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# The Works of John Ruskin

VOLUME 8: THE SEVEN LAMPS OF  
ARCHITECTURE

JOHN RUSKIN  
EDITED BY EDWARD TYAS COOK  
AND ALEXANDER WEDDERBURN



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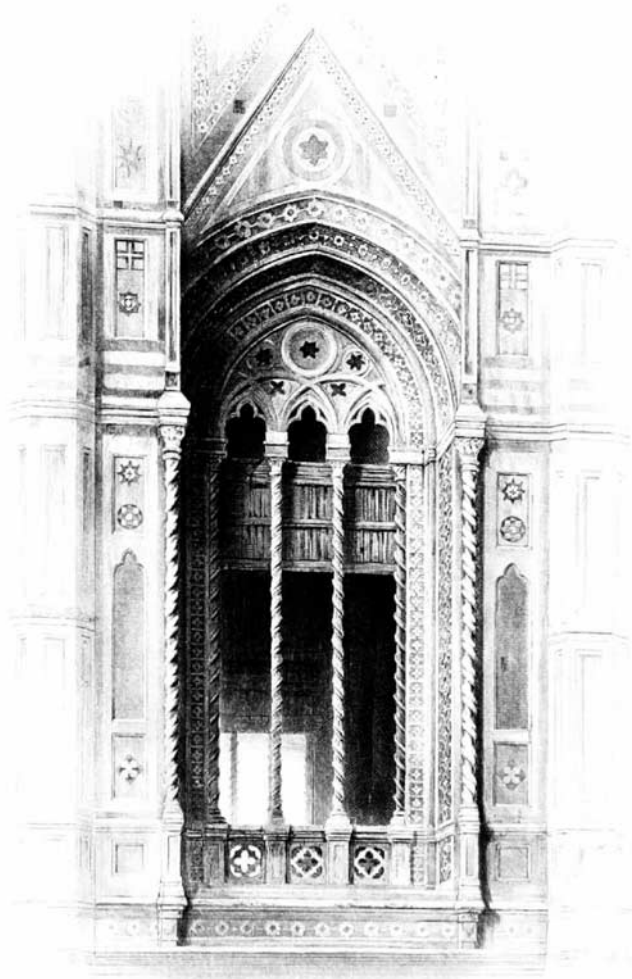
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Plate IX.



TRACERY FROM THE CAMPANILE OF GIOTTO,  
at Florence.

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# THE SEVEN LAMPS OF ARCHITECTURE

BY

JOHN RUSKIN

*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS DRAWN BY THE AUTHOR*

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John Ruskin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## CONTENTS TO VOLUME VIII

	PAGE
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS . . . . .	xiii
INDEX TO THE PLATES . . . . .	xv
INTRODUCTION TO THIS VOLUME . . . . .	xix
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE . . . . .	li
AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION (1849) . . . . .	3
"      "      "      SECOND EDITION (1855) . . . . .	7
"      "      "      EDITION OF 1880 . . . . .	15
<i>The Seven Lamps of Architecture</i> (CONTAINING THE TEXT OF ALL THE EDITIONS):—	
INTRODUCTORY . . . . .	17
CHAP.	
I. THE LAMP OF SACRIFICE . . . . .	27
II. THE LAMP OF TRUTH . . . . .	54
III. THE LAMP OF POWER . . . . .	100
IV. THE LAMP OF BEAUTY . . . . .	138
V. THE LAMP OF LIFE . . . . .	190
VI. THE LAMP OF MEMORY . . . . .	221
VII. THE LAMP OF OBEDIENCE . . . . .	248
NOTES BY THE AUTHOR . . . . .	267

## APPENDIX

I. LETTERS ON <i>The Seven Lamps of Architecture</i> :—	
1. TO W. H. HARRISON (APRIL 18, 1849) . . . . .	275
2. TO GEORGE SMITH (JUNE 5, 1849) . . . . .	276
II. THE MSS. OF <i>The Seven Lamps of Architecture</i> (WITH AD- DITIONAL PASSAGES) . . . . .	278
III. MINOR <i>Varie Lectiones</i> . . . . .	288

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00856-3 - The Works of John Ruskin, Volume 8: The Seven Lamps of Architecture

John Ruskin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

## CONTENTS

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

	PAGE
<b>EXTRACTS FROM RUSKIN'S LETTERS TO HIS FATHER AND MOTHER:—</b>	
THE CERTOSA OF PAVIA (MILAN, JULY 16, 1845) . . . . .	50
LIBERTY AND REPUBLICANISM (BAVENO, AUGUST 24, 1845) . . . . .	262
A SKETCH OF THE CA' FOSCARI (VENICE, SEPTEMBER 17, 1845) . . . . .	131
RESTORATION AT THE CA' D'ORO (VENICE, SEPTEMBER 23, 1845) . . . . .	243
THE GLOOM OF THE LAKES (AMBLESIDE, MARCH 28, 1847) . . . . .	xxv
A MEETING OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION (OXFORD, JUNE 27, 1847) . . . . .	xxv
ABBEVILLE AND SALISBURY (ABBEVILLE, AUGUST 8, 1848) . . . . .	188
ENRAPTURED WITH ABBEVILLE (ABBEVILLE, AUGUST 9, 1848) . . . . .	xxix
THE CHARM OF NORMANDY (LISIEUX, AUGUST 23, 1848) . . . . .	xxix
SKETCHING AT ST. LÔ (SEPTEMBER 16, 21, 1848) . . . . .	82
THE BEAUTY OF CAUDEBEC (ROUEN, OCTOBER 1, 1848) . . . . .	xxx
LIFE AND MANNERS: A CONVERSATION IN A CAFÉ (ROUEN, OCTOBER 2, 1848) . . . . .	262
THE ÆSTHETIC ATTRACTIONS OF ROMAN RITUAL (ROUEN, OCTOBER 9, 15, 1848) . . . . .	267
WORK AT ROUEN (OCTOBER 15, 1848) . . . . .	xxxi
A VISIT TO DR. WHEWELL AT TRINITY LODGE (CAMBRIDGE, APRIL 6, 7, 1851) . . . . .	xl
KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL (CAMBRIDGE, APRIL 7, 1851) . . . . .	63
LINCOLN CATHEDRAL (APRIL 10, 1851) . . . . .	12
 <b>EXTRACTS FROM RUSKIN'S LETTERS TO W. H. HARRISON:—</b>	
FISHERMEN AT DUNBAR (AUGUST 20, 1847) . . . . .	xxvii
THE REVISION OF "MODERN PAINTERS" (CROSSMOUNT, SEPTEMBER 18, 1847) . . . . .	xxvii
PARIS IN 1848 (CALAIS, OCTOBER 24, 1848) . . . . .	xxxii
 <b>EXTRACTS FROM RUSKIN'S DIARIES (1846-1849):—</b>	
A TOMB IN SENS CATHEDRAL (1846) . . . . .	xxii
CHAMPAGNOLE (APRIL 19, 1846) . . . . .	221
BARBAROUS GOTHIC (CHAMBÉRY, APRIL 26, 1846) . . . . .	xxi
THE COLLEONE CHAPEL, BERGAMO (MAY 10, 1846) . . . . .	51
ITALIAN IRON WORK (MAY 10, 1846) . . . . .	85
INTERSECTIONAL MOULDINGS (CHÂTILLON-SUR-SEINE, SEPTEMBER 23, 1846) . . . . .	xxi
VOLATILITY AND LISTLESSNESS (LEAMINGTON, JULY 29, 1847) . . . . .	xxvi
A ROUGH SCHEME OF "THE SEVEN LAMPS" (? 1846-1847) . . . . .	xxiii
SALISBURY CATHEDRAL (1848) . . . . .	188
NOTES ON NORMAN ARCHITECTURE (CAEN, SEPTEMBER 23, 1848) . . . . .	xxxi
COUTANCES CATHEDRAL (1848) . . . . .	xxxi
FORM AND COLOUR: NOTES AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM (DECEMBER 20, 1848) . . . . .	178
THE PLATES FOR "THE SEVEN LAMPS" (APRIL 1849) . . . . .	xxxv

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00856-3 - The Works of John Ruskin, Volume 8: The Seven Lamps of Architecture

John Ruskin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## CONTENTS

xi

	PAGE
EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF J. J. RUSKIN :—	
ON RUSKIN AT VENICE (MAY 25, 1846) . . . . .	xxiii
ON RUSKIN AT SALISBURY (JULY, 1848) . . . . .	xxviii
ON RUSKIN AT ABBEVILLE (AUGUST 12, 1848) . . . . .	xxix
THE APPEARANCE OF "THE SEVEN LAMPS" (VEVAY, MAY 22, 1849) . . . . .	xxxv
THE RECEPTION OF "THE SEVEN LAMPS" (GENEVA, JULY AND AUGUST, 1849) . . . . .	xxxvi
DESCRIPTIONS OF RUSKIN :—	
BY MISS MITFORD, IN 1847 . . . . .	xxiv
BY DR. FURNIVALL (A REMINISCENCE OF 1848) . . . . .	xxxiv
EXTRACTS FROM RUSKIN'S LETTERS TO HIS PUBLISHER ON THE 1880 EDITION OF "THE SEVEN LAMPS" (VARIOUS DATES, AUGUST 1879- FEBRUARY 1880) . . . . .	xlvii, 17
REVIEWS OF "THE SEVEN LAMPS OF ARCHITECTURE" . . . . .	xxxvii

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

*(From Drawings by the Author)*

TRACERY FROM THE CAMPANILE OF GIOTTO, AT FLORENCE	<i>Frontispiece</i>
PLATE	
I. ORNAMENTS FROM ROUEN, ST. LÔ, AND VENICE . . . . .	<i>To face page</i> 52
II. PART OF THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. LÔ, NORMANDY . . . . .	„ „ 81
III. TRACERIES FROM CAEN, BAYEUX, ROUEN, AND BEAUVAIS . . . . .	„ „ 88
IV. INTERSECTIONAL MOULDINGS . . . . .	„ „ 96
V. CAPITAL FROM THE LOWER ARCADE OF THE DOGE'S PALACE, VENICE . . . . .	„ „ 122
VI. ARCH FROM THE FAÇADE OF THE CHURCH OF SAN MICHELE AT LUCCA . . . . .	„ „ 125
VII. PIERCED ORNAMENTS FROM LISIEUX, BAYEUX, VERONA, AND PADUA . . . . .	„ „ 128
VIII. WINDOW FROM THE CA' FOSCARI, VENICE . . . . .	„ „ 132
IX. TRACERY FROM THE CAMPANILE OF GIOTTO, AT FLORENCE . . . . .	„ „ 138
X. TRACERIES AND MOULDINGS FROM ROUEN AND SALISBURY . . . . .	„ „ 165
XI. BALCONY IN THE CAMPO ST. BENEDETTO, VENICE	„ „ 175
XII. FRAGMENTS FROM ABBEVILLE, LUCCA, VENICE, AND PISA . . . . .	„ „ 199
XIII. PORTIONS OF AN ARCADE ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE CATHEDRAL OF FERRARA . . . . .	„ „ 212
XIV. SCULPTURES FROM THE CATHEDRAL OF ROUEN . . . . .	„ „ 216

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00856-3 - The Works of John Ruskin, Volume 8: The Seven Lamps of Architecture  
John Ruskin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## xiv LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FACSIMILE OF A PAGE OF THE MS. OF *The Seven**Lamps of Architecture* (CH. VI. § 1). *Between pp. 222 and 223*

FACSIMILE OF THE BINDING OF THE FIRST AND SECOND

EDITIONS . . . . . *To face page 185*


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*Note.*—All the numbered illustrations, except No. 9, are reproduced from the plates prepared for the edition of 1855. The *frontispiece* was engraved by J. C. Armytage from a new drawing made by the author for that edition; the others were re-engraved by R. P. Cuff from the drawings made by the author for the edition of 1849. Plate No. 9 was etched by the author; for particulars, see p. xlix.



## INDEX TO THE PLATES

The following list details the subjects of the various *figures* included in the plates, and gives the pages where they are referred to:—

## PLATE I. ORNAMENTS FROM ROUEN, ST. LÔ, AND VENICE:—

- FIG. 1. NICHE FROM THE CENTRAL GATE OF ROUEN (pp. 52, 123)  
 „ 2. (a) FLOWER WORK FROM THE TRANSEPTS OF ROUEN  
 (pp. 133, 173)  
 (b) FLOWER WORK FROM THE SOUTH DOOR OF ST. LÔ  
 (p. 133)  
 (c) FLOWER WORK FROM CAUDEBEC (p. 133)  
 „ 3. BALL WITH FLOWER WORK FROM THE ARCHITRAVE OF THE CENTRAL  
 GATE OF ST. MARK'S, VENICE (p. 121)  
 „ 4. FINIAL OF THE PEDIMENT GIVEN IN PLATE II., FROM THE CATHE-  
 DRAL OF ST. LÔ; BESIDE IT, A NATURAL GROUP OF THISTLE-  
 LEAVES (p. 122)

PLATE II. PART OF THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. LÔ, NORMANDY (pp. 81, 122,  
211)PLATE III. TRACERIES FROM CAEN, BAYEUX, ROUEN, AND BEAUVAIS  
(p. 88 *n.*):—

- FIG. 1. TREFOIL, FROM THE ABBAYE AUX HOMMES, CAEN (p. 88)  
 „ 2. SIXFOIL, FROM THE TRANSEPT TOWERS OF ROUEN (p. 88)  
 „ 3. TREFOIL AND QUATREFOIL, FROM COUTANCES (p. 88)  
 „ 4. MULTIPLICATIONS OF THE SAME FIGURES FROM ONE OF THE NAVE  
 CHAPELS OF ROUEN (p. 88)  
 „ 5. THE SAME, FROM ONE OF THE NAVE CHAPELS OF BAYEUX  
 (p. 88)  
 „ 6. “THE GLORIOUS TYPICAL FORM OF THE CLERESTORY OF THE  
 APSE OF BEAUVAIS” (p. 88)

## INDEX TO THE PLATES

## PLATE IV. INTERSECTIONAL MOULDINGS (p. 132):—

- FIG. 1. JUNCTION OF THE MOULDINGS OF THE GABLE AND VERTICAL, IN THE WINDOW OF THE SPIRE OF SALISBURY (p. 94)
- „ 2. FROM A FLYING BUTTRESS IN THE APSE OF ST. GERVAIS AT FALAISE (p. 97)
- „ 3. HALF OF THE HEAD OF A DOOR IN THE STADTHAUS OF SURSEE (p. 97)
- „ 4. EXAMPLE OF DOVETAILING, FROM THE LINTEL OF THE LATERAL DOOR OF THE CATHEDRAL OF PRATO (p. 70)
- „ 5. DETAIL OF FIG. 4 (p. 71)
- „ 6. EXAMPLE OF DEXTERITY IN THE FILLING OF SECTIONS, FROM THE WEST GATE OF ROUEN (p. 95)
- „ 7. ANOTHER EXAMPLE, FROM THE SAME (p. 96)
- „ 8. JUNCTION OF THE CIRCLES OF THE WINDOW OF THE PALAZZO FOSCARI, VENICE (SEE PLATE VIII.), (pp. 94, 166)

## PLATE V. CAPITAL FROM THE LOWER ARCADE OF THE DOGE'S PALACE, VENICE (pp. 122, 231)

## PLATE VI. ARCH FROM THE FAÇADE OF THE CHURCH OF SAN MICHELE, LUCCA (pp. 121, 125, 185, 277)

## PLATE VII. PIERCED ORNAMENTS FROM LISIEUX, BAYEUX, VERONA AND PADUA:—

- FIG. 1. SHAFTS AND SPANDREL FROM THE SOUTH-WEST DOOR OF THE CATHEDRAL OF LISIEUX (pp. 93, 125 *n.*, 128)
- „ 2. QUADRANT OF THE STAR WINDOW OF THE CHAPEL OF SAN PIETRO MARTIRE, ADJOINING STA. ANASTASIA, VERONA (p. 129)
- „ 3. TREFOILED SHIELD FROM THE CHURCH OF THE EREMITANI, PADUA (pp. 88, 129)
- „ 4. "FOAM BUBBLES" FROM A SPANDREL AT BAYEUX (p. 129)
- „ 5. ORNAMENT FROM THE TRANSEPT TOWERS OF ROUEN (p. 129)

## PLATE VIII. WINDOW FROM THE CA' FOSCARI, VENICE (pp. 94, 132, 166)

## PLATE IX. (AND FRONTISPIECE). TRACERY FROM THE CAMPANILE OF GIOTTO, FLORENCE (pp. 126, 187)

INDEX TO THE PLATES xviiPLATE X. TRACERIES AND MOULDINGS FROM ROUEN (pp. 89, 90) AND  
SALISBURY :—

- FIG. 1. PANEL DECORATION OF BUTTRESSES OF NORTH DOOR OF THE  
CATHEDRAL OF ROUEN (p. 165)
- „ 2. MOULDINGS OF THE QUATREFOIL ABOVE FIG. 1 (p. 166)
- „ 3. SECTION, EXPLAINING FIG. 1 (p. 165)
- „ 4. DETAIL OF MOULDING IN FIG. 1 (p. 165)
- „ 5. DOG-TOOTH MOULDING FROM SALISBURY CATHEDRAL (p. 172)

## PLATE XI. BALCONY IN THE CAMPO ST. BENEDETTO, VENICE (p. 175)

## PLATE XII. FRAGMENTS FROM ABBEVILLE, LUCCA, VENICE AND PISA :—

- FIG. 1. PILLAR AND SPANDREL FROM A PANEL DECORATION UNDER THE  
PULPIT OF ST. MARK'S, VENICE (p. 199)
- „ 2. PATTERNS ON THE COLUMNS OF SAN MICHELE, LUCCA (p. 183)
- „ 3. WINDOWS IN THE TOWERS OF ABBEVILLE (p. 211)
- „ 4. ARCH MOULDINGS ON THE PULPIT OF ST. ANDREA AT PISTOJA,  
BY NICCOLÒ PISANO (p. 200)
- „ 5. AN EXAMPLE OF VERTICAL PROPORTION FROM THE FLOWER  
STEM OF THE *Alisma Plantago* (p. 168)
- „ 6. SECTION OF JOINT IN THE SAME (p. 169)
- „ 7. SQUARE PANELLING FROM THE ARCHES OF THE CATHEDRAL OF  
PISA (pp. 111, 145)
- „ 8. PATTERN OF THE ARABESQUE ON THE BALCONY SHOWN IN PLATE  
XI (p. 175)

PLATE XIII. PORTIONS OF AN ARCADE ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE  
CATHEDRAL OF FERRARA, ETC. :—

- FIG. 1. TWO PAIRS OF COLUMNS FROM THE ARCADE ON THE SOUTH SIDE  
OF THE CATHEDRAL OF FERRARA (pp. 171, 212)
- „ 2. AN ARCH OF THE SAME (p. 212)
- „ 3. COLUMN, IN "RACK" PATTERN, FROM THE SAME (p. 213)
- „ 4. A SMALL CAPITAL FROM COUTANCES (p. 122)

PLATE XIV. SCULPTURES FROM THE BAS-RELIEFS OF THE NORTH DOOR OF  
THE CATHEDRAL OF ROUEN (pp. 216, 217)

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John Ruskin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## INTRODUCTION TO VOL. VIII

THIS volume, containing *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, follows, in the chronological order of Ruskin's principal works, the second volume of *Modern Painters* (Vol. IV.). That volume was published in 1846; no further portion of *Modern Painters* saw the light until 1856. During the intervening decade, the *magnum opus* was never wholly out of the author's mind, but its place of precedence was for a while usurped by other thoughts and tasks. "It is curious," he notes in his diary of 1849, "that in literature the most successful books seem to have been planned as they went on." Not Ruskin's books only, but the order in which he wrote them, were planned as he went on, and his mental journeying at no time was free from digressions. At the end of the second volume of *Modern Painters*, he was rapt in contemplation of "the angel choirs" of the early Italian painters. He followed up that volume by some minor writings on allied subjects to which we shall presently allude; but these were anonymous, and when he next appeared before the public with another volume, it was found to be devoted to the principles and ideals of Gothic architecture. This new study occupied him for seven years, and its results were embodied in five illustrated volumes—*The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849), *The Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (1851), *Examples of the Architecture of Venice* (1851), and *The Stones of Venice*, vols. ii. and iii. (1853). In resuming here the thread of Ruskin's literary biography from the Introduction to Vol. IV., we have, then, first to explain how it was that this architectural episode came to interrupt the progress of *Modern Painters*.

Ruskin did not realise at the time when he started off on his new enterprise how long the interruption was to be. When he was writing *The Seven Lamps*, he still thought that one more volume would complete *Modern Painters*; <sup>1</sup> while, doubtless, he did not foresee how laborious the studies for his projected work on Venetian architecture would become.<sup>2</sup> Hence he felt no hesitation in yielding to a new impulse, or—it were,

<sup>1</sup> This is clear from one of the drafts of the Preface to *Seven Lamps*, given below in Appendix ii., p. 280.

<sup>2</sup> *The Stones of Venice* was announced as being "in preparation" when *Seven Lamps* was published: see Bibliographical Note below, p. li.

## INTRODUCTION

perhaps, better to say—in obeying a new call. He was ever impetuous and enthusiastic; whatever his hand found to do, he began doing with all his might on the instant. In 1845 he had heard a fresh call, and had turned from the study of rocks and clouds to that of Fra Angelico and Tintoret.<sup>1</sup> He hurried home full of fervour, and put out the second volume of *Modern Painters*. But already, as we have seen, another interest was stirring within him. His gift for architectural drawing had greatly developed, and he saw around him on all sides the passing away of beautiful buildings which he felt that he had the capacity to understand and the skill to record.<sup>2</sup> It was a question, he said to himself, of now or never. Whilst he was taking drawings from one side of buildings, the “restorers” were knocking down the other.<sup>3</sup> Delay would be doubly fatal. He might be too late to record, and his readers would no longer be able to see. Thus the same burning enthusiasm that first threw Ruskin into the defence of Turner, and then into the interpretation of Tintoret, now diverted him to mediæval architecture.<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps, too, something was due to intellectual reaction. Ruskin had, as we have seen,<sup>5</sup> felt severely the strain of the second volume of *Modern Painters*. Like most great workers, he knew only one form of recreation—a change of work. The close study of architecture may have come as a relief from that of painting. Certain it is that the diary of his continental tour in 1846<sup>6</sup> is, for the first time, filled as much with notes on stained glass, on sculpture, and on architecture, as with descriptions of scenery or pictorial effects. Something in this latter sort there is;<sup>7</sup> he was then finishing, it will be remembered, a revision for the third edition of *Modern Painters*, vol. i., and in that edition extracts from his diary of 1846 were introduced.<sup>8</sup> But the new feature in the diary is the author's pre-occupation with architectural details. At Venice he was already busy with elaborate measurements of the buildings. He fills many pages, too, with notes on Willis's recently-published and epoch-making book on

<sup>1</sup> Vol. IV. p. xxiv.

<sup>2</sup> See Vol. IV. pp. xxvi., 37–41.

<sup>3</sup> See below, Preface to First Edition, § 1 n., p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> See below, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Vol. IV. p. xxxix.

<sup>6</sup> The itinerary of this tour was as follows:—Milan (April 14), Sens, Dijon (April 17), Champagnole (April 19), Geneva (April 21), Chambéry (April 26), St. Jean de Maurienne (April 27), Turin, Vercelli (May 4), Arona (May 6), Bergamo (May 7), Como, Verona (May 10), Venice (May 14), Padua (May 28), Bologna (June 1), Florence (June 7), Vevay (August 10), Geneva (August 15), Chamouni (August 23), Lucerne (August 31), Troyes, Châtillon-sur-Seine (Sept. 23). The dates are those on which entries happen to be made in the diary.

<sup>7</sup> See the extracts given in *Præterita*, ii. ch. x. § 190.

<sup>8</sup> See Vol. III. pp. 500, 504.

## INTRODUCTION

xxi

*The Architecture of the Middle Ages*.<sup>1</sup> He was reading also Woods' *Letters of an Architect*.<sup>2</sup> Points which he afterwards developed in *The Seven Lamps* were already occurring to him. Thus, it was during the tour of 1846, that Ruskin was struck by the system of intersectional mouldings, which he discusses at length in this book as a principal source of corruption in Gothic architecture (ch. ii. §§ 21 *seq.*, pp. 87-99). At Chambéry (April 26) he notes in his diary "a house in the main street here, remarkable as an example of that peculiar domestic Gothic so common in Switzerland, and of which one of the marked features seems to be the intersection of the rib mouldings at the angles, which I consider very ugly." At Châtillon-sur-Seine (September 23) he recurs to the subject:—

"The architecture all the way from Lucerne—and I suppose from Schaffhausen—here, shows a most distinct connection, here beginning to vanish in more grotesque and purely French form. I should call this architecture, generally, sectional or intersectional, its distinguishing character being that already noted . . . [at Chambéry], that the mouldings, instead of uniting with or arising out of each other, cut each other and form inelegant interstices, or are themselves violently truncated as in my examples taken at Lucerne and Sursee.<sup>3</sup> Another most interesting example occurs in the piers of the bridge of Aarburg . . . [reference to a sketch-book], where the sharp angles which meet the current are brought up to square full fronts on which the bridge is superimposed by brackets, composed of three tiers of semi-circular bands or mouldings, whose extremities show their truncations exactly in the manner of the beams of a châlet, from which the idea seems taken.<sup>4</sup> At Besançon the style appears in great perfection—more elegant than in Switzerland, but quite as vicious. A grand circular arch near the Post Office is most remarkable both for its side niches, and because its huge crockets are represented as going through its lateral pinnacles . . . [reference to a sketch]. This penetrability is, however, one of the bad characteristics of flamboyant architecture in its last extravagances."

At Chambéry (April 26), after the notes on the domestic architecture referred to above, he continues:—

"I suppose the cathedral here to be of the same period; its front is remarkable for its hard, square, valueless mouldings, and for the general awkwardness of all its forms. The carving, though somewhat too close

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. xl., 87, 95.

<sup>2</sup> See below, p. 206.

<sup>3</sup> See the drawing made at Sursee (Fig. 3 in Plate IV.) and the reference to it on p. 97.

<sup>4</sup> See below, ch. ii. § 28, p. 97.

## INTRODUCTION

and knotty, is deeply undercut and good, but it is put in narrow cords on broad bare mouldings, and so is rather hurtful than otherwise. A line of trefoiled foliation runs round the entrance door; but precisely in the place where it is most ineffective, that is to say nearly in the middle of its meagre mouldings, which have no columns nor capitals, but have continuous impostes, the foliation beginning abruptly and unexpectedly at the point; and so looks like a piece of paste-board ornament stuck on. There are no traces of ornament in the blank triangular space, now painted, below, but the two little doors underneath are flat headed or nearly so . . . [reference to a sketch]; the barbarous intersection of the curved by the horizontal moulding is especially painful. The rest of the detail, though not altogether so vicious, is entirely mindless, barred, ponderous, ill put together and exactly like, even to some of the minutiae of design, that which I used to draw in the blank leaves of Aristotle's Rhetoric.<sup>1</sup> The design at . . . [reference to a sketch] is remarkable for the thoroughly savage introduction of the round ball in the triangle, and for the imposition of the rich bracket abruptly on the meagre moulding. To this barbarism might advantageously be opposed the daring use of the fleur-de-lis at Beauvais, filling up or rather forming a trefoil, in a mode which could not have been thought of but when the spirit of Gothic defied its letter and laws.

So, again, at Sens (April 17) he had written:—

“ In one of the side chapels of the Cathedral of Sens there is a most precious tomb of the Cardinal Duprin,<sup>2</sup> surrounded on four sides with admirable sculpture, full of most Giottesque invention, and most instructive in the various modes by which expression has been attained through vigorous undercut shadows. All the faces have the look of portraits, and most vigorous ones; a design of the Cardinal in council on one of the shorter sides is exquisite in its variation of vivid gesture, and the figures of the secretary sitting, and the standing figure laying the sceptre on the table, are graceful as Perugino. The horses' heads also are superb.”

Ruskin on this tour of 1846 was, then, as enthusiastically absorbed in sections and mouldings, as formerly in flowers and rocks, and as busy in drawing doors and windows, as once in making sketches of skies and mountains. But one member of the party felt in this diversion of interest a serious disappointment. We have seen with what pleasurable

<sup>1</sup> Now in the British Museum; see Vol. I. p. xxxv.

<sup>2</sup> The tomb of Chancellor Duprat (not Duprin) is in the first chapel on the left of the choir.

## INTRODUCTION

xxiii

anticipation Ruskin had dwelt upon the prospect of taking his parents in 1846 over the ground he covered by himself in 1845.<sup>1</sup> But his father, who was becoming an old man, had not the mental agility which enabled his son to turn so easily from one enthusiasm to another. In *Præterita* Ruskin records regretfully, and not without self-reproaches, that he and his father were on this tour not so happily in accord as in earlier years.<sup>2</sup> A letter from the elder Ruskin to his old friend W. H. Harrison, among whose papers it has been found, shows the difference in the point of view:—

“He is cultivating art at present (writes J. J. Ruskin from Venice, May 25, 1846), searching for real knowledge, but to you and me this is at present a sealed book. It will neither take the shape of picture nor poetry. It is gathered in scraps hardly wrought, for he is drawing perpetually, but no drawing such as in former days you or I might compliment in the usual way by saying it deserved a frame; but fragments of everything from a Cupola to a Cart-wheel, but in such bits that it is to the common eye a mass of Hieroglyphics—all true—truth itself, but Truth in mosaic.”

The letter is not without its note of pathos to the sympathetic ear, and the writer's habitual good-sense hits off in a happy phrase the somewhat disjointed nature of Ruskin's studies.

Probably, however, the scheme of *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* was already beginning to assume shape in the author's mind. An undated note in the book containing the author's diary for 1846 and 1847 introduces us to some of his “Lamps;”<sup>3</sup> though at this time he seems to have thought of calling them “Spirits”:—

“Expression of emotion in Architecture as Monastic—peaceful—threatening—mysterious—proud—enthusiastic.

“Expression of ambition—Difficult cutting, vaulting, King's College, etc., raising of spires, etc.

“Consider luscious architecture: how far beautiful.

“General style. What constitutes its greatness. First, mere labour; patience, skill and devotion (Sacrifice). Then labour of *thinking* men; if nothing be lost, nothing valueless; consider if under this head one might not have a “Spirit of Husbandry” (consider also, awe and mystery and their spirit under head of Power). Yet it is fine to see work for work's sake, or rather for completion of a system sometimes.”

It does not appear, however, that Ruskin had as yet determined on casting his architectural studies into the form of a separate essay. They

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. IV. pp. xxv.–xxvii.

<sup>2</sup> *Præterita*, ii. ch. x. §§ 188–189.

<sup>3</sup> Compare the later draft below, in Appendix ii., p. 278.



seem to have been originally intended for a part or a section in *Modern Painters*.<sup>1</sup> Ruskin's diary for the latter part of 1846 is very fragmentary; it shows only that he was still much occupied with architectural subjects, and that he was studying a good deal at the British Museum among the illuminated books and natural history collections (not then removed to South Kensington). His literary production during the next two years (1847, 1848) was small. He suffered a good deal from ill-health and there were other home distractions.

His one contribution to literature in 1847 was—as in the case of some of his earlier productions<sup>2</sup>—the outcome of an affair of the heart. He was a suitor for the hand of Miss Lockhart, a grandchild of Sir Walter Scott. Lockhart had invited Ruskin to write upon Lord Lindsay's *Sketches of the History of Christian Art*. He accepted the invitation, more for the daughter's sake than for that of her father, then editor of the *Quarterly*. "With my usual wisdom in such matters," he says, "I went away into Cumberland to recommend myself to her by writing a *Quarterly* review."<sup>3</sup> The review, which appeared in the number for June 1847, gave Ruskin occasion to cover ground which he had already traversed in the second volume of *Modern Painters*<sup>4</sup> and was presently to occupy in the *Seven Lamps*.<sup>5</sup> In the Lake District, where—had his suit been successful—he thought of taking a house,<sup>6</sup> Ruskin made the acquaintance of Miss Mitford, already (as we have seen<sup>7</sup>) an admirer of *Modern Painters*. The friendship thus formed lasted throughout her life.<sup>8</sup> In a letter of 1847 she gives her first impression of "the Graduate." "Have you ever read," she writes to her friend, Mrs. Partridge, "an Oxford Graduate's letters on art? The author, Mr. Ruskin, was here last week, and is certainly the most charming person that I have ever known. The books are very beautiful, although I do not agree in all the opinions; but the young man himself is just what, if one had a son, one would have dreamt of his turning out, in mind, manner, conversation, everything. I quite longed for you to hear and admire him."<sup>9</sup> In March 1847, Ruskin settled himself at the Salutation Inn, Ambleside,<sup>10</sup> with George<sup>11</sup> as

<sup>1</sup> See Preface, p. 3, and the passage from a MS. in Appendix ii. below, p. 280.

<sup>2</sup> See Vol. I. pp. xxxiii., xlvi.

<sup>3</sup> *Præterita*, ii. ch. x. § 192.

<sup>4</sup> As, for instance, in the discussion in the review—of Giotto, Orcagna, and Fra Angelico.

<sup>5</sup> See below, pp. 50, 63, 103, 121.

<sup>6</sup> See Collingwood's *Life*, 1900, p. 108.

<sup>7</sup> Vol. I. p. xxxviii.

<sup>8</sup> Ruskin's letters to Miss Mitford are collected in a later volume of this edition.

<sup>9</sup> *Letters of Mary Russell Mitford*, Second Series, edited by H. F. Chorley, 1872, vol. i. p. 230.

<sup>10</sup> Described in *Præterita*, ii. ch. x. § 193.

<sup>11</sup> See Vol. IV. p. xxiv.

## INTRODUCTION

xxv

companion, to write his review. A letter to his mother shows him in a somewhat despondent mood:—

(*Sunday, March 28, 1847*).— . . . I finished—and sealed up—and addressed—my last bit of work, last night by ten o'clock—ready to send by to-day's post—so that my father should receive it with this. I could not at all have done it, had I stayed at home; for even with all the quiet here, I have had no more time than was necessary. For exercise, I find the rowing very useful, though it makes me melancholy with thinking of 1838,<sup>1</sup>—and the lake, when it is quite calm, is wonderfully sad and quiet: no bright colours—no snowy peaks. Black water—as still as death;—lonely, rocky islets—leafless woods,—or worse than leafless, the brown oak foliage hanging dead upon them; gray sky;—far-off, wild, dark, dismal moorlands; no sound except the rustling of the boat among the reeds. . . .

*One o'clock*.—I have your kind note and my father's, and am very thankful that you like what I have written, for I did not at all know myself whether it were good or bad.<sup>2</sup>

Good or bad, it elicited no favouring words from Miss Lockhart, and another letter, written three months later from Oxford (whither Ruskin had gone for the meeting of the British Association), reveals an increasing despondency, indicative too of ill-health:—

(*June 27, 1847*).—I am not able to write a full account of all I see, to amuse you, for I find it necessary to keep as quiet as I can, and I fear it would only annoy you to be told of all the invitations I refuse, and all the interesting matters in which I take no part. There is nothing for it but throwing one's self into the stream, and going down with one's arms under water, ready to be carried anywhere, or do anything. My friends are all busy, and tired to death. All the members of my section, but especially Forbes, Sedgwick, Murchison, and Lord Northampton—and of course Buckland,<sup>3</sup> are as kind to me as men can be; but I am tormented by the perpetual feeling of being in everybody's way. The recollections of the place, too, and the being in my old rooms, make me very miserable. I have not one moment of profitably spent time to look back to while I was here, and much useless

<sup>1</sup> In which year he spent the summer with his parents in the Lake country.

<sup>2</sup> This letter and the one following are reprinted from W. G. Collingwood's *Life*, 1900, pp. 108–109.

<sup>3</sup> Edward Forbes (1815–1854), President of the Geological Society, 1853. Adam Sedgwick (1785–1873), President of British Association, 1833, and of its Geological Section, 1837, 1845, 1853, 1860. Sir Roderick Murchison (1792–1871), President of the Royal Geographical Society, 1843; Director-General of the Geological Survey, 1855. Spencer Alwyne Compton, second Marquis of Northampton (1790–1851), President of the Royal Society, 1838–1849. For Buckland, see Vol. I, p. 211. Ruskin was one of the secretaries of the Geological Section for the Oxford meeting (see *Report of the Seventeenth Meeting of the British Association*, p. xv.)

## INTRODUCTION

labour and disappointed hope; and I can neither bear the excitement of being in the society where the play of mind is constant, and rolls over me like heavy wheels, nor the pain of being alone. I get away in the evenings into the hayfields about Cumnor,<sup>1</sup> and rest; but then my failing sight plagues me. I cannot look at anything as I used to do, and the evening sky is covered with swimming strings and eels. My best time is while I am in the Section room, for though it is hot, and sometimes wearisome, yet I have nothing to say,—little to do,—nothing to look at, and as much as I like to hear.

It is not surprising that the receipt of this letter convinced Ruskin's parents that his health needed serious attention. He was sent accordingly, as in 1841,<sup>2</sup> to Leamington for a month's "cure" under Dr. Jephson. In a characteristic passage in the diary written there, Ruskin speaks of an increasing volatility and listlessness:—

LEAMINGTON, *July 29.*—As I was walking down the chief street this afternoon, somewhat languid—partly owing to the weather, and partly to a disappointment in the ill-success of a laboured drawing, and partly from causes unknown, I could not help looking into the stationers' windows for some book to amuse me, though I have now on the table *The Guardian* and *Pamela*, and *I Promessi Sposi*, besides Wordsworth and Dante, and several books on chemistry, and a *Quarterly*, and Eastlake's book on oil painting, and George Herbert and Plato. All these came into my mind, and at the same time, very reproachfully, Wordsworth's account of the poor clergyman, Robert Walker, who "allowed not a moment of recreation except upon a Saturday afternoon, when he indulged himself with a Newspaper, or sometimes with a Magazine."<sup>3</sup> What a foretaste of Paradise to such a man would this room of mine be, this leisure and these books. So I walked past all the stationers, resolved not to encourage any more this continually increasing volatility and listlessness; and yet so far, I have thought since I came home, that much of the poor clergyman's time being given to labour in the field, and the rest to matters interesting to heart and conscience, left no room for the peculiar lassitude, which continual book occupation can hardly but induce. I will not buy any more books, but I am not sure that I am very wrong in wishing to do so.

Ruskin missed during this year 1847 the stimulus of foreign travel.<sup>4</sup> But he went in the late summer to Scotland, and there—"in the

<sup>1</sup> A retreat of which Matthew Arnold also was fond: see *The Scholar-Gipsy*.

<sup>2</sup> See Vol. I. pp. xlii., 395 n., 455.

<sup>3</sup> Wordsworth's "Memoir of the Rev. Robert Walker," in the notes to the Poems, p. 829 of John Morley's edition (Macmillan).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Vol. I. p. xxx., Vol. II. p. 395; and see above, on p. xxv., his yearning for "bright colours and snowy peaks."

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John Ruskin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## INTRODUCTION

xxvii

thistlefield at Crossmount”—he had “wise thoughts and wholesome sleep after them.”<sup>1</sup> “Those thoughts,” he adds, “are scattered afterwards up and down in *Fors* and *Munera Pulveris*.” Nor are they absent from *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, in which book we may find the germs of some of his later teaching in the political economy of art, and catch the first sound of waves of thought and feeling on social questions, afterwards to reverberate more loud and clear.<sup>2</sup> Letters written from Scotland to W. H. Harrison contain passages which show the current of Ruskin’s thoughts at this time:—

DUNBAR, *August 20, 1847*.— . . . I am much better since I left London, getting regular exercise and rest. I hope I shall not again fall into the state I was in all this winter, grievous to myself and stupid to everybody. Still there is a certain amount of spleen, or what else it may more justly be called, mingled with my present feelings which I cannot shake off. I cannot understand how you merry people can smile through the world as you do. It seems to me a sad one—more suffering than pleasure in it, and less of *hope* than of either—at least if the interpretations set by the most pious people on the Bible be true, and if not, then worse still. But it is woeful to see these poor fishermen toiling all night and bringing in a few casks of herrings each, twice a week or so, and lying watching their nets dry on the cliffs all day; their wives and children abused and dirty—scolding, fighting, and roaring through their unvarying lives. How much more enviable the sea-gulls that, all this stormy day, have been tossing themselves off and on the crags and winds like flakes of snow, and screaming with very joy. Certainly there must be something very wrong about man, when this is so; he could not be the unhappy animal he is but by his own fault.

The fourth edition of *Modern Painters*, vol. i., was at this time passing through the press, and Harrison relieved Ruskin of all trouble in the matter, who in a letter from Crossmount (Sept. 18) thanks his friend

“for the care and much trouble you have taken these two times respecting my rubbishy book. How sick you must be of reading such stuff again and again! Worse by half than my promenades in the Leamington pump-room—to the tune of an old harp, fiddle, and flute.”

<sup>1</sup> See *Præterita*, ii. ch. x. § 197, where account is given of this visit to his friend William Macdonald, of Crossmount.

<sup>2</sup> See below, notes on pp. 218, 264.

Ruskin returned from Scotland in October, and the winter of 1847–1848 was spent quietly at Denmark Hill. His only literary production was a second review for the *Quarterly*—this time of Sir Charles Eastlake’s *Materials for a History of Oil Painting*.<sup>1</sup> This broke little new ground, though his diaries show that Ruskin read up the subject diligently. For the rest, his months were spent in various branches of study, with a view to the continuation of *Modern Painters*. The architectural reading was continued; and his note-books show that at this time he made a minute study of Homer, which he afterwards turned to account in the chapter on “Classical Landscape” in *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. It should be added that his drawing—now, again, mostly devoted to leaves and flowers—was also steadily practised.<sup>2</sup>

The entries in Ruskin’s diary are at this time few and far between. “My diary has of late,” he says on Dec. 22, 1847, “been in letters to E. C. G.” The initials stand for Euphemia Chalmers Gray. She was the eldest daughter of Mr. George Gray, a lawyer, of Bowerswell, Perth, who was an old friend of Ruskin’s parents. She used to visit them at Herne Hill, and it was for her that Ruskin in 1841 had written *The King of the Golden River*.<sup>3</sup> Ruskin was about ten years her senior in age, and much more so in habits of life and thought. But, for various reasons, a match between Ruskin and her was equally desired by the parents on both sides, and on April 10, 1848, the marriage took place. This was the occasion of the “hurried visit to Scotland in the spring of this year,” mentioned in the Addenda of 1848 to *Modern Painters*, vol. ii.<sup>4</sup> After a short time spent in Scotland and the Lakes, Ruskin returned to Denmark Hill, where the proofs of the second edition of *Modern Painters*, vol. ii., were awaiting him. He afterwards took his wife to Commemoration at Oxford, and in July his father and mother joined them at Salisbury.

“My son,” wrote J. J. Ruskin to Harrison, “occupies himself with the architecture of the Cathedral, a lovely edifice, but I find it very slow.” How hard Ruskin worked is shown by many pages of notes and measurements in his diary. The fruits of his labour are to be seen in many pages of this volume;<sup>5</sup> but, as he mentions on p. 6, he was overtaken with a feverish attack, and the projected tour to the cathedrals and abbeys of England had to be abandoned. But Ruskin was not to be put off his cathedrals altogether, and as soon as he had recovered, he

<sup>1</sup> Mentioned above in the passage from a diary, on p. xxvi.

<sup>2</sup> See *Præterita*, ii. ch. x. § 199.

<sup>3</sup> See Vol. I. p. xlvi.

<sup>4</sup> See Vol. IV. p. 341.

<sup>5</sup> See pp. 6, 67, 94, 136, 167, 172, 188, 203.

## INTRODUCTION

xxix

started for a tour in Normandy, which resulted in the writing of the present volume.<sup>1</sup> “I went to Boulogne,” writes J. J. Ruskin to Harrison on August 12, “and saw my son and his wife off by rail to Abbeville, where he is in his element among cathedrals and tumble-down houses.”

This account of the matter is borne out by Ruskin’s letters and diaries. Now that he had again found definite occupation, all his old enthusiasm revived, and he worked indefatigably and with concentration. He was up at 6, he tells his father, to read before breakfast, which was at 8. By 9.30 he was seated in some corner convenient for sketching, or was busy with his measuring rules and note-books. Dinner was at 1.30, and again from 4 to 6 he was sketching. A “couple of crockets” would sometimes occupy him for “upwards of an hour.” His companions were pressed into the service. His wife posted up the diary; George was sometimes sent off to trace panels and bas-reliefs. Ruskin was in a fever to make the most of the time, and to record the beauties that he saw while yet the stones were standing the one on the other:—

“I was dancing round the table this forenoon,” he writes to his father from Abbeville (Aug. 9), “in rapture with the porch here—far beyond all my memories or anticipation—perfectly superb, and all the houses more fantastic, more exquisite than ever; alas! not all, for there is not a street without fatal marks of restoration, and in twenty years it is plain that not a vestige of Abbeville, or indeed of any old French town, will be left. How I pity the poor people who must live then; and myself, for I was too young to understand or feel enough of it till now, when it is all going. I got into a café and have been doing my best to draw the Cathedral porch; but alas, it is not so easily done. I seem born to conceive what I cannot execute, recommend what I cannot obtain, and mourn over what I cannot save.”

The country delighted him no less than the churches:—

“You never saw anything yet in France,” he writes from Lisieux (August 23) “so lovely as this Normandy—just fancy vallies like rich bits of Italy, tufted with elm, poplar, willow, and Spanish chestnut, set between round sweeping grouse hills of purple heather, as bare as Schehallien.<sup>2</sup> I think Effie makes the heather grow under her feet. But I never saw such a lovely contrast of purple and green; even in

<sup>1</sup> The following was the itinerary: Abbeville (Aug. 8), by Eu to Rouen (Aug. 16), Lisieux (Aug. 23), Falaise (Aug. 25), Mortain (Sept. 1), Avranches, Mont St. Michel (Sept. 8), Coutances (Sept. 12), St. Lô (Sept. 15), Bayeux (Sept. 21), Caen (Sept. 22), Honfleur (Sept. 29), Rouen (Oct. 1), and home by Gisors, Amiens and Paris to Calais (Oct. 24).

<sup>2</sup> More correctly Schehallion; at the foot of which mountain was Crossmount.