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 third volume contains Volume 1 of Modern Painters.

The Works of John Ruskin

Volume 3: Modern Painters I

John Ruskin
Edited by Edward Tyas Cook
and Alexander Wedderburn

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

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

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

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108008518

This edition first published 1903
This digitally printed version 2009

ISBN 978-1-108-00851-8 Paperback

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN

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.

LIBRARY EDITION

THE WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN

EDITED BY

E. T. COOK

AND

ALEXANDER WEDDERBURN

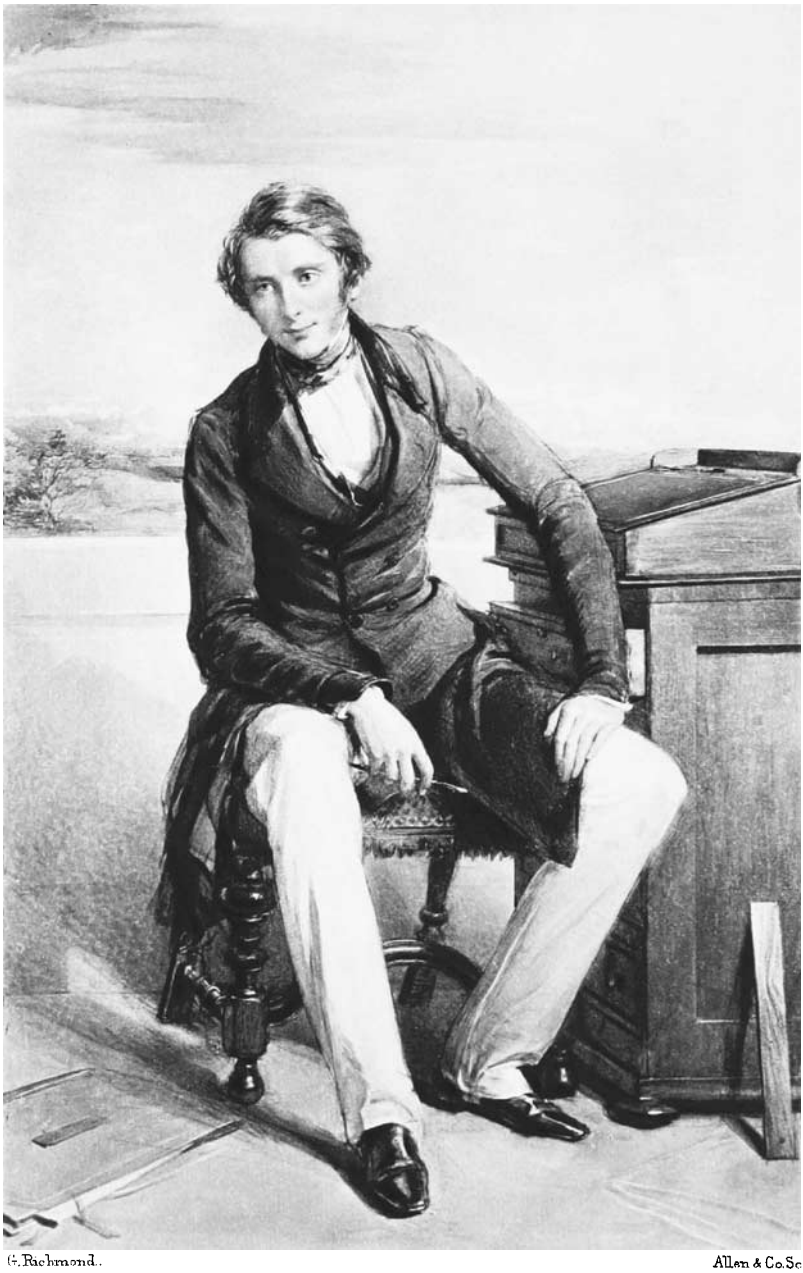
LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD
NEW YORK: LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1903

LIBRARY EDITION

VOLUME III

MODERN PAINTERS

VOLUME I



G. Richmond. Allen & Co. Sc

The Author of "Modern Painters," (1843.)

MODERN PAINTERS

VOLUME I

CONTAINING

PARTS I AND II

OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND OF TRUTH

BY

JOHN RUSKIN

"Accuse me not
Of arrogance, ...
If, having walked with Nature,
And offered, far as frailty would allow,
My heart a daily sacrifice to Truth,
I now affirm of Nature and of Truth,
Whom I have served, that their Divinity
Revolts, offended at the ways of men,
Philosophers, who, though the human soul
Be of a thousand faculties composed,
And twice ten thousand interests, do yet prize
This soul, and the transcendent universe,
No more than as a mirror that reflects
To proud Self-love her own intelligence."

WORDSWORTH

LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD
NEW YORK: LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1903

TO THE

LANDSCAPE ARTISTS OF ENGLAND

THIS WORK

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY

THEIR SINCERE ADMIRER,

THE AUTHOR

CONTENTS OF VOLUME III

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

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Note.—Of these illustrations, Nos. 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, and 13 have not before been published. The *frontispiece* was published (by half-tone process), in the *Magazine of Art*, Jan. 1891, and in the *Life and Work of John Ruskin*, by W. G. Collingwood, 1893, i. 108. No. 1 was published (on a somewhat smaller scale, by autotype process) in the large-paper edition of E. T. Cook's *Studies in Ruskin* (1890). No. 2 was published (on a smaller scale, by half-tone process) in *Scribner's Magazine*, Dec. 1898 (p. 661). Nos. 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 14 were published (on a larger scale, by photogravure process) in *Turner and Ruskin*, ed. by F. Wedmore (1900).

INTRODUCTION TO VOL. III

THE following pages contain the first volume of *Modern Painters*, the book by which Ruskin, whose *juvenilia* have occupied the preceding volumes of this edition, first made his mark as a prose-writer. The successive volumes of *Modern Painters* were in some respects independent works. They form not one book, but four or five. The first volume was published in 1843; the fifth not till 1860. Between the first and second there was an interval of three years (1843–46), and in point of view and in style a marked distinction. Between the second volume and the third and fourth (which were issued together) there was an interval of ten years (1846–56); and there was another interval of four years (1856–60) before the fifth and final volume was published. During these intervals Ruskin did a great deal of other work. Thus, to mention his principal books only, during the second of the intervals he wrote and published *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* and *The Stones of Venice;* and in the last interval, *The Political Economy of Art*, foreshadowing his studies in social and political questions. There is in the five volumes of *Modern Painters* a unity of purpose, but it is an increasing purpose. "In the main aim and principle of the book," said its author in his preface to the last volume, "there is no variation, from its first syllable to its last. It declares the perfect and eternal beauty of the work of God; and tests all work of man by concurrence with, or subjection to, that." But in the illustration of this underlying purpose, there are "oscillations of temper" and "progressions of discovery."[1] As the author's studies were widened and deepened, his judgments on particular painters and schools of painting were subject to successive changes, so that, some knowledge of the influences which affected him is necessary to understand the book aright. Many changes, too, were made in its text, especially in that of the first volume, some of which, as its main text now stands, was written in 1843, some in 1846, some in 1851. Again, criticisms upon and allusions to the volume, which occur elsewhere, sometimes refer to passages removed from later editions, or to opinions subsequently discarded or modified by the author. Thus, some knowledge of the bibliography of *Modern Painters* is also essential to

[1] Author's preface to vol. v. of *Modern Painters*.

the correct appreciation of it. To supply the information which is necessary for both these reasons is the main object of the introduction to this, as to the later volumes of the work.

Ruskin was only twenty-four when the first volume of *Modern Painters* appeared, but the germ of the book dates back to a much earlier time. *Modern Painters* was the work of an "Oxford Graduate"; the essay which contained its germ was written in the week before he matriculated. In October 1836, as already explained (Vol. I. p. xxxiii.), he had written a reply to a criticism in *Blackwood's Magazine* of Turner's pictures exhibited in that year. In those pictures—"Juliet and her Nurse," "Rome from Mount Aventine," and "Mercury and Argus"—Turner had developed the characteristics of his later manner "with his best skill and enthusiasm. . . . His freak in placing Juliet at Venice, instead of Verona, and the mysteries of lamp-light and rockets with which he had disguised Venice herself, gave occasion to an article in *Blackwood's Magazine* of sufficiently telling ribaldry, expressing, with some force, and extreme discourtesy, the feelings of the pupils of Sir George Beaumont at the appearance of these unaccredited views of Nature. The review," continues Ruskin, "raised me to the height of black anger in which I have remained pretty nearly ever since; and having by that time some confidence in my power of words, and—not merely judgment, but sincere *experience*—of the charm of Turner's work, I wrote an answer to *Blackwood*, of which I wish I could now find any fragment."[1] Ruskin's intention was to send the paper to *Blackwood*, but his father thought it right to ask Turner's consent to the publication. Turner's reply is given in *Præterita*.[2] Instead of returning the MS. for publication, he asked leave to send it to Mr. Munro of Novar, who had bought the picture of Juliet. Munro, says Ruskin, "never spoke to me of the first chapter of *Modern Painters* thus coming into his hands. Nor did I ever care to ask him about it." A contemporary copy of the essay has now been found among Ruskin's MSS.,[3] and is here printed for the first time[4] in Appendix i. (pp. 635–640). It is a most characteristic production, and should be read as a Prelude to *Modern Painters*. Alike in substance and in style, it is truly described as "the first chapter" of the book. It

[1] *Præterita*, i. ch. xii. § 243.

[2] Ruskin and his father did not at this time know Turner personally. Ruskin was introduced to him, by Griffith the picture-dealer, on June 20, 1840, as related in *Præterita* (ii. ch. iv. § 66), and from that date he was on very friendly terms.

[3] In MS. Book vii. : see "Notes on the MSS. of the Poems" in Vol. II. p. 532.

[4] One short extract from it was, however, given in Mr. Collingwood's *Life of John Ruskin*, 1900; see below, p. 635 *n*.

shows how effectively Ruskin had even then occupied the ground on which his defence of Turner was to be based. *Blackwood* had criticised Turner's pictures as being "out of nature"; Ruskin maintained, on the other hand, that they were true to the vital facts of nature, while giving at the same time "the consecration and the poet's dream." And something of "the scarlet and the gold"[1] of the painter's fancy passed into the young critic's defence. The style was hereafter to be more fully informed, and more deeply suffused with passion; to be chastened also and matured; but Ruskin the golden-mouthed[2] is already there. It cannot, however, be considered other than fortunate that Turner discouraged his young champion from entering the fray. The years which intervened before the germ of *Modern Painters* bore fruit were full of various instruction, equipping Ruskin the better for his task.

The history of the years of preparation for the writing of *Modern Painters* has already been traced in the Introductions to Volumes I. and II. Ruskin's education was broken and discursive, but it gave him many advantages. It was an education in literature, in art, and in nature.

His reading, if discursive, had been deep. He was saved, alike by his own genius and by broken health, from the dangers of cram. He read to learn, rather than to pass examinations. In after years Ruskin was given to belittling his classical attainments.[3] But if he was never a scholar in any philological sense, he had the heart of the matter in him; he had assimilated much of the best classical literature.[4] Already in the first volume of *Modern Painters*, as in *The Poetry of Architecture* before it, the vitality and freshness of his classical allusions are remarkable. The description he gave of himself, "A Graduate of Oxford," was borne out by much of the contents of his first volume. His method of argument—starting everywhere from the particular fact—shows from the first the influence of Aristotle. His elaborate classifications, divisions, and marginal summaries are reminiscent of Locke, whose *Essay on the Human Understanding* is frequently cited in the earlier chapters of this volume. But

[1] See below, p. 624.

[2] St. Chrysostom (St. John the Golden-mouthed) was the name given to Ruskin by his friend, Mrs. Cowper Temple (the late Lady Mount Temple).

[3] See, *e.g.*, *Præterita*, i. ch. xi. § 220, and *Instructions in the Preliminary Exercises arranged for the Lower Drawing School*, Oxford, 1872, p. 9 *n.*

[4] "Curiously scanty and desultory as his scholarship had been as a student, we are continually struck in the Oxford lectures with the range of reading, the subtle comments, and the force of sympathy with which he had reached the inmost soul of so many classical writers, both prose and verse, Roman as well as Greek. Nor has any Professor of Greek, of Poetry, or of Philosophy, touched with a wand of such magic power so many inimitable passages of Homer, Hesiod, Æschylus, Pindar, Aristophanes, Plato, Aristotle, Xenophon, Lucian; or again of Virgil, Horace, and Catullus" (F. Harrison, *John Ruskin*, 1902, p. 136).

Ruskin had not only read a good deal; he had himself already written much, as the two stout volumes of his *juvenilia* testify. "Though I shall always think," he wrote in after years, "those early years might have been better spent, they had their reward. As soon as I had anything really to say, I was able sufficiently to say it."[1]

Ruskin's studies in art have already been noticed in connexion with his *juvenilia* in prose and verse. We have there followed in detail the statement made in his preface to this volume (p. 5), that he had "been devoted from his youth to the laborious study of practical art." Especially should it be remembered, in reading the present volume, that Ruskin's descriptions of Turner were founded on long practice in copying that master's drawings and making studies—sometimes in water-colour or black-and-white, sometimes in oils—from his pictures. We have followed him also in the travels to which he referred when he added that his criticisms of the old schools of landscape painting were "founded on familiar acquaintance with every important work of art, from Antwerp to Naples." He might well have included England, for his acquaintance with the treasures of art in country-houses was also, as we have seen, unusually extensive. The foreign tour of 1833 had taken him to Brussels, Antwerp, Cologne, Milan, Genoa, Turin, and Paris. Though he was under the regulation age, he obtained permission to copy in the Louvre.[2] The tour of 1835 added Venice and Munich to his list; during the winter of 1840–41, he had seen Florence and spent weeks in the picture galleries and churches of Rome and Naples. His diaries in these years are not so full, as they afterwards became, of technical notes on pictures; but occasionally he makes a careful memorandum. Here, for instance, is an entry in his diary for 1841:[3]—

> TERNI, *April* 17.—Our last day in Rome I devoted to Sistine Chapel, and received real pleasure from it. I can appreciate Michael Angelo because his colour is so exquisitely subordinate to his light and shade. I do not remember seeing many notices of the delicate and refined feeling with which he has introduced the Madonna, meek, subdued, retiring behind the majesty of the Christ, but robed, the lower limbs at least, in the transparent blue of the heaven. This blue tells at first as a part of the firmament forming the background, and assists in keeping the figure subdued. This touch of delicate feeling is singularly contrasted with the unapproachable majesty—the infinite power—of the conception of the principal figure.

[1] "My First Editor," in *On the Old Road*, § 7.
[2] *Præterita*, i. ch. iv. § 94.
[3] *Cf.* in Vol. II. p. 167, the entry on the picture gallery at Bologna.

At Rome, too, during this winter, he was thrown much into the society of Joseph Severn and George Richmond, and in their company saw the galleries, and spent long evenings in the talk of the studios.[1] His earlier prose pieces reflect on many a page his recollections and impressions of pictures in foreign lands.[2] It should be remembered that at this period Ruskin had learnt, among the foreign masters, to delight chiefly in northern art, and especially in Rubens.[3] He now ranked Rubens, Vandyck, and Rembrandt, his favourites among the old masters, on an equality with Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Velasquez. Of the Venetians he as yet knew comparatively little;[4] it was not till 1845 that he "discovered" Tintoret. The influence of Harding—Ruskin's drawing-master at the time when the first volume of *Modern Painters* was being written—told strongly against "the various Van somethings and Back somethings, more especially and malignantly those who have libelled the sea."[5] Harding "had religious views in sympathy with his pupil, and he soon inoculated Ruskin with his contempt for the minor Dutch school—those bituminous landscapes, so unlike the sparkling freshness that Harding's own water-colour illustrated, and those vulgar tavern scenes, painted, he declared, by sots who disgraced art alike in their works and in their lives."[6] One "discovery," made in the year before the first volume of *Modern Painters* was published, must specially be noted. In his earlier period he had sought, in sketching, for effects and views of specially romantic character; he had looked at nature, also, through the eyes of Prout or Turner, and had tried to compose in their way. But one day, in the spring of 1842, he noticed, on the road to Norwood, "a bit of ivy round a thorn stem, which seemed, even to my critical judgment, not ill 'composed.'" The lesson thus learnt—the lesson of thinking nothing common or unclean, and of seeking beauty through truth—was re-enforced later in the year in the forest of Fontainebleau, when he found himself "lying on the bank of a cart-road in the sand, with no prospect whatever but a small aspen tree against the blue sky. Languidly, but not idly, I began to draw it; and as I drew, the languor passed away: the beautiful lines insisted on being traced. . . . With wonder increasing every instant, I saw that they 'composed'

[1] See *Præterita*, ii. ch. ii.
[2] See, for instance, in Vol. I., allusions to Caravaggio, p. 147; Claude, Salvator, and Poussin, p. 112; Rubens, p. 146; Titian, p. 249; and in Vol. II., to pictures at Bologna, p. 167; Aix la Chapelle, p. 351; and Cologne, p. 352.
[3] See preface (§ 7) to *Modern Painters*, vol. v., where he asks to be forgiven for the excessive admiration of Rubens in the first volume.
[4] See *Præterita*, ii. ch. v. § 101, and author's preface to vol. v. of *Modern Painters*.
[5] Below, pt. i. sec. i. ch. i. § 4.
[6] W. G. Collingwood: *Life of John Ruskin*, 1900, p. 81.

themselves by finer laws than any known of men. . . . 'He hath made everything beautiful in his time,' became for me thenceforward the interpretation of the bond between the human mind and all visible things; and I returned along the wood-road feeling that it had led me far."[1] It was to lead him to *Modern Painters*. The impression made upon him at the time by his new interest in simple studies from nature is well shown, and clearly expressed, in the Letter to a College Friend, of August 19, 1842.[2]

It was, however, to his long apprenticeship to Nature that Ruskin attached the greatest importance among the formative influences on his thought. "The beginning of all my own right art work in life depended," he says, "not on my love of art, but of mountains and sea. . . . I would pass entire days in rambling on the Cumberland hill-sides, or staring at the lines of surf on a low sand; . . . and through the whole of following life, whatever power of judgment I have obtained in art, which I am now confident and happy in using, or communicating, has depended on my steady habit of always looking for the subject principally, and for the art only as the means of expressing it."[3] It was this long study of nature that gave to Ruskin, in writing *Modern Painters*, his confidence and tone of authority. "I should not have spoken so audaciously," he wrote at the time, "had I not been able to trace, in my education, some grounds for supposing that I might in deed and in truth judge more justly of him [Turner] than others can. I mean, my having been taken to mountain scenery when a mere child, and allowed, at a time when boys are usually learning their grammar, to ramble on the shores of Como and Lucerne; and my having since, regardless of all that usually occupies the energies of the traveller,—art, antiquities, or people,—devoted myself to pure, wild, solitary, natural scenery; with a most unfortunate effect, of course, as far as general or human knowledge is concerned, but with most beneficial effect on that peculiar sensibility to the beautiful in all things that God has made, which it is my present aim to render more universal."[4] The same justification for his confidence is expressed in the passage from the fourth Book of Wordsworth's *Excursion*, which Ruskin placed on the title-page of every volume, in every edition, of *Modern Painters*. "He has just gone," writes his father on one occasion, "from a hurried dinner, to the sunset, which he

[1] *Præterita*, ii. ch. iv. §§ 74, 77; and see below, pt. ii. sec. iv. ch. iv. § 10 *n*. See also Plate No. 25 in Vol. II., and p. xlii. of the Introduction there; and see the drawings of the aspen in *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. Plates 27 and 28.

[2] Vol. I. p. 470.

[3] *Eagle's Nest*, § 41.

[4] See Letter to Liddell, in Appendix iii., below, p. 669.

visits as regularly as a soldier does his evening parade."[1] He was young in years when he sat down to write the book; but already, as the preceding volumes have shown, he had long "walked with Nature," and offered his heart "a daily sacrifice to Truth."

It was natural, therefore, that Ruskin's immediate preparation for *Modern Painters* should be a sojourn at Chamouni. The book in some form seems to have been in his mind during his long sojourn on the Continent in the winter of 1840–41; for on February 12, 1841, he wrote to his College Friend, "I have begun a work of some labour which would take me several years to complete."[2] At that time, however, his health forbade hard work, and, moreover, his final examinations at Oxford were still in front of him. These were disposed of in May 1842; and he at once set out with his parents for Switzerland. He had been greatly impressed in the spring of this year by the sight of Turner's new foreign sketches—the "Splügen" drawing, which was presented to Ruskin by his friends in 1878, being among the number. Of these sketches, and of the drawings made from them, an account is given in the Epilogue to Ruskin's *Notes on his Drawings by Turner*, and repeated references to them will be found in the following pages.[3] Many of the original sketches may be seen in the National Gallery.[4] The lesson of these drawings was the same as Ruskin learnt from his "discovery" described above. He saw in them examples, in Turner's highest power, of the landscape-art which owes nothing to traditional rules of composition, but attains, after long study of nature, to impressions of her inmost truth and spirit. His admiration of the "Splügen" drawing "directed mainly," Ruskin says, "all my mountain-studies and geological researches."[5] Ruskin and his parents went by Rouen, Chartres, Fontainebleau, Auxerre, Dijon, and Geneva. At Fontainebleau came the artistic revelation of the aspen already mentioned; at Geneva—in church one Sunday—a fit of self-reproach, and a resolution to get "some real available, continuing good, rather than the mere amusement of the time." This "was the origin of Turner's work"[6] The immediate impulse was the same as in the case of the essay of 1836. A review of the Royal

[1] Letter to W. H. Harrison from Dijon, May 28, 1844.
[2] Vol. I. p. 434.
[3] See below, pp. xxiii., 250, 551.
[4] Nos. 280, 286, 287, 288, and 289 are the first sketches of afterwards completed drawings. There are also hundreds of other Swiss sketches made at the same time.
[5] Epilogue to vol. ii. of *Modern Painters*.
[6] *Præterita*, ch. iii. § 58, ch. iv. § 78; and see the letter to Osborne Gordon, in Appendix iii., below, p. 666.

Academy's Exhibition of 1842 had reached Ruskin at Geneva, and filled him with rage.[1]

Ruskin had seen the pictures before leaving England, and, as the subsequent notices in this volume show, greatly admired them. The review which reached him at Geneva was probably that in the *Literary Gazette* or the *Athenæum*, both of which papers W. H. Harrison was in the habit of sending to Ruskin or his father. Some extracts are worth giving as showing the kind of criticism against which the first volume of *Modern Painters* was directed.[2] The *Literary Gazette* (No. 1321, May 14, 1842, p. 331) wrote:—

"No. 52, 'The Dogano' (*sic*), and 73, 'Campo Santo,' have a gorgeous *ensemble*, and produced by wonderful art, but they mean nothing. They are produced as if by throwing handfuls of white, and blue, and red, at the canvas, letting what chanced to stick, stick; and then shadowing in some forms to make the appearance of a picture. And yet there is a fine harmony in the highest range of colour to please the sense of vision; we admire, and we lament to see such genius so employed. But 'Farther on you may fare worse.' No. 182 is a Snow-storm of most unintelligible character—the snow-storm of a confused dream, with a steamboat 'making signals,' and (apparently, like the painter who was in it) 'going by the head' [*sic*; the word was of course lead]. Neither by land or water was such a scene ever witnessed; and of 338, 'Burial at Sea,' though there is a striking effect, still the whole is so idealised and removed from truth, that instead of the feeling it ought to effect, it only excites ridicule. And No. 353 caps all before for absurdity, without even any of the redeeming qualities in the rest. It represents Buonaparte,—facetiously described as 'the exile and the rock-limpet,' standing on the seashore at St. Helena. . . . The whole thing is so truly ludicrous, that the *risum teneatis* even of the Amici is absolutely impossible."

The *Athenæum* (May 14, 1842, No. 759, p. 433) was more ribald. Only by contemplation of Creswick's delicious landscape, it seems, could the spectator be prepared for the painful effect of Turner:—

"This gentleman has on former occasions chosen to paint with cream, or chocolate, yolk of egg, or currant jelly,—here he uses his whole array of kitchen stuff.[3] . . . We cannot fancy the state of eye, which will permit any

[1] The pictures by Turner in the Exhibition of 1842 were (1) Venice (view across the Grand Canal and Giudecca), National Gallery, No. 372 (now at Leicester); (2) Venice, the Campo Santo (in Mr. Bicknell's collection, referred to below, p. 250); (3) Snow-storm (N.G. No. 530; see below, p. 570); (4) "Peace" (Burial of Wilkie), N.G. No. 528; (5) "War: the Exile and the Rock-Limpet" (Napoleon), N.G. No. 529; see below, 273.

[2] Examples of the skits from the comic papers are given in Thornbury's *Life of Turner*, 1877, p. 398. Thackeray was among the scoffers (*ibid.* p. 399).

[3] For Ruskin's reply to this "eggs and spinach" criticism, see below, p. 277 *n*.

one cognizant of Art to treat these rhapsodies as Lord Byron treated 'Christabel'; neither can we believe in any future revolution, which shall bring the world round to the opinion of the worshipper, if worshipper such frenzies still possess."

The "Burial of Wilkie" and "Napoleon" were guyed in turn, and the critique concluded with surprise that the perpetrator of such outbreaks should have been allowed a place on the walls.

With these criticisms ringing in his ears as a call to action, Ruskin went on to Chamouni, hoping to say what was burning in his heart and mind within the limits of a pamphlet. But at Chamouni he became engrossed "with snow and granite."[1] And the more he considered, the larger grew the enterprise. The scheme for a pamphlet became one for a treatise. The defence of Turner was, therefore, postponed for autumn work at home. Some account of the expansion of Ruskin's scheme will be found in the description of the MSS. here given in Appendix v.

Of the tour of 1842, and of the studies at Chamouni immediately preparatory to the first volume of *Modern Painters*, no diary is now extant; perhaps little or none was written. His "feelings and discoveries" of this year were, he says, "too many and too bewildering to be written."[2] A few extracts from the diary of 1844, when he returned to like pursuits at Chamouni, will show how the days were passed in the earlier year also:—

> Geneva, *May* 1.—We arrived here yesterday. . . . The day before I should remember, for the walk I had at St. Laurent; above all, for the phenomenon at sunset which I had never seen till then—of the sun's image reflected from a bank of clouds above the horizon, for at least a quarter of an hour after he had set. It had all the brilliancy of a reflection in water, and if I had not seen the sun set, I should have taken it for the sun itself. A point of greatest intensity was on the edge of the cloud, but it shot up a stream of splendid light far towards the zenith, as well as downwards towards the sun. . . . About me lay the grey concave blocks of the Jura limestone—slippery with wet. Large black and white snails had come out everywhere to enjoy the rain. In the crevices of the rocks the lily of the valley grew profusely—accompanied by the wild strawberry and cowslip. I found a root of the star gentian, and kissed it as the harbinger of the Alps. The sunlight on the mossy ground burned russet as I returned, and died away in rose upon the piny hills.

[1] See the letters to W. H. Harrison and Rev. W. L. Brown, given in a note to Ruskin's poem, "A Walk in Chamouni," at Vol. II. pp. 222–223.
[2] *Præterita*, ii. ch. iv. § 78.

CHAMOUNI, *June* 20.—8, morning. An hour ago, I had the most beautiful sight that ever morning gave me among the Alps. The clouds had broken into fragments about the aiguilles which appeared brownish in the sky and transparent on the rocks, showing the whole form through; the tops of the crags were all clear, freshly and deeply laden with snow, and dark against the pale morning blue; but each had blowing from its peaks northward, a fringe of sunny cloud of intense brightness; that on the Charmoz was unbroken, and appeared like a glory. Below, under the Tapia, all was grey, dark cloud—cutting off their connection with the earth; on the Dru, the cloud was blowing from the north, the north side being clear; and the vapour rolling away in dark folds like a volume of smoke on the south, but the upper edge of every fold touched like a star with sunshine, and one bit, hanging in a cleft on its side, wedge shaped, shone like a bonfire. Mont Blanc, just seen and no more, through the transparent mist, ghost-like; but the white Aiguille du Goûter pure and serene in intense light, every spot of its sides down to the Pavillon covered with pure new snow so as to make it as beautiful as the highest Alp. But all passed away as soon as seen. . . .

CHAMOUNI, *June* 23.—9 o'clock, morning. There is a strange effect on Mont Blanc. The Pavillon hills are green and clear, with the pearly clearness that foretells rain; the sky above is fretted with spray of white compact textured cloud which looks like flakes of dead arborescent silver. Over the snow, this is concentrated into a cumulus of the Turner character, not heaped, but laid sloping on the mountain, silver white at its edge, pale grey in interior; the whole of the snow is cast into shadow by it, and comes dark against it, especially the lower curve of the Aiguille du Goûter. But on the summit the cloud is melted into mist, and what I suppose to be a heavy snow-storm is falling on the Grand Plateau, and in the hollow behind the Grands Mulets; into this shower the mountain retires gradually, and the summit is entirely veiled.

CHAMOUNI, *June* 26.—¼ past 4, morning. Of all the lovely dawns I ever saw on Mont Blanc, this bears the bell. When I woke at ½ past three, its form was scarcely distinguishable through morning mist, which in the lower valley hung in dense white flakes among the trees along the course of the Arve. There were heavy white clouds over the Pavillon, relieved against a threatening black ground which reached the horizon. The outline of the snow was throughout indistinct with what I thought were wind avalanches, but I believe they must have been evaporating moisture, blowing towards Cormayeur. As the dawn grew brighter, a brown group of cloud formed near the Dome du Goûter—not on it, but in the sky, blowing also towards Cormayeur. Presently the black threatening part of the horizon grew luminous, and threw out the clouds, before white, as grey masses from its body,

gradually disappearing itself into the ordinary light of pure horizon. A few minutes afterwards the first rose touched the summit, the mist gradually melting from the higher hills, leaving that in the valley arranged at the top in exquisitely fine, horizontal, water-like cirri, separated by little intervals from its chief mass. The light lowered to the Tacul and Dome, and such intense fire I never saw. The colour is deeper in the evening, but far less brilliant; a quarter of an hour afterwards, when it had touched the Aiguille du Goûter, it began to diminish on the summit, which then looked feeble and *green* beside the Tacul and Aiguille du Goûter; then the Aiguille du Midi caught it, but in proportion as it touched the lower height, it was less rosy. It is now intensely white, a little tawny, reaching to base of the Aiguille du Goûter, on which, as well as on the Breven and top of Mont de la Côte, there is deep fresh snow. The clouds became first brown, then rosy, then melted away—all but one cirrus which yet hangs just over the Dome. The valley mist is nearly melted, a fleecy flake hangs here and there among the pines; the air is intensely clear, and the meadows white-green with dew. Now another bank of mist has formed down the valley. It is instructive to observe that though apparently snow-white on the pastures, it comes vigorously dark against the pure sky of the south-west. The green light on the flank of the Breven is beautiful beyond measure.

On such "constant watchfulness," as Ruskin says, were the statements in *Modern Painters* founded.[1] Thus for long and happy days did Ruskin study the "Aiguilles and their Friends";[2]

"And by the vision splendid
Was on his way attended."[3]

On days of blue unclouded weather, he climbed the hills and explored the glaciers with his Savoy guide;[4] or pondered among the gentians and the Alpine roses; or sketched in the Happy Valley.[5] On days of rain, he would work indoors—sorting or sketching his minerals and flowers, or making careful studies of tree-structure from branches of pine. It was "beneath the cloudless peace of the snows of Chamouni" that Ruskin was to write, half-a-century later, the epilogue of the book "which their beauty inspired and their strength guided."

From Chamouni Ruskin returned home by the Rhine and Flanders, and, in his study at Herne Hill, set himself to writing his first volume. "Returning," says Ruskin, "in the full enthusiasm and rush of sap in the too literally sapling and stripling mind of me, (I) wrote the first

[1] *Præterita*, ii. ch. iii. § 49, and ch. v. § 94.
[2] The title of Plate 69 in vol. v. of *Modern Painters*.
[3] Wordsworth: *Intimations of Immortality*.
[4] In 1842 Michel Devouassoud (*Præterita*, ii. ch. iv. § 78).
[5] The frontispiece to Volume II. is from a drawing of Chamouni made in 1842.

volume of *Modern Painters*."[1] His mind was well stored. His heart was burning within him. His pen had already learnt much of its cunning. His home surroundings were favourable, too, to his work. Herne Hill was in those days at the edge of the open country. *Modern Painters* could never have been written, Ruskin used to say in later years, except in the purer air of fifty years since.[2] In October 1842 the Ruskin household was moved from Herne Hill to the larger house and grounds of Denmark Hill. Here Ruskin's study, on the first floor, looked on to "the lawn and further field"; while the window of his bedroom above, looking straight south-east, "gave command of the morning clouds, inestimable for its aid in all healthy thought."[3] Near by was Croxted Lane,[4] then a green by-road passing through hedge-rows. "There," says Ruskin, "my mother and I used to gather the first buds of the hawthorn; and there, in after years, I used to walk in the summer shadows, as in a place wilder and sweeter than our garden, to think over any passage I wanted to make better than usual in *Modern Painters*."[5] And, for his special art work, Ruskin was otherwise well placed. He had Dulwich Gallery close by, for examples of the ancients; and for Turner, he had not only the run of the master's own gallery in Queen Anne Street; but, nearer home, the collection of Mr. Bicknell at Herne Hill freely open to him, and the yet richer one of Mr. Windus within an easy journey at Tottenham. At Norwood, too, within an easy walk of Denmark Hill, was Mr. Griffith, the picture-dealer, who had first introduced Ruskin to Turner, and in whose house pictures and drawings by the artist were always to be seen.[6] Of the spirit in which Ruskin set himself to his task, the *Letters to a College Friend* and to Dale have already had something to tell. He had felt intensely a call to the interpretation of art and nature, "not by a flying fancy, but so long as I can remember, with settled and steady desire."[7] But it was a "serious call," and he threw into his answer to it all the earnestness and solemnity of a highly-strung temperament. Two long letters—written to Liddell and Osborne Gordon respectively—have been preserved, explaining in his own words the temper and the object in which he set

[1] Epilogue to *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (1883 ed.), § 3.

[2] *The Art of England*, § 184. *The Storm Cloud of the Nineteenth Century*, 1884, p. 137; and see the account of Herne Hill and its surroundings in *Præterita*, i. ch. ii.

[3] *Præterita*, ii. ch. viii. § 150, where Ruskin further describes his study. For the date of the move to Denmark Hill, see *Letters to a College Friend*, Vol. I. p. 474. At Herne Hill Ruskin's study was on the second floor, looking out upon the front garden.

[4] It was in Croxted Lane that Mr. Allen drew for Ruskin "Spirals of Thorn" (plate 52 in *Modern Painters*, vol. v.).

[5] *Fiction Fair and Foul*, § 1.

[6] For Mr. Bicknell, see below, p. 244 *n.*; for Mr. Windus, p. 234 *n.*; for Mr. Griffith, Epilogue to Ruskin's *Notes on his Drawings by Turner*.

[7] Letter to Dale, Vol. I. p. 398.

himself to write his book. These letters are printed in Appendix iii. (pp. 665–671). It seems that by this time Ruskin had abandoned the idea of taking Orders, which he had for some time entertained;[1] but Bible study still formed a part of his daily discipline. Among the MSS. of *Modern Painters* now in America (p. 682) is a translation, with notes, of the Epistle to the Romans. The MS. goes as far as ch. v. verse 7. It is an endeavour to translate the Greek text with close accuracy. The MS. does not seem worth printing, as an example of Ruskin's biblical studies at this period is included in the *Letters to a College Friend*.[2] It was Ruskin's habit, late on in life also, to do a little bit of very careful translation—from the Bible or Plato—every day. His style was in some measure the result of infinite pains.

With 1843 the diaries are again available. A few entries selected from the early months of the year will afford a glimpse of the author at work, showing his diverse interests and enthusiasms, and recording the progress of his composition:—

> *Jan.* 15.—Noble sermon from M[elvill],[3] relating chiefly to the constant necessary progress of man, even in eternity, and the necessary property of the Deity to be able to reveal Himself constantly, more and more, to all eternity without ever exhausting His attributes.
>
> I had a bright, sunny walk afterwards—on the hills: cloudless, though hard frost, and sparkling dusty snow half an inch deep brightening everything. I was delighted at the top of the hill, to catch the edge of the road, in shade—all snow—against the sky, and then the first touches of sun on the ruts as I rose. It was the light of the Alps, and their look against the sky—for a moment of fancy.
>
> *Jan.* 16.—. . . Turner is going to do ten more drawings, and I am in a fever till I see the subjects. . . .[4]
>
> *Jan.* 19.—Yesterday with Richard[5] to Geological. . . . To-day pleasant lesson from Harding, and got splendid Modern Italy[6] at Jennings', and some valuable notes at Royal Academy; but late to-night, and must be up to organize in the morning. Tennant said that a man published a paper a little while ago concerning geology, in which he described mountain limestone as granite; this is certainly rather broader than I could have fancied.

[1] See *Letters to a College Friend*, Vol. I. pp. 415, 433, 460.
[2] In the letter (xvi.) of Jan. 8, 1843, and the essay on "Was there Death before Adam fell?" Vol. I. pp. 475–487.
[3] See Vol. I. p. 490.
[4] See above, p. xxiii.
[5] Richard Fall; see Vol. II. p. 429.
[6] *i.e.* a print from Turner's picture, for which see below, p. 300 *n.* The notes at the Academy must have been from the Diploma Gallery (see below, p. 190).