

## CAMBRIDGE LIBRARY COLLECTION

*Books of enduring scholarly value*

### **Literary studies**

This series provides a high-quality selection of early printings of literary works, textual editions, anthologies and literary criticism which are of lasting scholarly interest. Ranging from Old English to Shakespeare to early twentieth-century work from around the world, these books offer a valuable resource for scholars in reception history, textual editing, and literary studies.

### **The Works of John Ruskin**

The influence of John Ruskin (1819–1900), both on his own time and on artistic and social developments in the twentieth century, cannot be over-stated. He changed Victorian perceptions of art, and was the main influence behind ‘Gothic revival’ architecture. As a social critic, he argued for the improvement of the condition of the poor, and against the increasing mechanisation of work in factories, which he believed was dull and soul-destroying. The thirty-nine volumes of the Library Edition of his works, published between 1903 and 1912, are themselves a remarkable achievement, in which his books and essays – almost all highly illustrated – are given a biographical and critical context in extended introductory essays and in the ‘Minor Ruskiniana’ – extracts from letters, articles and reminiscences both by and about Ruskin. This second volume contains Ruskin’s poems.

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-00850-1 - The Works of John Ruskin, Volume 2: Poems  
John Ruskin  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

Cambridge University Press has long been a pioneer in the reissuing of out-of-print titles from its own backlist, producing digital reprints of books that are still sought after by scholars and students but could not be reprinted economically using traditional technology. The Cambridge Library Collection extends this activity to a wider range of books which are still of importance to researchers and professionals, either for the source material they contain, or as landmarks in the history of their academic discipline.

Drawing from the world-renowned collections in the Cambridge University Library, and guided by the advice of experts in each subject area, Cambridge University Press is using state-of-the-art scanning machines in its own Printing House to capture the content of each book selected for inclusion. The files are processed to give a consistently clear, crisp image, and the books finished to the high quality standard for which the Press is recognised around the world. The latest print-on-demand technology ensures that the books will remain available indefinitely, and that orders for single or multiple copies can quickly be supplied.

The Cambridge Library Collection will bring back to life books of enduring scholarly value (including out-of-copyright works originally issued by other publishers) across a wide range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences and in science and technology.

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-00850-1 - The Works of John Ruskin, Volume 2: Poems  
John Ruskin  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

# The Works of John Ruskin

VOLUME 2: POEMS

JOHN RUSKIN  
EDITED BY EDWARD TYAS COOK  
AND ALEXANDER WEDDERBURN



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-00850-1 - The Works of John Ruskin, Volume 2: Poems  
John Ruskin  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,  
São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108008501](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108008501)

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2009

This edition first published 1903  
This digitally printed version 2009

ISBN 978-1-108-00850-1 Paperback

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

Cambridge University Press wishes to make clear that the book, unless originally published by Cambridge, is not being republished by, in association or collaboration with, or with the endorsement or approval of, the original publisher or its successors in title.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00850-1 - The Works of John Ruskin, Volume 2: Poems

John Ruskin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

THE COMPLETE  
WORKS OF  
JOHN RUSKIN

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-00850-1 - The Works of John Ruskin, Volume 2: Poems  
John Ruskin  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

*Two thousand and sixty-two copies of this edition—of which two thousand are for sale in England and America—have been printed at the Ballantyne Press, Edinburgh, and the type has been distributed.*

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00850-1 - The Works of John Ruskin, Volume 2: Poems

John Ruskin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

*LIBRARY EDITION*

THE WORKS OF  
JOHN RUSKIN

EDITED BY

E. T. COOK

AND

ALEXANDER WEDDERBURN



LONDON

GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD

NEW YORK: LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

1903

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-00850-1 - The Works of John Ruskin, Volume 2: Poems  
John Ruskin  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

*All rights reserved*



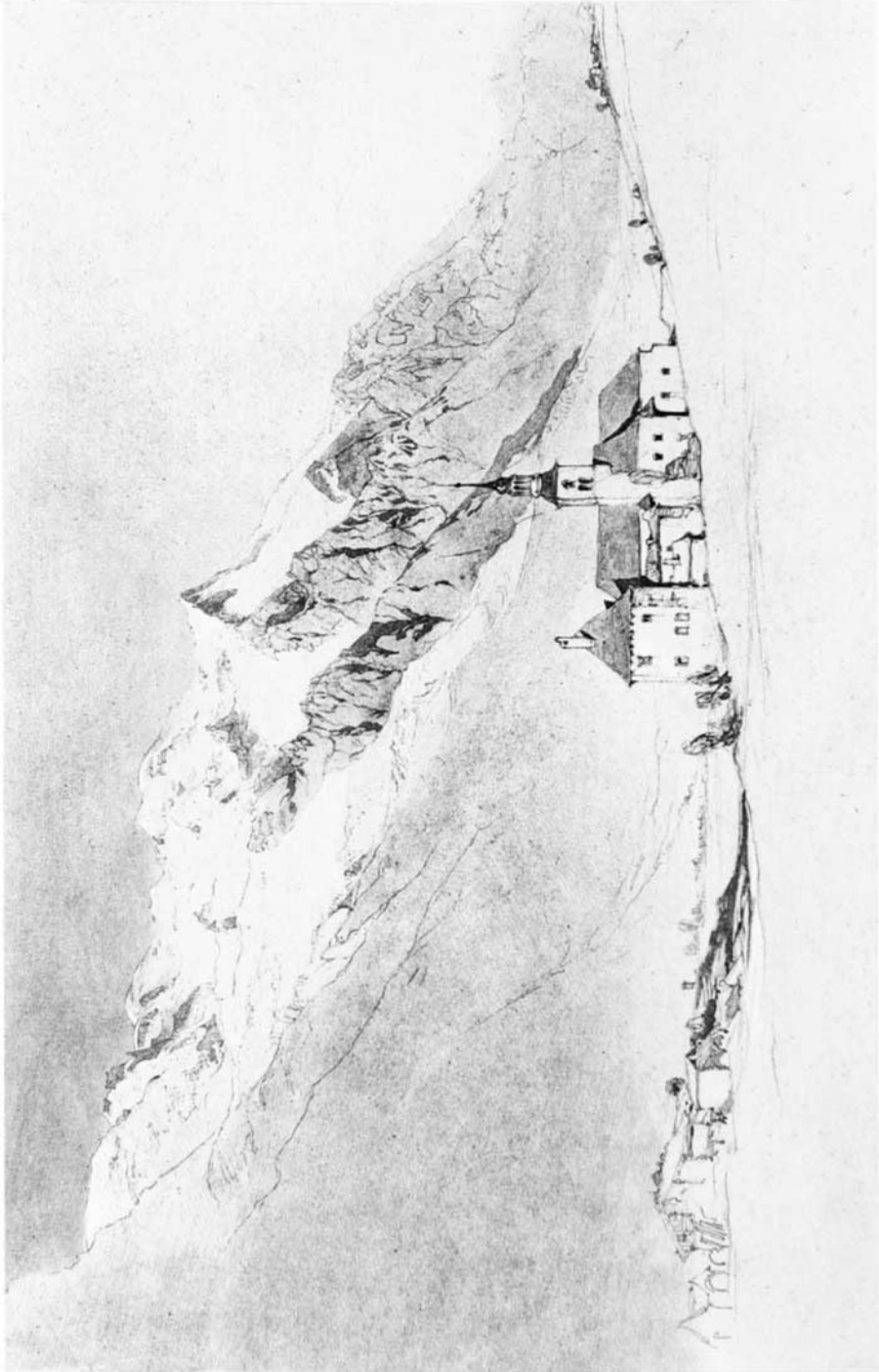
Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-00850-1 - The Works of John Ruskin, Volume 2: Poems  
John Ruskin  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

LIBRARY EDITION

VOLUME II

P O E M S



CHAMOUNI.

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-00850-1 - The Works of John Ruskin, Volume 2: Poems  
John Ruskin  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

# P O E M S

BY

JOHN RUSKIN

LONDON

GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD

NEW YORK : LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

1903

## CONTENTS OF VOLUME II

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION TO THIS VOLUME . . . . .	xvii
PREFATORY NOTES ON THE PLATES . . . . .	xxxix
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE . . . . .	xlv
 PART I. POEMS COLLECTED IN 1850 (1836-45):—	
SONG (“I WEARY FOR THE TORRENT LEAPING”) . . . . .	3
THE MONTHS . . . . .	5
THE AVALANCHE . . . . .	7
THE EMIGRATION OF THE SPRITES . . . . .	10
ON ADELE, BY MOONLIGHT . . . . .	16
GOOD NIGHT . . . . .	17
THE LAST SMILE . . . . .	18
THE MIRROR . . . . .	19
LETTER FROM RUSKIN TO W. H. HARRISON ON “THE MIRROR” . . . . .	20
REMEMBRANCE . . . . .	23
CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD . . . . .	25
THE GIPSIES . . . . .	27
THE SCYTHIAN GRAVE . . . . .	42
THE EXILE OF ST. HELENA . . . . .	45
A SCYTHIAN BANQUET SONG . . . . .	57
LETTER FROM RUSKIN TO W. H. HARRISON ON “A SCYTHIAN BANQUET SONG” . . . . .	69
THE RECREANT . . . . .	71
THE WRECK . . . . .	73
ARISTODEMUS AT PLATÆA . . . . .	74
SONG (“WE CARE NOT WHAT SKIES ARE THE CLEAREST”) . . . . .	76
SONG (“THOUGH THOU HAST NOT A FEELING FOR ONE”) . . . . .	78
HORACE:—“ITER AD BRUNDISIUM” . . . . .	79
MEMORY . . . . .	80
THE NAME . . . . .	81
CANZONET (“THE WINTER’S CHILL HATH CHARMED THE WAVE”) . . . . .	83
FRAGMENT FROM A METEOROLOGICAL JOURNAL . . . . .	85
CANZONET (“THERE’S A CHANGE IN THE GREEN OF THE LEAF”) . . . . .	87
SONG OF THE TYROLESE AFTER THE BATTLE OF BRIXEN . . . . .	88
SALSETTE AND ELEPHANTA . . . . .	90
THE SCYTHIAN GUEST . . . . .	101
TO ADELE . . . . .	110

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
PART I. <i>Continued</i> :—	114
THE LAST SONG OF ARION . . . . .	114
LETTER FROM RUSKIN TO W. H. HARRISON ON "THE LAST SONG OF ARION" . . . . .	122
THE BROKEN CHAIN—PART FIRST . . . . .	124
"    "    PART SECOND . . . . .	131
"    "    PART THIRD . . . . .	139
"    "    PART FOURTH . . . . .	146
"    "    PART FIFTH . . . . .	160
THE TWO PATHS . . . . .	181
THE OLD WATER-WHEEL . . . . .	183
THE TEARS OF PSAMMENITUS . . . . .	185
FAREWELL . . . . .	193
THE DEPARTED LIGHT . . . . .	205
AGONIA . . . . .	207
THE HILLS OF CARRARA . . . . .	208
CHARITIE . . . . .	211
THE BATTLE OF MONTENOTTE . . . . .	214
A WALK IN CHAMOUNI . . . . .	222
LA MADONNA DELL' ACQUA . . . . .	227
THE OLD SEAMAN . . . . .	229
THE ALPS (SEEN FROM MARENGO) . . . . .	232
MONT BLANC REVISITED . . . . .	233
THE ARVE AT CLUSE . . . . .	236
MONT BLANC . . . . .	237
WRITTEN AMONG THE BASSES ALPES . . . . .	238
THE GLACIER . . . . .	240
PART II. VERSES OF LATER YEARS (1847, 1867–68, 1881):—	
FOR A BIRTHDAY IN MAY . . . . .	243
AWAKE, AWAKE (OR, THE PEACE SONG) . . . . .	245
THE ZODIAC SONG . . . . .	247
"TWIST YE, TWINE YE" . . . . .	248
"TRUST THOU THY LOVE" . . . . .	250
PART III. VERSES WRITTEN IN BOYHOOD (1826–36):—	
FIRST POEMS: 1826 (AGE 7):	
ON THE STEAM ENGINE . . . . .	254
ON THE RAINBOW (EXTRACT) . . . . .	254
THE NEEDLESS ALARM . . . . .	255
ON SCOTLAND . . . . .	256
RAGLAN CASTLE . . . . .	256
GLEN OF GLENFARG . . . . .	257
TIME. BLANK VERSE . . . . .	258
1827 (AGE 8):	
THE SUN . . . . .	260
GLENFARG ("PAPA, HOW PRETTY THOSE ICICLES ARE") . . . . .	262



	PAGE
PART III. <i>Continued</i> :—	
1833 (AGE 14):	
MY FATHER'S BIRTHDAY . . . . .	338
ACCOUNT OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT IN 1833 :	
CALAIS . . . . .	341
CASSEL . . . . .	342
LILLE . . . . .	344
BRUSSELS . . . . .	346
THE MEUSE . . . . .	348
AIX-LA-CHAPELLE . . . . .	350
COLOGNE . . . . .	351
ANDERNACHT . . . . .	353
EHRENBREITSTEIN . . . . .	355
ST. GOAR . . . . .	359
HEIDELBERG . . . . .	361
THE BLACK FOREST . . . . .	365
ENTRANCE TO SCHAFFHAUSEN . . . . .	366
THE ALPS FROM SCHAFFHAUSEN . . . . .	366
THE RHINE . . . . .	368
VIA MALA . . . . .	369
SPLÜGEN . . . . .	370
THE SUMMIT . . . . .	371
THE DESCENT . . . . .	372
CHIAVENNA . . . . .	373
LAGO DI COMO . . . . .	373
CADENABBIA . . . . .	375
VILLA PLINIANA . . . . .	376
MILAN CATHEDRAL . . . . .	376
LAGO MAGGIORE . . . . .	377
GENOA . . . . .	378
PASSING THE ALPS . . . . .	379
CHAMOUNI . . . . .	380
THE ARVE AT CHAMOUNI . . . . .	384
"OH, ARE THERE SPIRITS, CAN THERE BE "	384
EVENING AT CHAMOUNI . . . . .	385
THE SOURCE OF THE ARVERON . . . . .	386
1834 (AGE 15):	
THE CRYSTAL-HUNTER . . . . .	388
THE INVENTION OF QUADRILLES . . . . .	394
1835 (AGE 16):	
JOURNAL OF A TOUR THROUGH FRANCE TO CHAMOUNI, 1835 :	
CANTO I. . . . .	396
CANTO II. . . . .	416
A LETTER FROM ABROAD :	
FROM PARIS . . . . .	429
FROM THE HOSPICE OF THE GREAT ST. BERNARD . . . . .	430
FROM SCHAFFHAUSEN . . . . .	431

## CONTENTS

xiii

PART III.—1835 (AGE 16)— <i>Continued</i> :—	PAGE
A LETTER FROM ABROAD— <i>Continued</i> :	
FROM THE TOP OF THE RIGHI . . . . .	433
FROM THE HOSPICE OF THE GRIMSEL . . . . .	434
FROM THUN . . . . .	437
VERONA . . . . .	439
VENICE . . . . .	440
SALZBURG . . . . .	441
THE WORLD OF THE SKY . . . . .	444
THE INVASION OF THE ALPS . . . . .	445
CONVERSATION ON NEW YEAR'S MORNING . . . . .	446
1836 (AGE 17):	
JACQUELINE . . . . .	449
SWISS MAIDEN'S SONG . . . . .	450
ALPINE-GLOW . . . . .	451
THE IRIS . . . . .	452
A LETTER TO HIS FATHER . . . . .	453
THE ALPINE LAKE . . . . .	458
CONGRATU— . . . . .	459
EVENING IN COMPANY—MAY 18 . . . . .	461
ON ADELE . . . . .	463
A MOMENT'S FALTER . . . . .	465
NATURE UNTENANTED . . . . .	466
SONG (“IN WINTER THOU CAMEST, THOU MADEST TO REJOICE”)	467
MONT BLANC . . . . .	468
A RHYMING LETTER . . . . .	470
MARCOLINI: A DRAMATIC FRAGMENT . . . . .	474

## APPENDIX

I. RUSKIN'S EDITION OF <i>Dame Wiggins of Lee</i> . . . . .	519
II. RHYMES TO MUSIC . . . . .	527
III. NOTES ON THE ORIGINAL MSS. OF THE POEMS . . . . .	529
IV. CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF POEMS . . . . .	535

THE FOLLOWING MINOR RUSKINIANA ARE ALSO CONTAINED IN THIS VOLUME :—

EXTRACTS FROM RUSKIN'S LETTERS TO HIS FATHER :	
A BIRTHDAY LETTER (MAY 10, 1828) . . . . .	263
BIRTHDAY GIFTS (FEBRUARY 21, 1829) . . . . .	xxx1
THE HAPPINESS OF BEING BUSY (MAY 10, 1829) . . . . .	xxxii
HIS SEA OF RHYMES (FEBRUARY 28, 1831) . . . . .	xxxiii
FINISHING “THE ITERIAD” (JANUARY 14, 1832) . . . . .	286
“ALL FLURRY AND HURRY” (FEBRUARY 20, 1832) . . . . .	xxxii
ON LUCIAN (FEBRUARY 27, 1832) . . . . .	114
A SKY OVER THE NORWOOD HILLS (MARCH 19, 1836) . . . . .	444
HINTS FOR WINNING THE NEWDIGATE (DECEMBER 24, 1836) . . . . .	xxiv
THE CENSOR'S SPEECH ON RUSKIN WINNING THE PRIZE (1839) . . . . .	xxvi
ON CONFLANS (APRIL 15 AND MAY 19, 1845) . . . . .	238



MINOR RUSKINIANA: *Continued*:—

	PAGE	
EXTRACTS FROM VERSES:		
A VERSIFICATION OF SCOTT'S <i>Monastery</i> (1827) . . . . .	260, 276	
THE SHIP (1828) . . . . .	264	
"THE PUPPET SHOW" (1829) . . . . .	xxxiii, 526	
VINTAGE (1834) . . . . .	388	
RHYMING LETTER TO HIS FATHER (1834) . . . . .	388	
RHYMING LETTER TO SIR W. JONES (1835) . . . . .	395	
RHYMING LETTER TO HIS FATHER (1835) . . . . .	404	
BIRTHDAY ADDRESS TO HIS FATHER (1837) . . . . .	xxxv	
EXTRACTS FROM RUSKIN'S PROSE DIARY OF A TOUR IN THE LAKES, ETC. (1830):		
HADDON HALL (JUNE 11) . . . . .	284	
FIRST IMPRESSIONS AT LOW-WOOD (JUNE 22) . . . . .	288	
SOUTHEY AT GROTHWAITE CHURCH (JUNE 27) . . . . .	297	
THE ASCENT OF SKIDDAW (JUNE 30) . . . . .	302	
WORDSWORTH AT RYDAL CHAPEL (JULY 4) . . . . .	297	
PASSAGES FROM RUSKIN'S PROSE DIARY OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT (1835):		
BAR-LE-DUC (JUNE 21) . . . . .	402	
THE VIEW OF MONT BLANC FROM THE DÔLE (JUNE 29) . . . . .	412	
PASSAGES FROM RUSKIN'S DIARY OF 1840-41:		
HOWLING AT ROME AND IN PECKWATER (ROME, DECEMBER 2, 1840) . . . . .	25	
RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LAKES (PAGANI AND NAPLES, MARCH 1841) . . . . .	xxx	
A REMINISCENCE OF CHRIST CHURCH (NAPLES, MARCH 12, 1841) . . . . .	185	
WRITING "THE BROKEN CHAIN" (VERCELLI, MAY 27, 1841) . . . . .	125	
WRITING "THE BROKEN CHAIN" (NEUCHÂTEL, JUNE 10, 1841) . . . . .	125	
RAPHAËL'S ST. CECILIA (BOLOGNA, MAY 3, 1841) . . . . .	167	
EXTRACTS FROM RUSKIN'S LETTERS TO W. H. HARRISON:		
ON "THE SCYTHIAN BANQUET SONG" (1838) . . . . .	65	
ON HERODOTUS (1838) . . . . .	71	
ON "ARION" (1841) . . . . .	115	
ON "THE BROKEN CHAIN" (JANUARY 15, 1839) . . . . .	124	
ON "THE BROKEN CHAIN" (JANUARY 1842) . . . . .	125	
ON "THE OLD WATER-WHEEL" (MARCH 22, 1840) . . . . .	183	
ON "FAREWELL" (MARCH 22, 1840) . . . . .	193	
ON "FAREWELL" (MAY 9, 1840) . . . . .	193	
ON "THE DEPARTED LIGHT" (1840) . . . . .	205	
LIFE AT CHAMOUNI (JUNE 20, 1842) . . . . .	222	
EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO THE REV. W. L. BROWN IN PRAISE OF CHAMOUNI (AUGUST 1842) . . . . .		223
LETTER FROM RUSKIN TO GEORGE SMITH ON THE ENGRAVING OF "AMBOISE" (1841 OR 1842) . . . . .		xlii
EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO HIS MOTHER ON "MONT BLANC REVISITED" (JUNE 9, 1845) . . . . .		233
NOTES OF CONVERSATIONS:		
ON THE AMBOISE DRAWING, WITH E. GOODALL (1841) . . . . .	xliii	
ON HIS POEMS (FROM A LETTER WRITTEN BY HIS FATHER, 1846) . . . . .	xix	
ON HIS WINNING THE NEWDIGATE (1881) . . . . .	xxvi	
IN PRAISE OF A LINE OF TENNYSON . . . . .	xxviii	
ON THE VIEW FROM FRIAR'S CRAG, DERWENT WATER . . . . .	295	
NOTES ON		
RUSKIN'S RECITAL OF THE NEWDIGATE PRIZE POEM . . . . .	xxvi	
THE DOMEQ SISTERS . . . . .	xx	
THE RUSKIN MEMORIAL AT FRIAR'S CRAG, DERWENT WATER . . . . .	294	

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

*(From Drawings by the Author)*

CHAMOUNI (1841 OR 1842) . . . . . *Frontispiece*

### PHOTOGRAVURES

PLATE

1. RYDAL WATER (AUGUST 1838) . . . . .	<i>To face page</i>	4
2. AMBOISE. ( <i>From the Engraving by E. Goodall</i> ) . . . . .	” ”	170
3. AMBOISE. ( <i>From the Original Drawing, 1841</i> ) . . . . .	<i>To precede page</i>	171
4. MILL AT BAVENO (1845) . . . . .	<i>To face page</i>	192
5. AT CARRARA . . . . .	” ”	208
6. THE COAST OF GENOA (ABOUT 1842). . . . .	” ”	219
7. THE GLACIER DES BOIS (1843). . . . .	” ”	224
8. SUNSET AT BAVENO (1845). . . . .	” ”	232
9. MONT BLANC DE ST. GERVAIS: FROM ST. MARTIN (1849) . . . . .	” ”	234
10. THE VALLEY OF CLUSE . . . . .	” ”	236
11. THE GLACIER DES BOSSONS (1874) . . . . .	” ”	240
12. HADDON HALL (AUGUST 29, 1838) . . . . .	” ”	284
13. RUIN NEAR AMBLESIDE (JULY 31, 1837) . . . . .	” ”	290
14. WATCH-TOWER AT ANDERNACH (1833) . . . . .	” ”	354
15. EHRENBREITSTEIN. ( <i>With Facsimile of Verses.</i> ) (1833) . . . . .	” ”	356
16. THE JUNGFRAU FROM INTERLAKEN (1833) . . . . .	” ”	380
17. ABBEVILLE . . . . .	” ”	398
18. THE CATHEDRAL SPIRE, ROUEN (1835). ( <i>Line Block</i> ) . . . . .	” ”	400
19. GATE OF THE ANCIENT PALACE, NANCY (1835) . . . . .	” ”	404
20. ROUEN (1835) . . . . .	” ”	430
21. FORTRESS IN THE VAL D'AOSTA (1835) . . . . .	” ”	432
22. ANCIENNE MAISON, LUCERNE (1835) . . . . .	” ”	434

II.

xv

b

xvi LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATE		
23.	HOSPITAL: PASS OF ST. GOTHARD (1835) . . . . .	To face page 436
24.	FRIBOURG (1835) . . . . .	” ” 438
25.	AT DULWICH (1842) . . . . .	” ” 470

FACSIMILES

1.	LETTER FROM RUSKIN TO HIS FATHER (DECEMBER 31, 1828) . . . . .	” ” 264
2.	VERSES (HIGHLAND MUSIC). ( <i>Enclosed in the preceding Letter</i> ) . . . . .	To precede page 265
3.	VERSES: “THE FAIRIES.” (Two Plates) . . . . .	To face page 316
4.	VERSES: “EHRENBREITSTEIN.” ( <i>With Drawing</i> ) . . . . .	See Plate 15

OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

WOODCUTS ILLUSTRATING THE ORIGINAL EDITION OF <i>Dame Wiggins of Lee</i> . ( <i>Reduced</i> ) . . . . .	Pages 518–525
ADDITIONAL ILLUSTRATIONS TO THE SAME BY KATE GREENAWAY, 1885. ( <i>Reduced</i> ). . . . .	Pages 521–523

*Note.*—Of these illustrations, the *frontispiece* and *photogravure plates*, 1, 3–14, 16, 17, 19–25, and the *facsimiles* 1–3 appeared in *The Poems of John Ruskin*, 1891 (illustrated edition), in the same medium. The *frontispiece* and Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 14, 19, 20, 22, and 25 are printed from the same plates; though in the case of the *frontispiece* and Nos. 9, 14, and 19 a little space has been removed from the background of the drawings. Nos. 1, 10, 12, 13, 17, 21, and 23 are new plates (slightly reduced as compared with the 1891 edition) from the original drawings. No. 16 is a new plate (same size as in 1891). Nos. 2 and 11 are new plates from the original engravings. One plate included in the 1891 edition, “Mont Velan,” has in this edition been transferred to Vol. I. (Plate No. 20).

For particulars of the plates (Nos. 2, 15, and 18) and the *facsimile* (No. 4) added in this edition, see below, p. xxxviii.

Five of the drawings here reproduced were in the Ruskin Exhibition held at the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours, 1901. No. 2 here was No. 133 in that exhibition; No. 19 was No. 288; No. 10 was No. 314; No. 13 was No. 327; No. 25 was No. 354; No. 8 was No. 411.

## INTRODUCTION TO VOL. II

IN this volume are collected all the verses by Ruskin which were published in his lifetime, together with one or two others which it has seemed well to include. From a considerable quantity of unpublished pieces belonging to Ruskin's childhood, scarcely anything further has been taken. At least as much as was desirable was published during his lifetime, and the scheme of the edition requires that all this should be reprinted. In some cases, however, where editorial excisions were made in the edition of 1891, passages have been restored from the MSS.; the nature of such restorations is explained in footnotes. Some general account is also given, in notes on successive years, of the verses left unpublished, and extracts containing matter of biographical or other interest are occasionally quoted (see, e.g. pp. 260, 395). Of the period of Ruskin's school and college days, a few hitherto unprinted pieces are now given. The most considerable of these is a dramatic fragment entitled *Marcolini* (pp. 474–516), which Ruskin, not without reason, considered the best of his earlier metrical essays (*Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. ch. v. § 2). Shorter pieces, hitherto unpublished, will be found on pp. 439, 444, 465. Of a later period are the Birthday Verses (p. 243), and "The Zodiac Song" (p. 247). Ruskin's serious attempts at versification ceased soon after the publication of the first volume of *Modern Painters*, so that the present volume covers the same period as the first volume of this edition.

The interest of his verses is twofold. The more mature of them have a value in themselves, as the productions of an observant mind, a cultivated ear, and a facile pen. They have further interest as biographical documents. Poetry, so far as it is sincere, is always a form of self-confession, and perhaps the limitation need not be made, for even modes or affectations reveal something of the personality behind them. There is this biographical interest in all Ruskin's verses, but in the case of the earlier pieces it is the principal interest. It was only after he had written in his autobiography the account of his early years that he consented to the collection of his verses. He regarded the *Poems* as pieces illustrative of *Præterita*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This fact should be borne in mind in considering passages (e.g. *Stones of Venice*, iii. ch. v. § 2) written earlier than *Præterita*, in which Ruskin refers to his verses.

These considerations, together with typographical convenience, have governed the arrangement of the present volume. Its contents may roughly be placed under two heads: (*a*) pieces which were published on their merits at the beginning of Ruskin's literary career; (*b*) pieces which were published after he had become famous in other fields of literature, on account of the interest reflected upon them by those achievements. This division corresponds with the circumstances under which the several pieces were originally published. The volume consists of three parts and an appendix. Part I. is a reprint of the *Poems* collected in 1850, with Ruskin's sanction, by his father from the various periodicals, etc., in which they had originally appeared. Part II. consists of a few Verses of Later Years. Part III. consists of the *juvenilia*. These were first printed in 1891, with his general consent, but at the discretion and on the selection of the editor to whom the task was entrusted. In an appendix, Ruskin's edition of "Dame Wiggins of Lee" (1885) is reprinted, together with some other nursery rhymes which were published in the *Poems*, 1891. It will thus be seen that a reader desiring to study Ruskin's verses only from the biographical point of view should first read Part III., and then return to Parts I. and II. The early verses are often of great interest, and in some ways of greater interest than many of the later pieces. But for reasons already stated, this volume gives precedence to the more mature poems.

## I

It is not always remembered that it was as a writer of verse that Ruskin first appeared before the world. The first piece of writing from his pen that appeared in print was in verse.<sup>1</sup> He was a favourite as an Album Poet before he had published any considerable essay in prose whatever. It was into verse that he threw the best efforts of his earlier years. It was upon hopes of poetic fame that his fond parents fed their admiration for his genius, and as a budding poet he first won attention in literary coteries. He described in later years how some of the pieces here given in Part I. "made my unwise friends radiantly happy in the thought that I should certainly be a poet, and as exquisitely miserable at the first praises of then clear-dawning 'Tennyson."<sup>2</sup> The judicious reader, who neither allows himself to read into Ruskin's verse a glamour from his prose, nor to be blinded by the greater merits of the prose to any merits in the verse, will probably sympathise a little with the hopes, while entirely applauding Ruskin's ultimate choice. His real strength lay in other directions; but

<sup>1</sup> "On Skiddaw and Derwent Water:" see p. 265. The appearance of this piece in print as early as 1830 has hitherto escaped notice in accounts of Ruskin's *juvenilia*.

<sup>2</sup> *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. ch. v. (added in 1877) § 2.

## INTRODUCTION

xix

if at all times he missed being a poet, he sometimes missed it only by a hair's-breadth.

Ruskin himself came to regard his poetic career as a false start. "My son," wrote his father to W. H. Harrison from Venice (May 25, 1846), "has not written a line of poetry, . . . he only regrets ever having written any. He thinks all his own poetry very worthless, and considers it unfortunate that he prematurely worked any small mine of poetry he might possess. He seems to think the mine is exhausted, and neither gold nor silver given to the world." Ruskin was drawn into working the mine by his own precocious facility, by the chances of literary introduction, by the encouragement of his father, and by a certain success in hitting the taste of the time. To his precocious facility and his father's encouragement of it we shall presently return. He has told, in *Præterita*,<sup>1</sup> the chance which opened the way into print for his youthful verses. Through a cousin, who was a clerk in the house of Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co., he was introduced to Thomas Pringle, the Scottish poet, at that time editor of *Friendship's Offering*, a fashionable Annual published by the firm. Pringle was struck by the young Ruskin's gifts, and published some of his pieces. The first thus to appear were "Salzburg" (p. 441), and "Fragments from a Metrical Journal" (p. 353). These came out in the Annual for 1835, published in the preceding autumn. Pringle was succeeded in the editorship by W. H. Harrison,<sup>2</sup> of whom Ruskin gave some account (in the vein of *Præterita*) in a paper entitled "My First Editor." Harrison was a close friend of Ruskin's father, and a great admirer of the son's talent. During the years of his editorship (1837-41) Harrison had a first call on all Ruskin's poems. Ruskin's connexion with *Friendship's Offering* continued after Harrison ceased to edit it; and his contributions were also sought for in other publications of the kind—such as *The Amaranth*, edited by T. K. Hervey (editor also of *The Athenæum*), and *The Keepsake* and *The Book of Beauty*, both edited by Lady Blessington. Indeed, no miscellany for the boudoir was considered complete without a copy of verses from "J. R." of "Christ Church, Oxford." In the essay above referred to Ruskin described the "meekly-minded persons," by whom these Annuals of the early Victorian time and style were written, and to whom they were addressed. In the Memoir of Mr. George Smith, the publisher, a higher claim is made, not without some justice, for one at least of the Annuals:—

"The writers in *Friendship's Offering* were the most distinguished of the day. They included not only veterans like Southey, Coleridge, and the Ettrick Shepherd, but also beginners like Tennyson and

<sup>1</sup> i. ch. v. § 103.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Vol. I. p. xlvihi.

## INTRODUCTION

Ruskin. The Hon. Mrs. Norton, Miss Mitford, and Miss Strickland, were regular contributors. To the volume for 1833 Macaulay contributed his 'Ballad of the Armada.' The numerous plates in each issue were after pictures by the greatest artists of the time, and were engraved by the best available talent. When the series was at its zenith of popularity, some eight to ten thousand copies of each volume were sold at Christmas" (*Dictionary of National Biography*, Supplementary Volume I., 1901, p. xiv.).

To this Annual alone Ruskin contributed twenty-seven pieces between 1835 and 1844.<sup>1</sup> He also contributed three drawings, beautifully engraved by E. Goodall (see below, p. xliii. *n*) and J. C. Armytage. Reviewers were on the whole very favourable, and it was seldom that lines by J. R. were not selected for appreciative quotation.<sup>2</sup> He was, in short, one of the popular Album Poets of the day.<sup>3</sup>

The Poems contributed to these albums, with the others collected in 1850, fall into four main groups: (1) love poems, (2) Herodotean poems, (3) prize poems, and (4) poems of nature. The love poems were inspired by Mdlle. Adèle Domecq, to whom a passing reference has already been made in the Introduction to Volume I. (p. xxxiii.). When Mr. Domecq brought his four younger daughters to Herne Hill, it was, says Ruskin, as "a Southern Cross of unconceived stars floating on a sudden into my obscure firmament of a London suburb."<sup>4</sup> Adèle Clotilde, the eldest of the four, was a graceful blonde of fifteen, and with her Ruskin fell violently in love. The attachment was encouraged by Ruskin's father (though not by his mother), and Mr. Domecq on his side was favourable; but the shy and serious boy failed to commend himself to the

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the ten numbers of *Friendship's Offering* (1835-44), the Annuals, etc., containing Ruskin's verses (on first publication) are *The Spiritual Times* (1830), *The Amaranth* (1839), *The London Monthly Miscellany*, vol. i. (1839), Heath's *Book of Beauty* (1845 and 1846), and *The Keepsake* (1845 and 1846).

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g. *Athenæum*, No. 520 (Oct. 14, 1837), No. 572 (Oct. 13, 1838), No. 625 (Oct. 19, 1839), No. 890 (Nov. 16, 1844); *Literary Gazette*, No. 1134 (Oct. 13, 1838). For extracts, etc., see below, notes on pp. 25, 58, 71, 102, 124, 132, 229. Ruskin's father, in a letter to W. H. Harrison (Jan. 26, 1839), mentions another "symptom of popularity": "His lines 'Remembrance' (p. 23), from *Friendship's Offering*, 1837-38, I see in a cheap almanack this year, and his mother was surprised by the same in a *Magasin des Modes*, taken up at a milliner's."

<sup>3</sup> It may be noted that the years of Ruskin's repute in this sort were those of Tennyson's silence. His first volumes appeared in 1827, 1830, 1832; no others, till 1842.

<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Richmond Ritchie (Miss Thackeray) has given a pleasant glimpse of another member of the family: "The writer can picture to herself something of the charm of these most charming sisters, for once, by chance, travelling on Lake Lemán, she found herself watching a lady who sat at the steamer's end, a beautiful young woman, all dressed in pale grey, with a long veil floating on the wind, who sat motionless and absorbed, looking towards the distant hills; not unlike the vision of some guiding, wistful Ariel at the prow, while the steamer sped its way between the banks. The story of the French sisters had gained an added interest from the remembrance of those dark

## INTRODUCTION

xxi

sparkling Adèle. In after years Ruskin told the story of this love passage with insouciant raillery,<sup>1</sup> but at the time it was very real, and profoundly affected him. In the Poems we may trace the strength of his passion, and when the final disappointment came, the unreproachful sadness of memory and its pang. The first visit of Adèle and her sisters to Herne Hill was in the first two months of 1836. Ruskin celebrates her “glory” and her “grace” (p. 16), and lingers over her “last smile” (p. 18). She departs; he sends her “Good-night” across the sea (p. 17). Her name is named in company (p. 461); he falters for a moment, but nerves himself to be firm (p. 465). These lines—here first published—have real dignity and compression. Occasional verses to Adèle in absence will be found in the poems of both 1837 and 1838—such are the song on p. 467, “The Mirror” (p. 19), “Nature Untenanted” (p. 466), and “Remembrance” (p. 23). In 1838 Adèle was sent to school in England, and Ruskin saw her again in August of that year; she and her sisters spent the following Christmas at Herne Hill; Ruskin was as devoted, and she as lightly laughing, as before. This second visit is reflected in several verses of the time. The song, “Though thou hast not a feeling for one Who is torn by too many for thee” (p. 78), sufficiently tells the story. Other pieces of the same date and motive are the song on p. 76, “Memory” (p. 80), “The Name” (p. 81), the canzonet on p. 83, “Fragment from a Meteorological Journal” (p. 85). But early in 1839 negotiations were entered into by the young lady’s family for a marriage between Adèle and Baron Duquesne, a rich and handsome young Frenchman. The fact was for a time kept from Ruskin’s knowledge by his parents, who feared that the disappointment would interfere with his studies at Oxford. The verses, “To Adèle” (p. 110), written in the first half of 1839, are not yet without all hope. At Christmas 1839, she and her sisters were again at Herne Hill. It is not clear whether Ruskin at this time knew the truth or not. The negotiations for Adèle’s marriage continued, and it took place in March 1840. The long poem, “Farewell” (p. 193), is dated as if on the eve of their last meeting and

lovely eyes, that charming countenance; for afterward, when I knew her better, the lady told me that her mother had been a Domecq, and had once lived with her three sisters in Ruskin’s home. Circumstances had divided them in after days, but all the children of the family in turn had been brought up to know Mr. Ruskin by name, and to love and appreciate his books. The lady sent him many messages by me, which I delivered in after days, when, alas! it was from Mr. Ruskin himself I learned that the beautiful traveller—Isabelle, he called her—had passed away before her time to those distant hills where all our journeys end” (*Records of Tennyson, Ruskin, and Browning*, 1892, pp. 98–99). Mrs. Ritchie’s friend was Isabelle, daughter of Diane Domecq (Comtesse de Maison), the eldest of the sisters, for whom see a reference in *Præterita*, i. ch. xi. § 226.

<sup>1</sup> *Præterita*, i. ch. x.



## INTRODUCTION

parting.<sup>1</sup> The quotation from the *Agamemnon* which he prefixed to it sufficiently indicates the feeling which inspired the verses :—

“ Come visions, sweet and sad, and bearing pain  
 Of hopings vain—  
 Void, void and vain, for scarce the sleeping sight  
 Has seen its own delight,  
 When thro’ the grasps of love that bid it stay  
 It vanishes away  
 On silent wings that roam adown the ways of sleep.”<sup>2</sup>

This “Farewell,” in the style of Shelley, is perhaps the best of the love poems. It was, as we learn from the correspondence between Ruskin’s father and W. H. Harrison, a particular “pet” with its author. He took unusual pains with it, polishing it and polishing again. It only fails of the effect of high poetry by too many traces of the file. This piece and “Agonia” (p. 207) are the last of the poems dedicated to her. He takes his leave in grief, but without bitterness. The spirit of the last pieces to Adèle is that of the earlier lines mentioned above :—

“ ’Twas but a moment’s falter, it is gone,  
 I am firm now, I have mine armour on. . . .  
 I am all rock ; nor word nor thought again  
 Shall shake the endurance of the clasping pain.”

In addition to the poems addressed directly to Adèle, Ruskin’s early love inspired also, at the beginning of it, sundry other literary exercises. Such was *Leoni*, as explained in Vol. I. (p. xlvi.). Another piece, included in the present volume, which had a similar origin, may here be noticed on account of this connexion, although it belongs to the third Part in our arrangement of the poems. *Marcolini* was “a tragedy on a Venetian subject, in which the sorrows of my soul were to be enshrined in immortal verse.”<sup>3</sup> Ruskin was at work on this in the summer of 1836. It was not finished ; his literary energy was much dissipated in that year (see below, p. 449). The fragment seems, however, to be worth including among his poetical *juvenilia*. It shows greater power than many of the other pieces, and power in a different direction than that indicated by most of them. It cannot indeed be said that the fragment discloses any skill in dramatic construction ; but the characters are well

<sup>1</sup> The date printed in *Friendship’s Offering* is September 1839. The actual parting was, however, on Dec. 28, 1839 (see below, p. 204 n).

<sup>2</sup> E. D. A. Morshead’s translation (*The House of Atreus*, in the “Golden Treasury” series, 1901, p. 20). The tragedies of Æschylus often furnished Ruskin with mottoes and phrases at this period ; see below, pp. 36, 45, 114, and see *Præterita*, i. ch. xii. § 260. Cf. also *Modern Painters*, pref. to 2nd ed. § 16.

<sup>3</sup> *Præterita*, i. ch. x. § 209.

## INTRODUCTION

xxiii

distinguished, and they display themselves in animated and appropriate dialogue. There are passages also which show that Ruskin could catch Shakespeare's style as cleverly as in other pieces he caught Scott's and Byron's and Shelley's. Whatever else may be thought of Ruskin's poetical apprenticeship, it induced him at any rate to the close study of great masters, until by experiments in many sorts, he gradually found his proper medium, and formed a style of his own.

The Herodotean pieces were partly undertaken as a relief and change of subject from the absorbing preoccupation of his amatory poems. "The Tears of Psammenitus" was written, he told a College Friend, "in two hours, as a relief from strong and painful excitement."<sup>1</sup> His father complained that the Scythian pieces savoured too strongly of "the shambles." In most of them there is certainly a note of gruesome realism which is in marked contrast to Ruskin's maturer style.<sup>2</sup> It is easy to see the effect of much reading of Byron in the succession of bloody, desperate, or love-sick heroes with whose deeds and passions Ruskin dramatically identified himself.<sup>3</sup> But the Herodotean setting selected for so many of Ruskin's poems also sprung from his keen interest in that historian, of all Greek authors the one to whom Ruskin took most kindly at Oxford. "My Herodotean history, at any rate," he wrote in 1886, "got well settled down into me, and remains a greatly precious possession to this day."<sup>4</sup> The metrical exercises which he gave himself helped thus to settle Herodotus down into him, and he saw in that prince of storytellers much picturesque and dramatic material (see Vol. I. p. 437). Schlegel (in his "Arion"), before Ruskin's time, and Matthew Arnold (in "Mycerinus"), after him, went to the same source.

The Poems sent in by Ruskin as an undergraduate at Oxford for the Newdigate Prize are three in number, for he competed twice unsuccessfully—in 1837 with "The Gipsies," in 1838 with "The Exile of St. Helena"—before winning the prize in 1839 with "Salsette and Elephanta." Prize

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. I. p. 437, and compare *ibid.* p. 444.

<sup>2</sup> "During all his boyhood and youth there were moments of weakness when he allowed himself to be carried away by a sort of nightmare, the reaction from healthy delight in natural beauty. In later life he learned to put limits to art, and to refuse the merely horrible as its material—at least, to confine it to necessary revelations of actual suffering. As an undergraduate, however, writing for effect, he gave free rein to the morbid imaginations to which his unhappy *affaire de cœur* and the mental excitement of the period predisposed him" (Collingwood's *Life*, 1900, p. 70). See also note on p. 57, below.

<sup>3</sup> See *Præterita*, i. ch. xi. § 228, and *Stones of Venice*, iii. ch. v. § 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Præterita*, i. ch. xi. § 228. References to Herodotus are frequent in Ruskin's works; see, e.g. *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. ch. iii. § 21, ch. vii. § 21, ch. xiii. § 27, and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter xii. In *The Elements of Drawing*, § 258, Herodotus is mentioned among the seven authors indispensable in any sound scheme of education. Ruskin also read Thucydides with great admiration (*Præterita*, *ibid.* § 237).

## INTRODUCTION

poems are built much on the same pattern, and Ruskin was not altogether well equipped for the rules of the competition. He meant to succeed, and his parents expected him to carry all before him, but he scorned the wisdom of the way in such matters. Among the hints given him by his tutor, Canon Dale, on going up to Oxford, was some good advice to competitors for the Newdigate:—

“Then he gave me (wrote Ruskin to his father on Dec. 24, 1836) some directions for gaining Oxford poetical prizes, which were very excellent directions for writing bad poetry. One was to imitate Pope. Now, when I write poetry I like to imitate nobody. However, one piece of counsel was excellent, viz. to write two poems—one in my own style, the other polished and spoiled up to their standard, so that if I failed to carry all before me with my own, I might be able to fall back upon the other.”

If Ruskin did not literally carry out this latter counsel, yet the reader will observe, on comparing the several pieces, that in “Salsette and Elephanta” he polished in the orthodox fashion, whereas in “The Gipsies” he went his own way. In the case of “The Gipsies,” Ruskin had a formidable competitor in Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, whom, however, he ran close for the prize. An eminent writer has made a comparison, somewhat disparaging to Stanley, of the two poems:—

“Those who care to see how a clever man may beat a man of genius may compare Dean Stanley’s ‘Gipsies’ with Ruskin’s. Stanley was no more a poet than was Ruskin, and had not a tenth part of Ruskin’s poetic spirit. But Stanley had the journalist’s *flair* for hitting the taste of the day, and appealing to the sentiments of his readers, instead of expatiating on his own.”<sup>1</sup>

Stanley’s poem was undoubtedly better calculated than Ruskin’s to hit the taste of the examiners, especially when Keble, as Professor of Poetry, was chief among them. But it seems unnecessary to disparage Stanley’s poem, which is among the best of its kind, and contains lines that will live, in order to account for Ruskin’s failure. His “Gipsies” may or may not be the better poem; it is certainly not the better “prize poem.” Ruskin’s father, whose intense admiration for his son’s talents never conquered his own shrewd common sense, put both the philosophy of prize poems and the besetting sin of Ruskin’s verses in an admirable letter to W. H. Harrison (April 7, 1837):—

“My son left for Oxford this morning, and had not time to reply to your kind notes. Some corrections he must and others he will, I doubt

<sup>1</sup> Frederic Harrison’s *John Ruskin* (in the “English Men of Letters” series), 1902, p. 35.

## INTRODUCTION

XXV

not, adopt. The truth is, that verses taken at random from his poetic heap are just about as fit for the public eye as a block of marble just starting into form would be for the model room of Somerset House. I was greatly pleased and much obliged by the business-like manner in which you dissected his trifle; such criticism is of more value to him than any ten of his best efforts will ever be to you. I cannot get him to correct or revise anything; and if he ever aspires to contend for a Poetry Prize at Oxford, he must fail, for this reason, that there it is not the poem having the greatest number of beauties, but that which betrays fewest faults, that carries the day. I trust your note may make my son begin to think how very far he may go wrong by indulging in unchecked, unpruned, unamended composition."

Ruskin took much pains with "The Exile of St. Helena," the subject set in the following year, but the poem was not among his happier pieces; he was very properly beaten, as he said, by his old school-fellow, J. H. Dart.<sup>1</sup> At the third try he was successful. His "Salsette and Elephanta" is less interesting than his "Gipsies," but it is far more smooth and polished. It "betrays the fewest faults." Its argument also conforms more closely to the then accepted models.<sup>2</sup> Nor is it without "beauties" of its own. The real Ruskin flashes out in occasional passages, as in the lines:—

"Yes—he shall fall, though once his throne was set  
Where the high heaven and crested mountains met,  
Though distant shone with many an azure gem  
The glacier glory of his diadem."

The exotic scenery of the poem has been known to perplex some readers. "Majestic Dharavee," "Canarah's hill," and the "peepul's purple shade" carry with them suggestions of Bon Gaultier's "Kaftan and Kalpac have gone to their rest," and of Edward Lear's "purple nullahs" and "silvery Goreewallahs." But for this the subject was responsible.<sup>3</sup>

Ruskin's success with "Salsette and Elephanta" won him favour in the

<sup>1</sup> See *Præterita*, ii. ch. viii. § 151, and below, p. 45 n.

<sup>2</sup> Stanley's "Gipsies" concludes with the restoration of all Wanderers to the fold of the Church; Ruskin's "Salsette and Elephanta," with heathen India deserting "the darkened path her Fathers trod," and seeking redemption in Christianity. Mr. Goldwin Smith is said to have given the following programme of a prize poem to a competitor whose subject was "The Stuarts": "The Stuarts will never be restored—The Jews will—Salem!" (F. Harrison, *l.c.*, p. 24.)

<sup>3</sup> Cases are known, I believe, in which readers have gone through the poem without deriving any clear idea of who or what were Salsette and Elephanta; therein not being worse at fault perhaps than Ruskin himself, who once confessed that he had "waded through 'The Revolt of Islam'" without ever discovering "who revolted against whom, or what" (*Præterita*, i. ch. x. § 210). It may be well, therefore, to say at once that Salsette and Elephanta are islands lying off Bombay, with remains of cave-temples sacred to Hindu divinities.

eyes of the College and University authorities. Keble, discharging the usual offices of the Professor of Poetry on these occasions, “asked me to cut out all my best bits.”<sup>1</sup> Dean Gaisford—previously “a sternly throned and wicked Anathema”—was gracious, and coached the prizeman for his recitation in the theatre (June 12, 1839). The Censor, in his speech at the end of term, made very complimentary allusions to the honour which a gentleman-commoner had done to the House. The following letter (preserved at Brantwood) gives a lively account of the speech:—

MY DEAREST FATHER,—I am in a great hurry, going to Athlone’s, but I thought the Censor’s speech particularly eloquent last night, and my mother can’t remember the substance thereof. After a few remarks on the Class List, he began to speak of a certain *insignis juvenis—ex superiori ordine*—of the upper rank of his college—uniting an intense degree of intellect and morality, who having acquired extensive knowledge of men and manners and natural phenomena during protracted travel—uniting refined taste with extensive knowledge of polite literature—*summo* something or other—and then *maxima facundiâ atque lepore*, etc.—had been successful in *certamine poetico—victoriam meritam*, etc.—to the great joy of his college friends and tutors. Then he proceeded to compare this Juvenis to Alexander the Great and Pompey, though I couldn’t catch the points of resemblance, and wound up by returning thanks to him in the name of his college, and saying they expected higher honour from him yet. All this in Latin, and a great deal more which I could not hear. I want a brown, rough, bright-eyed brute of a new dog.—Ever your most affectionate son,

J. RUSKIN.

The recitation of the Prize Poem at Commemoration was a great event in the domestic circle. His mother was too nervous to be present; but without need, for Ruskin got through the ordeal very well,<sup>2</sup> to his father’s infinite delight. The recitation was of accidental interest as bringing the

<sup>1</sup> *Præterita*, ii. ch. x. § 193.

<sup>2</sup> Among the visitors was Baroness Bunsen, who gave the following account of the recitations in a letter to her brother (July 2, 1839): “The new Doctors having been admitted, the young men who had obtained the prizes recited their poems and essays—one of a sort, Latin and English. This was rather long . . . but the English poem interested me, on the superstitions of India and their fall before the Cross—by Ruskin, a young man of promise. They tell me, too, the Latin was good, by Arthur Stanley, a pupil of Arnold” (*The Life and Letters of Frances, Baroness Bunsen*, by A. J. C. Hare, 1879, vol. i. p. 514). Stanley on this occasion won the Latin essay, on the subject, *Quænam sint erga Rempublicam Academicæ officia?* Ruskin, in conversation in 1881, said that the recitation “quite turned his head.” He added, however, that “The Gipsies” was the best of the poems he sent in for the Newdigate.

## INTRODUCTION

xxvii

young author to the notice of a master in literature, in whose spirit of “walking with nature” Ruskin was to undertake his principal work. “There were 2000 ladies and gentlemen to hear it,” records Ruskin’s father proudly in a letter to W. H. Harrison; “he was not at all nervous, and it went all very well off. The notice taken of him is quite extraordinary.” It must be doubted, however, whether the Newdigate Prize Poem was so much the attraction as the conferment of an honorary degree upon the Lake Poet. Wordsworth’s reception on the occasion by the undergraduates was most enthusiastic.<sup>1</sup> He in his turn took kindly notice of the young prize poet. “We were asked,” continues Ruskin’s father, “to meet Wordsworth yesterday, and getting next to him, I had a delightful hour.” Ruskin, it will be remembered, took a passage from Wordsworth for the motto of *Modern Painters*, and of the first two volumes of that book Wordsworth was among the earliest and most appreciative readers.<sup>2</sup>

Ruskin, it will be remembered, was threatened with consumption in May 1840, while reading for his degree at Oxford, and went abroad. On his return to England at the end of June 1841, after a further cure at Leamington, he resumed reading for the Schools. He passed his final examinations in May 1842, and then again went to Switzerland (May–August). *Modern Painters* had been in his mind since 1840–41, and was published in May 1843. During these years he was absorbed, it will be seen, in other pursuits—now, as always, he was sketching busily, as well as writing; and his poetical production was very small. It consisted either in finishing a piece already begun, namely, the very much “Broken Chain,” or in versifying impressions and descriptions of natural scenery which he was soon to treat in prose. The several poems on Mont Blanc and Chamouni (pp. 222, 233, 236, 237) may be compared with many a chapter in *Modern Painters*; the “Madonna dell’ Acqua” (p. 227) with many in *The Stones of Venice*. Close observation of nature may be discerned even in Ruskin’s earliest verses, but in these more mature pieces there is a note of reverential intensity, and a colouring of the landscape with reflections from human life, which are peculiarly characteristic. They form a fitting prelude to the later volumes of *Modern Painters*, and express with utmost clearness, as he said, the temper in which he began the most serious work of his life.<sup>3</sup> The greater intensity of feeling gives to these pieces a corresponding intensity of expression. They are certainly the best verses

<sup>1</sup> There is an account of it in the *Life and Letters of F. W. Robertson*, by Stopford Brooke, 1874, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> See Introduction to Vol. III. of this edition.

<sup>3</sup> See below, note on p. 234.