 9 |
| <i>June</i> | 9. Ditto, Cash | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| | 13. Ditto, draft at Bridgwater (J. Talbot) | 20 | 12 | 6 |
| | Ditto, draft at Bilston (Wilkins) | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| | 17. Ditto, Cash | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>July</i> | 6. Dividend on £8000 Consols | 118 | 10 | 0 |
| | | £424 | 3 | 4 |
| 1876 | | | | |
| <i>July</i> | 28. Cheque to Mr. John Ruskin | 330 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Aug.</i> | 15. Balance | 94 | 3 | 4 |
| | | £424 | 3 | 4 |

18.(II.) Affairs of the Master.

It was not my fault, but my printers' (who deserve raps for it), that mine came before the Company's in last *Fors.** It is, I think, now time to state, in general comment on my monotonous account, that the current expenses recorded in the bills of Jackson, Kate, Downs, and David, represent for the most part sums spent for the maintenance or comfort of others; and that I could if need were, for my own part, be utterly at ease in the sunny parlour of a village inn, with no more carriage or coachman than my own limbs,—no more service than a civil traveller's proper share,—and the blessedness of freedom from responsibility from everything. To which condition, if I ever reduce myself by my extravagance (and, indeed, just after paying my good Mr. Ellis for thirteenth-century MSS.,† etc., a hundred and forty pounds, I am in treaty to-day with Mr. Quaritch for another, which he says is charged at the very lowest penny at three hundred and twenty)—it will be simply to me only occasion for the loadless traveller's song; but as it would be greatly inconvenient to other people, I don't at present intend it. Some day, indeed, perhaps I shall begin to turn a

* Note by printer:—"We did this to avoid an unseemly division of balancesheet, and of two evils thought this the least."¹

† One of these is a perfect English Bible, folio, and in beautiful state, sent to Sheffield for the first volume of our Museum library. Of course I must make St. George a present of it.²

¹ [The same justification is pleaded in this edition.]

² [For other references to this Bible, see Letters 70, §13 (p. 727), and 86, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. p. 335).]

penny by my books.¹ The bills drawn by Mr. Burgess represent now the only loss I incur on them.²

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|------|----|----|
| Stated Balance, July 15th | 617 | 11 | 3 |
| Repayment and other receipts, July and August | 406 | 6 | 5 |
| | 1023 | 17 | 8 |
| Expenses | 427 | 5 | 0 |
| Balance, August 15th | £596 | 12 | 8 |
| | £ | s. | d. |
| July 16. Jeoghegan (blue neckties) | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| " Naval School | 5 | 5 | 0 |
| 17. David | 65 | 0 | 0 |
| " Downs | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| 30. Jackson | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| " Kate | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| Aug. 1. Ferne Hill ground-rent | 23 | 0 | 0 |
| 14. Burgess | 40 | 0 | 0 |
| 15. Ellis and White | 140 | 0 | 0 |
| " Lucy Tovey (gift) | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| " Self (chiefly gone in black quartz from St. Gothard Tunnel) | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| | £427 | 5 | 0 |

19. (III.) "MY DEAR SIR,—I duly received your very kind note referring to the 'notice to quit' to Lord Lonsdale's farmers in West Cumberland, and have delayed to reply till I had made special inquiries, and find that, as a rule, these tenants have no leases, but have held their farms from year to year only.

"Formerly, I am told, some had leases; but as these expired they were not renewed, and the supposition now is that all such have run out, and that all now as yearly tenants have had the notice given them simultaneously.

"The notice is clearly given to allow a re-valuation to be made; and when the new rents are arranged, it is expected that leases will then be granted, though it is plain to be seen that all the increased prosperity that the prosperity of recent years of the coal and iron industries have caused to farming, *may thus be secured to the landholder*; and the farmers, with or without leases, but with higher rents, may be left to bear alone the ebb of the tide that is evidently on the turn; and in any or every case, the general public—the consumers of these farmers' produce—will have to pay the extra rent, whatever it may be, that Lord Lonsdale may see fit to lay upon the land.*

* As I correct this sheet, Fors places another Carlisle paper in my hand; from which I gather that Lord Lonsdale's conceptions of what is fit, and not, are probably now changed. But my correspondent is wrong in *assuming* that the public will have to pay the extra rent. Very probably they will if the farming improvements are fallacious; but if indeed produce can be raised at less expense, the increased rent *may* represent only the difference between past and present cost of production. In this sense, however, the public *do pay* Lord Lonsdale's extra rent, that their market prices, but for his Lordship, would have been lowered. As matters stand, they may be thankful if they are not raised.

¹ [On this subject, see the Introduction to Vol. XXVII. (p. lxxxv.), and also Vol. XXX. Ruskin had made considerable sums by his books when they were published by Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co. His experiment in publishing on his own account was for a while unremunerative, but ultimately yielded him far higher profits than he had ever before received.]

² [See Letter 62, § 20 (pp. 530–531).]

“I have been studying this matter—the increase of land-rents—for many years, and consider it is very much to blame for the present high prices of all land produce, and the distress amongst the poorest of our population, as well as being a great hindrance to the carrying out of my schemes that have for their object the application of more of our own labour to our own soil. In a letter to my son a few weeks ago, I ventured to say that the man who was the first to demonstrate by actual experiment that English soil could be made to double or quadruple its produce, would earn the name of a new Columbus, in that he had discovered another America at our own doors. This son, my oldest, having shown a turn for mathematics, I was induced to send to Cambridge, my hope being that a good education might fit him to solve some of the problems that are so pressing us for solution (and which I had been essaying myself in the pamphlet on ‘Labour and Capital’); and as he now, on the completion of his second term, holds the second place in his year at St. John’s, there is a hope that he may take a good place in the mathematical tripos for 1878; and yet, since we got introduced to your books—two years ago—both he and I think he had best, as soon as he completes his course, go into farming; and hence the reference to growing crops that appeared in his letter last week, and which I am most happy to find has met with your approbation.” (Yes;—and I trust with higher approbation than mine.)

20. (IV.) The following paragraphs from a county paper gladden me exceedingly, by taking from me all merit of originality in any part of the design of the operations of St. George’s Company, while they prove to the most incredulous not only the practicability, but the assured good of such operations, already, as will be seen, carried to triumphant results on a private gentleman’s estate.

The *Agricultural Gazette* gives, as one of a series of papers on “Noteworthy Agriculturists,” a sketch of Mr. William Mackenzie, Archandunie, who, acting for Mr. Matheson, has carried out so many improvements on the Ardross estates. The sketch is in the form of an autobiography, which, as the *Gazette* remarks, carries with it a most pleasant impression of directness and simplicity of character no less than of industry, energy, and success. It is accompanied by a portrait of Mr. Mackenzie, which his friends will recognize as a fair likeness. Mr. Mackenzie states that he was born in 1806, in the parish of Urquhart, Ross-shire, where his ancestors had resided for many generations. His father, who occupied a small farm, died about five years ago at the advanced age of ninety. In 1824, he (Mr. William Mackenzie) entered as an apprentice at Belmaduthy^a Gardens, and after serving there three years, removed to the nurseries of Dickson and Co., Edinburgh, where he remained only a few months. He then went to the Duke of Buccleuch’s gardens at Dalkeith, serving under Mr. Macdonald, who was in advance of his time as a practical gardener. There he assisted in carrying out the improvements which were made in the gardens and pleasure-grounds. New ranges of hothouses and a fine conservatory were erected, into which the hotwater system of heating was, it is believed, first introduced in Scotland. Next Mr. Mackenzie assisted in laying out gardens and grounds at Barcaldine, the seat of Sir Duncan Campbell, in Argyllshire; and coming in 1835 to Rosehaugh, as head-gardener, forester, and superintendent of estate works, he carried out the construction of new gardens, both at Rosehaugh and Kinlochluichart, and the remodelling of private grounds and approaches. These large gardens at Barcaldine and Rosehaugh were made with great care, *especially in selecting and preparing the soil*

^a I can’t be responsible for these Scotch names. I sent the slip of paper to my printers, and “on their eyes be it.”

for the wall and vinery borders, so that after the lapse, in the one case of thirty years, and in the other of forty years, no decay or canker has appeared among the fruit trees.^b

"In 1847 Mr. Mackenzie commenced the improvements at Ardross, the property of Alexander Matheson, Esq., M.P. for the county of Ross.

"Ardross proper is surrounded by high hills, and with trifling exceptions was in a state of nature, the whole surface of the district being covered with coarse grass and heather, stunted birches, morass or quagmire, and studded with granite boulders drifted from the hills. The place was under sheep and a few black cattle, and, owing to the coarseness of the herbage, the cattle were subject to red water. *The tenants' houses were mere hovels, without chimneys, and with little or no glass in the windows. The population of the district of Ardross proper was, in 1847, only 109 souls; and now, in 1875, the population on the same area is 600, and the number of children attending school is about 140.*

"In giving a summary of the improvements, we will begin with the pleasuregrounds.^c They extend to about 800 acres. In forming them, waggons on rails were used for two years in removing knolls, forming terraces, and filling up gullies. The banks of the river and of the burns flowing through the grounds have been planted with upwards of a hundred different varieties of the finest and hardiest ornamental trees that could be procured, from the tulip-tree to the evergreen oak, and from the native pine to the Wellingtonia. Evergreen shrubs cover about 25 acres in detached portions on the banks of the river which flows immediately beneath the castle, as well as on the banks of two romantic burns, with beautiful cascades, and in ravines. The garden is enclosed with a bricklined wall, and so boggy was the site that the foundation of the wall is more than 6 feet below the sills of some of the doors. The south side is enclosed by a terrace wall 12 feet high, and the north wall is covered with glass, which includes vineries, conservatory, and orchard houses, besides a range of pits, all heated with water. *The soil of the garden was prepared and carted a considerable distance,† as there was none to be got on the site.*

"Upwards of 5000 acres of moor ground have been planted, chiefly with Scotch fir and larch, the thinnings of which are now being shipped for pit props, the plants of the oldest woods only having been taken out of the nursery in 1847.

"The extent of arable land may be best explained by stating that there are twenty-seven farms with thrashing mills, paying rents from £50 to £800 each; and upwards of a hundred ploughs are used in cultivating the lands improved. The steam plough is also to be seen at work on some of the farms." (St. George does not, however, propose entertaining the curious spectator in this manner.) "Cattle reared on the reclaimed land have taken prizes at the Highland Society's Shows, and at all local shows; and for cereals and green crops, they will bear a favourable comparison with any part of Scotland.

"At one of the detached properties, great care had to be taken, and engineering skill used, in the drainage. Recently a low-lying part of the lands, a mile and a half long by three-quarters broad, was a mixture of the lower stratum of

^b Italics mine (throughout the article, the rest of which is in Mr. Mackenzie's own words). Have the vine proprietors of Europe yet begun to look to the Earth—not the air, as the power that fails them? (See note†.)

^c It will, I hope, not be thought an absurdity in the St. George's Company to retain on their estates "pleasure-grounds" for their *tenants*, instead of themselves. In this one respect, and in this only, their public work will differ from this admirable piece of "private enterprise."

† Supposing the labour of all navvies, gold-diggers, and bad architects, throughout the world during the last fifty years, had been spent entirely in carting soil to where it was wanted for vegetables,—my dinnerless friends, you would have found the difference, by this time!

peaty bog, marsh, and spouty sand, charged with ochrey-coloured water, impregnated with sulphur and saltpetre. Attempts made by former occupants to drain this place were fruitless, from want of depth and proper outfall. We found all the pipes in their drains completely choked by deposited ochrey matter. The whole subsoil was running sand. In order to make the drainage perfect, a main leading drain was made, 800 yards long, and in some places 8 feet deep, in which were laid 'spigot and faucet,' vitrified pipes 10 to 15 inches in diameter, jointed with cement to prevent sand from getting in, with junctions to receive pipes of smaller sizes, from 10 inches down to 6 inches. Minor drains are from 2½ to 4 feet deep, with tiles of 2 to 4 inch bore, the smaller sizes having collars on the joints. Large stone cisterns are formed to receive the silt, and ventilating shafts with iron gratings are built to give circulation of air. By these means the whole flat is drained effectually, *and where bog rushes were the prevailing produce, crops of the richest wheat now grow.* THE STUNTED HERBAGE AND WATER WERE SO POISONOUS THAT BLACK CATTLE WERE KNOWN TO HAVE TURNED GRAY IN A SEASON(?).^e

"More than fifty miles of private roads have been made, and twelve miles of walks through the pleasure-grounds. One walk is six miles continuous, along the windings of fine scenery of the Alness. Upwards of forty miles of stone dykes and eighty of wire fences have been erected, enclosing the arable land and plantations.

"For twenty years from three to four hundred men were employed; two hundred of them lived in a square of barracks for nearly eleven years, *and so orderly were they that the services of a policeman were never required.* There are still a number of men employed, but the improvements are now coming to a close.

"*All the assistance I had in the engineering and planning was that of a young man only seventeen years old when the works were begun, and we never had occasion to employ day man for a single day re-doing work.*

"I may further add that I have now the great pleasure of seeing my liberal employer reletting all his farms on the Ardross estate to the same tenants, on a second nineteen years' lease" (at increased rents, of course, my friend?) "the second leases having been renewed between two and three years before the expiry of the previous leases, and none of the farms were ever advertised.

"I cannot leave this part of the present brief sketch without noticing a feature in the important work so successfully carried out by my enlightened employer, and one which cannot fail to be a source of great satisfaction to himself. Among the first things he did was to establish a school in the district, with a most efficient teacher, and the result is that sons of the small farmers and labourers are now in respectable positions in various walks of life. They are to be found in the capacities of gardeners, artisans, and merchants, students of law, medicine, and divinity. One of them, Donald Ross, carried the Queen's prize of £100 in the University, and is now one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools. Another is the chief constable of the county. Others are in the colonies of Australia, New Zealand, and America, all doing well; *and out of hundreds working for themselves, to my knowledge not one has gone astray.*^f

"I will now advert to the improvements on the west coast estates. A mansion-house was built in the parish of Kintail, with pleasure-grounds and gardens, *the*

^eThis passage, in capitals, being wholly astounding to me, I venture to put a note of interrogation to it. I have long myself been questioning the farmers in Westmoreland about the quantity of rank bog grass they let grow. But *their* only idea of improvement is to burn the heather; this being a cheap operation, and dangerous only to their neighbours' woods. Brantwood was within an ace of becoming Brantashes last summer.

^fThe name of the—certainly *very* efficient—teacher of these young people, and the general principles of their tuition, would have been a desirable addition, St. George thinks, to the information furnished by Mr. Mackenzie.

former being chiefly reclaimed from the sea. Two islands, which were surrounded by water 11 feet deep on the shore side, are now part of the lawn, the intervening spaces having been filled up by the removal of a hill of rotten rock. This house is let to a shooting tenant. The garden is excellent for fruit, including peaches, nectarines, and apricots, which come to perfection. At Duncraig, recently, a new mansion-house has been built, with all the modern appliances. New gardens have also been made at Duncraig, the site of which was originally a narrow gully running between high ridges of rock. The gardens are upwards of two acres within the walls. The soil is composed of virgin soil and turfy loam, the whole having been carted a considerable distance. The gardens were completed in 1871, and the different kinds of fruit trees, including pears, peaches, and apricots, are now bearing.

"Duncraig is rarely to be surpassed in scenery and beauty. The view is extensive, embracing the Cuchullin hills in Skye" (etc., etc.). "There are two fresh-water lakes within the grounds, one covering thirty-seven acres, and the other about sixty acres, abounding with excellent trout and char. One of them supplies Duncraig House with water, having a fall of about 300 feet. The pipe in its course supplies the gardens; the livery stables and laundry have also connections for applying hose in cases of fire.

"The conformation of the ground is a mingling of winding valleys with high rock hills, on which grows natural wood, such as birch, oak, ash, and mountain ash. Several of the valleys have been improved and laid out under permanent pasture, making the landscape, as seen from the front of the house, with wood, rock, and winding grassy bay, very picturesque.

"There are twelve miles of private drives and walks—miles of them cut out of the solid rock, and in some places in the face of precipices 100 feet sheer up above the sea. A home-farm is in course of being improved at Achandarroch, a mile south of Duncraig House."

The *Gazette* adds: Mr. Mackenzie himself farms some of the land which he has reclaimed, and nowhere probably is there a better example of what is possible in the way of agricultural improvement under a northern climate. Excellent crops of barley, clover, wheat, and roots are grown where nothing but a marshy wilderness once existed. Here obviously are the circumstances and the experience which should guide and stimulate the efforts of estate owners and improvers in the way of the reclamation of land which is now waste and worthless.

"HOLME HEAD, CARLISLE,
"July 6th, 1875.

21. "DEAR SIR,—When I read the number of *Fors* for last April, and came to your account of the rose-leaf cutting bees,¹ I recollected that I had seen one of these bees making its fragmentary cell in a hole in a brick wall, and that I had often seen the remnants of the cut leaves; but I never had a chance of watching them when at work till last week; and thinking the result may be interesting to you, and may correct the omission you refer to at the end of § 18 in the April *Fors*, I take the liberty to send them to you.²

"I had the opportunity of seeing a great many bees—often half-a-dozen together—at work upon a solitary dog-rose in front of a house at a small watering-place (Silloth), and I observed that they cut various shapes at different times. I picked off a great many of the leaves that they had been at, and send you herewith one or two specimens. I find that these have occasionally cut through the midrib of the leaf; but this is a rare exception. I found they carried the cuttings to some adjoining sand-hills, where they had bored small holes in the sand; and in these they built their leaf cells. The pollen in these cells was not purple, but yellow,

¹ [Letter 52, § 16 (p. 305).]

² [For woodcut of one of the leaves, see Letter 61, § 8 (p. 493).]

and may have been gathered from the Hawkweed which covers the banks where their nests are made.

"Since we came home, I have found some more leaves in my own garden similarly cut. The leaves I find to be cut in this way are the rose, French bean, and young laburnum.

"Yours truly,

"W. LATTIMER."

22. (V.) Part of a letter from the lady who sent me *Helix virgata*:¹—

"We live in a poor neighbourhood, and I have come to know the history of many poor working people lately; and I want to understand so much about it, even more than I used to long to understand the mysterious life of shells and flowers. Why aren't there public baths, etc., for children as much as public schools? They want washing more than teaching. 'Hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and bodies washed in pure water,'² is continually sounding in my ears." (Well—why don't you go and wash some, then?)

"A poor woman, whose father was a West Country carrier" (very good, but what is *she*?—the gist of the story depends on that: at present it's like one of those French twisty *Bulimi*, with no beginning to it), "was so delighted the other day to find we knew the 'West Country'; and when I was saying something about our intending to take the children down in May to pick cowslips, her face gleamed with delight as she said, 'Oh, the years since I've seen a cowslip!' We used to make 'tisties' " (twisties?) "of them, and it sent a thrill of remembrance through me of my own birthday treats, and cowslip-ball days.

"But I'm so glad you like the shells.³ No, there *is* nothing about vegetables in the word *Bulimus*; but 'empty-bellied'⁴ generally is hungry, and hungry generally eats a great deal when opportunity offers. Now these 'Bulimi' eat a great deal (of *vegetables*, it happens), so I suppose some one who named them thought they must be very hungry or 'empty-bellied.' That's the way I read the story."

Well, it's very accommodating and ingenious of you to read it that way; but many snails, thrushes, blackbirds, or old gentlemen of my acquaintance who "eat a great deal," appear to me more suggestive of the epithet "full-" than "empty—"—waistcoated, shall we say?

23. (VI.) Week's Diary of a Companion of St. George:⁵—

"*First day*.—Received from Sheffield a dainty 'well-poised little hammer' and three sharp-pointed little chisels: felt quite cheerful about porphyry-cutting.⁶

"*Second day*.—Sent to the village in the morning for a slab of freestone; employed man in the afternoon to chisel a hole in it, and to fix the porphyry therein with plaster-of-Paris; drew a straight line, thinking it wiser not to begin with an asterisk; turned the point of two chisels without making the least impression on my line:—the process turned out to be skating, not engraving. Tried the third chisel, and, after diligent efforts, made a cut equal in depth to about two

¹ [See Letter 63, § 17 (p. 551).]

² [Hebrews x. 22.]

³ [See Letter 63, § 19 (p. 553).]

⁴ [The old English word *Bulimy* (morbid hunger) comes from βονλιμια or βονλιμος, and hence the scientific term, *bulimus*, "a genus of terrestrial gasteropods."]

⁵ [This "diary" was written by Mrs. Julia Firth (the translator of *Ulric*).]

⁶ [See Letter 64, § 15 (p. 573).]

grains of sand. This is the Hamite bondage of art. Felt an increasing desire that the Master should try it, and a respect for the ancient Egyptians. Bore patiently the scoffs of the Amorites.

"*Third day.*—Sent chisel to the village to be hardened. Was recommended a lead hammer. Finally, a friend went to the village and brought back with him an iron hammer and two shorter chisels. Was asked by an Amorite gardener how I was 'getting on'—unconcealed pleasure on his part to hear that I was not getting on at all. Later, accomplished a beautiful irregular star-fish, which looks *mashed out* rather than *cut*, not the least like 'sharp, cliff-edged harbours,'¹ as the Master kindly supposes. I begin to feel for the ancient Egyptians: they must have got a great deal of porphyry-dust into their eyes. I shall rise in the morning to dulled points and splintered chisels; but 'when you have cut your asterisk, you will know,' etc.,² and this is not the voice of a syren (see *Eagle's Nest*³), but of my honoured Master. . . . A terrible suspicion occurs to me that he thought no one would or could cut it! Obedience is a fine thing! How it works in the midst of difficulties, dust, and worst of all—doubt!

"*Fourth day.*—I think porphyry-cutting is delightful work: it is true that I have not done any to-day, but I have had my chisels sharpened, and two new ones have arrived from the blacksmith this evening, made out of old files. Also, I have covered my chisels with pretty blue paper, and my hammer with blue-and-white ribbon. I feel the importance of the step gained. Surely I may rest righteously after such labour. If they sing 'From Egypt lately come,' in church, I shall think it very personal.

"*Fifth day.*—My piece of porphyry is now enriched by a second star-fish, with a little more backbone in it, and two dividing lines. I worked on the lawn this morning, under the chestnut trees;—the derision of the Amorite gardener (who was mowing the grass *with a scythe*) was manifested by the remark 'Is *that-t* all!' I told him about the Egyptian tombs, but he probably thinks me mildly insane; he however suggested a flat edge instead of a point to a chisel, and I will try it.

"*Sixth day.*—Had lead hammer cast, and waited for chisel.

"*Seventh day.*—With third hammer and seventh chisel will surely charm the porphyry.

"But, no! my latest asterisk is jagged in outline instead of sharp. I wonder what attempts others have made. Any one living in or near a blacksmith's shop would have an advantage, for the chisels are always wanting hardening, or rectifying in some way; and my blue papers soon disappeared. If obedience for the sake of obedience is angelic, I must be an exalted creature. One Amorite's suggestion was, 'You would do a deal better with a softer material.' This was the voice of the tempter.

"What is gained?—(besides a lifelong affection for porphyry)—a knowledge of one more thing that I *cannot* do; an admiration (to a certain extent) of those who could do it; and a wonder as to what the Master will require next of (amongst others) his faithful and obedient disciple."

24. (VII.) Portion of valuable letter from Mr. Sillar:—

"KINGSWOOD LODGE, LEE GREEN, S.E.,

"August 7th, 1876.

"MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—It may interest your correspondent, 'A Reader of *Fors*,'⁴ and possibly yourself also, to know that interested persons have altered old John Wesley's rules to suit modern ideas.

¹ [See above, p. 605.]

² [See above, p. 573.]

³ [See *Eagle's Nest*, § 74 (Vol. XXII. p. 175).]

⁴ [See Letter 68, § 9 n. (p. 673).]

“Rules of the Methodist Societies (Tyerman’s *Life and Times of Wesley*, p. 431).

“Rule.—Leader to receive once a week what members are willing to give towards *relief of the poor*.

“Altered to ‘support of the Gospel.’

“*Going to law* forbidden, is altered to ‘*brother* going to law with *brother*.’

“Original Rule.—The giving or taking things on usury, the words have been added, ‘that is, unlawful interest.’

“Mr. Tyerman remarks, ‘the curious reader will forgive these trifles.’

“I for one do not at all feel disposed to do so.”¹

(Nor does St. George; nor has he either leave, or hope, to say, “God forgive them.”)

¹ [For an answer to this letter, see Letter 71, § 18 (p. 750).]

LETTER 70

PROPERTY TO WHOM PROPER¹

1. I HAVE been not a little pestered this month by the quantities of letters, which I can't wholly cure myself of the weakness of reading, from people who fancy that, like other political writers of the day, I print, on the most important subjects, the first thing that comes into my head; and may be made immediately to repent of what I have said, and generally to see the error of my ways, by the suggestions of their better judgment.

Letters of this sort do not surprise me if they have a Scottish postmark, the air of Edinburgh having always had a curiously exciting quality, and amazing power over weak heads; but one or two communications from modest and thoughtful English friends have seriously troubled me by the extreme simplicity of their objections to statements which, if not acceptable, I had at least hoped would have been intelligible to them.

2. I had, indeed, expected difficulty in proving to my readers the mischievousness of Usury; but I never thought to find confusion in their minds between Property itself, and its Interest. Yet I find this singular confusion at the root of the objections made by most of my cavilling correspondents: “How *are* we to live” (they say) “if, when we have saved a hundred pounds, we can't make a hundred and five of them, without any more trouble?”

Gentlemen and ladies all,—you are to live on your hundred pounds, saved; and if you want five pounds more,

¹ [“Property” and “The A B C of Property” were rejected titles for this Letter. For passages originally intended for the beginning of the Letter, see Appendix 17, Vol. XXIX. p. 570.]

you must go and work for five pounds more; just as a man who hasn't a hundred pounds must work for the first five he gets.

The following sentence, written by a man of real economical knowledge, expresses, with more than usual precision, the common mistake: "I much fear if your definition of Usury be correct, which is to the effect that it is a sin to derive money from the possession of capital, or otherwise than by our own personal work. Should we follow this proposition to its final logical conclusion, we must preach communism pure and simple, and contend that property is theft,—which God forbid."

To this correspondent I answered briefly, "Is my house not my property unless I let it for lodgings, or my wife not my property unless I prostitute her?"

3. But I believe it will be well, though I intended to enter on other matters this month, to repeat instead once more, in the shortest and strongest terms I can find, what I have now stated at least a hundred times¹ respecting the eternal nature and sanctity of "Property."

A man's "Property," the possession "proper" to him—his own, rightly so called, and no one else's on any pretence of their's—consists of,

- A, The good things,
 - B, Which he has honestly got,
 - C, And can skilfully use.
- That is the A B C of Property.

A. It must consist of good things—not bad ones. It is rightly called therefore a man's "Goods," not a man's "Bads."

If you have got a quantity of dung lodged in your drains, a quantity of fleas lodged in your bed, or a quantity of nonsense lodged in your brains,—that is not "Property," but the reverse thereof; the value to you of your drains, bed, and brains being thereby diminished, not increased.

¹ [See, for instance, Letters 5, 25, 28 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 90–95, 470, 521).]

Can you understand *that* much, my practical friend?*

B. It must be a good thing, honestly got. Nothing that you have stolen or taken by force, nor anything that your fathers stole or took by force, is your property. Nevertheless, the benignant law of Nature concerning any such holding, has always been quite manifestly that you may keep it—if you can,—so only that you acknowledge that and none other to be the condition of tenure.†

Can you understand that much more, my practical friend?

C. It must be not only something good, and not only something honestly got, but also something you can skilfully use.

For, as the old proverb, “You can’t eat your pudding and have it,” is utterly true in its bearing against Usury,—so also this reverse of it is true in confirmation of property—that you can’t “have” your pudding unless you *can* eat it. It may be composed for you of the finest plums, and paid for wholly out of your own pocket; but if you can’t stomach it—the pudding is not for *you*. Buy the finest horse on four legs, he is not “proper” to you if you can’t ride him.¹ Buy the best book between boards,—Horace, or Homer, or Dante,—and if you don’t know Latin, nor Greek, nor Christianity, the paper and boards are yours indeed, but the books—by no means.

You doubt this, my practical friend?

4. Try a child with a stick of barley-sugar;—tell him it is his, but he mustn’t eat it; his face will express to you the fallaciousness of that principle of property in an unmistakable manner. But by the time he grows as old and

* I suppose myself, in the rest of this letter, to be addressing a “business man of the nineteenth century.”

† Thus, in the earlier numbers of *Fors*, I have observed more than once,² to the present landholders of England, that they may keep their lands—if they can! Only let them understand that trial will soon be made, by the Laws of Nature, of such capacity in them.

¹ [Compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 14 (Vol. XVII. p. 154).]

² [For references to the land question in the earlier numbers of *Fors*, see Vol. XXVII. pp. 30, 191, 233, 291, 368, 379–380, 471.]

stupid as you, perhaps he will buy barley-sugar that he can't taste, to please the public.

"I've no pleasure in that picture of Holman Hunt's," said a highly practical man of business to a friend of mine the other day, "nor my wife neither, for that matter; but I always buy under good advice as to market value; and one's collection isn't complete without one."

I am very doubtful, my stupid practical friend, whether you have wit enough to understand a word more of what I have got to say this month. However, I must say it on the chance. And don't think I am talking sentiment or metaphysics to you. This is the practicallest piece of lessoning you ever had in your days, if you can but make it out;—that you can only possess wealth according to your own capacity of it. An ape can only have wealth of nuts, and a dog of bones,* an earth-worm of earth, a charnel-worm of flesh, a West-end harlot of silk and champagne, an East-end harlot of gauze and gin, a modern average fine lady of such meat and drink, dress, jewels, and furniture, as the vile tradesmen of the day can provide, being limited even in the enjoyment of these,—for the greater part of what she calls "hers," she wears or keeps, either for the pleasure of others, if she is good, or for their mortification, if she is wicked,—but assuredly not for herself. When I buy a missal, or a picture, I buy it for myself, and expect everybody to say to me, What a selfish brute you are! But when a lady walks about town with three or four yards of silk tied in a bundle behind her, she doesn't see it herself, or benefit by it herself: she carries it for the benefit of beholders. When she has put all her

* A *masterless* dog, I should have written, but wanted to keep my sentence short and down to my practical friend's capacity. For if the dog have the good fortune to find a master, he has a possession thenceforth, better than bones; and which, indeed, he will, at any moment, leave, not his meat only, but his life for.¹

¹ [Compare, above, p. 21.]

diamonds on in the evening, tell her to stay at home and enjoy them in radiant solitude; and the child, with his forbidden barley-sugar, will not look more blank. She carries her caparison either for the pleasure or for the mortification of society; and can no more enjoy its brilliancy by herself than a chandelier can enjoy having its gas lighted.

5. We must leave out of the question, for the moment,¹ the element of benevolence which may be latent in toilette;* for the main economical result of the action of the great law that we can only have wealth according to our capacity, in modern Europe at this hour, is that the greater part of its so-called wealth is composed of things suited to the capacity of harlots and their keepers,—(including in the general term harlot, or daughter of Babylon,² both the unmarried ones, and the married ones who have sold themselves for money),—as of watches, timepieces, tapestries, china, and any kind of pictures or toys good for bedrooms and boudoirs; but that, of any wealth which harlots and keepers of harlots have no mind to, Europe at present takes no cognizance whatsoever.

Now, what the difference may be in the quality of property which honest and dishonest women like is—for you, my practical friend—quite an unfathomable question; but you can at least understand that all the china, time-pieces, and lewd pictures, which form the main “property” of Paris and her imitators, are verily, in the *commercial* sense of the word, property; and would be estimated as such by any Jew in any bankruptcy court; yet the harlots don’t lend their china or timepieces, on usury, nor make an income out of their bed-*hangings*,—do they? So that you see it is perfectly possible to have property, and a very costly quantity of it, without making any profit of such capital!

* It is a very subtle and lovely one, not to be discussed hurriedly.

¹ [Ruskin did not return to the question.]

² [Psalms cxxxvii. 8; Isaiah xlvi. 1. Compare, above, p. 502.]

But the harlots have another kind of capital which you, my blind practical friend, don't call "Property"; but which I, having the use of my eyes as well as of my hands, do. They have beauty of body;—many of them, also, wit of mind. And on these two articles of property, you observe, my friend, being much *more* their own, and much more valuable things, if they knew it, than china and timepieces—on these they do make an annual income, and turn them over, as you call it, several times perhaps in the year.

Now, if beauty of body and wit of tongue can be thus made sources of income, you will rank them perhaps, even as I do, among articles of wealth.

6. But, in old usury, there was yet another kind of treasure held account of—namely, Beauty of Heart, and Wit of Brains;—or what was shortly called by the Greek usurers, Psyche—(you may have heard the word before, my practical friend; but I do not expect you to follow me further). And this Psyche, or Soul, was held by the two great old masters of economy—that is to say, by Plato¹ and David—the best property of all that a man had; except only one thing, which the soul itself must be starved without, yet which you would never guess, my practical friend, if you guessed yourself into your grave, to be an article of property at all! The Law of God, of which David says, "*My soul fainteth* for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments," or in terms which you can perhaps better understand, "The law of thy mouth is dearer unto me than thousands of gold and silver."²

But indeed the market value of this commodity has greatly fallen in these times. "Damn the Laws of God," answered a City merchant of standing to a personal friend of mine, who was advising him the other day to take a little of that capital into his business.

¹ [See below, § 11.]

² [Psalms cxix. 20, 72.]

7. Then, finally, there is just one article of property more to be catalogued, and I have done. The Lawgiver Himself, namely; the Master of masters, whom when, as human dogs, we discover, and can call our own Master, we are thenceforth ready to die for, if need be. Which Mr. Harrison and the other English gentlemen who are at present discussing, in various magazines,¹ the meaning of the word “religion”* (appearing never to have heard in the course of their education, of either the word “licitor” or “ligature”²), will find, is, was, and will be, among all educated scholars, the perfectly simple meaning of that ancient word; and that there can be no such thing, even for sentimental Mr. Harrison, as a religion of Manity, nor for the most orthodox hunting parson, as a religion of Dogity;³ nor for modern European civilization as a religion of Bitchity, without such submission of spirit to the worshipped Power as shall in the most literal sense “bind” and chain us to it for ever.

8. And now, to make all matters as clear as may be, I will put down in the manner of a Dutch auction—proceeding to the lower valuation,—the articles of property, rightly so called, which belong to any human creature.

(I.) The Master, or Father, in the old Latin phrase, “Pater Noster”; of whom David wrote,⁴ “Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I

* See “definition” quoted as satisfactory in *Anthropological Magazine*, “the belief in spiritual beings,” which would make the devil a religious person, inasmuch as he both believes—and fears.

¹ [Mr. Harrison’s article, already referred to (pp. 614, 619 *nn.*), in the *Contemporary Review* for May 1876, was prompted by one in the March number by Mark Pattison.]

² [Compare, above, pp. 156, 701, where Ruskin again discusses the meaning of the word—a subject on which various opinions were prevalent among the ancients. Cicero derived it from *relegere* (*Nat. Deorum*, ii. 28, 72); but Servius (*ad Verg.*, *Æn.*, viii. 349) from *religare*. Modern etymologists agree with Ruskin in accepting the latter derivation, assuming as the root *lig* (*to bind*), whence also *lic-tor*, *lex*, *ob-lig-atio*. Compare also *Val d’Arno*, § 230 (Vol. XXIII. p. 134).]

³ [See above, p. 701.]

⁴ [Psalms lxxiii. 25.]

desire beside Thee;” but this possession includes, in Plato’s catalogue, the attendant spirits, “θεους οντας δεσποτας, και τους τουτοις επομενους”—“the Gods, being Masters, and those next to them,”¹ specially signified in another place as “the Gods, and the Angels, and the Heroes, and the Spirits of our Home, and our Ancestors.”²

(II.) The Law or Word of God, which the Bible Society professes to furnish for eighteenpence. But which, indeed, as often heretofore stated in *Fors Clavigera*, is by no means to be had at that low figure:³ the whole long hundred-and-nineteenth Psalm⁴ being little more than one agonizing prayer for the gift of it; and a man’s life well spent if he has truly received and learned to read ever so little a part of it.

(III.) The Psyche, in its sanity, and beauty (of which, when I have finished my inventory, I will give Plato’s estimate in his own words⁵). Some curious practical results have followed from the denial of its existence by modern philosophers; for the true and divine distinction between “genera” of animals, and quite the principal “origin of species” in them, is in their Psyche.⁶ but modern naturalists, not being able to vivisect the Psyche, have on the whole resolved that animals are to be classed by their bones; and whereas, for instance, by divine distinction of Psyche, the Dog and Wolf are precisely opposite creatures in their function to the sheepfold; and, spiritually, the Dominican or Dog of the Lord,⁷ is for ever in like manner opposed to the Wolf of the Devil, modern science, finding Dog and

¹ [*Laws*, v. 727 A. In giving the passage in its context lower down (§ 11), Ruskin curiously translates it differently (and less accurately). Compare Letter 82, § 19 *n*. (Vol. XXIX. p. 241).]

² [*Laws*, iv. 717 B.]

³ [See especially Letter 65, § 1 (p. 587); and compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 17 (Vol. XVIII. p. 67).]

⁴ [To Ruskin “the most precious” of all the Psalms: see Letter 53, § 3 (p. 319). For the numerous references to it in his books, see the General Index.]

⁵ [See below, § 11.]

⁶ [Compare *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 341.]

⁷ [Compare Letter 62, § 4 (p. 514).]

Wolf indistinguishable in their Bones, declares them to be virtually one and the same animal.*

(IV.) The Body, in its sanity and beauty: strength of it being the first simple meaning of what the Greeks called virtue; and the eternity of it being the special doctrine of the form of religion professed in Christendom under the name of Christianity.

(V.) The things good and pleasing to the Psyche: as the visible things of creation,—sky, water, flowers, and the like; and the treasured-up words or feats of other Spirits.

(VI.) The things good and pleasing to the Body: summed under the two heads of Bread and Wine, brought forth by the Amorite King of Salem.¹

(VII.) The documents giving claim to the possession of these things, when not in actual possession; or “money.”

9. This catalogue will be found virtually to include all the articles of wealth which men can either possess or lend (for the fourth, fully understood, means the entire treasure of domestic and social affection); and the law of their tenure is that a man shall neither sell nor lend that which is indeed his *own*; neither his God, his conscience, his soul, his body, or his wife's; his country, his house, nor his tools. But that things which are not “his own,” but over which he has charge or authority (as of more land than he can plough, or more books than he can read), these he is bound

* See the last results of modern enlightenment on this subject in Mr. Waterhouse Hawkins's directions for the scientific representation of Dogs,² illustrated by the charming drawings of that great artist;—especially compare the learned outlines of head and paw in Plate II., and the delineation of head without Psyche in Plate III., with the ignorant efforts of Velasquez in such extremities and features in our fourth photograph.³ Perhaps Mr. Waterhouse Hawkins will have the goodness, in his next edition, to show us how Velasquez ought to have expressed the Scapholinar, Cuneiform, Pisiform, Trapezium, Trapezoid, Magnum, and Unciform bones in those miserably drawn fore-paws.

¹ [Hebrews vii. 1, 2; and compare Letter 65, § 12 (p. 598).]

² [*The Artistic Anatomy of the Dog and Deer*, by B. Waterhouse Hawkins, F.L.S., F.G.S., with Illustrations Drawn on Wood by the Author, 1876. For another reference to the book, see Letter 75, § 11 (Vol. XXIX. p. 69).]

³ [See p. 627.]

to lend or give, as he sees they may be made serviceable to others; and not for further gain to himself. Thus his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury is, under penalties, bound to make his very excellent library at Lambeth serviceable to other scholars;¹ but it is not at all permitted to his Grace, by the laws of God, to use any part of the income derived from his pretty estate on the slope of the Addington Hills, for the purchase of books, by the loan of which, in the manner of Mr. Mudie, to the ignorant inhabitants of the village of Croydon, his Grace may at once add to his income (not more than) five per cent. on the capital thus laid out in literature; and to his dignity as a Christian pastor. I know, as it happens, more about the heather than the rents of his Grace's estate at Addington;² my father and I having taken much pleasure in its bloom, and the gleaming of bluebells amongst it—when he, in broken health, sought any English ground that Scottish flowers grew on,³ and I was but a child;—so that I thought it would please him to be laid in his last rest at the feet of those brown hills.⁴ And thus, as I say, I know somewhat of their flowers, but never inquired into their rents; and perhaps, as I rather hope, the sweet wood and garden ground serve only for his Grace's entertainment—not emolument: but even if only so, in these hard times his Grace must permit me to observe that he has quite as much earthly ground and lodging as any angel of the Lord can be supposed to require; and

¹ [The library at Lambeth Palace, now housed in the great Hall, was founded by Archbishop Bancroft (1610), who left by will "to his successors the Archbishops of Canterbury, for ever, a great and famous library of bookes of divinity, and of many other sorts of learning," provided that they bound themselves to the necessary assurances for the continuance of such books to the archbishops successively; otherwise, they were to be bequeathed to the "publique library of the University of Cambridge." At the Revolution the library was moved to Cambridge, but at the Restoration it was recalled by Archbishop Juxon to Lambeth. The library, which has been added to by gifts and bequests from many archbishops, is freely open to scholars.]

² [The country estate of the Archbishops of Canterbury was sold by Archbishop Temple, with the consent of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, to Mr. F. A. English in July 1898.]

³ [Compare the sub-title to *Proserpina*: "Studies of Wayside Flowers, while the air was yet pure among the Alps, and in the Scotland and England which my Father knew."]

⁴ [For the grave of Ruskin's father, see Vol. XVII. p. lxxvii.]

is under no necessity of adding to his possessions by the practice of usury. I do not know if the Archbishop has in his library the works of Mr. Thackeray; but he probably has sometimes relieved his studies of the Christian Fathers with modern literature, and may remember a figure of an amiable and economical little school-boy who begins life by lending three halfpence, early in the week, to the boys who had outrun their income, for four halfpence at the week's end.¹ The figure of the same little boy grown into an Archbishop, and making a few pence extra on his episcopal income by the loan of his old school-books, did not, it appears, suggest itself to the lamented author; but here it is, in relief, for us:²—

“EAST SURREY HALL, MUSEUM AND LIBRARY COMPANY

(LIMITED)

Registered under the Companies Acts, 1862 and 1867.

PRESIDENT,

HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

VICE-PRESIDENTS:

GRANVILLE LEVESON GOWER, ESQ., *High Sheriff of Surrey.*

S. BIRCH, ESQ., LL.D., etc., *British Museum.*

REV. DR. MOFFAT, *late African Missionary.*

THE HIGH BAILIFF OF THE BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK.

THE MAYOR OF REIGATE.

IT is proposed to found at Croydon * an Institution to be called the *East Surrey Hall, Museum and Library*. This Institution, to be placed in the largest town of Surrey, is intended for the benefit and use of the whole county.

* Being somewhat interested in Croydon, as readers of past *Fors* know,³ and in Museums also, I give large print to these proposals.

¹ [Bob Stubbs in *The Fatal Boots*.]

² [For another reference to this prospectus, see (in a later volume of this edition) *Usury: a Reply and a Rejoinder*, § 12.]

³ [See the account of his Croydon relations in Letter 46 (pp. 170–171).]

The Hall will be adapted for public meetings of every description, and it is hoped that it will also be an ornament to the town.

In the Museum it is intended to form a collection of objects of historic, scientific, and artistic interest, particularly of such as may be found in the County of Surrey. The Museum will be free.

The Library will consist of standard works of reference, arranged in rooms suitably furnished for the purposes of reading and study. In addition to works on general literature, it is intended to place in this Library, Books, Maps, and everything of the like nature, tending to elucidate the History, Topography, etc., of the County of Surrey, and especially of the Parish of Croydon. In the Company's Memorandum of Association it is expressly stipulated that one department of this Library shall be Free.

Other parts of the building will be so arranged as to be suitable for occupation, or for letting as offices to Friendly Societies and other Public Bodies.

The Capital required to found this Institution will be raised by means of Donations and One Pound Shares.

The Donations will be applied to carrying out all or any of the above objects, according as the Donor may desire.

The Articles of Association provide that "no dividend shall be declared in any one year exceeding in amount £5 per cent. per annum upon the amount of the Capital of the Company for the time being called up. If, in any one year, the net earnings of the Company would allow of a dividend exceeding in amount the said dividend of £5 per cent. per annum being declared, the Directors shall employ the surplus earnings in improving the buildings of the Company, or in the purchase of additional stock or effects, or otherwise, for the benefit of the Company, as the Directors for the time being shall from time to time determine."

VENICE, 16th September, 1876.

10. I am weary, this morning, with vainly trying to draw the Madonna-herb clustered on the capitals of St. Mark's porch;¹ and mingling its fresh life with the marble acanthus leaves which saw Barbarossa receive the foot of the Primate of Christendom on his neck;²—wondering within myself all the while, which did not further my painting, how far the existing Primate of Canterbury, in modestly declining to set his foot upon the lion and the adder,³ was bettering the temper of the third Alexander; and wondering yet more whether the appointment—as vicedefender of the Faith for Her Majesty—of Lord Lonsdale to be curator of Lancashire souls, in the number implied by the catalogue of livings in his patronage, given in our third article of Correspondence [p. 729], gave to the Lord of the Dales of Lune more of the character of the Pope, or the Lion?

11. What may be the real value of the Lancashire souls as a property in trust, we may, perhaps, as clearly gather from the following passage of Plato as from any Christian political economist:⁴—

“And now, whosoever has been content to hear me speaking of the Gods, and of our dear ancestors, let him yet hear me in this. For next to the Gods, of all his possessions his soul is the mightiest, being the most his own.

“And the nature of it is in all things twofold; the part that is stronger and better, ruling, and the part that is weaker and worse, serving; and the part of it that rules is always to be held in honour before that that serves. I command, therefore, every man that he should rightly honour his soul, calling it sacred, next to the Gods and the higher Powers attendant on them.

“And indeed, to speak simply, none of us honours his soul rightly, but

¹ [Possibly Plate E in Vol. X. (p. 156); for it appears from the present passage that the vegetation on the capitals had remained at a much later date than is assumed in the editorial description of that plate (p. lxiv.).]

² [See Vol. IX. p. 28.]

³ [Psalms xci. 13. Ruskin's note for his intended Index explains that “Usury” is “the adder (that biteth the horse heels)”; Genesis xlix. 17.]

⁴ [*Laws*, the beginning of book v.: 726-728 A.]

thinks he does. For Honour is a divine good, nor can any evil thing bring it,^a or receive; and he who thinks to magnify his soul by any gifts to it, or sayings, or submittings, which yet do not make it better from less good, seems indeed to himself to honour it, but does so in nowise.

“For example, the boy just become man thinks himself able to judge of all things; and thinks that he honours his own soul in praising it; and eagerly commits to its doing whatsoever it chooses to do.

“But, according to what has been just said, in doing this he injures and does not honour his soul, which, second to the Gods, he is bound to honour.

“Neither when a man holds himself not guilty of his own errors, nor the cause of the most and the greatest evils that befall him;^b but holds others to be guilty of them, and himself guiltless, always;—honouring his own soul, as it seems; but far away is he from doing this, for he injures it; neither when he indulges it with delights beyond the word and the praise of the Lawgiver;^c—then he in nowise honours it, but disgraces, filling it with weaknesses and repentances; neither when he does not toil through, and endure patiently, the contraries of these pleasures, the divinely praised Pains, and Fears, and Grievances, and Mournings, but yields under them; then he does not honour it in yielding; but, in doing all these things, accomplishes his soul in dishonour; neither (even if living honourably)† when he thinks that life is wholly good, does he honour it, but shames it, then also weakly allowing his soul in the thought that all things in the invisible world are evil; and not resisting it, nor teaching it that it does not know but that, so far from being evil, the things that belong to the Gods of that world may be for us the best of all things. Neither when we esteem beauty of body more than beauty of soul, for nothing born of the Earth is more honourable than what is born of Heaven; and he who thinks so of his soul knows not that he is despising his marvellous possession: neither when one desires to obtain money in any dishonourable way, or having so obtained it, is not indignant and unhappy therefore—does he honour his soul with gifts; far otherwise: he has given away the glory and honour of it for a spangle of gold; and all the gold that is on the earth, and under the earth, is not a price for virtue.”

^a I have no doubt of the mingled active sense of τιμωζῖν in this sentence,¹ necessary by the context; while also the phrase would be a mere flat truism, if the word were used only in its ordinary passive meaning.

^b To see clearly that whatever our fates may have been, the heaviest calamity of them—and, in a sort, the only real calamity—is our own causing, is the true humility which indeed we profess with our lips, when our heart is far from it.²

^c Pleasures which the Word of God, or of the earthly Lawgiver speaking in His Name, does not allow, nor *praise*; for all right pleasures it praises, and forbids sadness as a grievous sin.

† This parenthesis is in Plato’s mind, visibly, though not in his words.

¹ [θεῖον γὰρ ἀγαθὸν ποῦ ἴμη, τὸν δὲ κακῶν οὐσεν τι

² [Matthew xv. 8.]

12. That is as much of Plato's opinions concerning the Psyche as I can write out for you to-day; in next *Fors*, I may find you some parallel ones of Carpaccio's:¹ meantime I have to correct a mistake in *Eors*, which it will be great delight to all Amorites to discover; namely, that the Princess, whom I judged to be industrious because she went on working while she talked to her father about her marriage, cannot, on this ground, be praised beyond Princesses in general; for, indeed, the little mischief, instead of working, as I thought,—while her father is leaning his cesses in general; for, indeed, the little mischief, instead of working, as I thought,—while her father is leaning his head on his hand in the greatest distress at the thought of parting with her,—is trying on her marriage ring!²

¹ [See p. 732; also Letter 72, § 7 (pp. 761–762).]

² [See Letter 20, § 19 (Vol. XXVII. p. 347).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

13. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

I am sending in gifts to the men at Sheffield, wealth of various kinds, in small instalments—but in secure forms. Five bits of opal; the market value of one, just paid to Mr. Wright, of Great Russell Street, £3;¹ a beryl, of unusual shape, ditto, £2; a group of emeralds, from the mine of Holy Faith of Bogota, and two pieces of moss gold,—market value £2, 10s.,—just paid to Mr. Tennant. Also, the first volume of the Sheffield Library; an English Bible of the thirteenth century,—market value £50,—just paid to Mr. Ellis.² I tell these prices only to secure the men's attention, because I am not sure what acceptant capacity they have for them. When once they recognize the things themselves to be wealth,—when they can see the opals, know the wonderfulness of the beryl, enjoy the loveliness of the golden fibres, read the illuminations of the Bible page,—they will not ask what the cost, nor consider what they can get for them. I don't believe they will think even of lending their Bible out on usury.

I have no subscriptions, or other progress of the Society, to announce this month.

14. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

I am a little ashamed of my accounts this time, having bought a missal worth £320 for myself, and only given one worth £50 to Sheffield. I might state several reasons, more or less excusing this selfishness; one being that the £50 Bible is entirely perfect in every leaf, but mine wants the first leaf of Genesis; and is not, therefore, with all its beauty, fit for the first volume of the library. But it is one of my present principles of action not at all to set myself up for a reformer, and it must be always one not to set up for a saint; and I must beg my severely judging readers, in the meantime, rather to look at what I have done, than at what I have left undone, of the things I ask others to do. To the St. George's Fund I have given a tenth of my living,—and much more than the tenth of the rest was before, and is still, given to the poor. And if any of the rich people, whom we all know, will do as much as this, I believe you may safely trust them to discern and do what is right with the portion they keep (if kept openly, and not Ananias-fashion³), and if you press them farther, the want of grace is more likely on your part than theirs. I have never, myself, felt so much contempt for any living creature as for a miserable Scotch woman—curiously enough of Burns' country, and of the Holy Willie breed,⁴—whom I once

¹ [O. 3. in the Sheffield Catalogue: see Vol. XXVI. p. 429. The "beryl of unusual shape" is 9 B. 1 in the Museum; the "group of emeralds," 9 E. 1; and the pieces of moss gold are in Case G.]

² [See above, Letters 69, § 18 *n.* (p. 703), 73, § 4, and 86, § 1 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 16, 335.)]

³ [Acts v.]

⁴ [That is, of course, hypocritical: see the note to "Holy Willie's Prayer" in Burns. For another reference to the poem, see Ruskin's note on line 143 of Sidney's Psalter in *Rock Honeycomb*.]

by mischance allowed to come and stay in my house; and who, asking, when I had stated some general truths of the above nature, "why I kept my own pictures;" and being answered that I kept them partly as a national property, in my charge, and partly as my tools of work,—said "she liked to see how people reasoned when their own interests were touched;"—the wretch herself evidently never in all her days having had one generous thought which could not have been smothered if it had touched "her own interest," and being therefore totally unable to conceive any such thought in others.

15. Farther, as to the price I ask for my books, and my continuing to take rent for my house property, and interest from the Bank,¹ I must request my readers still for a time to withhold their judgment;—though I willingly insert the following remonstrance addressed to my publisher on the subject by an American Quaker gentleman, whose benevolent satisfaction in sending Mr. Sillar's three shillings to St. George's Fund, had induced him farther to take this personal interest in the full carrying out of all my principles.

"33, OAK STREET, ROCHESTER, N. Y., U.S.A.,
"11th mo. 4th. 1875.

"GEORGE ALLEN.

"RESPECTED FRIEND,—I have paid to the Post Office here, to be paid to thee in London, the equivalent of three shillings, which I have been requested to forward to thee for the St. George's Fund, in payment for W. C. Sillar's pamphlets on Usury.

"Thy Friend,

"EDWARD RUSHMORE.

"P.S.—I am a constant reader of *Fors Clavigera*, and was by it put in the way to obtain W. C. Sillar's pamphlets. I have abandoned the practice of usury, and take pleasure in the thought that the payment for the pamphlets, though trifling, goes to St. George's Fund. I sincerely wish Mr. Ruskin could feel it his duty to act promptly in withdrawing his money from usury. I think it would increase tenfold the force of his teaching on the subject. Please show this to him if convenient.—E. RUSHMORE."

16. I am partly, indeed, of my correspondent's way of thinking in this matter; but I must not allow myself to be dazzled by his munificence into an undue respect for his opinion; and I beg to assure him, and one or two other religious gentlemen who have had the goodness to concern themselves about my inconsistency, that the change in my mode of life which they wish me to carry out, while it would cause no inconvenience to me, seeing that I have before now lived in perfect comfort, and could now live in what is much more to me than comfort—peace—on a couple of guineas a week; plaguing myself no more either with authorship or philanthropy, and asking only so much charity from the Bursar of Corpus as to take charge for me of the sum of £2000 sterling, and dole me out my guineas from that dead capital monthly,—the surplus, less burial expenses, to be spent in MSS. for Corpus library at my death;—while, I say, this would be an entirely satisfactory arrangement, and serenely joyful release from care, to myself, it would be an exceedingly inconvenient arrangement to a number of persons who are at present dependent on me for daily bread, and who, not sharing

¹ [See Letter 44, § 14 (p. 139), and the passages there noted.]

my views about Interest, would have no consolation in their martyrdom. For which, and sundry valid reasons besides, I once for all assure my conscientious correspondents that the time is not yet come for me to do more than I have done already, and that I shall receive without cavilling, or asking for more, the tenth part of their own fortunes for St. George, with extreme pleasure.¹

THE MASTER'S ACCOUNTS

| | £ | s. | d. |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|----|----|
| Aug. 21. Crawley (a) | 30 | 0 | 0 |
| " George Inn, Aylesbury (b) | 30 | 0 | 0 |
| 23. Circular notes (c) | 200 | 0 | 0 |
| " Downs | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| 25. Annie Brickland ² | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Sept. 1. Raffaele ³ | 10 ⁴ | 0 | 0 |
| " Bernard Quaritch | 320 | 0 | 0 |
| | £655 | 0 | 0 |
| Balance, Aug. 15th | 596 | 12 | 8 |
| Sale of £500 Bank Stock | 1279 | 8 | 0 |
| | 1876 | 0 | 8 |
| | 655 | 0 | 0 |
| Balance, Sept. 15th | £1221 | 0 | 8 |

(a) Quarterly wages.

(b) Representing some dinners to friends; also exploring drives in the neighbourhood.

(c) Fast melting away in expensive inns, the only ones in which I can be quiet. If some pious young English boys and girls, instead of setting up for clergymen and clergywomen, would set up, on their marriage, for publicans, and keep clean parlours, lavendered sheets, and honest fare, all for honest price, for poor wanderers, like myself, I doubt not their reward would be great in Heaven.⁵

17. (III.) From *Carlisle Journal*, August 18th, 1876:—

"The deceased nobleman⁶ was the third Earl of the second creation of the title. He was born on the 27th of March, 1818, and was consequently fifty-eight years of age when he died. He was educated at Westminster and Trinity College, Cambridge, taking the degree of M.A. in 1838. In 1841 he entered the Life Guards as Cornet, and retired as Captain in 1854. From 1847 to 1872 he represented West Cumberland in Parliament in the Conservative interest, and succeeded to the title of Earl of Lonsdale upon the death of his uncle in 1872. He was Lord-Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of Cumberland and Westmoreland, Hon. Colonel of the Royal Cumberland Militia, and of Cumberland Rifle Volunteers, and Lieutenant-Colonel of Westmoreland and Cumberland Yeomanry Cavalry.

"The Earl was patron of more than forty church livings in this diocese. The following, forty-three in number, were, for the most part, wholly at his disposal,

¹ [Compare Letter 80 (Vol. XXIX. p. 180).]

² [See Letter 67, § 23 (p. 661 *n.*).]

³ [Carloforti, the artist: see above, p. 583; and below, p. 769.]

⁴ [This should be £15; for the author's correction, see Letter 72, § 13 (p. 769).]

⁵ [Matthew v. 12. Compare Letter 36, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 671).]

⁶ [See above, § 10.]

and of course descend to his successor:—Aikton, Armathwaite, Bootle, Bolton, Bowness, Brigham, Buttermere, Cockermouth, Cleator, Corney, Distington, Embleton, Gosforth, Hensingham, Haile, Kirkandrews-upon-Eden, Kirkbride, Lorton, Loweswater, Morseby, Mosser, St. Bees, Threlkeld, Whicham, Whitbeck; St. James, Christ Church, St. Nicholas, and Holy Trinity, Whitehaven; Askham, Bampton, Barton, Kirkby Stephen, Lowther, Patterdale, Clifton, Ravenstonedale, Shap, Startforth (Yorkshire), Bampton Kirk, Orton, St. John's-in-the-Vale, and Crosthwaite.

“The late Lord Lonsdale never took a prominent public part in political life, although he had a seat in the House of Commons for twenty-five years; but he had won much personal popularity as a country gentleman. In agriculture he was naturally interested, the rental of his landed estates in Cumberland alone being over £40,000 a year, and in Westmoreland nearly as much more; but it was that department concerning the breeding of horses to which he turned most attention. In the development of this taste he became an active member of the Turf. His horse ‘King Lud’ won the Cesarewitch Stakes in 1873, and it was its noble owner’s ambition to win the Cumberland Plate with it the following year. An unfortunate accident, however, lost him the race, and as in the previous year the breakdown of ‘The Preacher’ had also proved a disappointment, he did not try again. But horse-racing was not the only kind of sport with which the late Earl was closely connected. In the hunting-field he was a popular M.F.H., but only the other day it was announced that failing health had compelled him to say that he could not after next season hunt the Cottesmore hounds, of which he was held the mastership for six years.

“The remains of the deceased peer were removed to Lowther Castle on Tuesday evening, and several members of the Town and Harbour Board accompanied them from Whitehaven Castle to the railway station. The hearse was followed by two mourning coaches, containing the Viscount Lowther and Colonel Williams; Mr. R. A. Robinson, Mr. Mawson, and Mr. Borthwick. After these followed servants in the employ of the late lord, the trustees, and other inhabitants.

“The funeral will probably take place to-morrow or on Monday, at the family mausoleum at Lowther.

“The flags on the public buildings of Whitehaven and Carlisle have since Tuesday been displayed half-mast high.”

The *Sportsman* contains the following memoir of the late Lord Lonsdale as a patron of the Turf:—

“When he succeeded his uncle to the title of Earl of Lonsdale, in 1872, he relinquished his parliamentary duties. It was then that the observance of a very ancient custom devolved upon him—that of giving a cup to be raced for on Burgh Marsh, the contest to be confined to horses bred in the barony. The only occasions of race meetings being held on the Marsh, or foreshores of the Solway, are when there is a new Lord-Lieutenant of Cumberland; and from having assisted at the meeting—the management of which was entrusted to Mr. Lawley—I can well remember with what zeal his lordship entered into the rural sports, and the graceful speech he made when he presented the cup to Major Browne, who won with ‘The Crow,’ a son of ‘Grand Secret,’ that had been travelling the county. It was the especial delight of Lord Lonsdale that the winner was ridden by Jem Snowden—a native of Carlisle; and he presented the jockey with a handsome whip, and complimented the Cumberland horseman on his riding. There were not less than sixty thousand people present, and within almost a stone’s-throw of the Grand Stand was the monument put up to mark the spot where died King Edward, who was on his way to Scotland when death overtook him. Lord Lonsdale acted as steward of Carlisle Races for years, and he took a great deal of interest in the meeting, as he also did in the local gathering on Harray Moor, close to Whitehaven.”

18. (IV.) I am very grateful for the following piece of letter (as for all other kindness from the Companion to whom I owe it); and really I think it is "enough to make one give up wearing Valenciennes."¹

"August 9th, 1876.

"MY DEAR MASTER,—I have tried in vain to resist those words in the August *Fors.*—'some one tell me,'² but at last resolve to say my say, trusting to your indulgence if it is in vain.

"Some years ago, a friend of mine visiting Brussels went over the Royal Lace Manufactory, and seeing a woman busily at work on a very fine, and, according to the then fashion, large, collar, went up to her, and inquired how long she had been over this one piece. The woman answered, four years; and handed the work for my friend to examine more closely, but without changing her position, or lifting her eyes from the spot on which they were fixed; and on being asked the reason of this, said it would take too long time to have again to *fix* her eyes, so she kept them to the *one* spot through all the working hours. This is quite true. But the women were working in a large, light room—I doubt the correctness of the dark cellar, and do not see the reason for it—but all who have ever done any fine work can understand the loss of time in moving the eyes. But, after all, is lace-making worse for women than the ceaseless treadle movement of the sewing-machine? Lace-making hurts eyes only; the machine injures the whole woman—so I am told."

19. (V.) A letter from a Methodist minister, though written on the 14th, only reaches me here at Venice on the 28th. It will appear in next *Fors.*³ The gist of it is contradiction of Mr. Sillar's statement that the Wesleyans altered John Wesley's rules. "The alterations, whether good or bad" (says my new correspondent), "were made by himself." I am not surprised to hear this; for had Wesley been a wise Christian, there would no more, now, have been Wesleyan than Apollosian⁴ ministers.

¹ [See Letter 68, § 27 (p. 685).]

² [*Ibid.*]

³ [See Letter 71, § 18 (p. 750).]

⁴ [See 1 Corinthians i. 12. Compare the next Letter, § 18 (p. 750).]

LETTER 71

THE FEUDAL RANKS¹

VENICE, 4th October, 1876.

1. I AM able at last to give you some of the long-promised opinions of Carpaccio on practical subjects;² not that, except ironically, I ever call them “opinions.” There are certain men who *know* the truths necessary to human life; they do not “opine” them; and nobody’s “opinions,” on any subject, are of any consequence opposed to them.³ Hesiod is one of these, Plato another, Dante another, Carpaccio is another. He speaks little, and among the inspired painters may be thought of as one of the lesser prophets; but his brief book is of extreme value.

I have been happy enough to get two of my faithful scholars to work upon it for me; and they have deciphered it nearly all—much more, at all events, than I can tell you either in this *Fors*, or in several to come.

2. His message is written in the Venetian manner, by painting the myths of the saints, in his own way.

If you will look into the introduction to the *Queen of the Air*, you will find it explained that a great myth *can* only be written in the central time of a nation’s power.⁴ This prophecy of Carpaccio’s may be thought of by you as the sweetest, *because* the truest, of all that Venice was born to utter: the painted syllabing of it is nearly the last work and word of hers in true life. She speaks it, and virtually, thereafter, dies, or begins to die.

It is written in a series of some eighteen to twenty

¹ [See below, § 9. “The Feudal System,” and “St. Ursula” were rejected titles for this Letter.]

² [See Letters 18, § 13 (Vol. XXVII. p. 314), and 70, § 12 (above, p. 726).]

³ [Compare Letter 6, §§ 2, 3 (Vol. XXVII. p. 99).]

⁴ [Lecture I., §§ 7 *seq.* (Vol. XIX. p. 301).]

pictures, chiefly representing the stories of St. Ursula, St. George, and St. Jerome.¹

The first, in thoughtful order, of these, the dream of St. Ursula, has been already partly described in *Fors* (Letter 20, § 14²). The authorities of the Venetian Academy have been kind enough to take the picture down and give it me to myself, in a quiet room, where I am making studies, which I hope will be of use in Oxford, and elsewhere.

3. But there is this to be noted before we begin; that of these three saints, whose stories Carpaccio tells, one is a quite real one, on whose penman's work we depend for our daily Bible-bread.³ Another, St. George, is a very dimly real one,—very disputable by American faith,⁴ and we owe to him, only in England, certain sentiments;—the Order of the Garter, and sundry signboards of the George and Dragon. Venice supposed herself to owe more to him; but he is nevertheless, in her mind also, a very ghostly saint,—armour and all, too light to sink a gondola.⁵

Of the third, St. Ursula, by no industry of my good scholars, and none has been refused, can I find the slightest material trace. Under scholarly investigation, she vanishes utterly into the stars and the æther,—and literally, as you will hear, and see, into moonshine, and the modern German meaning of everything,⁶—the Dawn.* Not a relic, not a

* The primary form in which the legend shows itself is a Nature myth, in which Ursula is the Bud of flowers, enclosed in its rough or hairy calyx, and her husband, Æther—the air of spring. She opens into lovely life with “eleven” thousand other flowers—their fading is their sudden martyrdom. And—says your modern philosopher—“That's all”!

¹ [For an account of these pictures, and Ruskin's work upon them, see the Introduction to Vol. XXIV. pp. lv.–lvii.]

² [Vol. XXVII. p. 343. For the subsequent re-hanging of the St. Ursula pictures, see Vol. XXIV. p. liv.]

³ [For St. Jerome's translation of the Bible (the Vulgate), see *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iii. § 40.]

⁴ [See Letter 26, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 475); Emerson on St. George.]

⁵ [The reference is apparently to the legend of the great storm in 1341, when St. George (with St. Mark and St. Nicholas) entered a boat and exorcised the demons who were bent on destroying Venice.]

⁶ [See, for instance, Lecture XI. (“Myths of the Dawn”) in Max Müller's *Lectures on the Science of Language*.]

word remains of her, as what Mr. John Stuart Mill calls “a utility embodied in a material object.”¹

The whole of her utility is Immaterial—to us in England, immaterial, of late years, in every conceivable sense. But the strange thing is that Carpaccio paints, of the substantial and indisputable saint, only three small pictures; of the disputable saint, three more important ones; but of the entirely aerial saint, a splendid series, the chief labour of his life.

The chief labour;—and chief rest, or play, it seems also: questionable in the extreme as to the temper of Faith in which it is done.

4. We will suppose, however, at first, for your better satisfaction, that in composing the pictures he no more believed there ever had been a Princess Ursula than Shakespeare, when he wrote *Midsummer Night's Dream*, believed there had been a Queen Hippolyta: and that Carpaccio had just as much faith in angels as Shakespeare in fairies—and no more. Both these artists, nevertheless, set themselves to paint, the one fairies, the other angels and saints, for popular—entertainment (say your modern sages), or popular—instruction, it may yet appear. But take it your own way; and let it be for popular amusement. This play, this picture which I am copying for you, were, both of them we will say, toys, for the English and Venetian people.

5. Well, the next question is, whether the English and Venetians, when they *could* be amused with these toys, were more foolish than now, when they can only be amused with steam merry-go-rounds.

Below St. George's land at Barmouth, large numbers of the English populace now go to bathe. Of the Venetians, beyond St. George's island, many go now to bathe on the sands of Lido. But nobody thinks of playing a play about queens and fairies, to the bathers on the Welsh beach. The modern intellectual teacher erects swings upon

¹ [See Letter 4, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 64).]

the beach. There the suspended population oscillate between sea and sky, and are amused. Similarly in Venice, no decorative painter at Lido thinks of painting pictures of St. Nicholas of the Lido, to amuse the modern Venetian. Venetian. The white-necktied orchestra plays them a “pot-pourri,” and their steamer squeaks to them, and they are amused.¹

And so sufficiently amused, that I, hearing with sudden surprise and delight the voice of native Venetian Punch last night, from an English ship, and instantly inquiring, with impatience, why I had not had the happiness of meeting him before, found that he was obliged to take refuge as a runaway, or exile, under the British Flag, being forbidden in his own Venice, for evermore—such the fiat of liberty towards the first Apostolic Vicar thereof.²

6. I am willing, however, for my own part, to take Carpaccio a step farther down in the moral scale still. Suppose that he painted this picture, not even to amuse his public—but to amuse himself!

To a great extent I *know* that this is true. I know—(you needn’t ask how, because you can’t be shown how,—but I *do* know, trust me), that he painted this picture greatly to amuse himself, and had extreme delight in the doing of it; and if he did not actually believe that the princess and angel ever were, at least he heartily wished there had been such persons, and could be.

Now this is the first step to real faith. There may never have been saints: there may be no angels,—there may be no God. Professors Huxley and Tyndall are of opinion that there is no God: they have never found one in a bottle. Well: possibly there isn’t; but, my good Sheffield friends, do you wish there was? or are you of the French Republican opinion—“If there were a God, we should have to shoot him”³ as the first great step

¹ [See Letter 42, § 5 (p. 94).]

² [Punchinello, or Policinello, was perhaps more a “native” of Rome, and in later days more at home in Naples than in Venice. Wherever he went, however, he was like his ancestor, the Maccus of the ancient Romans, a chartered libertine and a favourite instrument of audacious political satire.]

³ [Compare Letter 53, § 11 (p. 328).]

towards the “abolition of caste” proposed by our American friends?*

7. You will say, perhaps,—It is not a proper intellectual state to approach such a question in, to wish anything about it. No, assuredly not,—and I have told you so myself, many a time.¹ But it is an entirely proper state to fit you for being approached by the Spirits that you wish for, if there are such. And if there are not, it can do you no harm.

Nor, so long as you distinctly understand it to be a wish, will it warp your intellect. “Oh, if I had but Aladdin’s lamp, or Prince Houssain’s carpet!” thinks the rightly-minded child, reading its *Arabian Nights*.² But he does not take to rubbing his mother’s lamps, nor to squatting on scraps of carpet, hopefully.

Well—concerning these Arabian nights of Venice and the Catholic Church. Carpaccio thinks,—“Oh, if there had but been such a Princess as this—if there could but be! At least I can paint one, and delight myself in the image of her!”

8. Now, can you follow him so far as this? Do you really wish there were such a Princess? Do you so much as want any kind of Princess? Or are your aims fixed on the attainment of a world so constituted that there shall be no Princesses in it any more,—but only Helps in the kitchen, who shall “come upstairs to play the piano,” according to the more detailed views of the American Socialist, displayed in our correspondence?³

I believe you can scarcely so much as propose this question to yourselves, not knowing clearly what a Princess

* Correspondence, Article VI. [p. 753].

¹ [See, for instance, Letter 53, § 4 (p. 319), where Ruskin speaks of the dangers of “any warp of mind,” and *Time and Tide*, § 37 (Vol. XVII. p. 350) where he condemns the acceptance or rejection of doctrines according to one’s fancy. With the passage in the text here, compare Vol. VII. p. 260 (“to a being undesirous of it, revelation is impossible”).]

² [For other references to the “History of Aladdin; or, the Wonderful Lamp,” see Vol. XIX. p. 74; and to the “History of Prince Ahmed and the Fairy PariBanou,” see above, p. 352.]

³ [See below, pp. 753–755.]

is. For a Princess is truly one of the members of that Feudal System which, I hear on all hands, is finally ended. If it be so, it is needful that I should explain to you specifically what the Feudal System was, before you can wish for a Princess, or any other part of it, back again.

9. The Feudal System begins in the existence of a Master, or Mister; and a Mistress,—or, as you call her, Missis,—who have deputed authority over a piece of land, hereditarily theirs; and absolute authority in their own house, or home, standing on such land: authority essentially dual, and not by any means admitting two masters, or two missises, still less our American friend's calculated desirable quantity of 150, mixed. And the office of a Master implies the office of Servants; and of a Mistress, the office of Maids. These are the first Four Chemical Elements of the Feudal System.

The next members of it in order of rank are the Master of the Masters, and Mistress of the Mistresses; of whom they hold their land in fee, and who are recognized still, in a sort, as landlord and landlady, though for the most part now degenerate into mere tax-gatherers; but, in their true office, the administrators of law concerning land, and magistrates, and hearers of appeal between household and household:* their duty involving perfect acquaintance and friendship with all the households under their rule; and their dominion, therefore, not by any possibility extending over very large space of territory,—what is commonly called in England an “estate” being usually of approximately convenient space.

The next members of the Feudal System in order of rank,¹ are the Lord of the Landlords, and Lady of the Landladies; commonly called their Duke, Doge, or leader, and Duchess or Dogaressa: the authority of this fourth member of the Feudal System being to enforce law and hear appeal between Lord and Lord; and to consult with them respecting the harmonious government of their estates

* Compare Letter 58, § 22 [p. 436].

¹ [Compare Letter 89, § 6 (Vol. XXIX. p. 405).]
XXVIII.

over such extent of land as may from some speciality of character be managed by common law referring to some united interest,—as, for instance, Cumberland, by a law having reference to pastoral life, Cornwall by laws involving the inspection of mines of tin, and the like,—these provinces, or shires, having each naturally a capital city, cathedral, town hall, and municipality of merchants.

As examples of which Fourth Order* in the Feudal System, the Dukes and Dukedoms of York, Lancaster, Venice, Milan, Florence, Orleans, and Burgundy, may be remembered by you as having taken very practical part in the government, or, it may be, misgovernment, of the former world.

Then the persons of the Fifth Order, in the Feudal System, are the Duke of the Dukes, and Duchess of the Duchesses, commonly called the King and Queen, having authority and magistracy over the Dukes of the provinces, to the extent in which such provinces may be harmoniously joined in a country or kingdom, separated from other portions of the world by interests, manners, and dialect.

Then the Sixth Order in the Feudal System, much, of late years, misunderstood, and even forgotten, is that of the Commander or Imperator of the Kings; having the same authority and office of hearing appeal among the Kings of kingdoms, as they among the Dukes of provinces.

10. The systems of all human civilized governments resolve themselves finally into the balance of the Semitic and Iapetic¹ powers under the anointed Cyrus of the East and Karl of the West.†

* I. Servant. II. Master. III. Lord. IV. Duke.

† I want to write a long note on Byzantine empire,—Commanders of the Faithful,—Grand Turks,—and the “Eastern question.”² But can’t: and perhaps the reader will be thankful.

¹ [Hitherto (in the octavo editions) misprinted “Lapetic”; corrected in the small editions to Iapetic. By “the Semitic and Iapetic,” Ruskin appears to mean the spiritual and temporal powers; Iapetus, the father of Prometheus, and as such the ancestor of the human race, standing for a personification of the human, temporal, planning authority. On Cyrus, as the type of “imperial commander,” see Letter 77, § 4 (Vol. XXIX. p. 111); and compare Ruskin’s Preface (§ 23) to *The Economist of Xenophon*.]

² [For Ruskin’s remarks thereon, see Vol. XXIX. pp. 45–46.]

The practical power of the office has been necessarily lost since the Reformation; and in recent debates in an English Parliament on this subject,¹ it appeared that neither the Prime Minister of England, nor any of her Parliamentary representatives, had the slightest notion of the meaning of the word.

The reason that the power of the office has been lost since the Reformation, is that all these temporal offices are only perfected, in the Feudal System, by their relative spiritual offices. Now, though the Squire and the Rector still in England occupy their proper symmetrical position, the equally balanced authority of the Duke and Bishop has been greatly confused: that of the King and Cardinal was so even during the fully animated action of both; and all conception of that of the Emperor and Pope is of course dead in Protestant minds.

11. But there was yet, in the Feudal System, one Seventh and Final Authority, of which the imagination is like to be also lost to Protestant minds. That of the King of Kings, and Ruler of Empires; in whose ordinances and everlasting laws, and in "feudom" or faith and covenant with whom, as the Giver of Land and Bread, all these subordinate powers lived, and moved, and had their being.²

And truly if, since we cannot find this King of Kings in the most carefully digested residuum, we are sure that we cannot find Him anywhere; and if, since by no fineness of stopper we can secure His essence in a bottle, we are sure that we cannot stay Him anywhere, truly what I hear on all hands is correct; and the Feudal System, with all consequences and members thereof, is verily at an end.

12. In the meantime, however, you can now clearly understand the significance, in that system, of the word

¹ [The reference is to the numerous debates, during the session of 1876, on the Royal Titles Bill, which conferred the title "Empress of India" on the Queen.]

² [Acts xvii. 28.]

Princess, meaning a King's daughter, bred in such ways and knowledges as may fit her for dominion over nations. And thus you can enjoy, if otherwise in a humour for its enjoyment, the story of the Princess Ursula, here following,—though for the present you may be somewhat at a loss to discern the practical bearings of it; which, however, if you will note that the chief work of the Princess is to convert the savage minds of the “English,” or people of Over-sea, from the worship of their god “Malcometto,” to the “rule of St. John the Baptist,”—you may guess to be in some close connection with the proposed “practice” of St. George's Company;¹ not less, indeed, than the functions of Carpaccio's other two chiefly worshipped saints.

13. The legends of St. Ursula, which were followed by him, have been collated here at Venice, and reduced to this pleasant harmony, in true help to me, by my good scholar James Reddie Anderson.² For whose spirit thus active with us, no less than for the spirit, at rest, of the monk who preserved the story for us, I am myself well inclined to say another Pater and Ave.³

THE STORY OF ST. URSULA*

There was once a just and most Christian King of Britain, called Maurus. To him and to his wife Daria was born a little girl, the fairest creature that this earth ever saw. She came into the world wrapped in a hairy mantle, and all men wondered greatly what this might mean. Then the King gathered together his wise men to inquire of them. But they could not make known the thing to him, for only God in Heaven knew how the rough robe signified that she should follow holiness and purity all

* This Life of St. Ursula has been gathered from some of the stories concerning her which were current through Italy in the time of Carpaccio. The northern form of the legend, localized at Cologne, is neither so lovely nor so ancient.

¹ [See Letter 73, § 14 (Vol. XXIX. p. 23).]

² [Mr. Anderson's version is mainly based on a fourteenth-century “Leggenda,” contained in *Leggende del Secolo XIV.* (published by Barbèra, Florence, 1863), vol. ii. Mr. Anderson added some things from the various Latin martyrologies. Recent Italian writers on Carpaccio seem to know only the Latin sources, and not the vernacular, which, however, is much more akin to Carpaccio.]

³ [See the last lines of § 13, p. 744.]

her days, and the wisdom of St. John the Baptist. And because of the mantle, they called her "Ursula," "Little Bear."

Now Ursula grew day by day in grace and loveliness, and in such wisdom that all men marvelled. Yet should they not have marvelled, since with God all things are possible. And when she was fifteen years old she was a light of all wisdom, and a glass of all beauty, and a fountain of scripture and of sweet ways. Lovelier woman there was not alive. Her speech was so full of all delight that it seemed as though an angel of Paradise had taken human flesh. And in all the kingdom no weighty thing was done without counsel of Ursula.

So her fame was carried through the earth, and a king of England, a heathen of over-seas, hearing, was taken with the love of her. And he set all his heart on having her for wife to his son Æther, and for daughter in his home. So he sent a mighty and honourable embassy, of earls and marquesses, with goodly company of knights, and ladies, and philosophers; bidding them, with all courtesy and discretion, pray King Maurus to give Ursula in marriage to Æther. "But," he said, "if Maurus will not hear your gentle words, open to him all my heart, and tell him that I will ravage his land with fire, and slay his people, and make himself die a cruel death, and will, after, lead Ursula away with me. Give him but three days to answer, for I am wasted with desire to finish the matter, and hold Ursula in my ward."

But when the ambassadors came to King Maurus, he would not have his daughter wed a heathen; so, since prayers and gifts did not move him, they spoke out all the threats. Now the land of Britain was little, and its soldiers few, while the heathen was a mighty King and a conqueror; so Maurus, and his Queen, and his councillors, and all the people, were in sore distress.

But on the evening of the second day, Ursula went into her chamber, and shut close the doors; and before the image of the Father, who is very pitiful, prayed all night with tears, telling how she had vowed in her heart to live a holy maiden all her days, having Christ alone for spouse. But, if His will were that she should wed the son of the heathen King, she prayed that wisdom might be given her, to turn the hearts of all that people who knew not faith nor holiness; and power to comfort her father and mother, and all the people of her fatherland.

And when the clear light of dawn was in the air, she fell asleep. And the Angel of the Lord appeared to her in a dream, saying, "Ursula, your prayer is heard. At the sunrising you shall go boldly before the ambassadors of the King of Over-sea, for the God of Heaven shall give you wisdom, and teach your tongue what it should speak." When it was day, Ursula rose to bless and glorify the name of God. She put on for covering and for beauty an enwrought mantle like the starry sky, and was crowned with a coronet of gems. Then, straightway passing to her father's chamber, she told him what grace had been done to her that night, and all that now was in her heart to answer to the ambassadors of Over-sea. So, though long he would not, she persuaded her father.

Then Maurus, and his lords and councillors, and the ambassadors of the heathen King, were gathered in the Hall of Council. And when Ursula entered the place where these lords were, one said to the other,

“Who is this that comes from Paradise?” For she moved in all noble gentleness, with eyes inclined to earth, learned, and frank,¹ delightful above all women upon earth. Behind her came a hundred maidens, clothed in white silk, fair and lovely. They shone brightly as the stars, but Ursula shone as the moon and the evening star.

Now this was the answer Ursula made, which the King caused to be written, and sealed with the royal seal, and gave to the ambassadors of the King of Over-sea.

“I will take,” she said, “for spouse, Æther, the son of my lord the King of Over-sea. But I ask of my lord three graces, and with heart and soul* pray of him to grant them.

“The second grace is that three years may be given me, before the bridal, in which to go to and fro upon the sea, that I may visit the bodies of the Saints in Rome, and the blessed places of the Holy Land.

“And for the last grace, I ask that he choose ten fair maidens of his kingdom, and with each of these a thousand more, all of gentle blood, who shall come to me here, in Britain, and go with me in gladness upon the sea, following this my holy pilgrimage.”

Then spake one of the nobles of the land to Maurus, saying, “My lord the King, this your daughter is the Dove of Peace come from Paradise, the same that in the days of the Flood brought to the Ark of Noah the olive-branch of good news.” And at the answer, were the ambassadors so full of joy that they well-nigh could not speak, and with praise and triumph they went their way, and told their master all the sweet answer of Ursula.

Then my lord the King said, “Praised and blessed be the name of our God Malcometto, who has given my soul for comfort that which it desired. Truly there is not a franker lady under the wheel of the sun; and by the body of my mother I swear there is nothing she can ask that I will not freely give. First of the maidens she desires shall be my daughter Florence.” Then all his lords rose, man by man, and gladly named, each, his child.

So the will of Ursula was done; and that King, and all his folk, were baptized into the Holy Faith. And Æther, with the English maidens, in number above ten thousand, came to the land of Britain.

Then Ursula chose her own four sisters, Habila, and Julia, and Victoria, and Aurea, and a thousand daughters of her people, with certain holy bishops, and great lords, and grave councillors, and an abbot of the order of St. Benedict, men full of all wisdom, and friends of God.

So all that company set sail in eleven ships, and passing this way and that upon the sea, rejoiced in it, and in this their maiden pilgrimage. And those who dwelt by the shores of the sea came forth in multitudes

* Molto incarnalmente.

¹ [For a reference to this “lovely description of St. Ursula,” see Letter 77, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 115).]

to gaze upon them as they passed, and to each man it appeared a delightful vision. For the ships sailed in fair order, side by side, with sound of sweet psalms and murmur of the waters. And the maidens were clad, some in scarlet and some in pure samite, some in rich silk of Damascus, some wore crowns, others garlands of flowers. Upon the shoulder of each was the visible cross, in the hands of each a pilgrim's staff, by their sides were pilgrims' scrips, and each ship's company sailed under the gonfalon of the Holy Cross. Ursula in the midst was like a ray of sunlight, and the Angel of the Lord was ever with them for guide.

So in the holy time of Lent they came to Rome. And when my Lord the Pope came forth, under the Castle of St. Angelo, with great state, to greet them, seeing their blessed assembly, he put off the mantle of Peter, and with many bishops, priests, and brothers, and certain cardinals, set himself to go with them on their blessed pilgrimage.

At length they came to the land of Slavonia, whose ruler was friend and liegeman to the Soldan of Babylon. Then the Lord of the Saracens sent straightway to the Soldan, telling what a mighty company had come to his land, and how they were Christian folk. And the Soldan gathered all his men of war, and with great rage the host of the heathen made against the company of Ursula.

And when they were nigh, the Soldan cried and said, "What folk are ye?" And Ursula spake in answer, "We are Christian folk: our feet are turned to the blessed tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the saving of our souls, and that we may win grace to pass into eternal life, in the blessed Paradise." And the Soldan answered, "Either deny your God, or I will slay you all with the sword. So shall ye die a dolorous death, and see your land no more." And Ursula answered, "Even so we desire to be sure witnesses for the name of God, declaring and preaching the glory of His name; because He has made heaven and earth and the sea by His Word; and afterward all living things; and afterward has willed, Himself, to die, for our salvation and glory. And who follows Him shall go to rejoice in *His* Fatherland and in His Kingdom."

Then she turned to her people: "My sisters and my brothers, in this place God has given us great grace. Embrace and make it sure, for our death in this place will be life perpetual, and joy, and sweetness never-ending. And there, above, we shall be with the Majesty and the angels of Paradise." Then she called her spouse to comfort and teach him. And he answered her with these words, "To me it appears three thousand years that death is a-coming, so much have I already tasted of the sweetness of Paradise."

Then the Soldan gave commandment that they should all be slain with the sword. And so was it done.

Yet when he saw Ursula standing, in the midst of all that slaughter, like the fairest stalk of corn in harvest, and how she was exceeding lovely, beyond the tongues of this earth to tell, he would have saved her alive, and taken her for wife. But when she would not, and rebuked him, he was moved with anger. Now there was a bow in his hand, and he set an arrow on the string, and drew it with all his strength, and it pierced the heart of the glorious maiden. So she went to God.

And one maiden only, whose name was Corbula, through fear hid herself in the ship. But God, who had chosen all that company, gave her heart, and with the dawn of the next day she came forth willingly, and received the martyr's crown.

Thus all were slain, and all are gone to Paradise, and sing the glad and sweet songs of Paradise.

Whosoever reads this holy history, let him not think it a great thing to say an Our Father, and a Hail Mary, for the soul of him who has written it.

14. Thus far the old myth. You shall hear now in what manner such a myth is re-written by a great man, born in the days of a nation's strength.

Carpaccio begins his story with what the myth calls a dream. But he wishes to tell you that it was no dream,—but a vision;—that a real angel came, and was seen by Ursula's soul, when her mortal eyes were closed.

“The Angel of the Lord,” says the legend. What!—thinks Carpaccio;—to this little maid of fifteen, the angel that came to Moses and Joshua? Not so, but her own guardian angel.

Guardian, and to tell her that God will guide her heart to-morrow, and put His own answer on her lips, concerning her marriage. Shall not such angel be crowned with light, and strew her chamber with lilies?

There is no glory round his head; there is no gold on his robes; they are of subdued purple and grey. His wings are colourless—his face calm, but sorrowful,—wholly in shade. In his right hand he bears the martyr's palm; in his left, the fillet borne by the Greek angels of victory, and, together with it, gathers up, knotted in his hand, the folds of shroud* with which the Etrurians veil the tomb.

* I could not see this symbol at the height at which the picture hung from the ground, when I described it in 1872.¹ The folds of the drapery in the *hand* are all but invisible, even when the picture is seen close; and so neutral in their grey-green colour that they pass imperceptibly into violet, as the faint green of evening sky fades into its purple. But the folds are continued under the wrist in the alternate waves which the reader

¹ [See Letter 20, §§ 14–16 (Vol. XXVII. p. 344).]

He comes to her, “in the clear light of morning”; the Angel of Death.

You see it is written in the legend that she had shut close the doors of her chamber.

They have opened as the angel enters,—not one only, but all in the room,—all in the house. He enters by one at the foot of her bed; but beyond it is another—open into the passage; out of that another into some luminous hall or street. All the window-shutters are wide open; they are made dark that you may notice them,—nay, all the press doors are open! No treasure bars shall hold, where *this* angel enters.

Carpaccio has been intent to mark that he comes in the light of dawn. The blue-green sky glows between the dark leaves of the olive and dianthus in the open window.

may see on the Etruscan tomb in the first room of the British Museum,¹ with a sculpturesque severity which I could not then understand, and could only account for by supposing that Carpaccio had meant the Princess to “dream out the angel’s dress so particularly”! I mistook the fillet of victory also for a scroll; and could not make out the flowers in the window. They are pinks, the favourite ones in Italian windows to this day, and having a particular relation to St. Ursula in the way they rend their calyx; and I believe also in their peculiar relation to the grasses (of which more in *Proserpina*²). St. Ursula is not meant, herself, to recognize the angel. He enters under the door over which she has put her little statue of Venus; and through that door the room is filled with light, so that it will not seem to her strange that his own form, as he enters, should be in shade; and she cannot see his dark wings. On the tassel of her pillow (Etrurian also³) is written “Infantia”; and above her head, the carving of the bed ends in a spiral flame, typical of the finally ascending Spirit. She lies on her bier, in the last picture but one, exactly as here on her bed; only the coverlid is there changed from scarlet to pale violet. See notes on the meaning of these colours in third *Deucalion*.⁴

¹ [Compare above, p. 626. But Ruskin may possibly be alluding here to one or other of the Etruscan sarcophagi (now placed in the annexe to the “GræcoRoman Basement”), some of which were, at the time when he wrote, in the “first room of the British Museum” (the “Gallery of Roman Busts”).]

² [Ruskin, however, did not include any discussion of the Grasses in *Proserpina*, as published. He had begun to write upon the various methods in which flowers rend their calyx: see Note 7 (Vol. XXV. p. 548).]

³ [Compare above, p. 626.]

⁴ [“Third *Deucalion*” means the third of the Parts in which the book was originally issued: vol. i. ch. vii. (“The Iris of the Earth”); scarlet, § 32 (iv.); violet, § 32 (ix.), Vol. XXVI. pp. 184, 187.]

But its light is low compared to that which enters *behind* the angel, falling full on Ursula's face, in divine rest.

In the last picture but one, of this story, he has painted her lying in the rest which the angel came to bring: and in the last, is her rising in the eternal Morning.¹

For this is the first lesson which Carpaccio wrote in his Venetian words for the creatures of this restless world,—that Death is better than *their* life; and that not bride-groom rejoices over bride² as they rejoice who marry not, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God, in Heaven.³

¹ [See Plates LIII. in Vol. XXIV. (pp. 176,178).]

² [Isaiah lxii. 5.]

³ [Matthew xxii. 30.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

15. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

Venice, October 20th.—I have sent for press, to-day, the fourth number of *Deucalion*,¹ in which will be found a statement of the system on which I begin the arrangement of the Sheffield Museum.

There are no new subscriptions to announce. Another donation, of fifty pounds, by Mrs. Talbot, makes me sadly ashamed of the apathy of all my older friends. I believe, in a little while now, it will be well for me to throw them all aside, and refuse to know any one but my own Companions, and the workmen who are willing to listen to me. I have spoken enough to the upper classes, and they mock me;—in the seventh year of *Fors*² I will speak more clearly than hitherto,—but not to *them*.

Meantime, my Sheffield friends must not think I am neglecting them, because I am at work here in Venice, instead of among them. They will know in a little while the use of my work here. The following portions of letter from the Curator of our Museum, with the piece of biography in it, which I venture to print, in haste, assuming permission, will be of good service to good workers everywhere.

“H. SWAN to J. RUSKIN.

“WALKLEY, SHEFFIELD, *October 18, 1876.*

“DEAR MASTER,—The interest in the Museum seems still increasing. Yesterday (Sunday), in addition to our usual allotment of casual calls at the Museum, we had a visit from a party of working men; two or three of them from Barnsley, but the most Sheffielders, among which last were several of those who came to meet thee on the last occasion. Their object was a double one; first, to see what progress we were making with the Museum; and, secondly, to discuss the subject of Usury, the unlawfulness of which, in its ordinary aspects, being (unlike the land question) a perfectly new notion to all except one or two. The objection generally takes this shape: ‘If I have worked hard to earn twenty pounds, and it is an advantage to another to have the use of that twenty pounds, why should he get that advantage without paying me for it?’ To which my reply has been, There may, or may not, be reasons why the lender should be placed in a better position for using his powers of body or mind; but the special question for you, with your twenty pounds, now is, not what right has he to use the money without payment—(he has every right, if you give him leave; and none, if you don’t);—the question *you* have to propose to yourself is this, ‘Why should I, as a man and a Christian, after having been paid for what I have earned, expect or desire to make an agreement by which I may get, from the labour of others, money I have not earned?’ Suppose, too, bail for a hundred pounds to be required for a prisoner

¹ [Chaps. viii.–x.:see Vol. XXVI. pp. 197 *seq.*]

² [*i.e.*, Letters 73–84.]

in whose innocence you believed, would you say, 'I will be bail for the hundred pounds, but I shall expect five pounds from him for the advantage he will thereby get'? No; the just man would weigh well whether it be right or no to undertake the bail; but, having determined, he would shrink from receiving the unearned money, as I believe the first unwarped instinct of a good man does still in the case of a loan.

"Although, as I have said, all question as to the right of what is called a moderate rate of interest was new to most of our visitors, yet I found a greater degree of openness to the truth than might have been expected. One of the most interesting parts of the discussion was the relation by one of the party of his own experiences, in years past, as a money-lender. 'In the place where I used to work at that time,' said he, 'there was a very many of a good sort of fellows who were not so careful of their money as I was, and they used often to run out of cash before the time came for them to take more. Well, knowing I was one that always had a bit by me, they used to come to me to borrow a bit to carry them through to pay-day. When they paid me, some would ask if I wanted aught for the use of it. But I only lent to pleasure them, and I always said, No, I wanted nought. One day, however, Jack——came to me, and said, "Now, my lad, dost want to get more brass for thyself, and lay by money? because I can put thee in the way of doing it." I said that was a great object for me. "Well," said he, "thou must do as I tell thee. I know thou'rt often lending thy brass to them as want a lift. Now thou must make them pay for using thy money, and if thou works as I tell thee, it'll grow and grow. And by-and-by they'll be paying and paying for the use of their own money over and over again." Well, I thought it would be a good thing for me to have the bits of cash come in and in, to help along with what I earned myself. So I told each of the men, as they came, that I couldn't go on lending for nothing, and they must pay me a bit more when they got their pay. And so they did. After a time, Jack——came again, and said, "Well, how'rt getting on?" So I told him what I was doing, and that seemed all right. After a time, he came again, and said, "Now thou finds what I said was right. The men can spare thee a bit for thy money, and it makes things a deal more comfortable for thyself. Now I can show thee how a hundred of thy money shall bring another hundred in." "Nay," said I, "thou canst not do that. That can't be done." "Nay, but it can," said Jack. And he told me how to manage; and that when I hadn't the cash, he would find it, and we'd halve the profits. [Say a man wants to borrow twenty pounds, and is to pay back at three shillings a week. The interest is first deducted for the whole time, so that if he agrees to pay only five per cent. he will receive but nineteen pounds; then the interest is more than five per cent. On the money actually out during the very first week, while the rate gradually rises as the weekly payments come,—slowly at first, but at the last more and more rapidly, till, during the last month, the money-lender is obtaining two hundred per cent. for the amount (now, however, very small) still unpaid.]

"Well, it grew and grew. Hundreds and hundreds I paid and received every week (and we found that among the poorest little shops it worked the best for us). At last it took such hold of me that I became a regular bloodsucker—a bloodsucker of poor folk, and nothing else. I was always reckoning up, night and day, how to get more and more, till I got so thin and ill I had to go to the doctor. It was old Dr. Sike, and he said, "Young man, you must give up your present way of work and life, or I can do nothing for you. You'll get worse and worse."

"So I thought and thought, and at last I made up my mind to give it all up, though I was then getting rich. But there was no blessing on what I'd got, and I lost it every farthing, and had to begin again as poor as I was when I first left the workhouse to learn a trade. And now, I've prospered and prospered in my little way till I've no cause to worry anyways about money, and I've a few men at work with me in my shop.

"Still, for all that, I don't see why I shouldn't have interest on the little capital I've saved up *honestly*; or how am I to live in my old age?"

"Another workman suggested, 'Wouldn't he be able to live on his capital?'

'Aye, but I want to leave that to somebody else,' was the answer. [Yes, good friend, and the same excuse might be made for any form of theft.—J. R.]

"I will merely add, that if there were enforced and public account of the amount of moneys advanced on loan, and if the true conditions and workings of those loans could be shown, there would be revealed such an amount of cruel stress upon the foolish, weak, and poor of the small tradesmen (a class far more numerous than are needed) as would render it very intelligible why so many faces are seamed with lines of suffering and anxiety. I think it possible that the fungus growth and increasing mischief of these loan establishments may reach such a pitch as to necessitate legislative interference, as has been the case with gambling. But there will never fail modes of evading the law, and the sufficient cure will be found only when men shall consider it a dishonour to have it imputed to them that *any* portion of their income is derived from usury."

16. THE UNION BANK OF LONDON (CHANCERY LANE BRANCH)
IN ACCOUNT WITH THE ST. GEORGE'S FUND

| 1876 | | <i>Dr.</i> | £ | s. | d. |
|------------|-----|--|-------|----|----|
| <i>Aug</i> | 16. | To Balance | 94 | 3 | 4 |
| <i>Oct</i> | 12. | " Draft at Bridgwater (per Mr. Ruskin) | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| | 24. | " (J.P. Stilwell) | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | <hr/> | | |
| | | | £169 | 3 | 4 |
| | | <i>Cr.</i> | £ | s. | d. |
| <i>Oct</i> | 12. | By Postage of Pass Book | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| | 25. | Balance | 169 | 3 | 1 |
| | | | <hr/> | | |
| | | | £169 | 3 | 4 |

17. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

| | | | £ | s. | d. |
|-------------|-----|-------------------------|-------|----|----------|
| <i>Sept</i> | 15. | Balance (a) | | | 1221 0 8 |
| | 20. | Kate | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | 26. | —at Venice, Antonio (b) | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Oct</i> | 1. | Secretary | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| | 3. | Downs | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| | 5. | Gift (c) | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| | 10. | Loan | 200 | 0 | 0 |
| " | | Jackson | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | <hr/> | | |
| | | | 495 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Oct</i> | 15. | Balance | £726 | 0 | 3 |

(a) By report from Bank; but the "repayments" named in it should not have been added to the cash account, being on separate account with the Company. I will make all clear in December.¹

(b) For Signor Caldara (Venetian botany²).

(c) Nominally loan, to poor relation, but I do not suppose he will ever be able to pay me. The following £200 I do not doubt receiving again.

¹ [Letter 72: see p. 769.]

² [See above, p. 583; and compare Vol. XXIX. p. 31 *n.*]

18. (III.) I print the following letter with little comment, because I have no wish to discuss the question of the uses of Dissent with a Dissenting Minister; nor do I choose at present to enter on the subject at all. St. George, taking cognizance only of the postscript, thanks the Dissenting Minister for his sympathy; but encourages his own servant to persist in believing that the "more excellent way"¹ (of Charity), which St. Paul showed, in the 13th of Corinthians, is quite as truly followed in devoting the funds at his said servant's disposal to the relief of the poor, as in the maintenance of Ruskinian Preachers for the dissemination of Ruskinian opinions, in a Ruskinian Society, with the especial object of saving Mr. Ruskin's and the Society's souls.

"September 14th, 1876.

"DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—Mr. Sillar's 'valuable letter' in last month's *Fors*,² (a) would have been more valuable if he had understood what he was writing about. Mr. Tyerman (in his *Life and Times of Wesley*, p. 431) gives the trifling differences between the present Rules of the Methodist Societies and the first edition issued in 1743. Instead of 'interested persons having altered old John Wesley's rules' (he was forty years old when he drew them up) 'to suit *modern ideas*'—the alterations, whether good or bad, were made by himself.

"The first contributions in the 'Classes' were made for the express purpose of discharging a debt on a preaching house. Then they were devoted 'to the relief of the poor,' there being at the time no preachers dependent on the Society for support. After 1743, when circuits had been formed and preachers stationed in certain localities, their maintenance gradually became the principal charge upon the Society's funds. (See Smith's *History of Methodism*, vol. i., p. 669.) In 1771 Wesley says expressly that the contributions are applied 'towards the expenses of the Society.' (b) (*Journal*, vol. iii., p. 205.) Certainly Methodism, thus supported, has done far more to benefit the poor and raise them, than any amount of mere almsgiving could have done. Methodist preachers have at least one sign of being in the apostolical succession. They can say, with Paul, 'as poor, yet making many rich.' (c)

" 'Going to law' was altered by Mr. Wesley to 'brother going to law with brother,' in order, no doubt, to bring the rule into verbal agreement with 1 Cor. vi. 6. (d)

" 'Usury' was defined by Mr. Wesley to be 'unlawful interest,' (e) in accordance with the ordinary notions of his day. He was greatly in advance of his age, yet he could scarcely have been expected to anticipate the definition of Usury given, as far as I know, (f) for the first time in *Fors* for August, 1876 [Letter 68]. I don't see why we Methodists should be charged with breaking the laws of Moses, David, and Christ (*Fors*, Letter 68, § 9 n.), if we consider 'old John Wesley's definition to be as good as the 'modern idea.'

"Of course St. George, for whom I have the greatest respect and admiration, will correct Mr. Sillar's mistake.

"I am, Sir,

"ANOTHER READER OF 'FORS' (which I wish you would
sell a little cheaper), and

"A METHODIST PREACHER.

"P.S.—Why should you not copy old John Wesley, and establish your St. George's Company on a legal basis? In 1784 he drew up a Deed of Declaration, which was duly enrolled in Chancery. It stated the purposes for which his Society was formed, and the mode in which it was to be governed. A Deed of Trust was

¹ [1 Corinthians xii. 31.]

² [Letter 69, § 24 (p. 710).]

afterwards drawn up for *one* of our chapels, reciting at length this Deed of Declaration, and all the purposes for which the property was to be used. All our other property is settled on the same trusts. A single line in each subsequent chapel deed—stating that all the trusts are to be the same as those of the ‘Model Deed,’ as we call the first one—obviates the necessity and expense of *repeating* a very long legal document.

“Success to St. George,—yet there is, I think, ‘a more excellent way.’ ”

19. *a.* Mr. Sillar’s letter did not appear in last month’s *Fors*. A small portion of it appeared, in which I regret that Mr. Sillar so far misunderstood John Wesley as to imagine him incapable of altering his own rules so as to make them useless.

b. I wish the Wesleyans were the only Society whose contributions are applied to no better purpose.

c. I envy my correspondent’s complacency in his own and his Society’s munificence, too sorrowfully to endeavour to dispel it.

d. The “*verbal*” agreement is indeed secured by the alteration. But as St. Paul, by a “brother,” meant any Christian, I shall be glad to learn from my correspondent whether the Wesleyans understand their rule in that significance.

e. Many thanks to Mr. Wesley. Doubtless his disciples know what rate of interest is lawful, and what not; and also by what law it was made so; and always pause with pious accuracy at the decimal point whereat the excellence of an investment begins to make it criminal. St. George will be grateful to their representative for information on these—not unimportant—particulars.

f. How far that *is*, my correspondent’s duly dissenting scorn of the wisdom of the Greeks, and legality of the Jews, has doubtless prevented his thinking it necessary to discover. I must not waste the time of other readers in assisting his elementary investigations; but have merely to point out to him that definitions either of theft, adultery, usury, or murder, have only become *necessary* in modern times: and that Methodists, and any other persons, are charged by me with breaking the law of Moses, David, and Christ, in so far only as they do accept Mr. John Wesley’s, or any other person’s, definition instead of *their* utterly unquestionable meaning.¹ (Would T.S., of North Tyne, reprint his letters for me from the Sunderland paper, to be sent out with December *Fors*?²)

20. (IV.) I reprint the following paragraph chiefly as an example of our ineffable British absurdity. It is perfectly right to compel fathers to send their children to school; but, once sent, it is the schoolmaster’s business to keep hold of them. In St. George’s schools, it would have been the little runaway gentleman who would have got sent to prison; and kept, sotto piombi,³ on bread and water, until he could be trusted with more liberty. The fate of the father, under the present application of British

¹ [For reply of “A Methodist Preacher” to Ruskin’s criticism, see Letter 73, § 18 (Vol. XXIX. p. 28).]

² [The letters were reprinted in a pamphlet entitled *John Wesley and Usury, Notes of a Discussion by T. S. and others in the “Newcastle Weekly Chronicle,” July and August, 1876: Sunderland 1877.*]

³ [See *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X.p. 342) and *ibid.*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. p. 185).]

law, leaves the problem, it seems to me, still insoluble but in that manner. But I should like to know more of the previous history of parent and child.

“The story of George Widowson, aged fifty-seven, told at the inquest held on his remains at Mile End Old Town on Wednesday, is worth recording. Widowson was, as appears by the evidence of his daughter, a sober, hard-working man until he was sent to prison for three days in last December in default of paying a fine for not sending his son, a boy eleven years of age, to school. The deceased, as several witnesses deposed, constantly endeavoured to make the child go to school, and had frequently taken him there himself; but it was all in vain. Young Widowson when taken to school invariably ran away, the result being that his father was driven to distraction. His imprisonment in December had preyed on his mind, and he took to drinking. He frequently threatened to destroy himself rather than be imprisoned again. Hearing that another summons was about to be issued against him, he broke up his home, and on the night of the 30th ultimo solved the educational problem by throwing himself into the Regent’s Canal. Fear of being again sent to prison by the School Board was, his daughter believed, the cause of his committing this act. The jury returned a verdict in accordance with this opinion; and although George Widowson was wrong to escape from the clutches of the friends of humanity by putting an end to his life, those who blame—me him should remember that imprisonment to a *bonâ fide* working man of irreproachable character, is simply torture. He loses all that in his own eyes makes life worth preservation.”—*Pall Mall Gazette*, July 7th, 1876.

21. (V.) The next extract contains some wholesome comments on our more advanced system of modern education.

“INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE.—At a meeting of the Indian section of the Society of Arts, under the presidency of Mr. Andrew Cassels, a paper on ‘Competition and its Effects upon Education’ was read by Dr. George Birdwood. In the course of his remarks, he commented at length upon the India Office despatch of Feb. 24, regarding ‘the selection and training of candidates for the Indian Civil Service, and feared that it would but serve to confirm and aggravate and rapidly extend the very worst evil of the old system of competition—namely, the degeneration of secondary education throughout England. . . . The despatch tended to make over all the secondary schooling of the country to the crammers, or to reduce it to the crammers’ system. They were making the entrance examinations year by year more and more difficult—as their first object must necessarily now be, not the moral and intellectual discipline of the boyhood of England, but to show an ever-growing percentage of success at the various competitive examinations always going on for public services. ‘The devil take the hindermost’ was fast becoming the ideal of education, even in the public schools. If they seriously took to cramming little fellows from twelve to fourteen for entrance into public schools, the rising generation would be used up before it reached manhood. A well-known physician of great experience told him that the competition for all sorts of scholarships and appointments was showing its evil fruits in the increase of insanity, epilepsy, and other nervous diseases amongst young people of the age from seventeen to nineteen, and especially amongst pupil-teachers; and if admission into the public schools of England was for the future to be regulated by competition, St. Vitus’s dance would soon take the place of gout, as the fashionable disease of the upper classes. This was the inevitable result of the ill-digested and ill-regulated system of competition for the public services, and especially the Indian Civil Service, which had prevailed; and he feared that the recent despatch would only be to hasten the threatened revolution in their national secondary schools, and the last state of cramming under the despatch would be worse than the first. . . . The best of

examiners was the examiner of his own pupils; for no man could measure real knowledge like the teacher. What should be aimed at was regular moderate study and sound and continuous discipline to start the growing man in life in the healthiest bodily and moral condition possible. He objected to children striving for prizes, whether in games or in studies. The fewer prizes won at school, the more would probably be won in life. Let their only anxiety be to educate their children well, and suffer no temptation to betray them into cramming, and the whole world was open to them.”—*Daily Telegraph*.¹

22. (VI.) The development of “humanity” in America is so brilliantly illustrated in the following paragraphs, that I have thought them worth preserving:—

*From “The American Socialist, devoted to the Enlargement and
Perfection of Home”*

“THE FUTURE OF SOCIETY

“An American, visiting Europe, notices how completely there the various functions of the social body are performed. He finds a servant, an officer, a skilled workman, at every place. From the position of the stone-breaker on the highway, up to that of the highest Government official, every post is filled; every personal want of the traveller or the citizen is attended to. Policemen guard him in the streets, lackeys watch for his bidding at the hotels, railroad officials with almost superfluous care forward him on his way. As compared with American railroad management, the great English roads probably have four *employes* to our one. This plenitude of service results from three things—viz., density of population, which gives an abundant working class; cheapness of labour; and the aristocratic formation of society that tends to fix persons in the caste to which they were born. The effect is to produce a smoothness in the social movement—an absence of jar and friction, and a release in many cases from anxious, personal outlook, that are very agreeable. The difference between English and American life in respect to the supply of service is like that between riding on a highly-finished macadamized way, where every rut is filled and every stone is removed, and picking one’s way over our common country roads.

“Another thing that the traveller observes in Europe is the abundance everywhere of works of art. One’s sense of beauty is continually gratified; now with a finished landscape, now with a noble building, now with statues, monuments, and paintings. This immense accumulation of art springs in part of course from the age of the nations where it is found; but it is also due in a very great degree to the employment given to artists by persons of wealth and leisure. Painting, sculpture, and architecture have always had constant, and sometimes munificent, patrons in the nobility and the Established Church.

“Observing these things abroad, the American asks himself whether the institutions of this country are likely to produce in time any similar result here. Shall we have the finished organization, the mutual service, and the wealth of art that characterize European society? Before answering this, let us first ask ourselves whether it is desirable that we should have them in the same manner that they exist abroad? Certainly not. No American would be willing to pay the price which England pays for her system of service. The most painful thing which one sees abroad is the utter absence of ambition in the class of household servants.

¹ [May 27, 1876. Sir George Birdwood’s paper was printed *in extenso* in the *Journal of the Society of Arts*, June 2, 1876, vol. 24, pp. 681–687.]

Men who in this country would be looking to a seat in the legislature,^a and who would qualify themselves for it, there dawdle away life in the livery of some noble, in smiling, aimless, do-nothing content, and beget children to follow in their steps. On seeing these servile figures, the American thanks heaven that the ocean rolls between his country and such a system. Rather rudeness, discomfort, self-service, and poverty, with freedom and the fire of aspiration, than luxury purchased by the enervation of man!

“Still, cannot we have the good without the bad? Cannot we match Europe in culture and polish without sacrificing for it our manhood? And if so, what are the influences in this country that are working in that direction? In answering this question, we have to say frankly that we see nothing in democracy alone that promises to produce the result under consideration. In a country where every one is taught to disdain a situation of dependence, where the hostler and the chambermaid see the way opened for them to stand even with the best in the land, if they will but exercise their privilege of ‘getting on,’ there will be no permanent or perfect service. And so long as every man’s possessions are divided and scattered at his death, there will be no class having the secured leisure and the inducement to form galleries of art. Why should John Smith take pains to decorate his house with works of art, when he knows that within a year after his death it will be administered upon by the Probate Court, and sold with its furniture for the benefit of his ten children?” (Well put,—republican sage.)

“In a word, looking at the aesthetic side of things, our American system must be confessed to be not yet quite perfect.” (You don’t say so!) “Invaluable as it is for schooling men to independence and aspiration, it requires, to complete its usefulness, another element. The Republic has a sequel. That completing element, that sequel, is Communism. Communism supplies exactly the conditions that are wanting in the social life of America, and which it must have if it would compete with foreign lands in the development of those things which give ease and grace to existence.

“For instance, in respect to service: Communism, by extinguishing caste and honouring labour, makes every man at once a servant and lord. It fills up, by its capacity of minute organization, all the social functions as completely as the European system does; while, unlike that, it provides for each individual sufficient leisure, and frequent and improving changes of occupation. The person who serves in the kitchen this hour may be experimenting with a microscope or giving lessons on the piano the next. Applying its combined ingenuity to social needs, Communism will find means to consign all repulsive and injurious labour to machinery. It is continually interested to promote labour-saving improvements. The service that is performed by brothers and equals from motives of love will be more perfect than that of hired lackeys, while the constantly varying round of occupation granted to all will form the most perfect school for breadth of culture and true politeness. Thus Communism achieves through friendship and freedom that which the Old World secures only through a system little better than slavery.

“In the interest of art and the cultivation of the beautiful, Communism again supplies the place of a hereditary aristocracy and a wealthy church. A Community family, unlike the ephemeral households of ordinary society, is a permanent thing. Its edifice is not liable to be sold at the end of every generation, but like a cathedral descends by unbroken inheritance. Whatever is committed to it remains, and is the care of the society from century to century. With a home thus established, all the members of a Community are at once interested to gather about it objects of art. It becomes a picture-gallery and a museum, by the natural accretion of time, and by the zeal of persons who know that every embellishment added to their home will not only be a pleasure to them personally, but will remain to associate them with the pleasure of future beholders in all time to come.

^aMay St. George be informed of how many members the American Legislature is finally to be composed; and over whom it is to exercise the proud function of legislation, which is to be the reward of heroic and rightly-minded flunkeys?

“Thus in Communism we have the conditions that are necessary to carry this country to the summit of artistic and social culture. By this route, we may at one bound outstrip the laboured attainments of the aristocracies of the Old World. The New York Central Park shows what can be achieved by combination on the democratic plan, for a public pleasure-ground. No other park is equal to it. Let this principle of combination be extended to the formation of homes as well as to municipal affairs, and we shall simply dot this country over with establishments (*b*) as much better than those of the nobles of England as they are better than those of a day-labourer. We say better, for they will make art and luxury minister to universal education, and they will replace menial service with downright brotherhood. Such must be the future of American society.”

“To the Editor of the ‘American Socialist.’

“In your first issue you raise the question, ‘*How large ought a Home to be?*’ This is a question of great interest to all; and I trust the accumulated answers you will receive will aid in its solution.

“I have lived in homes varying in numbers from one (the bachelor’s home) to several hundred; and my experience and observation lead me to regard one hundred and twenty-five as about the right number to form a complete home. I would not have less than seventy-five nor more than one hundred and fifty. In my opinion a Home should minister to all the needs of its members, spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical. This ordinary monogamic homes cannot do; hence resort is had to churches, colleges, club-rooms, theatres, etc.; and in sparsely settled regions of country, people are put to great inconvenience and compelled to go great distances to supply cravings as imperative as the hunger for bread. This view alone would not limit the number of persons constituting a Home; but I take the ground that in a perfect Home there will be a perfect blending of all interests and perfect vibration in unison of all hearts; and of course thorough mutual acquaintance. My experience and observation convince me that it is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to secure these results in a family of over one hundred and fifty members.

“In simply a monetary view it is undoubtedly best to have large Homes of a thousand or more; but money should not have great weight in comparison with a man’s spiritual, intellectual, and social needs.—D. E. S.”

^b As a painter, no less than a philanthropist, I am curious to see the effect of scenery, in these “polite” terms of description, “dotted over with establishments.”

LETTER 72

THE FATHERLAND¹

VENICE, 9th November, 1876, 7 morning.

1. I HAVE set my writing-table close to the pillars of the great window of the Ca' Ferro, which I drew, in 1841, carefully, with those of the next palace, Ca' Contarini Fasan. Samuel Prout was so pleased with the sketch that he borrowed it, and made the upright drawing from it of the palace with the rich balconies, which now represents his work very widely as a chromo-lithotint.*

Between the shafts of the pillars, the morning sky is seen pure and pale, relieving the grey dome of the church of the Salute; but beside that vault, and like it, vast thunderclouds heap themselves above the horizon, catching the light of dawn upon them where they rise, far westward, over the dark roof of the ruined Badia;²—but all so massive, that half-an-hour ago, in the dawn, I scarcely knew the Salute dome and towers from theirs; while the sea-gulls, rising and falling hither and thither in clusters above the green water beyond my balcony, tell me that the south wind is wild on Adria.

“Dux inquieti turbidus Adriæ.”³—The Sea has her Lord, and the sea-birds are prescient of the storm; but my own England, ruler of the waves in her own proud thoughts, can she rule the tumult of her people or, pilotless, even so

* My original sketch is now in the Schools of Oxford.⁴

¹ [See below, § 11.]

² [The Abbazia di S. Gregorio.]

³ [Horace, *Odes*, III. iii. 5.]

⁴ [Reference Series, No. 65: see Vol. XXI. p. 31. The drawing is reproduced in Vol. III., Plate 2 (p. 212).]

much as discern the thunderclouds heaped over her Galilean lake of life?¹

2. Here is a little grey cockle-shell, lying beside me,² which I gathered, the other evening, out of the dust of the Island of St. Helena; and a brightly-spotted snail-shell, from the thisty sands of Lido; and I want to set myself to draw these, and describe them, in peace.

“Yes,” all my friends say, “that is my business; why can’t I mind it, and be happy?”³

Well, good friends, I would fain please you, and myself with you; and live here in my Venetian palace, luxurious; scrutinant of dome, cloud, and cockle-shell. I could even sell my books for not inconsiderable sums of money if I chose to bribe the reviewers, pay half of all I got to the booksellers, stick bills on the lamp-posts, and say nothing but what would please the Bishop of Peterborough.⁴

I could say a great deal that would please him, and yet be very good and useful; I should like much again to be on terms with my old publisher,⁵ and hear him telling me nice stories over our walnuts, this Christmas, after dividing his year’s spoil with me in Christmas charity. And little enough mind have I for any work, in this seventy-seventh year that’s coming of our glorious century, wider than I could find in the compass of my cockle-shell.

3. But alas! my prudent friends, little enough of all that I have a mind to may be permitted me. For this green tide that eddies by my threshold is full of floating corpses, and I must leave my dinner to bury them, since I cannot save;⁶ and put my cockle-shell in cap, and take

¹ [For the reference here to Milton, see *Sesame and Lilies*, § 20 (Vol. XVIII. p. 69).]

² [Ruskin’s diary shows that on November 16 he “stayed in all day resting and painting cockle-shell successfully.”]

³ [For Ruskin’s “tragic power” in not being able to dissociate his thoughts from misery or destruction around him, see his Preface of 1883 to *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 9). For the island of St. Helena, see Vol. X. p. 423 *n.*, and Vol. XXIV. p. xliii.]

⁴ [Who had been reported as advising “strict neutrality” on questions of Political Economy: see the next page, and below, p. 770.]

⁵ [See the Introduction to Vol. XXVII. (p. lxxxiv.).]

⁶ [Compare *Time and Tide*, § 112 (Vol. XVII. p. 411).]

my staff in hand, to seek an unencumbered shore. This green sea-tide!—yes, and if you knew it, your black and sulphurous tides also—Yarrow, and Teviot, and Clyde, and the stream, for ever now drumly and dark as it rolls on its way, at the ford of Melrose.¹

Yes, and the fair lakes and running waters in your English park pleasure-grounds,—nay, also the great and wide sea, that gnaws your cliffs,—yes, and Death, and Hell also, more cruel than cliff or sea; and a more neutral episcopal person than even my Lord of Peterborough* stands, levelbarred balance in hand,—waiting (how long?) till the Sea shall give up the dead which are in it, and Death, and Hell, give up the dead which are in them.²

4. Have you ever thought of, desired to know, the real meaning of that sign, seen with the human eyes of his soul by the disciple whom the Lord loved? Yes, of course you have! and what a grand and noble verse you always thought it! “And the Sea——” Softly, good friend,—I know you can say it off glibly and pompously enough, as you have heard it read a thousand times; but is it, then, merely a piece of pomp? mere drumming and trumpeting, to tell you—what might have been said in three words—that all the dead rose again, whether they had been bedridden, or drowned, or slain? If it means no more than that, is it not, to speak frankly, bombast, and even bad and half unintelligible bombast?—for what does “Death” mean, as distinguished from the Sea,—the American lakes? or Hell as distinguished from Death,—a family vault instead of a grave?

But suppose it is not bombast, and does mean something that it would be well you should think of,—have you yet understood it,—much less, thought of it? Read the whole

* See third Article of Correspondence [p. 770].

¹ [For the fouling of Teviot, see *Ariadne Florentina*, § 242 (Vol. XXII. p. 473); of Clyde, Letter 16 (Vol. XXVII. p. 288); and of the Tweed, at Melrose, Letter 33, (*ibid.*, p. 622).]

² [Revelation xx. 13.]

passage from the beginning: “I saw the Dead, small and great, stand before God. And the Books were opened;”¹—and so to the end.

“*Stand*” in renewed perfectness of body and soul—each redeemed from its own manner of Death.

For have not they each their own manner? As the seed by the drought, or the thorn,—so the soul by the soul’s hunger, and the soul’s pang;—athirst in the springless sand; choked in the return wave of Edom; grasped by the chasm of the earth: some, yet calling “out of the depths”;² but some—“Thou didst blow with Thy wind and the sea covered them; they sank as lead in the mighty waters.”³ But *now* the natural grave, in which the gentle saints resigned their perfect body to the dust, and perfect spirit to Him who gave it;⁴—and now the wide sea of the world, that drifted with its weeds so many breasts that heaved but with the heaving deep;⁵—and now the Death that overtook the lingering step, and closed the lustful eyes;—and now the Hell, that hid with its shade, and scourged with its agony, the fierce and foul spirits that had forced its gates in flesh:—all these the Loved Apostle saw compelled to resote their ruin; and all these, their prey, stand once again, renewed, as their Maker made them, before their Maker. “And the Sea gave up the Dead which were in it, and Death, and Hell, the dead which were in them.”⁶

Not bombast, good reader, in any wise; nor a merely soothing melody of charming English, to be mouthed for a “second lesson.”

But is it worse than bombast, then? Is it, perchance, pure Lie?

5. Carpaccio, at all events, thought not; and this, as I

* Conf. *Inferno*, xxxiii. 123.

¹ [Revelation xx. 12.]

² [Psalms cxxx. 1.]

³ [Exodus xv. 10.]

⁴ [Ecclesiastes xii. 7.]

⁵ [Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, xi.]

⁶ [Revelation xx. 13.]

have told you,¹ is the first practical opinion of his I want you to be well informed of.

Since that last *Fors* was written, one of my friends found for me the most beautiful of all the symbols in the picture of the Dream;²—one of those which leap to the eyes when they are understood, yet which, in the sweet enigma, I had deliberately twice painted, without understanding.³

At the head of the princess's bed is embroidered her shield (of which elsewhere⁴);—but on a dark blue-green space in the cornice above it is another very little and bright shield, it seemed,—but with no bearing. I painted

¹ [See above, p. 732.]

² [The following letter to Mr. James Reddie Anderson bears upon these matters:—

“VENICE, 3rd January, 1877.

“MY DEAREST JAMIE,—I should have written to you on the first day of the year, had I not been passing, since Christmas day, through a course of teaching, which began with a gift from St. Ursula of a sprig of vervain, and a pot of pinks, ‘with her love,’ and went on unceasingly through the Christmas week and New Year’s day, closing and leaving me again in this material world—yesterday morning. The principal piece of it was through your discovery of the Porphyrio, and I am certain now that what you and Mr. Caird have done is the most important contribution to historical theology that could possibly have been made in these days, and I look with quite intense and securely trustful interest to the results of your collected evidence.

“Infidel that you were! You will end by living a Vita Nuova, and giving it to many and many a soul besides.

“I have been to look at St. Jerome, but it was too dark for the astronomy.

“The last (probable) additions to our picture reading of the Dream are that the deep crimson rods of the flower-pot are the four nails and lance point of her Lord, and that the singularly open book in her bookcase is the Book of her Life, the black clasp—arrow-head again—marking the place where, in sacred pause, ‘Quel giorno non piu leggemmo avanti.’

“Both these symbols are Mr. Bunney’s finding (except the Dante finish, which is *my* little contribution—but owing to your hint about Dante).

“Ever your affectionate,

“J. R.

For the “gift from St. Ursula,” see in the next volume, p. 30. For the “discovery of the Porphyrio,” (“the bird of chastity with the bent spray of vervain in its beak”), see *St. Mark’s Rest*, § 28 (Vol. XXIV. p. 230). The “contribution to historical theology” is doubtless the interpretation of “St. Jerome in his Study,” given in *St. Mark’s Rest*, Vol. XXIV. pp. 353–356. For the quotation from Dante, see *Inferno*, v. 138 (quoted also above, p. 354.)

³ [See Letter 20, §§ 14, 15 (Vol. XXVII. p. 342).]

⁴ [Ruskin did not, however, return to the subject. By “elsewhere” he probably meant his intended, but unwritten, “Separate Guide to the Works of Carpaccio in Venice” (see Vol. XXIV. p. 179 *n.*.)]

it, thinking it was meant merely for a minute repetition of the escutcheon below, and that the painter had not taken the trouble to blazon the bearings again. (I might have known Carpaccio never would even *omit* without meaning.) And I never noticed that it was not in a line above the escutcheon, but exactly above the princess's head. It gleams with bright silver edges out of the dark-blue ground—the point of the mortal Arrow!

At the time it was painted the sign would necessarily have been recognized in a moment; and it completes the meaning of the vision without any chance of mistake.

6. And it seems to me, guided by such arrow-point, the purpose of Fors that I should make clear the meaning of what I have myself said on this matter, throughout the six years in which I have been permitted to carry on the writing of these letters, and to preface their series for the seventh year, with the interpretation of this Myth of Venice.

I have told you that all Carpaccio's sayings are of knowledge, not of opinion.¹ And I mean by knowledge, *communicable* knowledge. Not merely personal, however certain—like Job's "I know that my Redeemer liveth,"² but discovered truth, which can be shown to all men who are willing to receive it. No great truth is allowed by nature to be demonstrable to any person who, foreseeing its consequences, desires to refuse it. He has put himself into the power of the Great Deceiver; and will in every effort be only further deceived, and place more fastened faith in his error.

7. This, then, is the truth which Carpaccio knows, and would teach:—

That the world is divided into two groups of men; the first, those whose God is their God, and whose glory is their glory, who mind heavenly things; and the second, men whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their

¹ [See Letter 71, § 1 (p. 732)]

² [Job xix. 25.]

shame,* who mind earthly things.¹ That is just as demonstrable a scientific fact as the separation of land from water. There may be any quantity of intermediate mind, in various conditions of bog;—some, wholesome Scotch peat,—some, Pontine marsh,—some, sulphurous slime, like what people call water in English manufacturing towns; but the elements of Croyance and Mescroyance² are always chemically separable out of the putrescent mess: by the faith that is in it, what life or good it can still keep, or do, is possible; by the miscreance in it, what mischief it can do, or annihilation it can suffer, is appointed for its work and fate. All strong character curdles itself out of the scum into its own place and power, or impotence: and they that sow to the Flesh, do of the Flesh reap corruption; and they that sow to the Spirit, do of the Spirit reap Life.³

I pause, without writing “everlasting,” as perhaps you expected. Neither Carpaccio nor I know anything about Duration of life, or what the word translated “everlasting,” means.⁴ Nay, the first sign of noble trust in God and man, is to be able to act without any such hope.⁵ All the heroic deeds, all the purely unselfish passions of our existence, depend on our being able to live, if need be, through the Shadow of Death: and the daily heroism of simply brave men consists in fronting and accepting Death as such, trusting that what their Maker decrees for them shall be well.

8. But what Carpaccio knows, and what I know also, are precisely the things which your wiseacre apothecaries,

* Mr. Darwin’s last discoveries of the gestures of honour and courtesy among baboons are a singular completion of the types of this truth in the natural world.⁶

¹ [Philippians iii. 19.]

² [Compare Letters 5 and 25 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 81, 466).]

³ [Galatians vi. 8.]

⁴ [On the meaning of αἰώνιος, translated “everlasting” (without any sufficient authority), see Excursus III. in Dean Farrar’s *Eternal Hope*.]

⁵ [Compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, Introduction, §§ 13 *seq.* (Vol. XVIII. pp. 394 *seq.*)]

⁶ [The reference is to a paper by Darwin in *Nature*, November 2, 1876 (vol. 15, pp. 18, 19) describing certain “indecorous habits” of monkeys on occasions of ceremony and in courtship.]

and their apprentices, and too often your wiseacre rectors and vicars, and *their* apprentices, tell you that you can't know, because "eye hath not seen nor ear heard them," the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God has revealed them to *us*,¹—to Carpaccio, and Angelico, and Dante, and Giotto, and Filippo Lippi, and Sandro Botticelli, and me, and to every child that has been taught to know its Father in heaven,—by the Spirit; because we have minded, or do mind, the things of the Spirit in some measure, and in such measure have entered into our rest.

"The things which God *hath prepared* for them that love Him." Hereafter, and up there, above the clouds, you have been taught to think; until you were informed by your land-surveyors that there was neither up nor down; but only an axis of *x* and an axis of *y*; and by aspiring aeronauts that there was nothing in the blue but damp and azote. And now you don't believe these things are prepared *anywhere*? They are prepared just as much as ever, when and where they used to be: just now, and here close at your hand. All things are prepared,—come ye to the marriage. Up and down on the old highways which your fathers trod, and under the hedges of virgin's bower and wild rose which your fathers planted, there are the messengers crying to you to come. Nay, at your very doors, though one is just like the other in your model lodging-houses,—there is One knocking, if you would open, with something better than tracts in His basket;—supper, and very material supper, if you will only condescend to eat of angels' food first.² There are meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: doth not your Father know that ye have need of these things? But if you make your belly your only love, and your meats your only masters, God shall destroy both it and them.

¹ [1 Corinthians ii. 9, 10. The other Bible references in § 8 are Romans viii. 5; Hebrews iv. 11; Matthew xxii. 4; Revelation iii. 20; 1 Corinthians vi. 13; Luke xii. 30; and Psalms xiv. 1.]

² [For explanation of this passage, see Letter 74, § 7 (Vol. XXIX. p. 35).]

Truly, it is hard for you to hear the low knocking in the hubbub of your Vanity Fair. You are living in the midst of the most perfectly miscreant crowd that ever blasphemed creation. Not with the old snap-finger blasphemy of the wantonly profane, but the deliberate blasphemy of Adam Smith: "Thou shalt hate the Lord thy God, damn His laws, and covet thy neighbour's goods."¹ Here's one of my own boys² getting up that lesson beside me for his next Oxford examination. For Adam Smith is accepted as the outcome of Practical Philosoph, at our universities; and their youth urged to come out high in competitive blasphemy. Not the old snap-finger sort,* I repeat, but that momentary sentiment, deliberately adopted for a national law. I must turn aside for a minute or two to explain this to you.

9. The eighth circle of Dante's Hell (compare *Fors* of December, 1872, Letter 24, § 15³) is the circle of fraud, divided into ten gulphs; in the seventh of these gulphs are the Thieves, by Fraud,—brilliantly now represented by the men who covet their neighbours' goods and take them in any way they think safe, by high finance, sham companies, cheap goods, or any other of our popular modern ways.

Now there is not in all the *Inferno* quite so studied a piece of descriptive work as Dante's relation of the infection of one cursed soul of this crew by another. They

* In old English illuminated Psalters, of which I hope soon to send a perfect example to Sheffield⁴ to companion our Bible, the vignette of the Fool saying in his heart, "There is no God," nearly always represents him in this action. Vanni Fucci makes the Italian sign of the Fig,—"A fig for you!"⁵

¹ [For another reference to Adam Smith's "new Commandment," see Letters 78 and 79 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 134, 146).]

² [One of his Oxford pupils, with him at this time in Venice: see Vol. XXIV. p. xli.]

³ [Vol. XXVII. p. 426.]

⁴ [The Psalter referred to was, however, not sent.]

⁵ [Dante, *Inferno*, xxv. 2, where in noticing the sacrilegious Vanni Fucci, Dante describes how "the sinner raised his hands pointed in mockery" ("le mani alzò con ambedue le fiche")—the practice of thrusting out thumb between the first and second fingers having prevailed very generally among European nations as an expression of insolent contempt.]

change alternately into the forms of men and serpents, each biting the other into this change—

“Ivy ne’er clasped
A doddered oak, as round the other’s limbs
The hideous monster intertwined his own;
Then, as they both had been of burning wax,
Each melted into other.”¹

Read the story of the three transformations for yourself (Cantos xxiv., xxv.), and then note the main point of all, that the spirit of such theft is especially indicated by its intense and direct manner of blasphemy:—

“I did not mark,
Through all the gloomy circle of the abyss,
Spirit that swelled so proudly’ gainst its God,
Not him who headlong fell from Thebes.”²

The soul is Vanni Fucci’s, who rifled the sacristy of St. James of Pistoja, and charged Vanni della Nona with the sacrilege, whereupon the latter suffered death. For in those days, death was still the reward of sacrilege by the Law of State; whereas, while I write this *Fors*, I receive notice of the conjunction of the sacred and profane civic powers of London to de-consecrate, and restore to the definitely pronounced “unholy” spaces of this world, the church of All-Hallows, wherein Milton was christened.

A Bishop was there to read, as it were, the Lord’s Prayer backwards, or at least address it to the Devil instead of to God, to pray that over this portion of British Metropolitan territory *His Kingdom* might again come.³

¹ [*Inferno* (Cary’s translation), xxv. 51–55.]

² [*Ibid.* (Cary’s translation), xxv. 12–15. Cary has “circles” and “his” God.]

³ [In 1876 the parish of All Hallows, Bread Street, was united with that of St. Mary-le-Bow, and the church itself was pulled down at the end of 1877. On the east side of Bread Street, marking the spot formerly occupied by the church, a bust of Milton has been let into the wall, with an inscription recording that he was there baptized. The ceremony of deconsecration was performed by Bishop Claughton, and reported in the *Times* of October 20, 1876. “A momentary sensation was caused,” says the report, “by a man in the congregation at the foot of the church declaring in a loud voice that he protested against the proceedings.” The *Times* of subsequent days makes no mention of any arrest.]

10. A notable sign of the times,—completed, in the mythical detail of it, by the defiance of the sacred name of the Church, and the desecration of good men's graves,* lest, perchance, the St. Ursulas of other lands should ever come on pilgrimage, rejoicing, over the sea, hopeful to see such holy graves among the sights of London.

Infinitely ridiculous, such travelling as St. Ursula's, you think,—to see dead bodies, forsooth, and ask, with every poor, bewildered Campagna peasant, "Dov' è San Paolo?"¹ Not at all such the object of modern English and American Tourists!—nay, sagacious Mr. Spurgeon came home from his foreign tour, and who more proud than he to have scorned, in a rational manner, all relics and old bones?² I have some notes by me, ready for February,³ concerning the unrejoicing manner of travel adopted by the sagacious modern tourist, and his objects of contemplation, for due comparison with St. Ursula's; but must to-day bring her lesson close home to your own thoughts.

11. Look back to §§ 5 and 16 of the *Fors* of January for this year.⁴ The first tells you, what this last sign of Church desecration now confirms, that you are in the midst of men who, *if* there be truth in Christianity at all, must be punished for their open defiance of Heaven by the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit, and the triumph of the Evil One. And you are told in the last paragraph that by the service of God only you can recover the presence of the Holy Ghost of Life and Health—the Comforter.

This—vaguely and imperfectly, during the last six years,

* My friend Mr. W. C. Sillar rose in the church, and protested, in the name of God, against the proceedings. He was taken into custody as disorderly,—the press charitably suggested, only drunk;—and was, I believe, discharged without fine or imprisonment, for we live in liberal days.

¹ [See Letter 43, § 13 (p. 119).]

² [See, for instance, *My Run to Naples and Pompeii*, a lecture by C. H. Spurgeon on Tuesday, January 28, 1873.]

³ [When the time came, however, other topics intervened. The notes in question are now printed in Appendix 18 (Vol. XXIX. p. 574).]

⁴ [Letter 61 (above, pp. 488–489, 501–502).]

proclaimed to you, as it was granted me—in this coming seventh year I trust to make more simply manifest;¹ and to show you how every earthly good and possession will be given you, if you seek first the Kingdom of God and His Justice.² If, in the assurance of Faith, you can ask and strive that such kingdom may be with you, though it is not meat and drink, but Justice, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost,³—if, in the first terms I put to you for oath,* you will do good work, whether you live or die,⁴ and so lie down at night, whether hungry or weary, at least in peace of heart and surety of honour;—then, you shall rejoice, in your native land, and on your nursing sea, in all fulness of temporal possession;—then, for you the earth shall bring forth her increase, and for you the floods clap their hands;⁵—throughout your sacred pilgrimage, strangers here and so-journers with God, yet His word shall be with you,—“the land shall not be sold for ever, for the land is Mine,”⁶ and after your numbered days of happy loyalty, you shall go to rejoice in His Fatherland, and with His people.

* Compare Letter 46, § 8, to end, observing especially the sentence out of 2nd Esdras, “before *they* were sealed that have gathered Faith for a Treasure” [§ 9].⁷

¹ [See Letter 81 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 194–195).]

² [Matthew vi. 33.]

³ [Romans xiv. 17.]

⁴ [Compare Letter 2, § 22 (Vol. XXVII. p. 44).]

⁵ [Psalms lxvii. 6, xcvi. 8.]

⁶ [Leviticus xxv. 23: see above, p. 672 *n.*]

⁷ [2 Esdras vi. 4, 5.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

12. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

There is no occasion to put our small account again in print till the end of the year: we are not more than ten pounds ahead, since last month.¹

I certainly would not have believed, six years ago, that I had so few friends who had any trust in me; or that the British public would have entirely declined to promote such an object as the purchase of land for national freehold.

Next year I shall urge the operatives whom any words of mine may reach, to begin some organization with a view to this object among themselves. They have already combined to build co-operative mills; they would find common land a more secure investment.

I am very anxious to support, with a view to the determination of a standard of material in dress, the wool manufacture among the old-fashioned cottagers of the Isle of Man; and I shall be especially grateful to any readers of *Fors* who will communicate with Mr. Egbert Rydings (Laxey, Isle of Man) on this subject. In the island itself, Mr. Rydings tells me, the stuffs are now little worn by the better classes, because they "wear too long,"—a fault which I hope there may be yet found English housewives who will forgive. At all events, I mean the square yard of Laxey homespun of a given weight, to be one of the standards of value in St. George's currency.²

The cheque of £25, sent to Mr. Rydings for the encouragement of some of the older and feebler workers, is the only expenditure, beyond those for fittings slowly proceeded with in our museum at Sheffield, to which I shall have to call attention at the year's end.

13. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

Though my readers, by this time, will scarcely be disposed to believe it, I really *can* keep accounts, if I set myself to do so: and even greatly enjoy keeping them, when I do them the first thing after my Exodus or Plato every morning; and keep them to the uttermost farthing. I *have* examples of such in past diaries; one, in particular, great in its exhibition of the prices of jargonel and Queen Louise pears at Abbeville.³ And my days always go best when they are thus begun, as far as pleasant feeling and general prosperity of work are concerned. But there is a great deal of work, and especially such as I am now set on, which does not admit of accounts in the morning; but imperatively requires the fastening down forthwith of what first comes into one's mind after waking. Then the accounts get put off; tangle their thread—(so the Fates always instantly then ordain)—in some eightpenny matter, and without *œdipus* to help on the right hand and *Ariadne* on the left, there's no bringing them right

¹ [See above, p. 749.]

² [For Mr. Rydings and the Laxey homespuns, see above, p. 585, and Vol. XXX.]

³ [The diary of 1868.]

again. With due invocation to both, I think I have got my own accounts, for the past year, stated clearly below.

| | Receipts. | | | Expenditure. | | | Balance. | | |
|-----------|-----------|----|----|--------------|----|----|----------|----|----------------|
| | £ | s | d. | £. | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. |
| February | 1344 | 17 | 9 | 817 | 0 | 0 | 527 | 17 | 9 |
| March | 67 | 10 | 0 | 370 | 2 | 3 | 225 | 5 | 6 |
| April | 1522 | 12 | 4 | 276 | 10 | 0 | 1471 | 7 | 10 |
| May | 484 | 18 | 3 | 444 | 16 | 3 | 1511 | 9 | 10 |
| June | 179 | 0 | 0 | 464 | 11 | 0 | 1225 | 18 | 10 |
| July | 0 | 0 | 0 | 460 | 0 | 0 | 765 | 18 | 10 |
| August | 180 | 11 | 8 | 328 | 19 | 6 | 617 | 11 | 0 |
| September | 0 | 0 | 0 | 427 | 5 | 0 | 190 | 6 | 0 |
| October | 1279 | 8 | 0 | 655 | 0 | 0 | 814 | 14 | 0 |
| November | 0 | 0 | 0 | 495 | 0 | 0 | 784 | 8 | 0 ¹ |
| December | 592 | 15 | 4 | 242 | 0 | 0 | 1135 | 3 | 4 ¹ |

In the first column are the receipts for each month; in the second, the expenditure; in the third, the balance, which is to be tested by adding the previous balance to the receipts in the first column, and deducting the expenditure from the sum.

The months named are those in which the number of *Fors* was published in which the reader will find the detailed statements: a grotesque double mistake, in March, first in the addition and then in the subtraction, concludes in a total error of threepence; the real balance being £225, 5s. 6d. instead of £225, 5s. 9d. I find no error in the following accounts beyond the inheritance of this excessive threepence (in October, p. 334,² the entry under September 1 is misprinted 10 for 15; but the sum is right), until the confusion caused by my having given the banker's balance in September, which includes several receipts and disbursements not in my own accounts, but to be printed in the final yearly estimate in *Fors* of next February. My own estimate, happily less than theirs, brings my balance for last month to £ 784, 8s.; taking up which result, the present month's accounts are as follows:—

RECEIPTS

| | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. |
|-----------------------------------|-----|----|----|---|----|----|
| <i>Oct.</i> 15. <i>Balance</i> | 784 | 8 | 0 | | | |
| <i>Dividend on £6500 Stock</i> | 292 | 10 | 0 | | | |
| <i>Payments, Marylebone</i> | 90 | 15 | 4 | | | |
| <i>Payments, Herne Hill</i> | 30 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| <i>London, Half-year's Salary</i> | 179 | 10 | 0 | | | |

1377 3 4

EXPENDITURE

| | | | | | | |
|---|-----|---|---|-----|---|---|
| <i>Oct. to Nov.</i> 15. <i>Life at Venice</i> | 150 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| <i>Oct.</i> 24. <i>Expenses</i> | 42 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| <i>Nov.</i> 1. <i>Expenses</i> ³ | 15 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| " 7. <i>Expenses</i> | 25 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| " 11. <i>Expenses</i> | 10 | 0 | 0 | 242 | 0 | 0 |

£1135 3 4

¹ [These balances should be £319, 14s. and £670, 9s.4d.:see the author's correction, Letter 74, § 18 (Vol. XXIX. p. 50).]

² [Letter 70, § 16 (p. 729).]

³ [See above, pp. 583, 729.]

14. (III.) I have lost the reference to a number of the *Monetary Gazette*, of three or four weeks back, containing an excellent article on the Bishop of Peterborough's declaration, referred to in the text,¹ that the disputes between masters and men respecting wages were a question of Political Economy, in which the clergy must remain "strictly neutral."

Of the Bishop's Christian spirit, in the adoption of his Master's "Who made me a divider?"² rather than of the earthly wisdom of John the Baptist, "Exact no more than that which is appointed you,"³ the exacting public will not doubt. I must find out, however, accurately what the Bishop *did* say; and then we will ask Little Bear's opinion on the matter. For indeed, in the years to come, I think it will be well that nothing should be done without counsel of Ursula.

15. (IV) The following is, I hope, the true translation of Job xxii. 24, 25, 26. I greatly thank my correspondent for it.

"Cast the brass to the dust, and the gold of Ophir to the rocks of the brooks.

"So, will the Almighty be thy gold and thy shining silver.*

"Yes, then wilt thou rejoice in the Almighty and raise thy countenance to God."

16. (V.) The following letter from a Companion may fitly close the correspondence for this year. I print it without suppression of any part, believing it may encourage many of my helpers, as it does myself:⁴—

"MY DEAR MASTER,—I have learnt a few facts about Humber keels. You know you were interested in my little keel scholars, because their vessels were so fine, and because they themselves were once simple bodies, almost guiltless of reading and writing. And it seems as if even the mud gives testimony to your words. So if you don't mind the bother of one of my tiresome letters, I'll tell you all I know about them.

"The Humber keels are, in nearly all cases, the property of the men who go in them. They are house and home to the keel family, who never live on shore like other sailors. It is very easy work navigating the rivers. There's only the worry of loading and unloading,—and then their voyages are full of leisure.

"Keelmen are rural sailors, passing for days and days between cornfields and poppy banks, meadows and orchards, through low moist lands, where skies are grand at sunrise and sunset.

"Now all this evidently makes a happy joyous life, and the smart colours and decoration of the boats are signs of it. Shouldn't you say so? Well, then, independence, home, leisure, and nature are right conditions of life—and that's a bit of St. George's doctrine I've verified nearly all by myself; and there are things I know about keel folks besides, which quite warrant my conclusions. But to see these very lowly craft stranded low on the mud at low tide, or squeezed in

* Silver of strength.

¹ [See above, § 3. Search in the *Monetary Gazette* has failed to find the passage; nor can the Bishop's declaration be traced in his *Life or Addresses*. For another reference by Ruskin to it, see Letter 76, § 13 (Vol. XXIX. p. 95).]

² [Luke xii. 14.]

³ [Luke iii. 13.]

⁴ [For a further reference to the letter, see Letter 75, § 17 (Vol. XXIX. p. 72).]

among other ships—big and grimy things—in the docks, you would think they were too low in the scale of shipping to have any pride or pleasure in life; yet I really think they are little arks, dressed in rainbows. Remember, please, Humber keels are quite different things to barges of any kind. And now keels are off my mind—except that if I can ever get anybody to paint me a gorgeous one, I shall send it to you.

“My dear Master, I have thought so often of the things you said about yourself, in relation to St. George’s work; and I feel sure that you are disheartened, and too anxious about it—that you have some sort of feeling about not being sufficient for all of it. Forgive me, but it is so painful to think that the Master is anxious about things which do not need consideration. You said, I think, the good of you was, that you collected teaching and laws for us. But is that just right? Think of your first impulse and purpose. Was not that your commission? Be true to it. To me it seems that the good of you (as you say it) is that you have a heart to feel the sorrows of the world—that you have courage and power to speak against injustice and falsehood, and more than all, that you act out what you say. Everybody else seems asleep or dead—wrapped up in their own comfort or satisfaction,—and utterly deaf to any appeal. Do not think your work is less than it is, and let all unworthy anxieties go. The work is God’s, if ever any work was, and He will look after its success. Fitness or unfitness is no question, for you are chosen. Mistakes do not matter. Much work does not matter. It only really matters that the Master stays with us, true to first appointment; that his hand guides all first beginnings of things, sets the patterns for us,—and that we are loyal.

“Your affectionate servant.”



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FORS CLAVIGERA

**LETTERS TO THE WORKMEN AND
LABOURERS OF GREAT BRITAIN**

VOLUME III

CONTAINING

LETTERS 73-96
1877, 1878-80-83-84

WITH THE AUTHOR'S INDEX

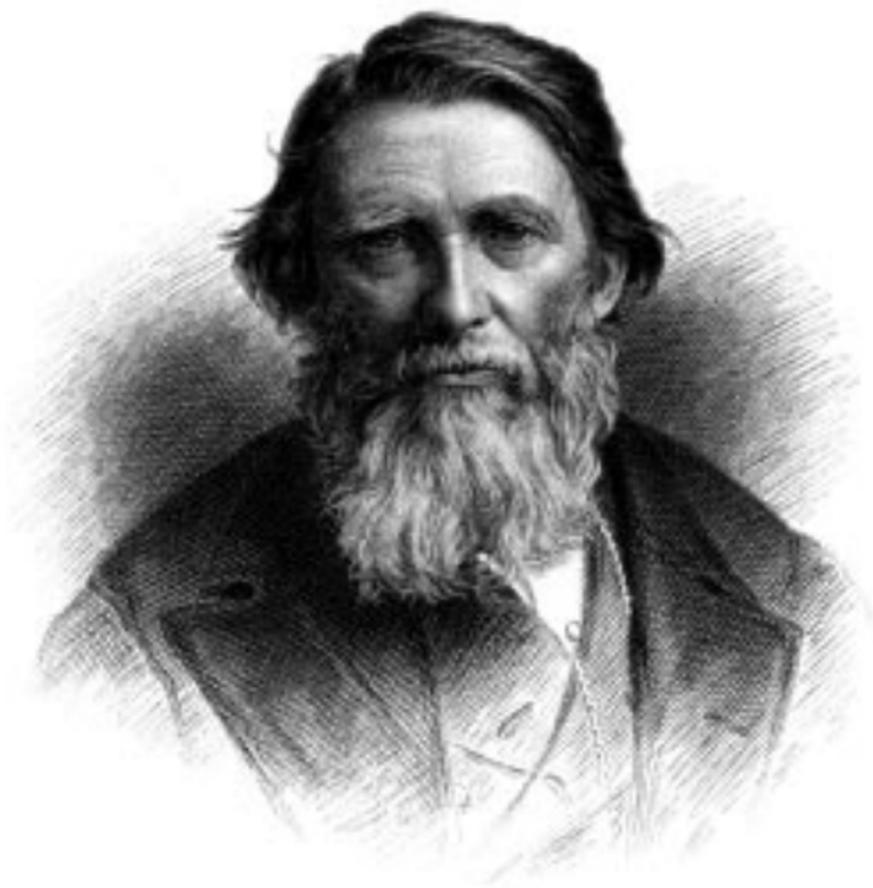
BY

JOHN RUSKIN

LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD
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1907

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JOHN RUSKIN

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INTRODUCTION TO VOL. XXIX

THIS volume contains Letters 73–96 of *Fors Clavigera* (corresponding to volumes vii. and viii. of the original issue of the work); an Appendix, consisting of additional passages or letters, relating to *Fors*; and an Index. Full particulars of the original publication, and of subsequent alterations, are given in Bibliographical Notes; in the case of the Letters, at p. xxix., in that of the Index at p. 603.

Letters 73–84 were issued during 1877, and with them may be grouped Letters 85–87, for these followed consecutively during the first three months of 1878. There then comes a break of two years, caused by Ruskin's serious illness. The period of his life and work which is covered by Letters 73–87 has already been dealt with in a previous Introduction (Vol. XXIV.), but some additional notes may here be given in illustration of passages in *Fors Clavigera*.

The earlier Letters (73–78), as also the later Letters in the preceding volume, are dated from Venice, where, it will be remembered, Ruskin spent the winter of 1876 and spring of 1877. While carrying on the general scheme of the book, these Letters reflect his Venetian interests, and the temper of his mind under Venetian influences. They contain discussions of Venetian pictures and architecture, and recite Venetian legends. They show him at work with photographers, artists, and sculptors, collecting examples for St. George's Museum at Sheffield. They have at times a mystical strain which was connected, as already explained,¹ with his imagination of St. Ursula. His Venetian friend Count Zorzi has recently published some Reminiscences of Ruskin² during this Venetian period which give a vivid picture of his occupations, interests, and thoughts during the months when the Venetian Letters were written. Among the young artists whom Ruskin had

¹ See Vol. XXIV. pp. xliii., xliv.

² In the *Cornhill Magazine*, August and September, 1906. Extracts are here given by courteous permission of Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co. Some letters from Ruskin, printed in Count Zorzi's articles, are given in a later volume of this edition.

working for him at Venice was Signor Raffaele Carloforti of Assisi, whose name figures repeatedly in the Accounts published in *Fors*.¹ He was acquainted with Count Zorzi, and had spoken to Ruskin of the Count's desire to publish a pamphlet of protest against the restoration of St. Mark's. Ruskin had bidden Carloforti to invite Count Zorzi to bring his manuscript:—

“When at eight o'clock that evening I entered his study and drawing-room, Ruskin, upright and serious, was seated at a large writing-table, covered with books, manuscripts, and writing paper, and in his hand he held an immense cork pen-holder as thick as a Havana cigar: he gave me one like it some time later.

“He wore a dark-blue frock-coat, a high cravat, and a higher collar. His ruddy face, his reddish hair and whiskers, and indeed his whole figure, were illuminated by a number of candles burning in silver candle-sticks. It seemed to me there were seven of them: perhaps because my head was full of the *Seven Lamps of Architecture*.

“He rose quickly and, with his slight person full of dignity, advanced to meet me as Carloforti introduced me, and thanked me for coming, in very English Italian. Then sitting down again and signing to me to take an arm-chair near him, he continued:

“‘And I thank my good friend Raffaele for having fulfilled the mission with which I charged him. So—they are assassinating St. Mark's?’

“‘Yes, sir, most unfortunately. And no one can see that better than yourself. They have been at it a good while, and they are going on.’

“‘I must say that you are very courageous, and that you have taken upon yourself a right hard task. I see you have brought your manuscript with you, as I told Carloforti to ask you to do. Will you be kind enough to read me some of the most important passages?’”

The Count proceeded to read the pages which were presently published with a preface by Ruskin:²—

“I spoke with impetuous enthusiasm, for all my heart was in the subject. All at once Ruskin interrupted me by springing to his feet. I did the same, and found myself in his arms.

“‘For thirty years,’ he said, with emotion, kissing my forehead, ‘I have been seeking a Venetian patrician—an artist—who would think and write about Venice and about St. Mark's as you have done, my young friend, and I am happy to have found you.’”

¹ See Vol. XXVIII. pp. 583, 633, 677, 729, 769; and below, p. 50.

² See Vol. XXIV. pp. 403–411.

“Why do you not publish?” asked Ruskin. The Count, it seems, had not the means to venture on separate publication; he proposed to send his chapters piecemeal to the *Adriatico*:—

“‘No, no, that is not to be thought of; the polemics roused day by day by your criticisms would spoil the effect of your arguments. Your terrible book must come out as a whole; it must be a big gun and do its work at a single shot. It must sweep away the evils of restoration as practised hitherto on the ancient monuments, evils deeply rooted not only here but in the whole of Europe. Allow me to offer you the means necessary for the publication, and find a publisher at once. Permit me to say that you are young; and although you have already engaged in the struggle for the conservation of the monuments of your city with isolated publications, this is the moment when you may be said to begin the real war against powerful adversaries who enjoy the confidence of the Government—the existing commissions, the bureaucracy. It is true that your artist colleagues and contemporaries are on your side; but you need an old general well known in Europe for the battle on behalf of your new ideas. I will therefore write you a letter addressed to every art centre in Europe, in which I will support and justify everything that you have expressed at greater length so ably and so courageously, touching these matters of archæology, art, and history, which interest the whole civilised world. And you will be kind enough to insert my letter as a preface to your book.’

“‘Do you know,’ he burst out gaily, in a louder tone—‘do you know that the Academy of Fine Arts elected me one of its honorary members a good while ago, and that the “Società Veneta di Storia Patria,” on April 25 last, almost as soon as it was started, also wanted to have me among its founders? I am yours! I am yours! I am at last a Venetian!’

“After a pause he went on in a sympathetic tone: ‘Carloforti has told me of the recent loss you have sustained in the death of your good father, and described him to me as a real Venetian gentleman of the good old stamp. He told me also that your mother is a Morosini. Pray offer her my respectful homage, and say that I shall feel honoured to pay her a visit if she will permit me.’

“The idea of meeting a real Morosini—who was not only the great-granddaughter of the last Procurator of St. Mark’s and descendant in the direct line of the Doge Domenico Morosini (1148–1155), who was buried in Santa Croce, and in whose reign the Campanile of St. Mark’s was completed, and of the Doge Marino Morosini (1249–1252), who was buried in St. Mark’s Atrium, and at whose death the custom was introduced of hanging up the arms of the Doges in the Basilica—filled Mr. Ruskin with the greatest joy.

“I shall never forget the moment in which, after stopping a long while in Corte Bottera at San Giovanni e Paolo (where I then lived) to admire a precious Byzantine arch, still *in situ*, having escaped the clutches of the robber speculators, he entered my study and bowed before my mother, kissing her hand as he would have kissed the hand of a queen. Never as long as I live shall I forget the veneration with which, stretching out both arms wide, he bent down and laid his forehead on the pile of parchment documents, wills, etc., belonging to the Morosini family, which I had laid out for his inspection on a large table.”

A translator for Ruskin’s Preface was found in a young Polish lady (Miss Eugenia Szczepanowska), then staying at Venice and now Count Zorzi’s wife. The Count polished his proofs; Ruskin wrote his Preface; and they often met to compare notes:—

“I used to visit him every evening from seven to ten o’clock at the ‘Calcina’ on the Zattere, where, as he said to me, he had transported his household gods in order to be quieter. Sometimes he invited me to supper, and then, as we drank our wine, I toasted him, and Our Venice, and he drank to my health, my mother’s and Eugenia’s. We talked about Venice, Rome, Assisi, Ravenna, and about Siena, which I had not then seen; discussed Carpaccio, Gentile Bellini, Tintoretto, Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Art in general. Not infrequently the conversation turned on religion. He told me about his visit to the tomb of the Holy Apostles, Peter and Paul,¹ and said to me:

‘ “Although I am a Protestant, and have little in common with Romish priests, I knelt down there several times and wept at the thought of Peter, and of the great apostle of civilisation and of the Gentiles.’

“He confided to me that an English friend of his in England had had certain revelations,² and was far advanced in the ‘Scienza di Dio.’ He spoke of his friend’s revelations with such conviction that I was amazed, and he confirmed them repeatedly as if talking to himself, but always with the idea that the listener must give all his attention to what he was saying. While he talked he bent his head from time to time, and then raised it with an energetic movement, gazing upwards with eyes that looked into vacancy or into the infinite, and repeated to himself:

‘ “Oh, yes, yes; he has gone very far! And he has had many, many clear revelations.’

“Sometimes in our talks politics were introduced. . . ; and all at once, leaping from Italy to England, he assured me:

¹ See Letter 43 (July 1874), Vol. XXVIII. pp. 119–120.

² See Vol. XXIV. pp. xxii.-xxiv., xliii.-xliv.

“ ‘Ideas there are upset, but a day will come when great and small will rise like one sole gentleman of the good old times, sword in hand’—and he stretched out his arm as if really brandishing a sword—‘and compel respect for Christian civilisation, whereas now people respect nothing but interest.’ ”

These glimpses of Ruskin’s thoughts and interests illustrate many a page of the Letters in this volume. For here also we see how St. Ursula personified for him the Good and Beautiful. “All real education goes on into an entirely merry and amused life, like St. Ursula’s, and ends in a delightful death” (p.23). It is St. Ursula who sends him messages (p. 30), dictating even—alas! in language not entirely intelligible—his policy on the Eastern Question (p. 46). Here, too, we find him laying down laws for Sheffield in Venetian terms (pp. 21, 38), and composing a revised Corn Law Rhyme, taught him, as he says, by the Doge Marino Morosini (p. 40 *n.*).

Count Zorzi has published the first draft of a passage in Ruskin’s Preface, which illustrates again the power of St. Ursula over his thoughts at this time. In the Preface, as published, Ruskin praises the Venetian Count for bearing an “ancient name in its unblemished honour.”¹ He added in the MS., with reference to one of the pictures in Carpaccio’s series,² “as St. Ursula’s standard-bearer; her standard of St. George’s cross, bright against the sky by the Castle of Saint Angelo.” Thus, at every point, of his artistic and social work alike, did St. Ursula and St. George govern his mind. But, through all his communings, Ruskin remained true to his gospel of manual labour. The Count thus records a morning call:—

“One morning I found Mr. Ruskin in the court of the ‘Calcina’ with a hatchet in his hand.

“ ‘Oh, oh! what are you doing?’ I cried. ‘Are you preparing to execute summary justice on the assassins of artistic Venice?’

“ ‘No, no, my dear friend. As you see, I am cutting wood. Allow me’—and he went on splitting certain logs for firewood with the greatest ease and naturalness. When he had set me a sufficiently good example, he invited me to his room, and as we went upstairs he advised me to take exercise in the same way from time to time, assuring me that wood-cutting was a kind of gymnastics very beneficial to health, which he had practised for some time, and which he was sure would do me good.”

¹ See Vol. XXIV. p. 411.

² “The Reception of St. Ursula by the Pope”: No. 6 in the series as described in Vol. XXIV. p. lii.

At home, as also abroad, this form of exercise and serviceable manual labour was constant with Ruskin; see his note on the subject in Letter 83, written at Brantwood (p. 273¹).

Ruskin returned from Venice in June 1877, as has been previously said, “to St. George’s work”;² and the Letters written immediately on his return contain much matter on that subject. On a visit to the Midlands, to inspect St. George’s land at Bewdley, he saw something of the nail-making district—a sight which inspired one of the most vivid passages in *Fors*, describing the “Clavigeræ” of modern industrial life (p. 174). A visit to London earlier in the year, when he went to the theatre and picture-galleries, had one memorable outcome; for a *critique* of the Grosvenor Gallery in Letter 79 led to the libel case of Whistler *v.* Ruskin, presently to be noticed. Among the places of entertainment which Ruskin was fond of visiting was the St. James’s Hall, where the Moore and Burgess company of “Christy Minstrels” used then to perform. “I remember Sir Edward Burne-Jones’s account,” says Mr. Collingwood, “of a visit to them; how the Professor dragged him there, to a front seat, and those burnt-corked people anticked and shouted, and Burne-Jones wanted to go, and Ruskin wouldn’t, but sat laughing through the whole performance as if he loved it. An afternoon to him of oblivion to the cares of life.”³ There is a reference to these Christy Minstrels in Letter 76 (p. 85⁴).

In the autumn of 1877 Ruskin received, among other visitors at Brantwood, Mr. T. C. Horsfall of Manchester, in whose scheme for establishing an Art Museum in that city he was greatly interested. Mr. Horsfall’s paper on the subject, with Ruskin’s comments, occupies several pages in this volume;⁵ and in an Appendix several private letters from Ruskin to the same correspondent are now given. Mr. Horsfall’s scheme took shape in the “Manchester Art Museum and University Settlement” (Ancoats Hall, Every Street, Manchester), which for many years has been a centre of “sweetness and light” in that city. It is an admirably educational Museum, and Ruskin’s influence is very apparent in the ideas which have governed its arrangements. It includes several of his drawings, as also many copies after Turner by Mr. William Ward, in some cases touched by Ruskin. He wrote a few notes also descriptive of these copies, which the Committee

¹ “Ruskin’s bill-hook, for cutting coppice at Brantwood,” is among the “personal relics” in the Ruskin Museum at Coniston.

² Vol. XXIV. p. xlv.

³ *Ruskin Relics*, p. 156.

⁴ See also Vol. XXVIII. p. 492.

⁵ See pp. 149–157, 195–197, 213–217.

have placed under them “as one of the many proofs he has given them of his interest in their work.”¹

The winter months of 1877–1878 were, as already noticed,² a time of much mental strain with Ruskin. The state of anger and of isolation, into which the writing of *Fors Clavigera* was apt to throw him, was a dangerous aggravation of over-work. One seems to see him in these later letters constantly fighting, but in vain, against excitement; certainly he is constantly promising the reader that he means in future to keep calm and adopt a gentler tone. “After this seventh year,” he writes in the last Letter of 1877, “I am going out into the highways and hedges; but no more with expostulation. I have wearied myself in the fire enough; and now, under the wild roses and traveller’s joy of the lane hedges, will take what rest may be in my pilgrimage” (pp. 293–4³).

It may be noted that, just a year before, he had made a like vow. “One quite fixed plan for the last year of *Fors*,” he wrote to Miss Beever from Venice (November 13, 1876), “is that there shall be absolutely no abuse or controversy in it.” He permitted himself, however, “a good fling at the Bishops to finish with.”⁴ But there was too much “devil” in him to make those blameful words the last. To his state of nervous irritability at the end of 1877 must be attributed the tone of the correspondence with Miss Octavia Hill, an old, true, and well-trying friend, and its publication in Letter 86 (February 1878). He allowed the correspondence to stand, when he afterwards revised the book; but at a later date (1888) he spoke to a friend of his desire to “ask forgiveness” for his “anger and pride.” The last Letter (87: “The Snow Manger”), written before his illness, is perfectly coherent and forcible, as a reader, who uses the notes of reference now given below the text, will perceive; but the Letter shows also, as he subsequently said, “a dangerous state of more or less excited temper and too much quickened thought” (p. 382).

And then at last came the break-down, in the form of the grave illness of February 1878. His recovery, as we have seen,⁵ was not slow;

¹ Mr. Horsfall explained his original scheme for the Museum, both in the letter to the *Manchester Guardian* quoted in *Fors*, and in a pamphlet entitled *The Art Museum, Manchester* (1878). An interesting account of the Museum is given in *The Ruskin Reading Guild Journal*, vol. i. (1889) pp. 149–151.

² See Vol. XXV. pp. xxi. *seq.*

³ See also p. 200.

⁴ *Hortus Inclusus*, p. 40 (ed. 1); reprinted in a later volume of this edition. See also the letter of July 28, 1877, to Mr. Horsfall in Appendix 22 (below, p. 589).

⁵ Vol. XXV. p. xxvi.

but he was weak, and for some time the injunctions of his doctors made the suspension of *Fors* imperative.

One of the first duties which awaited him on his partial recovery was the task of considering the defence in the libel action brought by Whistler. Ruskin's *critique* had appeared in July 1877 (p. 160), and it was at once reported that Whistler intended to bring an action for libel. Ruskin had been delighted at the prospect. "It's mere nuts and nectar to me," he wrote to Burne-Jones, "the notion of having to answer for myself in court, and the whole thing will enable me to assert some principles of art economy which I've never got into the public's head, by writing, but may get sent over all the world vividly in a newspaper report or two."¹ But this was not to be. The action was not brought immediately; Ruskin's serious illness intervened, and when the case was ready for trial his doctors forbade him to risk the excitement of appearing in person. Ruskin and Whistler, it may be interesting to state, had never met. Some years before Whistler had, through a mutual friend, expressed a desire to make the acquaintance of Ruskin, whose works he knew and appreciated, and he wished to show his pictures to the critic, but the meeting had not taken place.

The works which Whistler had exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1877 were (in addition to a portrait of Carlyle):—

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 4. Nocturne in Black and Gold | <i>Artist.</i> |
| 5. Nocturne in Blue and Silver | <i>Mrs. Leyland.</i> |
| 6. Nocturne in Blue and Gold | <i>Hon. Mrs. Percy Wyndham.</i> |
| 6A. Nocturne in Blue and Silver | <i>W. Graham.</i> |
| 7. Arrangement in Black, No. 3— Irving as Philip II. of Spain | <i>Artist.</i> |
| 8. Harmony in Amber and Black | <i>Artist.</i> |
| 9. Arrangement in Brown | <i>Artist.</i> |

Ruskin's criticism was general, but was given a certain specific application by the remark that he had "never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face." One of the pictures in question—the "Nocturne in Blue and Silver (Battersea Bridge)"—is now in the Tate Gallery (No. 1959), having been presented to the nation by the Art Collections Fund in 1905. It is often stated that this is the picture which Ruskin attacked, but

¹ *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, vol. ii. p. 86.

the statement is somewhat misleading. Several pictures were, indeed, included in the critical indictment, but the one which in fact aroused Ruskin's ire was, however, the "Nocturne in Black and Gold (The Falling Rocket)"—the only one of the four Nocturnes then for sale—"a night piece," Whistler called it at the trial, "representing the fireworks at Cremorne." This, too, was the picture which Ruskin's principal witness, Burne-Jones, singled out as justifying the criticisms. It now belongs to Mrs. Samuel Untermyer.

The case, which was tried before Baron Huddleston, excited lively interest both in artistic circles and among the general public. Ruskin's leading counsel was the Attorney-General, Sir John Holker, and with him was Mr. (afterwards Lord) Bowen.¹ On the other side was another famous counsel of the time, Serjeant Parry. Whistler appeared in the box, and he called as experts Mr. Albert Moore, Mr. W. M. Rossetti, and Mr. W. G. Wills. Ruskin's witnesses, besides Burne-Jones, were Mr. Frith, R.A., and Mr. Tom Taylor. The names of these witnesses show how sharply both the artistic and the critical opinions were at that time divided on the character of Whistler's work. Perhaps it is true of painters, as Wordsworth said of poets, that innovators have to create the taste by which they are to be admired. Whistler produced his Nocturnes in court; the defence produced Ruskin's portrait of the Doge Andrea Gritti by Titian,² to show what is meant by sound workmanship. In the end the jury found for the plaintiff, but awarded only one farthing damages³—a verdict which implied that in their opinion Ruskin was technically in the wrong, but that substantially his remarks were fair criticism. The

¹ Bowen's Opinion, given (November 29, 1877) when the action was first threatened, concluded as follows: "Most people of educated habits of mind are well aware of the infinite importance of having works of art, or alleged works of art, freely and even severely criticised by skilled and competent critics. But Mr. Ruskin must not expect that he will necessarily find juries composed of persons who have any knowledge of or sympathy with art. It would, for example, be hopeless to try to convince a jury that Mr. Ruskin's view of Mr. Whistler's performance was right. They never could or would be able to decide on that. They would look to the language used rather than to the provocation. And their sympathies would rather lean to the side of the man who wanted to sell his picture than to the side of the outspoken critic whose criticism interfered with the sale of a marketable commodity. I think, therefore, that Mr. Ruskin, whose language about Mr. Whistler in *Fors Clavigera* is exceedingly trenchant and contemptuous, must not be surprised if he loses the verdict. I should rather expect him to do so. The question is one of fact, whether the limits of fair and reasonable criticism were passed or not. And this issue will have to be determined not by a tribunal with any knowledge of or love for art, but by a jury composed of those who probably know nothing about it."

² Plate X. in Vol. XIX.

³ Whistler for some years used to wear the farthing on his watch-chain.

trial called forth a bitter, but not unamusing, brochure by Whistler, entitled *Whistler v. Ruskin: Art and Art Critics*; afterwards included in his book *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*. But better than anything in Whistler's pamphlet was a remark which he made when under cross-examination. "Can you tell me," asked the Attorney-General, "how long it took you to knock off that Nocturne?" "Two days." "The labour of two days, then, is that for which you ask two hundred guineas?" "No; I ask it for the knowledge of a life-time."

Burne-Jones, on whose evidence Ruskin chiefly relied, had been placed in a position of much delicacy and difficulty. Whistler was also his friend, and the passage in *Fors*, which formed the subject of the action, was practically a comparison between Whistler's work and his own. He felt strongly, however, that Ruskin was justified in asserting that good workmanship was essential to a good picture, and in finding this quality absent from the pictures in question. Ruskin's letters show how much he relied on Burne-Jones, and how grateful he was:—

"Brantwood, November 2 (1878).—I gave your name to those blessed lawyers as chief of men to whom they might refer for anything which in their wisdom they can't discern unaided concerning me. But I commended them in no wise and for no cause whatsoever to trouble or tease you; and neither in your case, nor in that of any other artist, to think themselves justified in asking more than may enable them to state the case in court with knowledge and distinctness."¹

"Brantwood, November 28.—I'm very grateful to you for speaking up, and Arthur [Severn] says you looked so serene and dignified that it was a sight to see. I don't think you will be sorry hereafter that you stood by me, and I shall be evermore happier in my serene sense of your truth to me, and to good causes—for there was more difficulty in your appearing than in any one else's, and I'm so glad you looked nice and spoke so steadily."

The result of the trial gave satisfaction to neither side. The damages awarded to Whistler were contemptuous; and the judge had not given the plaintiff costs. Each side was thus left to pay its own costs, and Ruskin found himself mulcted in a sum of £400 as the price of his criticism, which, whether sound or mistaken, was at any rate

¹ This letter has been printed in *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, vol. ii. p.87.

disinterested. Friends and admirers subscribed this sum, and sent it to Ruskin with an "expression of their opinion that your life-long, honest endeavours to further the cause of art should not be crowned by your being cast in the costs arising out of that action." Ruskin acknowledged the gift gratefully, but the result of the trial rankled in his mind, and letters to Dean Liddell show this was the cause which finally decided him to resign his Professorship at Oxford:—

"Brantwood, November 28, 1878.—Although my health has been lately much broken, I hesitated in giving in my resignation of my Art-Professorship in the hope that I might still in some imperfect way have been useful at Oxford. But the result of the Whistler trial leaves me no further option. I cannot hold a Chair from which I have no power of expressing judgment without being taxed for it by British Law. I do not know in what formal manner my resignation should be signified, but thought it best that the decisive intimation of it should be at once placed in your hands."

"Brantwood (no date).—It is much better that the resignation of the office should be distinctly referred to its real cause, which is virtually represented by this Whistler trial. It is not owing to ill-health that I resign, but because the Professorship is a farce, if it has no right to condemn as well as to praise. It has long been my feeling that nobody really cared for anything that I knew; but only for more or less lively talk from me—or else drawing-master's work — and neither of these were my proper business."

Ruskin himself wrote, and carefully preserved, some remarks on the action. These are now printed in an Appendix (pp. 585–587), together with a report of the trial (pp. 580–584).

The publication of *Fors Clavigera* was resumed some fourteen months after these events, but after three more Letters had appeared it was again interrupted by a further serious illness (in the spring of 1881). In May 1883 the book was once more resumed, and carried to its conclusion at Christmas 1884. In these later Letters Ruskin succeeded in keeping clear of that "blameful work" which excited him unduly, and they are among the most interesting and charming of the series. We need not here anticipate the story of his life after 1878, which will be found in a later Introduction, but one or two notes may be given in special connexion with *Fors*.

One of the Letters (92) is entitled "Ashestiel," and gives Ruskin's impressions, with some fine descriptive passages, of the Scott country.

These were the result of a journey in September and October 1883, during which he had spent a couple of days as the guest of Lord Reay at Laidlawstiel. An account of this visit by a fellow-guest has been printed by Grant-Duff:¹—

“Mr. Ruskin (wrote Mr. Rutson to Grant-Duff) came to Laidlawstiel for two nights after I wrote to you. I was delighted with his courtesy and charming manner and his eloquence. We went to Ashestiel. You should have seen the reverent way in which he approached, with his hat off, an old man who had worked for Scott, and how he expressed his sense of the honour of seeing a man who had known Scott, and how the sense of his having known Scott must make the man himself very happy. All this, said in a low and rich tone of Ruskin’s beautiful voice, while he stood slightly bowed, made a memorable little picture, the man standing in his doorway, and Ruskin just outside the cottage. . . . In the afternoon we partly drove and partly walked to Traquhair, getting our first view of it from outside the great gates, looking down the avenue guarded by the stone bears. From nearer at hand, Ruskin made a sketch of the house, which he declares (we not dissenting) to be a true work of art, faithful to the genius of the place, towers, height and pitch of roof, size and mutual relation of windows, and strength of material—all harmonising with each other and suited to the need of its inhabitants and to its situation among Scottish hills.”

A feature of the later Letters of *Fors* (91, 93, 94, 95, and 96) is the inclusion of drawings by Kate Greenway. Ruskin had made her acquaintance in 1882, and when these drawings began to appear in *Fors*, the acquaintance had ripened into warm friendship. A large collection of Ruskin’s letters to Kate Greenway will be found in a later volume, but one is given in this place because it refers to the headpiece of *Fors*, Letter 93. It is dated December 26, 1883:—

“I shan’t go to sleep over your note to-day.

“But I have no words, any more than if I *was* asleep, to tell you how marvellous I think these drawings. No one has ever done anything equal to them in pure grace of movement—no one in exquisiteness of dainty design. I tremble now to ask you to draw in any other way.

“As for the gift of them, I had never such a treasure given me, in my life—but it is not for me only. I am sure that these drawings will be [valued] endlessly and everywhere if I can get them engraved the least rightly—the sight of them alters one’s thoughts of all the world.

¹ *Notes from a Diary, 1881–1886*, vol. i. pp. 186–187.

“The little beauty with the note, alone, would have made a Christmas for me.

“I hope you will like the use I’ve made of one of your little dance-maidens. I think her glory of simplicity comes well alone.”¹

The Appendix to this volume contains additional passages from the manuscript of *Fors Clavigera*, and letters relating to the books. It has been noticed already² how greatly Ruskin’s correspondence was increased by the publication of *Fors*. Readers, who were interested in one aspect or another of his schemes, wrote to him in remonstrance or for counsel. *Fors*, again, was often controversial, and the “Correspondence” which he published in the Letters themselves was only a small portion of what he received or wrote. Several of his correspondents have placed their letters at the disposal of the editors, and selections from such material are now included in the Appendix (1, 2, 10, 11, 16, 17 (*b*), and 22).

Ruskin preserved, partly in manuscript and partly in proof, a large quantity of material intended for use in *Fors*. Particulars under this head have already been given.³ Some of this material was printed in Mr. Fauntorpe’s General Index to *Fors*; and this portion (not always the most interesting or important) is in this Complete Edition included: Appendix 3, 9, 14, and 17 (in part). Another piece of over-matter was sent by Ruskin in a letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette* (Appendix 25). The matter in the other Appendices, selected from the manuscripts at Brantwood, is included for its intrinsic interest and as supplementing the hitherto printed text of the book. Particular attention may be called to the notes on “Ruskin and Scott” (Appendix 7), which explain the special interest taken by Ruskin in the early life of that master; to the additional “Notes on the Life of Scott” (Appendix 8), which Ruskin wrote for *Fors*; to the notes of travel, now entitled “Morning Thoughts at Geneva” (Appendix 18), which he promised in Letter 72 for a later number but omitted to include; to the description of designs by Ludwig Richter (Appendix 23); and to an interesting Epilogue to the whole work (Appendix 26).

The Brantwood MSS. have also been drawn upon for occasional notes under the text; see, for instance, pp. 196, 395, 448, 497.

Finally, Ruskin’s own Index to *Fors* has been collated and completed, as explained more fully in a Bibliographical Note below (p. 607).

¹ This letter has appeared in *Kate Greenaway*, by M. H. Spielmann and G. S. Layard, 1905, p. 122.

² See Vol. XXVIII. p. xv.

³ See Vol. XXVII. p. lxxxviii.

For particulars with regard to the *manuscript* and *text*, the reader is referred to the Introduction in Volume XXVII. (pp. lxxxviii.—lxxxix.).

The *plates* in this volume are all new, with the exception of the woodcut from a child's writing, called by Ruskin "Theuth's Earliest Lesson" (VII.), and of the drawing by Kate Greenaway called "Rosy Vale" (VIII.). The *frontispiece*—a portrait of Ruskin (*circa* 1882)—though new in this place, occupied the same position in *The Ruskin Birthday Book* (1883). The plates introduced to illustrate the Venetian Letters are from negatives made for Ruskin in 1876 and 1877. The first (I.) is of the Vine Angle of the Ducal Palace; the next two (II. and III.) are of various capitals, described in the text. The fourth (IV.) is of the southern porches of the West Front, as they were at the same time. The next plate (V.) is introduced to illustrate Ruskin's remarks upon Scott's homes, at Ashestiel and Abbotsford. The facsimiles of Tintoret's handwriting on Plate VI. are from some sheets which Ruskin photographed from Venetian archives. The remaining two plates (IX. and X.) are woodcut-facsimiles by Mr. H. S. Uhlich of two of Richter's designs illustrating the Lord's Prayer—designs which Ruskin included among "Things to be Studied" by all his pupils. The illustrations printed in the text were all included in the original issues of *Fors*.

With regard to the plate of "Rosy Vale," it should be understood that it was intended by the artist to be coloured, and was treated by the engraver accordingly. One or two impressions were coloured by hand, by Miss Emily Warren, but Ruskin abandoned the idea of giving the coloured plate in *Fors*.

The *facsimiles* include three pages of the manuscript of *Fors* as published, and one page from a rough copy of an unused passage (see p. 537 *n.*). The other *facsimile* is of a passage in the manuscript (at Brantwood) of Scott's *Fortunes of Nigel*.

E. T. C.

[*Bibliographical Note.*—Letters 73–84 were originally issued in wrappers similar to those described in Vol. XXVIII. p. xxiii., but the imprint was altered at the foot, and reads as follows: “London: Printed for the Author by | Hazell, Watson, and Viney, London and Aylesbury; | and to be had of | Mr. George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent.”

Except where otherwise stated, the first edition of Letters 73–84 and 85–96 consisted of 2000 copies, and the second of 1000. The title of the Letter was also, except where otherwise stated, added in the Second Edition.

VOL. VII. (1877)

LETTER 73. *First Edition* (January 1, 1877).—Pages 1–24.

Second Edition (October 1885).

LETTER 74. *First Edition* (February 1, 1877).—Pages 25–56.

Second Edition (October 1885).

LETTER 75. *First Edition* (March 1, 1877).—Pages 57–94. A “cancel” sheet (pp. 57–58, 71–72) was issued with Letter 76, accompanied by a slip dated “Orpington, April 2.” For the mistakes on pp. 71–72, which rendered the substitution of this sheet necessary, see below.

Second Edition (September 1884).—The mistakes above mentioned were corrected.

LETTER 76. *First Edition* (April 2, 1877).—Pages 95–126.

Second Edition (December 1884).

LETTER 77. *First Edition* (May 1, 1877).—Pages 127–148.

Second Edition (August 1885).

LETTER 78. *First Edition* (June 1, 1877).—Pages 149–179. The actual date of publication was later: see Ruskin’s statement in § 17 (p. 140).

Second Edition (May 1885).

LETTER 79. *First Edition* (July 2, 1877).—Pages 181–213.

Second Edition (November 1883). *Third Edition* (January 1900). 150 copies.

LETTER 80. *First Edition* (August 1, 1877).—Pages 215–246.

Second Edition (May 1885).

LETTER 81. *First Edition* (September 1, 1877).—Pages 247–290.

Second Edition (May 1885).

LETTER 82. *First Edition* (October 1, 1877).—Pages 291–342.

Second Edition (May 1885).

This and some preceding Letters, though each of them dated the first of the several months, were in fact issued later: see Letter 82, § 7 (below, p. 227).

LETTER 83. *First Edition* (November 1, 1877).—Pages 343–388.

Second Edition (May 1885).

LETTER 84. *First Edition* (December 1, 1877).—Pages 389–412. At the foot of p. 412 is the imprint “Hazell, Watson, and Viney, Printers, London and Aylesbury.”

Second Edition (March 1885).

Letters 73–84 have never been reprinted collectively in volume form. Volumes supplied by the publisher have been made up from time to time of the separate Letters. The title-page originally issued was as here given (p. 3). That of the volume as now current bears the date “1895” and the words “Third Edition.”

NEW SERIES (VOL. VIII., 1878–1884)

With Letter 85 the “New Series” began (see p. 315). The twelve Letters comprising it were originally issued, separately, in buff-coloured paper wrappers. The first six Letters were numbered Letter the First, the Second, and so on. Then the consecutive numbering was adopted; thus, “Letter 91st (Seventh of New Series),” and so on. Letters 1–3 (85–87 in the collected series) had no title-pages, but a title on the front of the wrapper. Letters 4–12 (88–96) had title-pages as well. The “Advertisement” (as before) was printed on p. 4 of each wrapper. The price was 10d. each Letter.

LETTER 85 (New Series, Letter 1). *First Edition* (January 1878).—The title on the wrapper of this, and of the two succeeding Letters, was:—

Fors Clavigera. | Letters | to the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain.
| By John Ruskin, LL.D. | New Series. | Letter the First [Second, Third]
| January 1st [February 1st, March 1st], 1878 | [*Rose.*] | London: printed for
the author by | Hazell, Watson, & Viney, London & Aylesbury; | and to be
had of | Mr. George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | Price Tenpence.

Octavo, pp. 1–35.

Second Edition (March 1885).—This was headed “Letter the 85th,” instead of “Second Series, Letter 1.”

Third Edition (January 1896).—400 copies.

LETTER 86 (New Series, Letter 2).—*First Edition* (February 1, 1878).—Pages 37–74.

Second Edition (March 1885).—Renumbered.

Third Edition (January 1896).—350 copies.

LETTER 87 (New Series, Letter 3).—*First Edition* (March 1, 1878).—Pages 75–100.

Second Edition (March 1885).—Renumbered.

Third Edition (January 1896).—350 copies.

At the beginning of this Letter (1st ed.) the following slip was inserted:—

“Professor Ruskin, who is at present lying seriously ill—from prostration, caused by overwork—will not, until further notice, be able to issue ‘Fors,’ his medical advisers having ordered absolute rest for some time.”

“SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.

“February 26th.”

LETTER 88 (New Series, Letter 4).—The remaining Letters were issued with title-pages. Common to them all were the words: “Fors Clavigera. | Letters | to the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain. | By John Ruskin, LL.D. | [*Rose*.] | George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent.” On Letter 88 the description of the contents, after the author’s name, was “New Series. | Letter the Fourth | March 21, 1880.” The titles were reproduced on the front of the wrapper, with the addition of the words “Price Tenpence” at the foot. In the case of Letters 4–6 the date was omitted from the wrapper. In the case of Letter 4 only there was in ed. 1 an imprint at the foot of the reverse of the title-page—“Hazell, Watson, and Viney, Printers, London and Aylesbury.”

First Edition (March 21, 1880).—Pages 101–126. Page 101 was blank; on p. 102 was the quotation from the Orphic Hymn (see here p. 380).

Second Edition (June 1885).—Renumbered.

Third Edition (July 1900).—250 copies.

With this Letter, at the time of its original issue in March 1880, the following notice (written by Ruskin) was circulated by his publisher as a “Note” at the end of his list of “Works by Mr. Ruskin”:—

“The second series of *Fors Clavigera*, recommencing in the current number, will be carried forward as the author finds leisure, to the close of the eighth volume; the complete summary and indices of the whole, forming a smaller ninth volume, will be issued, with the closing letter, it is hoped within a year of the present date.

“The change in the plan of *Love’s Meinie*, from a limited series of University Lectures to a school book of Ornithology, has been the chief cause of the delay in the publication of the third lecture on the Chough. This is now in the press—but displaced so as to become the fourth in order;¹ the intermediate one, on the Ouzel and Dabchick, will be published together with the lecture on Serpents prepared for the London Institution, which will from the seventh number of *Deucalion*.² Both these lectures will be ready in April.

“The ‘*Elements of Prosody*’ were found by the author much more difficult, but also much more interesting matter to handle than he expected. The book is at last in the press, and may be safely promised, if all go well, for autumn issue in the present year.³

“→ Mr. Ruskin has always hitherto found his correspondents under the impression that, when he is able for average literary work, he can also answer any quantity of letters. He most respectfully and sorrowfully must pray them to observe that it is precisely when he is in most active general occupation that he can answer fewest private letters, and this year he proposes to answer—none, except those on St. George’s business. There will be enough news of him, for any who care to get them, in the occasional numbers of *Fors*.”

The last part of the notice was also lithographed on notepaper, with the address “Brantwood, Coniston” at the end, and circulated.

LETTER 89 (New Series, Letter 5).—On the title-page “New Series, | Letter the Fifth. | (September 29, 1880.”

First Edition (September 29, 1880).—Pages 127–158.

Of this Letter 525 copies were supplied free to Trade Unions, each copy being stamped “Trades Union Copy | presented | by the Author” (see below, p. 411).

Second Edition (January 1884).—Renumbered.

Third Edition (June 1892).—600 copies.

LETTER 90 (New Series, Letter 6).—On the title-page “New Series. | Letter the Sixth. | Lost Jewels. | May, 1883.”

¹ See on these matters Vol. XXV. pp. xxxi., xxxii.

² See now Vol. XXVI. pp. 295 *seq.*

³ See now Vol. XXXI.

First Edition (May 1883).—Pages 159–178. This Letter, and the succeeding ones, were entitled from the first.

Second Edition (April 1884).

Third Edition (March 1893).—500 copies.

LETTER 91 (New Series, Letter 7. This, and the remaining Letters were not, however, headed “Second Series”). On the title-page “Letter the 91st. |(Seventh of New Series.) | September, 1883. | Dust of Gold.”

First Edition (September 1883).—Pages 179–191.

Second Edition (August 1885).

Third Edition (January 1900).—250 copies.

LETTER 92 (New Series, Letter 8).—On the title-page “Letter the 92nd. |(Eighth of New Series) | November 1883. | Ashestiel.”

First Edition (November 1883).—Page 193–214.

Second Edition (March 1886).

LETTER 93 (New Series, Letter 9).—On the title-page “Letter the 93rd. |(Ninth of New Series.) | Christmas, 1883. | Invocation.” Of this Letter the *first* is the only edition. 3000 copies. Pages 215–230.

LETTER 94 (New Series, Letter 10).—On the title-page “Letter the 94th. |(Tenth of New Series.) | March, 1884. | Retrospect.”

First Edition (March 1884).—Pages 231–250. 3000 copies.

Second Edition (January 1900).—250 copies.

LETTER 95 (New Series, Letter 11).—On the title-page “Letter the 95th. |(Eleventh of New Series.) | October, 1884. | Fors Infantia.”

First Edition (October 1884).—Pages 251–281. 3000 copies.

Second Edition (January 1899).—350 copies.

This Letter had a frontispiece, “Theuth’s Earliest Lesson” (here Plate VII.).

Some portion of § 21 in this Letter had previously been used in the papers on *A Museum or Picture-Gallery* (1880): see below, p. 509 *n*.

LETTER 96 (New Series, Letter 12).—On the title-page “Letter the 96th (Terminal). |(Twelfth of New Series.) | Christmas, 1884. | Rosy Vale.” Pages 283–306. 3000 copies.

Of this Letter the *first* is the only edition. It had a frontispiece (Plate VIII.).

A slip inserted at the beginning of Letter 96 reads as follows:—

“ADVICE

“SUBSCRIBERS TO ‘FORS CLAVIGERA’ are requested to note that the present Letter (No. 96, ‘Rosy Vale’) completes Volume VIII., and the entire series of the work; also that a general Index is in preparation, of which due notice of publication and price will be given shortly.

“SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.

“*Christmas, 1884.*”

Letters 85–96 have never been collectively reprinted; but the separate numbers are made up by the publisher into a volume. The title-page, as first supplied, is shown here on p. 305.

SMALL EDITION

For particulars of this edition, and of the Pocket Edition, see Vol. XXVII. pp. c.-ciii. Letters 73–96 occupy vol. iv. The following are

the curtailments, etc., made in it, in addition to the omission of all the “Notes and Correspondence” in Letters 73, 74, 77, 78, 83, 85, 86, and 89.

LETTER 73. The passage in § 1 (“In which seventh year . . . my books”) is omitted.

LETTER 74. The author’s footnote to § 15 is omitted.

LETTER 75. § 76, fourth line from end, “Mr. Swan has” altered to “there are.” The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except § 21.

LETTER 76. The author’s footnote to § 12 is omitted. The “Notes and Correspondence” are given, except § 22.

LETTER 77. §§ 1, 6, the footnotes are omitted. § 8, the footnote is altered into one giving a short explanation of § 16 (“Notes and Correspondence”).

LETTER 79. The passage at the end of § 11 (“For Mr. Whistler’s own sake. . . public’s face”) is omitted. In the second edition of the octavo issue, though later than the libel case, it was retained. The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that § 14 is given (but not the Accounts).

LETTER 80. Of the “Notes and Correspondence” only §§ 14, 15 (omitting the first paragraph), 16, 17, 22 are given.

LETTER 81. § 4, the author’s footnote is omitted. § 10, the last three lines are omitted. The “Notes and Correspondence” are omitted, except that parts of §§ 14, 15 are strung together and given, and that the whole of §§ 17–20 is given.

LETTER 82. § 22, the last sentence but one is omitted. Of the “Notes and Correspondence” only §§ 28, 29, 30, 33, 34 are given.

LETTER 86. § 12 *n.*, the passage, “The following note. . .” to the end, is omitted.

LETTER 88. § 1, the passage, “These will be. . .the work,” is omitted.

LETTER 89. § 6, the author’s footnote is omitted.

LETTER 90. The whole of §§ 10–12 is omitted.

LETTER 93. The “Christmas Postscript” (§ 11) is omitted.

LETTER 95. The whole of §§ 24–27 is omitted.

REVIEWS

Spectator, April 7 and 14, 1877: articles entitled “Mr. Ruskin’s Will” and “Microscopic Extravagance.”

Saturday Review, April 14, 1877: “The Confessions of Mr. Ruskin.”

Standard, August 22, 1877 (referred to in Letter 81, § 13; below, p. 207).

Spectator, September 22, 1877. An article entitled “Mr. Ruskin’s Unique Dogmatism,” quoted and commented upon in Letter 85 (below, pp. 318–322).

Appleton’s Journal (New York), July 1878, N.S., vol. 5, pp. 58–65: “Ruskin’s *Fors Clavigera*” (an intelligent summary of the book).

Atlantic Monthly, July 1878, vol. 42, pp. 39–51. An article by H. E. Scudder on “St. George’s Company” (a summary of *Fors*).

Spectator, March 15 and 22, 1879: “Mr. Ruskin’s Society.” “We give this account,” wrote the editor, “from a friend of the scheme, as of a certain intellectual interest. We pass no criticism on what may be called a dream of fair living.”

The Manchester Magazine, January 1880, vol. 2, pp. 116–118: “What is the Guild of St. George? Abstract of a lecture delivered to the Aberdeen Branch of the Ruskin Society,” by Mr. John Morgan (for whom, see Vol. XIV. p. 312).

The Bingley Telephone and Airedale Courant, April 23, 1880 (referred to in Letter 89, § 1; below, p. 398).

The Winchester Review, June 15, 1880, No. 2, pp. 74–90: an article entitled “A New Utopia,” by E. Clarke.

The Scotsman, November 15, 1883 (“Mr. Ruskin on Ashestiel”).

Pall Mall Gazette, November 14 and December 27, 1883 (Letter 92 and 93); March 8 and December 23, 1884 (Letters 94 and 96).

Variae Lectiones.—Letter 73, § 3, lines 7 and 10, “you” and “them” italicised in accordance with Ruskin’s marking in his copy. § 11, footnote, “December 2” is here a correction for “December 1.” § 15, first note, see p. 24 *n.* § 18, line 2, “makes” is similarly corrected to “make.” § 18 (line 17 of p. 29 here), “67” (the number of the Letter referred to) has hitherto been misprinted “p. 27.”

Letter 74, § 2, footnote, line 3, “Coldara” is corrected to “Caldara.” § 5, for a passage struck out by the author, see p. 33 *n.* § 7, line 29, “angel’s” in ed. 1, “angels” later. § 15, line 27, “be” was misprinted “to” in ed. 2. § 18, line 2, “for” (in ed. 1) was misprinted “or” in later editions. In “Egbert Rydings” account, under January 1, 1877, “Guy” was misprinted “Gay” in ed. 1. At the end of the “Notes and Correspondence” there was the following: “ERRATUM.—In *Fors* of December last, p. 381, for xxxiii. read xxxiii.” (see Vol. XXVIII. p. 759). The mistake was corrected in ed. 3 of Letter 72.

Letter 75, § 2, line 8, “melons” has hitherto been misprinted “lemons.” § 9, the last word in the quotation from Cheney is here “permitted” (as in Cheney) instead of “allowed” (in previous editions). See also p. 65 *n.* § 10, line 15, “Couttet” was misprinted “Contet” in ed. 1 and “Coutet” afterwards. § 12, line 2, “quæso” is here a correction for “queso”; line 9, “87th” Psalm is here a correction for “86th.” § 14, footnote, “Edward” has hitherto been misprinted “Edwards.” § 21 (line 16 of p. 78 here), the word “Free” before “Church” is here omitted; Ruskin wrote it in error—the Act to which the letter refers was concerned with the Established Church.

Letter 76, § 1, line 28, “or” before “householder” in ed. 1, afterwards corrected to “nor.” § 15, line 5, “£2200” is the author’s correction for “£1200.” § 18, line 20, “for” is here inserted after “preparing.”

Letter 77, § 3, line 32, the commas before and after “following” (important for the sense) are now inserted in accordance with a note in Ruskin’s copy.

Letter 78, § 7, lines 19–21, the text has hitherto read: “No. 10, which is of a door of St. Mark’s, with two prophets bearing scrolls, in the midst of vineleaf ornament on each side, and look . . .” The corrections now made are from Ruskin’s copy. So in § 8, “The two northern” and “The two southern” are his corrections for “Northern” and “Southern”; and “in No. 11” is his insertion in line 12.

Letter 79, note (h), see p. 155 n.

Letter 80, § 8, dots are here introduced in the first passages from Plato, to mark where Ruskin passes from 698 B to 699 C. § 9, line 11, at the word "translation" there was in all the octavo editions an asterisk with the following footnote appended:—

* "*Rock Honeycomb* cost me and my printers' best reader more than usual pains to get into form: some errata have, nevertheless, escaped us both; of which 'fully' for 'full,' in line 114, as spoiling a pretty stanza, and '106' for '166,' in page 62, as causing some inconvenience, had better be at once corrected. It is also the hundred and first, not the fifty-first psalm whose rhythm is analyzed at page xliii. of the Preface."

These corrections are made in *Rock Honeycomb* as printed in this edition (Vol. XXXI.).

Letter 81, § 10, third line from end, "Grey" hitherto is a misprint for "Guy" (corrected by Ruskin in his copy).

Letter 82, § 2, the reference to Müller's *Dorians* is here corrected from "ch. ii." to "ch. xi.," and in the extract "Æolic" is a correction for "Eolic." § 10, author's footnote, "subject of much" is here a correction for "much subject of." § 15, author's footnote, line 5, has hitherto been in all editions "*must* be read now, though I'm terribly sorry to give it only in small print. It must not have small print. . ."; altered by Ruskin in his copy as in the present text. It is strange that the correction should not have been made by his proof-readers, for the passage was given in large print. Ruskin obviously changed his mind in the course of writing the note, and forgot to strike out the words "I'm terribly sorry," etc. § 17, line 20, and § 19, fifth line from end, ed. 1 and the Small Edition "Dionysus"; misprinted "Dionysius" in ed. 2. § 19, note (IV.), line 2, "peoples" in ed. 1. § 20, last line but one, "to" before "be" is omitted as marked by Ruskin in his copy. § 23, line 4, "person" has hitherto been misprinted for "power." § 24, author's footnote, "Blachford" is here a correction for "Blackford." § 33, "Schwab" has hitherto been misprinted "Schawb."

Letter 83, § 7, line 3, " 'guided' " in ed. 1; "guided" afterwards; the quotation marks are now restored, as the reference is to the corrected word in Scott's manuscript in § 6. § 24, last line, "Reddie" has hitherto been misprinted "Rennie."

Letter 85, § 10, line 11, the inverted commas after "alleged incomes" were omitted in ed. 3. § 12, line 24, "Herbert Spencer" has hitherto been misprinted "Spencer Herbert." § 14, ed. 1 had a misprint in the extract from Viollet-le-Duc—*e.g.*, "dike" for "dyke" in the eleventh line from the end of the present p. 332; on the other hand, ed. 3 misprinted "were" for "where" in line 7 of p. 334.

Letter 86, § 1, line 3, "an MS." in ed. 1. § 12, footnote, line 13, "retards" in ed. 1. § 16, line 6, "Saint Cross" has hitherto been misprinted "South Cross." § 17, line 20 of Mr. Willett's letter, "systems" was misprinted for "system" in ed. 3. § 18, line 40, "adapted" was misprinted "adopted" in ed. 1. § 26, fifth line from the end of Miss Hill's letter, "people" for "the people" in ed. 1.

Letter 87, § 1, line 9, "the" is Ruskin's correction in his copy for "these," and ed. 1 reads "nor is it possible." § 2, line 26, "Winny" is here altered to "Winnie" (to correspond with the spelling of the name

in *Castle Blair*). § 4, line 23, “and” is similarly his insertion; and so also “following” in § 7, line 24. In § 13, line 5, the punctuation now given is in accordance with Ruskin’s correction; the passage has hitherto been printed “I am myself so nearly, as you are so grievously faithless . . .” § 13, line 35, “and” was misprinted “add” in the third and small editions. § 14, line 10, “of” misprinted “or” in ed. 3. § 15, line 11, “Parizade” was misprinted “Pairzael” in ed. 1; line 17 from end, “worked” was misprinted “worked” in ed. 1; Ruskin in his copy changed the “worked” of later editions into “wrought.”

Letter 88, § 11, line 56, “1861” is here a correction for “1864.” § 14, line 49, for “three nights” ed. 1 reads “four nights.” § 17, line 13, “a twelfth” is here a correction for “an eleventh.”

Letter 89, § 1, lines 6–9, the brackets are inserted in accordance with Ruskin’s copy. § 2, line 2, “silence hitherto” is his correction for “hitherto silence.” § 7, the last word “nations” is here substituted in accordance with Hartwig’s text for “governments.” § 8, line 18, “these” is his correction for “their.” § 10, line 6, “while” is his correction for “and.” § 13, line 19, the word “is” has now been inserted after “in which.” § 14, line 26, the word “getting” is here inserted. § 18, line 20, “industrious” was misprinted “industries” in ed. 3.

Letter 90, § 11, line 12, “dog” is here a correction for “dogs.”

Letter 91, § 4, line 4, “develope” in ed. 1.

Letter 92, § 6, the quotation marks were incorrectly printed in previous editions. § 7, line 6, “six” is here a correction for “five.”

Letter 93, § 5, line 2, “not only that” is here a correction (required by the subsequent form of the sentence) for “that, not only.” In the list of members of the Guild (p. 477) “Somervell” is here a correction for “Somerville.”

Letter 95, § 25, line 4 of (2) “Mr. Park’s (family?)” is here a correction for “Mr. Park”; the former words being those given in Mr. Craig-Brown’s book (for which, see p. 512 *n.*).

Letter 96, § 1, line 1, “Menevia” is here a correction for “Meneira.” § 4. The account of “The Mother of the Orphans” was reprinted with some revisions in Part III. of *Christ’s Folk in the Apennine* (1887). The revisions have been followed in the text given in this volume. They are (in addition to minor matters of punctuation) as follows:—

In lines 8 and 9, *Fors* reads “the contemplative side of such a life.”

On page 520, the note * and † were not given in *Christ’s Folk*; lines 10, 11, 28 and 29, the italics were added in *Christ’s Folk*; page 521, line 6, *Fors* reads “at” for “on,” and in line 12, “the room” for “a room”; line 26, *Fors* adds “leave it” after “do.” The italics and the two footnotes on this page were not given in *Christ’s Folk*.

Page 522, lines 1 and 2, the italics were not there given; lines 33 *seq.*, *Fors* has “D.” for “Don.” Differences in the author’s footnotes are explained under the text.

Page 523, line 2, “(3d.)” is an addition from *Christ’s Folk*, as is “Don” for “D.”; line 32, the italics were not given in *Christ’s Folk*.

Page 525, the italics and the footnote were not in *Christ’s Folk*.

Page 526. The footnote is added from *Christ’s Folk*.]

FORS CLAVIGERA
LETTERS 73–96

FORS CLAVIGERA.

LETTERS *TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS OF GREAT BRITAIN.*

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART.

VOL. VII.



GEORGE ALLEN,
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.
1877.

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(1877)

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| <p>(<i>Venice, November 20, 1876.</i>) 1. The seventh year of <i>Fors</i> to close its first series. Plans for a future series. 2. "Clavigera," as nailing follies to the barn-door. Saying of the <i>Pall Mall Gazette</i> that "the wealth of the world is infinite," examined. 3, 4. Limitation of the quantity and use of true wealth. 5. Fraud and force hitherto the modes of obtaining land. 6, 7. The newspapers on England's "immense accession of wealth," and their tests of prosperity. 8. The author's suggestions: a registry of inhabitants and incomes in each district: <i>e.g.</i>, Sheffield. 9. A peace commissariat. 10. Community of wage-fund; idle persons to be fed, if tolerated. 11. A Duke of Sheffield to be elected. Advantages of fixed salaries beginning to be perceived. 12. Middlemen would not be tolerated, if once visible: retail, and cost, price of beer. 13. Drunkenness, so shocking to the respectable society dining with the brewer at Drayton Park. 14. The need of education. The art of being rightly amused. 15. The <i>Larvs</i> of Plato on Music.</p> <p>NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE.—16. Affairs of the Company. 17. Affairs of the Master. 18. Letter from "A Methodist Preacher."</p> | |

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Venetian laws regulating the sale of fruit. John Bright and the author. A new Corn Law Rhyme taught to the author in St. Mark's Portico. Results of free trade in modern Venetian greengrocery. 12. Ancient "Mother Law" of Venice forbidding middlemen in the sale of melons. (*January 5.*) 13. Food of the poor the first care of Venetian legislation. 14. The prayer for daily bread. 15. The Devil's taxes on the food of the poor. 16. "Four little myths" on the Eastern Question.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE.—17. Accounts of the Company. 18. Accounts of the Master: author's absence of mind at Verona. 19. Letter on "Turkish Loans and Bulgarian Atrocities." 20. Reference to a letter from a Scottish correspondent.

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10. Plato's "necessary sciences." 11, 12. Science evilly laid hold of worse than none. A great sentence from Plato, and its translators. 13. Plato on the teaching of science. 14. Asceticism and self-discipline to be practised only to make us capable of sacred joy. 15. Importance of birth in education. Plato on tragedy: Greek ideal of drama. Actors, doers. Realities of life, the best and truest tragedy. 16. Plato's scheme of education. Grammar (the general word for literature) only to be taught to youths for three years. 17. First training of children. Virtue, the symphony of the soul's faculties and parts. The essence of education is Music, properly understood. 18. Definitions and relations of Soul and Body in Plato's writings. Music essential to the right government of passions and intellect. Choral association essential to it. 19. Importance of children's play. Deadliness of novelty in youthful education. Rank of Angels among ancient spiritual powers. Plato's Three Choirs. Sacred continuance of song in the discipline of adult life. 20. Uselessness of Plato's conception to the modern mind. His ideal and its perversion. How the evil angels pervert the powers of the greatest men; yet their ministry to the soul of the race continues. 21. Sermon by the Bishop of Manchester on the peril of anticipating immortality. J. S. Mill on belief in immortality as a useful illusion. 22. Challenge to the Bishop on Usury repeated. 23. The gist of the author's quotations from Plato. Spiritual uses of dress, food, and music; reformation of the lower orders only possible by distribution of these things among them. The test of Christianity. 24. The need of giving to the poor without any return therefor. Modern prayer only street-boys' play with God's door-knocker. 25. Exhortation to learn the meaning of Prayer and Alms. *Dies Misericordiæ* to be remembered with the *Dies Iræ*. The Light of the Day of the Lord: to whom promised.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE.—26. Affairs of the Company prospering. 27. Affairs of the Master too many for him. 28. Letter from a correspondent on the conduct of life. 29. The author's reply: no compromise with evil possible. The true meaning of martyrdom and idolatry. 30. Advice on bodily exercise. 31. Report of the Howard Association on "Industrial Education *versus* Crime." 32. Letter from an English doctor, settled as a farmer in California. 33. Letter from Thomas Dixon on the new Labour League of America and on English leisure. 34. An answer from Plato. 35. Article from the *Scotsman* on rural depopulation.

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the ruin of the Doric cities. His definition of music, as the movement of sound so as to reach the soul for the education of it in virtue. 5. The Greek "Amusia" and modern "Amusement." The measure of Hesiod: the half more than the whole. 6. Ruin of England by the "amusia" of her Cavaliers and Puritans. Unconscious action of Scott's imagination as pleaded by Scott himself in the *Fortunes of Nigel*. 7. The heavenly involuntariness of the great masters. 8. Its connexion with sense of moral law. 9. "Poetical Justice." Shakespeare and Tragic Destiny. 10. Assertion of moral law in the *Heart of Midlothian*, the greatest of Scott's novels. Its analysis of Protestantism. 11. Its tragedy the result of "museless" hardness of nature. 12. Muselessness of the Cameronian leaders. Puritan errors respecting dancing; their negligence of the laws of nature; consequent corruption of dance and song. 13. The sirenic blasphemy of modern oratorio and opera. Plato's "euphemy" and "blasphemy." 14. Letter from A. S. Murray on Greek myths of music. 15. The author's interpretation of them.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE.—16. Affairs of the Company. Difficulties on the Abbey Dale property. 17. Affairs of the Master. His wood-chopping. 18. Article from the *Builder* on land monopoly. 19, 20. Extracts and Correspondence on Temporalities and Church Leases (1838). 21. Archbishop Tait and Irish Disestablishment: newspaper extract. 22. Letter on the conditions of labour in the case of a shop-girl under a churchwarden. 23. False and true education exemplified in the bondage of a government teacher, and the happiness of an old shepherd and his wife. 24. Manchester and the Thirlmere water scheme. Hydrophobia. 25. The real causes of the Indian famine. 26. The instincts of maternity extinguished by Mammon. Some statistics of home produce in 1857. 27. Talbot Village, Bournemouth. 28. Mourning by machinery: a tolling machine.

LETTER 84 (*December*)

THE LAST WORDS OF THE VIRGIN

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(*Brantwood, October 29.*) 1. "They have no wine:" an appeal for the help of the poor. "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it:" a command to serve the Lord. 2. An autumn evening above the Lago di Garda. 3, 4. The peasant race of Northern Italy. The Church on earth is now in such peasant races. 5. "To give them their meat in due season." 6. The return of the Lord "from the wedding." 7. "My Lord delayeth his coming." 8–11. The punishment of hypocrisy and division of heart: passages from Livy and Dante. 12. "Choose ye this day whom you will serve." 13. Future plans for *Fors Clavigera*: henceforth to be constructive only, the author putting aside expostulation and blame. 14. Summary of the evil of the day. Pillage of the labourer by the idler—the landlord, soldier, lawyer, priest, merchant, and usurer. To be cured only by an ordered Hierarchy. 15. The words of the King to the Seven Churches; 16, addressed to their Angels, or Guardian Spirits. 17–26. Analysis of Revelation, chapters ii. and iii.

FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTER 73

COMMISSARIAT¹

VENICE, 20th November, 1876.

1. THE day on which this letter will be published will, I trust, be the first of the seventh year of the time during which I have been permitted, month by month, to continue the series of *Fors Clavigera*. In which seventh year I hope to gather into quite clear form the contents of all the former work; closing the seventh volume with accurate index of the whole.² These seven volumes, if I thus complete them, will then be incorporated as a single work in the consecutive series of my books.

If I am spared to continue the letters beyond the seventh year, their second series³ will take a directly practical character, giving account of, and directing, the actual operations of St. George's Company; and containing elements of instruction for its schools, the scheme of which shall be, I will answer for it,⁴ plainly enough, by the end of this year, understood. For, in the present volume,⁵ I intend speaking directly, in every letter, to the Yorkshire

¹ [See below, § 9.]

² [On this subject, see below, p. 166.]

³ [Letters 85–96 (No. 85 being the first of the eighth year) were called “New Series”: see the Bibliographical Note (above, p. xxx.).]

⁴ [“But I did not say ‘If the Lord will,’ and the answer was an entirely unexpected one.”—*MS. note by Author in his copy*. He refers to the illnesses which made the last volume of *Fors* intermittent, and prevented him from carrying out the intentions stated in the text, which, moreover, were somewhat modified in a later Letter (see below, p. 138).]

⁵ [Of the original edition, Letters 73–84.]

operatives, and answering every question they choose to put to me,—being very sure that they will omit few relevant ones.

2. And first they must understand one more meaning I have in the title of the book. By calling it the “Nail bearer,” I mean not only that it fastens in sure place the truths it has to teach (January, 1872¹), but also, that it nails down as on the barn-door of our future homestead, for permanent and picturesque exposition, the extreme follies of which it has to give warning: so that in expanded heraldry of beak and claw, the spread, or split, harpies and owls of modern philosophy may be for evermore studied, by the curious, in the parched skins of them.

For instance, at once, and also for beginning of some such at present needful study, look back to Letter 44, §§ 2, 3,² wherein you will find a paragraph thus nailed fast out of the *Pall Mall Gazette*—a paragraph which I must now spend a little more space of barn-door in delicately expanding. It is to the following effect (I repeat, for the sake of readers who cannot refer to the earlier volumes):—

“The wealth of this world may be ‘practically’ regarded as infinitely great. It is not true that what one man appropriates becomes thereby useless to others; and it is also untrue that force or fraud, direct or indirect, are the principal, or indeed that they are at all common or important, modes of acquiring wealth.”

You will find this paragraph partly answered, though but with a sneer, in the following section, § 4; but I now take it up more seriously, for it is needful you should see the full depth of its lying.

3. The “wealth of this world” consists, broadly, in its healthy food-giving land, its convenient building land, its useful animals, its useful minerals, its books, and works of art.³

The healthy food-giving land, so far from being infinite, is, in fine quality, limited to narrow belts of the globe.

¹ [Letter 13, § 4 (Vol. XXVII. p. 231; and compare Letter 60, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 463).]

² [Vol. XXVIII. pp. 126–128.]

³ [Compare *A Joy for Ever*, §§ 144 *seq.* (Vol. XVI. pp. 129 *seq.*.)]

What properly belongs to *you* as Yorkshiremen is only Yorkshire. You, by appropriating Yorkshire, keep other people from living in Yorkshire. The Yorkshire squires say the whole of Yorkshire belongs to *them*, and will not let any part of Yorkshire become useful to anybody else, but by enforcing payment of rent for the use of it; nor will the farmers who rent it allow its produce to become useful to anybody else but by demanding the highest price they can get for the same.

The convenient building land of the world is so far from being infinite, that, in London, you find a woman of eight-and-twenty paying one-and-ninepence a week for a room in which she dies of suffocation with her child in her arms (*Fors*, December, 1872¹); and, in Edinburgh, you find people paying two pounds twelve shillings a year for a space nine feet long, five broad, and six high, ventilated only by the chimney (*Fors*, April, 1874; and compare March, 1873²).

4. The useful animals of the world are not infinite: the finest horses are very rare; and the squires who ride them, by appropriating them, prevent you and me from riding them. If you and I and the rest of the mob took them from the squires, we could not at present probably ride them; and unless we cut them up and ate them, we could not divide them among us, because they are not infinite.

The useful minerals of Yorkshire are iron, coal, and marble,—in large quantities, but not infinite, quantities by any means; and the masters and managers of the coal mines, spending their coal on making useless things out of the iron, prevent the poor all over England from having fires, so that they can now only afford close stoves (if those!) (*Fors*, March, 1873³).

The books and works of art in Yorkshire are not infinite, nor even in England. Mr. Fawkes' Turners are many, but not infinite at all, and as long as they are at Farnley

¹ [Letter 24, § 19 (Vol. XXVII. p. 431).]

² [Letter 40, § 11 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 73), and Letter 27, § 11 (Vol. XXVII. p. 498).]

³ [Letter 27, § 14 (Vol. XXVII. p. 502).]

they can't be at Sheffield. My own thirty Turners¹ are not infinite, and as long as they are at Oxford, can't be at Sheffield. You won't find, I believe, another such thirteenth-century Bible as I have given you,² in all Yorkshire; and so far from other books being infinite, there's hardly a woman in England, now, who reads a clean one, because she can't afford to have one but by borrowing.³

5. So much for the infinitude of wealth. For the mode of obtaining it, all the land in England was first taken by force, and is now kept by force. Some day, I do not doubt you will yourselves seize it by force.⁴ Land never has been, nor can be, got, nor kept, otherwise, when the population on it was as large as it could maintain. The establishment of laws respecting its possession merely defines and directs the force by which it is held:⁵ and fraud, so far from being an unimportant mode of acquiring wealth, is now the only possible one; our merchants say openly that no man *can* become rich by honest dealing. And it is precisely because fraud and force *are* the chief means of becoming rich, that a writer for the *Pall Mall Gazette* was found capable of writing this passage. No man could by mere overflow of his natural folly have written it. Only in the settled purpose of maintaining the interest of Fraud and Force; only in fraudfully writing for the concealment of Fraud, and frantically writing for the help of unjust Force, do literary men become so senseless.⁶

The wealth of the world is not infinite, then, my Sheffield friends; and moreover, it is most of it unjustly divided, because it has been gathered by fraud, or by dishonest force, and distributed at the will, or lavished by the neglect, of such iniquitous gatherers. And you have to ascertain

¹ [Ruskin's collection of Turners was much more numerous (see Vol. XIII. pp. 556–558). He must here refer to those which happened to be in his rooms at Corpus at this time.]

² [See Letter 70, § 13 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 727).]

³ [Compare Letter 16, § 12 (Vol. XXVII. p. 288).]

⁴ [Compare Letter 2, § 3 (Vol. XXVII. p. 30).]

⁵ [Compare Letter 45, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 152).]

⁶ [Compare below, p. 200.]

definitely, if you will be wise Yorkshiremen, how much of it is actually within your reach in Yorkshire, and may be got without fraud, by *honest* force. Compare Propositions V. and VI., October, 1872.¹

6. It ought to be a very pleasant task to you, this ascertaining how much wealth is within your reach in Yorkshire, if, as I see it stated in the article of the *Times* on Lord Beaconsfield's speech at the Lord Mayor's dinner, quoted in *Galignani* of the 10th of November, 1876:² "The immense accession of wealth which this country has received through the development of the railway system and the establishment of free trade, makes the present war expenditure," etc., etc., etc. what it does in the way of begetting and feeding Woolwich Infants³ is not at present your affair; your business is to find out what it does, and what you can help it to do, in making it prudent for you to beget, and easy for you to feed, Yorkshire infants.

But are you quite sure the *Times* is right? Are we indeed, to begin with, richer than we were? How is anybody to know? Is there a man in Sheffield who can,—I do not say, tell you what the country is worth,—but even show you how to set about ascertaining what it is worth?

The *Times* way, *Morning Post* way, and *Daily News* way of finding out, is an easy one enough, if only it be exact.

Look back to *Fors* of December, 1871,⁴ and you will find the *Times* telling you that "by every kind of measure,

¹ [Letter 22, §§ 11, 12 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 379, 380).]

² [*Galignani* must have been here quoting from some other paper. The passage cited does not occur in the article of the *Times*, which was by no means sympathetic towards Lord Beaconsfield's speech; in this he said (on the eve of the Constantinople Conference): "Although the policy of England is peace, there is no country so well prepared for war as our own. If she enters into a conflict in a righteous cause, if the contest is one which concerns her liberty, her independence, or her Empire, her resources are, I feel, inexhaustible. She is not a country that, when she enters into a campaign, has to ask herself whether she can support a second or a third campaign."]

³ [See Letter 2, § 20 *n.* (Vol. XXVII. p. 43).]

⁴ [Letter 12, § 24 (Vol. XXVII. p. 215).]

and on every principle of calculation, the growth of our prosperity is established,” because we drink twice as much beer, and smoke three times as many pipes, as we used to. But it is quite conceivable to *me* that a man may drink twice as much beer, and smoke three times as many pipes, as he used to do, yet not be the richer man for it, nor his wife or children materially better off for it.

7. Again, the *Morning Post* tells you (*Fors*, October, 1872¹) that because the country is at present in a state of unexampled prosperity, coals and meat are at famine prices; and the *Daily News* tells you (*Fors*, May, 1873²) that because coals are at famine prices, the capital of the country is increased. By the same rule, when everything else is at famine prices, the capital of the country will be at its maximum, and you will all starve in the proud moral consciousness of an affluence unprecedented in the history of the universe. In the meantime your wealth and prosperity have only advanced you to the moderately enviable point of not being able to indulge in what the *Cornhill Magazine* (*Fors*, April, 1873³) calls “the luxury of a wife,” till you are forty-five—unless you choose to sacrifice all your prospects in life for that unjustifiable piece of extravagance;—and your young women (*Fors*, May, 1873⁴) are applying, two thousand at a time, for places in the Post Office!

8. All this is doubtless very practical, and businesslike, and comfortable, and truly English. But suppose you set your wits to work for once in a Florentine or Venetian manner, and ask, as a merchant of Venice would have asked, or a “good man” of the trades of Florence, *how much money there is in the town*,—who has got it, and what is becoming of it? These, my Sheffield friends, are the first of economical problems for *you*, depend upon it; perfectly soluble when you set straightforwardly about them; or, so

¹ [Letter 22, § 7 (Vol. XXVII. p. 376).]

² [Letter 29, § 1 (Vol. XXVII. p. 527).]

³ [Letter 28, § 19 (Vol. XXVII. p. 521).]

⁴ [Letter 29, § 10 (Vol. XXVII. p. 536).]

far as insoluble, instantly indicating the places where the roguery is. Of money honestly got, and honourably in use, you can get account: of money ill got, and used to swindle with, you will get none.

But take account at least of what is countable. Your initial proceeding must be to map out a Sheffield district clearly. Within the border of that, you will hold yourselves Sheffields;—outside of it, let the Wakefield and Bradford people look after themselves; but determine your own limits, and see that things are managed well within them. Your next work is to count heads. You must register every man, woman, and child, in your Sheffield district (compare and read carefully the opening of the *Fors* of February last year¹); then register their incomes and expenditure; it will be a business, but when you have done it, you will know what you are about, and how much the town is really worth.

9. Then the next business is to establish a commissariat.² Knowing how many mouths you have to feed, you know how much food is wanted daily. To get that quantity good; and to distribute it without letting middlemen steal the half of it, is the first great duty of civic authority in villages, of ducal authority in cities and provinces, and of kingly authority in kingdoms.

Now, for the organization of your commissariat, there are two laws to be carried into effect, as you gain intelligence and unity, very different from anything yet conceived for your co-operative stores—(which are a good and wise beginning, no less). Of which laws the first is that, till all the mouths in the Sheffield district are fed, no food must be sold to strangers. Make all the ground in your district as productive as possible, both in cattle and vegetables; and see that such meat and vegetables be distributed swiftly to those who most need them, and eaten fresh.

¹ [Letter 62, § 3 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 513).]

² [See the title to this Letter.]

Not a mouthful of anything is to be sold across the border, while any one is hungry within it.

10. Then the second law is, that as long as any one remains unfed, or barebacked, the wages fund must be in common.* When every man, woman, and child is fed and clothed, the saving men may begin to lay by money, if they like; but while there is hunger and cold among you, there must be absolutely no purse-feeding, nor coin-wrapping. You have so many bellies to fill;—so much wages fund (besides the eatable produce of the district) to do it with.† Every man must bring all he earns to the common stock.

“What! and the industrious feed the idle?”

Assuredly, my friends; and the more assuredly because under that condition you will presently come to regard their idleness as a social offence, and deal with it as such: which is precisely the view God means you to take of it, and the dealing He intends you to measure to it. But if you think yourselves exempted from feeding the idle, you will presently believe yourselves privileged to take advantage of their idleness by lending money to them at usury, raising duties on their dissipation, and buying their stock and furniture cheap when they fail in business. Whereupon you will soon be thankful that your neighbour’s shutters are still up, when yours are down; and gladly

* Don’t shriek out at this, for an impossible fancy of St. George’s. St. George only cares about, and tells you, the constantly necessary laws in a well-organized state. *This* is a temporarily expedient law in a distressed one. No man, of a boat’s crew on short allowance in the Atlantic, is allowed to keep provisions in a private locker;—still less must any man of the crew of a *city* on short allowance.¹

† “But how if other districts refused to sell *us* food, as you say we should refuse to sell food to *them*?”

You *Sheffielders* are to refuse to sell food only because food is scarce with you, and cutlery plenty. And as you had once a reputation for cutlery, and have yet skill enough left to recover it if you will, the other districts of England (and some abroad) will be glad still to give you some of their dinner in exchange for knives and forks,—which is a perfectly sagacious and expedient arrangement for all concerned.

¹ [Compare *Time and Tide*, § 65 (Vol. XVII. p. 372).]

promote his vice for your advantage. With no ultimate good to yourself, even at the devil's price, believe me.

11. Now, therefore, for actual beginning of organization of this Sheffield commissariat, since probably, at present, you won't be able to prevail on the Duke of York¹ to undertake the duty, you must elect a duke of Sheffield, for yourselves. Elect a doge, if, for the present, to act only as purveyor-general:—honest doge he must be, with an active and kind duchess. If you can't find a couple of honest and well-meaning married souls in all Sheffield to trust the matter to, I have nothing more to say: for by such persons, and by such virtue in them only, is the thing to be done.

Once found, you are to give them fixed salary* and fixed authority; no prince has ever better earned his income, no consul ever needed stronger lictors, than these will, in true doing of their work. Then, by these, the accurately estimated demand, and the accurately measured supply, are to be coupled, with the least possible slack of chain; and the quality of food, and price, absolutely tested and limited.

12. But what's to become of the middleman?²

If you really saw the middleman at his work, you would not ask that twice. Here's my publisher, Mr. Allen, gets tenpence a dozen for his cabbages; the consumer pays threepence each. That is to say, you pay for three cabbages

* The idea of fixed salary, I thankfully perceive, is beginning to be taken up³ by philanthropic persons (see notice of the traffic in intoxicating liquors in *Pall Mall Budget* for December 2, 1876⁴), but still connected with the entirely fatal notion that they are all to have a fixed salary themselves for doing nothing but lend money, which, till they wholly quit themselves of, they will be helpless for good.

¹ [At the time when Ruskin wrote, there was, however, no Duke of York, the title having been in abeyance from the death of George III.'s son Frederick in 1827 to the creation of the present Prince of Wales as Duke of York in 1892.]

² [The question is taken up again in the next Letter: see below, pp. 41–42.]

³ [That is, since Ruskin preached the idea in *Unto this Last* (1860): see Vol. XVII. pp. 33 *seq.*]

⁴ [A leading article entitled "The Traffic in Intoxicating Liquors," discussing Mr. Chamberlain's advocacy of the "Gothenburg System." One of his proposals is described as being "to empower local authorities to carry on the trade themselves through the agency of managers remunerated by fixed salaries."]

and a half, and the middleman keeps two and a half for himself, and gives you one.

Suppose you saw this financial gentleman, in bodily presence, toll-taking at your door,—that you bought three loaves, and saw him pocket two, and pick the best crust off the third as he handed it in;—that you paid for a pot of beer, and saw him drink two-thirds of it and hand you over the pot and sops,—would you long ask, then, what was to become of him?

To my extreme surprise, I find, on looking over my two long-delayed indexes,¹ that there occurs not in either of them the all-important monosyllable “Beer.” But if you will look out the passages referred to in the index for 1874, under the articles “Food” and “Fish,”² and now study them at more leisure, and consecutively, they will give you some clear notion of what the benefit of middlemen is to you; then, finally take the *Fors* of March, 1873,³ and read § 10 carefully,—and you will there see that it has been shown by Professor Kirk, that out of the hundred and fifty-six millions of pounds which you prove your prosperity by spending annually on beer and tobacco, you pay a hundred millions to the rich middlemen, and thirty millions to the middling middlemen, and for every two shillings you pay, get threepence-halfpenny-worth of beer to swallow!

13. Meantime, the Bishop, and the Rector, and the Rector’s lady, and the dear old Quaker spinster who lives in Sweetbriar Cottage, are *so* shocked that you drink so much, and that you are such horrid wretches that nothing can be done for you! and you mustn’t have your wages raised, because you *will* spend them in nothing but drink. And to-morrow they are all going to dine at Drayton Park, with the brewer who is your member of Parliament, and is building a public-house at the railway station, and

¹ [See Vol. XXVII. pp. 437, 505, 553, 568.]

² [See the Index, below, p. 631; and for the entries now supplied under “Beer,” p. 615.]

³ [Letter 27 (Vol. XXVII. p. 497).]

another in the High Street, and another at the corner of Philpott's Lane, and another by the stables at the back of Tunstall Terrace, outside the town, where he has just bricked over the Dovesbourne, and filled Buttercup Meadow with broken bottles; and, by every measure, and on every principle of calculation, the growth of your prosperity is established!

You helpless sots and simpletons! Can't you at least manage to set your wives—what you have got of them—to brew your beer, and give you an honest pint of it for your money? Let *them* have the halfpence first, anyhow, if they must have the kicks afterwards.

Read carefully over, then, thirsty and hungry friends, concerning these questions of meat and drink, that whole *Fors* of March, 1873; but chiefly Sir Walter's letter,¹ and what it says of Education, as useless, unless you limit your tipping-houses.*

14. Yet some kind of education is instantly necessary to give you the courage and sense to limit them. If I were in your place, I should drink myself to death in six months, because I had nothing to amuse me; and such education, therefore, as may teach you how to be rightly amused I am trying with all speed to provide for you. For, indeed, all real education, though it begins in the wisdom of John the Baptist—(quite *literally* so; first in washing with pure water²), goes on into an entirely merry and amused life, like St. Ursula's; and ends in a delightful death. But to be amused like St. Ursula you must feel like her, and become interested in the distinct nature of Bad and Good. Above all, you must learn to know faithful and good men from miscreants.³ Then you will be amused by knowing the histories of the good ones—and very greatly entertained by visiting their tombs, and seeing their statues. You will

* Compare *Fors*, February, 1872 [Letter 14, § 13 (Vol. XXVII. p. 256).]

¹ [Letter 27, § 13 (Vol. XXVII. p. 500).]

² [Compare Letter 71, § 12 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 740).]

³ [For this word, see Vol. XXVII. p. 466.]

even feel yourselves pleased, some day, in walking consider able distances, with that and other objects, and so truly seeing foreign countries, and the shrines of the holy men who are alive in them, as well as the shrines of the dead. You will even, should a voyage be necessary, learn to rejoice upon the sea, provided you know first how to row upon it, and to catch the winds that rule it with bright sails. You will be amused by seeing pretty people wear beautiful dresses when you are not kept yourselves in rags, to pay for them; you will be amused by hearing beautiful music, when you can get your steam-devil's tongues, and throats, and wind-holes anywhere else, stopped, that you may hear it; and take enough pains yourselves to learn to know it, when you do. All which sciences and arts St. George will teach you, in good time, if you are obedient to him:—without obedience, neither he nor any saint in heaven can help you.¹

15. Touching which, now of all men hated and abused, virtue,—and the connection more especially of the arts of the Muse with its universal necessity,—I have translated a piece of Plato for you,² which, here following, I leave you to meditate on till next month:—

“The Athenian.”—It is true, my friends, that over certain of the laws, with us, our populace had authority; but it is no less true that there were others to which they were entirely subject.

“The Spartan.”—Which mean you?

“The Athenian.”—First, those which in that day related to music, if indeed we are to trace up to its root the change which has issued in our now too licentious life.

For, at that time, music was divided according to certain ideas and forms necessarily inherent in it; and one kind of songs consisted of prayers to the gods, and were called hymns; and another kind, contrary to these, for the most part were called laments,* and another, songs of resolute strength

* The Coronach of the Highlanders represents this form of music down to nearly our own days. It is to be defined as the sacredly ordered expression of the sorrow permitted to human frailty, but contrary to prayer, according to Plato's words, because expressing will contrary to the will of God.³

¹ [For a passage originally intended for this Letter, see Appendix 19 (p. 578).]

² [*Laws*, ii. 700–701.]

³ [This note was placed in quotation marks in later editions, though not in ed. 1. It can hardly be doubted, however, that the note is Ruskin's.]

and triumph, were sacred to Apollo; and a fourth, springing out of the frank joy of life, were sacred to Dionusos, and called “dithyrambs.”* And these modes of music they called Laws as they did Laws respecting other matters; but the laws of music for distinction’s sake were called Harplaws.

And these four principal methods, and certain other subordinate ones, having been determined, it was not permitted to use one kind of melody for the purpose of another; and the authority to judge of these, and to punish all who disobeyed the laws concerning them, was not, as now, the hissing, or the museless † cry of the multitude in dispraise, neither their clapping for praise: but it was the function of men trained in the offices of education to hear all in silence; and to the children and their tutors, and the most of the multitude, the indication of order was given with the staff; ‡ and in all these matters the multitude of the citizens was willing

* “The origin of the word is unknown” (Liddell and Scott). But there must have been an idea connected with a word in so constant use, and spoken of matters so intimately interesting;¹ and I have myself no doubt that a sense of the doubling and redoubling caused by instinctive and artless pleasure in sound, as in nursery rhymes, extended itself gradually in the Greek mind into a conception of the universal value of what may be summed in our short English word “reply”; as, first, in the reduplication of its notes of rapture by the nightingale,—then, in the entire system of adjusted accents, rhythms, strophes, antistrophes, and echoes of burden; and, to the Greek, most practically in the balanced or interchanged song of answering bodies of chorus entering from opposite doors on the stage: continuing down to our own days in the alternate chant of the singers on each side of the choir.

† “Museless,” as one says “shepherdless,” unprotected or helped by the Muse.

‡ I do not positively understand this,² but the word used by Plato signifies properly, “putting in mind,” or rather putting in the notion, or “nous”; and I believe the wand of the master of the theatre was used for a guide to the whole audience, as that of the leader of the orchestra is to the band,—not merely, nor even in any principal degree, for time-keeping (which a pendulum in his place would do perfectly),—but for exhortation and encouragement. Supposing an audience thoroughly bent on listening and understanding, one can conceive the suggestion of parts requiring attention, the indication of subtle rhythm which would have escaped uncultivated ears, and the claim for sympathy in parts of singular force and beauty, expressed by a master of the theatre, with great help and pleasure to the audience;—we can imagine it best by supposing some

¹ [The derivation of the word remains unknown. Ruskin, in connecting it with some idea of “doubling,” accepts the old explanation, *δι θυραμβος* for *δι θυραμος*, applied to Bacchus, meaning *double-doored*, an allusion to the double birth of the god (see Euripides, *Bacchæ*, 526), who is thus supposed to have given the name to the strain. But the fact that the first syllable in *δι θυραμβος* is long seems a fatal objection to this explanation: see Donaldson’s *Theatre of the Greeks*, p. 17 n.]

² [*ραβδου κοσμουσης η νουθετησις εγγινετο.*]

to be governed, and did not dare to judge by tumult; but after these things, as time went on, there were born, beginners of the museless libertinage,—poets, who were indeed poetical by nature, but incapable of recognizing what is just and lawful for the Muse; exciting themselves in passion, and possessed, more than is due, by the love of pleasure: and these mingling laments with hymns, and pæans with dithyrambs, and mimicking the pipe with the harp, and dragging together everything into everything else, involuntarily and by their want of natural instinct* led men into the false thought that there is no positive rightness whatsoever in music, but that one may judge rightly of it by the pleasure of those who enjoy it, whether their own character be good or bad. And constructing such poems as these, and saying, concerning them, such words as these, they led the multitude into rebellion against the laws of music, and the daring of trust in their own capacity to judge of it. Whence the theatric audiences, that once were voiceless, became clamorous, as having professed knowledge, in the things belonging to the Muses, of what was beautiful and not; and instead of aristocracy in that knowledge, rose up a certain polluted theatrocracy. For if indeed the democracy had been itself composed of more or less well-educated persons, there would not have been so much harm; but from this beginning in music, sprang up general disloyalty, and *pronouncing of their own opinion by everybody about everything*; and on this followed mere licentiousness, for, having no fear of speaking, supposing themselves to know, fearlessness begot shamelessness. For, in our audacity, to have no fear of the opinion of the better person, is in itself a corrupt impudence, ending in extremity of license. And on this will always follow the resolve no more to obey established authorities; then, beyond this, men are fain to refuse the service and reject the teaching of father and mother, and of all old age,—and so one is close to the end of refusing to obey the national laws, and at last to think no more of oath, or faith, of of the gods themselves: thus at last likening themselves to the ancient and monstrous nature of the Titans, and filling their lives full of ceaseless misery.

great, acknowledged, and popular master, conducting his own opera, secure of the people's sympathy. A people not generous enough to give sympathy, nor modest enough to be grateful for leading, is not capable of hearing or understanding music. In our own schools, however, all that is needful is the early training of children under true musical law; and the performance, under excellent masters, of appointed courses of beautiful music, as an essential part of all popular instruction, no less important than the placing of classical books and of noble pictures, within the daily reach and sight of the people.

* Literally, "want of notion or conception."¹

¹ [μονσικης ακοντες υπ ανοιας καταψενδομενοι.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

16. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

Our accounts to the end of the year will be given in the February *Fors*.¹ The entire pause in subscriptions, and cessation of all serviceable offers of Companionship,* during the last six months, may perhaps be owing in some measure to the continued delay in the determination of our legal position. I am sure that Mr. Somervell,² who has communicated with the rest of the Companions on the subject, is doing all that is possible to give our property a simply workable form of tenure; and then, I trust, things will progress faster; but whether they do or not, at the close of this seventh year, if I live, I will act with all the funds then at my disposal.

17. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

| Paid— | | £ | s. | d. |
|-------|---|------|----|----|
| Nov. | 18. The Bursar of Corpus | 13 | 0 | 0 |
| " | Henry Swan; engraving for <i>Laws of Fésole</i> ³ | | | |
| | | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| " | 29. Jackson | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| Dec. | 7. C. F. Murray, for sketch of Princess Ursula and her Father, from Carpaccio ⁴ | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| | 10. Oxford Secretary | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | 11. Self at Venice† | 150 | 0 | 0 |
| | 12. Downs | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| | 15. Burgess | 42 | 0 | 0 |
| | | £395 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | |
|------------------------|-------|---|----------------|
| Balance, November 15th | £1135 | 3 | 4 ⁵ |
| | £395 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | |
|------------------------|------|---|---|
| Balance, December 15th | £740 | 3 | 4 |
|------------------------|------|---|---|

* I have refused several which were made without clear understanding of the nature of the Companionship; and especially such as I could perceive to be made, though unconsciously, more in the thought of the honour attaching to the name of Companions, than of the self-denial and humility necessary in their duties.

† Includes the putting up of scaffolds at St. Mark's and the Ducal Palace to cast some of their sculptures;⁶ and countless other expenses, mythologically definable as the opening of Danaë's brazen tower; besides enormous bills at the "Grand Hotel," and sundry inexcusable "indiscriminate charities."⁷

¹ [Letter 74 (p. 48).]

² [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 659.]

³ [Plate II.: see Vol. XV. p. 367.]

⁴ [No. 56 in the Sheffield Museum: see Vol. XXX.]

⁵ [This amount should be £670, 9s. 4d., leaving a balance on December 15th of £275, 9s. 4d. See Letter 74, § 18 (p. 50), where Ruskin corrects the mistakes in accounts in Letter 72, § 13.]

⁶ [Some of the casts were sent to Sheffield: see below, p. 116.]

⁷ [See Letters 4, § 7 (Vol. XXVII. p. 67), and 93, § 6 (below, p. 471).]

18. (III.) The mingled impertinence and good feeling of the following letter make it difficult to deal with.¹ I should be unjust to the writer in suppressing it, and to myself (much more to Mr. Sillar) in noticing it.² The reader may answer it for himself; the only passage respecting which I think it necessary to say anything is the writer's mistake in applying the rule of doing as you would be done by to the degree in which your neighbour may expect or desire you to violate an absolute law of God. It may often be proper, if civil to your neighbour, to drink more than is good for you; but not to commit the moderate quantity of theft or adultery which you may perceive would be in polite accordance with his principles, or in graceful compliance with his wishes.

“November 14th, 1876.

“DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—Why so cross? *I* don't want to discuss with you the ‘uses of Dissent.’ I am no more a Dissenting minister than you are, and not nearly as much of a Dissenter; and where you find my ‘duly dissenting scorn of the wisdom of the Greeks and the legality of the Jews’ I don't know.

“Mr. Sillar backbites with his pen, and does evil to his neighbour. He does it quite inadvertently, misled by a passage in a book he has just read. Mr. Ruskin, forgetting his own clear exposition of Psalm xv., takes up the reproach against his neighbour, believes the evil, and won't even pray for the sinner. I correct the mistake; whereupon Mr. Ruskin, instead of saying he is sorry for printing a slander, or that he is glad to find Mr. Sillar was mistaken, calls Mr. Wesley an ass (‘unwise Christian—altering rules so as to make them useless,’ are his words, but the meaning is the same), and sneers at Methodism evidently without having made even an ‘elementary investigation’ of its principles, or having heard one sermon from a Methodist preacher,—so at least I judge from *Fors* 36, § 7.

“If you wanted information—which you don't—about our rules, I would point out that our rules are only three:—1, ‘To do no harm;’ 2, ‘To do all the good we can to men's bodies and souls;’ and 3, ‘To attend upon all the ordinances of God.’ A Methodist according to Mr. Wesley's definition (pardon me for quoting another of his definitions; unfortunately, in this case it does not express what *is*, but what ought to be) is, ‘One who lives after the method laid down in the Bible.’

“In answer to your questions, we don't approve of *going to law*, yet sometimes it may be necessary to appeal unto Cæsar; and in making a reference to a Christian magistrate in a Christian country, we don't think we should be doing what St. Paul condemns,—‘going to law before the unjust, before unbelievers and not before saints.’

“As to usury and interest. Hitherto, perhaps wrongly, we have been satisfied with the ordinary ideas of men—including, apparently, some of your most esteemed friends—on the subject. You yourself did not find out the wrong of taking interest until Mr. Sillar showed you how to judge of it (*Fors* 43, § 14); and your investigations are still, like mine, so elementary that they have not influenced your practice.

“I cannot tell you with ‘pious accuracy’ the exact number of glasses of wine

¹ [For the previous letter from this correspondent, and Ruskin's comments thereon, see Letter 71, §§ 18, 19 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 750).]

² [Here in his notes for the Index Ruskin has: “*Dissent*, Temper of, illustrated by Dissenter's letter. As I arrange this bit of index, Fors sends me a letter from a friend with this sentence in it: ‘There is a chapel in the village, Methodist, I conclude—we were amused to find that the mangling was done in the chapel; so I suppose it is a laundry during the week.’”]

you may properly take, giving God thanks; but pray don't take too many. Personally, I fancy the rule, 'Do unto others as you would be done by,' would keep me on the right side if I had any capital to invest, which I haven't. My good mother, eighty-three years of age, has a small sum, and since reading *Fors* I have just calculated that she has already received the entire amount in interest; and of course she must now, if your ideas are correct, give up the principal, and 'go and work for more.'

"As for my postscript, I really thought from *Fors* 66 (§ 19), 67 (§ 22), that you were bothered with lawyers, and did not know what to do with sums of money given to you for a definite purpose, and which apparently could not be legally applied to that purpose. A plan that has answered well for John Wesley's Society would, I thought, answer equally well for another company, in which I feel considerable interest. The objects of the two societies are not very dissimilar: our rules are substantially yours, only they go a little further. But whilst aiming at remodelling the world, we begin by trying to mend ourselves, and to 'save our own souls,' in which I hope there is nothing to raise your ire, or bring upon us the vials of your scorn. Referring to *Fors* 67,¹ I think I may say that 'we agree with most of your directions for private life.' In our plain and simple way,—assuredly not with your eloquence and rigour,—'we promulgate and recommend your principles,' without an idea that they are to be considered distinctively yours. We find them in the Bible: and if we don't 'aid your plans by sending you money,' it is because not one of us in a hundred thousand ever heard of them; and besides, it is possible for us to think that, whilst your plans are good, our own are better. For myself, I have for some time wished and intended to send something, however trifling it might seem to you, towards the funds of St. George's Company. Will you kindly accept 20s. from a *Methodist Preacher*? * I was going to send it before you referred to us, but spent the money in your photographs and Xenophon;² and sovereigns are so scarce with me that I had to wait a little before I could afford another.

"And now, if you have read as far as this, will you allow me to thank you most sincerely for all that I have learnt from you? I could say much on this subject, but forbear. More intelligent readers you may have, but none more grateful than

"Yours very truly,

"A METHODIST PREACHER."

* With St. George's thanks.

¹ [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 657.]

² [That is, the Lesson Photographs and "The Economist of Xenophon" (vol. i. of *Bibliotheca Pastorum*).]

LETTER 74

FATHER-LAW

VENICE, *Christmas Day*, 1876.*

1. LAST night, St. Ursula sent me her dianthus “out of her bedroom window, with her love,”¹ and, as I was standing beside it, this morning,—(ten minutes ago only,—it has just struck eight), watching the sun rise out of a low line of cloud, just midway between the domes of St. George and the Madonna of Safety, there came into my mind the cause of our difficulties about the Eastern question:² with considerable amazement to myself that I had not thought of it before; but, on the contrary, in what I had intended to say, been misled, hitherto, into quite vain collection of the little I knew about either Turkey or Russia; and entirely lost sight (though actually at this time chiefly employed with it!) of what Little Bear has thus sent me the flower out of the dawn in her window, to put me in mind of,—the religious meanings of the matter.

I must explain her sign to you more clearly before I can tell you these.

2. She sent me the living dianthus (with a little personal message besides,³ of great importance to *me*, but of none to the matter in hand), by the hands of an Irish

* I believe the following entry to be of considerable importance to our future work; and I leave it, uncorrected, as it was written at the time for that reason.

¹ [For this passage, see the Introduction to Vol. XXIV. p. xliii.; and compare Letter 20, giving account of the picture of St. Ursula’s Dream (Vol. XXVII. p. 342, and Plate VIII.), and Letters 75, § 1, and 88, § 6 (below, pp. 54, 385).]

² [See below, p. 45. Ruskin in his notes for the Index compares Letter 75, § 7 (p. 60).]

³ [For “one of the pieces of the private message,” see Letter 76, § 18 (p. 101).]

friend now staying here:¹ but she had sent me also, in the morning, from England, a dried sprig of the other flower in her window, the sacred vervain,* by the hands of the friend who is helping me in all I want for *Proserpina*,—Mr. Oliver.²

Now the vervain is the ancient flower sacred to domestic purity; and one of the chief pieces of teaching which showed me the real nature of classic life, came to me ten years ago, in learning by heart one of Horace's house-songs, in which he especially associates this herb with the *cheerful* service—yet sacrificial service—of the household Gods.

“The whole house laughs in silver;—maid and boy in happy confusion run hither and thither; the altar, wreathed with chaste vervain, asks for its sprinkling with the blood of the lamb.”³

Again, the Dianthus, of which I told you⁴ more was to be learned, means, translating that Greek name, “Flower of God,” or especially of the Greek Father of the Gods; and it is of all wild flowers in Greece the brightest and richest in its divine beauty. (In *Proserpina*, note classification.†)

3. Now, see the use of myths, when they are living.

You have the Domestic flower, and the Wild flower.

* I had carelessly and very stupidly taken the vervain for a decorative modification of olive.⁵ It is painted with entire veracity, so that my good friend Signor Caldara (who is painting Venetian flowers for us,⁶ knew it for the “Erba Luisa” at the first glance), went to the Botanical Gardens here, and painted it from the life. I will send his painting, with my own drawing of the plant from the Carpaccio picture, to the Sheffield museum.⁷ They can there be photographed for any readers of *Fors* who care to see such likeness of them.

† All left as written, in confusion: I will make it clear presently [§ 5.]

¹ [Lady Castletown.]

² [See Vol. XXV. p. 331.]

³ [Horace, *Odes*, IV. xi. 6–10.]

⁴ [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 745 n.]

⁵ [In Letter 71: see Vol. XXVIII. p. 745.]

⁶ [See the Rudimentary Series at Oxford, Cabinet XI. (Vol. XXI. p. 231); and Letter 71 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 749).]

⁷ [The drawings, however, were not sent, but the Museum contains one by J. W. Bunney of St. Ursula's window with the plants. Ruskin's drawing was No. 176 in the Ruskin Exhibition at the Fine Art Society's Gallery in 1907.]

You have the Christian sacrifice of the Passover, for the Household; and the universal worship of Allah, the Father of all,—our Father which art in Heaven,¹—made of specialty to you by the light of the crimson wild flower on the mountains; and all this by specialty of sign sent to you in Venice, by the Saint whose mission it was to convert the savage people of “England over-sea.”²

4. I am here interrupted by a gift, from another friend, of a little painting of the “pitcher” (Venetian water-carrier’s) of holy water, with the sprinkling thing in it,—I don’t know its name,—but it reminds me of the “Tu asperges” in Lethe, in the *Purgatorio*,³ and of other matters useful to me: but mainly observe from it, in its bearing on our work, that the blood of Sprinkling, common to the household of the Greek, Roman, and the Jew,⁴—and water of Sprinkling, common to all nations on earth, in the Baptism to which Christ submitted,—the one speaketh better things than that of Abel, and the other than that unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, in so far as they give *joy* together with their purity; so that the Lamb of the Passover itself, and the Pitcher of Water borne by him who showed the place of it, alike are turned, the one, by the last Miracle, into sacramental wine which immortally in the sacred Spirit makes glad the Heart of Man, and the other, by the first Miracle, into the Marriage wine, which here, and immortally in the sacred, because purified Body, makes glad the Life of Man.

2nd January, 1877.

5. Thus far I wrote in the morning and forenoon of Christmas Day: and leave it so, noting only that the reference to the classification in *Proserpina* is to the name there

¹ [Matthew vi. 9.]

² [See Letter 71, §§ 12, 13 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 739).]

³ [*Purgatorio*, xxxi. 98. The “sprinkling thing” is called the *asperges* or *aspergillum*.]

⁴ [See Hebrews ix. 19. For the other Bible references in § 4, see Matthew iii. 13; Hebrews xii. 24; 1 Corinthians x. 2; Mark xiv. 12, 13; Matthew xxvi. 26–28; Psalms civ. 15; and John ii. 7–10.]

given for the whole order of the pinks, including the dianthus,—namely, Clarissa.¹ The Dianthus will be the first sub-species; but note that this Greek name is modern, and bad Greek also; yet to be retained, for it is *our* modern contribution to the perfectness of the myth. Carpaccio meant it, first and practically, for a balcony window-flower—as the vervain is also; and what more, I can't say, or seek, to-day, for I must turn now to the business for this month, the regulation of our Sheffield vegetable market;—yet for *that*, even you will have to put up with another page or two of myth, before we can get rightly at it.

6. I must ask you to look back to *Fors* of August, 1872;² and to hear why the boy with his basket of figs was so impressive a sign to me.

He was selling them before the south facade of the Ducal Palace; which, built in the fourteenth century, has two notable sculptures on its corner-stones. Now, that palace is the perfect type of such a building as should be made the seat of a civic government exercising all needful powers.* How soon you may wish to build such an one at Sheffield depends on the perfection of the government you can develop there, and the dignity of state which you desire it should assume. For the men who took counsel in that palace “considered the poor,”³ and heard the requests of the poorest citizens, in a manner of which you have had as yet no idea given you by any government visible in Europe.

* State prisoners were kept in the palace, instead of in a separate tower, as was our practice in London, that none might be in bonds more than a month before they were brought up for judgment.

¹[In previous editions the text continued:—

“. . . Clarissa. It struck me afterwards that it would be better to have made it simply ‘Clara,’ which, accordingly, I have now determined it shall be. The Dianthus . . .”

As, however, Ruskin did not in fact make the change (see Vol. XV. p. 427, and *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 355), he struck out this passage in his own copy of *Fors*.]

² [Letter 20, § 4 (Vol. XXVII. p. 336).]

³ [Psalms xli. 1.]

This palace being, as I said, built in the fourteenth century, when the nation liked to express its thoughts in sculpture, and being essentially the national palace, its builder, speaking as it were the mind of the whole people, signed first, on its corner-stones,¹ their consent, in the scriptural definition of worldly happiness,—“Every man shall dwell under his vine and under his fig tree.”² And out of one corner-stone he carved a fig tree: out of the other, a vine. But to show upon what conditions, only, such happiness was to be secured, he thought proper also on each stone to represent the temptations which it involved, and the danger of yielding to them. Under the fig tree he carved Adam and Eve, unwisely gathering figs: under the vine, Noah, unwisely gathering grapes.

“*Gathering*,” observe;—in both instances the hand is on the fruit; the sculpture of the Drunkenness of Noah differing in this from the usual treatment of the subject.

These two sculptures represent broadly the two great divisions of the sins of men: those of Disobedience, or sins against known command,—Presumptuous sins—and therefore, against Faith and Love; and those of Error, or sins against unknown command, sins of Ignorance—or, it may be, of Weakness, but not against Faith, nor against Love.

These corner-stones form the chief decoration or grace of its strength—meaning, if you read them in their national lesson, “Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.”³ Then, next above these stones of warning, come the stones of Judgment and Help.

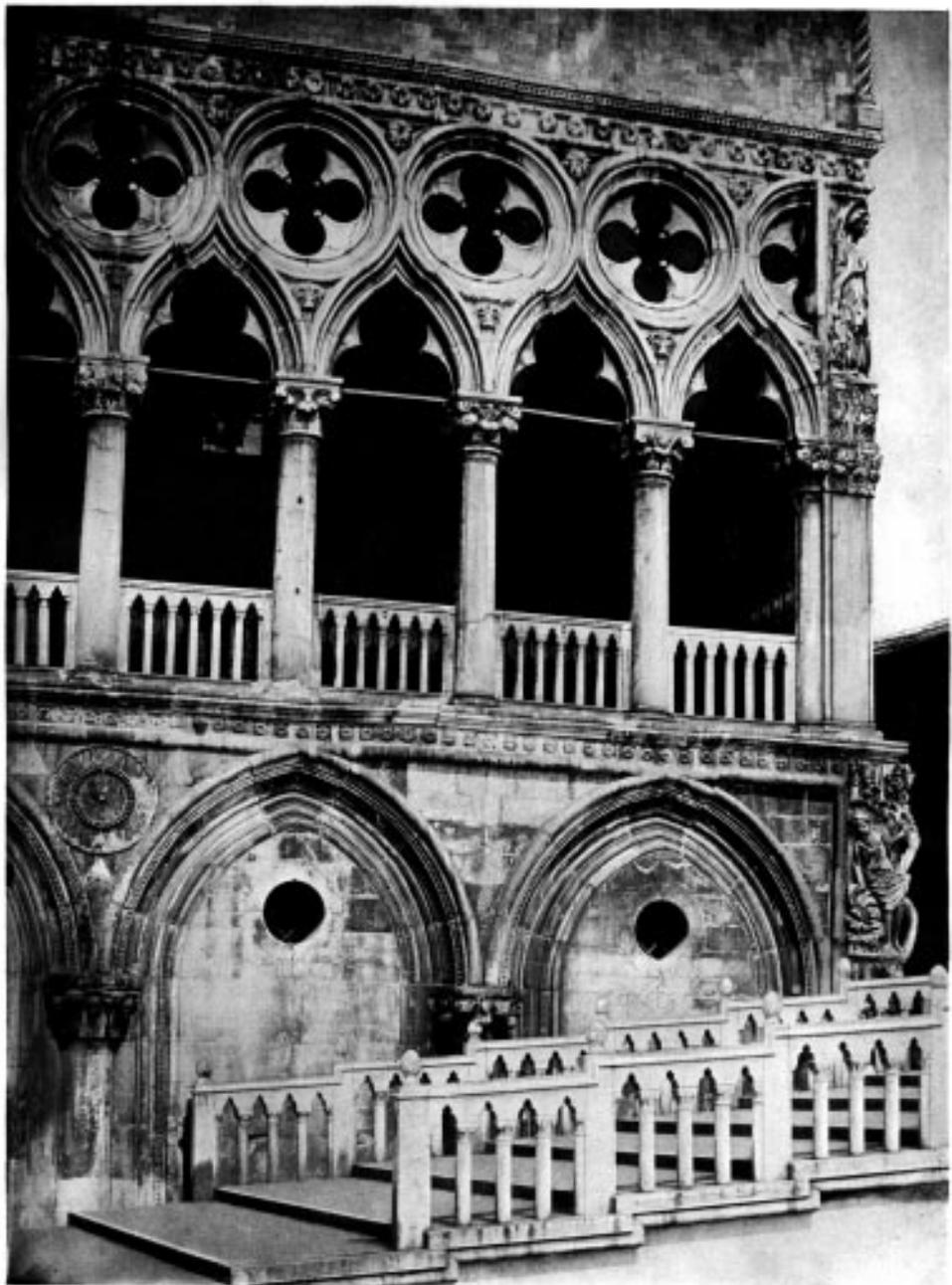
3rd January, 1877.

7. Above the sculpture of Presumptuous Sin is carved the angel Michael, with the lifted sword. Above the

¹ [Compare *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 359).]

² [Micah iv. 4; compare *Mornings in Florence*, § 130, where Ruskin refers to this passage (Vol. XXIII. p. 422).]

³ [1 Corinthians x. 12.]



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The Vine Angle of the Ducal Palace.

sculpture of Erring Sin, is carved the angel Raphael, leading Tobias, and his dog.¹

Not *Tobit*, and his dog, observe. It is very needful for us to understand the separate stories of the father and son, which gave this subject so deep a meaning to the mediæval Church. Read the opening chapter of *Tobit*,² to the end of his prayer. That prayer, you will find, is the seeking of death rather than life, in entirely noble despair. Erring, but innocent; blind, but *not thinking that he saw*,—therefore without sin.

To him the angel of all beautiful life is sent, hidden in simplicity of human duty, taking a servant's place for hire, to lead his son in all right and happy ways of life, explaining to him, and showing to all of us who read, in faith, for ever, what is the root of all the material evil in the world, the great error of seeking pleasure before use.³ This is the dreadfulness which brings the true horror of death into the world, which hides God in death, and which makes all the lower creatures of God—even the happiest, suffer with us,—even the most innocent, injure us.*

But the young man's dog went with them—and returned, to show that all the lower creatures, who can love, have passed, through their love, into the guardianship and guidance of angels.

And now you will understand why I told you in the last *Fors* for last year that you must eat angels' food before you could eat material food.⁴

* Measure,—who can,—the evil that the Horse and Dog, worshipped before God, have done to England.

¹ [For an earlier description of this sculpture, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. pp. 363–364); and for the story of Tobias and the dog, *ibid.*, p. 364 *n.*, and compare Vol. XXIII. p. 377.]

² [Ruskin writes from memory. It is not “the opening chapter” that he refers to, but ch. iii. 1–6.]

³ [Compare Letter 61, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 502).]

⁴ [See Letter 72, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 763).]

Tobit got leave at last, you see, to go back to his dinner.

8. Now, I have two pretty stories to tell you (though I must not to-day) of a Venetian dog,¹ which were told to me on Christmas Day last, by Little Bear's special order. Her own dog, at the foot of her bed, is indeed unconscious of the angel with the palm, but is taking care of his mistress's earthly crown;² and St. Jerome's dog, in his study, is seriously and admiringly interested in the progress of his master's literary work, though not, of course, understanding the full import of it.³

The dog in the vision to the shepherds, and the cattle in the Nativity, are always essential to these myths, for the same reason; and in next *Fors*, you shall have with the stories of the Venetian dog, the somewhat more important one of St. Theodore's horse,⁴—God willing. Finally, here are four of the grandest lines of an English prophet, sincere as Carpaccio, which you will please remember:—

“The bat that flits at close of eve,
Hath left the brain that won't believe.”

“Hurt not the moth, nor butterfly,
For the Last Judgment draweth nigh.”⁵

And now, Tobit having got back to his dinner, we may think of ours: only Little Bear *will* have us hear a little reading still, in the refectory. Take patience but a minute or two more.

9. Long ago, in *Modern Painters*,⁶ I dwelt on the, to

¹ [See Letter 75, § 11 (p. 67).]

² [For the picture of St. Ursula, see Plate VIII. in Vol. XXVII. (p. 344).]

³ [For the picture of St. Jerome, see Plate LXVI. in Vol. XXIV. (p. 354), and for an engraving of the dog, *ibid.*, p. 230.]

⁴ [See Letter 75, §§ 9, 11 (pp. 66–69).]

⁵ [William Blake, *Auguries of Innocence*; referred to also in *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 4 (Vol. XIX. p. 56), and see Appendix 18 (below, p. 577). Blake wrote “Kill,” not “Hurt.”]

⁶ [See in this edition Vol. V. pp. 80–81.]

me, utter marvellousness, of that saying of Christ (when “on this wise showed He Himself”)—

“Come and dine. . . .
. . . . So when they had dined,” etc.¹

I understand it now, with the “Children, have ye here any meat?”² of the vision in the chamber. My hungry and thirsty friends, do not you also begin to understand the sacredness of your daily bread; nor the divinity of the great story of the world’s beginning;—the infinite truth of its “Touch not—taste not—handle not, of the things that perish in the using, but only of things which, whether ye eat or drink, are to the glory of God?”³

10. But a few more words about Venice, and we come straight to Sheffield.

My boy with his basket of rotten figs *could* only sell them in front of the sculpture of Noah, because all the nobles had perished from Venice, and he was there, poor little costermonger, stooping to cry fighiaie between his legs, where the stateliest lords in Europe were wont to walk, erect enough, and in no disordered haste. (Curiously, as I write this very page, one of the present authorities in progressive Italy, progressive without either legs or arms, has gone whizzing by, up the canal, in a steam propeller, like a large darting water beetle.) He *could* only sell them in that place, because the Lords of Venice were fallen, as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs; and the sentence is spoken against them, “No man eat fruit of thee, hereafter.”⁴ And he could only sell them in Venice at all, because the laws of the greater Lords of Venice who *built* her palaces are disobeyed in her modern liberties. Hear this, from the

¹ [John xxi. 1, 12, 15.]

² [John xxi. 5: compare (in a later volume) *Letters on the Lord’s Prayer* (August 19).]

³ [Colossians ii. 21, 22; 1 Corinthians x. 31. With § 9 compare the passage from Ruskin’s diary given in Vol. XXIV. p. xxxiii.]

⁴ [Revelation vi. 13; Mark xi. 14.]

Venetian Laws of State respecting “Frutti e Fruttaroli,” preserved in the Correr Museum:—

19th June, 1516.*—“It is forbidden to all and sundry to sell bad fruits. Figs, especially, must not be kept in the shop from one day to another, on pain of fine of twenty-five lire.”

30th June, 1518.—“The sale of squeezed figs and preserved figs is forbidden. They are to be sold ripe.”

10th June, 1523.—“Figs cannot be preserved nor packed. They are to be sold in the same day that they are brought into this city.”

The intent of these laws is to supply the people largely and cheaply with ripe fresh figs from the mainland, and to prevent their ever being eaten in a state injurious to health, on the one side, or kept, to raise the price, on the other. Note the continual connection between Shakespeare’s ideal, both of commerce and fairyland, with Greece, and Venice: “Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,—with purple grapes, *green* figs, and mulberries;”¹ the laws of Venice respecting this particular fruit being originally Greek (Athenian; see derivation of word “sycophant,” in any good dictionary²).

11. But the next law, 7th July, 1523, introduces question of a fruit still more important to Venetians:—

“On pain of fine (ut supra), let no spoiled or decaying melons or bottlegourds be sold, nor any yellow cucumbers.”

19th June, 1524.—“The sale of fruits which are not good and nourishing is forbidden to every one, both on the canals and lands of this city. Similarly, it is forbidden to keep them in baskets more than a day; and, similarly, to keep bad mixed with the good.”

On the 15th July, 1545, a slight relaxation is granted of this law, as follows:—

“Sellers of melons cannot sell them either unripe or decayed (*crudi o marci*), without putting a ticket on them, to certify them as such.”

*“*Innibito a chiunque il vendere frutti cattivi.*” *Before* 1516, observe, nobody *thought* of doing so.

¹ [A *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Act iii. sc. 1.]

² [“A *fig-shewer*, i.e., *one who informs against persons exporting figs* from Attica, or *plundering sacred fig-trees*; hence a common informer, and so generally a false accuser” (Liddell and Scott).]

And to ensure obedience to these most wholesome ordinances of state, the life of the Venetian greengrocer was rendered (according to Mr. John Bright*) a burden to him, by the following regulations:—

6th July, 1559.—“The superintendents of fruits shall be confined to the number of eight, of whom two every week (thus securing a monthly service of the whole octave) shall stand at the barrier, to the end that no fruits may pass, of any kind, that are not good.”

* *Fors*, January, 1874 [Letter 37, § 4 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 16)]. I observe that, in his recent speech at Rochdale,¹ Mr. Bright makes mention of me which he “hopes I shall forgive.” There is no question

¹ [A speech on Temperance at the Rochdale Workmen’s Club, fully reported in the *Times* of January 3, 1877. Bright said: “I have not come here for the purpose of lecturing or preaching to you. I agree very much with an observation that I met with the other day in a lecture by Mr. Ruskin, that there is a good deal of the patronizing style practised when men come forward to address any of the labouring classes or the workmen such as are members of this Club. I should like to read you an extract from one of his lectures to explain to you what I mean. Mr. Ruskin is a great critic; he is a man who writes beautifully; he says a great many things that are worth being remembered; and, I must say,—I hope he will forgive me—he says a great many things that ought to be forgotten. Well, Mr. Ruskin on a subject like this says: ‘Nothing appears to me at once more ludicrous and more melancholy than the way the people of the present age usually talk about the morals of labourers. You hardly ever address a labouring man upon his prospects in life, without quietly assuming that he is to possess, at starting, as a small moral capital to begin with, the virtue of Socrates, the philosophy of Plato, and the heroism of Epaminondas.’ Now these were among the very greatest of the men of ancient Greece, and I think anybody who expects that is a little unfair. Mr. Ruskin says (here Bright quoted the rest of § 183 of *The Two Paths*, Vol. XVI. p. 400). I shall not follow the methods which Mr. Ruskin so amusingly condemns.”

Later on in the speech Bright quoted “the lines of Ebenezer Elliott, the Sheffield poet, the Corn Law rhymist:—

“Bread-taxed weaver all may see
What thy tax hath done for thee
And thy children, vilely led
Singing hymns for shameful bread,
Till the stones of every street
Know their little naked feet.
What shall bread-tax do for thee,
Venerable monarchy?
Dreams of evil spare my sight,
And let that horror rest in night.”

Later, again, in extolling the blessings of the cheap press, with its daily panorama of the world, Bright said: “Then you go to India, and even this very day

More special regulations follow, for completeness of examination; the refusal to obey the law becoming gradually, it is evident, more frequent as the moral temper of the people declined, until, just two centuries after the issuing

of forgiveness in the matter; Mr. Bright speaks of me what he believes to be true, and what, to the best of his knowledge, is so: he quotes a useful passage from the part of my books which he understands; and a notable stanza from the great song of Sheffield, whose final purport, nevertheless, Mr. Bright himself reaches only the third part of the way to understanding. He has left to me the duty of expressing the ultimate force of it, in such rude additional rhyme as came to me yesterday, while walking to and fro in St. Mark's porch, beside the grave of the Duke Marino Morosini;¹ a man who knew more of the East than Mr. Bright, and than most of his Rochdale audience; but who, nevertheless, shared the incapacity of Socrates, Plato, and Epaminondas, to conceive the grandeur of the ceremony "which took place yesterday in Northern India."

Here is Ebenezer's stanza, then, with its sequence, taught me by Duke Morocen:—

"What shall Bread-Tax do for thee,
Venerable Monarchy?
Dreams of evil,—sparing sight,
Let that horror rest in night.

What shall Drink-Tax do for thee,
Faith-Defending Monarchy?
Priestly King,—is *this* thy sign,
Sale of Blessing,—Bread,—and Wine?

What shall Roof-Tax do for thee,
Life-Defending Monarchy?
Find'st thou rest for England's head,
Only free among the Dead?
Loosing still the stranger's slave,—
Sealing still they Garden-Grave?
Kneel thou there; and trembling pray,
'Angels, roll the stone away.' "

(Venice, 11th January, 1877.)

—Socrates and Plato and Epaminondas and all the ancient Greeks and ancient Romans had never dreamt of such a thing as you see in your newspapers—read of the grand ceremony celebrated yesterday at Delhi, in North India, and the Proclamation made that the Queen of England was henceforth the Empress of the Indian Dominions." For a reference by Ruskin to the "Socrates, Plato, and Epaminondas" passage, see below, p. 58.]

¹ [For Ruskin's description of Morosini's tomb in the *atrium* of St. Mark's, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. (Vol. XI. pp. 112–113).]

of the first simple order, that no bad fruit is to be sold, the attempts at evasion have become both cunning and resolute, to the point of requiring greater power to be given to the officers, as follows:—

28th April, 1725.—“The superintendents of the fruits may go through the shops, and seek in every place for fruits of bad quality, and they shall not be impeded by whomsoever it may be. They shall mount upon the boats of melons and other fruits, and shall prohibit the sale of bad ones, and shall denounce transgressors to the magistracy.”

Nor did the government once relax its insistence, or fail to carry its laws into effect, as long as there was a Duke in Venice. Her people are now Free, and all the glorious liberties of British trade are achieved by them. And having been here through the entire autumn, I have not once been able to taste wall-fruit from the Rialto market, which was not *both* unripe and rotten, it being invariably gathered hard, to last as long as possible in the baskets; and of course the rottenest sold first, and the rest as it duly attains that desirable state.

12. The Persian fruits, however, which, with pears and cherries, fill the baskets on the Ducal Palace capitals,¹ are to the people of far less importance than the gourd and melon. The “melon boats,” as late as 1845, were still so splendid in beauty of fruit, that my then companion, J.D. Harding,² always spent with me the first hour of our day in drawing at the Rialto market. Of these fruits, being a staple article in constant domestic consumption, not only the quality, but the price, became an object of anxious care to the government; and the view taken by the Venetian Senate on the question I proposed to you in last *Fors*,³ the function of the middleman in raising prices, is

¹ [See the descriptions of the 25th and 27th capitals in *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. pp. 423, 424).]

² [For Ruskin’s days at Venice with J.D. Harding, see the Epilogue to *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 353).]

³ [See Letter 73, §§ 11, 12 (p. 21).]

fortunately preserved at length in the following decree of 8th July, 1577:—

DECREE OF THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS LORDS, THE FIVE
OF THE MARIEGOLE*

“It is manifestly seen that Melons in this City have reached a price at which scarcely anybody is bold enough to buy them; a condition of things discontenting to everybody, and little according with the dignity of the persons whose duty it is to take such precautionary measures as may be needful,” (the Five, most Illustrious, to wit,) “and although our Presessors † and other Magistrates, who from time to time have had special regard to this difficulty, have made many and divers provisional decrees, yet it is seen manifestly that they have always been vain, nor have ever brought forth the good effect which was desired; and the cause of this is seen expressly to be a great number of buyers-to-sell-again who find themselves in this city, and in whose presence it is impossible so quickly to make public anything relating to the import or export of food, but this worst sort of men pounce on it, ‡ and buy it, before it is born; in this, using all the intelligences, cunnings, and frauds which it is possible to imagine; so that the people of this city cannot any more buy anything, for their living, of the proper Garden-master of it; but only from the buyers-to-sell-again, through whose hands such things will pass two or three times before they are sold, which notable disorder is not by any manner of means to be put up with. Wherefore, both for the universal benefit of all the City, and for the dignity of our Magistracy, the great and illustrious Lords, the Five Wise Men, and Foreseers upon the Mariegole, make it publicly known that henceforward there may be no one so presumptuous as to dare, whether as Fruiterer, Green-grocer, Buyer-to-sell-again, or under name of any other kind of person of what condition soever, to sell melons of any sort, whether in the shops or on the shore of our island of Rialto, beginning from the bridge of Rialto as far as the bridge of the Beccaria; and similarly in any part of the piazza of St. Mark, the Pescaria, or the Tèra Nuova, § under penalty to whosoever such

* A Mariegola, Madre-Regola, or Mother-Law, is the written code of the religious and secular laws either of a club of Venetian gentlemen, or a guild of Venetian tradesmen.¹ With my old friend Mr. Edward Cheney’s help, I shall let you hear something of these, in next *Fors*.²

† Those who before us sat on this Seat of Judgment.

‡ Most illustrious, a little better grammar might here have been advisable;—had indignation permitted!

§ These limitations referring to the Rialto market and piazza, leave the *town* greengrocers free to sell, they being under vowed discipline of the Mariegola of Greengrocers.

¹ [See p. 10 of Cheney’s *Remarks on the Illuminated Manuscripts of the Venetian Republic* (for further particulars of which, see below, p. 64 *n.*). Compare also Letter 87, § 15 (p. 376).]

² [See, again, p. 64; and for Ruskin’s friendship with Edward Cheney, Vol. XXIV. pp. xxxix., 187.]

person shall sell or cause to be sold contrary to the present order, of 120 ducats for each time; to lose the melons, and to be whipped round the Piazza of the Rialto, or of San Marco, wheresoever he has done contrary to the law;" but the Garden-masters and gardeners may sell where they like, and nobody shall hinder them.¹

5th January, Morning.

13. I will give the rest of this decree in next *Fors*;² but I must pause to-day, for you have enough before you to judge of the methods taken by the Duke and the statesmen of Venice for the ordering of her merchandize, and the aid of her poor.

I say, for the ordering of her merchandize; other merchandize than this she had;—pure gold, and ductile crystal, and inlaid marble,—various as the flowers in mountain turf. But her first care was the food of the poor; she knew her first duty was to see that they had each day their daily bread. Their corn and pomegranate; crystal, not of flint, but life; manna, not of the desert, but the home—"Thou shalt let none of it say until the morning."³

14. "To *see* that they had their daily bread;" yes—but how to make such vision sure? My friends, there is yet one more thing, and the most practical of all, to be observed by you as to the management of your commissariat. Whatever laws you make about your bread—however wise and brave,—you will not get it unless you pray for it. If you would not be fed with stones, by a Father Devil, you must ask for bread from your Father, God. In a word, you must understand the Lord's Prayer—and *pray it*; knowing, and desiring, the Good you ask; knowing also, and abhorring, the Evil you ask to be delivered from. Knowing and obeying your Father who is in Heaven; knowing and wrestling with "your Destroyer" who is come down to Earth; and praying and striving also, that

¹ [For a reference to these "Mariogolas of Venice," see *Proserpina* (Vol. XXV. p. 385).]

² [This, however, was one of the things for which Ruskin could not find time in the next *Fors*: see below, p. 55.]

³ [Exodus xii. 10.]

your Father's will may be done there,—not his; and your Father's kingdom come there, and not his.

And finally, therefore, in St. George's name, I tell you, you cannot know God, unless also you know His and your adversary, and have no fellowship with the works of that Living Darkness, and put upon you the armour of that Living Light.¹

15. "Phrases,—still phrases," think you? My friends, the Evil Spirit indeed exists; and in so exact contrary power to God's, that as men go straight to God by believing in Him, they go straight to the Devil by disbelieving in Him. Do but fairly rise to fight him, and you will feel him fast enough, and have as much on your hands as you are good for. Act, then. Act—yourselves, waiting for no one. Feed the hungry, clothe the naked,² to the last farthing in your own power. Whatever the State does with its money, do you that with yours. Bring order into your own accounts, whatever disorder there is in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's; then, when you have got the Devil well under foot in Sheffield, you may begin to stop him from persuading my Lords of the Admiralty that they want a new grant, etc., etc., to make his machines with; and from illuminating Parliament with new and ingenious suggestions concerning the liquor laws.³ For observe, as the outcome of all that is told you in this *Fors*, all taxes put by the rich on the meat or drink of the poor, are *precise* Devil's laws. That is why they are so loud in their talk of national prosperity, indicated by the Excise, because the fiend, who blinds them, sees that he can also blind you, through your lust for drink, into quietly allowing yourselves to pay fifty millions a year, that the rich may make their machines of blood with, and play at shedding blood.*

* See third article in Correspondence [p.51], showing how the gain of our nobles becomes the gain of our usurers.

¹ [Ephesians v. 11; Romans xiii. 12.]

² [See Matthew xxv. 35, 36.]

³ [See above, p. 21 *n.*]

But patience, my good fellows. Everything must be confirmed by the last, as founded on the first, of the three resolutions I asked of you in the beginning,—“Be sure you can obey good laws before you seek to alter bad ones.”¹ No rattening, if you please;² no pulling down of park railings;³ no rioting in the streets. It is the Devil who sets you on that sort of work. Your Father’s Servant does not strive, nor cry, nor lift up His voice in the streets. But He will bring forth judgment unto victory;⁴ and, doing as He bids you do, you may pray as He bids you pray, sure of answer, because in His Father’s gift are all order, strength, and honour, from age to age, for ever.

16. Of the Eastern question, these four little myths contain all I am able yet to say:⁵—

¹ [See Letter 2, § 22 (Vol. XXVII. p. 44).]

² [An allusion with particular reference to Sheffield; the practice of rattening (that is, abstracting tools and destroying machinery, etc.) having been specially common among the trade unionists of that town: see Murray’s *New English Dictionary*, and Justin McCarthy’s *History of our Own Times*, 1880, vol. iv. p. 156.]

³ [Compare Vol. XXVII. p. 493.]

⁴ [Matthew xii. 19, 20.]

⁵ [Some sheets of MS. at Brantwood show that Ruskin sent these “four little myths” in a letter to the *Times*, thus:—

“VENICE, *December 27*, 1876.

“SIR,—I observe in your columns a letter from Lord Fitz William, in which he speaks of the conveners of the late meeting on the Eastern Question as ignorant persons and enthusiasts. Will you permit four words, or, in their now despised Greek form, myths, to be spoken on the Eastern Question by one of the ignorant persons to English wisdom, and by one of these enthusiastic persons to English caution? . . . [I.-IV. as in the text.]

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

J. RUSKIN.”

In a second draft: “I am informed that recently in your columns there has appeared a letter from an English nobleman whom I have reason to respect,” etc. The letter was not inserted. Lord FitzWilliam’s letter was quoted in the *Times* of October 24 from the *Sheffield Independent*. It criticised Mr. Gladstone’s language as “calculated to influence the minds of the ill-informed.” In a letter in the *Times* of October 26 he referred to such persons as “men who have had their indignation naturally and justly aroused,” but “many of whom probably have neither leisure nor opportunity for general historical reading.” For Ruskin as one of the conveners of the Conference on the Eastern Question, see Vol. XXIV. p. xxxviii. He refers to such taunts as Lord FitzWilliam’s in Letter 87, § 4 (below, p. 365).]

- I. St. George of England and Venice does not bear his sword for his own interests;¹ nor in vain.
- II. St. George of Christendom becomes the Captain of her Knights in putting off his armour.
- III. When armour is put off, pebbles serve.²
- IV. Read the psalm “In Exitu.”³

¹ [See *Mornings in Florence*, § 136 (Vol. XXIII. p. 428); and compare Letter 78, § 5 (below, p. 128).]

² [1 Samuel xvii. 40.]

³ [Psalm cxiv.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

17. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

Our accounts I leave wholly in the hands of our Companion, Mr. Rydings, and our kind helper, Mr. Walker. I believe their statement will be ready for publication in this article.

Our legal affairs are in the hands of our Companion, Mr. Somervell,¹ and in the claws of the English faculty of Law: we must wait the result of the contest patiently.

I have given directions for the design of a library for study connected with the St. George's Museum at Sheffield,² and am gradually sending down books and drawings for it, which will be specified in *Fors* from time to time, with my reasons for choosing them. I have just presented

JOHN RUSKIN, Esq., IN ACCOUNT WITH THE ST. GEORGE'S FUND

| <i>Dr.</i> | | <i>£</i> | <i>s.</i> | <i>d.</i> | | | <i>£</i> | <i>s.</i> | <i>d.</i> |
|----------------------------------|--|----------|-----------|-----------|---|--|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1876. | | | | | 1876. | | | | |
| Subscriptions to March 14th, see | | | | | Paid to Bankers, see April <i>Fors</i> | | 977 | 12 | 1 |
| April <i>Fors</i> | | 1023 | 11 | 10 | " " May, less 3d. | | | | |
| Additional to end of year:-- | | | | | charges | | 52 | 9 | 3 |
| May | | 8 | 6 | 1 | " " June | | 95 | 12 | 6 |
| June | | 10 | 10 | 0 | " " October | | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| July | | 102 | 0 | 6 | " " December | | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| September | | 16 | 16 | 0 | Purchase of land and house at | | | | |
| November | | 50 | 0 | 0 | Sheffield for Museum | | 980 | 0 | 0 |
| December | | 10 | 0 | 0 | Law expenses, ditto | | 26 | 15 | 11 |
| Cheques { £300 | | | | | Chemicals at Museum | | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| { £500 } | | 1130 | 0 | 0 | Prints, Colnaghi | | 29 | 10 | 0 |
| { £330 } | | | | | Law expenses, Tarrant and Mackrell | | 20 | 17 | 5 |
| | | 2351 | 4 | 5 | Repairs of cottages at Barmouth | | 27 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | Cheque to H. Swan, Sheffield, see | | | | |
| | | | | | Feb. <i>Fors</i> | | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | Cheque to H. Swan, Sheffield, see | | | | |
| | | | | | Feb. <i>Fors</i> | | 44 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | Cheque to H. Swan, Sheffield, see | | | | |
| | | | | | Aug. <i>Fors</i> | | 55 | 15 | 3 |
| | | | | | Cheque to H. Swan, Sheffield, see | | | | |
| | | | | | Nov. <i>Fors</i> | | 60 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | Mr. Rydings, for feeble workers at | | | | |
| | | | | | Laxey, Isle of Man | | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| To Balance | | 108 | 8 | 0 | | | | | |
| | | £2459 | 12 | 5 | | | £2459 | 12 | 5 |

¹[To whom the matter had been referred; see Vp/ XXVOOO, p.659, and above, p. 27. For the final settlement, see Vol.XXXI.]

²[For the Museum at Walkley, see, again, Vol. XXX. For later references in *Fors* to examples set to it, see below, pp. 124, 130, 165.]

THE UNION BANK OF LONDON (CHANCERY LANE BRANCH) IN ACCOUNT
WITH THE ST. GEORGE'S FUND

| Dr. | | £ s. d. | Cr. | | £ s. d. |
|----------|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| 1876. | | | 1876. | | |
| Jan. 1. | To Balance | 14 1 10 | Feb. 22. | By charges on two local notes | 0 0 10 |
| 6. | Dividend on £8000 Consols | 119 0 0 | 25. | By Postage of pass book | 0 0 3 |
| 13. | Per George Allen | 24 11 1 | Mar. 3. | John Ruskin, Esq. | 300 0 0 |
| Feb. 15. | Per John Ruskin, Esq. | 25 0 0 | July 28. | Ditto | 330 0 0 |
| " | Draft at Sheffield | 8 0 0 | Oct. 12. | Postage of pass book | 0 0 3 |
| " | Ditto at Ambleside | 6 0 0 | | | |
| " | Ditto at Bridgwater | 100 0 0 | | | |
| " | Ditto at Birmingham | 5 0 0 | | | |
| 22. | Per John Ruskin, Esq. | 35 0 0 | | | |
| Mar. 4. | Draft at Windsor | 20 0 0 | | | |
| 7. | Per John Ruskin, Esq. | 25 0 0 | | | |
| " | Draft at Oxford | 50 0 0 | | | |
| 14. | Per John Ruskin, Esq. | 6 0 0 | | | |
| " | Draft at Sheffield | 20 0 0 | | | |
| May 3. | Per John Ruskin, Esq. | 17 11 0 | | | |
| 6. | Draft at Bridgwater | 9 19 3 | | | |
| 9. | Ditto at Douglas, £25, less charges | 24 18 9 | | | |
| June 9. | Per John Ruskin, Esq. | 5 0 0 | | | |
| 13. | Draft at Bridgwater | 20 12 6 | | | |
| " | Ditto at Bilston | 50 0 0 | | | |
| 17. | Cash per John Ruskin, Esq. | 20 0 0 | | | |
| July 6. | Dividend on £8000 Consols | 118 10 0 | | | |
| Oct. 12. | Draft at Bridgwater | 50 0 0 | | | |
| 24. | Per J. P. Stilwell | 25 0 0 | | | |
| Dec. 4. | Draft at Bridgwater | 10 0 0 | Dec. 31. | By Balance | 191 9 1 |
| 23. | Per George Allen | 12 6 0 | | | |
| | | <u>£821 10 5</u> | | | <u>£821 10 5</u> |

CASH STATEMENT OF ST. GEORGE'S COMPANY TO

31st DECEMBER, 1876

| Dr. | | £ s. d. | Cr. | | £ s. d. |
|--|------|-------------------|---|-----|-------------------|
| RECEIPTS. | | | PAYMENTS. | | |
| Subscriptions to beginning of year, see April Fors | 785 | 1 10 | Purchase of £1000 Consols | 918 | 15 0 |
| Ditto to end of year, see Fors, April to July, Sept., Nov., and Dec. | 461 | 2 7 | Power of attorney for dividends | 0 | 5 0 |
| Ditto from Mr. George Allen, viz.: | | | Cheque book and other small charges at bankers' | 0 | 6 3 |
| Miss Kate Bradley | £1 | 1 0 | Purchase of land and house at Sheffield for Museum | 930 | 0 0 |
| F. Somerscales | 5 | 0 0 | Law expenses on the above | 26 | 15 11 |
| Miss Guest | 2 | 2 0 | F. D. Acland, for chemicals at Museum | 5 | 0 0 |
| Mona | 1 | 1 0 | Fittings, salary, taxes, etc., at ditto, per separate accounts to Dec. 31 | 193 | 12 2 |
| Miss Guest | 2 | 2 0 | Repairs of cottages at Barmouth | 27 | 0 0 |
| "Methodist Preacher" | 1 | 0 0 | Colnaghi and Co., for prints | 29 | 10 0 |
| Ditto from Mr. Rydings, Dec. 14 | 33 | 15 0 | Law charges for the Company | 20 | 17 5 |
| | | <u>1292 5 5</u> | Mr. Rydings, for feeble "home-spun" workers at Laxey | 25 | 0 0 |
| Interest on £7000 Consols to Jan. 1875, and on £8000 from July 1875 to July 1876 | 1007 | 17 6 | Mr. Rydings, cheque sent to Italy and not yet returned | £33 | 15 0 |
| Interest from balance at bankers' | 9 | 18 0 | Cash at bankers' | 191 | 9 1 |
| Balance remaining due to Mr. Ruskin for sums advanced at various times | 108 | 8 0 | Ditto at Museum | 16 | 3 1 |
| | | <u>£2418 8 11</u> | | | <u>241 7 2</u> |
| | | | | | <u>£2418 8 11</u> |

EGBERT RYDINGS IN ACCOUNT WITH ST. GEORGE'S COMPANY

| Dr. | (From June 29, 1876, to January 16, 1877) | Cr. | |
|----------|---|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| 1876. | | | 1876. |
| June 29. | To Mrs. Jane Lisle | £ s. d. | Dec. 14. By cash paid to the Union |
| 30. | „ Charles Firth | 1 1 0 | Bank to the St. George's |
| Aug. 7. | „ G. No. 50 | 10 10 0 | Fund |
| 12. | „ Miss Sargood | 2 2 0 | |
| 12. | „ Miss Christina Allan | 2 2 0 | 1877. |
| Sept. 1. | „ John Morgan, for 1871, | | Jan. 16. „ Balance in E. Rydings' |
| | No. 6 | 1 1 0 | hands |
| | „ Geo. Thomson | 5 0 0 | |
| Nov. 8. | „ John Morgan, for 1876, | | |
| | No. 6 | 1 1 0 | |
| | „ B. B., No. 26 | 1 10 0 | |
| Dec. 7. | „ J. D., No. 49 | 0 5 0 | |
| 9. | „ Josiah Gittins | 1 0 0 | |
| 9. | „ Miss M. Guest | 2 2 0 | |
| 12. | „ A. H., No. 37 | 5 0 0 | |
| 16. | „ Wm. Smither | 5 0 0 | |
| July 1. | „ Miss M. Guest (re- | | |
| | ceived by Mr. Ruskin, | | |
| | omitted in his ac- | | |
| | count) | 2 2 0 | |
| Dec. 23. | „ Miss Dora Livesey | 5 0 0 | |
| 29. | „ John E. Fowler | 3 0 0 | |
| 1877. | | | |
| Jan. 1. | „ Miss Julia Firth | 7 0 0 | |
| 1. | „ John and Mary Guy | 1 0 0 | |
| 3. | „ Miss Sarah A. Gimson | 1 1 0 | |
| 16. | „ Miss F. B. | 2 0 0 | |
| | | <u>£59 18 0</u> | |
| | | | <u>£59 18 0</u> |

| Dr. | SHEFFIELD MUSEUM ACCOUNT | Cr. | |
|----------|------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| 1876. | | | 1876. <i>Current Expenses.</i> £ s. d. £ s. d. |
| July 1. | To Balance in hand | 33 17 2 | July 1. H. Swan (salary) 10 0 0 |
| Nov. 22. | „ J. Ruskin, Esq., by | | 17. Gas 0 6 2 |
| | cheque | 60 0 0 | Sept. 11. Water 0 5 7 |
| | | | Oct. 1. H. Swan (salary) 10 0 0 |
| | | | Nov. 16. Water 0 8 8 |
| | | | Dec. 13. Gas 0 7 3 |
| | | | 23. Poor-rate 0 15 4 |
| | | | <u>22 3 0</u> |
| | | | <i>Repairs and Building Expenses.</i> |
| | | | Oct. 14. J. Tunnard, for |
| | | | two gates 3 15 0 |
| | | | Dec. 20. Silicato Paint |
| | | | Company 0 17 1 |
| | | | 21. Gravel and cart- |
| | | | age 0 13 6 |
| | | | <u>5 5 7</u> |
| | | | <i>Fittings and Cases.</i> |
| | | | Sept. 6. Jones, for cloth . 0 3 6 |
| | | | „ Cockayne, ditto . 0 3 4 |
| | | | „ Jackson, ditto . 0 7 8 |
| | | | Oct. 12. C. H. Griffiths, |
| | | | safe 6 0 0 |
| | | | Nov. 22. Leaf and Co., |
| | | | velvets 3 7 4 |
| | | | Dec. 1. Smithson and |
| | | | Dale, cabinet |
| | | | cases 40 0 0 |
| | | | 12. Cockayne, velvet . 0 2 3 |
| | | | <u>50 4 1</u> |
| | | | Cartage of goods 3 13 2 |
| | | | Petty expenses . 1 8 3 |
| | | | <u>5 1 5</u> |
| | | | Balance in hand 16 3 1 |
| | | | <u>£98 17 2</u> |
| | | <u>£98 17 2</u> | |

Examined and found correct, WM. WALKER, Jan. 9th, 1877.

the library with another thirteenth-century Bible,¹—that from which the letter R was engraved at § 7 of *Fors*, April, 1872;² and two drawings from Filippo Lippi and Carpaccio, by Mr. C. F. Murray.³

18. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

I am bound to state, in the first place,—now beginning a new and very important year, in which I still propose myself for the Master of the St. George's Company,—that my head certainly does not serve me as it did once, in many respects. The other day, for instance, in a frosty morning at Verona, I put on my dressing-gown (which is of bright Indian shawl stuff) by mistake for my great-coat; and walked through the full market-place, and half-way down the principal street, in that costume, proceeding in perfect tranquillity until the repeated glances of unusual admiration bestowed on me by the passengers led me to investigation of the possible cause. And I begin to find it no longer in my power to keep my attention fixed on things that have little interest for me, so as to avoid mechanical mistakes. It is assuredly true, as I said in the December *Fors*,⁴ that I *can* keep accounts; but, it seems, not of my own revenues, while I am busy with the history of those of Venice. In § 13, the November from that in the third, and the balance in that page should have been £670, 9s. 4d.; and in last *Fors*, £275, 9s. 4d. My Greenwich pottery usually brings me in £60; but I remitted most of the rent, this year, to the tenant, who has been forced into expenses by the Street Commissioners. He pays me £24, 16s. 9d., bringing my resources for Christmas to the total of £300, 6s. 1d.

My expenses to the end of the year are as follows:—

| | £ | s | d. |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| <i>Dec.</i> 18. Raffaele (<i>a</i>) | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| 22. A. Giordani (<i>b</i>) | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 23. Self | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| 25. Gift to relation | 60 | 0 | 0 |
| Paul Huret (<i>c</i>) | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 27. Downs | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | £160 | 0 | 0 |

(*a*) In advance, because he goes home to Assisi at Christmas.⁵

(*b*) The old Venetian sculptor who cast the Colleone statue for the Crystal Palace.⁶ Payment for casting Noah's vine on the Ducal Palace.⁷

(*c*) My godson at Boulogne. (His father, a pilot, now dead, taught me to steer a lugger.⁸) Christmas gift for books and instruments.

¹ [For the first one, see Letter 70, § 13 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 727). The second is a large manuscript Bible, described in Vol. XXX.]

² [Letter 16 (Vol. XXVII. p. 284).]

³ [These are the drawings described by Ruskin in the passage printed in Vol. XXIV. p. 451. They are in the Sheffield Museum: see Vol. XXX. The study from Carpaccio is the one mentioned in Ruskin's accounts above, p. 27.]

⁴ [Letter 72, § 13 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 768).]

⁵ [Raffaele Carloforti of Assisi, studying at this time under Ruskin at Venice: see the Introduction, above, p. xvi.]

⁶ [For this cast, see Vol. XI. p. 19.]

⁷ [See Vol. XXX.]

⁸ [In 1861: see Vol. XVII. p. xxxvii.]

Thus leaving me, according to my own views (I don't vouch for the banker's concurrence in all particulars), £140, 6s. 1d. to begin the year with, after spending, between last New Year's Day and this, the total sum of—I won't venture to cast it till next month;¹ but I consider this rather an economical year than otherwise. It will serve, however, when fairly nailed down in exposition, as a sufficient specimen of my way of living for the last twelve years, resulting in an expenditure during that period of some sixty thousand, odd, pounds. I leave, for the present, my Companions to meditate on the sort of Master they have got, begging them also to remember that I possess also the great official qualification of Dogberry and am indeed "one that hath had losses."² In the appropriate month of April, they shall know precisely to what extent, and how much—or little—I have left, of the money my father left me—with the action I mean to take in the circumstances.³

19. (III.) I reprint the following admirable letter with all joy in its sturdy statements of principle; but I wish the writer would look at Mr. D. Urquhart's *Spirit of the East*.⁴ He is a little too hard upon the Turk, though it is not in Venice that one should say so.

"TURKISH LOANS AND BULGARIAN ATROCITIES

"To the Editor of the 'Carlisle Journal'

"SIR,—There appears to be one probable cause of the present Eastern imbroglio which has escaped the notice of most of those who have written or spoken on the subject, viz., the various Turkish loans which have been floated on the London Stock Exchange.

"At first sight, few would be inclined to regard these as the root of the present mischief, but investigation may reveal that Turkish loans at high rates of interest, and Bulgarian atrocities, follow each other simply as cause and effect.

"Of course few of the Christian investors in these loans would ever think, when lending their spare capital to the Turk, that they were aiding and abetting him in his brutalities, or sowing the seed which was to produce the harvest of blood and other abominations in the Christian provinces under his sway. But such, nevertheless, may be the fact, and the lenders of the sinews of war to tyrannical and bloodthirsty governments should be warned that they are responsible for the sanguinary results which may ensue.

"The horrors to which our world has been subjected, through this system of lending and borrowing, are beyond possibility of computation. But let us simply inquire how much misery, destitution, and death lie at the door of our own national debt.

"If our ecclesiastical leaders could take up this subject during the present mission, and preach sermons upon it (as Christ Himself would have done), from such texts as these,—'For they bind burdens upon men's shoulders, grievous to be borne, and will not touch themselves with one of their fingers,' and 'For ye devour widows' houses,'—they would not find it necessary to refer so much to

¹ [But not done then: see below, pp. 74–75.]

² [*Much Ado About Nothing*, Act iv. sc. 2.]

³ [See Letter 76, §§ 17 *seq.* (pp. 99 *seq.*)]

⁴ [*The Spirit of the East, illustrated in a Journal of Travels through Roumeli during an Eventful Period*, 2 vols., 1838. "He" in Ruskin's text means not Urquhart (who was a Turcophil), but the writer of the letter.]

empty or appropriated pews, or to lament that only five per cent. of our working men are in attendance at church.

“One can fancy the effect which could be produced by a few sermons on these texts. Our own debt is a ‘burden’ which takes nearly one pound annually from every man, woman, and child in the kingdom, and our war armaments take nearly another pound. How many ‘widows’ houses’ must these ‘burdens’ be literally devouring? And yet when do we find the professed followers of ‘the Prince of Peace’ imitating their Master, and crying out boldly against those who lay these heavy burdens upon the shoulders of the people?”

“Few would think, when investing in the Turkish loans, that they were laying the train which has just exploded in the Turkish provinces with such disastrous effects, scattering so much ruin and desolation amongst the poor inhabitants there. No, they would only think what a good investment it was, and what a large interest the Turkish Government had engaged to pay for the accommodation. This is as far as borrower and lender usually look. The child wishes to hold the razor, the maniac wants the revolver; let them have them; it is their look-out, not ours, what use they make of them; and in this same spirit we callously hand over the wealth which the labour of England and its laws have put under our control, to a race of homicides, and sit supinely by while they, having transformed part of it into powder and shot, shower these relentlessly over their Christian subjects, till the heart of Europe turns sick at the sight.

“Now, let us follow the consequences, as they crop out in natural sequence. The Turk obtains his loan from Englishmen, and doubtless intends to pay the large interest he promised; but how has he to accomplish this? If he had had a Fortunatus’ purse he would not have had to borrow. He has no such purse, but he has provinces, where a population of Christians are faithfully cultivating the soil, and in one way or another providing themselves with the means of existence. These have to be the Fortunatus’ purse, out of which he will abstract the cash to pay the English lenders the promised interest on their loan. The principal he spends in luxurious living, and in providing the arguments (gunpowder and steel) which may be required to convince his Christian subjects that they owe the English lenders the interest he has engaged to pay for the loan. The loan itself, of course, had been contracted for their protection and defence!

“Here, then, we come to the old story. His tax-farming agents have to apply the screw of higher taxes to the people, demanding more and still more, to pay these English lenders their interest, till human patience reaches its limit; and the provinces revolt, resolved to be free from those unjust and cruel exactions, or to perish in the attempt. The rest is all too well known to need recapitulation. Every one knows how the Turkish hordes rushed down upon the patient people whom they had despoiled for centuries, like an avalanche of fire and steel, and the horrors and abominations that ensued. Yet, when a neighbouring monarch, of kindred faith to the suffering provinces, demanded (with an

‘Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughtered Saints, whose bones
Lie scattered o’er Bulgaria’s mountains cold’¹)

that these oppressions and atrocities should cease, as our Oliver Cromwell did effectually two centuries ago when similar atrocities were being perpetrated in Piedmont, what did we see?

“To the everlasting shame of England, we saw its fleet despatched to Besika Bay, as a menace to Russia not to put an end to these iniquities, and as a hint to Turkey to stamp out the revolt as quickly as possible, and by whatever means it might see fit to employ.

“Now to what have we to attribute this degradation of the British flag and British influence? Is it to secure British interests, the interest of a beggarly fifty

¹ [Milton’s sonnet, *On the late Massacre in Piedmont*, applied to Bulgaria.]

millions, or thereabouts, of foolishly invested money, that our jolly tars have to be despatched to give at least moral support and countenance to the murderers of women and children?

“Why, take it on this mercenary ground, and calculate what those Christians, if freed from their thralldom to the Turk, might make out of this ‘fairest part of God’s creation’ in a year or two, and the result will be astonishing. An agricultural race like the French, in a year, would raise ten times fifty millions’ worth of produce from the ground which Turkish rule is only cumbering. Then is it not time this cumberer were cut down? It has been let alone for centuries, and we, as its special husbandman, with a zeal worthy of a better cause, have been digging about it and dunging it (to our cost), and all to no purpose, and yet we have statesmen who think this fruitless—Heaven’s lightning-struck—old trunk must still be nourished as a shelter and protection to our interests in the East.

“These Turks, whom a few are so anxious to protect, have been a curse to Europe ever since they entered it. Their first generally known atrocities upon Christians were the massacres and outrages on the pilgrims who, in the Middle Ages, were visiting the Holy Sepulchre. Serve them right for their folly, say many. But call it our ‘ancient mummings,’ and how then? What would be said if a party from London, visiting Stonehenge, had to get their heads broken by the people of Salisbury for their folly? These atrocities roused the chivalry of the Christian nations of Europe, and gave rise to the Crusades. These eventually led to the Turks’ entrance into Europe, which they were likely to overrun, when Sobieski, ‘a man sent from God, whose name was John,’ came to the front and drove them back again. Ever since their appearance, they have been a thorn in the side of Europe—a thorn which should long ere this have been extracted.

“Should Europe extract this thorn now, and send this man of the sword back to his native deserts, and place a guard of Christian knights in charge of Constantinople, to teach him, should he attempt to return, that ‘all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword,’ then the nations of Europe, too long crushed under the weight of ‘bloated armaments’ and standing armies, might begin to study the art of peace.

“Then might we begin to regard ironclads and Woolwich infants as demons from the pit, which some of our bishops might venture to exorcise as monsters that were devouring widows’ houses every day they floated, or every time they were discharged; and which had no right to exist in a Christian or sane community. Then, too, we might find that Russia was, after all, no more a bear than England was a lion; and that, though peopled with men with passions like our own, they had them not less bridled than we, and could prove themselves to be men of honour, men to be trusted, and men who desired to stand by the principles of right and justice, be the consequences what they might, even though the heavens should fall and earthly patronisers of the angels be dissatisfied.—I am, etc.

COSMOPOLITAN.”

20. (IV.) I am grieved to leave my Scottish correspondent’s letter still without reply. But it is unconnected with the subjects on which I wish to lay stress in this letter; and I want to give its own most important subject a distinct place.¹

¹ [See Letter 75, §§ 20, 21 (pp. 75–78).]

LETTER 75

STAR LAW¹

VENICE, 1st February, 1877.

1. I AM told that some of my “most intelligent readers” can make nothing of what I related in last *Fors*, about St. Ursula’s messages to me.² What is their difficulty? Is it (1), that they do not believe in guardian angels,—or (2), that they do not think me good enough to have so great an angel to guard me,—or (3), that knowing the beginning of her myth, they do not believe in St. Ursula’s personality?

If the first, I have nothing more to say;—if the second, I can assure them, they are not more surprised than I was myself;—if the third, they are to remember that all great myths are conditions of slow manifestation to human imperfect intelligence;³ and that whatever spiritual powers are in true personality appointed to go to and fro in the earth,⁴ to trouble the waters of healing, or bear the salutations of peace, can only be revealed, in their reality, by the gradual confirmation in the matured soul of what at first were only its instinctive desires, and figurative perceptions.

2. Oh me! I had so much to tell you in this *Fors*, if I could but get a minute’s peace;—my stories of the

¹ [“Squires’ Stables” (see below, § 13) was a rejected title for this Letter. On the wrapper of his copy Ruskin also wrote “Astronomy and St. Theodore,” as a summary of the contents of this Letter.]

² [See Letter 74, §§ 1, 2 (p. 30).]

³ [“*Cf. Queen of the Air*, ch. i. § 2 (Vol. XIX. p. 296).”—*Author’s MS. note*. Ruskin in making his Index notes, here wrote against this passage, “take out for book on mythology”—a project never carried out.]

⁴ [Zechariah i. 10; and for the following Bible references, see John v. 4; and Luke ii. 13, 14.]

Venetian doggie,¹ and others of the greater dog and the lesser dog—in Heaven; and more stories of Little bear in Venice, and of the Greater bear and Lesser bear in Heaven; and more of the horses of St. Mark's, in Venice, and of Pegasus and the chivalry of Heaven;—ever so much more of the selling of melons in Venice,² and of the twelve manner of fruits in Heaven for the healing of the nations.³ And here's an infernal paragraph about you, in your own Sheffield, sent me in a Lincoln paper by some people zealous for schools of art—poor fools!—which is like to put it all out of my head. Of that presently.⁴ I *must* try to keep to my business.

3. Well, the beginning of all must be, as quickly as I can, to show you the full meaning of the nineteenth Psalm. “Cœli enarrant;” the heavens declare—or make clear—the honour of God; which I suppose, in many a windy oratorio, this spring, will be loudly declared by basses and tenors, to tickle the ears of the public, who don't believe one word of the song all the while!⁵

But it is a true song, none the less; and you must try to understand it before we come to anything else; for these Heavens, so please you, are the real roof, as the earth is the real floor, of God's house for you here, rentless, by His Law. That word “cœli,” in the first words of the Latin psalm, means the “hollow place.”⁶ It is the great space, or, as we conceive it, vault, of Heaven. It shows the glory of God in the existence of the light by which we live. All force is from the sun.

The firmament is the ordinance of the clouds and sky of the world.* It shows the handiwork of God. He daily

* See *Modern Painters*, in various places.⁷

¹ [As promised above, p. 36. The stories are given below, pp. 67–69.]

² [As promised in the last Letter: see p. 43.]

³ [Revelation xxii. 2.]

⁴ [See below, § 17 (p. 73).]

⁵ [With the reference here, compare Vol. XXII. p. 497; Vol. XXV. p. 167; and below, p. 269.]

⁶ [On this subject, see Vol. VII. p. 195 *n.*]

⁷ [For instance, in this edition, Vol. VI. pp. 106 *seq.*, and Vol. VII. pp. 195, 196.]

paints that for you; constructs, as He paints,—beautiful things, if you will look,—terrible things, if you will think. Fire and hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind (cyclone and other), fulfilling His Word.¹ The Word of God, printed in very legible type of gold on lapis-lazuli, needing no translation of yours, no colporteurship. There is no speech nor language where *their* voice is not heard. Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their word to the ends of the world. In them hath He set a tabernacle for the Sun, the Lord of Physical Life; in them also, a tabernacle for the Sun of Justice,² the Lord of Spiritual Life. And the light of this Sun of the Spirit is divided into this measured Iris of colours:—

I. THE LAW OF THE LORD. Which is perfect, converting the soul.

That is the constant law of creation, which breathes life into matter, soul into life.

II. THE TESTIMONIES OF THE LORD. Which are sure,—making wise the simple.

These are what He has told us of His law, by the lips of the prophets,—from Enoch, the seventh from Adam,³ by Moses, by Hesiod, by David, by Elijah, by Isaiah, by the Delphic Sibyl, by Dante, by Chaucer, by Giotto. Sure testimonies all; their witness agreeing together, making wise the simple—that is to say, all holy and humble men of heart.⁴

III. THE STATUTES OF THE LORD. Which are right, and rejoice the heart.

These are the appointed conditions that govern human life;—that reward virtue, infallibly; punish vice, infallibly;

¹ [Psalms cxlviii. 8.]

² [Compare Vol. VI. p. 614, and Vol. XVII. p. 59.]

³ [Jude 14, 15: see Letter 77, § 1 (below, p. 108).]

⁴ [Verse 31 of the Canticle, “Benedicite, omnia opera,” sung at Morning Prayer.]

—gladsome to see in operation. The righteous shall be glad when he seeth the vengeance—how much more in the mercy to thousands?¹

IV. THE COMMANDMENT OF THE LORD. Which is pure, enlightening the eyes.

This is the written law—under (as we count) ten articles, but in many more, if you will read. Teaching us, in so many words, when we cannot discern it unless we are told, what the will of our Master is.

V. THE FEAR OF THE LORD. Which is clean, enduring for ever.

Fear, or faith,—in this sense one: the human faculty that purifies, and enables us to see this sunshine; and to be warmed by it, and made to live for ever in it.

VI. THE JUDGMENTS OF THE LORD. Which are true, and righteous altogether.

These are His searchings out and chastisements of our sins; His praise and reward of our battle; the fiery trial that tries us, but is “no strange thing”;² the crown that is laid up for all that love His appearing.³ “More to be desired are they than gold;”—(David thinks first of these special judgments)—“Sweeter than honey, or the honeycomb;—moreover by them is Thy servant warned, and in keeping of them there is great reward.” Then—pausing—“Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from the faults I know not, and keep me from those I know; and let the words of my lips, and the thoughts of my brain, be acceptable in Thy open sight—oh Lord my strength, who hast made me,—my Redeemer, who hast saved.”

4. That is the natural and the spiritual astronomy of the nineteenth Psalm; and now you must turn back at

¹ [Psalms lviii. 10; Jeremiah xxxii. 18.]

² [See 1 Peter iv. 12.]

³ [See 2 Timothy iv. 8.]

once to the analysis given you of the eighth, in *Fors*, May, 1875.¹

For as, in the one, David looking at the sun in his light, passes on to the thought of the Light of God, which is His law, so in the eighth Psalm, looking at the sun on his throne, as the ruler and guide of the state of Heaven, he passes on to the thoughts of the throne and state of man, as the ruler and light of the World: “Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,—Thou hast put all things under his feet,”—beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying fowl.

It is of this dominion in love over the lower creatures that I have to speak to-day: but I must pause a moment to point out to you the difference between David’s astronomy with his eyes,² and modern astronomy with telescopes.*

David’s astronomy with the eyes, first rightly humbles him,—then rightly exalts;—What is man that Thou so regardest him—yet, how Thou hast regarded! But modern astronomy with telescope first wrongly exalts us, then wrongly humbles.

First, it wrongly exalts. Lo and behold—we can see a dozen stars where David saw but one; we know how far they are from each other; nay, we know where they will all be, the day after to-morrow, and can make almanacks. What wise people are we! Solomon, and all the Seven Sages of Greece, where are they? Socrates, Plato, and Epaminondas—what talk you to us of them!³ Did they know, poor wretches, what the Dog Star smelt of?

5. We are generally content to pause at this pleasant stage of self-congratulation; by no means to ask further

* Compare the whole of the lecture on Light, in *Eagle’s Nest* [Vol. XXII. pp. 193–207.]

¹ [Letter 53, §§ 9–11 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 325–328).]

² [Compare what Ruskin says of the business of education being to “see the sky” in Letter 9 (Vol. XXVII. p. 164).]

³ [Ruskin here notes for Index: “Plato, Socrates, Epaminondas, Mr. John Bright’s contempt of. Compare his speech in last number” (above, pp. 39–40 n.).]

what the general conclusions of the telescope may be, concerning ourselves. It might, to some people, perhaps seem a deficiency in the telescope that it could discern no Gods in heaven; that, for all we could make out, it saw through the Gods, and out at the other side of them. Mere transparent space, where we thought there were houses, and gardens, and rivers, and angels, and what not. The British public does not concern itself about losses of that nature: behold, there is the Universe: and here are we, the British public, in the exact middle of it, and scientific of it in the accuratest manner. What a fine state of things! Oh, proud British public, have you ever taken this telescopic information well into your minds; and considered what it verily comes to?

Go out on the seashore when the tide is down, on some flat sand; and take a little sand up into your palm, and separate one grain of it from the rest. Then try to fancy the relation between that single grain and the number in all the shining fields of the far distant shore, and onward shores immeasurable. Your astronomer tells you, your world is such a grain compared with the worlds that are, but that he can see no inhabitants on them, no sign of habitation, or of beneficence. Terror and chance, cold and fire, light struck forth by collision,¹ desolateness of exploding orb and flying meteor. Meantime—you, on your grain of sand—what are you? The little grain is itself mostly uninhabitable; has a damp green belt in the midst of it. In that,—poor small vermin,—you live your span, fighting with each other for food, most of the time; or building—if—if perchance you are at peace—filthy nests, in which you perish of starvation, phthisis, profligate diseases, or despair. There is a history of civilization for you! briefer than Mr. Buckle's² and more true—when you see the Heavens and Earth without their God.

6. It is a fearful sight, and a false one. In what manner

¹ [Compare Letter 6, § 9 (Vol. XXVII. p. 108).]

² [For other references to Buckle's book, see Vol. XXVIII. p. 157.]

or way I neither know nor ask; this I know, that if a prophet touched your eyes, you might in an instant see all those eternal spaces filled with the heavenly host;¹ and this also I know, that if you will begin to watch these stars with your human eyes, and learn what noble men have thought of them, and use their light to noble purposes, you will enter into a better joy and better science than ever eye hath seen.²

“Take stars for money—stars, not to be told
By any art,—yet to be purchased.”³

I have nothing to do, nor have you, with what is happening in space (or possibly may happen in time), we have only to attend to what is happening here—and now. Yonder stars are rising. Have you ever noticed their order, heard their ancient names, thought of what they were, as teachers, “lecturers,” in that large public hall of the night, to the wisest men of old? Have you ever thought of the direct promise to you yourselves, that you may be like them if you will? “They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars, for ever and ever.”⁴

7. They that be *wise*. Don’t think that means knowing how big the moon is. It means knowing what you ought to do, as man or woman; what your duty to your father is, to your child, to your neighbour, to nations your neighbours. A wise head of the English Government, for instance (Oliver, had he been alive⁵), would have sent word, a year ago, to the Grand Signior, that if he heard a word more of “atrocities” in Bulgaria after next week, he would blow his best palace into the Bosphorus. Irrespective of all other considerations, that was the first thing to be wisely said,

¹ [Luke ii. 13.]

² [See 1 Corinthians ii. 9.]

³ [George Herbert, *The Temple* (“Church Porch,” stanza 29): compare Vol. XXVII. pp. 217, 419.]

⁴ [Daniel xii. 3.]

⁵ [For similar references to Cromwell, see Vol. XXVII. pp. 270, 272, 279.]

and done, if needful. What *has* been said and *not* done, since,—the quantities of print printed, and talk talked, by every conceivable manner of fool,—not an honest syllable in all the lot of it (for even Mr. Bright’s true and rational statement—the only *quite* right word, as far as I can judge, I’ve seen written on the business,* that Russians had as much right to the sea, everywhere, as anybody else,¹ was tainted by his party spirit), I only wish I could show, in a heap of waste paper, to be made a bonfire of on Snowdon top.

That, I repeat, was the one simple, knightly, English-hearted thing to be done; and so far as the “Interests of England” are concerned, her first interest was in this, to *be* England; and not a filthy nest of tax-gatherers and horse-dealers. For the horse-dealer and the man-dealer are alike ignoble persons, and their interests are of little consequence. But the horse-rider and the man-ruler, which was England’s ancient notion of a man, and Venice’s also (of which, in abrupt haste, but true sequence, I must now speak), have interests of a higher kind. But, if you would well understand what I have next to tell you, you must first read the opening chapter of my little Venetian guide, *St. Mark’s Rest*,² which will tell you something of the two

* I do not venture to speak of the general statements in my master Carlyle’s letter;³ but it seemed to me to dwell too much on the idea of total destruction to the Turk, and to involve considerations respecting the character of Turk and Russian not properly bearing on the business. It is not, surely, “the Eastern Question” whether Turkey shall exist, or Russia triumph, but whether we shall or shall not stop a man in a turban from murdering a Christian.

¹ [This was a principal contention in Bright’s speech to his constituents at Birmingham on December 4, 1876.]

² [See Vol. XXIV. pp. 207 *seq.*]

³ [A letter to Mr. George Howard (afterwards Earl of Carlisle), dated November 24, and published in the *Times* of November 28, 1876. Carlyle, after praising the Russians as “a good and even noble element in Russia,” went on to urge that “the unspeakable Turk” should “be peremptorily informed that we can stand no more of his attempts to govern in Europe, and that he must *quam primum* turn his face to the eastward.” The letter was reprinted at vol. ii. pp. 307–311 of R. H. Shepherd’s *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Carlyle* (1881).]

piazzetta shafts, of which Mr. Swan has now photographs to show you at St. George's Museum;¹ and my Venetian readers, on the other hand, must have this *Fors*, to tell them the meaning of the statues on the top of said pillars.

8. These are, in a manner, her Jacob's pillars, set up for a sign that God was with her.² And she put on one of them, the symbol of her standard-bearer, St. Mark; and on the other, the statue of "St. Theodore," whose body, like St. Mark's, she had brought home as one of her articles of commercial wealth;³ and whose legend—what was it, think you?—What Evangel or Gospel is this, to be put level with St. Mark's, as the banner on the other wing of the Venetian Host?

Well, briefly, St. Mark is their standard-bearer in the war of their spirit against all spiritual evil; St. Theodore their standard-bearer in the war of their body against material and fleshly evil:—not the evil of sin, but of *material malignant force*. St. Michael is the angel of war against the dragon of sin; but St. Theodore, who also is not merely a saint, but an angel, is the angel of noble fleshly life in man and animals, leading both against base and malignant life in men and animals. He is the Chevalier, or Cavalier, of Venice,—her first of loving knights, in war against all baseness, all malignity; in the deepest sense, St. Theodore, literally "God gift," is Divine life in nature; Divine Life in the flesh of the animal, and in the substance of the wood and of the stone, contending with poison and death in the animal,—with rottenness in the tree, and in the stone. He is first seen (I can find no account of his birth) in the form of a youth of extreme beauty; and his first contest is with a dragon very different from St. George's; and it is fought in another manner. So much of the legend I must give you in Venice's own words, from her Mother-Rule of St. Theodore,—the Rule,

¹ [See Vol. XXX.]

² [See Genesis xxviii. 18–20.]

³ [Compare *St. Mark's Rest*, § 3 (Vol. XXIV. p. 210.)]

from the thirteenth century down, of her chief Club, or School, of knights and gentlemen. But meditate a little while first on that Venetian word “Mother-Law.”¹ You were told, some time since, in *Fors*, by an English lawyer, that it was not a lawyer’s business to make laws.² He spoke truth—not knowing what he said. It is only God’s business to make laws. None other’s than His ever were made, or will be. And it is lawyer’s business to read and enforce the same; however laughable such notion of this function may be to the persons bearing present name of lawyer.* I walked with one of these—the Recorder of London³—to and fro beside a sweet river bank in South England, a year ago; he discoursing of his work for public benefit. He was employed, at that time, in bringing before Parliament, in an acceptably moderate form, the demand of the Railroad Companies to tax the English people to the extent of six millions, as payment for work they had expected to have to do; and were *not* to do.

A motherly piece of law, truly! many such Mariegolas your blessed English liberties provide you with! All the while, more than mother, “for she *may* forget, yet will I not forget thee”⁴—your loving Lord in Heaven pleads with you in the everlasting law, of which all earthly law, that shall ever stand, is part; lovable, infinitely; binding, as the bracelet upon the arm—as the shield upon the neck; covering, as the hen gathereth her brood under her wings;⁵ guiding, as the nurse’s hand the tottering step; ever

* Compare *Unto this Last*, § 46, *note*,⁶ significant of all my future work. (I am about to republish this book page for page in its first form.)

¹ [See Letter 74, § 12 *n.* (p. 42).]

² [See the last paragraph but one of Mr. Frederic Harrison’s letter to the author, printed in Letter 67, § 24 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 663).]

³ [Russell Gurney. Ruskin refers in *Love’s Meinie*, § 132, to the compensation awarded to the Railway Companies for the Government’s taking over of the telegraphs (Vol. XXV. p. 126 *n.*).]

⁴ [Isaiah xlix. 15.]

⁵ [Proverbs iii. 3; Luke xiii. 34.]

⁶ [Vol. XVII. p. 63. The book was republished in August 1877: see *ibid.*, p. 5.]

watchful, merciful, life-giving; Mariegola to the souls,—and to the dust,—of all the world.

9. This of St. Theodore's was first written, in visible letters for men's reading, here at Venice, in the year 1258:¹—

“At which time we all, whose names are written below, with a gracious courage, with a joyful mind, with a perfect will, and with a single spirit,* to the honour of the most holy saviour and lord sir Jesus christ, and of the glorious virgin madonna saint mary his mother, and of the happy and blessed sir saint theodore, martyr and cavalier of God,—(‘martir et cavalier de dio’)—and of all the other saints and saintesses of God” (have set our names,—understood), “to the end that the above-said sir, sir saint theodore, who stands continually before the throne of God, with the other saints, may pray to our Lord Jesus christ that we all, brothers and sisters, whose names are underwritten, may have by his most sacred pity and mercy, remission of our minds, and pardon of our sins.”

* “Cum gratiosa mente, cum alegro anemo, cum sincera voluntate, et cum uno spirito, ad honor de lo santissimo salvador et signor nostro, misier Jesu-cristo et de la gloriosa verghene madoña senta maria soa mare.”

So much of the dialect of Venice, in mid-thirteenth century, the reader may bear with; the “mens” being kept in the Homeric sense still, of fixed purpose, as of Achilles.² It is pretty to see the word “Mother” passing upon the Venetian lips into “sea.”

The precious mariegola from which these passages are taken was first, I believe, described by Mr. Edward Cheney, *Remarks on the Illuminated Manuscripts of the Early Venetian Republic*, page 13.³ Of the manuscript written in 1258 there remain, however, only two leaves, both illuminated (see notes on them in fifth chapter of *St. Mark's Rest*⁴), the text is a copy of the original one, written after 1400. Mr. Cheney's following account of the nature of the “Schools” of Venice, of which this was the earliest, sums all that the general reader need learn on this subject:—

“Though religious confraternities are supposed to have existed at a much earlier period, their first *historical* mention at Venice dates from the middle of the thirteenth century. They were of various sorts; some were

¹ [This Mariegola illustrated with miniatures is in the Correr Museum. It contains besides the effigy of the patron saint surrounded by a crowd of devotees a large miniature on a gold ground, representing the Saviour seated between the Virgin and St. John the Baptist (Cheney, p. 13).]

² [See *Queen of the Air*, § 16 n. (Vol. XIX. p. 307).]

³ [This monograph (pp. 95) is No. 1 in vol. xi. (1867–1868) of the “Miscellanies” of the Philobiblion Society. It was also separately bound for private circulation. Ruskin's quotation about the “Scuole” is from pp. 10–12. Another monograph by Cheney (pp. 112)—*Original Documents relating to Venetian Painters* (see Vol. XXIV. p. 187)—is No. 2 in vol. xiv. (1872–1876) of the “Miscellanies,” and was also similarly circulated.]

⁴ [The fifth chapter was published some months later than this Letter, and did to contain these intended notes.]

“Remission of mind” is what we now profess to ask for in our common prayer, “Create in me a clean heart, oh Lord, and renew a right spirit within me.”¹ Whereupon follow the stories of the contest and martyrdom of St. Theodore, and of the bringing his body to Venice. Of which tradition, this is the passage for the sake of which I have been thus tedious to you:—

“For in that place there was a most impious dragon, which, when it moved, the earth trembled; when it came forth of its cave, whatsoever it met, it devoured.

“Then St. Theodore said in his heart, ‘I will go, and of my Father’s substance² make sacrifice, against the most impious dragon.’ So he came into the very place, and found there grass with flowers, and lighted down off his horse, and slept, not knowing that in that place was the cave of the dragon. And a kind woman, whose name was Eusebia, a Christian, and fearing God, while she passed, saw St. Theodore sleeping, and went with fear, and took him by the hand, and raised him up, saying, ‘Rise, my brother, and leave this place, for, being a youth, you know not, as I see,

confined to particular guilds and callings, while others included persons of every rank and profession.

“The first object of all these societies was religious and charitable. Good works were to be performed, and the practices of piety cherished. In all, the members were entitled to receive assistance from the society in times of need, sickness, or any other adversity.

“The ‘Confraternità Grandi’ (though all had the same object) were distinguished by the quantity, as well as by the quality, of their members, by their superior wealth, and by the magnificence of the buildings in which they assembled; buildings which still exist, and still excite the admiration of posterity, though the societies to which they owed their existence have been dispossessed and suppressed.

“The ‘Confraternità Piccole,’ less wealthy, and less magnificently lodged, were not the less constituted societies, with their own rules and charters, and having their own chapel, or altar, in the church of their patron-saint, in the sacristy of which their ‘*mariegola*’ was usually preserved. Many of the confraternities had a temporal as well as a spiritual object, and those which were composed exclusively of members of the same trade regulated their worldly concerns, and established the rules by which the Brothers of the Guild should be bound. Their bye-laws were subject to the approval of the Government; they were stringent and exclusive, and were strictly enforced. No competition was permitted.”

¹ [Psalms li. 10.]

² [Here in ed. I was a footnote, “Litor paterne substantie mee,” and the text continued: “. . . substance, will strive with the most impious dragon.” This was one of “two delicious mistakes” mentioned in the following letter: see p. 93 *n.*]

the fear that is in this place. A great fear is here. But rise quickly, and go thy way.' Then the martyr of Christ rose and said, 'Tell me, woman, what fear is in this place.' The maid-servant of God answered, saying, 'Son, a most impious dragon inhabits this place, and no one can pass through it.' Then St. Theodore made for himself the sign of the cross, and smiting on his breast, and looking up to heaven, prayed, saying, 'Jesus, the Son of the living God, who of the substance of the Father didst shine forth for our salvation, do not slack my prayer which I pray of thee (because thou in battle hast always helped me and given me victory), that I may conquer this explorer of the Devil.' Thus saying, he turned to his horse, and speaking to him as to a man, said, 'I know that in all things I have sinned against thee, oh God, who, whether in man or beast, hast always fought with me. Oh thou horse of Christ, comfort thee, be strong like a man, and come, that we may conquer the contrary enemy.' And as the horse heard his master saying fiery (sacrificial) words,¹ he stood, looking forth as with human aspect, here and there; expecting the motion of the dragon. Then the blessed Theodore with a far-sent voice cried, and said, 'Dragon, I say to thee, and give precept to thee in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ, who is crucified for the human race, that thou shouldest come out of thy place, and come to me.' Instantly as he heard the voice of St. Theodore, he prepared himself that he should go out to him. And he moving himself and raging, presently in that place the stones were moved, and the earth trembled. . . . Then the blessed Theodore, as he saw him moving himself in his fury, mounted his horse, and trampled him down, and the horse, giving a leap, rose over the most impious dragon, trampling it down with all its four feet. Then the most strong martyr of Christ, St. Theodore, extending his lance, struck it through the heart, and it lay stretched out dead."

VENICE, *Purification of the Virgin*, 1877.

10. Oh me, again, how am I ever to tell you the infinite of meaning in this all-but-forgotten story? It is eleven years to-day since the 2nd of February became a great festival to me:² now, like all the days of all the years, a shadow; deeper, this, in beautiful shade. The sun has risen cloudless, and I have been looking at the light of it on the edges of St. Ursula's flower, which is happy with me, and has four buds bursting, and one newly open flower, which the first sunbeams filled with crimson light down under every film of petal; whose jagged edges of paler rose broke over and over each other, tossed here and

¹ [In ed. 1, "saying prayerful words (rogalia verba), he stood." This is the second of the "delicious mistakes."]

² [1866. The day was one upon which Miss Rose La Touche came on a visit to Denmark Hill.]

there into crested flakes of petal foam, as if the Adriatic breakers had all been changed into crimson leaves at the feet of Venice-Aphrodite. And my dear old Chamouni guide, Joseph Couttet, is dead; he who said of me “le pauvre enfant,—il ne sait pas vivre”¹ and (another time) he would give me nine sous a day, to keep cows, as that was all I was worth, for aught he could see. Captain of Mont Blanc, in his time,—eleven times up it, before Alpine clubs began; like to have been left in a crevasse of the Grand Plateau, where three of his mates were left, indeed; he, fourth of the line, under Dr. Hamel, just brought out of the avalanche-snow breathing. Many a merry walk he took me in his onward years—fifty-five or so, thirty years ago. Clear in heart and mind to the last, if you let him talk; wandering a little if you wanted him to listen;—I’ve known younger people with somewhat of that weakness. And so, he took to his bed, and—ten days ago, as I hear, said, one evening, to his daughter Judith, “Bon soir, je pars pour l’autre monde,” and so went. And thinking of him, and of others now in that other world, this story of St. Theodore, which is only of the Life in this, seems partly comfortless. “Life in nature.” There’s another dead friend, now, to think of, who could have taught us much, James Hinton;² gone, he also, and we are here with guides of the newest, mostly blind, and proud of finding their way always with a stick. If they trusted in their dogs, one would love them a little for their dogs’ sakes. But they only vivisect their dogs.³

11. If I don’t tell you my tale of the Venetian doggie at once, it’s all over with it. How so much love and life

¹ [For earlier references to Joseph Marie Couttet and this saying of his, see Letters 4 and 5 (Vol. XXVII. pp.61,85). See also Vol. IV. p. xxv., and compare Vol. XXVI. p. lv. Couttet was one of the twelve guides who accompanied Dr. Hamel on his fatal ascent in August 1820; he was dragged out senseless and “nearly black from the weight of snow which had fallen upon him”: see *The Annals of Mont Blanc*, by C.E. Mathews, p.227. This accident is the subject of Ruskin’s poem of 1835, entitled “The Avalanche”: see Vol. II. p. 7.]

² [James Hinton (1822–1875), surgeon and philosophical writer; a fellow-member with Ruskin of the Metaphysical Society; author of *The Mystery of Pain* (1866).]

³ [For Ruskin’s views on vivisection, see Vol. XXVI. p. 179.]

can be got into a little tangle of floss silk, St. Theodore knows; not I; and its master is one of the best servants in this world, to one of the best masters.¹ It was to be drowned, soon after its eyes had opened to the light of sea and sky,—a poor worthless wet flake of floss silk it had like to have been, presently. Toni pitied it, pulled it out of the water, bought it for certain sous, brought it home under his arm. What it learned out of his heart in that half-hour, again, St. Theodore knows;—but the mute spiritual creature has been his own, verily, from that day, and only lives for him. Toni, being a pious Toni as well as a pitiful, went this last autumn, in his holiday, to see the Pope; but did not think of taking the doggie with him (who, St. Theodore would surely have said, ought to have seen the Pope too). Whereupon, the little silken mystery wholly refused to eat. No coaxing, no tempting, no nursing, would cheer the desolate-minded thing from that sincere fast. It would drink a little, and was warmed and medicined as best might be. Toni came back from Rome in time to save it; but it was not its gay self again for many and many a day after; the terror of such loss, as yet again possible, weighing on the reviving mind (stomach, supposably, much out of order also). It greatly dislikes getting itself wet; for, indeed, the tangle of its mortal body takes half a day to dry; some terror and thrill of uncomprehended death, perhaps, remaining on it, also,—who knows? but once, after this terrible Roman grief, running along the quay cheerfully beside rowing Toni, it saw him turn the

¹ [Antonio, gondolier to Rawdon Brown. In his copy of *Fors Clavigera* bequeathed to the Library of St. Mark at Venice, Rawdon Brown here pasted in a photograph of Cici—the doggie of his gondolier “Toni”—writing beneath it the following extract from a letter of Ruskin’s (dated January 25, 1877): “The photograph gives no idea of this little dog, which seemed to be an angel, entangled in a skin of silk, from which it was continually trying to escape.” In the same volume is a MS. sheet in Ruskin’s hand, containing a much-corrected Italian version of this passage, which he had sent to Toni. Ruskin corresponded with Toni after his master’s death; and Toni’s name is preserved in Browning’s sonnet on Rawdon Brown (*Century Magazine*, February 1884). For an anecdote told by Ruskin “in memory of the relations existing between my dear friend Mr. Rawdon Brown of Venice, an Englishman of the old school, and his servant-friend Antonio,” see the postscript to the “Ballad of Santa Zita” in *Roadside Songs of Tuscany* (Vol. XXXII.).]

gondola's head six feet aside, as if going away. The dog dashed into the water like a mad thing. "See, now, if aught but death part thee and me."¹

Indistinguishable, doubtless, in its bones from a small wolf: according to Mr. Waterhouse Hawkins;² but much distinguishable, by St. Theodore's theology, telling of God, down, thus far at least, in nature. Emmanuel,—with us;³ in Raphael, in Tobias, in all loving and lowly things; "the young man's dog went with them."⁴

12. And in those Adriatic breakers, anger-fringed, is He also?—Effice quæso, fretum, Raphael reverende, quietum.* And in the Dragons also, as in the deeps? Where is the battle to begin? How far down in the darkness lies this enemy, for whom Hell beneath is moved at the sound of his coming?⁵

I must not keep you longer with mythic teaching to-day; but may briefly tell you that this dragon is the "Rahab" which I mistook in the 87th Psalm;⁶ the crocodile, spiritually named for the power of Egypt, with that of Babylon. Look in the indices of *Fors* for the word "Crocodile,"⁷ and remember that the lifted cobra is the crest of the Egyptian Kings,⁸ as the living crocodile their idol. Make what you can out of that, till I have more time to tell you of Egyptian animal and herb gods;⁹ meantime, for the practical issue of all this.

13. I have told you the wealth of the world consists, for one great article, in its useful animals.¹⁰

* Engraved above the statue of Raphael on the Ducal Palace.¹¹

¹ [Ruth i. 17.]

² [See Letter 70, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 720 *n.*.)]

³ [Matthew i. 23.]

⁴ [Tobit v. 16: see above, p. 35.]

⁵ [See Psalms cxlviii. 7; Isaiah xiv. 9.]

⁶ [Psalms lxxxvii. 4: see Letter 64, § 1 *n.* (Vol. XXVIII. p. 562).]

⁷ [The references are to Letters 26, § 13, and 27, §§ 15, 16 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 484, 503–504).]

⁸ [Compare Letter 26, § 11 (*ibid.*, p. 484).]

⁹ [Ruskin, however, did not find time to revert to this subject.]

¹⁰ [See Letter 73, § 3 (above, p. 14).]

¹¹ [See *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 364).]

How to get the most you can of those, and the most serviceable?

“Rob the squires’ stables, to begin with?”

No, good friends,—no. Their stables have been to them as the first wards of Hell, locked on them in this life, for these three hundred years. But you must not open them that way, even for their own sakes.

“Poach the squires’ game?”

No, good friends,—no. Down among the wild en’mies,¹ the dust of many a true English keeper forbids you that form of theft, for ever.

“Poison the squires’ hounds, and keep a blood bull terrier?”

Worse and worse—merry men, all.

14. No—here’s the beginning. Box your own lad’s ears the first time you see him shy a stone at a sparrow;² and heartily, too; but put up, you and mother—(and thank God for the blessed persecution),—with every conceivable form of vermin the boy likes to bring into the house,*—and go hungry yourselves rather than not feed his rat or his rabbit.

Then, secondly,—you want to be a gentleman yourself, I suppose?

Well, you can’t be, as I have told you before,³ nor I neither; and there’s an end, neither of us being born in the caste: but you may get some pieces of gentlemen’s

* See the life of Thomas Edward (abstract given in *Times* of January 22nd of this year⁴).

¹ [Tennyson, *The Northern Farmer: Old Style*, ix.:—
“Keäper’s it wur; fo’ they fun’um theer a-laäid of’ is faäce
Down i’ the woild enemies afoor I coom’d to the plaäce.”]

² [Compare Letter 48, § 13 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 214).]

³ [In places, that is, where he connects the word “gentleman” with birth and race: see Vol. VII. p. 343, and the other passages there noted, and compare Letter 25 (Vol. XXVII. p. 468). Yet, though a workman cannot be a gentleman in the full sense of the term, “it is quite possible for him to understand the feelings of a gentleman and to share them”: see Letter 41 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 80). For Ruskin’s own lack of ancestry, see Vol. XXVIII. pp. 147–148.]

⁴ [A review of Dr. Samuel Smiles’s book, the *Life of a Scotch Naturalist, Thomas Edward*. For another reference to him, see Vol. XXII. p. 520 (where for “Edwards” read “Edward”).]

education, which will lead the way to your son's being a better man than you.

15. And of all essential things in a gentleman's bodily and moral training, this is really the beginning—that he should have close companionship with the horse, the dog, and the eagle. Of all birthrights and bookrights—this is his first. He needn't be a Christian,—there have been millions of Pagan gentlemen; he needn't be kind—there have been millions of cruel gentlemen; he needn't be honest,—there have been millions of crafty gentlemen. He needn't know how to read, or to write his own name. But he *must* have horse, dog, and eagle for friends. If then he has also Man for his friend, he is a noble gentleman; and if God for his Friend, a king. And if, being honest, being kind, and having God and Man for his friends, he *then* gets these three brutal friends, besides his angelic ones, he is perfect in earth, as for heaven. For, to be his friends, these must be brought up with him, and he with them. Falcon on fist, hound at foot, and horse part of himself—Eques, Ritter, Cavalier, Chevalier.

Yes;—horse and dog you understand the good of; but what's the good of the falcon, think you?

To be friends with the falcon must mean that you love to see it soar; that is to say, you love fresh air and the fields. Farther, when the Law of God is understood, you will like better to see the eagle free than the jessed hawk. And to preserve your eagles' nests, is to be a great nation.¹ It means keeping everything that is noble; mountains and floods, and forests, and the glory and honour of them, and all the birds that haunt them. If the eagle takes more than his share, you may shoot him,—(but with the knight's arrow, not the blackguard's gun)—and not till then.

16. Meantime, for you are of course by no means on the direct way to the accomplishment of all this, your way to such wealth, so far as in your present power, is this:

¹ [On this passage, compare the Introduction to *The Eagle's Nest*: Vol. XXII. p. xxxv.]

first, acknowledgment of the mystery of divine life, kindly and dreadful, throughout creation;¹ then the taking up your own part as the Lord of this life; to protect, assist, or extinguish, as it is commanded you. Understand that a mad dog is to be slain; though with pity—infinite of pity,—(and much more, a mad *man*, of an injurious kind; for a mad dog only bites flesh; but a mad man, spirit: get your rogue, the supremely maddest of men, with supreme pity always, but inexorably, hanged²). But to all good and sane men and beasts, be true brother; and as it is best, perhaps, to begin with all things in the lowest place, begin with true brotherhood to the beast: in pure simplicity of practical help, I should like a squad of you to stand always harnessed, at the bottom of any hills you know of in Sheffield,—where the horses strain;—ready there at given hours; carts ordered not to pass at any others: at the low level, hook yourselves on before the horses; pull them up too, if need be; and dismiss them at the top with a pat and a mouthful of hay. Here’s a beginning of chivalry, and gentlemanly life for you, my masters.

17. Then next, take *canal* life as a form of “university” education.

Your present system of education is to get a rascal of an architect to order a rascal of a clerk-of-the-works to order a parcel of rascally bricklayers to build you a bestially stupid building in the middle of the town, poisoned with gas, and with an iron floor which will drop you all through it some frosty evening; wherein you will bring a puppet of a Cockney lecturer in a dress coat and a white tie, to tell you smugly there’s no God, and how many messes he can make of a lump of sugar. Much the better you are for all that, when you get home again, aren’t you?

I was going here to follow up what our Companion had told us (*Fors*, December, 1876, Art. v. of Corr.³)

¹ [On this subject, compare Ruskin’s interpretation of an inscription on the mosaics of St. Mark’s (Vol. XXIV. pp. 302–303).]

² [For Ruskin’s view of capital punishment, see Vol. XXVII. p. 667 *n.*]

³ [Letter 72: Vol. XXVIII. p. 770.]

about the Hull “keels”; and to show you how an entirely refined life was conceivable in these water cottages, with gardens all along the shore of them, and every possible form of wholesome exercise and teaching for the children, in management of boat and horse,¹ and other helpfulness by land and water; but as I was beginning again to walk in happy thought beside the courses of quiet water that wind round the low hill-sides above our English fields,—behold, the *Lincoln Gazette*, triumphant in report of Art-exhibitions and competitions, is put into my hand,—with this notable paragraph in it, which Fors points me to, scornful of all else:—

“A steam-engine was used for the first time on Wednesday” (January 24th), “in drawing tram-cars through the crowded streets of Sheffield. The tramways there are about to dispense with the whole of their horses, and to adopt steam as the motive power.”

And doubtless the Queen will soon have a tramway to Parliament, and a kettle to carry her there, and steam-horse guards to escort her. Meantime, my pet cousin’s three little children have just had a Christmas present made to them of a real live Donkey; and are happier, I fancy, than either the Queen or you. I must write to congratulate them; so good-bye for this time, and pleasant drives to you.

¹ [Compare Letter 9, § 11 (Vol. XXVII. p. 154).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

18. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

I hope the accounts last month, with their present supplement, will be satisfactory. The sense of steady gain, little by little indeed, but infallible, will become pleasant, and even triumphant, as time goes on.

The present accounts supply some omissions in the general ones, but henceforward I think we need not give Mr. Walker or Mr. Rydings the trouble of sending in other than half-yearly accounts.

The best news for this month is the accession of three nice Companions; one sending us two hundred pounds for a first tithe; and the others, earnest and experienced mistresses of schools, having long worked under St. George's orders in their hearts, are now happy in acknowledging him and being acknowledged. Many a young creature will have her life made happy and noble by their ministry.

THE UNION BANK OF LONDON (CHANCERY LANE BRANCH), IN ACCOUNT WITH ST. GEORGE'S COMPANY.

| <i>Dr.</i> | | £ | s. | d. |
|-------------------|---|------|----|----|
| 1877. <i>Jan.</i> | 1. To Balance | 191 | 9 | 1 |
| | 23. " Per Mr. John Ruskin, cheque at Bridgwater(Talbot). | £50 | 0 | 0 |
| | " Ditto ditto | 26 | 11 | 3 |
| | " Sheffield (Fowler) | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| | | 96 | 11 | 3 |
| | 25. " Per ditto, draft at Brighton (Moss) | 200 | 0 | 0 |
| | 26. " Per Mrs. Bradley | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| | 29. " Per Mr. John Ruskin (Mr. Rydings' cheque) | 33 | 13 | 4 |
| „ <i>Feb.</i> | 15. " Per ditto, draft at Bridgwater (Browne) | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | | £628 | 13 | 8 |
| <i>Cr.</i> | | | | |
| 1877. <i>Feb.</i> | 15. By Balance | £628 | 13 | 8 |

19. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

I believe I have enough exhibited my simplicities to the public,—the more that, for my own part, I rather enjoy talking about myself, even in my follies. But my expenses here in Venice require more illustration than

I have time for, or think *Fors* should give space to; the Companions will be content in knowing that my banker's balance, February 5, was £1030, 14s. 7d.; but that includes £118, 10s., dividend on St. George's Consols, now paid by the trustees to my account for current expenses. The complete exposition of my present standing in the world I reserve for the Month of Opening.¹

20. (III.)

"EDINBURGH, *November 2, 1876.*

"I have been for some time a pupil of yours, at first in art, where I am only a beginner, but later in those things which belong to my profession (of minister). Will you allow this to be my excuse for addressing you?—the subject of my letter will excuse the rest.

"I write to direct your attention to an evil which is as yet unattacked, in hopes that you may be moved to lift your hand against it; one that is gaining virulence among us in Scotland. I know no way so good by which its destruction may be compassed as to ask your help, and I know no other way.

"I shall state the mere facts as barely as I can, being sure that whatever my feelings about them may be, they will affect you more powerfully." [Alas, good friend—you have no notion yet what a stony heart I've got!]² "I know you say that letters need not ask you to *do* anything; but that you should be asked for help in this case, and not give it, I believe to be impossible. Please read this letter, and see if that is not true; the next four pages may be missed, if the recent regulations made to carry out the Anti-Patronage Act have engaged your attention. The evil I speak of has to do with them.³

"This Act made the congregation the electors of their pastor, the Government leaving the General Assembly to regulate the process of election. It has enacted that the congregation meet and choose a committee to make inquiries, to select and submit to a second meeting of voters the names of one or more clergymen, whom they (the committee) are agreed to recommend. It is then in the power of the congregation to approve or disapprove the report; if the latter, a new committee is appointed; if the former, they proceed to elect; then if one name only is submitted, they accept it, and call the clergyman named to be their pastor; if more than one, to choose between them by voting.

"But the Assembly did not venture to take precautions against an abuse of which every one knew there was danger, or rather certainty. Every one knew that the congregations would not consent to choose without greater knowledge of the men to be chosen from, than could be obtained by means of the committee; and every one knew also of what sort was the morality popular on the subject. And what has happened is this: between the first meeting (to elect a committee), and the second meeting (to elect a minister), the church is turned into a theatre for the display and enjoyment of the powers—physical, mental, and devotional—of the several candidates.

"On a vacancy being declared, and the committee appointed, these latter *find*

¹ [See Letter 76, §§ 17 *seq.* (below, pp. 99 *seq.*); and for April as the month of opening, Letter 4, § 1 (Vol. XXVII. p. 60).]

² [In this edition Ruskin's remarks are enclosed in square brackets, in order to distinguish them from his correspondent's bracketed words.]

³ [The subject here discussed had been brought before the House of Lords on April 7, 1876, when a motion was carried ordering "Copy of Regulations framed and enacted by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to be observed in the election and appointment of Ministers under the powers conferred by the Patronage Abolition Act."]

that they do not need to exert themselves to seek fit men!" [Italics and note of admiration mine;—this appearing to me a most wonderful discovery on the part of the committee, and indeed the taproot of the mischief in the whole business.] "They are inundated with letters of application and testimonials from men who are seeking, not the appointment, but permission to preach before the congregation.

"The duties of the committee are practically confined to sifting" [with what aperture of sieve?] "these applications, and selecting a certain number, from twelve to three, who are on successive Sundays to conduct public worship before the electors, who may thus compare and choose.

"When all the 'leet' (as it is called) have exhibited themselves, a second meeting is called, and the committee recommend two or three of those who are understood to be most 'popular,' and the vote is duly taken. At first it was only unordained licentiates who were asked to 'preach on the leet' (as they call it), and they only for parishes; but nowadays—*i.e.*, this year—they ask and get men long ordained to do it; men long ordained lay themselves out for it; and for most assistantships (curacies) the same is required and given; that is to say, that before a man can obtain leave to work he must shame himself, and everything which it is to be the labour of his life to sanctify. He is to be the minister of Christ, and begin that by being the devil's. I suppose his desire is to win the world for Christ: as he takes his first step forward to do so, there meets him the old Satan with the old offer [there is small question here of whether he appears visible or not],¹ 'Some of this will I give thee, if thou wilt now down and worship me.' You see how it is. He is to conduct a service which is a sham; he is to pray, but not to Him he addresses; to preach, but as a candidate, not as an ambassador for Christ. The prayer is a performance, his preaching a performance. It is just the devil laughing at Christ, and trying to make us join him in the mockery." [No, dear friend, not quite that. It is the Devil *acting* Christ; a very different matter. The religious state which the Devil must attack by pretending religious zeal, is a very different one from that which he can attack—as our modern political economists,—by open scorn of it.]

"They are not consistent. There should be a mock baptism, a mock communion, a mock sick woman, to allow of more mock prayer and more mock comfort. Then they would see what the man could do—for a pastor's work is not confined to the usual Sunday service,—and could mark all the gestures and voice-modulations, and movements of legs and arms properly. I once was present as elector at one of these election-services, and can give my judgment of this people's 'privilege.' It simply made me writhe to see the man trying his best with face, figure, and voice to make an impression; to listen to the competition sermon and the competition prayer; to look at him and think of George Eliot's 'Sold, but not paid for.' The poor *people*,—will twenty years of faithful ministry afterwards so much as undo the evil done them in the one day? They are forced to assemble in God's house for the purpose of making that house a theatre, and divine service a play, with themselves as actors. They are to listen to the sermon, but as critics: for them to join in the prayers they stand up or kneel to offer, would be unfaithfulness to the purpose of their gathering. They are then to listen and criticise—to enjoy, if they can. On future Sundays will not they find themselves doing the same?"

"I have not spoken to many about it, but what they say is this: 1. How else can the people know whom to choose? [But that is not the question.] 2. The clergyman is doing so great a thing that he should forget himself in what he does—*id est*, he is to throw himself down (having gone to the temple to do it), and trust to the angels. Supposing that were right, it could make little difference: the actor may forget himself in *Macbeth*, but he is not the less an actor; and it is not a case of forgetting or remembering, but of doing. Yet this has been urged to me by a leading ecclesiastic and by other good men; who, besides, ignored the two

¹ [See Vol. XXVI. p. 345, and the references there given.]

facts, that all clergymen are not Christians" [is this an *acknowledged* fact, then, in our Reformed Churches, and is it wholly impossible to ascertain whether the candidates do, or do not, possess so desirable a qualification?], "far less exalted Christians, and that the Church has no right to lead its clergy into temptation. 3. The people ought to listen as sinners, and worship as believers, even at such exhibitions; judging of the minister's abilities from their own impression afterwards. [This is met by the two facts stated above as applied to the lay members of the Church and congregation; and by this, that they are unfaithful to the main purpose of their meeting, if they lose sight of that purpose to listen and pray.] 4. That certainly a poor assistantship is not worth preaching and praying for, but that a good one, or a parish, is. 5. That one must conform to the spirit of the age. [Spirit of God at a discount.]

"To this long letter I add one remark: that the reasons why the Church submits to this state of things seem to be the desire of the ecclesiastical party in power to do nothing which may hinder the influx of Dissenters (who in Scotland enjoy the same privileges); and the fact that our feelings on the subject, never fine, are already coarsened still more by custom.

"Dear sir (if you will allow me to call you so), I have expressed myself ill, and not so that you can, from what I have written, put yourself in our place. But if you were among us, and could see how this is hurting everybody and everything, and corrupting all our better and more heavenward feelings,—how it is taking the heart out of our higher life, and making even our best things a matter of self-seeking and 'supply and demand,'—then you could not help coming to our rescue. I know the great and good works you have planned and wish to finish; but still, do this before it is too late for us. I seem to ask you as Cornelius did Peter. All Scotland is the worse for it, and it will spread to England. And after all you are one of us, one of the great army of Christ—I think a commander; and I claim your help, and beseech it, believing no one else can give what I ask.

"Ever your faithful servant to command,

"A LICENTIATE OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND."

21. I can only answer provisionally this able and earnest letter, for the evils which my correspondent so acutely feels, and so closely describes, are indeed merely a minor consequence of the corruption of the motives, no less than the modes, of ordination, through the entire body of the Christian Churches. No way will ever be discovered of rightly ordaining men who have taken up the trade of preaching as a means of livelihood,¹ and to whom it is matter of personal interest whether they preach in one place or another. Only those who have *left* their means of living, that they may preach, and whose peace follows them as they wander, and abides where they enter in,² are of God's ordaining; and, practically, until the Church insists that every one of her ministers shall either have an independent income, or support himself, for his ministry on Sunday, by true bodily toil during the week, no word of the living Gospel will ever be spoken from her pulpits. How many of those who now occupy them have verily been invited to such office by the Holy Ghost, may be easily judged by observing how many the Holy Ghost has similarly invited, of religious persons already in prosperous business, or desirable position.

But, in themselves, the practices which my correspondent thinks so fatal, do not seem to me much more than ludicrous and indecorous. If

¹ [Compare Vol. XXVII. p. 580 *n.*]

² [See Matthew ix. 9; x. 13.]

a young clergyman's entire prospects in life depend, or seem to depend, on the issue of his candidature, he may be pardoned for endeavouring to satisfy his audience by elocution and gesture, without suspicion, because of such efforts, of less sincerity in his purpose to fulfil to the best of his power the real duties of a Christian pastor: nor can I understand my correspondent's meaning when he asks, "Can twenty years undo the mischief of a day?" I should have thought a quarter of an hour's honest preaching next Sunday quite enough to undo it.

And, as respects the direct sin in the anxious heart of the poor gesticulant orator, it seems to me that the wanderings of thought, or assumptions of fervour, in a discourse delivered at such a crisis, would be far more innocent in the eyes of the Judge of all, than the consistent deference to the opinions, or appeals to the taste, of his congregation, which may be daily observed, in any pulpit of Christendom, to warp the preacher's conscience, and indulge his pride.

And, although unacquainted with the existing organization of the Church of Scotland, I am so sure of the piety, fidelity, and good sense of many of her members, that I cannot conceive any serious difficulty in remedying whatever may be conspicuously indecorous in her present modes of Pastor-selection. Instead of choosing their clergymen by universal dispute, and victorious acclaim, might not the congregation appoint a certain number of—(may I venture to use the most significant word without offence?)—*cardinal*-elders, to such solemn office? Surely, a knot of sagacious old Scotchmen, accustomed to the temper, and agreeing in the theology, of their neighbours, might with satisfaction to the general flock adjudge the prize of Pastorship among the supplicant shepherds, without requiring the candidates to engage in competitive prayer, or exhibit from the pulpit prepared samples of polite exhortation, and agreeable reproof.

Perhaps, also, under such conditions, the former tenor of the young minister's life, and the judgment formed by his masters at school and college, of his character and capacity, might have more weight with the jury than the music of his voice or the majesty of his action; and, in a church entirely desirous to do what was right in so grave a matter, another Elector might reverently be asked for His casting vote; and the judgment of elders, no less than the wishes of youth, be subdued to the final and faithful petition,

"Show whether of these two, *Thou* hast chosen."¹

22. (IV.) The following noble letter will not eventually be among the least important of the writings of my Master. Its occasion (I do not say its subject, for the real gist of it lies in that sentence concerning the Catechism) is closely connected with that of the preceding letter. My ecclesiastical correspondent should observe that the Apostles of the Gospel of Dirt have no need to submit themselves to the ordeal of congregational Election. They depend for their influence wholly on the sweetness of the living waters to which they lead their flocks.

¹ [Acts i. 24.]

The *Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald* publishes the following extract of a letter written to a friend by Mr. Carlyle:—

“A good sort of man is this Darwin, and well-meaning, but with very little intellect. Ah, it is a sad, a terrible thing to see nigh a whole generation of men and women, professing to be cultivated, looking round in a purblind fashion, and finding no God in this universe. I suppose it is a reaction from the reign of cant and hollow pretence, professing to believe what, in fact, they do not believe. And this is what we have got to. All things from frog-spawn; the gospel of dirt the order of the day. The older I grow—and I now stand upon the brink of eternity—the more comes back to me the sentence in the Catechism which I learned when a child, and the fuller and deeper its meaning becomes, ‘What is the chief end of man?—To glorify God, and enjoy Him for ever.’ No gospel of dirt, teaching that men have descended from frogs through monkeys, can ever set that aside.”¹

23. (V.) The following admirable letter contains nearly all I have to affirm as to the taproot of economy, namely, house-building:—

“To the Editor of the ‘Spectator’

“CARSHALTON, Jan. 27, 1877.

“SIR,—Some seven or eight years ago you permitted me to give you an account of a small house which I had recently built for my own occupation. After the ample experience which I have had, more particularly during the wet of this winter, you may like to know what my convictions now are about houses and house-building. You will remember that I was driven to house-building because of my sufferings in villas. I had wanted warmth and quiet, more particularly the latter, as I had a good deal of work to do which could not be done in a noise. I will not recount my miseries in my search after what to me were primal necessities of life. Suffice to say, at last I managed to buy a little piece of ground, and to put on it a detached cottage, one storey high, with four good bedrooms, two sitting-rooms, and a study. I got what I desired, and never once during these seven years have I regretted building. There are some things which I should like altered, and for the benefit of those who may be intending to follow my example, I will say what they are, and get rid of them. In the first place, the house ought to have one room in the roof, and that room should have been the study, away from all household hubbub, and with a good view of the stars I could easily have kept out both cold and heat. In the next place, what is called a kitchener is a miserable contrivance for wasting coals, and, what is worse, for poisoning the soft water and spoiling the flowers with the soot which the great draught blows out of the chimney. At the same time, I would earnestly advise an oven in which bread can be baked. No dyspeptic person can well overrate the blessing of bread made simply from flour, yeast, water, and salt; and it is absolutely impossible to procure such bread from ordinary bakers. Thirdly, as I have a garden, I would use earth-closets, and save the expense of manure, and the chance of bursting

¹ [“Letter (fictitious, it proved to be afterwards, but full of good sense), understood by the author to be from Mr. Carlyle, on the Gospel of Dirt.”—*MS. note (for index) by Ruskin in his copy*. The letter had been quoted in the *Times* of January 17, 1877, from the *Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald*. Two days later the *Times* published a note from “L.” stating “on the best authority” that the letter was a hoax.]

pipes in frosty weather. Lastly, the cellar ought to have been treble the size it now is, and should have had a stove in it, for warming the house through gratings in the ceiling. I cannot recollect anything else I should like changed, except that I should like to have had a little more money to spend upon making the rooms loftier and larger.

“Now for what I have gained. We have been perfectly dry during all this winter, for the walls are solid, and impervious even to horizontal rain. They are jacketed from the top of the ground-floor upwards with red tiles, which are the best waterproof covering I know, infinitely preferable to the unhealthy-looking suburban stucco. Peace has been secured. Not altogether, because a man must have a very large domain if he is to protect himself utterly against neighbours who will keep peacocks, or yelping curs which are loose in the garden all night. But the anguish of the piano next door fitting into the recess next to my wall,—worse still, the anguish of expectation when the piano was not playing, are gone. I go to bed when I like, without having to wait till my neighbours go to bed also. All these, however, are obvious advantages. There is one, not quite so obvious, on which I wish particularly to insist. I have got a home. The people about me inhabit houses, but they have no homes, and I observe that they invite one another to their ‘places.’ Their houses are certain portions of infinite space, in which they are placed for the time being, and they feel it would be slightly absurd to call them ‘homes.’ I can hardly reckon up the advantages which arise from living in a home, rather than a villa, or a shed, or whatever you like to call it, on a three years’ agreement, or as an annual tenant. The sacredness of the family bond is strengthened. The house becomes the outward and visible sign of it, the sacramental sign of it. All sorts of associations cluster round it, of birth, of death, of sorrow, and of joy. Furthermore, there seems to be an addition of permanence to existence. One reason why people generally like castles and cathedrals is because they abide, and contradict that sense of transitoriness which is so painful to us. The house teaches carefulness. A man loves his house, and does not brutally damage plaster or paint. He takes pains to decorate it as far as he can, and is not selfishly anxious to spend nothing on what he cannot take away when he moves. My counsel, therefore, to everybody who can scrape together enough money to make a beginning is to build. Those who are not particularly sensitive, will at least gain solid benefits, for which they will be thankful; and those with a little more soul in them will become aware of subtle pleasures and the growth of sweet and subtle virtues, which, to say the least, are not promoted by villas. Of course I know it will be urged that estimates will be exceeded, and that house-building leads to extravagance. People who are likely to be led into extravagance, and can never say ‘No,’ should not build. They may live anywhere, and I have nothing to say to them. But really the temptation to spend money foolishly in house-building is not greater than the temptation to walk past shop windows.

“I am, Sir, etc.

“W. HALE WHITE.”¹

24. (VI.)

“Pardon the correction, but I think you were not quite right in saying in a recent *Fors* that the spiral line could be drawn by the hand and eye only.² Mr. F. C. Penrose, whose work on the Parthenon you referred to in one of your earlier books,³ showed me some time ago a double spiral he had drawn with a

¹ [Formerly a clerk in the Admiralty: see his letter in *Dilecta*, § 18. Author (under the pseudonym Mark Rutherford) of *The Autobiography of Mark Rutherford*, *The Revolution in Tanner’s Lane*, and other works.]

² [See Letter 62, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 525).]

³ [See *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. ch. v. § 12 (Vol. X. p. 153 n.).]

machine of his own devising, and also a number of other curves (cycloidal, conchoidal, and cissoidal, I think) drawn in the same way, and which latter, he said he believed, had never been drawn with absolute accuracy before.”

My correspondent has misunderstood me. I never said “the spiral” but *this* spiral, under discussion.

I have no doubt the machines are very ingenious. But they will never draw a snail-shell, nor any other organic form. All beautiful lines are drawn under mathematical laws organically *transgressed*, and nothing can ever draw these but the human hand. If Mr. Penrose would make a few pots with his own hand on a potter’s wheel, he would learn more of Greek art than all his measurements of the Parthenon have taught him.

LETTER 76

OUR BATTLE IS IMMORTAL¹

VENICE, *Sunday, 4th March, 1877.*

“Μαχη δη, φαμεν, αθανατος εστιν η τοιαυτη ξυμμαχοι δε ημιν θεοι τε αμ
α και δαιμονες, ημεις δ’ αυ κτηματα θεων και δαιμονων, φθειρει δε ημ
ας αδικια και υβρις μετα αφροσυνης, σωζει δε δικαιοσυνη και σωφρο
συνη μετα φρονησεως, εν ταις των θεων εμψυχοις οικουσαι δυναμεσι.
”

1. “WHEREFORE, our battle is immortal; and the Gods and the Angels fight with us: and we are their possessions. And the things that destroy us are injustice, insolence, and foolish thoughts; and the things that save us are justice, self-command, and true thought, which things dwell in the living powers of the Gods.”²

This sentence is the sum of the statement made by Plato in the tenth book of the *Laws* respecting the relations of the will of man to the Divine creative power. Statement which is in all points, and for ever, true; and ascertainably so by every man who honestly endeavours to be just, temperate, and true.

I will translate and explain it throughout, in due time; *³

* For the present, commending only to those of my Oxford readers who may be entering on the apostleship of the Gospel of Dirt,⁴ this following sentence, with as much of its context as they have time to read:—

“ο πρωτον γενεσεως και φθορας αιτιον απαντων, τουτο ου πρωτον αλλα υστερον απεφηναντο ειναι γεγονος οι την των ασεβων ψυχην απεργασαμενοι λογοι, ο δε υστερον προτερον, οθεν ημαρτηκασι περι θεων της οντως ουσιας.”

¹ [“Epistle of Jude” (see §§ 13 *seq.*) was a rejected title for this Letter.]

² [*Laws*, x. 906 A. The Greek passage in the note is from 891 E, thus translated by Jowett: “They affirm that which is the first cause of the generation and destruction of all things, to be not first but last, and that which was last to be first, and hence they have fallen into error about the true nature of the Gods.” The further passage translated in the text is from 902.]

³ [This, however, was not done.]

⁴ [See Letter 75, § 22 (p. 79).]

but am obliged to refer to it here hastily, because its introduction contains the most beautiful and clear pre-Christian expression at present known to me, of the law of Divine life in the whole of organic nature, which the myth of St. Theodore¹ taught in Christian philosophy.

I give one passage of it as the best preface to the matters I have to lay before you in connection with our beginning of real labour on English land (announced, as you will see, in the statement of our affairs for this month²):—

“Not, therefore, Man only, but all creatures that live and die, are the possessions of the Gods, whose also is the whole Heaven.

“And which of us shall say that anything in the lives of these is great, or little, before the Gods? for it becomes not those to whom we belong, best and carefullest of possessors, to neglect either this or that.

“For neither in the hands of physician, pilot, general, nor householder, will great things prosper if he neglect the little; nay, the stonemason will tell you that the large stones lie not well without the small: shall we then think God a worse worker than men, who by how much they are themselves nobler, by so much the more care for the perfectness of all they do; and shall God, the wisest, because it is so easy to care for little things, therefore not care for them, as if He were indolent or weary?”

2. Such preface befits well the serious things I have to say to you, my Sheffield men, to-day. I had them well in my mind when I rose, but find great difficulty in holding them there because of the rattling of the steamcranes of the huge steamer, *Pachino*.

Now, that's curious: I look up to read her name on her bow—glittering in the morning sun, within thirty paces of me; and, behold, it has St. George's shield and cross on it;* the first ship's bow I ever saw with a knight's shield for its bearing. I must bear with her cranes as best I may.

It is a right omen, for what I have to say in especial to the little company of you, who are minded, as I hear,

* At least, the sharp shield of crusading times, with the simple cross on it—St. George's in form, but this the Italian bearing reversed in tincture, gules, the cross argent.

¹ [See above, p. 65.]

² [See below, § 15.]

out of your steam-crane and all other such labour in Sheffield, pestilent to the enduring Sabbath of human peace on earth and goodwill towards men,¹ to take St. George's shield for your defence in Faith, and begin truly the quiet work and war—his, and all the saints—cleaving the wide “seas of Death, and sunless gulfs of Doubt.”²

3. Remember, however, always that seas of Death must mean antecedent seas of Life; and that this voice, coming to you from the laureated singer of England, prophesying in the *Nineteenth Century*,* does truly tell you what state Britannia's ruled waves have at present got into under her supremely wise ordination.

I wonder if Mr. Tennyson, of late years, has read any poetry but his own; or if, in earlier years, he never read, with attention enough to remember, words which most other good English scholars will instantly compare with his somewhat forced—or even, one might say, steam-craned, rhyme, to “wills,”³ “Roaring moon of—Daffodils.” Truly, the nineteenth century altogether, and no less in Mid-summer than March, may be most fitly and pertinently described as a “roaring moon”: but what has it got to do with daffodils, which belong to lakes of Life, not Death? Did Mr. Tennyson really never read the description of that golden harbour in the little lake which my Companions and I have been striving to keep the nineteenth century from changing into a cesspool with a beach of broken ginger-beer bottles?

“The waves beside them danced; but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee.
A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company.”⁴

* The sonnet referred to begins, I hear, the periodical so named.

¹ [Luke ii. 14.]

² [From Tennyson's Prefatory Sonnet to the *Nineteenth Century* (March 1877).]

³ [Ruskin, as appears from his note, had not yet seen the magazine; he quotes from some newspaper. Tennyson wrote “will” and “daffodil.”]

⁴ [Wordsworth, *Poems of the Imagination*, “I wandered lonely as a cloud” (1804). The poet states in a prefatory note that “the daffodils grew and still grow on the margin of Ullswater, but that the poem was written at Grasmere; and Ruskin here

No steam-craned versification in that, you will observe, by the way; but simple singing for heart's delight, which you will find to be the vital form of real poetry;¹ disciplined singing, also, if it may be, but natural, all the while. So also architecture, sculpture, painting,—Sheffield ironwork. Natural to Sheffield,*—joyful to Sheffield, otherwise an entirely impossible form of poetry there. (Three enormous prolonged trumpeting, or indecent bellowings—audible, I should think, ten miles off—from another steamer entering the Giudecca, interrupt me again,—and you need not think that I am peculiar in sensitiveness: no decent family worship, no gentle singing, no connectedly thoughtful reading, would be possible to any human being under these conditions, wholly inevitable now by any person of moderate means in Venice. With considerable effort, and loss of nervous energy, I force myself back into course of thought.)

4. You don't, perhaps, feel distinctly how people can be joyful in ironwork, or why I call it "poetry"?

Yet the only piece of good part-singing I heard in Italy, for a whole summer, was over a blacksmith's forge (and there has been disciplined music, as you know, made of its sounds before now; and you may, perhaps, have seen and heard Mr. G. W. Moore as the Christy Blacksmith²). But I speak of better harmonies to be got out of your work than Handel's, when you come at it with a true heart, fervently,³ as I hope this company of you

* All the fine work of man must be first instinctive, for he is bound to be a fine Animal—King of Animals; then, moral or disciplined, for he is bound to be a fine Spirit also, and King of Spirits. The Spirit power begins in directing the Animal power to other than egoistic ends. Read, in connection with last *Fors*, *The Animals of the Bible*, by John Worcester, Boston, Lockwood and Brooke, 1875.

refers to his preface to the protest by Mr. R. Somervell (a Companion of St. George's Guild) against the extension of the railway to Grasmere, etc. He there uses the same phrase about converting the lake into "a pool of drainage, with a beach of broken ginger-beer bottles."

¹ [Compare *Lectures on Art*, § 67 (Vol. XX. pp. 73–74).]

² [For other references to the Moore and Burgess Minstrels, see Vol. XXVIII. p. 492; and the Introduction, above, p. xx.]

³ [See 1 Peter i. 22.]

are like to do, to whom St. George has now given thirteen acres of English ground for their own;¹ so long as they observe his laws.

They shall not be held to them at first under any formal strictness—for this is mainly their own adventure; St. George merely securing coign of vantage for it, and requiring of them observance only of his bare first principles—good work, and no moving of machinery by fire. But I believe they will be glad, in many respects, to act by St. George’s advice; and, as I hope, truly begin his active work; of which, therefore, it seems to me now necessary to state unambiguously the religious laws which underlie the Creed and vow of full Companionship, and of which his retainers will, I doubt not, soon recognize the outward observance to be practically useful.

5. You cannot but have noticed—any of you who read attentively,—that *Fors* has become much more distinctly Christian in its tone, during the last two years;² and those of you who know with any care my former works, must feel a yet more vivid contrast between the spirit in which the preface to the *Crown of Wild Olive* was written, and that in which I am now collating for you the Mother Laws of the Trades of Venice.

This is partly because I am every day compelled, with increasing amazement, and renewed energy, to contradict the idiotic teaching of Atheism which is multiplied in your ears; but it depends far more essentially on two vital causes: the first, that since *Fors* began, “such things have befallen me”^{*} personally, which have taught me much, but of which I need not at present speak; the second, that in the work I did at Assisi in 1874, I discovered a fallacy which had underlain all my art teaching (and the teaching of Art, as I understand it, is the teaching of all things) since the year 1858. Of which I must be so far tedious

* Leviticus x. 19.

¹ [See below, § 15 (p. 98); and compare Letter 77, § 4 (p. 112).]

² [On this passage, see the Introduction to Vol. XXIII. p. xlvi.]

to you as to give some brief account. For it is continually said of me, and I observe has been publicly repeated lately by one of my very good friends, that I have “changed my opinions” about painting and architecture. And this, like all the worst of falsehoods, has one little kernel of distorted truth in the heart of it,¹ which it is practically necessary, now, that you, my Sheffield essayists of St. George’s service, should clearly know.

6. All my first books, to the end of the *Stones of Venice*, were written in the simple belief I had been taught as a child; and especially the second volume of *Modern Painters* was an outcry of enthusiastic praise of religious painting, in which you will find me placing Fra Angelico (see the closing paragraph of the book) above all other painters.

But during my work at Venice, I discovered the gigantic power of Tintoret,² and found that there was a quite different spirit in that from the spirit of Angelico; and, analysing Venetian work carefully, I found,—and told fearlessly, in spite of my love for the masters,—that there was “no religion whatever in any work of Titian’s; and that Tintoret only occasionally forgot himself into religion.”³—I repeat now, and reaffirm, this statement; but must ask the reader to add to it, what I partly indeed said in other places at the time,⁴ that only when Tintoret forgets himself, does he truly find himself.

Now you see that among the four pieces of art I have given you for standards to study,⁵ only one is said to be “perfect,”—Titian’s.⁶ And ever since the *Stones of Venice*

¹ [Tennyson: *The Grandmother*, viii. (“A lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies”); quoted also in Vol. VII. p. 352.]

² [See Ruskin’s letters of 1845 to his father (Vol. IV. p. xxxvii.).]

³ [See the *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. ch. i. §§ 13–14 (Vol. IX. pp. 31–32): “There is no religion in any work of Titian’s. . . . The mind of Tintoret . . . sometimes forgets itself into devotion;” and compare *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 182).]

⁴ [Not expressly said; but implied in the descriptions of Tintoret’s paintings in the Scuola di San Rocco: see Vol. IV. pp. 270 *seq.*, and Vol. XI. pp. 403 *seq.*; and compare Vol. VII. p. 295.]

⁵ [See Letter 66, § 17 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 625).]

⁶ [See Letter 69, § 15 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 700).]

was written, Titian was given in all my art teaching as a standard of perfection.¹ Conceive the weight of this problem, then, on my inner mind—how the most perfect work I knew, in my special business, could be done “wholly without religion”!

7. I set myself to work out that problem thoroughly in 1858, and arrived at the conclusion—which is an entirely sound one, and which did indeed alter, from that time forward, the tone and method of my teaching,—that human work must be done honourably and thoroughly, because we are now Men;²—whether we ever expect to be angels, or ever were slugs, being practically no matter. We *are* now Human creatures,³ and must, at our peril, do Human—that is to say, affectionate, honest, and earnest work.*

Farther, I found, and have always since taught, and do teach, and shall teach, I doubt not, till I die, that in resolving to do our work well, is the only sound foundation of any religion whatsoever: and that by that resolution only, and what we have done, and not by our belief, Christ will judge us, as He has plainly told⁴ us He will (though nobody believes Him) in the Resurrection.

But, beyond this, in the year 1858, I came to another conclusion, which was a false one.

My work on the Venetians in that year not only convinced me of their consummate power, but showed me that there was a great *worldly* harmony running through all they did—opposing itself to the fanaticism of the Papacy;

* This is essentially what my friend Mr. Harrison means (if he knew it) by his *Religion of Humanity*,—one which he will find, when he is slightly more advanced in the knowledge “of all life and thought,”⁵ was known and acted on in epochs considerably antecedent to that of modern Evolution.

¹ [As, for instance, in *Two Paths*, § 57 (Vol. XVI. p. 298).]

² [Compare *Time and Tide*, § 33 (Vol. XVII. p. 348).]

³ [Ruskin’s note for Index here is “Work, the resolution to do it well, the only true foundation of religion; compare end of *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iv. § 60.”]

⁴ [See, for instance, Matthew vii. 20 *seq.*]

⁵ [See the passage in Mr. Harrison’s letter in Vol. XXVIII. p. 663 (“Thought and life are very wide, and I will listen to the judgment only of those who have patiently weighed the *whole* of both”), and Ruskin’s note upon it (*ibid.*, p. 664). See also, below, p. 568 *n.*]

and in this worldly harmony of human and artistic power, my own special idol, Turner, stood side by side with Tintoret; so also Velasquez, Sir Joshua, and Gainsborough, stood with Titian and Veronese; and those seven men—quite demonstrably and indisputably giants in the domain of Art, of whom in the words of Velasquez himself, “Tizian z’e quel che porta la Bandiera,”¹—stood, as heads of a great Worldly Army, worshippers of Worldly visible Truth, *against* (as it seemed then to me), and assuredly distinct from, another sacred army, bearing the Rule of the Catholic Church in the strictest obedience, and headed by Cimabue, Giotto, and Angelico; worshippers not of a worldly and visible Truth, but of a visionary one, which they asserted to be higher; yet under the (as they asserted—supernatural) teaching of the Spirit of this Truth, doing less perfect work than their unassisted opposites!

8. All this is entirely so; fact tremendous in its unity, and difficult enough as it stands to me even now; but as it stood to me then, wholly insoluble, for I was still in the bonds of my old Evangelical faith; and, in 1858, it was with me, Protestantism or nothing: the crisis of the whole turn of my thoughts being one Sunday morning, at Turin, when, from before Paul Veronese’s Queen of Sheba,² and under quite overwhelmed sense of his God-given power, I went away to a Waldensian chapel, where a little squeaking idiot was preaching to an audience of seventeen old women and three louts,* that they were the only children of God in Turin; and that all the people in Turin outside the chapel, and all the people in the world out of sight of Monte Viso, would be damned. I came out of the chapel, in sum of twenty years of thought, a conclusively *un*-converted man—converted by this little Piedmontese gentleman, so powerful in his organ-grinding, inside-out, as it

* Counted at the time;—I am not quite sure now if seventeen or eighteen.

¹ [“Titian it is who bears the banner.” See *The Two Paths*, Lecture II., “The Unity of Art,” § 69 (Vol. XVI. p. 313).]

² [For a photogravure from this picture, see Vol. XVI., Plate III.]

were. “Here is an end to my ‘Mother-Law’ of Protestantism anyhow!—and now—what is there left?”¹ You will find what was left, as, in much darkness and sorrow of heart I gathered it, variously taught in my books, written between 1858 and 1874. It is all sound and good, as far as it goes: whereas all that went before was so mixed with Protestant egotism and insolence, that, as you have probably heard, I won’t republish, in their first form, any of those former books.*²

9. Thus then it went with me till 1874, when I had lived sixteen full years with “the religion of Humanity,” for rough and strong and sure foundation of everything; but on that, building Greek and Arabian superstructure, taught me at Venice, full of sacred colour and melancholy shade. Which is the under meaning of my answer to the Capuchin (*Fors*, Aug. 1875, § 2³), that I was “more a Turk than a Christian.” The Capuchin insisted, as you see, nevertheless that I might have a bit of St. Francis’s cloak: which accepting thankfully, I went on to Assisi, and there, by the kindness of my good friend Padre Tini, and others, I was allowed (and believe I am the first painter who *ever* was allowed) to have scaffolding erected above the high altar, and therefore above the body of St. Francis which lies in the lower chapel beneath it; and thence to draw

* Not because I am ashamed of them, nor because their Art teaching is wrong (it is precisely the Art teaching which I am now gathering out of the *Stones of Venice*, and will gather, God willing, out of *Modern Painters*, and reprint and reaffirm every syllable of); but the Religious teaching of those books, and all the more for the sincerity of it, is misleading—sometimes even poisonous; always, in a manner, ridiculous; and shall not stand in any editions of them republished under my own supervision.

¹ [Compare *Præterita*, vol. iii. ch. i. § 23, and the Introduction to Vol. VII. of this edition, pp. xl., xli.]

² [Thus *Modern Painters*, in its complete form, was not republished (after 1873) till 1888. For the plans, here referred to, see Vol. III. pp. xlvii., xlix. *Seven Lamps* was not republished between 1855 and 1880, and the edition of the latter year contained many deprecatory notes by the author. The *Stones of Venice* was republished in its first form in 1874; it is the rearranged “Travellers’ Edition” of 1879–1881 which Ruskin here projects.]

³ [Letter 56, Vol. XXVIII. p. 385.]

what I could of the great fresco of Giotto, “The marriage of Poverty and Francis.”*

And while making this drawing, I discovered the fallacy under which I had been tormented for sixteen years,—the fallacy that Religious artists were weaker than Irreligious. I found that all Giotto’s “weaknesses” (so called) were merely absences of material science. He did not know, and could not, in his day, so much of perspective as Titian,—so much of the laws of light and shade, or so much of technical composition. But I found he was in the make of him, and contents, a very much stronger and greater man than Titian; that the things I had fancied easy in his work, because they were so unpretending and simple, were nevertheless entirely inimitable; that the Religion in him, instead of weakening, had solemnized and developed every faculty of his heart and hand; and finally that his work, in all the innocence of it, was yet a human achievement and possession, quite above everything that Titian had ever done!

“But what is all this about Titian and Angelico to you,” are you thinking? “We belong to cotton mills—iron mills;—what is Titian to *us!*¹—and to all men. Heirs only of simial life, what Angelico?”

Patience—yet for a little while. They shall both be at least something to you before St. George’s Museum is six months older.

* The drawing I made of the Bride is now in the Oxford schools, and the property of those schools, and King Alfred.² But I will ask the Trustees to lend it to the Sheffield Museum, till I can copy it for you, of which you are to observe, please, that it had to be done in a dark place, from a fresco on a vaulted roof which could no more be literally put on a flat surface than the figures on a Greek vase.

¹ [See Letter 7, § 14 (Vol. XXVII. p. 128).]

² [The drawing, however, was not given to Oxford, nor was it sent to Sheffield. Ruskin seems to have sent it to America in 1879 (see, in a later volume, the letter to Professor Norton of February 27), but it does not figure in the Catalogue of the American Exhibition (Vol. XIII. pp. 582 *seq.*). Studies of the fresco were included in the Bond Street Exhibition of 1878 (*ibid.*, p. 527). As Ruskin’s copy is not available, a photographic reproduction of the fresco has been given (Plate I., Vol. XXVIII. p. 164). “King Alfred” was associated in Ruskin’s mind with his Oxford schools, because of Alfred’s supposed foundation of the University. Thus, in the schools, the Oxford fritillary was called “King Alfred’s Dew-flower” (Vol. XXI. p. 76.)]

10. Meantime, don't be afraid that I am going to become a Roman Catholic, or that I am one, in disguise. I can no more become a *Roman-Catholic*, than again an Evangelical Protestant.¹ I am a "Catholic" of those Catholics, to whom the Catholic Epistle of St. James is addressed—"the Twelve Tribes which are scattered abroad"²—the literally or spiritually wandering Israel of all the Earth. The St. George's creed includes Turks, Jews, infidels, and heretics; and I am myself much of a Turk, more of a Jew; alas, most of all,—an infidel; but not an atom of a heretic: Catholic, I, of the catholics; holding only for sure god's order to His scattered Israel,—“He hath shown thee, oh man, what is good; and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”³

11. "Humbly."—Have you the least idea, do you think, my Sheffield friends, what humility means,—or have any of your dress-coated lecturers? Is not almost everything you are trying to do begun in pride, or in ambition? And for walking humbly with your God:—(*your's*, observe, and your Fathers', as revealed to you otherwise than a Greek's and *his* Fathers', or an Indian's and his Fathers'), have you ever taken the least pains to know what kind of Person the God of England once was? and yet, do you not think

¹ [Ten years later than this letter it was rumoured that Ruskin had joined the Church of Rome. He then wrote the following letter for publication:—

“BRANTWOOD, *April 1, 1887.*

“DEAR SIR,—I shall be entirely grateful to you if you will take the trouble to contradict any news gossip of this kind which may be disturbing the minds of any of my Scottish friends. I was, am, and can be, only a Christian Catholic in the wide and eternal sense. I have been that these five-and-twenty years at least. Heaven keep me from being less as I grow older! but I am no more likely to become a Roman Catholic than a Quaker, Evangelical, or Turk.

“Ever faithfully yours,

“JOHN RUSKIN.”

The letter was reprinted from the *Christian Leader* in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of April 6, 1887 (with the explanation that the rumour in question arose from Ruskin's "recent act of neighbourly charity in giving a stained glass window to the Roman Catholic Chapel at Coniston"). The letter was also reprinted in the *Morning Post*, April 7, 1887; in *Igdrasil*, December 1890, vol. ii. p. 104; and in the privately issued *Ruskiniana*, Part I., 1890, pp. 117–118.]

² [James i. 1.]

³ [Micah vi. 8.]

yourselves the cleverest of human creatures, because you have thrown His yoke off, with scorn? You need not crow so loudly about your achievement. Any young gutter-bred blackguard your police pick up in the streets, can mock your Father's God, with the best of you.

"He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation,—my Father's God, and I will exalt Him."¹ You will find that to be an entirely salutary resolve of true humility; and I have no hope of any prosperity for you in this or any other undertaking, but as you set yourselves to recover, and reform, in truest sense, the Christian Faith you have been taught to spit on, and defile.

Which, that you may be able to do, you must learn it from the Catholic epistles; which are written to you Sheffielders as much as to any one else;—the Pauline epistles being only to special persons, and parts of them having no more help in them for *you*, than Jonah's message to Nineveh.² But the Catholic epistles are directly addressed to you—every word vital for you; and the most vital of these is the one that is given in nearly the same words by two of the Apostles, Peter and Judas (not Iscariot); namely, II. Peter i. 19, to end of epistle, and the epistle of Jude entire, comparing it with his question and its answer, John xiv. 22.³

12. For if you understand those two epistles,* and that

* I may as well notice, now I am on the epistles, one of the grotesque mistakes that continually slip into *Fors* through my crowding of work (I made two delicious ones in my Latin last month, and have had to cancel the leaf where I could:⁴ what are left will be literary curiosities in time). I had written, in *Fors* of July, 1876, § 17 *n.*, "true fact stated by St. *James*," and gave the scrawled page to an assistant, to be copied; who, reading the fair text afterwards to me, it struck me the passage was in Timothy. I bade my assistant look, and finding it so, said rapidly, "Put Timothy instead, then." But the "Saint" was left, and only caught my eye as I corrected the press, and set me thinking "why Timothy was never called a saint like other people," and I let it go!

¹ [Exodus xv. 2.]² [Jonah iii. 4.]

³ [The answer is in verses 23, 24: "If a man love me, he will keep my words. . . . He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings."]

⁴ [See the notes on pp. 65, 66, above, for the error in "*Fors* of July," Letter 67, see Vol. XXVIII. p. 652 *n.*]

question and answer, you will understand the great scientific fact respecting, not the origin, but the existence, of species: that there is one species of Men on God's side—called to be saints—elect—precious;¹ (but by no means limited to the horizon of Monte Viso²) who have everything in Christ; and another on the side of the Prince of this world,³ whose spot is the spot of *His Children*⁴—who have nothing in Christ.

And that you must belong, whether knowingly or not, to one of these armies; and are called upon, by St. George, now to ascertain which:—the battle being henceforth like to be sore between them, and between their Captain Archangels, whose old quarrel over the body of Moses⁵ is by no means yet decided.

And then you will also understand the definition of true Religious service (θρησκεία) by St. James the Bishop (which, if either Archdeacon Denison, or simpleton Tooth, or the stout British Protestant beadles of Hatcham,⁶ ever come to understand—as in God's good time they may, in Heaven—they will be a greatly astonished group of the Blessed, for some while),—to wit, “Pure service, and undefiled (even by its tallow-candle-dropping, if the candles are lighted for help of widows' eyes—compare *Fors*, June, 1871, § 9⁷)—before God, and the Father (God, of the Spirits of all Flesh⁸—and *our* Father, who know Him), is this, to visit the Fatherless and Widows in their affliction,

¹ [Romans i. 7; 1 Peter ii. 6.]

² [See above, § 8.]

³ [John xii. 31.]

⁴ [See Deuteronomy xxxii. 5.]

⁵ [See Jude 9.]

⁶ [The Rev. Arthur Tooth, Vicar of St. James's, Hatcham, who had been inhibited for ritualistic practices by the Court of Arches, defied the Court and continued to hold services. He was thereupon pronounced contumacious and in contempt, and a warrant for his arrest was issued. On January 22, 1877, he was arrested and lodged in Horsemonger Lane Gaol. On the previous day there had been a conflict for the possession of the church between the curate licensed by the bishop and the clergyman chosen by Mr. Tooth. On February 17 he was released. See the *Annual Register* for 1877, pp. 8, 9, etc. For Archdeacon Denison's ritualistic propaganda, see ch. x. in his *Notes of my Life, 1805–1878*.]

⁷ [Vol. XXVII. p. 109.]

⁸ [Numbers xvi. 22.]

and to *keep himself unspotted from the world*,”¹ of whose spots,—leopard’s, snake’s, Ethiopian’s, and fine lady’s patches,—your anatomical Students, though dispensing knowledge only skin-deep, are too slightly cognizant; and even your wise Christian scarcely can trace them from skin to clothes, so as to hate rightly “even the garment spotted by the Flesh.”²

13. Well, I must draw to an end, for I have no more time this month. Read, before next *Fors* time, that epistle of Jude with intense care. It sums all the Epistles, coming, by the order of the *Fors* which grouped the Bible books, just before the Apocalypse; and it precisely describes your worst—in verity, your only,—Enemies of this day; the *twice* dead people,—plucked up by the *roots*,³ having once been rooted in the Holy Faith of Christendom; but now, *filthy* dreamers (apostles of the Gospel of Dirt,⁴ in perpetual foul dream of what man was, instead of reverence for what he is); carried about of winds of vanity (pitiful apothecaries’ apprentices), speaking evil of things they know not; but in the things they know naturally as brute beasts, in these, corrupting themselves; going in the way of Cain—(brother kingdom at war with brother, France and Germany, Austria and Italy)—running after the error of Balaam for reward (the Bishop of Manchester—whom I finally challenged, personally and formally, through my Oxford Secretary, two months ago, not daring to answer me a word,⁵—knowing that the city he rules over is in every business act of it in mortal sin, and conniving,—to keep smooth with it—he! and the Bishop of Peterborough, “neutral,”⁶ in sleek consent to the son of Zippor’s prayer

¹ [James i. 27.]

² [Jude 23.]

³ [Jude 12. For the other Bible references on this page, see Jude 8; Isaiah lvii. 13; Jude 10, 11; Numbers xxii.-xxiv.]

⁴ [See Letter 75, § 22 (p. 78).]

⁵ [For the earlier challenge, see Letter 49 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 243); for later references to it, Letters 78 and 82 (pp. 136, 244). For the Bishop’s answer, see (in a later volume of this edition) *Usury: a Reply and a Rejoinder*.]

⁶ [See Letter 72, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 770).]

—“Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all”¹), and perishing in the gainsaying of Kore, going down quick into volcanic petroleum pit, in the gathering themselves against Lawgiver and Priest, saying, “Wherefore lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord? the days of Kinghood and Priesthood are ended!”

14. A notable piece of the Word of God to you, this, if ye will receive it: and in this last clause of it, for us of St. George’s Company, precisely imperative. You see that whole mysterious passage about the contest for the body of Moses (first, I suppose, of our Christian worshipping of relics, though old Greek motive of sacrest battle), comes in to enforce the not speaking evil of Dignities.² And the most fearful practical lessons in modern history are that the entire teaching of Mazzini, a man wholly upright, pure, and noble, and of subtlest intellectual power³—Italian of the Italians, was rendered poisonous to Italy because he set himself against Kinghood; and the entire war of Garibaldi,⁴ a soldier of ten thousand, innocent and gentle and true, and of old Roman valour, was rendered utterly ruinous to Italy, by his setting himself against the Priesthood. For both King and Priest are for ever, after the Order of Melchizedek,⁵ and none that rise against them shall prosper: and this, in your new plannings and fancyings, my good Sheffielders, you will please take to heart, that thought to yourselves, in the first confusion of things, St. George leaves all liberty of conscience consistent with the perfect law of liberty⁶ (which, however, you had better precisely understand from James the Bishop, who has quite other views concerning it than Mr. John Stuart Mill;—

¹ [Numbers xxiii. 25. For the other Biblical references in § 13, see Jude 11; Numbers xvi. 30 and 3.]

² [Jude 8, 9.]

³ [For an earlier reference to Mazzini, see Vol. XXVIII. p. 350. He was a great friend of Mrs. Carlyle, at whose house Ruskin had doubtless met him.]

⁴ [For other references to Garibaldi, see Letters 1, § 5; 3, § 7; 7, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 16, 51, 117).]

⁵ [Psalms cx. 4; Hebrews v. 6. Compare Vol. XXIII. p. 256, and Vol. XXVIII. p. 598.]

⁶ [James i. 25.]

James i. 25;¹ ii. 12, 13²), so soon as you have got yourselves settled, and feel the ground well under you, we must have a school built on it for your children, with enforced sending of them to be schooled; in earliest course of which schooling your old Parish-church golden legend will be written by every boy, and stitched by every girl, and engraven with diamond point into the hearts of both,—

“Fear God. Honour the King.”³

¹ [“But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”]

² [“So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.”]

³ [1 Peter ii. 17.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

15. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

A few of the Sheffield working-men who admit the possibility of St. George's notions being just, have asked me to let them rent some ground from the Company, whereupon to spend what spare hours they have, of morning or evening, in useful labour. I have accordingly authorized the sale of £2200 worth of our stock, to be re-invested on a little estate, near Sheffield, of thirteen acres, with good water supply.¹ The workmen undertake to St. George for his three per cent.; and if they get tired of the bargain, the land will be always worth our stock. I have no knowledge yet of the men's plans in detail; nor, as I have said in the text,² shall I much interfere with them, until I see how they develop themselves. But here is at last a little piece of England given into the English workman's hand, and heaven's.

16. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

I am beginning, for the first time in my life, to admit some notion into my head that I am a great man. God knows at how little rate I value the little that is in me; but the maintaining myself now quietly against the contradiction of every one of my best friends, rising as it does into more harmonious murmur of opposition at every new act to which I find myself compelled by compassion and justice, requires more than ordinary firmness: and the absolute fact that, being entirely at one in my views of Nature and life with every great classic author, I am yet alone in the midst of a modern crowd which rejects them all, is something to plume myself upon,—sorrowfully enough: but haughtily also. And now here has Fors reserved a strange piece of—if one's vanity were to speak—good fortune for me; namely, that after being permitted, with my friend Mr. Sillar's guidance,³ to declare again in its full breadth the great command against usury, and to explain the intent of Shakespeare throughout the *Merchant of Venice* (see *Munera Pulveris*⁴), it should also have been reserved for me to discover the first recorded words of Venice herself, on her Rialto!—words of the ninth century,* inscribed on her first church, St. James of the Rialto; and entirely unnoticed

* I have the best antiquarian in Venice as authority for this date—my own placing of them would have been in the eleventh.

¹ [This is referred to below as the Abbeydale Estate (see pp. 112, 140, 207, 273); elsewhere as the Mickley, or Totley, Estate (see Introduction to Vol. XXX).]

² [See above, § 4.]

³ [See the Introduction to Vol. XXVII. p. xlvii.]

⁴ [*Munera Pulveris*, § 100 (Vol. XVII. p. 223).]

by all historians, hitherto; yet in letters which he who ran might read¹:—only the historians never looked at the church, or at least, looked only at the front of it and never round the corners. When the church was restored in the sixteenth century, the inscription, no more to be obeyed, was yet (it seems) in reverence for the old writing, put on the gable at the back, where, an outhouse standing a little in the way, nobody noticed it any more till I came on it, poking about in search of the picturesque.² I found it afterwards recorded in a manuscript catalogue of ancient inscriptions in Venice, in St. Mark's library (and as I write this page, Sunday, March 11th, 1877, the photograph I have had made of it is brought in to me—now in the Sheffield Museum). And this is the inscription on a St. George's Cross, with a narrow band of marble beneath—marble so good that the fine edges of the letters might have been cut yesterday.

On the cross—

“Be thy Cross, oh Christ, the true safety of this place.” (In case of mercantile panics, you see.)

On the band beneath it—

“Around this temple, let the merchant's law be just—his weights true, and his agreements guileless.”

Those, so please you, are the first words of Venice to the mercantile world—nor words only, but coupled with such laws as I have set before you—perfect laws of “liberty and fraternity,” such as you know not, nor yet for many a day, can again learn.

It is something to be proud of to have deciphered this for you; and more to have shown you how you may attain to this honesty through Frankness. For indeed the law of St. George, that our dealings and fortunes are to be openly known, goes deeper even than this law of Venice, for it cuts at the root, not only of dishonesty, but of avarice and pride. Nor am I sorry that in myself submitting to it, my pride must be considerably mortified. If all my affairs had been conducted with prudence, or if my present position in the world were altogether stately, it might have been pleasant to unveil the statue of one's economy for public applause. But I scarcely think even those of my readers who least understand me, will now accuse me of ostentation.

17. My father left all his fortune to my mother and me: to my mother, thirty-seven thousand pounds* and the house at Denmark Hill for life; to me a hundred and twenty thousand, † his leases at Herne and

* 15,000 Bank Stock.

† I count Consols as thousands, forty thousand of this were in stocks.

¹ [Habakkuk ii. 2.]

² [The inscription is reproduced on Plate LXII. in Vol. XXI. (see pp. 268, 269). For other references to it, see *Unto this Last*, note of 1877 in the Preface (Vol. XVII. p. 20); *St. Mark's Rest*, § 131 (Vol. XXIV. p. 308); *Memorial Studies of St Mark's*, § 7 (*ibid.*, p. 417); the “Catalogue of the Ruskin Museum,” Vol. XXX.; and Postscript to the “Legend of Santa Zita” in *Roadside Songs of Tuscany* (Vol. XXXII.).]

Denmark Hills, his freehold pottery at Greenwich, and his pictures, then estimated by him as worth ten thousand pounds, but now worth at least three times that sum.

My mother made two wills; one immediately after my father's death; the other—in gentle forgetfulness of all worldly things past—immediately before her own. Both are in the same terms, "I leave all I have to my son." This sentence, expanded somewhat by legal artifice, remains yet pathetically clear, as the brief substance of both documents. I have therefore to-day, in total account of my stewardship, to declare what I have done with a hundred and fifty-seven thousand pounds; and certain houses and lands besides. In giving which account I shall say nothing of the share that other people have had in counselling or mis-counselling me; nor of my reasons for what I have done. St. George's bishops¹ do not ask people who advised them, or what they intended to do; but only what they did.

18. My first performance was the investment of fifty thousand pounds in "entirely safe" mortgages, which gave me five per cent. instead of three. I very soon, however, perceived it to be no less desirable, than difficult, to get quit of these "entirely safe" mortgages. The last of them that was worth anything came conveniently in last year (see *Fors* accounts²). I lost about twenty thousand pounds on them, altogether.

In the second place, I thought it rather hard on my father's relations, that he should have left all his money to me only; and as I was very fond of some of them, indulged myself, and relieved my conscience at the same time, by giving seventeen thousand pounds to those I liked best. Money which has turned out to be quite rightly invested, and at a high interest; and has been fruitful to me of many good things, and much happiness.

Next I parted with some of my pictures,³ too large for the house I proposed to live in, and bought others at treble the price, the dealers always assuring me that the public would not look at any picture which I had seen reason to part with; and that I had only my own eloquence to thank for the prices of those I wished to buy.*

I bought next a collection of minerals (the foundation now of what are preparing for Sheffield and other schools) for a stipulated sum of three thousand pounds, on the owner's statement of its value. It proved not to

* Fortune also went always against me. I gave *carte-blanche* at Christie's for Turner's drawing of Terni (five inches by seven⁴), and it cost me five hundred pounds. I put a limit of two hundred on the Roman Forum,⁵ and it was bought over me for a hundred and fifty, and I gnash my teeth whenever I think of it, because a commission had been given up to three hundred.

¹ [See Vol. XXVIII. pp. 512–513.]

² [See Letter 64, § 23, "Cash (Portsdown Mortgage)," Vol. XXVIII. p. 583.]

³ [Chiefly Turner's "Grand Canal," sold by Ruskin in 1872, on leaving Denmark Hill for Brantwood: see Vol. XIII. p. 606.]

⁴ [No. 20 in the "Notes" on Ruskin's Collection: see Vol. XIII. p. 426 *n.*]

⁵ [It does not appear to which of two drawings of this subject (both made for Hakewill's *Tour*) Ruskin refers—the "Forum from the Capitol," or the "Forum looking towards the Capitol." The former was last sold at Christie's in 1899; the latter in 1889.]

be worth five hundred. I went to law about it. The lawyers charged me a thousand pounds for their own services; gave me a thousand pounds back, out of the three; and made the defendant give me another five hundred pounds' worth of minerals. On the whole, a satisfactory legal performance; but it took two years in the doing, and caused me much worry; the lawyers spending most of the time they charged me for, in cross-examining me, and other witnesses, as to whether the agreement was made in the front or the back shop; with other particulars, interesting in a picturesque point of view, but wholly irrelevant to the business.¹

Then Brantwood was offered me, which I bought, without seeing it,² for fifteen hundred pounds (the fact being that I have no time to see things, and *must* decide at a guess; or not act at all).

Then the house at brantwood, a mere shed of rotten timber and loose stone, had to be furnished, and repaired. For old acquaintance' sake, I went to my father's upholsterer in London (instead of the country Coniston one, as I ought) and had five pounds charged me for a foot-stool;³ the repairs also proving worse than complete rebuilding; and the moving one's chattels from London, no small matter. I got myself at last settled at my tea-table, one summer evening, with my view of the lake—for a net four thousand pounds all told. I afterwards built a lodge nearly as big as the house, for a married servant, and cut and terraced a kitchen garden out of the "steep wood"*—another two thousand transforming themselves thus into "utilities embodied in material objects";⁴ but these latter operations, under my own immediate direction, turning out approvable by neighbours, and, I imagine, not unprofitable as investment.

All these various shiftings of harness, and getting into saddle—with the furnishing also of my rooms at Oxford, and the pictures and universal acquisitions aforesaid—may be very moderately put at fifteen thousand for a total. I then proceeded to assist my young relation in business; with resultant loss, as before related, of fifteen thousand;⁵ of which indeed he still holds himself responsible for ten, if ever able to pay it; but one of the pieces of the private message sent me, with St. Ursula's on Christmas Day,⁶ was that I should forgive this debt altogether. Which hereby my cousin will please observe, is very heartily done; and he is to be my cousin as he used to be, without any more thought of it.

Then, for my St. George and Oxford gifts—there are good fourteen thousand gone—nearer fifteen—even after allowing for stock prices, but say fourteen.

* "Brant," Westmoreland for steep.

¹ [In this case, which was put down for hearing in 1869, the actual value of the minerals and the sum which Ruskin had agreed to pay were in dispute. Ruskin drove down to Westminster on three successive days in order to give his evidence, but the case being blocked by a lengthy one before it, he characteristically declined to attend any more, and instructed his lawyers to make the best settlement they could out of court.]

² [See Vol. XXII. p. xxi.]

³ [See Letter 44, § 11 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 135).]

⁴ [See Letter 4, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 64).]

⁵ [See Letter 62, § 20 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 530).]

⁶ [See above, p. 30.]

And finally, you see what an average year of carefully restricted expense has been to me!—Say £5500 for thirteen years, or, roughly, seventy thousand; and we have this—I hope not beyond me—sum in addition:—

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Loss on mortgages | £20,000 |
| Gift to relations | 17,000 |
| Loss to relations | 15,000 |
| Harness and stable expenses | 15,000 |
| St. George and Oxford | 14,000 |
| And added yearly spending | 70,000 |
| | <hr/> |
| | £151,000 |

19. Those are the clearly stateable and memorable heads of expenditure—more I could give, if it were needful; still, when one is living on one's capital, the melting away is always faster than one expects; and the final state of affairs is, that on this 1st of April, 1877, my goods and chattels are simply these following:—

In funded cash—six thousand Bank Stock, worth, at present prices, something more than fifteen thousand pounds.

Brantwood—worth, certainly with its house, and furnitures, five thousand.

Marylebone freehold and leaseholds—three thousand five hundred.

Greenwich freehold—twelve hundred.

Herne Hill leases and other little holdings—thirteen hundred.

And pictures and books, at present lowest auction prices, worth at least double my Oxford insurance estimate of thirty thousand: but put them at no more, and you will find that, gathering the wrecks of me together, I could still now retire to a mossy hermitage, on a little property of fifty-four thousand odd pounds; more than enough to find me in meal and cresses. So that I have not at all yet reached my limit proposed in *Munera Pulveris*—of dying “as poor as possible,”¹ nor consider myself ready for the digging scenes in *Timon of Athens*.² Accordingly, I intend next year, when St. George's work really begins, to redress my affairs in the following manner:—

20. First. I shall make over the Marylebone property entirely to the St. George's Company, under Miss Hill's superintendence always. I have already had the value of it back in interest, and have no business now to keep it any more.³

Secondly. The Greenwich property was my father's, and I am sure he would like me to keep it. I shall keep *it* therefore; and in some way, make it a Garden of Tuileries, honourable to my father, and to the London he lived in.⁴

Thirdly. Brantwood I shall keep, to live upon, with its present servants—necessary, all, to keep it in good order; and to keep me comfortable, and fit for my work. I may not be able to keep quite so open

¹ [See *Munera Pulveris*, § 153 (Vol. XVII. p. 276).]

² [Act iv. sc. 3.]

³ [See, on this subject, Letter 86 (p. 360 *n.*).]

⁴ [Compare Vol. XXVII. pp. 69, 105. Ruskin retained the properties for some time, and ultimately sold them when opportunity offered of increasing the Brantwood estate.]

a house there as I have been accustomed to do: that remains to be seen.

Fourthly. My Herne Hill leases and little properties that bother me, I shall make over to my pet cousin—whose children, and their donkey,¹ need good supplies of bread and butter, and hay: she always promising to keep my old nursery for a lodging to me, when I come to town.²

Fifthly. Of my ready cash, I mean to spend to the close of this year, another three thousand pounds, in amusing myself—with such amusement as is yet possible to me—at Venice, and on the Alps, or elsewhere;³ and as, at the true beginning of St. George's work, I must quit myself of usury and the Bank of England, I shall (at some loss you will find, on estimate) then buy for myself twelve thousand of Consols stock, which, if the nation hold its word, will provide me with three hundred and sixty pounds a year—the proper degrees of the annual circle, according to my estimate, of a bachelor gentleman's proper income, on which, if he cannot live, he deserves speedily to die. And this, with Brantwood strawberries and cream, I will for my own poor part, undertake to live upon, uncomplainingly, as Master of St. George's Company,—*or die*. But, for my dependants, and customary charities, further provision must be made; or such dependencies and charities must end. Virtually, I should then be giving away the lives of these people to St. George, and not my own.

Wherefore,

Sixthly. Though I have not made a single farthing by my literary work last year,* I have paid Messrs. Hazell, Watson, and Viney an approximate sum of £800 for printing my new books, which sum has been provided by the sale of the already printed ones. I have only therefore now to *stop* working; and I shall receive regular pay for my past work—a gradually increasing, and—I have confidence enough in St. George and myself to say—an assuredly still increasing, income,⁴ on which I have no doubt I can sufficiently maintain all my present servants and pensioners; and perhaps even also sometimes indulge myself with a new missal. New Turner drawings are indeed out of the question; but as I have already thirty large and fifty or more small ones, and some score of illuminated MSS., I may get through the declining years of my æsthetic life, it seems to me, on those terms, resignedly, and even spare a book or two—or even a Turner or two, if needed—to my St. George's schools.

Now, to stop working *for the press*, will be very pleasant to me⁵—not to say medicinal, or even necessary—very soon. But that does not mean stopping work. *Deucalion* and *Proserpina* can go on far better without printing; and if the public wish for them, they can subscribe for them.

* Counting from last April Fool's day to this.

¹ [See above, p. 73.]

² [This was always done. The Preface of *Præterita* was written at Herne Hill "in what was once my nursery," Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Severn having renewed the lease until 1907.]

³ [For his movements, see Vol. XXIV, pp. xxxiv. *n.*, xlv.]

⁴ [This calculation was amply verified: see the account of Ruskin's publishing experiment in Vol. XXX., and compare the Introduction to Vol. XXVII. (pp. lxxxii.—lxxxvi.).]

⁵ [A self-denying ordinance which, however, was by no means to be carried out.]

In any case, I shall go on at leisure, God willing, with the works I have undertaken.

Lastly. My Oxford professorship will provide for my expenses at Oxford as long as I am needed there.

21. Such, Companions mine, is your Master's position in life;—and such his plan for the few years of it which may yet remain to him. You will not, I believe, be disposed wholly to deride either what I have done, or mean to do; but of this you may be assured, that my spending, whether foolish or wise, has not been the wanton lavishness of a man who could not restrain his desires; but the deliberate distribution, as I thought best, of the wealth I had received as a trust, while I yet lived, and had power over it. For what has been consumed by swindlers, your modern principles of trade are answerable; for the rest, none even of that confessed to have been given in the partiality of affection, has been bestowed but in real self-denial. My own complete satisfaction would have been in buying every Turner drawing I could afford, and passing quiet days at Brantwood, between my garden and my gallery, praised, as I should have been, by all the world, for doing good to myself.

I do not doubt, had God condemned me to that selfishness, He would also have inflicted on me the curse of happiness in it. But He has led me by other ways, of which my friends who are wise and kind, neither as yet praising me, nor condemning, may one day be gladdened in witness of a nobler issue.

22. (III.) The following letter, with the extracts appended to it, will be of interest, in connection with our present initiation of closer Bible study for rule of conduct.

I should also be glad if Major Hartley could furnish me with any satisfactory explanation of the circumstances which have induced my correspondent's appeal.

“MY DEAR SIR,—When I had the pleasure of seeing you last week you expressed some interest in the house in Gloucestershire where for a time resided the great translator of the English Scriptures, William Tyndale, and which is now in a sadly neglected condition. It is charmingly set on the south-western slope of the Cots-wolds, commanding a fine prospect over the richly wooded vale of the Severn, to the distant hills of Wales. After leaving Oxford, Tyndale came to reside in this manor-house of Little Sodbury, as tutor in the family of the proprietor, Sir John Walsh, and was there probably from 1521 to 1523. It was in the old dining-hall that, discussing with a neighbouring priest, Tyndale uttered his memorable words, ‘If God spare my life, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough to know more of the Scriptures than you do.’ This prediction he fulfilled, for he was the first man to translate from the original, and print in a foreign land, the English Scriptures, and was rewarded for his toil by being strangled and burnt. However England may have misused and abused the book, there can be no doubt that the introduction of Tyndale's Testaments marked a new and remarkable era in the history of our country; and whatever opinion may be formed of the contents of the volume, the fine masculine English and nervous simplicity of Tyndale's translation have commanded the admiration alike of friends and foes. Though they are probably familiar to you, I enclose an extract from the late Dr. Faber, a Roman Catholic, and another from Mr. Froude, the historian, as to the beauty of Tyndale's style.” (I wish Mr. Froude, the historian, cared a little less about style; and had rather told us what he thought about the Bible's matter. I bought the *Rinnovamento* of Venice

yesterday, with a reviews in it of a new Italian poem in praise of the Devil, of which the reviewer says the style is excellent.¹) “You may also be interested in perusing a translation from the Latin of the only letter of the translator that has ever been discovered, and which touchingly reveals his sufferings in the castle of Vilvorde, in Flanders, shortly before he was put to death. Now I hope you will agree with me that the only house in the kingdom where so great a man resided ought not to be allowed to fall into decay and neglect as it is now doing. Part of the house is unroofed, the fine old dining-hall with its beautiful roof has been turned into a carpenter’s shop, the chimney-piece and other portions of the fittings of the manor-house having been carried off by the owner, Major Hartley, to his own residence, two or three miles off. I have appealed to the proprietor in behalf of the old house, but in vain, for he does not even condescend to reply. I should be glad if your powerful pen could draw attention to this as well as other similar cases of neglect. The interesting old church of St. Adeline, immediately behind the manor-house of Little Sodbury, and where Tyndale frequently preached, was pulled down in 1858, and the stones carried off for a new one in another part of the parish. Many would have gladly contributed towards a new church, and to save the old one, but they were never asked, or had any opportunity. I fear I have wearied you with these particulars, but I am sure you will not approve the doings I have recounted. With pleasant recollections of your kind hospitality,

“Believe me, dear Sir,

“Your faithful and obliged.”

“The late Dr. Faber wrote of the English Bible, of which Tyndale’s translation is the basis, as follows.” (I don’t understand much of this sweet writing of Dr. Faber’s myself; but I beg leave to state generally that the stronghold of Protestant heresy is pure pig-headedness, and not at all a taste for pure English.)

“ ‘Who will not say that the uncommon beauty and marvellous English of the Protestant Bible is not one of the great strongholds of heresy in this country? It lives on the ear like music that can never be forgotten—like the sound of a church bell which a convert hardly knows he can forego. Its felicities seem to be almost things rather than mere words. It is part of the national mind and the anchor of national seriousness. The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses. The dower of all the gifts and trials of a man’s life is hidden beneath its words. It is the representative of the best moments; and all that there has been about him of soft and gentle, and pure and penitent and good, speaks to him for ever out of the English Bible. It is his sacred thing which doubt has never dimmed and controversy never soiled.’ (Doctor!) ‘In the length and breadth of the land there is not a Protestant with one spark of righteousness about him whose spiritual biography is not in his English Bible.’

“Mr. Froude says of Tyndale’s version:—

“ ‘Of the translation itself, though since that time it has been many times revised and altered, we may say that it is substantially the Bible with which we are all familiar. The peculiar genius—if such a word may be permitted’—(better *unpermitted*)—‘which breathes through it, the mingled tenderness and majesty, the Saxon simplicity, the preternatural’ (Do you really mean that, Mr. Froude?) ‘grandeur, unequalled, unapproached in the attempted improvements of modern scholars, all are here, and bear the impress of the mind of one man—William Tyndale.’—*Froude’s History of England*.²

“The only letter of William Tyndale which has been discovered was found in the archives of the Council of Brabant, and is as follows; it is addressed to the Marquis of Berg-op-Zoom, the Governor of Vilvorde Castle, in the Low Countries; the date is 1535:—

“ ‘I believe, right worshipful, that you are not ignorant of what has been determined concerning me (by the Council of Brabant), therefore I entreat your

¹ [For another reference to this work, see Letter 83, § 8 *n.* (p. 266).]

² [Ch. xii. vol. iii. p. 84 (1873 edition).]

lordship, and that by the Lord Jesus, that if I am to remain here (in Vilvorde) during the winter, you will request the Procureur to be kind enough to send me, from my goods which he has in his possession, a warmer cap, for I suffer extremely from cold in the head, being afflicted with a perpetual catarrh, which is considerably increased in the cell. A warmer coat also, for that which I have is very thin; also a piece of cloth to patch my leggings: my overcoat has been worn out; my shirts are also worn out. He has a woollen shirt of mine, if he will be kind enough to send it. I have also with him leggings of thicker cloth for putting on above; he has also warmer caps for wearing at night. I wish also his permission to have a candle in the evening, for it is wearisome to sit alone in the dark. But above all, I entreat and beseech your clemency to be urgent with the Procureur that he may kindly permit me to have my Hebrew Bible, Hebrew Grammar, and Hebrew Dictionary, that I may spend my time with that study. And in return may you obtain your dearest wish, provided always it be consistent with the salvation of your soul. But if any other resolution has been come to concerning me, that I must remain during the whole winter,¹ I shall be patient, abiding the will of God to the glory of the grace of my Lord Jesus Christ, whose Spirit I pray may ever direct your heart. Amen.

W. TYNDALE.’ ”

¹ [This letter is quoted from *William Tyndale: a Biography*, by the Rev. R. Demaus, who gives *hiemem perficiendum omnem*, and translates (p. 477) as in the text above, but the true words are *ante hiemem perficiendum*. A facsimile of the letter was published in 1872 by Mr. Francis Fry of Bristol, with a correct translation: “if any other resolution has been come to concerning me, before the conclusion of the winter, I shall be patient,” etc.]

LETTER 77

THE LORD THAT BOUGHT US¹

VENICE, *Easter Sunday*, 1877.

1. I HAVE yet a word or two to say, my Sheffield friends, respecting your religious services, before going on to practical matters. The difficulties which you may have observed the School Board getting into on this subject, have, in sum, arisen from their approaching the discussion of it always on the hypothesis that there is no God: the ecclesiastical members of the board wishing to regulate education so as to prevent their pupils from painfully feeling the want of one; and the profane members of it, so as to make sure that their pupils may never be able to imagine one. Objects which are of course irreconcilable; nor will any national system of education be able to establish itself in balance of them.

But if, instead, we approach the question of school discipline on the hypothesis that there is a God, and one that cares for mankind, it will follow that if we begin by teaching the observance of His Laws, He will gradually take upon Himself the regulation of all minor matters, and make us feel and understand, without any possibility of doubt, how He would have us conduct ourselves in outward observance.* And the real difficulty of our Ecclesiastical

* The news from Liverpool in the third article of Correspondence [p. 119], is the most cheering I ever read in public papers.

¹ [2 Peter ii. 1 (“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them”). Ruskin also wrote on the wrapper of his copy “Epistle of Jude,” as a summary of the contents of this Letter.]

party has of late been that they could not venture for their lives to explain the Decalogue, feeling that Modernism and all the practices of it must instantly be turned inside-out, and upside-down, if they did; but if, without explaining it, they could manage to get it *said* every Sunday, and a little agreeable tune on the organ played after every clause of it, that perchance would do (on the assumption, rendered so highly probable by Mr. Darwin's discoveries respecting the modes of generation in the Orchideæ,¹ that there *was* no God, except the original Baalzebub of Ekron, Lord of Blue-bottles and fly-blowing in general;² and that this Decalogue was only ten crotchets of Moses's, and not God's at all),—on such assumption, I say, they thought matters might still be kept quiet a few years longer in the Cathedral Close, especially as Mr. Bishop was always so agreeably and inoffensively pungent an element of London society; and Mrs. Bishop and Miss Bishop so extremely proper and pleasant to behold, and the grass of the lawn so smooth shaven. But all that is drawing very fast to its end. Poor dumb dogs that they are, and blind mouths, the grim wolf with privy paw daily devouring apace,³ and nothing said, and their people loving to have it so, I know not what they will do in the end thereof;⁴ but it is near. Disestablishment? Yes, and of more powers than theirs; that prophecy of the Seventh from Adam is of judgment to be executed upon all, and conviction of their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed.⁵

2. I told you to read that epistle of Jude carefully,⁶ though to some of you, doubtless, merely vain words; but

¹ [See Letter 46, § 15 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 183).]

² [Compare *Val d' Arno*, § 226 (Vol. XXIII. p. 132 *n.*).]

³ [Milton, *Lycidas*; compare *Sesame and Lilies*, §§ 20 *seq.* (Vol. XVIII. pp. 69 *seq.*).]

⁴ [Compare Jeremiah v. 31.]

⁵ ["And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints. To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed" (Jude 14, 15). Compare Letter 75, § 3 (above, p. 56).]

⁶ [Letter 76, § 13 (p. 95).]

to any who are earnestly thoughtful, at least the evidence of a state of the Christian Church in which many things were known, and preserved (that prophecy of Enoch, for instance), lost to us now; and of beliefs which, whether well or ill founded, have been at the foundation of all the good work that has been done, yet, in this Europe of ours. Well founded or not, at least let us understand, as far as we may, what they were.

With all honour to Tyndale (I hope you were somewhat impressed by the reward he had from the world of his day, as related in that final letter of his¹), there are some points in the translation that might be more definite: here is the opening of it, in simpler, and in some words certainly more accurate, terms:—

“Judas, the servant of Jesus Christ, and the brother of James, to all who are sanctified in God, and called and guarded in Christ.

“Pity, and Peace, and Love, be fulfilled in you.

“Beloved, when I was making all the haste I could to write to you of the common salvation, I was suddenly forced to write to you, exhorting you to fight for the faith, once for all delivered to the Saints.

“For there are slunk in among you certain men, written down before to this condemnation, insolent, changing the grace of God into fury, and denying the only Despot, God; and our Lord, Jesus Christ.

“And I want to put you in mind, you who know this,—once for all,—that the Lord, having delivered His people out of the land of Egypt, in the second place destroyed those who believed not.

“And the Angels which guarded not their beginning, but left their own habitation, He hath guarded in eternal chains, under darkness, to the judgment of the great day.”²

3. Now this translation is certainly more accurate, in observing the first principle of all honest translation, that the same word shall be used in English, where it is the same in the original.³ You see I have three times used the word “guarded.” So does St. Judas. But our translation varies its phrase every time; first it says “preserved,”

¹ [See Letter 76, § 22 (p. 105).]

² [Jude 1–6.]

[For other passages in which Ruskin insists on this point, see Vol. XXVII. p. 202.]

then “kept,” and then “reserved,”—every one of these words being weaker than the real one,¹ which means guarded as a watch-dog guards. To “reserve” the Devil, is quite a different thing from “watching” him. Again, you see that, for “lasciviousness,” I have written “fury.” The word² is indeed the same always translated lasciviousness, in the New Testament, and not wrongly, if you know Latin; but wherever it occurs (Mark vii. 22; Ephesians iv. 19, etc.), it has a deeper under-meaning than the lust of pleasure. It means essentially the character which “refuses to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely,”³ which cannot be soothed, or restrained, but will take its own way, and rage its own rage,*—alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them,—who, being *past feeling*, have given themselves over to fury⁴ (*animal* rage, carnivorousness in political economy,⁵—competition, as of horses with swinging spurs at their sides in the Roman corso, in science, literature, and all the race of life), to work *all* uncleanness,—(not mere sensual vices, but all the things that defile, comp. Mark vii. 22, just quoted), with greediness;—then, precisely in the same furrow of thought, St. Jude goes on,—“denying the only Despot, God;” and St. Paul, “but ye have not so learned Christ—*if so be that ye have heard Him, and been taught by Him*”—(which is indeed precisely the point dubitable)—“that ye put off the old man,” etc.,⁶—where you will find, following, St. Paul’s explanation of the Decalogue, to end of chapter (Eph. iv.), which if you will please learn by heart with the ten commandments, and, instead of merely praying, when you hear that disagreeable crotchet of Moses’s announced, “Thou

* See fourth article in Correspondence [p. 120.]

¹ [τετηρημενοις, τηρησαντας, τετηρηκεν.]

² [ασελγεια.]

³ [Psalms lviii. 5.]

⁴ [Ephesians iv. 18, 19.]

⁵ [See Vol. XXVIII. pp. 103, 159; and below, p. 199.]

⁶ [Ephesians iv. 20–22.]

shalt not steal,”¹ “Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this—crotchet,” which is all you can now do,—resolve solemnly that you will yourselves literally obey (and enforce with all your power such obedience in others) the Christian answering article of Decalogue, “Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth,”² you will, in that single piece of duty to God, overthrow, as I have said, the entire system of modern society, and form another in righteousness and true holiness, by no rage refusing, and in no cowardice denying, but wholly submitting to, the Lord who bought them with a price, the only Despot, God.

4. For our present translation of the passage is finally better in retaining the Greek word “Despot” here rather than “Lord,” in order to break down the vulgar English use of the word for all that is evil. But it is necessary for you in this to know the proper use of the words Despot and Tyrant. A despot is a master to whom servants belong, as his property, and who belongs to his servants as their property. My *own* master, my *own* servant. It expresses the most beautiful relation, next to that of husband and wife, in which human souls can stand to each other; but is only perfected in the right relation between a soul and its God. “Of those whom thou gavest me—mine—I have lost none,—but the son of perdition.”³ Therefore St. Jude calls God the *only* Despot. On the other hand, a Tyrant, Tyrannus, Doric for Cyrannus, a person with the essential power of a Cyrus,⁴ or imperial commander from whose decision there is no appeal, is a king exercising state authority over persons who do not in any sense belong to him as his property, but whom he has been appointed,

¹ [Exodus xx. 15.]

² [Ephesians iv. 28.]

³ [John xvii. 12: compare Letter 28, § 3 (Vol. XXVII. p. 508).]

⁴ [On this subject, compare Letter 71, § 10 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 738).]

or has appointed himself, to govern for general purposes of state-benefit. If the tyranny glow and soften into despotism, as Suwarrow's¹ soldiers (or any good commanding officer's) gradually become his "children," all the better—but you must get your simple and orderly tyrant, or Cyrus, to begin with. Cyrus, first suppose, only over greengroceries—as above recommended,² in these gardens of yours, for which yesterday, 11th April, I sent our Trustees word that they must provide purchase-money.³ In which territory you will observe the Master of St. George's Company is at present a Tyrant only; not a Despot, since he does not consider you as St. George's servants at all; but only requires compliance with certain of his laws while you cultivate his ground. Of which, the fixing of standard quality for your shoe-leather, since I hear you are many of you shoemakers, will be essential: and on this and other matters of your business, you will look to our St. George's Companion, Mr. Somervell,⁴ for instruction; with this much of general order, that you are to make shoes with extremest care to please your customers in all matters which they ought to ask; by fineness of fit, excellence of work, and exactitude of compliance with special orders: but you are not to please them in things which they ought not to ask. It is *your* business to know how to protect, and adorn, the human foot. When a customer wishes you really to protect and adorn his or her foot, you are to do it with finest care: but if a customer wishes you to injure their foot, or disfigure it, you are to refuse their pleasure in those particulars, and bid them—if they insist on such *dis*-service—to go elsewhere. You are not, the smiths of you, to put horseshoes hot on hoofs; and you are not, the shoemakers of you, to make any shoes with high heels, or with vulgar and useless decorations, or—if made to measure—that will

¹ [For another reference to Suwarrow, the Russian field-marshal (1730–1800), see Vol. XIII. p. 512.]

² [See Letter 73, § 11 (p. 21).]

³ [See above, p. 98.]

⁴ [For whom, see above, p. 47.]

pinch the wearer. People who wish to be pinched must find torturers off St. George's ground.

5. I expected, before now, to have had more definite statements as to the number of families who are associated in this effort. I hope that more are united in it than I shall have room for, but probably the number asking to lease St. George's ground will be greatly limited, both by the interferences with the modes of business just described, and by the law of openness in accounts. Every tradesman's books on St. George's ground must always be open on the Master's order, and not only his business position entirely known, but his *profits* known to the public: the prices of all articles of general manufacture being printed with the percentages to every person employed in their production or sale.

I have already received a letter from a sensible person interested in the success of our schemes, "fearing that people will not submit to such inquisition." Of course they will not; if they would, St. George's work would be soon done. If he can end it any day these hundred years, he will have fought a good fight.

6. But touching this matter of episcopal inquiry, here in Venice, who was brought up in her youth under the strictest watch of the Primates of Aquileia¹—eagle-eyed,—I may as well say what is to be in *Fors* finally said.

The British soul, I observe, is of late years peculiarly inflamed with rage at the sound of the words "confession" and "inquisition."*

The reason of which sentiment is essentially that the British soul has been lately living the life of a Guy Fawkes; and is in perpetual conspiracy against God and man,—evermore devising how it may wheedle the one, and rob the

* The French soul concurring, with less pride, but more petulance, in these sentiments. (See *Fors*, August, 1871, and observe my decision of statement. "The Inquisition *must* come."²)

¹ [See the Appendix to *St. Mark's Rest* (Vol. XXIV. p. 428).]

² [Letter 8, § 7 (Vol. XXVII. p. 139).]
xxix.

other.* If your conscience is a dark lantern,—then, of course, you will shut it up when you see a policeman coming; but if it is the candle of the Lord, no man when he hath lighted a candle puts it under a bushel.¹ And thus the false religions of all nations and times are broadly definable as attempts to cozen God out of His salvation at the lowest price; while His inquisition of the accounts, it is supposed, may by proper tact be diverted.

On the contrary, all the true religions of the world are forms of the prayer, “Search me, and know my heart; prove me, and examine my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”²

7. And there are, broadly speaking, two ways in which the Father of men does this: the first, by making them eager to tell their faults to Him themselves (“Father, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee”³); the second, by making them sure they cannot be hidden, if they would: “If I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there.”⁴ In neither case, do the men who love their Father fear that others should hear their confession, or witness His inquisition. But those who hate Him, and perceive that He is minded to make inquisition for blood,⁵ cry, even in this world, for the mountains to fall on them, and the hills to

* “It was only a week or two ago that I went into one of the best ironmongers in London for some nails, and I assure you that 25 per cent. of the nails I can’t drive; they, the bad ones, are simply the waste edges of the sheets that the nails are cut from: one time they used to be thrown aside; now they are all mixed with the good ones, and palmed on to the public. I say it without hesitation, and have proved it, that one cannot buy a thing which is well or honestly made, excepting perhaps a railway engine, or, by-the-bye, a Chubb’s safe to keep out thieves. I looked in their window yesterday and saw a small one, not three feet high, marked £83, 10s. Like ships versus guns,—more thieves, and more strength to keep them out. Verily, a reckoning day is near at hand.” (Part of letter from my publisher, Mr. Allen.)

¹ [Matthew v. 15.]

² [Psalms cxxxix. 23, 24.]

³ [Luke xv. 18.]

⁴ [Psalms cxxxix. 8.]

⁵ [Psalms ix. 12.]

cover them.¹ And in the actual practice of daily life you will find that wherever there is secrecy, there is either guilt or danger. It is not possible but that there should be things needing to be kept secret; but the dignity and safety of human life are in the precise measure of its frankness. Note the lovely description of St. Ursula,—*Fors*, November, 1876,—learned, and *frank*, and fair.² There is no fear for any child who is frank with its father and mother; none for men or women, who are frank with God.

I have told you that you can do nothing in policy without prayer. The day will be ill-spent, in which you have not been able, at least once, to say the Lord's Prayer with understanding; and if after it you accustom yourself to say, with the same intentness, that familiar one in your church service, "Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open," etc.,³ you will not fear, during the rest of the day, to answer any questions which it may conduce to your neighbour's good should be put to you.

8. Finally. You profess to be proud that you allow no violation of the sacredness of the domestic hearth. Let its love be perfect, in its seclusion, and you will not be ashamed to show the house accounts. I know—no man better—that an Englishman's house should be his castle; and an English city, his camp; and I have as little respect for the salesmen of the "ramparts of Berwick"* as for the levellers of the walls of Florence.⁴ But you were better and merrier Englishmen, when your camps were banked with grass, and roofed with sky, than now, when they are "ventilated

* See fifth article of Correspondence [p. 122].

¹ [Hosea x. 8; Luke xxiii. 30.]

² [Letter 71, § 13 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 742).]

³ [The first Collect of the Communion Service.]

⁴ ["The walls, which mark this last enlargement of the city (1388) and the length of whose circuit is very nearly six English miles, continue entire and unbroken throughout their whole extent, excepting where the more modern citadels of the *Belvedere* and the *Fortezza da Basso* have been inserted; but the towers which rose upon it have generally been demolished, or lowered to the level of the curtain." So Murray's *Handbook* in 1864 (p. 95). At the time when Ruskin wrote, most of the old walls had been, or were being, demolished, and broad new boulevards now occupy their site.]



Allen & Co. Sc

The Seventh and Seventeenth Capitals of the Ducal Palace.

(The Virtues — The Sages)

only by the chimney”;¹ and, trust me, you had better consent to so much violation of the secrecy of the domestic hearth, as may prevent you being found one day dead, with your head in the fireplace.²

9. Enough of immediate business, for to-day: I must tell you, in closing, a little more of what is being sent to your museum.

By this day’s post I send you photographs of two fourteenth-century capitals of the Ducal Palace here.³ The first is that representing the Virtues; the second, that representing the Sages whose power has been greatest over men. *Largitas*⁴ (Generosity) leads the Virtues; Solomon, the Sages; but Solomon’s head has been broken off by recent republican movements in Venice; and his teaching superseded by that of the public press—as “*Indi-catore generale*”—you see the inscription in beautiful modern bill type, pasted on the pillar.

Above, sits Priscian the Grammarian; and next to him, Aristotle the Logician: whom that in contemplating you may learn the right and calm use of reason, I have to-day given orders to pack, with extreme care, a cast of him,⁵ which has been the best ornament of my room here for some weeks; and when you have examined him well, you shall have other casts of other sages. But respecting what I now send,* observe, first,—

10. These capitals being octagonal, are composed each

* Mr. Ward will always be able to provide my readers with copies of the photographs referred to in *Fors*; and will never send bad impressions; but I can myself examine and sign the first four.⁶

¹ [See Letter 40, § 11 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 74).]

² [See Letter 61, § 18 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 504).]

³ [The photographs are here reproduced: Plate II. The capitals are the seventh and the seventeenth: see the descriptions of them in *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. pp. 389, 411). A drawing by Ruskin of the latter capital was No. 83 in the exhibition at the Fine Art Society in 1907.]

⁴ [Ruskin, in the note on this for his proposed Index, says “*Largitas*, liberality in gift (carelessly translated ‘Generosity’ in this page).”]

⁵ [For the casts of *Largitas* and Aristotle, see the Catalogue of the Ruskin Museum, Vol. XXX. “Casts of other sages” were not sent; they are represented in the Museum by photographs only.]

⁶ [That is, the Four Lesson Photographs: see Vol. XXVIII. p. 625.]

of sixteen clusters of leaves, opening to receive eight figure subjects in their intervals; the leaf clusters either bending down at the angles and springing up to sustain the figures (capital No. 1), or bending down under the figures and springing up to the angles (No. 2); and each group of leaves being composed of a series of leaflets divided by the simplest possible undulation of their surface into radiating lobes, connected by central ribs.

Now this system of leaf-division remains in Venice from the foliage of her Greek masters; and the beauty of its consecutive flow is gained by the observance of laws descending from sculptor to sculptor for two thousand years. And the hair which flows down the shoulders of Aristotle, and the divisions of the drapery of his shoulders and of the leaves of his book, are merely fourteenth-century forms of the same art which divided the flowing hair of your *Leucothea*¹ by those harmonious furrows. Of which you must now learn the structure with closer observance, to which end, in next *Fors*, we will begin our writing and carving lessons again.²

¹ [In the second Lesson Photograph: see Vol. XXVIII. p. 574.]

² [See Letter 78, §§ 6, 7 (p. 129).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

11. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

THE UNION BANK OF LONDON (CHANCERY LANE BRANCH) IN ACCOUNT WITH ST.
GEORGE'S FUND

| | | <i>Dr.</i> | £ | s. | d. |
|--------------|-----|--|------|----|----|
| 1877. | | | | | |
| <i>Feb.</i> | 15. | To Balance | 628 | 13 | 8 |
| | 19. | „ Draft at Douglas (per Mr. E. Rydings), less 1s. 6d., charges | 28 | 18 | 6 |
| <i>April</i> | 3. | „ Per Mr. Swan, left at Museum by a “Sheffield Working Man” | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| | 9. | „ Per ditto, from a “Sheffielder” | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| | | | £657 | 16 | 8 |
| | | <i>Cr.</i> | £ | s. | d. |
| <i>April</i> | 16. | By Balance | 657 | 16 | 8 |

No details have yet reached me of the men's plan at Sheffield;¹ but the purchase of their land may be considered as effected “if the titles are good.” No doubt is intimated on this matter; and I think I have already expressed my opinion of the wisdom of requiring a fresh investigation of title on every occasion of the sale of property;² so that, as my days here in Venice are surcharged with every kind of anger and indignation already, I will not farther speak at present of the state of British Law.

I receive many letters now from amiable and worthy women, who would be glad to help us, but whose circumstances prevent them from actually joining the society.

If they will compare notes with each other, first of all, on the means to be adopted in order to secure the delivery on demand, for due price, over at least some one counter in the nearest county town, of entirely good fabric of linen, woollen, and silk; and consider *that* task, for the present, their first duty to Heaven and Earth; and speak of it to their friends when they walk by the way, and when they sit down, and when they

¹ [See Letter 76, § 15 (p. 98).]

² [See Letter 64, § 22 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 579).]

rise up,¹—not troubling *me* about it, but determining among themselves that it shall be done,—that is the first help they can give me, and a very great one it will be. I believe myself that they will find the only way is the slow, but simple and sure one, of teaching any girls they have influence or authority over, to spin and weave; and appointing an honest and religious woman for their merchant. If they find any quicker or better way, they are at liberty to adopt it, so long as any machinery employed in their service is moved by water only. And let them re-read, in connection with the gifts and loans reported in this number of *Fors* as made to the Sheffield Museum, the end of *Fors* of September 1874.²

12. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

I have been pleased, and not a little surprised, by the generally indulgent view expressed by the public, as vocal through its daily press, of the way I have broadcast my fortune.³ But I wish it always to be remembered that even in what I believe to have been rightly distributed, this manner of lavish distribution is not in the least proposed by me as generally exemplary. It has been compelled in my own case, by claims which were accidental and extraordinary; by the fact that all my father's and mother's relations were comparatively poor,—and the still happier fact that they were all deserving; by my being without family of my own; by my possession of knowledge with respect to the arts which rendered it my duty to teach more than to enjoy, and to bestow at least a tithe of what I collected; and finally by what I conceive to be the unhappy conditions of social disorder temporarily existing around me, involving call no less imperative than that of plague or famine for individual exertion quite distinct from the proper course of the ordinary duty of private persons. My readers and Companions must not therefore be surprised, nor accuse me of inconsistency, when they find me as earnestly enforcing the propriety on their part, in most cases, of living much within their incomes, as contentedly exposing the (hitherto) excess of my expenditure above my own.

13. (III.) A paragraph from *Galignani*, sent me *Fors* for her part of cheering comment on the Catholic Epistles:—

“A WESLEYAN MAYOR AND A ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP.—The Roman Catholic Bishop of Liverpool laid on Monday the foundation-stone of a new church at Greenbank, St. Helens. The new building is to accommodate 850 worshippers, and will cost about £10,000. In the evening a banquet was given, and the Mayor of St. Helens, who (the *Liverpool Post* says) is a member of the Wesleyan community, was present. The Bishop proposed the Mayor's health; and the Mayor, in acknowledging the compliment, said that it gave him great pleasure to be present, and he rejoiced with them in the success which had attended their efforts that day—a success which had enabled them to lay the foundation-stone of

¹ [Deuteronomy vi. 7.]

² [Letter 45, § 19 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 165–166).]

³ [See Letter 76, §§ 17–21 (pp. 99–104).]

another church in the town. He rejoiced because he looked upon the various churches of the town as centres of instruction and centres of influence, which tended to the moral and spiritual welfare of the people. He was not a Roman Catholic, but he rejoiced in every centre of influence for good, whatever might be the tenets of the Church to which those centres belonged. For the welfare of the town which he had the honour of representing, he felt pleasure in being there that evening; and it would be ungrateful of him, with the feelings which he had for every branch of the Church, if he did not wish his Catholic townsmen God-speed. There was still a vast amount of ignorance to be removed, and the churches were the centres around which the moral influence was to be thrown, and which should gather in the outcasts who had hitherto been left to themselves. He hoped that the church, the foundation-stone of which they had just laid, would be raised with all possible speed, and he wished it God's blessing."

14. St. George and St. John Wesley charge me very earnestly to send their united compliments both to the Bishop, and to the Mayor of Liverpool;¹ but they both beg to observe that a place may be got to hold 850 people comfortably, for less than ten thousand pounds; and recommend the Mayor and Bishop to build the very plainest shelter for the congregation possible. St. George wishes the Bishop to say mass at an altar consisting of one block of Lancashire mountain limestone, on which no tool has been lifted up;² and St. John Wesley requests the Mayor to issue orders to the good people of Liverpool to build the walls—since walls are wanted—in pure charity, and with no commission whatever to the architect.³ No design is needed either for churches or sheepfolds—until the wolf is kept well out. But see next article.

15. (IV.) The most perfect illustration of what is meant by "turning the grace of God into fury"⁴ was given me here in Venice during the last Carnival. This grace, St. Paul writes to Titus, "hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God."⁵ Now the institution of Lent, before Easter, has the special function of reminding us of such grace; and the institution of Carnival before Lent, as to be pardoned by it, is the turning of such grace into fury. I print on the opposite page, as nearly as I can in facsimile, the bill of Venetian entertainments in St. Mark's Place, in front of St. Mark's Church (certainly, next to the square round the Baptistery of Florence, the most sacred earth in Italy), on the 9th February of this year.⁶ And I append translation, accurate I think in all particulars—commending, however, by St. Mark's order, and with his salutation, the careful study of the original to his good servant the Roman Catholic Bishop of Liverpool, to the end that the said prelate may not attach

¹ [This is an error; Ruskin means the Mayor of St. Helens.]

² [See Deuteronomy xxvii. 5.]

³ [Compare Letter 21, § 10 (Vol. XXVII. p. 359).]

⁴ [Jude 4. See above, § 3.]

⁵ [Titus ii. 11–13.]

⁶ [For another reference to this bill, see *Memorial Studies of St. Mark's*, § 13 (Vol. XXIV. p. 422).]

GIORNATA V.—Venerdì 9 Febbraio.

GRAN SABBA

Delle Streghe

Spettacolo portentoso e che farà venir l'aqua alta dal giubilo del Mare—Duecento discendenti legittime delle Maghe di Macbet, si scaraventeranno dalla loro foresta di Birmingan, e con un salto satanico precipiteranno sulla Piazza San Marco prendendola d'assalto da vari punti.—Stridendo, urlando, suonando, cantando, e agitando fuochi che illumineranno tutti i vasti domini di S.M. Allegra prenderanno d'assalto la Sala del Trono, dove daran principio alle loro danze infernali; quindi vi saranno canti e suoni diabolici e la

GRANDE LOTTA e combattimento di demonj

finchè il fischio di Satana ordinerà la pace intimando

Un Canto

ED UNA RIDDA INFERNALE

al chiarore di luci fantastiche, fosforiche, da far restar ciechi tutti coloro che sono orbi.

Finalmente la Piazza di S. Marco sarà invasa e completamente illuminata dalle

FIAMME DI BELZEBÙ

Perchè il *Sabba* possa riuscire più completo, si raccomanda a tutti gli spettatori di fischiare durante le *fiamme* come anime dannate.

Su questa serata che farà stupire e fremere gli elementi, non aggiungiamo dettagli, per lasciar ai felici regnicolo di S. M. Pantalone, gustar vergini gli effetti delle più prodigiose sorprese.

too much importance to church-building, while these things are done in front of St. Mark's.

“Day 5th.—*Friday, 9th February.*

“GREAT SABBATH OF THE WITCHES.

“Portentous spectacle, and which will make the water high with rejoicing of the Sea.* Two hundred legitimate descendants of the Witches of Macbeth, will hurl themselves out of their forest of Birmingan” (Birnam?), “and with a Satanic leap will precipitate themselves upon the piazza of St. Mark, taking it by assault on various points, shrieking, howling, piping, singing, and shaking fires which will illuminate all the vast dominions of his Joyful Majesty” (the leader of Carnival), “they will carry by assault the saloon of the Throne, where they will begin their infernal dances. Then there will be diabolic songs and music, and the Great Wrestling and Combat of Demons, until the whistle of Satan shall order peace, intimating a song and infernal ‘rida’ (?) by the glare of fantastic phosphoric lights, enough to make all remain blind who cannot see. Finally, the piazza of St. Mark will be invaded and completely illuminated by the flames of Beelzebub.

“That the Sabbath may succeed more completely, it is recommended to all the spectators to whistle, during the flames, like damned souls.

“But of this evening, which will astonish the elements, we will add no details, in order to leave the happy subjects of his Majesty Pantaloon to taste the virgin impressions of the most prodigious surprises.”

16. (V.) I reserve comment on the following announcement¹ (in which the italics are mine) until I learn what use the Berwick Urban Sanitary Authority mean to put the walls to, after purchasing them:—

“THE WALLS OF BERWICK.—The Berwick ‘ramparts’ are for sale. The Government has offered to sell a considerable part of them to the Berwick Urban Sanitary Authority; and at a special meeting of that body on Wednesday it was decided to negotiate for the purchase. From an account given of these ramparts by the *Scotsman* it seems that when the town was taken in 1296 by Edward I., they consisted only of wooden palisades, erected on the ridge of a narrow and shallow

* “Let the floods clap their hands,” etc.²

¹ [The subject, however, was not resumed. The subsequent history of the walls is given in the following newspaper paragraph:—

“The Board of Works recently leased from Berwick Corporation a section of the old fortifications, including the Bell Tower, the large stone fort fronting the sea; and two surviving fragments of the crumbling Edwardian walls. The ground has been fenced in with metal rails, and for another century the venerable relics of a stirring era in our national history will be preserved to posterity and saved from the ravages of further vandalism.

“The Berwick Historic Monuments Association, with Sir Edward Grey as president, has also been formed for the preservation of the Elizabethan ramparts, and is now engaged in opening out the flankers of the bastions, and clearing away the accumulated rubbish that has marred and obscured them for a long period. These flankers are eight in number, and may be described as open quadrangular courts of masonry measuring about 30 ft. by 90 ft., extending between the curtains and the wings of the bastions, while the fourth side is open towards the main ditch” (*Daily Chronicle*, August 24, 1906.)

² [Psalms xcvi. 8.]

ditch,—so narrow, in fact, that his Majesty cleared both ditch and palisades at a leap, and was the first thus gaily to enter the town. He afterwards caused a deep ditch to be dug round the town, and this ditch, when built, was encircled by a stone wall. *Robert Bruce, on obtaining possession of Berwick, raised the wall ten feet round, and this wall was again strengthened by Edward III., after the battle of Halidon Hill. Parts of this wall still exist,* as well as of the castle, which was a formidable structure founded at a remote date. It is stated to have been rebuilt by Henry II., and to have passed out of royal hands in 1303, being subsequently sold by the second Earl of Dunbar to the corporation of Berwick for £320. The corporation dismantled it, and used the stones for building the parish church, selling what they did not require for £109 to an alderman of Berwick, who afterwards sold it to the ancestor of Mr. Askew, of Pallinsburn. It was retained in that family until the construction of the North British Railway. *A considerable portion of the keep which was then standing, was levelled to the ground, and the railway station built upon the site of the main building.* The old fortifications which joined the castle measured in length 2 miles 282 yards, but in length the present walls only measure 11/4 mile 272 yards, and are constituted of a rampart of earth levelled and faced with stones. There are five bastions, which, with the ramparts, were kept garrisoned until 1819, when the guns were removed to Edinburgh Castle, in order to prevent them falling into the hands of the Radical rioters.”

LETTER 78

THE SWORD OF MICHAEL¹

VENICE, 9th May, 1877.

1. I SEND to-day, to our Museum, a photograph of another capital of the Ducal palace—the chief of all its capitals:² the corner-stone of it, on which rests the great angle seen in your photograph No. 3:³ looking carefully, you will easily trace some of the details of this sculpture, even in that larger general view; for this new photograph, No. 7, shows the same side of the capital.

Representing (this white figure nearest us) LUNA, the Moon, or more properly the Angel of the Moon, holding her symbol, the crescent, in one hand, and the zodiacal sign Cancer in the other,—she herself in her crescent boat, floating on the tides,—that being her chief influence on Venice. And note here the difference between heraldic and pictorial symbolism: she holds her small crescent for heraldic bearing, to show you who she is; once that understood, her crescent boat is a *picturesque* symbol of the way her reflected light glides, and traverses, and trembles on

¹ [See below, § 3. “The Ten Modern (or Houndsditch) Commands of Moses” and “Houndsditch Moses” (see § 10) were rejected titles for this Letter. Ruskin also wrote “Ducal Palace—Leucothea,—and my books in general” on the wrapper of his copy of the Letter as a summary of its contents.]

² [Plate III.; the eighteenth capital. For Ruskin’s earlier and fuller description of it, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. ch. viii. §§ 106–115 (Vol. X. pp. 412–416). See also No. 131 in the Reference Series at Oxford: Vol. XXI. p. 39 *n.*]

³ [Not to be confused with the “Lesson Photographs,” which were separately numbered 1–4. The series 1–12 here referred to consisted of photographs sent to the Museum from Venice. Nos. 8–12 are described below, pp. 130–131. No. 3 has not been mentioned before, nor are Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 identified in *Fors*. The inscription of the church of St. James (see above, p. 99) was perhaps No. 1. Nos. 2, 3, and 4 were probably general views of the Ducal Palace and the Pillars of the Piazzetta (described above, pp. 61–62). Nos. 5 and 6 must have been the photographs of the two capitals described in the last Letter (p. 117). This corner of the Palace—the “Fig-tree Angle”—is shown in Ruskin’s drawing of 1869; Plate H in Vol. X. (p. 358).]

the waves. You see also how her thin dress is all in waves; and the water ripples under her boat so gaily, that it sets all the leaf below rippling too. The *next* leaf, you observe, does not ripple.

2. Next to the Angel of the Moon, is the Angel of the planet Jupiter,—the symbol of the power of the Father (Zeus, Pater) in creation. He lays his hand on the image of Man; and on the ledge of stone, under the iron bar above his head, you may decipher, beginning at the whitest spot on the exactly nearest angle,—these letters:

D (written like a Q upside down) E L I; then a crack breaks off the first of the three legs of M; then comes O, and another crack; then D S A D A (the A is seen in the light, a dancing or pirouetting A on one leg); then D E C O, up to the edge of Jupiter's nimbus; passing over his head, you come on the other side to S T A F O, and a ruinous crack, carrying away two letters, only replaceable by conjecture; the inscription then closing with A V I T 7 E V A. The figure like a numeral 7 is, in all the Ducal Palace writing, short for E T, so that now putting the whole in order, and adding the signs of contraction hidden by the iron bar, we have this legend:

“DE LIMO DS ADA DE COSTA FO**AVIT ET EVA;”

or, in full,

“De limo Dominus Adam, de costa formavit et Evam.”

“From the clay the Lord made Adam, and from the rib, Eve.”

Both of whom you see imaged as standing above the capital, in photograph No. 3.

3. And above these, the Archangel Michael, with his name written on the cornice above him—ACANGEL. MICHAEL; the Archangel being written towards the piazzetta, and Michael, larger, towards the sea; his robe is clasped by a brooch in the form of a rose, with a small cross in its centre; he holds a straight sword, of real

bronze, in his right hand, and on the scroll in his left is written:

“ENSE
BONOS
TEGO
MALORV
CRIMINA
PURGO.”

“WITH MY SWORD, I GUARD THE GOOD, AND PURGE THE CRIMES OF THE EVIL.”

Purge—not punish; so much of purgatorial doctrine being engraved on this chief angle of the greater council chamber of the Senate.¹

Of all such inscription, modern Venice reads no more; and of such knowledge, asks no more. To guard the good is no business of hers now: “is not one man as good as another?” and as to angelic interference, “must not every one take care of himself?” To purify the evil;—“but what!—are the days of religious persecution returned, then? And for the old story of Adam and Eve,²—don’t we know better than that!” No deciphering of the old letters, therefore, any more; but if you observe, here are new ones on the capital, more to the purpose. Your Modern Archangel Uriel³—standing in the Sun—provides you with the advertisement of a Photographic establishment, FOTOGRAFIA, *this* decoration, alone being in letters as large, you see, as the wreath of leafage round the neck of the pillar. Another bill—farther round the shaft—completes the effect; and at your leisure you can compare the beautiful functions and forms of the great modern art of Printing, with the ancient rude ones of engraving.

4. Truly, it is by this modern Archangel Uriel’s help, that I can show you pictures of all these pretty things, at

¹ [Compare *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. pp. 359–363).]

² [Compare *Mornings in Florence*, § 124 (Vol. XXIII. p. 416 n.).]

³ [Uriel (the fourth Archangel: 2 Esdras iv. 36), “the Light of God,” regent of the sun.]

Sheffield;—but by whose help do you think it is that you have no real ones at Sheffield, to see instead? Why haven't you a Ducal Palace of your own, without need to have the beauties of one far away explained to you? Bills enough you have,—stuck in variously decorative situations; public buildings also—but do you take any pleasure in them? and are you never the least ashamed that what little good there may be in them, every poor flourish of their cast iron, every bead moulding on a shop front, is borrowed from Greece or Venice: and that if you got all your best brains in Sheffield, and best hands, to work, with that sole object, you couldn't carve such another capital as this which the photographer has stuck his bill upon?

You don't believe that, I suppose. Well,—you will believe, and know, a great deal more, of supreme serviceableness to you, if ever you come to believe and know that. But you can only come to it slowly, and after your “character” has been much “improved,”—as you see Mr. Goldwin Smith desires it to be (see the third article of Correspondence). To-day you shall take, if you will, a step or two towards such improvement, with Leucothea's help—white goddess of sea foam,¹ and the Sun-Angel's help—in our lesson-Photograph No. 1.² With your patience, we will now try if anything “is to be seen in it.”³

5. You see at all events that the hair in every figure is terminated by severely simple lines externally, so as to make approximately round balls, or bosses, of the heads; also that it is divided into minute tresses from the crown of the head downwards; bound round the forehead by a double fillet, and then, in the head-dress of the greater Goddess, escapes into longer rippling tresses, whose lines are continued by the rippling folds of the linen sleeve below.

¹ [See *St. Mark's Rest*, § 76 (Vol. XXIV. p. 267).]

² [See Plate V. in Vol. XXVIII. (p. 574). The “Leucothea” had, however, been numbered as the Second Lesson Photograph, because it was the second selected by Ruskin (*ibid.*, pp. 574, 625). Yet on p. 626 he calls it, as here, “the first”—that is, in historical order.]

³ [See Letter 69, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 698).]

Farther, one of these longer tresses, close behind the ear, parts from the others, and falls forward, in front of the right shoulder.

Now take your museum copy of my *Aratra Pentelici*, and, opposite § 67,¹ you will find a woodcut,* giving you the typical conception of the Athena of Athens at the time of the battle of Marathon. You see precisely the same disposition of the hair; but she has many tresses instead of one, falling in front of her shoulders; and the minute curls above her brow are confined by a close cap, that her helmet may not fret them. Now, I have often told you that everything in Greek myths is primarily a physical,—secondly and chiefly a moral—type.² This is first, the Goddess of the air, secondly and chiefly, celestial inspiration, guiding *deed*; specially those two deeds of weaving, and righteous war, which you practise at present, both so beautifully, “in the interests of England.”³

Those dark tresses of hair, then, physically, are the dark tresses of the clouds;—the spots and serpents of her ægis, hail and fire;—the soft folds of her robe, descending rain. In her spiritual power, all these are the Word of God, spoken either by the thunder of His Power,⁴ or as the soft rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.⁵ Her spear is the strength of sacred deed, and her helmet, the hope of salvation.⁶

You begin now to take some little interest in these rippings of the leaves under the Venetian Lady of Moonlight, do not you? and in that strangely alike Leucothea, sedent there two thousand years before that peaceful moon

* I place copies of this cut in Mr. Ward's hands, for purchase by readers who have not access to *Aratra*.

¹ [See Vol. XX. p. 242 (Plate IV.).]

² [See the *Queen of the Air*, § 2 (Vol. XIX. p. 296).]

³ [See Letter 74, § 16 (above, p. 46).]

⁴ [Job xxvi. 14.]

⁵ [See Deuteronomy xxxii. 2.]

⁶ [1 Thessalonians v. 8.]

rose on Venice; and that, four hundred years before our “Roaring moon”¹ rose on *us*.

6. But farther. Take a very soft pencil, and touching very lightly, draw lines on the photograph between the ripples of the hair, thus: and you will find that the distances 1–2, 2–3, 3–4, etc., first diminish gradually, and then increase;—that the lines 1, 2, 3, etc., radiate from the slope of the fillet, gradually, till they become horizontal at the shoulder; and lastly, that the whole group first widens and then diminishes, till the trees farthest back losing itself altogether, and the four nearest us hiding behind the shoulder, the fullest one, set for contrast beside the feeblest, dies away in delicate rippling over the shoulder line.

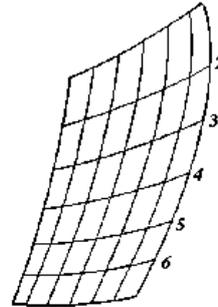


Fig. 1

Now, sketch with a soft pencil such a little diagram of all this, as the figure above; and then, take your pen, and try to draw the lines of the curved tresses within their rectangular limits. And if you don't “see a little more in” *Leucothea's* hair before you have done,—you shall tell me, and we'll talk more about it.

Supposing, however, that you do begin to see more in it, when you have finished your drawing, look at the plate opposite § 119 in *Aratra*,² and read with care the six paragraphs 115–120. Which having read, note this farther,—the disorder of the composition of the later art in Greece is the sign of the coming moral and physical ruin of Greece; but through and under all her ruin, the art which submitted itself to religious law survived as a remnant; unthought of, but immortal, and nourished its little flock, day by day, till Byzantium rose out of it, and then Venice. And that flowing hair of the Luna was in truth sculptured

¹ [Tennyson, “Prefatory Sonnet” to the *Nineteenth Century*: see Letter 76, § 3 (p. 84).]

² [See Vol. XX., Plate VIII., and pp. 277–281.]



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The Eighteenth Capital of the Ducal Palace.

(The Moon and God Creating Man)

by the sacred power of the ghosts of the men who carved the Leucothea.

You must be patient enough to receive some further witness of this, before our drawing lesson ends for to-day.

7. You see that drapery at Leucothea's knee. Take a sheet of thin note-paper: fold it (as a fan is folded) into sharp ridges; but straight down the sheet, from end to end. Then cut it across, from corner to corner, fold either half of it up again, and you have the root of all Greek, Byzantine, and Etruscan pendent drapery.

Try, having the root thus given you, first to imitate that simple bit of Leucothea's, and then the complex ones, ending in the tasselled points, of Athena's robe in the woodcut. Then, take a steel pen, and just be good enough to draw the edges of those folds;—every one, you see, taken up in order duly, and carried through the long sweeping curves up to the edge of the ægis at her breast. Try to do that yourself, with your pen-point, and then, remember that the Greek workman did it with his brush-point, designing as he drew, and that on the convex surface of a vase,—and you will begin to see what Greek vases are worth, and why they are so.

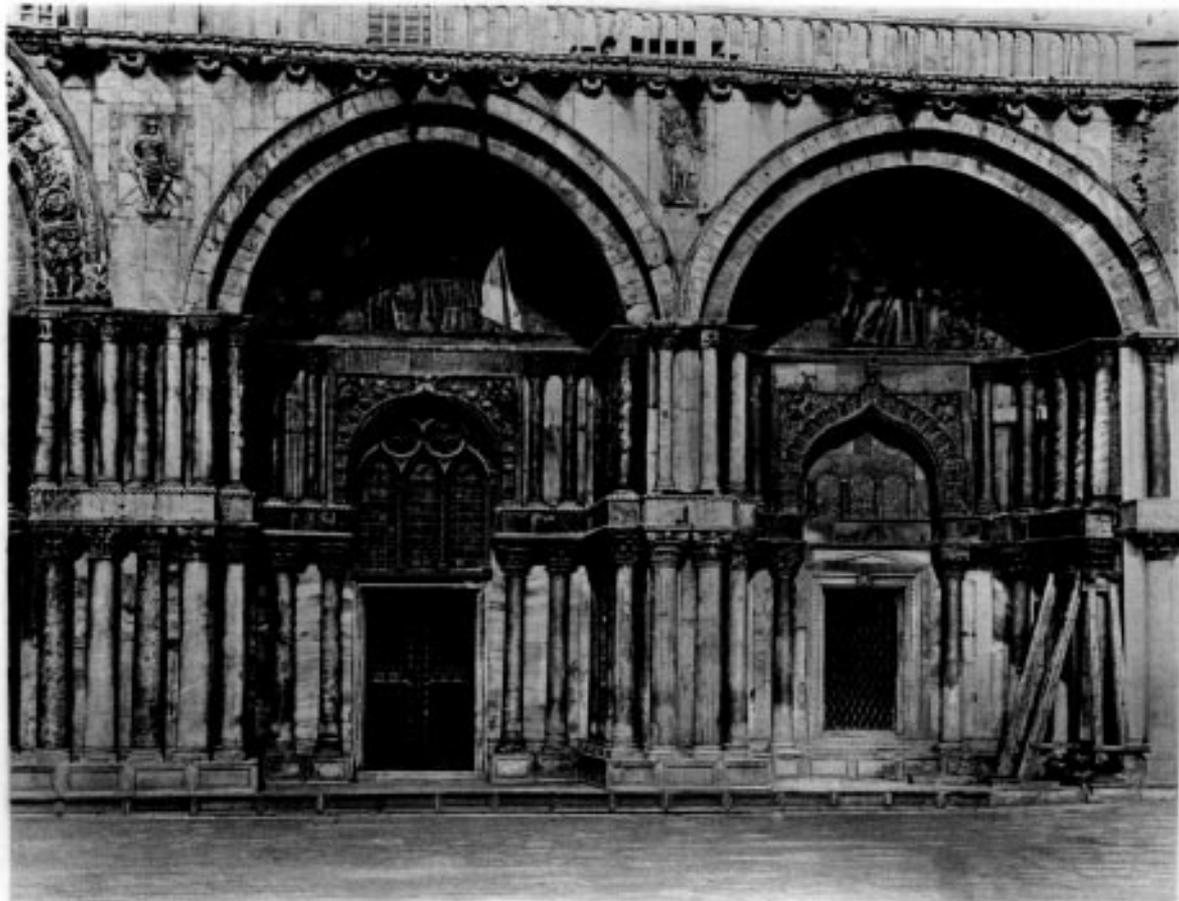
Then lastly, take your photograph No. 10 *b*,¹ which is the flank of a door of St. Mark's, with a prophet bearing a scroll, in the midst of vineleaf ornament:—and look at the drapery of the one on the left where it falls in the last folds behind his foot.

Athena's sacred robe, you see, still!—and here no vague reminiscence, as in the Luna, but absolutely pure Greek tradition, kept for two thousand years,—for this decoration is thirteenth-century work, by Greek, not Venetian, artists.

8. Also I send other photographs, now completing your series to the twelfth, namely—

No. 8. Entire west front of St. Mark's, as it stood

¹ [This was a photograph showing part of the door on the left of the central one, as the spectator faces the front. The detail here described is well shown in the engraving on Plate VI. in *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 115).]



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The Southern Porches of the West Front of St. Mark's
(1877)

in the fifteenth century; from Gentile Bellini's picture of it.

No. 9. Entire west front, as it stands now.

No. 10. The two northern of the five porches of the west front, as it is.

No. 11. The two southern porches of the west front, as it is now.¹

No. 12. Central porch of the west front, as it is now. The greater part of this west front is yet uninjured, except by time, since its mosaics were altered in the sixteenth century. But you see in No. 11 that some pillars of the southern porch are in an apparently falling condition; propped by timbers. They were all quite safe ten years ago; they have been brought into this condition by the restorations on the south side, and so left: the whole porch was therefore boarded across the front of it during the whole of this last winter; and the boards used for bill-sticking, like the pillars of the Ducal Palace. I thought it worth while to take note of the actual advertisements which were pasted on the palings over the porch, on Sunday, the 4th of March of this year (see next page): two sentences were written in English instead of Italian by the friend who copied them for me.

Such are the modern sacred inscriptions and divine instructions presented to the Venetian people by their church of St. Mark.² What its ancient inscriptions and perennial advertisements were, you shall read in *St. Mark's Rest*,³ if you will, with other matters appertaining to ancient times.

9. With none others do I ask you to concern yourselves; nor can I enough wonder at the intense stupidity and obstinacy with which the public journals speak of all

¹ [Plate IV., reproduced from the photograph in question. For Gentile Bellini's picture of the West Front (No. 8), see Plate XLVI. in Vol. XXIV. (p. 164); for Bunney's picture of the West Front (corresponding to No. 9), see Plate C in Vol. X. (p. 82); for Ruskin's drawing of the North-West Portico (partly corresponding to No. 10), Plate D in Vol. X. (p. 116).]

² [Compare Appendix 25 ("Romanist Decoration of Bases") in vol. i. of *Stones of Venice* (Vol. IX. p. 472).]

³ [See chs. viii., ix. (Vol. XXIV. pp. 282–334).]

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THOSE WHO BUY 10 WILL RECEIVE 11.

DENTI.

NON PIÙ ESTRAZIONE, SICURA GUARIGIONE.

CALLE DEI SPECCHIERIE.

10 LIRE DI MANCIA.

PERDUTÁ UNA

CAGNOLINA,

COLORE CANNELLA COLLE ORECCHIE PIUTOSTO LUNGE.

I am trying to teach and to do, as if I were making a *new* experiment in St. George's Company; while the very gist and essence of everything St. George orders is that it shall *not* be new, and not an "experiment";* but the re-declaration and re-doing of things known and practised successfully since Adam's time.

Nothing new, I tell you,—how often am I to thrust this in your ears? Is the earth new, and its bread? Are the plough and sickle new in men's hands? Are Faith and Godliness new in their hearts? Are common human charity and courage new? By God's grace, lasting yet, one sees, in miners' hearts, and sailors'. Your political cowardice is new, and your public rascality, and your blasphemy, and your equality, and your science of Dirt.¹ New in their insolence and rampant infinitude of egotism—not new in one idea, or in one possibility of good.

10. Modern usury is new, and the abolition of usury laws; but the law of Fors as old as Sinai. Modern divinity with—not so much as a lump of gold—but a clot of mud, for its god, is new; but the theology of Fors as old as Abraham. And generally the modern Ten Commandments are new:²—"Thou shalt have any other god but me. Thou shalt worship every beastly imagination on earth and under

* The absurd endeavours of modern rhymesters and republicans with which St. George's work is so often confounded, came to water, because they *were* new, and because the rhyming gentlemen thought themselves wiser than their fathers.³

¹ [Compare Letter 75, § 22 (Gospel of Dirt): above, p. 78.]

² [Here in his notes for Index Ruskin writes, "Decalogue, Modern, complete form of (compare the first sketch of it by Arthur Clough)," the reference being to "The Latest Decalogue" in Clough's *Poems* (1869, p. 186). Clough does not reverse the commandments (as is here done in the text), but his points appealed strongly to Ruskin; as, for instance—

"Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat,
When it's so lucrative to cheat. . .
Thou shalt not covet, but tradition
Approves all forms of competition."

The last two lines are quoted in *A Joy for Ever*, § 185 n. (Vol. XVI. p. 169).]

³ [Ruskin seems to refer to the anti-monarchical Corn Law rhymes of Ebenezer Elliott (see above, p. 39), and perhaps to the abortive communistic schemes of Robert Owen, socialist and philanthropist (1771–1858).]

it. Thou shalt take the name of the Lord in vain to mock the poor, for the Lord will hold him guiltless who rebukes and gives not; thou shalt remember the Sabbath day to keep it profane; thou shalt dishonour thy father and thy mother; thou shalt kill, and kill by the million, with all thy might and mind and wealth spent in machinery for multifold killing; thou shalt look on every woman to lust after her; thou shalt steal, and steal from morning till evening,—the evil from the good, and the rich from the poor;* thou shalt live by continual lying in million-fold sheets of lies; and covet thy neighbour's house, and country, and wealth, and fame, and everything that is his." And finally, by word of the Devil, in short summary, through Adam Smith, "A new commandment give I unto you: that ye hate one another."¹

11. Such, my Sheffield, and elsewhere remaining friends, are the developed laws of your modern civilization; not, you will find, whatever their present freshness, like to last in the wear. But the old laws (which alone *Fors* teaches you) are not only as old as Sinai, but much more stable. Heaven and its clouds, earth and its rocks, shall pass; but these shall not pass away.² Only in *their* development, and full assertion of themselves, they will assuredly appear active in new directions, and commandant of new duties or abstinences; of which that simple one which we stopped

* Stealing by the poor from the rich is of course still forbidden, and even in a languid way by the poor from the poor; but every form of theft, forbidden and approved, is practically on the increase.

Just as I had finished writing this modern Decalogue, my gondolier, Piero Mazzini, came in for his orders. His daughter is, I believe, dying of a brain disease, which was first brought on by fright, when his house was broken into last year, and all he had in it carried off. I asked him what the new doctor said, knowing one had been sent for. The new doctor said "he had been called too late; but the girl must have a new medicine, which would cost a franc the dose."

¹ [Compare Letter 79, § 1 (p. 146), for what Ruskin (in his note for Index) calls a "more complete form" of the new Commandment; and for Adam Smith, see Letter 62, § 6 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 516).]

² [Compare Matthew xxiv. 35.]

at in last *Fors*,¹—“Let him that stole steal no more”²—will be indeed a somewhat astonishing abstinence to a great many people, when they see it persisted in by others, and therefore find themselves compelled to think of it, however unwillingly, as perhaps actually some day imperative also on themselves.

When I gave you in *Fors*, April, 1871,³ the little sketch of the pillaging of France by Edward III. before the battle of Crécy, a great many of my well-to-do friends said, “Why does he print such things? they will only do mischief!”—meaning, they would open the eyes of the poor a little to some of the mistaken functions of kings. I had previously given (early enough at my point, you see), that sketch of the death of Richard I., *Fors*, March, 1871,⁴ differing somewhat from the merely picturesque accounts of it, and Academy pictures, in that it made you clearly observe that Richard got his death from Providence, not as a king, but as a burglar. Which is a point to be kept in mind when you happen any day to be talking about Providence.

12. Again. When Mr. Greg so pleasantly showed in the *Contemporary Review* how benevolent the rich were in drinking champagne, and how wicked the poor were in drinking beer, you will find that in *Fors* of Dec., 1875,⁵ I requested him to supply the point of economical information which he had inadvertently overlooked,—how the champagne drinker had *got* his champagne. The poor man, drunk in an ungraceful manner though he be, has yet worked for his beer—and does but drink his wages. I asked, of course, for complete parallel of the two cases,—what work the rich man had done for *his* sparkling beer; and how it came to pass that *he* had got so much higher

¹ [Letter 77, § 3 (p. 111).]

² [Ephesians iv. 28.]

³ [Letter 4, § 10 (Vol. XXVII. p. 72).]

⁴ [Letter 3, § 14 (*ibid.*, pp. 58–59).]

⁵ [Letter 60, but in this edition the passage (reprinted in *Eors* from an earlier paper) is not there repeated: see for it Vol. XVII. p. 561.]

wages, that he could put them, unblamed, to that benevolent use. To which question, you observe, Mr. Greg has never ventured the slightest answer.

13. Nor has Mr. Fawcett, you will also note, ventured one word of answer to the questions put to him in *Fors*, October, 1872; June, 1872; November, 1871;¹ and to make sure he dared not, I challenged him privately, as I did the Bishop of Manchester,² through my Oxford Secretary. Not a word can either of them reply. For, indeed, you will find the questions are wholly unanswerable, except by blank confessions of having, through their whole public lives, the one definitely taught, and the other, in cowardice, permitted the acceptance of, the great Devil's law of Theft by the Rich from the Poor, in the two terrific forms either of buying men's tools, and making them pay for the loan of them—(Interest)—or buying men's lands, and making them pay for the produce of them—(Rent). And it is the abstinence from these two forms of theft, which St. Paul first requires of every Christian, in saying. "Let him that stole, steal no more."³

14. And in this point, your experiment at Sheffield *is* a new one. It will be the first time, I believe, in which the landlord (St. George's Company, acting through its Master) takes upon himself the Ruler's unstained authority,—the literal function of the Shepherd who is *no* Hireling, and who *does* care for the sheep,⁴ and not count them only for their flesh and fleece.⁵ And if you will look back to the last chapter of *Munera Pulveris*, and especially to its definition of Royal Mastership,—or the King's, as separated

¹ [Letters 22, §§ 8, 14; 18, §§ 15–19; and 11, §§ 8–10 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 378, 381, 316–318, 187–189. For Fawcett's refusal of the challenge, see *ibid.*, p. 378 n.)]

² [See above, p. 95.]

³ [Ephesians iv. 28.]

⁴ [John x. 11, 12.]

⁵ [A passage in Ruskin's diary shows the inspiration under which he wrote:—

"May 21.—Yesterday found in St. Mark's the Duke and his People, and had a glorious hour, in the quiet gallery, with the service going on—I alone up there, and the message by the words of the old mosaicist given me; and found, returning home, that the Sheffield men had accepted my laws, and wrote to them in return that they should stand rentless."

For the mosaic referred to, see *St. Mark's Rest*, § 113 (Vol. XXIV. p. 296.)]

from the Hireling's, or Usurer's, § 147; and read what follows, of Mastership expectant of Death, § 152,¹—you will see both what kind of laws you will live under; and also how long these had been determined in my mind, before I had the least thought of being forced myself to take any action in their fulfilment. For indeed I knew not, till this very last year in Venice, whether some noble of England might not hear and understand in time, and take upon himself Mastership and Captaincy in this sacred war: but final sign has just been given me that this hope is vain;² and on looking back over the preparations made for all these things in former years—I see it must be my own task, with such strength as may be granted me, to the end. For in rough approximation of date nearest to the completion of the several pieces of my past work, as they are built one on the other,—at twenty, I wrote *Modern Painters*; at thirty, the *Stones of Venice*; at forty, *Unto this Last*; at fifty, the Inaugural Oxford lectures; and—if *Fors Clavigera* is ever finished as I mean—it will mark the mind I had at sixty; and leave me in my seventh day of life, perhaps—to rest. For the code of all I had to teach will then be, in form, as it is at this hour, in substance, completed.

Modern Painters taught the claim of all lower nature on the hearts of men; of the rock, and wave, and herb, as a part of their necessary spirit life; in all that I now bid you to do, to dress the earth and keep it,³ I am fulfilling what I then began. The *Stones of Venice* taught the laws of constructive Art, and the dependence of all human work or edifice, for its beauty, on the happy life of the workman. *Unto this Last* taught the laws of that life itself, and its dependence on the Sun of Justice: the Inaugural Oxford lectures, the necessity that it should be led, and the gracious laws of beauty and labour recognized, by the

¹ [Vol. XVII. pp. 269, 275.]

² [The reference is, no doubt, to the resignation of the first Trustees of St. George's Guild (Mr. Cowper-Temple and Sir Thomas Acland): see § 17.]

³ [Genesis ii. 15. See *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 13).]

upper, no less than the lower, classes of England; and lastly *Fors Clavigera* has declared the relation of these to each other, and the only possible conditions of peace and honour, for low and high, rich and poor, together, in the holding of that first Estate, under the only Despot, God,¹ from which whoso falls, angel or man, is kept, not mythically nor disputably, but here in visible horror of chains under darkness to the judgment of the great day:² and in keeping which service is perfect freedom,³ and inheritance of all that a loving Creator can give to His creatures, and an immortal Father to His children.

15. This, then, is the message, which, knowing no more as I unfolded the scroll of it, what next would be written there, than a blade of grass knows what the form of its fruit shall be, I have been led on year by year to speak, even to this its end.

And now it seems to me, looking back over the various fragments of it written since the year 1860, *Unto this Last, Time and Tide, Munera Pulveris*, and *Eagle's Nest*, together with the seven years' volumes⁴ of *Fors Clavigera*, that it has been clearly* enough and repeatedly enough spoken for those who will hear: and that, after such indexed summary of it as I may be able to give in the remaining numbers of this seventh volume,⁵ I should set aside this political work as sufficiently done; and enter into my own rest, and your next needed service, by completing the bye-law books of Botany and Geology⁶ for St. George's

* The complaints of several of my friends that they cannot understand me lead me the more to think that I am multiplying words in vain. I am perfectly certain that if they once made the resolution that nothing should stay them from doing right when they once knew what the right was, they would understand me fast enough.⁷

¹ [See above, p. 111.]

² [Jude 6.]

³ [Prayer-book; the Second Collect, for Peace. See *Seven Lamps*, ch. vii. § 2 (Vol. VIII. p. 249).]

⁴ [Of the original edition.]

⁵ [Compare above, p. 13.]

⁶ [*Proserpina* and *Deucalion*.]

⁷ [Ruskin in his copy marks this as "the most solemn note."]

schools, together with so much law of art as it may be possible to explain or exhibit, under the foul conditions of the age.

16. Respecting all these purposes, here are some words of Plato's,¹ which reverently and thankfully adopting also for my own, I pray you to read thoughtfully, and abide by:—

“Since, then, we are going to establish laws; and there have been chosen by us guardians of these laws, and we ourselves are in the sunset of life, and these guardians are young in comparison of us, we must at the same time write the laws themselves; and, so far as possible, make these chosen keepers of them able to write laws also, when there shall be need. And therefore we will say to them, ‘Oh our friends, saviours of law, we indeed, in all matters concerning which we make law, shall leave many things aside unnoticed: how can it be otherwise? Nevertheless, in the total system, and in what is chief of its parts, we will not leave, to the best of our power, anything that shall not be encompassed by strict outline, as with a painter’s first determination of his subject within some exact limit. This line, then, that we have drawn round, it will be for you afterwards to fill. And to what you must look, and keep for ever in your view as you complete the body of law, it behoves you to hear. For, indeed, the Spartan Megillus, and the Certan Clinias, and I, Athenian, have many a time agreed on this great purpose among ourselves; but now we would have you our disciples to feel with us also, looking to the same things to which we have consented with each other that the lawgiver and law-guardian should look. And this consent of ours was in one great sum and head of all purposes: namely, that a man should be made good, having the virtues of soul which belong to a man; and that whatever occupations, whatever disciplines, whatever possessions, desires, opinions, and instructions, contribute to this end, whether in male or female, young or old, of all that dwell together in our state, those, with all zeal, are to be appointed and pursued through the whole of life: and as for things other than such, which are impediments to virtue, that no soul in the state shall show itself as prizing or desiring them. And this shall be so finally and sternly established, that if it became impossible to maintain the city, so ordered, in the presence of its enemies, then its inhabitants should rather choose to leave their city for ever, and bear any hardship in exile, than submit to any yoke put on them by baser men, or change their legislation for any other which would make them baser themselves. This was the very head and front of all that we consented in, to which we would, now, that you our disciples looking also, should praise or blame the laws we have made; such of them as have no real power to this noble end, reject; but such as contribute to it, salute; and affectionately receiving them, live in them; but to all other way of life leading to anything else than such good, you must bid farewell.’ ”

¹ [*Laws*, vi. 770.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

17. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

The quite justifiable, but—in my absence from England—very inconvenient, hesitation of our trustees to re-invest any part of our capital without ascertaining for themselves the safety of the investment, has retarded the completion of the purchase of Abbey-dale: and the explanations which, now that the Company is actually beginning its work, I felt it due to our trustees to give, more clearly than heretofore, of its necessary methods of action respecting land, have issued in the resignation of our present trustees, with the immediately resulting necessity that the estate of Abbey-dale should be vested in me only until I can find new trustees. I have written at once to the kind donor of our land in Worcestershire,¹ and to other friends, requesting them to undertake the office. But this important and difficult business, coming upon me just as I was in the midst of the twelfth-century divinity of the mosaics of St. Mark's, will, I hope, be sufficient apology to my readers for the delay in the publication of the present number of *Fors*. I have, however, myself guaranteed the completion of the purchase of Abbeydale to the owner: and as, God willing, I shall be at home now in a fortnight,² will get the estate vested under new trustees with utmost speed. Respecting the future tenants of it, I have pleasant intelligence, but do not care to be hasty in statement of so important matters.³

18. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

I do not suppose that any of my readers—but there is chance that some who hear and talk of me *without* reading me—will fancy that I have begun to be tired of my candour in exposition of personal expenses. Nothing would amuse me more, on the contrary, than a complete history of what the last six months have cost me; but it would take me as long to write that, as an account of the theology of St. Mark's,⁴ which, I am minded to give the time to instead, as a more important matter; and, for the present, to cease talk of myself. The following statement, by Miss Hill, of the nature and value of the property which I intend to make over next year to the St. *mjcont

¹ [Mr. George Baker, who accepted the office of trustee; the other new trustee was Mr. Q. Talbot: see Letter 79, § 14 (p. 164).]

² [Ruskin reached home, after a winter and spring spent in Venice, on June 16, 1877. A month later he went to see Mr. Baker at Birmingham.]

³ [For later references, see pp. 207, 273, and Vol. XXX.]

⁴ [In ch. viii. of the Third Part of *St. Mark's Rest*, which was issued in July 1879.]

part, the sources of wealth were due to the fortunate position of England, the great variety of its mineral and other resources, and, above all, *the steady, energetic, and industrious character of her working men*' (not in the least, you observe, to that of their masters; who have nevertheless got the wealth, have not they, Mr. Smith?). 'In part, the sources of wealth were accidental and transitory. The close of the great wars of Napoleon left England the only manufacturing and almost the only maritime power in the world. The manufactures of other countries were destroyed by the desolating inroads of war, and their mercantile marine was almost swept from the seas. Add to these facts that England was the banker of the world, and they would understand the great source of England's wealth. The wars were, however, now over, and other nations were entering into competition, and now this country had formidable rivals in Germany and Belgium and on the other side of the Atlantic, and they must expect them to take their own part in having manufactories, though it would be possible for England to open up new countries for produce. England must expect competitors, too, in her carrying trade, and they all knew that the bank of the world went where the principal trade was done. In the middle of the last century the bank of the world was at Amsterdam. They must expect, therefore, that some of the accidental and transitory sources of superiority would pass away. All the more necessary was it therefore that *the main source of prosperity, the character of the workmen*, should remain unimpaired. It was impossible to say that there were not dangers threatening the character of the working men, for the rapid increase of ('their masters') wealth, with the sudden rise of wages, had exposed them to many temptations. It was of no use being censorious. The upper classes of the land had, for the most part, spent their large wealth in enjoyments suited to their tastes' (as for instance,—Mr. Smith?), 'and they must not be surprised that working men should act like-wise, though their taste might not be so refined. It was appalling to see how large an amount of wages was spent in drink. *The decay of the industrial classes of England would be disastrous to her in proportion to her previous prosperity*, because the past had of course increased the population of England to an enormous extent, and should the wealth and industry of the land pass away, this vast mass would become a population of penury and suffering. Mr. Goldwin Smith went on to say that he understood that the present institution had this object in view: to draw away the artisan from places where he was tempted to indulgences, to places of more rational entertainment, and where the same temptations would not spread their snares before him. He expressed his sympathy with the moral crusade movement instituted by the teetotalers, but he doubted the efficacy of restrictive legislation on this subject. The Anglo-American race was an exceedingly temperate people, and the restrictive measures adopted in some parts of the country were rather the expression than the cause of temperance, but their effect in restraining the habits of the intemperate was not very great. In proof of this he quoted the effect of the Drunken Act of Canada, a permissive measure which had been adopted in Prince Edward's County. He was ready enough, he had told his friends in Canada, to co-operate in favour of strong measures if they could show him there was a desperate emergency, and in his judgment the only one way to prevent liquor being drunk was to prevent it being made; but if they simply wished to harass the retail trade, they would have a constant amount of contrabandism and habitual violation of the law. Therefore he had not that confidence that many good and wise men had in restrictive legislation, though he could sympathise with their aim. They could all concur, however, in removing temptation out of the way of the working men and providing counter attractions, and that he understood was their object in erecting the present building. A man who had been working all day must have some enjoyment, and they should provide it as best suited to the taste' (in the next article the public are required to accommodate their tastes to the nutriment); 'and, therefore, as these were the objects of the present establishment, they deserved hearty sympathy and support.'

"A fancy fair was then opened, which will extend over three days, in aid of the objects of the institution."

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"A fancy fair was then opened, which will extend over three days, in aid of the objects of the institution."

20. (IV.) "ADULTERATED BUTTER.—The manufacture of those unpleasant compounds, 'butterine,' 'margarine,' and their congeners, is, we hear, making rapid progress. Indeed, there seems a dismal probability that these objectionable compounds will soon almost entirely supersede the genuine article in the market. To a large extent, the public will be absolutely compelled by circumstances to *accommodate their tastes to this new form of nutriment*. They may be quite ready to pay, as at present, 1s. 10d. to 2s. per lb. for the best Devonshire or Aylesbury, but the option will no longer remain in their hands. Here is the *modus operandi* by which a malevolent fate is compassing the perpetual nausea of butter *gourmets*. To manufacture butterine and margarine, the first step is to obtain a supply of real butter. This must be of the finest quality. Inferior descriptions do not sufficiently disguise the rank flavour of the fat which forms about nine-tenths of the manufactured article. Having procured a sufficient quantity of prime Devonshire, the manufacturer next proceeds to amalgamate it with beef-fat, until he has obtained a product marvellously resembling pure butter. This nasty stuff costs about 6d. per lb., and the manufacturer, therefore, makes a handsome profit by retailing it at from 10d. to 1s. per lb. to that large class of the community which believes in the saving efficacy of small economies. The quantity of first-class butter in the market is strictly limited, and is incapable of being increased. Already the demand almost outruns the supply, as is proved by the high price commanded by such descriptions in the market. What, then, will be the result when the manufacturers of shoddy butter come to bid for the article? Some experts go so far as to predict that Devonshire butter will fetch 3s. per lb. before another twelve months, through the operation of this competition. On the other hand, inferior sorts will be altogether driven out of the market by the new compound, which is, we believe, more palatable, and 50 per cent. cheaper. Under these depressing circumstances, we can but trust some other means may be found for disguising the rancid taste of beef fat. It would be hard, indeed, if butter connoisseurs in moderate circumstances were condemned to the Hobson's choice of margarine or nothing."—*Land and Water*.¹

21. Very hard indeed; but inevitable, with much other hardness, under modern conditions of prosperity.

I must briefly explain to you the error under which our press-writers and the Chancellor of the Exchequer² and Mr. Goldwin Smith are all labouring.

They have got into the quite infinitely and diabolically stupid habit of thinking that the increase of *money* is the increase of prosperity.

Suppose at this moment every man in Sheffield had a thousand pounds, in gold, put into his coat pockets. What would be the consequence? "You would all buy all you wanted"?

But do you think all you want is in Sheffield, then? You would gobble up all the turtle—first come first served—drink all the beer, dress your wives in all the silks, and then in a little while—Stand staring at each other, with nothing to eat, drink, or put on, shaking your gold in your pockets. "You would send somewhere else"? Yes, I dare say; but then, mind you, the prosperity is to be universal. Everybody in Bradford and Halifax has a thousand pounds in *his* pocket, and all the turtle and beer are gone, long ago, there, too.

"Oh—but you would send abroad"? Yes, I dare say. But the prosperity is to be world-wide: everybody in France has a thousand pounds in *his* pockets, and all the turtle and champagne are gone there, too, since yesterday at five o'clock—and everything is at famine prices everywhere,

¹ [January 13, 1877. For another reference to the article, see Letter 79 (p. 152).]

² [At this time Sir Stafford Northcote held the office.]

and will soon be—for no price to be had anywhere. *That* is your “universal prosperity,” according to the word of the devil. But the word of God is that the increase of prosperity is increase, not of money, but money’s worth.

22. (V.) Several of my readers have asked me to write a letter to boys as well as to girls. Here is some advice respecting them, which I cannot better:—

“A PLEA FOR BOYS.—The Rev. Thomas Street sends to the *New York Christian Union* ‘A Plea for Boys,’ in the course of which he says:—‘Every boy, if he is in sound health, has an excess of energy which must find an outlet. The mother is alarmed and worried at what she calls his mischievous proclivities. He is always breaking things, is never still, is always in the way, wanting to act outside of house-hold law. He keeps the good mother and sister in a constant fever. Their *bête noire* is a rainy day, when Charley can’t go outdoors to play; a school vacation is a burden hard to be borne, and the result is, Charley must be packed off to a distant boarding-school, not so much for his education, but to get rid of him. If, as we hold, the interests of husband and wife are one, and it is essential to train the girl for wifehood in all household duties, it is equally so to train the boy for his part in the same direction. He should be under the law of home order, taught to be as neat and tidy as a girl; to arrange his bed-clothing and furniture, instead of leaving it to his sister to do. He should have provided him needles, thread, and buttons, and be taught their use, that he may not be subjected in manhood to that terror of nervous men, a buttonless shirt. He should take lessons from the cook, and be capable of preparing a wholesome dinner. He should learn how to do the multitude of little things that are constantly demanding attention in the house. There is no knowledge, however trivial, that will not at some time come into service. It is said that a “Jack of all trades is master of none,” but he need not make himself master. He may know enough of the general principles of mechanics to be able to repair wastes, and keep things in order. If a swollen door sticks, he should know how to ease it. If a hinge creaks, how to get at it and stop its music. If a lock or a clock is out of repair, how to take it to pieces and arrange it properly. If a pipe or a pan leaks, how to use iron and solder for its benefit. If the seams of a tub are open, how to cooper it. If a glass is broken in a sash, how to set another. How to hang paper on walls, and use brush and paint and putty. How to make a fire, and lay a carpet, and hang a curtain. Every boy may learn enough of these things to do away with the necessity of calling a cobbling mechanic to his house when he is a man. And he will delight to learn them. He will take infinite pleasure in the employment. Nothing makes a boy feel so proud as to be able to do things. His workshop will be his paradise. He will have his mind occupied and amused with utilities. He will be led to think, to reflect, and invent. Neither need this interfere with his studies or his plays; he will pursue and enjoy them with more zest. It is idleness, aimlessness, that is ruining our boys. With nothing attractive to do at home, they are in the streets or in worse places, expending their energies and feeding their desires for entertainment upon follies.’ ”

23. (VI.) The following letter, from one of our brave and gentle companions, has encouraged me in my own duties, and will, I trust, guide no less than encourage others in theirs:—

“SCARBOROUGH, *Whit Sunday*, 1877.

“DEAR MASTER,—I write to acquaint you with our removal from Skelton to Scarborough, and how it happened. At Newby Hall Farm (where I was employed as carpenter) is a steam-engine which they use for thrashing, chopping, pumping,

and sawing purposes; the blacksmith acts as engineer. It got out somehow that I understood engines and machinery; and the blacksmith at times was busy shoeing horses when he was wanted at the engine, so I was asked to attend to it for an hour or so, which I did at frequent intervals. In April, 1876, we got a change in farm manager—a regular steam-go-ahead sort of a man, with great ideas of ‘modern improvements,’ and with him more work to be done through the engine, which used to work two or three days a month, but now three or four days a week, and I came to be looked upon by him as engineer. I remonstrated with him two or three times, telling him that it was quite contrary to my views and wishes, and that I hoped he would free me from it. Well, winter comes, with its wet weather, and the labourers, numbering about thirty, had to work out in all the bad weather, or else go home and lose their pay of course, the engine all the time hard at work doing that which they very comfortably might be doing under cover, and so saving them from hunger or rheumatism. Well, this sort of thing cut me up very much, and my wife and I talked the matter over several times, and we were determined that I should do it no longer, let the consequence be what it may; so at Christmas I told him that with the closing year I should finish with the engine. He said he was very sorry, etc., but if I did I should have to leave altogether. On New Year’s morning he asked me if I was determined on what I said, and I answered yes; so he told me to pack my tools and go, and so ended my work at Newby Hall Farm. The parson and one or two kindly wishing ladies wished to intercede for me, but I told them that I did not desire it, for I meant what I said, and he understood me. Well, I sought about for other employment, and eventually started work here at Scarborough with Mr. Bland, joined and builder, and we have got nicely settled down again, with a full determination to steer clear of steam.

“Remaining yours humbly,

“JOHN GUY.¹

“J. RUSKIN, ESQ.”

¹ [For another letter from John Guy, see Letter 85, § 9 (p. 326).]
XXIX.

LETTER 79

LIFE GUARDS OF NEW LIFE¹

HERNE HILL, 18th June, 1877.

1. SOME time since, at Venice, a pamphlet on social subjects was sent me by its author—expecting my sympathy, or by way of bestowing on me his own. I cut the following sentence out of it, which, falling now out of my pocket-book, I find presented to me by Fors as a proper introduction to things needing further declaration this month:—

“It is indeed a most blessed provision that men will not work without wages; if they did, society would be overthrown from its roots. A man who would give his labour for nothing would be a social monster.”

This sentence, although written by an extremely foolish, and altogether insignificant, person, is yet, it seems to me, worth preserving, as one of the myriad voices, more and more unanimous daily, of a society which is itself a monster; founding itself on the New Commandment, Let him that hateth God, hate his brother also.²

A society to be indeed overthrown from its roots; and out of which, my Sheffield workmen, you are now called into this very “monstrosity” of labour, not for wages, but for the love of God and man; and on this piece of British ground, freely yielded to you, to free-heartedness of unselfish toil.

¹ [See below, § 4. “The Social Monster” (see § 1) was a rejected title for this Letter. Ruskin also wrote on the wrapper of his copy “Art—Manchester Letter—and Grosvenor Gallery,” as a summary of its contents.]

² [“And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also” (1 John iv. 21).]

2. Looking back to the history of guilds of trade in England, and of Europe generally, together with that of the great schools of Venice, I perceive the real ground of their decay to have lain chiefly in the conditions of selfishness and isolation which were more or less involved in their vow of fraternity, and their laws of apprenticeship. And in the outset of your labour here on St. George's ground, I must warn you very earnestly against the notion of "co-operation" as the policy of a privileged number of persons for their own advantage. You have this land given you for your work, that you may do the best you can for *all* men; you are bound by certain laws of work, that the "best you can" may indeed be good and exemplary; and although I shall endeavour to persuade you to accept nearly every law of the old guilds, that acceptance, I trust, will be with deeper understanding of the wide purposes of so narrow fellowship, and (if the thought is not too foreign to your present temper) more in the spirit of a body of monks gathered for missionary service, than of a body of tradesmen gathered for the promotion even of the honestest and usefullest trade.

3. It is indeed because I have seen you to be capable of co-operation, and to have conceived among yourselves the necessity of severe laws for its better enforcement, that I have determined to make the first essay of St. George's work at Sheffield. But I do not think you have yet learned that such unity of effort can only be vital or successful when organized verily for the "interests of England"¹—not for your own; and that the mutiny against co-operative law which you have hitherto selfishly, and therefore guiltily, sought to punish, is indeed to be punished for precisely the same reasons as mutiny in the Channel Fleet.

I noticed that there was some report of such a thing the other day,—but discredited by the journals in which it

¹ [See above, p. 128.]

appeared, on the ground of the impossibility that men trained as our British sailors are, should disobey their officers, unless under provocation which no modern conditions of the service could involve. How long is it to be before these virtues of loyalty and obedience shall be conceived as capable of development, no less in employments which have some useful end, and fruitful power, than in those which are simply the moral organization of massacre, and the mechanical reduplication of ruin!

4. When I wrote privately to one of your representatives, the other day, that Abbeydale was to be yielded to your occupation rent-free,* you received the announcement with natural, but, I must now tell you, with thoughtless, gratitude. I ask you no rent for this land, precisely as a captain of a ship of the line asks no rent for her deck, cleared for action. You are called into a Christian ship of war;—not hiring a corsair's hull, to go forth and rob on the high seas. And you will find the engagements you have made only tenable by a continual reference to the cause for which you are contending,—not to the advantage you hope to reap.

But observe also, that while you suffer as St. George's soldiers, he answers for your lives, as every captain must answer for the lives of his soldiers. Your ranks shall not be thinned by disease or famine, uncared for,—any more than those of the Life Guards; and the simple question for each one of you, every day, will be, not how he and his family are to live, for your bread and water will be sure; but how much good service you can do to your country. You will have only to consider, each day, how much, with an earnest day's labour, you can produce, of any useful things you are able to manufacture. These you are to sell at absolutely fixed prices, for ready money only;

* Practically so. The tenants must legally be bound to pay the same rent as on the other estates of St. George; but in this case, the rents will be entirely returned to the estate, for its own advantage; not diverted into any other channels of operation.

and whatever stock remains unsold at the end of the year, over and above the due store for the next, you are to give away, through such officers of distribution as the society shall appoint.

5. You can scarcely, at present, having been all your lives, hitherto, struggling for security of mere existence, imagine the peace of heart which follows the casting out of the element of selfishness as the root of action; but it is peace, observe, only, that is promised to you, not at all necessarily, or at least primarily, *joy*. You shall find rest unto your souls when first you take on you the yoke of Christ;¹ but joy only when you have borne it as long as He wills, and are called to enter into the joy of your Lord.²

That such promises should have become all but incredible to most of you, is the necessary punishment of the disobedience to the plainest orders of God, in which you have been taught by your prophets, and permitted by your priests, to live for the last quarter of a century. But that this incredibility should be felt as no calamity,—but rather benefit and emancipation; and that the voluble announcement of vile birth and eternal death as the origin and inheritance of man, should be exulted over as a new light of the eyes and strength of the limbs; *this* sometimes, after all that I have resolved, is like to paralyse me into silence—mere horror and inert winter of life.

6. I am going presently to quote to you, with reference to the accounts of what I have been last doing for your Museum (Article I. of Correspondence), some sentences of an admirable letter which has been just put into my hands, though it appeared on the 27th of February last, in the *Manchester Guardian*.³ An admirable letter, I repeat, in its general aim; and in much of its text;—closing, nevertheless, with the sorrowful admission in the sentence italicized

¹ [Matthew xi. 29.]

² [Matthew xxv. 21.]

³ [The paper was by Mr. T. C. Horsfall: see Appendix 22 (below, pp. 589–593).]

in following extract,—its writer appearing wholly unconscious of the sorrowfulness of it:—

“That art had, as we believe, great popularity in Greece—that it had, as we know, such popularity in Italy—was in great measure owing to its representing personages and events known to all classes. Statue and picture were the illustration of tales, the text of which was in every memory. *For our working men no such tales exist*, though it may be hoped that to the children now in our schools a few heroic actions of great Englishmen will be as well known, when, a few years hence, the children are men and women, as the lives of the saints were to Italian workmen of the fifteenth century, or the hunting in Calydon and the labours of Hercules to Athenians, twenty-three hundred years ago.”

7. “For our working men, no such tales exist.” Is that, then, admittedly and conclusively true? Are Englishmen, by order of our school-board, never more to hear of Hercules,—of Theseus,—of Atrides—or the tale of Troy? Nor of the lives of the saints neither? They are to pass their years now as a tale that is *not* told¹—are they? The tale of St. Mary and St. Magdalen—the tale of St. John and his first and last mother*—the tale of St. John’s Master, on whose breast he leant?² Are all forgotten then? *and* for the English workman, is it to be assumed in the outset of benevolent designs for “improving his character” that “no such tales exist”?

And those other tales, which *do* exist—good Manchester friend,—tales *not* of the saints? Of the Magdalens who love—*not* much; and the Marys, who never waste anything; and the “heroic Englishmen” who feel the “interests of England” to be—their own?—You will have pictures of these, you think, for improvement of our working mind. Alas, good friend, but where is your painter to come from? You have forgotten, in the quaintest way, to ask *that!* When you recognize as our inevitable fate that we shall no more “learn in our childhood, as the Italians did, at

* “Then came unto him the mother of the two sons of Zebedee, beseeching him” [Matthew xx. 20].

“Then saith he to that disciple, Behold thy mother” [John xix. 27].

¹ [See Psalms xc. 9.]

² [John xiii. 25.]

once grateful reverence for the love of Christ, the sufferings of the Virgin, or the patient courage of the saints,” and yet would endeavour to comfort us in the loss of these learnings by surrounding us with “beautiful things”—you have not told us who shall make them! You tell us that the Greeks were surrounded with beautiful objects. True; but the Greeks must have *made* them before they could be surrounded by them. How did they so? The Romans stole them, in the spirit of conquest; and we buy them—in the spirit of trade. But the Greek and the Italian *created* them. By what spirit?—they?

8. Although attempting no answer to this ultimate question, the immediate propositions in the paper are, as I have said, admirable; and in the comments with which I must accompany what I now quote of it, please understand that I am not opposing the writer, but endeavouring to lead him on the traces of his hitherto right thoughts, into their true consequences.

The sentences quoted above are part of a description of England, in which I leave them now to take their proper place:—

“What are the conditions under which art is now studied? We meet in no temples adorned with statues of gods, whose forms are at the same time symbols of divine power and types of earthly beauty. (*a*) Our eyes are not trained to judge sculpture by watching the lithe strong limbs of

(*a*) In his presently following proposals for “a better system,” the writer leaves many of these calamitous conditions unspoken of, assuming them, presumably, to be irretrievable. And this first one, that we do not meet in temples, etc., he passes in such silence.

May I at least suggest that if we cannot have any graven images of gods, at least, since the first of the Latter-day pamphlets, we might have demolished those of our various Hudsons.¹

¹ [*Latter-Day Pamphlets*, by Thomas Carlyle. No. I. entitled “The Present Time”; and No. VII. “Hudson’s Statue” (Hudson, the Railway King). Compare Vol. XXVIII. p. 120.]

athletes. (b) We do not learn in our childhood, as the Italians did, at once grateful reverence for the love of Christ, the sufferings of the Virgin, the patient courage of the saints, and admiration of the art that shadowed them forth. But we have the Royal Institution in Mosley Street, and its annual exhibition of pictures and sculpture. We have far less leisure than the contemporaries of Raphael or of Praxiteles. (c) Our eyes rest patiently on the unmeaning and ugly forms of modern furniture, on soot-begrimed and hideous houses, on a stratum of smoke-laden air that usurps the name

(b) The writer feels instinctively, but his readers might not gather the implied inference, that locomotives, however swift, as substitutes for legs, and rifles or torpedoes, however effective and far-reaching as substitutes for arms, cannot,—by some extraordinary appointments of Providence in the matter of taste,—be made subjects of heroic sculpture.

(c) Why, my friend? Does not Mr. Goldwin Smith declare (see last *Fors*, § 19¹) that “there has been nothing in the commercial history of any country, of either ancient or modern times, that would compare with the mass of opulence of England of the present day”?—and cannot opulence purchase leisure? It is true that Mr. Goldwin Smith is a goose; and his inquiries into the commercial history of ancient and modern times have never reached so far as the origin even of adulteration of butter;² (Look back, by the way, to my former notes on Isaiah vii. 15;³ and just take these farther little contributions on the subject. The other day, in the Hôtel de la Poste at Brieg, I had a nice girl-waitress from the upper Valais; to whom, having uttered complaint of the breakfast honey being watery and brown, instead of sugary and white, “What!” she said, in self-reproachful tone, “have I brought you ‘du clair’?” and running briskly away, returned presently with a clod of splendid saccharine snow. “Well, but tell me then, good Louise, what do they put in their honey to make this mess of it, that they gave you first for me?” “Carrots,

¹ [See above, p. 141. For an earlier and more tolerant reference to Mr. Goldwin Smith, see Vol. XVII. p. 479.]

² [Compare Letter 78, § 20 (pp. 142–143).]

³ [“Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.” The “former notes” are not in *Fors*, but in *Time and Tide*, § 168 (Vol. XVII. pp. 453–454).]

of sky. (d) The modern system of landscape painting, the modern use of water-colour, alone suffice to make an intelligent knowledge of art far more difficult than it was two hundred years ago. (e) Yet we act as if we believed that by strolling for a few hours a day, on a few days in the year, through a collection of pictures most of which are bad, and by carelessly looking at a few pictures of our own, we can learn to understand and be interested in more forms of art than Da Vinci or Michael Angelo would have tried to master, at a time when art still confined itself to familiar and noble subjects, and had not yet taken the whole universe for its province. (f)

“Is no better system possible? It is, I believe, as certain that in the last twenty years we have learnt to better understand good music, and to love it more, as that in the same time our knowledge and love of pictures

I believe, sir,” she answered, bravely; and I was glad to hear it was no worse;) but, though Mr. Goldwin Smith *be* a goose, and though, instead of an opulent nation, we are indeed too poor to buy fresh butter,¹ or eat fresh meat,—is even that any reason why we should have no leisure? What are all our machines for, then? Can we do in ten minutes, without man or horse, what a Greek could not have done in a year, with all the king’s horses and all the king’s men?²—and is the result of all this magnificent mechanism, only that we have “far less leisure”?³

(d) One of the most grotesque consequences of this total concealment of the sky, with respect to art, is the hatred of the modern landscape painter for blue colour! I walked through the Royal Academy yesterday; and found that, in all the landscapes, the sky was painted like a piece of white wall plaster.

(e) Probably the modern use of landscape painting, and the modern use of water-colour, are wrong, then. The use of good landscape painting is to make the knowledge of nature easier,—not the knowledge of art more difficult,—than it was in earlier days.

(f) I do not myself observe any petulant claims on the part of modern art to take the universe for its province. It appears to me, on the contrary, to be principally occupied in its own dining-room, dressing-room, and drawing-room.

¹ [See above, p. 143.]

² [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 310 *n.*]

³ [The question is asked again below, p. 215; and see the private letter to Mr. Horsfall in Appendix 22 (p. 590).]

have not increased. *The reason is easily found. Our music has been chosen for us by masters, and our pictures have been chosen by ourselves.* (g) If we can imagine exhibitions where good, bad, and indifferent symphonies, quartets, and songs could be heard, not more imperfectly than pictures good, bad, and indifferent are seen at the Academy, and works to which

(g) I have italicized this sentence, a wonderful admission from an Englishman: and indeed the gist of the whole matter. But the statement that our pictures have been chosen by ourselves is not wholly true. It was so in the days when English amateurs filled their houses with Teniers, Rubens, and Guido, and might more cheaply have bought Angelico and Titian. But we have not been masterless of late years; far from it. The suddenly luminous idea that Art might possibly be a lucrative occupation, secured the submission of England to such instruction as, with that object, she could procure: and the Professorship of Sir Henry Cole at Kensington has corrupted the system of art-teaching all over England into a state of abortion and falsehood from which it will take twenty years to recover.¹ The Professorships also of Messrs. Agnew at Manchester have covered the walls of that metropolis with “exchangeable property” on the exchanges of which the dealer always made his commission, and of which perhaps one canvas in a hundred is of some intrinsic value, and may be hereafter put to good and permanent use. But the first of all conditions, for this object, is that the Manchester men *should*, for a little while, “choose for themselves”! That they should buy nothing with intent to sell it again; and that they should buy it of the artist only, face to face with him; or from the exhibition wall by direct correspondence with him.*

* The existence of the modern picture dealer is impossible in any city or country where art is to prosper; but some day I hope to arrange a “bottega” for the St. George’s Company, in which water-colour drawings shall be sold, none being received at higher price than fifty guineas, nor at less than six,—(Prout’s old fixed standard for country dealers²),—and at the commission of one guinea to the shopkeeper, paid by the buyer; on the understanding that the work is, by said shopkeeper, known to be

¹ [Compare Vol. XVI. pp. xxvi.-xxxi., and Vol. XXVII. p. 605.]

² [See Vol. XIV. p. 403.]

at a concert we must listen for twenty minutes were to be listened through in as many seconds, or indeed by an ear glance at a few bars, can we doubt that pretty tunes would be more popular than the finest symphonies of Beethoven, or the loveliest of Schubert's songs?

"It is surely possible (*h*) to find a man or men who will guide us in

(*h*) Perfectly possible; if first you will take the pains to ascertain that the person who is to guide you in painting, can paint, as you ascertained of Mr. Hallé¹ that he could play. You did not go to the man at the music shop, and pay him fifty guineas commission for recommending you a new tune, did you? But what else than that have you ever done, with respect to painting? I once, for instance, myself, took the trouble to recommend the burghers of Liverpool to buy a Raphael. As nobody had paid, or was to pay me, any commission for my recommendation, they looked on it as an impertinence; printed it—though written as a private letter to a personal friend,—made what jest they could out of it, declared the picture was cracked, left it to crack farther, bought more David Coxes, and got an amateur lecturer next year to lecture to them on the beauties of Raphael.²

But if you will get once quit of your precious British idea that your security is in the dealer's commission on the cost, you may get help and authority easily enough.³

good, and warranted as such; just as simply as a dealer in cheese or meat answers for the quality of those articles.

¹ [For another reference to Mr. (afterwards Sir Charles) Hallé (1819–1895), see *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 27 (Vol. XIX. p. 78). On coming to England in 1848 Hallé settled at Manchester, where his orchestra was first instituted.]

² [Ruskin must be under some confusion here. Nothing is known at the Liverpool Art Gallery of any recommendation from Ruskin to buy a Raphael, and the Gallery does not, and never did, possess a single David Cox. The only printed letter, with regard to pictures at Liverpool, with which the editors are acquainted, is one written in 1858 (see Vol. XIV. p. 327), but the picture then recommended was not a Raphael, but a modern Pre-Raphaelite work.]

³ [Ruskin in his copy here struck out the following passage, which has appeared in all previous editions:—

"If you look at Number VI. of my *Mornings in Florence*, you will see that I speak with somewhat mortified respect of my friend Mr. Charles F. Murray, as knowing more in many ways of Italian pictures than I do myself. You may give *him* any sum you like to spend in Italian pictures,—you will find that none of it sticks to his fingers: that every picture he buys for you is a good one; and that he will charge you simply for his time."

For the reference to Mr. Murray, see Vol. XXIII. p. 409.]

our study of pictures as Mr. Hallé has guided us in our study of music,—who will place before us good pictures, and carefully guard us from seeing bad. A collection of a dozen pictures in oil and water colour, each excellent of its kind, each with an explanation of what its painter most wished to show, of his method of work, of his reasons for choosing his point of view, and for each departure from the strictest possible accuracy in imitation, written by men of fit nature and training—such a collection would be of far greater help to those people who desire to study art than any number of ordinary exhibitions of pictures. Men who by often looking at these few works, knew them well, would have learnt more of painting, and would have a safer standard by which to judge other pictures, than is often learnt and gained by those who are not painters. Such a collection would not need a costly building for its reception, so that in each of our parks a small gallery of the kind might be formed, which might, of course, also contain a few good engravings, good vases, and good casts, each with a carefully written explanation of our reasons for thinking it good. Then, perhaps, in a few years, authority would do for these forms of art what it has done for music. But many other lessons could at the same time be taught. None is of greater importance than that beautiful form in the things that surround us can give us as much, if not as high, pleasure, as that in pictures and statues;—that our sensibility for higher forms of beauty is fostered by everything beautiful that gives us pleasure;—and that the cultivation of a sense of beauty is not necessarily costly, but is as possible for people of moderate incomes as for the rich. Why should not the rooms in which pictures are shown be furnished as the rooms are furnished in which the few English people of cultivated love of art live, so that we may learn from them that the difference between beautiful and ugly wall-papers, carpets, curtains, vases, chairs, and tables is as real as the difference between good and bad pictures? In hundreds of people there is dormant a sensibility to beauty that this would be enough to awaken.

“Of our working classes, comparatively few ever enter a gallery of pictures, and unless a sense of beauty can be awakened by other means, the teaching of the School of Art is not likely to be sought by many people of that class. In our climate, home, and not gallery or piazza, is the place where the influence of art must be felt. To carry any forms of art into the homes of working people would a few years ago have been impossible. Happily we have seen lately the creation of schools and workmen’s clubs, destined, we may hope, to be as truly parts of their homes as public-houses have been, and as their cramped houses are. Our schools are already so well managed that probably many children pass in them the happiest hours they know. In those large, airy rooms let us place a few beautiful casts, a few drawings of subjects, if possible, that the elder children read of in their lessons, a few vases or pretty screens. By gifts of a few simple things of this kind, of a few beautiful flowers beautifully arranged, the love and the study of art will be more helped than by the gift of twenty times their cost to the building fund of an art gallery.”¹

¹ [For a letter to Ruskin on the same subject, from the writer of the above, see Letter 81, §§ 17–20 (pp. 213–217).]

9. From the point where my last note interrupted it, the preceding letter is all admirable; and the passage respecting choice and explanation of pictures, the most valuable I have ever seen printed in a public journal on the subject of the Arts. But let me strongly recommend the writer to put out of his thoughts, for the time, all questions of beautiful furniture and surroundings. Perfectly simple shelter, under the roughest stones and timber that will keep out the weather, is at present the only wholesome condition of private life. Let there be no assumptions of anything, or attempts at anything, but cleanliness, health, and honesty, both in person and possession. Then, whatever you can afford to spend for education in art, give to good masters, and leave them to do the best they can for you: and what you can afford to spend for the splendour of your city, buy grass, flowers, sea, and sky with. No art of man is possible without those primal Treasures of the art of God.

10. I must not close this letter without noting some of the deeper causes which may influence the success of an effort made this year in London, and in many respects on sound principles, for the promulgation of Art-knowledge; the opening, namely, of the Grosvenor Gallery.

In the first place, it has been planned and is directed by a gentleman* in the true desire to help the artists and better the art of his country:—not as a commercial speculation. Since in this main condition it is right, I hope success for it; but in very many secondary matters it must be set on different footing before its success can be sure.

Sir Coutts Lindsay is at present an amateur both in art and shopkeeping. He must take up either one or the other business, if he would prosper in either. If he intends

* As also, by the way, the Fine-Art Gallery by my friend Mr. Huish,¹ who means no less well.

¹ [For whom, see Vol. XIII. p. liv.]

to manage the Grosvenor Gallery rightly, he must not put his own works in it until he can answer for their quality:¹ if he means to be a painter, he must not at present superintend the erection of public buildings, or amuse himself with their decoration by china and upholstery. The upholstery of the Grosvenor Gallery is poor in itself; and very grievously injurious to the best pictures it contains, while its glitter as unjustly veils the vulgarity of the worst.²

In the second place, it is unadvisable to group the works of each artist together.³ The most original of painters repeat themselves in favourite dexterities,—the most excellent of painters forget themselves in habitual errors: and it is unwise to exhibit in too close sequence the monotony of their virtues, and the obstinacy of their faults. In some cases, of course, the pieces of intended series illustrate and enhance each other's beauty,—as notably the Gainsborough Royal Portraits last year;⁴ and the really beautiful ones of the three sisters, by Millais, in this gallery.⁵ But in general it is better that each painter should, in fitting places, take his occasional part in the pleasantness of the picture-concert, than at once run through all his pieces, and retire.

In the third place, the pictures of scholars ought not

¹ [The exhibition contained five pictures by Sir Coutts Lindsay, the founder and original proprietor of the Grosvenor Gallery. His idea was "that of building an entirely independent picture-gallery, where distrust of originality and imagination would not be shown, delicate workmanship would not be extinguished, and the number of pictures exhibited would not be too large for the wall-space. . . . Admission was not to be by competition or prescriptive right, but by invitation" (*Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, vol. ii. p. 69).]

² ["The costly crimson Italian silk hangings of the big room might have fairly resented the epithet 'poor,' but that they were 'grievously injurious' to some of the pictures there we knew too well, and our friend Mr. Hallé, the Secretary, was told so in a dismayed note from Edward: 'To say the truth, I had the greatest fear of the red when I saw it before it was put up—it seemed far too glaring to be tolerable near any delicately coloured picture. It sucks all the colour out of pictures, and only those painted in grey will stand it'" (*ibid.*, p. 77).]

³ [But see *Note on the Turner Gallery*, Vol. XIII. p. 177.]

⁴ [In the Exhibition of Old Masters at the Royal Academy in 1876, where a few of the Gainsborough portraits were lent from Windsor Castle.]

⁵ [Two sisters and their sister-in-law. No. 24, "The Marchioness of Ormonde"; No. 25, "Countess Grosvenor"; and No. 26, "Lady Beatrice Grosvenor" (afterwards Lady Chesham).]

to be exhibited together with those of their masters; more especially in cases where a school is so distinct as that founded by Mr. Burne-Jones,¹ and contains many elements definitely antagonistic to the general tendencies of public feeling. Much that is noble in the expression of an individual mind, becomes contemptible as the badge of a party; and although nothing is more beautiful or necessary in the youth of a painter than his affection and submission to his teacher, his own work, during the stage of subservience, should never be exhibited where the master's may be either confused by the frequency, or disgraced by the fallacy, of its echo.

11. Of the estimate which should be formed of Mr. Jones's own work, I have never, until now, felt it my duty to speak; partly because I knew that the persons who disliked it were incapable of being taught better; and partly because I could not myself wholly determine how far the qualities which are to many persons so repulsive, were indeed reprehensible.

His work, first, is simply the only art-work at present produced in England which will be received by the future as "classic" in its kind,—the best that has been, or could be. I think those portraits by Millais may be immortal (if the colour is firm), but only in such subordinate relation to Gainsborough and Velasquez, as Bonifazio, for instance, to Titian. But the action of imagination of the highest power in Burne-Jones, under the conditions of scholarship, of social beauty, and of social distress, which necessarily aid, thwart, and colour it, in the nineteenth century, are alone in art,—unrivalled in their kind; and I *know* that these will be immortal,² as the best things the mid-nineteenth century in England could do, in such true relations

¹ [At the Grosvenor Gallery in 1877 there were pictures by Mr. R. Spencer Stanhope and Mr. J. M. Strudwick.]

² [The pictures by Burne-Jones exhibited in 1877 were "The Beguiling of Merlin," "The Days of Creation," "Venus' Mirror," "Temperantia," "Fides," "St. George," "Spes," and "A Sibyl." For other references to "The Days of Creation," see the general notice of Burne-Jones in *The Art of England*, §§ 39, 48.]

as it had, through all confusion, retained with the paternal and everlasting Art of the world.

Secondly. Their faults are, so far as I can see, inherent in them as the shadow of their virtues;—not consequent on any error which we should be wise in regretting, or just in reproving. With men of consummately powerful imagination, the question is always, between finishing one conception, or partly seizing and suggesting three or four: and among all the great inventors, Botticelli is the only one who never allowed conception to interfere with completion. All the others,—Giotto, Masaccio, Luini, Tintoret, and Turner, permit themselves continually in slightness; and the resulting conditions of execution ought, I think, in every case to be received as the best possible, under the given conditions of imaginative force. To require that any one of these Days of Creation should not have been finished as Bellini or Carpaccio would have finished it, is simply to require that the other Days should not have been begun.

Lastly, the mannerisms and errors of these pictures, whatever may be their extent, are never affected or indolent. The work is natural to the painter, however strange to us; and it is wrought with utmost conscience of care, however far, to his own or our desire, the result may yet be incomplete. Scarcely so much can be said for any other pictures of the modern schools: their eccentricities are almost always in some degree forced; and their imperfections gratuitously, if not impertinently, indulged. For Mr. Whistler's own sake, no less than for the protection of the purchaser, Sir Coutts Lindsay ought not to have admitted works into the gallery in which the ill-educated conceit of the artist so nearly approached the aspect of wilful imposture. I have seen, and heard, much of Cockney impudence before now; but never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face.¹

¹ [This was the passage on which Whistler founded an action for libel against Ruskin. For Whistler's pictures in the Gallery, and particulars of the trial, see the Introduction, above, pp. xxii.–xxiv.]

12. Among the minor works carefully and honourably finished in this gallery, M. Heilbuth's¹ are far the best, but I think M. Tissot's² require especial notice, because their dexterity and brilliancy are apt to make the spectator forget their conscientiousness. Most of them are, unhappily, mere coloured photographs of vulgar society; but the "Strength of Will," though sorely injured by the two subordinate figures, makes me think the painter capable, if he would obey his graver thoughts, of doing much that would, with real benefit, occupy the attention of that part of the French and English public whose fancy is at present caught only by Gustave Doré. The rock landscape by Millais³ has also been carefully wrought, but with exaggeration of the ligneous look of the rocks. Its colour as a picture, and the sense it conveys of the real beauty of the scene, are both grievously weakened by the white sky; already noticed as one of the characteristic errors of recent landscape.⁴ But the spectator may still gather from them some conception of what this great painter might have done, had he remained faithful to the principles of his school when he first led its onset. Time was, he could have painted every herb of the rock, and every wave of the stream, with the precision of Van-Eyck, and the lustre of Titian.

And such animals as he drew,—for perfectness and ease of action, and expression of whatever in them had part in the power or the peace of humanity!⁵ He could have painted the red deer of the moor, and the lamb of the fold, as never man did yet in this world. You will never know what you have lost in him.

¹ [Eleven pictures by Ferdinand Heilbuth (born in Hamburg, 1829; died in Paris, 1889) were exhibited (Nos. 7, 7A, 8–16), various landscapes and portraits.]

² [Ten pictures by James Tissot were exhibited (Nos. 17–26), including "The Triumph of Will" (No. 22).]

³ ["The Sound of Many Waters;" exhibited, however, not at the Grosvenor Gallery, but at the Royal Academy, 1877.]

⁴ [See above, § 8, *note (d)*.]

⁵ [Compare the final note in "Notes on the Millais Exhibition, 1886" (Vol. XIV. p. 496).]

13. But landscape, and living creature, and the soul of man,—you are like to lose them all, soon. I had many things to say to you in this *Fors* ;—of the little lake of Thirlmere, and stream of St. John’s Vale, which Manchester, in its zeal for art, is about to drain from their mountainfields into its water-closets¹ (make pictures of those, will you then, my Manchester friends?) ; so also for educational purposes, here in the fine West of London, the decent burghers place their middle-class girls’ school at the end of Old Burlington Street, and put a brutal head, to make mouths at them, over its door.² *There*, if you will think of it, you may see the complete issue of Sir Henry Cole’s professorship at Kensington. This is the best your Modern Art can write—of divine inscription over the strait gate³—for its girl-youth! But I have no more time, nor any words bitter enough, to speak rightly of the evil of these things; and here have Fors and St. Theodore been finding, for me, a little happy picture of sacred animal life, to end with for this time. It is from a lovely story of a country village and its good squire and gentle priest—told by one of my dear friends,⁴—and every word of it true,—in *Baily’s Magazine* for this month.* It is mostly concerning a Derby Favourite, and is a strait lesson in chivalry throughout;—but this is St. Theodore’s bit of it. The horse had been sent down to Doncaster to run for the St. Leger, and there went off his feed, and became restless and cheerless,—so that every one thought he had been “got at.” One of the stable-boys, watching him, at

* Magazine—or Miscellany. I forget which.⁵

¹ [See Vol. XIII. p. 517 *n*. For other references to the Manchester Corporation’s waterworks at Thirlmere, see below, pp. 224, 290, 346, 374.]

² [Where the head may still be seen.]

³ [The title of ch. v. in *Mornings in Florence* (Vol. XXIII. p. 382).]

⁴ [Mr. Frederick Gale. Ruskin’s diary shows that he was with Mr. Gale on June 24. For reference to another article by Mr. Gale in *Baily’s Magazine*, see Letter 82, § 1 (p. 220).]

⁵ [The reference is to an article entitled “The Pride of our Village,” in *Baily’s Monthly Magazine of Sports and Pastimes*, July 1877, vol. xxx. p. 330.]

last said, “He’s a-looking for his kitten.” The kitten was telegraphed for, and sent down, two hundred miles. “The moment it was taken out of its basket and saw the horse, it jumped on his back, ran over his head, and was in the manger in a moment, and began patting his nose.” And the horse took to his feed again, and was as well as ever—and won the race.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

14. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

I have obtained the kind consent of Mr. George Baker (at present the Mayor of Birmingham), to accept Trusteeship for us,¹ such Trusteeship being always understood as not implying any general consent in the principles of the Company, but only favourable sympathy in its main objects. Our second Trustee will be Mr. Q. Talbot, virtually the donor, together with his mother, who has so zealously helped us in all ways, of our little rock-estate at Barmouth.² I am just going down to see the twenty acres which Mr. Baker has also given us in Worcestershire. It is woodland, of which I have ordered the immediate clearing of about the fourth part; this is being done under Mr. Baker's kind superintendence: the cheque for £100 under date 5th May in the subjoined accounts is for this work.

At last our legal position is, I think, also secure. Our solicitors have been instructed by Mr. Barber³ to apply to the Board of Trade for a licence under sec. 23 of the "Companies Act, 1867." The conditions of licence stated in that section appear to have been drawn up precisely for the convenience of the St. George's Company, and the terms of it are clearer than any I have yet been able to draw up myself, as follows:—

"The income and property of the Association, whencesoever derived, shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects of the Association as set forth in this memorandum of association; and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly, by way of dividend, or bonus, or otherwise howsoever by way of profit, to the persons who at any time are or have been members of the Association, or to any of them, or to any person claiming through any of them.

"Provided that nothing herein shall prevent the payment, in good faith, of remuneration to any officers or servants of the Association, or to any member of the Association, or other person, in return for any services actually rendered to the Association."

There will not, in the opinion of our lawyers, be any difficulty in obtaining the sanction of the Board of Trade under this Act; but I remain

¹ [The former trustees having resigned: see Letter 78, § 17 (p. 140).]

² [See Vol. XXVIII, pp. 268, 395, 424; and, for further account of the estate, Vol. XXX.]

³ [See Letter 55 (Vol. XXVIII, p. 376).]

myself prepared for the occurrence of new points of formal difficulty; and must still and always pray the Companions to remember that the real strength of the Society is in its resolved and vital unity; not in the limits of its external form.

I must enter into more particulars than I have space for, to-day, respecting the position of some of our poorer Companions,¹ before explaining some of the smaller items of wages in the subjoined account. The principal sums have been paid to Mr. Swan for the gradual furnishing of the museum; and to artists at Venice for drawings made for its art gallery. But for £100 of the £150 last paid to Mr. Murray, I have also secured, with his assistance, a picture of extreme value that has been hitherto overlooked in the Manfrini gallery; and clearly kept for us by Fors, as the exactly right picture on the possession of which to found our Sheffield school of art. It is a Madonna by Verrocchio, the master of Leonardo da Vinci, of Lorenzo di Credi, and of Perugino, and the grandest metal-worker of Italy.²

And it is entirely pure and safe for us; but will need carefulest securing of the tempera colour on its panel before it can be moved: it cannot, therefore, reach Sheffield till the autumn. The other works bought for the Museum will be there in the course of this month.

THE UNION BANK OF LONDON (CHANCERY LANE BRANCH) IN
ACCOUNT WITH THE ST. GEORGE'S FUND

| <i>Dr.</i> | <i>Cr.</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|----|----------------|----|-------------------------------|-----|----|---|------------------------------------|----|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|----|----|---|---|------|---|---|---|----|----|---|--|-------|----|---|---|-------|---|----|----|---|---|----|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|---------------------------------|-----|---|---|-------------------------------------|-----|---|---|-------------------------------|------|----|----------------|-------------------------------|-----|----|---|--|-------|----|---|
| <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left; width: 30%;">1877.</th> <th style="text-align: right; width: 20%;">£</th> <th style="text-align: right; width: 10%;">s.</th> <th style="text-align: right; width: 10%;">d.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Apr. 15. To Balance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">657</td> <td style="text-align: right;">16</td> <td style="text-align: right;">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20. " Per J. P. Stilwell</td> <td style="text-align: right;">25</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May 7. " Per a Sheffield Silver-smith from Mr. H. Swan</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11. " Per Mr. Rydings, draft at Wolverhampton (Wilkins)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">50</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18. " Per Mr. Rydings, draft at Douglas (less 10d. charges)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">17</td> <td style="text-align: right;">13</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26. " Proceeds of sale of Consols</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2700</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 8. " Per Mr. Rydings, draft at Douglas (less 1s. 10d. charges)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">36</td> <td style="text-align: right;">18</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black;">£3487</td> <td style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black;">12</td> <td style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black;">0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | 1877. | £ | s. | d. | Apr. 15. To Balance | 657 | 16 | 8 | 20. " Per J. P. Stilwell | 25 | 0 | 0 | May 7. " Per a Sheffield Silver-smith from Mr. H. Swan | 0 | 4 | 0 | 11. " Per Mr. Rydings, draft at Wolverhampton (Wilkins) | 50 | 0 | 0 | 18. " Per Mr. Rydings, draft at Douglas (less 10d. charges) | 17 | 13 | 2 | 26. " Proceeds of sale of Consols | 2700 | 0 | 0 | June 8. " Per Mr. Rydings, draft at Douglas (less 1s. 10d. charges) | 36 | 18 | 2 | | £3487 | 12 | 0 | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left; width: 30%;">1877.</th> <th style="text-align: right; width: 20%;">£</th> <th style="text-align: right; width: 10%;">s.</th> <th style="text-align: right; width: 10%;">d.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Apr. 23. By Power of attorney for sale of Consols</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> <td style="text-align: right;">11</td> <td style="text-align: right;">6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May 11. " Postage of pass-book</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>" " Power of attorney for sale of Consols</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> <td style="text-align: right;">11</td> <td style="text-align: right;">6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26. " Mr. John Ruskin</td> <td style="text-align: right;">400</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 5. " Deposit account</td> <td style="text-align: right;">500</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>" " Mr. B. Bagshawe</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2287</td> <td style="text-align: right;">16</td> <td style="text-align: right;">6³</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 15. By Balance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">298</td> <td style="text-align: right;">12</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black;">£3487</td> <td style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black;">12</td> <td style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black;">0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | 1877. | £ | s. | d. | Apr. 23. By Power of attorney for sale of Consols | 0 | 11 | 6 | May 11. " Postage of pass-book | 0 | 0 | 3 | " " Power of attorney for sale of Consols | 0 | 11 | 6 | 26. " Mr. John Ruskin | 400 | 0 | 0 | June 5. " Deposit account | 500 | 0 | 0 | " " Mr. B. Bagshawe | 2287 | 16 | 6 ³ | June 15. By Balance | 298 | 12 | 3 | | £3487 | 12 | 0 |
| 1877. | £ | s. | d. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Apr. 15. To Balance | 657 | 16 | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 20. " Per J. P. Stilwell | 25 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| May 7. " Per a Sheffield Silver-smith from Mr. H. Swan | 0 | 4 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 11. " Per Mr. Rydings, draft at Wolverhampton (Wilkins) | 50 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18. " Per Mr. Rydings, draft at Douglas (less 10d. charges) | 17 | 13 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 26. " Proceeds of sale of Consols | 2700 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| June 8. " Per Mr. Rydings, draft at Douglas (less 1s. 10d. charges) | 36 | 18 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | £3487 | 12 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1877. | £ | s. | d. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Apr. 23. By Power of attorney for sale of Consols | 0 | 11 | 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| May 11. " Postage of pass-book | 0 | 0 | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| " " Power of attorney for sale of Consols | 0 | 11 | 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 26. " Mr. John Ruskin | 400 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| June 5. " Deposit account | 500 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| " " Mr. B. Bagshawe | 2287 | 16 | 6 ³ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| June 15. By Balance | 298 | 12 | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | £3487 | 12 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>June 15. To Balance £298 12s. 3d.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

¹ [See Letter 80, § 11 (p. 182).]

² [See the further account of the picture in the Sheffield Catalogue (Vol. XXX.), where also a reproduction of it is given.]

³ [For details of this amount, see below, pp. 182-183.]

| JOHN RUSKIN, ESQ., IN ACCOUNT WITH ST. GEORGE'S FUND, FROM 1ST JANUARY TO 30TH JUNE, 1877. | | | |
|---|-----------|--|-----------|
| Dr. | | Cr. | |
| 1877. | £ s. d. | 1877. | £ s. d. |
| Jan. 6. To Dividend on £8000 Consols | 118 10 0 | Jan. 1. By Balance (see February Fors ²) | 108 8 0 |
| " " Subscriptions received from 1st January to 28th February (see March Fors ¹) as per contra | 430 4 7 | " " Paid to Bankers as per contra (see March Fors ¹) | 430 4 7 |
| May 26. " Cash per Trustees | 400 0 0 | " " By cheque to Bunney | 25 0 0 |
| | 948 14 7 | Feb. 2. " Do. to Mrs. Talbot | 80 12 0 |
| | | 7. " Do. to Swan | 50 0 0 |
| | | 12. " Do. to Bunney | 40 0 0 |
| | | 18. " Do. to Bagshawe | 180 0 0 |
| | | 25. " Do. to Geddes | 10 0 0 |
| | | Mar. 5. " Do. to Graham | 5 0 0 |
| | | " " Do. to Burdon | 5 0 0 |
| | | Apr. 18. " Do. to Bunney | 25 0 0 |
| | | 20. " Do. to Murray | 25 0 0 |
| | | 28. " Do. to Swan | 50 0 0 |
| June 30. To Balance | 335 10 0 | May 5. " Do. to Baker | 100 0 0 |
| | £1284 4 7 | 22. " Do. to Murray | 150 0 0 |
| | | | £1284 4 7 |

June 30. By Balance due to Mr. Ruskin £335, 10s.

15. (II.) I have received several kind letters from correspondents, under the impression of my having definitely announced the discontinuance of *Fors* at the close of the year, encouraging me still to proceed with it. But I never said that it was to be discontinued;—only that it was to be completed at least into a well-abstracted and indexed first series of seven volumes.³ I cannot tell from day to day what I shall be able or shall be ordered to do or write: *Fors* will herself show me, when the time comes.

In the meantime, I have to thank my readers for the help given me by their assurance that the book is of use, in many ways which are little manifest to me.

16. (III.) The following portions of two letters from a kind and practised schoolmistress, now one of our Companions, are of extreme value:—

"BRISTOL, 19th April, 1877.

"Mothers indeed need first to understand and value their own children—strange as it seems to say so. Whether rich or poor, they seem to have no notion of what they are, or could be,—nor, certainly, of what they could *do*.

"Delighting much in all you say about goodness of work, generally, I rejoice

¹ [Letter 75 (above, p. 74).]

² [Letter 74 (above, p. 48).]

³ [See above, p. 13.]

in it especially, looking to what might be done by children, and what *will*, I trust, be done by them when rightly taught and trained.

“Those active energies which now so often show themselves in ‘naughtiness,’ and cause teachers such terrible trouble, might be turned to account for the best and highest purposes. Children are perfectly capable of excellent work, of many kinds,—and, as you say, of finding ‘play’ in it,¹—perhaps all that they would need (though I am not quite prepared to say that).

“They could be made to understand the need of help, and could give very real help indeed, in ways which I shall be only too happy to suggest, and make a beginning in, when a little less tied than at present. The difficulty is not at all with children, but with their parents, who never seem to think of, or care for, general needs, as in any way affecting educational work—at least, in its progress. And meanwhile, for lack of such training as can only come through the earnest following up of a worthy aim, the educational work itself suffers miserably.

“I find myself speaking of children and parents, rather than girls and mothers,—which may be partly accounted for from the fact that both boys and girls come under us in village schools, such as I have had most to do with. And this leads me also (following your direction) to suggest, first, that ‘mammias’ should teach their little girls to *care for their humbler brothers and sisters*,—which they would naturally do if not warned against them, as is, I fear, the rule. There are indeed obvious dangers in such contact as would seem right and natural; but here, again, your Oxford Lectures give sufficient direction—if it were but applied (I mean where you speak of the danger of travelling on certain parts of the Continent).^{*} Kindly intercourse, even if somewhat imperfect and scanty, would soon lead to the discovery of ways of helping, besides the sympathy implied in it, far more valuable, if genuine, than the upper classes seem to have any idea of. But I am sure I am not saying too much when I repeat that, so far from being encouraged to care for ‘poor’ children, girls are studiously kept away from them, excepting for superficial kindnesses—mere gifts, etc. But many things might be given, too, with the greatest advantage to both parties, and at the smallest cost, if any (pecuniary, at least), to the giver. Are you aware of the shameful waste that goes on, quite as a rule, in the houses of those who leave domestic management largely to housekeepers and upper servants?—and I fear that this is an increasing number. I have not entered far into this matter, but I know quite enough to make me miserable whenever I think of it. If ‘young ladies’ were instructed in the barest elements of ‘domestic economy’ rightly understood, they would soon lessen this evil, without being, necessarily, either very wise or very good. And if they were at all good and kind, they would at once think of ways of benefiting ‘poor’ people through their own economy.

“But nothing will stand in the place of free personal intercourse, for the securing of the full blessing; and this is the very thing that mammias shrink from entirely, for both themselves and their daughters.

“P. S.—I had meant to spare you a further infliction, but wish much to add a word about the true relations of young gentlefolks to servants, as nearest to them of the humbler class. Even nice girls are in the habit of behaving most unbecomingly towards them, and speak of them in a way which shows they are entirely at sea as to their real position and duty towards these ‘neighbours.’ And yet their power for good might be very great indeed in this direction, if but known and used; for, as you know, genuine sympathy will win its way at once with so-called inferiors.

^{*} I forget, and don’t understand.²

¹ [The reference seems to be to Letter 78, § 22 (p. 144), where, however, the writer is not Ruskin, but a correspondent of his.]

² [The reference is to *Lectures on Art*, § 111 (Vol. XX. p. 104).]

But is it not so throughout? 'Middle-class' people will never be won as long as there is such a barrier placed in their way of pride and exclusiveness.* The *greater* and truer bond seems entirely sacrificed to the lesser distinction. See Oxford alone in evidence, which should teach in everything."

"Easter Monday.

17. "Education (and I will dare to use the word in writing to yourself) is no hopeless drudgery, but full of life and brightness, if at all properly understood. Some few of those who have to do with children would be able to follow me thus far. But even these few do not seem to see the connection there is between their work and the more general one—that which St. George is taking in hand.

"Everybody agrees that the people are to be helped upwards by 'education' (whatever may be meant by the word), and we are supposed to be doing something in England to forward that cause. We know too well that the work is not being done, all the time—looking to elementary schools, at least; but even supposing it were, it takes years for each child to be taught and trained, and the need of help is pressing. Children cannot be educated in a shorter time than they can grow up to be men and women; but meanwhile, even in a single year, teaching of the right sort would speak for itself as to general bettering. And its effects would extend at once in a way which 'educators' have no idea of at present, simply because they do not understand their craft. I know less than I thought I did a few years ago, but hope that this humble-looking admission will gain credence for me when I say that—though groping along with the rest—I have felt my way to facts enough to make me far more than hopeful about what may be done when free scope for right work is once secured.

"There is no need of extraordinary outlay, or even special ability in the teacher; all that is required is that the children should be handled wisely and kindly, and turned to account at once as *helpers in the work* with themselves.

"I really cannot feel happy in taking up your time with going into detail, at present, but am most thankful to be allowed to bear witness in this matter—so entirely misunderstood, as it seems to me. Through neglect of the grand rule given in St. Matt. vi. 33,† so entirely applicable to aims with children, we come short of success as regards the humblest attainments, the highest 'standard' in which, as set by Government, could be reached with the greatest ease, if any right way were taken."

18. (IV.) The following fragment of a letter I have been just writing to an old farmer-friend who is always lecturing me on the impossibility of

* Again, I don't quite understand. Does my correspondent mean servants by "Middle-class people"? and what has Oxford to do with it?

† "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God." My correspondent, in fear of being diffuse, has not enough explained her following meaning, namely, that the parents' first effort in their child's education should be to make it a "child of the kingdom." I heard the other day of a little boy for whom good and affectionate parents had ordered that there should be a box of sweetmeats on the table of every room in the house, and a parcel of them under his pillow. They are now obliged to send him away for "change of air,"—which might not have been necessary had they sought for him first the kingdom of God, and observed that it consisted not in meat and drink, nor in "goodies," but in "joy in the Holy Ghost."¹

¹ [Romans xiv. 17.]

reclaiming land on a small scale, may be perhaps of use to some other people:—

“You have never got it clearly into your head that the St. George’s Company reclaims land, as it would build an hospital or erect a monument, for the public good; and no more asks whether its work is to ‘pay’ in reclaiming a rock into a field, than in quarrying one into a cathedral.”

My friend tells me of some tremendous work with steam, in the Highlands, by the Duke of Sutherland, of which I must hear more before I speak.¹

¹ [Ruskin, however, did not revert to the subject.]

LETTER 80

THE TWO CLAVIGERÆ¹

BELLEFIELD, BIRMINGHAM,² 16th July, 1877.

1. I NEVER yet sate down to write my *Fors*, or indeed to write anything, in so broken and puzzled a state of mind as that in which, this morning, I have been for the last ten minutes idly listening to the splash of the rain; and watching the workmen on the new Gothic school, which is fast blocking out the once pretty country view from my window.

I have been staying for two days with the good Mayor

¹ [See below, § 4. “The Worcestershire Clavigeræ” and “Birmingham” were rejected titles for this Letter.]

² [The house of Mr. George Baker, then Mayor of Birmingham. Ruskin sent him the MS. of this portion of *Fors* with the following letter:—

“BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,

“Wednesday (July 18th, 1877).

“DEAR MR. BAKER,—I arrived at home in all comfort (and my good little Joan with her children the day after), and now I must thank you once more, in deliberation, for all your kindness to me, and express more distinctly than I could in the nervousness of leaving, the most true pleasure I had in meeting all the friends you brought to me,—no less than in the sympathy and help which you gave me on all subjects in which I was interested.

“Perhaps you may like to keep the first scratch of the beginning of next *Fors*, written in your house at my bedroom window, before breakfast on the morning I left. I have copied it, so that in case people ever ask you whether I write ‘easily’ you will be able at once to show them—very much the contrary.

“I am terribly pushed with all arrears of home work, and cannot tell you half of what I should like to (besides what little these scraps may say); in the meantime accept again my truest thanks, and believe me, with hearty regards to all your family,

“Respectfully and affectionately yours,

“J. RUSKIN.

“GEORGE BAKER, ESQ.”

This letter is here reprinted from *St. George*, vol. iii. p. 145, where (pp. 142–144) it is also reproduced in *facsimile*.]

of Birmingham: and he has shown me St. George's land, his gift,¹ in the midst of a sweet space of English hill and dale and orchard, yet unhurt by hand of man: and he has brought a representative group of the best men of Birmingham to talk to me; and they have been very kind to me, and have taught me much: and I feel just as I can fancy a poor Frenchman of some gentleness and sagacity might have felt, in Nelson's time,—taken prisoner by his mortal enemies, and beginning to apprehend that there was indeed some humanity in Englishmen, and some providential and inscrutable reason for their existence.

You may think it strange that a two days' visit should produce such an effect on me; and say (which indeed will be partly true) that I ought to have made this visit before now. But, all things considered, I believe it has been with exactness, timely; and you will please remember that just in proportion to the quantity of work and thought we have spent on any subject, is the quantity we can farther learn about it in a little while, and the power with which new facts, or new light cast on those already known, will modify past conclusions. And when the facts are wholly trustworthy, and the lights thrown precisely where one asks for them, a day's talk may sometimes do as much as a year's work.

The one great fact which I have been most clearly impressed by, here, is the right-mindedness of these men, so far as they see what they are doing. There is no equivocation with their consciences,—no silencing of their thoughts in any wilful manner; nor, under the conditions apparent to them, do I believe it possible for them to act more wisely or faithfully. That some conditions, nonapparent to them, may give unexpectedly harmful consequences to their action, is wholly the fault of others.

2. Meantime, recovering myself as a good ship tries to do after she has been struck by a heavy sea, I must say to my Birmingham friends a few things which I could not, while I was bent on listening and learning;—could not,

¹ [See Vol. XXVIII. pp. 629, 630; and above, p. 164.]

also, in courtesy, but after deliberation had: so that, in all our debate, I was under this disadvantage, that they could say to me, with full pleasure and frankness, all that was in their minds; but I could not say, without much fear and pause, what was in mine. Of which unspoken regrets this is the quite initial and final one; that all they showed me, and told me, of good, involved yet the main British modern idea that the master and his men should belong to two entirely different classes; perhaps loyally related to and assisting each other; but yet,—the one, on the whole, living in hardship—the other in ease;—the one uncomfortable—the other in comfort;—the one supported in its dishonourable condition by the hope of labouring through it to the higher one,—the other honourably distinguished by their success, and rejoicing in their escape from a life which must nevertheless be always (as they suppose) led by a thousand to one* of the British people. Whereas St. George, whether in Agriculture, Architecture, or Manufacture, concerns himself only with the life of the workman,—refers all to that,—measures all by that,—holds the Master, Lord, and King, only as an instrument for the ordering of that; requires of Master, Lord, and King, the entire sharing and understanding of the hardship of that,—and his fellowship with it as the only foundation of his authority over it.

3. “But we *have* been in it, some of us,—and know it, and have, by our patience—”

“Won your escape from it.” I am rude—but I know what you would say. Does then the Physician—the Artist—the Soldier—the good Priest—labour only for escape from his profession? Is not this manufacturing toil, as compared with all these, a despised one, and a miserable,—

* I do not use this as a rhetorical expression. Take the lower shopkeepers with the operatives, and add the great army of the merely helpless and miserable; and I believe “a thousand to one” of the disgraced and unhappy poor to the honoured rich will be found a quite temperately expressed proportion.

by the confession of all your efforts, and the proclamation of all your pride; and will you yet go on, if it may be, to fill England, from sea to sea, with this unhappy race, out of which you have risen?

“But we cannot all be physicians, artists, or soldiers. How are we to live?”

Assuredly not in multitudinous misery. Do you think that the Maker of the world intended all but one in a thousand of His creatures to live in these dark streets; and the one, triumphant over the rest, to go forth alone into the green fields?

4. This was what I was thinking, and more than ever thinking, all the while my good host was driving me by Shenstone’s home, The Leasowes,¹ into the vale of Severn; and telling me how happily far away St. George’s ground was, from all that is our present England’s life, and—pretended—glory. As we drove down the hill a little farther towards Bewdley (Worcestershire for “Beaulieu,” I find;—Fors undertakes for pretty names to us, it seems,—Abbey-dale, Beau-lieu, and if I remember, or translate, rightly, the House by the Fountain²—our three Saxon, Norman, and Celtic beginnings of abode) my host asked me if I would like to see “nailing.” “Yes, truly.” So he took me into a little cottage where were two women at work,—one about seventeen or eighteen, the other perhaps four or five and thirty; this last intelligent of feature as well could be; and both, gentle and kind,—each with

¹ [A mile north-east of Halesowen. Johnson, in his life of the poet, says, “His delight in rural pleasures, and his ambition of rural elegance, induced him to point his prospects, to diversify his surface, to entangle his walks, and to wind his waters; which he did with such judgment and such fancy as made his little domain the envy of the great and the admiration of the skilful, a place to be visited by travellers and copied by designers.” The grounds have since been much altered; and “a line of canal close to the place has interfered with its rural quiet, and brought the disagreeable accompaniment of rude traffic and vexatious depredation. Enough of their original appearance, however, remains to render these grounds highly interesting” (Murray’s *Handbook for Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, and Herefordshire*, 1884, p. 209). For references by Ruskin to Shenstone, see Vol. V. pp. 218, 247; Vol. XII. p. 335; and Vol. XXII. p. 320.]

² [Ty’n-y-ffynon, the name not of St. George’s Cottages at Barmouth, but of the house and home of Mrs. Talbot, who gave them to the Guild. For St. George’s land at Abbeydale (elsewhere called Mickley or Totley, see above, p. 98.)]

hammer in right hand, pincers in left (heavier hammer poised over her anvil, and let fall at need by the touch of her foot on a treadle like that of a common grindstone). Between them, a small forge, fed to constant brightness by the draught through the cottage, above whose roof its chimney rose:—in front of it, on a little ledge, the glowing lengths of cut iron rod, to be dealt with at speed. Within easy reach of this, looking up at us in quietly silent question,—stood, each in my sight an ominous Fors, the two Clavigeræ.

At a word, they laboured, with ancient Vulcanian skill. Foot and hand in perfect time: no dance of Muses on Parnassian mead in truer measure;—no sea fairies upon yellow sands more featly footed. Four strokes with the hammer in the hand: one ponderous and momentary blow ordered of the balanced mass by the touch of the foot; and the forged nail fell aside, finished, on its proper heap;—level-headed, wedge-pointed,* a thousand lives soon to depend daily on its driven grip of the iron way.

5. So wrought they,—the English Matron and Maid;—so was it their darg¹ to labour from morning to evening,—seven to seven,—by the furnace side,—the winds of summer fanning the blast of it. The wages of the Matron Fors, I found, were eight shillings a week; †—her husband, otherwise and variously employed, could make sixteen. Three shillings a week for rent and taxes, left, as I count, for the guerdon of their united labour, if constant, and its product providently saved, fifty-five pounds a year, on which they had to feed and clothe themselves and their six children; eight souls in their little Worcestershire ark.

* Flattened on two sides, I mean: they were nails for fastening the railroad metals to the sleepers, and made out of three-inch (or thereabouts) lengths of iron rod, which I was surprised and pleased to find, in spite of all our fine machines, the women still preferred to cut by hand.

† Sixteen-pence a day, or, for four days' work, the price of a lawyer's letter. Compare *Fors* 64, § 6. [Vol. XXVIII. p. 566.]

¹ [See Vol. XXVII. p. 599, and Vol. XXVIII. p. 93.]

Nevertheless, I hear of all my friends pitying the distress I propose to reduce myself to, in living, all alone, upon three hundred and sixty,¹ and doing nothing for it but contemplate the beauties of nature; while these two poor women, with other such, pay what portion of their three shillings a week goes to provide me with my annual dividend.

6. Yet it was not chiefly their labour in which I pitied them, but rather in that their forge-dress did not well set off their English beauty; nay, that the beauty itself was marred by the labour; so that to most persons, who could not have looked through such veil and shadow, they were as their Master, and had no form nor comeliness.² And all the while, as I watched them, I was thinking of two other Englishwomen, of about the same relative ages, with whom, in planning last *Fors*, I had been standing a little while before Edward Burne-Jones's picture of *Venus's Mirror*,³ and mourning in my heart for its dulness, that it, with all its Forget-me-nots, would not forget the images it bore, and take the fairer and nobler reflection of their instant life. Were these then, here,—their sisters;⁴ who had only, for Venus's mirror, a heap of ashes; compassed about with no Forget-me-nots, but with the Forgetfulness of all the world?

7. I said just now that the evil to which the activities of my Birmingham friends tended was in nowise their own fault.

Shall I say now whose fault it is?

I am blamed by my prudent acquaintances for being too personal; but truly, I find vaguely oburgatory language generally a mere form of what Plato calls *σκιαμαχια*,⁵ or shadow-fight: and that unless one can plainly say, Thou art the man⁶ (or woman, which is more probable), one might

¹ [See Letter 76, § 20 (p. 103).]

² [Isaiah liii. 2.]

³ [At the Grosvenor Gallery: see above, p. 157.]

⁴ [The question is resumed in Letter 81, § 3 (p. 193).]

⁵ [See, e.g., *Apology*, 18 D; *Republic*, 520 C; *Laws*, 830 C.]

⁶ [2 Samuel xii. 7.]

as well say nothing at all. So I will frankly tell, without wandering into wider circles, among my own particular friends whose fault it is. First, those two lovely ladies who were studying the *Myosotis palustris* with me;—yes, and by the way, a little beauty from Cheshire who came in afterwards;—and then, that charming—(I didn't say she was charming, but she was, and is)—lady whom I had charge of at Furness Abbey (*Fors* 11, § 3), and her two daughters; and those three beautiful girls who tormented me so on the 23rd of May, 1875 (*Fors* 54, § 20¹), and another one who greatly disturbed my mind at church, only a Sunday or two ago, with the sweetest little white straw bonnet I had ever seen, only letting a lock or two escape of the curliest hair, so that I was fain to make her a present of a Prayer-book afterwards, advising her that her tiny ivory one was too coquettish,—and my own pet cousin; and—I might name more, but leave their accusation to their consciences.

These, and the like of them (not that there are very many their like), are the very head and front of mischief;²—first, because, as I told them in Queens' Gardens,³ ages ago, they have it in their power to do whatever they like with men and things, and yet do so little with either; and secondly, because by very reason of their beauty and virtue, they have become the excuse for all the iniquity of our days: it seems so impossible that the social order which produces such creatures should be a wrong one.* Read, for instance, this letter concerning them from a man both wise and good,—(though thus deceived!) sent me in

* “Would you have us less fair and pure then?” No; but I would have you resolve that your beauty should no more be bought with the disgrace of others, nor your safety with their temptation. Read again *Fors* 45, § 17. [Vol. XXVIII. pp. 162–163.]

¹ [Vol. XXVII. p. 183; Vol. XXVIII. p. 353.]

² [“The very head and front of my offending” (*Othello*, Act i. sc. 3).]

³ [The second lecture in *Sesame and Lilies*: see Vol. XVIII. p. 109.]

comment on *Fors* for April, 1876, referring especially to §§ 6, 7:¹—

“MY DEAR RUSKIN,—Thank you for *Fors*, which I have read eagerly, but without being quite able to make out what you are at. You are hard on Mr. Keble and the poor lady who ‘dresses herself and her children becomingly.’ If ever your genuine brickmaker gets hold of her and her little ones—as he very likely may some day,—he will surely tear them to pieces, and say that he has your authority for thinking that he is doing God a service. Poor lady!—and yet dressing becomingly and looking pleasant are a deal harder, and better worth doing, than brickmaking. You make no allowance for the many little labours and trials (the harder to do and bear, perhaps, because they are so little) which she must meet with, and have to perform in that ‘trivial round’ of visiting and dressing. As it is, she is at least no worse than a flower of the field. But what prigs would she and her husband become if they did actually take to dilettante (*i.e.*, non-compulsory) brickmaking! In their own way, almost all ‘rich’ people, as well as the so-called ‘poor’—who, man, woman, and child, pay £5 each per annum in *taxes* on intoxicating drinks—*do* eat their bread in the sweat of their faces: for the word you quote ‘is very broad,’ and more kinds of bread than one, and more sorts of sweat than one, are meant therein.”²

8. A letter this which, every time I read it, overwhelms me with deeper amazement:³ but I had rather, if it may be, hear from some of my fair friends what *they* think of it, before I farther tell them thoughts of mine; only, lest they should hold anything I have in this *Fors* said, or am, in the next,⁴ likely to say, disloyal to their queenship, or their order, here are two more little pieces of Plato,⁵ expressing his eternal fidelity to Conservatism, which, like the words of his in last *Fors*,⁶ I again pray⁷ to be permitted, reverently, to take also for mine:—

“For at that time” (of the battle of Marathon, Mr. Lowe may perhaps be interested in observing⁸) “there was an ancient polity among us,

¹ [Letter 64: Vol. XXVIII. p. 566.]

² [This is the letter from Coventry Patmore to which reference is made in a letter now printed in a note to Letter 66, § 23 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 633).]

³ [It is considered further in Letter 81, § 4 (p. 194).]

⁴ [See § 3 (p. 193).]

⁵ [*Laws*, book iii. 698 B, 699 C, and book vii. 793 B and C.]

⁶ [Not *last Fors*, but Letter 78: above, p. 139.]

⁷ [That is, as before in Letter 78 (p. 139), he had “reverently and thankfully” taken other words of Plato’s for his own.]

⁸ [The reference is to Mr. Lowe’s speech in 1871, already mentioned in *Fors*: see Letter 6, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 101 *n.*, 102). The newspapers, not recognizing this reference, were misled into attributing Patmore’s letter (§ 7) to Lowe: see below, p. 207.]

and *ancient divisions of rank, founded on possession*; and the queen* over us all was a noble shame, for cause of which we chose to live in bondage to the existing laws. . . . By which shame, as often before now said,¹ all men who are ever to be brave and good must be bound; but the base and cowardly are free from it, and have no fear of it.

“And these laws which we have now told through, are what most men call unwritten laws: and what besides they call laws of the Fatherland, are but the sum and complete force of these. Of which we have said justly that we must neither call them laws, nor yet leave them unspoken,—for these lie in the very heart of all that has been written, and that is written now, or can be written for evermore: being simply and questionlessly father-laws from the beginning, which, once well founded and practised, encompass † with eternal security whatever following laws are established within these; but if once the limits of these be overpassed,‡ and their melody broken, it is as when the secretest foundations of a building fail, and all that has been built on them, however beautiful, collapses together,—stone ruining against stone.”

9. The unwritten and constant Law of which Plato is here speaking, is that which my readers will now find enough defined for them in the preface to the second volume of *Bibliotheca Pastorum*, p. xxvi.,² as being the *Guardian Law of Life*, in the perception of which, and obedience to

* “Despotis,” the feminine of Despot.

† More strictly, “cover,” or “hide” with security; a lovely word—having in it almost the fulness of the verse,—“in the secret of the tabernacle shall He hide me.”³ Compare the beginning of Part III.⁴ of *St. Mark’s Rest*.

‡ The apparent confusion of thought between “enclosing” and “supporting” is entirely accurate in this metaphor. The foundation of a great building is always wider than the superstructure; and if it is on loose ground, the outer stones must grasp it like a chain, embedded themselves in the earth, motionlessly. The embedded cannon-balls at the foundation of any of the heaps at Woolwich will show you what Plato means by these Earth, or Fatherland, laws; you may compare them with the first tiers of the Pyramids, if you can refer to a section of these.

¹ [Ruskin in his copy of *Fors* refers to *Laws*, 647.]

² [Of the original edition; now § 17 of the Preface to *Rock Honeycomb* (Vol. XXXI).]

³ [Psalms xxvii. 5. The word in Plato is *περικαλυψαντα*.]

⁴ [At the time of writing, Ruskin had issued no Part III. of *St. Mark’s Rest*; and the reference here must be to an intended, but not published, passage, as there is nothing relevant in the present connexion either in the “first supplement to *St. Mark’s Rest*” (now chapter x.), which was the third part in order of issue (published in December 1877), or in “Part III.” (so called, now chapter viii.) which did not appear till 1879.]

which, all the life of States for ever consists. And if now the reader will compare the sentence at the bottom of that page, respecting the more gross violations of such law by Adultery and Usury, with the farther notes on Usury in page 17,¹ and then, read, connectedly, the 14th and 15th Psalms² in Sidney's translation, he will begin to understand the mingled weariness and indignation with which I continue to receive letters in defence of Usury, from men who are quite scholars enough to ascertain the facts of Heaven's Law and Revelation for themselves, but will not,—partly in self-deceived respect to their own interests; and partly in mere smug conceit, and shallow notion that they can discern in ten minutes objections enough to confound statements of mine that are founded on the labour of as many years.

10. The portion of a letter from a clergyman to Mr. Sillar, which I have printed for the third article of our Correspondence [§ 14], deserves a moment's more attention than other such forms of the "Dixit Insipiens,"³ because it expresses with precision the dullest of all excuses for usury, that some kind of good is done by the usurer.

Nobody denies the good done; but the principle of Righteous dealing is, that if the good costs you nothing, you must not be paid for doing it. Your friend passes your door on an unexpectedly wet day, unprovided for the occasion. You have the choice of three benevolences to him,—lending him your umbrella,⁴—lending him eighteen-pence to pay for a cab,—or letting him stay in your parlour till the rain is over. If you charge him interest on the umbrella, it is profit on capital—if you charge him interest on the eighteen-pence, it is ordinary usury—if you charge him interest on the parlour, it is rent. All three are equally

¹ [Again the reference is to the original edition; the passage is Ruskin's note on Sidney's version of Psalm v.]

² [See Letter 23, § 24 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 415–416).]

³ [Psalms xiv. 1, often quoted by Ruskin (see General Index).]

⁴ [For another illustration taken from the lending of an umbrella, see Appendix 17, § 2 (below, pp. 570–571).]

forbidden by Christian law, being actually worse, because more plausible and hypocritical sins, than if you at once plainly refused your friend shelter, umbrella, or pence. You feel yourself to be a brute, in the one case, and may some day repent into grace; in the other you imagine yourself an honest and amiable person, rewarded by Heaven for your Charity: and the whole frame of society becomes rotten to its core. Only be clear about what is finally right, whether you can do it or not; and every day you will be more and more able to do it if you try.

For the rest, touching the minor distinctions of less and greater evil in such matters, you will find some farther discourse in the fourth article of our Correspondence: and for my own compromises, past or future, with the practices I condemn, in receiving interest, whether on St. George's part or my own, I hold my former answer¹ consistently sufficient, that if any of my readers will first follow me in all that I have done, I will undertake in full thereafter to satisfy their curiosity as to my reasons for doing no more.

¹ [Compare Letter 70, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 728, 729).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

11. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

The first of the formal points of difficulty which, last month, I said I should be prepared to meet,¹ turns out to be one of nomenclature. Since we take no dividend, we cannot be registered as a "Company," but only a "Society"—"Institute"—"Chamber," or the like.

I accept this legal difficulty as one appointed by Fors herself; and submit to the measures necessitated by it even with satisfaction; having for some time felt that the title of "Company" was becoming every day more and more disgraceful, and could not much longer be attached to any association of honourable Englishmen.

For instance, here is a little notification which has just been sent me,—charmingly printed, with old English letters at the top of the page, as follows:—

**The Artizans', Labourers' & General Dwellings'
Company, Limited.**

INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE.²

OFFICES—27, GREAT GEORGE STREET,
WESTMINSTER, S. W.,
July 4th, 1877.

MY LORDS, LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN,

We are desired by the Committee to address you briefly at the present stage with respect to the aspect of the Company's affairs.

The discoveries already made have proved the importance of the investigation, and led to the arrest of the Company's Manager.

Although waste, extravagance, and possibly fraud, have been discovered, the Committee would advise the Shareholders not to sacrifice their Shares under the influence of groundless panic, as there is good reason to believe that the property is of such intrinsic value that it may yet be placed upon a solid and satisfactory footing.

We are, &c.,

EVELYN A. ASHLEY,
Chairman.
JOHN KEMPSTER,
Hon. Sec.

¹ [See above, p. 165.]

² [For the report of the Committee of Investigation, see *Times*, August 4, 1872 (p. 6 e). The previous chairman and the secretary were committed for trial (August 15) and convicted (October 26). The Company itself survived these troubles, and has had, and continues to have, a prosperous and useful career. The late Sir Richard Farrant was for many years its deputy-chairman.]

—respecting which I beg Mr. Ashley, being a friend whom I can venture a word to, to observe, that if he would take a leaf out of *Fors's* books, and insist on all accounts being made public monthly, he would find in future that the mismanagement could be “arrested,” instead of the mismanager; which would be pleasanter for all concerned.

Now, as I never mean any of the members of St. George's “Company” (so called at present) to be put to such exercise of their faith respecting the intrinsic value of their property as the Committee of the General Dwellings Company here recommend, I am of opinion that the sooner we quit ourselves of this much-dishonoured title the better; and I have written to our solicitors that they may register us under the title of St. George's Guild: and that the members of the Guild shall be called St. George's Guildsmen and Guildswomen.

I have a farther and more important reason for making this change. I have tried my method of Companionship for six years and a half, and find that the demand of the tenth part of the income is a practical veto on the entrance of rich persons through the needle's eye¹ of our Constitution. Among whom, nevertheless, I believe I may find some serviceable Guildsmen and Guildswomen, of whom no more will be required than such moderately creditable subscription as the hitherto unheard-of affluence described by Professor Goldwin Smith² may enable them to spare; while I retain my old “Companions” as a superior order, among whom from time to time I may perhaps enroll some absurdly enthusiastic Zaccheus or Mary,—who, though undistinguished in the eye of the law from the members of our general Guild, will be recognized by St. George for the vital strength of the whole Society.

12. The subjoined accounts will, I hope, be satisfactory: but I am too practically busy in pushing forward the arrangement of our Museum, and co-operative work, at Sheffield, to spare time, this month, for giving any statement about them.

Please note with respect to Mr. Bagshawe's subjoined account for the cheque of June 5th (see last *Fors*³), that the amount of stock sold to produce the £2700 out of which this cheque was paid, was £2853, 7s. 5d.

“3, HIGH STREET, SHEFFIELD, 8th June, 1877.

“MY DEAR SIR,—Yourself from Badger.

“This purchase has been long delayed in completion for various reasons, the last being some little delay in remitting the cheque for the purchase-money and valuation, which I received only on Tuesday last. However, I have paid over the purchase-money and amount of valuation this morning, and the conveyance to yourself has been executed by Mrs. Badger and her husband, and is in my possession. The title-deeds relate to other property as well as to that purchased by you, and therefore the vendor retains them, and has entered into a covenant to produce them in the usual form. The certificate of Mrs. Badger's acknowledgment of the conveyance before commissioners has to be filed, and upon receiving an office copy of it to attach to the conveyance, the latter shall be forwarded to Messrs.

¹ [See Matthew xix. 24.]

² [See Letter 78, § 19 (p. 141).]

³ [Above, p. 165.]

Tarrant and Co., as you requested, together with the deeds of the property lately purchased from Mr. Wright at Walkley, which are still in my safe.

“On the other side I give a short cash statement of the transaction for your guidance.

“Believe me,

“Yours very sincerely,

“BENJAMIN BAGSHAWE.

“PROFESSOR RUSKIN.”

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|-------|----|----|
| To amount of cheque received, 5th June, 1877, from Mr. Cowper Temple, signed by himself and Sir T. D. Acland | 2287 | 16 | 6 |
| By purchase-money of Mickley property paid over to Mrs. Badger, 8th June, 1877 | £2200 | 0 | 0 |
| By amount of valuation for tillage and fixtures | 74 | 6 | 6 |
| By stamps, law stationers' charges, and railway fare to Totley, on my attending to take possession of the property on your behalf | 12 | 11 | 4 |
| By balance remitted to you by cheque herewith | 0 | 18 | 8 |
| | £2287 | 16 | 6 |

EGBERT RYDINGS IN ACCOUNT WITH ST. GEORGE'S COMPANY,
FROM 16TH JANUARY TO 30TH JUNE, 1877

| Dr. | £ s. d. | Cr. | £ s. d. |
|--|-----------|--|-----------|
| 1877. | | 1877. | |
| Jan. 16. To Balance cash in hand (see <i>Forz</i> , No. 74) | 26 3 0 | Feb. 7. By cash sent Union Bank, London | 29 0 0 |
| 26. „ Miss L. Kennedy | 5 0 0 | May 5. Ditto ditto | 50 0 0 |
| Feb. 15. „ Robert Somervell | 2 0 0 | 9. Ditto ditto | 17 14 0 |
| Mar. 13. „ Mrs. Joseph Fry | 5 0 0 | 31. Ditto ditto | 37 0 0 |
| Apr. 18. „ A tithe of gifts, E. B. | 1 11 0 | June 25. Ditto ditto | 2 2 0 |
| 21. „ G. D. | 7 0 0 | | |
| May 1. „ Companion No. 29 | 50 0 0 | | |
| 12. „ G., No. 50 | 10 0 0 | | |
| 19. „ G. D. | 7 0 0 | | |
| 25. „ G. D. | 20 0 0 | | |
| June 4. „ Miss Sargood | 2 2 0 | | |
| | £135 16 0 | | £135 16 0 |

13. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

I am being very much tormented just now by my friends; and to make them understand how, I will print a short letter from one of the least wise among them, by which I think the rest may perceive, beyond the possibility of mistake, what measure of absurdity may be more or less involved in their own treatment of me.

“DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—You have never answered my latter letters, so I suppose you are inexorably angry with me for something or other. Nevertheless I should like to see you, and show you my own pretty little girl. Won't you see me just five minutes?

“Yours ever truly.”

Now this letter exhibits in the simplest possible form the error which I find most of my friends at present falling into; namely, thinking that they show their regard for me by asking me for sympathy, instead of giving it. They are sincere enough in the regard itself, but are always asking me to do what, in consequence of it, they should like themselves, instead of considering what *they* can do, which *I* should like. Which briefly, for the most part at present, is to keep out of my way, and let me alone. I am never angry with anybody unless they deserve it; and least of all angry with my friends:—but I simply at present can't answer their letters, having, I find, nine books in the press,¹ besides various other business; and much as I delight in pretty little girls, I only like seeing them like clouds or flowers, as they chance to come, and not when I have to compliment their mothers upon them. Moreover, I don't much value any of my general range of friends now, but those who will help me in what my heart is set on; so that, excepting always the old and tried ones, Henry Acland, and George Richmond, and John Simon, and Charles Norton, and William Kingsley, and Rawdon Brown, and Osborne Gordon, and Burne-Jones, and "Grannie" and "Mammie,"² and Miss Ingelow, with their respective belongings of family circle; and my pets—who all know well enough how much I depend on them; and one to two newly made such, I hope enough comprehensive exception,—I don't care any more about my friends, unless they are doing their best to help my work; which, I repeat, if they can't, let them at least not hinder; but keep themselves quiet, and not be troublesome.

14. (III.) The following letter, expressing a modern clergyman's sense of his privileges in being "a Gentile, and no Jew," in that so long as he abstains from things strangled, and from fornication,³ he may fatten at his ease on the manna of Usury,—I cannot but rejoice in preserving, as an elect stone, and precious,⁴ in the monumental theology of the Nineteenth Century:—

"DEAR MR. SILLAR,—Thanks for calling my notice again to the Jewish law against usury. When we last talked and wrote about this subject, I told you the Hebrew word for usury means *biting*, and our own word *usury* commonly means *unlawful profit*.

"But our conversation this morning has led to this thought, 'I am a Gentile, and not a Jew.' And Gentile Christians are living under the rules laid down with respect to the peculiar laws of Judaism in Acts xv., where there is no mention made of the Jewish usury law. I refer you to verses 10, 28, and 29. This, to my mind, quite settles the matter.

"You want me to preach against bankers, and lenders of money at interest. Upon my conscience, I cannot preach against the benefactors of their fellow-men.

¹ [Namely (in addition to *Fors*), *St. Mark's Rest*, *Mornings in Florence*, *Laws of Fésole*, *Rock Honeycomb*, *Proserpina*, *Deucalion*; and new editions of *Unto this Last* and *Ethics of the Dust*.]

² [Lady Mount-Temple and Mrs. Hilliard.]

³ [Acts xv. 20.]

⁴ [1 Peter ii. 6.]

“Let me give you a case in point. I have myself received great benefit from lenders of money at interest. A year or two ago I bought a new block of chambers near the new Law Courts. I gladly borrowed £8000 to help me to pay for them. Without that assistance I could not have made the purchase, which is a very advantageous one to me already; and will be much more so when the Law Courts are completed.

“How can the trustees of the settlement under which the money was put out, or the person who ultimately receives the interest, be condemned in the day of judgment, according to your theory?

“They have not wronged, nor oppressed, nor bit me; but have really conferred a great benefit upon me. And I hope I am not to be condemned for paying them a reasonable interest, which I very willingly do.

“Yours very sincerely.”

15. (IV.) Though somewhat intimately connected with the “affairs of the Master,” the following letters are so important in their relation to the subject of usury in general, that I think it well to arrange them in a separate article.

I received, about three months ago, in Venice, a well-considered and well-written letter, asking me how, if I felt it wrong to remain any longer a holder of Bank stock, I yet could consent to hold Consols, and take interest on those, which was surely no less usury than the acceptance of my Bank dividend. To this letter I replied as follows, begging my correspondent to copy the letter, that it might be inserted in *Fors*:—

“MY DEAR SIR,—I am much pleased by your intelligent question, which you would have seen at any rate answered at length, as soon as I got out of Venice, where I must keep my time for Venetian work—also I did not wish to confuse my statement of facts with theoretical principles.

“All interest is usury; but there is a vital difference between exacting the interest of an already contracted debt, and taking part in a business which consists in enabling new ones to be contracted. As a banker, I derange and corrupt the entire system of the commerce of the country; but as a stock-holder I merely buy the right to tax it annually—which, under present circumstances, I am entirely content to do, just as, if I were a born Highlander, I should contentedly levy black-mail, as long as there was no other way for Highlanders to live, unless I thought that my death would put an end to the system;—always admitting myself a thief, but an outspoken, wholesome, or brave thief;* so also, as a stock-holder, I am an outspoken and wholesome usurer;—as a soldier is an outspoken and wholesome murderer. Suppose I had been living as a hired bravo, stabbing for hire, and had written,—‘I must quit myself of this murderous business,—I shall go into the army,’—you might ask me, What—are you not still paid an annual income, to kill anybody Mr. Disraeli orders you to? ‘Yes,’ I should answer; ‘but now outspokenly, and, as I think soldiering is managed, without demoralizing the nature of other people. But, as a bravo, I demoralized both myself and the people I served.’

“It is quite true that my *phrase* ‘to quit myself or usury and the Bank

* Compare *Fors*, Letter 45, § 13, and note. [Vol. XXVIII. p. 158.]

of England,¹ implied that stock interest was not usury at all. But I could not modify the sentence intelligibly, and left it for after explanation.

“All national debts, you must have seen in *Fors* abused enough.² But the debt existing, and on such terms, the value of all money payments depends on it in ways which I cannot explain to you by letter, but will as *Fors* goes on.

“Very truly yours.”

16. To this letter I received last month the following reply:—

“MY DEAR SIR,—I am very grateful to you for your courteous and candid letter in reply to mine of the 11th ult. It is with pleasure that I have made, in accordance with your request, the copy of it enclosed herein.

“May I again trespass on your kindness and ask you still further to meet the difficulties into which your teaching on usury has plunged me?

“If a national debt be wrong on principle, is it right of you to encourage its prolongation by lending the country money? Or is the fact of its being ‘already contracted’ a sufficient reason for your taxing the people annually, and thereby receiving money without working for it?

“Again, is the case of the Highlander quite analogous? *You have* another ‘way to live’ apart from taking any ‘interest’ or ‘usury’; and should you not, to be quite consistent with your teaching, rather live on your principal as long as it lasts? (*Fors* 70, §§ 2, 3.) You speak of yourself as ‘an outspoken and wholesome usurer’;—if I read aright, you taught in *Fors* 68, § 8,³ that the law enunciated in Leviticus xxv. 35–37, ‘is the simple law for all of us—one of those which Christ assuredly came not to destroy but to fulfil.’ If ‘*all* interest is usury,’ is not the acceptance of it—even when derived from Consols—contrary to the law of Christ, and therefore sinful? Can there be any ‘wholesome’ sin, however outspoken?

“Pardon my thus trespassing on your time, and believe me,

“Gratefully and faithfully yours.”

17. The questions put by my correspondent in this second letter have all been answered in *Fors* already (had he read carefully), and that several times over; but lest he should think such answer evasive, I will go over the ground once more with him.

First, in reply to his general question, “Can there be *any* wholesome sin?” No; but the violation of a general law is not always sin. “Thou shalt not kill”⁴ is a general law. But Phinehas is blessed for slaying, and Saul rejected for sparing.⁵

Secondly. Of acts which under certain conditions would be sin, there is every degree of wholesomeness and unwholesomeness, according to the absence or presence of those conditions. For the most part, open sin is wholesomer than secret; yet some iniquity is fouler for being drawn with cords of vanity,⁶ and some blasphemy baser for being deliberate and

¹ [See Letter 76, § 20 (p. 103).]

² [See, for instance, Letters 1, 22 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 14, 377).]

³ [Vol. XXVIII. pp. 712–714, 673.]

⁴ [Exodus xx. 13.]

⁵ [See Numbers xxv. 8–11, and 1 Samuel xv.]

⁶ [Isaiah v. 18.]

insolent, like that of our modern men of science. So again, all sin that is fraudulent is viler than that which is violent; but the venal fraud of Delilah is not to be confused with the heroic treachery of Judith.¹ So, again, all robbery is sin, but the frank pillage of France by the Germans² is not to be degraded into any parallel with the vampire lotteries of the modern Italian Government. So, again, all rent is usury, but it may often be wise and right to receive rent for a field,—never, to receive it for a gambling table. And for application to St. George's business, finally,—so long as our National debt exists, it is well that the good Saint should buy as much stock of it as he can; and far better that he should take the interest already agreed for, and spend it in ways helpful to the nation, than at once remit it, so as to give more encouragement to the contraction of debt.

18. (V.) Part of a letter from a young lady Companion, which will be seen, without comment of mine, to be of extreme value:—

“Last Sunday morning my father and brothers went to the funeral of an old workman who had been in my father's service for forty years. The story of his life is rather an unusual one in these days. The outside of his life, as I know it, is just this. He was a boy in the works to which my father was apprenticed to learn —; and when my father bought —, Tom went with him, and had been foreman for many years when he died. He spent his whole life in honest, faithful labour, chiefly, it seems to me, for other people's benefit, but certainly to his own entire satisfaction. When my brothers grew up and went into the business, they often complained, half in joke, that Tom considered himself of much more importance there than they; and even after they were made partners, he would insist upon doing things his way, and in his own time. His only interest was their interest; and they knew that, in spite of his occasional stubbornness, they could rely without hesitation on his absolute faithfulness to them. They say, ‘One of the old sort, whom we can never replace.’

“But the leisure side of Tom's life is to me grievous,—so pleasureless, narrow, dull. He came from Wales, and has lived ever since in the street where the — is,—a dirty, wretched, close street in one of the worst neighbourhoods in —, peopled by the lowest class,—a street where he can never have seen one green leaf in spring or flower in summer, where the air is poisoned with bad smells, and the very sunlight only shines on ugliness, filth, and poverty. And here Tom lived—not even taking a country walk, or going to breathe fresher air in the wider streets. He was once offered a ticket for an entertainment of some sort at — Hall, only a few minutes' walk from the —, and was not sure of the way there! He never went away but once, to the funeral of a relative in Wales; and once, twenty-four years ago, to take charge of a house out of town for my father, and then of course came to his work every day. He was never known to be drunk, and never away from work for a day's illness in his life—until the very end. Tom was a great reader and politician, I believe, and in reading found his sole recreation from the monotony of daily toil. Ought one to pity most the man who was content (apparently) with such a poor, bare life, unconscious of the pleasures that lay outside it, waiting to be enjoyed, or the crowds of restless, discontented people who ramble yearly all over the world, in vain search for new excitements, ‘change of air’ and scene?” (Does my correspondent really doubt?)

“Tom's illness seemed to become alarming all at once. His wife could not

¹ [See Judges xvi., and Judith viii.-xvi.]

² [Compare Vol. XXVIII. p. 69.]

persuade him to stay away from work until the last few days, and he would not take a real holiday. My father wanted him to go to Wales, and try his native air, but Tom said it would kill him. The only indulgence he would take, when quite unable to work, was a *ride in the omnibuses once or twice* with his wife, and a sail across the river. But it was too late, and he died after a very short illness, almost in harness. His wife's words to my brother are very touching: 'I ran away with him, and my friends were very angry, but I've never regretted it. It's thirty-nine years ago, but my heart has never changed to him. He was very kind to me always; he couldn't have been kinder if he had been a gentleman!' I suppose she thinks gentlemen are always kind to their wives.

"Poor Tom! I wonder if he has had said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant!' But I can't help wishing his life had not been so colourless and pleasureless here. I do not like to think that a steady, honest, industrious working man should either be obliged, or should ever be *content*, to live like a machine, letting the best faculties of a man for enjoyment and improvement" (I should have been very much puzzled to 'improve' Tom, my dear, if you had sent him to me with that view) "be ignored; and die knowing nothing of the infinite loveliness of God's world, though he may know much of the beauty of faithfulness, and the blessedness of honest work. It seems such a needless sacrifice and waste; for surely these condition of life *are* needles, or else our civilization and Christianity are utter failures."

Possibly not quite, my dear,—in so far as they have produced Tom, to begin with; and are even beginning to make you yourself perceive the value of that "production."

19. (VI.) The following letter, from another Companion, says, in more gentle terms, nearly all I wish to say, myself, concerning church service in modern days:—

"MY DEAR MASTER,—I want to tell you, if you've no objection, how tiresome, and like a dull pantomime, Christmas grows to me—in its religious sense. The Bethlehem story is revived, with music and picturing, simply to mock and cheat one's heart, I think; for people can't live for ever on other people's visions and messages. If we want to see fine things, and hear high and gracious ones, such as the shepherds did, we must live under the same conditions. We, too, *must* have the simple, healthy lives,—the fields near, the skies pure,—and then we shall understand, for ourselves, nativity mysteries, belonging to our own immediate time, directly sent from heaven. But it would be troublesome to give us those things, while it is profitable to get up a mimic scene of past glories. Well, I cannot care for it, and so instead of going painfully to Bethlehem, I come to Venice—or wherever the master is; for you would not cheat nor mock, but give the real good. That people don't care for the good, is a sad thing for them, but there were not many who cared for the actual, simple truth in the Bethlehem days. It is a very different thing the caring for things called after them. We are so prone to be apish, somehow or other; for ever mimicking, acting,—never thinking or feeling for ourselves. If you are quite faithful to the truth, you cannot fail; and it is so priceless a blessing that one amongst us is true.

"I have a little incident of my splendid Christmas Day to tell you,—a mere straw, but showing which way the wind blows.

"We went to church on Christmas morning—my sister and I. All was in orthodox fashion. There were the illuminated Scriptures, and the choir sang about 'Unto you is born this day,' etc. The sermon wandered from the point a little, but it kept returning to the manger and its mystery.

"Well, on leaving, a violent storm of sleet and hail came on, and we were

glad to take shelter in a tramway car close by, along with quite a little company of church-leavers. While the car waited its time for starting, three ragged little lads were swept up, like birds drifted by a storm-gust; and they too scrambled into the car, one of them saying to the most miserable of the three, 'Come in, Jim; I'll pay a penny for you.' They looked like dissipated little Christmas-boxers, who had been larking in the streets all night, waiting for the dingy dawn to go begging in. Huddled up shivering in a corner, and talking about their money in hoarse tones—like you ravens, they were the pictures of birds of prey. As they muttered hoarsely among themselves, they contrasted so much with the little treble singers in the choir, that they hardly seemed to be children. I heard them propose buying penny pies; and after twisting about like eels, they suddenly became still!—spell-bound, I imagine, with the thoughts of penny pies. 'Jim,' the very ragged one with no money, looked anxious about his fare. Presently, as if at a signal, the other two got up and went out softly,—like little Judases—without a word to their companion! On reaching the pavement, they called to the conductor, 'Hi, you'll have to turn that lad out,—he's no money;' then they scampered off at full speed. Jim gathered his rents and rags together for a descent into the storm and slush of the street. I was just opposite, so gave him the fare, and bid him sit still. And just then some more very wet church folks came in—so full of thoughts about the child of Bethlehem, I imagine, for whom there was such scant room, that they were utterly oblivious of poor Jim, and the little room he might want. Two of them squeezed him, without looking at him, into merely nothing; and a third, also without looking, fairly sat upon him, it seemed to me, but he got himself behind cleverly. These were grandly dressed people. Next came, as we had started, the conductor, for fares, and I felt rather glad our ragged companion was so smothered up. But when his little thin, dirty arm came forth with his penny, there was a shameful scene. The conductor ordered him roughly out on to the steps at the back, but took his fare, saying there was no room for him. Not one of us said anything. I was very angry, but I suppose didn't like to make a little scene by asking the man to let him come in. I am remorseful yet about it. So the poor bairn went out. However (this is nicer), a minute after came in a young workman—quiet and delicate looking. As he glanced round, he spied the child, and inquired immediately about him. 'There must be *made* room,' he replied to the conductor's shamefaced excuse. And the man looked round with such reproach and severity that master Jim was asked in, in less than no time, and invited to 'Take a seat, my boy.' It was rather funny too; but I was pleased exceedingly, and I tell it to you for the sake of the young workman. *He* had *not* been to church,—*we* had. That puzzles me—or rather it makes it clear to me."

20. (VII.) Fragment of note from another Companion, with a nice little illustration of "Rent" in it:—

"I wonder if St. George would listen to a very sad little petition, and give me anything out of his fund for a poor old woman who is bedridden, and her hands so crippled she can't do any work with them. All she has to depend on is 3s. a week from the parish, out of which she has to pay 2s. and 9d. weekly ("to whom?" asks St. George) for the rent of her room; so that all *she* has to support her is 3d. a week, and a loaf from the parish (Kensington) every week. She has an idiot daughter who sometimes earns a few halfpence for mangling.

"Mrs. E. (the old woman) is so devoted to flowers; and she has a few pots in the window beside her bed, and she wriggles herself to them with difficulty, but can just manage to pick off a fading leaf; and after a long sleepless night of pain, spoke of it as a great reward that she had actually *seen a bud opening!* Do speak to St. George!—I know he'll listen to you; and if he gave even a shilling a week, or half-a-crown, with certainty, this poor old woman's heart would indeed rejoice. I can give more particulars if wanted."

I read all this to St. George; who grumbled a little, saying it was all the same as asking *him* to pay the rent to the——(here he checked himself)—landlord; but gave his half-crown at last, under protest.¹

21. (VIII.) Two pleasant little scraps about useful industry, which will refresh us after our various studies of modern theology and charity.

“The swarm of bees came down, by passenger train *from London*, a week before we came home, and Mrs. Allen and Grace managed to put them in their place without being stung. The people at the station were much tickled at the notion of a swarm of bees coming by train. The little things have been very busy ever since. Hugh and I looked into their little house, and saw that they had built the best part of eight rows of comb in ten days. They are very kind and quiet. We can sit down by the side of the hive for any length of time, without harm, and watch them come in loaded. It is funny to see a certain number of them at the entrance, whose duty it is to keep their wings going as fans, to drive cool air into the hive (people say), but I don’t know: anyhow, there were lines of them fanning last night; and the others, as they came in loaded, passed up between them.

“A lady asks if you couldn’t write on domestic servants. A smith at Orpington, on being canvassed by a gentleman to give his vote in favour of having a School Board here, replied, ‘We don’t want none of your School Boards here. As it is, if you want clerks, you can get as many as you like at your own price; but if I want a good smith to-morrow, I couldn’t get one at any price.’

“G. ALLEN.”

22. (IX.) I must needs print the last words of a delicious letter from a young lady, which I dearly want to answer, and which I think she expected me to answer,—yet gave me only her name, without her address. If she sends it—will she also tell me what sort of ‘unkind or wicked’ things everybody says?²

“I did not mean to write all this, but I could not help it—you have been like a personal friend to me ever since I was sixteen. It *is* good of you to keep on writing your beautiful thoughts when everybody is so ungrateful, and says such unkind, wicked things about you.”

¹ [See also Letter 81, § 14 (p. 208).]

² [See Letter 81, § 1 (p. 191).]

LETTER 81

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN¹

BRANTWOOD, 13th August, 1877.

1. THE Thirteenth,—and not a word yet from any of my lady-friends in defence of themselves!² Are they going to be as mute as the Bishops?³

But I have a delightful little note from the young lady whose praise of my goodness I permitted myself to quote in the last article of my August correspondence,—delightful in several ways, but chiefly because she has done, like a good girl, what she was asked to do, and told me the “wicked things that people say.”

“They say you are ‘unreasoning,’ ‘intolerably conceited,’ ‘self-asserting’; that you write about what you have no knowledge of (Politic. Econ.); and two or three have positively asserted, and tried to persuade me, that you are mad—really mad!! They make me so angry. I don’t know what to do with myself.”

The first thing to be done with yourself, I should say, my dear, is to find out *why* you are angry. You would not be so, unless you clearly saw that all these sayings were malignant sayings, and come from people who would be very thankful if I *were* mad, or if they could find any other excuse for not doing as I bid, and as they are determined not to do. But suppose, instead of letting them make you angry, you serenely ask them what I have said

¹ [A discarded title was “What they knew as Beasts” (compare Jude 10): see below, § 9.]

² [See Letter 80, §§ 7, 8 (pp. 175–178).]

³ [For the author’s challenge to them, see Letter 49, §§ 11, 12 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 242–244).]

that is wrong; and make them, if they are persons with any pretence to education, specify any article of my teaching, on any subject, which they think false, and give you their reason for thinking it so. Then if you cannot answer their objection yourself, send it to *me*.

You will not, however, find many of the objectors able, and it may be long before you find *one* willing, to do anything of this kind. For indeed, my dear, it is precisely because I am not self-asserting, and because the message that I have brought is not mine, that they are thus malignant against me for bringing it. “For this is the message that ye have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.” Take your first epistle of St. John, and read on from that eleventh verse to the end of the third chapter: and do not wonder, or be angry any more, that “if they have called the Master of the house, Baalzebub, they call also those of his household.”¹

2. I do not know what Christians generally make of that first epistle of John. As far as I notice, they usually read only from the eighth verse of the first chapter to the second of the second; and remain convinced that they may do whatever they like all their lives long, and have everything made smooth by Christ. And even of the poor fragment they choose to read, they miss out always the first words of the second chapter, “My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin *not*.” still less do they ever set against their favourite verse of absolution—“If any man sin, he hath an Advocate,”—the tremendous eighth verse of the third chapter, “He that committeth sin is of the Devil, for the Devil sinneth from the beginning,” with its before and after context—“Little children, let no man deceive you: he that *doeth* righteousness is righteous;” and “whosoever *doeth* not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.”

3. But whatever modern Christians and their clergy

¹ [Matthew x. 25.]

choose to make of this epistle, there is no excuse for any rational person, who reads it carefully from beginning to end, and yet pretends to misunderstand its words. However originally confused, however afterwards interpolated or miscopied, the message of it remains clear in its three divisions: (1) That the Son of God is come in the flesh (chap. iv. 2, v. 20, and so throughout); (2) That He hath given us understanding that we may know Him that is true (iii. 19, iv. 13, v. 19, 20); and (3) that in this understanding we know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren (iii. 14). All which teachings have so passed from deed and truth into mere monotony of unbelieved phrase, that no English now is literal enough to bring the force of them home to my readers' minds. "Are these, then, your sisters?" I asked of our fair English-women concerning those two furnace-labourers.¹ They do not answer,—or would answer, I suppose, "Our sisters in God, certainly," meaning thereby that they were not at all sisters in Humanity; and denying wholly that Christ, and the Sisterhood of Christendom, had "come in the Flesh."

Nay, the farthest advanced of the believers in Him are yet so misguided as to separate themselves into costumed "Sisterhoods," as if these were less their sisters who had forge-aprons only for costume, and no crosses hung round their necks.

But the fact is assuredly this,—that if any part or word of Christianity be true, the literal Brotherhood in Christ is true, in the Flesh as in the Spirit; and that we are bound, every one of us, by the same laws of kindness to every Christian man and woman, as to the immediate members of our own households.

4. And, therefore, we are bound to know who are Christians, and who are not,—and the test of such division having been made verbal, in defiance of Christ's plainest

¹ [See Letter 80, § 6 (p. 175).]
XXIX.

orders, the entire body of Christ has been corrupted into such disease, that there is no soundness in it, but only wounds and bruises and putrefying sores.¹ Look back to *Fors* for January 1876. How is it that no human being has answered me a word to the charge closing § 5?² “You who never sowed a grain of corn, never spun a yard of thread, devour and waste to your fill, and think yourselves better creatures of God, doubtless, than this poor starved wretch.” No one has sent me answer; but see what terrific confirmation came to me, in that letter from a good, wise, and Christian man,³ which I printed in last *Fors*, who nevertheless is so deceived by the fiends concerning the whole method of division between his own class and the poor brethren, that he looks on all his rich brethren as seed of Abel, and on all his poor brethren as seed of Cain, and conceives nothing better of the labourer but that he is in his nature a murderer. “He will tear your pretty lady in pieces, and think he is doing God service.” When was there ever before, in the human world, such fearful Despising of the Poor?^{4*}

5. These things are too hard for me;⁵ but at least, as now the days shorten to the close of the seventh year,⁶ I will make this message, so far as I have yet been able to deliver it, clearly gatherable. Only, perhaps, to do so, I must deliver it again in other and gentler terms. It cannot be fully given but in the complete life and sifted writings of St. John, promised for the end of our code of foundational Scripture (*Fors*, January 1876, § 14, and

* Compare *Fors* 61, § 21: “Here, the sneer of ‘those low shoemakers’ is for ever on the lip,” and the answer of the sweet lady at Furness, November, 1871, § 3.⁷

¹ [Isaiah i. 6.]

² [Letter 61: Vol. XXVIII. p. 489.]

³ [Coventry Patmore: see above, p. 177.]

⁴ [James ii. 6.]

⁵ [2 Samuel iii. 39.]

⁶ [That is, since the commencement of *Fors*.]

⁷ [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 509; Vol. XXVII. p. 183.]

compare July, 67, § 12¹),—nevertheless it may be that the rough or brief words in which it has already been given (January 1876, 61, §§ 7 and 16; February, 62, §§ 2 and 8; March, 63, § 6; April, 64, § 5; and, of chief importance, July, 67, §§ 9 and 17²), have been too rough, or too strange, to be patiently received, or in their right bearing understood: and that it may be now needful for me to cease from such manner of speaking, and try to win men to this total service of Love by praise of their partial service.

6. Which change I have for some time thought upon, and this following letter,*—which, being a model of gentleness, has exemplary weight with me myself,—expresses better than I could without its help, what I suppose may be the lesson I have to learn.

“MANCHESTER, *July 25th*, 1877.

“MY DEAR SIR,—I have long felt that I ought to write to you about *Fors Clavigera*, and others of your later books. I hesitated to write, but all that I have heard from people who love you, and who are wise enough and true enough to be helped by you, and all that I have thought in the last few years about your books,—and I have thought much about them,—convinces me that my wish is right, and my hesitation wrong. For I cannot doubt that there are not very many men who try harder to be helped by you than I do. I should not wish to write if I did not know that most of the work which you are striving to get done, ought to be done, and if I did not see that many of the means which you say ought to be used for doing it, are right means. My dulness of mind, because I am not altogether stupid, and my illness, because I do not let it weaken my will to do right, have taught me some things which you cannot know, just because you have genius and mental vigour which give you knowledge and wisdom which I cannot hope to share.

“May I not try to make my humble knowledge of the people, through whom alone you can act,† aid your high knowledge of what has to be done?”

* This letter is by the author of the excellent notes on Art-Education in the July number of *Fors*,³ of which a continuation will be found in the correspondence of this month [p. 213].

† Herein lies my correspondent’s chief mistake. I have neither intention, nor hope, of acting through any of the people of whom he speaks; but, if at all, with others of whom I suppose myself to know more,—not less,—than he.

¹ [Vol. XXVIII. pp. 500, 647.]

² [Vol. XXVIII. pp. 491, 501, 512, 517, 542, 564, 644, 652.]

³ [Letter 79, §§ 6–8 (above, pp. 149–156).]

“Since, eight or nine years ago, I read *Sesame and Lilies*, I have had the reverence and love for you which one feels only for the men who speak in clear words the commands which one’s own nature has before spoken less clearly. And I say without self-conceit that I am trying to do the best work that I know of. It could not then be quite useless that you should know why I often put down *Fors* and your other books in despair, and why I often feel that, in being so impatient with men whose training has been so different from yours, and who are what they are only partly by their own fault;—in forgetting that still it is true of most sinners that ‘they know not what they do’; and in choosing some of the means which you do choose for gaining a good object, you are making a ‘refusal’ almost greater than can be made by any other man, in choosing to work for evil rather than for good.

“May I show you that sometimes *Fors* wounds me, not because I am sinful, but because I know that the men whom you are scourging for sin, are so, only because they have not had the training, the help, which has freed you and me from that sin?

“If I were a soldier in a small army led by you against a powerful foe, would it not be my duty to tell you if words or acts of yours weakened our courage and prevented other men from joining your standard? I ask you to let me tell you, in the same spirit, of the effect of your words in *Fors*.

“You do not know, dear Mr. Ruskin, what power for good you would have, if you would see that to you much light has been given in order that through you other men may see. You speak in anger and despair because they show that they greatly need that which it is your highest duty to patiently give them.

“Pardon me if all that I have written seems to you to be only weak.

“I have written it because I know, from the strong effect of the praise which you gave my letter in the July *Fors*, and of the kind words in your note, that in no other way can I hope to do so much good as I should do, if anything I could say should lead you to try to be, not the leader of men entirely good and wise, free from all human weakness, but the leader, for every man and woman in England, of the goodness and wisdom which are in them, in the hard fight they have to wage against what in them is bad and foolish.

“I am, dear Mr. Ruskin, yours very truly.”¹

¹ [A passage in the MSS. at Brantwood refers as follows to this letter from a correspondent, “who writes me word he is thrown into depression by my violent language”:]—

“If you want gentle language and clear guidance, why don’t you read, and read again and again, the Inaugural Oxford lectures? There I have said all that is needful for any man’s guidance in all ways, so far as I know it. I have written every syllable in utmost tenderness, and with a care more scrupulous than a sculptor’s last finishing of a Parian statue; the two last lines of the 93rd paragraph, for instance, summing the power of Love between Man and Wife—’at its height, it is the bulwark of Patience, the tutor of Honour, and the perfection of Praise’*—took me at least half-an-hour’s work: in choosing out of the much that might have been said, the three chief things which it was necessary to say.”]

* [Vol. XX. p. 92.]

7. This letter, I repeat, seems to me deserving of my most grave respect and consideration;* but its writer has entirely ignored the first fact respecting myself, stated in *Fors* at its outset¹—that I do not, and cannot, set myself up for a political leader; but that *my* business is to teach art, in Oxford and elsewhere;—that if any persons trust me enough to *obey* me without scruple or debate, I can securely tell them what to do, up to a certain point, and be their “makeshift Master”² till they can find a better; but that I entirely decline any manner of political action which shall hinder me from drawing leaves and flowers.

And there is another condition, relative to this first one, in the writing of *Fors*, which my friend and those others who love me, for whom he speaks, have never enough observed: namely, that *Fors is a letter*, and written as a letter should be written, frankly, and as the mood, or topic, chances; so far as I finish and retouch it, which of late I have done more and more, it ceases to be what it should be, and becomes a serious treatise, which I never meant to undertake. True, the play of it (and much of it is a kind of bitter play) has always, as I told you before, as stern final purpose as Morgiana’s dance;³ but the gesture of the moment must be as the humour takes me.

But this farther answer I must make, to my wounded friends, more gravely. Though, in *Fors*, I write what first comes into my head or heart, so long as it is true, I write no syllable, even at the hottest, without weighing the truth

* The following passage in a more recent note adds to this feeling on my part, and necessitates the fulness of my reply:—

“I feel so sure that what I said in my first letter very many people who love you would say,—have said inaudibly,—that the words hardly seem any longer to be mine. It was given to me to speak for many. So if you think the words printed can be of any use, they are of course entirely at your service.”

¹ [See Letter 1, § 3 (Vol. XXVII. p. 13); and compare Vol. XXVIII. p. 236.]

² [See Letter 67, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 644).]

³ [See Letter 62, § 1 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 512); and compare the Introduction to Vol. XXVII. (p. lvi.).]

of it in balance accurate to the estimation of a hair.¹ The language which seems to you exaggerated, and which it may be, therefore, inexpedient that I should continue, nevertheless expresses, in its earnestness, facts which you will find to be irrefragably true, and which no other than such forceful expression could truly reach, whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear.²

Therefore *Fors Clavigera* is not, in any wise, intended as counsel adapted to the present state of the public mind, but it is the assertion of the code of Eternal Laws which the public mind *must* eventually submit itself to, or die; and I have really no more to do with the manners, customs, feelings, or modified conditions of piety in the modern England which I have to warn of the accelerated approach either of Revolution or Destruction, than poor Jonah had with the qualifying amiabilities which might have been found in the Nineveh whose overthrow he was ordered to foretell, in forty days.³ That I should rejoice, instead of mourning, over the falseness of such prophecy, does not at all make it at present less passionate in tone.

8. For instance, you⁴ have been telling me what a beloved Bishop you have got in Manchester; and so, when it was said in page 45 of *Fors* for 1876,⁵ that “it is merely *through the quite bestial ignorance of the Moral Law* in which the English Bishops have contentedly allowed their flocks to be brought up, that any of the modern conditions of trade are possible,” you thought perhaps the word “bestial” inconsiderate! But it was the most carefully considered and accurately true epithet I could use. If you will look back to the 208th page of *Fors* of 1874,⁶ you will find the following sentence quoted from the Secretary’s Speech at

¹ [*Merchant of Venice*, Act iv. sc. 1.]

² [Ezekiel ii. 5, 7; iii. 11.]

³ [Jonah iii. 4. For a criticism by the *Spectator* on this passage and Ruskin’s reply, see below, p. 320.]

⁴ [That is, his correspondent, Mr. Horsfall of Manchester: see below, Appendix 22, pp. 590, 591, 593.]

⁵ [Letter 62; § 4 of this edition (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 514–515).]

⁶ [Letter 45; § 14 of this edition (Vol. XXVIII. p. 159).]

the meeting of the Social Science Association in Glasgow in that year. It was unadvisably allowed by me to remain in small print: it shall have large type now, being a sentence which, in the monumental vileness of it, ought to be blazoned, in letters of stinking gas-fire, over the condemned cells of every felon's prison in Europe:—

“MAN HAS THEREFORE BEEN DEFINED AS AN ANIMAL THAT EXCHANGES. IT WILL BE SEEN, HOWEVER, THAT HE NOT ONLY EXCHANGES, BUT FROM THE FACT OF HIS BELONGING, IN PART, TO THE ORDER CARNIVORA, THAT HE ALSO INHERITS TO A CONSIDERABLE DEGREE THE DESIRE TO POSSESS WITHOUT EXCHANGING; OR, IN OTHER WORDS, BY FRAUD OR VIOLENCE, WHEN SUCH CAN BE USED FOR HIS OWN ADVANTAGE, WITHOUT DANGER TO HIMSELF.”

9. Now, it is not at all my business, nor my gift, to “lead” the people who utter, or listen to, this kind of talk, to better things. I have no hope for them,—any quantity of pity you please, as I have also for wasps, and puff-adders:—but not the least expectation of ever being able to do them any good. My business is simply to state in accurate, not violent, terms, the nature of their minds, which they themselves (“out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant”¹) assert to be “bestial,”—to show the fulfilment, in them, of the words of prophecy: “What they know naturally, as brute-beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves,”²—and to fasten down their sayings in a sure place, for eternal scorn, driving them into the earth they are born of, as with Jael's hammer.³ And this I have held for an entirely stern duty, and if it seems to have been ever done in uncharitable contempt, my friends should remember how much, in the doing of it, I have been forced to read the writings of men whose natural stupidity is enhanced always by their settled purpose of maintaining the interests of Fraud and Force* (see *Fors* of January 1877,

* That is to say, the “framework of Society.” It is a perfectly conscientious feeling on their part. We will reason as far as we can, without saying anything that shall involve any danger to “property.”

¹ [Luke xix. 22.]

² [Jude 10.]

³ [Judges iv. 21. Compare Vol. XXVII. p. 231, and Vol. XXVIII. p. 463; and below, p. 379.]

§ 5¹ into such frightful conditions of cretinism, that having any business with them and their talk is to me exactly as if all the slaving Swiss populace of the high-air-cure establishment at Interlaken² had been let loose into my study at once. The piece of Bastiat, for instance, with analysis of which I began *Fors* seven years ago,³—what can you put beside it of modern trade-literature, for stupidity, set off with dull cunning?—or this, which in good time has been sent me by Fors (perhaps for a coping-stone of all that I need quote from these men, that so I may end the work of nailing down scarecrows of idiotic soul,⁴ and be left free to drive home the fastenings of sacred law)—what can you put beside *this*, for blasphemy, among all the outcries of the low-foreheaded and long-tongued races of demented men?—

“HAD MANKIND GIVEN OBEDIENCE TO THAT PROHIBITION,* THE RACE WOULD LONG SINCE HAVE DISAPPEARED FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH. FOR WITHOUT INTEREST THE ACCUMULATION OF CAPITAL IS IMPOSSIBLE, WITHOUT CAPITAL THERE CAN BE NO CO-OPERATION OF ANTERIOR AND PRESENT LABOUR, WITHOUT THIS CO-OPERATION THERE CAN BE NO SOCIETY, AND WITHOUT SOCIETY MAN CANNOT EXIST.” (Bastiat, *Harmonies of Political Economy*, vol. ii., page 165. English edition.)

10. With this passage, and some farther and final pushing home of my challenge to the Bishops of England,⁵ which must be done, assuredly, in no unseemly temper or haste,—it seems probable to me that the accusing work of *Fors* may close. Yet I have to think of others of its readers,

* The Prohibition of Usury.

¹ [Letter 73 (above, p. 16).]

² [St. Beatenberg, on the Lake of Thun. The carriage road thither from Inter-laken was completed in 1865, and the Kurhaus opened ten years later (see Coolidge's *Swiss Travel and Guide-books*, p. 242).]

³ [See Letter 1, § 13 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 24–25).]

⁴ [Ruskin in his note for Index here adds: “*Idiotic* is used in this place in the accurate Greek sense, ‘self-contained.’” See Letter 28, § 19 (Vol. XXVII. p. 521).]

⁵ [See below, p. 244.]

before so determining, of whom one writes to me this month, in good time, as follows:—

“In reading the last (June) *Fors*, I see—oh, so sorrowfully!—that you have been pained by hearing ‘complaints’ that should never have been felt—much less spoken, and least of all for you to hear. It is bad enough for those who love every word of your teaching to find *Fors* misread. But I for one feel it to be just unpardonable that anything so mistaken should reach you as to lead you to think you are ‘multiplying words in vain.’¹

“‘In vain’?—Dearest Master, surely, surely you know that far and near, many true hearts (who—known or unknown to you—call you by that sacred name) watch hungrily for the coming of your monthly letter, and find it Bread, and Light.

“Believe me, if the ‘well-to-do’—who have never felt the consequences of the evils you seek to cure—‘can’t understand’ you, there are those who can, and do.

“Perhaps, for instance, your ‘well-to-do friends,’ who can get any fruit they wish for, in season or out of season, from their own garden or hothouse, may think the ‘Mother Law’ of Venice about Fruit² only beautiful and interesting from an antiquarian point of view, and not as having any practical value for English people to-day: but suppose that one of them could step so far down as to *be* one of ‘the *poor*’ (*not* ‘the working’ classes) in our own large towns—and so living, to suffer a fever, when fruit is a necessity, and find, as I have done, that the price of even the commonest kinds made it just impossible for the very poor to buy it—would not he or she, after such an experience, look on the matter as one, not only of personal, but of wide importance? I begin to think it is only through their own need, that ordinary people know the needs of others. Thus if a man and his wife living, with no family, on say ten

¹ [Letter 78, § 15 *n.* (above, p. 138).]

² [See Letter 74 (p. 42).]

before so determining, of whom one writes to me this month, in good time, as follows:—

“In reading the last (June) *Fors*, I see—oh, so sorrowfully!—that you have been pained by hearing ‘complaints’ that should never have been felt—much less spoken, and least of all for you to hear. It is bad enough for those who love every word of your teaching to find *Fors* misread. But I for one feel it to be just unpardonable that anything so mistaken should reach you as to lead you to think you are ‘multiplying words in vain.’¹

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¹ [Letter 78, § 15 *n.* (above, p. 138).]

² [See Letter 74 (p. 42).]

shillings per week, find that in a town they can't afford to buy, and can get no garden in which to grow fruit—they will know at once that their neighbours who on the same sum must bring up half-a-dozen children, will have to do without vegetables as well as fruit; and having felt the consequences of their own privation they will know that the children will soon—probably—suffer with skin and other diseases, so serious as to make them ask, *why* are fruit and vegetables so much scarcer and dearer than they were when we were children? And once any one begins to honestly puzzle out that, and similar questions (as I tried to do before *Fors* was given us), they will be, I know, beyond all telling, thankful for the guidance of *Fors*, and quite ready to 'understand' it.

“Ah me! if only the 'well-to-do' would *really* try to find an answer, only to the seemingly simple question asked above, I would have more hope than now for the next generation of 'the lower classes.' For they would find that dear vegetables means semi-starvation to countless poor families. One of the first facts I learnt when I came here was,—'Poor folks' children don't get much to eat all winter but bread and potatoes.' Yet, last October, I one day gave twopence for three ordinary potatoes; and, all winter, could buy no really good ones. Under such conditions, many children, and infirm and sick people, could be but half fed; and half-fed children mean feeble, undersized, diseased men and women, who will become fathers and mothers of sickly children,—and where will the calamity end? Surely the 'food supply' of the people *is* every one's business. ('That can't concern you, my dear,' is the putting down we women get, you know, if we ask the 'why?' of a wrong to other people.) I can't, when I hear of sickly children, but ask, very sadly, what kind of workmen and soldiers and sailors will they and their children be in another century?

“You will think I am looking a long way forward; yet if one begins only to puzzle out this question (the scarcity

of fruit and vegetables), they will find it takes them back, far away from towns, far off the 'very poor,' until they come to the beginning of the mischief, as you show us; and then the well-to-do will find they *have* had much to do with the question, and find too a meaning in the oft-read words, 'We are every one members one of another.'

"There, I fear I'm very rude, but I'm not a little angry when people who are blind say there is no light to see by. I've written so much, that I'm now afraid I shall tire you too much: but I do so want to tell you what I feel now, even more than when I began—no words *can* tell you—*how* close, and true, and tried a friend *Fors* is.

"Last winter there was great distress in this town. Many persons were thrown out of employment because there was 'great depression in the shoe trade': of course among some classes there was great suffering. Yet, with children literally starving because their fathers could get no work to do, all the winter through, and up to the present time, a 'traction engine' (I think they call it) was at work levelling, etc., the streets, and a machine brush swept them,—past the very door of a house where there was a family of little children starving. 'They have pawned about everything in the house but the few clothes they have on, and have had no food since yesterday morning,' I was told on *Christmas Day*. All the winter through I could not get one person who talked to me of 'the distress in the shoe trade' to see that it was only like applying a plaster to a broken limb, instead of setting the bone, to give coal and bread tickets to these poor starving people, and was not really 'feeding the hungry.' People are, as far as I know, *never* half fed by such means, but over-fed one day in the week, and left foodless the other six.*

"I talked earnestly to a 'Board' schoolmistress who is 'educating' near three hundred children; but, alas! she persisted in saying, 'It would be a disgraceful thing if we had

* Compare Letter 61, § 1 [Vol. XXVIII. pp. 483–484].

not the engine and brush, when other towns have got them long ago.' Will you not believe that in such a winter it was good to get *Fors*? People do listen to you.

"John Guy's letter is glorious.¹ I am so thankful for it. I would like to tell him so, but fear he may not read the name 'Companion' as I do."

11. I should not have given this letter large type for the portions referring to myself; but I wish its statement of the distress for food among the poorer classes—distress which is the final measure of decrease of National wealth—to be compared with the triumphant words of Mr. Goldwin Smith in contemplation of the increased number of chimneys at Reading² (and I suppose also of the model gaol which conceals from the passing traveller the ruins of its Abbey). And I will pray my first correspondent³ to believe me, that if once he thoroughly comprehends the quantity of fallacy and of mischief involved in these thoughtless expressions of vulgar triumph, and sets himself to contradict and expose them, he will no longer be sensitive to the less or more of severity in the epithets given to their utterers. The following passage from another of his letters on this subject, with my following general answer, may, I think, sufficiently conclude what is needful to be said on this subject:—

"To quite free my mind from the burden which it has long carried, I will speak, too, of what you have said of Goldwin Smith, and Mill. I know that men who fail to see that political change is purely mischievous* are so far 'geese,'⁴ but I know, too, that it is wrong to call them geese. They are not entirely so; and of the geese or half-geese who follow them in flocks, about the noblest quality is that they are loyal to and admire their leaders, and are hurt and made angry when names which they do not like are used of those leaders."

* I had not the slightest intention of alluding to *this* failure of theirs, which happens to be my own also.

¹ [See Letter 78, § 23 (p. 144).]

² [See Letter 78, § 19 (p. 141).]

³ [Mr. Horsfall: see above, p. 149.]

⁴ [See Letter 79, § 8, *note c* (p. 152).]

12. Well, my dear sir, I solemnly believe that the less they like it, the better my work has been done.¹ For you will find, if you think deeply of it, that the chief of all the curses of this unhappy age is the universal gabble of its fools, and of the flocks that follow them, rendering the quiet voices of the wise men of all past time inaudible. This is, first, the result of the invention of printing,² and of the easy power and extreme pleasure to vain persons of seeing themselves in print. When it took a twelvemonth's hard work to make a single volume legible, men considered a little the difference between one book and another; but now, when not only anybody can get themselves made legible through any quantity of volumes, in a week, but the doing so becomes a means of living to them, and they can fill their stomachs with the foolish foam of their lips,* the universal pestilence of falsehood fills the mind of the world as cicadas do olive-leaves, and the first necessity for our mental government is to extricate from among the insectile noise, the few books and words that are Divine. And this has been my main work from my youth up,—not caring to speak my own words, but to discern,³ whether in painting or scripture, what is eternally good and vital, and to strike away from it pitilessly what is worthless and venomous. So that now, being old, and thoroughly practised in this trade, I know either of a picture—a book—or

* Just think what a horrible condition of life it is that any man of common vulgar wit, who knows English grammar, can get, for a couple of sheets of chatter in a magazine, two-thirds of what Milton got altogether for *Paradise Lost*!⁴ all this revenue being of course stolen from the labouring poor, who are the producers of all wealth. (Compare the central passage of *Fors* 11, § 5.⁵)

¹ [Ruskin's note for Index here is:—

“Anger,—ought to be caused in rogues by just blame. Compare Plato, viii. 832.”]

² [Compare *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. (Vol. XI. p. 125 n.); *Ariadne Florentina*, § 42 (Vol. XXII. pp. 326–327; and *St. Mark's Rest*, § 70 (Vol. XXIV. p. 262).]

³ [Compare Letter 41 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 81); and Vol. XXV. p. 112, with the other passages there noted.]

⁴ [See Vol. VII. p. 449.]

⁵ [Vol. XXVII. pp. 184–185.]

a speech, quite securely whether it is good or not, as a cheesemonger knows cheese;—and I have not the least mind to try to make wise men out of fools, or silk purses out of sows' ears; but my one swift business is to brand them of base quality, and get them out of the way, and I do not care a cobweb's weight whether I hurt the followers of these men or not,—totally ignoring them, and caring only to get the facts concerning the men themselves fairly and roundly stated for the people whom I have real power to teach. And for qualification of statement, there is neither time nor need. Of course there are few writers capable of obtaining any public attention who have not some day or other said something rational; and many of the foolishest of them are the amiablest, and have all sorts of minor qualities of a most recommendable character,—propriety of diction, suavity of temper, benevolence of disposition, wide acquaintance with literature, and what not. But the one thing I have to assert concerning them is that they are men of eternally worthless intellectual quality, who never ought to have spoken a word in this world, or to have been heard in it, out of their family circles; and whose books are merely so much floating fogbank, which the first breath of sound public health and sense will blow back into its native ditches for ever.¹

¹ [For a criticism of § 12 in the *Spectator* and Ruskin's reply, see below, pp. 318–321.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

13. (BEFORE entering on general business, I must pray the reader's attention to the following letter, addressed by me to the Editor of the *Standard* on the 24th of August:—

“*To the Editor of the ‘Standard’*”

“BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,

“24th August, 1877.

“SIR,—My attention has been directed to an article in your columns of the 22nd inst. referring to a supposed correspondence between Mr. Lowe and me.¹ Permit me to state that the letter in question is not Mr. Lowe's. The general value of your article as a review of my work and methods of writing, will I trust be rather enhanced than diminished by the correction, due to Mr. Lowe, of this original error; and the more that your critic in the course of his review expresses his not unjustifiable conviction that no correspondence between Mr. Lowe and me is possible on any intellectual subject whatever.

“I am, Sir,

“Your obedient servant,

“JOHN RUSKIN.”)

14. (I.) Affairs of the Company.

I shall retain the word “Company” to the close of the seventh volume of *Fors*,² and then substitute whatever name our association may have been registered under, if such registration can be effected. Supposing it cannot, the name which we shall afterwards use will be “Guild,” as above stated.³

I regret that the Abbey Dale property still stands in my name; but our solicitors have not yet replied to my letter requesting them to appoint new Trustees;⁴ and I hope that the registration of the Guild may soon enable me to transfer the property at once to the society as a body.

¹ [As explained above (p. 177 *n.*), a letter from Coventry Patmore, printed in *Fors*, had been attributed in the newspapers to Lowe. See the *Times*, August 21 (8 *f*) and the *Monetary Gazette*, August 25. The *Standard* had a leading article founded on this idea on August 22. The article concluded with the words: “The world will be made no wiser by any controversy between Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Lowe, for it would be impossible to reduce their figures or facts to a common denominator.” The mistake was corrected in the *Times* on August 25, and Ruskin's letter to the *Standard* appeared on August 28. It was reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. ii. p. 275.]

² [Letters 73 to 84 constituted the seventh volume of the original edition.]

³ [See Letter 80, § 11 (p. 182).]

⁴ [See Letter 79, § 14 (p. 164).]

I ought, by rights, as the Guild's *master*, to be at present in Abbey Dale itself; but as the Guild's *founder*, I have quite other duties. See the subsequent note on my own affairs.

Our accounts follow, which I can only hope will be satisfactory, as, in these stately forms, I don't understand them myself. The practical outcome of them is, that we have now of entire property, five thousand Consols, (and something over);—eight hundred pounds balance in cash; thirteen acres freehold at Abbey Dale,—twenty at Bewdley, two at Barmouth, and the Walkley Museum building, ground, and contents.

I must personally acknowledge a kind gift of three guineas, to enable St. George, with no detriment to his own pocket, to meet the appeal in the Correspondence of *Fors* 80, § 20 [p. 189].

15. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

I said just now that I ought to be at Abbey Dale; and truly I would not fail to be there, if I had only the Guild's *business* to think of. But I have the Guild's schools to think of, and while I know there are thousands of men in England able to conduct our business affairs better than I, when once they see it their duty to do so, I do not believe there is another man in England able to organize our elementary lessons in Natural History and Art. And I am therefore wholly occupied in examining the growth of *Anagallis tenella*,¹ and completing some notes on St. George's Chapel at Venice;² and the Dalesmen must take care of themselves for the present.

Respecting my own money matters, I have only to report that things are proceeding, and likely to proceed to the end of this year, as I intended, and anticipated: that is to say, I am spending at my usual rate (with an extravagance or two beyond it), and earning nothing.

16. (III.) The following notes on the existing distress in India, by correspondents of the *Monetary Gazette*, are of profound import. Their slightly predicatory character must be pardoned, as long as our Bishops have no time to attend to these trifling affairs of the profane world.

“Afflictions spring not out of the ground, nor is this dire famine an accident that might not have been averted. David in the numbering of Israel sinned in the pride and haughtiness of his heart, and the retribution of Heaven was a pestilence that from Dan to Beersheba slew in one day seventy thousand men. The case of India is exactly parallel. This rich country has been devastated by bad Government, and the sins of the rulers are now visited on the heads of the unoffending and helpless people. These poor sheep, what have they done? It cannot be denied that, taking the good years and the bad together, India is capable of supplying much more corn than she can possibly consume; and besides, she can have abundant stores left for exportation. But the agricultural resources of the land are paralyzed by a vile system of finance, the crops remain insufficient, the teeming population is never properly fed, but is sustained, even in the best of times, at the lowest point of vitality. So that, when drought comes, the food supplies fall short at once, and the wretched hungry people are weak and prostrate in four-and-twenty hours. The ancient rulers of India by their wise forethought did much, by the

¹ [Ruskin's notes on this plant (the little bog Pimpernel) are now added to *Proserpina*: see Vol. XXV. p. 543.]

² [Chapter x. of *St. Mark's Rest* (“The Shrine of the Slaves”) published in December 1877.]

SHEFFIELD MUSEUM ACCOUNT, FROM JANUARY 1 TO JUNE 30, 1877.

| Dr. | | | | Cr. | | | |
|----------|------------------------------|-----|-------|----------|---|------|------|
| | | £ | s. d. | £ | s. d. | | |
| 1877. | | | | 1877. | <i>Current Expenses.</i> | | |
| Jan. 1. | To Cash in hand ¹ | 16 | 3 1 | Jan. 1. | By Curator's salary | 25 | 0 0 |
| 8. | „ Mrs. Hannah Grant | 0 | 1 0 | 3. | „ Fire Insurance | 0 | 4 6 |
| Feb. 10. | „ J. Ruskin (cheque) | 50 | 0 0 | 31. | „ Gas | 1 | 14 3 |
| May 1. | „ Ditto ditto | 50 | 0 0 | Feb. 7. | „ Water rate | 0 | 5 7 |
| June 30. | „ Ditto ditto | 50 | 0 0 | Mar. 31. | „ Property Tax | 0 | 7 2 |
| | | 166 | 4 1 | Apr. 1. | „ Curator's salary | 25 | 0 0 |
| | | | | 9. | „ District rate | 1 | 19 0 |
| | | | | May 2. | „ Gas (temporarily employed in heating; will not be used during ensuing winter) | 6 | 6 9 |
| | | | | June 11. | „ Water | 0 | 5 8 |
| | | | | 14. | „ Poor rate | 0 | 13 5 |
| | | | | 25. | „ Ditto in addition of land | 0 | 1 9 |
| | | | | | | 61 | 18 1 |
| | | | | | <i>Building and Grounds.</i> | | |
| | | | | Jan. 11. | By J. Tunnard (wooden gate and joinery) | 2 | 14 9 |
| | | | | Feb. 13. | „ W. Webster (gateway and wall-work) | 5 | 4 7 |
| | | | | Mar. 10. | „ B. Bagshawe (transfer of fresh land) | 1 | 16 2 |
| | | | | 22. | „ J. C. and J. S. Ellis (on account) | 10 | 0 0 |
| | | | | Apr. 20. | „ J. Swift (wood and zinc) | 0 | 8 0 |
| | | | | May 1. | „ J. C. and J. S. Ellis (balance, hot water apparatus) | 10 | 14 0 |
| | | | | 5. | „ J. Smith (drains) | 0 | 12 0 |
| | | | | 14. | „ Fisher, Holmes and Co. (grass seed) | 0 | 8 0 |
| | | | | „ | „ E. Richardson (tree planting) | 2 | 0 0 |
| | | | | 19. | „ Geo. Creswick (gravel) | 1 | 17 6 |
| | | | | „ | „ C. Ellis and J. S. Smith (labour on path and road) | 9 | 13 2 |
| | | | | | | 45 | 8 2 |
| | | | | | <i>Cases and Fittings.</i> | | |
| | | | | Mar. 3. | By W. Chaloner (on account) | 5 | 0 0 |
| | | | | 16. | „ W. Chaloner (balance, table and fittings) | 6 | 4 6 |
| | | | | May 1. | „ Leaf and Co. (velvets) | 4 | 12 6 |
| | | | | 14. | „ B. Dixon (silk) | 0 | 5 0 |
| | | | | 21. | „ B. Dixon (silk) | 0 | 12 3 |
| | | | | „ | „ Brooks and Son (silk) | 0 | 12 0 |
| | | | | | | 17 | 6 3 |
| | | | | June 30. | „ Carriage of goods and postage | 5 | 2 5 |
| | | | | „ | „ Petty expenses | 1 | 5 7 |
| | | | | „ | „ Cash in hand | 35 | 3 7 |
| | | | | | | £166 | 4 1 |

Examined and found correct, Aug. 22, 1877. WM. WALKER.

¹ [From account at end of Letter 74 (p. 49).]

THE UNION BANK OF LONDON (CHANCERY LANE BRANCH), IN
ACCOUNT WITH THE ST. GEORGE'S FUND.

| Dr. | | £ | s. | d. | Cr. | | | | |
|----------|--|-------|----|----|----------|--|-------|----|---|
| 1877. | | | | | 1877. | | | | |
| Jan. 1. | To Balance ¹ | 191 | 9 | 1 | Apr. 23. | By power of attorney for sale of Consols | 0 | 11 | 6 |
| 23. | „ Per Mr. J. Ruskin, draft at Bridgwater (Talbot) | 50 | 0 | 0 | May 11. | „ Postage of pass-book | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| „ | „ Ditto Ditto | 26 | 11 | 3 | „ | „ Power of attorney for sale of Consols | 0 | 11 | 6 |
| „ | „ Ditto, Sheffield (Fowler) | 20 | 0 | 0 | 26. | „ Mr. J. Ruskin | 400 | 0 | 0 |
| 25. | „ Ditto, Brighton (Moss) | 200 | 0 | 0 | June 5. | „ To Deposit Account | 500 | 0 | 0 |
| 26. | „ Per Mrs. Bradley | 7 | 0 | 0 | 11. | „ Mr. B. Bagshawe | 2287 | 16 | 6 |
| 29. | „ Per Mr. J. Ruskin, Mr. Rydings' draft, less 1s. 8d. charges ² | 33 | 13 | 4 | 30. | „ Balance | 301 | 14 | 3 |
| Feb. 15. | „ Per Mr. J. Ruskin, draft at Bridgwater (Browne) | 100 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| 19. | „ Per Mr. Rydings' draft at Douglas, less 1s. 6d. charges | 28 | 18 | 6 | | | | | |
| Apr. 3. | „ Per Mr. Swan, left at Museum by "A Sheffield Working Man" | 0 | 2 | 0 | | | | | |
| 9. | „ Per ditto, from a "Sheffielder" | 0 | 2 | 6 | | | | | |
| 20. | „ Per J. P. Stilwell | 25 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| May 7. | „ Per Mr. Swan, from a "Sheffield silversmith" | 0 | 4 | 0 | | | | | |
| 11. | „ Per Mr. Rydings' draft at Wolverhampton | 50 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| 18. | „ Per ditto, draft at Douglas, less 10d. charges | 17 | 13 | 2 | | | | | |
| 26. | „ Proceeds of sale of £2853, 7s. 5d. Consols | 2700 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| June 8. | „ Per Mr. Rydings' draft at Douglas, less 1s. 10d. charges | 36 | 18 | 2 | | | | | |
| 22. | „ Per Mr. J. Ruskin, Post Office Order | 1 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| 30. | „ Draft at Croydon, per Mr. Rydings | 2 | 2 | 0 | | | | | |
| | | £3490 | 14 | 0 | | | £3490 | 14 | 0 |

July 1. To Balance £301 14 3

¹ [From account at end of Letter 74 (p. 48).]

² [See, again, account at end of Letter 74 (p. 49).]

storage of water and by irrigation, to avoid these frightful famines; and the *ruins of their reservoirs and canals, which exist to this day, testify alike to their wisdom, and to the supreme folly of India's modern rulers.* Diverse principles of statesmanship underlie these different policies, and the germ of the whole case is hidden in these first principles. The ancients reserved from the 'fat' years some part of their produce against the inevitable 'lean' years which they knew would overtake them. When, therefore, the 'lean' years came, their granaries were comparatively full. You, with your boasted wisdom of *the nineteenth century*, in reality degenerate into the madness of blind improvidence. You do even worse. You draw on the future, by loans and kindred devices, in order to repair the errors and shortcomings of the present. The past was once the present, and you drew on what was then the future; that future is now the present, the bill is at maturity, there are no resources either in the storehouse or in the till, and famine comes of consequence. Nor is this all—the greater part of the folly and crime remains to be told. You have desolated the fairest portion of the land by the iniquities of usury. The cultivating classes are in hopeless indebtedness, the hereditary money-lender holds them firmly in his grasp, and the impoverished villagers, have neither the means nor the heart properly to cultivate the soil. The rulers sit quietly by, while the normal state of things is that agriculture—the primitive industry of the land—is carried on under the vilest system of 'high finance'; where loans are regularly contracted even for the purchase of cattle, and of implements of husbandry, *and the rates of usury run from thirty to eighty per cent.* Agriculture is thus stunted and paralyzed by usury, and not by droughts; and as links in a natural chain of sequences, the earth refuses her increase, and the people perish. The blight and curse of India is usury. You and all your subordinates know it is so, and you do not, and dare not, interpose with dignity or effect. Your fathers planted that tree, so fair to behold, and so seemingly desirable, to make the partakers thereof rich; but it is *forbidden*, as was the tree in the early Paradise of man. Every great statesman who has written his fame in the history and in the laws of the world, has denounced and forbidden it. Are you wiser than they? Was Lycurgus a fool when he forbade it? Was Solon a fanatic when he poured his bitterest denunciations on it? Were Cato, Plato, and Aristotle mad when with burning words they taught its iniquities? Were the Councils of the Church of Rome drunk with insane prejudices, when one after another they condemned it as a mortal sin? Was the Protestant Church of England in deadly error, or in petty warfare against the science of political economy, against truth or against morality, when she declared it to be the revenue of Satan? Was Mahomet wrong when he strictly forbade it? or the Jewish Church when it poured its loudest anathemas on it as a crime of the first magnitude? They all with one accord, in all ages, under the influences of every form of civilization and religion, denounced and forbade it even in the smallest degree; and it has destroyed every nation where it has been established. In India it is not one per cent. Which is inherently wrong, and insidiously destructive. It is *eighty per cent.*, with the present penalty of a deadly famine, and a sharp and complete destruction imminent.

"But this wisdom of Joseph in Egypt was not so rare in ancient times. The rulers of these epochs had not been indoctrinated with Adam Smith and the other political economists, whose fundamental maxim is, 'Every man for himself, and the devil for the rest.' Here is another illustration, and as it belongs to Indian history, it is peculiarly pertinent here. The Sultan, Ala-ud-din, fixed the price of grain, and received it as tribute; by these means so much royal grain came into Delhi, that there never was a time when there were not two or three royal granaries full of grain in the city. When there was a deficiency of rain, the royal stores were opened; corn was never deficient in the market, *and never rose above the fixed price.* If the rains had fallen regularly, and the seasons had always been favourable, there would have been nothing so wonderful in grain remaining at one price; but the extraordinary fact was, that though during the reign of Ala-ud-din there were years in which the rain was deficient, yet, instead of the usual scarcity, there was no want of corn

in Delhi, and there was no rise in the price, either of the grain brought out of the royal granaries or of that imported by the dealers. Once or twice when the rains failed to some extent, a market overseer reported that the price had risen half a jital, *and he received twenty blows with a stick*. That was an admirable administration for the people; our own is supreme folly in comparison. Perhaps if every time there were an Indian famine we were to administer twenty blows with a stick to a finance minister and a political economist, and were to hang up in every village the principal usurer, the nations might, by aid of these crude methods, arrive at a perception of the wisdom of ancient rule. We certainly would do much to prevent the recurrence of Indian famines after the establishment of that stern but salutary discipline.

"Talking of usury in India, the *Globe* has just published for public edification another illustration of this rampant iniquity. 'In a case which lately came before the Calcutta Small Cause Court, it was proved that during two years the debtor had paid 1450 rupees for the interest and amortization of an original debt of 600 rupees. Yet the creditor had so arranged the account that he was able to make a final claim of 450 rupees on account of principal, and 26 rupees as overdue interest. Thus, in the course of only two years, the loan of 600 rupees had swallowed up 1926 rupees, or at the rate of 963 rupees per annum. After deducting the amount of the original advance, the interest charges came to 681 rupees 8 annas a year, so that the creditor really recovered the debt, with 13½ per cent. interest, in the course of twelve months, and yet held as large a claim as ever against his victim. Owing to the non-existence of usury laws in India, the judge was compelled to give judgment against the defendant for the full sum claimed; but he marked his sense of the transaction by allowing the balance to be paid off in small monthly instalments. At the same time he expressed a regret, in which we heartily agree, that the Indian Civil Code contains no restrictions on the practice of usury.

"I would 'heartily agree' also, if the regret were intended to fructify in a measure to put down usury altogether, and abolish the money-lender with all his functions. There will be no hope for India till that shall be done; and what is more, we shall have a famine of bread in England very shortly, if we do not deal effectually with that obnoxious gentleman at home."¹

17. (IV.) The following more detailed exposition of my Manchester correspondent's designs for the founding of a museum for working men in that city, should be read with care.² My own comments, as before, are meant only to extend, not to invalidate, his proposals.

"It is many years since the brightest sunshine in Italy and Switzerland began to make me see chiefly the gloom and foulness of Manchester; since the purest music has been mingled for my ear with notes of the obscene songs which are all the music known to thousands of our workpeople; since the Tale of Troy and all other tales have been spoiled for me by the knowledge that 'for our working classes no such tales exist.'³ Do not doubt that I know that those words are sorrowful,—that I know that while they are true, gladness cannot often be felt except by fools and knaves. We are so much accustomed to allow conditions of life to exist which make health impossible, and to build infirmaries and hospitals for a few of the victims of those conditions;—to allow people to be drawn into crime by irresistible temptations, which we might have removed, and to provide prison chaplains for the most troublesome criminals;—our beneficent activity is so apt to take the

¹ [*Monetary Gazette*, August 25, 1877; compare the issue for December 12, 1874. For subsequent notes on the Famine, see below, pp. 244, 281.]

² [For the letter to the *Manchester Guardian* on this subject, from the author's correspondent (Mr. Horsfall), see Letter 79, §§ 6–8 (pp. 149–156).]

³ [See Letter 79, § 6 (p. 150).]

form of what, in Mrs. Fry's case, Hood so finely called 'nugatory teaching,'¹ that it is quite useless to urge people of our class to take up the work of making healthy activity of body and mind possible for the working classes of our towns, and a life less petty than that which we are now living, possible too for the rich. They prefer to work in hospitals and prisons. (a) The most hospital-like and therefore inviting name which I can find for the work which I have mentioned—a work to which I shall give what strength I have—is the 'cure of drunkenness.' Under the 'scientific treatment of drunkenness' I can find a place for every change that seems to me to be most urgently needed in Manchester and all manufacturing towns. Pray do not think that I am jesting, or that I would choose a name for the sake of deception. The name I have chosen quite accurately describes one aspect of the work to be done. I must write an explanation of the work, as I am not rich enough to do more than a small part by myself.

"There is, I believe, no doubt that in the last seventy or eighty years the higher and middle classes of English people, formerly as remarkable for drunkenness as our workmen now are, (b) have become much more temperate. I try to show what are the causes of the change, and how these causes, which do not yet affect the poor, may be made to reach them. I must tell you very briefly what we are already doing in Manchester, and what I shall try to get done. The work of smoke prevention goes on very slowly. The Noxious Vapours Association will have to enforce the law, which, if strictly enforced, would make all mill chimneys almost smokeless. But the 'nuisance sub-committees' will not enforce the law. We shall show as clearly and effectively as possible how grossly they neglect their duty. I believe that in a year or two all that the law can help us to do will be done, and the air will then be much purer.(c)

18. "Music is one of the things most needed. The mood, which I know well, must be very well known by workpeople—the mood in which one does not wish to improve one's mind, or to talk, but only to rest. All men must know that temptation is never harder to resist than then. We have music to protect us, which calls up our best thoughts and feelings and memories. The poor have—the public-house,—where their thoughts and feelings are at the mercy of any one who chooses to talk or sing obscenely; and they are ordered to leave even that poor refuge if they don't order beer as often as the landlord thinks they ought to do. In every large English town there are scores of rich people who know what Austrian beer-gardens are,—how much better than anything in England; and yet nowhere has one been started. I am trying now to get a few men to join me in opening one. I should prefer to have tea and coffee and cocoa instead of beer, as our beer is much more stupefying than that which is drunk in Austria. All that is needed is a large,

(a) Most true. This morbid satisfaction of consciences by physicking people on their deathbeds, and preaching to them under the gallows, may be ranked among the most insidious mischiefs of modern society.² My correspondent must pardon St. George for taking little interest in any work which proposes to itself, even in the most expanded sense, merely curative results. Is it wholly impossible for him to substitute, as a scope of energy, for the "cure of drunkenness," the "distribution of food"? I heard only yesterday of an entirely well-conducted young married woman fainting in the street for hunger. If my correspondent would address himself to find everybody enough of Meat, he would incidentally, but radically, provide against anybody's having a superabundance of Drink.

(b) Compare the *Crown of Wild Olive*, §§ 148, 149 [VOL XVIII. p. 505].

(c) I omit part of the letter here: because to St. George's work it is irrelevant. St. George forbids, not the smoke only, but much more—the fire.

¹ [For a note by Ruskin on this saying, see Letter 82, § 4 (p. 223).]

² [Compare Letter 9, § 4 (VOL. XXVII. p. 148).]

well-lighted, well-ventilated room; (*d*) where every evening three or four good musicians shall play such music as one hears in Austria,—music of course chosen by us, and not, as it is in music-halls, virtually by the lowest blackguards. (*e*) A penny or twopence will be paid at the door, to quite cover the cost of the music; and tea, etc., will be sold to people who want it; but no one will have to order anything for ‘the good of the house.’ Then there will be a place where a decent workman can take his wife or daughter, without having to pay more than he can well afford, and where he will be perfectly sure that they will hear no foul talk or songs. I don’t know of any place of which that can now be said.

19. “Mr. Ward probably told you of my plans for a museum. I shall be very grateful to you if you will tell me whether or not they are good. (*f*) I want to make art again a teacher. I know that while our town children are allowed to live in filthy houses, to wear filthy clothes, to play in filthy streets, look up to a filthy sky, and love filthy parents, there can be very little in them—compared, at least, with what under other conditions there would be—that books, or art, or after-life can ‘educate.’ But still there is something,—far more than we have any right to expect. How very many of these children, when they grow up, do not become drunkards, do not beat their wives! When I see how good those already grown up are, how kind, as a rule, to each other, how tender to their children, I feel not only shame that we have left them unhelped so long; but, too, hope, belief, that in our day we can get as many people with common kindness and common sense, to work together, as will enable us to give them effective help.

“After all, town children sometimes see brightness. To-day the sky was radiantly blue: looking straight up, it was hardly possible to see that there was smoke in the air, though my eyes were full of ‘blacks’ when I left off watching the clouds drift.

“So long as people are helpful to each other and tender to their children, is there not something in them that art can strengthen and ennoble? Can we not find pictures, old or new, that will bring before them in beautiful forms their best

(*d*) Alas, my kindly friend—do you think there is no difference between a “room” and a “garden” then? The *Garden* is the essential matter; and the Daylight. Not the music, nor the beer, nor even the coffee.

(*e*) I will take up this subject at length, with Plato’s help, in next *Fors.*¹ Meantime, may I briefly ask if it would not be possible, instead of keeping merely the bad *music* out of the hall, to keep the bad *men* out of it? Suppose, the music, instead of being charged twopence for, were given of pure grace;—suppose, for instance, that rich people, who now endeavour to preserve memory of their respected relations, by shutting the light out of their church windows with the worst glass that ever good sand was spoiled into—would bequeath an annual sum to play a memorial tune of a celestial character?—or in any other pious way share some of their own operatic and other musical luxury with the poor; or even appoint a Christian lady-visitor, with a voice, to sing to them, instead of preach?—and then, as aforesaid, instead of permitting seats to be obtained for twopence, make the entry to such entertainments a matter of compliment, sending tickets of admission, as for Almack’s, to persons who, though moneyless, might yet be perceived to belong to a penurious type of good society,—and so exclude “blackguards,” whether lowest or highest, altogether. Would not the selection of the pieces become easier under such conditions?

(*f*) *Very good*;—but the main difficulty which we have to overcome is, not to form plans for a museum, but to find the men leisure to muse. My correspondent has not yet answered my question, why we, and they, have less than the Greeks had.²

¹ [See Letter 82, §§ 17 *seq.* (pp. 237 *seq.*)]

² [See Letter 79, § 8, note (*c*) (above, p. 153). The subject is resumed at the beginning of Letter 83 (p. 257).]

feeling and thoughts? I speak of pictures with great diffidence. For what in them directly reveals noble human feeling I care deeply; but my eyes and brain are dull for both form and colour. I venture to speak of them at all to you only because I have thought much of the possibility of using them as means for teaching people who can barely read. Surely pictures must be able to tell tales, (g) even to people whose eyes have been trained in a Manchester back street. The plan which I wish to try is, to take, with the help of other men, a warehouse with some well-lighted walls. On these I would hang first the tale of the life of Christ, told by the copies published by the Arundel Society, as far as they can be made to tell it; and with the gaps, left by them, filled by copies made specially for us. Under the whole series the same history would be told in words, and under each picture there would be a full explanation. There are hundreds of English people who have never heard this tale; but it is the tale that is better known than any other. Other tales told by pictures, I hope, can be found.

“You speak hopelessly of the chance of finding painters for the actions of great Englishmen, but could you not find painters for English hills and woods? (h) I should like to make other people, and myself, look with their brains, eventually even with their hearts, at what they now see only with their eyes. So I would have drawings made of the prettiest places near Manchester to which people go on holidays. They should be so painted that, if rocks are seen, it may be easy to know what kind of rocks they are; if trees, what kind of trees. Under or near these pictures, there should be sketches in outline giving the names of all the principal things—‘clump of oaks,’ ‘new red sandstone.’ On the opposite wall I would have cases of specimens—large-scale drawings of leaves of trees, of their blossom and seeds. For pictures of hills there should be such plates, showing the leading lines of the hills, as you give in the ‘Mountain’ volume of *Modern Painters*. It might help to make us think of the wonderfulness of the earth if we had drawings—say of a valley in the coal measure district as it now is, and another of what it probably was when the coal plants were still growing. If each town had such a series of pictures and explanatory drawings, they might be copied by chromolithography, and exchanged.

(g) Yes, provided the tales be true, and the art honest. Is my correspondent wholly convinced that the tales he means to tell are true? For if they are not, he will find no good whatever result from an endeavour to amuse the grown-up working men of England with mediæval fiction, however elegant. And if they are true, perhaps there is other business to be done before painting them.

Respecting the real position of the modern English mind with respect to its former religion, I beg my readers’ accuratest attention to Mr. Mallock’s faultlessly logical article in the *Nineteenth Century* for this month, “Is life worth living?”¹

(h) Possibly; but as things are going we shall soon have our people incredulous of the existence of these also. If we cannot keep the fields and woods themselves, the paintings of them will be useless. If you can, they are your best museum. It is true that I am arranging a museum in Sheffield, but not in the least with any hope of regenerating Sheffield by means of it;—only that it may be ready for Sheffield otherwise regenerated, to use. Nor should I trouble myself even so far, but that I know my own gifts lie more in the way of cataloguing minerals than of managing men.

The rest of my correspondent’s letter, to its close, is of extreme value and interest.

¹ [*Nineteenth Century*, September 1877. The first of five papers on the subject published in that magazine. They were afterwards recast, and published as a book, which also was entitled *Is Life Worth Living?* (1879). This was inscribed to Ruskin, and a dedicatory letter to him was printed (pp. vii.-ix.), acknowledging the author’s indebtedness as “of an intellectual debtor to a public teacher,” and that of “a private friend to the kindest of private friends.”]

“We would have the photographs which you have described in *Fors*, or, better, coloured copies of the pictures, with all that you have written about them. Might we not have also good chromo-lithographs of good drawings, so that we might learn what to buy for our houses?”

“I speak as if I thought that one museum could do measurable good in a huge city. I speak so because I hope that there are rich people enough, sick at heart of the misery which they now helplessly watch, to open other museums, if the first were seen to do good; or enough such people to lead the poor in forcing the authorities of the city to pay for museums from the rates.

20. “I would have good music in the museum every evening, and I would have it open on Sunday afternoons, and let fine music be played then too. I would do this for the same reason which makes me think little of ‘temples.’ How can churches help us much now? I have *heard no preacher tell us, in calmness or in anger, that it is the duty of our class—still the ruling class—to give the people light and pure air, and all that light and pure air, and only they, would bring with them.* (i) Until preachers have the wisdom to see, and the courage to say, that if while the people are being stifled, in body and mind, for air now, and only *may* want more water seven years hence, and probably will not want a Gothic town-hall even seventy years hence, we spend half a million pounds sterling on a town-hall, and I don’t know how many millions for your Thirlmere water, we are guilty of grievous sin,—until they see and say this, how can the religion of which they are the priests help us? The poor and the rich are one people. If we can prevent the poor from being brutes, and do not, we are brutes too, though we be rich and educated brutes. Where two or three, or two or three hundred such, are gathered together—it matters not in what name—God is *not* in the midst of them. Some day I hope we shall be able again to meet in churches and to thank God—the poor for giving them good rulers, and we for giving us the peace which we shall not find until we have taken up our duty of ruling. At present many workmen, after drinking on Saturday till public-houses close, lie in bed on Sunday until public-houses open. Then they rise, and begin to drink again. Till churches will help many, I want museums to help a few. Till Sunday be a day which brings to us all a livelier sense that we are bound to God and man with bonds of love and duty, I would have it be at least a day when working men may see that there are some things in the world very good. The first day will do as well as the seventh for that. How can people, trained as our working classes now are, rest on Sunday? To me it seems that *our* Sunday rest, which finds us with stores of knowledge and wisdom that we could not have, had not hundreds of people worked for us, is as much out of the reach of workmen as the daintily cooked cold meats which we eat on Sunday when we wish to be very good to our servants.”

21. (V.) Perhaps, after giving due attention to these greater designs, my readers may have pleasure in hearing of the progress of little Harriet’s botanical museum; see *Fors* 61, § 21 [VOL. XXVIII. pp. 507–508].

“I have told Harriet of the blue ‘Flag flowers’ that grew in our garden at home, on the bank by the river, and I was as pleased as she, when among the roots given us, I found a Flag flower. One morning, when Harriet found a bud on it, she went half wild with delight. ‘Now *I* shall see one of the flowers you tell about.’ She watched it grow day by day, and said, ‘It *will* be a grand *birthday* when it bursts open.’ She begged me to let her fetch her ‘father and little brother’ up to look at the wonderfully beautiful (to her) flower on its ‘birthday.’ Of course I agreed; but, alas! almost as soon as it was open, a cat broke it off. Poor little Harriet!—it was a real grief to her: said flower was, like all our flowers (the soil is so *very* bad), a most pitiable, colourless thing, hardly to be known as a relative

(i) Italics mine.

of country flowers; but they are all 'most lovely' to Harriet: she tells me, 'We shall have such a garden as never was known,' which is perhaps very true.

"Harriet's plants don't ever live long, but she is learning to garden by degrees,—learning even by her mistakes. Her first daisy and buttercup roots, which you heard of, died, to *her* surprise, in their first winter. 'And I took ever such care of them,' she said; 'for when the snow came I scraped it all off, and covered them up nice and warm with *soot and ashes*, and *then* they died.' "

22. (VI.) Finally, and for hopefulest piece of this month's *Fors*, I commend to my readers every word of the proposals which, in the following report of the "Bread-winners' League," are beginning to take form in America; and the evidence at last beginning to be collected respecting the real value of railroads, which I print in capitals.

" 'The Bread-winners' League'—an organization of workmen and politicians extending throughout the State of New York—publishes the following proclamation:—

" 'Riots are the consequence of vicious laws, enacted for the benefit of the powerful few to the injury of the powerless many.

" 'Labour, having no voice in our law-making bodies, will, of necessity, continue to strike.

" 'Riot and bloodshed will spasmodically re-occur until these questions are squarely put before the American people for popular vote and legislative action.

" 'It is an iniquity and absurdity that half-a-dozen railroad magnates can hold the very existence of the nation in their hands, and that we shall continue to be robbed by national banks and other moneyed corporations. That "resumption of labour" must be had is self-evident; and if the industrial and labouring classes desire to protect their just interests and independence, they must first emancipate themselves from party vassalage and secure direct and honest representation in the councils of the nation, state, and municipality.

" 'The directors that by negligence or crime steal the earnings of the poor from savings banks, and render life insurance companies bankrupt, invariably escape punishment. And under existing laws there is no adequate protection for the depositors or the insured.'

"Justus Schwab,¹ the most prominent Communistic leader in the country, lays it down as part of the platform of his party that—

" 'The Government must immediately take, control, own, and operate the railroads and work the mines. The only monopoly must be the Government.'

"At the Communistic meeting held in Tompkins Square a few nights ago, it was resolved that—

" 'To secure the greatest advantages of economy and convenience resulting from the improvements of the age, and to guard against the cupidity of contractors, the fraudulent principle of interest on money, the impositions of the banking system, and the extortions practised by railroads, gas companies, and other organized monopolies, the system of contracting public work should be abolished, and all public improvements, such as postroads, railroads, gasworks, waterworks, mining operations, canals, post-offices, telegraphs, expresses, etc., should be public property, and *be conducted by Government* at reasonable rates, for the interest of society.'

"Thus, you observe, the Ohio Republicans, in their official declarations, are at one with the Communists.

"Judge West, the candidate of the Ohio Republicans for the office of Governor, in a speech upon receiving the nomination, said:—

" 'I desire to say, my fellow-citizens, to you a word only upon a subject which I know is uppermost in the minds and in the hearts of most of you. It is that the industry of our country shall be so rewarded as that labour shall at least

¹ [See below, p. 252 *n.*]

receive that compensation which shall be the support and sustenance of the labourer. I do not know how it may certainly be brought about. But if I had the power, I would try one experiment at least. I would prohibit the great railroad corporations, the great thoroughfares of business and trade, from so reducing their rates by ruinous competition as to disable themselves from paying a just compensation to their operators.

“ I would go further, and would arrange and fix a minimum of prices for all who labour in the mines and upon the railroads, and then require that from all the net receipts and the proceeds of the capital invested the labourer at the end of the year should, in addition to his fixed compensation, receive a certain per cent. of the profits.

“ Then, if the profits were insufficient to compensate you as liberally as you might otherwise desire, you would bear with your employers a portion of the loss. But if these receipts be sufficient to make a division, we would in God’s name let the labourer, who is worthy of his hire, share a portion of the profits.’

“Three other facts are worthy of attention:—

“1. THERE ARE 811 RAILROADS IN THE UNITED STATES, AND OF THESE ONLY 196 THAT PAID A DIVIDEND WITHIN THE LAST FISCAL YEAR. IN SIXTEEN STATES AND TERRITORIES NOT A SINGLE RAILROAD HAS PAID A DIVIDEND. THERE ARE 71 RAILROADS IN NEW YORK, AND ONLY 20 OF THEM PAID A DIVIDEND; 52 IN ILLINOIS, AND ONLY 7 PAID A DIVIDEND; 18 IN WISCONSIN, AND ONLY 1 PAID A DIVIDEND; AND SO ON.

“2. THE NUMBER OF COMMERCIAL FAILURES THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE COUNTRY DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THIS YEAR WAS 4749; DURING THE FIRST HALF OF 1876 IT WAS 4600; DURING THE FIRST HALF OF 1875 IT WAS 3563. BUSINESS GROWS WORSE INSTEAD OF BETTER.

“3. CONGRESS, AT ITS COMING SESSION, WILL BE ASKED TO VOTE A SUBSIDY OF \$91,085,000, IN THE SHAPE OF A GUARANTEE OF INTEREST ON BONDS, TO BUILD 2431 MILES OF THE TEXAS AND PACIFIC RAILROAD, AND THE JOB WILL PROBABLY BE SUCCESSFUL.”

LETTER 82

HEAVENLY CHOIRS¹

BRANTWOOD, 13TH SEPTEMBER, 1877.

1. I REALLY thought *Fors* would have been true to its day, this month; but just as it was going to press, here is something sent me by my much-honoured friend Frederick Gale (who told me of the race-horse and kitten²), which compels me to stop press to speak of it.

It is the revise of a paper which will be, I believe, in *Baily's Magazine* by the time this *Fors* is printed;—a sketch of English manners and customs in the days of Fielding³ (whom Mr. Gale and I agree in holding to be a truly moral novelist, and worth any quantity of modern ones since Scott's death,—be they who they may).

But my friend, though an old Conservative, seems himself doubtful whether things may not have been a little worse managed, in some respects, then, than they are now: and whether some improvements may not really have taken place in the roads,—postage, and the like: and chiefly his faith in the olden time seems to have been troubled by some reminiscences he has gathered of the manner of inflicting capital punishment in the early Georgian epochs. Which manner, and the views held concerning such punishment, which dictate the manner, are indeed among the

¹ ["Of Books" and "The Nurse's Song" (see below, § 18) were rejected titles for this Letter.]

² [See Letter 79, § 13 (p. 162).]

³ [The reference is to an article entitled "Social Life in the Last Century," which appeared in *Baily's Magazine* for October 1877, VOL. 31, pp. 78–89. Mr. Gale remarks with regard to Fielding, "I am very fond of the old novels of a century and a half ago; and although they have to be kept in a place by themselves, I firmly believe that there is more real morality in them than in half the books of the present day." On the morality of Fielding, compare VOL. XXVIII. pp. 287–288.]

surest tests of the nobility or vileness of men: therefore I will ask my friend, and my readers, to go with me a little farther back than the days of Fielding, if indeed they would judge of the progress, or development, of human thought on this question;—and hear what, both in least and in utmost punishment, was ordained by *literally* “Rhadamanthine” law, and remained in force over that noblest nation who were the real Institutors of Judgment,* some eight hundred years, from the twelfth to the fourth century before Christ.

2. I take from Müller’s *Dorians*,¹ Book III., chap. xi., the following essential passages (italics always mine):—

“*Property* was, according to the Spartan notions, to be *looked upon as a matter of indifference*; in the decrees and institutions attributed to Lycurgus, no mention was made of this point, and the ephors were permitted to judge according to their own notions of equity. The ancient legislators had an evident repugnance to any strict regulations on this subject; thus Zaleucus—who however first made particular enactments concerning the right of property—*expressly interdicted certificates of debt*. . . .

“The ephors decided all disputes concerning money and property, as well as in accusations against responsible officers, provided they were not of a criminal nature; the kings decided in cases of heiresses and adoptions. Public offences, *particularly of the kings and other authorities*, were decided by an extreme course of judicature. The popular assembly had probably no judicial” (meaning only elective) “functions: disputes concerning the succession to the throne were referred to it only after ineffectual attempts to settle them, and it then passed a decree. . . .

“Among the various punishments which occur, fines levied on property would appear ridiculous in any other state than Sparta, on account of their extreme lowness. Perseus, in his treatise on the Lacedæmonian government, says that ‘the judge immediately condemns the rich man to the loss of a *desert* (*επαικλον*); the poor he orders to bring a reed, or a rush, or laurel leaves for a public banquet.’ Nicocles the Lacedæmonian says upon the same subject, ‘when the ephor has heard all the witnesses, he either acquits the defendant or condemns him; and the successful plaintiff slightly fines him in a cake, or some laurel leaves,’ which were used to give a relish to the cakes. . . .

“Banishment was probably never a regular punishment in Sparta, for the law could hardly compel a person to do that which, if he had done

* The Moasic law never having been observed by the Jews in literalness.

¹ [Referred to also in *Crown of Wild Olive*, VOL. XVIII. p.472. See VOL. ii. pp. 232, 233, 235–236, 238, 241, 242, 239–240, of the English edition of 1830. Dots have been inserted to show where Ruskin omits passages.]

it voluntarily, would have been punished with death. . . . On the other hand, banishment exempted a person from the most severe punishments, and, according to the principles of the Greeks, preserved him from every persecution; so that even a person who was declared an outlaw by the Amphictyons was thought secure when out of the country. There is no instance in the history of Sparta of any individual being banished for political reasons, so long as the ancient constitution continued. . . .

“The laws respecting the penalty of death which prevailed in the Grecian, and especially in the Doric, states, were derived from Delphi. They were entirely founded upon the ancient rite of expiation, by which a limit was first set to the fury of revenge, and a fixed mode of procedure in such cases was established. . . .

“The Delphian institutions were, however, doubtless connected with those of Crete, where Rhadamanthus was reported by ancient tradition to have first established courts of justice, and a system of law (the larger and more important part of which, in early times, is always the criminal law).^{*} Now as Rhadamanthus is said to have made exact retaliation the fundamental principle of his code, it cannot be doubted, after what has been said in the second book on the connection of the worship of Apollo, and its expiatory rites, with Crete, that in this island the harshness of that principle was early softened by religious ceremonies, in which victims and libations took the place of the punishment which should have fallen on the head of the offender himself.

“The punishment of death was inflicted either by strangulation, in a room of the public prison, or by throwing the criminal into the Cæadas, † a ceremony which was always performed by night. It was also in ancient times the law of Athens that no execution should take place in the daytime. So also the Senate of the Æolic Cume (whose antiquated institutions have been already mentioned) decided criminal cases during the night, and voted with covered balls, nearly in the same manner as the kings of the people of Atlantis, in the *Critias* of Plato. These must not be considered as oligarchical contrivances for the undisturbed execution of severe sentences, but they must be attributed to the dread of pronouncing and putting into execution the sentences of death, and to an unwillingness to bring the terrors of that penalty before the eye of day. A similar repugnance is expressed in the practice of Spartan Gerusia, which never passed sentence of death without several days’ deliberation, nor ever without the most conclusive testimony.”

* I have enclosed this sentence in brackets, because it is the German writer’s parenthesis, from his own general knowledge; and it shows how curiously unconscious he had remained of the real meaning of the “retaliation” of Rhadamanthus, which was of good for good, not of evil for evil.¹ See the following note.

† I did not know myself what the Cæadas was; so wrote to my dear old friend, Osborne Gordon, who tells me it was probably a chasm in the limestone rock; but his letter is so interesting that I keep it for *Deucalion*.²

¹ [See Letter 23, § 16 (VOL. XXVII. p. 409).]

² [Where, however, it was not used. For this chasm, see Strabo, viii. 367, and Thucydides, i. 134.]

3. These being pre-Christian views of the duty and awfulness of capital punishment—(we all know the noblest instance¹ of that waiting till the sun was behind the mountains)—here is the English eighteenth-century view of it, as a picturesque and entertaining ceremony:—

“As another instance of the matter-of-course way of doing business in the olden time, an old Wiltshire shepherd pointed out to a brother of mine a place on the Downs where a highwayman was hung, on the borders of Wilts and Hants. ‘It was quite a pretty sight,’ said the old man; ‘for the sheriffs and javelin-men came a-horseback, and they all stopped at the Everleigh Arms for refreshment, as they had travelled a long way.’ ‘Did the man who was going to be hanged have anything?’ ‘Lord, yes, as much strong beer as he liked; and we drank to his health, and then they hung he, and buried him under the gallows.’”²

4. Now I think the juxtaposition of these passages may enough show my readers how vain it is to attempt to reason from any single test, however weighty in itself,—to general conclusions respecting national progress. It would be as absurd to conclude, from the passages quoted, that the English people in the days of George the Third were in all respects brutalized, and in all respects inferior to the Dorians in the days of Rhadamanthus, as it is in the modern philanthropist of the Newgatory* school to conclude that we are now entering on the true Millennium, because we can’t bear the idea of hanging a rascal for his crimes,³

* As a literary study, this exquisite pun of Hood’s (quoted by my correspondent in last *Fors*⁴), and intensely characteristic of the man, deserves the most careful memory, as showing what a noble and instructive lesson even a pun may become, when it is deep in its purpose, and founded on a truth which is perfectly illustrated by the seeming equivocation.

¹ [The death of Socrates: see Plato’s *Phædo*, 116, 117.]

² [From Mr. Gale’s article as cited above (p. 220 *n.*), pp. 86–87.]

³ [On this subject, see VOL. XXVII. p. 667 *n.*]

⁴ [See Letter 81, § 17 (p. 214). Another pun which Ruskin loved was Hood’s dying jest to his wife: “My dear, I fear you’ll lose your lively Hood.” Ruskin used to refer to this with admiration for the calm and peace of mind which the dying man’s playfulness implied. “Hood,” wrote Ruskin of his puns, “is so awful under his fun that one never can laugh”: see (in a later volume of this edition) the letter to C. E. Norton of November 29, 1858.]

though we are quite ready to drown any quantity of honest men for the sake of turning a penny on our insurance;¹ and though (as I am securely informed) from ten to twelve public executions of entirely innocent persons take place in Sheffield, annually, by crushing the persons condemned under large pieces of sandstone thrown at them by steam-engines; in order that the moral improvement of the public may be secured, by furnishing them with carving-knives sixpence a dozen cheaper than, without these executions, would be possible.

5. All evidences of progress or decline have therefore to be collected in mass,—then analyzed with extreme care,—then weighed in the balance of the Ages, before we can judge of the meaning of any one:—and I am glad to have been forced by Fors to the notice of my friend's paper, that I may farther answer a complaint of my Manchester correspondent,² of which I have hitherto taken no notice, that I under-estimate the elements of progress in Manchester. My answer is, in very few words, that I am quite aware there are many amiable persons in Manchester—and much general intelligence. But, taken as a whole, I perceive that Manchester can produce no good art, and no good literature; it is falling off even in the quality of its cotton; it has reversed, and vilified in loud lies, every essential principle of political economy; it is cowardly in war, predatory in peace; and as a corporate body, plotting at last to steal, and sell, for a profit,* the waters of Thirlmere and clouds of Helvellyn.³

* The reader must note—though I cannot interrupt the text to explain, that the Manchester (or typically commercial,—compare *Fors*, Letter 70, § 4⁴) heresy in political economy is twofold,—first, what may specifically be called

¹ [See Letter 56, § 18 (VOL. XXVIII. p. 394).]

² [Mr. Horsfall: see above, pp. 149, 204, 213.]

³ [For a note on this subject, see VOL. XIII. p. 517 *n*. Opposition to the Manchester scheme was at this time being promoted by Mr. R. Somervell, a Companion of St. George's Guild, and his pamphlets were circulated with *Fors* (see VOL. XXVII. p. cviii.).]

⁴ [VOL. XXVIII. p. 715.]

And therefore I have no serious doubt that the Rhadamanthine verdict* on that society, being distinctly retributive, would be, not that the Lake of Thirlmere should be brought to the top of the town of Manchester, but that the town of Manchester, or at least the Corporation thereof, should be put at the bottom of the Lake of Thirlmere.

You think I jest, do you? as you did when I said I should like to destroy the New Town of Edinburgh,¹—(see notes in Correspondence, on the article in the *Scotsman*²), and the city of New York?

the Judasian heresy,—that the value of a thing is what it will fetch in the market: “This ointment might have been sold for much,³—this lake may be sold for much,—this England may be sold for much,—this Christ may be sold for⁴—little; but yet, let us have what we can get,” etc.; and, secondly, what may specifically be called the “heresy of the tables”—i.e., of the money-changers—that money begets money,⁵ and that exchange is the root of profit. Whereas only labour is the root of profit, and exchange merely causes loss to the producer by tithing to the pedlar.

Whereupon I may also note, for future comparison of old and new times, the discovery made by another of my good and much-regarded friends, Mr. Alfred Tylor, who is always helping me, one way or other;⁶ and while lately examining some documents of the old Guilds, for I forget what purpose of his own, it suddenly flashed out upon him, as a general fact concerning them, that they never looked for “profit”—(and, practically, never got it),—but only cared that their work should be good, and only expected for it, and got surely, day by day, their daily bread.

* More properly, in this case, the *Minoan* verdict. Though I do not care for “discoveries,”⁷ and never plume myself on them, but only on clear perception of long-known facts; yet, as I leave my work behind me, I think it right to note of new things in it what seem to me worthy,—and the analysis of the powers of the three Judges,—Minos, the Punisher of Evil; Rhadamanthus, the Rewarder of Good; and Æacus, the Divider of Possession,—is, I believe, mine exclusively.⁸

¹ [See Letter 1, § 4 (Vol. XXVII. p. 15.)]

² [Below, p. 254.]

³ [Matthew xxvi. 9.]

⁴ [See Matthew xxvi. 15, 16.]

⁵ [Compare *Val d'Arno*, § 277 (Vol. XXIII. p. 161).]

⁶ [See *Deucalion*, Vol. XXVI. pp. 290, 365.]

⁷ [Compare Vol. XXVII. p. 124.]

⁸ [This analysis of the function of the three Judges is given in Letter 23, § 16 (Vol. XXVII. p. 409). It is to be found also (partly stated) in *Aratra Pentelici*, § 207 (Vol. XX. p. 352), and in *Val d'Arno*, § 199 (Vol. XXIII. p. 117). But it is most clearly and fully set out in “The Tortoise of Ægina,” a lecture which Ruskin had not published: see Vol. XX. pp. 382–385.]

My friends, I did not jest then, and do not, now. I am no Roman Catholic,¹—yet I would not willingly steal holy water out of a font, to sell;—and being no Roman Catholic, I hold the hills and vales of my native land to be true temples of God, and their waves and clouds holier than the dew of the baptistery, and the incense of the altar.

6. And to these Manchester robbers, I would solemnly speak again the words which Plato wrote² for prelude to the laws forbidding crimes against the Gods,—though crimes to him inconceivable as taking place among educated men. “Oh, thou wonderful” (meaning wonderful in wretchedness), “this is no human evil that is upon thee, neither one sent by the Gods, but a mortal pestilence and œstrus* begotten among men from old and uncleansed iniquities: wherefore, when such dogmas and desires come into thy soul, that thou desirest to steal sacred things, seek first to the shrines for purification, and then for the society of good men; and hear of them what they say, and with no turning or looking back, fly out of the fellowship of evil men:—and if, in doing this, thy evil should be lightened, well; but if not, then holding death the fairer state for thee, depart thou out of this life.”

For indeed † “the legislator knows quite well that to such men there is ‘no profit’ in the continuance of their lives; and that they would do a double good to the rest of men, if they would take their departure, inasmuch as they would be an example to other men not to offend, and they would relieve the city of bad citizens.”

7. I return now to what I began a week ago, thinking

* There is no English word for this Greek one, symbolical of the forms of stinging fury which men must be transformed to beasts, before they can feel.³

† The closing sentence from this point is farther on in the book.⁴ I give Jowett’s translation, p. 373.—The inverted commas only are mine.

¹ [See above, p. 92.]

² [*Laws*, book ix. 854 B, C.]

³ [See Letter 83, § 24 (p. 281).]

⁴ [*Laws*, book ix., 862 E. The following reference is to vol. iv. of Jowett’s *Plato* (first edition 1871).]

My friends, I did not jest then, and do not, now. I am no Roman Catholic,¹—yet I would not willingly steal holy water out of a font, to sell;—and being no Roman Catholic, I hold the hills and vales of my native land to be true temples of God, and their waves and clouds holier than the dew of the baptistery, and the incense of the altar.

6. And to these Manchester robbers, I would solemnly speak again the words which Plato wrote² for prelude to the laws forbidding crimes against the Gods,—though crimes to him inconceivable as taking place among educated men. “Oh, thou wonderful” (meaning wonderful in wretchedness), “this is no human evil that is upon thee, neither one sent by the Gods, but a mortal pestilence and œstrus* begotten among men from old and uncleansed iniquities: wherefore, when such dogmas and desires come into thy soul, that thou desirest to steal sacred things, seek first to the shrines for purification, and then for the society of good men; and hear of them what they say, and with no turning or looking back, fly out of the fellowship of evil men:—and if, in doing this, thy evil should be lightened, well; but if not, then holding death the fairer state for thee, depart thou out of this life.”

For indeed † “the legislator knows quite well that to such men there is ‘no profit’ in the continuance of their lives; and that they would do a double good to the rest of men, if they would take their departure, inasmuch as they would be an example to other men not to offend, and they would relieve the city of bad citizens.”

7. I return now to what I began a week ago, thinking

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⁴ [*Laws*, book ix., 862 E. The following reference is to vol. iv. of Jowett’s *Plato* (first edition 1871).]

then, as I said,¹ to be in the best of time. And truly the lateness of *Fors* during the last four or five months has not been owing to neglect of it, but to my taking more pains with it, and spending, I am grieved to say, some ten or twelve days out of the month in the writing of it, or finishing sentences, when press correction and all should never take more than a week, else it gets more than its due share of my shortening life. And this has been partly in duty, partly in vanity, not remembering enough my often-announced purpose² to give more extracts from classical authors, in statement of necessary truth; and trust less to myself; therefore to-day, instead of merely using Plato's help, in talking of music, I shall give little more than his own words, only adding such notes as are necessary for their application to modern needs. But what he has said is so scattered up and down the two great treatises of the *Republic* and the *Laws*, and so involved, for the force and basis of it, with matter of still deeper import, that, arrange it how best I may, the reader must still be somewhat embarrassed by abruptness of transition from fragment to fragment, and must be content to take out of each what it brings. And indeed this arrangement is more difficult because, for my present purposes, I have to begin with what Plato concludes in,—for *his* dialogues are all excavatory work, throwing aside loose earth, and digging to rock foundation; but *my* work is edificatory, and I have to lay the foundation first. So that to-day I must begin with his summary of conclusions in the twelfth book of the *Laws*,* namely, that

“the Ruler must know the principle of good which is common to the four cardinal virtues, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance; and which makes each and all of them virtue: and he must know, of what is beautiful and good, the principle that makes it beautiful, and makes it

* My own edition of Plato is Bekker's, printed by Valpy, 1826; and my own references, made during the last fifteen years, are all to page and line of this octavo edition, and will be given here,—after naming the book

¹ [§ 1 (p. 220).]

² [See, for instance, Letters 49 and 67 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 235–236, 648.)]

good; and knowing this, he must be able to set it forth first in words, and follow it out in action. Therefore, since of all beautiful things one of the most beautiful is the fact of the existence and power of the Gods, although it may be pardoned to the common people of the city that they know these things only by fame, no man may be a governor who has not laboured to acquire every faith concerning the existence of the Gods: and there should be no permission to choose, as a guardian of the laws, any one who is not a divine man, and one who has wholly gone through the sum of labour in such things,”—(meaning, having laboured until he has fought his way into true faith).

“And there are two lines of knowledge by which we arrive at belief in the Gods: the first, the right understanding of the nature of the soul, that it is the oldest and divinest of all the things to which motion, taking to itself the power of birth, gives perpetual being; and the other, the perception of order in the movements of matter, in the stars, and in all other things which an authoritatively ruling mind orders and makes fair. For of those who contemplate these things neither imperfectly nor idiotically, no one of men has been born so atheist as not to receive the absolutely contrary impression to that which the vulgar suppose. For to the vulgar it seems that people dealing with astronomy and the other arts that are concerned with necessary law, must become atheists, in seeing that things come of necessity, and not of the conception formed by a will desiring accomplishment of good. But that has been so only when they looked at them” (in the imperfect and idiotic way) “thinking that the soul was newer than matter, instead of older than matter, and after it, instead of before it,—thinking which, they turned all things upside-down, and themselves also: so that they could not see in the heavenly bodies anything but lifeless stones and dirt; and filled themselves with atheism and hardness of heart, against which the reproaches of the poets were true enough, likening the philosophers to dogs uttering vain yelpings. But indeed, as I have said, the contrary of all this is the fact. For of mortal men he only can be rightly wise and reverent to the Gods, who knows these two things—the Priority of the Spirit, and the Masterhood of Mind over the things in Heaven, and who knowing these things first, adding then to them those necessary [ἀναγκαῖα] parts of introductory learning of which we have often before spoken, and also those relating to the Muse, shall harmonize them all into the system of the practices and laws of states.”*

of each series; thus, in the present case, *Laws*, XII. 632, 9, meaning the twelfth book of the *Laws*, 9th line of 632nd page in Bekker’s 8th volume; but with this reference I will also give always, in brackets, that to the chapter in Stephanus, so that the full reference here is,—*Laws*, XII. 632, 9 (966).¹

* The Greek sentence is so confused, and the real meaning of it so entirely dependent on the reader’s knowledge of what has long preceded it, that I am obliged slightly to modify and complete it, to make it clear. Lest the reader should suspect any misrepresentation, here is Mr. Jowett’s more literal rendering of it, which however, in carelessly omitting

¹ [Ruskin, in making notes for the Index, found that “the reference is wrong!” The correct references are to Bekker, 632, 12; 633, 3; and 634, 12; to Stephanus, 965 D, 966 C, E, 967. The translation here is Ruskin’s.]

8. The word “necessary” in the above sentence, refers to a most important passage in the seventh book,¹ to understand which, I must now state, in summary, Plato’s general plan of education.

It is founded primarily on the distinction between masters and servants; the education of servants and artizans being not considered in the *Laws*, but supposed to be determined by the nature of the work they have to do. The education he describes is only for the persons whom we call “gentlemen”—that is to say, landholders, living in idleness on the labour of slaves. (The Greek word for slave and servant is the same; our word slave being merely a modern provincialism contracted from “Sclavonian.” See *St. Mark’s Rest*, Supplement I.²)

Our manufacturers, tradesmen, and artizans, would therefore be left out of question, and our domestic servants and

one word (*αναγκαία*) and writing “acquired the previous knowledge,” instead of “acquired the previous *necessary* knowledge,” has lost the clue to the bearing of the sentence on former teaching:—

“No man can be a true worshipper of the Gods who does not know these two principles—that the soul is the eldest of all things which are born, and is immortal, and rules over all bodies; moreover, as I have now said several times, he who has not contemplated the mind of nature which is said to exist in the stars, and acquired the previous knowledge, and seen the connection of them with music, and harmonized them all with laws and institutions, is not able to give a reason for such things as have a reason.”

Compare the Wisdom of Solomon, xiii. 1–9:—

“Surely vain are all men by nature, who are ignorant of God, and could not out of the good things that are seen, know him that is: neither by considering the works did they acknowledge the workmaster; but deemed either fire, or wind, or the swift air, or the circle of the stars, or the violent water, or the lights of heaven, to be the gods which govern the world. With whose beauty if they being delighted took them to be gods, let them know how much better the Lord of them is: for the first author of beauty hath created them. But if they were astonished at their power and virtue, let them understand by them how much mightier he is that made them. For by the greatness and beauty of the creatures proportionably the maker of them is seen. But yet for this they are the less to be blamed: for they peradventure err, seeking God, and desirous to find him. For being conversant in his works they search him diligently, and believe their sight; because the things are beautiful that are seen. Howbeit neither are they to be pardoned. For if they were able to know so much, that they could aim at the world how did they not sooner find out the Lord thereof?”

¹ [See below, pp. 231–233.]

² [Now ch. x., “The Shrine of the Slaves” (Vol. XXIV. p. 335).]

agricultural labourers all summed by Plato simply under the word “slaves”^{*}—a word which the equivocation of vulgar historians and theologians always translates exactly as it suits their own views: “slave,” when they want to depreciate Greek politics; and servant, when they are translating the words of Christ or St. Paul, lest either Christ or St. Paul should be recognized as speaking of the same persons as Plato.

9. Now, therefore, the reader is to observe that the teaching of St. George differs by *extension* from that of Plato, in so far as the Greek never imagined that the blessings of education could be extended to servants as well as to masters: but it differs by absolute contradiction from that of Mr. Wilberforce and Mrs. Beecher Stowe,¹ in *their* imagination that there should be no servants and no masters at all. Nor, except in a very modified degree, does even its extended charity differ from Plato’s severity. For if you collect what I have said about education hitherto, you will find it always spoken of as a means of discrimination between what is worthless and worthy in men;² that the rough and worthless may be set to the roughest and foulest work, and the finest to the finest; the rough and rude work being, you will in time perceive, the best of charities to the rough and rude people. There is probably, for instance, no collier’s or pitman’s work so rough or dirty, but that—if you set and kept Mr. Ayrton to it,—his general character and intelligence would in course of time be improved to the utmost point of which they are capable.³

10. A Greek gentleman’s education then, which, in some modified degree, St. George proposes to make universal for

^{*} *Laws*, VII. 303, 17 (806).

¹ [For Ruskin’s views on the question of slavery, see Vol. XVII. p. 254 n.]

² [See, for instance, *Lectures on Art*, § 3 (Vol. XX. p. 20).]

³ [For Mr. Ayrton, first Commissioner of Works, see Vol. XXII. p. 367. “He was blessed with a gift of offence. If a thing could be done either civilly or rudely, Mr. Ayrton was pretty sure to do it rudely. . . . He seemed to think a civil tongue gave evidence of a feeble intellect” (Justin M’Carthy’s *History of Our Own Times*, 1880, vol. iv. pp. 320–321.)]

Englishmen who really deserve to have it, consisted essentially in perfect discipline in music, poetry, and military exercises; but with these, if he were to be a perfect person, fit for public duties, he had also to learn three “necessary” sciences: those of number, space, and motion (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy), which are called “necessary,” not merely as being instrumental to complete human usefulness, but also as being knowledges of things existing by Divine Fate, which the Gods themselves cannot alter, against which they cannot contend, and “without the knowledge of which no one can become a God, an angel, or a hero capable of taking true care of men.”*

11. None of these sciences, however, were to be learned either with painful toil, or to any extent liable to make men lose sight of practical duty. “For,” he says, “though partly I fear indeed the unwillingness to learn at all, much more do I fear the laying hold of any of these sciences in an evil way. For it is not a terrible thing, nor by any means the greatest of evils, nor even a great evil at all, to have no experience of any of these things. But to have much experience and much learning, with evil leading, is a far greater loss than that.” This noble and evermore to be attended sentence is (at least in the fulness of it) untranslatable but by expansion. I give, therefore, Mr. Jowett’s and the French translations, with my own, to show the various ways in which different readers take it; and then I shall be able to explain the full bearing of it.

(1) “For entire ignorance is not so terrible or extreme an evil, and is far from being the greatest of all; too much cleverness, and too much learning, accompanied with ill bringing up, are far more fatal.”

* This most singular sentence (vii. 818¹), having reference to the rank in immortality attainable by great human spirits (“*hac arte Pollux et vagus Hercules,*” etc.²), will be subject of much future inquiry.³ See, however, the note farther on [p. 240].

¹ [Here the reference is to Stephanus, 818 C. The passage next translated in the text follows: 819 A.]

² [Horace, *Odes*, III. iii. 9.]

³ [The subject is not, however, resumed except on p. 240]

The word which Plato uses for “much experience”¹ does literally mean *that*, and has nothing whatever to do with “cleverness” in the ordinary sense; but it involves the idea of dexterity gained by practice, which was what Mr. Jowett thought of. “Ill bringing up” is again too narrow a rendering. The word I translate literally “leading”^{*} is technically used for a complete scheme of education; but in this place it means the tendency which is given to the thoughts and aim of the person, whatever the scheme of education may be. Thus we might put a boy through all the exercises required in this passage—(through music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy), and yet throughout give him an evil “leading,” making all these studies conducive to the gratification of ambition, or the acquirement of wealth. Plato means that we had better leave him in total ignorance than do this.

12. (French) “L’ignorance absolue n’est pas le plus grand des maux, ni le plus à redouter: une vaste étendue de connaissances mal digérées est quelque chose de bien pire.”²

The Frenchman avoids, you see, the snare of the technical meaning; but yet his phrase, “ill digested,” gives no idea of Plato’s real thought, which goes to the *cause* of indigestion, and is, that knowledge becomes evil if the aim be not virtuous: nor does he mean at all that the knowledge *itself* is imperfect or “ill digested,” but that the most accurate and consummate science, and the most splendid dexterity in art, and experience in politics, are worse evils, and that by far, than total ignorance, if the aim and tone of the spirit are false.

13. “Therefore,”—he now goes on,³ returning to his practical point, which was that no toilsome work should be

* It is virtually the *end* of the word *pedagogue*—the person who *led* children to their school.

¹ [The passage is η πολυπειρια και πολυμαθια μετα κακης αγωγης γιγνεται πολυ τουτων μειζων ζημια.]

² [*Œuvres de Platon*, 1845, vol. i. p. 315, in the series entitled *Pantheon Littéraire*. The translation is by Aug. Callet.]

³ [*Laws*, vii. 819 A—C.]

spent on the sciences, such as to enslave the soul in them, or make them become an end of life—“Therefore, children who are to be educated as gentlemen should only learn, of each science, so much as the Egyptian children learn with their reading and writing, for from their early infancy their masters introduce the practice of arithmetic, giving them fruits and garlands of flowers” (cowslip-balls and daisy-chains), “to fit together, fewer or more out of equal numbers; and little vessels of gold, silver, and bronze, sometimes to be mingled with each other, sometimes kept separate” (with estimate of relative value probably in the game, leading to easy command of the notion of pounds, shillings, and pence); “and so making every operation of arithmetic of practical use to them, they lead them on into understanding of the numbering and arranging of camps, and leadings* of regiments, and at last of household economy, making them in all more serviceable and shrewd than others.” Such with geometry and astronomy (into the detail of which I cannot enter to-day) being Plato’s “necessary” science, the higher conditions of education, which alone, in his mind, deserve the name, are those above named¹ as relating to the Muse.

14. To which the vital introduction is a passage most curiously contrary to Longfellow’s much-sung line, “Life is real, life is earnest,”²—Plato declaring out of the very deep of his heart, that it is *unreal* and *unearnest*. I cannot give space to translate the whole of the passage, though I shall return for a piece presently;³ but the gist of it is that the Gods alone are great, and have great things to do;

* The same word again—the end of pedagogue, applied to soldiers instead of children.

¹ [See p. 228.]

² [“A Psalm of Life.”]

³ [The passage in question is in the *Laws*, vii. 803, 804: “Human affairs are hardly worth considering in earnest. . . . God is the natural and worthy object of a man’s most serious and blessed endeavours. . . . Man is made to be the plaything of God; wherefore every man should pass life in the noblest of pastimes. . . . sacrificing and singing and dancing . . . being for the most part puppets, but having some little share of reality.” Ruskin does not return presently to the passage; his notes on Plato were, as he says (p. 258), interrupted.]

but man is a poor little puppet, made to be their plaything; and the virtue of him is to play merrily in the little raree-show of his life, so as to please the Gods. Analyzed, the passage contains three phases of most solemn thought; the first, an amplification of the “What is man that thou art mindful of him?”¹ the second, of the “He walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain;”² the third, that his real duty is to quiet himself, and live in happy peace and play, all his measure of days. “The lambs play always, they know no better;”³ and they ought to know no better, he thinks, if they are truly lambs of God: the practical outcome of all being that religious service is to be entirely with rejoicing,—that only brightness of heart can please the Gods; and that asceticism and self-discipline are to be practised only that we may be made capable of such sacred joy.

15. The extreme importance of this teaching is in its opposition to the general Greek instinct that “Tragedy,” or song in honour of the Gods, should be sad. An instinct which, in spite of Plato, has lasted to this day, in the degree in which men disbelieve in the Gods themselves, and in their love. Accepting cheerfulness, therefore, as the fulfilment of sanctity, we shall understand in their order the practical pieces both about music* and about higher education, of which take this first (vi. 766⁴):—

* I thought to have collected into this place the passages about the demoralizing effect of sad music (Verdi’s, for instance, the most corrupting type hitherto known), from the *Republic* as well as the *Laws*; but that must be for next month;⁵ meantime, here is a little bit about tragedy which *must* be read now, and must not have small print, so I separate it only by a line from the text.⁶

“Concerning comedy, then, enough said; but for the earnest poets of the world occupied in tragedy, if perchance

¹ [Psalms viii. 4.]

² [Psalms xxxix. 6.]

³ [*Poems*, by Jean Ingelow (“Songs of Seven,” stanza ii.); quoted also in Vol. XVIII. p. 211.]

⁴ [The reference is, more accurately, *Laws*, book vi. 765 E–766 A.]

⁵ [See below, pp. 261, 262.]

⁶ [The passage is from the *Laws*, book vii. 817.]

“For every sprout of things born, once *started* fairly towards the virtue of its nature, fulfils it in prosperous end; this being true of all plants, and of animals wild or gentle, and of man; and man, as we have said, is indeed gentle,

any of these should come to us, and ask thus: ‘Oh, ye strangers, will you have us to go into your city and your land, or no?*' and shall we bring our poetry to you and act it to you, or how is it determined by you of the doing † such things?’ What then should we answer, answering rightly, to the divine men? For in my thoughts it is fixed that we should answer thus: ‘Oh, noblest of strangers,’ should we say, ‘we ourselves also according to our power are poets of tragedy,—the most beautiful that we can and the best. For all our polity is but one great presentment of the best and most beautiful life, which we say to be indeed the best and truest tragedy: poets therefore are you, and we also alike poets of the same things, antartists [αντιτεχνοι], and antagonists to you as our hope is of that most beautiful drama, which the true law only can play to its end. Do not therefore think that we at all thus easily shall allow you to pitch your tents in our market-place; and yield to you that bringing in your clear-voiced actors, speaking greater things than we, you should speak to our people,—to our wives and to our children and to all our multitude, saying, concerning the same things that we speak of, not the same words, but for the most part, contrary words.’ ”

* In sentences like this the familiar euphony of “no” for “not,” is softer and fuller in meaning, as in sound, than the (commonly held) grammatical form;—and in true analysis, the grammar is better, because briefer, in the familiar form; it being just as accurate to complete the sentence by understanding “say” before “no,” as by repeating “have us” after “not.”

† In every case, throughout this sentence (and generally in translations from good Greek philosophical writing), the reader must remember that “drama” being our adopted Greek word for “the thing done,” and “poetry” our adopted Greek word for “the thing made,” properly the meaning of the sentence would require us to read “maker” for “poet,” and “doer” for “actor.”

if only he receive right education, together with fortunate nature; and so becomes the divinest and the gentlest of things alive; but if not enough or not rightly trained, he becomes, of all things that earth brings forth, the savagest.”

The “together with fortunate nature” in this passage, refers to the necessity of fine race in men themselves; and limits the future question of education to such, Plato not concerning himself about such as are ill-born. Compare the Vulgate, of the birth of Moses, “videns eum elegantem.”¹

16. The essential part of the education of these, then,—that properly belonging to the Muse,—is all to be given by the time they are sixteen; the ten years of childhood being exclusively devoted to forming the disposition; then come three years of grammar, with the collateral sciences, in the manner above explained, and then three years of practice in executive music: bodily exercises being carried on the whole time to the utmost degree possible at each age. After sixteen, the youth enters into public life, continuing the pursuit of virtue as the object of all, life being not long enough for it.

The three years of literary education, from ten to thirteen, are supposed enough to give a boy of good talent and disposition all the means of cultivating his mind that are needful. The term must not be exceeded. If the boy has not learned by that time to read and write accurately and elegantly,* he is not to be troubled with such things more, but left illiterate. Then, literary study is to be foregone for three years even by those who are afterwards to take it

* Every day, I perceive more and more the importance of accurate verbal training. If the Duke of Argyll, for instance, had but had once well taught him at school the relations of the words *lex*, *lego*, *loi*, and *loyal*; and of *rex*, *rego*, *roi*, and *royal* (see *Unto this Last*, § 44²), he could neither have committed himself to the false title of his treatise on natural

¹ [Exodus ii. 2: “when she saw that he was a goodly child.”]

² [See Vol. XVII. p. 59 *n.*]

up again, that they may learn music completely—this being considered a sedentary study, and superseding grammar, while the athletic exercises always occupy the same time of each day, and are never remitted.

17. Understanding this general scheme, we begin at the beginning; and the following passage, ii. 501, 1 (653),¹ defines for us Plato's thoughts, and explains to us his expressions relating to the discipline of childhood:—

“Now, I mean by education* that first virtue which can be attained by children, when pleasure and liking, and pain and disliking, are properly implanted in their souls while yet they cannot understand why; but so that when they get the power of reasoning, its perfect symphony may assure them that they have been rightly moralled into their existing morals. This perfect symphony of the complete soul is properly called virtue; but the part of its tempering which, with respect to pleasure and pain, has been so brought up, from first to last, as to hate what it should hate, and love what it should love, we shall be right in calling its education.

“Now these well-nourished habits of being rightly pained and pleased are, for the most part, loosened, and lost by men in the rough course of life; and the Gods, pitying the race born to labour, gave them, for reward of their toil and rest from it, the times of festival to the Gods. And the Gods gave, for companions to them in their festivals, the Muses, and Apollo, the leader of Muses, and Dionysus, that the pure instincts they

history, “reign of law,”² nor to the hollow foundation of his treatise on the tenure of land in the assumption that the long establishment of a human law, whether criminal or not, must make it divinely indisputable. See p. 6 of *A Crack with His Grace the Duke of Argyll*. Seton and Mackenzie, Edinburgh; Whittaker, London.

* Jowett thus translates;³ but the word here in Plato⁴ means, properly, the result of education, spoken of as the habit fixed in the child; “good breeding” would be the nearest English, but involves the idea of race, which is not here touched by the Greek.

¹ [*Laws*, 653 B–654 B.]

² [For other allusions to the *Reign of Law*, see Vol. XXVIII. p. 85 n. The other treatise is *Essay on the Commercial Principles applicable to Contracts for the Hire of Land*, by the Duke of Argyll, K.T. Issued as a Cobden Club pamphlet, 1877. See pp. 1–4 for the “foundation of his treatise.” The form of the pamphlet was closely copied in the anonymous reply mentioned by Ruskin, which appeared as a publication of “The Clodhopper Club.”]

³ [Ruskin takes the word from Jowett, but the translation otherwise is Ruskin's own.]

⁴ [παιδειαν δη λεγω την παραγινομενην πρωτον παισιν αρετην]

first had learned might be restored to them while they kept festival with these Gods.

“Now, therefore, we must think whether what is hymned* among us be truly said, and according to nature or not.¹

“And this is what is said: that every young thing that lives is alike in not being able to keep quiet, but must in some way move and utter itself,—for mere movement’s sake, leaping and skipping, as if dancing and at play for pleasure,—and for noise’ sake, uttering every sort of sound. And that, indeed, other living creatures have no sense of the laws of order and disorder in movements which we call rhythm and harmony; but to us, those Gods whom we named as fellows with us in our choirs,† these are they who gave us the delightful sense of rhythm and harmony in which we move; and they lead our choirs, binding us together in songs and dances, naming them choruses from the choral joy.

“Shall we, then, receive for truth thus much of their tradition, that the first education must be by the Muses and Apollo?

“K. So let it be accepted. ‡

“A. Then the uneducated person will be one who has received no choral discipline; and the educated, one who has been formed to a sufficient degree under the choral laws.

“Also the choir, considered in its wholeness, consists of dance and song; therefore a well-educated person must be one who can sing and dance well.

“K. It would seem so.”

18. And here, that we may not confuse ourselves, or weaken ourselves, with any considerations of the recent disputes whether we have souls or not,—be it simply understood that Plato always means by the soul the aggregate of mental powers obtained by scientific culture of the imagination and the passions; and by the body the aggregate of material powers obtained by scientific promotion of exercise and digestion. It is possible for the soul to be strong with a weak body, and the body strong with

* A hymn is properly a song embodying sacred tradition; hence, familiarly the thing commonly said of the Gods.

† Compare ii. 539, 5 (665).

‡ Henceforward, I omit what seem to me needless of the mere expressions of varied assent which break the clauses of the Athenian’s course of thought.

¹ [οραν ουν χρη, ποτερον αληθης ημιν κατα φυσιν ο λογος νμυεται τα νυν, η πως. Compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 102 n. (Vol. XVII. p. 227), where Ruskin quotes the passage which next follows.]

a weak soul; and in this sense only the two are separately considered, but not necessarily, therefore, considered as finally separable.

And understanding this much, we can now clearly understand, whether we receive it or not, Plato's distinct assertion that, as gymnastic exercise is necessary to keep the body healthy, musical exercise is necessary to keep the soul healthy; and that the proper nourishment of the intellect and passions can no more take place without music, than the proper functions of the stomach and the blood without exercise.

We may be little disposed, at first, to believe this, because we are unaware, in the first place, how much music, from the nurse's song to the military band and the lover's ballad, does really modify existing civilized life;¹ and, in the second place, we are not aware how much higher range, if rightly practical, its influence would reach, of which right practice I must say, before going on with Plato's teaching, that the chief condition is companionship, or choral association (not so much marked by Plato in words, because he could not conceive of music practised otherwise), and that for persons incapable of song to be content in amusement by a professional singer, is as much a sign of decay in the virtue and use of music, as crowded spectators in the amphitheatre sitting to be amused by gladiators are a sign of decline in the virtue and use of war.

19. And now, we take the grand statement of the evil of *change* in methods of childish play, following on the general discussion of the evil of change:²—

“I say, then, that in all cities we have all failed to recognize that the kind of play customary with the children is the principal of the forces that maintain the established laws. For when the kind of play is determined, and so regulated that the children always play and use their fancies in the

¹ [Compare *Time and Tide*, § 61 (Vol. XVII. p. 368).]

² [Ruskin in the following passage puts together *Laws*, book vii. 797 A—C; 799 A, B; and book ii. 664 B. The translations are Ruskin's. For another reference to the “three choirs,” see Vol. XXII. p. 19.]

same way and with the same playthings, this quietness allows the laws which are established in earnest to remain quiet also; but if once the plays are moved and cast in new shapes, always introducing other changes, and none of the young people agreeing with each other in their likings, nor as to what is becoming and unbecoming either in the composure of their bodies or in their dress, but praise in a special way any one who brings in a new fashion whether of composure or colour—nothing, if we say rightly, can be a greater plague (destructive disease) in a city; for he who changes the habits of youth is, indeed, without being noticed, making what is ancient contemptible, and what is new, honourable,—and than this, I repeat, whether in the belief of it, or the teaching, there cannot be a greater plague inflicted on a city.

“Can we do anything better to prevent this than the Egyptians did; namely, to consecrate every dance and every melody, ordering first the festivals of the year, and determining what days are to be devoted to the Gods, and to the children of the Gods, and to the Angels.* And then to determine also what song at each offering is to be sung; and with what dances each sacrifice to be sanctified; and whatever rites and times are thus ordained, all the citizens in common, sacrificing to the Fates and to all the Gods, shall consecrate with libation.

* I cannot but point out with surprise and regret the very mischievous error of Mr. Jowett’s translation in this place of the word “δαίμονες”—“heroes”¹ Had Plato meant heroes, he would have said heroes, the word in this case being the same in English as in Greek. He means the Spiritual Powers which have lower office of ministration to men; in this sense the word *dæmon* was perfectly and constantly understood by the Greeks, and by the Christian Church adopting Greek terms; and on the theory that the Pagan religion was entirely false, but that its spiritual powers had real existence, the word *dæmon* necessarily came among Christians to mean an evil angel,—just as much an angel as Raphael or Gabriel—but of contrary powers. I cannot therefore use the literal word *dæmon*, because it has this wholly false and misleading association infixed in it; but in translating it “angel,” I give to the English reader its full power and meaning in the Greek mind; being exactly what the term *αγγελος*, or messenger,² was adopted by the Christians to signify, of their own *good* spirits. There are then, the reader must observe generally, four orders of *higher* spiritual powers, honoured by the Greeks:

I. The Gods,—of various ranks, from the highest Twelve to the minor elemental powers, such as Tritons, or Harpies.

II. The Sons of the Gods,—children of the Gods by mortal mothers, as Heracles, or Castor. Rightly sometimes called Demi-Gods.

III. Angels,—spiritual powers in constant attendance on man.

IV. Heroes,—men of consummate virtue, to whose souls religious rites are performed in thankfulness by the people whom they saved or exalted, and whose immortal power remains for their protection. I have often elsewhere spoken of the beautiful custom of the Locrians always to leave a

¹ [Compare Ruskin’s Preface (§ 13 n.) to *The Economist of Xenophon*.]

² [Compare Letter 12, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 202).]

“I say, then, there should be three choirs to fill, as with enchantment of singing, the souls of children while they are tender, teaching them many other things, of which we have told and shall tell, but this chiefly and for the head and sum of all, that the life which is noblest is also deemed by the Gods the happiest. Saying this to them, we shall at once say the truest of things, and that of which we shall most easily persuade those whom we ought to persuade.”

With which we may at once read also this,—ii. 540, 2 (665):—

“That every grown-up person and every child, slave and free, male and female,—and, in a word, the entire city singing to itself—should never pause in repeating such good lessons as we have explained; yet somehow changing, and so inlaying and varying them, that the singers may always be longing to sing, and delighting in it.”¹

And this is to be ordered according to the ages of the people and the ranks of the deities. For the choir of the Muses, is to be of children, up to the age of sixteen; after that, the choir of Apollo, formed of those who have learned perfectly the mastery of the lyre,—from sixteen to thirty; and then the choir of Dionysus, of the older men, from thirty to sixty; and after sixty, being no longer able to sing, they should become mythologists, relating in divine tradition the moral truths they formerly had sung. ii. 528, 12 (664).

20. At this point, if not long before, I imagine my reader stopping hopelessly, feeling the supreme uselessness of such a conception as this, in modern times, and its utter

vacant place in their charging ranks for the spirit of Ajax Oileus.² Of these four orders, however, the first two naturally blend, because the sons of the Gods became Gods after death. Hence the real orders of spiritual powers *above* humanity, are three—Gods, Angels, Heroes (as we shall find presently, in the passage concerning prayer and praise³), associated with the spirits on the ordinary level of humanity, of Home, and of Ancestors. Compare *Fors*, Letter 70, § 8.⁴

¹ [This passage is continued in Letter 83, § 2 (p. 258).]

² [See *Aratra Pentelici*, § 198 (Vol. XX. p. 346).]

³ [The passage is in the *Laws*, 801: “There should be hymns and praises of the Gods, intermingled with prayers; and after the Gods, prayers and praises should be offered in like manner to angels and heroes.” Ruskin does not presently give the passage: compare the note on p. 233.]

⁴ [Vol. XXVIII. p. 719]
xxix.

contrariness to everything taught as practical among us. “Belief in Gods! belief in divine tradition of Myths! Old men, as a class, to become mythologists, instead of misers! and music, throughout life, to be the safeguard of morality!—What futility is it to talk of such things *now*.”

Yes, to a certain extent this impression is true. Plato’s scheme was impossible even in his own day,—as Bacon’s *New Atlantis* in *his* day—as Calvin’s reform in *his* day—as Goethe’s *Academe* in his.¹ Out of the good there was in all these men, the world gathered what it could find of evil, made its useless Platonism out of Plato, its graceless Calvinism out of Calvin,² determined Bacon to be the meanest of mankind, and of Goethe gathered only a luscious story of seduction, and daintily singable devilry. Nothing in the dealings of Heaven with Earth is so wonderful to me as the way in which the evil angels are allowed to spot, pervert, and bring to nothing, or to worse, the powers of the greatest men:³ so that Greece must be ruined, for all that Plato can say,—Geneva for all that Calvin can say,—England for all that Sir Thomas More and Bacon can say;—and only Gounod’s *Faust* be the visible outcome to Europe of the school of Weimar.

21. What, underneath all that visible ruin, these men have done in ministry to the continuous soul of this race, may yet be known in the day when the wheat shall be gathered into the garner.⁴ But I can’t go on with my work now; besides, I had a visit yesterday from the friend who wrote me that letter about speaking more gently of things and people,⁵ and he brought me a sermon of the

¹ [For other references to the *New Atlantis*, see Vol. XVIII. p. 514; Vol. XX. p. 290; and Vol. XXII. p. 206. By “Goethe’s *Academe*” Ruskin means presumably the ideal of education sketched by Goethe’s in *Wilhelm Meister*: see Carlyle’s sketch of “this fine theorem” in his Inaugural Address at Edinburgh (*Miscellanies*, vol. vii. pp. 189–192, 1872 edition), and for references to it by Ruskin, *Munera Pulveris*, § 121 *n.*, and *Time and Tide*, § 96 (Vol. XVII. pp. 243, 398).]

² [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 83).]

³ [Compare *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 178).]

⁴ [Matthew iii. 12; Luke iii. 17.]

⁵ [See Letter 81, § 6 (p. 196).]

Bishop of Manchester's to read,¹—which begins with the sweetly mild and prudent statement that St. Paul, while “wading in the perilous depths” of anticipations of immortality, and *satisfied* that there would be a victory over the grave, and that mortality would be swallowed up of life, *wisely* brought his readers' thoughts back from *dreamland* to reality, by bidding them simply be steadfast, unmovable—always abounding in the work of the Lord,—forasmuch as they knew that their labour would not be in vain in the Lord;² and in which, farther on, the Bishop, feeling the knowledge in modern times not quite so positive on that subject, supports his own delicately suggested opinions by quoting Mr. John Stuart Mill, who “in his posthumous essays admits that though the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is probably an illusion, it is morally so valuable that it had better be retained,”³—a sentence, by the way, which I recommend to the study of those friends of mine who were so angry with me for taxing Mr. John Stuart Mill with dishonesty, on the subject of rent. (*Time and Tide*, § 156.⁴)

22. Well, all this, the sermon, and the quotations in it, and the course of thought they have led me into, are entirely paralysing to me in the horrible sense they give me of loathsome fallacy and fauity pervading every syllable of our modern words, and every moment of our modern life; and of the uselessness of asking such people to read any Plato, or Bacon, or Sir Thomas More, or to do anything of the true work of the Lord, forasmuch as they *don't* know, and seem to have no capacity for learning, that such labour shall not be in vain.⁵ But I will venture once more to warn the Bishop against wading, himself, in the “perilous depths” of anticipations of immortality, until he

¹ [See now Sermon XII. (“Immortality”) in *University and Other Sermons*, by the Right Rev. James Fraser, D. D., edited by J. W. Diggle, 1887, pp. 167, 179 n.]

² [1 Corinthians xv. 54, 55, 58.]

³ [This is Bishop Fraser's summary of the “general result” reached by Mill: see, for instance, p. 249 of *Three Essays on Religion*, 1874.]

⁴ [Vol. XVII. p. 442.]

⁵ [1 Corinthians xv. 58.]

has answered my simple question to him, whether he considers usury a work of the Lord?¹ And he will find, if he has “time” to look at them, in last *Fors*, some farther examples of the Lord’s work of that nature, done by England in India just now, in which his diocese of Manchester is somewhat practically concerned.²

I cannot go on with my work, therefore, in this temper, and indeed perhaps this much of Plato is enough for one letter;—but I must say, at least, what it is all coming to.

23. If you will look back to § 61 of *Time and Tide*, you will find the work I am now upon, completely sketched out in it, saying finally that “the action of the devilish or deceiving power is in nothing shown quite so distinctly among us at this day, not even in our commercial dishonesties, or social cruelties, as in its having been able to take away music as an instrument of education altogether, and to enlist it almost wholly in the service of superstition on the one hand, and of sensuality on the other.” And then follows the promise that, after explaining, as far as I know it, the significance of the parable of the Prodigal Son (done in *Time and Tide*, §§ 175–177), I should “take the three means of human joy therein stated, fine dress, rich food, and music, and show you how these are meant all alike to be sources of life and means of moral discipline, to all men, and how they have all three been made by the devil the means of guilt, dissoluteness, and death.”³

This promise I have never fulfilled, and after seven years am only just coming to the point of it. Which is, in few words, that to distribute good food, beautiful dress, and the practical habit of delicate art, is the proper work of the fathers and mothers of every people for help of those who have been lost in guilt and misery: and that only by *direct* doing of these three things can they now

¹ [For the previous challenge, see p. 136.]

² [See Letter 81, § 16 (p. 208).]

³ [See *Time and Tide*, § 62 (Vol. XVII. p. 369). For the other references, see *ibid.*, pp. 368, 459–461.]

act beneficently or helpfully to any soul capable of reformation. Therefore, you who are eating luxurious dinners, call in the tramp from the highway and share them with him,—so gradually you will understand how your brother came to *be* a tramp; and practically make your own dinners plain till the poor man's dinner is rich,—or you are no Christians; and you who are dressing in fine dress, put on blouses and aprons, till you have got your poor dressed with grace and decency,—or you are no Christians; and you who can sing and play on instruments, hang your harps on the pollards¹ above the rivers you have poisoned, or else go down among the mad and vile and deaf things whom you have made, and put melody into the souls of them,—else you are no Christians.²

24. No Christians, you; no nor have you even the making of a Christian in you. Alms and prayers, indeed, alone, won't make one, but they have the bones and substance of one in the womb; and you—poor modern Judasian³—have lost not only the will to give, or to pray, but the very understanding of what gift and prayer mean. “Give, and it shall be given to you,”⁴—not by God, for-sooth, you think, in glorious answer of gift, but only by the Jew money-monger in twenty per cent, and let no benevolence be done that will not pay. “Knock, and it shall be opened to you,”⁵—nay, never by God, in miraculous answer, but perchance you may be allowed to amuse yourself, with the street boys, in rat-tat-tatting on the knocker; or perchance you may be taken for a gentleman, if you elegantly ring the visitors' bell—till the police-man Death comes down the street, and stops the noise of you.

¹ [Compare Psalms cxxxvii. 2.]

² [With this § 23 may be compared *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 27 (Vol. XVIII. p. 407); Preface of 1871 to *Sesame and Lilies*, § 11 (*ibid.*, p. 40); and *Lectures on Art*, § 121 (Vol. XX. p. III).]

³ [See above, § 5 *n.* (p. 225).]

⁴ [Luke vi. 38.]

⁵ [Matthew vii. 7.]

Wretch that you are, if indeed, calling yourself a Christian, you *can* find any dim fear of God, or any languid love of Christ, mixed in the dregs of you,—then, for God’s sake, learn at least what prayer means, from Hezekiah and Isaiah, and not from the last Cockney curly-tailed puppy who yaps and snaps in the *Nineteenth Century*,*—and for Christ’s sake, learn what alms mean, from the Lord who gave you His Life, and not from the lady patronesses of the last charity ball.

25. Learn what these mean, Judasian Dives, if it may be,—while Lazarus yet lies among the dogs,—while yet there is no gulf fixed between you and the heavens,¹—while yet the stars in their courses² do not *forbid* you to think their Guide is mindful of you. For truly the day is coming of which Isaiah told—“The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?” who among us shall dwell with everlasting burning?”³ And the day of which he told is coming, also, when the granaries of the plains of heaven, and the meres of its everlasting hills, shall be opened, and poured forth for its children; and the bread shall be given, and the water shall be sure, for him “that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly—that

* Nevertheless, I perceive at last a change coming over the spirit of our practical literature, and commend all the recent papers by Lord Blachford, Mr. Oxenham, Mr. Mallock, and Mr. Hewlett, very earnestly to my own reader’s attention.⁴

¹ [See Luke xvi. 20–31.]

² [Judges v. 20.]

³ [Isaiah xxxiii. 14.]

⁴ [The references are to Lord Blachford’s contribution to the “Modern Symposium” on “The Soul and Future Life,” in the *Nineteenth Century* for September 1877 (vol. ii. pp. 341–348); and to the first part of Mr. Mallock’s “Is Life worth Living?” in the same number, pp. 251–273: for another reference to these papers, see Letter 81, § 19 *n.* (above, p. 216). Mr. H. G. Hewlett (father of Mr. Maurice Hewlett) had a paper on “Songs for Sinners” in the *Contemporary Review* for July 1876 (vol. 28, pp. 238–262), and one on “William Blake” in the same magazine for October 1876 (*ibid.*, pp. 756–784). The Rev. H. N. Oxenham had a series of papers in the *Contemporary* for January to April 1876, on “Eternal Perdition and Universalism.”]

despiseth the gain of oppressions—that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes—that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil. He shall dwell on high—his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks.”¹ Yea, blessing, beyond all blessing in the love of mortal friend, or the light of native land,—“Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty; they shall behold the Land that is far away.”¹

¹ [Isaiah xxxiii. 15–17.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

26. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

Prospering. The Companions must take this brief statement, for once, with as much faith as if it were the chairman's of an insolvent railway, for I have no space to tell them more.

27. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

Too many for him: and it is quite certain he can't continue to ride so many horses at once, or keep so many balls in the air.¹ All that he thinks it needful, in this *Fors*, to say, is that, whatever he may cease hope of doing, he will not fail from St. George's work, as long as he has strength for any work at all.

28. (III.) I give a general answer to the following letter, asking my correspondent's pardon for anything which may seem severe, or inapplicable, in his own special case. There are also, I fear, one or two words misprinted or misplaced in the letter—but I have carelessly lost the MS., and cannot correct.

"DEAR SIR,—I venture to address you upon a matter that concerns me very much—viz., the leisure time of my existence. Nine hours of each day are taken up as employer (sedentary business); three hours of which, perhaps, working myself. One hour and a half, each, devoted to the study of music and drawing or painting. Five hours yet remaining walking to or from business, meals, physical exercise,—this last of the usual gymnastic useless pattern.

"I cannot but think that there must be many others like situated—perhaps *compelled* to plunge with the stream of the questionable morality of modern commerce, or in other various ways making it utterly impossible, during that portion of the day, to follow out the life you teach us to live,—yet who feel and desire that that portion of day they can really call their own, should be spent in a true rounded manly development, and as far as may be in harmony with that which is eternally right. I do not know of any prescribed detail you have made with special reference to this compromised class, and this is the only excuse I can offer for writing to you—you that are the source of all that I feel deepest in religion and morality: fathom it I cannot, yet feel deeper and stronger each succeeding year, all that I love in nature and art I owe to you; and this debt of gratitude has made me bold to try and make it greater.

"Ever gratefully yours."

29. If we know there is a God, and mean to please Him, or if even (which is the utmost we can generally say, for the best of our faith), if we think there is so much hope, or danger, of there being a God as to make it prudent in us to try to discover whether there be or not, in the only way He has allowed us to ascertain the fact, namely, doing as we

¹ [Compare the letter to Mr. Allen given in Vol. XXV. p. xxii.]

have heard that He has bidden us, we may be sure He can never be pleased by the form of compromise with circumstances, that all the business of our day shall be wrong, on the principle of sacrificial atonement, that the play of it shall be right;—or perhaps not even that *quite* right, but in my correspondent's cautious phrase, only "as far as may be, in harmony with what is right."

Now the business "necessities" of the present day are the precise form of idolatry which is, at the present day, *crucially* forbidden by Christ; precisely as falling down to worship graven images, or eating meat offered to idols,¹ was *crucially* forbidden in earlier times. And it is by enduring the persecution, or death, which may be implied in abandoning "business necessities" that the Faith of the Believer, whether in the God of the Jew or Christian, must be *now* tried and proved.

But in order to make such endurance possible, of course our side must be openly taken, and our companions in the cause known; this being also needful, that our act may have the essential virtue of Witness-down, or as we idly translate it, Martyr-dom.

This is the practical reason for joining a guild, and signing at least the Creed of St. George,² which is so worded as to be acceptable by all who are resolved to serve God, and withdraw from idolatry.*

30. But for the immediate question in my correspondent's case—

First. Keep a working man's dress at the office, and always walk home and return in it; so as to be able to put your hand to anything that is useful. Instead of the fashionable vanities of competitive gymnastics, learn common forge work, and to plane and saw well;—then, if you find in the city you live in, that everything which human hands and arms are able, and human mind willing, to do, of pulling, pushing, carrying, making, or cleaning—(see in last *Fors* the vulgar schoolmistress's notion of the civilization implied in a mechanical broom³)—is done by machinery,—you will come clearly to understand, what I have never been able yet to beat, with any quantity of *verbal* hammering, into my readers' heads,—that, as long as living breath-engines, and their glorious souls and muscles, stand idle in the streets, to dig coal out of pits to drive dead steam-engines, is an absurdity, waste, and wickedness, for which—I am bankrupt in terms of contempt,—and politely finish my paragraph—"My brethren, these things ought not so to be."⁴

Secondly. Of simple exercises, learn to walk and run at the utmost speed consistent with health: do this by always going at the quickest

* The magnificent cheat which the Devil played on the Protestant sect, from Knox downwards, in making them imagine that Papists were disbelieving idolaters, and thus entirely effacing all spiritual meaning from the word "idolatry,"⁵ was the consummation of his great victory over the Christian Church, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

¹ [Exodus xx. 4; 1 Corinthians viii. 1.]

² [See Letter 58, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 419).]

³ [Not *last Fors*, but Letter 81, § 10 (p. 203).]

⁴ [James iii. 10.]

⁵ [For Ruskin's insistence on the true meaning of "idolatry" (εἰδωλον), see Vol. X. p. 450, and Vol. XX. p. 66. On that of "martyr" (μαρτυριον, witness), compare Letter 26, § 10 (Vol. XXVII. p. 482).]

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pace you can in the streets, and by steadily, though minutely, increasing your pace over a trial piece of ground, every day.¹ Learn also dancing, with extreme precision; and wrestling, if you have any likely strength; in summer, also rowing in sea-boats; or barge-work, on calm water; and, in winter (with skating of course), quarterstaff and sword-exercise.

31. (IV.) The following extract from the report of the Howard Association² is of great value and importance:—

“INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION *versus* CRIME.—Several years ago the Secretary of the Howard Association, having to visit the chief prisons of Holland and Belgium, took occasion to notice other social institutions of those countries, and on his return to England invited attention (in many newspapers) to the very useful tendency of the cheap technical schools of Holland, for the industrial training of poor children. Many circumstances indicate that public and legislative attention is more than ever needed to this question. For the extension of intellectual teaching through the ‘Board Schools,’ valuable as it is, has not, as yet, been accompanied by an adequate popular conviction that mere head knowledge, apart from *handicraft* skill, is a very one-sided aspect of education, and if separated from the latter, may in general be compared to rowing a boat with one oar. (Far worse than that, to loading it with rubbish till it sinks.—J. R.) Indeed, popular intellectual education, if separated from its two essential complements—*religious* and *industrial* training—is an engine fraught with terrible mischief.

“An instructive leading article in the *Hull Packet* (of May 11th, 1877) complains of a great increase of juvenile crime in that large town, where, at times, the spectacle has been witnessed of ‘gangs of young thieves lining the front of the dock, several of them so small that they had to be placed upon a box or stool to enable the magistrates to see them.’ *And the crimes of those children are not only more numerous but more serious than formerly.* The Editor adds, ‘*It is singular that the rapid increase should date from the time that the Education Act came into force.*’ Here again is indicated the necessity for manual training in addition to head knowledge.*

“In connection with *industrial* education, it may also be mentioned that during the year a veteran member of this Association, ex-Sheriff Watson (of Ratho, N. B.) has published a pamphlet, ‘Pauperism and Industrial Education in Aberdeenshire’ (Blackwood), in which he shows that a very remarkable diminution of crime and pauperism has taken place in that particular county as compared with the rest of Scotland, owing mainly to *industrial* day schools. The children came from their own homes at seven or eight o’clock A.M.; had breakfast, dinner, and supper; were employed three hours daily in learning, and religious instruction, and five hours in *manual industry*, and returned to their own homes at night. It is stated, ‘When all these elements are combined and skilfully applied, success is certain. *When any one of them is left out, failure is equally sure.*’

(I do not quite know what the writer means by “learning” in this passage. But I can assure him, whatever he means by it, *that* element may be left out harmlessly, if only the child be taught good manners, religious faith, and manual skill.—J. R.)

*[Italics mine.]

¹ [Compare *Hortus Inclusus*, p. 41 (ed. 3, p. 47).]

² [An Association called after John Howard, the prison reformer (1726–1790), “for Promoting the Best Methods of Criminal Treatment and Crime Prevention.” The extract is from the Annual Report for 1877. A separate leaflet was also issued in that year, headed “Industrial Education *versus* Crime.”]

32. (V.) I have not time, alas! to comment on the following two letters; except only to say that the introductory one is from a Companion of the Guild; and that the introduced one is the most extraordinary testimony to the practical powers of children, rightly educated, which I have ever seen or heard of. Here is little Hercules, again visible to us in his cradle, and no more in myth, but a living symbol! If any practical reader should be too much pained by the sentimental names of the children, let him read, to refresh himself, the unsentimental oration of the *Scotsman* in the last article of our Correspondence.

“24th July, 1877.

“DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—When Mr. Ward was here the other evening, we were reading a letter from a cousin of ours who has been several years in California; and he said he thought you would like it for *Fors*; so I send some extracts—more perhaps than are suitable for *Fors*,—but I thought you might like to see them. The gentleman was an English doctor, and practised for many years in Ceylon, and has been almost all over the world. He married a gentle, well-educated English lady, and they have seven children. ‘Neenee’s’ name is ‘Irene Dolores’; the boy they call ‘Buddha’ is ‘Everest,’ after the highest mountain in Hindostan. ‘Nannie’ is ‘Lanthe.’ Every word of the letter is true, for ‘Gus’ couldn’t exaggerate or prevaricate in the slightest possible degree.

“Ever yours sincerely.”

“15th May, 1877.

“I am running two farms, about four miles apart—one with goats (Angora), and the other grain, sheep, and pigs. My time is at present entirely occupied, and all of us are busy all the time. Percy and Nannie herd the goats just now, and will have to for another month, as they are kidding, and we are milking them. We have about 222 goats, all the Angoras which produce mohair. They are the most beautiful creatures you ever saw. Percy is only five, yet he killed a rattlesnake a few days ago, about four feet long, and as big as my arm; it was as much as he could carry with both hands when he brought it home in triumph. Nannie nearly trod on it, and he killed it for her. I can’t afford to get the children boots, so they are obliged to look out sharp for snakes. Buddha trod on an enormous rattlesnake the other day, but his naked foot did not hurt it, so it did not bite him.

“On the other farm I have about 400 merino sheep and 70 hogs. The children all have their work to do. Percy, Nannie, and Buddha herd goats. Zoe and Neenee look after the baby and the younger children, and dress and wash them, lay the table, help cook, and wash dishes; and the mother makes all our clothes. We live roughly, but we have plenty to eat and drink. All our plans as to coming home are knocked on the head, and I have determined not to entertain the idea again, but to settle down here for good. Farming is slow work, but we shall get on in time; and if we don’t, the boys will. We will educate them the best we can, and I don’t think much of education or civilization anyhow. Zoe is learning the violin, and I shall buy a zithern for Neenee. All the children have an excellent ear for music, and Zoe bids fair to have a very fine voice. The boys will have been brought up to this sort of farming, and will have a good chance to get on, I think. For a man with a lot of children, Cala is the best place. I don’t wish to have anything more to do with medicine,—it’s all a big humbug. For the most part farming is honest;—anyhow, at least it’s possible to be an honest farmer.

“I am just about to enlarge the house. The climate is the best in the world. We live very roughly, and perhaps a little slovenly; but we have lots to eat

and drink,—three good square meals every day; and after this year shall have fruit.

“I believe we are fixtures here now: indeed I mean to dig me a grave on the top of our hill, so as to get as near to heaven as possible.

“I think, on the whole, the kids will have a better chance here than at home.* Besides, the times will be bad at home now. You are drifting into a terrible war,¹ in the course of which England will lose India, I think,—not altogether directly by Russia, but by revolt of the natives.”

33. (VI.) A letter of deep import from my old friend and correspondent in *Time and Tide*, Mr. Dixon.² It shall be commented on at length in next *Fors*:³ meantime, I commend with sternest ratification, to all my readers, Mr. George Mitchell's letter in the *Builder* for August 25th of this year.⁴

“15, SUNDERLAND STREET, SUNDERLAND, 15th Sept., 1877.

“DEAR SIR,—I omitted in my last⁵ to inform you that the new Labour League of America is a revival of the old ideas that were promulgated by the Anabaptists in the time of Luther, in Germany, in the Peasants' War, and then again by the French Revolutionists, 1789. The leader Schwab is one of the leaders of the 'Internationalists' who figured in the Paris Commune days.⁶ A very good summary of their ideas and plans was given in a series of articles in *Fraser's Magazine* a few years ago.⁷ I possess several of their programmes, though of late I have heard very little of them. I enclose a cutting respecting their Congress this year on the Continent.

“I will try to procure something of more detail, for I am very deeply interested in this organization, though I do not agree with all the principles they advocate.

* Very certainly, my friend;—but what is the chance of home, if all the kids good for anything are in California?

¹ [The writer of the letter was perturbed, it seems, by the foreign policy of Lord Beaconsfield, which displayed Turkish sympathies in the Russo-Turkish war which was beginning at the date of the letter.]

² [See Vol. XVII. pp. lxxviii.—lxxix.]

³ [See pp. 257 *seq.*]

⁴ [For an extract from this, see Letter 83, § 18 (p. 273).]

⁵ [See above, p. 218.]

⁶ [Justus Schwab in the following year became the leader of the more “advanced” Anarchists who broke away from other sections at the Congress in Albany. He was tried for complicity in the bomb outrage at Chicago in May 1886, and sentenced to imprisonment for life. In 1893 he was given an unconditional pardon by Governor Altgeld.]

⁷ [A series of articles on “The International Working Men's Association” (*L'Internationale*) in *Fraser's Magazine*, July, August, and September 1875; vol. 92 (N. S., vol. 12), pp. 72, 181, 300. To the last of the articles a note is appended by the editor: “It is highly noticeable that, in all which has been said of and by ‘The International Working Men's Association,’ the once thing whereof we hear no whisper from first to last is WORK itself,—that, among the rights of a Working Man, the right of doing his Work honestly and well, not basely, scandalously, and fraudulently, as usual at present, is never once touched on, has apparently never been thought of. This evil remaining, all other reforms would but ‘skin and film the ulcerous place.’ ”]

I see in it a great principle for the good of the working classes if it was rightly and justly conducted. It aims to unite the working classes of every country in one bond of universal brotherhood. It is opposed to war, strikes, and all such like combinations having *force* as the principal means of attaining the amelioration of the evils they suffer from. The original ideas were of a simple, gradual, progressive character, but ultimately in the fierce rabid actions that stained the Commune in Paris, the result of being led by fierce wild men. In a novel entitled *The Universalist* is a very good account of their aims, only it is coloured with a novelist's romantic way of depicting such matters.

"If you care for more respecting them, I can, I think, send you some particulars. I enclose you Bright's speech at Manchester, which seems not so jubilant as he used to be of the progress of our people: his allusion to Venice¹ seemed akin to some thoughts of yours, so thought would interest you; also his allusion to the Indian Famine, and our neglect of our duty to these people.

"Was the leisure of the Greeks not due to the hard work of the helots and slaves they had? Is *our* leisure, or rather the leisure of our rich people, not due to the work done by our workpeople? Just think of the leisure of our people—think of the idle lives of the daughters of our tradespeople: it seems to me there is more leisure enjoyed now by our people than ever was enjoyed by any people—I mean the rich and trading classes.

"When I visit the houses of our trading classes, I feel amazed to see the gradual change in their circumstances within these few years,—the style of life they live, the servants they keep, the almost idle lives of their sons and daughters. Then see the way in which we live, how different to the simple style of our forefathers! If our lives were simpler, if we all had to labour somewhat like our old people, then how different it would be!

"Yours respectfully,

"THOMAS DIXON."

34. Well said, my old friend: but you must not confuse fevered idleness with leisure.

All questions raised either by my Manchester or Newcastle correspondent, respecting our want or possession of leisure, are answered by the following short extract from Plato:—

"*The Athenian*. Do we then all recognize the reason why, in our cities, such noble choirs and exercise have all but passed away;—or shall we only say that it is because of the ignorance of the people, and their legislators?

"*The Cretan*. Perhaps so.

"A. Ah no, you too simple Cleinias! there are two other causes; and causes enough they are, too.

"C. Which mean you?

"A. The first, the love of riches, leaving no moment of leisure" (making all Time leisureless) "to care about anything but one's own possessions, upon which the soul of every citizen being suspended, cannot contain any other thought but of his daily gain. And whatever knowledge of skill may conduce to such gain,—*that*, he is most ready in private to learn and practise; but mocks at every other. Here then is one of the causes we look for, that no one cares any more to be earnest in any good or honourable thing; but every man, in insatiable thirst for gold and silver, will submit himself to any art or trick if only he can grow rich by it, and do any deed,—be it holy, be it profane, or be it utterly vile,

¹ [See below, p. 274 n.]

—reluctant at nothing, if only he may get the power, like a beast, to eat and drink his fill of every kind, and fulfil to the uttermost all his lusts.”—*Laws*, VIII. 351, 20 (831).

35. (VII.) The following public voice of the New Town of Edinburgh, on the “inevitable” in Scotland, may perhaps enable some of my readers to understand at last when I said seven years ago, that I should like to destroy the New Town of Edinburgh;¹—namely, because I loved the old one,—and the better Burg that shall be for ever.

I have yet one other modern oration to set beside this; and then I will say my say of both.²

“A letter which we print elsewhere, written by an able practical farmer, appeals strongly to the Highland and Agricultural Society to do something ‘to stay the plague of depopulation of men and valuable live-stock, and to dislodge the wild beasts and birds which have been the cause of so much injury to Scottish agriculture.’ The request will seem, on the face of it, to be strange, if not unintelligible, seeing that there are more people in Scotland now than ever there were before, and that Scottish agriculture, judged by what it brings to market, produces more than ever it did. A perusal of the whole of the letter, however, will show what it is that the writer means. He has been looking at a farm, or what used to be a sheep farm somewhere in the north, and he finds that it is now given up to game. The land was, he says, thirty or forty years ago divided into four or five average-sized farms, each having tenants and carefully cultivated in the lower-lying parts, while on the hills cattle and sheep fed. Altogether these farms afforded a ‘livelihood to quiet and industrious tenants and peasants, giving the owners fair rentals, with certainty of advance by judicious outlay in permanent improvements.’ Now all this is changed. There are no men, horses, cattle, or sheep, only game. The sheep-drains are choked, and the lands are boggy. This, then, is what the writer means by depopulation, and by injury to Scottish agriculture. Of course he sees in it great national injury in the shape of limitation of the area of land fitted for agriculture, and in the lessening of the meant supply, and, as we have said, he calls upon the Highland and Agricultural Society to do something to bring back the people and the farms.

“The question will naturally be asked, What can the Highland and Agricultural Society do? Perhaps, too, most people will ask, Ought it to do anything? The writer of the letter is laudably anxious for the extension and improvement of the business in which he is engaged, and he regards the afforesting of sheep land as a great offence. But can it be so regarded by the Highland and Agricultural Society, or by the country generally? It may be that many of us would think the land better used as a sheep farm than as a game forest; but that is not the question. *What the landlord has had to decide* has been how to make the most *profitable* use of his property, and he has apparently found that he could make more of it for sporting purposes than he could for farming. ‘There’s a greater interest at stake than the sheep farmer,’ said the gamekeeper to our correspondent, who adds that ‘you discover that some wealthy Cockney pays more for six weeks’ blowing off powder and shot than the sheep farmer can pay for a whole year.’ Well, that is the whole question in a nutshell—the land lets for more to the sportsman than to the farmer. *What would be thought of the landlord* as a man of business if he did not let his land in the best market? Our correspondent would think it hard if anybody sought to place restrictions upon the sale of his

¹ [See Letter 1, § 4 (Vol. XXVII. p. 15).]

² [Ruskin’s note here for his proposed Index is “Modern Oration of the *Scotsman*. The authors’ say of it, promised, but not yet said.”]

produce. The people who denounce all intoxicating liquors are in the habit of showing that the consumption of barley in breweries and distilleries is an enormous abstraction from the food of the people for purposes which have no value—nay, which they assert are positively injurious. What would our correspondent think if it was proposed to compel him to grow less barley or to sell his barley for other purposes than brewing or distillation? He would say, and rightly, that it was a grossly improper interference with his right to make the most of his business; yet it would really be no worse in principle than what he virtually proposes in the case of landlords. To say that they must not let their land for sporting purposes, and that they must let it for agriculture, would be a limitation of their market exactly the same in principle and proportionately the same in effect, as a law preventing farmers from selling their barley to brewers, and compelling them to use it or sell it only for the feeding of cattle. The mistake of supposing that landlords ought to have some peculiar economic principles applied to them in the sense of restricting the use to which they shall put their land is common enough, but the reasons given are, as a rule, *sentimental* rather than practical. It may be said that the complaint of our correspondent as to the abstraction of land from agriculture, and the consequent lessening of the supply of food, is practical. In the same sense so is the complaint of the total abstainers as to barley; and so would be an objection to the sale or fearding of land for building purposes; but they are not convincing. In the neighbourhood of every great town many acres of land that would have produced food have been covered with buildings; ought the extension of towns, therefore, to be prohibited by law?

“The depopulation of the country districts is a favourite theme with *sentimental* people, who will persist in fighting against the inevitable, and speaking of that as a crime which is in fact the operation of a *natural law*. (!) Like our correspondent, they draw loving pictures of small farms and numerous tenants, giving the impression that when these could be seen, the times were blissful and the nation strong. According to these theorists, not only were the farmers and peasantry numerous, but they were happy, contented, and prosperous; and now they are all gone, to the injury of the country. If the picture were in all respects faithful, it would not show that any action to prevent the change would have been possible or successful. It is as certain as anything can be that so long as better wages and better living are to be got in towns, working people will not stay in the country. Census returns show that while the population of the rural districts is steadily decreasing, that of the towns is as steadily and rapidly increasing; the reason being that people can earn more in towns than they can in the country. Nor is that all. It cannot be doubted that the tendency to throw several small farms into a single large one, while it has helped the decrease of the population, has largely increased the quantity of food produced. The crofter’s life alternated between barely enough and starvation. It was rare that he could get before the world. His means being small, he could not cultivate land to advantage, and what he did cost him heavily. He had to do wearily and wastefully what the large farmer can do with ease and economically. No doubt many of the crofters clung to their mode of life—they knew no other. But with the spread of railways the increase of steam-boats, the opening of roads, and the accessibility of newspapers, they learned to change their opinions, as they discovered that they could shake off their misery and live comparatively well without half the anxiety or actual labour that accompanied their life of semi-starvation. It would probably be found that, in the cases where changes were made by compulsion and by wholesale, the people who were sent away are now highly grateful for what was done. Whether that be the case or not, however, it is certain that what is called the depopulation of the country districts will go on as long as the towns offer greater inducements to the people. It seems to be thought not only that landlords ought to be compelled to let their land in small farms, but that some people should be compelled to occupy them. That is the logical inference from the complaints that are made, and it is enough to state it to show its absurdity. Nothing of the kind is or ought to be possible. Land and its cultivation must be on a perfectly business footing if there is to be

real progress and if no injustice is to be done. The people who complain of depopulation are not, as a rule, those whose lot in having to leave their patches of land is thought to be so hard, but theorists and sentimentalists who, if they could have their way, would inflict terrible evils upon the country. It is not meant that our correspondent is one of these. He probably talks of depopulation rather as a fashion of speaking than as advancing a theory, or because he is actuated by a sentiment. He is a farmer, and does not like to see a farm become a forest: that is why he complains. Yet he would no doubt admit that every man is entitled to do the best he can for himself provided he does no injury to others. That is a rule which he would insist upon in his own case, and properly; and he will find it very difficult to show cause why it should not also be applied to crofters and landlords."—*Scotsman*, 20th June, 1877.

LETTER 83

HESIOD'S MEASURE¹

1. "WAS the leisure of the Greeks not owing to the hard work of the helots and slaves they had?" asked my old friend, Thomas Dixon, in his letter given last month.²

Yes, truly, good labourer; nor the Greeks' leisure only, but also—if we are to call it leisure—that of the rich and powerful of this world, since this world began. And more and more I perceive, as my old age opens to me the deeper secrets of human life, that the true story and strength of that world are the story and strength of these helots and slaves; and only its fiction and feebleness in the idleness of those who feed on them:—which fiction and feebleness, with all their cruelty and sensuality, filling the cup of the fornication of the kings of the earth now to the lip,³ must be, in no long time now, poured out upon the earth; and the cause of the poor judged by the King who shall reign in righteousness.⁴ For all these petty struggles of the past, of which you write to me, are but the scudding clouds and first wailing winds, of the storm which must be as the sheet lightning—from one part of heaven to the other,—“So also shall the coming of the Son of Man be.”⁵

Only the first scudding clouds, I say,—these hitherto seditions; for, as yet, they have only been of the ambitious,

¹ [See below, § 5. “Music” and “Story and Fiction” were rejected titles for this Letter.]

² [See Letter 82, § 33 (p. 253).]

³ [Compare Revelation xvii. 2, 4.]

⁴ [Compare Psalms lxxii. 2.]

⁵ [Matthew xxiv. 27.]

or the ignorant; and only against tyrannous men: so that they ended, if successful, in mere ruinous license; and if they failed, were trampled out in blood: but *now*, the ranks are gathering, on the one side, of men rightly informed, and meaning to seek redress by lawful and honourable means only; and, on the other, of men capable of compassion, and open to reason, but with personal interests at stake so vast, and with all the gear and mechanism of their acts so involved in the web of past iniquity, that the best of them are helpless, and the wisest blind.

No debate, on such terms, and on such scale, has yet divided the nations; nor can any wisdom foresee the sorrow, or the glory, of its decision. One thing only we know, that in this contest, assuredly, the victory cannot be by violence; that every conquest under the Prince of War retards the standards of the Prince of Peace; and that every good servant must abide his Master's coming in the patience, not the refusal, of his daily labour.

Patiently, and humbly, I resume my own, not knowing whether shall prosper—either this or that;¹ caring only that, in so far as it reaches and remains, it may be faithful and true.²

2. Following the best order I can in my notes,—interrupted by the Bishop's sermon in last letter,³—I take, next, Plato's description of the duties of the third choir, namely that of men between the ages of thirty and sixty; vii. 316, 9 (812):—

“We said, then, that the sixty-years-old singers in the service of Dionysus should be, beyond other men, gifted with fine sense of rhythm, and of the meetings together of harmonies; so that being able to choose, out of imitative melody, what is well and ill represented of the soul in its passion, and well discerning the picture of the evil spirit from the picture of the good, they may cast away that which has in it the likeness of evil, and bring forward into the midst that which has the likeness of good; and hymn and sing *that* into the souls of the young, calling them forth

¹ [Ecclesiastes xi. 6.]

² [Revelation xix. 11.]

³ [Letter 82, § 21 (p. 243).]

to pursue the possession of virtue, by means of such likenesses. And for this reason the sounds of the lyre ought to be used for the sake of clearness in the chords;* the master and pupil keeping both their voices in one note together with the chord: but the changes of the voice and variety of the lyre, the chords giving one tune, and the poet another melody, and the oppositions of many notes to few, and of slow to swift, sometimes in symphony, sometimes in antiphony, the rhythm of the song also in every sort of complication inlaying itself among the sounds of the lyre,—with all this, the pupils who have to learn what is useful of music in only three years, must have nothing to do: for things opposed, confusing each other, are difficult to learn: and youth, as far as possible, should be set at ease in learning.”†

I think this passage alone may show the reader that the Greeks knew more of music than modern orchestral fiddlers fancy. For the essential work of Stradivarius, in substituting the violin for the lyre and harp, was twofold. Thenceforward, (A) instrumental music became the captain instead of the servant of the voice; and (B) skill of instrumental music, as so developed, became impossible in the ordinary education of a gentleman. So that, since his time, old King Cole has called for his fiddlers three,¹ and Squire Western sent Sophia to the harpsichord when he was drunk:² but of souls won by Orpheus, or cities built by Amphion, we hear no more.³

3. Now the reader must carefully learn the meanings of the—no fewer than seven—distinct musical terms used by Plato in the passages just given. The word I have translated “changes of the voice” is, in the Greek technical,—“heterophony”; and we have besides, rhythm, harmony, tune, melody, symphony, and antiphony.

Of these terms “rhythm” means essentially the time

* “Chord,” in the Greek use, means only one of the strings of the instrument, not a concord of notes. The lyre is used instead of the flute, that the music may be subordinate always to the words.

† Not by having smooth or level roads made for it, but by being plainly shown, and steadily cheered in, the rough and steep.

¹ [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 261.]

² [*Tom Jones*, book iv. ch. v.]

³ [For Orpheus, see Vol. XIX. pp. 66, 178, and Vol. XX. p. 356; for Amphion, *ibid.*, pp. 356, 379. On the history of the violin, compare *Præterita*, iii. § 81 n.]

and metre; “harmony” the fixed relation of any high note to any low one;* “tune” the air given by the instrument; “melody” the air given by the voice; “symphony” the concord of the voice with the instrument, or with companion voices; “diaphony” their discord; “antiphony” their opposition; and “heterophony” their change.

4. And it will do more for us than merely fasten the sense of the terms, if we now re-read in last *Fors* the passage (p. 237) respecting the symphony of acquired reason with rightly compelled affection; and then those following pieces respecting their diaphony, from an earlier part of the *Laws*, iii. 39, 8 (688), where the concordant verdict of thought and heart is first spoken of as the ruling virtue of the four cardinal; namely:—

“Prudence, with true conception and true opinion, and the loves and desires that follow on these. For indeed, the Word † returns to the same point, and what I said before (if you will have it so, half in play) now I say again in true earnest, that prayer itself is deadly on the lips of a fool, unless he would pray that God would give him the contrary of his desires. And truly you will discern, if you follow out the Word in its fulness, that the ruin of the Doric cities never came on them because of cowardice, nor because their kings knew not how to make war; but because they knew not nobler human things, and were indeed ignorant with the greatest and fatallest of ignorances. And the greatest of ignorances, if you will

* The apparently vague use of the word “harmony” by the ‘Greeks is founded on their perception that there is just as fixed a relation of influence on each other between high and low notes following in a well-composed melody as when they are sounded together in a single chord. That is to say, the notes in their assigned sequence relatively increase the pleasure with which each is heard, and in that manner act “harmoniously,” though not heard at the same instant. But the definition of the mingled chord is perfect in ii. 539, 3 (665). “And to the order” (time) “of motion the name ‘rhythm’ is given, and to the mingling of high and low in sound, the name of ‘harmony,’ and the unison of both these we call ‘choreia.’ ”

† I write, “Word” (Logos) with the capital initial when it stands in the original for the “entire course of reasoning,” since to substitute this long phrase would weaken the sentences fatally. But no mystic or divine sense is attached to the term “Logos” in these places.¹

¹ [The reference is to the much-discussed meaning of the word in the Greek Testament, John i. 1, and to the Neo-Platonists.]

have me tell it you, is this: when a man, judging truly of what is honourable and good, yet loves it not, but hates it, and loves and caresses with his soul what he perceives to be base and unjust,—this diaphony of his pain and pleasure with the rational verdict of his intellect, I call the last of ignorances; and the greatest, because it is in the multitude of the soul's thoughts.”*

Presently afterwards—though I do not, because of the introduction of other subjects in the sentence, go on translating—this same ignorance is called the “out-of-tune-est” of all; there being scarcely a word in Greek social philosophy which has not reference to musical law; and scarcely a word in Greek musical science which has not understood reference to social law.

So that in final definition—ii. 562, 17 (673):—

“The whole Choreia is whole child-education for us, consisting, as we have seen, in the rhythms and harmonies which belong to sound (for as there is a rhythm in the movement of the body, so there is a rhythm in the movement of sound, and the movement of sound we call tune). And *the movement of sound, so as to reach the soul for the education of it in virtue* (we know not how), we call MUSIC.”

5. You see from this most important passage that the Greeks only called “Music” the kind of sound which induced right moral feeling (“they knew not *how*,”¹ but they knew it *did*), and any other kind of sound than that, however beautiful to the ear or scientific in composition, they did not call “Music” (exercise under the Muses), but “Amusia,”—the denial, or desolation for want, of the Muses.² Word now become of wide use in modern society; most accurately, as the Fates have ordained, yet by an equivocation in language; for the old French verb “muser,” “to

* Note David, of the contrary state—

“In the *multitude* of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts *delight* my soul.”³

¹ [Curiously these words are omitted in Jowett's version.]

² [Compare “The Relation of National Ethics to National Arts,” §§ 18, 19 (Vol. XIX. p. 176).]

³ [Psalms xciv. 19.]

think in a dreamy manner,” came from the Latin “musso,” “to speak low,” or whisper, and not from the Greek word “muse.” But it once having taken the meaning of meditation, “a-muser,” “to dispel musing,” became a verb very dear to generations of men whom any manner of thoughtfulness tormented; and,—such their way of life—could not but torment: whence the modern “amusement” has practically established itself as equivalent to the Greek “amusia.”

The Greek himself, however, did not express his idea fully in language, but only in myth. His “amusia” does not mean properly the opposing delightfulness, but only the interruption, and violation, of musical art. The proper word for the opposed delightful art would have been “sirenic”;¹ but he was content in the visionary symbol, and did not need the word, for the disciples of the Sirens of course asserted their songs to be Music as much as the disciples of the Muses. First, therefore, take this following passage respecting the violation of music, and then we will go on to consider its opposition:—

(iii. 47, 10 (690).) “For now, indeed, we have traced such a fountain of seditions as well needs healing; and first consider, in this matter, how, and against what, the kings of Argos and Messene sinned, when they destroyed at once themselves and the power of the Greeks, marvellous great as it was in their time. Was not their sin that they refused to acknowledge the utter rightness of Hesiod in his saying that ‘the half is often more than the whole’? For, when to take the whole is mischievous, but the half, a measured and moderated good, then the measured good is more than the unmeasured, as better is more than worse.

“*The Cretan*. It is a most right and wise saying.

“*The Athenian*. Whether, then, are we to think, of the kings, that it was this error in *their* hearts that in each several case destroyed them, or that the mischief entered first into the heart of the people?

“*The Cretan*. In all likelihood, for the most part, the disease was in the kings, living proudly because of luxury.

“*The Athenian*. Is it not evident, as well as likely, that the kings first fell into this guilt of grasping at more than the established laws gave them: and with what by speech and oath they had approved, they kept no symphony in act; and their diaphony, as we said, being indeed the uttermost ignorance, yet seeming wisdom, through breaking of tune and sharp amusia, destroyed all those noble things?”

¹ [Compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 90 (Vol. XVII. p. 211), and Vol. XIX. p. 177.]

6. Now in applying this great sentence of Plato's to the parallel time in England, when her kings "kept no symphony in act with what by word and oath they had approved," and so destroyed at once themselves and the English power, "marvellous great as it was in their time"—the "sharp amusia" of Charles I. and his Cavaliers was indeed in grasping at more than the established laws gave them; but an entirely contrary—or, one might technically call it, "flat amusia"—met it on the other side, and ruined Cromwell and his Roundheads. Of which flat or dead amusia Plato had seen no instance, and could not imagine it; and for the laying bare its root, we must seek to the truest philosopher of our own days, from whose good company I have too long kept the reader,¹—Walter Scott.

When he was sitting to Northcote (who told the story to my father, not once nor twice, but I think it is in Hazlitt's conversations of Northcote also²), the old painter, speaking with a painter's wonder of the intricate design of the *Waverley Novels*,³ said that one chief source of his delight in them was that "he never knew what was coming."

"Nor I neither," answered Sir Walter.

Now this reply, though of course partly playful, and made for the sake of its momentary point, was deeply true, in a sense which Sir Walter himself was not conscious of. He was conscious of it only as a weakness,—not as a strength. His beautiful confession of it as a weakness is here in my bookcase behind me, written in his own hand, in the introduction to the *Fortunes of Nigel*.⁴ I take it

¹ [Since Letter 67, Vol. XXVIII. p. 644 (except for passing references in Letters 73 and 82, above, pp. 23, 220).]

² ["I was much pleased with Sir Walter, and I believe he expressed a favourable opinion of me. I said to him, 'I admire the way in which you begin your novels. You set out so abruptly, that you quite surprise me. I can't at all tell what's coming.' 'No!' says Sir Walter, 'nor I neither'"] (*Conversations of James Northcote, Esq., R.A.*, by William Hazlitt, 1830, p. 221).]

³ [Compare what Ruskin says, in his analysis of *Redgauntlet*, of the "subtle heraldic quartering" in the *Waverley Novels*: Letter 47, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 194).]

⁴ [The manuscript remains at Brantwood; and the passages cited are here given in *facsimile*.]

Captain Respect to yourself there ought to be some caution -

Author. Any of caution could augment my title to success - But to
confer to you the truth the words and papers in which I have succeeded
have uniformly been written with the greatest rapidity and those I have
seen some of them placed in opposition to the others and commended as
never highly finished I could appeal to pen and standard that these in
which I have come fully off were by much the more laboured. I have not
been fool enough to neglect extraordinary precautions. I have laid down
my work to scale divided it into volumes of chapters and endeavoured
to construct a story which should evolve itself gradually and strikingly
and without surprise and simulate curiosity and finally terminate in
a striking catastrophe - But I thank them ere I deliver what feels
themselves the feathers of my pen when I begin to write and guide leads
it astray from the purpose characters expand under my hand incidents
are multiplied the story lingers while the materials were used - My Gothic
regular manner turns out a Gothic anomaly and the work is done
long before I have attained the point I proposed.

Captain. Resolution & determination forbear under temptations
that will -

Author. Alas my dear son you do not know the force of parental
affection - When I begin such a character as Mabel Farrow or Dalgety
my imagination brightens and my conception becomes clear at
every step which I make in his company, although it leads me many
a weary mile away from the regular road and forces me to keep back
and detach to get back into the route again -

If I desert the character as you advise me my thoughts become pro-
- by flat and dull I work painfully to myself and under a consciousness
of flattery which makes me flay - the sunshine with which I fancy
had invested the incidents departs from them and leaves every thing
flat and gloomy - I am as sure the same author than the dog in
a wheel endeavoured to get round and round for hours as like the
same dog merely churning his own tail and gamboling in all the
frolic of fiction - See that I thank I am bewitched -

Captain. Nay, Sir if you please so every there is no more to be said.

reverently down, and copy it from the dear old manuscript, written as it is at temperate speed, the letters all perfectly formed, but with no loss of time in dotting *is*, crossing *ts*, writing mute *es* in past participles, or in punctuation; the current dash and full period alone being used. I copy with scrupulous care, adding no stop where stop is not.

“*Captain*” (Clutterbuck) Respect for yourself then ought to teach caution—

Author. Aye if caution could augment my title to success—But to confess to you the truth the books and passages in which I have succeeded have uniformly been written with the greatest rapidity and when I have seen some of these placed in opposition with others and commended as more highly finished I could appeal to pen and standish that those in which I have come feebly off were by much the more laboured. I have not been fool enough to neglect ordinary precautions. I have laid down my work to scale divided it into volumes and chapters and endeavoured to construct a story which should evolve itself gradually and strikingly maintain suspense and stimulate curiosity and finally terminate in a striking catastrophe—But I think there is a dæmon which seats himself upon the feather of my pen when I begin to write and * leads it astray from the purpose Characters expand under my hand incidents are multiplied the story lingers while the materials increase—my regular mansion turns out a Gothic anomaly and the work is done long before I have attained the end I proposed.

Captain. Resolution and determined forbearance might remedy that evil.

Author. Alas my dear Sir you do not know the fever of paternal affection—When I light on such a character as Baillie Jarvie or Dalgety my imagination brightens and my conception becomes clearer at every step which I make in his company although it leads me many a weary mile away from the regular road and forces me to leap hedge and ditch to get back into the route again¹—†

If I resist the temptation as you advise me my thoughts become prosy flat and dull I write painfully to myself and under a consciousness of flagging which makes me flag—the sunshine with which fancy had invested the incidents departs from them and leaves everything flat and gloomy—I am no more the same author than the dog in a wheel condemned to go round and round for hours is like the same dog merrily chasing his own tail and gamboling in all the frolic of freedom—In short I think I am bewitchd—

Captain. Nay Sir if you plead sorcery there is not more to be said.”

* The only word altered in the whole passage, and that on the instant.

† The closing passage of the author’s paragraph, down to “bewitchd,” is an addition on the lateral leaf.

¹ [For a reference to this passage, see *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 296.]

7. Alas, he did but half know how truly he had right to plead sorcery, feeling the witchcraft, yet not believing in it, nor knowing that it was indeed an angel that “guided,” not a dæmon¹ (I am forced for once to use with him the Greek word in its Presbyterian sense) that misled, his hand, as it wrote in gladness the fast-coming fancies. For, truly in that involuntary vision was the true “design,” and Scott’s work differs from all other modern fiction by its exquisiteness of art, precisely *because* he did not “know what was coming.” For, as I have a thousand times before asserted²—though hitherto always in vain,—no great composition was ever produced by composing, nor by arranging chapters and dividing volumes; but only with the same heavenly involuntariness in which a bird builds her nest. And among the other virtues of the great classic masters, this of enchanted Design is of all the least visible to the present apothecary mind: for although, when I first gave analysis of the inventive powers in *Modern Painters*, I was best able to illustrate its combining method by showing that “there was something like it in chemistry,”³ it is precisely what *is* like it in chemistry, that the chemist of to-day denies.

8. But one farther great, and greatest, sign of the Divinity in this enchanted work of the classic masters, I did not then assert,—for, indeed, I had not then myself discerned it,—namely, that this power of noble composition is never given but with accompanying instinct of moral law; and that so severe, that the apparently too complete and ideal justice which it proclaims has received universally the name of “poetical” justice—the justice conceived only by the men of consummate imaginative power. So that to say of any man that he has power of design, is at once to say of him that he is using it on God’s side; for it can only have been taught him by that Master, and cannot

¹ [See Letter 82, § 19 *n.* (p. 240).]

² [See Vol. XX. p. 55, and the other passages there noted.]

³ [See Vol. IV. (*Modern Painters*, ii.) p. 234.]

be taught by the use of it against Him. And therefore every great composition in the world, every great piece of painting or literature—without any exception, from the birth of Man to this hour—is an assertion of moral law, as strict, when we examine it, as the *Eumenides* or the *Divina Commedia*; while the total collapse of all power of artistic design in Italy at this day has been signalized and sealed by the production of an epic poem in praise of the Devil and in declaration that God is a malignant “Larva.”*

9. And this so-called poetical justice, asserted by the great designers, consists not only in the gracing of virtue with her own proper rewards of mental peace and spiritual victory; but in the proportioning also of worldly prosperity to visible virtue; and the manifestation, therefore, of the presence of the Father in this world, no less than in that which is to come. So that, if the life-work of any man of unquestioned genius does not assert this visible justice, but, on the contrary, exhibits good and gentle persons in unredeemed distress or destruction,—that work will invariably be found to show no power of design; but to be merely the consecutive collection of interesting circumstances well described, as continually the best work of Balzac, George Sand, and other good novelists of the second order.¹ In some separate pieces, the great masters will indeed exhibit the darkest mystery of human fate, but never without showing, even then, that the catastrophe is owing in the root of it to the violation of some moral law: “*She hath deceived her father,—and may thee.*”² The root of the entire tragedy is marked by the mighty master in

* A highly laudatory review of this work, in two successive parts, will be found in the columns of the Venetian journal *Il Tempo*, in the winter of 1876–77.³

¹ [For the rank given by Ruskin to Balzac and George Sand, see Vol. V. pp. 323, 330, 332, 360, 372.]

² [*Othello*, Act i. sc. 3. See Letter 90, § 3 *n.*, where Ruskin refers to the present passage (below, p. 426). See also on the tragedy of *Othello*, *Munera Pulveris*, § 134 *n.* (Vol. XVII. p. 257).]

³ [See Letter 76, § 22 (p. 105).]

that one line—the double sin, namely, of daughter and father; of the first in too lawlessly forgetting her own people, and her father's house;¹ and of the second, in allowing his pride and selfishness to conquer his paternal love, and harden him, not only in abandonment of his paternal duty, but in calumnious insult to his child. Nor, even thus, is Shakespeare content without marking, in the name of the victim of Evil Fortune, his purpose in the tragedy, of showing that there *is* such a thing as Destiny, permitted to veil the otherwise clear Providence, and to leave it only to be found by noble Will, and proved by noble Faith.

10. Although always, in reading Scott, one thinks the story one has last finished, the best, there can be little question that the one which has right of pre-eminence is the *Heart of Midlothian*,² being devoted to the portraiture of the purest life, and most vital religion, of his native country.

It is also the most distinct in its assertion of the moral law; the assignment of earthly reward and punishment being, in this story, as accurately proportioned to the degrees of virtue and vice as the lights and shades of a photograph to the force of the rays. The absolute truth and faith of Jeanie make the suffering through which she has to pass the ultimate cause of an entirely prosperous and peaceful life for herself, her father, and her lover: the falsehood and vanity of Effie prepare for her a life of falsehood and vanity: the pride of David Deans is made the chief instrument of his humiliation; and the self-confidence which separated him from true fellowship with his brother-Christians, becomes the cause of his eternal separation from his child.

Also, there is no other analysis of the good and evil of the pure Protestant faith which can be for a moment compared to that in the *Heart of Midlothian*, showing that

¹ [Compare Psalms xlv. 10.]

² [Compare Letter 92, § 7 (below, p. 456), where Ruskin again gives reasons for placing the *Heart of Midlothian* "highest of all his works."]

in an entirely simple, strong, and modest soul, it brings forth fruit of all good works and kindly thoughts; but that, when it meets with innate pride, and the unconquerable selfishness which comes from want of sympathy, it leads into ludicrous and fatal self-worship, mercilessness to the errors, whether in thought or conduct, of others; and blindness to the teaching of God Himself, where it is contrary to the devotee's own habits of thought. There is no other form of the Christian religion which so insolently ignores all Scripture that makes against it, or gathers with so passionate and irrational embrace all Scripture that makes for it.

11. And the entire course of the tragic story in the *Heart of Midlothian* comes of the "Museless" hardness of nature, brought upon David Deans by the persecution in his early life, which changed healthy and innocent passion into religious pride,—

"I bless God (with that singular worthy, Peter Walker, the packman at Bristo Port), that ordered my lot in my dancing days, so that fear of my head and throat, dread of bloody rope and swift bullet, cauld and hunger, wetness and weariness, stopped the lightness of my head, and the wantonness of my feet. And now, if I hear ye, quean lassies, sae muckle as name dancing, or think there's such a thing in the world as flinging to fiddlers' sounds and pipers' springs, as sure as my father's spirit is with the just, ye shall be no more either charge or concern of mine."¹

Over the bronze sculpture of this insolent pride, Scott instantly casts, in the following sentence ("Gang in then, hinnies," etc.), the redeeming glow of paternal love; but he makes it, nevertheless, the cause of all the misery that follows, to the end of the old man's life:—

"The objurgation of David Deans, however well meant, was unhappily timed. It created a division of feeling in Effie's bosom, and deterred her from her intended confidence in her sister. 'She wad haud me nae better than the dirt below her feet,' said Effie to herself, 'were I to confess that I hae danced wi' him four times on the green down by, and ance at Maggie Macqueen's.' "

Such, and no more than such, the little sin, that day

¹ [*The Heart of Midlothian*, ch. x.]

concealed—sin only *in* concealment. And the fate of her life turns on the Fear and the Silence of a moment.

12. But for the effective and final cause of it, on that Deadly Muselessness of the Cameronian leaders, who indeed would read of the daughter of Herodias dancing before Herod,¹ but never of the son of Jesse dancing before the Lord; and banished sackbut and psaltery, for signals in the service of Nebuchadnezzar, forgetting that the last law of Moses and last prayer of David were written in song.²

And this gloomy forgetfulness, or worse,—presumptuous defiance, of the laws of the nature given by his Maker to man, left, since the Reformation, the best means of early education chiefly in the hands of the adversary of souls; and thus defiled the sanctuary of joy in the human heart, and left it desolate for the satyrs to dance there, and the wild beasts of the islands to cry.³

Which satyric dance and sirenic song, accomplished, both, with all the finish of science, and used in mimicry of every noble emotion towards God and man, become the uttermost, and worst—because the most traitorous—of blasphemies against the Master who gave us motion and voice submissive to other laws than of the elements; and would have made us “as happy”—nay, how much happier!—than the “wave that dances on the sea”;⁴ and how much more glorious in praise than the forests, though they clap their hands, and the hills, that rejoice together before the Lord.⁵

13. And this cry of the wild beasts of the islands, or sirenic blasphemy, has in modern days become twofold; consisting first in the mimicry of *devotion* for pleasure, in the oratorio,⁶ withering the life of religion into dead bones on the siren-sands; and secondly, the mimicry of *compassion*, for pleasure, in the opera, wasting the pity and love which

¹ [See the speech of David Deans in the same chapter.]

² [The Bible references are Mark vi. 22; 2 Samuel vi. 14; Daniel iii. 5; Deuteronomy xxxii.; 2 Samuel xxii., xxiii. 1.]

³ [Isaiah xiii. 21, 22.]

⁴ [Wordsworth, “The Two April Mornings.”]

⁵ [See Isaiah lv. 12, and Psalms xcvi. 8.]

⁶ [Compare above, p. 55.]

should overflow in active life, on the ghastliest visions of fictitious grief and horriest decoration of simulated death.¹ But these two blasphemies had become one, in the Greek religious service of Plato's time. "For, indeed,—vii. 289, 20 (800)—this has come to pass in nearly all our cities, that when any public sacrifice is made to the Gods, not one chorus only, but many choruses, and standing, not reverently far from the altars, but beside them" (yes, in the very cathedrals themselves), "pour forth blasphemies of sacred things" (not mockeries, observe, but songs precisely corresponding to our oratorios—that is to say, turning dramatic prayer into a solemn sensual pleasure),

"both with word and rhythm, and the most wailing harmonies, racking the souls of the hearers; and whosoever can make the sacrificing people weep the most, to him is the victory. Such lamentations, if indeed the citizens have need to hear, let it be on accursed instead of festal days, and from hired mourners as at funerals. But that we may get rid at once of the need of speaking of such things, shall we not accept, for the mould and seal of all song, Euphemy, the speaking the good of all things, and not Blasphemy, the speaking their sorrow?"

Which first law of noble song is taught us by the myth that Euphemy was the Nurse of the Muses—(her statue was still on Parnassus in Pausanias' time²)—together with that of Linus, who is the master of true dirge music, used in permitted lamentation.

14. And here, in good time, comes to me a note from one of my kindest and best teachers, in old time, in the Greek Vase room of the British Museum,* which points

* Mr. A. S. Murray,³ the first, I believe, of our Greek antiquaries who distinguished, in the British Museum, the vases executed in imitation of archaic forms by late Roman artists, from real Athenian archaic pottery.

¹ [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. pp. 390–392).]

² [Ruskin, relying on memory, says Parnassus for Helicon: see Pausanias, ix. 29, 5, where also the story of Linus is told.]

³ [Alexander Stuart Murray (1841–1904), LL.D., Keeper of Greek and Roman Antiquities at the British Museum, 1886–1904. For another letter from him, see *Love's Meinie*, § 166 n. (Vol. XXV. p. 159). Murray advocated the view, published by Heinrich Brunn in "Probleme in der Geschichte der Vasenmalerei," 1871 (*Abhandl. d. K. Bayer. Akad. d. W.*, 1 classe, xii. 2, p. 87), that a very considerable proportion of the black-figured vases found in Etruria were specially made for the Etruscan market, in the third and second centuries A.D., by late Athenian artists working after Etruria had succumbed to Rome.]

out one fact respecting the physical origin of the music-myths, wholly new to me:—

“On reading your last *Fors* I was reminded of what used to seem to me an inconsistency of the Greeks in assigning so much of a harmonizing influence to music for the practical purposes of education, while in their myths they regularly associated it with competition, and cruel punishment of the loser. The Muses competed with the Sirens—won, and plucked their feathers to make crowns of. Apollo competed with Marsyas—won, and had him flayed alive.¹ Apollo and Pan had a dispute about the merits of their favourite instruments; and Midas, because he decided for Pan, had his ears lengthened at the command of Apollo. The Muses competed with the daughters of Pieros, who failed, and lost their life. It looks as if there had been a Greek Eistedfodd! But, seriously, it is not easy to be confident about an explanation of this mythical feature of Music. As regards Apollo and Marsyas, it is to be observed that Marsyas was a river god, who made the first flute from the reeds of his own river, and thus he would represent the music of flowing water, and of wind in the reeds. Apollo was the god of the music of animate nature; the time of his supremacy was summer. The time when Marsyas had it all his own way was winter. In summer his stream was dried up, and, as the myth says, he was flayed alive. The competition was, then, in the first place, between the music of summer and the music of winter; and, in the second place, between the music of animate nature and that of water and wind. This explanation would also apply to the competition of the Muses and Sirens, since the latter represented the music of the seashore, while the Muses were associated with Apollo, and would represent whatever principle he represented. The myth of the daughters of Pieros is probably only a variant of that of the Sirens. As regards the rivalry of Apollo and Pan, I do not see any satisfactory explanation of it. It was comparatively slight, and the consequences to Midas were not so dreadful after all.”

15. The interpretation here of the punishment of Marsyas as the drying up of the river, whose “stony channel in the sun”² so often, in Greece and Italy, mocks us with memory of sweet waters in the drought of summer, is, as I said, wholly new to me, and, I doubt not, true. And the meaning of the other myths will surely be open enough to the reader who has followed Plato thus far: but one more must be added to complete the cycle of them—the contest of Dionysus with the Tyrrhenian pirates;³—and then we

¹ [For the myth of Marsyas, compare Vol. XIX. p. 343.]

² [Quoted also in *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. p. 174).]

³ [See the *Homeric Hymn* to Dionysus. The story is the subject of the sculptures on the frieze of the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates at Athens, of which casts are in the Elgin Room at the British Museum: see E. T. Cook’s *Popular Handbook to the Greek and Roman Antiquities*, pp. 199, 200.]

have the three orders of the Deities of music throughout the ages of Man,—the Muses, Apollo, and Dionysus,—each with their definite adversaries. The Muses, whose office is the teaching of sacred pleasures to childhood, have for adversaries the Sirens, who teach sinful pleasure; Apollo, who teaches intellectual, or historic, therefore worded, music, to men of middle age, has for adversary Marsyas, who teaches the wordless music of the reeds and rivers; and, finally, Dionysus, who teaches the cheerful music which is to be the wine of old age, has for adversary the commercial pirate, who would sell the god for gain, and drink no wine but gold. And of these three contests, bearing as they do in their issue on all things festive and pantomimic, I reserve discussion for my seventh year's Christmas *Fors*;¹ such discussion being, I hope, likely to prove serviceable to many of my honest friends, who are losing their strength in forbidding men to drink, when they should be helping them to eat;² and cannot for the life of them understand what, long since pointed out to them, they will find irrefragably true, that “the holiness of the parsonage and parson at one end of the village, can only be established in the holiness of the tavern and tapster at the other.”³

¹ [Letter 84, but the discussion is not there given.]

² [Compare Letter 81, § 17, *note (a)*: p. 214.]

³ [Compare Letter 36, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 671); also 84, § 14, and 93, § 9 (below, pp. 295, 474).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

16. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

My general assertion of our prosperity last month¹ referred principally to the accession of new Companions, whose enrolment much encourages me, especially that of one much-regarded friend and Fellow of my college. On the other hand, I have been greatly concerned by the difficulties which naturally present themselves in the first organization of work at Abbey Dale,—the more that these are for the most part attributable to very little and very ridiculous things, which, with all my frankness, I see no good in publishing. The root of all mischief is of course that the Master is out of the way, and the men, in his absence, tried at first to get on by vote of the majority;—it is at any rate to be counted as no small success that they have entirely convinced themselves of the impossibility of getting on in that popular manner; and that they will be glad to see me when I can get there.

17. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

I have nothing interesting to communicate under this head, except that I have been very busy clearing my wood, and chopping up its rotten sticks into faggots;—that I am highly satisfied with the material results of this amusement; and shall be able to keep the smoke from my chimneys this winter of purer blue than usual, at less cost.

18. (III.) I think it well, in connection with what is said in the reply to Mr. Dixon at the opening of this letter, to print, below, part of the article in the *Builder* to which I so gravely recommended my readers' attention last month.² If the writer of that article can conceive of any means by which his sentence, here italicized, could be carried out, short of revolution, other than the means I propose in the action of the St. George's Company,—the steady and irrevocable purchase of the land for the nation by national subscription,—I should be very thankful to hear of them. The organization of a Parliament strong enough even to modify the existing methods of land tenure would *be* revolution.

“Five men own one-fourth of Scotland. One duke owns 96,000 acres in Derbyshire, besides vast estates in other parts of England and in Ireland. Another, with estates all over the United Kingdom, has 40,000 acres in Sussex and 300,000 acres in Scotland. This nobleman's park is fifteen miles in circumference! Another

¹ [See p. 248.]

² [See Letter 82, § 33 (p. 252).]

duke has estates which the highroad divides for twenty-three miles! A marquis there is who can ride a hundred miles in a straight line upon his own land! There is a duke who owns almost an entire county stretching from sea to sea. An earl draws £200,000 every year from his estates in Lancashire. A duke regularly invests £80,000 a year in buying up lands adjoining his already enormous estates. A marquis enjoys £1,000,000 a year from land. An earl lately died leaving to his heirs £1,000,000 sterling and £160,000 a year income from land. The income from land derived by one ducal family of England is £1,600,000, which is increasing every year by the falling in of leases. One hundred and fifty persons own half England, seventy-five persons own half Scotland, thirty-five persons own half Ireland; and all the lands of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland are owned by less than 60,000 persons, and they say to the remaining 32,000,000 of people, 'All this land of Great Britain and Ireland was given to the children of men, and behold we are the Lord's children in possession, and you millions, you go to work!'

"Now, sir, these noblemen and gentlemen might keep their lands for all I cared, provided they would adopt and act upon the old adage, that 'property has its duties as well as its rights'; but, sir, they will never act upon that motto until they are compelled by the loud, long, and united voice of the people. *We must get this land system readjusted*, or revolution is bound to come, within the lifetime of grave and reverend seniors like you and me. The fact is, sir, that a majority of the inhabitants of this country are in a state of squalid poverty,—living in miserable fever dens, without any of the decencies of life,—scarcely ever getting a good meal, and yet they are becoming educated! Cannot others see what this means? Are the dukes, and lords, and baronets, and squires, so blinded by their wealth, the result in too many cases of sacrilege, that they cannot see what is coming? Education and starvation! What will they produce? Why, sir, as sure as two and two make four, they will bring revolution. You have well and truly said, 'Such a question allowed to remain unanswered in another part of Europe has induced revolution, followed by destruction,' and you said this with regard to the London monopolies of property; but, sir, the land monopoly of the provinces must lead to revolution in this part of Europe before very long, and I will attempt to show you why. The land monopoly is at the bottom of all the pauperism, both that which is recognized and that which is unrecognized; for that is the dangerous poverty which does not stoop to parish relief, but bears and resolves in silence."—*Builder*, Aug. 25, 1877.

19. (IV.) *I meant to have given in this Fors* the entire speech of the Angel of the Church of Manchester,¹ at the banquet whose deliciousness inspired that superb moral peroration of Mr. Bright, which I hope entered profoundly into the pleased stomachs of the Corporation.² But—it has been the will of Fors that I should mislay the Manchester Angel's speech

¹ [For Ruskin's use of the word "Angel" in this connexion, see Letters 70, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 721), and 84, § 16 (below, p. 296). For the Bishop of Manchester's speech on the occasion in question, see Vol. XXII. p. 515 *n.*]

² [In this speech (delivered at the banquet to celebrate the opening of the new Town Hall, September 13, 1877), Bright reminded his audience that "Great cities have fallen before Manchester was known—

'Venice, lost and won,
Her 1300 years of freedom done,
Sinks like the seaweed out of which she rose.'

Assembled as we are in this gorgeous apartment, partaking of this profuse banquet, let us not forget the perils which we may meet. Let Manchester, which is, I hold,

—and find, instead, among a heap of stored papers this extract respecting Episcopal Revenues, from No. 1 of “Humanitarian Tracts” on “Past and Passing Events, the Church, Modern Jesuitism, Church Lands, and the Rights of Property, published by John Hopper, Bishopwearmouth.”¹ Not feeling complete confidence in the Humanitarian and Hopperian account of these things, I sent the subjoined extract to a reverend friend, requesting him to ascertain and let me know the truth. His reply follows the accusation; but it will be seen that the matter requires further probing; and I would fain advise my antiquarian friends that it would be better service to history, at this moment, if any faithful investigator,—Mr. Froude, for instance,—would lay the whole subject clearly before the public, than any labours among the chronicles, or ruins, of St. Albans or any other abbey, are likely to render,² unless they were undertaken in a spirit which could read the silence, as well as the utterance, of the great Ages. Thus then, the Humanitarian:—

“On the 1st of August, 1848, Mr. Horsman, in the House of Commons, speaking on Temporalities and Church-leases, said: ‘I believe few people have any idea of the value of the episcopal and capitular estates. No return of them has ever been made. . . . It is known, however, that these estates are immense When the Committee on Church Leases was sitting in 1838, it attempted to get returns of the actual value of these leased estates. From some of the prelates and dignitaries they did receive them; others indignantly refused.

| | Per annum. |
|--|----------------|
| The present Archbishop of Canterbury (then Bishop of Chester) returned his income at | £3,951 |
| But the rental of his leased estate was | 16,236 |
| Making a difference of | <hr/> £12, 285 |
| The Archbishop of York returned his income at | £13, 798 |
| Actual rental | 41, 030 |
| Making a difference of | <hr/> £27,232 |
| The then Archbishop of Canterbury returned his income at | £22,216 |
| Actual rental | 52,000 |
| Making a difference of | <hr/> £29,784 |

of the very foremost of our great cities, as she has done in the past, contribute her share in that wisdom which in all times is the sure foundation of the permanent prosperity and of the true grandeur of States.”]

¹ [For an obituary notice of John Hopper, see Letter 57, § 11 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 414).]

² [The reference is to Froude’s paper entitled “Annals of an English Abbey”: see Letter 88 (below, p. 390 and *n.*).]

Next, my clerical friend's letter:—

“April 4, 1876.

“DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—It is with great disappointment that I return your pamphlet and paper, without being able to give a satisfactory answer to the charge against the Bishops of 1839. I have tried and waited patiently, and tried again, but people now know little, and care less, for what then happened, and my name is not influential enough to get the information from officials who alone can supply it.

“You must forgive my obstinacy if I still doubt whether the difference went into the Bishops' pockets! My doubts are the more confirmed by examining other assertions made in the pamphlet at random. I venture to send you such statistics as I have been able to gather in reply to the main argument of the tract, should you think it worth your while to read them.”

20. Having no interest in the “general argument” of the pamphlet, but only in its very definite and stern charges against the Bishops, I did not trouble myself with their statistics; but wrote to another friend, my most helpful and kind Mr. F. S. Ellis, of New Bond Street, who presently procured for me the following valuable letter and essential documents; but, as it always happens, somehow, we have not got at the main point,—the difference, if any, between the actual and alleged incomes. For decision of which I again refer myself, humbly, to the historians of this supereminently glorious, pious, and well-informed century.

“The Grove, 21st September, 1875.

“DEAR SIR,—I find, on referring to Hansard, that the report of Mr. Horsman's speech on pp. 22, 23 of the pamphlet, is substantially, but *not verbally*, accurate. Some only of the figures are quoted by him, but not in the way in which they are placed in the pamphlet. With this I hand you extracts from printed returns covering the range of the figures on p. 23 of the pamphlet, and also giving the incomes finally assigned to the various Sees.

“I am, dear Sir, faithfully yours,
“Fred. W. Foster.

“F. S. ELLIS, ESQ.,
“New Bond Street, London.”

Parliamentary Reports from Committees, 1839, vol. viii., pp. 237–376.

Report from the Select Committee on Church Leases, etc. Ordered to be printed 6th May 1839. No. 247.

Page 40. The total annual value of the property let on leases by the Archbishop of Canterbury—£52,086, 1s.

Return dated 23rd February, 1839.

Parliamentary Reports from Committees, 1837–38, vol. ix.

Report from the Select Committee on Church Leases, etc. Ordered to be printed 7th Aug., 1838. No. 692.

Page 560. The aggregate net annual value of lands and tithes in Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire, held by lease, under the See of York:—

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| Three leases | £2,546 |
| | 6,350 |
| | 33,134 |
| | <hr/> |
| Return dated 28th July, 1838, | £42,030 |

Parliamentary Reports from Committees, 1837–38, vol. ix.

Report from the Select Committee on Church Leases, etc. Ordered to be printed 7th Aug., 1838. No. 692.

Page 566. The annual value of the property belonging to the See of Chester, and which is let on lives, is £15,526; on years, £710. Total, £16,236.

Return dated 25th July, 1838.

| Sees. | Total Amount of the average gross Yearly Income of the See, and of the Ecclesiastical Preferments (if any) permanently or accustomably annexed thereto. | Permanent Payments out of the Revenues of the See. | Yearly Net subject to temporary charges (if any) stated below. |
|----------------------|---|--|--|
| Canterbury | £22,216 | £3,034 | £19,182* |
| York | 13,798 | 1,169 | 12,629 |
| Chester | 3,951 | 690 | 3,261 |
| Total of the 27 Sees | 181,631 | | 160,292 |
| Average. | 6,727 | . | 5,936 |

By an Order in Council passed 25th August, 1871, and gazetted 19th Sept., 1851, the annual incomes assigned to the various Sees was as follows:—

| | |
|--|----------|
| Canterbury | £15,000 |
| York, London | 10,000 |
| Durham | 8,000 |
| Winchester | 7,000 |
| Ely | 5,500 |
| Bath and Wells, Exeter, Gloucester and Bristol, Lincoln, Oxford, Rochester, Salisbury, Worcester. | 5,000 |
| Carlisle, Chester, St. David's, Lichfield, Norwich, Peterborough, Ripon. | 4,500 |
| St. Asaph, Bangor, Chichester, Hereford, Llandaff, Manchester. | 4,200 |
| Total | £152,200 |
| Average. | £5,637 |

Parliamentary Accounts and Papers, 1837, vol. xli., pp. 223–320.—A return of the clear annual revenue of every Archbishopric, Bishopric, etc., according to the Report of the Commissioners appointed by the King to inquire into the Ecclesiastical Revenues of England and Wales, on an average of three years, ending 31st Dec., 1831, etc. Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 25th April, 1837. No. 240. (1s.)¹

21. (V.) I can no more vouch for any of the statements in the following newspaper article than I can for those of the pamphleteer of Bishopwearmouth. But that such statements should have been publicly made,

* Temporary charge; repayment of mortgage, the principal by instalments, and interest; making a yearly payment of about £3780. The interest decreases at the rate of £60 every year. Final payment to be made in 1873.

¹ [For further correspondence on this subject, see Letter 85, § 10 (p. 327).]

and, so far as I know, without contradiction, is a fact to be noted in *Fors*. I have omitted much useless newspaper adornment, and substituted one or two clearer words in the following article, which may be seen in its entirety in *Christian Life* for 1st September, 1877.¹

“DIZZINESS IN HIGH PLACES.—Kells is in Ireland; and his Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, who is at present recreating himself in that country, has been at Kells. In Kells there is a branch of the Protestant Orphan Society, and this branch has held a meeting, presided over by a prelate of Unitarian ancestry, Bishop Plunket, of Meath. The meeting was further dignified by the presence of his Grace.

“However, it seems there was something to get over before Kells could enter with proper rapture into the unwonted delight of welcoming a Primate of All England. A whisper had run abroad that the Archbishop had not been the best of friends to the Episcopalianism of the Green Isle. It was muttered that he had gone for disestablishment—at least, when disestablishment was kept at a safe distance from the State Church of England. It was even alleged by some unscrupulous spirits, that Canterbury’s voice had been heard to second Earl Granville’s motion for the second reading of the Bill. The right reverend chairman set this calumny at rest. Dr. Plunket assured the Episcopalianism of Kells that his Grace had always been a warm lover of their Church, and had never seconded the dreadful Bill. Technically, no doubt, this was perfectly true; Dr. Tait was not Earl Granville’s seconder. If the Archbishop had been content to let the disclaimer rest where his disestablished brother had placed it, the occasion would have excited no comment from the critics of the Irish press; but his Grace, still feeling uneasy under the cruel aspersions of rumour, must needs go further, and in a short speech of his own he boldly declared that if he had been accused of murder he could not have been more astonished than to hear it reported that ‘he had individually helped to pull down the old Established Church of Ireland.’ Of all the public measures carried in his time none did he more deeply deplore than that which removed it from the position it had so long occupied; and he was happy to say that he had endeavoured to do what he could to mitigate the blow when it fell.

“The *Northern Whig* has been at the pains to look up ‘Hansard’ on the point at issue, and reports the result as follows: ‘It is certain that when Lord Granville moved the second reading of the Bill in the House of Lords, on 14th June, 1869, the Archbishop of Canterbury spoke in favour of the Bill, and against an amendment proposed by Lord Harrowby and seconded by the Duke of Rutland. He wanted amendments, all of them with a pecuniary effect introduced into it, and said it could be made a good Bill, for which the people would bless God that they had a House of Lords. He likewise supported Lord Cairns’ compromise, which Lord Derby stigmatized as “an unconditional surrender,” and a concession of the very principle of the Bill; and he did not sign Lord Derby’s protest against it. While thirteen English bishops voted against the Irish Church Bill, his Grace, together with the late Bishop Wilberforce, did not vote at all. This is the true state of the case.’

“We call attention to this discrepancy between the Archiepiscopal acts and the Archiepiscopal account of them with unfeigned sorrow and concern. Nothing presents itself to us as a more melancholy feature of the public *morale* of our time than the indulgence accorded of late years to a scandalously immoral species of public distortion of well-known or well-ascertainable facts. Of this the worst example

¹ [Those who desire to know the truth of this matter (by no means fairly given in this newspaper extract) should refer to ch. xiv. (vol. ii. pp. 1 *seq.*) in the *Life of Archibald Campbell Tait*, by Randall Davidson. Tait’s speech on the Second Reading is summarised on pp. 29–31.]

has long been notorious in the most conspicuous place. Mr. Chamberlain once outraged all etiquette in his denunciation of it, but his indignation, however uncouth in form, was universally felt to be neither undeserved nor ill-timed. A pernicious example is sure sooner or later to tell. Our public men are now being educated in a school which easily condones on the ground of personal convenience the most flagrant breaches of the law of truth. The chief minister of the Church follows in the tortuous path which has long been a favourite resort of the chief Minister of the State. It was not always so. English public men were once pre-eminently distinguished for the lofty, open honour of their public speech. The moral scorn and loathing with which, for example, a quarter of a century ago men regarded Louis Napoleon's worthless word, bids fair to become an extinct sentiment. Straightforwardness is a foolish old-fashioned habit, a custom we have outgrown. 'We have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves.' We repeat this is the most serious symptom of our times. The newspapers which have been speculating as to the disasters which are to flow, after a thousand years, from England's future want of coal, would do better to inquire into the far greater disasters which threaten at our door through England's present lack of supreme reverence for truth."

22. (VI.) Part of a letter from a Companion, connected with our present subject in its illustration of other modes of clerical revenue:—

"Some four or five years ago, I made acquaintance with a girl whom I used to see often at church, and whom I watched and admired, and pitied. She was about eighteen years of age,—always pale,—always very poorly dressed indeed,—always came to church in a hurry. But her voice was delicious in the psalms; and she was delicate and pretty, with such evident enthusiastic devotion to church-services, and such an air of modest self-sufficiency, that I could not let her alone, for curiosity. I tried to catch her going out of church, but she walked too fast. I tried to waylay her coming in, but her self-possessed air of reserve kept me off. Until at last, one evening, a lingering of people in the porch about some testimonial matter for a young curate who was going away, kept her a minute or two near me. I was not at all interested in the testimonial, but I said to her,—the little crowd and general air of sympathy giving me courage,—'I do not think of subscribing, do you?' 'Yes; certainly she did,'—with quite a glow of emphatic fervour. I pretended to need persuasion and conviction about my intention; and we walked along together. And I learnt,—besides the wonderful perfections of the curate in Sunday-school teaching, etc.—that she was a machinist in a large draper's and clothier's shop; that she earned very few shillings a week; that she had a mother dependent on her earnings; that she worked in an upper room with many more—I think about twenty—women; that just then they suffered very much from cold, and more from bad air, as they had to keep the windows shut; and that she worked from seven in the morning till seven at night. (Imagine it amid the noise of twenty sewing-machines—the dust and disagreeableness of material in the course of being made—the dismal surroundings—the outside prospect of chimney-pots. What a life!) The proprietor of this paradise—the shopkeeper—was a churchwarden, or something official, at the same church.

"The remedy in this case might have been found in two ways. The curate—so gratefully remembered, but who could not, by reason of the veil of poverty and care she wore, or who dared not, by reason of his goodishness, have rendered her any help as to a sister—might have, in proper parish service, exposed the state of things at the shop, and asked for subscriptions for the master of it to enable his servants to have warmth and fresh air at least. Or the man himself, properly preached to, made to give his work-girls three times as much for half their work, and to provide them a work-room, healthy and pretty. I am sure that clergymen—very ordinary ones—might, with honesty, do little miracles like these."

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23. (VII.) The next two articles I leave without comment. They are illustrations, needing none, of false and true methods of education.

“August 9, 1877.

“DEAR MASTER,—You asked to know more about the ‘bondage’ in which Government teachers worked—referring to Miss—in particular. The enclosed (written independently, and more fully than usual, on that point) gives just the illustration I could have wished.” (Illustration lost, but the commentary is the essential matter.)

“Now you will let me comment upon the sentence in this letter.—‘I cannot teach as if I were a machine: I must put life into my work, or let it alone.’ This comes at once to the special grievance, felt by all those of us (I do not at all know how many this includes) who *care* for their children. *They* are ‘lively,’ if they are anything; and we discover, sooner or later, that our one duty as teachers is to crush life in every form and whenever showing itself. I do not mean to say that the ‘Education Department’ *aims* at this result; but it follows inevitably from the ‘pressure’ put upon teachers who, crammed, *not* ‘trained,’ themselves (I speak from painful experience as to the so-called ‘Training Colleges’), almost necessarily perpetuate the evil: the better sort groaning under it, and trying to free themselves and their children; the rest, groaning too, but accepting their fate, and tightening the chains of those under them. I believe Miss—would agree to this as too generally true.”

(VIII.) “I paid a visit last week to aged neighbours—known here as the ‘Old Shepherd,’ and the ‘Old Shepherd’s Wife.’ I only found the old lady at home, and she was exceedingly pleased with a poor little gift I took her, and began at once to tell me how well both she and he were at present. They look *very* old, but that may be their hard life, in this trying climate. But she told me she had been more than fifty years married, and had been so happy with her kind, good man; and then she added, so earnestly, ‘And I’m happy yet—just as happy as happy can be.’ They have never had any children themselves; ‘but I’ve had bairns as much on my knee as if I’d had o’ my ain,’ she added. For she first brought up a motherless niece of her own; and then, when *she* had married and died, leaving one baby girl, she went to Edinburgh and took baby, and has reared her, though ‘she put on ten years to my age, she was that fractious and ill to bring thro’!’ The child is now ten years old, and goes to a Board School near. They are well off for their position,—have a cottage, which they let in summer, and a garden, well cared for. Both have been industrious and economical all their lives. And yet, could many of the idler class declare honestly they are so happy and contented?”

24. (IX.) In justice to the Manchester Corporation, Rhadamanthus commands me to print what they have got to say for themselves anent their proposed speculation in Thirlmere, adding a delightful little note of Mr. Anderson’s.

“Those who wish to further the scheme answer this charge by the declaration that they are but using prudent foresight with a view to future needs. They admit the commercial value of fine scenery as a means of bringing tourists to a district, but assert that when once this enormous reservoir is made, many more persons will go to see it than would ever travel in search of any beauty of lake or mountain, and that it will, in point of fact, greatly enhance the charm of the scenery. They kindly, if not judiciously, promise to take the greatest care to ‘add to the beautification of the surroundings.’ If the little church of Wythburn

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should be submerged, they will build another, of a prettier pattern, a little higher up the hill, and carry the gravestones up to a fresh bit of ground. 'The old road,' they think, 'may be relegated to the deeps without a murmur, especially as it is the intention of the Waterworks Committee to substitute [*sic*] the present tortuous up-and-down track by a straight road, cut on a level line around the slopes of Helvellyn. Below it, the lake, enlarged to more than twice its present dimensions, will assume a grandeur of appearance in more striking accordance with its majestic surroundings.' These lovers of the picturesque regret feelingly that 'the embankment at the north end will not be seen from the highway, in consequence of the intervention of a wooded hill. This,' they say, 'is a circumstance which may be regretted by tourists in search of the beautiful in nature and the wonderful in art, as the embankment will be of stupendous height and strength, and by scattering a few large boulders over its front, and planting a few trees in the midst of them, it will be made to have an exact resemblance to its surroundings if indeed it does not approach in grandeur to its proud neighbour the Raven Crag,' etc."—*Spectator*.¹

"I have a translation for 'oestrus' in the connection you use it in *Fors*.² Mad dogs do not *shun* water, but rush to, and wallow in it, though they cannot drink. It is a mortal 'hydrophobia' begotten among the uncleansed iniquities of Manchester."—(J. Reddie Anderson.)

25. (X.) Farther most precious notes on the real causes of the Indian Famine:³—

"EXPORTS AND FAMINE.—Some of the former famines of India were famines of money rather than of corn, as we have pointed out on several previous occasions. Now there is a veritable famine of corn—of money there is always more or less a famine there, so far as the great bulk of the population is concerned. But in the midst of this famine of corn—under the dreadful pressure of which the helpless people die by hundreds of thousands—there goes on a considerable exportation of corn, and it becomes imperatively necessary to send back a corresponding quantity, at largely enhanced prices for the profits of the merchants, and at the cost of British philanthropy and the national funds. The force of folly can no further go! This blemish on our statesmanship will be recorded to the bewilderment of the historians of posterity, who will be amazed at our stupidity, and at the weakness of the Government that, in the face of a famine so dreadful, has neither heart nor power to enforce a better 'political economy,' or to restrain the cupidity which, like the unclean vulture, fattens on death and decay.

"During the year 1876 India exported to the ports of the United Kingdom 3,087,236 cwt. of wheat. The significance of this quantity will be apparent when we consider that importations from Germany were only 2,324,148 cwt., from Egypt 2,223,238 cwt., and British North America 2,423,183 cwt. Russia, which was at one time our principal granary, exported 8,880,628 cwt., which shows our imports of Indian wheat were considerably more than one-third of those from Russia, while the United States sent us 19,323,052 cwt., the supply from India being about one-sixth; a remarkable result for a trade in the very earliest stages of its development.

"With regard to the growth of wheat, it is important to observe that it has been confined to the last few years, and has been remarkably rapid. It has in fact been during the period in which the modern famines have been rife. Not that we would argue that the export of wheat and other grain is the cause of famine.

1 [From an article entitled "Manchester and the Meres," September 8, 1877.]

2 [See Letter 82, § 6 *n.* (p. 226).]

3 [See above, p. 208.]

We have already indicated the wretched finance of the country, which keeps the agricultural classes in hopeless bondage to the village usurers, as the fruitful cause. *But this export of corn from a famishing land is a phenomenon of political rule and of paternal government, which it has been reserved for this Mammon-stricken age to illustrate. No ancient statesmanship would have been guilty of such cruel maladministration or such weakness.* The Great Moguls would have settled the business in a sterner and a better fashion. They would not have been content with administering a few blows with a stick to the unlucky wight who brought tidings of disaster, but would have peremptorily laid an embargo on the export of corn as a first necessity in times of famine, and would have hung up side by side the merchants who dared to sin against, a law so just and necessary, with the usurers whose exactions paralysed agricultural industry, and denuded the fields of the crops. We neither take the preventative measures which the government of our predecessors devised, nor do we, when the famines actually come, take the measures of ordinary prudence to alleviate their horrors. This is, indeed, the age of Mammon, and its licentious cupidity must not be restrained. Buy in the cheapest market, and sell in the dearest, is its invariable maxim, and with fiendish pertinacity it claims its privilege among the dying and the dead. Thus it sweeps off from the famishing crowds the meagre crop which has escaped the ravages of drought and usury, and it brings it home to English ports to compete with American importations in our markets, or to send it back to India at prices which yield enormous profits to the adventurers. But this superior wisdom, and this hardened selfishness, is right, for it is sanctioned by Adam Smith.

“But it is not to England alone that this export is made; to Ceylon, the Mauritius, and the West India Islands, constant shipments are going on, and according to statistics that are before us, in the six months 1873–4, nearly 380,000 of wheat, grain, etc., were shipped from Bengal alone to the above-named places—enough to have filled with plenty, for two full months at least, the mouths of the wretched creatures who were perishing at that time. It is said that in 1873 Ceylon alone imported from the districts that are now famine-stricken 7,000,000 bushels of grain, and yet Ceylon is unsurpassed on this planet as a fruitful garden; it contains about 12 or 13 millions of acres, more or less, of fine arable land; it has a delicious climate, and abundant rainfall, and yet it has less than a million of acres under grain crop, and draws its chief supplies from India, while the land-owners refuse to cultivate the land they hold, or to sell the land they will not cultivate.”—*Monetary Gazette*, Sept. 1.

26. “What is it that reduces to insensibility in woman this Divine instinct of maternal tenderness? It is the hardening influences of Mammon, and the pressure which the accursed domination of the Demon of the Money power brings to bear on every order of society. If it be a fact that women, even in the ranks of respectability, murder their unborn infants, it is because the pressure of the time reduces them to despair, and this fearful strain has its origin in nothing else than the Mammon of unrighteousness, which is a grinding tyranny, and a standing menace to the noblest sentiments of our nature, and the dearest interests of society. It hardens every heart, extinguishes every hope, and impels to crime in every direction. Nor do the soft influences of womanhood, nor the sanctities of maternity, escape its blighting curse.”

“We quote—with our cordial acknowledgement of the diligence that has compiled the figures—from a paper read by Stephen Bourne, F.S.S., before the Manchester Statistical Society:—

“For the present purpose I commence with 1857, as being just twenty years back, and the first also of the peaceful era which followed on the termination of the Crimean War. In that year the total value of the foreign and colonial goods retained for consumption in this country amounted to £164,000,000, of which 64 was for articles of food, 82 for raw materials for manufacture, and 18 for manufactured articles. Last year, these amounts were a total of £319,000,000, of which

159 was for food, 119 raw materials, and 41 other, from which it will appear that 39 per cent. of the whole in the former year, and 50 per cent. In the latter, went for food. In making this separation of food from other articles, it is not possible to be absolutely correct, for so many substances admit of a twofold use; take, for instance, olive oil, which is actually used both as food and in manufactures, or the fat of animals, which may appear on our table at meal-times for food, or in the shape of candles to lighten its darkness. Again, it may be asked, What is food? Meat and tobacco are totally different in their use or abuse, but both enter the mouth and are there consumed; both, therefore, are classed under this head, together with wines, spirits, etc. . . . As it would be unsafe to take for comparison the amount of either in a single year, an average for the first and last three years has been worked out, showing that whilst the number of consumers had increased from $28\frac{1}{3}$ to $32\frac{3}{4}$ millions, the food furnished from abroad had advanced from 59 to 153, a growth of the one by 16, of the other by 160 per cent. This means that on an average each member of the community now consumes to the value of two and a half times as much foreign food as he did twenty years back, somewhere about £5 for £2.'—*Monetary Gazette*, Aug. 25.

27. (XI). The following account of “Talbot village” is sent me in a pamphlet without date. I am desirous of knowing the present condition and likelihood of matters there, and of answers to the questions asked in notes.

“Talbot Village, which is situate about two miles to the north of Bournemouth, stands on a high and breezy level in Dorset, and on the confines of Hampshire, commanding a magnificent view on all sides.

“The enclosure of the village comprehends about 465 acres, of which 150 acres lie open and uncultivated for the cattle of the farmers and recreation of the cottagers in the village. There are five farms, (a) with suitable houses and outhouses, and nineteen cottages, each of which has an acre of ground attached. In the village stands a handsome block of stone buildings, which embraces seven distinct and separate houses, (b) all together known as ‘Talbot Almshouses.’ In addition, there is a school-house, in combination with an excellent house and garden for the use of the master. Further, the village contains a church, which stands in a churchyard of three acres; in the tower of the church is a clock with chimes.

“There is one house in the village devoted to the purposes of a general shop, but all beer-houses are strictly prohibited.

“So much by way of brief description of a village which attracts the observation of all visitors to Bournemouth.

“Previously to 1842, the whole of the country now comprising the village was a wild moor, the haunt of smugglers and poachers. About that time the late Miss Georgina Talbot, of Grosvenor Square, paid a visit to Bournemouth, then in its infancy. Her attention, was drawn to the wretched state of the labouring population of the district, and her first impulse was to encourage industry and afford them employment. She first rented some land, and set men (who were for the most part leading vagrant lives) (c) to work to improve it. Many of the more influential people in the neighbourhood of that day thought her views Utopian, and were disposed to ridicule them; Miss Talbot, however, had deeply considered the subject,

(a) What rent is paid for these farms, and to whom?

(b) The “village,” as far as I can make it out, consists of nineteen cottages, seven poor-houses, a church, a schoolhouse, and a shop. If this be meant for an ideal of the village of the future, is not the proportion of poor-house to dwelling-house somewhat large?

(c) These were not afterwards taken for settlers, I suppose?

and was not to be discouraged; and observing how wretchedly the poor (*d*) were housed, determined to build suitable cottages, to each of which should be attached an acre of land. Steadily progressing, Miss Talbot continued to acquire land, and eventually (in addition to other land in Hampshire) became the possessor of the district which is now known as 'Talbot Village.' The almshouses before referred to were then built for the benefit of the aged (*e*) of the district who had ceased to be able to work, and the schoolhouse for the benefit of the young of the village. Having succeeded in laying out the whole village to her satisfaction, Miss Talbot's mind began to consider how these benefits should be permanently secured to the objects of her bounty; and, accordingly, the almshouses were endowed by an investment in the Funds, and the village, with the almshouses, vested in Lord Portman, the late Lord Wolverton, and three other gentlemen, and their successors, upon trusts in furtherance of the settlor's views. When this had been accomplished, it became necessary to provide a church and place of sepulture, and three acres of land were set apart for the purpose; but before the church could be completed and fit for consecration, Miss Talbot's sudden death occurred; and it is a remarkable circumstance, that this lady was the first to be interred in the ground she had appropriated for burials. Those who have visited the spot cannot have failed to see the tomb erected by her sister, the present Miss Talbot.

"This lady completed the church and its various appliances, and supplied all that her sister could have desired. The church itself has been supplied with a heating apparatus, an organ, and musical service; a clock with chimes, (*f*) arranged for every day in the week; a pulpit of graceful proportions, and an ancient font brought from Rome. On the interior walls of the church have been placed texts of Scripture, revised and approved by Wilberforce, Bishop of Winchester, and Stanley, Dean of Westminster.

"Before concluding a brief account of 'Talbot Village,' we must add that the whole is managed by trustees, under the judicious and far-seeing views of the founder. The rent of each cottage and garden is limited to £6 per annum, free of rates and taxes, and no lodger is allowed, so that there may be no possible overcrowding. The objects of the almshouses are strictly defined, and rules regulating the inmates are to be found on the walls. To sum up the whole, everything has been devised by Miss Georgina Talbot, seconded by the present Miss Talbot, to ensure a contented, virtuous, and happy community.

"It is an instance of success attending the self-denying efforts of a most estimable lady, and, it is to be hoped, may prove an incentive to others to 'go and do likewise.'

"M. KEMP-WELCH,

"*One of the Trustees.*"

(*d*) What poor? and what wages are now paid by the farmers to the cottagers?

(*e*) If for the benefit of the *destitute*, it had been well; but the aged are, in right human life, the chief treasure of the household.

(*f*) The triumphant mention of this possession of the village twice over, induces me to hope the chimes are in tune. I see it asserted in a book which seems of good authority that chimes in England are not usually required to possess this merit.¹ But better things are surely in store for us!—see last article of Correspondence.

¹ [Ruskin probably refers to Rev. H. T. Ellacombe's *Practical Remarks on Belfries and Ringers*, 1850, where at p. 10 "miserable work" in jangling bells is spoken of as too frequent in England. It was not a new fault, for the Rev. W. C. Lukis, in his *Account of Church Bells*, 1857, p. 40, cites a foreign traveller, Paul Hentzner (1550–1560), who says the "people of England are vastly fond of great noises that fill the ear, such as firing of cannon, beating of drums, and the ringing of bells."]

I beg that it may be understood that in asking for farther information on these matters, I have no intention whatever of decrying Miss Talbot's design; and I shall be sincerely glad to know of its ultimate success. But it is of extreme importance that a lady's plaything, if it should turn out to be nothing more, should not be mistaken for a piece of St. George's work, nor cast any discredit on that work by its possible failure.

28. (XII.) Fors is evidently in great good-humour with me, just now; see what a lovely bit of illustration of Sirenic Threnodia, brought to final perfection, she sends me to fill the gap in this page with:—

“Here's a good thing for *Fors*.¹ A *tolling*-machine has been erected at the Ealing cemetery at the cost of £80, and seems to give universal satisfaction. It was calculated that this method of doing things would (at 300 funerals a year), be in the long run cheaper than paying a man threepence an hour to ring the bell. Thus we mourn for the departed!—L. J. H.”²

¹ [Ruskin used the “good thing” in his Oxford lectures also: see *Readings in Modern Painters*, § 7 (Vol. XXII. p. 510).]

² [Laurence Hilliard; for whom, see Vol. XIII. p. 400, and Vol. XXV. p. xxiv.]

LETTER 84

THE LAST WORDS OF THE VIRGIN

“THEY HAVE NO WINE.”
“WHATSOEVER HE SAITH UNTO YOU, DO IT.”¹

BRANTWOOD, 29th Oct., 1877.

1. THESE, the last recorded words of the Mother of Christ, and the only ones recorded during the period of His ministry (the “desiring to see thee”² being told Him by a stranger’s lips), I will take, with due pardon asked of faithful protestant readers, for the motto, since they are the sum, of all that I have been permitted to speak, in God’s name, now these seven years.³

The first sentence of these two, contains the appeal of the workman’s wife, to her son, for the help of the poor of all the earth.

The second, the command of the Lord’s mother, to the people of all the earth, that they should serve the Lord.

2. This day last year, I was walking with a dear friend,⁴ and resting long, laid on the dry leaves, in the sunset, under the vineyard-trellises of the little range of hills which, five miles west of Verona, look down on the Lago di Garda at about the distance from its shore that Cana is from the Lake of Galilee;—(the Madonna had walked to the bridal some four miles and a half). It was a Sunday evening, golden and calm; all the vine leaves quiet; and the soft clouds held at pause in the west, round the mountains that

1 [John ii. 3, 5.]

2 [Luke viii. 20.]

3 [Since the commencement of *Fors*.]

4 [Perhaps Mr. C. H. Moore (for whom, see Vol. XXIV. p. xli.), as on the envelope containing the MS. of this Letter Ruskin wrote, “MS. of last *Fors Clavigera* of the seven years, kept for Mr. C. Moore.”]

Virgil knew so well, blue above the level reeds of Mincio.¹ But we had to get under the crest of the hill, and lie down under cover, as if avoiding an enemy's fire, to get out of hearing of the discordant practice in fanfaronade, of the military recruits of the village,—modern Italy, under the teaching of the Marsyas² of Mincio, delighting herself on the Lord's day in that, doubtless, much civilized, but far from mellifluous, manner; triumphing that her monasteries were now for the most part turned into barracks, and her chapels into stables. We, for our own part, in no wise exultant nor exhilarated, but shrinking down under the shelter of the hill, and shadows of its fruitful roofs, talked, as the sun went down.

3. We talked of the aspect of the village which had sent out its active life, marching to these new melodies; and whose declining life we had seen as we drove through it, half-an-hour before. An old, far-straggling village, its main street following the brow of the hill, with gardens at the backs of the houses, looking towards the sacred mountains and the uncounted towers of purple Verona.

If ever peace, and joy, and sweet life on earth might be possible for men, it is so here, and in such places,—few, on the wide earth, but many in the bosom of infinitely blessed, infinitely desolate Italy. Its people were sitting at their doors, quietly working—the women at least,—the old men at rest behind them. A worthy and gentle race; but utterly poor, utterly untaught the things that in *this* world make for their peace.³ Taught anciently, other things, by the steel of Ezzelin;⁴ taught anew the same lesson, by the victor of Arcola, and the vanquished of Solferino,⁵—and the supreme evil risen on the ruin of both.

There they sate—the true race of Northern Italy, mere

¹ [Compare Vol. XXIV. p. 456 and *n.*]

² [See above, p. 271.]

³ [See Romans xiv. 19.]

⁴ [See Vol. XXVII. p. 241.]

⁵ [For Napoleon's victory at Arcola (1796), see Vol. XVI. p. 67 *n.*; for another mention of the defeat of the Austrians at Solferino (1859), Vol. XXVII. p. 320.]

prey for the vulture,—patient, silent, hopeless, careless: infinitude of accustomed and bewildered sorrow written in every line of their faces, unnerving every motion of their hands, slackening the spring in all their limbs. And their blood has been poured out like water, age after age, and risen round the wine-press, even to the horse-bridles.¹ And of the peace on earth, and the goodwill towards men,² which He who trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with Him³—died to bring them, they have heard by the hearing of the ear,—their eyes have not seen.

“They have no wine.”

4. But He Himself has been always with them,⁴ though they saw Him not, and they have had the deepest of His blessings. “Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”⁵ And in the faith of these, and such as these,—in the voiceless religion and uncomplaining duty of the peasant races, throughout Europe,—is now that Church on earth, against which the gates of Hell shall not prevail.⁶ And on the part taken in ministry to them, or in oppressing them, depends now the judgment between the righteous and the wicked servant, which the Lord, who has so long delayed His coming, will assuredly now, at no far-off time, require.

“But and if that servant shall say in his heart, ‘My Lord delayeth His coming’⁷—

Shall I go on writing?—We have all read the passage so often that it falls on our thoughts unfelt, as if its words were dead leaves. We will write and read it more slowly to-day—so please you.

5. “Who then is a faithful and wise servant whom his

¹ [See Revelation xiv. 20.]

² [Luke ii. 14.]

³ [Isaiah lxiii. 3.]

⁴ [See Matthew xxviii. 20.]

⁵ [John xx. 29.]

⁶ [Compare Matthew xvi. 18.]

⁷ [See Matthew xxiv. 48, though Ruskin here gives St. Luke’s version (xii. 45).]

Lord hath made ruler over His household, to give them their meat in due season?"¹

Over *His* household,—He probably having His eyes upon it, then, whether *you* have or not. But He has made you ruler over it, that you may give it meat, in due season. Meat—literally, first of all. And that seasonably, according to laws of duty, and not of chance. You are not to leave such giving to chance, still less to take advantage of chance, and buy the meat when meat is cheap, that you may “in due season” sell it when meat is dear. You don’t see that in the parable? No, you cannot find it. ‘Tis not in the bond.² You will find something else is not in the bond too, presently.

But at least this is plain enough, that you are to give meat—when it is due. “Yes, spiritual meat—but not mutton”? Well, then—dine first on spiritual meat yourself. Whatever is on your own table, be it spiritual or fleshly, of *that* you are to distribute; and are made a ruler that you may distribute, and not live only to consume. You say I don’t speak plain English, and you don’t understand what I mean. It doesn’t matter what I mean,—but if Christ hasn’t put that plain enough for you—you had better go learn to read.

6. “Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that He shall make him ruler over all His goods.”³

A vague hope, you think, to act upon? Well, if you only act on such hope, you will never either know, or get, what it means. No one but Christ can tell what *all* His goods are; and you have no business to mind, yet; for it is not the getting of these, but the doing His work, that you must care for yet awhile. Nevertheless, at spare times, it is no harm that you wonder a little where He has gone to, and what He is doing; and He has given you at least some hint of that, in another place.

“Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning,

¹ [Matthew xxiv. 45.]

² [*Merchant of Venice*, Act iv. sc. 1.]

³ [Matthew xxiv. 46, 47.]

and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, *when He shall return from the wedding.*"¹ Nor a hint of it merely, but you may even hear, at quiet times, some murmur and syllabbling of its music in the distance—"The Spirit, and the Bride, say, Come."²

7. "But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, 'My Lord delayeth His coming,' and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken—"³

To "smite"—too fine a word: it is, quite simply, to "strike"—that same verb which every Eton boy used to have (and mercifully) smitten into him.—You smite nobody now—boy or man—for their good, and spare the rod of *correction*. But you smite *unto death* with a will. What is the ram of an ironclad for?

"To eat and drink *with* the drunken." Not drunk himself—the upper servant; too well bred, he; but countenancing the drink that does not overcome him,—a goodly public tapster; charging also the poor twenty-two shillings for half-a-crown's worth of the drink he draws for them;⁴ boasting also of the prosperity of the house under his management.⁵ So many bottles, at least, his chief butler-hood can show emptied out of his Lord's cellar,—“and shall be exalted to honour, and for ever give the cup into Pharaoh's hand,” he thinks.⁶ Not lascivious, he, but frank in fellowship with all lasciviousness—a goodly speaker after Manchester Banquet,* and cautious not to add, personally, drunkenness to Thirlmere thirst.⁷

* Compare description in *Fors*, October, 1871,⁸ of the "Entire Clerkly or Learned Company," and the passage in *Munera Pulveris* there referred to [§ 159].

¹ [Luke xii. 35, 36.]

² [Revelation xxii. 17.]

³ [Matthew xxiv. 48, 49.]

⁴ [For other references to this calculation (in which Ruskin states the augmentation of price somewhat differently in different places), see Vol. XXVII. p. 498; Vol. XXVIII. p. 644; and above, p. 22.]

⁵ [Compare Letter 12, § 24 (Vol. XXVII. p. 215).]

⁶ [See Genesis xl.]

⁷ [For the Manchester banquet, see above, p. 274 *n.* For other references to the Manchester Corporation's waterworks at Thirlmere, see Vol. XIII. p. 517 *n.*; Vol. XXII. p. 531; and in this volume, pp. 162, 224, 346, 374.]

⁸ [Letter 10, § 13 (Vol. XXVII. p. 174).]

“The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for Him, and in an hour that he is not aware of. And shall cut him asunder, and shall appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”¹

“*Cut him asunder.*”

8. Read now this—mighty among the foundational words of Human Law, showing forth the Divine Law:

“Tum Tullus, . . . Meti Suffeti, inquit, si ipse discere posses fidem ac fœdera servare, vivo tibi ea disciplina a me adhibita esset; nunc, quoniam tuum insanabile ingenium est, tu tuo supplicio doce humanum genus ea sancta credere quæ a te violata sunt. Ut igitur paulo ante, animum inter Fidenatem Romanamque rem ancipitem gessisti, ita jam corpus passim distrahendum dabis.”²

9. And after, this:—

“But there brake off; for one had caught mine eye,
 Fix’d to a cross with three stakes on the ground:
 He, when He saw me, writhed Himself throughout
 Distorted, ruffling with deep sighs His beard.
 And Catalano, who thereof was ’ware,
 Thus spake: ‘That piercèd spirit, whom intent
 Thou view’st, was He who gave the Pharisees
 Counsel, that it were fitting for one man
 To suffer for the people. He doth lie
 Transverse; nor any passes, but Him first
 Behoves make feeling trial how each weighs.
 In straits like this along the foss are placed
 The father of His consort, and the rest
 Partakers in that counsel, seed of ill
 And sorrow to the Jews.’ I noted, then,
 How Virgil gazed with wonder upon Him,
 Thus abjectly extended on the cross
 In banishment eternal.”³

¹ [Matthew xxiv. 50, 51.]

² [“Then said Tullus (Hostilius, King of Rome, to the Alban dictator)—Metius Suffetius, if thou thyself couldst learn to keep faith and covenants, that teaching I should have given thee, and thou shouldst live. Now, since thy heart is incurably evil, do thou by thy punishment teach the world to hold sacred that which thou hast dishonoured. Whereas, therefore, a while since, thy mind was divided betwixt Fidena and Rome, so now shall thy body be divided and drawn asunder” (Livy, i. 23).—*Translation by W. G. Collingwood in the Small Edition of “Fors,”* vol. iv. p. 262.]

³ [Cary’s translation of Dante’s *Inferno*, xxiii. 112–129.]

10. And after, this:—

“Who, e’en in words unfetter’d, might at full
 Tell of the wounds and blood that now I saw,
 Though he repeated oft the tale? No tongue
 So vast a theme could equal, speech and thought
 Both impotent alike. If, in one band
 Collected, stood the people all, whoe’er
 Pour’d on Apulia’s fateful¹ soil their blood,
 Slain by the Trojans; and in that long war
 When of the rings the measured booty made
 A pile so high, as Rome’s historian writes
 Who errs not; with the multitude, that felt
 The girding force of Guiscard’s Norman steel,
 And those, the rest, whose bones are gathered yet
 At Ceperano, there where treachery
 Branded th’ Apulian name, or where beyond
 Thy walls, O Tagliacozzo, without arms
 The old Alardo conquer’d:—and his limbs
 One were to show transpierced, another his
 Clean lopt away,—a spectacle like this
 Were but a thing of nought, to the hideous sight
 Of the ninth chasm.

Without doubt,
 I saw, and yet it seems to pass before me,
 A headless trunk, that even as the rest
 Of the sad flock paced onward. By the hair
 It bore the sever’d member, lantern-wise
 Pendent in hand, which look’d at us, and said,
 ‘Woe’s me!’ The spirit lighted thus himself;
 And two there were in one, and one in two:
 How that may be, he knows who ordereth so.”²

11. I have no time to translate “him who errs not,”* nor to comment on the Dante,—whoso readeth, let him understand,³—only this much, that the hypocrisy of the priest who counselled that the King of the Jews should

* “Che non erra.” I never till now, in reading this passage for my present purpose, noticed these wonderful words of Dante’s, spoken of Livy. True, in the grandest sense.

¹ [“Fortunata terra.” Here Ruskin alters Cary’s “happy” to “fateful”: see Cary’s note on the passage.]

² [Cary’s translation of Dante’s *Inferno*, xxviii. 1–21, 113–121.]

³ [Matthew xxiv. 15.]

die for the people,¹ and the division of heart in the evil statesman who raised up son against father in the earthly kingship of England,* are for ever types of the hypocrisy of the Pharisee and Scribe,—penetrating, through the Church of the nation, and the Scripture or Press of it, into the whole body politic of it; cutting it verily in sunder, as a house divided against itself; and appointing for it, with its rulers, its portion—where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.²

12. Now, therefore, if there be any God, and if there be any virtue, and if there be any truth, choose ye this day, rulers of men, whom you will serve.³ Your hypocrisy is not in pretending to be what you are not; but in *being* in the uttermost nature of you—Nothing—but dead bodies in coffins suspended between Heaven and Earth, God and Mammon.

If the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him.⁴ You would fain be respectful to Baal, keep smooth with Belial, dine with Moloch, sup, with golden spoon of sufficient length, with Beelzebub;—and kiss the Master⁵ to bid Him good-night. Nay, even my kind and honest friends make, all of them, answer to my message: “I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it.—Suffer me first to bury my father.—I have married a wife—have not I to keep her and my children first of all? Behold, I cannot come.”⁶

13. So after this seventh year,⁷ I am going out into the highways and hedges:⁸ but now no more with expostulation. I have wearied myself in the fire enough; and now, under

* Read the story of Henry II. in *Fors*, March 1871.⁹

¹ [John xi. 49, 50.]

² [Matthew xii. 25; xxiv. 51.]

³ [Joshua xxiv. 15.]

⁴ [I Kings xviii. 21.]

⁵ [See Matthew xxvi. 48, 49.]

⁶ [See Luke xiv. 18, 20.]

⁷ [Since the commencement of *Fors*.]

⁸ [See Matthew xxii. 9.]

⁹ [Letter 3, § 9 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 52–53).]

the wild roses and traveller's joy of the lane hedges, will take what rest may be, in my pilgrimage.

I thought to have finished my blameful work before now,¹ but Fors would not have it so;—now, I am well convinced she will let me follow the peaceful way towards the pleasant hills. Henceforth, the main work of *Fors* will be constructive only; and I shall allow in the text of it no syllable of complaint or scorn.² When notable public abuses or sins are brought to my knowledge, I will bear witness against them simply, laying the evidence of them open in my Correspondence, but sifted before it is printed; following up myself, the while, in plain directions, or happy studies, St. George's separate work, and lessoning.

Separate, I say once more, it must be;³ and cannot become work at all until it is so. It is the work of a world-wide monastery; protesting, by patient, not violent, deed, and fearless, yet henceforward unpassionate, word, against the evil of this our day, till in its heart and force it be ended.

14. Of which evil I here resume the entire assertion made in *Fors*, up to this time, in few words.

All social evils and religious errors arise out of the pillage of the labourer by the idler: the idler leaving him only enough to live on (and even that miserably*), and taking all the rest of the produce of his work to spend in his own luxury, or in the toys with which he beguiles his idleness.

And this is done, and has from time immemorial been done, in all so-called civilized, but in reality corrupted, countries,—first by the landlords; then, under their direction, by the three chief so-called gentlemanly “professions,”

*“Maintain him—yes—but how?”—question asked of me by a working girl, long ago.⁴

¹ [See the Introduction, above, p. xxi.]

² [But see later, p. 361.]

³ [Not by the formation of “separate institutions” (Vol. XXVIII. p. 643), but in separation from “the unfruitful works of darkness” (*ibid.*, p. 542).]

⁴ [See *Unto this Last*, § 80 (Vol. XVII. p. 108).]

of soldier, lawyer, and priest; and, lastly, by the merchant and usurer. The landlord pillages by direct force, seizing the land, and saying to the labourer, You shall not live on this earth, but shall here die, unless you give me all the fruit of your labour but your bare living:—the soldier pillages by persuading the peasantry to fight, and then getting himself paid for skill in leading them to death:—the lawyer pillages by prolonging their personal quarrels with marketable ingenuity; and the priest by selling the Gospel, and getting paid for theatrical displays of it.* All this has to cease, inevitably and totally: Peace, Justice, and the Word of God must be *given* to the people, not sold. And these *can* only be given by a true Hierarchy and Royalty, beginning at the throne of God, and descending, by sacred stair let down from heaven,¹ to bless and keep all the Holy creatures of God, man and beast, and to condemn and destroy the unholy. And in this Hierarchy and Royalty all the servants of God have part, being made priests and kings to Him,² that they may feed His people with food of angels and food of men;³ teaching the word of God with power, and breaking and pouring the Sacrament of Bread and Wine from house to house, in remembrance of Christ, and in gladness and singleness of heart;⁴ the priest's function at the altar and in the tabernacle, at one end of the village, being only holy in the fulfilment of the deacon's function at the table and in the taberna, at the other.⁵

And so, out of the true earthly kingdom, in fulness of time, shall come the heavenly kingdom, when the tabernacle

* Compare *Unto this Last*, § 21.⁶ The three professions said there to be "necessary" are the pastor's, physician's, and merchant's. The "pastor" is the Giver of Meat, whose office I now explain in its fulness.

¹ [See Genesis xxviii. 12.]

² [Revelation i. 6.]

³ [Compare Letter 74 (above, p. 35).]

⁴ [Acts ii. 46.]

⁵ [Compare Letters 36, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 671); 83, § 15, and 93, § 9 (pp. 272, 474).]

⁶ [Vol. XVII. p. 39.]

of God shall be with men;¹ no priest needed more for ministry, because all the earth will be Temple; nor bread nor wine needed more for mortal food, or fading memory, but the water of life given to him that is a thirst,² and the fruits of the trees of healing.³

15. Into which kingdom that we may enter, let us read now the last words of the King when He left us for His Bridal, in which is the direct and practical warning of which the parable of the Servant was the shadow.

It was given, as you know, to Seven Churches, that live no more,—they having refused the word of His lips, and been consumed by the sword of His lips. Yet to all men the command remains—He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit faith unto the Churches.⁴

They lie along the hills, and across the plain, of Lydia, sweeping in one wide curve like a flight of birds or a swirl of cloud—(if you draw them by themselves on the map you will see)—all of them either in Lydia itself, or on the frontier of it: in nature, Lydian all—richest in gold, delicatest in luxury, softest in music, tenderest in art, of the then world. They unite the capacities and felicities of the Asiatic and the Greek: had the last message of Christ been given to the Churches in Greece, it would have been to Europe in imperfect age; if to the Churches in Syria, to Asia in imperfect age:—written to Lydia, it is written to the world, and for ever.

16. It is written “to the Angels of the Seven Churches.”⁵ I have told you what “angels” meant to the Heathen.⁶ What do you, a Christian, mean by them? What is meant by them here?

Commonly, the word is interpreted of the Bishops of

¹ [Revelation xxi. 3.]

² [See John iv. 14; Revelation xxi. 6.]

³ [Revelation xxii. 2.]

⁴ [Revelation ii. 7. The subject of this Letter from § 15 to the end is a commentary on Revelation ii. and iii.]

⁵ [Revelation i. 20.]

⁶ [See Letter 12, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 202).]

these Churches; and since, in every living Church, its Bishop, if it have any, must speak with the spirit and in the authority of its angel, there is indeed a lower and literal sense in which the interpretation is true (thus I have called the Archbishop of Canterbury an angel in *Fors* of October, 1876¹); but, in the higher and absolutely true sense, each several charge is here given to the Guardian Spirit of each several Church, the one appointed of Heaven to guide it. Compare *Bibliotheca Pastorum*, vol. i., Preface, §§ 3–5, closing with the words of Plato which I repeat here: “For such cities as no angel, but only a mortal, governs, there is no possible avoidance of evil and pain.”²

Modern Christians, in the beautiful simplicity of their selfishness, think—every mother of them—that it is quite natural and likely that their own baby should have an angel to take care of it, all to itself: but they cannot fancy such a thing as that an angel should take the liberty of interfering with the actions of a grown-up person,—how much less that one should meddle or make with a society of grown-up persons, or be present, and make any tacit suggestions, in a parliamentary debate. But the address here to the angel of the capital city, Sardis, marks the sense clearly: “These things saith He which hath the Seven Stars in His right hand, *and*” (that is to say) “the Seven Spirits of God.”³

And the charge is from the Spirit of God to each of these seven angels, reigning over and in the hearts of the whole body of the believers in every Church; followed always by the dateless adjuration, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the *Spirit* saith unto the Churches.”

17. The address to each consists of four parts:—

First. The assertion of some special attribute of the Lord of the Churches, in virtue of which, and respect

¹ [Letter 70, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 721); and see Letter 83, § 19, where Dr. Fraser is called “the Angel of the Church of Manchester” (above, p. 274).]

² [*Laws*, iv. 713.]

³ [See Revelation i. 16; ii. 1; iii. 1. For the following Bible references, see *ibid.*, ii. 7, 11, 17, 29; iii. 6, 13, 22.]

to which, He specially addresses that particular body of believers.

Second. The laying bare of the Church's heart, as known to its Lord.

Third. The judgment on that state of the heart, and promise or threat of a future reward or punishment, assigned accordingly, in virtue of the Lord's special attribute, before alleged.

Fourth. The promise, also in virtue of such special attribute, to all Christians who overcome, as their Lord overcame, in the temptation with which the Church under judgment is contending.

18. That we may better understand this scheme, and its sequence, let us take first the four divisions of charge to the Churches in succession, and then read the charges in their detail.¹

(I.) EPHESUS.

The Attribute.—That holdeth the seven stars, and walketh in the midst of the seven golden candle-sticks.

The Declaration.—Thou hast left thy first love.

The Judgment.—I will move thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

The Promise.—(Always, “to him that overcometh.”)
I will give to eat of the tree of life.

(II.) SMYRNA.

The Attribute.—The First and the Last, which was dead, and is alive.

The Declaration.—I know thy sorrow,—and thy patience.

The Judgment.—Be thou faithful to death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

The Promise.—He shall not be hurt of the second death.

¹ [There are notes, partly used in the following analysis, in Ruskin's diary of 1854.]

(III.) PERGAMOS.

The Attribute.—He which hath the sharp sword with two edges.

The Declaration.—Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam.

The Judgment.—I will fight against thee with the sword of my mouth.

The Promise.—I will give him to eat of the hidden manna.

(IV.) THYATIRA.

The Attribute.—That hath His eyes like a flame of fire.

The Declaration.—Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel.

The Judgment.—I will kill her children with death.

The Promise.—I will give him the morning star.

(V.) SARDIS.

The Attribute.—That hath the seven Spirits of God.

The Declaration.—Thou hast a few names, even in Sardis.

The Judgment.—They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.

The Promise.—I will confess his name before my Father and His angels.

(VI.) PHILADELPHIA.

The Attribute.—He that hath the key of David.

The Declaration.—I have set before thee an open door.

The Judgment.—I will keep thee from the hour of temptation.

The Promise.—He shall go out of my temple no more.

(VII.) LAODICEA.

The Attribute.—The Beginning of the Creation of God.

The Declaration.—Thou art poor and miserable.

The Judgment.—Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

The Promise.—I will grant him to sit with Me in My throne.

19. Let us now read the charges in their detail, that we may understand them as they are given to ourselves.

Observe, first, they all begin with the same words, “I know thy *works*.”¹

Not even the maddest and blindest of Antinomian teachers could have eluded the weight of this fact, but that, in the following address to each Church, its “work” is spoken of as the state of its heart.

Of which the interpretation is nevertheless quite simple; namely, that the thing looked at by God first, in every Christian man, is his work;—without that, there is no more talk or thought of him. “Cut him down—why cumbereth he the ground?”² But, the work being shown, has next to be tested. In what spirit was this done,—in faith and charity, or in disobedient pride? “You have fed the poor? yes; but did you do it to get a commission on the dishes, or because you loved the poor? You lent to the poor,—was it in true faith that you lent to *me*, or to get money out of my poor by usury in defiance of me? You thought it a good work—did you? Had you never heard then—“This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent”?”³

20. And now we take the separate charges, one by one, in their fulness:—

(I.) Ephesus.—The attribute is essentially the spiritual

¹ [Revelation ii. 2, 9, 13, 19; iii. 1, 8, 15.]

² [See Luke xiii. 7.]

³ [John vi. 29.]

power of Christ, in His people,—the “lamp” of the virgins,¹ the “light of the world”² of the Sermon on the Mount.

The Declaration praises the intensity of this in the Church, and—which is the notablest thing for *us* in the whole series of the charges—it asserts the burning of the Spirit of Christ in the Church to be especially shown because it “cannot bear them which are evil.”³ This fierceness against sin, which we are so proud of being well quit of, is the very life of a Church;—the toleration of sin is the dying of its lamp. How indeed should it shine before men,⁴ if it mixed itself in the soot and fog of sin?

So again, although the Spirit is beginning to burn dim, and thou hast left thy first love, yet, *this* “thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes.”⁵ (See note below on Pergamos.)

The promise is of fullest life in the midst of the Paradise and garden of God. Compare all the prophetic descriptions of living persons, or states, as the trees in the garden of God;⁶ and the blessing of the first Psalm.

21. (II.) Smyrna.—The attribute is that of Christ’s endurance of death. The declaration, that the faithful Church is now dying, with Him, the noble death of the righteous, and shall live for evermore. The promise, that over those who so endure the slow pain of death in grief, for Christ’s sake, the second death hath no power.

22. (III.) Pergamos.—The attribute is of Christ the Judge, visiting for sin; the declaration, that the Church has in it the sin of the Nicolaitanes, or of Balaam,—using its grace and inspiration to forward its worldly interest, and grieved at heart because it *has* the Holy Ghost;—the darkest of blasphemies. Against this, “Behold, I come quickly, and will fight against thee with the sword of my mouth.”⁷

¹ [Matthew xxv. 1.]

² [Matthew v. 14.]

³ [Revelation ii. 2.]

⁴ [Matthew v. 16.]

⁵ [Revelation ii. 6. Compare Vol. XIV. p. 415.]

⁶ [Revelation ii. 7.]

⁷ [Revelation ii. 16.]

The promise, that he who has kept his lips from blasphemy shall eat of the hidden manna: the word, not the sword, of the lips of Christ. "How sweet is Thy word unto my lips."¹

The metaphor of the stone,² and the new name, I do not yet securely understand.

23. (IV.) Thyatira.—The attribute: "That hath his eyes like a flame of fire" (searching the heart), "his feet like fine brass"³ (treading the earth, yet in purity, the type of all Christian practical life, unsoiled, whatever it treads on); but remember, lest you should think this in any wise opposed to the sense of the charge to Ephesus, that you may *tread* on foulness, yet remain undefiled; but not lie down in it and remain so.

The praise is for charity and active labour,—and the labour more than the charity.

The woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess,⁴ is, I believe, the teacher of labour for lascivious purpose, beginning by the adornment of sacred things, not verily for the honour of God, but for our own delight (as more or less in all modern Ritualism). It is of all manner of sins the most difficult to search out, and detect the absolute root or secret danger of. It is the "depth of Satan"⁵—the most secret of his temptations, and the punishment of it, death in torture. For if our *charity* and *labour* are poisoned, what is there more to save us?

The reward of resistance is, to rule the nations with a rod of iron—(true work, against painted clay); and I will

¹ [Psalms cxix. 103.]

² ["To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it" (Revelation ii. 17). In his notes of 1854 Ruskin says:—

"This holding the name in the white stone is very suggestive as well as mysterious. In one sense the White Stone may be the Heart—always a stone, compared to what it ought to be; yet a white one when it holds Christ ('Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God')."]

³ [Revelation ii. 18.]

⁴ [Revelation ii. 20.]

⁵ [Revelation ii. 24.]

give him the morning star (light of heaven, and morning-time for labour).¹

24. (V.) Sardis.—The attribute: “That hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars.”²

Again, the Lord of Life itself—the Giver of the Holy Ghost. (“Having said thus, he breathed on them.”) He questions, not of the poison or misuse of life, but of its *existence*. Strengthen the things that are left—that are ready to *die*. The white raiment is the transfiguration of the earthly frame by the inner life, even to the robe of it, “so as no fuller on earth can white them.”

The judgment: I will come unto thee as a thief (in thy darkness, to take away even that thou hast).

The promise: I will not blot his name out of the Book of Life.

25. (VI.) Philadelphia.—The attribute: He that is holy (separate from sin)—He that is true (separate from falsehood)—that hath the key of David (of the city of David which is Zion, renewed and pure; conf. verse 12); that openeth, and no man shutteth (by *me* if any man enter in³); and shutteth, and no man openeth,⁴—(for without, are fornicators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie⁵).

The praise, for faithfulness with a little strength, as of a soldier holding a little fortress in the midst of assaulting armies. Therefore the blessing, after that captivity of the strait siege—the lifting up of the heads of the gates, and setting wide of the everlasting doors by the Lord, mighty in battle.⁶

The promise: Him that overcometh will I make, not merely safe within my fortress temple, but a pillar of it—built on its rock, and bearing its vaults for ever.⁷

¹ [Revelation ii. 27, 28.]

² [Revelation iii. 1. The other Bible references in § 24 are John xx. 22; Revelation iii. 2, 5; Mark ix. 3; Revelation iii. 3; Mark iv. 25; and Revelation iii. 5.]

³ [John x. 9.]

⁴ [Revelation iii. 7.]

⁵ [Revelation xxii. 15.]

⁶ [See Psalms xxiv. 7, 8.]

⁷ [Revelation iii. 12.]

26. (VII.) Laodicea.—The attribute: the Faithful witness—the Word—the Beginning of Creation.¹

The sin, chaos of heart,—useless disorder of half-shaped life. Darkness on the face of the deep,² and rejoicing in darkness,—as in these days of ours to the uttermost. Chaos in all things—dross for gold—slime for mortar³—nakedness for glory—pathless morass for path—and the proud blind for guides.

The command, to try the gold, and purge the raiment, and anoint the eyes,—this order given as to the almost helpless—as men waked in the night, not girding their loins for journey, but in vague wonder at uncertain noise, who may turn again to their slumber, or, in wistful listening, hear the voice calling—“Behold, I stand at the door!”⁴

It is the last of the temptations, bringing back the throne of Annihilation; and the victory over it is the final victory, giving rule, with the Son of God, over the recreate and never to be dissolved order of the perfect earth.

In which there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, “for the former things are passed away.”⁵

“Now, unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you, faultless, before the Presence of His glory with exceeding joy;

“To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”⁶

The first seven years' Letters of Fors Clavigera were ended in Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 21st Nov., 1877.

¹ [Revelation iii. 14.]

² [Genesis i. 2.]

³ [Genesis xi. 3.]

⁴ [Revelation iii. 17–20.]

⁵ [Revelation xxi. 4.]

⁶ [Jude 24, 25.]

FORS CLAVIGERA.

LETTERS

*TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS
OF GREAT BRITAIN.*

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF
FINE ART.

VOL. VIII.



GEORGE ALLEN,
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1. The author's experiments in school education for infants. 2. Summary of the teaching of *Fors* on the Land Question. Hereditary possession of land assumed. Nonsense of land nationalisation. 3. Possession of land implies the duties of living on it, and making it fruitful and beautiful for others. 4. Public lands to be available as schools of natural history. 5. Schools to be adjusted to local conditions. Things which all must learn, and things which many need not learn. Doubtful value of grammar in education. 6. Exclusion of competition essential. 7. "You cannot make a silk purse of a sow's ear," nor disguise the flap

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of it by giving it a diamond earring. The wholesome indisposition of the average mind for intellectual labour provides for “stopping Thornaby Waste.” 8. Opportunities of intellectual education to be given to all, but it is not to be enforced on the unfit. Moral education alone to be universal. 9. Importance of a sound system in elementary music. Author’s experiments in the construction of a lyre. The bell the most sacred instrument. 10. Elocution. The essentials of fine speaking. 11. Only story-books, poetry or prose, to be used for reading lessons. Shakespeare not to be used as a school-book. 12. The reading-room and the library: how they should be arranged. 13. Narration. Importance of teaching children to give accurate account of what they have done and seen. 14. Arithmetic. Importance commonly attached to this a filthy folly. 15. Geography. Futility of ordinary maps. 16. Physical and historical maps should be substituted. How the study of them should be associated with geology and drawing. 17. Astronomy. How the study should be associated with geometry and writing. 18. Writing and drawing: “Theuth’s first lesson;” how clever children teach themselves. 19. Zoology. The author’s schemes for plates and explanatory text. 20. Botany. Need for a simple handbook with handcoloured plates. 21. Needlework. Author’s vision of what a needlework-room in St. George’s Museum was meant to contain. 22. Mr. Albert Fleming’s revival of the old spinning-wheel; Miss Stanley’s book on useful sewing. 23. Letter from Francesca’s mother on education without compulsion. 24. Letter from T. CraigBrown enclosing letters by Mungo Park and Scott, and giving an anecdote of the former. 25. Letter of Mungo Park to his sister. Letter of Scott, sending help to a brother of Park. Letter of Scott to Park. 26. The author’s further remarks on Mungo Park’s character. 27. Comments on a letter in the *Scotsman* about Ashestiel.

LETTER 96 (*Terminal*) (*Christmas* 1884)

ROSY VALE

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1. Extract from Dugdale’s *Monasticon*, describing St. David’s Monastery in the Rosy Valley. 2. Letter describing the Rosière of Nanterre. 3. Letter from “Francesca” describing her servant’s home, “La Rose.” 4. Account by Francesca of “a Rosy Vale in Italy, rejoicing round its Living Rose”: story of “The Mother of the Orphans.” 5. “Go and do thou likewise.” 6. “Great shall be the peace of thy children.” “The story of Rosy Vale is not ended.”

FORS CLAVIGERA

“YEA, THE WORK OF OUR HANDS, ESTABLISH THOU IT”¹

LETTER 85

UNIQUE DOGMATISM²

1. THE series of letters which closed last year were always written, as from the first they were intended to be, on any matter which *chanced* to interest me, and in any humour which *chance* threw me into. By the adoption of the title “Fors,” I meant (among other meanings) to indicate this desultory and accidental character of the work; and to imply, besides, my feeling, that, since I wrote wholly in the interests of others, it might justifiably be hoped that the chance to which I thus submitted myself would direct me better than any choice or method of my own.

So far as regards the subjects of this second series of letters, I shall retain my unfettered method, in reliance on the direction of better wisdom than mine. But in my former letters, I also allowed myself to write on each subject, whatever came into my mind, wishing the reader, like a friend, to know exactly what my mind was. But as no candour will explain this to persons who have no feelings in common with me,—and as I think, by this time, enough has been shown to serve all purposes of such frankness, to

¹ [Psalms xc. 17.]

² [See below, § 4.]

those who can receive it,—henceforward, I shall endeavour to write, so far as I can judge, what may be serviceable to the reader, or acceptable by him; and only in some occasional and minor way, what may explain, or indulge, my own feelings.

2. Such change in my method of address is farther rendered necessary, because I perceive the address must be made to a wider circle of readers.

This book was begun in the limited effort to gather a society together for the cultivation of ground in a particular way;—a society having this special business, and no concern with the other work of the world. But the book has now become a call to all whom it can reach, to choose between being honest or dishonest; and if they choose to be honest, also to join together in a brotherhood separated, visibly and distinctly, from cheats and liars. And as I felt more and more led into this wider appeal, it has also been shown to me that, in this country of England, it must be made under obedience to the Angel of England;—the Spirit which taught our fathers their Faith, and which is still striving with us in our Atheism. And since this was shown to me, I have taken all that I understand of the Book which our fathers believed to be divine, not, as in former times, only to enforce, on those who still believed it, obedience to its orders; but indeed for help and guidance to the whole body of our society.

The exposition of this broader law mingling more and more frequently in my past letters with that of the narrow action of St. George's Guild for the present help of our British peasantry, has much obscured the simplicity of that present aim, and raised up crowds of collateral questions, in debate of which the reader becomes doubtful of the rightness of even what might otherwise have been willingly approved by him: while, to retard his consent yet farther, I am compelled, by the accidents of the time, to allege certain principles of work which only my own long study of the results of the Art of Man upon his mind enable

me to know for surety; and these are peculiarly offensive in an epoch which has long made—not only all its Arts mercenary, but even those mercenary forms of them subordinate to yet more servile occupations.

3. For example; I might perhaps, with some success, have urged the purchase and cultivation of waste land, and the orderly and kindly distribution of the food produced upon it, had not this advice been coupled with the discussion of the nature of Rent, and the assertion of the God-forbidden guilt of that Usury, of which Rent is the fatallest form. And even if, in subtlety, I had withheld, or disguised, these deeper underlying laws, I should still have alienated the greater number of my possible adherents by the refusal to employ steam machinery, which may well bear, to the minds of persons educated in the midst of such mechanism, the aspect of an artist's idle and unrealizable prejudice. And this all the more, because the greater number of business-men, finding that their own opinions have been adopted without reflection, yet being perfectly content with the opinions so acquired, naturally suppose that mine have been as confidently collected where they could be found with least pains:—with the farther equally rational conclusion, that the opinions they have thus accidentally picked up themselves are more valuable and better selected than the by no means obviously preferable faggot of mine.

And, indeed, the thoughts of a man who from his youth up, and during a life persistently literary, has never written a word either for money or for vanity,¹ nor even in the careless incontinence of the instinct for self-expression, but resolutely spoken only to teach or to praise others, must necessarily be incomprehensible in an age when Christian preaching itself has become merely a polite and convenient profession,—when the most noble and living literary faculties, like those of Scott and Dickens, are perverted by the will

¹ [Compare the Preface to the fifth volume of *Modern Painters* (Vol. VII. pp. 9–10).]

of the multitude, and perish in the struggle for its gold; and when the conceit even of the gravest men of science provokes them to the competitive exhibition of their conjectural ingenuity,¹ in fields where argument is impossible, and respecting matters on which even certainty would be profitless.

4. I believe, therefore, that it will be satisfactory to not a few of my readers, and generally serviceable, if I reproduce, and reply to, a portion of a not unfriendly critique which, appearing in the *Spectator* for 22nd September, 1877, sufficiently expressed this general notion of my work, necessarily held by men who are themselves writing and talking merely for profit or amusement, and have never taken the slightest pains to ascertain whether any single thing they say is true: nor are under any concern to know whether, after it has been sold in the permanent form of print, it will do harm or good to the buyer of it.

“MR. RUSKIN’S UNIQUE DOGMATISM²”

“As we have often had occasion, if not exactly to remark, yet to imply, in what we have said of him, Mr. Ruskin is a very curious study. For simplicity, quaintness, and candour, his confidences to ‘the workmen and labourers of Great Britain’ in *Fors Clavigera* are quite without example. For delicate irony of style, when he gets a subject that he fully understands, and intends to expose the ignorance, or, what is much worse, the affectation of knowledge which is not knowledge, of others, no man is his equal. But then as curious as anything else, in that strange medley of sparkling jewels, delicate spider-webs, and tangles of exquisite fronds which makes” (the writer should be on his guard against the letter *s* in future passages of this descriptive character) “up Mr. Ruskin’s mind, is the high-handed arrogance which is so strangely blended with his imperious modesty, and that, too, often when it is most grotesque. It is not, indeed, his arrogance, but his modest self-knowledge which speaks, when he says in this new number of the *Fors* that though there are thousands of men in England able to conduct the business affairs of his Society better than he can, ‘I do not believe there is another man in England able to organize our elementary lessons in Natural History and Art. And I am therefore wholly occupied in examining the growth of *Anagallis tenella*, and completing some notes on St. George’s Chapel at Venice.’³ And no doubt he is quite right.

¹ [Compare Vol. XXVII. pp. 124, 642.]

² [On the charge of dogmatism, compare Vol. XIX. p. 60.]

³ [See Letter 81, § 15 (above, p. 208).]

Probably no one could watch the growth of *Anagallis tenella* to equal purpose, and no one else could complete his notes on St. George's Chapel without spoiling them. We are equally sure that he is wise, when he tells his readers that he must entirely decline any manner of political action which might hinder him 'from drawing leaves and flowers.' But what does astonish us is the supreme confidence,—or say, rather, hurricane of dictatorial passion,—though we do not use the word 'passion' in the sense of anger or irritation, but in the higher sense of mental white-heat, which has no vexation in it, (a)—with which this humble student of leaves and flowers, of the *Anagallis tenella* and the beauties of St. George's Chapel at Venice, passes judgment on the whole structure of human society, from its earliest to its latest convolutions, and not only judgment, but the sweeping judgment of one who knows all its laws of structure and all its misshapen growths with a sort of assurance which Mr. Ruskin would certainly never feel in relation to the true form, or the distortions of the true form, of the most minute fibre of one of his favourite leaves or flowers. Curiously enough, the humble learner of Nature speaking through plants and trees, is the most absolute scorn of Nature speaking through the organization of great societies and centuries of social experience. (b) We know well what Mr. Ruskin would say,—that the difference is great between the growth that is without moral freedom and the growth which has been for century after century distorted by the reckless abuse of moral freedom. And we quite admit the radical difference. But what strikes us as so strange is that this central difficulty of all,—how much is really due to the structural growth of a great society, and quite independent of any voluntary abuse which might be amended by voluntary effort, and how much is due to the false direction of individual wills,—*never strikes Mr. Ruskin as a difficulty at all.* (c) On the contrary, he generalizes in his sweeping way, on social tendencies which appear to be (d) far more deeply ingrained in the very structure of human life than the veins of a leaf in the structure of a plant, with a confidence with which he would never for a moment dream of generalizing as to the true and normal growth of a favourite plant. Thus he tells us in the last number of *Fors Clavigera* is not in any way intended as counsel adapted to the present state of the public mind, but it is the assertor of the code of eternal laws which the public mind *must* eventually submit itself to, or die; and I have really no more to do with the manners, customs, feelings, or modified conditions of piety in the

(a) I don't understand. Probably there is not another so much vexed person as I at present extant of his grave.

(b) It *would* be curious, and much more, if it only *were* so.

(c—Italics mine). On what grounds did the writer suppose this? When Dr. Christison¹ analyzes a poison, and simply states his result, is it to be concluded he was struck by no difficulties in arriving at it, because he does not advise the public of his embarrassments?

(d) What does it matter what they *appear* to be?

¹ [Sir Robert Christison, M.D. (1797–1882); medical adviser to the Crown, 1829–1866; author of a *Treatise on Poisons*.]

modern England, which I have to warn of the accelerated approach either of Revolution or Destruction, than poor Jonah had with the qualifying amiabilities which might have been found in the Nineveh whose overthrow he was ordered to foretell in forty days.¹ But the curious part of the matter is that Mr. Ruskin, far from keeping to simple moral laws, denounces in the most vehement manner social arrangements which seem to most men (*e*) as little connected with them as they would have seemed to 'poor Jonah.' We are not aware, for instance, that Jonah denounced the use of machinery in Nineveh. Indeed, he seems to have availed himself of a ship, which is a great complication of machines, and to have 'paid his fare' from Joppa to Tyre, without supposing himself to have been accessory to anything evil in so doing. We are not aware, too, that Jonah held it to be wrong, as Mr. Ruskin holds it to be wrong, to charge for the use of a thing when you do not want to part with it altogether. These are practices which are so essentially interwoven alike with the most fundamental as also with the most superficial principles of social growth, that any one who assumes that they are rooted in moral evil is bound to be very careful to discriminate where the evil begins, and show that it can be avoided,—just as a naturalist who should reproach the trees on a hill-side for sloping away from the blast they have to meet, should certainly first ask himself how the trees are to avoid the blast, or how, if they cannot avoid it, they are to help so altering their growth as to accommodate themselves to it. But Mr. Ruskin, though in relation to nature he is a true naturalist, in relation to human nature has in him nothing at all of the human naturalist. It never occurs to him apparently that here, too, are innumerable principles of growth which are quite independent of the will of man, and that it becomes the highest moralist to study humbly where the influence of the human will begins and where it ends, instead of rashly and sweepingly condemning, as due to a perverted morality, what is in innumerable cases a mere inevitable result of social structure. (*f*)

"Consider only how curiously different in spirit is the humility with which the great student of the laws of beauty watches the growth of the *Anagallis tenella*, and that with which he watches the growth of the formation of human opinion. A correspondent had objected to him that he speaks so contemptuously of some of the most trusted leaders of English workmen, of Goldwin Smith, for instance, and of John Stuart Mill. Disciples of such leaders, the writer had said, 'are hurt and made angry, when

(*e*) What does it matter what they "seem to most men"?

(*f*) To this somewhat lengthily metaphorical paragraph, the needful answer may be brief, and without metaphor. To every "social structure" which has rendered either wide national crime or wide national folly "inevitable"—ruin is also "inevitable." Which is all I have necessarily to say; and which has been by me, now, very sorrowfully,—enough said. Nevertheless, somewhat more may be observed of England at this time,—namely, that she has no "social structure" whatsoever; but is a mere heap of agonizing human maggots, scrambling and sprawling over each other for any manner of rotten eatable thing they can get a bite of.

¹ [See Letter 81, § 7 (above, p. 198).]

names which they do not like are used of their leaders.' Mr. Ruskin's reply is quite a study in its way:—

'Well, my dear sir, I solemnly declare,' etc., down to 'ditches for ever.'—See *Fors*, September, 1877.¹

Now observe that here Mr. Ruskin, who would follow the lines of a gossamer thread sparkling in the morning dew with reverent wonder and conscientious accuracy, arraigns, first, the tendency of man to express immature and tentative views of passing events, (g) as if that were wholly due, not to a law of human nature, ! ! (h) but to those voluntary abuses of human freedom which might as effectually be arrested as murder or theft could be arrested by moral effort; next arraigns, if not the discovery of the printing-press (of which any one would suppose that he entertained a stern disapprobation), at least the inevitable (i) results of that discovery, precisely as he would arraign a general prevalence of positive vice; and last of all, that he actually claims the power, as an old littérateur, to discern at sight 'what is eternally good and vital, and to strike away from it pitilessly what is worthless and venomous.' On the first two heads, as it seems to us, Mr. Ruskin arraigns laws of nature as practically unchangeable as any by which the sap rises in the tree and the blossom forms upon the flower. On the last head, he assumes a tremendous power in relation to subjects very far removed from these which he has made his own,——"

——I have lost the next leaf of the article, and may as well, it seems to me, close my extract here, for I do not know what subject the writer conceives me to have made my own, if *not* the quality of literature! If I am ever allowed, by public estimate, to know anything whatever,

(g) I have never recognized any such tendency in persons moderately well educated. What is their education for—if it cannot prevent their expressing immature views about *anything*?

(h) I insert two notes of admiration. What "law of human nature" shall we hear of next? If it cannot keep its thoughts in its mind, till they are digested,—I suppose we shall next hear it cannot keep its dinner in its stomach.

(i) There is nothing whatever of inevitable in the "universal gabble of fools," which is the lamentable fact I have alleged of the present times, whether they gabble with or without the help of printing-press. The power of saying a very foolish thing to a very large number of people at once, is of course a greater temptation to a foolish person than he was formerly liable to; but when the national mind, such as it is, becomes once aware of the mischief of all this, it is evitable enough—else there were an end to popular intelligence in the world.

¹ [Letter 81, § 12 (p. 205).]
XXIX.

it is—how to write.¹ My knowledge of painting is entirely denied by ninety-nine out of a hundred painters of the day; but the literary men are great hypocrites if they don't really think me, as they profess to do, fairly up to my work in that line. And what would an old *littérateur* be good for, if he did not know good writing from bad, and that without tasting more than a half page? And for the moral tendency of books—no such practised sagacity is needed to determine that. The sense, to a healthy mind, of being strengthened or enervated by reading, is just as definite and unmistakable as the sense, to a healthy body, of being in fresh or foul air: and no more arrogance is involved in perceiving the stench, and forbidding the reading of an unwholesome wholesome book, than in a physician's ordering the windows to be opened in a sick room. There is no question whatever concerning these matters, with any person who honestly desires to be informed about them;—the real arrogance is only in expressing judgments, either of books or anything else, respecting which we have taken no trouble to be informed. Here is my friend of the *Spectator*, for instance, commenting complacently on the vulgar gossip about my opinions of machinery, without even taking the trouble to look at what I said, else he would have found that, instead of condemning machinery, there is the widest and most daring plan in *Fors* for the adaptation of tide-mills to the British coasts that has yet been dreamt of in engineering;² and that, so far from condemning ships, half the physical education of British youth is proposed by *Fors* to be conducted in them.³

5. What the contents of *Fors* really are, however, it is little wonder that even my most studious friends do not at present know, broken up as these materials have been into a mere moraine of separate and seemingly jointless stones, out of which I must now build such Cyclopean

¹ [Compare Vol. XXVII. pp. 400, 616; and Vol. XXVIII. p. 425.]

² [See Letter 51, § 26 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 293).]

³ [See Letter 8, § 10 (Vol. XXVII. p. 143).]

wall as I shall have time and strength for. Therefore, during some time at least, the main business of this second series of letters will be only the arrangement for use, and clearer illustration, of the scattered contents of the first.

And I cannot begin with a more important subject, or one of closer immediate interest, than that of the collection of rain, and management of streams. On this subject, I expect a series of papers from my friend Mr. Henry Willett,¹ containing absolutely verified data: in the meantime I beg the reader to give his closest attention to the admirable statements by M. Viollet-le-Duc, given from the new English translation of his book on Mont Blanc, in the seventh article of our Correspondence. I have before had occasion to speak with extreme sorrow of the errors in the theoretical parts of this work:² but its practical intelligence is admirable.

6. Just in time, I get Mr. Willett's first sheet. His preface is too valuable to be given without some farther comment,³ but this following bit may serve us for this month:—

“The increased frequency in modern days of upland floods appears to be due mainly to the increased want of the retention of the rainfall. Now it is true of all drainage matters that man has complete power over them at the beginning, where they are widely disseminated, and it is only when by the uniting ramifications over large areas a great accumulation is produced, that man becomes powerless to deal satisfactorily with it. Nothing ever is more senseless than the direct contravention of Nature's laws by the modern system of gathering together into one huge polluted stream the sewage of large towns. The waste and expense incurred, first in collecting, and then in attempting to separate and to apply to the land the drainage of large towns, seems a standing instance of the folly and perversity of human arrangements, and *it can only be accounted for by the interest which attaches to the spending of large sums of money.*” (Italics mine.)

¹ [For Mr. Willett, see Vol. XXVIII. p. 576; the series of papers, suggested by Mr. Willett, were however not given (see below, p. 349).]

² [See *Deucalion*, i. ch. x. §§ 13, 18, Vol. XXVI. pp. 228, 230.]

³ [See below, pp. 345, 347–349.]

“It may be desirable at some future time to revert to this part of the subject, and to suggest the natural, simple, and inexpensive alternative plan.

“To return to the question of floods caused by rainfall only. The first and completely remunerating expenditure should be for providing tanks of filtered water for human drinking, etc., and reservoirs for cattle and manufacturing purposes, in the upland valleys and moorland glens which form the great collecting grounds of all the water which is now wastefully permitted to flow either into underground crevices and natural reservoirs, that it may be pumped up again at an enormous waste of time, labour, and money, or neglectfully permitted to deluge the habitations of which the improper erection on sites liable to flooding has been allowed.

“To turn for a moment to the distress and incurred expense in summer from want of the very same water which has been wasted in winter, I will give three or four instances which have come under my own knowledge. In the summer of 1876 I was put on shore from a yacht a few miles west of Swanage Bay, in Dorsetshire, and then, walking to the nearest village, I wanted to hire a pony-chaise from the landlady of the only inn, but she was obliged absolutely to refuse me because the pony was already over-worked by having to drag water for the cows a perpendicular distance of from two hundred to three hundred feet from the valley beneath. Hardly a rain-shoot, and no reservoir, could be seen. A highly intelligent gentleman in Sussex, the year before, remarked, ‘I should not regret the rain coming and spoiling the remainder of my harvest, as it would thereby put an end to the great expense I am at in drawing water from the river for my flock of sheep.’ In the village of Farnborough, Kent, there are two wells: one at the Hall, 160 feet deep, and a public one at the north-west of the village. In summer a man gets a good living by carting the water for the poor people, charging 1d. for six gallons, and earning from 2s. 6d. to 3s. a day. One agricultural labourer pays 5d. a week for his family supply in summer. ‘He could catch more off his own cottage, but the spouts are out of order, and the landlord won’t put them right.’ I know a farmer in Sussex who, having a seven-years’ lease of some downland, at his own expense built a small tank which cost him £30. He told me at the end of his lease the farm would be worth £30 per annum more, because of the tank. The Earl of Chichester, who has most wisely and successfully grappled with the subject, says that £100 per annum is not an unfrequent expenditure by individual farmers for the carting of water in summer-time.

“In my next I will give, by his lordship’s kind permission, a detailed account and plan of his admirable method of water supply, superseding wells and pumping.”

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

7. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Company.

I never was less able to give any account of these, for the last month has been entirely occupied with work in Oxford;¹ the Bank accounts cannot be in my hands till the year's end; the business at Abbeydale² can in no wise be put on clear footing till our Guild is registered;³ and I have just been warned of some farther modifications needful in our memorandum for registry.

But I was completely convinced last year that, fit or unfit, I must take all these things in hand myself; and I do not think the leading article of our Correspondence will remain, after the present month, so wholly unsatisfactory.

8. (II.) Affairs of the Master. (12th December, 1877.)

Since I last gave definite statements of these,⁴ showing that in cash I had only some twelve thousand pounds left, the sale of Turner's drawings, out of the former collection of Mr. Munro, of Novar, took place; and I considered it my duty, for various reasons, to possess myself of Caernarvon Castle, Leicester Abbey, and the Bridge of Narni;⁵ the purchase of which, with a minor acquisition or two besides, reduced my available cash, by my banker's account yesterday, to £10,223, that being the market value of my remaining £4000 Bank Stock. I have directed them to sell this stock, and buy me £9000 New Threes instead; by which operation I at once lose about sixty pounds a year of interest (in conformity with my views already enough expressed on that subject⁶), and I put a balance of something over £1500 in the Bank, to serve St. George and me till we can look about us a little.

Both the St. George's and my private account will henceforward be rendered by myself, with all clearness possible to me; but they will no longer be allowed to waste the space of *Fors*. They will be forwarded on separate sheets to the Companions, and be annually purchasable by the public.⁷

¹ [Ruskin is writing in December 1877. During preceding weeks he had been delivering the course of lectures entitled "Readings in *Modern Painters*" (Vol. XXII. pp. 508 *seq.*.)]

² [See above, p. 273.]

³ [This was ultimately done in October 1878: see Vol. XXX.]

⁴ [See above, pp. 98–104.]

⁵ [For these purchases, see Vol. XXV. p. xix.; and for the drawings themselves, Vol. XIII. pp. 442, 444, 424.]

⁶ [See Letters 76, § 20; 80, §§ 15–17 (above, pp. 103, 185–187).]

⁷ [See Vol. XXX.]

I further stated, in last year's letters, that at the close of 1877 I should present my Marylebone property to St. George for a Christmas gift, without interfering with Miss Octavia Hill's management of it.¹ But this piece of business, like everything else I try to do just now, has its own hitches; the nature of which will be partly understood on reading some recent correspondence between Miss Hill and myself, which I trust may be closed, and in form presentable, next month.² The transference of the property will take place all the same; but it will be seen to have become questionable how far Miss Hill may now consent to retain her control over the tenants.

9. (III.) We cannot begin the New Year under better auspices than are implied in the two following letters.

TO MR. JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.

"HONOURED SIR,—I send ten shillings, which I beg you to accept as a gift for your St. George's Fund. The sum is small, but I have been thinking that as you are now bringing some plots of land into cultivation, that even so small a sum, if spent in the purchase of two or three apple or other fruit trees suitable to the locality, they might be pointed to, in a few years' time, to show what had been the result of a small sum, when wisely deposited in the Bank of Nature.

"Yours very Respectfully,

"A Garden Workman,

"This day 80 years old,

"JOSEPH STAPLETON.

"*November 28th, 1877.*"

(The apple-trees will be planted in Worcestershire,³ and kept separate note of.)

"CLOUGHTON MOOR, NEAR SCARBOROUGH,

"*November 15, 1877.*"

"DEAR MASTER,—We have delayed answering your very kind letter, for which we were very grateful, thinking that soon we should be hearing again from Mr. Bagshawe, because we had a letter from him the same day that we got yours, asking for particulars of the agreement between myself and Dr. Rooke. I answered him by return of post, requesting him likewise to get the affair settled as soon as convenient; but we have not heard anything since. But we keep working away, and have got the house and some of the land a bit shapely. We are clearing, and intend closing, about sixteen hundred yards of what we think the most suitable and best land for a garden, and shall plant a few currant and gooseberry bushes in, I hope directly, if the weather keeps favourable. In wet weather we repair the cottage indoors, and all seems to go on very nicely. The children enjoy it very much, and so do we too, for you see we are all together—'father's always at home.' I shall never be afraid of being out of work again, there is so much to do; and I think it will pay, too. Of course it will be some time before it returns anything, excepting tired limbs, and the satisfaction that it is, and looks,

¹ [See Letter 76, § 20 (p. 102).]

² [See below, pp. 354–360.]

³ [This, however, was not done.]

better. We intend rearing poultry and have a cow, perhaps, when we get something to grow to feed them with; and to that intent I purpose preparing stone this winter to build an outbuilding for them in the spring-time. I can do it all myself—the working part; but should require help to purchase lime and timber, but not yet. We shall try our best to work and make our arrangements suit your views as far as we understand them, and anything you could like us to do, we shall be glad to perform.

“Yours truly,

“JOHN GUY.

“Our gross earnings for the year is £54, 18s. 3½d. Our expenses this year have been heavy, with two removals, but we have a balance of £11 after paying tenth, for which we enclose Post Office order for £5, 9s. 10d. We have plenty of clothing and shoes and fuel to serve us the winter through; so Mary says we can do very well until spring.”¹

10. (IV.) The following important letters set the question raised about the Bishops’ returns of income at rest. I need scarcely point out how desirable it would be for these matters to be put on so simple footing as to leave no ground for misapprehension by the common people. “Disingenuousness” which the writer suspects in the “Humanitarian” is not usually a fault of the lower orders; nor do they ever fail in respect to a good and active clergyman.

“November 28, 1877.

“DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I see from the November *Fors*² that you ask for further explanation of some figures published by a ‘Humanitarian,’ of Bishopwearmouth, touching the Bishops’ incomes of thirty-nine years ago. ‘The apparent discrepancy between the actual and alleged incomes’ is very easily explained. The larger figures are not, and are not said to be, the incomes of the Bishops at all. The estates were then let on ‘beneficial’ leases; and the people who held these leases, generally country squires, were the real owners of the lands, paying to the Bishops ancient nominal rents, and occasional lump sums (‘fines’), when the leases were renewed. The big sums, therefore, are the estimated rental of the lands—that is, *e.g.*, in the case of York the £41,030 represent the rents paid to the country gentlemen by their tenants, and the £13,798 is the average, one year with another, of what the squires paid to the Archbishop in rents and fines. The difference, of course, represents the value of the lands to the squires. What the figures really show, therefore, is the amount of Church property which, little by little, in the course of centuries, through a bad system of tenure, had got into the hands of laymen. This bad system has been long abolished, under the operation of divers laws passed in 1841, and later; and the Bishops have now, as your other table shows, much-reduced and unvarying income.”

“It may help you to see how the proportions (in the case of different Bishops) of the Bishops’ receipts to value of lands, vary so much, when I explain that the average episcopal income was required, in the forms issued by the Royal Commission, to be made out from the actual receipts of a specified period—seven years, I think.*

*The term had necessarily to be moderate, as it would have been useless to ask a Bishop as to the receipts of his predecessor.

¹ [For a previous letter from John Guy, see Letter 78, § 23 (p. 144).]

² [Letter 83, § 19 (p. 275).]

Now the separate leaseholds were of very various values, some big and some little, and it would often happen that several years elapsed without any big 'fine' falling in; and then there might come, in quick succession, the renewals of three or four very valuable estates, thus raising immensely the average for those particular years. Hence every Bishop's return, though accurately given as required, was a very rough average, though the return, taken as a whole—that is, as regards all the sees together—gave a fair view of the facts. The ins and outs of the affair, you see, can only be understood by people familiar with the working of the now obsolete system. I therefore in my last note abstained from saying more than was just sufficient to indicate the blunder, or disingenuousness, of the pamphleteer, knowing that it would be useless to burden your pages with farther details. To any one who knows the facts, the large figures given as the *apparent* incomes of Bishops are simply ludicrous. No Bishop ever had any income approaching to £50,000. That of the late Bishop Summer, of Winchester, was always quoted as exorbitantly vast, and it was about £19,000. I know privately that the late Archbishop of Canterbury, with his £15,000 a year, left his family the noble fortune of £600 per annum!"

11. (V.) "THE FATE OF CYFARTHFA.—Mr. Crawshay has put a summary end to all rumours as to the possibility of a start at Cyfarthfa. One of his old servants, says the *Western Mail*, wrote to him lately on matters apart from the iron-works; but in the course of his letter he asked his old master whether there were any hopes of the works being again started. The reply from Mr. Crawshay was as follows: 'Trade is worse than ever it was, and I see not the slightest chance of Cyfarthfa starting again; and I believe if it ever does start it will be under different circumstances to the present, as it will require a large sum to be laid out in improvements, such as making steel-works, etc. I am too near my grave to think of doing anything of the sort; and I think so badly of trade altogether that I have no wish to see my sons remain in it. I am feeling very poorly, and do not think I can possibly live very long, and if I am able I shall sell the works before I die. There is nothing now to bind me to them, for I have been estranged from them by the conduct of the men. I always hoped and expected to die with the works going, and the same feeling among the men for their employers; but things have changed, and all is different, and I go to my grave feeling I am a perfect stranger, as all my old men are gone, or nearly so.'"¹

"9, STEVENSON SQUARE, MANCHESTER,

"9th October, 1877.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Could you have thought, did you expect, that such an utter vindication of your words would embody itself in this form?

"T. W. P.

"J. RUSKIN, ESQ."

12. Yes, my friend, I not only expected, but knew positively that such vindication, not of my words only, but of the words of all the servants of God, from the beginning of days, would assuredly come, alike in this, and in other yet more terrible, forms. But it is to be noted that there are four quite distinct causes operating in the depression of English,—especially iron,—trade, of which two are our own fault; and the other two, being inevitable, should have been foreseen long since, by even the vulgar sagacity of self-interest.

The first great cause is the separation between masters and men, which is wholly the masters' fault, and the necessary result of the defiance of every moral law of human relation by modern political economy.

¹ [For further correspondence on this subject, see Letter 86, § 17 (p. 353).]

The second is the loss of custom, in consequence of bad work—also a result of the teaching of modern political economy.

The third, affecting especially the iron trade, is that the funds which the fools of Europe had at their disposal, with which to build iron bridges instead of wooden ones, put up spike railings instead of palings, and make machines in substitution for their arms and legs, are now in a great degree exhausted; and by the time the rails are all rusty, the bridges snapped, and the machines found to reap and thresh no more corn than arms did, the fools of Europe will have learned a lesson or two which will not be soon forgotten, even by *them*; and the iron trade will be slack enough, thereafter.

The fourth cause of trade depression,—bitter to the hearts of the persons whom Mr. Herbert Spencer calls patriots,¹—is, that the inhabitants of other countries have begun to perceive that they have got hands as well as we—and possibly, in some businesses, even better hands; and that they may just as well make their own wares as buy them of us. Which wholesome discovery of theirs will in due time mercifully put an end to the British ideal of life in the National Shop; and make it at last plain to the British mind that the cliffs of Dover were not constructed by Providence merely to be made a large counter.

13. (VI.) The following paper by Professor W. J. Beal is sent me by a correspondent from a New York journal. The reader is free to attach such weight to it as he thinks proper. The passage about the Canada thistle is very grand.

“Interest money is a heavy tax on many people of the United States. There is no other burden in the shape of money which weighs down like interest, unless it be money spent for intoxicating liquors. Men complain of high State taxes, of school-taxes, and taxes for bridges, sewers (? grading), and for building churches. For some of these they are able to see an equivalent, but for money paid as interest—for the use of money, few realize or gain (? guess) what it costs. It is an expensive luxury to pay for the mere privilege of handling what does not belong to you. People are likely to overestimate your wealth, and (make you?) pay more taxes than you ought to.

“In most parts of our new country, ten per cent. per annum, or more, is paid for the use of money. A shrewd business man may reasonably make it pay to live at this rate for a short time, but even such men often fail to make it profitable. It is an uncommon thing for any business to pay a sure and safe return of ten per cent. for any length of time. The profits of great enterprises, like railroads, manufactories of iron, cloth, farm-implements, etc., etc., are so variable, so fluctuating, that it is difficult to tell their average profit, or the average profit of any one of them. We know it is not uncommon for railroads to go into the hands of a receiver, because they cannot pay the interest on their debts. Factories stop, and often go to decay, because they cannot pay running expenses. Often they cannot continue without losing money, to say nothing about the interest on the capital. Merchants seldom can pay ten per cent. On large amounts for any length of time. Even six per cent. is a heavy tax on any kind of business.

“But it was not of these classes that I intended to speak at this time. The writer has been most of his life among farmers, and has had unusual opportunities for studying their management of finances. It may be worse in a new country

¹ [See Vol. XVII. p. 556.]

than in an old one, but so far as my knowledge extends, a large majority of the farms of Michigan are covered by a mortgage. The farmer needs capital to buy sheep, cattle, tools; to build houses and barns, and to clear and prepare land for crops. He is very likely to underestimate the cost of a farm, and what it takes to stock it properly. He invests all his money, and perhaps runs in debt, for his land alone, leaving nothing with which to furnish it. Quite often he buys more land before he has money to pay for it, or even before he has paid off the mortgage on his present farm. Times may be easy; crops may be good, and high in price, for a few years. He overestimates his ability to make money, and runs in debt. Fortune changes. He has 'bad luck,' and the debt grows larger instead of smaller.

"Farming is a safe business, but even this has its dark side. Good crops are by no means sure, even with good culture. Blight, drought, insects, fire, sickness, and other calamities may come when least expected, and with a large debt overwhelm the hopeful farmer.

"I have never seen a farm that for several years together paid ten per cent. interest on the capital invested. In an old scrap-book I find the following: 'No blister draws sharper than does the interest. Of all industries, none is comparable to that of interest. It works all day and night, in fair weather and in foul. It has no sound in its footsteps, but travels fast. It gnaws at a man's substance with invisible teeth. It binds industry with its film, as a fly is bound in the spider's web. Debt rolls a man over and over, binding him hand and foot, and letting him hang upon the fatal mesh until the long-legged interest devours him. There is but one thing on a farm like it, and that is the Canada thistle, which swarms with new plants every time you break its roots, whose blossoms are prolific, and every flower the father of a million seeds. Every leaf is an awl, every branch a spear, and every plant like a platoon of bayonets, and a field of them like an armed host. The whole plant is a torment and a vegetable course. And yet, a farmer had better make his bed of Canada thistles than to be at ease upon interest.'

"There are some exceptions to the general rule, that no man should run in debt. It may be better for one to owe something on a house and lot than to move from house to house every year or so and pay a high rent. It may do for a farmer to incur a small debt on a new piece of land, or on some improvement, but be cautious. A small debt will sometimes stimulate to industry and economy, but a large one will often weary, and finally come off victorious.

"A farmer wishes to save his extra lot for his son, and so pays ten per cent. His sons and daughters cannot go to a good school or college because of that mortgage. The son sees the privations of a farmer's life under unfavourable circumstances. The father dies, and leaves the farm to his son with a heavy debt on it, which he in vain attempts to remove, or he sells the farm and leaves that kind of drudgery. Very often a farmer is keeping more land than he is able to work or manage well. He does not know how to get value received, and more, out of his hired help. Such a one is unwise not to sell a part, clear the debt, and work the remainder better."

14. (VII.) The passage referred to in the text,¹ from Mr. Bucknall's translation of M. Viollet-le-Duc's essay on Mont Blanc:—

"But what is man in presence of the great phenomena which geology reveals? What can he do to utilize or to counteract their consequences? How can such diminutive beings, whose most numerous army would be barely noticed on the slopes of these mountains, in any degree modify the laws which govern the distribution of watercourses, alluvial deposits, denudations, and the accumulation

¹ [See above, § 5. For particulars of the book, see Vol. XXVI. p. 221. Ruskin's extracts are from its last chapter ("Influence of the Labours of Man in the Distribution of Watercourses"), pp. 337–340, 353–356, 375–378.]

and melting of snows on such vast mountain masses? Is not their impotence manifest?

“No; the most terrible and powerful phenomena of Nature are only the result of the multiplication of infinitesimal appliances or forces. The blade of grass or the fibre of moss performs a scarcely appreciable function, but which, when multiplied, conducts to a result of considerable importance. The drop of water which penetrates by degrees into the fissures of the hardest rocks, when crystallized as the result of a lowering of the temperature, ultimately causes mountains to crumble. In Nature there are no insignificant appliances, or, rather, the action of Nature is only the result of insignificant appliances. Man, therefore, can act in his turn, since these small means are not beyond the reach of his influence, and his intelligence enables him to calculate their effects. yet owing to his neglect of the study of Nature—his parent and great nurturer, and thus ignorant of her procedure, man is suddenly surprised by one of the phases of her incessant work, and sees his crops and habitations swept away by an inundation. Does he proceed to examine the cause of what he calls a cataclysm, but which is only the consequence of an accumulation of phenomena? No; he attributes it to Providence, restores his dykes, sows his fields, and rebuilds his dwellings; and then. . . waits for the disaster—which is a consequence of laws he has neglected to study—to occur again. Is it not thus that things have been taking place for centuries?—while Nature, subject to her own laws, is incessantly pursuing her work with an inflexible logical persistency. The periodical inundations which lay waste vast districts are only a consequence of the action of these laws; it is for us, therefore, to become acquainted with them, and to direct them to our advantage.

“We have seen in the preceding investigations that Nature had, at the epoch of the great glacial débâcles, contrived reservoirs at successive stages, in which the torrent waters deposited the materials of all dimensions that were brought down—first in the form of drift, whence sifting them, they caused them to descend lower down; the most bulky being deposited first, and the lightest, in the form of silt, being carried as far as the low plains. We have seen that, in filling up most of these reservoirs by the deposit of material, the torrents tended to make their course more and more sinuous—to lengthen it, and thus to diminish the slopes, and consequently render their flow less rapid. We have seen that in the higher regions the torrents found points of rest—levels prepared by the disintegration of the slopes; and that from these levels they incessantly cause *débris* to be precipitated, which ultimately formed cones of dejection, often permeable, and at the base of which the waters, retarded in their course and filtered, spread in rivulets through the valleys.

“Not only have men misunderstood the laws of which we mention here only certain salient points, but they have for the most part run counter to them, and have thus been paving the way for the most formidable disasters. Ascending the valleys, man has endeavoured to make the great laboratories of the mountains subservient to his requirements. To obtain pastures on the slopes, he has destroyed vast forests; to obtain fields suitable for agriculture in the valleys, he has embanked the torrents, or has obliterated their sinuosities, thus precipitating their course towards the lower regions; or, again, bringing the mud-charged waters into the marshes, he has dried up the latter by suppressing a great many accidental reserves. The mountaineer has had but one object in view—to get rid as quickly as possible of the waters with which he is too abundantly supplied, without concerning himself with what may happen in the lower grounds. Soon, however, he becomes himself the first victim of his imprudence or ignorance. The forests having been destroyed, avalanches have rolled down in enormous masses along the slopes. These periodical avalanches have swept down in their course the humus produced by large vegetable growths; and in place of the pastures which the mountaineer thought he was providing for his flocks, he has found nothing more than the denuded rock, allowing the water produced by rain or thawing to flow in a few moments down to the lower parts, which are then rapidly submerged and desolated. To obtain a few acres by drying up a marsh or a small lake, he has often lost

double the space lower down in consequence of the more rapid discharge of pebbles and sand. As soon as vegetation has attempted to grow on the cones of dejection—the products of avalanches, and which consist entirely of *débris*—he will send his herds of goats there, which will destroy in a few hours the work of several years. At the terminal point of the elevated combes—where the winter causes the snows to accumulate—far from encouraging the larger vegetable growths, which would mitigate the destructive effects of the avalanches, he has been in the habit of cutting down the trees, the approach to such points being easy, and the cones of dejection favouring the sliding down of the trunks into the valley.

“This destruction of the forests appears to entail consequences vastly more disastrous than are generally supposed. Forests protect forests, and the more the work of destruction advances, the more do they incline to abandon the altitudes in which they once flourished. At the present day, around the *massif* of Mont Blanc, the larch, which formerly grew vigorously at an elevation of six thousand feet, and marked the limit of the larger vegetable growths, is quitting those heights, leaving isolated witnesses in the shape of venerable trunks which are not replaced by young trees.

“Having frequently entered into conversation with mountaineers on those elevated plateaux, I have taken occasion to explain to them these simple problems, to point out to them the foresight of Nature and the improvidence of man, and to show how by trifling efforts it was easy to restore a small lake, to render a stream less rapid, and to stop the fall of materials in those terrible couloirs. They would listen attentively, and the next day would anticipate me in remarking, ‘Here is a good place to make a reservoir. By moving a few large stones here, an avalanche might be arrested.’

“The herdsmen are the enemies of the forests; what they want is pasturage. As far as they can, therefore, they destroy the forests, without suspecting that their destruction is sure to entail that of the greater part of the pastures.

“We saw in the last chapter that the lowering* of the limit of the woods appears to be directly proportioned to the diminution of the glaciers; in fact, that the smaller the volume of the glaciers, the more do the forests approach the lower (?higher¹) regions. We have found stumps of enormous larches on the beds of the ancient glaciers that surmounted La Flégère, beneath the Aiguilles Pourries and the Aiguilles Rouges—*i.e.*, more than three hundred feet above the level of the modern Châlet de La Flégère, whereas at present the last trees are some yards below this hotel, and maintain but a feeble existence. These deserts are now covered only with stone *débris*, rhododendrons, and scanty pasturage. Even in summer, water is absent at many points, so that to supply their cattle the herdsmen of La Flégère have been obliged to conduct the waters of the Lacs Blancs into reservoirs by means of a small dyke which follows the slopes of the ancient moraines. Yet the bottoms of the trough-shaped hollows are sheltered, and contain a thick layer of humus, so that it would appear easy, in spite of the altitude (6600 feet), to raise larches there. But the larch is favoured by the neighbourhood of snows or ice. And on this plateau, whose summits reach an average of 8500 feet, scarcely a few patches of snow are now to be seen in August.

“Formerly these ancient glacier beds were dotted with small tarns, which have been drained off for the most part by the herdsmen themselves, who hoped thus to gain a few square yards of pasture. Such tarns, frozen from October to May, preserve the snow and form small glaciers, while their number caused

* “Raising,” I think the author must have meant.¹

¹ [But see Letter 86, § 12, note by Mr. Willett (p. 348).]

these solitudes to preserve permanent névés, which, covering, the rocky beds, retarded their disintegration. It was then also that the larches, whose stumps still remain, covered the hollows and sheltered parts of the combes. The area of pasturage was evidently limited; but the pasturage itself was good, well watered, and could not be encroached upon. Now both tarns and névés have disappeared, and larches likewise, while we see inroads constantly made on the meadows by stony *débris* and sand.

“If care be not taken, the valley from Nant-Borant to Bonhomme, which still enjoys such fine pastures, protected by some remains of forests, will be invaded by *débris*; for these forests are already being cleared in consequence of a complete misunderstanding of the conditions imposed by the nature of the locality.

“Conifers would seem to have been created with a view to the purpose they serve on the slopes of the mountains. Their branches, which exhibit a constant verdure, arrest the snows, and are strongly enough attached to their trunk to enable them to support the load they have to carry. In winter we may see layers of snow eight inches or a foot thick on the palmated branches of the firs, yet which scarcely make them bend. Thus every fir is a shelf which receives the snow and hinders it from accumulating as a compact mass on the slopes. Under these conditions avalanches are impossible. When the thaws come, these small separate stores crumble successively into powder. The trunk of the conifer clings to the rocks by the help of its roots, which, like wide-spread talons, go far to seek their nourishment, binding together among them all the rolling stones. In fact, the conifer prefers a rock, settles on it, and envelops it with its strong roots as with a net, which, stretching far and wide, go in search of neighbouring stones, and attach them to the first as if to prevent all chance of their slipping down.* In the interstices *débris* of leaves and branches accumulate, and a humus is formed which retains the waters and promotes the growth of herbaceous vegetation.

“It is wonderful to see how, in a few years, slopes, composed of materials of all shapes, without any appearance of vegetation, become covered with thick and vigorous fir plantations—*i.e.*, if the goats do not tear off the young shoots, and if a little rest is left to the heaps on which they grow. Then the sterile ground is clothed, and if an avalanche occurs, it may prostrate some of the young trees and make itself a passage, but vegetation is eager to repair the damage. Does man ever aid in this work? No; he is its most dangerous enemy. Among these young conifers he sends his herds of goats, which in a few days make sad havoc, tear off the shoots, or hinder them from growing; moreover, he will cut down the slender trunks for firewood, whereas the great neighbouring forest would furnish him, in the shape of dead wood and fallen branches, with abundance of fuel.

“We have observed this struggle between man and vegetation for several years in succession. Sometimes, but rarely, the rising forest gains the victory, and, having reached a certain development, can defend itself. But most frequently it is atrophied, and presents a mass of stunted trunks, which an avalanche crushes and buries in a few moments.

“Reservoirs in steps at successive heights are the only means for preventing the destructive effects of floods, for regulating the streams, and supplying the plains during the dry seasons. If, when Nature is left to herself, she gradually fills up those she had formed, she is incessantly forming fresh ones; but here man interferes and prevents the work. He is the first to suffer from his ignorance and cupidity; and what he considers his right to the possession of the soil is too often the cause of injury to his neighbours and to himself.

* Compare the chapter on the offices of the Root, in *Proserpina*,¹

¹ [Vol. XXV. p. 221.]

“Civilized nations are aware that in the towns they build it is necessary to institute sanitary regulations—that is, regulations for the public welfare, which are a restriction imposed on the absolute rights of property. These civilized nations have also established analogous regulations respecting highways, the watercourses in the plains, the chase, and fishing; but they have scarcely troubled themselves about mountain districts, *which are the sources of all the wealth of the country* (Italics mine; but the statement needs qualification.—J. R.); for where there are no mountains there are no rivers, consequently no cultivated lands; nothing but *steppes*, furnishing, at best, pasturage for a few cattle distributed over immense areas.

“On the pretext that mountain regions are difficult of access, those among us who are entrusted by destiny, ambition, or ability, with the management of the national interests, find it easier to concern themselves with the plains than with the heights. (I don’t find any governments, nowadays, concerning themselves even with the *plains*, except as convenient fields for massacre.—J.R.)

“We allow that in those elevated solitudes Nature is inclement, and is stronger than we are; but it so happens that an inconsiderable number of shepherds and poor ignorant mountaineers are free to do in those altitudes what their immediate interests suggest to them. What do those good people care about that which happens in the plains? They have timber, for which the sawmill is ready, and they fell it where the transport to that sawmill is least laborious. Is not the incline of the couloir formed expressly for sliding the trunks directly to the mill?

“They have water in too great abundance, and they get rid of it as fast as they can. They have young fir-plants, of which the goats are fond; and to make a cheese which they sell for fifty centimes, they destroy a hundred francs’ worth of timber, thereby exposing their slopes to be denuded of soil, and their own fields to be destroyed. They have infertile marshes, and they drain them by digging a ditch requiring two days’ work. These marshes were filled with accumulations of peat, which, like a sponge, retained a considerable quantity of water at the time of the melting of the snows. They dry up the turf for fuel, and the rock, being denuded, sends in a few minutes into the torrents the water which that turf held in reserve for several weeks. Now and then an observer raises a cry of alarm, and calls attention to the reckless waste of territorial wealth. Who listens to what he says? who reads what he writes? (*Punch* read my notes on the inundations at Rome, and did his best to render them useless.—J. R.¹)

“Rigorously faithful to her laws, Nature does not carry up again the pebble which a traveller’s foot has rolled down, the slope—does not replant the forests which your thoughtless hands have cut down when the naked rock appears, and the soil has been carried away by the melted snows and the rain—does not restore the meadow to the disappearance of whose soil our want of precaution has contributed. Far from comprehending the marvellous logic of these laws, you contravene their beneficent control, or at least impede their action. So much the worse for you, poor mortal! Do not, however, complain if your lowlands are devastated, and your habitations swept away; and do not vainly impute these disasters to a vengeance or a warning on the part of Providence. For these disasters are mainly owing to your ignorance, your prejudices, and your cupidity.”

¹ [See *Punch*, February 4, 1871, vol. 60, p. 52: “Ruskin’s Remedy for Inundation.” For his reply to *Punch*, see below, Letter 86, § 10 (p. 345); for the Letters on Roman Inundations, see Letter 33, § 19 (Vol. XXVII, p. 622), and Vol. XVII, pp. 547 *seq.* The article in *Punch*—a serio-comic criticism of Ruskin’s schemes—was founded more particularly on the second of the letters given in Vol. XVII.]

"YEA, THE WORK OF OUR HANDS, ESTABLISH THOU IT"

LETTER 86

LET US (ALL) EAT AND DRINK¹

1. IN assuming that the English Bible may yet be made the rule of faith and conduct to the English people; and in placing in the Sheffield Library, for its first volume, a MS. of that Bible in its perfect form,² much more is of course accepted as the basis of our future education than the reader will find taken for the ground either of argument or appeal, in any of my writings on political economy previous to the year 1875. It may partly account for the want of success of those writings, that they pleaded for honesty without praise, and for charity without reward;—that they entirely rejected, as any motive of moral action, the fear of future judgment; and—taking St. Paul in his irony at his bitterest word,—“Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,”—they merely expanded that worldly resolution into its just terms: “Yes, let us eat and drink”—what else?—but let us *all* eat and drink, and not a few only, enjoining fast to the rest.

Nor do I, in the least item, now retract the assertion, so often made in my former works,* that human probity and virtue are indeed entirely independent of any hope in

* Most carefully wrought out in the preface to the *Crown of Wild Olive* [Vol. XVIII. pp. 392–399.]

¹ [1 Corinthians xv. 32.]

² [See Letters 69, § 18 *n.*, and 70, § 13 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 703, 727).]

futurity; and that it is precisely in accepting death as the end of all, and in laying down, on that sorrowful condition, his life for his friends, that the hero and patriot of all time has become the glory and safety of his country. The highest ideals of manhood given for types of conduct in *Unto this Last*,¹ and the assertions that the merchant and common labourer must be ready, in the discharge of their duty, to die rather than fail, assume nothing more than this; and all the proper laws of human society may be perfectly developed and obeyed, and must be so wherever such society is constituted with prudence, though none of them be sanctioned by any other Divinity than that of our own souls, nor their violation punished by any other penalty than perfect death. There is no reason that we should drink foul water in London, because we never hope to drink of the stream of the City of God;² nor that we should spend most of our income in making machines for the slaughter of innocent nations, because we never expect to gather the leaves of the tree for their healing.³

2. Without, therefore, ceasing to press the works of prudence even on Infidelity, and expect deeds and thoughts of honour even from Mortality, I yet take henceforward happier, if not nobler, ground of appeal, and write as a Christian to Christians; that is to say, to persons who rejoice in the hope of a literal, personal, perpetual life, with a literal, personal, and eternal God.

To all readers holding such faith, I now appeal, urging them to confess Christ before men; which they will find, on self-examination, they are most of them afraid to do.

For going to church is only a compliance with the fashion of the day; not in the least a confession of Christ, but only the expression of a desire to be thought as respectable as other people. Staying to sacrament is usually not much more; though it *may* become superstitious, and

¹ [See §§ 21–24 (Vol. XVII. pp. 39–42).]

² [Psalms xlvi. 4.]

³ [Revelation xxii. 2.]

a mere service done to obtain dispensation from other services. Violent combativeness for particular sects, as Evan-gelical, Roman Catholic, High Church, Broad Church—or the like, is merely a form of party-egotism, and a defiance of Christ, not confession of Him.

But to confess Christ is, first, to behave righteously, truthfully, and continently; and then, to separate ourselves from those who are manifestly or by profession rogues, liars, and fornicators. Which it is terribly difficult to do; and which the Christian Church has at present entirely ceased to attempt doing.

3. And, accordingly, beside me, as I write, to-day (shortest day, 1877), lies the (on the whole) honestest journal of London,¹—*Punch*,—with a moral piece of Christian art occupying two of its pages, representing the Turk in a human form, as a wounded and all but dying victim—surrounded by the Christian nations, under the forms of bear and vultures.²

“This witness is true”³ as against themselves, namely, that hitherto the action of the Christian nation to the infidel has always been one of rapine, in the broad sense. The Turk *is* what he is because we—have been only Christians in name. And another witness is true, which is a very curious one; never, so far as I know, yet received from past history.

Wherever the Christian Church, or any section of it, has indeed resolved to live a Christian life, and keep God’s laws in God’s name,—there, instantly, manifest approval of Heaven is given by accession of *worldly prosperity* and victory. This witness has only been unheard, because every sect of Christians refuses to believe that the religion of any other sect can be sincere, or accepted of Heaven: while the truth is that it does not matter a burnt stick’s end

¹ [Compare Letter 42, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 98).]

² [A double-page cartoon by Tenniel, entitled “The Gathering of the Eagles”—Austria and Germany on the one side, the Russian Bear on the other.]

³ [Titus i. 13.]

from the altar, in Heaven's sight, whether you are Catholic or Protestant, Eastern, Western, Byzantine, or Norman, but only whether you are true. So that the moment Venice is true to St. Mark, her flag flies over all the Eastern islands; and the moment Florence is true to the Lady of Lilies, her flag flies over all the Apennines; and the moment Switzerland is true to Notre Dame des Neiges, her pine-club beats down the Austrian lances; and the moment England is true to her Protestant virtue, all the sea-winds ally themselves with her against the Armada: and though after-shame and infidel failure follow upon every nation, yet the glory of their great religious day remains unsullied, and in that, they live for ever.¹

4. This is the Temporal lesson of all history, and with that there is another Spiritual lesson,—namely, that in the ages of faith, conditions of prophecy and seer-ship exist, among the faithful nations, in painting and scripture, which are also immortal and divine;—of which it has been my own special mission to speak for the most part of my life; but only of late I have understood completely the meaning of what had been taught me,—in beginning to learn somewhat more, of which I must not speak to-day; Fors appointing that I should rather say final word respecting our present state of spiritual fellowship, exemplified in the strikes of our workmen, the misery that accompanies them, and the articles of our current literature thereupon.

The said current literature, on this subject, being almost entirely under the command of the masters, has consisted chiefly in lectures on the guilt and folly of strikes, without in any wise addressing itself to point out to the men any other way of settling the question. “You can't have three shillings a day in such times; but we will give you two and sixpence; you had better take it—and, both on religious and commercial grounds, make no fuss. How much better is two-and-sixpence than nothing! and if once

¹ [On sincerity as the essential element in creeds, see Vol. XXVIII. p. 19.]

the mill stop—think—where shall we be all then?” “Yes,” the men answer, “but if to-day we take two and sixpence, what is to hinder you, to-morrow, from observing to us that two shillings are better than nothing, and we had better take *that* sum on religious and commercial principles, without fuss. And the day after, may not the same pious and moral instructors recommend to us the contented acceptance of eighteenpence? A stand must clearly be made somewhere, and we choose to make it here, and now.”

The masters again have reason to rejoin: “True, but if we give you three shillings to-day, how are we to know you will not stand for three and sixpence to-morrow, and for four shillings next week? A stand must be made somewhere, and we choose to make it here, and now.”

5. What solution is there, then? and of what use are any quantity of homilies either to man or master, on their manner of debate, that show them no possible solution in another way? As things are at present, the quarrel can only be practically closed by imminence of starvation on one side, or of bankruptcy on the other: even so, closed only for a moment,—never ended, burning presently forth again, to sink silent only in death;—while, year after year, the agonies of conflict and truces of exhaustion produce, for reward of the total labour, and fiat of the total council of the people, the minimum of gain for the maximum of misery.

Scattered up and down, through every page I have written on political economy for the last twenty years,¹ the reader will find unflinching reference to a principle of solution in such dispute, which is rarely so much as named by other arbitrators;—or if named, never believed in: yet, this being indeed the only principle of decision, the conscience of it, however repressed, stealthily modifies every arbitrate word.

The men are rebuked, in the magistral homilies, for

¹ [See, for the “law of Grace,” *Munera Pulveris*, § 100 (Vol. XVII. p. 224).]

their ingratitude in striking. Then there must be a law of *Grace*, which at least the masters recognize. The men are mocked in the magistral homilies for their folly in striking. Then there must be a law of *Wisdom*, which at least the masters recognize.

Appeal to *these*, then, for their entire verdict, most virtuous masters, all-gracious and all-wise. These reprobate ones, graceless and senseless, cannot, find their way for themselves; you must guide them. That much I told you, years and years ago.¹ You will have to do it, in spite of all your liberty-mongers. Masters, in fact, you must be; not in name.

6. But, as yet blind; and drivers—not leaders—of the blind,² you must pull the beams out of your own eyes,³ now; and that bravely. Preach your homily to yourselves first. Let me hear once more how it runs, to the men. “Oh foolish and ungrateful ones,” you say, “did we not once on a time give you high wages—even so high that you contentedly drank yourselves to death; and now, oh foolish and forgetful ones, that the time has come for us to give you low wages, will you not contentedly also starve yourselves to death?”

Alas, wolf-shepherds—this is St. George’s word to you:—

“In your prosperity you gave these men high wages, not in any kindness to *them*, but in contention for business among yourselves. You allowed the men to spend their wage in drunkenness, and you boasted of that drunkenness by the mouth of your Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in the columns of your leading journal, as a principal sign of the country’s prosperity.⁴ You have declared again and again, by vociferation of all your orators, that you have wealth, so overflowing that you do not know what to do with it.⁵ These men who dug the wealth for you, now lie

¹ [In *Unto this Last* (1860) and *Time and Tide* (1867): see Vol. XVII. pp. 29 *seq.*, 319–320.]

² [Matthew xv. 14.]

³ [Luke vi. 42.]

⁴ [See Letter 12, § 24 (Vol. XXVII. p. 215).]

⁵ [See Letters 22, § 7 (*ibid.*, p. 376), and 48, § 21 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 220–221).]

starving at the mouths of the hell-pits you made them dig; yea, their bones lie scattered at the grave's mouth, like as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth.¹ Your boasted wealth—where is it? Is the war between these and you, because you now mercilessly refuse them food, or because all your boasts of wealth were lies, and you have none to give?

“Your boasts of wealth *were* lies. You were working from hand to mouth in your best times; now your work is stopped, and you have nothing in the country to pay for food with; still less any store of food laid by. And how much distress and wrath you will have to bear before you learn the lesson of justice, God only knows. But this is the lesson you *have* to learn.”

7. Every workman in any craft* must pass his examination (crucial, not competitive) when he comes of age, and be then registered as capable of his profession; those who cannot pass in the higher crafts being remitted to the lower, until they find their level. Then every registered workman must be employed where his work is needed—(You interrupt me to say that his work is needed nowhere? Then, what do you want with machinery, if already you have more hands than enough, to do everything that needs to be done?)—by direction of the guild he belongs to, and paid by that guild his appointed wages, constant and unalterable by any chance or phenomenon, whatsoever. His wages must be given him day by day, from the hour of his entering the guild, to the hour of his death, never

* Ultimately, as often before stated, every male child born in England must learn some manner of skilled work by which he may earn his bread. If afterwards his fellow-workers choose that he shall sing, or make speeches to them instead, and that they will give him his turnip a day, or somewhat more, for Parliamentary advice, at their pleasure be it. I heard on the 7th of January this year that many of the men in Wales were reduced to that literal nourishment. Compare *Fors*, Nov. 1871.²

¹ [Psalms cxli. 7.]

² [Letter 11, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 185).]

raised, nor lowered, nor interrupted; admitting, therefore, no temptation by covetousness, no wringing of anxiety, no doubt or fear of the future.

8. *That* is the literal fulfilment of what we are to pray for—"Give us each day—our daily *bread*,"¹—observe—not our daily money. For, that wages may be constant, they must be in kind, not in money. So much bread, so much woollen cloth, or so much fuel, as the workman chooses; or, in lieu of these, *if* he choose, the order for such quantity at the government stores; order to be engraved, as he chooses, on gold, or silver, or paper: but the "penny" a day² to be always and everywhere convertible, on the instant, into its known measure of bread, cloth or fuel, and to be the standard, therefore, eternal and invariable, of all value of things, and wealth of men. That is the lesson you have to learn from St. George's lips, inevitably, against any quantity of shriek, whine, or sneer, from the swindler, the adulterator, and the fool. Whether St. George will let me teach it you before I die, is his business, not mine; but as surely as I shall die, these words of his shall *not*.

And "to-day" (which is my own shield motto³) I send to a London goldsmith, whose address was written for me (so Fors appointed it) by the Prince Leopold, with his own hand,—the weight of pure gold which I mean to be our golden standard, (defined by Fors, as I will explain in another place,⁴) to be beaten to the diameter of our old English "Angel," and to bear the image and superscriptions above told (*Fors*, Oct. 1875).⁵

9. And now, in due relation to this purpose of fixing the standard of bread, we continue our inquiry into the second part of the Deacon's service—in not only breaking bread, but also pouring wine, from house to house; that so making all food one sacrament, all Christian men may

¹ [Matthew vi. 11.]

² [Matthew xx. 2.]

³ [See Vol. I p. xi.]

⁴ [Ruskin did not, however, revert to this subject.]

⁵ [Letter, 58, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 430.).]

eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people, their Lord adding to their assembly daily such as shall be saved.¹

Read first this piece of a friend's recent letter:²—

“MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—In reading over again the December *Fors*,³ I have been struck with your question quoted. ‘They have no wine?’ and the command is ‘Fill the water-pots with WATER.’ I am greatly averse to what is called improving, spiritualizing—,i.e., applying the sacred text in a manner other than the simple and literal one; but Christ's words had doubtless in them a germ of thoughtful wisdom applicable to other aims and ends besides the original circumstances; and it is a singular coincidence that Fors should have induced you to close your last year with your quotation from the Cana miracle, and that the next number should propose to deal with ‘filling the water-pots (*cisterna*) with water.’ One thing is certain, viz that in many parts of the world, and even in England in summer, the human obedience to the command precedent to the miracle would be impossible. Did you ever read Kingsley's Sermon on Cana? If you think it well to give a few of the extracts of him ‘who being dead yet speaketh,’ I shall be delighted to make them, and send them;* they are different from what one hears in ordinary churches, and are *vital* for St. George.”⁴

“It is, I think in the first place, an important, as well as a pleasant thing, to know that the Lord's glory, as St. John says, was first shown forth at a wedding,—at a feast. . . . Not by helping some great philosopher to think more deeply, or some great saint to perform more wonderful acts of holiness; but in giving the simple pleasure of wine to simple, commonplace people of whom we neither read that they were rich, nor righteous. . . .

“Though no one else cares for the poor, He cares for them. With their hearts He begins His work, even as He did in England sixty years ago, by the preaching of Whitfield and Wesley. Do you wish to know if anything is the Lord's work? See if it is a work among the poor. . . .

“But again, the Lord is a giver, and not a taskmaster. He does not demand from us: He gives to us. He had been giving from the foundation of the world. Corn and wine, rain and sunshine, and fruitful seasons

* From *Sermons on National Subjects*. Parker and Son. 1860.

¹ [Acts ii. 46, 47.]

² [The letter was from Mr. Willett.]

³ [Letter 84. See pp. 285, 288.]

⁴ [Mr. Willett did send the extracts, and the following passages are from pp. 312–320 of *Sermons on National Subjects*, by Charles Kingsley, Second Series. London and Glasgow, Richard Griffin and Company, 1854. Dots have now been inserted where passages are omitted.]

had been His sending. And now He has come to show it. He has come to show men who it was who had been filling their heart with joy and gladness, who had been bringing out of the earth and air, by His unseen chemistry, the wine which maketh glad the heart of man.

“In every grape that hangs upon the vine, water is changed into wine, as the sap ripens into rich juice. He had been doing that all along, in every vineyard and orchard; and that was His glory. Now He was come to prove that; to draw back the veil of custom and carnal sense, and manifest Himself. Men had seen the grapes ripen on the tree; and they were tempted to say, as every one of us is tempted now, ‘It is the sun, and the air, the nature of the vine and the nature of the climate, which make the wine.’ Jesus comes and answers, ‘Not so; I make the wine; I have been making it all along. The vines, the sun, the weather, are only my tools, wherewith I worked, turning rain and sap into wine; and I am greater than they. I made them; I do not depend on them; I can make wine from water without vines, or sunshine. Behold, and drink, and see my glory *without* the vineyard, since you had forgotten how to see it *in* the vineyard!’ . . .

“We, as well as they, are in danger of forgetting who it is that sends us corn and wine, and fruitful seasons, love, and marriage, and all the blessings of this life.

“We are now continually fancying that these outward earthly things, as we call them, in our shallow carnal conceits, have nothing to do with Jesus or His kingdom, but that we may compete, and scrape, even cheat, and lie, to get *them** and when we have them, misuse them selfishly, as if they belonged to no one but ourselves, as if we had no duty to perform about them, as if we owed God no service for them.

“And again, we are in danger of spiritual pride; in danger of fancying that because we are religious, and have, or fancy we have, deep experiences, and beautiful thoughts about God and Christ, and our own souls, therefore we can afford to despise those who do not know as much as ourselves; to despise the common pleasures and petty sorrows of poor creatures, whose souls and bodies are grovelling in the dust, busied with the cares of this world, at their wits’ end to get their daily bread; to despise the merriment of young people, the play of children, and all those everyday happinesses which, though we may turn from them with a sneer, are precious in the sight of Him who made heaven and earth.

“All such proud thoughts—all such contempt of those who do not seem as spiritual as we fancy ourselves—is evil. . . .

“See, in the epistle for the second Sunday after the Epiphany, St. Paul makes no distinction between rich and poor. This epistle is joined with the gospel of that day to show us what ought to be the conduct of Christians who believe in the miracles of Cana; what men should do who believe that they have a Lord in heaven, by whose command suns shine, fruits, ripen, men enjoy the blessings of harvest, of marriage, of the comforts which the heathen and the savage, as well as the Christian, man partake. . . .

* Italics mine. The whole sentence might well have them; it is supremely important.

“My friends, these commands are not to one class, but to all. . . . Poor as well as rich may minister to others with earnestness, and condescend to those of low estate. Not a word in this whole epistle which does not apply equally to every rank, and sex, and age. Neither are these commands to each of us by ourselves, but to all of us together, as members of a family. If you will look through them, they are not things to be done to ourselves, but to our neighbours; not experiences to be felt about our own souls, but rules of conduct to our fellow-men. They are all different branches and flowers from that one root, ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.’

“Do we live thus, rich and poor? Can we look each other in the face this afternoon and say, each man to his neighbour, ‘I have behaved like a brother to you. I have rejoiced at your good fortune, and grieved at your sorrow. I have preferred you to myself?’”

Seldom shall you read more accurate or more noble words. How is it that clergymen who can speak thus, do not see the need of gathering together, into one “*little*” flock,¹ those who will obey them?

10. I close our *Fors* this month with Mr. Willett’s admirable prefatory remarks on water-distribution,² and a few words of his from a private letter received at the same time; nothing only farther a point or two of my own mountain experience. When *Punch* threw what ridicule he could* on my proposal to from field and glen

* It is a grotesque example of the evil fortune which continually waits upon the best efforts for *essential* good made in this unlucky nineteenth century, that a journal usually so right in its judgment, and sympathetic in its temper (I speak in entire seriousness), and fearless besides in expressing both (see, for instance, the splendid article on the Prince Christian’s sport in the number for the 12th of this month³), should have taken the wrong side, and that merely for the sake of a jest, on the most important economical question in physics now at issue in the world!

¹ [Luke xii. 32.]

² [As promised above, Letter 85, § 6 (p. 323).]

³ [An article in the number for January 12, 1878 (vol. 74, p. 3), headed “A Royal Eagle and a Royal Sportsman,” in which Prince Christian was rated very severely for the following exploit recorded in the *Times* of January 1, 1878: “For several days past an eagle of great size and beauty has been seen hovering about Windsor Great Park, and on Wednesday it was observed to settle itself on the Castle. Information of this fact having been forwarded to Prince Christian, His Royal Highness, accompanied by several keepers, tried to shoot it, but failed. In order to capture it, a trap was laid, into which the bird subsequently entangled itself; but it tore itself away, leaving one of its toes in the mesh.”]

reservoirs on the Apennines to stay the storm-waters;¹ and, calculating ironically the quantity that fell per acre in an hour's storm, challenged me to stay it, he did not know that all had actually been done to the required extent by the engineers of three hundred years since, in the ravine above Agubbio² (the Agubbio of Dante's Oderigi³),—their rampart standing, from cliff to cliff, unshaken, to this day; and he as little foresaw that precisely what I had required to be done to give constancy of sweet waters to the storm-balanced ravines of Italy, I should be called on in a few years more to prevent the mob of England from doing, that they may take them away from the fair pastures of the valley of St. John.⁴

11. The only real difficulty in managing the mountain waters is when one cannot get hold of them,—when the limestones are so cavernous, or the sands so porous, that the surface drainage at once disappears, as on the marble flanks of hill above Lucca; but I am always amazed, myself, at the extreme docility of streams when they can be fairly caught and broken, like good horses, from their

¹ [See note at end of Letter 85 (p. 334). The passage from the jocose article in *Punch* is as follows: "Now, really, my dear Oracle! Do you know that rain has fallen over London at the rate of four inches in the hour? That about Rome, such falls may take place for several hours, and at not distant intervals? That thirty inches of rain in twenty-four hours have been recorded at Geneva? . . . Where would your two-foot dykes and conduits and tanks be, in a storm like *that*? As John Thomas would say, 'Gone to everlasting smash.' Seriously, are you aware what an inch depth of rain means? It means 22,400 gallons, or one hundred tons, of water on every square acre of land," etc. etc.]

² [Gubbio, or Agubbio, the ancient Umbrian city of *Iguvium* or *Engubium*. The reference is to the Bottaccione, a remarkable specimen of mediæval engineering, constructed much earlier than Ruskin says, the probable date being the middle of the fourteenth century. It lies outside the Porta Metauro, about a mile and a half along the road that leads to Scheggia and the Flaminian Way. It is "a reservoir, formed near the source of the Camignano, by uniting the slopes of Monte Ingino and Monte Calvo by a huge wall, or dam, 30 yards wide, thus forming a basin 126 yards long, 75 wide, and 26 in depth, which, when full of water, looks like a miniature lake. The supply is regulated by a door through which the water is allowed to pass at will, for the use of the numerous mills which formerly existed in connexion with the woollen manufacture" (*Gubbio Past and Present*, by Laura M'Cracken, 1905, p. 305).]

³ [*Purgatorio*, xi. 79, 80: see Vol. XII. p. 477, and Vol. XXVII. p. 355.]

⁴ [The reference is to the conversion of Thirlmere into a reservoir, the lake being fed by the beck which flows through the Vale of St. John: see above, p. 162.]

youth, and with a tender bridle-hand. I have been playing lately with a little one on my own rocks,¹—now as tame as Mrs. Buckland's leopard,*—and all I have to complain of in its behaviour is, that when I set it to undermine or clear away rubbish, it takes a month to do what I expected it to finish with a morning's work on a wet day; and even that, not without perpetual encouragement, approbation, and assistance.

On the other hand, to my extreme discomfiture, I have entirely failed in inveigling the water to come down at all, when it chooses to stay on the hill-side in places where I don't want it: but I suppose modern scientific drainage can accomplish this, though in my rough way I can do nothing but peel the piece of pertinacious bog right off the rock,—so beneficently faithful are the great Powers of the Moss, and the Earth, to their mountain duty of preserving, for man's comfort, the sources of the summer stream.

12. Now hear Mr. Willett:

“Three or four times every year the newspapers tell us of discomfort, suffering, disease, and death, caused by floods. Every summer, unnecessary sums are expended by farmers and labourers for water carted from a distance, to supply daily needs of man and beast. Outbreaks of fever from drinking polluted and infected water are of daily occurrence, causing torture and bereavement to thousands.

“All these evils are traceable mainly to our wicked, wasteful, and ignorant *neglect*; all this while, money is idly accumulating in useless hoards; people able and willing to work are getting hungry for want of employment; and the wealth of agricultural produce of all kinds is greatly curtailed for want of a wise, systematic, and simple application of the *mutual law of supply and demand* † in the storage of *rain-water*.

* See the *World*, January 9th of this year.²

† Somewhere (I think in *Munera Pulveris*³), I illustrated the law of Supply and Demand in commerce, and the madness of leaving it to its natural consequences without interference, by the laws of drought and rain.

¹ [See Vol. XXV. pp. xxxvii.–xxxviii.]

² [The animal was, in fact, a jaguar. See “Celebrities at Home: Mr. Frank Buckland in Albany Street”: “Hearing the cries of her pet, Mrs. Buckland came to the rescue; and it was amusing to see this child of the forest, with gleaming eyes and frantic yelps, cast itself at her feet and nestle meekly in the folds of her dress.”]

³ [See *Munera Pulveris*, §§ 141–144 (Vol. XVII. pp. 265–268).]

“I can only now briefly introduce the subject, which if you consider it of sufficient importance I will follow up in future letters.

“While the flooding of the districts south of the Thames at London is mainly owing to the contraction of the channel by the embankment, thereby causing the flood-tide to form a sort of *bore*, or advancing tidal-wave as in the Severn and Wye, the periodic winter floods near Oxford, and in all our upland valleys, are admittedly more frequent and more severe than formerly; and this *not* on account of the increased rainfall.* The causes are to be found rather in—

- I. The destruction of woods, heaths, and moorlands.
- II. The paving and improved road-making in cities and towns.
- III. The surface drainage of arable and pasture lands.
- IV. The draining of morasses and fens; and,
- V. The straightening and embanking of rivers and water-courses.

“All these operations have a tendency to *throw the rainfall* rapidly from higher to lower levels.

“This wilful winter waste is followed by woeful summer want.

“The people perish for lack of knowledge.’ The remedy is in our own hands.

“Lord Beaconsfield once wisely said, ‘Every cottage should have its porch, its oven, and its TANK.’

* On the Continent, however, there *has* been an increased rainfall in the plains, caused by the destruction of the woods on the mountains, and by the coldness of the summers, which cannot lift the clouds high enough to lay snow on the high summits. The following note by Mr. Willett on my queries on this matter in last *Fors*,¹ will be found of extreme value:—

“I am delighted with ‘Viollet-le-Duc’s’ Extracts. Yet is not strange that he calls man ‘impotent’? The same hands that can cut down the forests, can plant them; that can drain the morass, can dam up and form a lake; the same child that could lead the goats to crop off the young fir-tree shoots, could herd them away from them. I think you may have missed Le Duc’s idea about lower glaciers causing higher forests, and *vice versâ*. ‘Forests collect snow, retard its rapid thaw, and its collection into denuding slides of snow by this lower temperature, and retard the melting of the glacier, which therefore grows—*i.e.*, accumulates,—and pushes lower and lower down the valley. The reduction in temperature condenses more of the warm vapour, and favours growth of conifers, which gradually spread up so that destruction of forests in higher regions causes melting and retraction of glaciers.’ I will send you shortly an old essay of mine in which the storage of water and the destructive avalanche were used as illustrating the right and wrong use of accumulated wealth. Lord Chichester’s agent is at work with the plans and details for us, and you shall have them early in the new year (*D. V.*), and for it may I say—

‘With patient mind, thy path of duty run:
 God nothing does, nor suffers to be done,
 But thou thyself wouldst do, if thou couldst see
 The end of all events as well as He.’ ”

¹ [Letter 85, § 5 (p. 322).]

“And every farm-house, farm-building, and every mansion, should have its reservoir; every village its series of reservoirs; and every town and city its multiplied series of reservoirs, at different levels, and for the separate storage of water for drinking, for washing and for streets, and less important purposes.

“I propose in my next¹ to give more in detail the operations of the principles here hinted at, and to show from what has been done in a few isolated instances, what would follow from a wider and more general application of them.”

¹ [After the next letter the monthly publication of *Fors* was stopped by the author's illness referred to in Letter 88, and no more of Mr. Willett's papers appeared.]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

13. (I.) AFFAIRS of the Guild.

I am happy to be able at last to state that the memorandum of our constitution, drawn up for us by Mr. Barber, and already published in the 55th number of the first series of *Fors*,¹ has been approved by the Board of Trade, with some few, but imperative, modifications, to which I both respectfully and gladly submit, seeing them to be calculated in every way to increase both our own usefulness, and public confidence in us.

The organization of the Guild, thus modified, will be, by the time this letter is published, announced, as required by the Board, in the public journals; and, if not objected to on the ground of some unforeseen injuriousness to existing interests, ratified, I believe, during the current month, or at all events within a few weeks. I have prepared a brief abstract of our constitution and aims,² to be issued with this letter, and sent generally in answer to inquiry.

I stated in my last letter³ that I meant to take our accounts into my own hands;—that is to say, while they will always be printed in their properly formal arrangement, as furnished by our kind accountants, Mr. Rydings and Mr. Walker, I shall also give my own abstract of them in the form most intelligible to myself, and I should think also to some of my readers. This abstract of mine will be the only one given in *Fors*: the detailed accounts will be sent only to the members of the Guild.⁴ Until the registration of the Guild, I am still obliged to hold the Abbey Dale estate in my own name; and as we cannot appoint our new trustees till we are sure of our own official existence, I am obliged to order the payment of subscriptions to my own account at the Union Bank, to meet the calls of current expenses, for which I have no authority to draw on the account of the Guild but by cheque from its trustees.

I shall only farther in the present article acknowledge the sums I have myself received since the last statement of our accounts. The twenty days since the beginning of the year have melted into their long nights without sufficing for half the work they had been charged to do; and have had farther to meet claims of unexpected duty,⁵ not profitless to the Guild, assuredly; but leaving me still unable to give the somewhat lengthy

¹ [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 376 for the first draft. For the final form of the document, see Vol. XXX.]

² [Also printed in Vol. XXX.]

³ [See above, p. 325.]

⁴ [See, again, Vol. XXX.]

⁵ [Probably in connexion with the Turner Exhibition in the early part of 1878: see Vol. XIII. p. liv.]

explanations of our year's doings, without which our accounts would be unintelligible.

| | | £ | s. | d. |
|-------------|---|-------|----|----|
| 1877 | | | | |
| <i>Nov.</i> | 1. Joseph Stapleton | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| | 7. Mr. Talbot (Tithe) | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | 15. John Guy | 5 | 9 | 10 |
| " | Frances M. Henderson | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| " | Sale of Mr. Sillar's pamphlets on Usury | 0 | 17 | 0 |
| <i>Dec.</i> | 17. Louisa A. Keighley | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| | 28. Helen J. Ormerod | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | 31. Elizabeth Green | 0 | 10 | 9 |
| 1878 | | | | |
| <i>Jan.</i> | 1. Margaret Cox | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| | 4. R. B. Litchfield | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| | 10. William Hall | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| | 20. Ada Hartnell | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| | | <hr/> | | |
| | | £148 | 13 | 7 |

14. (II.) Affairs of the Master.

The lengthy correspondence given in our last article leaves me no farther space for talk of myself. People say I invite their attention to the subject too often: but I must have a long gossip in March.¹

15. (III.)

"8, KINGSGATE STREET, WINCHESTER,
23rd Nov., 1877.

"DEAR SIR,—If you will not help us, I do not know who will.

"One of the loveliest parts of the meadows close to the town is going to be entirely and irremediably spoiled: an engine-house is to be built, and all the drains are to be brought into a field in the middle of the Itchen valley, so that the buildings will be a blot in the landscape, an eyesore from every point, whether looking towards Saint Cross or back from there to the Cathedral and College; or almost worse than these, from every hill round the town they will be the most conspicuous objects. I think you know the town; but do you know that this is its prettiest part? You can have some idea what it would be to have a spot which has been dear to you all your life, and which you see day by day in all its aspects, utterly ruined; and besides, it seems so wrong that this generation should spoil that which is not theirs, but in which none have really more than a life interest, but which God has given us to enjoy and to leave in its loveliness for those after us. I wish I could speak as strongly as I feel, if it would induce you to speak for us, or rather that I could show you the real need for speaking, as I know you would not keep silence for any but good reasons. Surely destroying beauty to save a little money *is* doing the devil's work, though I am told that it is wrong to say so.

"Yours respectfully and gratefully,
"A. H. W.

"There is another place where the works might be, where they could be planted out, and where the trees would be an improvement; some engineers say that the soil too is better suited to the purpose. Do help us if you can! It is a haunting misery to me—both what we shall lose, and the sin of it."

¹ [This, however, was not done.]

Alas, my poor friend, no mortal can help you.¹ England has bred up a race of doggish and vile persons, for the last fifty years. And they will do their doggish work, be sure of that, whatever you or I can say, until, verily, him that dieth of them the dogs shall eat.²

16. (IV.) The following admirable letter is enough for its work. I have no room for the article it enclosed:—

“ARNOLD HOUSE, 16th Dec., 1877.

“MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—It is very singular that the day after I wrote to you on the evils of drainage as adopted by modern engineers,³ such an article as the enclosed should appear in the *Times*.⁴ The time must come when most of the expenditure on these drains will prove useless. But the evil continues, viz., of adding daily more streets to the present system, often choking the drains and converting them into stagnant elongated cesspools, ten times more injurious than the old ones, because of the risk of contagious and infectious germs being introduced from some house to multiply and infect a number. The remedy I think should be, 1st, to prevent additions to the present system; 2ndly, to enact that instead of fresh constructive works, bearing interest to be paid in rates, each house above a certain rental, say above £20 a year, shall be compelled to deodorize and remove its own sewage—*i.e.*, fæcal matter in its original concentrated form; and that all smaller houses should be done by the municipality or local board, who should employ a staff of labourers to do it by districts, weekly, the material being very valuable to agriculturists if kept concentrated and deodorized by the charcoal of peat or of tan, of sawdust, and of rubbish of all sorts. Labour of this kind would employ a great many now burdensome to the rates, unemployed; land would be fertilized instead of impoverished; and eventually perhaps districts now infested with drains that don't drain might be gradually won from the senseless system of accumulating streams, to the natural order of distribution and deposit under earth for fertilizing objects.

“Just as ‘dirt is something in its wrong place,’⁵ so social evils are mainly wrong applications of right powers; nay, even sin itself is but the misuse of Divine gifts,—the use at wrong times and places of right instincts and powers.

“Pardon these scribblings; but when I see and feel deeply, I think perhaps if I put the thoughts on paper to you, they may perhaps take a better form, and be sown in places where they may take root and spring up and bear fruit to man's benefit, and therefore to the glory of the Great Father.

“Ever most faithfully and gratefully,

“HENRY WILLETT.”

¹ [The fears of Ruskin and his correspondent (the late Miss Williams) were well justified. The sewage works (on the road between Kingsgate Road and St. Catherine's Hill), though now to some extent planted out, are a bad eyesore. A yet worse disfigurement was committed some years later by the cuttings on the side of the Hill for the little-used Didcot and Southampton Railway.]

² [1 Kings xiv. 11.]

³ [See above, p. 323.]

⁴ [A leading article in the *Times* of December 15, 1877, dealing with the Metropolitan Sewage question—discussing the evils and difficulties of various systems, and arriving at “the plain truth that the problem of disposing of the sewage of great cities is as yet unsolved.”]

⁵ [The saying “Dirt is only matter in its wrong place” is attributed to Lord Palmerston.]

17. (V.) The following “word about the notice which appeared in last *Fors*¹ about the Cyfarthfa Iron Works” deserves the reader’s best attention; the writer’s name and position, which I am not at liberty to give, being to me sufficient guarantee of its trustworthiness.

“Their owner has lately passed as a martyr to unreasonable demands from his workmen, in more than one publication. But what are the facts? Mr. Crawshay held himself aloof from the Ironmasters’ combination which in 1873 locked out the workmen. When the works of the combined masters were reopened, it was upon an agreed reduction. Mr. Crawshay’s workmen sent a deputation to him, offering to work on the terms agreed upon at the other works of the district; but Mr. Crawshay would not accede unless his men accepted *ten per cent, below* the rate that was to be paid by his rivals in trade, and received by his men’s fellow-workmen in the same town and district!² In a month or two the Associated Masters obtained another reduction of ten per cent, from their men. Mr. Crawshay’s workmen waited upon him, and offered to go in at *these* terms. But no; they must still accept ten per cent. below their neighbours, or be shut out. In another couple of months wages fell another ten per cent. Mr. Crawshay’s men made the same offer, and met with the same rebuff. This was repeated, I think, a fourth time—(wages certainly fell forty per cent. in less than a twelve-month)—but Mr. Crawshay had nailed his colours to the mast for ten per cent. below anybody else.

“It is quite true, as Lord Aberdare says,³ ‘that the Cyfarthfa Works are closed because the men would not work at the wages offered them.’ But what else is true?. The following:—

“1. The works presumably could have been worked at a profit, with wages at the same rate as was paid at rival works.

“2. The demand that his men should work at ten per cent. less wages than was given in the same market, was the unjustifiable act of an unscrupulous competition, and the heartless act of an unreasonable and selfish master.

“3. Had the men submitted to his terms, it would have been the immediate occasion of reducing the whole of their fellow-workmen in the Associated works. Hence,

“4. What has been called the unreasonable conduct of infatuated workmen, can be clearly traced to conduct on their master’s part flagrantly unreasonable; and the stand they made was recommended alike by justice, by regard for the other employers, and by unselfish solicitude for their fellows in the trade.

“I may add—Had the men quietly submitted, the works would have run only a short time. Iron-works are now suffering from one of those stages in the march of civilization which always produces suffering to a few. Steel rails have supplanted iron rails, and capitalists who have not adapted their plant accordingly must needs stand. Some may perhaps feel that a great capitalist who, having amassed an enormous fortune, has neither built market, hall, fountain, nor museum for the town where he made it, might be expected, at all events, to acknowledge his responsibility by adapting his works to meet the times, so that a little population of wealth producers might be kept in bread. However that may be, Cyfarthfa Works standing has no more to do with strikes and unreason of workmen than ‘Tenterden steeple has to do with Goodwin

¹ [Letter 85, § 11 (p. 328).]

² [Mr. Robert Crawshay, of the Cyfarthfa Iron Works, stated his side of the case in a letter in the *Times* of January 13, 1873, under the heading “The Strike in South Wales” (p. 7 a).]

³ [See Lord Aberdare’s letter in the *Times* of January 10, 1878, under the heading “The Distress in South Wales” (p. 6 d).]

Sands.¹ The iron-workers—poor creatures!—had nothing to do with putting the knife to their throats by helping Mr. Bessemer to his invention of cheap steel; but of course they have long since got the blame of the collapse of the iron trade. All the capitalists in all the journals have said so. They might exclaim with Trotty Veck, ‘We must be born bad—that’s how it is.’”

18. (VI.) The following correspondence requires a few, and but a few, words of preliminary information.²

For the last three or four years it has been matter of continually increasing surprise to me that I never received the smallest contribution to St. George’s Fund from any friend or disciple of Miss Octavia Hill’s.

I had originally calculated largely on the support I was likely to find among persons who had been satisfied with the result of the experiment made at Marylebone under my friend’s superintendence. But this hope was utterly disappointed; and to my more acute astonishment, because Miss Hill was wont to reply to any more or less direct inquiries on the subject, with epistles proclaiming my faith, charity, and patience, in language so laudatory, that, on the last occasion of my receiving such answer, to a request for a general sketch of the Marylebone work, it became impossible for me, in any human modesty, to print the reply.

The increasing mystery was suddenly cleared, a month or two ago, by a St. George’s Companion of healthily sound and impatient temper, who informed me of a case known to herself, in which a man of great kindness of disposition, who was well inclined to give aid to St. George, had been diverted from such intention by hearing doubts expressed by Miss Hill of my ability to conduct any practical enterprise successfully.

I requested the lady who gave me this information to ascertain from Miss Hill herself what she had really said on the occasion in question. To her letter of inquiry, Miss Hill replied in the following terms:—

“MADAM,—In justice to Mr. Ruskin, I write to say that there has evidently been some misapprehension respecting my words.

“Excuse me if I add that beyond stating this fact I do not feel called upon to enter into correspondence with a stranger about my friend Mr. Ruskin, or to explain a private conversation of my own.

“I am, Madam, yours truly,

“OCTAVIA HILL.”

19. Now it would have been very difficult for Miss Hill to have returned a reply less satisfactory to her correspondent, or more irritating to a temper like mine. For in the first place, I considered it her bounden

¹ [See Vol. XXVII. p. 51 *n.*]

² [In connexion with the correspondence, reference may be made to the following passages in which Ruskin refers to his association with Miss Octavia Hill: *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 8 *n.*)—a reference to the assistance rendered by her in preparing illustrations for that work; she was also the means of introducing Ruskin to his much-valued assistant, Arthur Burgess (Vol. XIV. p. xxxii.). See also in a similar connexion Vol. XV. p. 134 *n.* To her admirable social work in Marylebone Ruskin refers in *Time and Tide*, § 148 (Vol. XVII. p. 437); “Modern Art,” § 21 (Vol. XIX. p. 213: compare *ibid.*, p. xxiv.); and in *Fors*, Letters 10, 21 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 175, 364), 40, 41, 46 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 63, 81, 173). See also the Introduction, above, p. xxi.]

duty to enter into correspondence with all strangers whom she could possibly reach, concerning her friend Mr. Ruskin, and to say to *them*, what she was in the habit of saying to me: and, in the second place, I considered it entirely contrary to her duty to say anything of me in private conversation which she did not "feel called upon to explain" to whomsoever it interested. I wrote, therefore, at once myself to Miss Hill, requesting to know why she had not replied to Mrs.——'s question more explicitly: and received the following reply:—

"14, NOTTINGHAM PLACE, Oct. 7th, 1877.

"MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I wrote instantly on receiving Mrs.——'s letter to say that my words had been misunderstood. I could not enter with a stranger, and such a stranger! (a) into anything more concerning a friend, or a private conversation.

"But if *you* like to know anything I ever said, or thought, about you for the twenty-four years I have known you, 'most explicitly' shall you know; and you will find no trace of any thought, much less word, that was not utterly loyal, and even reverently tender towards you" (my best thanks!—had I been more roughly handled, who knows what might have come of it?) "Carlyle, who never saw me, told you I was faithful. Faithful—I should think so! I could not be anything else. Ask those who have watched my life. I have not courted you by flattery; I have not feigned agreement where I differed or did not understand; I have not sought you among those I did not trust or respect" (thanks, again, in the name of my acquaintance generally); "I have not worried you with intrusive questions or letters. I have lived very far away from you, but has there been thought or deed of mine uncoloured by the influence of the early, the abiding, and the continuous teaching you gave me? Have I not striven to carry out what you have taught in the place where I have been called to live? Was there a moment when I would not have served you joyfully at any cost? Ask those who know, if, when you have failed or pained me, (b) I have not invariably said, if I said anything, that you might have good reasons of which I knew nothing, or might have difficulties I could not understand; or that you had had so much sorrow in your life, that if it was easier to you to act thus or thus in ways affecting me, so far as I was concerned I was glad you should freely choose the easier. You have seen nothing of me; (c) but ask those who have, whether for twenty-four years I have been capable of any treasonable thought or word about you. It matters *nothing* to me; (d) but it is sad for you for babbling tongues to make you think any one who ought to know you, chattered, and chattered falsely, about you.

"I remember nothing of what I *said*, (e) but distinctly what I *thought*, and think, and will write that to you if you care. Or if you feel there is more that

(a) I have no conception what Miss Hill meant by this admiring parenthesis, as she knew nothing whatever of the person who wrote to her, except her curiosity respecting *me*.

(b) I should have been glad to have known the occasion on which I did either, before being excused.

(c) This statement appears to me a singular one; and the rather that Miss Hill, in subsequent letters, implies, as I understand them, that she has seen a good deal of *me*.

(d) It seems to me that it ought, on the contrary, to matter much.

(e) I greatly regret, and somehow blame, this shortness of memory. The time is not a distant one,—seven or eight weeks. Anything I say, myself, earnestly, of my friends, I can remember for at least as many years.

I had not seen him for many years till he asked me to come and see him and his wife and children. He is a manufacturer, face to face with difficult problems, full of desire to do right, with memories of ideals and resolutions, building his house, managing his mills, with a distinct desire to do well. I found him inclined to think perhaps after all he had been wrong, and that you could teach him nothing, because he could not apply your definite directions to his own life. The object of my words was just this: 'Oh, do not think so. All the nobility of standard and aim, all the conscience and clear sight of right principles, is there, and means distinct action. Do not look to Mr. Ruskin for definite direction about practical things: he is not the best judge of them. You, near to the necessities of this tangible world and of action, must make you own life, and apply principles to it. Necessity is God's rightly estimated, and cannot be inconsistent with right. But listen to the teacher who sees nearer to perfection than almost any of us: never lose sight or memory of what he sets before you, and resolutely apply it, cost what it may, to your own life.'

"I do think you most incapable of carrying out any great practical scheme. I do not the less think you have influenced, and will influence, action deeply and rightly.

"I have never said, or implied, that I was unable to answer any question. I did think, and do think, the explanation of what I might have said, *except to yourself*, likely to do you more harm than good; partly because I do strongly think, and cannot be sure that I might not have said, that I do feel you to have a certain incapacity for practical work; and all the other side it is difficult for the world to see. It is different to say it to a friend who reverences you, and one says more completely what one means. I was glad when you said, 'Let the thing be while you are ill.' God knows I am ill, but remember your proposal to leave it was in answer to one offering to tell you all. And I never have to any other single creature made my health any reason whatsoever for not answering any question, or fulfilling indeed any other duty of my not very easy life. Clearly, some one has received an impression from what I said to Mr.—, very different from what I had intended to convey, but he seemed in tune with your spirit and mine towards you when I spoke.

"For any pain my action may have given you, I earnestly desire to apologize—yes, to ask you to forgive me. I never wronged or injured you or your work in thought or word intentionally; and I am, whatever you may think, or seem to say,

"Faithfully yours,

"OCTAVIA HILL."

21. To this letter I replied as follows:—

"BRANTWOOD, *November 4, 1877.*

"MY DEAR OCTAVIA,—I am glad to have at last your letter, though it was to Mrs.—, and not to me, that it ought at once to have been addressed, without forcing me to all the trouble of getting at it. Your opinions of me are perhaps of little moment to *me*, but of immense moment to others. But for this particular opinion, that I trust the wrong people, I wish you to give me *two* sufficient examples of the error you have imagined. You yourself will be a notable third; and at the mouth of two or three witnesses, the word will be established.¹

"But as I have never yet, to my own knowledge, 'trusted' any one

¹ [Deuteronomy xix. 15.]

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"But as I have never yet, to my own knowledge, 'trusted' any one

¹ [Deuteronomy xix. 15.]

who has failed me, *except* yourself, and one other person of whom I do not suppose you are thinking, I shall be greatly instructed if you will give me the two instances I ask for. I never *trusted* even my father's man of business; but took my father's word as the wisest I could get. And I know not a single piece of business I have ever undertaken, which has failed by the fault of any person chosen by me to conduct it.

"Tell me, therefore, of two at least. Then I will request one or two more things of you; being always

"Affectionately yours,

"J. R.

P.S.—Of all injuries you could have done—not me—but the cause I have in hand, the giving the slightest countenance to the vulgar mob's cry of 'unpractical'¹ was the fatallest."

22. The reader may perhaps, at first, think this reply to Miss Hill's sentimental letter somewhat hard. He will see by the following answer that I knew the ground:—

"14, NOTTINGHAM PLACE, W., Nov. 5, 1877.

"DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—You say that I am a notable instance of your having trusted the wrong people. Whether you have been right hitherto, or are right now, the instance is equally one of failure to understand character. It is the only one I have a right to give. I absolutely refuse to give other instances, or to discuss the characters of third parties. My opinion of your power to judge character is, and must remain, a matter of opinion. Discussions about it would be useless and endless; besides, after your letters to me, you will hardly be astonished that I decline to continue this correspondence.

"I remain, yours faithfully,

"OCTAVIA HILL."

23. I *was*, however, a little astonished, though it takes a good deal to astonish me nowadays, at the suddenness of the change in tone; but it rendered my next reply easier:—

"CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,

"7th November, 1877.

"MY DEAR OCTAVIA,—You err singularly in imagining. I invited you to a 'discussion.' I am not apt to discuss *anything* with persons of your sentimental volubility; and those with whom I enter on discussion do not, therefore, find it either useless or endless.

"I required of you an answer to a perfectly simple question. That answer I require again. Your most prudent friends will, I believe, if you consult them, recommend your rendering it; for they will probably perceive—what it is strange should have escaped a mind so logical and delicate as yours—that you have a better right to express your 'opinions' of my discarded servants, to myself, who know them, and after the time is long past when your frankness could have injured them, than to express your 'opinions' of your discarded master, to persons who know nothing

¹ [On this point, compare Letter 11, § 17 (Vol. XXVII. p. 193).]

of him, at the precise time when such expression of opinion is calculated to do him the most fatal injury.

“In the event of your final refusal, you will oblige me by sending me a copy of my last letter for publication,—your own being visibly prepared for the press.

“J. R.”

“Should you inadvertently have destroyed my last letter, a short abstract of its contents, as apprehended by you, will be all that is needful.”

24.

14. NOTTINGHAM PLACE, W., 8th Nov., 1877.

“DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I did consult friends whom I consider both prudent and generous before I declined to make myself the accuser of third persons.

“I send you at your request a copy of your last letter; but I disapprove of the publication of this correspondence. Such a publication obviously could not be complete,* and if incomplete must be misleading. Neither do I see what good object it could serve.

“I feel it due to our old friendship to add the expression of my conviction that the publication would injure you, and could not injure me.

“I am, yours faithfully,

“OCTAVIA HILL.”

25. I saw no occasion for continuing the correspondence farther, and closed it on the receipt of this last letter, in a private note, which Miss Hill is welcome to make public, if she has retained it.

Respecting the general tenor of her letters, I have only now to observe that she is perfectly right in supposing me unfit to conduct, myself, the operations with which I entrusted *her*; but that she has no means of estimating the success of other operations with which I did *not* entrust her,—such as the organization of the Oxford Schools of Art; and that she has become unfortunately of late confirmed in the impression, too common among refortunely labourers, that no work can be practical which is prospective. The real relations of her effort to that of the St. George’s Guild have already been stated (*Fors*, Oct. 1871¹); and the estimate which I had formed of it is shown not to have been unkind, by her acknowledgement of it in the following letter,—justifying me, I think, in the disappointment expressed in the beginning of this article.

“14, NOTTINGHAM PLACE, Oct. 3rd, 1875.

“MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I send you accounts of both blocks of buildings, and have paid in to your bank the second cheque,—that for Paradise Place, £20, 5s. 8d. I think neither account requires explanation.

“But I have to thank you, more than words will achieve doing, in silent gratitude, for your last letter, which I shall treasure as one of my best possessions. I had no idea you could have honestly spoken so of work which I have

* This is not at all obvious to me. I can complete it to the last syllable, if Miss Hill wishes.

¹ [Letter 10, § 15 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 175–176).]

always thought had impressed you more with its imperfections, than as contributing to any good end. That it actually was in large measure derived from you, there can be no doubt. I have been reading during my holidays, for the first time since before I knew you, the first volume of *Modern Painters*, which Mr. Bond was good enough to lend me these holidays; and I was much impressed, not only with the distinct recollection I had of paragraph after paragraph when once the subject was recalled,—not only with the memory of how the passages had struck me when a girl,—but how even the individual words had been new to me then, and the quotations,—notably that from George Herbert about the not fooling,¹—had first sent me to read the authors quoted from. I could not help recalling, and seeing distinctly, how the whole tone and teaching of the book, striking on the imagination at an impressionable age, had biassed, not only this public work, but all my life. I always knew it, but I traced the distinct lines of influence. Like all derived work, it has been, as I said, built out of material my own experience has furnished, and built very differently to anything others would have done; but I know something of how much it owes to you, and in as far as it has been in any way successful, I wish you would put it among the achievements of your life. You sometimes seem to see so few of these. Mine is indeed poor and imperfect and small; but it is in this *kind of way* that the best influence tells, going right down into the people, and coming out in a variety of forms, not easily recognized, yet distinctly known by those who know best; and hundreds of people, whose powers are tenfold my own, have received,—will receive,—their direction from your teaching, and will do work better worth your caring to have influenced.

“I am, yours always affectionately,

“OCTAVIA HILL.”

With this letter the notice of its immediate subject in *Fors* will cease, though I have yet a word to say for my other acquaintances and fellow-labourers.² Miss Hill will, I hope, retain the administration of the Marylebone houses as long as she is inclined, making them, by her zealous and disinterested service, as desirable and profitable a possession to the Guild as hitherto to me.³ It is always to be remembered that she has acted as the administrator of this property, and paid me five per cent, upon it regularly,—entirely without salary, and in pure kindness to the tenants. My own part in the work was in taking five instead of ten per cent, which the houses would have been made to pay to another landlord; and in pledging myself neither to sell the property nor raise the rents, thus enabling Miss Hill to assure the tenants of peace in their homes, and encourage every effort at the improvement of them.

¹ [For the quotation, see Vol. III. p. 174.]

² [This, however, was not done.]

³ [Ultimately Ruskin parted with the Marylebone property to Miss Hill; “nor did he care,” says Mr. Collingwood, “to spend upon himself the £3500, which I believe was the price. It went right and left in gifts: till one day he cheerfully remarked

‘It’s a’ gane awa’

Like snaw aff a wa’.

‘Is there really nothing to show for it?’ he was asked. ‘Nothing,’ he said, ‘except this new silk umbrella’ ” (*Life and Work of John Ruskin*, 1900, p. 291).]

"YEA, THE WORK OF OUR HANDS, ESTABLISH THOU IT"

LETTER 87¹

THE SNOW MANGER²

1. By my promise that, in the text of this series of *Fors*, there shall be "no syllable of complaint, or of scorn,"³ I pray the reader to understand that I in no wise intimate any change of feeling on my own part. I never felt more difficulty in my life than I do, at this instant, in not lamenting certain things with more than common lament, and in not speaking of certain people with more than common scorn.

Nor is it possible to fulfil the rightly warning functions of *Fors* without implying *some* measure of scorn. For instance, in the matter of choice of books, it is impossible to warn my scholars against a book, without implying a certain kind of contempt for it. For I never would warn them against any writer whom I had complete respect for,—however adverse to me, or my work. There are few stronger adversaries to St. George than Voltaire. But my scholars are welcome to read as much of Voltaire as they like. His voice is mighty among the ages. Whereas they are entirely forbidden Miss Martineau,—not because she is an infidel, but because she is a vulgar and foolish one.*

*I use the word vulgar, here, in its first sense of egoism, not of selfishness, but of not seeing one's own relations to the universe. Miss Martineau plans a book—afterwards popular—and goes to breakfast, "not

¹ [With this Letter was issued a Publisher's Notice, recording the suspension of *Fors*, owing to the author's serious illness: see p. xxx.]

² [For the title, see § 7.]

³ [See Letter 84, § 13 (p. 294).]

2. Do not say, or think, I am breaking my word in asserting, once for all, with reference to example, this necessary principle. This very vow and law that I have set myself, *must* be honoured sometimes in the breach of it,¹ so only that the transgression be visibly not wanton or incontinent. Nay, in this very instance it is because I am not speaking in *pure* contempt, but have lately been as much surprised by the beauty of a piece of Miss Martineau's writings, as I have been grieved by the deadly effect of her writings generally on the mind of one of my best pupils, who had read them without telling me, that I make her a definite example. In future, it will be ordinarily enough for me to say to my pupils privately that they are not to read such and such books; while, for general order to my *Fors* readers, they may be well content, it seems to me, with the list of the books I want them to read constantly;² and with such casual recommendation as I may be able to give of current literature. For instance, there is a quite lovely little book just come out about Irish children, *Castle Blair*,³—(which, let me state at once, I have strong personal, though stronger impersonal, reasons for recommending, the writer being a very dear friend; and some Irish children, for many and many a year, much more than that⁴). But the impersonal reasons are—first, that the book is good and lovely, and true;

knowing what a great thing had been done.”⁵ So Mr. Buckle, dying, thinks only—he shall not finish *his* book.⁶ Not at all whether God will ever make up *His*.

¹ [*Hamlet*, Act i. sc. 4.]

² [Ruskin does not give any such list of books, though he gives one of authors (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 500–501: see also *ibid.*, pp. 20, 407, 434).]

³ [*Castle Blair: a Story of Youthful Days*, by Flora L. Shaw (now Lady Lugard) 2 vols., 1878.]

⁴ [Miss Rose La Touche and her sister: see *Præterita*, iii. § 51.]

⁵ [The reference is to Miss Martineau's account (in her *Autobiography*, 1877, vol. i. p. 139) of the inception of her *Illustrations of Political Economy*. She unfolded her scheme in the family circle: “Brother James nodded assent; my mother said, ‘Do it’; and we went to tea, unconscious what a great thing we had done since dinner.”]

⁶ [Compare Vol. XXII. p. 523. Froude related the incident in his lecture on “The Science of History” (the first of the *Short Studies*).]

having the best description of a noble child in it (Winnie) that I ever read; and nearly the best description of the next best thing—a noble dog; and reason second is that, after Miss Edgeworth's *Ormond* and *Absentee*,¹ this little book will give more true insight into the proper way of managing Irish people than any other I know.*

3. Wherewith I have some more serious recommendations to give; and the first shall be of this most beautiful passage of Miss Martineau, which is quoted from *Deer-brook*² in the review of her autobiography:—

“In the house of every wise parent, may then be seen an epitome of life—a sight whose consolation is needed at times, perhaps, by all. Which of the little children of a virtuous household can conceive of his entering into his parents' pursuits, or interfering with them? How sacred are the study and the office, the apparatus of a knowledge and a power which he can only venerate! Which of these little ones dreams of disturbing the course of his parents' thought or achievement? Which of them conceives of the daily routine of the household—its going forth and coming in, its rising and its rest—having been different before its birth, or that it would be altered by his absence? It is even a matter of surprise to him when it now and then occurs to him that there is anything set apart for him—that he has clothes and couch, and that his mother thinks and cares for him. If he lags behind in a walk, or finds himself alone among the trees, he does not dream of being missed; but home rises up before him as he has always seen it—his father thoughtful, his mother occupied, and the rest gay, with the one difference of *his* † not being there. This he believes, and has no other trust than in his shriek of terror, for being ever remembered more. Yet, all the while, from day to day, from year to year, without one moment's intermission, is the providence of his parent around him, brooding over the workings of his infant spirit, chastening its passions, nourishing its affections—now *troubling it with salutary pain*, now

* Also, I have had it long on my mind to name the [*Strange*] *Adventures of a Phaeton*³ as a very delightful and wise book of its kind; very full of pleasant play, and deep and pure feeling; much interpretation of some of the best points of German character; and, last and least, with pieces of description in it which I should be glad, selfishly, to think inferior to what the public praise in *Modern Painters*.—I can only say, they seem to *me* quite as good.

† Italics mine.

¹ [For another reference to *Ormond*, see Vol. XXV. p. 282; to the *Absentee*, *Præterita*, i. § 145, and below, p. 444 n.]

² [Chapter xxxiii., pp. 359, 360 (1860 edition). The passage is cited in a review of the *Autobiography*, by Henry S. Richardson, in the *Contemporary Review*, May 1877, vol. 29, pp. 1115–1116.]

³ [By William Black; first published in 1872.]

animating it with even more wholesome delight. All the while, is the order of the household affairs regulated for the comfort and profit of these lowly little ones, though they regard it reverently, because they cannot comprehend it. They may not know of all this—how their guardian bends over their pillow nightly, and lets no word of their careless talk drop unheeded, and records every sob of infant grief, hails every brightening gleam of reason and every chirp of childish glee—they may not know this, because they could not understand it aright, and each little heart would be inflated with pride, each little mind would lose the grace and purity of its unconsciousness; but the guardianship is not the less real, constant, and tender for its being unrecognized by its objects.”

This passage is of especial value to me just now, because I have presently to speak about faith, and its power;¹ and I have never myself thought of the innocent *faithlessness* of children, but only of their faith. The idea given here by Miss Martineau is entirely new to me, and most beautiful. And had she gone on thus, expressing her own feelings modestly, she would have been a most noble person, and a verily “great” writer. She became a vulgar person, and a little writer, in her conceit;—of which I can say no more, else I should break my vow unnecessarily.

4. And by way of atonement for even this involuntary disobedience to it, I have to express great shame for some words spoken, in one of the letters of the first series, in total misunderstanding of Mr. Gladstone’s character.²

I know so little of public life, and see so little of the men who are engaged in it, that it has become impossible for me to understand their conduct or speech, as it is reported in journals.

There are reserves, references, difficulties, limits, excitements, in all their words and ways, which are inscrutable to me; and at this moment I am unable to say a word about the personal conduct of any one, respecting the Turkish³ or any other national question,—remaining myself perfectly clear as to what was always needed, and still

¹ [See below, pp. 370–373.]

² [See Letter 57, § 2 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 403). Ruskin, at the time of writing the present letter, had just returned from staying with Mr. Gladstone at Hawarden.]

³ [Then at a very critical stage: see below, p. 375 n.]

needs, to be *done*, but utterly unable to conceive *why* people talk, or do, or do not, as hitherto they have spoken, done, and left undone. But as to the actual need, it is now nearly two years since Mr. Carlyle, Mr. Froude, and several other men of “credible” (shall we say?) name, gathered together at call of Mr. Gladstone, as for a great national need, together with a few other men of more retired and studious mind, Edward Burne-Jones for one, and myself for another, and did then plainly and to the best of their faculty tell the English nation what it had to do.¹

The people of England answered, by the mouths of their journals, that Mr. Carlyle and Mr. Froude knew nothing of history, that Mr. Gladstone was a dishonest leader of a party, and that the rest of us were insignificant, or insane, persons.²

5. Whereupon the significant and sagacious persons, guiding the opinions of the public, through its press, set themselves diligently to that solemn task.

And I will take some pains to calculate for you,³ my now doubtless well-informed and soundly purposed readers, what expenditure of type there has been on your education, guidance, and exhortation by those significant persons, in these last two years.

I am getting into that *Cathedra Pestilentiaë*⁴ again!—My good reader, I mean, truly and simply, that I hope to get, for next month,⁵ some approximate measure of the space in heaven which would be occupied by the unfolded tissue or web of all the columns of the British newspapers which have during these last two years discussed, in your pay, the Turkish question. All that counsel, you observe, you have bought with a price. Mr. Carlyle and Mr. Froude gave you theirs gratis, as all the best things are

¹ [For the allusions here to the Conference at the St. James’s Hall on the Eastern Question, see Vol. XXIV. p. xxxviii.]

² [See Letter 74, § 16 *n.* (p. 45).]

³ [This, however, was not done.]

⁴ [“The seat of the scornful” (Vulgate, Psalms i. 1): compare the preface (§ 15) to *Rock Honeycomb* (Vol. XXXI).]

⁵ [His illness, however, stopped the publication of *Fors*.]

given;¹ I put nearly a prohibitory tax upon mine, that you might not merely travel with your boots on it;² but here was an article of counsel made up for your consumption at *market* price. You have paid for it, I can tell you *that*, approximately, just now, one million nine hundred and four thousand nine hundred and eighteen pounds.³ You have voted also in your beautiful modern manner, and daily directed your governors what they were to do for British interests and honour. And your result is—well, you shall tell me your opinions of that next month; but—whatever your opinions may be—here is the result for you, in words which are not of the newest, certainly, and yet are in a most accurate sense “This Evening’s News”:—

“Quare fremuerunt Gentes, et Populi meditati sunt inania?

“Astiterunt Reges terræ, et Principes convenerunt in unum, adversus Dominum et adversus Christum ejus.

“Disrumpamus vincula eorum, et projiciamus a nobis jugum ipsorum.

“Qui habitat in celis iridebit eos, et Dominus subsannabit eos.

“Tunc loquetur ad eos in ira sua, et in furore suo conturbabit eos.”

6. If you can read that bit of David and St. Jerome, as it stands, so be it. If not, this translation is closer than the one you, I suppose, *don’t* know:—

“Why have the nations foamed as the sea; and the people meditated emptiness?

“The Kings of the earth stood, and the First Ministers met together in conference, against the Lord, and against His Christ.

“Let us break, they said, the chains of the Lord and Christ. Let us cast away from us the yoke of the Lord and Christ.

“He that inhabits heaven shall laugh at them, and the Lord shall mock them.

“Then shall He speak to them in His anger, and torment them with His strength.”⁴

¹ [For Carlyle’s letter on the Eastern Question, see above, p. 61 *n*. Froude’s views were given in *Is Russia Wrong? A Series of Letters*, by a Russian Lady (Madame Olga Novikoff), with a Preface by J. A. Froude, 1878; and, later, in *Russia and England from 1876 to 1880: a Protest and an Appeal*, by O.K. (Madame Novikoff), with a Preface by J. A. Froude, 1880.]

² [See Letter 69, § 10 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 695–696).]

³ [If Ruskin had in his mind the “72 newspapers” spoken of in Letter 11 (Vol. XXVII. p. 182), his calculation seems to be very much short; it would only allow for an average daily circulation for each of little more than 10,000.]

⁴ [Psalms ii. 1–5.]

7. There are one or two of the points of difference in this version which I wish you to note. Our “why do the heathen rage” is unintelligible to us, because we don’t think of *ourselves* as “heathen” usually. But we are; and the nations spoken of are—the British public,—and the All-publics of our day, and of all days.

Nor is the word “rage” the right one, in the least. It means to “fret idly,” like useless sea,—incapable of *real* rage, or of *any* sense,—foaming out only its own shame. “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt;”¹—and even just now—the purest and best of public men spitting out emptiness only and mischief. “Fluctibus et fremitu assurgens, *Benace*, MARINO.”² In the Septuagint, the word is to neigh like a horse—(“They were as fed horses in the morning; every one neighed after his neighbour’s wife.”³)

Then, I have put the full words “of the Lord and Christ” in the third verse, instead of “their,” because else people don’t see who “they” are.

And in the fourth verse, observe that the “anger” of the Lord is the *mind* in which He speaks to the kings; but His “fury” is the *practical* stress of the thunder of His power, and of the hail and death with which He “troubles” them and torments. Read *this* following piece of evening’s news, for instance. It is one of thousands such. That is what is meant by “He shall vex them in his sore displeasure,”⁴ which words you have chanted to your pipes and bellows so sweetly and so long,—“His so-o-o-ore dis-plea-a-sure.”

But here is the *thing*, nearly at your doors, reckoning by railway distance. “The mother got impatient, thrust the child into the snow, and hurried on—not looking back.”⁵

8. But *you* are not “vexed,” you say? No,—perhaps

¹ [Isaiah lvii. 20.]

² [Virgil, *Georgics*, ii. 160 (*Benacus*, *i.e.*, Lago di Garda): compare Vol. XX. p. 259.]

³ [Jeremiah v. 8. The word is εχρημετιζον.]

⁴ [Psalms ii. 5.]

⁵ [Hence the title of the Letter. For a reference to this passage, see Letter 93, § 4 (p. 469).]

that is because you are so very good. And perhaps the muffins will be as cold as the snow, too, soon, if you don't eat them. Yet if, after breakfast, you look out of window westward, you may see some "vexation," even in England and Wales, of which more, presently,¹ and if you read this second Psalm again, and make some effort to understand it, it may be provisionally useful to you,—provisionally on your recognizing that there is a God at all, and that it is a *Lord* that *reigneth*, and not merely a *Law* that reigneth, according to the latter-day divinity of the Duke of Argyll² and Mr. George Dawson.³ Have patience with me. I'm not speaking as I didn't mean to.⁴ I want you to read, and attentively, some things that the Duke of Argyll and Mr. Dawson have said; but you must have the caterpillar washed out of the cabbage, first.

9. I want you to read,—ever so many things. First of all, and nothing else till you have well mastered that, the history of Montenegro given by Mr. Gladstone in the *Nineteenth Century* for May 1877, p. 360. After that, "Some Current Fallacies about Turks," etc., by the Rev. Malcolm MacColl, *Nineteenth Century*, December 1877, p. 831. After that, the Duke of Argyll's *Morality in Politics*. And after that, the obituary of "George Dawson, Politician, Lecturer, and Preacher," by the Rev. R. W. Dale, *Nineteenth Century*, August 1877, p. 44.⁵

¹ [See below, pp. 375, 378.]

² [For other references to the Duke of Argyll's *Reign of Law*, see Vol. XXVIII. p. 85. n.]

³ [George Dawson (1821–1876) one of the most popular lecturers of the day; minister of "The Chapel of the Saviour," Birmingham, a chapel founded on an eclectic basis, and on the principle that neither teacher nor congregation should be pledged to any form of theological belief. He was the companion of Carlyle on his first visit to Germany.]

⁴ [A reference to his promise not to sit any longer in the seat of the scornful: see above, pp. 294, 361, 365.]

⁵ [Mr. Gladstone's article, "Montenegro: a Sketch," appeared in vol. i. of the *Nineteenth Century*, pp. 360–379. It is reprinted in the fourth volume of his *Gleanings* (pp. 305–339). Canon MacColl's article, "Some Current Fallacies about Turks, Bulgarians, and Russians," is in the *Nineteenth Century*, vol. ii. pp. 831–842. That by the Duke of Argyll (who had been a fellow-visitor with Ruskin at Hawarden), on "Morality in Politics," is in the *Contemporary Review*, July 1877, vol. 30, pp. 319–333. Mr. Dale's critique of Dawson occupies pp. 44–61 in vol. ii. of the *Nineteenth Century*.]

It is an entirely kind and earnest review of one of the chief enemies of Evangelicalism, by an Evangelical clergy-man. The closing passages of it (pp. 59 to 61) are entirely beautiful and wise,—the last sentence, let me thankfully place for an abiding comfort and power in St. George's Schools:¹—

“To despise the creeds in which the noblest intellects of Christendom in past times found rest, is presumptuous folly; to suppose that these creeds are a final and exact statement of all that the Church can ever know, is to forget that in every creed there are two elements,—the divine substance, and the human form. The form must change with the changing thoughts of men; and even the substance may come to shine with clearer light, and to reveal unsuspected glories, as God and man come nearer together.”

10. And the whole of the piece of biography thus nobly closed is full of instruction; but, in the course of it, there is a statement (pp. 49–51) respecting which I have somewhat contradictory to say, and that very gravely. I am sorry to leave out any of the piece I refer to: but those of my readers who have not access to the book, will find the gist of what I must contradict, qualifiedly, in these following fragments:—

A. “The strength of his (George Dawson's) moral teaching was largely derived from the firmness of his own conviction that the laws which govern human life are not to be evaded; that they assert their authority with relentless severity; that it is of no use to try to cheat them; that they have no pity; that we must obey them, or else suffer the consequences, of our disobedience. He insisted, with a frequency, an earnestness, and an energy which showed the depth of his own sense of the importance of this part of his teaching, that what a man; shows he must also reap,—no matter though he has sown ignorantly or carelessly; that the facts of the physical and moral universe have a stern reality; and that, if we refuse to learn and to recognize the facts, the best intentions are unavailing. The iron girder must be strong enough to bear the weight that is put upon it, or else it will give way,—no matter whether the girder is meant to support the roof of a railway station, or the floor of a church, or the gallery of a theatre. Hard work is necessary for success in business; and the man who works hardest—other things being equal—is most likely to succeed, whether he is a saint or a sinner.”

¹ [The sentiment in the extract from Dale closely resembles a passage in Ruskin's *Ethics of the Dust*, § 118: see Vol. XVIII. pp. 355–356.]
XXIX.

B. "The facts of the universe are steadfast, and not to be changed by human fancies or follies; the laws of the universe are relentless, and will not relax in the presence of human weakness, or give way under the pressure of human passion and force."

C. "No matter though you have a most devout and conscientious belief that by mere praying you can save a town from typhoid fever; if the drainage is bad and the water foul, praying will never save the town from typhoid."

11. Thus far, Mr. Dale has been stating the substance of Mr. Dawson's teaching; he now, as accepting that substance, so far as it reaches, himself proceeds to carry it farther, and to apply the same truths—admitting them to be truths—to spiritual things. And now, from *him* we have this following most important and noble passage, which I accept for wholly true, and place in St. George's schools:—

D. "It would be strange if these truths became false as soon as they are applied to the religious side of the life of man. The spiritual universe is no more to be made out of a man's own head, than the material universe or the moral universe. *There*, too, the conditions of human life are fixed. *There*, too, we have to respect the facts; and, whether we respect them or not, the facts remain. *There*, too, we have to confess the authority of the actual laws; and, whether we confess it or not, we shall suffer for breaking them. To suppose that, in relation to the spiritual universe, it is safe or right to believe what we think it pleasant to believe,—to suppose that, because we think it is eminently desirable that the spiritual universe should be ordered in a particular way, therefore we are at liberty to act as though this were certainly the way in which it is ordered, and that, though we happen to be wrong, it will make no difference,—is preposterous. No; water drowns, fire burns, whether we believe it or not. No belief of ours will change the facts, or reverse the laws of the spiritual universe. It is our first business to discover the laws, and to learn how the facts stand."

12. I accept this passage—observe, totally,—but I accept it for itself. The basis of it—the preceding Dawsonian statements, A, B, and C,—I wholly deny, so far as I am a Christian. If the Word of Christ be true, the facts of the physical universe are *not* steadfast. They are steadfast only for the infidel. But these signs shall evermore follow them that believe. "They shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them."¹ No matter how bad the drainage of the town, how foul the

¹ [Mark xvi. 18.]

water, “He shall deliver thee from the noisome pestilence; and though a thousand fall at thy right hand, it shall not come nigh thee.”¹ This, as a Christian, I am bound to believe. This, speaking as a Christian, I am bound to proclaim, whatever the consequences may be to the town, or the opinion of me formed by the Common Council; as a Christian, I believe prayer to be, in the last sense, sufficient for the salvation of the town; and drainage, in the last sense, insufficient for its salvation. Not that you will find me, looking back through the pages of *Fors*, unconcerned about drainage.² But if, of the two, I must choose between drains and prayer—why, “look you”—whatever you may think of my wild and whirling words, I will go pray.³

And now, therefore, for St. George’s schools, I most solemnly reverse the statement B, and tell my scholars, with all the force that is in me, that the facts of the universe are NOT steadfast, that they ARE changed by human fancies, and by human follies (much more by human wisdoms),—that the laws of the universe are no more relentless than the God who wrote them,—that they WILL relax in the presence of human weakness, and DO give way under the pressure of human passion and force, and give way so totally, before so little passion and force, that if you have but “faith” as a grain of mustard seed, *nothing* shall be impossible unto you.⁴

13. “Are these merely fine phrases, or is he mad, as people say?” one of my polite readers asks of another.

Neither, oh polite and pitying friend. Observe, in the first place, that I simply speak *as* a Christian, and express to you accurately what Christian doctrine is. I am myself so nearly as you are,—so grievously faithless to less than the least grain of—Colman’s—mustard, that *I* can take up no serpents, and raise no dead.

¹ [Psalms xci. 3, 7.]

² [See, for instance, Vol. XXVII. pp. 92, 296, 326; Vol. XXVIII. pp. 176, 181, 204, 301, 689; and above, pp. 323–324.]

³ [*Hamlet*, Act i. sc. 5: “Look you, I’ll go pray.”]

⁴ [Matthew xvii. 20.]

But I don't say, therefore, that the dead are not raised, nor that Christ is not risen,¹ nor the head of the serpent bowed under the foot of the Seed of the Woman.² I say only,—*if* my faith is vain, it is because I am yet in my sins.³ And to others I say—what Christ bids me say. That, simply,—that, literally,—that, positively; and no more. “If thou wilt believe, thou shalt see the salvation of God.”⁴

If thou *wilt* (wouldest)—Faith being essentially a matter of will, after some other conditions are met. For how shall they believe on whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?⁵ Yea; but—asks St. George, murmuring behind his visor,—much more, how shall they hear without—ears.

He that *hath* ears (it is written),—let him hear;⁶—but how of him that hath none?

For observe, far the greater multitude of men *cannot* hear of Christ at all. You can't tell an unloving person, what love is, preach you till his doomsday. What is to become of them, God knows, who is their Judge; but since they cannot hear of Christ, they cannot believe in Him, and for them, the Laws of the Universe are unchangeable enough. But for those who *can* hear—comes the farther question whether they *will*. And then, if they do, whether they will be steadfast in the faith,⁷—steadfast behind the shield, point in earth, cross of iron—(compare *Laws of Fésole*, chapter iii., and the old heraldic word “restrial,” of bearings, first written in blood⁸),—else, having begun in

¹ [See 1 Corinthians xv. 16.]

² [See Genesis iii. 15.]

³ [See 1 Corinthians xv. 17.]

⁴ [John xi. 40.]

⁵ [Romans x. 14.]

⁶ [Matthew xi. 15.]

⁷ [See 1 Peter v. 9.]

⁸ [Chapter iii. in the *Laws of Fésole* has for its subject “The Quartering of St. George's Shield”: see Vol. XV. p. 365. For “restrial” bearings—said of those which “in respect of their strength and solid substance” are “able to abide the stresse and force of any triall they shall be put unto”—see *Val d'Arno*, § 105 (Vol. XXIII. p. 64); for the cross, as the first restrial bearing “drawn by dying fingers dipped in blood,” see *ibid.*, § 115, p. 70.]

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the spirit, they may only be “made perfect in the flesh.” (Gal. iii. 3.) But if, having begun in the Spirit, they grieve it not,¹ there will be assuredly among them the chorus-leader. He that “leads forth the choir of the Spirit,” and worketh MIRACLES among you. (Gal. iii. 5.²)

14. Now, lastly, read in the ninth chapter of Froude’s *History of England*, the passage beginning, “Here, therefore, we are to enter upon one of the grand scenes of history,”* down to, “He desired us each to choose our confessor, and to confess our sins one to another;” and the rest, I give here, for end of this *Fors*:—

“The day after, he preached a sermon in the chapel on the 59th Psalm:³ ‘O God, Thou hast cast us off, Thou hast destroyed us;’ concluding with the words, ‘It is better that we should suffer here a short penance for our faults, than be reserved for the eternal pains of hell hereafter;’—and so ending, he turned to us, and bade us all do as we saw him do. Then rising from his place he went direct to the eldest of the brethren, who was sitting nearest to himself, and kneeling before him, begged his forgiveness for any offence which in heart, word, or deed he might have committed against him. Thence he proceeded to the next, and said the same; and so to the next, through us all, we following him, and saying as he did,—each from each imploring pardon.

“Thus, with unobtrusive nobleness, did these poor men prepare themselves for the end; not less beautiful in their resolution, not less deserving the everlasting remembrance of mankind, than those three hundred who in the summer morning sate combing their golden hair in the passes of Thermopylæ. We will not regret their cause; there is no cause for which any man can more nobly suffer than to witness that it is better for him to die than to speak words which he does not mean. Nor, in this their hour of trial, were they left without higher comfort.

“ ‘The third day after,’ the story goes on, ‘was the mass of the Holy Ghost, and God made known His presence among us. For when the host was lifted up, there came as it were a whisper of air, which breathed upon our faces as we knelt. Some perceived it with the bodily senses; all felt it as it thrilled into their hearts. And then followed a sweet, soft sound of music, at which our venerable father was so moved, God being thus

* Octavo edition of 1858, vol. ii., p. 341.⁴

¹ [Ephesians iv. 30.]

² [ο οὖν επιχορηγῶν ἡμῖν τὸ Πνεῦμα: translated in the English version, “that ministereth to you the Spirit.”]

³ [An error for Psalm 1x.]

⁴ [Vol. ii. pp. 235–245, in the small edition; from the account of the execution of the brethren of the London Charterhouse (1535). The preacher was the Prior. For another reference to the incident, see below, p. 389.]

abundantly manifest among us, that he sank down in tears, and for a long time could not continue the service—we all remaining stupefied, hearing the melody, and feeling the marvellous effects of it upon our spirits, but knowing neither whence it came nor whither it went. Only our hearts rejoiced as we perceived that God was with us indeed.’ ”

15. It can't be the end of this *Fors*, however, I find (15th February, half-past seven morning), for I have forgotten twenty things I meant to say; and this instant, in my morning's reading, opened and read, being in a dream state, and not knowing well what I was doing,—of all things to find a new message!—in the first chapter of Proverbs.

I was in a dreamy state, because I had got a letter about the Thirlmere debate,¹ which was to me, in my purposed quietness, like one of the voices on the hill behind the Princess Parizade.² And *she* could not hold, without cotton in her ears, dear wise sweet thing. But luckily for me, I have just had help from the Beata Vigri at Venice, who sent me her own picture and St. Catherine's, yesterday, for a Valentine;³ and so I *can* hold on:—only just read this first of Proverbs with me, please.

“The Proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel.

“To *know* wisdom and instruction.”

(Not to “opine” them.⁴)

¹ [The Manchester Corporation's Thirlmere Bill had been read a second time on February 13: compare Vol. XIII. p. 517 *n.*]

² [*Arabian Nights* (“Story of the Sisters who envied their Younger Sister”). See Jonathan Scott's translation, 1811, vol. v. pp. 379–381. The Princess Periezadeh, in her search for the speaking bird, the singing tree, and yellow water, stopped her ears with cotton-wool against the terrifying voices on the mountain. “I mind not, said she to herself, all that can be said, were it worse; I only laugh at them, and shall pursue my way.” It was from this story, by the way, that the incident of the black stones, utilised by Ruskin in his *King of the Golden River*, is derived.]

³ [So Ruskin notes in his diary. Presumably some one had sent him a study, or a photograph, of a favourite picture in the Academy at Venice—“the Beata Catherine Vigri's St. Ursula; Catherine Vigri herself, it may be, kneeling to her”: see Vol. XXIV. p. 185.]

⁴ [Compare Letter 11, § 19 (Vol. XXVII. p. 195); and below, Letter 89, § 2 (p. 399).]

“To *perceive* the words of understanding.”

(He that hath eyes, let him read—he that hath ears, hear. And for the Blind and the Deaf,—if patient and silent by the right road-side,¹—there may also be some one to say “He is coming.”)

“To receive the instruction of WISDOM, JUSTICE, and JUDGMENT, and EQUITY.”

Four things,—oh friends,—which you have not only to *perceive*, but to *receive*. And the species of these four things, and the origin of their species,—you know them, doubtless, well,—in these scientific days?

“To give subtlety to the simple; to the *young* man, knowledge and discretion.”

(Did ever one hear, lately, of a young man’s wanting either? Or of a simple person who wished to be subtle? Are not we all subtle—even to the total defeat of our hated antagonists, the Prooshians and Rooshians?²)

“A wise man will hear and will increase learning.”

(*e.g.*, “A stormy meeting took place in the Birmingham Town Hall last night. It was convened by the Conservative Association for the purpose of passing a vote of confidence in the Government; but the Liberal Association also issued placards calling upon Liberals to attend. The chair was taken by Mr. Stone, the President of the Conservative Association, but the greater part of his speech was inaudible even upon the platform, owing to the frequent bursts of applause, groans, and Kentish fire, intermingled with comic songs. Flags bearing the words ‘Vote for Bright’ and ‘Vote for Gladstone’ were hoisted, and were torn to pieces by the supporters of the Government. Dr. Sebastian Evans moved, and Alderman Brinsley seconded, a resolution expressing confidence in Her Majesty’s Government. Mr. J. S. Wright moved, and Mr. R. W. Dale seconded, an amendment, but neither speaker could make himself heard; and on the resolution being put to the meeting it was declared carried, but the Liberal speakers disputed the decision of the chairman, and asserted that two-thirds of the meeting were against the resolution.”—*Pall Mall Gazette*, February 13th, 1878.)

¹ [See Matthew xx. 30: “two blind men, sitting by the wayside, when they heard that Jesus passed by,” etc.]

² [The reference is to the foreign policy of Lord Beaconsfield, and to the movements of the British Fleet at this time, which were directed to preventing a Russian occupation of Constantinople—a contingency to which the German Government was supposed not to object. Ruskin attunes his words to the Cockneyism as in the popular music-hall ditty of the time: “The Rooshians shall not have Constantinople”; or as W. S. Gilbert has it, “He might have been a Roosian, A French, or Turk, or Prooshian.”]

“And a man of understanding shall *attain unto* wise counsels.”

(Yes, in due time; but oh me—over what burning marle, and by what sifting of wheat!¹)

“To understand a proverb, and the interpretation.”

(Yes, truly—all this chapter I have known from my mother’s knee—and never understood it till this very hour.)

“The words of the wise and their *dark* sayings.”

(Behold this dreamer cometh,²—and this is his dream.)

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

(*e.g.*, “Herr—, one of the Socialist leaders, declaring that he and his friends, since they do not fear earthly Powers, are not likely to be afraid of Powers of any other kind.”—*Pall Mall Gazette*, same date.*)

“My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother.”

The father is to teach the boy’s reason; and the mother, his will. He is to take his father’s word, and to obey his mother’s—look, even to the death.

(Therefore it is that all laws of holy life are called “mother-laws” in Venice.—*Fors*, Letter 74, § 12.³)

* I take this passage out of an important piece of intelligence of a quite contrary and greatly encouraging kind. “A new political party has just been added to the many parties which already existed in Germany. It calls itself ‘the Christian Social party.’ It is headed by several prominent Court preachers of Berlin, who, alarmed at the progress made by the Socialists, have taken this means of resisting their subversive doctrines. The object of the party is to convince the people that there can be no true system of government which is not based upon Christianity; and this principle is being elaborately set forth in large and enthusiastic meetings. Herr Most, one of the Socialist leaders, has given the political pastors an excellent text for their orations by declaring that he and his friends, since they do not fear earthly Powers, are not likely to be afraid of Powers of any other kind. Branches of the Christian Socialist party have been formed in several of the most important German towns; and they confidently expect to be able to secure a definite position in the next Imperial Parliament.”

¹ [“Sift you as wheat” (Luke xxii. 31).]

² [Genesis xxxvii. 19.]

³ [Above, p. 42.]

“For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head.”

Alas, yes!—once men were crowned in youth with the gold of their father’s glory; when the hoary head was crowned also in the way of righteousness.

And so they went their way to prison, and to death.

But now, by divine liberty, and general indication, even Solomon’s *own* head is not crowned by any means.—*Fors*, Letter 77, § 9.¹

“And chains about thy neck”—(yes, collar of the knightliest. Let not thy mother’s Mercy and Truth forsake thee)—bind them about thy neck, write them upon the tables of thine heart.² *She* may forget: yet will not *I* forget thee.³

(Therefore they say—of the sweet mother laws of their loving God and lowly Christ—“Disrumpamus *vincula* eorum et projiciamus a nobis, *jugum* ipsorum.”⁴)

Nay—nay, but if they say thus then?

“Let us swallow them up *alive*, as the grave.”

(Other murderers kill, before they bury;—but YOU, you observe, are invited to bury before you kill. All these things, when once you know their meaning, have their physical symbol quite accurately beside them. Read the story of the last explosion in Yorkshire—where a woman’s husband and her seven sons fell—all seven—all eight—together:⁵ about the beginning of barley harvest⁶ it was, I think.)

“And *whole* as those that go down into the pit.”

(Other murderers kill the body only, but YOU are invited to kill “whole”—body and soul. Yea—and to kill with such wholeness that the creatures shall not even know they ever *had* a soul, any more than a frog of Egypt.⁷ You will

¹ [Above, p. 116: a reference to the breaking off of Solomon’s head from the capital of the Ducal Palace at Venice.]

² [Proverbs iii. 3.]

³ [Isaiah xlix. 15.]

⁴ [Psalms ii. 3: see above, p. 366.]

⁵ [Particulars of this accident cannot be traced.]

⁶ [Ruth i. 22.]

⁷ [See Letter 64, § 4 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 564).]

not, think you. Ah, but hear yet—for second thoughts are best.)

“We shall find all precious substance. We shall fill our houses with spoil.”

(ALL precious substance. Is there anything in those houses round the park that could possibly be suggested as wanting?—And *spoil*,—all taken from the killed people. Have they not sped—have they not divided the spoil—to every man a damsel or two. Not one bit of it all wrought for with your own hand,—even so, mother of Sisera.¹)

“Cast in thy lot among *us*.”—(The Company is limited.)

“Let us all have one”—(heart? no, for *none* of us have that;—mind? no, for none of us have that;—but let us all have one—) “purse.” And now—that you know the meaning of it—I write to the end my morning’s reading:—

“My son, walk not thou in the way with them.

“Refrain thy foot from their path. For their feet *run* to evil, and *hasten* to shed blood.

“Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.

“And they lay wait for their *own* blood.

“They lurk privily for their *own* lives.

“SO ARE THE WAYS OF EVERY ONE THAT IS GREEDY OF GAIN, WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE LIFE OF THE OWNERS THEREOF.”

Now, therefore, let us see what these ways are—the *Via Peccatorum*,—the Pleasantness of them, and the Peace.²

16. The following are portions of a letter from the brother of one of my country friends here, who has been pastor of the English Baptist church in Tredegar about twenty years:—

“TREDEGAR, 11th February, 1878.

“Some three hundred men are said to have been discharged from the works last week. The mills are to be closed all this week, and the iron-workers do not expect to be able to earn a penny. About a day and a half per week, on the average, is what they have been working for several months. The average earnings have been six shillings a week, and out of that they have to pay for coal, house-rent, and other expenses, leaving

¹ [Judges v. 30, 28.]

² [Proverbs iii. 17.]

very little for food and clothing. The place has been divided into districts. I have one of these districts to investigate and relieve. In that district there are a hundred and thirty families in distress, and which have been relieved on an average of two shillings per week for each family for the last month. Many of them are some days every week without anything to eat, and with nothing but water to drink: they have nothing but rags to cover them by day, and very little beside their wearing apparel to cover them on their beds at night. They have sold or pawned their furniture, and everything for which they could obtain the smallest sum of money. In fact, they seem to me to be actually starving. In answer to our appeal, we have received about three hundred pounds, and have distributed the greater part of it. We also distributed a large quantity of clothing last week which we had received from different places. We feel increasing anxiety about the future. When we began, we hoped the prospect would soon brighten, and that we should be able before long to discontinue our efforts. Instead of that, however, things look darker than ever. We cannot tell what would become of us if contributions to our funds should now cease to come in, and we do not know how long we may hope that they will continue to come in, and really cannot tell who is to blame, nor what is the remedy.”¹

They know not at *what* they stumble.² How should they?

Well—will they hear at last then? Has Jael-Atropos³ at last driven her nail well down through the Helmet of Death he wore instead of the Helmet of Salvation⁴—mother of Sisera?

¹ [For further reference to this extract, see Letter 93, § 4 (p. 469).]

² [Proverbs iv. 19.]

³ [Compare the title of Letter 69 (“The Message of Jael-Atropos”), Vol. XXVIII. p. 687; see also above, p. 199. See also the letter to Mr. Walter Severn in Vol. XXVII. p. xx., where Ruskin speaks of “Fors Clavigera” as “Jael to the Sisera of lost opportunity.”]

⁴ [Isaiah lix. 17.]

Ω θνητοισι δικαιοτατη, πολυλβε, ποθεινη,
 εξ ισοτητος αιι θνητοις χαιρουισα δικαιοις,
 παντιμ, ολβιομοιρε, Δικαιοσυνη μεγαλαυχης,
 η καθαραις γνωμαις αιι τα δεοντα βραβευεις,
 αθραυστος το συνειδος αιι θραυεις γαρ απαντας,
 οσσοι μη το σον ηλθον, υπο ζυγον αλλοροσαλλοι,
 πλαστιγξιν βριαρησι παρεγκλιναντες απληστως.
 αστασιαστε, φιλη παντων, φιλοκωμ ερατεινη,
 ειρηνη χαιρουσα, βιον ζηγουα βεβαιον.
 αιι γαρ το πλεον στυγεις, ισοτητι δε χαιρεις.
 εν σοι γαρ σοφιη αρετης τελος εσθλον ικανει.
 κλυθι, θεα, κακιην θνητων θραυουσα δικαιοως,
 ως αν ισορροπησιν αιι βιος εσθλος οδευοι
 θνητων αηθρωπων, οι αρουρης καρπον εδουσιν,
 και ζων παντων, οποσ εν κολποισι τιθηνει
 γαια θεα μητηρ και ποντιος ειναλιος Ζευς.

*Thou who doest right for mortals,—full of blessings,—thou,
 the desired of hearts,
 Rejoicing, for thy equity, in mortal
 righteousness;—All-honoured, happy-fated,
 majestic-miened Justice,
 Who dost arbitrate, for pure minds, all that ought to be,
 Unmoved of countenance thou;—(it is they who shall be
 moved
 That come not under thy yoke,—other always to others,
 Driving insatiably oblique the loaded scales);—
 Thou,—seditionless, dear to all—lover of revel, and lovely,
 Rejoicing in peace, zealous for pureness of life,
 (For thou hatest always the More, and rejoicest in
 equalness.
 For in thee the wisdom of virtue reaches its noble end.)
 Hear, Goddess!—trouble thou justly the mischief of
 mortals,
 So that always in fair equipoise the noble life may travel
 Of mortal men that eat the fruit of the furrow,
 And of all living creatures, whom nurse in their bosoms
 Earth the Goddess mother, and the God of the deep sea.
 ORPHEUS.—Sixty-third Hymn.*

“YEA, THE WORK OF OUR HANDS, ESTABLISH THOU IT”

LETTER 88

THE CONVENTS OF ST. QUENTIN¹

BRANTWOOD, *8th February*, 1880.

1. It is now close on two years since I was struck by the illness which brought these Letters to an end, as a periodical series; nor did I think, on first recovery, that I should ever be able to conclude them otherwise than by a few comments in arranging their topical index.²

But my strength is now enough restored to permit me to add one or two more direct pieces of teaching to the broken statements of principle which it has become difficult to gather out of the mixed substance of the book. These will be written at such leisure as I may find, and form an eighth volume, which with a thin ninth, containing indices, I shall be thankful if I can issue in this tenth year from the beginning of the work.

2. To-day, being my sixty-first birthday, I would ask leave to say a few words to the friends who care for me, and the readers who are anxious about me, touching the above-named illness itself. For a physician's estimate of it, indeed, I can only refer them to my physicians. But there were some conditions of it which I knew better than they could: namely, first, the precise and sharp distinction between the state of morbid inflammation of brain which

¹ [See below, § 14. The passage from the Orphic Hymns was printed by Ruskin by way of frontispiece to the Letter. For a notice issued with the Letter, see above, p. xxxi.]

² [This Index (which was to have formed an additional volume of *Fors*) was never completed by Ruskin, but is now printed (for the most part from his notes) see below: p. 607.]

gave rise to false visions (whether in sleep, or trance, or waking, in broad daylight, with perfect knowledge of the real things in the room, while yet I saw others that were not there), and the not morbid, however dangerous, states of more or less excited temper, and too much quickened thought, which gradually led up to the illness, accelerating in action during the eight or ten days preceding the actual giving way of the brain (as may be enough seen in the fragmentary writing of the first edition of my notes on the Turner exhibition¹); and yet, up to the transitional moment of first hallucination, entirely healthy, and in the full sense of the word “sane”; just as the natural inflammation about a healing wound in flesh is sane, up to the transitional edge where it may pass at a crisis into morbid, or even mortified, substance. And this more or less inflamed, yet still perfectly healthy, condition of mental power, may be traced by any watchful reader, in *Fors*, nearly from its beginning,—that manner of mental ignition or irritation being for the time a great additional force, enabling me to discern more clearly, and say more vividly, what for long years it had been in my heart to say.

3. Now I observed that in talking of the illness, whether during its access or decline, none of the doctors ever thought of thus distinguishing what was definitely diseased in the brain action, from what was simply curative—had there been time enough—of the wounded nature in me. And in the second place, not perceiving, or at least not admitting, this difference; nor, for the most part, apprehending (except the one who really carried me through, and who never lost hope—Dr. Parsons of Hawkshead) that there *were* any mental wounds to be healed, they made, and still make, my friends more anxious about me than there is occasion for: which anxiety I partly regret, as it pains them; but much more if it makes them more doubtful than they used to be (which, for some, is saying

¹ [For these *Notes*, see Vol. XIII. pp. 391 *seq.*; and for the fragmentary character of the first edition, *ibid.*, pp. liv., lv.]

a good deal) of the “truth and soberness”¹ of *Fors* itself. Throughout every syllable of which, hitherto written, the reader will find one consistent purpose, and perfectly conceived system, far more deeply founded than any bruited about under their founders’ names; including in its balance one vast department of human skill,—the arts,—which the vulgar economists are wholly incapable of weighing; and a yet more vast realm of human enjoyment—the spiritual affections,—which materialist thinkers are alike incapable of imagining: a system not mine, nor Kant’s, nor Comte’s;—but that which Heaven has taught every true man’s heart, and proved by every true man’s work, from the beginning of time to this day.

4. I use the word “Heaven” here in an absolutely literal sense, meaning the blue sky,² and the light and air of it. Men who live in that light,—“in pure sunshine, not under mixed-up shade,”³—and whose actions are open as the air, always arrive at certain conditions of moral and practical loyalty, which are wholly independent of religious opinion. These, it has been the first business of *Fors* to declare. Whether there be one God or three,—no God, or ten thousand,—children should have enough to eat, and their skins should be washed clean. It is not *I* who say that. Every mother’s heart under the sun says that, if she has one.

Again, whether there be saints in Heaven or not, as long as its stars shine on the sea, and the thunnies swim there—every fisherman who drags a net ashore is bound to say to as many human creatures as he can, “Come and dine.”⁴ And the fishmongers who destroy their fish by cartloads that they may make the poor pay dear for what is left,⁵ ought to be flogged round Billingsgate, and out of

¹ [Acts xxvi. 25.]

² [Compare Ruskin’s saying that the object of education is to see the sky: Letter 9, § 19 (Vol. XXVII. p. 164).]

³ [Plato, *Phædrus*, 239 C. The Greek is given in *Art of England*, § 79.]

⁴ [John xxi. 12: compare above, p. 37.]

⁵ [See Letter 38 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 33).]

it. It is not *I* who say that. Every man's heart on sea and shore says that—if he isn't at heart a rascal. Whatever is dictated in *Fors* is dictated thus by common sense, common equity, common humanity, and common sunshine—not by me.

5. But farther. I have just now used the word "Heaven" in a nobler sense also: meaning, Heaven and our Father therein.

And beyond the power of its sunshine, which all men may know, *Fors* has declared also the power of its Fatherhood,—which only some men know, and others do not,—and, except by rough teaching, may not. For the wise of all the earth have said in their hearts always, "God is, and there is none beside Him;"¹ and the fools of all the earth have said in their hearts always, "I am, and there is none beside me."

Therefore, beyond the assertion of what is visibly salutary, *Fors* contains also the assertion of what is invisibly salutary, or salvation-bringing, in Heaven, to all men who will receive such health: and beyond this an invitation—passing gradually into an imperious call—to all men who trust in God, that they purge their conscience from dead works,² and join together in work separated from the fool's; pure, undefiled,³ and worthy of Him they trust in.

6. But in the third place. Besides these definitions, first, of what is useful to all the world, and then of what is useful to the wiser part of it, *Fors* contains much trivial and desultory talk by the way. Scattered up and down in it,—perhaps by the Devil's sowing tares among the wheat,⁴—there is much casual expression of my own personal feelings and faith, together with bits of autobiography, which were allowed place, not without some notion of their being useful, but yet imprudently, and even incontinently,

¹ [See Deuteronomy iv. 39.]

² [Hebrews ix. 14.]

³ [See James i. 27.]

⁴ [See Matthew xiii. 25.]

because I could not at the moment hold my tongue about what vexed or interested me, or returned soothingly to my memory.

Now these personal fragments must be carefully sifted from the rest of the book, by readers who wish to understand it, and taken within their own limits,—no whit farther. For instance, when I say that “St. Ursula sent me a flower with her love,”¹ it means that I myself am in the habit of thinking of the Greek Persephone, the Latin Proserpina, and the Gothic St. Ursula, as of the same living spirit; and so far regulating my conduct by that idea as to dedicate my book on Botany to Proserpina; and to think, when I want to write anything pretty about flowers, how St. Ursula would like it said. And when on the Christmas morning in question, a friend staying in Venice brought me a pot of pinks, “with St. Ursula’s love,” the said pot of pinks did afterwards greatly help me in my work;—and reprove me afterwards, in its own way, for the failure of it.

7. All this effort, or play, of personal imagination is utterly distinct from the teaching of *Fors*, though I thought at the time its confession innocent, without in any wise advising my readers to expect messages from pretty saints, or reprobation from pots of pinks: only being urgent with them to ascertain clearly in their own minds what they *do* expect comfort or reproof from. Here, for instance (Sheffield, 12th February), I am lodging at an honest and hospitable grocer’s, who has lent me his own bedroom, of which the principal ornament is a card printed in black and gold, sacred to the memory of his infant son, who died aged fourteen months, and whose tomb is represented under the figure of a broken Corinthian column, with two graceful-winged ladies putting garlands on it. He is comforted by this conception, and, in that degree, believes and feels with me: the merely palpable fact is probably, that

¹ [See Letter 74, § 1 (above, p. 30).]
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his child's body is lying between two tall chimneys which are covering it gradually with cinders. I am quite as clearly aware of that fact as the most scientific of my friends; and can probably see more in the bricks of the said chimneys than they. But if they can see nothing in Heaven above the chimney tops, nor conceive of anything in spirit greater than themselves, it is not because they have more knowledge than I, but because they have less sense.

Less *common-sense*,¹—observe: less practical insight into the things which are of instant and constant need to man.

8. I must yet allow myself a few more words of auto-biography touching this point. The doctors said that I went mad, this time two years ago, from overwork. I had not been then working more than usual, and what was usual with me had become easy. But I went mad because nothing came of my work. People would have understood my falling crazy if they had heard that the manuscripts on which I had spent seven years of my old life had all been used to light the fire with, like Carlyle's first volume of the *French Revolution*.² But they could not understand that I should be the least annoyed, far less fall ill in a frantic manner, because, after I had got them published, nobody believed a word of them. Yet the first calamity would only have been misfortune,—the second (the enduring calamity under which I toil) is humiliation,—resisted necessarily by a dangerous and lonely pride.

9. I spoke just now of the "wounds" of which that fire in the flesh came;³ and if any one ask me faithfully, what the wounds were, I can faithfully give the answer of Zechariah's silenced messenger, "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."⁴ All alike, in whom I had most trusted for help, failed me in this main work:

¹ [On common-sense, compare Appendix 3 (p. 535).]

² [See Froude's *Carlyle's Life in London*, vol. i. pp. 26 *seq.*]

³ [See James v. 3.]

⁴ [Zechariah xiii. 6.]

some mocked at it, some pitied, some rebuked,—all stopped their ears at the cry: and the solitude at last became too great to be endured. I tell this now, because I must say some things that grieve me to say, about the recent work of one of the friends from whom I had expected most sympathy and aid,—the historian J. A. Froude. Faithful, he, as it appeared to me, in all the intent of history: already in the year 1858 shrewdly cognizant of the main facts (with which he alone professed himself concerned) of English life past and present; keenly also, and impartially, sympathetic with every kind of heroism, and mode of honesty. Of him I first learned the story of Sir Richard Grenville; by him was directed to the diaries of the sea captains in Hakluyt; by his influence, when he edited *Fraser's Magazine*, I had been led to the writing of *Munera Pulveris*: his Rectorial address at St. Andrew's was full of insight into the strength of old Scotland; his study of the life of Hugo of Lincoln, into that of yet elder England;¹ and every year, as Auld Reekie and old England sank farther out of memory and honour with others, I looked more passionately for some utterance from him, of noble story about the brave and faithful dead, and noble wrath against the wretched and miscreant² dead-alive. But year by year his words have grown more hesitating and helpless. The first preface to his history is a quite masterly and exhaustive summary of the condition and laws of England before the Reformation; and it most truly introduces the following book as a study of the process by which that condition and those laws were turned upside-down, and inside-out, “as a man wipeth a dish,—wiping it, and turning it upside-down;”³ so that, from the

¹ [The references are to “England's Forgotten Worthies,” “Calvinism” (the subject of the Rectorial address), and “A Bishop of the Twelfth Century”—all included in *Short Studies on Great Subjects*. For the allusion to *Munera Pulveris*, see Vol. XVII. pp. 1., 143. For references by Ruskin to Grenville, see Vol. XXVII. p. 153, and the other passages there noted; to Hakluyt's *Voyages*, Vol. XXVII. p. 237; and to Bishop Hugo, Vol. XXVIII. p. 118.]

² [That is, misbelieving: see Vol. XXVII. pp. 81, 466.]

³ [2 Kings xxi. 13.]

least thing to the greatest, if our age is light, those ages were dark; if our age is right, those ages were wrong,—and *vice versâ*. There is no possible consent to be got, or truce to be struck, between them. Those ages were feudal, ours free; those reverent, ours impudent; those artful, ours mechanical; the consummate and exhaustive difference being that the creed of the Dark Ages was, “I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth;” and the creed of the Light Ages has become, “I believe in Father Mud, the Almighty Plastic; and in Father Dollar, the Almighty Drastic.”

10. Now at the time when Mr. Froude saw and announced the irreconcilableness of these two periods, and then went forward to his work on that time of struggling twilight which foretold the existing blaze of day, and general detection of all impostures, he had certainly not made up his mind whether he ought finally to praise the former or the latter days. His reverence for the right-eousness of old English law holds staunch, even to the recognition of it in the most violent states of—literal—ebullition: such, for instance, as the effective check given to the introduction of the arts of Italian poisoning into England, by putting the first English cook who practised them into a pot of convenient size, together with the requisite quantity of water, and publicly boiling him,¹—a most concise and practical method. Also he rejoices in the old English detestation of idleness, and determination that every person in the land should have a craft to live by, and practise it honestly: and in manifold other matters I perceive the backward leaning of his inmost thoughts; and yet in the very second page of this otherwise grand preface, wholly in contravention of his own principle that the historian has only to do with facts, he lets slip this—conciliating is it? or careless? or really intended?—in any case amazing—sentence, “A condition

¹ [See ch. 4 of Froude's *History*, vol. i. pp. 308–309 in the octavo edition.]

of things” (the earlier age) “differing both outwardly and inwardly from that *into which a happier fortune has introduced ourselves.*” An amazing sentence, I repeat, in its triple assumptions,—each in itself enormous: the first, that it is happier to live without, than with, the fear of God; the second, that it is chance, and neither our virtue nor our wisdom, that has procured us this happiness;—the third, that the “ourselves” of Onslow Gardens¹ and their neighbourhood may sufficiently represent also the ourselves of Siberia and the Rocky Mountains—of Afghanistan and Zululand.

11. None of these assumptions have foundation; and for fastening the outline of their shadowy and meteoric form, Mr. Froude is working under two deadly disadvantages. Intensely loving and desiring Truth before all things, nor without sympathy even for monkish martyrs,—see the passage last quoted in my last written *Fors*, § 14,²—he has yet allowed himself to slip somehow into the notion that Protestantism and the love of Truth are synonymous;—so that, for instance, the advertisements which decorate in various fresco the station of the Great Northern Railway, and the newspapers vended therein to the passengers by the morning train, appear to him treasures of human wisdom and veracity, as compared with the benighted ornamentation of the useless Lesche of Delphi,³ or the fanciful stains on the tunnel roof of the Lower Church of Assisi.⁴ And this the more, because, for second deadly disadvantage, he has no knowledge of art, nor care for it; and therefore, in his life of Hugo of Lincoln, passes over the Bishop’s designing, and partly building, its cathedral, with a word, as if he had been no more than a woodman building a hut:⁵ and in his

¹ [Froude’s London residence.]

² [Above, p. 373.]

³ [See Vol. XX. pp. 20 *n.*, 269.]

⁴ [For Giotto’s frescoes there, see Vol. XXIII. pp. xlii. *seq.*]

⁵ [In describing the subject of his paper, Froude says: “It is the life of St. Hugo of Avalon, a monk of the Grand Chartreuse, who was invited by Henry II. into England, became Bishop of Lincoln, and was the designer, and in part builder, of Lincoln Cathedral” (*Short Studies*, vol. ii. p. 61, 1891 edition).]

recent meditations at St. Albans,¹ he never puts the primal question concerning those long cliffs of abbey-wall, how the men who thought of them and built them, differed, in make and build of soul, from the apes who can only pull them down and build bad imitations of them: but he fastens like a remora on the nearer, narrower, copper-coating of fact—that countless bats and owls did at last cluster under the abbey-eaves; fact quite sufficiently known before now, and loudly enough proclaimed to the votaries of the Goddess of Reason, round *her* undefiled altars. So that there was not the slightest need for Mr. Froude's sweeping out these habitations of doleful creatures. Had he taken an actual broom of resolutely bound birch twigs, and, in solemn literalness of act, swept down the wrecked jackdaws' nests, which at this moment make a slippery dunghill-slope, and mere peril of spiral perdition, out of what was once the safe and decent staircase of central Canterbury tower, he would have better served his generation. But after he had, to his own satisfaction, sifted the mass of bone-dust, and got at the worst that could be seen or smelt in the cells of monks, it was next, and at least, his duty, as an impartial historian, to compare with them the smells of modern unmonastic cells (unmonastic, that is to say, in their scorn of sculpture and painting,—monastic enough in their separation of life from life). Yielding no whit to Mr. Froude in love of Fact and Truth, I will place beside his picture of the monk's cell, in the Dark Ages, two or three pictures by eye-witnesses—yes, and by line-and-measure witnesses—of the manufacturer's cell, in the happier times “to which Fortune has introduced ourselves.” I translate them (nearly as Fors opens the pages to me) from M. Jules Simon's *L'Ouvrière*, a work which I recommend in the most earnest manner, as a text-book for the study of French in young ladies' schools. It must, however, be

¹ [“Annals of an English Abbey,” in which Froude traces the corruptions of the monastic system, first published in *Scribner's Monthly*, 1873–1874, vol. vii. pp. 91, 187, 282; see now *Short Studies*, vol. iii. pp. 1–129 (1891 edition).]

observed, prefatorily, that these descriptions were given in 1861; and I have no doubt that as soon as this *Fors* is published, I shall receive indignant letters from all the places named in the extracts, assuring me that nothing of the sort exists there now. Of which letters I must also say, in advance, that I shall take no notice; being myself prepared, on demand, to furnish any quantity of similar pictures, seen with my own eyes, in the course of a single walk with a policeman through the back streets of any modern town which has fine front ones. And I take M. Jules Simon's studies from life merely because it gives me less trouble to translate them than to write fresh ones myself. But I think it probable that they *do* indicate the culminating power of the manufacturing interest in causing human degradation; and that things may indeed already be in some struggling initial state of amendment. What things *were*, at their worst, and were virtually *everywhere*, I record as a most important contribution to the History of France, and Europe, in the words of an honourable and entirely accurate and trustworthy Frenchman.¹

12. "Elbeuf, where the industrial prosperity is so great, ought to have healthy lodgings. It is a quite new town, and one which may easily extend itself upon the hills (*coteaux*) which surround it. We find already, in effect, *jusqu'à mi-côte* (I don't know what that means,—half-way up the hill?), beside a little road bordered by smiling shrubs, some small houses built without care and without intelligence by little speculators scarcely less wretched than the lodgers they get together"—(this sort of landlord is one of the worst modern forms of Centaur,—half usurer, half gambler). "You go up two or three steps made of uncut stones" (none the worse for that though, M. Jules Simon), "and you find yourself in a little room lighted by one narrow window, and of which the four walls of earth have never been whitewashed nor rough-cast. Some half-rotten oak planks thrown down on the soil pretend to be a flooring. Close to the road, an old woman pays sevenpence halfpenny a week" (sixty-five centimes,—roughly, forty francs, or thirty shillings a year) "for a mud hut which is literally naked—neither bed, chair, nor table in it (*c'est en demeurer confondu*). She sleeps upon a little straw, too rarely renewed; while her son, who is a labourer at the port, sleeps at night upon the damp ground, without either straw or covering. At some steps farther on, a little back

¹ [See pp. 159–162 of *L'Ouvrière*, par Jules Simon, Paris, 1861. The passage in § 14 is from pp. 147–149, 151–154.]

from the road, a weaver, sixty years old, inhabits a sort of hut or sentry-box (for one does not know what name to give it), of which the filth makes the heart sick" (he means the stomach too—*fait soulever le cœur*). "It is only a man's length, and a yard and a quarter broad; he has remained in it night and day for twenty years. He is now nearly an idiot, and refuses to occupy a better lodging which one proposes to him.

"The misery is not less horrible, and it is much more general at Rouen. One cannot form an idea of the filth of certain houses without having seen it. The poor people feed their fire with the refuse of the apples which have served to make cider, and which they get given them for nothing. They have quantities of them in the corner of their rooms, and a hybrid vegetation comes out of these masses of vegetable matter in putrefaction. Sometimes the proprietors, ill paid, neglect the most urgent repairs. In a garret of the Rue des Matelas, the floor, entirely rotten, trembles under the step of the visitor; at two feet from the door is a hole larger than the body of a man. The two unhappy women who live there are obliged to cry to you to take care, for they have not anything to put over the hole, not even the end of a plank. There is nothing in their room but their spinning-wheel, two low chairs, and the wrecks of a wooden bedstead without a mattress. In a blind alley at the end of the Rue des Canettes, where the wooden houses seem all on the point of falling, a weaver of braces lodges with his family in a room two yards and a half broad by four yards and three-quarters long, measured on the floor; but a projection formed by the tunnels of the chimney of the lower stories, and all the rest, is so close to the roof that one cannot make three steps upright. When the husband, wife, and four children are all in it, it is clear that they cannot move. One will not be surprised to hear that the want of air and hunger make frequent victims in such a retreat (*reduit*). Of the four children which remained to them in April, 1860, two were dead three months afterwards. When they were visited in the month of April, the physician, M. Leroy, spoke of a ticket that he had given them the week before for milk. 'She has drunk of it,' said the mother, pointing to the eldest daughter, half dead, but who had the strength to smile.¹ Hunger had reduced this child, who would have been beautiful, nearly to the state of a skeleton.

"The father of this poor family is a good weaver. He could gain in an ordinary mill from three to four francs a day, while he gains only a franc and a half in the brace manufactory. One may ask why he stays there. Because at the birth of his last child he had no money at home, nor fire, nor covering, nor light, nor bread. He borrowed twenty francs from his patron, who is an honest man, and he cannot without paying his debt quit that workshop where his work nevertheless does not bring him enough to live on. It is clear that he will die unless some one helps him, but his family will be dead before him."

13. Think now, you sweet milkmaids of England whose face is your fortune,² and you sweet demoiselles of France

¹ [For later references to this passage, see below, pp. 402, 470.]

² [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 310 n.]

who are content, as girls should be, with breakfast of brown bread and cream (read Scribe's little operetta, *La Demoiselle à Marier*),—think, I say, how, in this one,—even though she *has* had a cup of cold milk given her in the name of the Lord,¹—lying still there, “nearly a skeleton,” that verse of the song of songs which is Solomon's, must take a new meaning for you: “We have a little sister, and she has no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day of her espousals?”²

14. “For the cellars of Lille, those who defend them, were they of Lille itself, have not seen them. There remains one, No. 40 of the Rue des Étaques; the ladder applied against the wall to go down is in such a bad state that you will do well to go down slowly. There is just light enough to read at the foot of the ladder. One cannot read there without compromising one's eyes: the work of sewing is therefore dangerous in that place; a step farther in, it is impossible, and the back of the cave is entirely dark. The soil is damp and unequal, the walls blackened by time and filth. One breathes a thick air which can never be renewed, because there is no other opening but the trap-door (*soupirail*). The entire space, three yards by four, is singularly contracted by a quantity of refuse of all sorts, shells of eggs, shells of mussels, crumbled ground and filth, worse than that of the dirtiest dunghill. It is easy to see that no one ever walks in this cave. Those who live in it lie down and sleep where they fall. The furniture is composed of a very small iron stove of which the top is shaped into a pan, three earthen pots, a stool, and the wood of a bed without any bedding. There is neither straw nor coverlet. The woman who lodges in the bottom of this cellar never goes out of it. She is sixty-three years old. The husband is not a workman: they have two daughters, of which the eldest is twenty-two years old. These four persons live together, and have no other domicile.

“This cave is one of the most miserable, first for the extreme filth and destitution of its inhabitants, next by its dimensions, most of the cellars being one or two yards wider. These caves serve for lodging to a whole family; in consequence, father, mother, and children sleep in the same place, and too often, whatever their age, in the same bed. The greater number of these unhappies see no mischief in this confusion of the sexes; whatever comes of it, they neither conceal it, nor blush for it; nay, they scarcely know that the rest of mankind have other manners. Some of the caves, indeed, are divided in two by an arch, and thus admit of a separation which is not in general made. It is true that in most cases the back cellar is entirely dark, the air closer, and the stench more pestilent. In some the water trickles down the walls, and others are

¹ [Matthew x. 42.]

² [Canticles viii. 8.]

close to a gully-hole, and poisoned by mephitic vapours, especially in summer. . . .

“There are no great differences between the so-called ‘courettes’ (little alleys) of Lille, and the so-called ‘forts’ of Roubaix, or the ‘convents’ of St. Quentin; everywhere the same heaping together of persons and the same unhealthiness. At Roubaix, where the town is open, space is not wanting, and all is new,—for the town has just sprung out of the ground,—one has not, as at Lille, the double excuse of a fortified town where space is circumscribed to begin with, and where one cannot build without pulling down. Also at Roubaix there are never enough lodgings for the increasing number of workmen, so that the landlords may be always sure of their rents. Quite recently, a manufacturer who wanted some hands brought some workwomen from Lille, paid them well, and put them in a far more healthy workshop than the one they had left. Nevertheless, coming on Thursday, they left him on Saturday: they had found no place to lodge, and had passed the three nights under a gateway. In this open town, though its rows of lodgings are more than half a mile from the workshops, they are not a bit more healthy. The houses are ill-constructed, squeezed one against another, the ground between not levelled, and often with not even a gutter to carry away the thrown-out slops, which accumulate in stagnant pools till the sun dries them. Here at hazard is the description of some of the lodgings. To begin with a first floor in Wattel Street: one gets up into it by a ladder and a trap without a door; space, two yards and a half by three yards; one window, narrow and low; walls not rough-cast; inhabitants, father, mother, and two children of different sexes,—one ten, the other seventeen: rent, one franc a week. In Halluin Court¹ there is a house with only two windows to its ground floor, one to the back and one to the front; but this ground floor is divided into three separate lodgings, of which the one in the middle”—(thus ingeniously constructed in the age of light)—“would of course have no window at all, but it is separated from the back and front ones by two lattices, which fill the whole space, and give it the aspect of a glass cage. It results that the household placed in this lodging has no air, and that none of the three households have any privacy, for it is impossible for any person of them to hide any of his movements from the two others. One of these lodgings is let for five francs a month; the woman who inhabits it has five children, though all young, but she has got a sort of cage made in the angle of her room, which can be got up to by a winding staircase, and which can hold a bed. This the lodger has underlet, at seventy-five centimes a week, to a sempstress, abandoned by her lover, with a child of some weeks old. This child is laid on the bed, where it remains alone all the day, and the mother comes to suckle it at noon. A gown and a bonnet, with a little parcel which may contain, at the most, one chemise, are placed on a shelf, and above them an old silk umbrella—an object of great luxury, the *débris* of lost opulence. Nearly all the inhabitants of this court are subject to fever. If an epidemic came on the top of that, the whole population would be carried off. Yet it is not two years since Halluin Court was built.”

¹ [Compare below, Letter 89, § 5 (p. 402).]

Such, Mr. Froude,¹ are the “fortresses” of free—as opposed to feudal—barons; such the “convents” of philosophic—as opposed to catholic—purity. Will you not tell the happy world of your day, how it may yet be a little happier? It is wholly your business, not mine;—and all these unwilling words of my tired lips are spoken only because *you* are silent.

15. I do not propose to encumber the pages of the few last numbers of *Fors* with the concerns of St. George’s Guild: of which the mustard-seed state (mingled hopefully however with that of cress) is scarcely yet overpast. This slackness of growth, as I have often before stated, is more the Master’s fault than any one else’s, the present Master being a dilatory, dreamy, and—to the much vexation of the more enthusiastic members of the Guild—an extremely patient person; and busying himself at present rather with the things that amuse him in St. George’s Museum than with the Guild’s wider cares;—of which,

¹ [The first draft had a longer passage here:—

“Such are the fortresses of modern power—and such, the convents of modern purity. And if any living writer wills to be the historian of evil rather than of good,—these are the first sorrows to be pictured, while yet there is time to relieve,—these the first sins to be recorded, whether for present amendment, or enduring shame. But if with no tragic thirst for the thrill of compassion, and no morbid pleasure in the self-gratulation of disdain, the historian sets himself to discern the balance of the facts, and the bias of the ways of his time, no age of the world is so equally poised between iniquity and righteousness, between corruption and growth, as to leave him long incapable of judgment. There is another side to the picture of which I have been revealing the horror. Out of the distress of one section, has arisen, or may yet arise, various increase of comfort or convenience for others—such as Miss Edgeworth, Macaulay, and the lower tribes of partly honest blunderers and partly interested partizans who have followed them, believed and proclaim to be the first fruits of the Godless Millennium. The balanced account of the pains of the poor, and of the deeds and pleasures of the rich, is the first of all State documents which a true Historian has to decipher; and not merely to decipher, but to exhibit with much more than the philosophical admiration of Truth—with a warrior’s resolution to enthrone and defend her at cost, if it must be, of his life. Men in the dark ages died for what they believed; but men in these light ages will not put themselves to the least danger for what they know.”

In explanation of the reference here to Miss Edgeworth, see (in a later volume of this edition) *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 46 *n.*, and compare Vol. XI. p. 125 *n.*]

however, a separate report will be given to its members in the course of this year,¹ and continued as need is.

16. Many well-meaning and well-wishing friends outside the Guild, and desirous of entrance, have asked for relaxation of the grievous law concerning the contribution of the tithe of income. Which the Master is not, however, in the least minded to relax;² nor any other of the Guild's original laws, none of which were set down without consideration, though this requirement of tithe does indeed operate as a most stiff stockade, and apparently unsurmountable hurdle-fence, in the face of all more or less rich and, so to speak, overweighted, well-wishers. For I find, practically, that fifty pounds a year can often save me five—or at a pinch, seven—of them; nor should I be the least surprised if some merry-hearted apprentice lad, starting in life with a capital of ten pounds or so, were to send me one of them, and go whistling on his way with the remaining nine. But that ever a man of ten thousand a year should contrive, by any exertion of prudence and self-denial, to live upon so small a sum as nine thousand, and give one thousand to the poor,—this is a height of heroism wholly inconceivable to modern pious humanity.

17. Be that as it may, I am of course ready to receive subscriptions for St. George's work from outsiders—whether zealous or lukewarm—in such amounts as they think fit: and at present I conceive that the proposed enlargements of our museum at Sheffield are an object with which more frank sympathy may be hoped than with the agricultural business of the Guild. Ground I have, enough—and place for a pleasant gallery for such students as Sheffield may send up into the clearer light;*—but I don't choose to

* An excellent and kind account of the present form and contents of the Museum will be found in the last December number of Cassell's *Magazine of Art*.³

¹ [The "Master's Report" was, however, not issued till 1881: see Vol. XXX.]

² [That is, in the case of full "Companions:" see above, p. 182. Subsequently, however, the "stockade" was removed: see Vol. XXX. p. 47.]

³ [By Edward Bradbury, vol. iii. pp. 57–60.]

sell out any of St. George's stock for this purpose, still less for the purchase of books for the Museum,—and yet there are many I want, and can't yet afford. Mr. Quaritch, for instance, has a twelfth-century Lectionary, a most precious MS., which would be a foundation for all manner of good learning to us: but it is worth its weight in silver, and inaccessible for the present.¹ Also my casts from St. Mark's, of sculptures never cast before, are lying in lavender—or at least in tow—invisible and useless, till I can build walls for them: and I think the British public would not regret giving me the means of placing and illuminating these rightly. And, in fine, here I am yet for a few years, I trust, at their service—ready to arrange such a museum for their artizans as they have not yet dreamed of;—not dazzling nor overwhelming, but comfortable, useful, and—in such sort as smoke-cumbered skies may admit,—beautiful; though not, on the outside, otherwise decorated than with plain and easily-worked slabs of Derbyshire marble, with which I shall face the walls, making the interior a working man's Bodleian Library, with cell and shelf of the most available kind, undisturbed, for his holiday time. The British public are not likely to get such a thing done by any one else for a time, if they don't get it done now by me, when I'm in the humour for it. Very positively I can assure them of that; and so leave the matter to their discretion.

Many more serious matters, concerning the present day, I have in mind—and partly written, already; but they must be left for next *Fors*, which will take up the now quite imminent question of Land, and its Holding, and Lordship.

¹ [This Lectionary was ultimately bought by Ruskin, out of the funds of the St. George's Guild, for the Sheffield Museum ("Master's Report," 1884, § 5): see Vol. XXX., where also (in the Catalogue of the Museum) the casts from St. Mark's are described.]

“YEA, THE WORK OF OUR HANDS, ESTABLISH THOU IT”

LETTER 89

WHOSE FAULT IS IT?¹

TO THE TRADES UNIONS OF ENGLAND²

BEAUVAIS, *August 31, 1880.*

1. MY DEAR FRIENDS,—This is the first letter in *Fors* which has been addressed to you as a body of workers separate from the other Englishmen who are doing their best, with heart and hand, to serve their country in any sphere of its business, and in any rank of its people. I have never before acknowledged the division, (marked, partly in your own imagination, partly in the estimate of others, and of late, too sadly, staked out in permanence by animosities and misunderstandings on both sides,) between you, and the mass of society to which you look for employment. But I recognize the distinction to-day, moved, for one thing, by a kindly notice of last *Fors*, which appeared in the *Bingley Telephone* of April 23rd of this year;³ saying, “that it was to be wished I would write more to and for the workmen and workwomen of these

¹ [For the title, see § 10 (p. 408).]

² [525 copies of this Letter were issued free to Trade Unions, each copy being stamped “Trades Union Copy, presented by the Author”: see below, § 13. “The most important *Fors* I have yet written,” Ruskin called it in a letter to Miss Beever (September 18); “dainty packets of dynamite” (*Hortus Inclusus*, 3rd ed., p. 85; reprinted in a later volume of this edition).]

³ [*The Bingley Telephone and Airedale Courant*. The article contains also the following passage: “John Ruskin appears to run away with the idea that he is not appreciated by working people. We can assure him that he is mistaken in this. We know numbers in our small circle of friends, who look upon him in the light which he would value most, that of a man who loves truth for its own

realms,” and influenced conclusively by the fact of your having expressed by your delegates at Sheffield¹ your sympathy with what endeavours I had made for the founding a Museum there, different in principle from any yet arranged for working men: this formal recognition of my effort, on your part, signifying to me, virtually, that the time was come for explaining my aims to you, fully, and in the clearest terms possible to me.

2. But, believe me, there have been more reasons than I need now pass in review, for my silence hitherto respecting your special interests. Of which reasons, this alone might satisfy you, that, as a separate class, I knew scarcely anything of you but your usefulness, and your distress; and that the essential difference between me and other political writers of your day, is that I never say a word about a single thing that I don't know, while they never trouble themselves to know a single thing they talk of; but give you their own “opinions”² about it, or tell you the gossip they have heard about it, or insist on what they like in it, or rage against what they dislike in it; but entirely decline either to look at, or to learn, or to speak, the Thing as it is, and must be.

Now I know many things that are, and many that must be, hereafter, concerning my own class: but I know nothing yet, practically, of yours, and could give you no serviceable advice either in your present disputes with your masters, or in your plans of education and action for yourselves, until I had found out more clearly, what you meant by a Master, and what you wanted to gain either in education or action,—and, even farther, whether the kind of

sake, and is a sincere lover of his fellow-men, and who desires in his heart their elevation to a higher plane. We have seen a letter which he once sent to a woolsorter in Cottingley, and he says in it that his correspondent was the first working man who had ever written a letter to him. But John Ruskin must be told that humble working men look upon him as such a great man that it would be presumptuous on their part to do such a thing.”]

¹ [The reference is probably to the subscriptions collected for the Museum among the co-operators: see below, p. 415 *n.*]

² [Compare above, p. 374.]

person you meant by a Master was one in reality or not, and the things you wanted to gain by your labour were indeed worth your having or not. So that nearly everything hitherto said in *Fors* has been addressed, in main thought, to your existing Masters, Pastors, and Princes,¹—not to you,—though these all I class with you, if they knew it, as “workmen and labourers,” and you with them, if *you* knew it, as capable of the same joys as they, tempted by the same passions as they, and needing, for your life, to recognize the same Father and Father’s Law over you all, as brothers in earth and in heaven.

3. But there was another, and a more sharply restrictive reason for my never, until now, addressing you as a distinct class;—namely, that certain things which I knew positively must be soon openly debated—and what is more, determined—in a manner very astonishing to some people, in the natural issue of the transference of power out of the hands of the upper classes, so called, into yours,—transference which has been compelled by the crimes of those upper classes, and accomplished by their follies,—these certain things, I say, coming now first into fully questionable shape,² could not be openly announced as subjects of debate by any man in my then official position as one of a recognized body of University teachers, without rendering him suspected and disliked by a large body of the persons with whom he had to act. And I considered that in accepting such a position at all, I had virtually promised to teach nothing contrary to the principles on which the Church and the Schools of England believed themselves—whether mistakenly or not—to have been founded.

The pledge was easy to me, because I love the Church and the Universities of England more faithfully than most churchmen, and more proudly than most collegians; though

¹ [“Masters, being the leaders in your work; Pastors, the teachers of your hearts; Princes, the rulers over them and you.”—*MS. note by Author in his copy.*]

² [“*i.e.*, shape of which it can be distinctly questioned: is it convenient, tenable, graceful, or the like?”—*MS. note by Author in his copy.*]

my pride is neither in my college boat, nor my college plate, nor my college class-list, nor my college heresy. I love both the Church and the schools of England, for the sake of the brave and kindly men whom they have hitherto not ceased to send forth into all lands, well nurtured, and bringing, as a body, wherever their influence extended, order and charity into the ways of mortals.

And among these I had hoped long since to have obtained hearing, not for myself, but for the Bible which their Mothers revered, the laws which their Fathers obeyed, and the wisdom which the Masters of all men—the dead Senate of the noblest among the nations—had left for the guidance of the ages yet to be. And during seven years I went on appealing to my fellow scholars, in words clear enough to them, though not to you, had they chosen to hear: but not one cared nor listened, till I had sign sternly given to me that my message to the learned and the rich was given, and ended.

4. And now I turn to you, understanding you to be associations of labouring men who have recognized the necessity of binding yourselves by some common law of action, and who are taking earnest counsel as to the conditions of your lives here in England, and their relations to those of your fellow-workers in foreign lands. And I understand you to be, in these associations, disregardant, if not actually defiant, of the persons on whose capital you have been hitherto passively dependent for occupation, and who have always taught you, by the mouths of their appointed Economists, that they and their capital were an eternal part of the Providential arrangements made for this world by its Creator.

In which self-assertion, nevertheless, and attitude of inquiry into the grounds of this statement of theirs, you are unquestionably right. For, as things are nowadays, you know any pretty lady in the Elysian fields of Paris who can set a riband of a new colour in her cap in a taking way, forthwith sets a few thousands of Lyonnaise spinners

and dyers furiously weaving ribands of like stuff, and washing them with like dye. And in due time the new French edict reaches also your sturdy English mind, and the steeples of Coventry ring in the reign of the elect riband, and the Elysian fields of Spital,¹ or whatever other hospice now shelters the weaver's head, bestir themselves according to the French pattern, and bedaub themselves with the French dye; and the pretty lady thinks herself your everlasting benefactress, and little short of an angel sent from heaven to feed you with miraculous manna, and you are free Britons that rule the waves, and free Frenchmen that lead the universe, of course; but you have not a bit of land you can stand on—without somebody's leave, nor a house for your children that they can't be turned out of, nor a bit of bread for their breakfast to-morrow, but on the chance of some more yards of riband being wanted. Nor have you any notion that the pretty lady herself can be of the slightest use to you, except as a consumer of ribands; what God made *her* for—you do not ask: still less she, what God made *you* for.

5. How many are there of you, I wonder, landless, roofless, foodless, unless, for such work as they choose to put you to, the upper classes provide you with cellars in Lille, glass cages in Halluin Court, milk tickets for which your children still have “the strength to smile—”^{*} How many of you, tell me,—and what your united hands and wits are worth at your own reckoning?

Trade Unions of England—Trade Armies of Christendom, what's the roll-call of you, and what part or lot have you, hitherto, in this Holy Christian Land of your Fathers? Is not that inheritance to be claimed, and the Birth Right of it, no less than the Death Right? Will you not determine where you may be Christianly bred, before you set

^{*} See *Fors* for March of this year, Letter 88, with the sequel.²

¹ [For the weavers of Spitalfields, see Letter 18 (Vol. XXVII. p. 306 *n.*).]

² [For the cellars in Lille, see p. 393; for the glass cages of Halluin Court and the sequel, p. 394; for the milk tickets, p. 392.]

your blockhead Parliaments to debate where you may be Christianly buried¹ (your priests also all a-squabble about that matter, as I hear,—as if any ground could be consecrated that had the bones of rascals in it, or profane where a good man slept!). But how the Earth that you tread may be consecrated to you, and the roofs that shade your breathing sleep, and the deeds that you do with the breath of life yet strengthening hand and heart,—this it is your business to learn, if you know not; and this mine to tell you, if you will learn.

6. Before the close of last year, one of our most earnest St. George's Guildsmen wrote to me saying that the Irish Land League claimed me as one of their supporters; and asking if he should contradict this, or admit it.

To whom I answered, on Christmas Day of 1879, as follows:—

BRANTWOOD, *Christmas, '79.*

“You know I never read papers, so I have never seen a word of the Irish Land League or its purposes; but I assume the purpose to be—that Ireland should belong to Irishmen;² which is not only a most desirable, but, ultimately, a quite inevitable condition of things,—that being the assured intention of the Maker of Ireland, and all other lands.

“But as to the manner of belonging, and limits and rights of holding, there is a good deal more to be found out of the intentions of the Maker of Ireland, than I fancy the Irish League is likely to ascertain, without rueful experience of the consequences of any and all methods contrary to those intentions.

¹ [A Burials Bill had been one of the first measures introduced by the Liberal Government of 1880. The Bill gave to Nonconformists the right to be buried in churchyards and in consecrated grounds in cemeteries. “On no subject have so large a number of signatures ever been collected from the clergy of England as were arrayed in opposition to the Government Burials Bill of 1880” (Davidson's *Life of Archbishop Tait*, vol. ii. p. 378).]

² [For another note on the Irish question, see Vol. XXVI. p. 295 n.]

“And for my own part I should be wholly content to confine the teaching—as I do the effort—of the St. George’s Guild, to the one utterly harmless and utterly wholesome principle, that land, by whomsoever held, is to be made the most of, by human strength, and not defiled,* nor left waste. But since we live in an epoch assuredly of change, and too probably of Revolution; and thoughts which cannot be put aside are in the minds of all men capable of thought, I am obliged also to affirm the one principle which can—and in the end will—close all epochs of Revolution,—that each man shall possess the ground he can use—and no more,—USE, I say, either for food, beauty, exercise, science, or any other sacred purpose. That each man shall *possess*, for his own, no more than such portion, with the further condition that it descends to his son, inalienably—right of primogeniture being in this matter eternally sure. The nonsense talked about division is all temporary; you can’t divide for ever, and when you have got down to a cottage and a square fathom—if you allow division so far—still primogeniture will hold the right of that.

“But though *possession* is, and must be, limited by use (see analytic passages on this head in *Munera Pulveris*¹), Authority is not. And first the Maker of the Land, and then the King of the Land, and then the Overseers of the Land appointed by the King, in their respective orders, must all in their ranks control the evil, and promote the good work of the possessors. Thus far, you

* And if not the land, still less the water. I have kept by me now for some years, a report on the condition of the Calder, drawn up by Mr. James Fowler, of Wakefield, in 1866, and kindly sent to me by the author on my mention of Wakefield in *Fors*.² I preserve it in these pages, as a piece of English History characteristic to the uttermost of our Fortunate Times.³ See Appendix to this number [p. 417].

¹ [*Munera Pulveris*, §§ 14, 35, 36, 114, 115 (Vol. XVII. pp. 154, 166, 167, 239).]

² [See Letters 50, 55, 57, 62.]

³ [The reference is to the passage cited from Froude: see above, pp. 388–389.]

will find already, all is stated in *Fors*;¹ and *further*, the right of every man to possess so much land as he can *live* on—especially observe the meaning of the developed Corn Law Rhyme,

“Find’st thou rest for England’s head
Free alone among the dead?”*

meaning that Bread, Water, and the Roof over his head, must be tax- (*i.e.*, rent-) free to every man.

“But I have never yet gone on in *Fors* to examine the possibly best forms of practical administration. I always felt it would be wasted time, for these *must* settle themselves. In Savoy the cottager has his garden and field, and labours with his family only; in Berne, the farm labourers of a considerable estate live under the master’s roof, and are strictly domestic; in England, farm labourers might probably with best comfort live in detached cottages; in Italy, they might live in a kind of monastic fraternity. All this, circumstance, time, and national character must determine; the one thing St. George affirms is the duty of the master in every case to make the lives of his dependants noble to the best of his power.”

7. Now you must surely feel that the questions I have indicated in this letter could only be answered rightly by the severest investigation of the effect of each mode of human life suggested, as hitherto seen in connection with other national institutions, and hereditary customs and character. Yet every snipping and scribbling blockhead hired by the bookseller to paste newspaper paragraphs into what may sell for a book, has his “opinion”² on these things, and will announce it to you as the new gospel of eternal

* See *Fors*, Letter 74, § 11 (note) [above, p. 40].

¹ [See Letter 71, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 737, 738).]

² [Compare above, pp. 374, 399.]

and universal salvation—without a qualm of doubt—or of shame—in the entire loggerhead of him.

Hear, for instance, this account of the present prosperity, and of its causes, in the country of those Sea Kings who taught you your own first trades of fishing and battle:—

“The Norwegian peasant is a free man on the scanty bit of ground which he has inherited from his fathers; and he has all the virtues of a freeman—an open character, a mind clear of every falsehood, an hospitable heart for the stranger. His religious feelings are deep and sincere, and the Bible is to be found in every hut. He is said to be indolent and phlegmatic; but when necessity urges he sets vigorously to work, and never ceases till his task is done. His courage and his patriotism are abundantly proved by a history of a thousand years.

“Norway owes her present prosperity chiefly to her liberal constitution. The press is completely free, and the power of the king extremely limited. All privileges and hereditary titles are abolished. The Parliament, or the ‘Storthing,’ which assembles every three years, consists of the ‘Odel-thing,’ or Upper House, and of the ‘Logthing,’ or Legislative Assembly. Every new law requires the royal sanction; but if the ‘Storthing’ has voted it in three successive sittings, it is definitely adopted in spite of the royal veto. Public education is admirably cared for. There is an elementary school in every village; and where the population is too thinly scattered, the schoolmaster may truly be said to be abroad, as he wanders from farm to farm, so that the most distant families have the benefit of his instruction. Every town has its public library; and in many districts the peasants annually contribute a dollar towards a collection of books, which, under the care of the priest, is lent out to all subscribers.

“No Norwegian is confirmed who does not know how to read, and no Norwegian is allowed to marry who has not been confirmed. He who attains his twentieth year without having been confirmed, has to fear the House of Correction. Thus ignorance is punished as a crime in Norway, an excellent example for far richer and more powerful nations.”¹

8. I take this account from a book on the Arctic regions, in which I find the facts collected extremely valuable, the statements, as far as I can judge, trustworthy, the opinions and teachings—what you can judge of by this specimen.² Do you think the author wise in attributing the prosperity

¹ [*The Polar World: a Popular Description of Man and Nature in the Arctic and Antarctic Regions of the Globe*, by Dr. G. Hartwig, 1869, ch. ix. pp. 110, 111.]

² [“Half-sandy, half-soppy, political opinions,” Ruskin calls them in *Love’s Meinie* (Vol. XXV. p. 120). For another reference to the book, see the paper, *Usury: a Reply and a Rejoinder*, in a later volume of this edition.]

of Norway chiefly to her kings being crippled, and her newspapers free? or that perhaps her thousand years of courage may have some share in the matter? and her mind clear of every falsehood? and her way of never ceasing in a task till it is done? and her circulating schoolmasters? and her collected libraries? and her preparation for marriage by education? and her House of Correction for the uneducated? and her Bible in every hut? and, finally, her granted piece of his native land under her peasant's foot for his own? Is her strength, think you, in any of these things, or only in the abolition of hereditary titles, the letting loose of her news-mongers, and the binding of her king? *Date* of these modern constitutional measures, you observe, not given! and consequences, perhaps, scarcely yet conclusively ascertainable. If you cannot make up your own minds on one or two of these open questions, suppose you were to try an experiment or two? Your scientific people will tell you—and this, at least, truly—that they cannot find out anything without experiment: you may also in political matters think and talk for ever—resultlessly. Will you never try what comes of Doing a thing for a few years, perseveringly, and keep the result of that, at least, for known?

9. Now I write to you, observe, without knowing, except in the vaguest way, who you *are!*—what trades you belong to, what arts or crafts you practise—or what ranks of workmen you include, and what manner of idlers you exclude. I have no time to make out the different sets into which you fall, or the different interests by which you are guided. But I know perfectly well what sets you *should* fall into, and by what interests you *should* be guided. And you will find your profit in listening while I explain these to you somewhat more clearly than your penny-a-paragraph liberal papers will.

In the first place, what business have you to call yourselves only *Trade* Guilds, as if “trade,” and not production, were your main concern? Are you by profession nothing

more than pedlars and mongers of things, or are you also Makers of things?

It is too true that in our City wards our chapmen have become the only dignitaries—and we have the Merchant-Tailors' Company, but not the plain Tailors'; and the Fishmongers' Company, but not the Fishermen's; and the Vintners' Company, but not the Vinedressers'; and the Ironmongers' Company, but not the Blacksmiths'; while, though, for one apparent exception, the Goldsmiths' Company proclaims itself for masters of a craft, what proportion, think you, does its honour bear compared with that of the Calf-worshipful Guild of the Gold Mongers?

Be it far from me to speak scornfully of trade. My Father—whose Charter of Freedom of London Town I keep in my Brantwood treasury beside missal and cross—sold good wine, and had, over his modest door in Billiter Street, no bush.¹ But he grew his wine, before he sold it; and could answer for it with his head, that no rotten grapes fermented in his vats, and no chemist's salt effervesced in his bottles. Be you also Tradesmen—in your place—and in your right; but be you, primarily, Growers, Makers, Artificers, Inventors, of things good and precious. What talk you of Wages? Whose is the Wealth of the World but yours? Whose is the Virtue? Do you mean to go on for ever, leaving your wealth to be consumed by the idle, and your virtue to be mocked by the vile?

10. The wealth of the world is yours; even your common rant and rabble of economists tell you that—"no wealth without industry." Who robs you of it, then, or beguiles you? Whose fault is it, you clothmakers, that any English child is in rags? Whose fault is it, you shoemakers, that the street harlots mince in high-heeled shoes, while your own babes paddle barefoot in the street slime? Whose fault is it, you bronzed husbandmen, that through all your

¹ [*As You Like It*, Act v. sc. 4 (Epilogue).]

furrowed England, children are dying of famine? Primarily, of course, it is your clergymen's¹ and masters'² fault: but also in this your own, that you never educate any of your children with the earnest object of enabling them to see their way out of this, not by rising above their father's business, but by setting in order what was amiss in it:³ also in this your own, that none of you who do rise above your business, ever seem to keep the memory of what wrong they have known, or suffered; nor, as masters, set a better example than others.

Your own fault, at all events, it will be now, seeing that you have got Parliamentary power in your hands, if you cannot use it better than the moribund Parliamentary body has done hitherto.

11. To which end, I beg you first to take these following truths into your good consideration.

First. Men don't and can't live by exchanging articles, but by producing them. They don't live by trade, but by work. Give up that foolish and vain title of Trades Unions; and take that of Labourers' Unions.

And, whatever divisions chance or special need may have thrown you into at present, remember there are essential and eternal divisions of the Labour of Man, into which you *must* practically fall, whether you like it or not; and these eternal classifications it would be infinitely better if you at once acknowledged in thought, name, and harmonious action. Several of the classes may take finer divisions in their own body, but you will find the massive general structure of working humanity range itself under these following heads, the first eighteen assuredly essential; the three last, making twenty-one altogether, I shall be able,

¹ ["In not delivering the primary command of Christianity by the Mouth of the Baptist. 'The people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise' " (Luke iii. 10, 11).—MS. *note by Author in his copy.*]

² ["In directing you to make useless things."—*Ibid.*]

³ [Compare Ruskin's evidence before the Public Institutions Committee, Vol. XVI. p. 474.]

I think, to prove to you are not superfluous:¹—suffer their association with the rest in the meantime.

1. Shepherds.
2. Fishermen.
3. Ploughmen.
4. Gardeners.
5. Carpenters and Woodmen.
6. Builders and Quarrymen.
7. Shipwrights.
8. Smiths and Miners.*
9. Bakers and Millers.
10. Vintners.
11. Graziers and Butchers.
12. Spinners.
13. Linen and Cotton-workers.
14. Silk-workers.
15. Woollen-workers.
16. Tanners and Furriers.
17. Tailors and Milliners.
18. Shoemakers.
19. Musicians.
20. Painters.
21. Goldsmiths.

Get these eighteen, or twenty-one, as you like to take them, each thoroughly organized, proud of their work, and doing it under masters, if any, of their own rank, chosen for their sagacity and vigour, and the world is yours, and all the pleasures of it, that are true; while all false pleasures in such a life fall transparent, and the hooks are seen through the baits of them. But for the organization of these classes, you see there must be a certain quantity

* See note in Appendix II. [p. 422.]

¹ [Compare Letter 11 (Vol. XXVII. p. 186 *n.*)]

of land available to them, proportioned to their multitude: and without the possession of that, nothing can be done ultimately; though at present the mere organization of your masses under these divisions will clear the air, and the field, for you, to astonishment.

12. And for the possession of the land, mind you, if you try to take it by force, you will have every blackguard and *vaut-rien* in the world claiming his share of it with you,—for by that law of force he has indeed as much right to it as you; but by the law of labour he has not. Therefore you must get your land by the law of labour; working for it, saving for it, and buying it, as the spendthrifts and idlers offer it you: but buying never to let go.

And this, therefore, is practically the first thing you have to bring in by your new Parliaments—a system of land tenure, namely, by which your organized classes of labouring men may possess their land as corporate bodies, and add to it—as the monks once did, and as every single landlord can, now; but I find that my St. George's Guild cannot, except through complications or legal equivocations almost endless, and hitherto indeed paralyzing me in quite unexpectedly mean and miserable ways.

Now I hope all this has been clearly enough said, for once: and it shall be farther enforced and developed as you choose, if you will only tell me by your chosen heads whether you believe it, and are any of you prepared to act on it, and what kinds of doubt or difficulty occur to you about it, and what farther questions you would like me to answer.

13. And that you may have every power of studying the matter (so far as *I* am concerned), *this Fors* you shall have gratis;—and the next, if you enable me to make it farther useful to you. That is to say, your committees of each trade-guild may order parcels of them from my publisher in any quantities they wish, for distribution among their members. To the public its price remains fixed, as that of all my other books. One word only let me say in

conclusion, to explain at once what I mean by saying that the pleasures of the world are all yours.

God has made man to take pleasure in the use of his eyes, wits, and body. And the foolish creature is continually trying to live without looking at anything, without thinking about anything, and without doing anything. And he thus becomes not only a brute, but the unhappiest of brutes. All the lusts and lazinesses he can contrive only make him more wretched; and at this moment, if a man walks watchfully the streets of Paris, whence I am now writing to you,—a city in which is every invention that science, wit, and wealth can hit upon to provoke and to vary the pleasures of the idle,—he will not see one happy or tranquil face, except among the lower and very hard-labouring classes. Every pleasure got otherwise than God meant it—got cheaply, thievingly, and swiftly, when He has ordered that it should be got dearly, honestly, and slowly,—turns into a venomous burden, and, past as a pleasure, remains as a load, increasing day by day its deadly coat of burning mail.¹ The joys of hatred, of battle, of lust, of vain knowledge, of vile luxury, all pass into slow torture: nothing remains to man, nothing is possible to him of true joy, but in the righteous love of his fellows; in the knowledge of the laws and the glory of God, and in the daily use of the faculties of soul and body with which that God has endowed him.

PARIS, 18th September, 1880.

¹ [Compare Letter 21, § 12 (Vol. XXVII. p. 360).]

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

14. "DEAR SIR,—May I take an advantage of this note, and call your attention to a fact of much importance to Englishmen, and it is this? On reference to some Freethought papers—notably, the *National Reformer*—I find a movement on foot amongst the Atheists, vigorous and full of life, for the alteration of the Land Laws in our much-loved country. It is a movement of much moment, and likely to lead to great results. The first great move on the part of Charles Bradlaugh, the premier in the matter, is the calling of a Conference to discuss the whole question.¹ The meeting is to be attended by all the National Secular Society's branches throughout the empire; representatives of nearly every Reform Association in England, Scotland, and Ireland; deputations from banded bodies of workmen, colliers, etc.,—such as the important band of Durham miners—trade unionists; and, in fact, a most weighty representative Conference will be gathered together. I am, for many reasons, grieved and shocked to find the cry for Reform coming with *such a heading* to the front. Where are our statesmen,—*our clergy*? The terrible crying evils of our land system are coming to the front in our politics without the help of the so-called upper classes; nay, with a deadly hatred of any disturbance in that direction, our very clergy are taking up arms against the popular cry.

"Only a week ago I was spending a few days with a farmer near Chester, and learned to my sorrow and dismay that the Dean and Chapter of that city, who own most of the farms, etc., in the district wherein my friend resides, refuse now—and only *now*—to accept other than *yearly* tenants for these farms, have raised all the rents to an exorbitant pitch, and only allow the land to be sown with wheat, oats, or whatever else in seed, etc., on a personal inspection by their agent.² The consequence of all this is, that poverty is prevailing to an alarming extent: the workers getting all the bitter, hard toil; the clergy, one may say, *all* the profits. It is terrible, heart-breaking; I never longed so much for heart-searching, vivid eloquence, so that I might move men with an irresistible tongue to do the Right.

"I wonder how many of these great ones of our England have seen the following lines from Emerson; and yet what a lesson is contained in them!

'God said, I am tired of kings,
I suffer them no more;
Up to my ear the morning brings
The outrage of the poor.

Lo! I uncover the land
Which I hid of old time in the West,
As the sculptor uncovers the statue
When he has wrought his best;

¹ [The Conference was held at the St. James's Hall on February 10, 1880, Mr. Bradlaugh being in the chair, Mr. T. Burt, Mr. Joseph Arch, and Mr. Michael Davitt being among the speakers. Fully reported in the *Times*, February 11, 1880.]

² [For further correspondence on this subject, see Letter 90, § 12 (p. 436).]

I show Columbia, of the rocks
Which dip their foot in the seas,
And soar to the air-borne flocks
Of clouds, and the boreal fleece.

I will divide my goods;
Call in the wretch and slave:
None shall rule but the humble,
And none but toil shall have.'

Boston Hymn.

"I can only pray and hope that some mighty pen as yours, if not yourself, may be moved to show Englishmen the right way before it is too late.

"I have the honour to remain,

"Your obedient servant."

"JOHN RUSKIN, ESQ."

15. "DEAR SIR,—I have seen a letter from you to Mr. G. J. Holyoake, in which you say 'the only calamity which I perceive or dread for an Englishman is his becoming a rascal; and co-operation amongst rascals—if it were possible—would bring a curse. *Every year sees our workmen more eager to do bad work, and rob their customers on the sly.* All political movement among such animals I call essentially fermentation and putrefaction—not co-operation.'¹

"Now, sir, I see, I think, as completely and consequently as positively as you possibly can, the truth of your general statement—that is, that there is a wide-spread *tendency* and *habit* of producing work that has the appearance of being good

1 [The second of two letters written by Ruskin to George Jacob Holyoake in 1879–1880. The former letter—printed in the *Christian Life*, December 20, 1879, in the *Coventry Co-operative Record* of January 1880, and in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. ii. p. 109—was written, some time in August 1879, in acknowledgment of a copy of Mr. Holyoake's *History of Co-operation: its Literature and its Advocates* (2 vols., 1875–1877). The letter was as follows:—

"BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE.

"DEAR MR. HOLYOAKE,—I am not able to write you a pretty letter to-day, being sadly tired, but am very heartily glad to be remembered by you. But it utterly silences me that you should waste your time and energy in writing 'Histories of Co-operation' anywhere as yet. My dear sir, you might as well write the history of the yellow spot in an egg—in two volumes. Co-operation is as yet—in any true sense—as impossible as the crystallisation of Thames mud.

"Ever faithfully yours,

"J. RUSKIN."

The second letter—printed in the *Daily News*, June 19, 1880, and in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. ii. p. 110—was as follows:—

"BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,

"April 12, 1880.

"DEAR MR. HOLYOAKE,—I am very glad that you are safe back in England, and am not a little grateful for your kind reference to me while in America, and for your letter about Sheffield Museum. But let me pray for another interpretation of my former letter than mere Utopianism. The one calamity which I perceive or dread for an Englishman is his

when yet it is a fraud: its reality is not according to the appearance. But, sir, is the part that I have underlined correct? It is said that Lancashire sends to India calico with lime or paste put in it to make it feel stout: is that the workman's fault?

"I myself am a workman in what is called fancy hosiery, and to get a living have to make a great quantity of work—in some instances turning very good wool into rubbish, when yet I know that it is capable of being made into very nice and serviceable clothing; but if I made it into anything of the sort I should be ruining my employer, because he could not sell it at a profit: something at four shillings, that should be fourteen, is what is required—I should like to see it stopped. How is it to be done?"

"If you, sir, were to ask a merchant in these goods why they were not made better, more serviceable, and perfect, he would most certainly tell you that the *Germans* are in our market with enormous quantities of these goods at terribly low prices, and that he has no market for goods of superior quality and higher prices. I produced a great novelty about six years ago; it was a beautiful class of goods, and a vast trade came on in them; and now those goods are entirely run out in consequence of their being made worse, and still worse, till they were turned into rubbish. Competition did that—'fermentation and putrefaction'; but I cannot see that the workman was to blame: he was ordered to do it.

"Yours most respectfully."

"MR. RUSKIN."

(No answer to this is expected.)

Answer was sent, nevertheless; promising a more sufficient one in *Fors*; which may be briefly to the first question, "Is the part underlined correct?"—too sorrowfully, Yes; and to the second question—Is it the workman's fault?—that the workman can judge of that, if he will, for himself. Answer at greater length will be given in next *Fors*.¹

"CRANLEIGH, SURREY, *May 26th*, 1880.

16. "REVERED SIR,—You ask me how I came to be one of your pupils. I have always been fond of books, and in my reading I often saw your name; but one day, when reading a newspaper account of a book-sale, I saw that one of your books fetched £38 for the five volumes: I was struck with the amount, and thought that they must be worth reading; I made up my mind to find out more about them, and if possible to buy some. the next time I went to London I asked a bookseller to show me some of your works: he told me that he did not keep them. I got the same answer from about half-a-dozen more that I tried; but

becoming a rascal, and co-operation among rascals—if it were possible—would bring a curse. Every year sees our workmen more eager to do bad work and rob their customers on the sly. All political movement among such animals I call essentially fermentation and putrefaction—not co-operation.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"J. RUSKIN."

The "kind reference to Mr. Ruskin while in America" alludes to a public speech made by Mr. Holyoake during his stay in that country. The "letter about Sheffield Museum," was one in high praise of it, written by Mr. Holyoake to the editor of the *Sheffield Independent*, in which paper it was printed (March 8, 1880). Mr. Swan, the Curator of the Museum, had started a penny subscription among workmen, and Mr. Holyoake, who was addressing the co-operators at Sheffield at the time, collected various sums for the fund: see above, p. 399 *n.*]

¹ [This, however, was not done.]

this only made me more determined to get them, and at last I found a bookseller who agreed to get me *Fors*.

"When I got it, I saw that I could get them from Mr. Allen. I have done so; and have now most of your works.

"I read *Fors* with extreme interest, but it was a tough job for me, on account of the number of words in it that I had never met with before; and as I never had any schooling worth mentioning, I was obliged to look at my dictionaries pretty often: I think I have found out now the meanings of all the *English* words in it.

"I got more good and real knowledge from *Eors* than from all the books put together that I had ever read.

"I am now trying to carry out your principles in my business, which is that of a grocer, draper, and clothier; in fact, my shop is supposed by the Cranleigh people to contain almost everything that folks require.

"I have always conducted my business honestly: it is not so difficult to do this in a village as it is in larger places. As far as I can see, *the larger the town the worse it is for the honest tradesman*. [Italics mine.—J. R.]

"The principal difference I make now in my business, since I read *Fors*, is to recommend hand-made goods instead of machine-made. I am sorry to say that most of my customers will have the latter. I don't know what I can do further, as I am not the maker of the goods I sell, but only the distributor.

"If I understand your teaching, I ought to keep hand-made goods *only*,* and those of the best quality obtainable. If I did this, I certainly should lose nearly all my trade; and as I have a family to support, I cannot do so. No; I shall stick to it, and sell as good articles as I can for the price paid, and tell my customers, as I always have done, that the best goods are the cheapest.

"I know you are right about the sin of usury. I have but little time to-day, but I will write to you again some day about this.

"I met with a word (*Adscititious*) in 'Carlyle,' I cannot find in any dictionaries that I can get at.

"I sent the minerals off yesterday packed in a box.† I am half-afraid now that you will not think them good enough for the Museum.

"Your grateful pupil,

"STEPHEN ROWLAND.

"JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D."

* Answered—By no means, but to recommend them at all opportunities.

† A collection of English minerals and fossils presented by Mr. Rowland to St. George's Museum, out of which I have chosen a series from the Clifton limestones for permanent arrangement.¹

¹ [These specimens may be seen in the Museum.]

APPENDIX I

MR. FOWLER'S REPORT ON THE CONDITION OF THE CALDER¹

Given in evidence before the Royal Commissioners at Wakefield, and published in their Report, page 17 (with some additions²)

17. It would be difficult to find a more striking instance than that afforded by the Calder, of the extent to which our rivers have been defiled by sewage and refuse from manufactories. Its green banks and interesting scenery³ made it formerly a pleasant resort for the artizan and operative in hours of leisure, while its clear and sparkling waters invited the healthful recreations of boating, bathing, and fishing. "In 1826 the water was clear, and the bottom was free from mud; it was a gravelly, sandy bottom, and I have frequently myself sent stones into it for boys to dive down after; the water at a depth of seven or eight feet was sufficiently clear to distinguish stones at the bottom; some of the streams running in, for instance the Alverthorpe Beck, at that time were full of fish; there was a great deal of fish in the river. I have frequently seen kingfishers there, which shows the general clearness of the water."—*Extract from Mr. Milner's evidence*, p. 63. Pike of all sizes, trout up to three pounds in weight, salmon trout, dace, and bream were plentiful. Even so lately as within the last twenty years, any one with a fly might in an afternoon catch a basketful of chub, each weighing at least two or three pounds: and during freshes, with a cast net, very frequently ninety or a hundred, sometimes even a hundred and fifty pounds, of roach, chub, gudgeon, etc., were caught in an evening. On one occasion, where the water was let off from a quite short cutting belonging to the Calder and Hebble Navigation Company, at least four hundred and fifty pounds of eels were taken; in fact, whenever any one wanted fish, a sackful might readily be obtained. Nothing of this kind has been known, however, since the springing up of manufactories in the Vale of the Calder. Soon after the Thornes Soap Works were begun near Wakefield, many stones of fish, which had come up the river to spawn, were to be seen floating dead upon the surface. During that year all fish forsook this part of the stream as regular inhabitants. For some time after, however, during freshes, a fish was occasionally to be seen as a curiosity; and so lately as 1858, an experienced fisherman succeeded, on one of several persevering trials, in capturing two small chub.

At present, the condition of the river is most disgusting. Defiled almost from its source, it reaches us with the accumulated refuse of Todmorden, Hebden Bridge,

¹ [See above, p. 404 *n.*]

² [Mr. James Fowler, one of the surgeons to the Wakefield Hospital and Dispensary. The report is on pp. 17, 18 of the *Third Report of the Commissioners appointed to Inquire into the Best Means of Preventing the Pollution of Rivers (Rivers Aire and Calder, etc.)*, vol. ii. Minutes of Evidence, 1867.]

³ [See Letter 57 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 411).]

Sowerby Bridge, Halifax, Elland, Brighouse, Cooper Bridge, Holmfirth, Huddersfield, Mirfield, Dewsbury, Earlsheaton, Thornhill, and Horbury. At the suspension bridge, about a mile and a half above Wakefield, it runs slowly, and in many places is almost stagnant. It has a bluish-black, dirty-slate colour; and a faint, nauseous smell, which leaves an extremely unpleasant impression for long after it has been once thoroughly perceived,—considerably worse than that made by the Thames after a stage on a penny boat. The banks and every twig and weed in reach are coated with soft, black slime or mud, which is studded on the edges of the stream with vivid patches of annelides. Above are overhanging willows; and where the branches of these touch the water, especially in any quiet pool, large sheets of thin bluish or yellowish green scum collect, undisturbed save by the rising to the surface of bubbles of fœtid gas. Between this point and Wakefield, the refuse of extensive soap works and worsted mills enters, causing discoloration for several hundred yards. I have, in fact, traced large quantities of soap scum beyond Portobello, a distance of about half a mile. Nearer the town, quantities of refuse from large dye works are continually being discharged, to say nothing of the periodical emptying of spent liquor and vat sediments. *It is noteworthy that whereas formerly goods were brought to Wakefield to be dyed on account of the superiority of the water for the purpose, the trade has now left Wakefield to a considerable extent, and the Wakefield manufacturers have themselves to send away their finer goods from home to be dyed.* On the opposite side are two full streams, one of sewage, the other apparently from some cotton mills; and here it may be stated that the exact degree to which influxes of this kind injure in different cases is extremely difficult to estimate; some manufacturers using ammonia, while others adhere to the old-fashioned pigs' dung and putrid urine. The banks on each side are here studded with granaries and malting houses, from the latter of which is received that most pernicious contamination, the steep-liquor of malt. There is also the refuse of at least one brewhouse and piggery, and of a second soap manufactory drained into the river before it reaches the outlet of Ings Beck, at the drain immediately above Wakefield Bridge. In this situation, on any warm day in summer, torrents of gas may be seen rising to the surface, and every now and then large masses of mud, which float for awhile and then, after the gas they contain has escaped and polluted the atmosphere, break up and are re-deposited, or are at once carried down the river, stinking and putrefying in their course. The Calder and Hebble Navigation Company are periodically put to great inconvenience and expense in removing collections of this kind, the smell of which is often most offensive, and has more than once caused serious illness to the workmen employed. About two years ago the mud had accumulated to a depth of five feet, and, the water having been drained off, at least two thousand tons were removed, but no fish or living being of any kind was discovered. At the bridge there has been a water-mill for at least seven hundred years, and any one interested in the smell of partially oxidized sewage should not omit to stand over the spray which ascends from the wheel. Masses of solid fæces may be seen at the grating through which the water is strained. Looking from the bridge westward, except in wet weather, is a large, open, shallow, almost stagnant pond of the most offensive character, with tracks of dark-coloured mud constantly exposed. The sewer of the town and the West Riding Asylum, with the refuse of the worsted, woollen, and cloth mills, malt-houses, breweries, brew-houses, slaughter-houses, dye-works, fibre mills, soap mills, and grease works enters by the drain just below; its surface covered with forth of every conceivable colour and degree of filthiness, overhung by willows, in whose branches are entangled and exposed to view the most disgusting objects. The scum may readily be traced down the river for a considerable distance. The last defilement of moment is that from some extensive grease works, in which oil of vitriol is largely employed.

The Ings Beck, to which I have already alluded, merits a few particular remarks, being the most important tributary the Calder receives in this district. On the day I last examined its outlet, the smell arising was most offensive. The general resemblance of the stream was rather to thick soup than water, and it had a dirty, greasy, yellowish, indigo-slate colour, where not coated by froth, scum, or floating

filth. Its bed is silted to a considerable extent by black, foetid mud, and its outlet partially obstructed by two large ash heaps. It may be observed, however, that this is perhaps the only place in the neighbourhood at present where refuse ashes have been tilted, and that, though the height of the water in the river alters considerably according to the state of the weather, the raising of the bed is due for the most part to matters washed down from a higher source. Such is the case with the miscellaneous sediment dredged by the Calder and Hebble Navigation Company near the Wakefield dam, and with the shoal at Lupset pond above Wakefield; an accumulation of ashes and dye-woods having risen in the latter situation during the last five or six years. Walking up the bank of the beck, one may form a fair idea of the kind of contamination received. Besides dead dogs, tin kettles, broken pots, old pans, boots, hats, etc., we find house-sinks and surface drains, public-house refuse and factors' privies flowing in unscrupulously. Myriads of annelides in the mud upon the banks subsist on the impurities; that in the neighbourhood of a warm sewer being, in fact, for some distance entirely concealed by sheets of moving pink. A railway waggon-maker's establishment was a little while ago an artificial manure factory, and contributed greatly to the general pollution.

At the bottom of Thornhill Street are two strong foul streams, one of sewage, the other, on the day I visited it, discharging deep indigo-coloured stuff. Immediately above this the beck, though receiving muddy refuse from some cement works, was purple coloured, and where the branches of overhanging shrubs dipped beneath its surface, a polychrome froth and scum collected. A few hundred yards higher, having passed the place of entrance of the purple dye, the stream regained nearly its original dirty indigo appearance. Near the Low Hill bridge was a fall of hot mauve refuse, with several yards of rainbow-coloured scum. Where the water could be seen, in one light it would have a bluish tint, in another a dirty yellowish; and the mud was deep and flocculent. Nearer Chald Lane there was an extremely filthy ditch, covered with scum, and loaded with the privy and house refuse of a large number of cottages and low lodging-houses; and a little higher two large streams of thick purple dye refuse. Above the dam in this situation enter the waste of a dye-works and shoddy mill, with the filthy privy and surface drains of Salt Pie Alley. The water here is the colour of the contents of a sloppail, is almost stagnant, coated in patches of several yards with scum, and is in other respects very offensive. At Brooksbank a kind of long oblong pond is formed, two sides of which are of thick mud, one exposing the privy refuse and excrements in three drains from the neighbouring cottages and lodging-houses; and about here does or did recently enter the flushings of the cesspools from the prison with its sixteen hundred inmates, and the refuse of the chemicals used in the annual manufacture, dyeing, and bleaching of about seven hundred and fifty tons of matting. Balne Beck also enters at this point. Going upwards we find the Westgate Beck receiving the fouled water and other refuse of two large worsted mills, of surface drains, of piggeries, and of privies; then muddy water, apparently from some brick-yards, and hot waste from a large woollen mill. Immediately above healthy green confervæ began to show themselves; long grass floats on the surface; shrubs grow upon the banks; and if a brown scum collects where the branches touch the surface, it has altogether a less disgusting character. Fairly out in the country the water is bright and clear, and boys bathe in it in summer when deep enough.

Balne Beck is on the whole as yet tolerably clean, the sides only being lined with mud patched with red, and the stones at the bottom coated with long trails of green confervæ. The principal impurities are from a soap-works, a coal-mine, a skin-preparing shed, and a brick-field. The Yorkshire Fibre Company did a short time since drain a large quantity of poisonous matter into the beck, but is at present restrained by an injunction.

The Water Company's works are situated about two and a half miles below Wakefield Bridge, and consequently receive the water in an extremely unfavourable condition. It has received the unchecked and accumulating filth and pollution

of 400,000 inhabitants (number now much greater), and their manufactures, to which Wakefield itself, with its 20,000 inhabitants, has contributed. The large live-stock market also, with its average sale of 800 beasts and 6000 sheep, has added a grave pollution. As if to show how completely we acquiesce in the abandoned corruption of the stream, the putrefying carcasses of animals—not only of dogs and cats, but of pigs, sheep, and calves—are allowed to drift along with their surfeiting smell, until stopped of themselves at Stanley Ferry.

On stirring up the mud from the bottom, a Winchester quart of gas was readily collected by means of an inverted funnel, and was found, on examination, to consist chiefly of carbonic acid, light carburetted hydrogen, sulphuretted hydrogen, and free nitrogen.

It is not easy to estimate accurately the effect of nuisances of this kind on the public health. Two years and a half ago, whilst the waterworks were undergoing improvement, and for some months the supply to the town was merely pumped up from the river into the mains without filtration, the actual mortality did not appear directly to increase. This, however, may be explained by the fact that a peculiar atmospheric condition is necessary in order to develop fully the death-bearing properties of impure water; and it may be added that, as it was, and as I had occasion to represent to the Local Board at that time, there was a greater amount of diarrhœa, continued fever, erysipelas, diffuse abscess, and of cutaneous and subcutaneous cellular inflammation; while the inflammation generally was peculiarly liable to take on the erysipelatous form and become unmanageable, and the convalescence from various diseases to be unwontedly interrupted and prolonged. Possibly this, and even an increased death-rate, had it occurred, might have been explained in part by other causes; but I cannot resist the conviction that bad water as a beverage, and the taint which it communicates to the atmosphere, bear a most important part both in causing actual disease and in weakening the power of the constitution to bear up against disease, and so shorten life in that way. Greatly improved houses have been built for the artizan class during the last few years; greater attention has been paid to the ventilation of mills and workshops; the agitation for a people's park indicates how wide-awake the population is to the benefit of fresh air; wages have increased; the character of the food consumed is more closely inspected; the drainage is more efficient; many open sewers have been closed; bad wells have been stopped; but both the death-rate and the amount of disease have increased; the former reaching so high as 27.4 per thousand in the present year. The whole of the excess in this mortality is due to preventable disease, which includes diarrhœa, cholera, and typhoid, the poison of which may unquestionably and has frequently been known to be conveyed through water. An indication of the extent to which constitutional vigour has at the same time diminished, is found in the fact that less than twenty years ago to blister, bleed, and purge was the routine of the physicians' practice at the dispensary, while cod-liver oil and quinine were unknown. This mode of treatment, if it did not cure, certainly did not kill; for the patients did well under it, having strength to bear up against and conquer both disease and treatment. Now, I will venture to say, that ninety-nine per cent. of our patients would sink under the depletory measures of bygone days; and during last year, in a practice of only 2700 patients, it was found necessary to prescribe no less than twenty-three gallons of cod-liver oil, and sixty-four ounces of quinine, to say nothing of nourishment and stimulants. An atmosphere saturated with smoke, and shutting out instead of conveying the light of the sun, sedentary habits, dense population, and unhealthy pursuits, have doubtless shared in bringing about this general lowness of constitution; but the healthy textural drainage and repair of the body, and consequently the perfect activity of its functions, can scarcely take place if, instead of pure water, it be supplied with a compound with which it is not organized to operate.

I have nothing to add respecting the moral contamination of material filthiness, since that is out of my province. But surely drunkenness and vice, and other forms of intellectual insensibility, are fostered, if not originated, by mental despair and disappointment; the things which should, in the ordinary course of nature,

be pleasing and refreshing to the mind, having ceased to be so. At least we are taught that in the heavenly Jerusalem the river which proceeds from the throne of God is clear as crystal, giving birth on either side to the tree of life for the healing of the nations; whereas

“Upon the banks a scurf,
From the foul stream condensed, encrusting hangs,
That holds sharp combat with the sight and smell,”

freighted by devils, in the dingy regions of the damned.

(Signed)

JAMES FOWLER.

WAKEFIELD, *15th October*, 1866.

(The Commissioners at this time said the river had received the utmost amount of contamination of which a river was capable,—but it is much worse now.)

APPENDIX II

18. THE business of mining is put in this subordinate class [p. 410], because there is already more metal of all sorts than we want in the world, if it be used prudently; and the effect of this surplus is even now to make mining, on the whole, always a loss. I did not know that this law extended even to recent gold-workings. The following extract from the *Athenæum* of April 3 of this year is, I suppose, trustworthy:—

A History of the Precious Metals from the Earliest Times to the Present.
By Alexander Del Mar, M. E. (Bell and Sons.)

It is not often that a volume which deals with such a subject as that which Mr. Del Mar has written on can be considered interesting by the general reader. Yet in the present instance this really might be the case if the reader were to occupy himself with those chapters in this work which deal with mining for the precious metals in America. A residence of some years in California has given Mr. Del Mar a practical acquaintance with the manner in which mining is conducted, and the history of that industry there from the commencement. This knowledge also has enabled him to describe with the vividness derived from actual knowledge the operations of the Spaniards in Central America while searching for gold from the fifteenth century onwards. The picture Mr. Del Mar draws of the results of the *auri sacra fames* which consumed both earlier and later seekers after wealth is indeed terrible. Empires were overthrown, and their industrious and docile populations were swept away in numbers almost beyond belief, or ground down by every suffering which avarice, cruelty, and sensuality could inflict. The ultimate utter exhaustion both of conquerors and conquered marks the period reaching far into the eighteenth century, when forced labour was employed. The statement that “the Indies had become ‘a sort of money’ ” (p. 63), expresses perhaps as forcibly as possible what the fate of the native inhabitants of Southern America was under the rule of the Spaniard. And if, during the comparatively short period that has elapsed since the famous discovery of gold at Mill Race in California, the reckless consumption of life has not been associated with the utter brutality which marked the conduct of the followers of Cortes and Pizarro, the economic results are scarcely more satisfactory. Mr. Del Mar calculates that the outlay on mining far outweighs the proceeds; he estimates that the £90,000,000 of gold produced in California from 1848 to 1856 inclusive “cost in labour alone some £450,000,000, or five times its mint value” (p. 263.) Nor is this estimate of the net product even of the “Comstock Lode” more favourable to the owners (p. 266). Here also the total cost is placed at five times the return. Beyond this the mining country is devastated. Destruction of timber, consequent injury to climate, ruin to fertile land by hydraulic mining, are but a part of the injury. The scale on which operations are carried on may be judged from the fact that the aggregate length of the “mining ditches,” or aqueducts, employed in bringing water to the mines, is put down as 6585 miles in California in 1879 (p. 290). These works are maintained at much cost. The reader will ask, “How can such an industry continue? The country is desolated, the majority of those employed lose. Why is all this labour thus misapplied?” The answer is, The spirit of gambling and the chance of a lucky hit lure the venturers on. The multitude forget the misfortunes of the many, while they hope to be numbered among the fortunate few.

“YEA, THE WORK OF OUR HANDS, ESTABLISH THOU IT”

LETTER 90

LOST JEWELS ¹

1. I AM putting my house in order; and would fain put my past work in order too, if I could. Some guidance, at least, may be given to the readers of *Fors*—or to its partial readers—in their choice of this or that number. To this end I have now given each monthly part its own name, indicative of its special subject.² The connection of all these subjects, and of the book itself with my other books, may perhaps begin to show itself in this letter.

The first principle of my political economy will be found again and again reiterated in all the said books,³—that the material wealth of any country is the portion of its possessions which feeds and educates good men and women in it; the connected principle of national policy being that the strength and power of a country depends absolutely on the quantity of good men and women in the territory of it, and not at all on the extent of the territory—still less on the number of vile or stupid inhabitants.⁴ A good crew in a good ship, however small, is a power; but a bad crew in the biggest ship—none,—and the best crew

¹ [For the title, see § 6.]

² [See the Bibliographical Note in Vol. XXVII. p. xci.]

³ [See, for instance, *Unto this Last*, § 77 (Vol. XVII. pp. 104–105).]

⁴ [See, for instance, *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 114 (Vol. XVIII. p. 479), and *Queen of the Air*, § 121 (Vol. XIX. p. 401). The illustration of a ship’s crew was a favourite one with Ruskin in his economic writings: compare, for instance, Vol. XVII. p. 372; Vol. XXVIII. p. 127; and above, p. 20.]

in a ship cut in half by a collision in a hurry, not much the better for their numbers.

Following out these two principles, I have farther, and always, taught that, briefly, the wealth of a country *is in* its good men and women, and in nothing else: that the riches of England are good Englishmen; of Scotland, good Scotchmen; of Ireland, good Irishmen. This is first, and more or less eloquently, stated in the close of the chapter called the Veins of Wealth, of *Unto this Last*: and is scientifically, and in sifted terms, explained and enforced in *Munera Pulveris*. I have a word or two yet to add to what I have written, which I will try to keep very plain and unfigurative.

2. It is taught, with all the faculty I am possessed of, in *Sesame and Lilies*,¹ that in a state of society in which men and women are as good as they can be (under mortal limitation), the women will be the guiding and purifying power. In savage and embryo countries, they are openly oppressed, as animals of burden; in corrupted and fallen countries, more secretly and terribly. I am not careful concerning the oppression which they are able to announce themselves, forming anti-feminine-slavery colleges and institutes, etc.; but of the oppression which they cannot resist, ending in their destruction, I am careful exceedingly.

The merely calculable phenomena of economy are indeed supposed at present to indicate a glut of them; but our economists do not appear ever to ask themselves of what *quality* the glut is, or, at all events, in what quality it would be wisest to restrict the supply, and in what quality, educated according to the laws of God, the supply *is* at present restricted.

I think the experience of most thoughtful persons will confirm me in saying that extremely good girls (good children, broadly, but especially girls), usually die young. The pathos of their deaths is constantly used in poetry

¹ [See Lecture II., "Of Queens' Gardens" (Vol. XVIII).]

and novels; but the power of the fiction rests, I suppose, on the fact that most persons of affectionate temper have lost their own May Queens or little Nells¹ in their time. For my own part of grief, I have known a little Nell die, and a May Queen die, and a queen of May, and of December also, die;—all of them, in economists' language, "as good as gold," and in Christian language, "only a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and honour."² And I could count the like among my best-loved friends, with a rosary of tears.

3. It seems, therefore, that God takes care, under present circumstances, to prevent, or at least to check, the glut of that kind of girls. *Seems*, I say, and say with caution—for perhaps it is not entirely in His good pleasure that these things are so. But, they being so, the question becomes therefore yet more imperative—how far a country paying this enforced tax of its good girls annually to heaven is wise in taking little account of the number it has left? For observe that, just beneath these girls of heaven's own, come another kind, who are just earthly enough to be allowed to stay with us; but who get put out of the way into convents, or made mere sick-nurses of, or take to mending the irremediable,—(I've never got over the loss to me, for St. George's work, of one of the sort). Still, the nuns are always happy themselves; and the nurses do a quantity of good that may be thought of as infinite in its own way; and there's a chance of their being forced to marry a King of the Lombards and becoming Queen Theodolindas³ and the like: pass these, and we come to a kind of girl, just as good, but with less strong

¹ [On the death of little Nell, in the *Old Curiosity Shop*, see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 11 *n.*]

² [Psalms viii. 5; Hebrews ii. 7, 9.]

³ [Theodolinda, a Bavarian princess, whose adventures ended in a marriage with Autharis, King of the Lombards, at Verona. "At the end of one year it was dissolved by the death of Autharis (A.D. 590), but the virtues of Theodolinda had endeared her to the nation, and she was permitted to bestow, with her hand, the sceptre of the Italian kingdom" (Gibbon, ch. xlv.). See, for another reference to her, Vol. XX. p. 363.]

will*—who is more or less spoilable and mis-manageable: and these are almost sure to come to grief, by the faults of others, or merely by the general fashions and chances of the world. In romance, for instance, Juliet—Lucy Ashton—Amy Robsart.¹ In my own experience, I knew one of these killed merely by a little piece of foolish pride—the exactly opposite fault to Juliet’s.† She was the niece of a most trusted friend of my father’s, also a much trusted friend of mine in the earliest Herne Hill days of my Cock Robin-hood;² when I used to transmute his name, Mr. Dowie, into “Mr. Good-do,” not being otherwise clear about its pronunciation. His niece was an old sea-captain’s only daughter, motherless, and may have been about twenty years old when I was twelve. She was certainly the most beautiful girl of the pure English-Greek ‡ type I ever saw, or ever am likely to see of any type whatever. I’ve only since seen one who could match her, but she was Norman-English. My mother was her only confidante in her love affairs: consisting mostly in gentle refusals—not because she despised people, or was difficult to please, but wanted simply to stay with her father; and did so serenely, modestly, and with avoidance of all pain she could spare her lovers, dismissing quickly and firmly, never tempting or playing with them.

* Or, it may be, stronger animal passion,—a greater inferiority.

† Juliet, being a girl of a noble Veronese house, had no business to fall in love at first sight with anybody. It is her humility that is the death of her; and Imogen would have died in the same way, but for her helpful brothers.³ Of Desdemona, see *Fors* for November 1877.⁴

‡ By the English-Greek type, I mean the features of the statue of Psyche at Naples, with finely-pencilled dark brows, rather dark hair, and bright pure colour. I never forget beautiful faces, nor confuse their orders of dignity, so that I am quite sure of the statement in the text.

¹ [On the death of Juliet, see *Sesame and Lilies*, § 57 (Vol. XVIII. p. 113); on the tragic note in the *Bride of Lammermoor* and *Kenilworth*, see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 26.]

² [Compare Letter 54 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 345), where Ruskin speaks of his “Cock-Robinson-Crusoe sort of life.”]

³ [For other references to the character of Imogen, in *Cymbeline*, see Vol. XVIII. p. 113, and *Pleasures of England*, § 35.]

⁴ [Letter 83, § 9 (above, p. 266).]

At last, when she was some five or six and twenty, came one whom she had no mind to dismiss; and suddenly finding herself caught, she drew up like a hart at bay. The youth, unluckily for him, dared not push his advantage, lest he should be sent away like the rest; and would not speak,—partly could not, loving her better than the rest, and struck dumb, as an honest and modest English lover is apt to be, when he was near her; so that she fancied he did not care for her. At last, she came to my mother to ask what she should do. My mother said, “Go away for a while,—if he cares for you, he will follow you; if not, there’s no harm done.”

But she dared not put it to the touch,¹ thus, but lingered on, where she could sometimes see him,—and yet, in her girl’s pride, lest he should find out she liked him, treated him worse than she had anybody ever before. Of course this piece of wisdom soon brought matters to an end. The youth gave up all hope, went away, and, in a month or two after, died of the then current plague, cholera: upon which his sister—I do not know whether in wrath or folly—told his mistress the whole matter, and showed her what she had done. The poor girl went on quietly taking care of her father, till his death, which soon followed; then, with some kindly woman-companion, went to travel.

Some five or six years afterwards, my father and mother and I were going up to Chamouni, by the old char-road under the Cascade de Chêde.² There used to be an idiot beggar-girl, who always walked up beside the chars, not ugly or cretinous, but inarticulate and wild-eyed, moaning a little at intervals. She came to be, in time, year after year, a part of the scene, which one would even have been sorry to have lost. As we drew near the top of the long hill, and this girl had just ceased following, a lady got out of a char at some little distance behind, and ran up to ours, holding out her hands.

¹ [See the song “I’ll never love thee more” of James Graham, Marquis of Montrose.]

² [For this old road, see Vol. VII. p. 107 *n.*, and compare Vol. III. p. 540 *n.*]

We none of us knew her. There was something in the eyes like the wild look of the other's; the face was wrinkled, and a little hard in expression—Alpine, now, in its beauty. “Don't you know Sybilla?” said she. My mother made her as happy as she could for a week at Chamouni,¹—I am not sure if they ever met again: the girl wandered about wistfully a year or two longer, then died of rapid decline.

4. I have told this story in order to draw two pieces of general moral from it, which may perhaps be more useful than if they were gathered from fable.

First, a girl's proper confidant is her father. If there is any break whatever in her trust in him, from her infancy to her marriage, there is wrong somewhere,—often on his part, but most likely it is on hers; by getting into the habit of talking with her girl-friends about what they have no business with, and her father much. What she is not inclined to tell her father, should be told to no one; and, in nine cases out of ten, not thought of by herself.

And I believe that few fathers, however wrong-headed or hard-hearted, would fail of answering the habitual and patient confidence of their child with true care for her. On the other hand, no father *deserves*, nor can he entirely and beautifully win, his daughter's confidence, unless he loves her better than he does himself, which is not always the case. But again here, the fault may not be all on papa's side.

In the instance before us, the relations between the motherless daughter and her old sea-captain father were entirely beautiful, but not rational enough. *He* ought to have known, and taught his pretty Sybilla, that she had other duties in the world than those immediately near his own arm-chair; and she, if resolved not to marry while he needed her, should have taken more care of her own heart, and followed my mother's wise counsel at once.

5. In the second place, when a youth is fully in love with a girl, and feels that he is wise in loving her, he

¹ [For a reference to this meeting at Chamouni (in 1849), see *Præterita*, ii. § 223; and for another reference to Miss Dowie's death, *ibid.*, i. § 260.]

should at once tell her so plainly, and take his chance bravely, with other suitors. No lover should have the insolence to think of being accepted at once, nor should any girl have the cruelty to refuse at once; without severe reasons. If she simply doesn't like him, she may send him away for seven years or so—he vowing to live on cresses, and wear sackcloth meanwhile, or the like penance: if she likes him a little, or thinks she might come to like him in time, she may let him stay near her, putting him always on sharp trial to see what stuff he is made of, and requiring, figuratively, as many lion-skins or giants' heads as she thinks herself worth. The whole meaning and power of true courtship is Probation; and it oughtn't to be shorter than three years at least,—seven is, to my own mind, the orthodox time. And these relations between the young people should be openly and simply known, not to their friends only, but to everybody who has the least interest in them: and a girl worth anything ought to have always half-a-dozen or so of suitors under vow for her.

There are no words strong enough to express the general danger and degradation of the manners of mob-courtship, as distinct from these, which have become the fashion,—almost the law,—in modern times: when in a miserable confusion of candlelight, moonlight, and limelight—and anything but daylight,—in indecently attractive and insanely expensive dresses, in snatched moments, in hidden corners, in accidental impulses and dismal ignorances, young people smirk and ogle and whisper and whimper and sneak and stumble and flutter and fumble and blunder into what they call Love;—expect to get whatever they like the moment they fancy it, and are continually in the danger of losing all the honour of life for a folly, and all the joy of it by an accident.

6. Passing down now from the class of good girls who have the power, if they had the wisdom, to regulate their lives instead of losing them, to the less fortunate classes, equally good—(often, weighing their adversity in true balance,

it might be conjectured, better)—who have little power of ruling, and every provocation to misruling their fates: who have, from their births, much against them, few to help, and, virtually, none to guide,—how are we to count the annual loss of its girl-wealth to the British nation in these? Loss, and probably worse; for if there be fire and genius in these neglected ones, and they chance to have beauty also, they are apt to become to us long-running, heavy burdening, incalculable compound interest of perdition. God save them, and all of us, at last!

But, merely taking the pocket-book red-lined balance of the matter, what, in mere cash and curricula,¹ do these bright reverses of their best human treasures cost the economical British race, or the cheerful French? That account you would do well to cast, looking down from its Highgate² upon your own mother—(of especially these sort of children?) city; or, in Paris, from the hill named, from the crowd of its Christian martyrs, Mont Martre, upon the island in Seine named “of our Lady”—the Ile Notre Dame; or, from top of Ingleborough,³ on all the south and east of Lancashire and Yorkshire, black with the fume of their fever-fretted cities, rolling itself along the dales, mixed with the torrent mists. Do this piece of statistic and arithmetic *there*, taking due note that each of these great and little Babylons, if even on the creditor side you may set it down for so much (dubitable) value of produce in dynamite and bayonet, in vitriol, brass, and iron,—yet on the debtor side has to account for annual deficit *indubitable!*—the casting away of things precious, the profanation of things pure, the pain of things capable of happiness—to what sum?

7. I have told you a true story of the sorrow and death of a maid whom all who knew her delighted in. I want

¹ [Ruskin here seems to use the word “curricula” (*curriculum*, course) in the sense of currency.]

² [Ruskin had doubtless here in mind Carlyle’s description of Coleridge “on the brow of Highgate Hill, looking down on London and its smoke-tumult” (*Life of John Sterling*, part i. ch. viii.).]

³ [See the title of the first Letter in *Fors*.]

you to read another of the sorrow and vanishing of one whom few, except her father, delighted in; and none, in any real sense, cared for. A younger girl this, of high powers—and higher worth, as it seems to me. The story is told in absolute and simple truth by Miss Laffan, in her little grey and red book,¹—*Baubie Clarke*. (Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh, 1880). “It all happened in Edinburgh,” Miss Laffan says in a private letter to me, “exactly as I relate: I went into every place in which this child was, in order to describe them and her, and I took great pains to give the dialect exactly. I remember how disappointed you were to learn that Flitters’ death was not true;—this story is quite true, from first to last.” I must leave my darling Baubie for a moment, to explain the above sentence with a word or two about my still better beloved Flitters, in *Tatters, Flitters, and the Councillor*. The study of those three children, given by Miss Laffan, is, in the deepest sense, more true, as well as more pathetic, than that of Baubie Clarke,—for Miss Laffan knows and sees the children of her own country thoroughly,* but she has no clear perceptions of the Scotch. Also, the main facts concerning Tatters and Flitters and their legal adviser are all true—bitterly and brightly true: but the beautiful and heroic death was—I could find it in my heart to say, unhappily,—*not* the young girl’s. Flitters, when last I heard of her, was still living her life of song; such song as was possible to her. The death, so faithfully and beautifully told, was actually that of an old man, an outcast, like herself. I have no doubt Flitters could, and would, have died so, had

* It is curious, by the way, how totally Miss Edgeworth failed in drawing Irish *children*, though she could do English ones perfectly—and how far finer “Simple Susan” is than “The Orphans”²—while her Irish men and women are perfect, and she is, in fact, the only classical authority in the matter of Irish character.

¹ [A little book of 49 pp. issued in grey paper boards with red border. Ruskin refers to it again in a note to “The Story of Paolina” in *Christ’s Folk in the Apennine* (Vol. XXXII.).]

² [These are tales in Miss Edgeworth’s *Parents’ Assistant*.]

it become her duty, and the entire harmony of the story is perfect; but it is not so sound, for my purpose here, as the pure and straightforward truth of Baubie Clarke.

8. I must give the rude abstract of it at once: Miss Laffan's detailed picture will not, I believe, be afterwards of less interest.

Baubie, just thirteen, lived with her father and mother, in lodgings, such as the piety of Edinburgh provides for her poor.¹ The mother was a hopeless drunkard, her father the same—on Saturday nights; during the week carrying advertisement-boards for what stipend that kind of service obtains. Baubie, a vagrant street-singer, is the chief support and guardian both of father and mother. She is taken captive one day, at a street corner, by a passing benevolent lady (I can't find out, and Miss Laffan is to be reprehended for this omission, if Baubie was pretty!—in her wild way, I gather—yes); carried off to an institution of sempstresses, where she is cross-examined, with wonder and some pity; but found to be an independent British subject, whose liberties, at that moment, cannot be infringed. But a day or two afterwards, her father coming to grief, somehow, and getting sent to prison for two months, the magistrate very properly takes upon him the responsibility of committing Baubie, in the meantime, to Miss Mackenzie's care. (I forget what becomes of the mother.²)

She is taken into a charitable, religious, and extremely well-regulated institution; she is washed and combed properly, and bears the operation like a courageous poodle; obeys afterwards what orders are given her patiently and duly. To her much surprise and discontent, her singing, the chief pleasure and faculty of her existence, is at once stopped, under penalties. And, while she stays in the institution, she makes no farther attempt to sing.

¹ [See Letter 27, § 11 (Vol. XXVII. p. 498); and compare above, p. 15.]

² [The mother had received a sentence of three months. When Baubie and her father take their departure, “`She,’ says he, with a gesture of his head backwards at the prison, ‘will no’ be oot this month, sae she’ll niver need to ken, eh?’ ” (p. 48).]

But from the instant she heard her father's sentence in the police court, she has counted days and hours. A perfect little keeper of accounts she is: the Judgment Angel himself, we may not doubt, approving and assisting, so far as needful. She knows the day and the hour by the Tron church,¹ at which her father, thinking himself daughterless, will be thrust out, wistful, from his prison gate. She is only fearful, prudently and beautifully self-distrusting, of missing count of a day.

In the dormitory of her institution, on an unregarded shutter, in the shade, morning after morning she cuts her punctual notch.

And the weary sixty days pass by. The notches are counted true to the last,—and on the last night, her measures all taken, and her points and methods of attack all planned, she opens the window-sash silently, leaps down into the flowerless garden, climbs its wall, cat-like,—Lioness-like,—and flies into Edinburgh before the morning light. And at noon, her father, faltering through the prison gate, finds her sitting on its step waiting for him.

And they two leave Edinburgh together, and are seen—nevermore.

On the cover of the book which tells you this owertrue Scots novel, there is a rude woodcut of Baubie, with a background consisting of a bit of a theatre, an entire policeman, and the advertisement window of a tavern,—with tacit implication that, according to the benevolent people of Edinburgh, all the mischief they contend with is in theatres, coffee-shops; and police, as against universal Scripture-readers.

9. Partly, this is true,—in the much greater part it is untrue;—and all through *Fors* you will find the contrary statement that theatres should be pious places;² taverns,

¹ [This old church received its name from a public “tron,” or weighing machine, which stood close by, and to which the keepers of false weights were nailed by the ears.]

² [See Letter 39, §§ 6, 7 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 51–52).]

holy places,¹ and policemen an irresistibly benevolent power: which, indeed, they mostly *are* already; and what London crossings and cart-drivings would be without them we all know. But I can write no more on these matters myself, in this *Fors*, and must be content to quote the following extremely beautiful and practical suggestion by Sir John Ellesmere,² and so, for to-day, end.

“I don’t care much about music myself. Indeed, I often wonder at the sort of passionate delight which Milverton, and people like him, have in the tinkling of cymbals; but I suppose that their professions of delight are sincere. I proposed to a grave statesman, who looked daggers at me for the proposal, that the surplus of the Irish Church revenues should be devoted to giving opera-boxes to poor people who are very fond of music. What are you all giggling at? I’ll bet any money that that surplus will not be half so well employed. Dear old Peabody used to send orders for opera-boxes to poor friends. I was once present when one of these orders arrived for a poor family devoted to music; and I declare I have seldom seen such joy manifested by any human beings. I don’t mind telling you that since that time, I have sometimes done something of the same kind myself. Very wrong, of course, for I ought to have given the money to a hospital.”

10. In looking back over *Fors* with a view to indices, I find the Notes and Correspondence in small print a great plague, and purpose henceforward to print all letters that are worth my reader’s diligence in the same-sized type as my own talk.³ His attention is first requested to the following very valuable one, originally addressed to the editor of the *Dunfermline Journal*; whence reprinted, it was forwarded to me, and is here gladly edited again; being the shortest and sensiblest I ever got yet on the vegetarian side.

VEGETARIANISM.—“SIR,—As a vegetarian, and mother of four vegetarian children, will you kindly grant me a little space in favour of a cause which editors seemingly regard as a subject for jest rather than serious consideration? Without aiming at convincing men, I would appeal principally to

¹ [See Letters 36, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 671); 83, § 15; 84, § 14; and compare 93, § 9 (pp. 272, 295, 474).]

² [The quotation is from *Social Pressure*, by the author of *Friends in Council*, 1875, ch. xv. p. 217. For other references to Sir Arthur Helps, see Vol. XI. p. 153 *n.*]

³ [In this edition, however, for the sake of uniformity and from considerations of space, the letters that follow are printed in smaller type.]

women and mothers; to consider this cause, if they wish to enjoy good rest at nights and see robust healthy children who are never fevered with fatty soups. Without taking up the question about the use or abuse of the lower animals, I would direct your attention to our own species—men and women—and the benefit of vegetarianism as regards them only, economy being one of my pleas; health, comfort, and cleanliness the others. Look on the lower masses who live in fever dens, dress in rags, are constant claimants of charity, invariable exhibitions of dirt and disease; and go when you like to their dens, what fries of steaks and pork do you not sniff up, with the other compounds of abominations! Look at the other picture. Scotsmen are all the world over foremen in workshops and leaders of men. Who are the best men in Scotland but these porridge-fed, abstemious, clear-headed Aberdonians, who only grow weakly and unhealthy when they grow out of the diet that made their positions, and take to the customs about them? Is the man or woman to be laughed at, or admired, the most who can be content with a bit of bread or a basin of porridge as a meal, that he may be able to buy clothes or books, or take a better house to live in or have something to lay past for education, or to give in charity after he has paid his debts; or is the custom to be advocated that encourages gorging three or four times a day with all sorts of expensive luxuries, meaning, to the workman, when his work is slack, starvation or dependence? Sir, to me—a vegetarian both from choice and necessity—it appears that no condition of life can justify that practice while poverty exists. As regards the laws of health I leave the matter to doctors to take up and discuss. I have only to say from the personal experience of five years that I am healthier and stronger than I was before, have healthy, strong children, who never require a doctor, and who live on oatmeal porridge and pease bannocks, but who do not know the taste of beef, butter, or tea, and who have never lost me a night's rest from their birth. Porridge is our principal food, but a drink of buttermilk or an orange often serve our dinner, and through the time saved I have been able to attend to the health of my children and the duties of my home without the hindrance of a domestic servant, my experiments in that line being a complete failure.

“I am, etc.,

“HELEN NISBET.

“35 LORNE STREET, LEITH WALK.”

11. I am in correspondence with the authoress of this letter, and will give the results arrived at in next *Fors*,¹ only saying now that Walter Scott, Burns, and Carlyle, are among the immortals, on her side, with a few other wise men, such as Orpheus, St. Benedict, and St. Bernard; and that, although under the no less wise guidance of the living Æsculapius, Sir William Gull (himself dependent

¹ [This, however, was not done.]

much for diet on Abigail's gift to David, a bunch of raisins¹), I was cured of my last dangerous illness² with medicine of mutton-chop, and oysters; it is conceivable that these drugs were in reality homoœpathic, and hairs of the dog that bit me.³ I am content to-day to close the evidence for the vegetarians with Orpheus' Hymn to the Earth:⁴—

“Oh Goddess Earth, mother of the happy Gods and of mortal men,
 All-nursing, all-giving, all-bearing, all-destroying;
 Increasing in blossom, heavy with fruit, overflowing with beauty,
 Throne of eternal ordinance, infinitely adorned girl,
 Who bearest in birth-pang all manner of fruit;
 Eternal, all-honoured, deep-hearted, happy-fated;
 Rejoicing in meadow-sweetness, deity of flower-multitude,
 And joyful in thy Night; round whom the fair-wrought order of
 the stars
 Rolls in its everlasting nature and dreadful flowing;
 Oh blessed goddess, increase thy fruits in gladness,
 And through thy happy seasons in kindness of soul.”

12. The second, and in this number terminal letter, which I have to recommend to the reader's study, is one from the agents to the Dean and Chapter of Chester, as follows:—

“ST. WERBURGH CHAMBERS, CHESTER,
April 17, 1883.

“SIR,—Our attention has just been called to an anonymous letter contained in your *Fors*—letter fifth, 1880—reflecting on the Dean and Chapter of Chester in the management of their property. The paragraph occurs at p. 145–46,⁵ and commences thus: ‘Only a week ago,’ etc.; and ends, ‘With an irresistible tongue,’ etc.

“Our answer is:—The Dean and Chapter have never refused to grant a lease to an eligible man, but have always complied when asked. They have *not* ‘raised all the rents,’ etc., but have materially reduced most of them since they acquired their property. The agents never interfere with the modes of farming unless manifestly exhaustive; and the statement that they ‘only allow the land to be sown,’ etc., on a ‘personal inspection

¹ [1 Samuel xxv.]

² [In 1882.]

³ [The Scottish form of a proverbial saying, which in one form or another is as old as Antiphanes: στυνὼ τὸν στυνὼν ἐζελαυνεῖν (*Meineke*, iii. 139).]

⁴ [The 26th of the Orphic Hymns.]

⁵ [Letter 89 (fifth of the New Series), § 14, in this edition: above, p. 413.]

of their agents,' is untrue. They never heard of any 'poverty prevailing (*sic*) on their estate to an alarming extent,' or to any extent at all. Surely 'the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain' deserve to be approached with verified facts, and not thus.

"Yours obediently,

"TOWNSHEND AND BARKUS.

"(Agents to the Dean and Chapter of Chester.)

"JOHN RUSKIN, ESQ., LL.D."

The only notice which it seems to me necessary to take of this letter is the expression of my satisfaction in receiving it, qualified with the recommendation to the Very Rev^{ds}. the Dean and Rev^{ds} the Chapter of Chester, to advise their agents that "prevailing" is usually spelt with an "i."

JOHN RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, 23rd April, 1883.



LETTER 91

SEPTEMBER 1883

DUST OF GOLD

1. I have received several letters from young correspondents, complaining that I attach too much importance to beauty in women,¹ and asking, “What are plain girls to do?”—one of them putting this farther question, not easy of answer, “Why beauty is so often given to girls who have only the mind to misuse it, and not to others, who would hold it as a power for God’s service?” To which question, however, it is to be answered, in the first place, that the mystery is quite as great in the bestowal of riches and wit; in the second place, that the girls who misuse their beauty, only do it because they have not been taught better, and it is much more other people’s fault than theirs; in the third place, that the privilege of seeing beauty is

¹ [See, for instance, above, pp. 176, 426.]

quite as rare a one as that of possessing it, and far more fatally misused.

The question, "What are plain girls to do?" requires us first to understand clearly what "plainness" is. No girl who is well-bred, kind, and modest, is ever offensively plain; all real deformity means want of manners, or of heart.¹ I may say, in defence of my own constant praise of beauty, that I do not attach half the real importance to it which is assumed in ordinary fiction;—above all, in the pages of the periodical which best represents, as a whole, the public mind of England. As a rule, throughout the whole seventy-volume series of *Punch*,—first by Leech and then by Du Maurier,—all nice girls are represented as pretty; all nice women as both pretty and well dressed; and if the reader will compare a sufficient number of examples extending over a series of years, he will find the moral lesson more and more enforced by this most popular authority, that all real ugliness in either sex means some kind of hardness of heart, or vulgarity of education. The ugliest man, for all in all, in *Punch* is Sir Gorgius Midas,²—the ugliest women, those who are unwilling to be old. Generally speaking, indeed, *Punch* is cruel to women above a certain age; but this is the expression of a real truth in modern England, that the ordinary habits of life and modes of education produce great plainness of *mind* in middle-aged women.

2. I recollect three examples in the course of only the last four or five months of railway travelling. The most interesting and curious one was a young woman evidently of good mercantile position, who came into the carriage with her brother out of one of the manufacturing districts. Both of them gave me the idea of being amiable in disposition, and fairly clever, perhaps a little above the average

¹ [On beauty as dependent on goodness, compare *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 182); *Munera Pulveris*, § 6 (Vol. XVII. p. 149); *Queen of the Air*, § 168 (Vol. XIX. pp. 413–414); and *Art of England*, § 83.]

² [The type with successive caricaturists of the "self-made" rich man; see Du Maurier's *Society Pictures from "Punch,"* 1891, *passim*, and compare *Deucalion*, Vol. XXVI. p. 307. Compare the head from one of Charles Keene's drawings in *Punch*, which Ruskin puts beside a Greek Apollo in *Aratra Pentelici* (Vol. XX. p. 294).]

in natural talent; while the sister had good features, and was not much over thirty. But the face was fixed in an iron hardness, and keenly active incapacity of any deep feeling or subtle thought, which pained me almost as much as a physical disease would have done; and it was an extreme relief to me when she left the carriage. Another type, pure Cockney, got in one day at Paddington, a girl of the lower middle class, round-headed, and with the most profound and sullen expression of discontent, complicated with ill-temper, that I ever saw on human features:—I could not at first be certain how far this expression was innate, and how far superinduced; but she presently answered the question by tearing open the paper she had bought with the edge of her hand into jags half an inch deep, all the way across.

The third, a far more common type, was of self-possessed and all-engrossing selfishness, complicated with stupidity;—a middle-aged woman with a novel, who put up her window and pulled down both blinds (side and central) the moment she got in, and read her novel till she fell asleep over it: presenting in that condition one of the most stolidly disagreeable countenances which could be shaped out of organic clay.

3. In both these latter cases, as in those of the girls described in *Fors*, Letter 20, §§ 17–18,¹ the offensiveness of feature implied, for one thing, a constant vexation, and *diffused* agony or misery, endured through every moment of conscious life, together with total dulness of sensation respecting delightful and beautiful things, summed in the passage just referred to as “*tortured* indolence, and *infidel* eyes,” and given there as an example of “life negative, under the curse,” the state of condemnation which begins in this world, and separately affects every living member of the body; the opposite state of life, under blessing being represented by the Venice-imagined beauty of St.

¹ [Vol. XXVII. p. 345.]

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¹ [Vol. XXVII. p. 345.]

Ursula in whose countenance what beauty there may be found (I have known several people who saw none, and indeed Carpaccio has gifted her with no dazzling comeliness) depends mainly on the opposite character of *diffused* joy, and ecstasy in peace.

And in places far too many to indicate, both of *Fors* and my Oxford lectures,¹ I have spoken again and again of this radiant expression of cheerfulness, as a primal element of Beauty, quoting Chaucer largely on the matter; and clinching all, somewhere² (I can't look for the place now), by saying that the wickedness of any nation might be briefly measured by observing how far it had made its girls miserable.

4. I meant this quality of cheerfulness to be included above,³ in the word "well-bred," meaning original purity of race (Chaucer's "debonnaireté") disciplined in courtesy, and the exercises which develop animal power and spirit. I do not in the least mean to limit the word to aristocratic birth and education. Gotthelf's Swiss heroine, Freneli, to whom I have dedicated in *Proserpina*,⁴ the pansy of the Wengern Alp, is only a farm-servant;⁵ and Scott's Jeanie Deans⁶ is of the same type in Scotland. And among virtuous nations, or the portions of them who remain virtuous, as the Tyrolese and Bavarian peasants, the Tuscans (of whom I am happily enabled to give soon some true biography and portraiture⁷), and the mountain and sea-shore races of France, England, Scotland, and Ireland, almost everybody is "well-bred," and the girlish beauty universal. Here in Coniston

¹ [See, for instance, in *Fors*, Vol. XXVII. p. 433 (Chaucer's "Ladie Gladnesse"); and in Oxford lectures, *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 26, 27 (Vol. XXII. pp. 314–315), and *Val d'Arno*, § 200 (Vol. XXIII. p. 118), in both of which places Chaucer's "Debonnaireté" is referred to.]

² [*Ethics of the Dust*, § 76 (Vol. XVIII. p. 296). Compare above, p. 424.]

³ [See p. 439.]

⁴ [ii. ch. i. § 35 (Vol. XXV. p. 409).]

⁵ [Compare Letter 94, § 11 (p. 491); and Vol. VII. p. 430.]

⁶ [Compare Letter 31, § 4 (Vol. XXVII. p. 564).]

⁷ [See (in a later volume of this edition) *The Story of Ida*, *The Roadside Songs of Tuscany*, and *Christ's Folk in the Apennine*, by Francesca Alexander, edited by John Ruskin.]

it is almost impossible to meet a child whom it is not a real sorrow again to lose sight of. So that the second article of St. George's creed, "I believe in the nobleness of human nature,"¹ may properly be considered as involving the farther though minor belief in the loveliness of the human form; and in my next course of work at Oxford, I shall have occasion to insist at some length on the reality and frequency of beauty in ordinary life, as it has been shown us by the popular art of our own day.² This frequency of it, however, supposing we admit the fact, in no wise diminishes the burden to be sustained by girls who are conscious of possessing less than these ordinary claims to admiration; nor am I in the least minded to recommend the redemption of their loneliness by any more than common effort to be good or wise. On the contrary, the prettier a girl is, the more it becomes her duty to try to be good; and little can be hoped of attempts to cultivate the understanding, which have only been provoked by a jealous vanity. The real and effective sources of consolation will be found in the quite opposite direction, of self-forgetfulness;—in the cultivation of sympathy with others, and in turning the attention and the heart to the daily pleasures open to every young creature born into this marvellous universe. The landscape of the lover's journey may indeed be invested with ætherial colours, and his steps be measured to heavenly tunes³ unheard of other ears; but there is no sense, because these selfish and temporary raptures are denied to us, in refusing to see the sunshine on the river, or hear the lark's song in the sky. To some of my young readers, the saying may seem a hard one; but they may rest assured that the safest and purest joys of human life rebuke the violence of its passions; that they are obtainable without anxiety, and memorable without regret.

5. Having, therefore, this faith, or more justly speaking,

¹ [See Letter 58, Vol. XXVIII. p. 419.]

² [*The Art of England*, Lecture V. (delivered in November 1883), § 143.]

³ [Letter 57, § 6 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 406).]

this experience and certainty, touching the frequency of pleasing feature in well-bred and modest girls, I did not use the phrase in last *Fors*, which gave (as I hear) great offence to some feminine readers, “a girl *worth* anything,”¹ exclusively, or even chiefly, with respect to attractions of person; but very deeply and solemnly in the full sense of worthiness, or (regarding the range of its influence) All-worthiness, which qualifies a girl to be the ruling Sophia of an all-worthy workman, yeoman, squire,² duke, king, or Caliph;—not to calculate the advance which, doubtless, the luxury of Mayfair and the learning of Girton must have made since the days when it was written of Koot el Kuloob, or Enees-el Jelees, that “the sum of ten thousand pieces of gold doth not equal the cost of the chickens which she hath eaten, and the dresses which she hath bestowed on her teachers; for she hath learned writing, and grammar, and lexicology, and the interpretation of the Koran, and the fundamentals of law, and religion, and medicine, and the computation of the Calendar, and the art of playing upon musical instruments,”*—not calculating, I say, any of these singular powers or preciousnesses, but only thinking of the constant value generalized among the King’s verses, by that notable one, “Every wise woman buildeth her house; but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands,”⁸—and seeing that our present modes of thought and elements of education are not always so arranged as to foster to their utmost the graces of prudence and economy in woman, it was surely no over-estimate of the desirableness of any real house-builder among girls, that she should have five or six suitors at once under vow for her? Vow, surely also of no oppressive or extravagant nature! I said nothing of such an one as was required by Portia’s father

**Arabian Nights*, Lane’s translation, i. 392.

¹ [Letter 90, § 5 (p. 429).]

² [For a reference to Fielding’s Allworthy, see Letter 34 (Vol. XXVII. p. 631).]

³ [Proverbs xiv. 1.]

of *her* suitors,¹ and which many a lover instinctively makes, in his own bosom,—“her, or none.” I said nothing of any oath of allegiance preventing the freedom of farther search or choice;—but only the promise of the youth that, until he saw one better worth winning, he would faithfully obey his chosen mistress’s will in all things; and suffer such test as she chose to put him to: it being understood that at any time he had the power as openly to withdraw as he had openly accepted the candidature.

6. The position of Waverley towards Flora MacIvor, of Lord Evandale to Miss Bellenden, of Lovell to Miss Wardour, Tressilian to Amy Robsart, or Quentin Durward to the Countess Isabel,² are all in various ways illustrative of this form of fidelity in more or less hopeless endeavour: while also the frankness of confession is assumed both by Miss Edgeworth and Richardson, as by Shakespeare, quite to the point of entire publicity in the social circle of the lovers.* And I am grieved to say that the casual observations which have come to my ears, since last *Fors* appeared, as to the absurdity and impossibility of such devotion, only further prove to me what I have long since perceived, that very few young people, brought up on modern principles, have ever felt love, or even know what it means, except under the conditions in which it is also possible to

*See the decision of Miss Broadhurst in the thirteenth chapter of the *Absentee*,³ and the courtships to Harriet Byron, *passim*.⁴ The relations of France to Cordelia, of Henry V. to the Princess Katherine, and of the Duke to Olivia, are enough to name among the many instances in Shakespeare.⁵

¹ [Compare *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 417.]

² [For other references to Flora MacIvor, see *Sesame and Lilies*, § 59 (Vol. XVIII. p. 115); to *Old Mortality* (Evandale and Miss Bellenden), Vol. XXIII. p. 141, and Vol. XXV. p. 297; to the *Antiquary* (Lovell and Isabella Wardour), below, p. 456; to *Kenilworth* (Amy Robsart), *Præterita*, iii. §§ 71 n., 72; and *Quentin Durward* (the Countess Isabel), *ibid.*, § 72.]

³ [For another reference to the *Absentee*, see above, p. 363.]

⁴ [For another reference to *Sir Charles Grandison*, see *Præterita*, ii. § 70; and for Richardson generally, Vol. V. pp. 360, 373, and Vol. XXV. p. 355.]

⁵ [For a fuller reference to the relations of France to Cordelia (*King Lear*, Act i.), see Vol. XXV. p. 417; for the Princess Katherine (*Henry V.*), *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 21; for *Twelfth Night*, Vol. XXV. p. 419.]

the lower animals. I could easily prove this, if it were apposite to my immediate purpose, and if the subject were not too painful, by the evidence given me in a single evening, during which I watched the enthusiastic acceptance by an English audience of Salvini's frightful, and radically false, interpretation of Othello.

7. Were I to yield, as I was wont in the first series of these letters, without scruple, to the eddies of thought which turned the main stream of my discourse into apparently irrelevant, and certainly unprogressive inlets, I should in this place proceed to show how true-love is inconsistent with railways, with joint-stock banks, with the landed interest, with parliamentary interest, with grouse shooting, with lawn tennis, with monthly magazines spring fashions, and Christmas cards. But I am resolute now to explain myself in one place before becoming enigmatic in another, and keep to my one point until I have more or less collected what has been said about it in former letters. And thus continuing to insist at present only on the worth or price of womanhood itself, and of the value of feminine creatures in the economy of a state, I must ask the reader to look back to Letter 4, § 7,¹ where I lament my own poverty in not being able to buy a white girl of (in jeweller's language) good lustre and facetting; as in another place I in like manner bewail the present order of society in that I cannot make a raid on my neighbour's house, and carry off three graceful captives at a time;² and in one of the quite most important pieces of all the book, or of any of my books, the essential nature of real property in general is illustrated by that of the two primary articles of a man's wealth, Wife, and Home;³ and the meaning of the word "mine," said to be only known in its depth by any man with reference to the first.⁴ And here, for further, and in its sufficiency I hope it may be received as a final,

¹ [Vol. XXVII. p. 68.]

² [See Letter 54, § 20 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 353).]

³ [See Letter 62, §§ 9, 10 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 519, 520).]

⁴ [See Letter 28, § 19 (Vol. XXVII. p. 521).]

illustration, read the last lines (for I suppose the terminal lines can only be received as epilogue) of the play by which, in all the compass of literature, the beauty of pure youth has been chiefly honoured; there are points in it deserving notice besides the one needful to my purpose:—

Prince. “Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague!
 See what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
 That Heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!
 And I, for winking at your discords too,
 Have lost a brace of kinsmen:—all are punish’d.”

Cap. “O brother Montague, give me thy hand:
 This is my daughter’s jointure, for no more
 Can I demand.”

Mont. “But I can give thee more:
 For I will raise her statue in pure gold;
 That while Verona by that name is known,
 There shall no figure at such rate be set,
 As that of true and faithful Juliet.”

Cap. “As rich shall Romeo by his lady lie;
 Poor sacrifices of our enmity.”¹

8. I do not know if in the tumultuous renderings and reckless abridgments of this play on the modern stage, the audience at any theatre is ever led to think of the meaning of the Prince’s saying, “That Heaven finds means to *kill your joys with love.*” Yet in that one line is the key of Christian theology and of wise natural philosophy; the knowledge of the law that binds the yoke of inauspicious stars, and ordains the slumber of world-wearied flesh.

Look back to Friar Laurence’s rebuke of the parents’ grief at Juliet’s death,—

“Heaven and yourself
 Had part in this fair maid; now Heaven hath all;”²

and you will find, in the concluding lines, not only the interpretation of the Prince’s meaning, but a clear light thrown on a question lately in some one of our critical magazines, more pertinently asked than intelligently answered—

¹ [*Romeo and Juliet*, Act v. sc. 3.]

² [*Ibid.*, Act iv. sc. 5.]

“Why Shakespeare wrote tragedies?”¹ One of my chief reasons for withdrawing from the later edition of *Sesame and Lilies* the closing lecture,² on the “Mystery of Life,” was the feeling that I had not with enough care examined the spirit of faith in God, and hope in futurity, which, though unexpressed, were meant by the master of tragedy to be felt by the spectator what they were to himself, the solution and consolation of all the wonderfulness of sorrow;—a faith for the most part, as I have just said, unexpressed; but here summed in a single line, which explains the instinctive fastening of the heart on the great poetic stories of grief,—

“For Nature’s tears are Reason’s merriment.”³

9. Returning to the terminal passage of the play, may I now ask the reader to meditate on the alchemy of fate, which changes the youth and girl into two golden statues? Admit the gain in its completeness; suppose that the gold had indeed been given down, like Danaë’s from heaven,⁴ in exchange for them; imagine, if you will, the perfectest art-skill of Bezaleel or Aholiab⁵ lavished on the imperishable treasures. Verona is richer, is she, by so much bullion? Italy, by so much art? Old Montague and Capulet have their boy’s and girl’s “worth” in gold have they? and though for every boy and girl whom now you exile from the gold of English harvest and the ruby of Scottish health, there return to you, O loving friends, their corpses’ weight, and more, in Californian sand,—is your bargain with God’s bounty wholly to your mind? or if so, think you that it is to His, also?

10. Yet I will not enter here into any debate of loss

¹ [See an article, entitled “Why did Shakespeare write Tragedies?” by “J.S.,” in the *Cornhill Magazine* for August 1880 (vol. 42, p. 153); and on Shakespearean tragedy, compare Vol. XVIII. p. 162 *n.*]

² [See further on this subject, Vol. XVIII. pp. lviii.—lix.]

³ [*Romeo and Juliet*, Act iv. sc. 5.]

⁴ [For other references to the myth of Danaë, see Vol. VII. pp. 184–185 *n.*, and Vol. XIX. p. 311.]

⁵ [Exodus xxxvi. 1: compare Vol. XXIII. pp. 266, 274.]

by exile, and national ostracism of our strongest. I keep to the estimate only of our loss by helpless, reckless, needless death, the enduring torture at the bolted theatre door of the world, and on the staircase it has smoothed to Avernus.¹

“Loss of life”! By the ship overwhelmed in the river, shattered on the sea; by the mine’s blast, the earthquake’s burial—you mourn for the multitude slain. You cheer the lifeboat’s crew: you hear, with praise and joy, of the rescue of one still breathing body more at the pit’s mouth:—and all the while, for one soul that is saved from the momentary passing away (according to your creed, to be with its God), the lost souls, yet locked in their polluted flesh, haunt, with worse than ghosts, the shadows of your churches, and the corners of your streets; and your weary children watch, with no memory of Jerusalem, and no hope of return from *their* captivity, the weltering to the sea of your Waters of Babylon.²

¹ [The first draft of this passage was different, thus:—

“. . . our loss by absolute, total, constant, and innocent death, the everlasting torture at the narrow barred theatre door, in which, while we draw our daily breath and play out our daily play, our English children, moment by moment, are trampled into clay on the staircase to Avernus’ deep.”

It is interesting to note that in Ruskin’s later, as in his earlier writings, his revisions were in the nature of compression and greater simplicity.]

² [See Psalm cxxxvii.]

LETTER 92

ASHESTIEL

ABBOTSFORD, *September 26th*, 1883.

1. I CAN never hear the whispering and sighing of the Tweed among his pebbles, but it brings back to me the song of my nurse, as we used to cross by Coldstream Bridge, from the south, in our happy days.

“For Scotland, my darling, lies full in my view,
With her barefooted lassies, and mountains so blue.”¹

Those two possessions, you perceive, my poor Euryclea² felt to be the chief wealth of Scotland, and meant the epithet “barefooted” to be one of praise.

In the two days that have past since I this time crossed the Broder, I have seen but one barefooted lassie, and she not willingly so,—but many high-heeled ones:—who willingly, if they might, would have been heeled yet higher. And perhaps few, even of better minded Scots maidens, remember, with any due admiration, that the greater part of Jeanie Deans’ walk to London was done barefoot,³ the days of such pilgrimage being now, in the hope of Scotland, for ever past; and she, by help of the high chimneys built beside Holyrood and Melrose, will henceforward obtain the beatitude of Antichrist,—Blessed be ye Rich.⁴

2. Nevertheless, it is worthy of note that in the village where Bruce’s heart is buried,⁵ I could yesterday find no

¹ [Quoted also in Letter 51, § 4 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 273).]

² [For Euryclea, nurse of Ulysses, see *Odyssey*, i. 429, iv. 742, xix. 357.]

³ [See *Heart of Midlothian*, ch. xxviii.]

⁴ [Compare Ruskin’s Introduction to *Usury and the English Bishops* (in a later volume of this edition), where he draws up a complete series of the New Beatitudes.]

⁵ [Melrose.]

better map of Scotland than was purchaseable for a penny,—no clear sign, to my mind, either of the country's vaster wealth, or more refined education. Still less that the spot of earth under which the king's heart lies should be indicated to the curious observer by a small white ticket, pegged into the grass; which might at first sight seem meant to mark the price of that piece of goods; and indeed, if one meditates a little on the matter, verily does so; this piece of pasteboard being nothing less than King Robert Bruce's monument and epitaph; and the devotional offering of Scotland in the nineteenth century, at his shrine. Economical, even in pasteboard, as compared with the lavish expenditure of that material by which the "Scots wha hae," etc.,¹ receive on all their paths of pilgrimage the recommendation of Colman's mustard.

So much, looking out on the hillside which Scott planted in his pride, and the garden he enclosed in the joy of his heart, I perceive to be the present outcome of his work in literature. Two small white, tickets—one for the Bruce, the other for Michael Scott:² manifold acreage of yellow tickets—for Colman's mustard. Thus may we measure the thirst for knowledge excited by modern Scottish religion, and satisfied by modern Scottish education.

WHITHORN, *October 3rd*, 1883.

3. As the sum of Sir Walter's work at Melrose, so here the sum of St. Ninian's at Candida Casa,³ may be set down in few and sorrowful words. I notice that the children of the race who now for fifteen hundred years

¹ [For another reference to Burns's *Bannockburn*, see Preface, § 4, to *Rock Honeycomb* (Vol. XXXI).]

² [For Michael Scott, the Wizard, see Vol. XIV. p. 97. The tomb, supposed to be his (see *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, canto ii.), is by others asserted to be that of Sir Brian Latoun.]

³ [The White House is the ancient name of Whithorn, or Whitherne, Abbey, on the Solway, where the first Christian church in Scotland was built, by St. Ninian, in the fourth century, according to Bede. "Candida Casa" is the title of a chapter written by Ruskin for the intended Sixth Part of his *Our Fathers Have Told Us*: see a later volume of this edition.]

have been taught in this place the word of Christ, are divided broadly into two classes: one very bright and trim, strongly and sensibly shod and dressed, satchel on shoulder, and going to or from school by railroad; walking away, after being deposited at the small stations, in a brisk and independent manner. But up and down the earthy Broadway between the desolate-looking houses which form the main street of Whithorn, as also in the space of open ground which borders the great weir and rapid of the Nith at Dumfries, I saw wistfully errant groups of altogether neglected children, barefoot enough, tattered in frock, begrimed in face, their pretty long hair wildly tangled or ruggedly matted, and the total bodies and spirits of them springing there by the wayside like its thistles,—with such care as Heaven gives to the herbs of the field,—and Heaven's Adversary to the seed on the Rock.

They are many of them Irish, the Pastor of Whithorn tells me,—the parents too poor to keep a priest, one coming over from Wigton sometimes for what ministration may be imperative. This the ending of St. Ninian's prayer and fast in his dark sandstone cave, filled with the hollow roar of Solway,—now that fifteen hundred years of Gospel times have come and gone.

This the end: but of what is it to be the beginning? of what new Kingdom of Heaven are *these* children the nascent citizens? To what Christ are these to be allowed to come for benediction, unforbidden?¹

BRANTWOOD, *October 10th*, 1883.

4. The above two entries are all I could get written of things felt and seen during ten days in Scott's country, and St. Ninian's; somewhat more I must set down before the impression fades.² Not irrelevantly, for it is my instant

¹ [See Matthew xix. 14.]

² [At this time Lord Reay had been at Brantwood, and Ruskin afterwards went on a visit to him in Scotland: see the Introduction, above, p. xxvi. The ten days in Scotland were September 23 to October 4.]

object in these resumed letters to index and enforce what I have said hitherto on early education; and while, of all countries, Scotland is that which presents the main questions relating to it in the clearest form, my personal knowledge and feelings enable me to arrange aught I have yet to say more easily with reference to the Scottish character than any other. Its analysis will enable me also to point out some specialties in the genius of Sir Walter, Burns, and Carlyle, which English readers cannot usually discern for themselves. I went into the Border country, just now, chiefly to see the house of Ashestiel: and this morning have re-read, with better insight, the chapter of Lockhart's *Life* which gives account of the sheriff's settlement there;¹ in which chapter there is incidental notice of Mungo Park's last days in Scotland, to which I first pray my readers' close attention.

5. Mungo had been born in a cottage at Fowlsheils on the Yarrow, nearly opposite Newark Castle. He returns after his first African journey to his native cottage, where Scott visits him, and finds him on the banks of Yarrow, which in that place passes over ledges of rock, forming deep pools between them. Mungo is casting stone after stone into the pools, measuring their depths by the time the bubbles take to rise, and thinking (as he presently tells Scott) of the way he used to sound the turbid African rivers. Meditating, his friend afterwards perceives, on further travel in the distant land.

With what motive, it is important for us to know. As a discoverer—as a missionary—or to escape from ennui? He is at that time practising as a physician among his own people. A more sacred calling cannot be;—by faithful missionary service more good could be done among fair Scotch laddies in a day, than among black Hamites in a lifetime;—of discovery, precious to all humanity, more might be made among the woods and rocks of Etrick than in

¹ [Vol. ii. ch. i.; the following quotations are from pp. 11–13 (1837 edition).]

the thousand leagues of desert between Atlas and red Edom. Why will he again leave his native stream?

It is clearly not mere baseness of petty vanity that moves him. There is no boastfulness in the man:—

“ ‘On one occasion,’ says Scott, ‘the traveller communicated to him some very remarkable adventures which had befallen him in Africa, but which he had not recorded in his book.’ On Scott’s asking the cause of this silence, Mungo answered that, ‘in all cases where he had information to communicate, which he thought of importance to the public, he had stated the facts boldly, leaving it to his readers to give such credit to his statements as they might appear justly to deserve; but that he would not shock their faith, or render his travels more marvellous, by introducing circumstances which, however true, were of little or no moment, as they related solely to his own personal adventures and escapes.’ ”

Clearly it is not vanity, of Alpine-club kind,¹ that the Old Serpent is tempting this man with. But what then?

“His thoughts had always continued to be haunted with Africa. He told Scott that whenever he awoke suddenly in the night, he fancied himself still a prisoner in the tent of Ali; but when Scott expressed surprise that he should intend again to re-visit those scenes, he answered that he would rather brave Africa and all its horrors, than *wear out his life in long and toilsome rides over the hills of Scotland, for which the remuneration was hardly enough to keep soul and body together.*”

I have italicized the whole sentence, for it is a terrific one. It signifies, if you look into it, almost total absence of the instinct of personal duty,—total absence of belief in the God who chose for him his cottage birthplace, and set him his life-task beside it;—absolute want of interest in his profession, of sense for natural beauty, and of compassion for the noblest poor of his native land. And, with these absences, there is the clear presence of the fatallest of the vices, Avarice,—in the exact form in which it was the ruin of Scott himself,—the love of money for the sake of worldly position.

6. I have purposely placed the instinct for natural beauty, and compassion for the poor, in the same breath of

¹ [On this subject, see *Sesame and Lilies*, Vol. XVIII. pp. 90, 21–26.]

the sentence;—their relation, as I hope hereafter to show,¹ is constant. And the *total* want of compassion, in its primary root of sympathy, is shown in its naked fearsomeness in the next sentence of the tale:—

“Towards the end of the autumn, Park paid Scott a farewell visit, and slept at Ashestiel. Next morning his host accompanied him homewards over the wild chain of hills between the Tweed and the Yarrow. Park talked much of his new scheme, and mentioned his determination *to tell his family that he had some business for a day or two in Edinburgh, and send them his blessing from thence without returning to take leave.* He had married not long before a pretty and amiable woman; and when they reached the Williamhope Ridge, ‘the autumnal mist floating heavily and slowly down the valley of the ‘Yarrow’ presented to Scott’s imagination ‘a striking emblem of the troubled and uncertain prospect which his undertaking afforded.’ He remained however unshaken, and at length they reached the spot where they had agreed to separate. A small ditch divided the moor from the road, and in going over it, Park’s horse stumbled and nearly fell.

“ ‘I am afraid, Mungo,’ said the sheriff, ‘that is a bad omen.’ To which he answered, smiling, ‘*Freits* (omens) follow those who look to them.’ With this expression Mungo struck the spurs into his horse, and Scott never saw him again.”

“Freits follow those who look to them.” Words absolutely true (with their converse, that they cease to follow those who do *not* look to them): of which truth I will ask the consenting reader to consider a little while.

He may perhaps think Mungo utters it in all wisdom, as already passing from the darkness and captivity of superstition into the marvellous light of secure Science and liberty of Thought. A wiser man, are we to hold Mungo, than Walter,—then? and wiser—how much more, than his forefathers?

I do not know on what authority Lockhart interprets “freit,” as only meaning “omen.”² In the Douglas glossary it means “aid,” “or protection”; it is the word used by Jove, declaring that he will not give “freit” from heaven

¹ [The subject is not resumed in *Fors*; but see *Art of England*, § 15, and *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 54. Compare Vol. XX. p. 90.]

² [See King James’s work, *Damonologie*, pp. 99, 100: “all kind of practiques, freites, or other extraordinary actions, which cannot abide the trew touch of natural reason.”]

either to Trojan or Rutulian;¹ and I believe it always to have the sense of *serviceable* warning—protective, if watched and obeyed. I am not here concerned with the question how far such guidance has been, or is still, given to those who look for it; but I wish the reader to note that the form of Celtic intellect which rejected the ancient faith was certainly not a higher one than that which received it. And this I shall best show by taking the wider ground of inquiry, how far Scott's own intellect was capable of such belief,—and whether in its strength or weakness.

7. In the analysis of his work, given in the *Nineteenth Century in Fiction, Fair and Foul*,² I have accepted twelve novels as characteristic and essentially good,—naming them in the order of their production. These twelve were all written in twelve years, before he had been attacked by any illness; and of these, the first six exhibit the natural progress of his judgment and faith, in the prime years of his life, between the ages of forty-three and forty-eight.

In the first of them, *Waverley*, the supernatural element is admitted with absolute frankness and simplicity, the death of Colonel Gardiner being foretold by the, at that time well-attested, faculty of second sight,—and both the captivity and death of Fergus McIvor by the personal phantom, hostile and fatal to his house.³

In the second, *Guy Mannering*, the supernatural warning is not allowed to reach the point of actual vision. It

¹ [The reference is to the version by Gavin Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld, the first complete translation of the *Aeneid*, into a British tongue (1553), and to the glossary appended in the edition of 1710. See *Aeneid*, x. 110–113; translated on p. 317 of Douglas (1710):—

“Nouthir Troianis nor Rutulianis freith will I,
Let aithir of thame thare awin fortoun stand by . . .
King Jupiter sal be to all equale.”]

For other references to the Bishop's translation, see Vol. XXVIII. p. 500; and below, p. 557.]

² [The reference is to the first (*Nineteenth Century*, June 1880) of a series of papers, reprinted in *On the Old Road* (see a later volume of this edition, §§ 24–27). Ruskin does not there say that the twelve novels were written “before he had been attacked by any illness,” but that the first six were; which statement, however, is incorrect, as his illness began before *Rob Roy* and the *Heart of Midlothian* were written (see note now appended to the passage in *On the Old Road*.)]

³ [*Waverley*, chaps. xlvi., lix., lxi.]

is given by the stars, and by the strains in the thread spun at the child's birth by his gipsy guardian.¹

In the third, the *Antiquary*, the supernatural influence reduces itself merely to a feverish dream, and to the terror of the last words of Elspeth of the Craighburnfoot: "I'm coming, my leddy—the staircase is as mirk as a Yule midnight."²

In the fourth, *Old Mortality*, while Scott's utmost force is given to exhibit the self-deception of religious pride, imagining itself inspired of heaven, the idea of prophetic warning is admitted as a vague possibility, with little more of purpose than to exalt the fortitude of Claverhouse; and in the two last stories of his great time, *Rob Roy*, and the *Heart of Midlothian*, all suggestion whatever of the interference of any lower power than that of the Deity in the order of this world has been refused, and the circumstances of the tales are confined within the limits of absolute and known truth.

I am in the habit of placing the *Heart of Midlothian* highest of all his works,³ because in this element of intellectual truth, it is the strictest and richest;—because, being thus rigid in truth, it is also the most exalted in its conception of human character;—and lastly, because it is the clearest in acknowledgment of the overruling justice of God, even to the uttermost, visiting the sin of the fathers upon the children,⁴ and purifying the forgiven spirit without the remission of its punishment.

In the recognition of these sacred laws of life it stands alone among Scott's works, and may justly be called the greatest: yet the stern advance in moral purpose which it indicates is the natural consequence of the discipline of age—not the sign of increased mental faculty. The entire range of faculty, imaginative and analytic together, is unquestionably the highest when the sense of the supernatural

¹ [*Guy Mannering*, chaps. iii. and iv.]

² [*Antiquary*, ch. xl. ("My lady calls us!—Bring a candle;—the grand staircase is as mirk as a Yule midnight. We are coming, my lady!").]

³ [See Letter 83, § 10 (above, p. 267).]

⁴ [Exodus xx. 5.]

is most distinct,¹—Scott is *all himself* only in *Waverley* and the *Lay*.²

8. No line of modern poetry has been oftener quoted with thoughtless acceptance than Wordsworth's:

“Heaven lies about us in our infancy.”³

It is wholly untrue in the implied limitation; if life be led under heaven's law, the sense of heaven's nearness only deepens with advancing years, and is assured in death. But the saying is indeed true thus far, that in the dawn of virtuous life every enthusiasm and every perception may be trusted as of divine appointment; and the *maxima reverentia* is due not only to the innocence of children,⁴ but to their inspiration.

And it follows that through the ordinary course of mortal failure and misfortune, in the career of nations no less than of men, the error of their intellect, and the hardening of their hearts, may be accurately measured by their denial of spiritual power.

In the life of Scott, beyond comparison the greatest intellectual force manifested in Europe since Shakespeare, the lesson is given us with a clearness as sharp as the incision on a Greek vase.⁵ The very first mental effort for which he obtained praise was the passionate recitation of the passage in the *Æneid*, in which the ghost of Hector appears to Æneas.⁶ And the deadliest sign of his own approaching death is in the form of incredulity which dictated to his weary hand the *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*.⁷

¹ [See Ruskin's reference to this passage in his “Notes on Gipsy Character” in *Roadside Songs of Tuscany* (Vol. XXXII).]

² [Compare an additional passage in Appendix 8 (below, p. 541).]

³ [Ode, *Intimations of Immortality*, stanza v.]

⁴ [Juvenal, xiv. 47:—

“Maxima debetur puero reverentia. Si quid
Turpe paras, ne tu pueri contemperis annos,
Sed peccaturo obstet titi filius infans.”]

⁵ [With this simile, compare *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 100.]

⁶ [Book ii. 268–317.]

⁷ [Written in 1830.]

9. Here, for the present, I must leave the subject to your own thought,—only desiring you to notice, for general guidance, the gradations of impression on the feelings of men of strong and well-rounded intellect, by which fancy rises towards faith.

(I.) The lowest stage is that of wilfully grotesque fancy, which is recognized as false, yet dwelt upon with delight and finished with accuracy, as the symbol or parable of what is true.

Shakespeare's Puck, and the Dwarf Goblin of the *Lay*, are precisely alike in this first level of the imagination. Shakespeare does not believe in Bottom's translation; neither does Scott that, when the boy Buccleugh passes the drawbridge with the dwarf, the sentinel only saw a terrier and lurcher passing out.¹ Yet both of them permit the fallacy, because they acknowledge the Elfin power in nature, to make things, sometimes for good, sometimes for harm, seem what they are not. Nearly all the grotesque sculpture of the great ages, beginning with the Greek Chimæra,² has this nascent form of Faith for its impulse.

(II.) The ghosts and witches of Shakespeare, and the Bodach Glas³ and White Lady of Scott, are expressions of real belief, more or less hesitating and obscure. Scott's worldliness too early makes him deny his convictions, and in the end effaces them. But Shakespeare remains sincerely honest in his assertion of the uncomprehended spiritual presence; with this further subtle expression of his knowledge of mankind, that he never permits a spirit to show itself but to men of the highest intellectual power. To Hamlet, to Brutus, to Macbeth, to Richard III.; but the royal Dane does not haunt his own murderer,—neither does Arthur, King John; neither Norfolk, King Richard II.; nor Tybalt, Romeo.

¹ [*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act iii. sc. 1; *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, canto iii. stanza xii.]

² [See *Queen of the Air*, § 29 (Vol. XIX. p. 325).]

³ [*Waverley*, ch. lix. For another reference to Scott's conception of the White Lady of Avenel, in the *Monastery*, see *Præterita*, i. § 174.]

(III.) The faith of Horace in the spirit of the fountain of Brundisium,¹ in the Faun of his hill-side, and in the help of the greater gods, is constant, vital, and practical; yet in some degree still tractable by his imagination, as also that of the great poets and painters of Christian times. In Milton, the tractability is singular; he hews his gods out to his own fancy, and then believes in them; but in Giotto and Dante the art is always subjected to the true vision.²

(IV.) The faith of the saints and prophets, rising into serenity of knowledge, "I know that my Redeemer liveth,"³ is a state of mind of which ordinary men cannot reason; but which, in the practical power of it, has always governed the world, and must for ever. No dynamite will ever be invented that can rule;—it can but dissolve and destroy. Only the Word of God and the heart of man can govern.

10. I have been led far, but to the saving of future time, by the examination of the difference in believing power between the mind of Scott and his unhappy friend. I now take up my immediate subject of inquiry, the effect upon Scott's own mind of the natural scenery of the native land he loved so dearly. His life, let me first point out to you, was in all the joyful strength of it, spent in the valley of the Tweed. Edinburgh was his school, and his office; but his home was always by Tweedside: and more perfectly so, because in three several places during the three clauses of life. You must remember also the cottage at Lasswade for the first years of marriage, and Sandy-Knowe for his childhood; but, allowing to Smailholm Tower and Roslin Glen whatever collateral influence they may rightly claim over the babe and the bridegroom, the constant influences of home remain divided

¹ [A slip of the pen for Bandusia (*Odes*, III. xiii.). For other references to it, as also to the Ode "Faune Nympharum," see Vol. XIX. p. 173. On the faith of Horace, see also *Bible of Amiens*, iii. § 52.]

² [With what is here said of Milton and Dante, compare *Sesame and Lilies*, §§ 110, 111 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 156–158).]

³ [Job xix. 25.]

As I drove from Abbotsford to Ettrick, Tweed and Ettrick
 were both in flood; not down nor wrathful, but in
 the clear fallness of ^{their} perfect strength and from the bridge of
 Ettrick I saw the two streams join, and the Tweed
 - for miles down ^{his} the vale, and the Ettrick for miles
 up among his hills, - each of them in ^{his} multitudes
 of their windleap waves, a march of ^{infinite lights, dappled} interminable
 lights and intervals, ^{unless} with eddies of ^{gliding} ~~purple~~ ^{purple and shadow} ~~darkness~~ of
 but for the work part - two ^{gliding} ~~moving~~ paths of sunshine
^{far sweep} ^{beach} between the green glow of their ^{level} niches, and the
 blessing of them, and the gravel; - the stately
 moving of the ^{rippled} many waters, ^{wide peaceful} than ^{their calm} their rippled spaces, and
 feed like mist clouds, their pools of ^{running} ~~amber~~ ^{current} ^{unbroken} ^{single}
 has ~~no~~ bridges the silver edges with a ^{amber} ^{under} ^{and} ^{gloom} of gold,
 and all along their shore, ^{beyond the sword} and the ^{numerous} ^{things} processions of dark forest
 in ^{myriad} ^{of} ^{insects} ^{and} ^{wounded} ^{grass} ^{of} ^{glorious} ^{open}

strictly into the three æras at Rosebank, Ashestiel, and Abbotsford.¹

11. Rosebank, on the lower Tweed, gave him his close knowledge of the district of Flodden Field; and his store of foot-traveller's interest in every glen of Ettrick, Yarrow, and Liddel-water.

The vast tract of country to which these streams owe their power is composed of a finely-grained dark and hard sandstone, whose steep beds are uniformly and simultaneously raised into masses of upland, which nowhere present any rugged or broken masses of crag, like those of our Cumberland mountains, and are rarely steep enough anywhere to break the grass by weathering; a moderate shaly—or, rather, gritty—slope of two or three hundred feet opposite Ashestiel itself, being noticeable enough, among the rounded monotony of general form, to receive the separate name of “the Slidders.” Towards the bottom of a dingle, here and there, a few feet of broken bank may show what the hills consist of; but the great waves of them rise against the horizon without a single peak, crest, or cleft to distinguish one from another, though in their true scale of mountain strength heaved into heights of 1500 or 2000 feet; and covering areas of three or four square leagues for each of the surges. The dark rock weathers easily into surface soil, which forms for the greater part good pasture, with interspersed patches of heath or peat, and, Liddesdale-way, rushy and sedgy moorland, good for little to man or beast.

Much rain falls over the whole district; but, for a great part of its falling time, in the softly-diffused form of Scotch mist, absorbed invisibly by the grass soil; while even the heavier rain, having to deal with broad surfaces of serenely set rock, and finding no ravines in which it can concentrate force, nor any loose lighter soil to undermine, threads its way down to the greater glens in gradual and deliberate

¹ [At Rosebank, the seat of his uncle, Captain Richard Scott, Sir Walter spent much of his youth. At Ashestiel, he lived from 1804 to 1812; at Abbotsford, thenceforward.]

influence, nobody can well see how: there are no Lodores nor Bruar waters, still less Staubbachs or Giessbachs; unnoticed, by million upon million of feebly glistening streamlets, or stealthy and obscure springs, the cloudy dew descends towards the river, and the mysterious strength of its stately water rises or declines indeed, as the storm impends or passes away; yet flows for ever with a serenity of power unknown to the shores of all other mountain lands.¹

And the more wonderful, because the uniformity of the hill-substance renders the *slope* of the river as steady as its supply. In all other mountain channels known to me, the course of the current is here open, and there narrow—sometimes pausing in extents of marsh cord lake, sometimes furious in rapids, precipitate in cataracts, or lost in subterranean caves. But the classic Scottish streams have had their beds laid for them, ages and ages ago, in vast accumulations of rolled shingle, which, occupying the floor of the valleys from side to side in apparent level, yet subdue themselves with a steady fall towards the sea.²

12. As I drove from Abbotsford to Ashestiel, Tweed and Ettrick were both in flood; not dun nor wrathful, but in the clear fulness of their perfect strength: and from the bridge of Ettrick I saw the two streams join, and the Tweed for miles down the vale, and the Ettrick for miles up among his hills,—each of them, in the multitude of their windless waves, a march of infinite light, dazzling,—interminable,—intervals indeed with eddies of shadow, but, for the most part, gliding paths of sunshine, far-swept beside the green glow of their level inches, the blessing of them, and the guard:—the stately moving of the many waters, more peaceful than their calm, only mighty, their

¹ [Compare *Art of England*, § 167, where Ruskin, referring to this Letter as an “analysis of the main character of the scenery by which Scott was inspired,” adds to the beauty of its rivers “the collateral charm, in a Borderer’s mind, of the very mists and rain that feed them.”]

² [The MS. adds: “. . . towards the sea, so that the river current, here and there eddying indeed for a moment in deeper pools, yet in its mass rolls on in an endless multitude of glittering or glooming waves.”]



Photo Valentines, London.

Allen & Co. Sc.



Photo. Ellis & Co. Niagara.

Allen & Co. Sc.

rippled spaces fixed like orient clouds, their pools of pausing current binding the silver edges with a gloom of amber and gold; and all along their shore, beyond the sward, and the murmurous shingle, processions of dark forest, in strange majesty of sweet order, and unwounded grace of glorious age.

The house of Ashestiel itself is only three or four miles above this junction of Tweed and Ettrick.* It has been sorrowfully changed since Sir Walter's death, but the essential make and set of the former building can still be traced. There is more excuse for Scott's flitting to Abbotsford than I had guessed,¹ for *this* house stands, conscious of the river rather than commanding it, on a brow of meadowy bank, falling so steeply to the water that nothing can be seen of it from the windows. Beyond, the pasture-land rises steep three or four hundred feet against the northern sky, while behind the house, south and east, the moorlands lift themselves in gradual distance to still greater height, so that virtually neither sunrise nor sunset can be seen from the deep-nested dwelling. A tricklet of stream wavers to and fro down to it from the moor, through a grove of entirely natural wood,—oak, birch, and ash, fantastic and bewildering, but nowhere gloomy, or decayed, and carpeted with anemone. Between this wild avenue and the house, the old garden remains as it used to be, large, gracious, and tranquil; its high walls swept round it in a curving line like a war rampart, following the ground; the fruit-trees, trained a century since, now with grey trunks a foot wide, flattened to the wall like sheets of crag; the strong bars of their living trellis charged, when I saw them, with clusters of green-gage, soft bloomed into gold and blue; and of orange-pink magnum bonum, and crowds of ponderous pear, countless as leaves. Some open space of grass and path,

* I owe to the courtesy of Dr. Matthews Duncan the privilege of quiet sight both of the house and its surroundings.

¹ [See Letter 47, § 14 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 198). Plate V. here gives views of Ashestiel and Abbotsford respectively.]

now all redesigned for modern needs, must always have divided the garden from what was properly the front of the house, where the main entrance is now, between advanced wings, of which only the westward one is of Sir Walter's time: its ground floor being the drawing-room, with his own bedroom of equal size above, cheerful and luminous both, enfilading the house front with their large side windows, which commanded the sweep of Tweed down the valley, and some high masses of Ettrick Forest beyond, this view being now mostly shut off by the opposite wing, added for symmetry! But Sir Walter saw it fair through the morning clouds when he rose, holding himself, nevertheless, altogether regardless of it, when once at work. At Ashestiel and Abbotsford alike, his work-room is strictly a writing-office, what windows they have being designed to admit the needful light, with an extremely narrow vista of the external world.¹ Courtyard at Abbotsford, and bank of young wood beyond: nothing at Ashestiel but the green turf of the opposite fells with the sun on it, if sun there were, and silvery specks of passing sheep.

The room itself, Scott's true "memorial" if the Scotch people had heart enough to know him, or remember, is a small parlour on the ground-floor of the north side of the house, some twelve feet deep by eleven wide; the single window little more than four feet square, or rather four feet *cube*, above the desk, which is set in the recess of the mossy wall, the light thus entering in front of the writer, and reflected a little from each side. This window is set to the left in the end wall, leaving a breadth of some five feet or a little more on the fireplace side, where now, brought here from Abbotsford, stands the garden chair of the last days.²

¹ [In a note on the MS. of the first draft of this Letter Ruskin gives the dimensions of the rooms: "Dining-room about 16½ x 15¾. Study 11 x 12, not including deep window recess in wall. Drawing-room 18½ x 15½. Bedroom same."]

² [It was stated shortly afterwards in the *Scotsman* that Sir Walter Scott's study had been turned into a passage, in the recent improvements. See below, Letter 95, § 27 (p. 515).]

Contentedly, in such space and splendour of domicile, the three great poems were written,¹ *Waverley* begun; and all the make and tenure of his mind confirmed, as it was to remain, or revive, through after time of vanity, trouble, and decay.

13. A small chamber, with a fair world outside:—such are the conditions, as far as I know or can gather, of all greatest and best mental work. At heart, the monastery cell always, changed sometimes, for special need, into the prison cell. But, as I meditate more and more closely what reply I may safely make to the now eagerly pressed questioning of my faithful scholars, what books I would have them read, I find the first broadly-swept definition may be—Books written in the country. None worth spending time on, and few that are quite safe to touch, have been written in towns.

And my next narrowing definition would be, Books that have good music in them,—that are rightly-rhythmic: a definition which includes the delicacy of perfect prose, such as Scott's; and which *excludes* at once a great deal of modern poetry, in which a dislocated and convulsed versification has been imposed on the ear in the attempt to express uneven temper, and unprincipled feeling.

By unprincipled feeling, I mean whatever part of passion the writer does not clearly discern for right or wrong, and concerning which he betrays the reader's moral judgment into false sympathy or compassion. No really great writer ever does so: neither Scott, Burns, nor Byron ever waver for an instant, any more than Shakespeare himself, in their estimate of what is fit and honest, or harmful and base. Scott always punishes even error, how much more fault, to the uttermost; nor does Byron, in his most defiant and mocking moods, ever utter a syllable that defames virtue or disguises sin.

In looking back to my former statement in the third

¹ [The *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, previously begun, was finished at Ashestiel. *Marmion* and the *Lady of the Lake* were wholly written there.]

volume of *Modern Painters*, of the influence of natural scenery on these three men,¹ I was unjust both to it and to them, in my fear of speaking too favourably of passions with which I had myself so strong personal sympathy. Recent Vandalism has taught me, too cruelly, and too late, the moral value of such scenes as those in which I was brought up; and given it me, for my duty to the future, to teach the Love of the fair Universe around us as the beginning of Piety, and the end of Learning.

14. The reader may be interested in comparing with the description in the text, Scott's first fragmentary stanzas relating to the sources of the Tweed. (Lockhart, vol. i., p. 314.)

“Go sit old Cheviot’s crest below,
 And pensive mark the lingering snow
 In all his scaurs abide,
 And slow dissolving from the hill
 In many a sightless, soundless rill,
 Feed sparkling Bowmont’s tide.

“Fair shines the stream by bank and lea,
 As wimpling to the eastern sea
 She seeks Till’s sullen bed,
 Indenting deep the fatal plain,
 Where Scotland’s noblest, brave in vain,
 Around their monarch bled.

“And westward hills on hills you see,
 Even as old Ocean’s mightiest sea
 Heaves high her waves of foam,
 Dark and snow-ridged from Cutsfeld’s wold
 To the proud foot of Cheviot roll’d,
 Earth’s mountain billows come.”

¹ [See Vol. V. (*Modern Painters*, iii.) p. 360.]



LETTER 93

INVOCATION

1. MY Christmas letter, which I have extreme satisfaction in trusting this little lady to present to you, comes first to wish the St. George's Company, and all honest men, as merry a Christmas as they can make up their minds to (though, under present circumstances, the merriment, it seems to me, should be temperate, and the feasting moderate);—and in the second place, to assure the St. George's Company both of its own existence, and its Master's, which, without any extreme refinement of metaphysics, the said Company might well begin to have some doubt of—seeing that there has been no report made of its business, nor record of its additional members, nor catalogue of its additional properties, given since the—I don't know what day of—I don't know what year.¹

I am not going to ask pardon any more for these administrative defects, or mysterious silences, because, so far as they are results of my own carelessness or procrastination,

¹ [The last mention in *Fors* of accounts relating to the Guild was in Letter 86 (February 1878), § 13, p. 351. The last Report issued to members of the Guild had been dated December 6, 1881 (see Vol. XXX.).]

they are unpardonable; and so far as they might deserve indulgence if explained, it could only be justified by the details, otherwise useless, of difficulty or disappointment in which more than one of our members have had their share—and of which *their* explanations might sometimes take a different shape from mine. Several have left us, whose secession grieved me; one or two, with my full consent. Others, on the contrary, have been working with their whole hearts and minds, while the Master was too ill to take note of their labour: and, owing, I believe, chiefly to that unpraised zeal, but in a measure also to the wider reading and better understanding of *Fors* itself, new members are rapidly joining us, and, I think, all are at present animated with better and more definite hope than heretofore.

2. The accounts of the Company,—which, instead of encumbering *Fors*, as they used to do, it seems to me now well to print in a separate form, to be presented to the Companions with the recommendation not to read it, but to be freely purchasable by the public who may be curious in literature of that kind,¹—do not, in their present aspect, furnish a wide basis for the confidence I have just stated to be increasing. But, in these days, that we are entirely solvent, and cannot be otherwise, since it is our principal law of business never to buy anything till we have got the money to pay for it,—that whatever we have bought, we keep, and don't try to make a bad bargain good by swindling anybody else,—that, at all events, a certain quantity of the things purchased on such terms are found to be extremely useful and agreeable possessions by a daily increasing number of students, readers, and spectators, at Sheffield and elsewhere,—and that we have at this Christmas-time of 1883 £4000 and some odd hundreds of stock, with, besides the lands and tenements specified in my last report, conditional promise of a new and better site for the St. George's Museum at Sheffield, and of £5000 to begin

¹ [For such Reports and Accounts, see Vol. XXX.]

the building thereof,¹—these various facts and considerations do, I think, sufficiently justify the Companions of St. George in sitting down peaceful-minded, so far as regards their business matters, to their Christmas cheer; and perhaps also the Master in calling with confidence on all kind souls whom his words may reach, to augment the hitherto narrow fellowship.

3. Of whose nature, I must try to sum in this *Fors* what I have had often to repeat in private letters.

First, that the St. George's Guild is not a merely sentimental association of persons who want sympathy in the general endeavour to do good. It is a body constituted for a special purpose: that of buying land, holding it inviolably, cultivating it properly, and bringing up on it as many honest people as it will feed. It means, therefore, the continual, however slow, accumulation of landed property, and the authoritative management of the same; and every new member joining it shares all rights in that property, and has a vote for the re-election or deposition of its Master. Now, it would be entirely unjust to the Members who have contributed to the purchase of our lands, or of such funds and objects of value as we require for the support and education of the persons living on them, if the Master allowed the entrance of Members who would have equal control over the Society's property, without contributing to it. Nevertheless, I sometimes receive Companions whose temper and qualities I like, though they may be unable to help us with money, (otherwise it might be thought people had to pay for entrance,) but I can't see why there should not be plenty of people in England both able and willing to help us; whom I once more² very solemnly call upon to do so, as thereby exercising the quite healthiest and straightforwardest power of Charity. They can't make the London or Paris landlords emancipate *their* poor (even if it were according to sound law to make such an endeavour). But

¹ [On this subject, see again Vol. XXX.]

² [For the last appeal of this kind, see Letter 88 (p. 396).]

they can perfectly well become landlords themselves, and emancipate their *own*.

4. And I beg the readers alike, and the despisers of my former pleadings in this matter, to observe that all the recent agitation of the public mind, concerning the dwellings of the poor,¹ is merely the sudden and febrile (Heaven be thanked, though, for such fever!) recognition of the things which I have been these twenty years trying to get recognized, and reiterating description and lamentation of—even to the actual printing of my pages blood-red²—to try if I could catch the eye at least, when I could not the ear or the heart. In my index, under the head of “Misery,”³ I know not yet what accumulation of witness may be gathered,—but let the reader think, now, only what the single sentence meant which I quoted from the Evening news in the last *Fors* I wrote before my great illness (March, 1878, § 7⁴), “The mother got impatient, *thrust the child into the snow*, and hurried on—not looking back.” *There* is a Christmas card, with a picture of English “nativity” for you—O suddenly awakened friends! And again, take this picture of what Mr. Tenniel calls John Bull guarding his Pudding,⁵ authentic from the iron-works of Tredegar, 11th February, 1878 (§ 16⁶):

“For several months the average earnings have been six shillings a week, and out of that they have to pay for *coal*, and *house rent* and other expenses (the rent-collector never out of *his* work), leaving very little for food or clothing. In my district there are a hundred and thirty families

¹ [The reference is to a pamphlet by Mr. G. R. Sims (1883) on *How the Poor Live*, and to the “inquiry into the condition of the abject poor” conducted by the London Congregational Union. The results of the inquiry had been published, shortly before Ruskin wrote this Letter, in a pamphlet entitled *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London* (October 1883). The pamphlets had a large sale, and were widely noticed in the press.]

² [Part of § 36 of *Sesame and Lilies* (Vol. XVIII. pp. 91–93). Among other “former pleadings in this matter” (elsewhere than in *Fors*) reference may be made to *A Joy for Ever*, § 7 (Vol. XVI. pp. 18–19); *Munera Pulveris*, § 108 (Vol. XVII. pp. 233–234); and *Queen of the Air*, § 68 (Vol. XIX. p. 362).]

³ [Ruskin’s Notes for Index did not, however, include a heading “Misery.” See now, below, p. 650.]

⁴ [Letter 87; above, p. 367.]

⁵ [The reference is to a cartoon of 1859: see *Art of England*, § 151.]

⁶ [Letter 87; above, p. 378.]

in distress; they have nothing but rags to cover them by day, and very little beside that wearing apparel to cover them on their beds at night,—they have sold or pawned their furniture, and everything for which they could obtain the smallest sum of money; many of them are some days every week without anything to eat,—and with nothing but water to drink”—

and *that* poisoned, probably.

Was not this, the last message I was able to bring to John Bull concerning his Pudding, enough to make him think how he might guard it better? But on first recovery of my power of speech,¹ was not the news I brought of the state of La Belle France worth *her* taking to thought also?—

“In a room two yards and a half broad by four yards and three-quarters long, a husband, wife, and four children, of whom two were dead two months afterwards,—of those left, the eldest daughter ‘had still the strength to smile.’ Hunger had reduced this child, who would have been beautiful, nearly to the state of a skeleton.”

(*Fors*, Letter 88, § 12, and see the sequel.²)

5. And the double and treble horror of all this, note you well, is not only that the tennis-playing and railroad-flying public trip round the outskirts of it, and whirl over the roofs of it,—blind and deaf; but that the persons interested in the maintenance of it have now a whole embodied Devil’s militia of base littérateurs in their bound service;—the worst form of serfs that ever human souls sank into—party conscious of their lying, partly, by dint of daily repetition, believing in their own babble, and totally occupied in every journal and penny magazine all over the world, in declaring this present state of the poor to be glorious and enviable, as compared with the poor that have been. In which continual pother of parroquet lie, and desperately feigned defence of all things damnable, this nineteenth century stutters and shrieks alone in the story of mankind.

¹ [That is, on recovery from the illness in the spring of 1878, which caused *Fors* to be suspended after the number for March 1878 (Letter 87) till March 1880 (Letter 88).]

² [Above, p. 392.]

Whatever men did before now, of fearful or fatal, they did openly. Attila does not say his horse-hoof is of velvet. Ezzelin deigns no disguise of his Paduan massacre.¹ Prince Karl of Austria fires his red-hot balls in the top of daylight, “at stroke of noon, on the shingle roofs of the weavers of Zittau in dry July, ten thousand innocent souls shrieking in vain to Heaven and Earth, and before sunset Zittau is ashes and red-hot walls,—not Zittau, but a cinder-heap,”*—but Prince Karl never says it was the best thing that could have been done for the weavers of Zittau,—and that all charitable men hereafter are to do the like for all weavers, if feasible. But your nineteenth century prince of shams and shambles sells for his own behoof the blood and ashes, preaches, with his steam-throat, the gospel of gain from ruin, as the only true and only Divine, and fills at the same instant the air with his darkness, the earth with his cruelty, the waters with his filth, and the hearts of men with his lies.

6. Of which the primary and all-pestilentiallest is the one formalized now into wide European faith by political economists, and bruted about, too, by frantic clergymen! that you are not to give alms² (any more than you are to fast, or pray),—that you are to benefit the poor entirely by your own eating and drinking, and that it is their glory and eternal praise to fill your pockets and stomach,—and themselves die, and be thankful. Concerning which falsehood, observe, whether you be Christian or not, *this* unquestionable mark it has of infinite horror, that the persons who utter it have themselves lost their joy in giving—cannot conceive that strange form of practical human felicity—it is more “blessed” (not *benedictum* but *beatum*) to give than to receive³—and that the entire practical life

* *Friedrich*, v. 124. [Book xviii. ch. v.]

¹ [Compare Letter 84, § 3 (p. 287); and see Vol. XII. p. 137 n.]

² [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 136 (Vol. XVIII. p. 182).]

³ [Acts xx. 35.]

and delight of a “lady” is to be a “loaf-giver,”¹ as of a lord to be a land-giver. It is a degradation—forsooth—for your neighbour’s child to receive a loaf, and you are pained in giving it one; your own children are not degraded in receiving their breakfast, are they? and you still have some satisfaction of a charitable nature in seeing *them* eat it? It is a degradation to a bedridden pauper to get a blanket from the Queen! how, then, shall the next bedded bride of May Fair boast of the carcanet from her?²

7. Now, therefore, my good Companions of the Guild,—all that are, and Companions all, that are to be,—understand this, now and evermore, that you come forward to be Givers, not Receivers, in this human world: that you are to *give* your time, your thoughts, your labour, and the reward of your labour, so far as you can spare it, for the help of the poor and the needy (they are not the same personages, mind: the “poor” are in constant, healthy, and accepted relations to you,—the needy, in conditions requiring change); and observe, in the second place, that you are to work, so far as circumstances admit of your doing so, with your own hands, in the production of substantial means of life—food, clothes, house, or fire—and that *only by such* labour can you either make your own living, or anybody else’s. One of our lately admitted Companions wrote joyfully and proudly to me the other day that she was “making her own living,” meaning that she was no burden to her family, but supported herself by teaching. To whom I answered,—and be the answer now generally understood by all our Companions,—that *nobody* can live by teaching, any more than by learning: that both teaching and learning are proper duties of human life, or pleasures of it, but have nothing whatever to do with the support of it.

¹ [Compare Letter 45, § 17 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 162); and *Sesame and Lilies*, § 88 (Vol. XVIII. p. 138).]

² [Compare what Ruskin says, in *Unto this Last*, about Government pensions and the workhouse, Vol. XVII. pp. 22, 23.]

Food can only be got out of the ground, or the air, or the sea. What you have done in fishing, fowling, digging, sowing, watering, reaping, milling, shepherding, shearing, spinning, weaving, building, carpentering, slating, coal-carrying, cooking, coster-mongering, and the like,—that is St. George's *work*, and means of power. All the rest is St. George's *play*, or his devotion—not his labour.

8. And the main message St. George brings to you is that *you* will not be degraded by this work nor saddened by it,—*you*, who in righteous will and modest resignation, take it upon you for your servant-yoke, as true servants, no less than children, of your Father in Heaven; but, so far as it *does* mean an acknowledgment that you are not better than the poor, and are content to share their lowliness in that humility, you enter into the very soul and innermost good of sacred monastic life, and have the loveliness and sanctity of it, without the sorrow or the danger; separating yourselves from the world and the flesh, only in their sin and in their pain. Nor, so far as the praise of men may be good and helpful to you, and, above all, good for *them* to give you, will it ever be wanting. Do you yourself—even if you are one of these who glory in idleness—think less of Florentine Ida because she is a working girl? or esteem the feeling in which “everybody called her ‘Signora’ ” less honourable than the crowd's stare at my lady in her carriage?¹

But above all, you separate yourself from the world in its sorrow. There are no chagrins so venomous as the chagrins of the idle; there are no pangs so sickening as the satieties of pleasure. Nay, the bitterest and most enduring sorrow may be borne through the burden and heat of day² bravely to the due time of death, by a true worker. And, indeed, it is this very dayspring and fount of peace in the bosoms of the labouring poor which has

¹ [See *The Story of Ida*, by Francesca Alexander (Vol. XXXII.).]

² [Matthew xx. 12.]

till now rendered their oppression possible. Only the idle among *them* revolt against their state;—the brave workers die passively, young and old—and make no sign. It is for you to pity them, for you to stand with them, for you to cherish, and save.

9. And be sure there are thousands upon thousands already leading such life—who are joined in no recognized fellowship, but each in their own place doing happy service to all men. Read this piece of a friend's letter, received only a day or two since, while I was just thinking what plainest examples I could give you from real life:—

“I have just returned from W——, where I lived in a house of which the master was a distributor of sacks of grain, in the service of a dealer in grain, while his two daughters did, one of them the whole work of the house, including attendance on the old mother who was past work, and the other the managing of a little shop in the village,—work, with all” (father and daughters) “beginning at five A.M. I was there for some months, and was perfectly dealt with, and never saw a fault. What I wanted to tell you was that the daughter, who was an admirable cook, was conversant with her poets, quoted Wordsworth and Burns, when I led her that way, and knew all about Brantwood, as she had carefully treasured an account of it from an old Art Journal.”¹

“*Perfectly* dealt with.” Think what praise is in those three words!—what straightforward understanding, on both sides, of true hospitality! Think (for one of the modes of life quickest open to you—and serviceablest),—what roadside-inns might be kept by a true Gaius and Gaia!² You have perhaps held it—in far back *Fors*—one of my wildest sayings, that every village should have, as a Holy Church at one end, a Holy Tavern at the other!³ I will better the saying now by adding—“they may be side by side, if you will.” And then you will have entered into another mystery of monastic life, as you shall see by the plan given of a Cistercian Monastery in the second forthcoming

¹ [For the account in question, entitled “A Lakeside Home,” see Vol. XXIII p. xxvii.]

² [“Gaius mine host” (Romans xvi. 23).]

³ [See Letter 36, § 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 671); and compare Letters 83, § 15, and 84, § 14 (above, pp. 272, 295).]

number of *Valle Crucis*¹—where, appointed in its due place with the Church, the Scriptorium and the school, is the Hospitium for entertaining strangers unawares.² And why not awares also? Judge what the delight of travelling would be, for nice travellers (read the word “nice” in any sense you will)—if at every village there were a Blue Boar, or a Green Dragon, or Silver Swan*—with Mark Tapley of the Dragon for Ostler—and Boots of the Swan for Boots—and Mrs. Lupin or Mrs. Lirriper³ for Hostess—only trained at Girton in all that becomes a Hostess in the nineteenth century! Gentle girl-readers mine, is it any excess of Christianity in you, do you think, that makes you shrink from the notion of being such an one, instead of the Curate’s wife?⁴

* “And should I once again, as once I may,
Visit Martigny, I will not forget
Thy hospitable roof, Marguerite de Tours,
Thy sign the Silver Swan. Heaven prosper thee.”

(ROGERS’S *Italy*.)

In my schools at Oxford I have placed, with Mr. Ward’s beautiful copy of Turner’s vignette of the old Cygne, at Martigny, my own early drawing of the corridor of its neighbour inn “La Poste,”—once itself a convent.⁵

¹ [*Valle Crucis* was to have been the sixth volume in *Our Fathers have Told Us*, and “occupied with the monastic architecture of England and Wales” (see *Bible of Amiens*). The volume was never published; but two chapters for it—“Candida Casa” and “Mending the Sieve”—were included in *Verona and Other Lectures*. They are in this edition printed with the *Bible of Amiens* in Vol. XXXIII., where the plan, here referred to, will be found.]

² [See Hebrews xiii. 2.]

³ [For Mark Tapley, compare Letter 28 (Vol. XXVII. p. 519). For Mrs. Lupin, afterwards Mark’s wife, see *Martin Chuzzlewit*, chaps. iii., iv., etc. For other references to Mrs. Lirriper’s Lodgings, see *Proserpina*, Vol. XXV. p. 455, and the other passages there noted.]

⁴ [Compare Letter 38, § 8 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 36).]

⁵ [Ruskin had again stayed at the inn in 1870, when he wrote to his mother (May 11): “I have had a lovely morning walk, and enjoy being in the old Hôtel de la Poste, where I drew the corridor when I was fifteen;” and again (May 13), “It is exceedingly pretty to see the swallows flying in and out of the corridor here, without minding anybody: they come in at the open arches, and satisfy me that the air is better than is usually thought.” His “own early drawing” of the inn was not, however, given to Oxford, and the editors are unable to say where it is. Turner’s vignette is No. 212 in the National Gallery (Vol. XIII. p. 617); Mr. Ward’s copy, No. 146 in the Rudimentary Series at Oxford (Vol. XXI. p. 213).]

10. My time fails me—my thoughts how much more—in trying to imagine what this sweet world will be, when the meek inherit it indeed, and the lowliness of *every* faithful handmaiden has been regarded of her Lord. For the day *will* come, the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever. Not by might, nor by power, but by His Spirit—the meek shall He guide in judgment, and the meek shall He teach His way.¹

CHRISTMAS POSTSCRIPT

11. In the following alphabetical list of our present Companions, I have included only those who, I believe, will not blame me for giving their names in full,* and in whose future adherence and support I have entire trust; for, although some of them have only lately joined us, they have done so, I think, with clearer knowledge of the nature and working of the Guild than many former Companions who for various causes have seen good to withdraw. But some names of members may be omitted, owing to the scattered registry of them while I was travelling, or perhaps forgotten registry during my illnesses. I trust that in the better hope and more steady attention which I am now able to bring to the duties of the Mastership, the list may soon be accurately completed, and widely enlarged. One Companion, ours no more, sends you, I doubt not, Christmas greeting from her Home,—FLORENCE BENNETT. Of her help to us during her pure brief life, and afterwards,

* I only give the first Christian name, for simplicity's sake, unless the second be an indication of family.

¹ [The Bible references in § 10 are Psalms ix. 18; Psalms xxv. 9; Zechariah iv. 6. Compare Matthew v. 5, and Luke i. 48.]

by her father's fulfilment of her last wishes, you shall hear at another time.¹

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| * ADA HARTNELL. | HELEN ORMEROD. |
| ALBERT FLEMING. | *HENRIETTA CAREY. |
| ALICE KNIGHT. | *HENRY LARKIN. |
| * ANNIE SOMERSCALES. | HENRY LUXMORE. |
| * BLANCHE ATKINSON. | HENRY WARD. |
| DAVID CAMPBELL. | JAMES GILL. |
| * DORA LEES. | *JOHN FOWLER. |
| DORA THOMAS. | *JOHN MORGAN. |
| EDITH HOPE SCOTT. | *JULIA FIRTH. |
| EDITH IRVINE. | KATHLEEN MARTIN. |
| * EGBERT RYDINGS. | MARGARET COX. |
| * ELIZABETH BARNARD. | MAUD BATEMAN. |
| EMILIE SISSISON. | *REBECCA ROBERTS. |
| EMMELINE MILLER. | *ROBERT SOMERVELL. |
| ERNEST MILLER. | SARAH THOMAS. |
| *FANNY TALBOT. | *SILVANUS WILKINS. |
| FERDINAND BLADON. | *SUSAN BEEVER. |
| *FRANCES COLENZO. | WILLIAM MONK. |
| * GEORGE ALLEN. | *WILLIAM SHARMAN. |
| GEORGE NEWLANDS. | *WILLIAM SMITHERS. |
| GRACE ALLEN. | |

The names marked with a star were on the original roll of the Guild, when it consisted of only thirty-two Members and the Master.

¹ [See the Trustee's Report for 1883, appended to *The Guild of St. George: Master's Report*, 1884 (Vol. XXX.).]



LETTER 94

RETROSPECT

BRANTWOOD, 31st *December*, 1883.¹

1. IT is a provoking sort of fault in our English language, that while one says defect, defection, and defective; retrospect, retrospection, and retrospective, etc.,—one says prospect and prospective, but not prospection; respect and respective, but not respection; perspective, but not perspect, nor perspersion; præfect, but not præfection; and refection, but not refect,—with a quite different manner of difference in the uses of each admitted, or reasons for refusal of each refused, form, in every instance: and therefore I am obliged to warn my readers that I don't mean the above title of this last *Fors* of 1883 to be substantive, but participle;—that is to say, I don't mean that this letter will be *a* retrospect, or back-prospect, of all *Forses* that have been; but that it will be in its own tenor, and to a limited distance, *Retrospective*: only I cut the “ive” from the end of the word, because I want the restrospection to be complete as far as it reaches.

¹ [Not issued till March 1884.]

Namely, of the essential contents of the new series¹ of *Fors* up to the date of this letter; and in connection with them, of the First letter, the Seventeenth, and the Fiftieth, of the preceding series.

2. I will begin with the seventeenth letter; which bears directly on the school plan given in my report for this year.² It will be seen that I struck out in that plan the three R's from among the things promised to be taught,³ and I wrote privately with some indignation to the Companion who had ventured to promise them, asking her whether she had never read this seventeenth letter; to which she answered that "inspectors of schools" now required the three R's imperatively,—to which I again answered, with indignation at high pressure, that ten millions of inspectors of schools collected on Cader Idris⁴ should not make me teach in my schools, come to them who liked, a single thing I did not choose to.

And I do not choose to teach (as usually understood) the three R's; first, because, as I *do* choose to teach the elements of music, astronomy, botany, and zoology, not only the mistresses and masters capable of teaching these should not waste their time on the three R's; but the children themselves would have no time to spare, nor should they have. If their fathers and mothers can read and count, *they* are the people to teach reading and numbering, to earliest intelligent infancy. For orphans, or children whose fathers and mothers can't read or count, dame schools in every village (best in the almshouses, where there might be dames enow) are all that is wanted.

Secondly. I do not care that St. George's children, as a rule, should learn either reading or writing, because

¹ [Letters 85–96 were originally issued as Letters 1–12, New Series.]

² [The Report, which seems to be referred to, though in the main "ready for publication before Christmas of 1883," was not issued till 1885. In its ultimate form, it contains no detailed "school plans," but contains (§ 6) references to "a design long entertained by me of making mineralogy, no less than botany, a subject of elementary education, even in ordinary parish schools" (see Vol. XXX.)]

³ [See Vol. XXVII. p. 296.]

⁴ [Ruskin's correspondent was writing from Barmouth.]

there are very few people in this world who get any good by either. Broadly and practically, whatever foolish people *read*, does *them* harm, and whatever they *write*, does other people harm (see my notes on Narrs in general, and my own Narr friend in particular, *Fors*, Letter 53, § 7¹): and nothing can ever prevent this, for a fool attracts folly as decayed meat attracts flies, and distils and assimilates it, no matter out of what book;²—he can get as much out of the Bible as any other, though of course he or she usually reads only newspaper or novel.*

3. But thirdly. Even with children of good average sense,—see, for example, what happened in our own Coniston school, only the other day. I went in by chance during the hour for arithmetic; and, inserting myself on the nearest bench, learned, with the rest of the class, how much seven-and-twenty pounds of bacon would come to at ninepence farthing a pound, with sundry the like marvellous consequences of the laws of number; until, feeling myself a little shy in remaining always, though undetectedly, at the bottom of the class, I begged the master to let us

* Just think, for instance, of the flood of human idiotism that spent a couple of years or so of its life in writing, printing, and reading the Tichborne trial,³—the whole of that vital energy and time being not only direct loss, but loss in loathsome thoughts and vulgar inquisitiveness. Had it been spent in pure silence, and prison darkness, how much better for all those creatures' souls and eyes! But, if they had been unable to read or write, and made good sailors or woodcutters, they might, instead, have prevented two-thirds of the shipwrecks on our own coast, or made a pestilential province healthy on Ganges⁴ or Amazon.

Then think farther—though which of us by any thinking can take measure?—of the pestilence of popular literature, as we perceive it now accommodating itself to the tastes of an enlightened people, in chopping up its formerly loved authors—now too hard for its understanding, and too pure for its appetite—into crammed sausages, or blood-puddings swiftly gorgeable. Think of Miss Bradon's greasy mince-pie of Scott!⁵—and buy,

¹ [Vol. XXVIII. pp. 321–323.]

² [Compare above, p. 205.]

³ [See Vol. XXVIII. pp. 41, 143.]

⁴ [For references in *Fors* to Indian famines, see Vol. XXVIII. p. 67; and above, Letters 81 and 83 (pp. 208, 281).]

⁵ [*The Waverley Novels*, abridged and edited by M. E. Braddon (vol. i., 1881). Compare *A Knight's Faith*, ch. xiv. n.]

all rest a little; and in this breathing interval, taking a sovereign out of my pocket, asked the children if they had ever been shown the Queen's Arms on it?

(Unanimous silence.)

"At any rate, you know what the Queen's Arms *are*?" (Not a whisper.)

"What! a roomful of English boys and girls, and nobody know what the Queen's or the King's Arms are—the Arms of England?" (Mouths mostly a little open, but with no purpose of speech. Eyes also, without any immediate object of sight.)

"Do you not even remember seeing such a thing as a harp on them?" (Fixed attention,—no response.) "Nor a lion on his hind legs? Nor three little beasts running in each corner?" (Attention dissolving into bewilderment.)

"Well, next time I come, mind, you must be able to tell me all about it;—here's the sovereign to look at, and when you've learnt it, you may divide it—if you can. How many of you are there here to-day?" (Sum in addition, taking more time than usual, owing to the difficulty

for subject of awed meditation, "No. 1, One penny, complete in itself" (published by Henry Vickers, 317, Strand), the Story of Oliver Twist, by Charles Dickens,—re-arranged and sublimed into Elixir of Dickens, and Otto of Oliver, and bottled in the following series of aromatic chapters, headed thus:—

| | | |
|-------|-------|--------------------------------|
| Chap. | I. | At the Mercy of the Parish. |
| " | II. | In the Clutches of the Beadle. |
| " | III. | Among the Coffins. |
| " | IV. | Among Thieves. |
| " | V. | Fagin the Jew. |
| " | VI. | Before the "Beak." |
| " | VII. | Bill Sikes. |
| " | VIII. | Nancy. |
| " | IX. | Nancy Carries on. |
| " | X. | The Burglary planned. |
| " | XI. | The Burglary. |
| " | XII. | A Mysterious Stranger. |
| " | XIII. | The Murdered Girl. |
| " | XIV. | The Murderer's Flight. |
| " | XV. | The Murderer's Death. |
| " | XVI. | The Jew's Last Night Alive. |

of getting the figures to stand still. It is established finally that there are thirty-five.)

“And how many pence in a sovereign?” (Answer instantaneous and vociferous.)

“And thirty-fives in two hundred and forty?” (All of us at pause. The master comes to the rescue, and recommends us to try thirties instead of thirty-fives.)

“It seems, then, if five of you will stand out, the rest can have eightpence apiece. Which of you will stand out?”

And I left *that* question for them to resolve at their leisure, seeing that it contained the essence of an examination in matters very much higher than arithmetic.

And now, suppose that there were any squire’s sons or daughters down here, for Christmas, from Christ-Church or Girton, who could and would accurately and explicitly tell these children “all about” the Queen’s Arms: what the Irish Harp meant, and what a Bard was, and ought to be;—what the Scottish Lion meant, and how he got caged by the tressure of Charlemagne,* and who Charlemagne was;—what the English leopards meant, and who the Black Prince was, and how he reigned in Aquitaine,¹—Would not all this be more useful, in all true senses, to the children, than being able, in two seconds quicker than children outside, to say how much twenty-seven pounds of bacon comes to at ninepence farthing a pound? And if then they could be shown, on a map, without any railroads on it,—where Aquitaine was, and Poitiers, and where Picardy, and Crécy, would it not, for children who are likely to pass their lives in Coniston, be more entertaining and more profitable than to learn where “New Orleans” is (without any new Joan to be named from it), or New Jerusalem, without any new life to be lived in it?

* See *Fors*, Letter 25, §§ 10, 11, 12. [Vol. XXVII. pp. 455–458.]

¹ [Here, again, see Letter 25; *ibid.*, pp. 454–455.]

4. Fourthly. Not only do the arts of literature and arithmetic continually hinder children in the *acquisition* of ideas,—but they are apt greatly to confuse and encumber the *memory* of them. Read now, with renewed care, Plato’s lovely parable of Theuth and the king of Egypt (17, § 5¹), and observe the sentences I translated, though too feebly. “It is not medicine (to give the power) of divine memory, but a quack’s drug for memorandum, leaving the memory, idle.” I myself, for instance, have written down memoranda of many skies, but have forgotten the skies themselves. Turner wrote nothing,—but remembered all. And this is much more true of things that depend for their beauty on sound and accent; for in the present fury of printing, bad verses, that could not be *heard* without disgust, are continually printed and read as if there was nothing wrong in them; while all the best powers of minstrel, bard, and troubadour depended on the memory and voice, as distinct from writing.* All which was perfectly known to wise men ages ago, and it is continually intimated in the different forms which the myth of Hermes takes, from this Ibis Theuth of Egypt down to Correggio’s most perfect picture of Mercury teaching Cupid to read;²—where, if you will look at the picture wisely, you see that it really ought to be called, Mercury trying, and *failing*, † to teach Cupid to read! For, indeed, from the beginning and to the end of time, Love reads without letters, and counts without arithmetic.

But, lastly and chiefly, the personal conceit and ambition

* See lives of Beatrice and Lucia, in the first number of *Roadside Songs of Tuscany* [Vol. XXXII.]

† Sir Joshua, with less refinement, gives the same meaning to the myth, in his picture of Cupid pouting and recusant, on being required to decipher the word, “pin-money.”³

¹ [Vol. XXVII. pp. 294–295.]

² [No. 10 in the National Gallery; for other references to the picture, see Vol. XIX. p. 29, and *n.*]

³ [The picture of “Venus chiding Cupid” in Lord Northbrook’s collection; engraved by Bartolozzi, 1784; exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery, 1883.]

developed by reading, in minds of selfish activity, lead to the disdain of manual labour, and the desire of all sorts of unattainable things, and fill the streets with discontented and useless persons, seeking some means of living in town society by their wits. I need not enlarge on this head; every reader's experience must avow the extent and increasing plague of this fermenting imbecility, striving to make for itself what it calls a "position in life."¹

5. In sight, and thought of all these sources of evil in our present staples of education, I drew out the scheme of schooling, which incidentally and partially defined in various passages of *Fors* (see mainly Letter 67, § 19²), I now sum as follows.

Every parish school to have garden, playground, and cultivable land round it, or belonging to it, spacious enough to employ the scholars in fine weather mostly out of doors.³

Attached to the building, a children's library, in which the scholars who *care* to read may learn that art as deftly as they like, by themselves, helping each other without troubling the master;—a sufficient laboratory always, in which shall be specimens of all common elements of natural substances, and where simple chemical, optical, and pneumatic experiments may be shown; and according to the size and importance of the school, attached workshops, many or few,—but always a carpenter's, and first of those added in the better schools, a potter's.

In the school itself, the things taught will be music, geometry, astronomy, botany, zoology, to all; drawing, and history, to children who have gift for either. And finally, to all children of whatever gift, grade, or age, the laws of Honour, the habit of Truth, the Virtue of Humility, and the Happiness of Love.

6. I say, the "virtue of Humility," as including all the habits of Obedience and instincts of Reverence which are

¹ [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, §§ 2, 3 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 54–55).]

² [See Vol. XXVIII. pp. 655–656, and the other passages there noted.]

³ [Compare Letter 95, § 4 (p. 495).]

dwelt on throughout *Fors*, and all my other books*—but the things included are of course the primary ones to be taught, and the thirteenth Aphorism of that sixty-seventh letter cannot be too often repeated, that “Moral education begins in making the creature we have to educate, clean, and obedient.” In after time, this “virtue of humility” is to be taught to a child chiefly by gentleness to its failures, showing it that by reason of its narrow powers, it cannot *but* fail. I have seen my old clerical master, the Rev. Thomas Dale,¹ beating his son Tom hard over the head with the edge of a grammar, because Tom could not construe a Latin verse, when the rev. gentleman ought only with extreme tenderness and pitifulness to have explained to Tom that—he wasn’t Thomas the Rhymer.²

For the definitely contrary cultivation of the vice of Pride, compare the education of Steerforth by Mr. Creakle. (*David Copperfield*, chap. vi.)

But it is to be remembered that humility can only be truly, and therefore only effectively taught, when the master is swift to recognize the special faculties of children, no less than their weaknesses, and that it is his quite highest and most noble function to discern these, and prevent their discouragement or effacement in the vulgar press for a common prize. See the beautiful story of little George, *Friends in Council*.³

* Compare especially *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 144 to end of Lecture IV. I repeat emphatically the opening sentence—“Educate, or Govern,—they are one and the same word. Education does not mean teaching people to know what they do not know—it means teaching them to behave as they do not behave. It is not teaching the youth of England the shapes of letters and the tricks of numbers, and then leaving them to turn their arithmetic to roguery and their literature to lust. It is, on the contrary, training them into the perfect exercise and kingly continence of their bodies and souls,—by kindness, by watching, by warning, by precept, and by praise,—but above all, by example.”⁴

¹ [See Vol. I. pp. xxxiii., xlix.]

² [For other references to Thomas of Erceldoune (*circa* 1220–1297), called “the Rhymer,” see Vol. XIII. p. 49; and *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, §§ 38, 41, 47.]

³ [A wrong reference, and the right one has not been traced. For Ruskin’s references to Sir Arthur Helps’ works, see General Index.]

⁴ [Vol. XVIII. p. 502.]

7. Next, as to writing. A certain kind of writing, which will take from half-an-hour to an hour for a line, will indeed be taught—as long ago promised, in St. George’s schools; examples being given of the manner of it at § 7 of Letter 16, and Letter 64, § 16;¹ but, so far from qualifying the pupil for immediately taking a lucrative clerkship in a Government office, or a county banking-house, or a solicitor’s ante-room, the entire aim of our training will be to *disqualify* him, for ever, from writing with any degree of current speed; and especially from producing any such *æschrography* (as everybody writes Greek-English nowadays, I use this term in order more clearly to explain myself) as the entry in my own Banker’s book facsimiled at § 8 of Letter 61,² and the “Dec.” for December here facsimiled from a London tradesman’s bill just

sent in, or  the ornamental R engrossed on my

Father’s executor’s articles of release, engraved at § 3 of Letter 16;³ but to compel him, on the contrary, to write whatever words deserve to be written in the most perfect and graceful and legible manner possible to his hand.

And in this resolution, stated long since,⁴ I am now more fixed than ever; having had much experience lately of handwriting, and finding, first, that the scholar who among my friends does the *most* as well as the best work,⁵ writes the most deliberately beautiful hand: and that all the hands of sensible people agree in being merely a reduction of good print to a form producible by the steady motion of a pen, and are therefore always round, and extremely upright, becoming more or less picturesque according to the humour of the writer, but never slurred into any unbecoming speed, nor subdued by any merely

¹ [Vol. XXVII. p. 284; Vol. XXVIII. p. 573.]

² [Vol. XXVIII. p. 494.]

³ [Vol. XXVII. p. 280.]

⁴ [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 276.]

⁵ [Dr. Caspar Gregory, of Leipsic.]

adi 20 d'ito

Ho Iacomo tintoretto dal magnifico
 in domingio fevo exquisissimo un d'oro
 de comprar tele et colori de expenzer
 li doi quadri grandi nella sala
 nel duenti trenta

un'oro 30-

adi 3 d'agosto 1577
 Ho Iacomo tintoretto dal mag^o di pablo d'anna
 exquisissimo un'ora della scuola di san vito
 ducati d'oro p. l'omia provisione anticipata
 d'una vna provisione un'ora giusta dal povero
 povero solo d'oro d'ito in capitolo general nel d'oro 100-

adi 13 d'ito 1579
 Ho Iacomo neburi d'ito tintoretto dal mag^o di giovanni
 sopra d'ito ducati cento quali sono ~~abati~~ come per l'omia
 provisione del expenzer li quadri in sala et questo anno del 79

100-

Ho Iacomo sopra d'ito dal sopra d'ito ducati sedici per li
 azuri oltra marini messi in li quadri di questo anno
 et questo di ordine d'elli 3 expenzer sopra li quadri nel d'oro 16-

mechanical habit,* whereas the writing of foolish people is almost always mechanically monotonous; and that of begging-letter writers, with rare exception much sloped, and sharp at the turns.

8. It will be the law of our schools, therefore, that the children who want to write clerk's and begging-letter hands, must learn them at home; and will not be troubled by *us* to write at all. The children who want to write like gentlemen and ladies (like St. Jerome, or Queen Elizabeth, for instance¹) will learn, as aforesaid, with extreme slowness. And if you will now read carefully the fiftieth letter, above referred to, you will find much to meditate upon, respecting home as well as school teaching; more especially the home-teaching of the mining districts (§ 11), and the home library of cheap printing, with the small value of it to little Agnes (§ 4).² And as it chances—for I have no more time for retrospect in this letter—I will close it with the record of a lesson received again in Agnes's cottage, last week. Her mother died three years ago; and Agnes, and her sister Isabel, are at service:—another family is in the cottage—and another little girl, younger than Agnes, “Jane Anne,”³ who has two elder brothers, and one little one. The family have been about a year there, beginning farmer's

* Sir Walter's hand, from the enormous quantity and constancy of his labour, becomes almost mechanical in its steadiness, on the pages of his novels; but is quite free in his letters. Sir Joshua's hand is curiously slovenly; Tintoret's, grotesque and irregular in the extreme; Nelson's, almost a perfect type: especially in the point of not hurrying, see facsimile just before Trafalgar, *Fors* Letter 66.⁴ William the Conqueror and his queen Matilda could only sign a cross for their names.

¹ [“Like St. Jerome” means presumably “like the Greek writing which Carpaccio represents St. Jerome reading”: see Letter 61, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 495). Specimens of Queen Elizabeth's handwriting are exhibited in the British Museum.]

² [See Vol. XXVIII. pp. 262–263, 256–257.]

³ [Ruskin refers again to this little girl in Part iv. of *Christ's folk in the Apennine* (Vol. XXXII.).]

⁴ [See Plate VI. in Vol. XXVIII. p. 625. For an example of Scott's hand in the *Novels*, see above, p. 264. To show Tintoret's hand (as also to illustrate his scale of payment), Ruskin placed on sale, through Mr. William Ward, facsimiles of “Twenty-three Receipts given by Tintoretto between 1553 and 1554 for money received by him from the Confraternity of S. Rocco for paintings.” A sheet of these is here reproduced.]

life, after miner's, with much ill-fortune, the last stroke of which was the carrying away of the entire roof of their grange, at midnight, by the gale of 11th December, the timbers of it thundering and splintering over the roof of the dwelling-house. The little girl was so terrified that she had a succession of fainting fits next day, and was sent for a week to Barrow, for change of scene. When I went up on Wednesday last to see how things were going on, she had come back that morning, and was sitting with her child-brother on her lap, in the corner by the fireside. I stayed talking to the mother for half-an-hour, and all that time the younger child was so quiet that I thought it must be ill; but, on my asking,—“Not he,” the mother said, “but he's been jumping about all the morning, and making such a fuss about getting his sister back, that now he's not able to stir.”

But the dearest child of the cottage was not there.

Last spring they had a little boy, between these two, full of intelligent life, and pearl of chief price to them. He went down to the field by the brookside (Beck Leven), one bright morning when his elder brother was mowing. The child came up behind without speaking; and the back sweep of the scythe caught the leg, and divided a vein. His brother carried him up to the house; and what swift binding could do was done—the doctor, three miles away, coming as soon as might be, arranged all for the best, and the child lay pale and quiet till the evening, speaking sometimes a little to his father and mother. But at six in the evening he began to sing. Sang on, clearer and clearer, all through the night,—so clear at last, you might have heard him, his mother said, “far out on the moor there.” Sang on till the full light of morning, and so passed away.

“Did he sing with words?” I asked.

“Oh, yes; just the bits of hymns he had learnt at the Sunday-school.”

So much of his education finally available to him, you observe.

Not the multiplication table *then* nor catechism then, nor commandments then,—these rhymes only remained to him for his last happiness.

“Happiness in delirium only,” say you?

All true love, all true wisdom, and all true knowledge, seem so to the world: but, without question, the forms of weakness of body preceding death, or those during life which are like them, are the testing states, often the strongest states, of the soul. The “Oh, I could prophesy!”¹ of Harry Percy, is neither dream, nor delirium.

9. And the lesson I received from that cottage history, and which I would learn with my readers, is of the power for good in what, rightly chosen, has been rightly learned by heart at school, whether it show at the time of not.² The hymn may be forgotten in the playground, or ineffective afterwards in restraining contrary habits of feeling and life. But all that is good and right retains its unfelt authority; and the main change which I would endeavour to effect in ordinary school discipline is to make the pupils read less, and remember more; exercising them in committing to memory, not by painful effort, but by patient repetition, until they cannot but remember (and observing always that the accentuation is right,—for if *that* be once right the understanding will come in due time), helping farther with whatever elementary music, both of chant and instrument, may be familiarly attainable. To which end, may I modestly recommend all musical clergymen, and churchwardens, to dispense—if funds are limited—with organs in the church, in favour of harp, harpsichord, zittern, or peal of bells, in the schoolroom:³ and to endeavour generally to make the parish enjoy *proper* music out of the church as well as in it, and on Saturday as well as Sunday.

10. I hope to persevere in these summaries through next letter; meantime, this curiously apposite passage in

¹ [1 *King Henry IV.*, Act v. sc. 4.]

² [compare the *Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*, § 82, where Ruskin refers to this passage and reinforces it, giving a passage from the Wisdom of Solomon.]

³ [Ruskin, it may be mentioned, gave a set of hand-bells to Coniston School.]

one received this morning, from a much valued Companion, needs instant answer (she is the second tutress in a school for young girls, which has been lately begun by a German lady, who is resolved to allow no “cramming”):—

“We have nineteen pupils now, and more are promised. The children are all progressing satisfactorily, and seem happy, but our path will be uphill for some time to come. Sewing is in a very backward condition; the children think it would be better done in the machine. Hardly any of them can write, and we can’t get any decent large-hand copy-books. And they don’t like poetry! What is to be done with such matter-of-fact young persons? On the other hand, they are lovable and intelligent children, much interested in the garden (they are to have little gardens of their own when the spring comes) and the birds. *Birds*, you observe, not merely sparrows; for though we are only on the edge of the Liverpool smoke we have plenty of robins and starlings, besides one tomtit, and a visit from a chaffinch the other day. We have not been able to begin the cookery class yet, for we are not actually living at the school; we hope to take up our abode there next term. Mrs. Green, my ‘principal,’—I don’t see why I shouldn’t say mistress, I like the word much better,—*could* teach spinning if she had a wheel, only then people would say we were insane, and take the children away from us.

“I am very much obliged for last *Fors*, and delighted to hear that there is a new one nearly ready. But would you please be a little bit more explicit on the subject of ‘work’ and ‘ladyhood’?¹ Not that what you have said already seems obscure to me, but people disagree as to the interpretation of it. The other night I proposed to a few fellow-disciples that we should make an effort to put ourselves in serviceable relationship to some few of our fellow-creatures, and they told me that ‘all that was the landlord’s business or the capitalist’s.’ Rather disheartening, to a person who has no hope of ever becoming a landlord or capitalist.”

11. Yes, my dear, and very finely the Landlord and Capitalist—in the sense these people use the words—of land-taxer and labour-taxer, have done that business of theirs hitherto! Land and labour appear to be discovering—and rather fast nowadays—that perhaps they might get along by themselves, if they were to try. Of that, more next letter;²—for the answers to your main questions in this,—the sewing is a serious one. The “little wretches”—(this is a well-trained young lady’s expression, not mine—interjectional on my reading the passage to her) must be

¹ [See above, pp. 471–472.]

² [See Letter 95, § 2 (p. 493).]

got out of all that as soon as you can. For plain work, get Miss Stanley's book,¹ which gives you the elements of this work at Whitelands,—(I hope, however, to get Miss Greenaway to sketch us a pattern frock or two, instead of the trimmed water-butts of Miss Stanley's present diagrams)—and for fine work, make them every one sew a proper sampler, with plenty of robins in it, and your visitors the tomtit and chaffinch, and any motto they like in illuminated letters, finished with gold thread,—the ground, silk. Then, for my meaning as to women's work, what *should* I mean, but scrubbing furniture, dusting walls, sweeping floors, making the beds, washing up the crockery, ditto the children, and whipping them they want it,—mending their clothes, cooking their dinners,—and when there are cooks more than enough, helping with the farm work, or the garden, or the dairy? Is *that* plain speaking enough? Have I not fifty times over,² in season and out of season, dictated and insisted and asseverated and—what stronger word else there may be—that the essentially right life for all woman-kind is that of the Swiss Paysanne,—and given Gotthelf's Freneli for the perfect type of it, and dedicated to her in *Proserpina* the fairest pansy in the world,³ keeping only the poor little one of the sand-hills for Ophelia?

12. But in a rougher way yet—take now the facts of such life in old Scotland, seen with Walter Scott's own eyes:⁴—

"I have often heard Scott mention some curious particulars of his first visit to the remote fastness of one of these Highland friends; but whether he told the story of Invernahyle, or of one of his own relations of the Clan Campbell, I do not recollect; I rather think the latter was the case. On reaching the brow of a bleak eminence overhanging the primitive tower and its tiny patch of cultivated ground, he found his host and three sons, and perhaps half a dozen attendant *gillies*, all stretched half asleep

¹ [*Needlework and Cutting-out; being Hints Suggestions, and Notes for the use of Teachers in dealing with the difficulties in the Needlework Schedule*, by Kate Stanley, Head Governess and Teacher of Needlework at Whitelands College, 1883. The little book is dedicated to Ruskin.]

² [See, for instance, Letters 5 and 91 (Vol. XXVII. p. 88; and above, p. 441).]

³ [Compare Letter 91, § 4 (p. 441).]

⁴ [Lockhart, vol. i. pp. 141, 142.]

in their tartans upon the heath, with guns and dogs, and a profusion of game about them; while in the courtyard, far below, appeared a company of women, actively engaged in loading a cart with manure. The stranger was not a little astonished when he discovered, on descending from the height, that among these industrious females were the laird's own lady, and two or three of her daughters; but they seemed quite unconscious of having been detected in an occupation unsuitable to their rank—retired presently to their 'bowers,' and when they reappeared in other dresses, retained no traces of their morning's work, except complexions glowing with a radiant freshness, for one evening of which many a high-bred beauty would have bartered half her diamonds. He found the young ladies not ill informed and exceedingly agreeable; and the song and the dance seemed to form the invariable termination of their busy days."

You think such barbarism for ever past? No, my dears; it is only the barbarity of idle gentlemen that must pass. *They* will have to fill the carts—you to drive them; and never any more evade the burden and heat of the day—they, in shooting birds and each other, or you in walking about in sun-hats and parasols,—like this.





LETTER 95

FORS INFANTIÆ

1. I do not well know whether it has more distressed, or encouraged me, to find how much is wanting, and how much to be corrected, in the hitherto accepted modes of school education for our youngest children. Here,¹ for the last year or two, I have had the most favourable opportunities for watching and trying various experiments on the minds of country children, most thankfully recognizing their native power; and most sorrowfully the inefficiency of the means at the schoolmaster's disposal, for its occupation and development. For the strengthening of his hands, and that of our village teachers and dames in general, I have written these following notes at speed, for the brevity and slightness of which I must pray the reader's indulgence: he will find the substance of them has been long and deeply considered.

2. But first let me fulfil the pledge given in last number of *Fors*² by a few final words about the Land Question—needless if people would read my preceding letters with

¹ [In the Coniston village school.]

² [See Letter 94, § 11 (p. 490).]

any care, but useful, as a general heading of them, for those who have not time to do so.

The plan of St. George's Guild is wholly based on the supposed possession of land by hereditary proprietors, inalienably; or if by societies, under certain laws of responsibility to the State.

In common language, and in vulgar thought, the possession of land is confused with "freedom." But no man is so free as a beggar; and no man is more solemnly a servant to God, the king, and the laws of his country, than an honest land-holder.

The nonsense thought and talked about "Nationalization of Land," like other nonsense, must have its day, I suppose,—and I hope, soon, its night. All healthy states from the beginning of the world, living on land,* are founded on hereditary tenure, and perish when either the lords or peasants sell their estates, much more when they let them out for hire. The single line of the last words of John of Gaunt to Richard II., "Landlord of England art thou now, not King,"¹ expresses the root of the whole matter; and the present weakness of the Peers in their dispute with the Commons² is because the Upper House is composed now no more of Seigneurs, but of Landlords.

3. Possession of land implies the duty of living on it, and by it, if there is enough to live on; then, having got one's own life from it by one's own labour or wise superintendence of labour, if there is more land than is enough

* As distinct from those living by trade or piracy.

¹ [*King Richard II.*, Act ii. sc. 1.]

² [A conflict between the House of Lords and the House of Commons was now at its height, owing to the action of the Lords in declining to accept the Reform Bill for the extension of the County franchise, unless it were coupled with a measure for the redistribution of seats (July 9). A vigorous agitation against the House of Lords marked the autumn recess. Ultimately a compromise was arrived at, on the basis of the Government promise to pass a Redistribution Bill, if the Lords first passed the Reform Bill, and to discuss the lines of redistribution with the leaders of the opposition: see Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. iii. pp. 126–139.]

for one's self, the duty of making it fruitful and beautiful for as many more as can live on it.

The owner of land, necessarily and justly left in a great measure by the State to do what he will with his own, is nevertheless entirely responsible to the State for the generally beneficial management of his territory; and the sale of his land, or of any portion of it, only allowed under special conditions, and with solemn public registry of the transference to another owner: above all, the landmarks by which estates are described are never to be moved.

4. A certain quantity of public land (some belonging to the king and signory, some to the guilds of craftsmen, some to the town or village corporations) must be set aside for public uses and pleasures, and especially for purposes of education, which, rightly comprehended, consists, half of it, in making children familiar with natural objects, and the other half in teaching the practice of piety towards them (piety meaning kindness to living things, and orderly use of the lifeless).

And throughout the various passages referring to this subject in *Fors*, it will be found that I always presuppose a certain quantity of carefully tended land to be accessible near our schools and universities, not for exercise merely, but for instruction;—see last *Fors*, § 5 [p. 484].

5. Of course, schools of this kind cannot be in large towns,—the town school must be for townspeople; but I start with the general principle that every school is to be fitted for the children in its neighbourhood who are likely to grow up and live in its neighbourhood. The idea of a general education which is to fit everybody to be Emperor of Russia,¹ and provoke a boy, whatever he is, to want to be something better, and wherever he was born to think it a disgrace to die, is the most entirely and directly diabolic of all the countless stupidities into which the British nation has been of late betrayed by its avarice and irreligion. There are, indeed, certain elements of education which are

¹ [Compare Letter 9, § 6 (Vol. XXVII. p. 150).]

alike necessary to the inhabitants of every spot of earth. Cleanliness, obedience, the first laws of music, mechanics, and geometry, the primary facts of geography and astronomy, and the outlines of history, should evidently be taught alike to poor and rich, to sailor and shepherd to labourer and shopboy. But for the rest, the efficiency of any school will be found to increase exactly in the ratio of its direct adaptation to the circumstances of the children it receives; and the quantity of knowledge to be attained in a given time being equal, its value will depend on the possibilities of its instant application. You need not teach botany to the sons of fishermen, architecture to shepherds, or painting to colliers; still less the elegances of grammar to children who throughout the probable course of their total lives will have, or ought to have, little to say, and nothing to write.*

6. Farther, of schools in all places, and for all ages, the healthy working will depend on the total exclusion of the stimulus of competition in any form or disguise. Every child should be measured by its own standard, trained to its own duty, and rewarded by its just praise. It is the *effort* that deserves praise, not the success; nor is it a question for any student whether he is cleverer than others or duller, but whether he has done the best he could with the gifts he has. The madness of the modern cram and examination system arises principally out of the struggle to get lucrative places; but partly also out of the radical blockheadism of supposing that all men are naturally equal,¹ and can only make their way by elbowing;—the facts being that every child is born with an accurately defined and absolutely limited capacity; that he is naturally (if able at all) able for some things and unable for others;

* I am at total issue with most preceptors as to the use of grammar to *any* body. In a recent examination of our Coniston school I observed that the thing the children did exactly best, was their parsing, and the thing they did exactly worst, their repetition. Could stronger proof be given that the dissection of a sentence is as bad a way to the understanding of it as the dissection of a beast to the biography of it?

¹ [Compare Vol. XXVII. p. 96, and the other places there noted.]

that no effort and no teaching can add one particle to the granted ounces of his available brains; that by competition he may paralyse or pervert his faculties, but cannot stretch them a line; and that the entire grace, happiness, and virtue of his life depend on his contentment in doing what he can, dutifully, and in staying where he is, peaceably. So far as he regards the less or more capacity of others, his superiorities are to be used for *their* help, not for his own pre-eminence; and his inferiorities to be no ground of mortification, but of pleasure in the admiration of nobler powers. It is impossible to express the quantity of delight I used to feel in the power of Turner and Tintoret, when my own skill was nascent only; and all good artists will admit that there is far less personal pleasure in doing a thing beautifully than in seeing it beautifully done. Therefore, over the door of every school, and the gate of every college I would fain see engraved in their marble the absolute Forbidding

μηδεν κατα εριθειαν η κενοδοξιαν:
 “Let *nothing* be done through strife or vain glory:”¹

and I would have fixed for each age of children and students a certain standard of pass in examination, so

¹ [Philippians ii. 3. The MS. at Brantwood has an additional passage (headed “*fors* 10. 31st June”):—

“As over the main entrance of every school I would have written the words, ‘Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory,’ so over the door of its library I would have written the words which define the manner of doing—

εν παντι εργαω αγαθω καρποφορουνται—

‘in every good work bearing fruit’; and, as the children become able to understand its meaning, the whole context of that sentence should be explained to them, namely, the eleven verses from the 9th to the 20th of 1st Colossians which define the relations of knowledge to labour, and of both to eternal life, according to the faith of ancient Christendom.

“It may be that the child as it advances in years may become a Mahometan, Buddhist, Positivist, or Materialist. But, supposing it to retain common human intelligence, it will always be glad to have learned as an historical fact what the faith of European Christendom once was; while for Mahometan, Buddhist, Positivist, and Materialist, no less securely than for the Christian, the words of the inscribed text remain the true description of every wise man. To the end of time, for humanity it will remain the law of its being, that truth can only be perceived by the innocent, and knowledge only reached through duty.”]

adapted to average capacity and power of exertion, that none need fail who had attended to their lessons and obeyed their masters; while its variety of trial should yet admit of the natural distinctions attaching to progress in especial subjects and skill in peculiar arts. Beyond such indication or acknowledgment of merit, there should be neither prizes nor honours; these are meant by Heaven to be the proper rewards of a man's consistent and kindly life, not of a youth's temporary and selfish exertion.

7. Nor, on the other hand, should the natural torpor of wholesome dulness be disturbed by provocations, or plagued by punishments. The wise proverb ought in every schoolmaster's mind to be deeply set—"You cannot make a silk purse of a sow's ear;" expanded with the farther scholium that the flap of it will not be the least disguised by giving it a diamond earring. If, in a woman, beauty without discretion be as a jewel of gold in a swine's snout,¹ much more, in man, woman, or child, knowledge without discretion—the knowledge which a fool receives only to puff up his stomach, and sparkle in his cockscorn. As I said,* that in matters moral most men are not intended to be any better than sheep and robins, so, in matters intellectual, most men are not intended to be any wiser than their cocks and bulls,—duly scientific of their yard and pasture, peacefully nescient of all beyond. To be proud and strong, each in his place and work, is permitted and ordained to the simplest; but ultra,—ne sutor, ne fossor.²

And it is in the wholesome indisposition of the average mind for intellectual labour that due provision is made for the quantity of dull work which must be done in stubbing the Thornaby wastes³ of the world. Modern Utopianism

* Notes on the life of Santa Zita (*Songs of Tuscany*, Part II.).⁴

¹ [Proverbs xi. 22.]

² [Pliny, 35, 10, 36: "ne sutor supra crepidam (judicaret)."]

³ [Tennyson, *Northern Farmer, Old Style*: compare Vol. XX. p. 87, and (in a later volume of this edition) "Mending the Sieve," § 24.]

⁴ [See Vol. XXXII. Part II. of the *Roadside Songs of Tuscany* had been issued in July 1884.]

imagines that the world is to be stubbed by steam, and human arms and legs to be eternally idle; not perceiving that thus it would reduce man to the level of his cattle indeed, who can only graze and gore, but not dig! It is indeed certain that advancing knowledge will guide us to less painful methods of human toil; but in the true Utopia, man will rather harness himself, with his oxen, to his plough, than leave the devil to drive it.

8. The entire body of teaching throughout the series of *Fors Clavigera* is one steady assertion of the necessity that educated persons should share their thoughts with the uneducated, and take also a certain part in their labours. But there is not a sentence implying that the education of all should be alike, or that there is to be no distinction of master from servant, or of scholar from clown. That education should be open to all, is as certain as that the sky should be; but, as certainly, it should be enforced on none, and benevolent Nature left to lead her children, whether men or beasts, to take or leave at their pleasure. Bring horse and man to the water, let them drink if, and when, they will;—the child who desires education will be bettered by it, the child who dislikes it, only disgraced.

Of course, I am speaking here of intellectual education, not moral. The laws of virtue and honour are, indeed, to be taught compulsorily to all men; whereas our present forms of education refuse to teach them to any; and allow the teaching, by the persons interested in their promulgation, of the laws of cruelty and lying, until we find these British islands gradually filling with a breed of men who cheat without shame, and kill without remorse.

It is beyond the scope of the most sanguine thought to conceive how much misery and crime would be effaced from the world by persistence, even for a few years, of a system of education thus directed to raise the fittest into positions of influence, to give to every scale of intellect its natural sphere, and to every line of action its unquestioned principle. At present wise men, for the most part, are silent, and good

men powerless; the senseless vociferate, and the heartless govern; while all social law and providence are dissolved by the enraged agitation of a multitude, among whom every villain has a chance of power, every simpleton of praise, and every scoundrel of fortune.

9. Passing now to questions of detail in the mode of organizing school instruction, I would first insist on the necessity of a sound system in elementary music. Musicians, like painters, are almost virulently determined in their efforts to abolish the laws of sincerity and purity; and to invent, each for his own glory, new modes of dissolute and lascivious sound. No greater benefit could be conferred on the upper as well as the lower classes of society than the arrangement of a grammar of simple and pure music, of which the code should be alike taught in every school in the land. My attention has been long turned to this object, but I have never till lately had leisure to begin serious work upon it. During the last year, however, I have been making experiments with a view to the construction of an instrument by which very young children could be securely taught the relations of sound in the octave; unsuccessful only in that the form of lyre which was produced for me, after months of labour, by the British manufacturer, was as curious a creation of visible deformity as a Greek lyre was of grace, besides being nearly as expensive as a piano! For the present, therefore, not abandoning the hope of at last attaining a simple stringed instrument, I have fallen back—and I think, probably, with final good reason—on the most sacred of all musical instruments, the “Bell.”

Whether the cattle-bell of the hills, or, from the cathedral tower, monitor of men, I believe the sweetness of its prolonged tone the most delightful and wholesome for the ear and mind of all instrumental sound. The subject is too wide to be farther dwelt on here; of experiment or progress made, account will be given in my reports to the St. George’s Guild.¹

¹ [This, however, was not done.]

10. Next for elocution. The foundational importance of beautiful speaking has been disgraced by the confusion of it with diplomatic oratory, and evaded by the vicious notion that it can be taught by a master learned in it as a separate art. The management of the lips, tongue, and throat may, and perhaps should, be so taught; but this is properly the first function of the singing master. Elocution is a moral faculty; and no one is fit to be the head of a children's school who is not both by nature and attention a beautiful speaker.

By attention, I say, for fine elocution means first an exquisitely close attention to, and intelligence of, the meaning of words, and perfect sympathy with what feeling they describe; but indicated always with reserve. In this reserve, fine reading and speaking (virtually one art) differ from "recitation," which gives the statement or sentiment with the explanatory accent and gesture of an actor. In perfectly pure elocution, on the contrary, the accent ought, as a rule, to be much lighter and gentler than the natural or dramatic one, and the force of it wholly independent of gesture or expression of feature. A fine reader should read, a great speaker speak, as a judge delivers his charge; and the test of his power should be to read or speak unseen.

11. At least an hour of the school-day should be spent in listening to the master's or some trustworthy visitor's reading, but no children should attend unless they were really interested; the rest being allowed to go on with their other lessons or employments; a large average of children, I suppose, are able to sew or draw while they yet attend to reading, and so there might be found a fairly large audience, of whom however those who were usually busy during the lecture should not be called upon for any account of what they had heard; but, on the contrary, blamed, if they had allowed their attention to be diverted by the reading from what they were about, to the detriment of their work. The real audience consisting of the few for whom the book had

been specially chosen, should be required to give perfect and unbroken attention to what they heard; to stop the reader always at any word or sentence they did not understand, and to be prepared for casual examination on the story next day.

I say “on the *story*,” for the reading, whether poetry or prose, should always be a story of some sort, whether true history, travels, romance, or fairy-tale. In poetry, Chaucer, Spenser, and Scott, for the upper classes, lighter ballad or fable for the lower, contain always some thread of pretty adventure. No merely didactic or descriptive books should be permitted in the reading room, but so far as they are used at all, studied in the same way as grammars; and Shakespeare, accessible always at play time in the library in small and large editions to the young and old alike, should never be used as a school book, nor even formally or continuously read aloud. He is to be known by thinking, not mouthing.

12. I have used, not unintentionally, the separate words “reading room” and library. No school should be considered as organized at all, without these two rooms, rightly furnished; the reading room, with its convenient pulpit and students’ desks, in good light, skylight if possible, for drawing, or taking notes—the library with its broad tables for laying out books on, and recesses for niched reading, and plenty of lateral light¹ kept carefully short of glare: both of them well shut off from the schoolroom or rooms, in which there must be always more or less of noise.

The Bible-reading, and often that of other books in which the text is divided into verses or stanzas, should be frequently conducted by making the children read each its separate verse in important passages, afterwards committing them to memory,—the pieces chosen for this exercise should

¹ [The Building Schedule to the Elementary Education Code has for some years required that light should as far as possible be admitted from the left side of scholars.]

of course be the same at all schools,—with wider scope given within certain limits for choice in profane literature: requiring for a pass, that the children should know accurately out of the passages chosen, a certain number, including not less than five hundred lines, of such poetry as would always be helpful and strengthening to them; therefore never melancholy, but didactic, or expressive of cheerful and resolute feeling.

13. No discipline is of more use to a child's character, with threefold bearing on intellect, memory, and morals, than the being accustomed to relate accurately what it has lately done and seen. The story of Eyes and No Eyes in *Evenings at Home*¹ is intended only to illustrate the difference between inattention and vigilance; but the exercise in narration is a subsequent and separate one; it is in the lucidity, completeness, and honesty of statement. Children ought to be frequently required to give account of themselves, though always allowed reserve, if they ask: "I would rather not say, mamma," should be accepted at once with serene confidence on occasion; but of the daily walk and work the child should take pride in giving full account, if questioned; the parent or tutor closely lopping exaggeration, investigating elision, guiding into order, and aiding in expression. The finest historical style may be illustrated in the course of the narration of the events of the day.

14. Next, as regards arithmetic: as partly stated already in the preceding *Fors*, § 2 [p. 479], children's time should never be wasted, nor their heads troubled, with it. The importance at present attached to it is a mere filthy folly, coming of the notion that every boy is to become first a banker's clerk and then a banker,—and that every woman's principal business is in checking the cook's accounts. Let children have small incomes of pence won by due labour,—they will soon find out the difference between a three-penny-piece and a fourpenny, and how many of each go to

¹ [For particulars of this book, see Vol. XXVI. p. 114 n.]

a shilling. Then, watch the way they spend their money,* and teach them patience in saving, and the sanctity of a time-honoured hoard (but for use in a day of need, not for lending at interest); so they will painlessly learn the great truth known to so few of us—that two and two make four, not five. Then insist on perfect habits of order and putting-by of things; this involves continually knowing and counting how many there are. The multiplication table may be learned when they want it—a longish addition sum will always do instead; and the mere mechanism of multiplication and division and dotting and carrying can be taught by the monitors; also of fractions, as much as that $\frac{1}{2}$ means a half-penny and $\frac{1}{4}$ a farthing.†

15. Next for geography. There is, I suppose, no subject better taught at elementary schools; but to the pursuit of it, whether in advanced studentship or in common life, there is now an obstacle set so ludicrously insuperable, that for ordinary people it is simply an end to effort. I happen at this moment to have the first plate to finish for the *Bible of Amiens*, giving an abstract of the features of France.¹ I took for reduction, as of convenient size, probably containing all I wanted to reduce, the map in the *Harrow Atlas of Modern Geography*,² and found the only clearly visible and the only accurately delineated things in it, were the railroads! To begin with, there are two Mont

* Not in Mrs. Pardiggle's fashion:³ a child ought to have a certain sum given it to give away, and a certain sum to spend for itself wisely; and it ought not to be allowed to give away its spending money. Prudence is a much more rare virtue than generosity.

† I heard an advanced class tormented out of its life the other day at our school to explain the difference between a numerator and denominator. I wasn't sure myself, for the minute, which was which; and supremely didn't care.

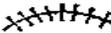
¹ [The plate lettered "The Dynasties of France," illustrating ch. i. § 12.]

² [*The Harrow Atlas of Modern Geography, with Index*. Selected from the maps published under the superintendence of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. Stanford & Co., 1856. Harrow: Crowley and Clarke, Booksellers to Harrow School. See the map of "France in Departments."]

³ [See *Bleak House*, ch. viii.]

Blancs, of which the freeborn British boy may take his choice. Written at some distance from the biggest of them, in small italics, are the words “Grand St. Bernard,” which the boy cannot but suppose to refer to some distant locality; but neither of the Mont Blancs, each represented as a circular pimple, is engraved with anything like the force and shade of the Argonne hills about Bar-le-Due; while the southern chain of the hills of Burgundy is similarly represented as greatly more elevated than the Jura. Neither the Rhine, Rhone, Loire, nor Seine is visible except with a lens; nor is any boundary of province to be followed by the eye; patches of feeble yellow and pale brown, dirty pink and grey, and uncertain green, melt into each other helplessly across wriggings of infinitesimal dots; while the railways, not merely black lines, but centipede or myriapede caterpillars,¹ break up all France, as if it were crackling clay, into senseless and shapeless divisions, in which the eye cannot distinguish from the rest even the great lines of railway themselves, nor any relative magnitudes of towns, nor even their places accurately,—the measure of nonsense and misery being filled up by a mist of multitudinous names of places never heard of, much less spoken of, by any human being ten miles out of them.

16. For maps of this kind, there can be no question with any reasonable human creature that, first, proper physical maps should be substituted; and secondly, proper historical ones; the diagrams of the railways being left to Bradshaw; and the fungus growths of modern commercial towns to the sellers of maps for counting-houses. And the Geological Society should, for pure shame, neither write nor speak another word, till it has produced effectively true models to scale of the known countries of the world.² These, photographed in good side light, would give all that

¹ [The MS. adds “like this .”]

² [For another reference to the Geological Society in this sense, Vol. XXVI. pp. 568–569 *n.*]

was necessary of the proportion and distribution of mountain ranges;* and these photographs should afterwards be made the basis of beautiful engravings, giving the character of every district completely, whether arable, wooded, rocky, moor, sand, or snow, with the carefulest and clearest tracing of the sources and descent of its rivers; and, in equally careful distinction of magnitude, as stars on the celestial globe, the capitals and great provincial towns; but absolutely without names or inscriptions of any kind. The boy who cannot, except by the help of inscription, know York from Lancaster, or Rheims from Dijon, or Rome from Venice, need not be troubled to pursue his geographical studies. The keys to every map, with the names, should form part of the elementary school geography, which should be the same over the whole British Empire, and should be extremely simple and brief; concerning itself in no wise with manners and customs, number of inhabitants, or species of beasts, but strictly with geographical fact, completed by so much intelligible geology, as should explain whether hills were of chalk, slate, or granite, and remain mercifully silent as to whether they were Palæo- or Kaino-zoic, Permian or Silurian. The age, or ages of the world, are not of the smallest consequence either to ants or myrmidons,—either to moths or men. But the ant and man must know where the world, now existent, is soft or flinty, cultivable or quarriable.

Of course, once a system of drawing rightly made universal, the hand-colouring of these maps would be one of the drawing exercises, absolutely costless, and entirely instructive. The historical maps should also, as a matter of course, be of every county in successive centuries;¹—the

* Of the cheap barbarisms and abortions of modern cram, the frightful method of representing mountain chains by black bars is about the most ludicrous and abominable. All mountain chains are in groups, not bars, and their watersheds are often entirely removed from their points of greatest elevation.

¹ [Of late years such maps have been prepared: see, for instance, the *Historical Atlas of Modern Europe*, edited by R. Lane Poole (Clarendon Press, 1902), in which

state of things in the nineteenth century being finally simplified into a general brown fog, intensified to blackness over the manufacturing centres.

17. Next, in astronomy, the beginning of all is to teach the child the places and names of the stars when it can see them, and to accustom it to watch for the nightly change of those visible. The register of the visible stars of first magnitude and planets should be printed largely and intelligibly for every day of the year, and set by the schoolmaster every day; and the arc described by the sun, with its following and preceding stars, from point to point of the horizon visible at the place, should be drawn, at least weekly, as the first of the drawing exercises.

These, connected on one side with geometry, on the other with writing, should be carried at least as far, and occupy as long a time, as the exercises in music; and the relations of the two arts, and meaning of the words “composition,” “symmetry,” “grace,” and “harmony” in both, should be very early insisted upon and illustrated. For all these purposes, every school should be furnished with progressive examples, in facsimile, of beautiful illuminated writing: for nothing could be more conducive to the progress of general scholarship and taste than that the first natural instincts of clever children for the imitation or, often, the invention of picture writing, should be guided and stimulated by perfect models in their own kind.

18. The woodcut prefixed to this number¹ shows very curiously what complete harmony there is between a clever child’s way of teaching itself to draw and write—and no teaching is so good for it as its own, if that can be had—and the earliest types of beautiful national writing. The indifference as to the places of the letters, or the direction in which they are to be read, and the insertion of any that

Maps XV.—XXIV. are of England; and Emil Reich’s *A New Student’s Atlas of English History* (Macmillan, 1903). So, again, a really good physical atlas, by J. G. Bartholomew (recently awarded the gold medal of the Geographical Society), is now in preparation (vol. iii. was issued in 1899).]

¹ [In the original edition; now transferred to the present place (Plate VII.).]



are to spare for the filling of corners or otherwise blank spaces in the picture, are exactly the modes of early writing which afterwards give rise to its most beautiful decorative arrangements—a certain delight in the dignity of enigma being always at the base of this method of ornamentation. The drawing is by the same little girl whose anxiety that her doll's dress might not hurt its feelings has been already described in my second lecture at Oxford, on the Art of England.¹ This fresco, executed nearly at the same time, when she was six or seven years old, may be compared by antiquarians, not without interest, with early Lombardic MSS. It needs, I think, no farther elucidation than some notice of the difficulty caused by the substitution of T for J in the title of "The Jug," and the reversal of the letter Z in that of "The Zebra," and warning not to mistake the final E of "The Cake" for the handle of a spotted tea-cup. The most beautifully Lombardic involution is that of "The Fan," written—

T N H
E A Ʒ

19. Next, for zoology, I am taking the initiative in what is required myself, by directing some part of the funds of the St. George's Guild to the provision of strongly ringed frames, large enough to contain the beautiful illustrations given by Gould, Audubon, and other such naturalists;² and I am cutting my best books to pieces for the filling of these frames, which can be easily passed from school to school; and I hope to prepare with speed a general text for them, totally incognizant of all quarrel or inquiry concerning species, and the origin thereof; but simply calling a hawk a hawk, and an owl an owl; and trusting to the scholar's sagacity to see the difference; but giving him all

¹ [In the fourth lecture as printed: see *Art of England*, § 91.]

² [See, in the Catalogue of the Sheffield Museum (Vol. XXX.), the account of the Eyton Collection of such prints. For Audubon, see Vol. XXV. p. 181.]

attainable information concerning the habits and talents of every bird and beast.¹

20. Similarly in botany, for which there are quite unlimited means of illustration, in the exquisite original drawings and sketches of great botanists, now uselessly lying in inaccessible cupboards of the British Museum and other scientific institutions.² But the most pressing need is for a simple handbook of the wild flowers of every country—French flowers for French children, Teuton for Teuton, Saxon for Saxon, Highland for Scot—severely accurate in outline, and exquisitely coloured by hand (again the best possible practice in our drawing schools); with a text regardless utterly of any but the most popular names, and of all microscopic observation; but teaching children the beauty of plants as they grow, and their culinary uses when gathered, and that, except for such uses, they should be left growing.³

21. And lastly of needlework. I find among the materials of *Fors*, thrown together long since, but never used, the following sketch of what the room of the Sheffield Museum, set apart for its illustration, was meant to contain.⁴

“All the acicular art of nations, savage and civilized—from Lapland boot, letting in no snow water, to Turkey cushion bossed with pearl,—to valance of Venice gold in needlework,—to the counterpanes and samplers of our own lovely ancestresses—imitable, perhaps, once more, with good help from Whitelands College and Girton. It was but yesterday my own womankind were in much wholesome and sweet excitement, delightful to behold, in the practice of some new device of remedy for Rents (to think how

¹ [The continuation, or revision, of *Love's Meinie*, here contemplated, was not carried out.]

² [For the collection of Sowerby's drawings in the British Museum, see Vol. XXV. p. 421 *n.*]

³ [Ruskin refers in Part iv. of *Christ's Folk in the Apennine* (Vol. XXXII.) to some experiments which he made in the spring of 1887 in teaching village children botany.]

⁴ [Ruskin, however, never sent any specimens of needlework to the Museum, though recently some have been exhibited there (see Vol. XXX.) The passage which here follows (the remainder of § 21) had previously been used by Ruskin. (though with a different order in the paragraphs and with some additional phrases) in his *Letters on a Museum or Picture Gallery*, 1880: see now the later volume of this edition containing *On the Old Road*.]

much of evil there is in the two senses of that four-lettered word! as in the two methods of intonation of its synonym, Tear!), whereby it might be daintily effaced, and with a newness which would never make it worse. The process began—beautiful even to my uninformed eyes—in the likeness of herring-bone masonry, crimson on white, but it seemed to me marvellous that anything should yet be discoverable in needle process, and that of so utilitarian character.

“All that is reasonable, I say, of such work is to be in our first Museum room; all that Athena and Penelope would approve. Nothing that vanity has invented for change, or folly loved for costliness.

“Illustrating the true nature of a thread and a needle, the structure first of wool and cotton, of fur and hair and down, hemp, flax, and silk:—microscope permissible, *here*, if anything can be shown of *why* wool is soft, and fur fine, and cotton downy, and down downier; and how a flax fibre differs from a dandelion stalk, and how the substance of a mulberry leaf can become velvet for Queen Victoria’s crown, and clothing of purple for the housewife of Solomon.

“Then the phase of its dyeing. What azures and emeralds and Tyrian scarlets can be got into fibres of thread!

“Then the phase of its spinning. The mystery of that divine spiral, from finest to firmest, which renders lace possible at Valenciennes;—anchorage possible, after Trafalgar (if Hardy had done as he was bid¹).

“Then the mystery of weaving. The eternal harmony of warp and woof; of all manner of knotting, knitting, and reticulation; the art which makes garments possible woven from the top throughout;² draughts of fishes possible, miraculous enough, always, when a pilchard or herring

¹ [See the last chapter of Southey’s *Life of Nelson*, where Nelson’s dying instructions—“Anchor, Hardy, anchor”—are recorded, and the biographer adds that unhappily the fleet did not anchor. In later editions, however, Southey withdrew the remark, being convinced from the *Memoirs and Correspondence of Lord Collingwood* that the state of the weather, which Nelson could not foresee, would have rendered anchorage dangerous, if not impossible.]

² [Compare John xix. 23.]

shoal gathers itself into companionable catchableness;—which makes, in fine, so many nations possible, and Saxon and Norman beyond the rest.

“And finally, the accomplished phase of needlework—the ‘*Acu Tetigisti*’¹ of all time, which does indeed practically exhibit—what mediæval theologians vainly disputed—how many angels can stand on a needle point, directing the serviceable stitch, to draw the separate into the inseparable.”

22. Very thankfully I can now say that this vision of thread and needlework, though written when my fancy had too much possession of me, is now being in all its branches realised by two greatly valued friends,—the spinning on the old spinning-wheel, with most happy and increasingly acknowledged results, systematized here among our West-morland hills by Mr. Albert Fleming;² the useful sewing, by Miss Stanley of Whitelands College, whose book on that subject³ seems to me in the text of it all that can be desired, but the diagrams of dress may perhaps receive further consideration. For indeed the schools of all young womankind are in great need of such instruction in dress-making as shall comply with womankind’s natural instinct for self-decoration in all worthy and graceful ways, repressing in the rich their ostentation, and encouraging in the poor their wholesome pride.

23. On which matters, vital to the comfort and happiness of every household, I may have a word or two yet to say in next *Fors*;⁴ being content that this one should close with the subjoined extract from a letter I received lately from Francesca’s mother,⁵ who, if any one, has right to be heard on the subject of education; and the rather that it is, in main purport, contrary to much that I have both believed and taught, but, falling in more genially with

¹ [*Plautus Rudens*, v. 2, 19.]

² [See Vol. XXX.]

³ [See above, p. 491.]

⁴ [This, however, was not done.]

⁵ [For Miss Francesca Alexander and her mother, see *Roadside Songs of Tuscany* (Vol. XXXII.).]

the temper of recent tutors and governors, may by them be gratefully acted upon, and serve also for correction of what I may have myself too servilely thought respecting the need of compulsion.

“If I have the least faculty for anything in this world, it is for teaching children, and making them good and *perfectly happy* going along. My whole principle is that no government is of the least use except self-government, and the worst children will do right, if told which is right and wrong, and that they must act for themselves. Then I have a fashion, told me by a friend when Francesca was a baby; which is this,—*never see evil, but praise good*; for instance, if children are untidy, do not find fault, or appear to notice it, but the first time possible, praise them for being neat and fresh, and they will soon become so. I dare say you can account for this, I cannot; but I have tried it many times, and have never known it fail. I have other ideas, but you might not approve of them,—the religious instruction I limited to paying my little friends for learning Dr. Watts’ ‘Though I’m now in younger days,’ but I suppose *that*, like my system generally, is hopelessly old-fashioned. Very young children can learn this verse from it:—

“ ‘I’ll not willingly offend,
Nor be easily offended;
What’s a miss I’ll strive to mend,
And endure what can’t be mended.’

There was an old American sea captain who said he had been many times round the world comfortably by the help of this verse.”

24. The following letters necessitate the return to my old form of notes and correspondence; but as I intend now the close of *Fors* altogether, that I may have leisure for some brief autobiography instead,¹ the old book may be permitted to retain its colloquial character to the end.

“WOODBURN, SELKIRK, N. B., 11th December, 1883.

“DEAR SIR,—The Ashestiel number of *Fors*² reaches me as I complete certain notes on the relationship of Scott to Mungo Park, which will form part of a History of Ettrick Forest, which I hope to publish in 1884.³ This much in explanation of my presumption in writing you at all.

¹ [The first part of *Præterita*, here announced, was published in July 1885.]

² [Letter 92.]

³ [The book was ultimately published in 1886: *The History of Selkirkshire; or, Chronicles of Ettrick Forest*, 2 vols. The three letters here given are printed (not quite so fully) in vol. ii. pp. 291, 297–298. On p. 298 Mr. Craig-Brown quotes the passage from *Fors*, Letter 92, to which he here takes exception, and in answer to it quotes the story here communicated to Ruskin.]

“Having now had all the use of them I mean to take, I send you copies of three letters taken by myself from the originals—and never published until last year, in an obscure local print:—

“1. Letter from Mungo Park to his sister. 2. Letter from Scott to Mrs. Laidlaw, of Peel (close to Ashestiel), written after the bankruptcy of a lawyer brother of the African traveller had involved his entire family circle in ruin. The ‘merry friend’ is Archibald Park, brother of Mungo (see Lockhart, ch. xiii.). It is he Sir Walter refers to in his story about the hot hounds entering Loch Katrine (see *Introd. Lady of Lake*). 3. Letter to young Mungo Park, on the death of his father, the above Archibald.

“I send you these because I know the perusal of letter No. 2 will give you deep pleasure, and I owe you much. Nothing in Sir Walter’s career ever touched me more.

“May I venture a word for Mungo Park? He brought my wife’s aunt into this world in the course of his professional practice at Peebles; and I have heard about his work there. He was one of the most devoted, unselfish men that stood for Scott’s hero—Gideon Gray. Apropos of which, a story, Park, lost on the moors one wild night in winter, directed his horse to a distant light, which turned out to be the candle of a hillshepherd’s cottage. It so happened that the doctor arrived there in the nick of time, for the shepherd’s wife was on the point of confinement. He waited till all was well over, and next morning the shepherd escorted him to where he could see the distant road. Park, noticing the shepherd lag behind, asked him the reason, on which the simple man replied—“Deed, sir, my wife said she was sure you must be an angel, and I think sa tae; so I’m just keeping a hint, to be sure I’ll see you flee up.’ This I have from the nephew of Park’s wife, himself a worthy old doctor and ex-provost of Selkirk. The first motive of Park’s second journey may have been fame; I am disposed to think it was. But I am sure if *auri fames* had anything to do with it, it was for his wife and children that he wanted it. Read his letters home, as I have done, and you will concede to the ill-fated man a character higher than last *Fors* accords him.

“If you place any value on these letters, may I venture to ask you to discharge the debt by a copy of last *F. C.* with your autograph? I am not ashamed to say I ask it in a spirit of blind worship.

“I shall not vex you by writing for your own eyes how much I honour and respect you; but shall content myself with professing myself your obedient servant,

“T. CRAIG-BROWN.”

8th May, 1881.

25. Copy of letters lent to me by Mr. Blaikie, Holydean, and taken by him from boxes belonging to late Miss Jane Park, niece of Mungo Park.

(1.) Original letter from Mungo Park to his sister, Miss Bell Park, Hartwoodmires, near Selkirk. “DEAR SISTER,—I have not heard from Scotland

since I left it, but I hope you are all in good health, and I attribute your silence to the hurry of harvest. However, let me hear from you soon, and write how Sandy's marriage comes on, and how Jeany is, for I have heard nothing from her neither. I have nothing new to tell you. I am very busy preparing my book for the press, and all friends here are in good health. Mr. Dickson is running about, sometimes in the shop and sometimes out of it. Peggy is in very good health, and dressed as I think in a cotton gown of a bluish pattern; a *round-eared much* (sic,—properly mutch), or what they call here a cap, with a white ribbon; a Napkin of lawn or muslin, or some such thing; a white striped dimity petticoat. Euphy and bill (Bell *or* Bill?) are both in very good health, but they are gone out to play, therefore I must defer a description of them till my next letter.—I remain, your loving brother, MUNGO PARK.—London, Sept. 21st, 1795. P.S.—Both Peggy and Mr. Dickson have been very inquisitive about you and beg their compliments to you.”

(2.) (Copy.) Letter from (Sir) Walter Scott to Mrs. Laidlaw, of Peel. (See Lockhart's *Life*, chap. xvii., p. 164.) “MY DEAR MRS. LAIDLAW,—Any remembrance from you is at all times most welcome to me. I have, in fact, been thinking a good deal about Mr. Park's (family?) especially about my good merry friend Archie, upon whom such calamity has fallen. I will write to a friend in London likely to know about such matters to see if possible to procure him the situation of an overseer of extensive farms in improvements, for which he is so well qualified. But success in this is doubtful, and I am aware that their distress must be pressing. Now, ‘Waterloo’ has paid, or is likely to pay me a great deal more money than I think proper to subscribe for the fund for families suffering, and I chiefly consider the surplus as dedicated to assist distress or affliction. I shall receive my letter in a few days from the booksellers, and I will send Mr. Laidlaw care for £50 and three months, the contents to be applied to the service of Mr. Park's family. It is no great sum, but may serve to alleviate any immediate distress; and you can apply it as coming from yourself, which will relieve Park's delicacy upon the subject. I really think I will be able to hear of something for him; at least it shall not be for want of asking about, for I will lug him in as a postscript to every letter I write. Will you tell Mr. Laidlaw with my best compliments—not that I have bought Kaeside, for this James will have told him already, but that I have every reason to think I have got it £600 cheaper than I would at a public sale? Mrs. Scott and the young people join in best compliments, and I ever am, dear Mrs. Laidlaw, very truly yours, WALTER SCOTT.—Edinburgh, 20th Nov. (1815).”

(3.) Letter (original) from Sir Walter Scott to Mr. Mungo Park, Tobermory, Isle of Mull, Oban. “SIR,—I was favoured with your very attentive letter conveying to me the melancholy intelligence that you have lost my old acquaintance and friend, your worthy father. I was using some interest to get him placed on the Superannuated Establishment of the Customs, but God has been pleased to render this unnecessary. A great charge devolves on you, sir, for so young a person, both for the comfort and support of his family. If you let me know your plans of life when settled, it is possible I may be of use to you in some shape or other, which I should desire in the circumstances, though my powers are very limited

unless in the way of recommendation. I beg my sincere condolence may be communicated to your sister, who I understand to be a very affectionate daughter and estimable young person. I remain very much your obedient servant, WALTER SCOTT.—Edinburgh, 17th May, 1820.”

26. I am greatly obliged to Mr. Brown for his own letter, and for those which I have printed above; but have only to answer that no “word for Mungo Park” was the least necessary in reply to what I said of him, nor could *any* word in reply lessen its force, as far as it goes. I spoke of him¹ as the much regretted friend of Sir Walter Scott, and as a man most useful in his appointed place of a country physician. How useful, and honoured, and blessed that function was, nothing could prove more clearly than the beautiful fact of the shepherd’s following him as an angel; and nothing enforce more strongly my blame of his quitting that angel’s work by Tweedside to trace the lonely brinks of useless rivers. The letter to his sister merely lowers my estimate of his general culture; a common servant’s letter home is usually more interesting, and not worse spelt. A “sacred” one to his wife, published lately by a rabid Scot in reply to the serene sentences of mine, which he imagines “explosive” like his own, need not be profaned by *Fors*’ print. I write letters with more feeling in them to most of my good girl-friends, any day of the year, and don’t run away from them to Africa afterwards.

27. A letter from Miss Russell² to the *Scotsman*, written soon after last *Fors* was published, to inform Scotland that Ashestiel was not a farm house,—(it would all, with the latest additions, go inside a Bernese farmer’s granary)—that nobody it belonged to had ever done any farming, or anything else that was useful,—that Scott had been greatly honoured in being allowed a lease of it, that his study had been turned into a passage in the recent improvements,³ and that in the dining-room of it, Mrs. Siddons had called

¹ [See above, p. 453.]

² [Ashestiel passed in 1712 to the Russells, whose descendants are still in possession: see Crockett’s *The Scott Country*, 1905, p. 160.]

³ [See above, p. 463 *n.*]

for beer,¹ may also be left to the reverential reading of the subscribers to the *Scotsman*;—with this only question, from me, to the citizens of Dun Edin, What good is their pinnacle in Princes Street,² when they have forgotten where the room was, and corridor is, in which Scott wrote *Marmion*?

¹ ["Scott (who was a capital mimic) often repeated her tragic exclamation to a footboy during a dinner at Ashestiel, 'You've brought me water, boy,—I asked for beer' " (Lockhart, vol. ii. p. 267 *n.*.)]

² [For the Scott Monument, see Letter 31, § 6 (Vol. XXVII. p. 565).]



“YEA, THE WORK OF OUR HANDS, ESTABLISH THOU IT”

LETTER 96 (TERMINAL)

ROSY VALE

1. “ST. DAVID, having built a monastery near Menevia, which is from him since called St. David’s, in a place called the Rosy Valley (Vallis Rosina), gave this strict rule of monastical profession,—’That every monk should labour daily with his hands for the common good of the Monastery, according to the Apostle’s saying, He that doth not labour, let him not eat.¹ For those who spend their time in idleness debase their minds, which become unstable, and bring forth impure thoughts, which restlessly disquiet them.’ The monks there *refused all gifts or possessions offered by unjust men; they detested riches*; they had no care to ease their labour by the use of oxen or other cattle, for every one was instead of riches and oxen to himself and his brethren. They never conversed together by talking but when necessity required, but each one performed the labour enjoined him, joining thereto prayer, or holy meditations on Divine things: and having finished their country work, they returned to their monastery, where they spent the remainder of the day, till the evening, in reading or writing. In the evening, at the sounding of a bell, they all left their work and immediately repaired to the church, where they remained till the stars appeared, and then went all together to their refection, eating sparingly and not to satiety, for any excess in eating, though it be only of bread, occasions luxury. Their food was bread with roots or herbs, seasoned with salt, and their thirst they quenched with a mixture of water and milk. Supper being ended, they continued about three hours in watching, prayers, and genuflexions. After this they went to rest, and at cock-crowing they arose again, and continued at prayer till day appeared. All their inward temptations and thoughts they discovered to their superior. Their clothing was of the skins of beasts. Whosoever desired to be admitted into their holy convocation was obliged to remain ten days at the door of the monastery as an offcast, unworthy to be admitted into their society, and there he was exposed to be scorned; but if, during that time, he patiently endured that mortification, he was received by the religious senior who had charge of the gate, whom he served, and was by him instructed. In that condition he continued a long time, exercised in painful labours, and grievous mortifications, and at last was admitted to the fellowship of the brethren.

¹ [2 Thessalonians iii. 10.]

“This monastery appears to have been founded by St. David, some time after the famous British synod assembled in the year 519, for crushing of the Pelagian heresy, which began again to spread after it had been once before extinguished by St. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, and St. Lupus, Bishop of Troyes. This monastery is not taken notice of in the *Monasticon*, any more than the other two above, and for the same reason, as not coming within any of the orders afterwards known in England, and having had but a short continuance; for what became of it, or when it finished, is not known.”

2. I chanced on this passage in the second volume of Dugdale’s *Monasticon*,¹ as I was choosing editions of it at Mr. Quaritch’s,² on one of the curious days which I suppose most people recognize as “white” among the many-coloured ones of their lives; that is to say, the days when everything goes well, by no management of their own. About the same time I received the following letter from a very old and dear friend:—

“In an old *Fors*³ you ask for information about Nanterre. If you have not had it already, here is some. As you know, it is in the plain between Paris, Sèvres, and Versailles—a station on the Versailles line; a little station, at which few persons ‘descend,’ and fewer still ascend; the ladies of the still somewhat primitive and rather ugly little village being chiefly laundresses, and preferring, as I should in their place, to go to Paris in their own carts with the clean linen. Nanterre has, however, two notable transactions in its community. It makes cakes, sold in Paris as ‘Gâteaux de Nanterre,’ and dear to childhood’s soul. *And*—now prick up your ears—it yearly elects a Rosière. Not a high-falutin’ æsthetic, self-conscious product, forced, and in an unsuitable sphere; but a *real* Rosière—a peasant girl, not chosen for beauty, or reading or writing, neither of which she may possibly possess; but one who has in some signal, but simple, *unself-conscious* way done her duty in the state of life unto which it has pleased God to call her,—done it in the open, fresh air, and under the bright sun, in the ‘fierce white light’ of village public opinion; who is known to young and old, and has been known all her life.

“She is crowned with roses in May, and has a portion of rather more than 1000 francs. She is expected soon to marry, and carry on into the higher functions of wife and mother the promise of her maidenhood.”

¹ [The above account is quoted from vol. i. p. 216 of the two additional volumes to the *Monasticon* by John Stevens, 1722; it is incorporated as a footnote in vol. vi. part iii. p. 1629, of the “new edition” (1846) of Sir William Dugdale’s *Monasticon Anglicanum* (first published 1665–1673).]

² [Mr. Quaritch’s shop in Piccadilly was a favourite haunt of Ruskin’s, and with Mr. Bernard Quaritch, the founder of the business (1819–1899) he was on terms of personal friendship.]

³ [Not “in an old *Fors*,” but in ch. ii. § 5, of *The Bible of Amiens*.]

3. And with this letter came another, from Francesca, giving me this following account of her servant Edwige's* native village:—

“I have been asking her about ‘Le Rose’; she says it is *such* a pretty place, and the road has a hedge of beautiful roses on each side, and there are roses about all the houses. . . . But now I can hardly finish my letter, for since she has begun she cannot stop running on about her birthplace, and I am writing in the midst of a long discourse about the chestnut-trees, and the high wooded hill, with the chapel of the Madonna at its summit, and the stream of clear water where she used to wash clothes, and I know not what else! She has a very affectionate recollection of her childhood, poor as it was; and I do think that the beautiful country in which she grew up gave a sort of brightness to her life. I am very thankful that her story is going to be printed,¹ for it has been a help to me, and will be, I think, to others.”

4. Yes, a help, and better than that, a light,—as also this that follows, being an account just sent me by Francesca, of a Rosy Vale in Italy, rejoicing round its Living Rose.

THE MOTHER OF THE ORPHANS²

“In the beautiful city of Bassano, on the Brenta, between the mountains and the plain, Signora Maria Zanchetta has passed the eighty-five years of her busy, happy, and useful life, bringing a blessing to all who have come near her, first in her own family, and afterwards, for the last forty-five years, to one generation after another of poor orphan girls, to whom she has been more than a mother. She always had, from childhood, as she herself told me, a wish to enter a religious life, and her vocation seems to have been rather for the active than for the contemplative life. She belongs to an honourable family of Bassano, and appears to have had an especial love and reverence for her parents, whom she would never leave as long as they lived. After their death she continued to live with an invalid sister, Paola, whom, she remembers always with great tenderness, and who is spoken of still, by those who knew her, as something very near a saint.

“I have often wondered how much of Signora Maria's sweet and beautiful Christian spirit, which has brought comfort into hundreds of lives, may be owing to the influence of the saintly elder sister, whose helpless condition must have made her seem, to herself and others, comparatively useless in the world, but who lived always so very near to heaven! After Paola died, Maria, being no longer needed at home, resolved to give

* See *Roadside Songs of Tuscany*, No. II., p. 80.³

¹ [See the “Story of Edwige” in *Roadside Songs of Tuscany* (Vol. XXXII.).]

² [This account was reprinted, with some small revisions (here followed) and with some additional footnotes (here given), in Part iii. of *Christ's Folk in the Apennine* (1887): see the Bibliographical Note, above, p. xxxvi.]

³ [In Ruskin's Postscript to the “Ballad of Santa Zita.”]

herself entirely to some charitable work, and her mind turned to the Girls' Orphan Asylum, close to her own house. Her brother and other relations would have preferred that she should have become a nun in one of those convents where girls of noble families are sent for education, considering that such a life was more honourable,* and better suited to her condition. She told me this part of her story herself, and added, 'In the convent I should have been paid for my work, but I wanted to served the Lord without recompense in this world, and so I came here to the orphans.' There she has lived ever since, *wearing the same dress as the poor girls*,† living their life, entering into all their pleasures, and troubles; *overseeing the washing, giving a hand to the mending*, leading a humble, laborious life, full, one would think, of wearisome cares and burdens,—a mother's burdens, without a mother's instinct to support them; but still, if one may judge by her face, she has lived in perpetual sunshine. And how young she looks still! She must have been a delicate blonde beauty in her youth; and she still retains a complexion like a sweet-briar rose, and her kind blue eyes are as clear and peaceful as an infant's. Her hair, still abundant as in youth, is quite white, and yet not like snow, unless it be snow with the evening sunshine upon it; one sees in a moment that it has once been golden, and it is finer than anything that I ever saw, excepting thistledown. Her dress is of the poorest and plainest, and yet I cannot feel that she would be more beautiful in any other. A blue cotton dress, and cap of the same, with a handkerchief and apron, such as are worn by the contadine,—nothing else; but all arranged with scrupulous neatness. There is nothing monastic in the dress, nor in the life; Signora Maria is free to stay or go as she will; she is bound by no vow, belongs to no order; there has been nothing but the love of God, and of the poor children, to hold her to her place all these long years. She has some property, but *she leaves the use of it to her family*, ‡ taking for herself only just what is sufficient for her own maintenance in the asylum, that she may not take anything from the orphans. I had long wished to know this good Signora Maria; and finally, last May, I had the great pleasure of seeing her. I had sent to ask at what hour she could see me; to which she replied, 'Any time after six in the morning.' Which I thought was pretty well for eighty-five!

"When, the next morning, I went with Edwige to the orphan asylum, and we entered the very modest little 'bottega,' as they call it, with its low ceiling, and counter where they sell artificial flowers, and certain

* Let me earnestly pray the descendants of old Catholic families to think how constantly their pride, the primary mortal sin, has been the ruin of all they had most confidently founded it on, and all they strove to build on such foundation.

† The good Superiora's example, comparing what we are told of the dress of the girls themselves at page 525, may well take the place of all I had to say in this last *Fors*, about dress, summed in the simple advice to all women of rank and wealth,—Till you can dress your poor beautifully, dress yourselves plainly; till you can feed all your poor healthily, live your-selves like the monks of Vallis Rosina, and the message of *Fors* is ended.

‡ How many, so-called, Reformations, disruptions, dishonours, and agonies, of the Catholic Church would have been spared her, had the Popes simply insisted on this law being observed by her religious orders! [*Note added in "Christ's Folk."*]

simple medicines of their own preparing in which the Bassano people have great faith; and where also they receive orders for ornamental laundry-work, and for embroidery of a religious description; *—when, as I was saying, we entered this room, half-a-dozen elderly women were standing talking together, all in the same old-fashioned blue dresses. I asked if I could see the Superiora, on which this very pretty and young-looking lady came forward; and I, not dreaming that she could be the aged saint for whom I was looking, repeated my question. ‘A servirla!’ she replied. I was obliged to explain the astonishment, which I could not conceal, by saying, that I had expected to see a much older lady. ‘I *am* old,’ she answered, ‘but I have good health, thank the Lord!’ And then she led us through a room where a number of girls were doing the peculiar laundry-work of which I have spoken,—one cannot call it ironing, *for no iron is used about it*; † but with their fingers, and a fine stick kept for the purpose, they work the starched linen into all kinds of delicate patterns. They all rose and bowed politely as we passed, and then the old lady preceded us up the stone staircase (which she mounted so rapidly that she left us some way behind her), and conducted us to a pleasant upper chamber, where we all sat down together. On this day, and on those following, when I was taking her portrait, I gathered many particulars of her own life, and also about the institution, which I must write down one by one as I can remember them, for I find it impossible to arrange them in any order. She told me that they were in all seventy-five, between women and girls. Every girl taken into the institution has a right to a home in it for life, if she will; and many never choose to leave it, or if they do, they return to it; but others have married, or gone to service, or to live with their relations. Once, many years ago, she had seven little slave girls, put temporarily under her care by a good missionary who had bought them in Africa. She seems to have a peculiar tenderness in her remembrance of the poor little unbaptized savages. ‘The others call me Superiora,’ she said, ‘but *they* used to call me Mamma Maria.’ And her voice softened to more than its usual gentleness as she said those words.

“And now I must leave the dear old lady for a moment, to repeat what Silvia told me once about those same little slave girls. It was a warm summer’s evening, and Silvia and I were sitting, as we often do, on the broad stone steps of the Rezzonico Palace,¹ between the two immense old stone lions that guard the door, and watching the sunset behind the mountains. And Silvia was telling me how, when she was a very small child, those little African girls were brought to the house, and what wild black faces they had, and what brilliant eyes. As they were running about the wide lawn behind Palazzo Rezzonico (which stands in a retired country place about a mile from the city), they caught sight of those stone lions by the door, and immediately pressed about them, *and fell to*

* I should be inclined considerably to modify these directions of industry, in the organization of similar institutions here.

† I italicize here and there a sentence that might otherwise escape notice. I might italicize the whole text, if I could so express my sympathy with all it relates.

¹ [The Villa Rezzonica, outside Bassano, celebrated for its views, extending as far as the Euganean Hills, and over those of the Sette Comuni and Asolo.]

*embracing them, as if they had been dear friends, and covered them with tears and kisses;** and Silvia thought that they were thinking of their own country, and perhaps of lions which they had seen in their African deserts. I asked Signora Maria if she knew what had become of those poor girls. She said that she had heard that two of them afterwards entered a convent; but she had lost sight of them all for many years; and, indeed, they had only remained in Bassano for five months.

“While I was drawing the old lady’s portrait, a tall, strong, very pleasant-looking woman of fifty or so came in and stood beside me. She wore the same dress as the Superiora, excepting that she had no cap, nor other covering for her wavy black hair, which was elaborately braided, and knotted up behind, in the fashion commonly followed by the contadine in this part of the country. She had very bright eyes, in which a smile seemed to have taken up its permanent abode, even when the rest of her face was serious. Her voice was soft (there seems to be something in the atmosphere of that orphanage which makes everybody’s voice soft); but her movements were rapid and energetic, and she evidently had a supply of vigour and spirit sufficient for half-a-dozen, at least, of average women. She was extremely interested in the progress of the picture (which she said was as much like the Superiora as anything could be that was *sitting still*), but it was rather a grievance to her that the old lady *would* be taken in her homely dress. ‘Come now, you *might*¹ wear that other cap!’ she said, bending over the little fair Superiora, putting her strong arm very softly around her neck, and speaking coaxingly as if to a baby; then looking at me: ‘She has such a pretty cap, that I made up for her myself, and she will not wear it!’ ‘I wear it when I go out,’ said Signora Maria, ‘but I would rather have my likeness in the dress that I always wear at home.’ I, too, said that I would rather draw her just as she was. ‘I suppose you are right,’ said the younger woman, regretfully, ‘but she is so much prettier in that cap!’ I thought her quite pretty enough in the old blue cap, and kept on with my work. Meanwhile while I asked some questions about the institution. Signora Maria said that it was founded in the last century by a good priest, Don Giorgio Pirani, and afterwards farther endowed by Don Marco Cremona, whom she had herself known in his old age. How old this Don Marco was she could not remember; a cast of his face, which she afterwards showed me, and which she told me was taken after his death, represented a very handsome, benevolent-looking man, of about seventy; but I imagine (judging from the rest of the conversation) that he must have been much older. She told me that the founder, Don Giorgio, having inherited considerable property, and having no relations that needed it, had bought the land and three or four houses, which he had thrown into one; and had given it all for poor orphan girls of Bassano.

* This is to me the most lovely and the most instructive fact I ever heard, in its witness to the relations that exist between man and the inferior intelligences of creation.²

¹ [Here, in *Christ’s Folk*, a note was added: “These three last flashes of italic are F.’s.”]

² [In *Christ’s Folk* the following note was substituted:—

“I think this is the loveliest thing I ever heard of the relations between animals and man.”]

“The place accommodates seventy-five girls and women, and is always full. Thirty centimes (3d.) a day are allowed for the maintenance of each girl, and were probably sufficient in Don Giorgio’s time, but times have changed since then. However, they do various kinds of work, principally of a religious or ecclesiastical nature,—making priests’ dresses, or artificial flowers for the altar, or wafers to be used at the Communion; besides sewing, knitting, and embroidery of all kinds;—and the women work for the children, and the whole seventy-five live together in one affectionate and united family. The old lady seemed very fond of her ‘tose,’ as she calls the girls, and said that they also loved her; which I should think they would, for a more entirely lovable woman it would be hard to find.

“She has the delightful manners of an old-fashioned Venetian, full of grace, sweetness, and vivacity, and would think that she failed in one of the first Christian duties if she did not observe all the laws of politeness. She never once failed, during our rather frequent visits at the institution, to come downstairs to meet us, receiving me always at the outside door with a kiss on both cheeks; and when we came away she would accompany us into the cortile, and stand there, taking leave, with the sun on her white hair. When, however, she found this last attention made me rather uncomfortable, she desisted; for her politeness being rather of the heart than of etiquette, she never fails in comprehending and considering the feelings of those about her.

“But to return to our conversation. The woman with the black, wavy hair, whose name was, as I found out, Annetta, remarked, with regard to the good Don Giorgio Pirani, that ‘he died so young, poor man!’ As it seemed he had accomplished a good deal in his life, I was rather surprised, and asked, ‘How young?’ To which she replied, in a tone of deep compassion, ‘Only seventy-five, poor man! But then he had worn himself out with the care of the institution, and he had a great deal of trouble.’ Annetta calculated age in the Bassano fashion; in this healthy air, and *with the usually simple habits of life of the people*, longevity is the rule, and not the exception. The portrait of Don Giorgio’s mother hangs beside his in the refectory, with an inscription stating that it was painted ‘in the year of her age eighty-nine’; also that her name was Daciana Pirani, and that she assisted her two sons, Giorgio and Santi, in their charitable work for the orphans. The picture itself bears the date 1774, and represents a fresh-coloured, erect, very pleasant-looking lady, with bright, black eyes; very plainly dressed in a long-waisted brown gown and blue apron, with a little dark-coloured cap, which time has rendered so indistinct that I cannot quite make out the fashion of it. A plain handkerchief, apparently of fine white linen, is folded over her bosom, and her arms are bare to the elbows, with a fine Venetian gold chain wound several times around one of them,—her only ornament, excepting her little round earrings. She is standing by a table, on which are her crucifix, prayer-book, and rosary. The Superiora told me that when Don Giorgio was engaged in building and fitting up his asylum, sometimes, at the table his mother would observe that he was absent and low-spirited, and had little appetite, at which she would ask him anxiously, ‘What ails you, my son?’ and he would reply, ‘I have no more money for my workmen.’ At this she always said, ‘Oh,

if that is all, do not be troubled! I will see to it!' And, rising from the table, she would leave the room, to return in a few minutes with a handful of money, sufficient for the immediate expenses. Don Giorgio himself must have had, if his portrait tells the truth, a singularly kind, sensible, and cheerful face, with more regular beauty than Don Marco Cremona, but less imposing, with dark eyes and white curling hair. Of Santi Pirani I could learn nothing, excepting that he was a priest, an excellent man, and his brother's helper.

"But to return to what I was saying about the Bassano fashion of reckoning age. It is not long since a Bassano gentleman, himself quite a wonderful picture of vigorous health, was complaining to me that the health of the city was not what it used to be. 'Indeed,' he said, with the air of one bringing forward an unanswerable proof of his assertion, 'at this present time, among all my acquaintances, I know only one man past a hundred! My father knew several; but now they all seem to drop off between eighty and ninety!' And he shook his head sadly. I asked some questions about his centenarian friend, and was told that he was a poor man, and lived on charity. 'We all give to him,' he said; 'he always worked as long as he could, and at his age we do not think it ought to be expected of him.'

"As nearly as I can understand, people here begin to be considered elderly when they are about eighty, but those who die before ninety are thought to have died untimely. Signora Maria's family had an old servant, by name Bartolo Mosca, who lived with them for seventy-two years. He entered their service at fourteen, and left it—for a better world, I hope—at eighty-six. He was quite feeble for some time before he died, and his master kept a servant expressly to wait upon him. A woman servant, Maria Cometa, died in their house of nearly the same age, having passed all her life in their service.

"I was much interested in observing Annetta's behaviour to her Superiora; it was half reverential, half caressing. I could hardly tell whether she considered the old lady as a patron saint or a pet child. Anxious to know what was the tie between them, I asked Annetta how long she had been in the place. She did a little cyphering on her fingers, and then said, 'Forty years.' In answer to other questions, she told me that her father and mother had both died within a few weeks of each other, when she was a small child, the youngest of seven; and her uncle, finding himself left with the burden of so large a family on his shoulders, had thought well to relieve himself in part by putting the smallest and most helpless 'with the orphans.' '*She* has been my mother ever since,' she said, dropping her voice, and laying her hand on the little old lady's shoulder. She added that some of her brothers had come on in the world, and had wished to take her home, and that she had gone at various times and stayed in their families; but that she had always come back to her place in the institution, because she could never be happy, for any length of time, anywhere else. I asked if the girls whom they took in were generally good, and repaid their kindness as they should do, to which the old lady replied, 'Many of them do, and are a great comfort; but others give us much trouble. What can we do? We must have patience; we are here on purpose.' 'Besides,' said Annetta, cheerfully, 'it would never

do for us to have all our reward in this world; if we did, we could not expect any on the other side.'

"The Superiora told me many interesting stories about the institution, and of the bequests that had been left to it by various Bassano families, of which the most valuable appeared to be *some land in the country with one or two contadine houses*, where the girls are sent occasionally to pass a day in the open air and enjoy themselves. Many families had bequeathed furniture and pictures to the institution, so that one sees everywhere massive nutwood chairs and tables, carved and inlaid, all of old republican * times. One picture, of which I do not recollect the date, but it is about two hundred years old, I should think, represents a young lady with fair curls, magnificently dressed in brocade and jewels, by name Maddalena Bernardi, who looks always as if wondering at the simple unworldliness of the life about her; and beside her hangs the last of her race (her son, I suppose, for he is much like her in feature; but no one knows, now); a poor Franciscan frate, 'who did a great deal for the orphans,' Signora Maria says. Next to the frate, between him and good Don Giorgio, she showed me a Venetian senator, all robe and wig, with a face like nobody in particular, scarlet drapery tossed about in confusion, and a background of very black thunder-clouds. 'This picture,' she said, 'was left us by the Doge Erizzo, and represents one of his family. He left us also a hundred and twenty staia of Indian corn, and two barrels of wine, yearly; and we still continue to receive them.' She showed me also a room where the floor was quite covered with heaps of corn, saying, 'I send it to be ground as we need it; but it will not last long, there are so many mouths!'

"During the many days that I visited Signora Maria, I noticed several things which seemed to me different from other orphan asylums which I have seen. To be sure, I have not seen a great many; but from what little I have been able to observe, I have taken an impression that orphan girls usually have their hair cut close to their heads, and wear the very ugliest clothes that can possibly be obtained, and that their clothes are made so as to fit no one in particular. Also I think that they are apt to look dull and dispirited, with a general effect of being educated by machinery, which is not pleasant. Signora Maria's little girls, on the contrary, *are made to look as pretty as is possible* in the poor clothes which are the best that can be afforded for them. Their cotton handkerchiefs are of the gayest patterns, their hair is arranged becomingly, so as to make the most of the light curls of one, or the heavy braids of another, and most of them wear little gold earrings. And if one speaks to them, they answer with a pleasant smile, and do not seem frightened. I do not think that the dear old lady keeps them, under an iron rule, by any means. Another thing which I noticed was that while many of the younger children, who had been but a little while in the place, looked rather sickly, and showed still the marks of poverty and neglect, the older girls, who had been there for several years, had, almost without exception, an appearance of vigorous health. It was my good fortune to be there once on washing-day, when a number of girls, apparently from

* Old stately times, Francesca means, when Bassano and Castelfranco, Padua and Verona, were all as the sisters of Venice.

fifteen to twenty years old, bare-armed (and some of them bare-footed), were hanging out clothes to dry in the cortile; and such a picture of health and beauty I have seldom seen, nor such light, strong, rapid movements, nor such evident enjoyment of their work.

“Next to the room where I did most of my work was a long narrow room where many of the women and elder girls used to work together. An inscription in large black letters hung on the wall, ‘Silentium.’ I suppose it must have been put there with an idea of giving an orderly conventual air to the place; perhaps it may have served that purpose, it certainly did no other! The door was open between us, and the lively talking that went on in that room was incessant. Once the old lady by my side called to them, ‘Tose!’ and I thought that she was calling them to order, but it proved that she only wanted to have a share in the conversation. When not sitting for her portrait, she used to sew or knit, as she sat beside me. She could do beautiful mending, and never wore spectacles. She told me that she *had* worn them until a few years before, *when her sight had come back quite strong as in youth.*

“But I must allow, in speaking of my friends of the orphan asylum, that some of their religious observances are a little—peculiar. In the large garden, on the side where Signora Maria has her flower border (‘We cannot afford much room for flowers,’ Annetta says, ‘but they are the delight of the Superiora!’) is a long walk under a canopy of grape-vines, leading to a niche where stands, under the thick shade, a large wooden Madonna of the Immaculate Conception. She is very ugly, and but a poor piece of carving; a stout, heavy woman in impossible drapery, and with no expression whatsoever. The seven stars (somewhat rusty and blackened by the weather) are arranged on a rather too conspicuous piece of wire about the head. The last time I saw her, however, she had much improved, if not in beauty or sanctity, at least in cleanliness of appearance; which Annetta accounted for by saying complacently: ‘I gave her a coat of white paint myself, *oil* paint; so now she will look well for a long time to come, and the rain will not hurt her.’ I observed that some one had placed a rose in the clumsy wooden hand, and that her ears were ornamented with little garnet earrings. Annetta said, ‘The girls put together a few soldi and bought those earrings for the Madonna; they are very cheap ones; and I bored the holes in her ears myself with a gimlet.’* Before this Madonna the girls go on summer afternoons to sing the litanies, and apparently find their devotion in no way disturbed by the idea of Annetta’s tinkering. She seems to do pretty much all the carpentering and repairing that are wanted about the establishment, and is just as well pleased to ‘restore’ the Madonna as anything else. I was very sorry, at last, when the time came to say good-bye to the peaceful old house and its inmates. The Superiora, on the occasion of her last sitting, presented me with a very pretty specimen of the girls’

* There is no passage in all these histories which claims from the general reader more tender and loving attention; or in reading which he ought to repent more solemnly of light thought and scornful mood, or to remember with more shame the iconoclasm of Churches that had neither sense nor charity. [*Note added in “Christ’s Folk.”*]

work—a small pin-cushion, surrounded with artificial flowers, and surmounted by a dove, with spread wings, in white linen; its shape, and even feathers, quite wonderfully represented by means of the peculiar starching process which I have tried to describe. I can only hope that the dear old lady may be spared to the utmost limit of life in Bassano, which would give her many years yet; for it is sad to think of the change that must come over the little community when she is taken away. She is still the life of the house; her influence is every where. She reminds me always of the beautiful promise, ‘They shall yet bear fruit in old age.’ Once I was expressing to her my admiration for the institution, and she said, ‘It is a *happy* institution.’ And so it is, but it is she who has made it so.”

5. This lovely history, of a life spent in the garden of God, sums, as it illumines, all that I have tried to teach in the series of letters which I now feel that it is time to close.

The “Go and do thou likewise,”¹ which every kindly intelligent spirit cannot but hear spoken to it, in each sentence of the quiet narrative, is of more searching and all-embracing urgency than any appeal I have dared to make in my own writings. Looking back upon my efforts for the last twenty years, I believe that their failure has been in very great part owing to my compromise with the infidelity of this outer world, and my endeavour to base my pleading upon motives of ordinary prudence and kindness, instead of on the primary duty of loving God,—foundation other than which can no man lay.² I thought myself speaking to a crowd which could only be influenced by visible utility; nor was I the least aware how many entirely good and holy persons were living in the faith and love of God as vividly and practically now as ever in the early enthusiasm of Christendom, until, chiefly in consequence of the great illnesses which, for some time after 1878, forbade my accustomed literary labour,³ I was brought into

¹ [Luke x. 37.]

² [1 Corinthians iii. 11.]

³ [For the illness of 1878, see Vol. XXV. p. xxvi. Ruskin was again seriously ill in 1881 and 1882: see the Introduction to Vol. XXXIII. The friends to whom he here alludes include, no doubt, Professor Norton in America, Dr. John Brown in Scotland, Mr. and Mrs. La Touche in Ireland, and Mrs. and Miss Francesca Alexander in Italy.]

closer personal relations with the friends in America, Scotland, Ireland, and Italy, to whom, if I am spared to write any record of my life, it will be seen that I owe the best hopes and highest thoughts which have supported and guided the force of my matured mind. These have shown me, with lovely initiation, in how many secret places the prayer was made which I had foolishly listened for at the corners of the streets;¹ and on how many hills which I had thought left desolate, the hosts of heaven still moved in chariots of fire.²

6. But surely the time is come when all these faithful armies should lift up the standard of their Lord,—not by might, nor by power, but by His spirit,³ bringing forth judgment unto victory. That they should no more be hidden, nor overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. If the enemy cometh in like a flood, how much more may the rivers of Paradise? Are there not fountains of the great deep that open to bless, not destroy?

And the beginning of blessing, if you will think of it, is in that promise, “Great shall be the peace of thy *children*.” All the world is but as one orphanage, so long as its children know not God their Father; and all wisdom and knowledge is only more bewildered darkness, so long as you have not taught them the fear of the Lord.

Not to be taken out of the world in monastic sorrow, but to be kept from its evil in shepherded peace;—ought not this to be done for all the children held at the founts beside which we vow, in their name, to renounce the world? Renounce! nay, ought we not, at last, to redeem?

The story of Rosy Vale is not ended;—surely out of its silence the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and round it the desert rejoice, and blossom as the rose!

¹ [Compare Matthew vi. 5, 6.]

² [2 Kings vi. 17.]

³ [Zechariah iv. 6. The other Bible references in § 6 are Matthew xii. 20; Romans xii. 21; Isaiah lix. 19; Genesis vii. 11; Isaiah liv. 13; Isaiah lv. 12; and Isaiah xxxv. 1.]

APPENDIX

ADDITIONAL PASSAGES FROM THE MANUSCRIPT OF, AND LETTERS RELATING TO, “FORS CLAVIGERA”

1. PROFIT AND LOSS IN THE IRON TRADE
2. THE DUTIES OF LANDLORDS. THE SHEPHERD,
LORD CLIFFORD
3. COMMON SENSE. CASH DOWN
4. OBSERVATION AND DESCRIPTION
5. THE TRUE MEANING OF “MINE” AND “WORK”
6. THE WORTH OF A VOTE
7. RUSKIN AND SCOTT
8. NOTES ON THE LIFE OF SCOTT
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PLATO
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MANCHESTER MANUFACTURER
11. THE DEFINITION OF MONEY: LETTERS TO THE
REV. J. P. FAUNTHORPE
12. DISCRIMINATION IN ART TEACHING
13. LAWS FOR THE WINE TRADE
14. ECONOMY: GOD’S AND THE DEVIL’S
15. THE EIGHTEENTH PSALM

16. THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY: LETTERS TO MR.

FREDERIC HARRISON

17. INTEREST; AND RAILWAYS:—

(a) AN ADDITIONAL PASSAGE*(b)* A LETTER TO MR. W. WALKER

18. MORNING THOUGHTS AT GENEVA

19. “THESE THY CREATURES OF BREAD AND WINE”

20. WHISTLER *v.* RUSKIN:—*(a)* REPORT OF THE TRIAL*(b)* “MY OWN ARTICLE ON WHISTLER”

21. MYTHS AND NOVELS

22. CORRESPONDENCE WITH T. C. HORSFALL

23. PLATO’S “MUSIC” AND LUDWIG RICHTER

24. GOOD AND EVIL

25. NOTES ON THE LAND QUESTION

26. EPILOGUE

1

**PROFIT AND LOSS IN THE
IRON TRADE**

A LETTER TO THE AUTHOR OF A PAMPHLET ON
“WAGES”¹

[See Letter 2, § 10 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 35–37)]

HERNE HILL, LONDON,

January 5th, 1874.

SIR,—I have been much interested by your pamphlet on *Wages*, which I suppose your publisher sent me by your direction. As I observe you honour me by quoting a sentence of mine in it, you will perhaps pardon my intruding a question on you privately, which otherwise I should only have ventured to state in any notice I may have to take of this important address in public.

You limit your estimates and inquiries (as far as I can see) to the profit and loss, prosperity or depression, of the iron trade only. Have you arrived at any conclusions as to the effect of that trade on other businesses? For instance: in consequence of its flourishing condition, I pay twice as much for the fire by which I am writing as I did last year. You examine the effect of that rise of price on the coal owner; and you congratulate him and the country generally on his better remuneration. But you do not examine the effect of the change on *me*, nor congratulate me. Again. The sum I pay extra for firing is withdrawn from that which I am able to spend on art patronage. The coal owner becomes the art patron, instead of me. Have you examined the effect upon the art of the country which is likely to result from making the coal owner its patron, instead of the persons who are occupied in the study of it?

Again. You speak of iron as if it were always useful. Can you give me any estimate of the capital sunk unproductively in the merely ornamental iron railings of London;—or perhaps it will be better to say, the iron railings² simply;—I suppose it would be difficult to separate the cost of ornamentation with any definiteness from that of general make. But I have long wished to obtain from some competent authority a rough estimate of the total sum thus withdrawn from productive labour.

¹ [This letter was first printed in *Poet-Lore*, July 1891, vol. iii. pp. 361–362; and next in the privately issued *Letters upon Subjects of General Interest from John Ruskin to Various Correspondents*, 1892, pp. 54–57.]

² [The “iron railings” Problem is a favourite one of Ruskin’s: see Vol. XXVII. pp. 35–37, 68; and the other places noted at *ibid.*, p. 36 n.]

These three questions are strictly only branches of the main one; the effect of the iron and coal trade on other trades or occupations.

But I permit myself one more inquiry in another direction. You point with exultation to the various incapacities of Belgium and Russians for production of iron: do you think, then, that if a little more iron existed in those countries, or in the world generally, and if Belgians and Russians were less stupid than they are, the British Nation would find existence impossible—or even greatly inconvenienced by the increased sagacity and wealth of its neighbours? And might not the sentence in the close of your address concerning the dignity of those who are the least dependent upon the favours of others, be advisably coupled with an assertion of the dignity of those who are least dependent on the stupidity of others?

I am, Sir,

Your faithful Servant,

J. RUSKIN.

2

THE DUTIES OF LANDLORDS

[See Letter 12, § 17 (Vol. XXVII. p. 210)]

DENMARK HILL, S. E.,

9th August, 1871.

DEAR MR. WOODD,¹—I am getting fast better, but am obliged to economise returning strength,² and Joan writes for me, which is an excuse to get still a little of the “star-light.”

Some day she will tell you what need of human comfort I have felt, and the story of my endeavours to get it—in vain. If I had not had the unfailing comfort of Joan herself, I should not even be dictating now. Meantime, I have been more and more drawn away from my own vexations into the plans in which I rejoice to have your sympathy, nor do I doubt ultimately that you will be able one way or another to help me in no small degree.

My chief hope is, indeed, to get the proprietors of land, on which there is still an uncorrupted English race of peasants, to look upon these as their greatest possession, and to bring back for good, instead of evil, the organization of the Feudal System. You must wait for the forthcoming numbers of the *Fors* before you can judge of my purpose—or, at all definitely, see your way to help me. I go slowly, being resolved that nothing shall interfere with the work in Oxford, which is my immediate duty, and knowing also that if I am right, the work will be taken up in due

¹ [The late Charles H. Wood, Esq., Oughtershaw Hall, Langstroth Dale, Skipton. These letters have not before been published. A letter from Mr. Woodd is given in Letter 38, § 18 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 43–45).]

² [After his illness at Matlock: see Vol. XXII. p. xviii. “Joan” is Mrs. Arthur Severn.]

time by stronger hands than mine; and that if I am wrong, I shall gain nothing by hurry, except the chance of falling into grosser error.

I have often heard of the Shepherd, Lord Clifford, but have never seen a full account of him. Where can I find one? My impression from what I remember is, that his life was the very type of what I want to urge on our nobles as evermore their duty, and at this crisis the only chance they have of saving England from revolution, and themselves from contemptible ruin; but they are far lost, I know not how far redeemable.

I wish I could come to see you, but cannot at present leave my mother, who was much shaken by my illness, nor can I leave the arrangement of plans for schools at Oxford, which are now entirely under my care. You will write to me as things occur to you when you see the next pamphlet? and believe in the unflinching regard which makes your sympathy to me at once more delightful and more helpful as the years pass on.

Ever affectionately yours,
J. Ruskin.

Hand not so shaky as that from illness, but it's a hot day.

THE SHEPHERD, LORD CLIFFORD

Denmark Hill, S. E.

DEAR MR. WOODD,—Will you forgive my writing with a prettier hand, for mine's very tired just now—and here I've had your books since 9th December it seems without so much as acknowledging them. Whitaker's *Craven* is of great interest to me—in many other matters than this of the Shepherd Lord—and makes me long to come and see your Yorkshire home; but life has been with me nothing but a longing now, except that day by day I get some little bit of old plans accomplished—only they always branch in execution into so many new ones. The Shepherd Lord, however, disappoints me, for he seems to have been made a shepherd against his will, and his accusation of his son, if just in any wise, takes away one's respect for him, as having so little influence, and if unjust, as the book partly hints . . .

Did not you say that there are still vestiges of pleasant tradition in the hills about him?

I forget whether I told you that I have got a little place on Coniston Water with six acres of heather and ten of wood coming down on the house so steeply that the place is called Brantwood—"Brant" being "steep" in old Cumberland.

I will send your books back in the course of this week.

A good New Year to you.

Your affectionate,
J. Ruskin.

COMMON SENSE. CASH DOWN¹

[See Letter 26, § 1 (Vol. XXVII. p. 473)]

WE never enough observe that “common sense” is, at least in one-half of it, a *virtue*; because the habit of self-command enables us constantly to perceive truths to which self-indulgence renders us blind. For instance, in my work with the street sweepers in London,² it became a question for how much one of them could get a pair of boots. And I found the conditions under which the boots were to be got, were always that some intermediate person should answer for the payment to the bootmaker. The price of the boots was then to be paid by instalments to the intermediate person. It was impossible to explain to my street sweeper, that he paid sixpence extra for his boots, in commission to this intermediate person. He remained stolidly blind to that calculable fact, because he had never in his life possessed self-command enough to save the price of his boots before he bought them.

The want of intellectual power, definitely connected with the absence of self-command, is not, as I am sure all of us in some time of our lives have painfully felt, confined to uneducated persons. The entire system of credit on which modern commerce is based assumes for its first principle—that the facility of payment increases by its delay! The actual results to the commercial body are a grievous loss of time and labour, through complexity of accounts, and debate respecting them; * a still greater loss of health through anxiety, and the maintenance of a certain number of rogues at the expense of honest persons. But the community remains intellectually blind to these entirely demonstrable consequences, because no one has the self-command to delay purchases till he has the money to make them! Without delaying you by farther instances, I will venture to state positively that the especial power which we term “common sense,” is nothing else than the method of action given by absolute moral self-command to the faculties of art, of knowledge, and of wit, granting first that these are of a certain rank.

* I have seen my father over and over again lose the pleasant hours of his summer evening in writing letters to explain to pertinacious customers why they couldn't have credit for nine months instead of six.

¹ [This passage was printed as Notes 7 (“Common Sense. Cash Down”) and 8 (“Wastefulness of Credit”) in Mr. Faunthorpe's *Index to “Fors Clavigera,”* pp. 502–503.]

² [See Letter 48, § 3 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 204); and the Introduction to that volume, pp. xvi.–xviii.]

OBSERVATION AND DESCRIPTION¹

[See Letter 28, §§ 17, 18 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 519–520)]

So that this relation of Master and Servant, in the full breadth of it, embraces your whole existence, but we must begin study of it in various examples, as one would analyse a small stone that we might understand the nature of a rock. And Sir Walter shows, and describes, every honest form of it, as no other man ever did.

Describes, observe, because he can show; that is to say, has himself known in reality, and can therefore make manifest to others. No other description is of any value, nay, is other than deadly and venomous. From Dante's Paradise to Dickens' *Prison* every word of noble description is written by personal vision of the facts. Dante had seen Heaven as truly as Dickens the Marshalsea. Understand at once and for ever, if you can, this eternal difference between good and bad work. Dante had seen Love, and Honour, and Learning, and Patience, and Shame in living human creatures, and the glory and happiness of the creatures in them, and can triumphantly declare that these things make the faces of God's children shine as the sun in their Father's Kingdom. And Dickens had seen Lust, and Fraud, and Ignorance, and Covetousness, and Insolent Shame, and all the other gods whom England now serves, in their nakedness, and truly wrote of the conditions of their service. And Scott is the greatest of imaginative artists in fiction,* because he is the faithfullest of observers.²

* I know the outcry which ordinary critics will raise against this statement. They can understand the Flemish art of De Balzac or Thackeray, but have no conception of the power, scarcely a sense of the purpose, of Scott's Gainsborough touch.

¹ [This passage is printed from a sheet of MS. at Brantwood.]

² [For Scott's "imaginative power," see Letter 34, § 8 (Vol. XXVII. p. 630); for his faithfulness of observation, compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. p. 42), where Ruskin says that Scott's imagination consists in the involuntary remembrance of things actually seen.]

A certain portion of the work of man must be for
 his bread - and that is his Labour; - with
 the sweat of his face, for accomplished as a
 daily task - and ended as a daily task - with
 the prayer - Give us each day our daily bread.
 But another portion of man's work is that in which
 according to his ^{separate} power, gift and strength, he carries
 forward the purposes of God for his Race: accepts
 from his Sires their ^{separate} knowledge and their ^{own} labors; adds
^{to the temple of truth} to it his store of true craftsmanship - bequeaths
 his ^{own piece and} work as a part of the immortal work
 of this World - ^{and of all other} to the Future. ~~be it here~~
 in his own place - ^{and the prayer for} ~~the work of our hands~~ ^{Establish them}
 this work is - ~~They will be done on earth as~~
~~it is in Heaven~~ ^{honestly, in our own life of today}
 and the toil of the hands, for the life - today
 is our 'labour'.
 But the toil of hand and heart, honestly - for
 the future of life of other - is our 'opus' - of
 which when well done - the angels may say,
 'Perfect opus' - 'Perfectus' - Did it thoroughly, and
 of which before ^{his} eyes are closed, the promise is
 to every servant of God. 'He shall see of the travail
 of his soul, and shall be satisfied'.

THE MEANING OF “MINE” AND “WORK”¹

[See Letter 28, § 19 (Vol. XXVII. p. 521)]

BUT the Greeks have another word for “their own”—very different from this “idios.” That is the real power of a fine language, to have separate words for separate thoughts.

When Athena is undressing to arm herself, the *Iliad* says of her that she lets fall on the floor of Heaven “her robe, which she herself had made, and laboured with her hands.”²

Whatever you have thus made with your hands is yours indeed, utterly and justly, and if well done, to be claimed eternally—with honour; or if ill done, to be eternally answered for with shame. In the best wrought picture which I know in Italy—that in which equality and tranquillity of right emotion have animated the workman’s hand most surely from the beginning of it to the end—the said workman has painted himself kneeling at the side of it; and an angel (one of many imagined there) points down to him, saying, “This one carried the work through.” Not merely did it, but did it thoroughly,—per-fecit.³ Perfected it. What you have so done, is yours indeed, yet all men’s besides; of that, though truly your possession, you will find the theory of Common Property holds in a divine way; and what is nobly done is done for all: that which is rightly pleasing to yourself is also pleasing to all. You cannot sell it, if you would. You have given it, without selling, as the earth gives her fruit.

A certain portion of the work of man must be for his bread. That is his Labour—with the sweat of his face; accomplished as a daily task, and ended as a daily task, with the prayer: “Give us each day our daily bread.” But another portion of Man’s work is that in which, according to

¹ [The first passage is printed from a sheet of MS. at Brantwood; the second is from a sheet, formerly in Mr. Collingwood’s possession, given by him in facsimile as the frontispiece to vol. ii. of the first edition (1893) of his *Life and Work of John Ruskin*. The facsimile is here reproduced.]

² [Book v. 735: compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 106 (Vol. XX. p. 269).]

³ [For this inscription—“Iste perfecit opus”—on Fra Filippo Lippi’s “Coronation of the Virgin” at Florence, see *Ariadne Florentina*, § 189 (Vol. XXII. p. 428). Studies of the picture are in the Sheffield Museum (Vol. XXX.).]

his poor separate gift and strength, he carries forward the purposes of God for his Race; accepts from his Sires their Morality and their Art; adds to the temple his little stone of true craftsman's cutting; bequeaths his own piece and part of the Immortal work of *this* World, and therefore of all others, to the Future, in his own place. And the prayer for this work is: "Yea, the work of our hands, establish thou it." And the toil of the hands, honestly, for our own life of to-day, is our "labour."

But the toil of hand and heart, honestly, for the future life of others, is our "Opus"; of which, when well done, the angels may say, "Perfecit opus"—Perfected. Did it *thoroughly*, and of which, before his eyes are closed, the promise is to every servant of God: "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."

THE WORTH OF A VOTE¹

[See Letter 29, § 16 (Vol. XXVII. p. 544)]

THAT is the value I set on my own right of voting. But my correspondent is in a passion with me because I would deprive him (he thinks) of his; I never said so. He may be perhaps one of the persons to whose vote I should attach particular importance. His vote, respecting me, for instance, is that I treat politics with levity, because after separating ten of the best years of life for the study of political economy, and writing a book upon it in the most finished accuracy of terms I could contrive,² I now decline to teach him the science by private correspondence. Can he not vote, with similar perspicacity, for somebody who is capable of treating politics with seriousness? Who on earth can hinder him, however much they wished it? May not he vote, he and his unanimous friends, for any man, woman, or child in the United Kingdom whose politics they approve; set their elect on the top of Wrekin—within telescopic view of all England and Wales—and listen to his, or her, or its oratory, from that position without any shadow of opposition from the other side of the House—and proceed also to whatever proceedings they may be thereby persuaded—without the smallest reference to me? Who am I, to stand in their way? And if the police happened to do so, why, the police have also, I suppose, a right to their votes: but may be outvoted, with a sufficient number of sticks.

My correspondent will, I hope, not allow his mind to be disturbed further on the subject of his vote. No mortal, nor any mass of mortals, can take *that* from him. But they can seriously interfere with his other properties, which, for my part, I hold even of greatly more importance than my vote. For instance, those little properties of wife and children, which the *Cornhill Magazine* says, looking from its Arable standing-point, are inadmissible for the Agricultural labourer till he is forty-five³ How of his rights to these. If my general readers, to whom I must now pass, though closing with regret my talk with my republican correspondent, will look back to the piece of translation from Marmontel's *Contes Moraux*,⁴ they will find that the French peasant there described, says of *his* wife and children that "there is nothing else worth having but that." And I may now further confess that it was for the sake of that sentence alone that I translated the whole passage. For it is a divinely and eternally true sentence.

¹ [This passage, headed "*Fors—May*," is printed from sheets of MS. at Brantwood. It was written to follow the note where Ruskin says, "I have never in my life voted for any candidate for Parliament."]

² [For the care with which *Unto this Last* was written, see Vol. XVII. p. xxv., and Letter 48, § 18 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 218).]

³ [See Letter 28, § 19 (Vol. XXVII. p. 521).]

⁴ [See Letter 17, Vol. XXVII. p. 301.]

RUSKIN AND SCOTT¹

[See Letter 33, § 13 (Vol. XXVII. p. 616)]

I MUST speak a few words about myself, to-day, before entering on our subject. I should not venture to say anything to you of Scott, or of any other great man, unless I knew myself to be in closer sympathy with them than you can generally be yourselves; but observe, in claiming this sympathy I do not claim the least approach to any equality of power. I had sympathy with Tintoret, with Scott, with Turner, with Carlyle—as a child with its father or mother, not as friend with friend. What they feel, I, in a feeble and inferior way, feel also; what they are, I can tell you, because in a poor and weak way I am like them—of their race—but no match for them. It has curiously happened to me also to have been educated in many particulars under the same conditions as Scott, and often in the same places. My father was a High School lad of Edinburgh; the first picture I ever saw with conscious eyes was of Edinburgh Castle; the earliest patriotic delight I can remember, in my life, distinctly, is the delight of crossing the Tweed into Scotland;² and I was educated—to all intents and purposes—by my Puritan mother and aunt, first by thorough training in the Bible, and secondly by being let loose into Homer and Scott.

I translated half the *Monastery* into jingling rhyme when I was ten years old,³ and had seen before I was twelve every castle in Scotland, England, and Wales, from Stirling to Dover, and every abbey, from Dunkeld to St. Frideswide. Seen them, I say; meaning a very different thing from what you call “seeing” nowadays. On our journeys, above described,⁴ either my father, or mother, or nurse Ann used to take me in the quiet summer afternoons to play or look, as long as I chose, wherever I chose—which was always by a river side, or under an abbey or castle wall. Among other inferiorities of power, one good flow in my gifts of thought has been in some ways serviceable to me, like Scott’s lameness.⁵ I am totally destitute of invention, while I have curiously intense and long practised habits of analysis; hence I am always happy in contemplating or explaining other people’s work, and have been—it will be found hereafter—a sound interpreter of the genius of others, without being able to

¹ [This passage is printed from sheets of MS. at Brantwood, headed “Fors.”]

² [Letter 51 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 273).]

³ [See Vol. II. p. 260 n.]

⁴ [See Letter 10 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 169, 170).]

⁵ [See Letter 32 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 591, 592).]

produce anything of the slightest value of my own. But in the merely contemplative and dreamy conditions of imagination, in the feelings which change material things into spiritual, I believe none, even of the strongest men, had much advantage of me; and whenever Scott speaks of sensation or impression instead of invention, I know that I can understand him better than most of his readers.

Thus much it was necessary to tell you, because henceforward I shall venture to speak of some personal experience of my own in illustration of Scott's.¹

¹ [In this connexion, see the notes in Vol. XXVII. p. 612.]

NOTES ON THE LIFE OF SCOTT¹

[See Letter 33, § 17 (Vol. XXVII. p. 621)]

1. No poet ever “collects materials” for his poetry. He lives his own life; and its casualties, good and evil, compel him into song. David lives his king’s life; and the “materials” for, say, the hundredth Psalm, are All Lands,² seen with kingly sight. Burns lives a ploughman’s life; and ploughs up his “materials,” be they daisy or field-mouse,³ with no previous search whatever.

2. Scott wrote three great poems—the “Lay,” “Marmion,” and the “Lady”—and two—“Rokeby” and the “Lord”—so very far from being great, that, though written in the full noon of his intellectual powers, I can scarcely admit them to the name of being poems at all. He had diligently “gathered materials” for the two last, planned both with his best skill, worked on them under the stimulus of reputation to be kept, and of fortune to be gained. They came to nothing, however, and he quits the poetical trade, silenced.

3. The three great ones had been otherwise set about. When he was a boy of fifteen or sixteen* he set out on his first independent ride on his own pony to the Highlands; saw Perth for the first time, pulling rein on the Wicks of Baigle “without meaning to do so” (“Since that hour the recollection of that inimitable landscape has possessed the strangest influence over my mind and retained its place as a memorable thing, while much that was influential on my own fortunes has fled from my recollection”†), and stays that autumn with his dear old friend Stewart of Invernahyle, from whose life and lips he receives the “materials” of *Waverley*—not to be used yet for twenty-five years—and among whose neighbours he is taught that women may do rough country work and yet lose none of their womanly dignity.‡

* 1786 or 1787 indeterminate (Lockhart, i. 140); he himself says “not above fifteen.”

† Lockhart, i. 141.

‡ Lockhart, i. 142.

¹ [These are printed from sheets of MS. at Brantwood, headed “Scott. Recast Notes.” The numbering of the paragraphs is here inserted. The notes were clearly intended for a continuation of the sketch of the Life of Scott, which is broken off in Letter 33.]

² [“Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.”]

³ [For another reference to the poem of Burns, “To a mountain daisy, on turning one down with the plough,” see Vol. XXV. p. 431.]

4. The brother-in-law of Invernahyle has some refractory tenants, and a year or two later the young “writer’s apprentice” is sent—authoritative—with his party of a sergeant and six men, obtained from a regiment lying in *Stirling*, to enforce execution on these refractory persons, and “to see that the gallant sergeant does not exceed his part by committing violence or plunder.” He rides in all the dignity of danger, with a front and rear guard and levelled arms. The sergeant is full of stories of Rob Roy and of *himself*, and thus they ride across Teith, by Lochs Vennachar and Achray, into the Trossachs. Captain Thornton’s march from the Clachan of Aberfoil¹ is not written till nearly thirty years afterwards, and the Trossachs, as far as I can find, are never seen more. In that one ride from Stirling to Benvenue, the rider, wholly unconscious of any but strictly legal objects, diversified by refreshing admiration of proceedings—not altogether legal stolen delight—sees all the glories of Roderick, Helen, and King James.

5. These “materials” and spiritual provender being laid in, not according to the laws of demand and supply, but as the wild violet sows itself, the seed sown lies buried many a day. This ride is in 1786, and is the first of many such holidays, thought of literally and only as such, while the boy plods on at the work his father desires to the day of his father’s death. Thirteen years of obedience, in the strength of his youth, 1786 to 1799, of his own age fifteen to twenty-eight.² At eight-and-twenty his father leaves him, established, as it seems, in life. He had married the year before, and was made Sheriff Depute of Selkirkshire in the autumn—an active and thorough man of business now, though with a turn for verse-making which his colleagues looked on with some disfavour.

6. The gift was of course in his true Border blood; but he had caught some further trick of song from Bürger and Monk Lewis;³ and soon after his marriage is, as never before, elated at the honour of being asked by Lewis to dine with him at his hotel, and receives from the reverend “Monk”—whose ear for rhythm was finer even than Byron’s—severe correction of his false rhymes and Scotticisms. Under such encouragement and chastisement he makes his first serious attempt in verse, “Glenfinlas.” Except “Ellandonnan Castle,”⁴ “Glenfinlas” is the exactly worst ballad in all the three volumes of the *Border Minstrelsy*. But, though crude and callow, yet the “materials” gathered in his boy’s ride into the Trossachs, so many years ago, are beginning to move and curdle in the shell. The moon’s radiance “quivering on Katrine’s lakes” and “resting on Ben Ledi’s head,” “the lovely Flora of Glengyle,” “Thy dame the Lady of the Flood,” the watchfire, the hounds, the harp, the seer, the “huntress maid in beauty bright”—what compressed embryo, though as yet wholly

¹ [See *Rob Roy*, chaps. 29 and 30.]

² [In the outline of Scott’s life in Letter 32, Ruskin makes this period end with 1796: see Vol. XXVII. pp. 587–588.]

³ [Scott’s first attempt in poetry was, it will be remembered, a version of *Leonore*—a spectre-ballad by Gottfried August Bürger (1748–1794). A version of the same ballad was one of the earliest exercises of another poet—D. G. Rossetti. For Scott’s intercourse with M. G. Lewis, called “Monk Lewis,” after the title of his romance *The Monk* (1795), see Lockhart, i. pp. 290 *seq.*]

⁴ [By Colin Mackenzie of Portmore.]

unintelligible, in this first small nest-egg of song under his honeymoon bower of Lasswade!

7. He has the sense still to distrust himself—still to seek for better things than his own. For four years more—and only in the playtime of these, following always his sheriff's or advocate's work manfully—he collects what Border song remains in authentic memory. Even the first two volumes of the *Border Minstrelsy* were not published till January 1802.* During these years he receives his true poetical education by hard work in the Advocates' Library on Border history, and happy gathering of the true words of Border song by every cottage hearth of the dale and moors.

And at last, in the autumn of 1802, being now well over thirty, his time comes.

8. The young lady of Bowhill asks of him a ballad on the Legend of Gilpin Horner.¹ He writes the opening stanzas; reads them to his friends Erskine and Cranstoun, who are not enthusiastic; he thinks no more of them; but gets a kick of a horse on Portobello sands a few days after, and is laid up for three days in his lodgings, during which leisure he carries on his rhyme to the end of its first canto.† It proceeds—when proceeding at all—at the rate of a canto a week, but is always getting thrown aside, though meditated on doubtless in the intervals. The four first cantos were read to Wordsworth at Lasswade in September 1803;² but again the work is dropped for another year. At last, on 1st August 1804, he writes to Ellis of the “only 150 things he had to do,” ‡ Ashestiel to furnish, Rosebank to sell, and among others to go into quarters with the cavalry. For then he wants a good horse, has not its price ready, and, thus pushed, finished the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, § which was published in January 1805.

In the history of British poetry nothing had ever equalled the demand for the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and from the Chancellor of England and Pitt³ downwards through all ranks, and prevailing over all prejudices, flowed the full current of its power and praise.

Scott heard it all unmoved, his mind bent on what he still held to be the better work of others, and for his own, choosing the true history of his country, be it in prose or rhyme:—

“My present employment is an edition of John Dryden's Works, which is already gone to press. As for riding on Pegasus, depend upon it, I will never again cross him in a serious way, unless I should by some strange accident reside so long in the Highlands, and make myself master of their ancient manners, so as to paint them with some degree of accuracy in a kind of *companion* to the Minstrel Lay.”⁴

* Lockhart, i. 343.

† Lockhart, i. 365, 366.

‡ Lockhart, ii. 6.

§ Thus at least must be interpreted his own statement to Crabbe (Lockhart, iii. 28); but compare Messrs. Longmans' gift of “Captain” (ii. 35).

¹ [Lockhart, ii. 24.]

² [Lockhart i. 403.]

³ [Lockhart, ii. 34.]

⁴ [Letter to Ellis: Lockhart, ii. 51.]

9. And in the meantime—between his edition of Dryden and his Review articles on Spenser and Froissart, Godwin’s Fleetwood, Colonel Thornton’s Sporting Tour, and some cookery books¹—he writes (1805) the opening chapters of *Waverley*, and copies the MS. of “True Thomas and the Quene of Elfland” in Lincoln Cathedral.² He is still, however, “young, *light-headed*, and happy”;³ his life at Ashestiel, entirely congenial to him, rhythmic as the sun; and his horses “Captain” and “Lieutenant,” and Lord Moira’s sham fights and sieges,³ have exhilarating influences, hard to withstand. He represses, however, as it seems, the newly rising springs of song, until the disordered state of his brother’s affairs “rendered it desirable for him to obtain immediate command of a sum,” etc. † Whereupon he enters into treaty with Constable, and is paid a thousand guineas for the unseen and unfinished MS. This is at the close of 1806. He works prudently and happily on the theme already murmuring in his mind—the lovely epistles to his friends are dated from Ashestiel—as the months glide, and, “Oh, man, I had many a grand gallop among these braes when I was thinking of *Marmion*.”⁴ The Tantallon canto is suggested to him by Mr. Guthrie Wright during their trip to Dumfries,⁵ but the full passion does not come on him till he is in quarters again with the cavalry in the autumn of 1807:—

“In the intervals of drilling, Scott used to delight in walking his powerful black steed up and down by himself upon the Portobello sands, within the beating of the surge; and now and then you would see him plunge in his spurs and go off as if at the charge, with the spray dashing about him. As we rode back to Musselburgh he often came and placed himself beside me to repeat the verses that he had been composing during these pauses of our exercise.”⁶

I wish I knew when the last stanzas of the poem were actually written ‡ (is the MS. extant? Lockhart is always inconceivably silent about the little things one most wants to know), but probably in the Christmas time at Merton House, where “from the first days of his ballad rhyming down to the close of his life, he usually spent that season with the immediate head of his race.”§

10. The immediate sales of *Marmion*, stimulated by the popularity of its

* Introduction to *Marmion*, 1830. That to the first edition of 1808 is curiously apologetic for a second trespass on public favour.

† Lockhart, ii. 114 *seq.*⁷

‡ By the last stanzas of the poem, I mean mainly the 25th to 32nd of the last canto. The actual close was scamped a little (bills pressing, it appears, again. See his letter to Byron⁸), but he was never good at a finish.

§ Lockhart, ii. 123.

¹ [Lockhart, ii. 52.]

² [Lockhart, ii. 73.]

³ [Lockhart, ii. 46, 47.]

⁴ [So he said in later years to Lockhart (ii. 117).]

⁵ [Lockhart, second edition, 1839, vol. iii. p. 15 (not in the first edition).]

⁶ [Mr. Skene, in Lockhart, ii. 117.]

⁷ [See also the prose Introduction to *Marmion*.]

⁸ [Lockhart, ii. 399.]

predecessor, were of course greater than those of the *Lay*, but the admiration it excited was less joyous, for three good reasons—the villainy of the hero, the more definitely historical and severe character of the story, and the transference of affectionate description from Melrose to Edinburgh (for all the world cares for Melrose, but only High School boys for the view from Blackford Hill). Also various snappings and scribblings of criticism—partly professional and chaotic (Jeffrey), partly pedantic (Ellis),¹ partly pious and supercilious (Wordsworth)—tried their little forces on him at first, but quieted themselves gradually for shame or in better understanding, and on the whole people felt rightly the fact and enchantment of his advancing power. Wordsworth's letter is monumental of the man—we must not lose a word of it:—

“Thank you for *Marmion*. I think that your end has been attained. That it is not the end which I should wish you to propose to yourself you will be well aware, from what you know of my notions of composition, both as to matter and manner. In the circle of my acquaintance, it seems as well liked as the *Lay*, though I have heard that in the world it is not so. Had the poem been much better than the *Lay*, it could scarcely have satisfied the public, which has too much of the monster, the moral monster, in its composition. The spring has burst out upon us all at once, and the vale is now in exquisite beauty; a gentle shower has fallen this morning, and I hear the thrush, who has built in my orchard, singing amain. How happy we should be to see you here again! Ever, my dear Scott, your sincere friend, W. W.”²

¹ [For Jeffrey's criticism (in the *Edinburgh Review*), see Lockhart, ii. pp. 146–149; and for that of Ellis, *ibid.*, pp. 143–145.]

² [Lockhart, ii. pp. 142–143.]

STREAMS AND THEIR USE:
TRANSLATION FROM THE “LAWS OF PLATO,”¹ VI.
761

[See Letter 33, § 18 (Vol. XXVII. p. 622)]

AND after they have thus made the land difficult of access to enemies, they shall make it as easy as can be, in access and traverse, to friends; and to the utmost possible for men, and beasts of burden, and herds and flocks: caring for the paths of each, that they may be tame* to them, and for the waters from Heaven (that they may not do evil to the country, but on the contrary profit it, in flowing from the heights of the hills into their hollow valleys), restraining the outflowings of them, both with trench and rampart, that so the mountain dells, receiving and drinking the waters of Heaven, may give brooks and fountains to the lower places and meadows; and bear to the parchedest grounds fulness of sweet waters. † And these fountain flowings, whether in the passing river, or at their well-head, shall be made beautiful with plantation and fair building.

* “Tame” [ημερωταται] of a path subdued from ruggedness and dangerousness, into smooth facility and safety like a rude and wild creature made kind.

† The sweetness insisted on, because in the hot grounds the least stagnant pool becomes poisonous.

¹ [This piece of translation was published as Note 6 in the Appendix to Mr. Faunthorpe’s *Index to “Fors Clavigera,”* pp. 501–502.]

ON THE USE OF MACHINERY:
LETTERS TO A MANCHESTER MANUFACTURER¹

[See Letter 37, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 21)]

[REGARDING Ruskin's refusal to allow the use of the steam-engine (Letter 37, § 9, p. 21), Mr. Joseph Brooke, a Manchester manufacturer, wrote (January 18, 1874):—

"I cannot understand you when you exclude from the forces to be employed upon your projected estate that of 'artificial power'—'Wind and Water,' you say, why not Fire? Why deny for desirable ends the use of a steam-engine, which I admit has in common with 'wind and water and animal force' frequently been used for undesirable ends?

"This exclusion of modern mechanism for useful purpose has always been strange to me. Were I to become an inhabitant of your domain I could make many things myself in my household that should not be 'clumsily' fashioned, but to be compelled to forego the use of the 'tools' which I acquired as a boy in doing so—seems to me a hardship indeed, not to say a waste of time. Is there a moral difference between a lathe worked by a trundle and one which is turned by a steam-engine? Would not your fourteenth-century Florentines have used the steam-engine if they had known it?"

To this inquiry Ruskin replied from "Corpus Christi College, Oxford" (no date):—]

MY DEAR SIR,—Please read the 5th *Fors* carefully, May '71, especially pp. 12, 13;² also the note on labour near the end of last section of the *Queen of the Air*.³

No Florentine would have endured the sight of any smoke or blackness in his city, or near it, for half-an-hour. No art, nor any high moral culture, is possible in filth of soot.

The difference between a trundle and a steam-engine is that for the one you use your legs, and for the other you don't—and that your legs will drop off in lust or idleness if you *don't* use them.

¹ [These letters, not hitherto printed, have been placed at the disposal of the editors by Mr. Brooke.]

² [Of the original edition; now §§ 9, 10 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 86, 87).]

³ [In the original editions, where the passage was reprinted from *Notes on the General Principles of Employment*: see now Vol. XVII. pp. 545–546.]

You may use *Natural* Air, Water, or Fire. And you must not manufacture Air, Water, or Fire but at your peril.

Use the sun, the wind, and the rain. And, under certain limited needs, you may light fire, or use a fan, or distil water. But to live by Fire is diabolical.

Truly yours,
J. R.

[The manufacturer replied as follows:—

HOLLIN HALL, BOLLINGTON, NEAR MACCLESFIELD,
January 25th, 1874.

DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—It was kind of you to answer my letter.

I have read again the number of *Fors* and the passage in the *Queen of the Air* to which you direct me.

I have felt, and feel again, the force of these, and other, sayings of yours—perhaps more deeply this time, for I have just returned from a day's journey to Doncaster and back *via* Stockport, Hyde, Penistone, Barnsley, Mexborough, etc., a line of country which involuntarily called up another of your recent sayings—"loathsome to live in"—throughout the journey, and I thought, in response to your letter, that truly such living was "diabolical."

But I wish I knew more clearly where we must draw the line—what are your "certain limited needs" under which we may "light fires"—where the human necessity ends and the devilish life begins.

Were such men as Watt, Boulton, Stephenson, Arkwright, Jacquard, William Lee benefactors or malefactors to their race?

I have inherited the sole charge of a large cotton-spinning business, and were I to extinguish my fire (which of course partakes of the diabolical) I must ruin myself and some thousand or so others.

I could cavil at your letter—could tell you, for example, that I cannot see why a man is better protected from lust begotten of loss of his legs because his lathe is moved by a legitimate "fall of water" which would leave them "idle" equally with the steam-engine you prohibit.

But I will not; I feel that you see clearly a living truth which we who are performe in the "peril of fire" can but grope after.

Yearningly some of us do this, and as you write books which seem to indicate that truth (faintly perceived though it be), you cannot wonder that I should crave a clearer vision.

My question is, what is to be done?—done by *us*?

Faithfully yours,
Joseph Brooke.

JOHN RUSKIN, ESQ.

To this letter Ruskin rejoined:—]

CORPUS CHRIST COLLEGE, OXFORD,
28th Jan. '74.

DEAR MR. BROOKE,—Your letter is deeply interesting to me. It is the first I have received from any man in business, showing earnestness of thought.

There is no need for any of us to be ruined. All useful change must be slow and by progressive and visibly secure stages. The evils of centuries cannot be defied and conquered in a day.

But I am only enigmatical and obscure because I know this, and do not want people to think me expectant of everything in an hour.

I know perfectly, and with absolute clearness, what I want and mean; but dare not say it publicly, yet.

Watt, Stephenson, Arkwright were not malefactors,¹ but the good they gave has been abused by malefactors, and in the present state of general morality, every good would be turned to its opposite.

But the use of the steam-engine is not in daily life—but for violent and, generally, distant efforts.

May I, without of course name or place, print your letter, and answer it in Fors more deliberately
than I can to-day?
Ever most truly yours,
J. Ruskin.

One thing only let me say privately. Do not let us confuse the investigation of what should be with what we can do, or must suffer.

Let us ascertain, abstractedly, whether Interest, or manufactures, be right. After that comes the quite separate question, what am I to do with my Bank Stock, or you with your cotton-mill?

[Mr. Brooke replied that he by no means stood alone in the attitude described in his previous letter:—

“Indeed it is not so. Although we cannot by any means yet mark a first ‘visibly secure stage’ of improvement, still I can testify that apprehension of chaos and disaster has entered the minds of some whom I meet. Within the last ten days I have had said to me on the Manchester Exchange, in reference to the fearful anarchy of competition obtaining there: ‘Sir, I fear we must admit that we all assemble here to do each other what injury we can.’ . . .

“It is the startling distance between what is right and what is immediately possible in direction of right—which you have, tenderly I feel, shown me to be separate considerations—that so much try one’s fortitude.”

Ruskin replied (no date):—]

MY DEAR SIR,—I am deeply interested by your last letter. For indeed I was thinking of you as almost alone. I have had no letters of the kind from any one else.

Have you read Carlyle’s *Shooting Niagara*, carefully? Every sentence of it is pregnant and intense.²

For me, I have always been misunderstood in the strangest way. People *will* have it that I want them to be moral and *unbusinesslike*, whereas my assertion always has been—you cannot be businesslike *but* by being moral.

Meet to injure each other, and you will all—be injured. Meet to help each other, and you will all—be helped.

That is absolute common-sense in all human business. Morality altogether apart.

Ever faithfully yours,
J. Ruskin.

¹ [See Vol. XXVIII. p. 134.]

² [Ruskin refers to this piece by Carlyle in Vol. XXII. p. 173, and Vol. XXIII. p. 131.]

There are three things necessary to be done in commerce to make it healthy—

A. To make things always of the best, whether cheap or dear.

B. To give and exact cash payment.

C. To let nobody live by lending money.

The manner of *approach* to these three perfections must be determined by each of us according to our means and position. Is it impossible to begin an association of merchants, more or less independent, who would at least observe *B*?

[Mr. Brooke replied:—

“I think you would be surprised if you knew how often I for one have declared myself (to myself) willing to accept your invitation—*Fors*, May 1871, p. 22;¹ and before you wrote it I could envy a man I knew in Wales whom we caught once digging his own potatoes, with a volume of Essays open near him—a fair sample of his life. But who is ever to restore truth and faithfulness between Capitalists and Labourers, to stay the rush of competition in Trade and its attendant crimes, to bring back again that pride of service, much of which *I* even have seen corrupted, and thus perhaps eventually to ‘make England’s face something cleaner again,’ if we don’t stand to our posts? God knows I don’t feel any special mission for the task—none less; but I think if I were to shirk my share of it, I could never feel that He had given me the ease.

“A friend of mine,* wealthy and highly gifted, has deliberately educated his sons with the injunction that they shall follow him in this work. He gives his life to it, and is at this time planning a new scheme whereby the interests of the Workpeople shall be from the first legally involved in those of their Employers in a new ‘Concern’ which he is establishing *for the purpose of trying the experiment*. I know that the idea of profit-accruing to himself does not enter his calculations further than is necessary to establish the success of his scheme and recommend its adoption to others. He has read *Munera Pulveris*, and I want, Sir, to modify your assertion that ‘people *will* have it that you want them to be moral and *unbusinesslike*’—it may be true, probably is, of many, but other some think and feel differently about you. Surely you don’t gauge public opinion of your utterances by the criticisms of the Daily Press, blatant pest that it has become!

“Your second precept for rendering commerce healthy—‘To give and exact cash payments’—is in my business practised as nearly as is possible—the terms of the Trade being for purchase of cotton cash in ten days and for purchase of produce from cotton cash in fourteen days. These terms are rigid, and we know no ‘paper’ except bank-notes.

“But your first and third precepts—‘To make things always of the best, whether cheap or dear’ and ‘To let nobody live by interest’—are hopeless indeed. How can we obey the first when often *the demand* is for poor quality (though I hope that’s mending), and when our values are for ever interfered with by speculation totally unlawful?”

* The Chairman of the Associated Employers of Labour.

¹ [See now Vol. XXVII. pp. 96–97.]

Ruskin replied (no date):—]

DEAR MR. BROOKE,—*Please* glance over these rough pages¹ written for the *May Fors*; and I'm sorry to send you such a scrawl, but can't write better now, in average work. If you will further criticize and question, I think we shall make it a useful number, between us. . . .

Ever gratefully yours,
J. R.

[Mr. Brooke continued the correspondence, and Ruskin replied, sending some more bits of *Fors*, Letter 44:—]

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
15th Feb.

DEAR MR. BROOKE,—I'm very sorry you're ill. Here are two bits you ought to have—but the continuation has gone on continuing into too much to send. Tell me first what you feel about what you have—if you can read it.

Ever faithfully yours,
J. R.

[In reply to a further letter from Mr. Brooke, Ruskin wrote:—]

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
25th Feb.

DEAR MR. BROOKE,—Thanks for all your letters. I fear you were a little hurt by the manner of mine, but I am obliged to think of you as representing your class—not as yourself. I did not reply to your last because you said you were unwell. There is no haste; I have plenty in hand. When you are ready to go on we must be very steady in keeping to one point at a time. . . .

Nor is it a question whether *you* are making a bad article or not, but whether you are co-operating in their make. You don't forge notes; you only supply the forgers with *good* paper, which, luckily for you, they want *thin*. (That is the gist of your last letter, you know.)

But all these personal questions are irrelevant until the general points and laws are *fixed*.* When you are ready to go on, we will, if you please, begin with your admission (is it not?) that machinery does not enable us

* Thus in your last note you say. "Don't stop building dwellings for the poor; as long as the bank will give you interest, *that* is a benefit at any rate." Now, suppose the bank were a brothel on a vast scale, would you say the same of its profits? That I ought to go on building for the poor out of them? You must *first* determine what the bank *is*. *Then*, what I am to do.

¹ [The "rough pages" were for the most part printed in *Fors*, Letter 44, §§ 8, 9, 13 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 132–134, 137–138). For an additional passage, now printed from the MS., see the note in Vol. XXVIII. p. 132.]

to produce more food, but only to buy it of others. Which you think we have, or may have, a "call" to do.

This is quite a new element in the debate, and we must clear it up.

Are we to debate on the ground of Christianity? or of science only. I do not care which, but let me know which, and let us keep to it.

Ever truly yours,

J. Ruskin.

Parcel of MS. received all right. This is a private letter altogether, meant only to clear the way.¹

¹ [Here on Ruskin's side the correspondence ceased. He went abroad in March (see Vol. XXIII. p. xxx.).]

**THE DEFINITION OF MONEY:
LETTERS TO THE REV. J. P. FAUNTHORPE¹**

[See Letter 44, § 11 *n.* (Vol. XXVIII. p. 134)]

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
December 18th, 1880.

DEAR MR. FAUNTHORPE,—You call me “Master” in private. I know you dare not confess me for one in public; but do you know accurately and thoroughly *why* you dare not?

In your article² on *Money* you quote an entirely common and valueless bit of me, but you repeat deliberately the lie which I have been twenty years fighting against, with my entire heart and soul. You have much more than the power of mind necessary to understand the nature of that Lie. What is it that makes you shrink from using the mind God gave you, in this one direction? The Lie is, apparently, a very innocuous one—“Money is a Medium of Exchange.”

You might find it out to be a lie merely by defining its words. Ask just *what* is a Medium? Having defined that, ask farther, when you give a penny for a loaf, *where* is the *Medium*? *You* have a penny; somebody else has a loaf; you exchange the penny for the loaf. But where’s the *Medium*? But you might find it out to be a lie by substituting the false definition in the most important passage in which the word Money is used in all human literature.

“The love of Money is the root of all Evil.”³ Try it with: “The love of a Medium of Exchange is the root of all evil.” Will it still be true? Is it still “Word of God,” in evangelical sense? Is it still word of a wise

¹ [The letters in this section of the Appendix are here reprinted from *Letters from John Ruskin to Rev. J. P. Faunthorpe, M. A.*, edited by Thomas J. Wise, privately issued 1895, vol. i. pp. 21–41.]

² [The reference is to “Lesson XLIV.: Money” in *Household Science: Readings in Necessary Knowledge for Girls and Young Women*, edited by the Rev. J. P. Faunthorpe, Principal of Whitelands College, 1881. The Lesson begins (p. 391) with the statement “Money is the medium of exchange.” The “entirely common and valueless bit” of Ruskin (quoted on p. 397) is from *Time and Tide*, § 18 (Vol. XVII. p. 334): “whether a shilling a day be good pay or not, depends wholly on what a ‘shilling’s worth’ is,” etc.]

³ [1 Timothy vi. 10.]

man, in human and common sense? Now *you* have assuredly common sense enough, and divine spirit enough, to understand the difference between this Lie-definition and the true one. "Money is an order for goods." And you can see that though the Bible sentence will not read so musically, it will read as truly, and with much *more* meaning, when you substitute *this* definition: "The love of Orders for Goods is the root of all Evil." That is to say, the love of Power, to begin with, and of Consumption, to end with. The endeavour to get the *grasp* of Goods, instead of to *produce* them, and to get the privilege of devouring them, instead of the faculty of *creating* them.

You can see, also, that when you define the terms farther this true definition becomes a hundred-fold more precious. For you have to define the word "Goods," and to distinguish "Goods" from "Evils," which to do is of all the work proposed in any Training College the precisely Primary. I am going to print this letter in next *Fors*; and probably also for separate circulation.¹ But will you first give me an answer to be printed with it? And be assured that I should not have written it unless, first, I had trusted much in your friendship, your courage, and your sincerity; and, secondly, so much admired both the substance and arrangement of this volume of yours on Household Science, as to hope with all my heart that it may become oracular in every English and un-English Household, alike to those that are far off, and to them that are nigh.²

Ever yours respectfully and affectionately,

J. Ruskin.

THE REV. J. P. FAUNTHORPE, M. A.

Postscript.—*Note* to be put to the question, "Where is the Medium," when the letter is published.

You would probably at first answer, "It is not a penny, but my knowledge, that I *really* exchange with the baker for bread, and the penny is the 'Medium' of *that* exchange!"

But, if the Baker wanted your knowledge, you would not need the penny, *nor he take it*. He would give you the loaf for the Latin lesson at once. That exchange needs no "Medium," and can have none. The exchange of English coals for American meat indeed needs the "Medium" of a ship, but not of money. If there were none in the world the exchange would still take place, as it does now, and a tally of notches on the masts would express every condition of debt and credit. And you will find, in every other conceivable instance, that money is not a "Medium of Exchange," but an "Order for Goods"; and that, therefore, its reality as Money depends on there *being* Goods to Order,—which your vulgar economist, and your England taught by him, never considers it his or her business to ascertain! And the essential difference between having a thousand pounds in your pocket-book, or only a penny in your purse, is not that you can become a Mediator of your Exchanges, but that you *can* become a consumer of more goods.

¹ [This intention, however, was not carried out.]

² [Ephesians ii. 17.]

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE
(December, 1880).

DEAR MR. FAUNTHORPE,—You would see that my letter was written hastily, in the first passion of sorrow at finding you still in that net of the Fowler, and amid noisome pestilence.¹ My secretary sent it off before I had revised either it or your article, and I must throw it into completer form. But the first appeal of it, the main thing, is the question, Why you do not examine into the truth of this mighty thing, this *accurate* Enemy of God?

Your whole article is a series of confusions between Coin, Money, and Goods, not worth separate notice, but leading to such terrific generalizations, as “if everybody agreed to take tin, tin would do as well,” etc., etc., and “the use of money is to *buy* what we want,” as if it could not be used to *produce* it also; as if it could not be *abused*, in that fatallest of all ways, for reproducing itself! Not but that, for your simple readers, the immediate purchase is of course the thing to be lectured on first, but how of saving? how of living? The postscript, scribbled yesterday, then copied that you might see it clearer, I send to-day, copy and manuscript draft, in case you like to keep the letter by itself! There are all sorts of verbal niceties requiring to be dealt with in your definitions. “Means,” in English, has entirely ceased, like “moyen,” to translate “medium.” That word is properly used in science (and in Spiritualism?), but in your article it stands for “instrument,” method of, way of, a totally different thing. Again, “Money is the measure of value”; consider what equivocation is in that sentence. It is the *denomination* of value, but not the *means, instrumentum* of measurement. A pint *pot* does measure bulk of liquids, a foot *rule* bulk of solids, and a pound weight the weight of both. But the thing that you say Money is the measure of, *Value*? What is that itself? You *mean* that *Money* measures *Money* price—*i. e.*, is the denominator of it. But, what is it that money price measures?

Ever affectionately yours,
J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
December 23rd, 1880.

DEAR MR. FAUNTHORPE,—I am deeply grateful for your kind letter. It, with others equally kind, but not a thousandth part as important, must be only thanked to-day, for Christmas brings more duties than I am able for, and I have only read yet the beginning and end of yours.

But at once let me pray you to reconsider your first sentence, “The essence of a lie is its intention.” The essence of *being a liar* is intention; the essence of a Lie is—its own falsehood. If you affectionately tell a child that hemlock is good for him, the memory of your intentions may make your regret light, but not the earth on his coffin. I criticise your book for your *readers*, not for *you*. And I used the ugly word “lie” as the equivalent of a Falsehood—first, because it is shorter and plainer;

¹ [Psalms xci. 3.]
XXIX.

secondly, because (not by you, but by those whose teaching you have followed) the Falsehood *is* intended, deliberate, continual, and in its work Deadly, more than the black plague.

I can say no more to-day, but am ever,

Faithfully and affectionately yours,

J. Ruskin.

Brantwood, Coniston, Lancashire,

December 24th, 1880.

DEAR MR. FAUNTHORPE,—I wish you a Happy Christmas. But so I do to the robins, and the wrens. *You* cannot but have a Thoughtful Christmas, *if* a happy one, being a Messenger of Christ. And are you not also by vow a priest of the Most High God? And are you not trusted with the training of the trainers of Christ's little ones in the way they should go—govern-esses, to whom, more than to their mothers, England now trusts her girl-souls? the mothers, being mostly incompetent, and having wings only like butterflies, not hens.

Governesses, or Schoolmistresses, or teachers in schools of this or that useful thing, whatever they are to be, in whatever rank, over whatever rank, what a mighty power this is given to you! I do not know, clearly, how wide it is, or how deep. For the lowlier it is, the deeper it is, and the more necessary it should be true and pure in its teaching. The Mistress may learn at any time of her life, but the Servant must at the village school, if ever.

To *you*, therefore, if to any ordained man in all this England, comes straight and close home St. Paul's charge:¹ "*Thou*, O Man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness. I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ, who before Pilate bore the good confession, *thou* who before many witnesses hast confessed the good confession, that thou keep the commandment spotless, unrebukable, until the Epiphany of our Lord." Flee *these* things! What things? Keep *the* Commandment! What Commandment? Will you look, and tell me, What things? What Commandment? and if you are minded to obey it, or to dispute it?

Ever your loving friend,

John Ruskin.

P. S.—Perhaps this letter may begin a quieter and more accurately arranged examination of the matter at issue between us, than my first hastily written appeal to you. And, for the first step in the scientific part of it, will you tell me why, if money be a Medium of Exchange, and no more than that, we may not all of us have all we want of it, and equal use of it. Why should not the government issue any quantity; and why should a miser be looked on as unkind, if the thing he pleases himself in hoarding can be supplied for the asking to everybody else? Why should any soul of us be poor, if the issuing of bank-notes by the ton would make us rich? Can a Medium of Exchange in your pocket be rendered useless by putting more of it in mine?

¹ [1 Timothy vi. 11–14. Ruskin's translation differs somewhat from the Authorised Version.]

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
December 31st, 1880.

DEAR MR. FAUNTHORPE,—The Camellias are here, and I thank Mrs. Faunthorpe for sending them.

But I have written to you in weariness and painfulness, and I must have answer to the three quite definite questions in my last letter before I speak of any of the matters entered upon in your non-answer of two days ago. You cannot possibly begin the year with any work more pertinent, or more imperative. Very earnestly I wish you health, and power, and peace in its days. And am,

Your faithful friend,
 JOHN RUSKIN.

THE REV. J. P. FAUNTHORPE, M. A.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
January 2nd, 1881.

DEAR MR. FAUNTHORPE,—I am most truly grateful for your loving and kind letter. A good deal of what is worst in the bottom of me, and saddest in the midst, had been stirred up by the implication in your former letter that I was likely to engage you in oppositions of science, falsely so called;¹ and by the reading of the *Whitelands Annual*, which I will not speak of to-day, but only ask you to add to your present compliance with me the careful reading of paragraphs 120 to 137 in the old copy of the *Queen of the Air*,² which perhaps you may like to keep, only you must make some of the girls copy the corrections on a copy³ I will send for that operation; and please let them also copy the enclosed note⁴ into it, and into their own, which I will send also if they haven't one.

I have sent a book⁵ to Whitelands, which, if they could study every word of (I doubt not their willingness) would be an education better than any living queen's.

Ever yours affectionately,
 J. RUSKIN.

¹ [1 Timothy vi. 20.]

² [For §§ 120–127 (in part), see Vol. XIX. pp. 400–406. The rest of § 127, §§ 128–132 (in part), and § 134 (in part) in the original edition were reprinted from the *Notes on the General Principles of Employment*: see Vol. XVII. pp. 541–546. For the rest of § 132, § 133, and the rest of § 134, see Vol. XIX. pp. 406–408. §§ 135–137 in the original edition were reprinted from *Cestus of Aglaia*: see Vol. XIX. pp. 72–76.]

³ [These corrections were made by Ruskin on a copy of the first (1869) edition of the *Queen of the Air*. They were, however, but trivial, and were made use of by Mr. Faunthorpe when preparing the fourth (1883) edition of the work, which he edited for Ruskin. See Vol. XIX. pp. lxxi., 285.]

⁴ [The “Note” referred to follows this letter, below, p. 558.]

⁵ [The edition of 1710 (with glossary) of *Virgil's Æneid, translated into Scottish Verse by Professor Gawin Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld*. See references to it in Letters 61 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 500), and 92 (above, p. 455).]

[The following is the "Note" referred to in the preceding letter. It is to be observed that the Note is headed "Denmark Hill," although the letter itself is addressed from Brantwood. Doubtless it was an old note, written in London at some earlier date, and now for the first time made use of.]

DENMARK HILL, S. E.

Real value, as opposed to mere price in market, which is the received value among buyers and sellers of it under particular circumstances.

The conditions of real money-value may be best understood by supposing the represented property first infinitely large, and then infinitely small.

Imagine a territory so richly productive as to require no labour. Every kind of necessary or pleasant food, fruit or flower, laid up in store or gatherable on the instant, and only a few inhabitants on it unable to consume the thousandth part of its abundance. No one would have to pay for anything but the trouble of carriage, and for an incommensurably small sum might possess whatever he chose—the value of money being thus infinitely large, and passing through that infinity into nothing.

Suppose, on the contrary, the food consumed by pestilence, gradually to the last grain of corn; the inhabitants would gradually pay more and more for a little food, their whole fortune at last for a handful of corn, and the value of money thus becoming infinitely small, would pass on this side also, as the last food was consumed, into zero.

Between these two zeros, the uselessness which signifies that everything may be got *without* money, and the uselessness which signifies that nothing can be got *with* it, the real value of money oscillates according to the actually attainable quantity of goods, and the market value of money according to the caprices and panics of commercial minds.

DISCRIMINATION IN ART TEACHING¹

[See Letter 57, § 7 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 407)]

THE first need is to be assured that there is a bad and good in art and in literature, and that some people know the one from the other.

If once we are assured of that, we are able to deal with the second question—Shall we let everybody, young people or uneducated people, look at and read what they like, and so find out what is good for themselves? or shall we give them only good art—only good literature—and forbid them bad art and bad literature?

Forbid; but how can you, says John Milton, wisest of the Liberty men. Let us hear him first, nevertheless, on this point of absolute goodness:²—

“I deny not, but that it is of greatest concernment in the Church and Commonwealth, to have a vigilant eye how Bookes demeane themselves as well as men; and thereafter to confine, imprison, and do sharpest justice on them as malefactors: For Books are not absolutely dead things, but doe contain a potencie of life in them to be as active as that foule was whose progeny they are; may they do preserve as in a violll the purest efficacie and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous Dragons teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet on the other hand unlesse warinesse be us’d, as good almost kill a Man as kill a good Book; who kills a Man kills a reasonable creature, Gods Image; but hee who destroyes a good Booke, kills reason it selfe, kills the Image of God, as it were in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the Earth; but a good Booke is the pretious life-blood of a master spirit, imbalm’d and treasur’d up on purpose to a life beyond life. ’Tis true, no age can restore a life, whereof perhaps there is no great losse; and revolutions of ages doe not oft recover the losse of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole Nations fare the worse. We should be wary therefore what persecution we raise against the living labours of publick men, how we spill that season’d life of man preserv’d and stor’d up in Books; since we see a kinde of homicide may be thus committed, sometimes a martyrdome, and if it extend to the whole impression, a kinde of massacre, whereof the execution ends not in the slaying of an elementall life, but strikes at that ethereall and first essence, the breath of reason it selfe, slaies an immortality rather than a life.”*

* It seems to me that in this passage there must be some gap; to make it clear reasoning it ought to have “not only” inserted here after “therefore,” and “but much more” after “public men” in the next line.

¹ [This passage is printed from sheets of MS. at Brantwood, headed “Fors.”]

² [This passage is not given in the MS., but Ruskin obviously refers to *Areopagitica* (p. 35 in Arber’s Reprint) as here given.]

Now, in this passage you may read “picture” or “work of art” for book, with entirely the same force in the passage.

Which, so generalized, is literally and entirely true. And the Essay which I have printed, to take the lead among all that I have ever myself said which seems to me deserving not to die,¹ is the amplification of this; of which if you will now read §§ 32, 38, and 41²—the latter in connection with our recent studies in *Fors* from Kirkby Lonsdale churchyard³—you will be better prepared for what I have to say next, namely, that you cannot, then, at present, teach the British public anything but evil, by putting means of information indiscriminately within their reach.

The Crystal Palace proposes to do this. You have there casts of the best Greek statues, made entirely accessible to the British public, but at the same time the Soho Bazaar and the Surrey Pantomime in the central aisle.⁴ And the only word I have ever heard spoken by the British public concerning the Greek statues was an indecent jest by a drunken sailor; while the decent and undrunk portion of the British public entirely abjures that region of plaster anatomy, delights itself with its own dress and chatter under the monster organ, and makes the lovely Temple of Minerva at Ægina serve as a vestibule to the Ladies’ Cloak-room.

At Kensington matters are still worse. For there fragments of really true and precious art are buried and polluted amidst a mass of loathsome modern mechanisms, fineries, and fatuity, and have the souls trodden out of them, and the lustre polluted on them, till they are but as a few sullied pearls in a troughful of rotten pease, at which the foul English public snout grunts in an amazed manner, finding them wholly flavourless.⁵ Now, therefore, the first thing we need in England is an accessible museum, however small, containing only good art, and chiefly of a quality which the British public can understand, or may in time come to understand, and which therefore will be in some degree attractive to it.

Good water-colour drawings, for instance, are pleasant to everybody. Not so pleasant as bad ones to the general mob; but never offensive, and in time attractive. Such a drawing, for instance, as that I named⁶ of Mrs. Allingham’s, in the water-colours of this year, could not fail to teach rightly, when it taught at all.

But even the best Greek vases must always be entirely unintelligible and useless to the British public, and need never be put in a museum* intended for them.

[Here the MS. breaks off.]

* Cf. p. 5 of Letter 23 [§ 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 398).]

¹ [*Sesame and Lilies* was reissued in 1871 as the first volume in a collected Works” series of Ruskin’s books: see Vol. XVIII. pp. lix., 9.]

² [Vol. XVIII. pp. 84–86, 96–99.]

³ [See Letters 52 and 56 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 298, 393).]

⁴ [For the casts, see Vol. XX. p. 237; for the pantomime, Vol. XIX. pp. 216–218.]

⁵ [For a similar reference to the South Kensington “labyrinth,” see (in a later volume of this edition) the letter of March 20, 1880, on *A Museum or Picture Gallery*.]

⁶ [In *Academy Notes* for 1875: see Vol. XIV. p. 264.]

LAWS FOR THE WINE TRADE¹

[See Letter 58, § 13 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 429)]

Now, therefore, to begin one little piece of construction work, and as far as possible conclude it, let me state the main clauses of St. George's laws concerning wine.

The disorder of life and degradation of temper which attend the growth of the vine in many districts of Europe result either from the cupidity of the masters (reducing the vineyard labourers to serfdom), or the ignorance of the peasant and his consumption of the precious yearly fruit of his ground in his own careless thirst. Of all material tests of high civilization none can be more simple than the storing of corn and wine. You cannot have the highest civilization but in districts producing both, and that both should be rightly cultivated and distributed will always signify a nearly perfect condition of the commonwealth.

By prudent industry the corn and wine district of the temperate zone may be greatly extended beyond its present limits. But within their attainable limits no ground should ever be allowed by the Government to be put under vine but that which has good exposure and fitting soil. The northern and eastern slopes of hills, so often put under vine by the proprietors in districts of reputation for wine, must be authoritatively reduced to lower produce, and no grapes grown but such as will give wine that will keep.

The most accurate and scrupulous skill being spent on these, and the preparation of the wines conducted under Government inspection preventing, by quite crushing penalties, all adulteration and imposture, the wines are to be finally sealed with the Government seal in bottles of accurate and equal measure in all Christian countries, admitting of course division of such measure according to the preciousness of the wine; and the storehouses on each estate are to be proportioned in size to the time which the wine requires to be matured in, so that, supposing it is at its best at the end of ten years, the storehouses must hold the produce of ten vintages, and as the new year's wine is put in wood at one end of them, the ten years' old wine taken out for sale at the other, the sale of the newer wine being permitted if the consumer ask for it, but not at a lower price, so that there may be no temptation to any one to drink, or give immature

¹ [Printed from a MS., with no heading, at Brantwood.]

wine because it is cheaper. The measure of wine therefore from these inspected stores will always be of the same known and unquestioned money value, inevitable and minor variations in flavour being noticed only for the better pleasing, in courtesy, of individual taste, but not permitted to affect price, and the wines of entirely rare quality retained by Government for gifts of honour or use in medicine.

I have no occasion to say more than this on the subject of wine-growth in the text of *Fors*; but I will admit into its correspondence any useful letters of suggestion or statement from wine-growers. Of letters of objection I shall take no notice because no rational objection *can* be made to this system except on grounds of selfish interest which I refuse to recognize.

14

ECONOMY: GOD'S AND THE DEVIL'S¹

[See Letter 58, § 12 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 429)]

DEVIL'S, AND FOOL'S POLITICAL

GOD'S, AND HIS SERVANT'S

Economy.

ECONOMY.

1. That good things are only good, if they can be turned into money.

1. That money is only good, if it can be turned into good things.

2. That all human prosperity must be founded on the vices of human nature, because these are the essential powers of human nature, and its virtues are accidental and impotent.

2. That all human prosperity must be founded on the virtues of human nature, because these are the essential powers of human nature, and its vices are accidental and impotent.

3. That every man is bound to form, and at liberty to follow, his own opinion on all matters concerning him.

3. That every man is bound to know, and under orders to follow, God's opinion, on all matters concerning him.

4. That there is no Devil, no Life, and no God.

4. (*indivisible*). That there is an Eternal God, an Eternal Life, and an Eternal Death.

¹ [This section of the Appendix was printed as Note 5 in Mr. Faunthorpe's *Index to "Fors Clavigera,"* p. 501.]

THE EIGHTEENTH PSALM¹

[See Letters 61 and 64]

THEREFORE she is the teacher, and shelter of Israel; a hard taskmaster, yet needful, serviceable. "Out of Egypt have I called my son;"² yes, but the Son was first sent there.

There is continual debate among learned men nowadays whether the art of Greece came from Egypt or Tyre. But they debate without themselves knowing what *could* be got from either of them, and in the meantime the Turks have hindered Count de Cesnola from going on with his diggings in Cyprus, where the marbles are the key to everything. The noble collection of them which, made out of the temple at Golgos three years ago, he offered for an old song to the British Museum,³ and which its authorities (my own impression is, through pure and mere jealousy) offered him an older song for, and let it be bought over their heads by New York, where doubtless the enlightened public will soon break it all up for soft building materials, contained the entire evidence needed respecting what was western and southern in Greek art. Unquestionably, however, one elementary branch of the arts—letters and the art of writing them—did come from the Reed country. Egypt is not only the great Engraver on stone, but the great Scribe on Papyrus. And the Ark which her princess found, itself of reed, among the paper reeds by the brooks, is the first origin and type of all noble Library.

Whereupon we may proceed to our writing lesson—progress in which is for the most part dependent on your obeying the general order, never to write anything but what you sincerely suppose needs to be written, and will be good, if written, for yourself in future and for others at present. And plant that written word thoroughly and accurately, as you would plant potatoes or vines or anything else meant to grow, in true lines and with due pains, and no hurry. The words which you copied for a first lesson were Greek for, "I will love thee, O Lord, my strength," the beginning of the 18th Psalm.

¹ [This passage is printed from MS. sheets at Brantwood, headed "New Copy." It was clearly intended to follow Letter 61, for it takes up the writing exercise, there set (Vol. XXVIII. p. 494); but it also connects with what is said of Egypt in Letter 64 (*ibid.*, p. 563).]

² [Matthew ii. 15.]

³ [For another allusion to this collection and its refusal by the British Museum, see Vol. XXV. p. 161.]

Now I only myself understand the beginning and end of that Psalm, and have not the slightest notion what all the middle of it means. It is very fine, no doubt, if we take it as a description of a storm; and I have before now expatiated on it as such, in *Modern Painters*,¹ but I don't see what clouds, or hail or lightning, have to do with the rest of the Psalm; it having certainly been by none of them that God had discomfited Saul; and neither had David himself anywise rejoiced over that discomfiture. I leave therefore the ten verses of the mid-Psalm as absolutely enigmatic and useless, for the present, but from the first to the seventh and from the seventeenth to end, commend them to your attention, as in all literalness what according to your truth and usefulness you will be able one day to say for yourself.

And of the first six verses, I will at once translate from Vulgate and Septuagint more accurately for you:—

“I will love thee, O Lord, my Fortitude.

“The Lord is my Firmament, and my refuge, and my Deliverer. My God is my helper, and I will hope in Him; He is the Holder of Shield above me,² and the horn of my safety, and the taker up of my battle. Praising, I will call on the Lord.”

Now, you see I have written Fortitude instead of strength. Not because it is a longer or more handsome word, but a quite different word. Any impious lout may be strong. But only a man who loves God and has obeyed His law can have Fortitude.

Also, you see I have written Firmament instead of rock. That makes a considerable difference. For in the first chapter of Genesis you have the word puzzling you as if it never occurred anywhere else; and it is entirely proper for you to know that the word *does* occur again here, and has nothing to do with the word used of the Rock which Moses struck, or with St. Peter.

“Then the Heavens are telling the Glory of God,
And the Firmament shows His *Doing*.”³

Now, what Firmament have you got to show for yourselves? Can you make so much as a brick? You are poor weak things. Grasshoppers.

Yes, and you hope to hop to heaven, do you, and whistle and eat yourselves into eternal life and the Glory of God?

¹ [In the chapter on “The Firmament”: see Vol. VI. pp. 109, 110.]

² [*Adjutor* in the Vulgate; ὑπερασπιστης in the LXX.]

³ [Psalms xix. 1: compare the title, *Cæli Enarrant*, given to one of Ruskin's sets of reprints from *Modern Painters* (Vol. III. p. lxiii.)]

**“THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY”:
LETTERS TO MR. FREDERIC HARRISON¹**

[See Letter 66 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 618)]

THE absurdity of the sentence as it stands (with “whole” italicised too) I leave to your own comments after reflection and repentance.² But I must definitely show you the inconsistency of what you meant by it, with the “religion you so ardently advocate.” You say, in your account of your birth to the light of it (p. 863³) that “somehow you found yourself thinking that a religious life meant conscious devotion to human welfare.” (In other words, you did not at that time know so much as the proper scholarly use of the words religion and philanthropy.) At page 869 you say: “Our religion means the devotion of our life to the supreme Master of our life.” Curious to know who this may be, I wade through four more pages of gossip, to the statement (p. 874) that the word Humanity centres our reverence in that which is itself homogeneous—“a real unity, which is also moral, sympathetic, and benevolent.”

Now, my dear friend, I doubt not that the word Humanity does all this and more for you; but when you come to know something of that whole of life which you suppose so summarily comprehensible, you will find that it can do nothing of the sort for other people. Some thirty years ago, in my first work for Turner, I had with sorrow to myself to expose the good old chevalier Bunsen’s illogical Trinity of God, Man, and Humanity, and did so by requesting him to consider instead the Trinity of Man, Dog, and Canineness.⁴ Using now, as I always find it best to do, and English word for the Latin, and calling this Trinity the Trinity of Man, Dog, and Dogity, suppose I was to be told by some of my lady friends whose religion is Lap-dogity, that the word Lap-dogity centred their reverence in that which was itself homogeneous, a real Unity which was also moral, sympathetic, and benevolent: would you not instantly feel it necessary to observe to them, that the reverend, moral, sympathetic and benevolent homogenesis of lap-dogity was absolutely dependent on the much more reverend,

¹ [This passage, printed from unheaded sheets of MS. at Brantwood, clearly formed part of the first draft of the reply to Mr. Harrison in Letter 66.]

² [For the reference here, see note on page 568, below.]

³ [The page is that of vol. 27 of the *Contemporary Review*, containing Mr. Harrison’s article on “Humanity” (see Vol. XXVIII. pp. 614, 619 *nn.*.)]

⁴ [See Appendix II. to vol. iii. of *Modern Painters* (Vol. V. pp. 424–425).]

moral, sympathetic, and benevolent homogenesis of ladyhood, and that if the lady were nothing without a lap-dog to adore, the lap-dog would also be nothing without a lady to adore him. Now the question which is vital for the Dog's reverence, namely, that he should have a mistress, is also vital to the man's, that he should have a master.¹

[THE published correspondence between Ruskin and Mr. Harrison was accompanied by private letters. Several of Ruskin's, placed at the disposal of the editors by Mr. Harrison, are subjoined.]

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,

1st June, '76.

MY DEAR HARRISON,—I did not think *Fors* would have kept its time this month, or should before have told you that I had written a letter to you in the course of it,² which I trust you will not think done in unkindly feeling, but which nevertheless expresses some condition of antagonism between us in a way which I thought necessary, for many reasons, too long to enter into. If you care to make any answer, and the questions put are entirely serious on my part, you shall of course have open pages, and if I think the answer forcible and interesting, full type print. But probably some private correspondence may prepare the way best for what is to be public on either side. Only, in every case, believe me,

Most truly yours,

J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,

8th June, 1876.

MY DEAR HARRISON,—I was *very* glad of your kind letter from the shores of Solent, and I trust you will find nothing in the paper, after you have time to read it, to make you at all waver in your trust in its being done in good feeling. There is one somewhat insolent expression about your not knowing good traceries,³ which may seem gratuitous, or ill founded (for this your very letter about Salisbury, Romsey, and the rest, means true interest in architecture). But if you ever took up the subject, or any other branch of great art, so as to *know* thoroughly the difference between the designer of Salisbury and Mr. Scott, or between Titian and Mr. Leighton,⁴ your constant sense of the degradation of the existing human intellect would

¹ [Compare Letter 69, § 16 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 701).]

² [Letter 66, §§ 9–15 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 618–625).]

³ [Letter 66, § 11 (*ibid.*, p. 620).]

⁴ [Mr. Harrison had doubtless made some reference to Leighton's fresco (1866) of "The Wise and Foolish Virgins" in the church at Lyndhurst.]

become so horrible to you that you could not think of any general conditions of development, but only of the immediate causes of the intellectual ruin.

But besides this, the unconsciousness in your paper of the misery of the persons who used to believe truly in a personal Deity, and now cannot find him any more, and you therefore resting satisfied in such a system as that which your paper metaphorically supports as an equivalent for Religion, is the real reason of my attacking the paper. And some day I shall go on to that, but was not up to it in this *Fors*. The usury questions¹ are of course most earnest, pressing, and practical.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,

19th June.

MY DEAR HARRISON,—I wish I had time to answer your kind and tender private letter, but it is impossible. The public one² I fear must be answered somewhat haughtily, but there is no time to ask you to reconsider it; only, please tell me if you object to the insertion of letters of reference to the paragraphs that have to be commented on (as always in *Fors* correspondence). If so, I must put them at the side, bringing the letter into narrower column of type.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. R.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE.

MY DEAR HARRISON,—I am very deeply touched by your to-day's letter, and am, in consequence of it, going to pray you to permit me to withhold the one intended for publication till you have reconsidered it, and until we each understand the other better. I had no conception of your depth of feeling; you have none of my modes of using language, nor, therefore, of the extreme difficulty of our conversing at all; we are simply fighting at present about the black and white shield.

I can say no more to-day—but this only, that I *cannot* understand how, with the feeling of regard to me that you have always shown—and the far more flattering estimate of me than I thought you had formed, which you now express—you never either wrote to me as a friend, or attacked me as a foe, for those sayings which you think so deadly and blasphemous in *Fors*. If I had ever been taught anything true and of much value to me by a man whom I regarded as a friend, I should have been earnest to plead with him against what I felt to be any horrible error in his public work.

Why have you let me go on, and never either supported me, in my war with the iniquity of England, or corrected me, in my own?

¹ [See Letter 66, § 14 (p. 624).]

² [Printed in Letter 67, § 24 (pp. 662–663). Ruskin's answer followed, pp. 663–664.]

I am stupid and tired to-day. I have a thousand things to say, of which the first is—forgive me for not publishing your public letter, and have patience with me. The second is, that with such earnestness as I find yours to be, and know my own to be, it *must* be possible for the one of us who is wrong to be shown that he is so by the other. And we *can't* be both right.

Ever affectionately yours,
J. R.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
3rd July.

DEAR HARRISON,—I was obliged to publish your letter after all, for I wanted the usury bit;¹ and besides—there was some nice little game in it otherwise useful. You will perhaps get to understand me a little better, some day.

Always affectionately yours,
J. RUSKIN,

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE.

MY DEAR HARRISON,—You won't be able to stop at this point of the talk—I did not put you into *Fors* to let you go so easily. You will have to answer for your creed, or else let it be what you call “reviled,”² to an extent which, all I can say is, I wouldn't stand if I were you; but then I'm not you. You know I have not touched on what you call your religion yet. And I am going to attack you, not at all for what you believe, but for mere impertinence and falseness of language—for bad *writing*, in short—which I abhor as I do bad painting; and do verily, whether you think it or not, know something about the causes and kinds of. When, for instance, you talk of a man's being acquainted with the whole of life and thought³ (when no living being yet ever knew so much as his own life and thought, let alone his wife's, or his dog's, though with him always), I don't dispute or debate about the saying, as *you mean* it, but I attack you for saying what you don't mean, and never could for a moment have meant. So also I shall attack you, not for professing Positivism, but for not knowing the meaning of the word Positive, and

¹ [Compare Ruskin's introductory remarks in Letter 67, § 24 (pp. 661–662).]

² [See Letter 67, § 24 and § 25 (Ruskin's note *b*); pp. 662, 663.]

³ [For Mr. Harrison's remark, see Vol. XXVIII. p. 663; for Ruskin's comment, p. 664 (note *h*), and, above, p. 88 *n*. A letter (July 1876) to Mr. Girdlestone (for whom, see Vol. XXVIII. pp. 555, 575, 606) refers to the same passage:—

“You have a way of always bringing out what snappishness is in me—in spite of our general harmony of thought. That sentence about ‘the whole of life and thought’ could only have been written by a man who really knows *nothing*. I could puzzle Harrison, Comte, or the wisest of encyclopædists with the first dead twig I snapped from a tree, or the first word I read from a wise man's saying: they know neither Death nor Life.”]

confusing pono with scio, and both with sapio, until you even translate positio into sapientia.

Well, you will, I hope, whether I plague you into reply or not, remain in your present trust that I care for you all the while.

And now, let me just know two things more privately. What do you mean by my “*genius*.”¹ Genius for what? What do you think I have ever either seen or taught, rightly? and what do you feel “blasphemous” in anything I have said?

Ever affectionately yours,

J. R.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE.

MY DEAR HARRISON,—It is precisely because you “decline debate about *words*” that you are at present using your strength in vain, and talking nonsense without knowing it. The first education of a man is to use his language accurately. You continually say what you don’t mean; and read entirely bestial rubbish as if it were human sense, because you have never been at the pains to learn language accurately. When you *can* read Pope, Horace, or Dante, you will know why there may be Calvinism, Comtism, Positivism, or even so small and paltry a heresy as Ruskinism. But no Popism, Horaceism, or Dantism.

All debate *must* be FIRST about words. Else we debate merely about Bosh-mosh-posh. We must first define Bosh-mosh-posh—in classical, or accepted terms.

But your present letter speaks of the Life after death. Now it was precisely because I saw no reference to such a life in your letter from Oxford² that I attacked it. If you will refer me to any of your writings in which you give account of your own or of Positivist views in that matter, I will read them with utter earnestness before saying more.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

You must forgive the brief rudeness of my letter; in general I don’t care for, nor write to the persons who misunderstand me, or care for the people I hate (Mill, Spencer, etc.). But you are very different from the rest. Only how CAN—I would underline to bottom of page if I had time—you think that I use my powers against Humanity—when the second article in my creed for Companions of St. George is

“I believe in the Nobleness of Human Nature?”³

¹ [The reference here is to Mr. Harrison’s reply in the *Fortnightly Review* for July 1876, in which, after an acknowledgment of Ruskin’s services to his age, he adds, “Genius, like nobility, has its duties.”]

² [That is, the article in the *Contemporary Review*, from which this correspondence started—the scene of the article being laid in Oxford (see Vol. XXVIII. p. 619).]

³ [See Letter 58, Vol. XXVIII. p. 419.]

INTEREST; AND RAILWAYS¹

[See Letters 68, § 4; 47, Notes and Correspondence; and 70
(Vol. XXVIII. pp. 669, 201, 712)]

1. THE effort to confound interest with wages is one of the stupidest and wickedest of modern diabolic lies. I take, as I have said again and again,² from ten to fifteen per cent. interest³ for my money in the Bank of England. But I don't superintend the Bank of England in any one moment or any one particular. I am, therefore, a mere and pure usurer. Every clerical or feminine railroad shareholder, taking a dividend on the traffic, without attending to it, is a usurer. Every landlord living away from his estate is a usurer, who lives by lending land. If he live *on* his estate, manage it for his own advantage, and take the produce (as the *Daily Telegraph* says ideal landlords should⁴) "all for himself,"—he is indeed a slavemaster and thief; but not an usurer. And in any of these cases one may be an amiable slavemaster, a brave thief, or a well-meaning usurer; but our first moral business is, to know clearly—as every man may know if he will—what we *are*.⁵

It is enough to show the especial and subtle evil of usury, to reflect on the general fact in human nature, that while we won't give anybody half-a-crown, without asking what he wants with it, we will lend him any quantity of millions, to commit murder with, or do what else he likes.

2. For definition of the sin, put it to yourself thus. You have something by you—tool, money, land, house, or what not—which you cannot or don't want to use yourself, but somebody else does. Say your umbrella—to begin

¹ [This portion of the Appendix is printed from a corrected proof, headed "Fors Clavigera. Letter 70." This proof has been placed at the editors' disposal by Mr. William White, formerly Curator of the Ruskin Museum. The sections are here numbered for convenience of reference. §§ 1–4 were printed as Note 1 in Mr. Faunthorpe's *Index* to "*Fors Clavigera*," pp. 497–498, but from an uncorrected and incomplete proof; for the variations, see the Bibliographical Note, below, p. 606. After § 4 there comes in the proof the passage (not very closely connected with the context) which is Note 7 in Mr. Faunthorpe's *Index*: see above, Appendix 3, p. 535. The proof then continues with §§ 5–7. § 6 was printed as Note 2 in Mr. Faunthorpe's *Index*, but again from an uncorrected proof; for the variations, see below, p. 606.]

² [See, for instance, Vol. XXVII. p. 364, and Vol. XXVIII. pp. 139, 673.]

³ [That is, on the par value of the stock.]

⁴ [See Letter 10, § 1 (Vol. XXVII. pp. 165–166).]

⁵ [Compare Letter 44 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 139).]

with.¹ You are not going out in the rain yourself to-day—your neighbour is; and if he have a new coat on, he can afford to pay you something for the loan—but, if you take such pay, *that is* Usury. From a succession of neighbours, asking the same favour, you may, and should, take what will pay for a new umbrella, when the one for lending is worn-out. But you must not live on your umbrella.

3. So with a piece of your land. If you can plough it, or delight in it yourself—do so. If you can't plough it yourself—or don't mean to, and your neighbour would thankfully do so, you must lend him the land;—if he return it less fit for a crop, next year, he must pay you for that harm, and if more fit for a crop, you must pay him for that good.

At present, he not only pays rent for the ground, but has his rent raised if he benefit it!

4. “But, at that rate, nobody would lend anything”? Yes. Everybody would lend, as they do now, but with conscious justice, and charity; and life to the whole world be stronger and easier than it is now by the precise degree in which the sums now paid for interest of money, would be better applied in the hands of laborious good men, in the beginning of life, than in the hands of idle wicked men at the close of it.

By the way, I see that His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury is setting up for a Usurer on Book-lending—and in very good company too—as President of the East Surrey Hall, Museum, and Library Company, Limited.²

5. “Well, but we can't get dividends by road *mending*—so we must by road making.”

Suppose I want a footpath made through my land, I hire a labourer, and pay him for his work, and dismiss him when it is done. But I do not give him the right, thenceforward for ever, to charge me sixpence every time I walk over it.

Suppose a nobleman wants a road made through his park. He hires a number of labourers, pays them so much a day, and dismisses them when the road is made. He does not give them a right to have a turnpike at his lodge, and make him pay a toll every time he drives in.

6. The people of Manchester and London want a road made between the two places. Then what they wisely and rightly should do, would be, what the private persons did—pay at once for the work of making the road, and dismiss the labourers when it is made.

Instead of doing that honestly, they borrow the money, and agree to pay the lenders a tax whenever they travel, thenceforward for ever. It is true that this arrangement for them, if the traffic be not great, may turn out advantageous by the ruin of the lenders. And if all the sums sunk in railroads in England were now accurately estimated. I have little doubt, it would be seen that the British public had got their railroads, on the whole, made, by the entirely involuntary subscriptions of the mites—even all their living—by a large number of single old ladies and gentlemen.

But that is not the proper way to make any sort of road, or accomplish any public work; nor is it, in the end, advantageous even to the public. The money of those simple persons, would in reality have been

¹ [Compare Letter 80, § 10 (above, p. 179).]

² [See Letter 70, § 9 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 721–722).]
XXIX.

spent more advantageously for the British people, in the general expenditure of domestic life, than in dragging the movable population about the country, or feeding surveyors and mechanics. Nor do I suppose that if in such true terms, any Bill were brought before Parliament, definitely proposing to construct a railway by some method of delicate mechanical abstraction from the pockets of private persons, even though it were guaranteed that the persons to be sucked by the ferruginous vampire should imagine, till the operation was completed, that their pockets were being filled instead of emptied;—I do not suppose, I say, that such a Bill would pass.

7. But, on the contrary, the theory of railroads, however erroneous, which has possessed itself of the public mind, is that they are a good investment. That is to say, that when the road makers have done their work for Lord John, in my Lord John's park; cut down his trees, filled his lake, dug up his lawn, and burnt his fruit-trees, the Jew who has paid them will be thankfully permitted by my Lord John to put a turnpike on his drive, and charge him ten per cent. On all the expenses incurred, to the end of time! Propose even that popular arrangement in Parliament in its absolute truth; call the shareholders, what they are—children of the true Israel—Jew-usurers; separate the expenses of construction and working from their "dividends"; show the proportion of every man, woman, and child's fare which is to be paid to them for ever; and I don't believe the Bill would pass.*

FLORENCE, *September 20th*, 1874.

DEAR MR. WALKER,¹—I got your obliging note all right. I should have acknowledged it before, but wanted to say a word about interest, for which I only to-day find time. Your position and knowledge give you so great an advantage in thinking of these things, that if you will observe only two great *final* primal facts, you are sure to come to a just conclusion.

Interest is always either Usury on loan, or Tax on industry (of course often both, and much more), but always one of these!

* The following perfect little sketch of what he supposed the next newspaper article would be on this passage, was sent me by Mr. Somervell. If any real editor can better it, he may try, before I answer.

Editor of the—, expressing the convictions of most readers.—“Mr. Ruskin displays his wonted incapacity to comprehend the simplest problem involving any commercial or financial considerations, when he talks of London and Manchester paying for their road, out and out. He forgets that the Corporations of London and Manchester, in order to do so, would have to borrow the money, and, of course, pay interest upon it. As things are now managed, the persons who lend

¹ [Mr. William Walker, of the Union Bank of London; one of the auditors of the accounts of the St. George's Guild (see Vol. XXVIII. p. 556). This letter was first printed in *Igdrasil*, for *December* 1891, pp. 226–227; and next in the privately issued *Letters upon Subjects of General Interest from John Ruskin to Various Correspondents*, 1892, pp. 58–60.]

I get interest either by lending or investing. If I take interest on investment I tax industry.

A railroad dividend is a tax on its servants—ultimately, a tax on the traveller, or on the safety of his life (I mean, you get your dividend by leaving him in danger).

You will find there is absolutely no reason why a railroad should pay a dividend more than the pavement of Fleet Street.

The profit of a contractor—as of a turnpike man or paviour—is not a dividend, but the average of a chance business profit.

Of course I may tax Theft as one of the forms of industry—Gambling, etc.; that is a further point. Keep to the simple one. To make money either by lending or taxing is a sin. If people really *ought* to have money lent to them, do it gratis; and if not, it is a *double* sin to lend it them for pay.

The commercial result of taking no interest would be: First, that rogues and fools could not borrow, therefore could not waste or make away with money.

The second, that the money which was accumulated in the chests of the rich would be fructifying in the hands of the active and honest poor.

Of course the wealth of the country, on these conditions, would be treble what it is. Interest of money is, in a word, a tax by the idle on the busy, and by the rogue on the honest man.

Not one farthing of money is ever made by Interest.

Get that well into your head. It is *all* taken by the idle rich out of the pockets of the poor, or of the really active persons in commerce.

Truly yours,

J. RUSKIN.

the money to make the road, subsequently undertake the business of conducting the traffic upon it; and their dividends consist of the fairly-earned profit upon such traffic, in addition to the interest—or usury, as Mr. Ruskin is pleased, incorrectly, to term it—upon the original outlay. How matters could be mended by virtually dividing this payment between two sets of people, we fail to perceive. It would be well if Mr. Ruskin could divest himself of these absurd notions about the interest of money, which he has probably acquired from a too reverent study of some of the wise men of old. Mr. Ruskin forgets that Plato and Dante, though in many respects very remarkable personages, were not business men of the nineteenth century.”

MORNING THOUGHTS AT GENEVA¹

[See Letter 72, § 10 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 766)]

HÔTEL DES BERGUES, GENEVA,

28th August, 1876.

I WOKE at three this morning, and as soon as my window became a glimmering square,² rose every now and then to watch the light increase. The dawn was fair and clear, and the long slopes of the Buet, and double pillars of the Aiguilles d'Argentière,—“well-known” masses, a young member of the Alpine Club would perhaps write—but to me, still mysteries, though seen these forty years and more,—were traced dark against the softly glowing sky.

But, precisely between them and my window, a little chimney of some “works” on the opposite quay was throwing up its thread of brown smoke, which, the air being perfectly calm, stayed, in a browner cloud, precisely at the level of the brightest low sky, and dimmed the aiguilles, so that there was no drawing or seeing their outline, any more than through a smoked glass.

Also, just under my window, at the corner of the bridge, there was an apparatus for laying asphalt with a vaporous boiling-pot, and a little funnel besides, sending up as much smoke as a small steamer, which, being close by, floated about in gusts and rags, sometimes over the rosy clouds, sometimes over Mont Blanc, and sometimes over the piece of lake yet left visible to the north, round the corner of the Hôtel de Russie.

Under which circumstances, I not only lost all pleasure in my view of Mont Blanc and the dawn, but received very distinct and severe pain from it.

“I am a foolish, carbbed old fellow—am I,—and shouldn't have minded the smoke?”

Well, my friend, I know I am foolish,—and God knows it better than I: but it is at present chiefly in coming to this place at all, and wandering

¹ [This passage is printed partly from a proof of “Over matter for *Fors*,” and partly from sheets of MS. at Brantwood. The passage was intended for *Fors* of February 1877.]

² [For the reference to Tennyson's *Princess*, see Vol. VII. p. 459, and Vol. XIX. p. 101.]

up and down its streets—(such as are left of what once was Geneva), with continual echo from the walls on each side, “Dead—all dead,”—(who, all, are dead, I will tell you perhaps, some day, if I ever get more autobiography written). And it is not at all in being unable to enjoy Mont Blanc through smoke.

For let me ask you a question or two.

(DOMO D’OSSOLA, 3rd September.)

(I suppose, in doing so, that *Fors* by chance has been taken up by some traveller of the modern school,—and I am not speaking now to my own St. George Companions, but to him or her. You most probably care as little for the sight of Mont Blanc as the Genevese themselves, and you came to Geneva merely to buy jewellery and live in a fashionable hotel: but by the price I see Moët stand at on the wine-card, I perceive you at least care for champagne. Well,—suppose, at table-d’hôte to-day, turning to take it just at the creamiest, you saw that the waiter had cut his finger with the wire, and dropped some blood into the glass. You would not enjoy your champagne with blood in it, would you? Still less, if the blood were blood of a diseased person? Well, my eyes are educated just as your mouth is; and I enjoy the morning light on Mont Blanc as you do champagne; and rather more (for, mind you, I know and understand all *your* tastes perfectly, and am just as fond of Moët as you; but you know none of *my* pleasures, and must take my estimate of them on trust). And, believe me, the trained eye has higher pleasure than the trained mouth; and in this higher pleasure it is capable also of more bitter pain. I would drink all the nastiest stuff you could mix, out of the English chemist’s round the corner, if I could only get that smoke swept off Mont Blanc; and, besides, you probably would not really *taste* the blood in your champagne, you would only fancy you tasted it. But I not only can see the horrible smoke, but *can’t* see the snow; I can’t taste my wine because of the blood. I am a nasty creature, am I, and it isn’t the taste merely, it is the idea that would be sickening to you? Yes; and it isn’t the taste, but the idea that is sickening to *me*. That smoke *means* blood, as surely as the smoke from Joan of Arc’s pile of faggots meant it. That smoke means the blood of the souls of the Swiss nation, perverted into vile tavern keepers from righteous citizens; it means the blood of the English nation degraded into acrobats from gentlemen, and into street swaggerers from gentlewomen; it means the blood of all nations degraded into atheists and usurers—travellers to that eternal ice which would not bend under Pietrapana¹—from Christians, and travellers to the Celestial mountains above the crystal sea.

But I must go back to the question of loss in the pleasure of sight only. For I mean more than you do in speaking of that pleasure itself. Among the points of true value in the first and second volume of *Modern Painters*, none were more vital than the distinction made between ordinary sight, and what—there being no English word for it—I was forced to call

¹ [*Inferno*, xxxii.: see Vol. V. p. 297; and compare Vol. XVIII. p. 99, and Vol. XXVII. p. 412.]

by the Greek one “Theoria,” “Contemplation”¹—seeing within the temple of the heart. And I never, through all the years that have passed since, felt the full value of the power I had in this kind as I did, by the will of Fors, yesterday in walking down the Simplon Pass. It had become nobler to me than ever, in the degree of the advance of my own powers of thought and reach of sympathy, and I felt as if I had never seen it truly until now.²

And just as I was passing between the shade and sun, after passing the bridge at the great gallery, there came out of the gallery, following me, a caleche, with four foreigners in it, one a lady, well featured and with considerable character and power in her expression—the men, as far as I could judge, average conditions of the somewhat stout and coarse Frenchman, well to do in the world.

And in all the world they were well to do in, there is not assuredly a more dramatically exciting mountain scene than that at the great gallery of Gondo. Two torrents meeting each other, both powerful—one in a fall of some four hundred feet—a bridge over the face of the fall, entering a cave—what Adelphi manager could concert for his playbill better material than this! Alps above in a sea of them, tossed breaker over breaker in hollow-crested crages, soft wreathing woods of Italy in the ravine below, and all this bursting on the eyes in an instant, not by the slow raising of a curtain, but the passing through a rock gate.

The four travellers never moved their heads, nor raised their eyes. They were talking, of course, but not of anything particularly interesting, not in the least eagerly. They simply continued their conversation, undisturbed by any of these external phenomena. Now, the difference between these people and me was not that at all that they were ordinary persons, and I a man of genius. It would be very pleasant to think that. I should not gnash my teeth at them and feel my whole day at Domo d’Ossola embittered by the sight of them—if I thought that I was so much their better; I should be walking about with my nose in the air and my toes turned out, on *that* supposition! It is true that I see colours better than most people, and know a thing or two that few do about rocks and clouds. I am very glad I do. What I am *not* glad of, but horror-struck to feel is, that while I was taught in early youth to look at Nature with the joy of a child in its Father’s work, these who drive past me, blind—nay, the nations among whom I live—are now taught to see in her nothing but a chaos of the clay they would fain forget they are made of, these persons being, in all probability, just as capable of good and happiness as I—wittier assuredly, being French; stronger and braver, being healthy and young—and I doubt not in their hearts capable of all average human goodness, are yet spoiled and poisoned into this wreck of animal stupidity in comparison of me, because if you will look back to

¹ [See *Modern Painters*, vol. i. pt. ii. sec. i. ch. ii., and vol. ii. sec. i. ch. xv. (Vol. III. pp. 140 *seq.*, and Vol. IV. pp. 208 *seq.*). Compare “Readings in *Modern Painters*” (1877), where Ruskin says that the main value of the book is “exactly in that systematic scheme of it which I had despised, and in the very insistence upon the Greek term Theoria, instead of sight or perception, in which I had thought myself perhaps uselessly or affectedly refined” (Vol. XXII. p. 512).]

² [For Ruskin’s early love of the Simplon Pass, see *Præterita*, ii. § 131.]

the chapters on Theoria in *Modern Painters*, you will see that the entire difference between the human sight of beauty and the animal scorn of it is shown to consist, in this concurrence, with physical sense, of Mental Religion.¹ I use the word in its true meaning—the acknowledgment of Spiritual Power. But with this, or faith in God, there must also, in true contemplation, be joined charity to men, and such lower form of charity as may tenderly cherish all lower creatures. No beauty is visible to human eyes but through this are of triple light. Religion, without love of man, becomes madness; love of man, without tenderness to the lower creature, becomes insolence; and as

“The bat that flits at close of eve
Has left the brain that won’t believe,”²

so also Religion, without love of man,—is that possible? Alas, too possible. God forbid but that some of the people who go to church in England should not be sincere in their worship; but they are trying to love their God, and not their brothers, and their worship is fit only for Bedlam.

Here in Italy, on the other hand, their Religion is ended; but their affectionateness, not yet. I was up last night among the vast stone pines of the Sanctuario of Orta. Aisle after aisle of temple in those mountain cedars, and chapel following chapel, for succession, formerly, of secret prayer.

All of them closed, now; but built against the side of one of them a “Caffè Ristorante,” and at the opposite side over the closed door, written: “Qui si chiamano i custodi del monte per visitare le cappelle.”

Not to be pulled wholly down for a while, if perchance yet a penny may be turned out of the religion of their fathers.³

¹ [See Ruskin’s analysis of the contents of section i. in vol. ii. of *Modern Painters* (Vol. IV. pp. 11–17).]

² [Blake’s *Auguries of Innocence*. The lines are quoted in Letter 74 (above, 36).]

³ [The entry in Ruskin’s diary is as follows:—

“(September 3, 1876.) *Sunday evening, Orta*.—Up at the Sanctuario; one of the dismallest walks I ever had in this world! the vast stone pines and closed chapels being monuments of religion wholly gone; a party of blackguards making the loveliest of the green avenues horrible with their laughs; shrieking children, rude and graceless in gesture, rushing about the ‘Caffè Ristorante’ opposite the main terrace, with door beside it inscribed, ‘Qui si chiamano,’ etc. They came out, two of them, and staggered and spit about on the terrace till I was obliged to go. But such stone pines I have not seen since the Farnese.”]

**“THESE THY CREATURES OF BREAD
AND WINE”¹**

[See Letter 73; above, p. 24]

I CAN'T completely tell you how to regulate the price of a cabbage, or of a pint of milk, unless I clear your minds first on the principles of currency, free trade, corporal punishment, and commercial remuneration; and to clear your minds on these matters is not only to sweep out nearly the entire mass of what you have been taught since you were born, but also to explain the mechanism to you of a system of true government, of which the working must be by the concurrence of a system of cog-wheels infinitely more complex than those of a chronometer, and of which the Spring must be Faith, and the Diamond, Honour.

And if such my difficulty in expressing, much more that of proving, the truth to you, must be extreme, because in every application of such laws to actual life their good result must be for some time thwarted by the collaterally adverse conditions under which they are lived; and even their accurate application is impossible, in any particular instance, without a knowledge of detail which it will take time to acquire.

But, with careful reading of my previous statements, I think you may possibly now at least understand the broad principles by which true commerce must be regulated in food. God has given us imperishable gold—perishable, but preservable for all necessary time, bread and wine. “These thy creatures of bread and wine,”² brought forth to us by the Eternal Priesthood of Justice, are to be distributed in purity to all who need them, at the time that they need them; and the sign of the quantity which any person may claim of them is to be written in sacred Gold.

That is the Divine law—simple, universal, and constant. So far as you keep it, you shall live happily and decently in regard of bodily nourishment; so far as you break it, you must live miserably and indecently. But to apply it with immediate precision to the question—vital to you after hard fag work—the present price of a pot of beer in Sheffield, I must know all the conditions of making beer good, and the quantity you

¹ [Printed from sheets of MS. at Brantwood. The sheets are headed “Conclusion”; *i.e.*, probably the intended conclusion of Letter 73, a passage from Plato (§ 15) being afterwards substituted.]

² [See the Prayer of Consecration in the Communion Service.]

will on the average need of it, and a great deal more—which I don’t know, and which you can only find out by experience.

But get this at all events into your heads clearly. A pound of bread and a pint of beer are to be standards of currency, *always* to be given by your Ducal Government in exchange for a given weight of silver; or a certain number of pounds of bread and pints of beer in exchange for a given weight of gold. (If you like, for lightness, paper and leather better than silver or gold, the Ducal Government will let you have them, provided you keep them clean.)

This current bread and beer, with other standards (a flask of wine, a square yard of cloth, and the like), are to be of standard quality, answered for by the Ducal Government as it answers for its gold—all of the purest and best in its power. Accordingly, the Ducal Government must have mills and breweries. The miller, the brewer, and the gold-coiner are all to be its salaried servants, and all liable to precisely the same punishment (whatever that may be determined as fitting—a huge question, you perceive, having several knots in it!) if they be detected adulterating the bread, the beer, or the gold. Only one coiner will be needful, and perhaps three or four millers and brewers; but these officers of food and coin, be they few or many, will all be equally well looked after, equally in honourable position, equally paid, and equally, as I have just said, liable to be—let us use for the present the more or less parliamentary and elastic expression—“suspended” if they be found adulterating the products under their care.

It is perfectly ridiculous—and a great deal more than ridiculous—to say that these things are impossible. You can elect your Duke and Duchess to-morrow, Lady Day, if you will; you can elect your Brewers and Millers, and their men; you can enable them to grind and to brew on some small scale somewhere; you can agree among yourselves to buy the bread and beer so produced, and none other. You need not ratten anybody, you need not abuse anybody, you need not—until you see occasion—“suspend” anybody, you need not send anybody to Parliament, and you need not ask what Parliament is about. If you can only find a dozen of honest people among you, and agree among yourselves to buy of them, you have solved, in essentials, every politico-economical problem of this present world. If you can’t find a dozen honest people among you, nor agree upon anything with yourselves, no least politico-economical problem will ever be soluble to you.

And as for building a system of Economy on Dishonesty and Disagree-ment—*i.e.*, “competition” among yourselves—my hungry friends, every word you hear of advice in that direction is only the rising echo of the eternal cry of the Furies on the walls of Hell—“Venga Medusa.”¹

¹ [*Inferno*, ix. 52: compare Vol. V. p. 285, and Vol. XXVII. p. 427.]

“WHISTLER *v.* RUSKIN”

[See Letter 79]

(a) REPORT OF THE TRIAL¹

[IN consequence of a passage in Letter 79, § 11 (above, p. 160), Whistler brought an action for libel against Ruskin. The case has considerable interest in the history of English art-criticism, and as the report is not easily accessible, it is here printed.]

EXCHEQUER DIVISION—NOVEMBER 25 (Before Baron Huddleston and a Special Jury)

THIS was an action for an alleged libel which the plaintiff said had been falsely and maliciously published, and had greatly damaged his reputation as an artist. The defendant pleaded that the article complained of was privileged as being a fair and *bona fide* criticism upon a painting which the plaintiff had exposed for public view.

Mr. Serjeant Parry and Mr. Petheram appeared for the plaintiff; the Attorney-General and Mr. Bowen for the defendant.

In opening the case, Mr. Serjeant Parry said Mr. Whistler, the plaintiff, had followed the profession of an artist for many years both in this country and abroad, and Mr. John Ruskin, the defendant, held the highest position in Europe and America as an art critic. Mr. Whistler was the son of an eminent military engineer, a citizen of the United States, who for many years was engaged in superintending the construction of the railway from St. Petersburg to Moscow. Having passed some years of his life in St. Petersburg, the plaintiff went to France and Holland, where he studied his profession, and he also acquired a great reputation as a painter in America. He was also an etcher, and in that capacity had likewise distinguished himself. He occupied a somewhat independent position in art, and it might be that his theory of painting was, in the estimation of some, eccentric; but his great object was to produce the utmost effect which colour would enable him to do, and to bring about a harmony in colour and arrangement in his pictures. Although a man adopted such a theory and followed it out with earnestness, industry, and almost enthusiasm, yet it was no reason why he should be denounced or libelled. In the summer of 1877 the plaintiff exhibited several of his pictures at the Grosvenor Gallery; and shortly afterwards there appeared in a pamphlet, edited and chiefly written by Mr. Ruskin, entitled *Fors Clavigera*, an article in which he criticised the modern school of art. He said, “Sir Coutts Lindsay is at present an amateur both in art and shopkeeping. He must take up either the one or the other business

¹ [This report is quoted from the *Times*, by the courtesy of the proprietors.]

if he would prosper in either;” and then referring to Mr. Whistler, he wrote as follows:—

“Lastly, the mannerisms and errors of these pictures (alluding to the pictures of Mr. Burne-Jones), whatever may be their extent, are never affected or indolent. The work is natural to the painter, however strange to us, and is wrought with the utmost conscience of care, however far to his own or our desire the result may yet be incomplete. Scarcely as much can be said for any other pictures of the modern school; their eccentricities are almost always in some degree forced, and their imperfections gratuitously, if not impertinently, indulged. For Mr. Whistler’s own sake, no less than for the protection of the purchaser, Sir Coutts Lindsay ought not to have admitted works into the Gallery in which the ill-educated conceit of the artist so nearly approached the aspect of wilful imposture. I have seen and heard much of Cockney impudence before now, but never expected to hear a coxcomb ask 200 guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public’s face.”

The learned counsel contended that these words could not, in any sense, be said to be a fair and *bona fide* criticism, and coming as they had from so great an authority as Mr. Ruskin, they had, in fact, done the plaintiff a great deal of injury in his profession and in the public estimation.

Mr. James Abbott M’Neill Whistler was then examined by Mr. Petheram. He was of American parentage and born in St. Petersburg, where he lived until he was twelve or fourteen years of age. His father constructed the railway between St. Petersburg and Moscow. He was educated at West Point, America, and afterwards studied in Paris with M. Gavie for two or three years. Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Poynter, and Mr. Du Maurier were his fellow-students. He finally settled in London and continued his career as an artist. He exhibited at the Royal Academy, and sold his first picture there to Mr. Philip, the well-known artist of Spanish subjects. He also exhibited at Paris and at the Dudley Gallery. During the whole of his career he had been in the habit of etching, and he had received a gold medal for his etchings exhibited at The Hague. There were collections of his etchings in the British Museum and Windsor Castle. In 1877 he exhibited eight pictures at the Grosvenor Gallery—a portrait of Mr. Carlyle; “A Nocturne, in Blue and Gold,” and other “Nocturnes” in “Black and Gold,” and “Blue and Silver”; “An Arrangement in Black,” representing Mr. Henry Irving as Philip II. of Spain; “A Harmony in Amber and Black”; and “An Arrangement in Brown.” Carlyle’s picture had been engraved. He sold one of the “Nocturnes” to Mr. Percy Wyndham for 200 guineas, and he had a commission for another for 150 guineas. Since the publication of Mr. Ruskin’s criticism he had not been able to get the same price for his pictures.

Cross-examined by the Attorney-General: He had sent pictures to the Royal Academy which were not accepted, but that was the experience of all artists. The last picture rejected was “An Arrangement in Gray and Black: portrait of the Painter’s Mother.” It was afterwards exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery. The “Arrangement in Black and Gold” was a night view of Cremorne with the fire-works. Asked the meaning of the word “Nocturne,” Mr. Whistler said that a picture was to him throughout a problem, which he attempted to solve, and he made use of any incident or object in nature that would bring about a symmetrical result. “An Arrangement” was an arrangement of light, form, and colour. Among his pictures were some night views, and he chose the word “Nocturne” because it generalised and simplified them all. As he had happened to use some musical terms it was supposed he intended to show a kind of connection between the two arts; but he had no such intention. It was probably the view of Mr. Ruskin that an artist should not let a picture leave his hands which he could improve by labour of his own, and that he should give value for what he received. He had been told that his pictures exhibited eccentricities. Of course he expected that his pictures would be criticised. The “Nocturne in Black and Gold” he knocked off in a couple of days. He painted the picture one day and finished it off the next. He did not give his pictures time to mellow, but he exposed them in the open air, as he went on with his work, to dry. He did not ask 200 guineas

for two days' work; he asked it for the knowledge he had gained in the work of a lifetime. In the course of his evidence the plaintiff said that he sometimes put colour on the frame, saying it was a part of the scheme of the picture, and that he also placed his monogram on the frame as well as on the canvas.

Some of the pictures were exhibited in court, and the jury went to see the rest at the Westminster Palace Hotel.

Mr. W. M. Rossetti, who said he had made art his special study for years, said he appreciated the meaning of Mr. Whistler's pictures. The blue and the silver picture, being a view of Old Battersea Bridge, he thought was very artistic and a beautiful representation of a pale bright moonlight. He held the same opinion of another picture in the same style. The black and gold picture represented the darkness of night mingled and broken by the brightness of fireworks. The picture of Carlyle was a fine portrait with a certain peculiarity. He admired sincerely some of Mr. Whistler's works in the Grosvenor Gallery in 1877, and he thought they were the works which a conscientious artist might put forth.

Cross-examined: The black and gold picture was not a gem nor an exquisite, nor beautiful work, but it was work of art. Asked if it was eccentric, he said it was unlike the work of most other painters. Two hundred guineas was its full value, not a stiffish price.

Mr. Albert Moore, an artist, said he thought Mr. Whistler's pictures had a large aim in which he had succeeded as no living artist had done. They were beautiful works of art, and 200 guineas was not too large a price for them.

In cross-examination he said he thought there was great originality in the plaintiff's pictures. He could not call it eccentricity.

Mr. W. G. Wills, dramatic author and artist, said that the plaintiff's pictures betrayed a great knowledge of art. Mr. Whistler looked at nature in a poetical light and had a native feeling for colour. His works were those of a man of genius and a conscientious artist. He described his pictures as original. This was the case for the plaintiff.

The Attorney-General said that after the evidence for the plaintiff he should be compelled to call some witnesses well acquainted with the principles of art to give their opinion on the plaintiff's pictures; but the question for the jury was whether Mr. Ruskin had or had not criticised the plaintiff's productions in a fair, honest, and moderate spirit. A critic might use strong language, and even resort to ridicule, without exposing himself to the charge of acting maliciously. Perhaps some people would extinguish critics altogether; but they had their value; and what would become of the fine arts if there was no incentive to excel? If art was to live and flourish, so must criticism. He regretted he was unable to call Mr. Ruskin as he was too ill to attend the Court. That gentleman, it was well known, had devoted himself for years to the study of art. From 1869 he had been Slade Professor at Oxford; he had written much on art, and judging from his works it was obvious that he was a man of the keenest susceptibility. He had a great love and reverence for art, and a special admiration for highly finished pictures. His love for art almost amounted to idolatry, and to the examination of the beautiful in art he had devoted his life. Rightly or wrongly, Mr. Ruskin had not a very high opinion of the days in which we lived. He thought too much consideration was given to money-making, and that the nobility of simplicity was not sufficiently regarded. With regard to artists, he upheld a high standard and required something more than a few flashes of genius. He required a laborious and perfect devotion to art, and he held that an artist should not only struggle to get money, but also to give full value to the purchaser of his productions. He said it was the ancient code that no piece of work should leave the artist's hands which his diligence or further reflection could improve, and that the artist's fame should be built not upon what he received, but upon what he gave. Entertaining these views, it was not wonderful that Mr. Whistler's pictures should attract Mr. Ruskin's attention and that he should subject them to criticism. He did subject them to a severe and slashing criticism, and even held them up to ridicule and contempt; but in doing so he only expressed, as he was entitled to do, his honest

opinion. The learned counsel then dealt with the evidence of the plaintiff, and contended that his pictures were marked by a strangeness of style and a fantastical extravagance which fully justified the language employed by Mr. Ruskin in regard to them. He hoped to convince the jury before his case was closed that the defendant's criticism, however severe, was perfectly fair and *bona fide*, and could not be reasonably objected to. In the present mania for art it had become a kind of fashion among some people to admire the incomprehensible, to look upon the fantastic conceits of an artist like Mr. Whistler, his “nocturnes,” “symphonies,” “arrangements,” and “harmonies,” with delight and admiration; but the fact was that such productions were not worthy the name of great works of art. This was not a mania that should be encouraged; and if that was the view of Mr. Ruskin, he had a right, as an art critic, to fearlessly express it to the public. It was said that Mr. Ruskin had ridiculed Mr. Whistler's pictures; but if he disliked criticism, he should not have rendered himself open to it. Quoting from *Fors Clavigera*, the Attorney-General showed that Mr. Ruskin was neither a partial nor a stern and hard critic, and that while he aimed his trenchant criticism right and left, he ungrudgingly gave high praise where it was due. The whole article complained of was a sweeping condemnation of the modern school, and, as regarded Mr. Whistler, pointed out that his conceits and extravagances did not redound to his credit, and that he was careless of his name and fame when he offered such things for sale. It was objected that Mr. Ruskin had said he was “ill-educated”; but if that was Mr. Ruskin's opinion, judging from his productions, was it libellous to say so? It was also complained he had written, “I never expected to hear a coxcomb ask 200 guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face,” but the term “coxcomb” was applied to him as an artist, and not as a man. What was a “coxcomb”? He had looked out for the word, and found that it came from the old idea of the licensed jester, who wore a cap and bells with a cock's comb in it, and went about making jests for the amusement of his master and family. If that were the true definition, Mr. Whistler should not complain, because his pictures were capital jests, which had afforded much amusement to the public. Mr. Ruskin had lived a long life without being attacked. No one could say that he had purchased his praise, and no one had attempted to restrain his pen through the medium of the jury. Mr. Ruskin did not retract one syllable of his criticism upon Mr. Whistler's pictures. He believed he was right. For nearly all his life he had devoted himself to criticism for the sake of the art he loved, and he asked the jury not now to paralyse his hand. If they gave a verdict against him, he must cease to write. It would be an evil day for the art of this country if Mr. Ruskin were prevented from indulging in proper and legitimate criticism, and pointing out what was beautiful and what was not, and if critics were all reduced to a dead-level of forced and fulsome adulation.

Mr. Edward Burne-Jones said he had been a painter for twenty years, and during the last two or three years his works had become known to the public. Complete finish ought to be the standard of painting, and artists ought not to fall short of what for ages had been acknowledged as essential to a perfect work. The “nocturne” in blue and silver representing Battersea reach was a work of art, but very incomplete. It was an admirable beginning—simply a sketch. In no sense whatever did it show the finish of a complete work of art. It was masterly in colour but deficient in form, which was as essential as colour. Its merits lay only in colour. Neither in composition, nor in detail, nor in form had it any quality whatever. As to the next picture, “Battersea Bridge,” the colour was better, but it was even more formless than the other. A day or a day and a half seems a reasonable time for its production. It was, as he said, a mere sketch, and he did not think Mr. Whistler ever intended it should be finished. The “Nocturne” in black and gold representing the fireworks at Cremorne had not the merit of the other two. It was not a work of art; it was one of thousands of failures to represent night. It was not worth two hundred guineas.

Mr. Bowen wished to produce a picture by Titian to show what was a finished work.

Baron Huddleston thought this was going too far. The learned counsel would have to prove first that the picture was Titian's.

Mr. Bowen said he should do that.

Baron Huddleston referred to the story of the "genuine" Titian which was purchased by some artists to determine the secret of that master's wonderful colouring. On being rubbed down the explorers found a red surface, and exclaimed, "Here's the secret"; but on going a little further in the process it was discovered that the red substratum was a portrait of George III. in a militia uniform. (Laughter.)

After some discussion the picture was produced, and appeared to be a portrait of a "Doge" of Venice.

Mr. Edward Burne-Jones described it as a beautiful example of Titian's works. It was a portrait of Andrea Gritti, and a splendid arrangement of flesh and blood. It was a most perfect specimen of a highly finished work of ancient art. He considered that Mr. Whistler possessed great power, but had not fulfilled his early promise. He had evaded the difficulties of painting by not carrying his pictures far enough. He had an unrivalled sense of atmosphere.

Cross-examined: The value of this specimen of Titian depended upon the accident of a sale-room. It would be worth many thousands to him, but might have been sold for forty guineas. Lord Elcho had a beautiful Titian which he purchased for twenty guineas. It now belonged to Mr. Ruskin. Mr. Whistler had an almost unrivalled appreciation of atmosphere, and his colour was beautiful, especially in moonlight seas; but there his merits stopped.

Mr. Frith, R.A., said he did not consider the pictures of Mr. Whistler which had been produced in court were serious works of art. There was beautiful colour, but it was no more than could be had on a wall-paper or a piece of silk. To him they did not represent either moonlight or water. The one in black and gold was not worth 200 guineas. He had come reluctantly to speak against a brother artist, and had only attended upon subpoena.

In cross-examination he said one of Turner's pictures—"The Snowstorm"—had been properly described by Mr. Ruskin as a "mass of soap-suds and whitewash." Turner was an idol of Mr. Ruskin's, and should be of all painters; but that applied to his early works. His latest pictures were as insane as the people who admired them.

Mr. Tom Taylor, as an art critic, also expressed an unfavourable view of the pictures exhibited by Mr. Whistler at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1877. He read a criticism which he wrote at the time, in which he said that they were only one set nearer pictures than delicately tinted wall-paper.

In cross-examination he admitted Mr. Whistler had high merit as an artist, but all his work was unfinished.

The learned counsel on each side having addressed the jury,

Baron Huddleston, in summing up, said that if a man committed to paper language disparaging to another and holding him up to hatred, contumely, and contempt he was guilty of a libel. The law presumed malice, but that might be rebutted by the author of the language proving that it was a fair and *bona fide* criticism, therefore the question in the present case for the jury was whether Mr. Ruskin's pamphlet was a fair and *bona fide* criticism upon the plaintiff's works; and it was for the defendant to make that out. It was of the last importance that a critic should have full latitude to express the judgments he honestly formed, and for that purpose there was no reason why he should not use ridicule as a weapon; but a critic must confine himself to criticism, and not make it the veil for personal censure, nor allow himself to run into reckless and unfair attacks merely for the love of exercising his power of denunciation.

The jury after being absent for an hour came into the court for an explanation from the learned judge of the words "wilful imposture" in the alleged libel, and, again retiring, came back shortly afterwards and gave a verdict for the plaintiff—damages one farthing.

The learned judge gave judgment for the plaintiff, but without costs

(b) “MY OWN ARTICLE ON WHISTLER”

[Ruskin at the time of the trial was not well enough to attend. Among the MSS. at Brantwood are the following passages, headed “My own Article on Whistler”]:—

It has long been alleged against me,¹ with much indignation, that in criticism I do not help my friends. The sentiment that every expression of a man’s opinions ought to help either himself, his friends, or his party, is now so completely the first commandment of English morality that I have ceased to be surprised when, if I say anybody’s picture is good—though I don’t know the painter from Noah—he immediately writes to thank me for my unexpected kindness; and if I say it is bad, similarly writes to ask what he has done to offend me, or institutes an action for libel, in which the English law will politely estimate the force of my injurious opinion at a farthing, and make my friends pay it four hundred pounds² for the expression of its own opinion to that effect.

The function of the critic, in his relation to contemporary art, is of course the same as that of the critic with respect to contemporary literature; namely, to recommend “authors” (the word is properly common to men of original power in both the arts) of merit to public attention, and to prevent authors of no merit from occupying it. All good critics delight in praising, as all bad ones in blaming (there is an interesting letter in Lockhart’s *Life of Scott*, describing the vital difference between Scott and Jeffrey in this respect³); and I am both proud and happy in being able to say of myself that the entire strength of my life has been spent in the praise of artists who among the ancients had remained unappreciated, or among the moderns, maligned or unknown.

I use the word “maligned” deliberately and sorrowfully in thinking of the criticisms which first provoked me into literature;⁴ before I was old enough to learn with Horace and Turner “*Malignum spernere vulgus.*”⁵ If attacks such as those I refer to (in *Blackwood’s Magazine*, anonymous, and in recent periodicals by persons who even assert their ignorance for the pledge of their sincerity) could be repressed by the care and acumen of British Law, it would be well alike for the dignity of Literature and the interests of

¹ [See, on this point, *Academy Notes*, 1875 (Vol. XIV. p. 261).]

² [This, the amount of Ruskin’s costs, was paid by a subscription among his friends and admirers: see the Introduction, above, p. xxiv.]

³ [See Lockhart, vol. ii. pp. 156–157. “It struck me,” writes the correspondent quoted by Lockhart, “that there was this great difference—Jeffrey, for the most part, entertained us, when books were under discussion, with the detection of faults, blunders, absurdities, or plagiarisms; Scott took up the matter where he left it, recalled some compensating beauty or excellence for which no credit had been allowed, and by the recitation, perhaps, of one fine stanza, set the poor victim on his legs again.” For Ruskin’s views on the function of criticism, see further *The Art of England*, § 192.]

⁴ [For the anonymous article in *Blackwood* which provoked Ruskin, see Vol. I. p. xxxiii., and Vol. III. p. xviii. Ruskin’s article replying to *Blackwood* was submitted to Turner, who, despising the “malignum vulgus,” dismissed the attack as “of no import”: see *Præterita*, i. § 243.]

⁵ [*Odes*, II. xvi. 39, 40 (quoted also in Vol. XVII. p. 228, and see Vol. XX. p. 358).]

Art. But the Bench of honourable Criticism is as truly a Seat of Judgement as that of Law itself, and its verdicts, though usually kinder, must sometimes be no less stern. It has ordinarily been my privilege to extol, but occasionally my duty to condemn, the works of living painters. But no artist has ever been suspected of purchasing my praise, and this is the first attempt that has been made through the instrumentality of British Law to tax my blame. I do not know the sense attached, legally, to the word "libel"; but the sense rationally attaching to it is that of a false description of a man's person, character, or work, made wilfully with the purpose of injuring him.

And the only answers I think it necessary to make to the charge of libel brought against me by the plaintiff, are first, that the description given of his work and character is accurately true so far as it reaches; and secondly, that it was calculated, so far as it was believed, to be extremely beneficial to himself and still more to the public. In the first place, the description given of him is absolutely true. It is my constant habit, while I praise without scruple, to weigh my words of blame in every syllable. I have spoken of the plaintiff as ill-educated and conceited, because the very first meaning of education in an artist is that he should know his true position with respect to his fellow-workmen, and ask from the public only a just price for his work. Had the plaintiff known either what good artists gave, habitually, of labour to their works, or received, contentedly, of pay for them, the price he set on his own productions would not have been coxcombry but dishonesty.

I have given him the full credit of his candid conceit, and supposed him to imagine his pictures to be really worth what he asks for them. And I did this with the more confidence, because the titles he gave them showed a parallel want of education. All well-informed painters and musicians are aware that there is analogy between painting and music. The public would at once recognize the coxcombry of a composer, who advertised a study in chiaroscuro for four voices, or a prismatic piece of colour in four flats, and I am only courteous in supposing nothing worse than coxcombry in an artist who offers them a symphony in green and yellow for two hundred pounds.

Nor is the final sentence, in which the plaintiff is spoken of as throwing his palette in the public's face, other than an accurate, though a brief, definition of a manner which is calculated to draw attention chiefly by its impertinence. The standard which I gave, thirty years ago, for estimate of the relative value of pictures, namely, that their preciousness depended ultimately on the greatness and the justice of the ideas they contained and conveyed,¹ has never been lost sight of by me since, and has been especially insisted on lately, in such resistance as I have been able to offer to the modern schools which suffer the object of art to be ornament rather than edification. It is true that there are many curious collectors of libraries, in whose eyes the binding of the volumes is of more importance than their contents; and there are many patrons of art who benevolently comply with the fashion of the day, without expecting to derive more benefit from the fronts of their pictures

¹ [See *Modern Painters*, Vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 92).]

than from the backs of their books. But it is a critic's first duty in examining works proposed in public exhibition to distinguish the artist's work from the upholsterer's; and although it would be unreasonable to expect from the hasty and electric enlightenment of the nineteenth century, any pictorial elucidations of the Dispute of the Sacrament, or the School of Athens,¹ he may yet, without any severity of exaction, require of a young painter that he should work a little with his head as well as with his fingers; and may explain to the spectator, without libellous intention, the difference between Attic air and a London fog.

It gives me no little pain to be compelled to point out, as the essential grounds of the present action, the confusion between art and manufacture, which, lately encouraged in the public mind by vulgar economists, has at last, in no small manner, degraded the productions even of distinguished genius into marketable commodities, with the sale of which it is thought as unwarrantable to interfere as with the convenient dishonesties of popular trade.

This feeling has been still farther increased by the idea of many kindly persons that it is a delicate form of charity to purchase the feeble works of incompetent artists, and by the corresponding efforts of large numbers of the middle classes, under existing conditions of social pressure, to maintain themselves by painting and literature, without possessing the smallest natural faculties for either.

I will confine myself, with reference to this, in my estimate, infinitely mischievous tendency of the public mind, to the simple statement that in flourishing periods, whether of trade or art, the dignity, whether of operatives or artists, was held to consist in their giving, in every sense, good value for money and a fair day's work for a fair day's wages. The nineteenth century may perhaps economically pride itself on the adulteration of its products and the slackness of its industries. But it ought at least to instruct the pupils of its schools of Art, in the ancient code of the Artist's honour, that no piece of work should leave his hands, which his diligence could further complete, or his reflection further improve, and in the ancient decision of the Artist's pride, that his fame should be founded on what he had given, not on what he had received.

[Here the MS. breaks off.]

¹ [For Raphael's "Dispute of the Sacrament," spoken of by Ruskin as "the most perfect effort yet made by art to illustrate divine science," see *Eagle's Nest*, § 46 (Vol. XXII. p. 156); for the "School of Athens," Vol. V. p. 49, and Vol. XXII. p. 422.]

MYTHS AND NOVELS¹

[See Letter 79, § 7 (above, p. 150)]

“FOR our working men, no such tales exist.” The question is, how we are to get on without them. For when Plato comes to attack the chief of all political difficulties—the incontinence of the masses—he does not at all attempt to attack it by Teetotal Societies, illusive liquor laws, or the like, but essentially by three things, namely, stories, sermons, and songs; called in Greek, myths, words, and melodies.

The entirely worst book, so far as I know, produced by the modern insolence of infidelity contains the following sentence: “Greek myths have no moral purpose whatsoever.” Which is accurately and exquisitely the reverse of fact. For not only every Greek myth has a moral purpose which is its entire life, as much as the breath is of the human body, but no good myth, or, as we call it, novel, was ever written, or can be, without such a purpose;* only in the finest forms of myth it is always so hidden, and partly beyond the consciousness of the story-teller himself, that it heals and saves like the medicinal power in a herb, which we gather only for its sweet scent and beauty.

* My literary readers may fancy they know a great many good and yet immoral novels. There are no such things. Whatever good there is in immoral novel writers depends on some instinct they have for good, which may be polluted or directed in a thousand ways, but in which their strength wholly consists. George Sand will not live indeed, nor Victor Hugo, being both too far tainted;² but both of them got their power from the sense of Justice, and George Sand from her enjoyment of the simplicities of real virtue (read *La Petite Fadette*, and the *Péché de Monsieur Antoine*). De Balzac and all other strong tellers of his school derive their power from the analysis of crime—the moral sense never failing (read *Le Père Goriot*, for a type³). The moment the moral sense really fails, all genius is dead; in its vitality, all genius revives. The best novel in the world is the *Vicar of Wakefield*.

¹ [This passage is printed from the *Fors* MSS. at Brantwood.]

² [For other references to *Le Péché de Monsieur Antoine*, see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, §§ 107, 109; and to George Sand generally, Vol. V. p. 360, and Vol. XII. p. 121. For references to Victor Hugo, see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 14, and *Præterita*, i. § 164.]

³ [For Ruskin’s summary of this story, see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 5; and for other references to Balzac generally, see Vol. V. pp. 323, 330, 332.]

**CORRESPONDENCE WITH
MR. T. C. HORSFALL¹**

[See Letters 79 and 81]

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
28th July, 1877.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am most deeply grateful for your letter—and you cannot, I think, but feel assured that I must be—and I think it extremely probable that you have been ordered by Fors herself to write it, at the time when she wishes me to change the tone of my own letters. For their past tone I am no more answerable than the men whom you regret my blaming are answerable for their mistakes, or rather, let me say, than a tree is answerable for being bent by storm. I *could* only write as I felt and thought, and whatever harm the book has done, or whatever good it has fallen short of doing, I cannot regret its inevitable form. But all this year, it has been more or less shown me that such form may now change. I can only answer your letter to-day with my truest thanks. I have not yet read more than the letter itself, nor can, till to-morrow.

Ever faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

10th August, 1877.²

MY DEAR SIR,—I am heartily sorry to have delayed till now the acknowledgment of your kind letters. One especially I meant to have answered instantly, but was hindered—the apologetic one. I can't understand how you could have thought for a moment any of your letters had

¹ [In *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 79 (dated June 18, 1877), Ruskin had quoted with much approval and some criticism a paper contributed to the *Manchester Guardian* on February 27, 1877. The writer of the paper was Mr. T. C. Horsfall, who thereupon put himself into communication with Ruskin. One of his letters (July 25, 1877)—a remonstrance with Ruskin for the denunciatory tone of *Fors*—was printed in Letter 81, § 6 (p. 195). A passage from the MSS. at Brantwood, replying further to the remonstrance, is now appended to the text (see above, p. 196 *n.*). To Mr. Horsfall himself Ruskin sent the letter here given.]

² [Mr. Horsfall among other letters wrote the one printed in § 6 of Letter 81. The following letters (2, 3, and 4) refer to Ruskin's intention to publish it.]

been other than courteous and kind. The greater part of the one on Museums you will see printed in next *Fors* Correspondence, with a few comments. I am entirely unable for private correspondence, but if you read my fourth inaugural lecture (*Lectures on Art*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1870¹) you will see clearly how far I can go with you, and if you look for the accounts of the Sheffield Museum in *Fors*, gradually how far I am going by myself. I am much interested by what you tell me of your Bishop,² but in what do you suppose it inconsistent with *my* words? I assert that he refuses to state the whole Gospel of God that he may keep smooth with Manchester. You tell me how smooth he has kept—where is the inconsistency?

Very heartily yours,

J. RUSKIN.

August, 1877.

MY DEAR SIR,—I made all the corrections as you direct—the queried sentence was by the printer, not me (I scratched out his query). The places of omission have been marked by stars. I left out the bit about cups, because pottery is too serious a piece of education to be spoken about so slightly.

You have not answered my chief query in last *Fors*, Why we have less leisure than the Greeks?³ Please send me just a line about this. If you will look at the abstract of the history of usury, given in White's *Warfare of Science*, prefaced by Tyndall⁴ (in which the writer is triumphing in the victory of the Usurer in these latter days), I do not think you will again call usury a sin "invented by Mr. Sillar." It is a sin of the same unnatural class as Cannibalism. I have nothing to do with judging the culpability of Robinson Crusoe's Friday. But when once he is told that Cannibalism is wrong—if he goes on supposing himself wiser than God and all his old servants—I have no civil language, for him, and I believe, of all existing vices, usury to be the most pernicious in its essence—in its effect on the modern mind. Of whoredom and theft a man repents—in usury he triumphs.

If I believed men were better now than of old, my dear Sir, I never should write a word more in this world. God knows how tired I am, and that nothing but the fiercest agony of indignation would wring a word more from me. But I will answer your letter tenderly and accurately; forgive any over-impetuosity in this, but the horror to me of the things done in modern life is quite unspeakable otherwise.

¹ [See Vol. XX. pp. 95–117.]

² [See the reference to this in Letter 81, § 8 (above, p. 198).]

³ [See Letter 79, § 8 (p. 153).]

⁴ [*The Warfare of Science*, by Andrew Dickson White, LL.D., President of Cornell University, with Prefatory Note by Professor Tyndall, 1876. The theme of the book is "the great, sacred struggle" of science; and one of the victories, won after "centuries of war" against rigid adherence to the Bible, is "the taking of interest on loans" (pp. 122 seq.). For another reference to the book, see (in a later volume of this edition) *Usury: a Reply and a Rejoinder*, § 26.]

August 24th, 1877.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am deeply interested by your gentle and wise letter, and am more than ever grieved that your state of health prevents your doing all that your kindly will and good sense would enable you to effect. You must please pardon the tone in which, in the forthcoming *Fors*, some parts of your letter, considered as the expression of many other persons, are answered.¹ I am not able always to write as I would—the thoughts take their own way in form when I begin to get them down. The principal difference between us—the conviction, on your part, of national progress, on mine, of national decline—has not been touched upon. It requires most careful statements and explanations, for which I have neither time nor, at present, power, being nearly as ill, I fancy, as you are, though without pain, but with threatening, if I over-think myself, of worse than headache.

Always believe me faithfully and affectionately yours

(Whether *Fors* reads rough or smooth),

J. RUSKIN.

I may give your name, may I not?

August 25th, 1877.

DEAR MR. HORSFALL,—There was no mistake of any import in your former letters. I have, alas, no time even to read their correction this morning, but I chance to open on a leaf of your former about your Bishop, which I never answered. Your Bishop was challenged, as the Overseer of the greatest Mercantile City in England, by Mr. Sillar, to say whether the Bible (whether the Word of God or not) did or did not condemn the taking of Interest on loans. To this the Bishop answered, “He had not time to inquire.”² An answer which, *had it been true*, would have been so intensely idiotic that I cannot believe it to have been anything else than a lie of the basest kind. I believe he knew perfectly well what his answer must be, if he answered at all.

But, grant him to be so foolish as to suppose his time better occupied than in determining such a question, and so ignorant as not to be aware of the nature of such a struggle as the Church fought against usury for ten centuries, I challenged him again through my own private secretary³ that it might be done in perfect courtesy. And he remained utterly silent. What was to hinder him from expressing the conviction that his time was better occupied than in acquainting himself with the facts of this matter? or, if he knew the facts, his resolution not to assert them, on the pleas which you now find for him?

Ever most truly yours,

J. R.

¹ [See above, pp. 197–200.]

² [See Letter 56 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 401).]

³ [See Letter 78 (above, p. 136).]

August 27th, 1877.

DEAR MR HORSFALL,—Neither our pain nor pleasure have anything whatever to do with this matter.

The declaration of a Bishop of any Christian body of men that he has not time to ascertain the meaning of a Scriptural prohibition, which possibly affects the entire system of the commerce of his day, is either madness of folly or equivocation—for which I use the briefer word—having never, as I have stated in *Fors* before now, met with *one* honest clergyman in my life, except Bishop Colenso.¹

They are *all* partizans, concealing what they think makes against their opinions, or against the good of men—as they in their better wisdom than God’s understand it—and sophistically urging what they think advantageous.

You are also separated from me by one great difference in principle. I never judge, or attempt to judge, men’s conscience. I never praise myself or blame others—they may be infinitely better men than I, for aught I know. My business is only to declare that they are lying, stealing, or equivocating, if they *are so*. Their consciences are God’s field, not mine.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. R.

August 28th, 1877.

MY DEAR SIR,—I find your letters so interesting that—without being able to read them straight through—I let them lie among my papers and take a bit every now and then.

I had not before noticed your reference to Savonarola. Yes, both he and Botticelli² were, I thank God, utterly of one mind with me, and both spoke absolutely truth to the falling Florence they alone saw Death in the face of. And, refusing their testimony, she died. You don’t suppose there is any life in Florence *now!* She is not even a whitened sepulchre, but a blackened and foul one. And the signs of England’s ruin are as clear and fearful as of hers, yet the life in us is larger and the rural population more active. The future of England may be, for aught I know, redeemable, but she must first recognize her state as needing redemption.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. R.

August 29th, 1877

MY DEAR SIR,—I am very grateful for your letter of yesterday (of which I at once destroyed the first part). But I think you were perfectly right in calling the man a liar; and, so far as you were not, only wrong if you allowed the sense of personal injury to make your language violent.

¹ [See Vol. XIV. p. 285 *n.*, and Vol. XXVIII. p. 244.]

² [Compare *Ariadne Florentina*, § 199 (Vol. XXII. p. 436).]

All such expressions in *Fors* are the deliberate assertions of what the hypocrisy of the age can not discern in itself, and the unconsciousness of the lie, which you think its palliation, is, in my mind, its completion.

Ever affectionately yours,
J. R.

We are in the extremest at issue in all our views of Facts. That is the real reason of your regret at my manner of statement. *I* think the good which it seems to you your Bishop is doing, no good whatever. I think the harm you believe Colenso did, the only good done by any Bishop in my day. I think of men like Dr. Guthrie,¹ and the great popular Glasgow Editor of *Good Words*,² and your Bishop, as men who make all things smooth and smiling for the Devil's work, and daub every wall with untempered mortar.³

¹ [Thomas Guthrie (1803–1873), preacher and philanthropist. Ruskin admired his work (see Vol. XII. p. xxx. *n.*), though criticising his theology (Vol. VI. p. 483).]

² [Norman Macleod (1812–1872); minister of the Church of Scotland; one of the founders of the Evangelical Alliance, 1847; chaplain to Queen Victoria, 1857–1872; D.D., Glasgow, 1858; editor of *Good Words*, 1860–1872.]

³ [This correspondence led to a visit by Mr. Horsfall to Brantwood; while at a later date (1883) Ruskin contributed an Introduction to a pamphlet by Mr. Horsfall, entitled *The Study of Beauty and Art in Large Towns* (see a later volume of this edition).]



II 8. Thirlich, after Ludwig Richter

“Our Father which art in Heaven”

**PLATO'S "MUSIC" AND LUDWIG
RICHTER¹**

[See Letters 82 and 83]

I MUST pause here to collect the meaning thus far. Education, properly so called, begins in earliest infancy, by making the child like what it should like, and hate what it should hate (as, for instance, like milk, and dislike gin; like playing with animals, dislike hunting them; like playing in clean water, and dislike dirt; like hearing truth, and dislike being deceived; and so on), but that these rightly-formed instincts are likely to pass away in advancing life, unless maintained by discipline under three Gods, of which music, the art of motion in the voice, is that which preserves virtue in the soul; and gymnastic, the art of the motion of the limbs, that which preserves virtue in the body.*

The last point to be dwelt on in the Platonic teaching is the vital principle that all our singing is to be with the help and fellowship of certain Gods—namely, the Muses, Apollo, and Dionysus. Translating this into a faith acceptable (whether we accept it or not) by faithful Christians it means that all good music must be sung by the help and companionship of angels. Suppose we at all believed in angels, and in their guardianship of children, and guidance of men, we should be interested in trying to conceive their different ranks, and the kind of fellowship they have with us, and with the lower animals. Of which the only

* Now this, however useful, is an illogical decision; for, to be accurate in terms, it should run that music, being wise motion of the voice, preserves the virtue of the voice; and gymnastic, being wise motion of the limbs, preserves the virtue of the limbs. But logic would only here lead us into false forms (as it always does when it becomes a guide instead of a method). Plato is essentially right, though informal. Music is not the movement of the voice only, but the production of a new condition in external things (sound), and is not at all an opposite to gymnastic, but a different art altogether, acting, not on its instrument, the mouth, but on the ear and intellect, while gymnastic re-acts only on its own instrument, the limbs, and affects the moral disposition only, not the intellect; and practically, on the whole, the one disciplines (as Plato says it does) the soul, and the other the body.

¹ [These passages are printed from proofs of *Fors* "over matter," headed "Take out and keep."]



H. S. Ulrich, after Ludwig Richter

“Thy Kingdom Come”

beautiful or in any wise faithful imageries that I know in Protestant art, are those by Ludwig Richter.¹ Get, if you can, at least his lovely illustration of the Lord's Prayer, where, in the first ("Our Father, which art in Heaven"), the child-angel is seen at the baby's beside, making it dream of Christ; while outside the cottage, the father and mother and elder children sit in the starry and moonlit night—the little spring beside them plashing into the wooden trough, giving the only sound through its silence. Then in the next picture ("Hallowed be Thy name") the slowly flying angel brings the sound of the church bells through morning sunshine; and in the next ("Thy kingdom come"), while one crowned with flowers teaches the elder children (one with a dock-leaf for a parasol) what they should begin to know of flowers, another—itsself no more than just able to fly—helps the baby up the steep rock-steps, a third, hidden behind the tree-trunk, prompts the two who are learning their first prayer from their mother, and on the lowest branch, the tiniest angel of all, with a tiny pipe, is teaching two callow birds to sing. In the fifth picture ("Give us each day")—the most beautiful piece of religious art that I know in modern work—while the sower sows, and the mother under the shadow of the hedge feeds her two little ones with a spoon, the dog waiting with his patient head between them, and the elder boy pausing with his piece of bread, two large bites out of it, held behind him,—above, the bird feeds her nestlings, and a fairy angel, in the cup of a flower, holds a pitcher of honey to the bee. Last, in the eighth picture comes the Angel Deliverer from Evil. I repeat, with wonder to myself, these German pictures are the only faithful imageries of divine companionship that I know of in modern art to illustrate Plato by.*

* Richter's imaginations, lovely always, are even to himself more symbols than assertions. They degenerate continually into idle ornamental fancy, and have no saving religious power to most minds.

¹ [Compare *Art of England*, §§ 29, 51, where Ruskin commends these designs for use in country village schools, and again describes the fifth picture. Plates IX. and X. here are facsimiles, respectively, of the first illustration ("Our Father which art in Heaven") and of the third ("Thy Kingdom Come").]

GOOD AND EVIL¹

[A First Draft for Letter 87, with additions made in 1881]

BRANTWOOD, 22nd Jan., 1878.

I HAVE been to-day re-reading with care the ordinances for the separation of the Nazarite (Numbers vi.), followed as they are by the great form of blessing to all Israel, as a consecrated and separate people; not less mystically related to the separation of our own souls from the evil world,—which the Grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to us that it may teach—purifying us for a nation of overflowing power, zealous of good works.²

And there is perhaps nothing more pressing of my constructive work than the full explaining of the second article of St. George's creed,³ in its opposition to the doctrine of the "corruption of human nature" as it is commonly taught.

Human nature *is* corrupt—too sorrowfully and deeply so. What you have first to perceive concerning it is exactly *that*—namely, that all the evil of it *is* its corruption, not itself! That our sin is our Death; not our Nature, but the destruction of our Nature. And that through and within all such horror of infected plague, the living soul, holy and strong, yet exists, strong enough with its Maker's help to purge and burn itself free, to all practical need, from the body of that death, and rise up in its ancient noblesse, overflowing in strength, and zealous of good works.

And on either side of this quite demonstrable and incontrovertible truth there are two infinitely fatal, infinitely false, Lies—the first, that our Nature itself is ignoble, and to its core, vile; the second, that the evil now visible in the world is not its corruption, nor its death, but a part of its necessary being, and therefore essentially good, not evil.

I have myself passed through both these heresies; in the first I was bred, and held it as a solemn article of religious faith until I began to be able to think for myself. Then, perceiving what I had been taught to be wholly false, I fell (partly also in consequence of respect for the teachers, who had made me think) into the other heresy, and for some years I felt and wrote that the world was all good, and that there was no evil in it

¹ [This fragment, of autobiographical interest, is printed from MSS. at Brantwood, headed "*Fors, March,*" and dated as above.]

² [Titus ii. 11, 14.]

³ [See Letter 58, Vol. XXVIII. p. 419.]

but of our own foolish making or thinking; that death was good and pain good, and earthquake and pestilence good, if only we received them as God had willed, and dealt with them as He appointed. Either of these heresies may—perhaps one or other must—be held with sincerity, and supported with plausible reason by any person who is not trying his utmost to do *all* the good he can in the world. But the moment that effort is made (and *less* than that effort, observe, is not Christianity),—the moment it is made, a quite new experience

[Fragment of 1878 ends here, curiously enough.]

Before I could write what the “new experience” was, I got it myself—a little too hot; and was laid on my back by anything but an advantageous illness, the first which broke my strength and scattered all my plans, now at last slowly being gathered into practicable order again. But, lest the “new experience” should never be explained at all, I now (11th August, 1881, after a second illness of the same kind,) finish my sentence of 1878. . . .

A quite new experience will present itself to him, namely, the power of the Spirit that “*letteth*”—“He that now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.”¹ That is to say, in combination with his own personal faults, follies, and weaknesses, and turned with or lance-cast from them as a snake on and from a deadly tree, he will find a distinct Adversary, which is not his Fault, but its true Accuser; not his lameness, but the presenter of Stones of Stumbling to it; not his folly, but the follower and Avenger of it; and similarly in all things round him an Opposer or Destroyer, powerful in proportion to the disbelief in his existence—an Adversary against whom no vigilance is constant enough, no shield strong enough, but that his Lion’s tooth will sometimes scar, and his fire-dart pierce—only, in right battle

γνω δ’ Ὀδυσσεύς οἱ οὐτι βέλως κατακαιριὸν ἦλθεν.²

¹ [2 Thessalonians ii. 7.]

² [*Iliad*, xi. 439.]

NOTES ON THE LAND QUESTION¹

To the Editor of the "Pall Mall Gazette"

March 15th [1877].

IN looking over the material which the discontinuance of *Fors Clavigera* prevented my using, I have come on the enclosed, to my mind, every way sensible and thoughtful letter, entering into close detail respecting recent errors in land management, which I thought might—under present condition of land question—be permitted space in your columns.

The enclosure is as follows, the writer being Mr. Stephen Rowland of Cranleigh:—

"I saw in last *Fors* that you are going to write on the land question. I therefore send you word what a good many farmers here think is the cause of their present difficulties. I daresay it is not different from what you know about the matter, but I thought it would do no harm to write. In the first place, some few years ago some manufacturers and others who had made large fortunes in trade came into the country and bought farms, or hired them at much higher rents than had ever been paid before. This led to a rise in rents all through the district. Well, then, the new farmers gave their labourers more money for their work than anybody else had ever done; but the worst of it was that, the masters not knowing themselves what a fair day's work was, the men gradually did less and less work, and what they did was worse done than it used to be, until now it takes two men to do what one did in the old time. The farmers say, though, that there are still a few men who have always done, and do, their very best, and put their heart into their work, but there are but few such now.

"The new farmers soon had a new house or two built about the farm, and then compelled the parish to make the old green lanes—for which this country is famous—into hard roads, at a great expense and consequent increase in the parish rates, which are paid chiefly by the farmers. Then the Education Act was passed, which keeps the boys off the land until they pass a certain standard in the school. By the time they do this most of them don't want to drive plough, but get into some other employment that they think is more genteel, so that the farmer has to pay a man instead of a boy to drive plough, and has also to pay the greater part of the boy's schooling although he wants him more than enough on the farm. To make matters worse, the seasons have been against the farmers. They also tell me that the tithes are higher than they used to be: why this should be I cannot understand, but it seems that when tithes were taken in kind, every tenth

¹ [This section of the Appendix is from the *Pall Mall Gazette* of March 17, 1887. It was reprinted in *Igdrasil*, September 1890, vol. i. pp. 346–347, and again in the privately issued *Ruskiniana*, Part I., 1890, pp. 64–65.]

shock of corn was taken, whether the shock was good or bad, and so a fair average tenth was got, but now the tithe is calculated on the market price of corn, and as the farmer always sends his best corn to market, and keeps what he calls the trail corn at home to feed cattle and pigs with, the tithe is really levied on the best corn only, and not on the good and bad together, as it used to be. There is also the game difficulty, and the imports from foreign countries, which you most likely know a good deal more about than I do; but, right or wrong, most farmers that I have talked to about these matters think as I have written. I forgot to tell you, though, that there is one farmer here who never uses a machine for anything that he can get done by hand. He has told me that he would have his corn threshed with a flail if he could get any one to do it. He says that the straw is better for cattle."

EPILOGUE¹

I BEGAN the second series of these letters in the hope of completing their broken teaching in many particulars and fulfilling at least to some extent their promise of notes on the life of Scott, with as much memory of my own as might be worth keeping. But I believe now that the serious matter of which they mainly consist had better not be further extended, or diluted, by personalities. I find in reviewing the book that it contains much more than I knew, and is written with a vigour and precision which I do not in future years hope to equal, and that on the whole with a systematic index, these letters had better now be placed before the public in concluded form, and what gossip about his favourite author, or himself, may be indulged to an old man's garrulity, prevented from encumbering the conclusion of his careful and earnest thought.

Of the too sanguine passages in which I have spoken of the conditions of happiness which Sir Thomas Browne and Bacon only ventured to design in ideal light, as within the actual reach of present effort, I will only say that they were written with a faith in the sense and courage of living Englishmen in which I am neither shaken nor ashamed; and that my own failure in proving the possibility of such things came only of the diversion of energy to the subjects of art which my dearest friends insisted was my only proper province; and of its arrest in 1875 by personal sorrow. And I have more than once expressed my conviction, nor do I see reason now to doubt its soundness, that had I given my whole strength and heart to the leadership of the St. George's Guild, it would ere now have accomplished all I hoped.

Putting aside, however, these expressions of trust in the immediate realization of my objects, there is no [statement] of principle throughout the book which I am the least inclined to qualify. Far the contrary; it appears to me that the state of society is rapidly drawing to a crisis in which all that *Fors* proclaims false will be found fatally so, and in which, of pure necessity, some respectful experiment will be made on the lines it has pointed out. More especially this seems to me probable with respect to the primary need of the organization of labour, pleaded for by me in *Unto this Last*, and variously insisted upon through all my other books. As I grow older, and have further experience of and insight into life, nothing impresses me so much as the useless affliction of its anxieties and uncertainties, in that no one, ordinarily, is *sure* of daily bread, or safe and calm in their daily toil. And I am every day more vexed at the loss of benevolent effort in contest with narrow forms of vice or distress, when it ought all to be concentrated into the order and discipline of totally governing power.

¹ [This passage is printed from MS. at Brantwood. It seems to have been written for Letter 96, being afterwards displaced by the letter from "Francesca": see p. 519.]

RUSKIN'S INDEX
TO SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL TOPICS IN
"FORS CLAVIGERA"

[*Bibliographical Note.*—There have hitherto been published three kinds of Index to *Fors Clavigera*—(1) two Indices published, and in part prepared, by Ruskin himself, to Letters 1–24 and to Letters 25–48 respectively; (2) a General Index to the whole work, prepared under the superintendence of the Rev. J. P. Faunthorpe; (3) Indices, prepared by Mr. W. G. Collingwood, at the end of each volume in the “Small Edition” of *Fors* (for which, see Vol. XXVII. p. c.). These indices (3) were to a curtailed edition of the book.

The Index contained in the following pages (609–676) is a completion of Index (1), as explained below (p. 607). First, however, in this Note particulars are given of the previous publications (1) and (2).

RUSKIN’S INDEX TO LETTERS 1–24 (1873)

First Edition (1873).—The title of this Index is as follows:—

Fors Clavigera. | Letters | to the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain. | By John Ruskin, LL.D. | Supplementary Number. | Index to Vols. I. and II. | [*Rose*] | London: printed for the Author | by Watson and Hazell, London and Aylesbury; | and to be had of | Mr. G. Allen, Heathfield Cottage, Keston, Kent.

Octavo, pp. 28. The headline is “Index” on each page. Issued, in September 1873,¹ in pale grey paper wrappers, with the title on the front, there being no title-page. On p. 1 is the drop-title—“Fors Clavigera. | Index | To the Volumes for 1871 and 1872,” with the explanation, “The larger black numerals indicate the number of the letter; the smaller numerals, the pages.” The “Advertisement” of *Fors Clavigera* appears on p. 4 of the wrapper. The Index was distributed gratis. 1000 copies.

Some original notes by the author were introduced into this Index. These are given in this edition as notes to the text: see Vol. XXVII. pp. 29, 54, 85, 94, 117, 130, 149, 184, 185, 186, 187, 191, 194, 209, 260, 297, 323, 346, 347.

Second Edition (1877).—The title (again on the wrapper) is altered, as follows: “(Second Thousand). | [*Rose*.] | London: Printed for the Author by | Hazell, Watson, & Viney, London and Aylesbury; | and to be had of | Mr. G. Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent.” Page 4 of the wrapper is blank. On p. 1, after the drop-title, are the words “Second Thousand (*revised*).”

Issued, as before, in November 1877. 1000 copies. Out of print.

¹ Such is the actual date of publication. Ruskin’s reference to it in the Letter for July 1873 (Vol. XXVII. p. 568) must be taken as anticipatory.

The revisions were numerous, but unimportant. Ed. 1 contains 15 lines on the last page; ed. 2 (owing to additions on preceding pages), 31. The proofs of ed. 1 were not read very accurately; thus, on p. 20 of it, lines 1 and 2, which really belonged to the heading "Obedience," were printed under "P" with no heading at all; occasionally also, references to letters or pages were left blank.

In ed. 2 such errors were corrected, and a few additional entries were made. The principal revision was, however, the alteration of references to pages, so as to make them apply to the later editions of the several Letters; for, as explained in the Bibliographical Note to Vol. XXVII. (p. xcii.), the pagination of Letters 1–20 had been altered after the first editions.

RUSKIN'S INDEX TO LETTERS 25–48 (1876)

First Edition (1876).—The title (again on the wrapper) is as follows:—

Fors Clavigera. | Letters | to the Workmen and Labourers | of Great Britain. | By John Ruskin, LL.D. | Supplementary Number. | Index to Vols. III. and IV. | [*Rose.*] | London: printed for the Author by | Watson and Hazell, London and Aylesbury; | and to be had of | Mr. George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent.

Octavo, pp. 36. The headline is "Index" on each page. Issued, in January 1876, in pale grey paper wrappers. The "Advertisement" of *Fors Clavigera* appears on p. 4 of the wrapper. The Index was distributed gratis. 1000 copies.

Second Edition (1878).—A reprint of the First, with the addition of the words "Second Thousand" on the cover and on p. 1, and the alteration of the imprint to "Hazell, Watson, & Viney."

The following Prefatory Note appeared on p. 1 of the Index:—

*"Though the kind friends who have drawn up this and the earlier index are not content with their work, I believe it will be found entirely sufficient for its purposes, until the system of the whole is more developed. As soon as it has received anything like conclusive form, I will index its subjects, in connection, myself."*¹

Issued in June 1878. 1000 copies (of which a few are still, 1907, obtainable).

A review of this Index appeared in the *Monetary Gazette*, January 8, 1876.

MR. FAUNTHORPE'S INDEX TO THE COMPLETE WORK (1887)

In addition to the indexes described above, Ruskin made a large number of notes and memoranda for similar indexes to the remaining volumes. These memoranda have been much used in the present edition (see below,

¹ It is clear, however, that much of the work was Ruskin's own; the wording of many of the entries is conclusive. Probably what he left to friends was the arrangement of the entries.

p. 608). He did not, however, complete the work, and the task of compiling an Index to the whole series of Letters was undertaken by the Rev. J. P. Faunthorpe, Principal of Whitelands College, who issued the following "Editor's Note":—

"SOME years ago Mr. Ruskin expressed a wish to have a complete Index to *Fors Clavigera*, and gave me permission to make it. I have worked at it steadily ever since, not without much kindly assistance; and my pleasure at its appearance in complete form is marred by one abiding regret.¹

"There were in existence, Indexes to Vols. I. and II., published in Vol. II.; to Vols. III. and IV., published in Vol. IV.; and in addition to these, various notes, memoranda, partial indexes of separate letters; and a complete, but brief, MS. Index to Vols. V., VI., and VII.; none of which I have made much use of, because it seemed necessary to do the whole thing on one plan, or not do it at all. So I read every word.

"No one who admires *Fors Clavigera* will, I think, object to the length of the Index, nor to the numerous cross references,—which, indeed, might have been multiplied almost *ad infinitum*. But any reader not finding what is wanted under one letter, will most probably find it under another, in intimate, and what seemed to me at the time to be superior, connection. Thus, if the names of Italian painters are not found under 'Names,' they will be found under 'Italians,' or 'Painters,' or under their own letter.

"Some classification has been, and perhaps more might have been, given. Some, perhaps many, references, might have been omitted, and some no doubt are, for it is not a Concordance.

"I have one hope left, that it may be useful to readers of *Fors Clavigera*; one confession to make, that it is not perfect; and one clear intimation to give, that Mr. Ruskin is wholly irresponsible for its present shape, because he never saw the proofs.

"January 1887."

The title-page of Mr. Faunthorpe's Index is as follows:—

Index | to | *Fors Clavigera*. | Letters | to the Workmen and Labourers | of
Great Britain. | By | John Ruskin, LL.D., | Honorary Student of Christ
Church, | and Honorary Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. | Vols.
I. to VIII. | [*Rose*] | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. |
1871–7. 1878–80–83–84. | 1887.

Octavo, pp. xvi.+503. Title-page (with imprint at the foot of the reverse—"Printed by Hazell, Watson, & Viney, Ltd., London and Aylesbury"), pp. i.–ii.; "Editor's Note" (as given above), with blank reverse, pp. iii.–iv.; Contents of the eight volumes of *Fors Clavigera*, pp. v.–xii.; List of Illustrations in the eight volumes, pp. xiii.–xv.; "Addenda et Corrigenda" (in the Index), p. xvi.; text of Index, pp. 1–494; Appendix (see below), pp. 495–503.

Issued, in March 1887, in mottled-grey paper boards, with a white paper label on the back, which reads, "Ruskin | Index to | *Fors Clavigera*." 2000 copies. Price 10s. In 1893 copies were bound in cloth and the price was reduced to 7s. 6d. The volume is still (1907) obtainable.

The references in the Index are (in the case of Letters 1–36) to the Letters and pages of the Letters; (in the case of Letters 37–96) to the Letters and pages of the Volumes. It should be noted that the Index

¹ Mr. Faunthorpe had hoped that Ruskin would write a Preface to the Index.

was compiled from the second editions of the earlier Letters, which, as mentioned above, vary in their pagination from the first editions. This Index, not being by Ruskin, is not included in this edition of his Works (see below, p. 607).

The Appendix consists of "Notes" 1–8, being "Over-matter, on various subjects, put in type for, but not included in *Fors*." To the following Contents of the Appendix (p. 495 of the Index) are added the pages in the present volume where this over-matter is printed:—

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Usury (Interest, Rent, etc.) | page 570 |
| 2. Railways and Interest | " 570 |
| 3. S. George's Laws not New | (see below, " 606) |
| 4. Mr. Ruskin—Curious Autobiography | " 607 |
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| 6. Streams and their Use | " 546 |
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| 8. Wastefulness of Credit | " 534 |

Of these "Notes," Nos. 1 and 2 are now printed together, in accordance with a proof corrected by Ruskin which Mr. Faunthorpe had not seen. Between his uncorrected proof and the latter there are the following variations:—

§ 1, line 4, "of England" added after "Bank," and "any one" before "particular"; line 10, "indeed" added after "he is"; line 11, "And in" for "In"; last line, "or do" for "or." At the end of § 1 the "Note" adds "And an average gentleman will not charge his friend on a loan; but will, the public, all he can."

§ 2, line 1, after "definition of the sin," the "Note" adds "obscured as it has been by metaphysical indignation on one side, and by dull equivocation on the other"; lines 4–6, the "Note" reads ". . . your neighbour is; and you will feel yourself a surly sort of dog if you don't lend it him. If he have a new coat on, he can afford to pay you something for the loan—but you are worse than a surly dog, if you take such pay. *That is Usury . . .*"; the end of § 2 in the "Note" reads ". . . when the lending one is worn out. You must see that your umbrella is in the stand. But you can't live on it, more than on the stand itself."

§ 4, line 6, for "wicked men" the "Note" reads "misers."

§ 6, line 7, for "may turn out advantageous," the "Note" reads "ends"; and in lines 11 and 12, for "subscriptions . . . living by," "help of"; in lines 13 and 14, it omits "or accomplish any public work." The "Note" ends thus: ". . . pockets of private persons, even though ever so softly and flatteringly applied, it could become law."

Mr. Faunthorpe's "Note 3" was printed by him in error; the passage was already in the text of Letter 78, § 9 and *n.* (above, p. 133).

Mr. Faunthorpe's "Note 4" has not seemed worth including in the present Appendix to *Fors*, for it is merely a newspaper extract summarising

a portion of Letter 76. But for the sake of completeness it is here subjoined:—

“MR. RUSKIN—CURIOUS AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

“Mr. Ruskin announced, under date April 2nd, that he has, at the request of a few Sheffield workmen, authorised the investment of £1200 in an estate of thirteen acres of land near Sheffield, whereupon the workmen may spend what spare hours they have, and for which they agree to pay 3 per cent. Mr. Ruskin says, ‘Here at last is a little piece of England given into the English workman’s hand and heaven’s.’ Mr. Ruskin also publishes his autobiography, saying his father left him £120,000, besides property at Herne Hill, Denmark Hill, Greenwich, and pictures; and left his mother £37,000. He gave £17,000 to his poor relations; sold the pictures, bought Brantwood, assisted a young relation in business at a cost of £15,000, spent £15,000 on *harness and stables*, and has given £14,000 to St. George, besides having spent £70,000 variously. He is now worth £55,000, and announces that he will give the Marylebone property absolutely to St. George’s Company. The Herne Hill property he gives to his cousin, and will finally invest the remaining £12,000, and live or die upon its interest.—*Inverness Courier*.”

Ruskin no doubt preserved the cutting for the comic instance of a journalist’s unintelligent summarising which is supplied by the underlined words: see Letter 76, § 18 (above, p. 101).

THE PRESENT INDEX

The scheme of the present edition does not admit of an attempt to include in the volumes devoted to *Fors Clavigera* a corrected and complete Index to the work. *Fors* is indexed, as part of the editors’ general plan, in the General Index to the edition. But the separate Indices to Letters 1–48 were Ruskin’s own, and he attached considerable importance to them.¹ He also intended to complete them by similar Indices for the rest of *Fors*, and he had nearly completed the notes necessary for that purpose. It has, therefore, seemed right that his Indices should be completed and incorporated here. It should be understood that, in preparing this “Ruskin Index,” the editors have made no attempt to make it exhaustive. They have accepted his scale and method, and carried it through where he had left the work undone. It is an Index to some of the topics which he considered of principal importance.

The present Index, then, has been thus put together:—

(a) The two Indexes published by Ruskin have been combined. That is to say, in the case of Letters 1–48, the references given are those (and, with a few exceptions next to be stated, those only) which Ruskin gave in his two volumes. This combination has occasionally necessitated rearrangement and the transference of a reference from one head to another; in fact, however, there are no omissions.

In a few places of the text of *Fors*² Ruskin notes topics which ought to have been, but were not, included in one or other of his two Indexes. These topics have now been added. They are “Beer,” “Glass Pockets,” and “Misery.”

In a few places in Ruskin’s Indices he included corrections of misprints in the text of *Fors*, or notes explanatory of it. The corrections have all

¹ See his references in Vol. XXVII. pp. 437, 505, 553, 568; Vol. XXVIII. p. 528; and in the present volume, pp. 13, 166.

² See Letters 62 (Vol. XXVII. p. 528), 73, and 93 (above, pp. 22, 469).

been made in the text; and the notes, as already stated (p. 603), are now transferred from the Index to the Text.

Ruskin's reference were, in the case of Letters 1–36, to the number of the Letter and to the page of each Letter; and in the case of Letters 37–48 to the number of the Letter and to the page of the volume. In the present Index the references throughout are to Letters and sections (§§).

(b) Ruskin's copy of *Fors Clavigera* at Brantwood contains various Index notes. In another copy, of which only volumes i., v., vi., and vii. (in Mr. Wedderburn's possession) are forthcoming, he made many other Index references. In this copy he thus noted Letters 49 (fully), 50–60 (sparsely), 61–72 (all fully), and 73–84 (mostly done). Thus in the case of Letters 1–48, Ruskin's printed Indexes have received some additions from his MS. notes; while in the case of Letters 49–84, the Index references here given are chiefly from the author's memoranda.

(c) Ruskin did not note volume viii. for Index; here, therefore, the editors have supplied references; adhering, as above explained, to the scale, and method of selection, which Ruskin's own indexing seemed to suggest.]

RUSKIN'S INDEX

TO SOME OF THE
PRINCIPAL TOPICS IN "FORS CLAVIDERA"

*The larger black numerals refer to the Letters; the smaller numerals,
to the Sections (§§)*

| | |
|---------|---------------------------|
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| " | 37-72 " " XXVIII. |
| " | 73-96 are in this volume. |

The scope of this Index, as just explained on the preceding pages, should be noted. The reader will bear in mind that reference should also be made to the General Index to this edition.

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