

CATALOGUE OF THE REFERENCE SERIES

INCLUDING TEMPORARILY THE FIRST SECTION OF THE STANDARD SERIES

NOTE.¹—The Standard Series referred to in the Lectures as S. 1, S. 2, etc., will be ultimately composed of four hundred pieces:² 1 to 100 illustrating the schools of painting in general; 101 to 200, those of sculpture and its relative arts connected with the traditions and religion of the Gothic races; 201 to 300, those of sculpture and its relative arts connected with the traditions and religion of the Greeks; and 301 to 400, the special skill of modern time.

The reason for the adoption of this order is that the art of painting furnishes examples of every meritorious quality possible in form or colour: the earlier arts of sculpture and building may then be advantageously studied with reference to these ultimate results; and our own skill finally estimated by comparison with whatever it has chosen to imitate, and measure of whatever it has been able to invent.³

The first pieces in the large cabinets, up to the number 50

¹ [In the *Catalogue of Examples* this preface began as follows:—

“The examples now placed in the University Galleries form the nucleus of what it is intended should become ultimately three distinctly complete series. The first is to be composed of types of various art, the best that I can obtain, as standards of method or school. It is to be called the Standard Series; referred to in the Lectures as S. 1, S. 2, etc., and composed of, ultimately, four hundred . . .”]

² [This intention, however, was not carried out; only the first fifty examples of the “Standard Series” were arranged.]

³ [The preface in the *Catalogue of Examples* continued as follows:—

“The second series is for immediate service, and composed partly of exercises to be copied; partly of examples for reference with respect to practical questions. It is to be called the Educational Series, and referred to in the Lectures as Edu. 1, Edu. 2, etc. I may extend this series indefinitely for some time.

“The third series consists of examples, not standard, but having qualities worthy of notice and necessary for illustration. It is to be called the Reference Series, and will be of quite . . .”]

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in this Catalogue, all belong to the Standard Series. The numbers beyond 50 are part of the Reference Series, which will be of quite mixed character, as supplementary to the two others, and referred to in the Lectures as Ref. 1, Ref. 2, etc.¹

I am obliged to leave blanks in my numbers. I think it better to do this than to change the numbers continually.

[STANDARD SERIES]

1. *Brignol Banks, on the Greta, near Rokeby.* Engraved from Turner's drawing in the Yorkshire Series.²

It is chosen as an example of the best English painting and engraving of recent times. The design is among the loveliest of all Turner's local landscapes, and the engraving shows the peculiar attainments of recent line work in England; namely, the rendering of local colour and subdued tones of light. The hills are all dark with foliage, and the expression of the fading light of evening upon them is given distinctively, as different from the full light of noon. In the best old engraving the high lights on the trees would have been white, and the light would have been clear and simple, but not, unless by some conventional arrangement of rays, expressive of any particular hour of the day. I do not mean it to be understood, however, that the English engraving is better, or that its aim is altogether wiser than that of the early school; but

¹ [Instead of "I am obliged . . . continually," the *Catalogue of Examples* reads:—
"About 200 pieces in all, belonging to these three groups, are already placed in the University Galleries, and will be found enough for introductory study."]

² [In the *Catalogue of Examples* Ruskin added the following lines:—

"Yet sang she, 'Brignol banks are fair,
And Greta woods are green,

.
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer queen."

The passage is put together from the song in canto xvi. of *Rokeby*. The engraving (by S. Rawle) was the last plate but one in T. D. Whitaker's *Richmondshire*. For references to the subject, see *Lectures on Art*, § 25 (Vol. XX. p. 36), and *Lectures on Landscape*, § 100 (Vol. XXII. p. 69).]

XXV



Allen & Co. Sc.

J.M.W. Turner, R.A.

The Junction of the Greta and Tees

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only that it has this merit of its own, deserving our acknowledgment. Other reasons for the choice of this subject to begin the Series are noted in the first Lecture; two chief ones are that the little glen is a perfect type of the loveliest English scenery, touched by imaginative associations; and that the treatment of it by Turner is entirely characteristic, both of his own temper throughout life, and of the pensiveness of the great school of chiaroscuroists to which he belongs.¹

2. *The Junction of the Greta and Tees at Rokeby.*²

A faultless example of Turner's work at the time when it is most exemplary. It will serve us for various illustrations as we advance in the study of landscape, but it may be well to note of it at once, that in the painting of the light falling on the surface of the Tees, and shining through the thicket above the Greta, it is an unrivalled example of chiaroscuro of the most subtle kind;—obtained by the slightest possible contrasts, and by consummate skill in the management of gradation. The rock and stone drawing is not less wonderful, and entirely good as a lesson in practice.

The house seen through the trees is Mr. Morrith's (Scott's friend). "The grounds belonged to a dear friend with whom I had lived in habits of intimacy many years, and the place itself united the romantic beauties of the wilds of Scotland with the rich and smiling aspect of the southern portion of the island."—(Introduction to *Rokeby*.)

¹ [See *Lectures on Art*, §§ 161, 185 (Vol. XX. pp. 155, 174); and *Lectures on Landscape*, § 44 (Vol. XXII. p. 40).]

² [The original water-colour drawing; here reproduced (Plate XXV.). It was engraved (by John Pye) in *Richmondshire*. Ruskin says that he denied himself much in giving it to Oxford (Vol. XIII. p. 444), and calls it the best of his Turner drawings (*Lectures on Landscape*, § 8). For other references to the drawing, see *Lectures on Art*, §§ 25, 170 (Vol. XX., pp. 36, 163); the note on No. 14 in the *Catalogue of Examples* (Educational Series), below, p. 61; Vol. XIII. pp. 431, 444; the Introduction to Vol. XIX. p. xxxviii.; *Lectures on Landscape*, § 100; and *Eagle's Nest*, § 9 (Vol. XXII.). In the little inn at Rokeby, Ruskin stayed in 1876; the visitors' book contains the following entry in his hand:—

" Prof. Ruskin } Very happy here from
Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Severn } 2nd to 4th May, 1876."

See *Richmondshire Illustrated by . . . Turner, with Descriptions by Mrs. Alfred Hunt*, 1891, p. 76, where the entry is thus printed.]

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3. *Scene on the Loire*.¹

Chosen in farther illustration of the pensiveness of the chiaroscuroist school, and as a faultless example of Turner's later and most accomplished work. It is painted wholly in solid colour, as No. 2 is painted wholly in transparent; and the two drawings together show the complete management of colours soluble in water, or thin liquid of any kind, and laid on grounds which are to be made to contribute to the effect. The lights in the first drawing, and the grey sky and water in the second, are of course both the grounds left, white and grey.

4. *Melencolia*. (Engraving by Albert Dürer.)

In connection with this plate, I wish you to read the chapter on Dürer and Salvator, in the fifth volume of *Modern Painters*,² and to note farther these few things.

All first-rate work in modern days must be done in some degree of sorrow of heart, for it is necessarily founded on whatever the workman has felt most deeply, both respecting his own life, and that of his fellow-creatures; nor has it been possible for any man, keen-sighted and gentle-hearted (and all the greatest artists are so), to be satisfied in his own prosperity, even if he feels it sufficient for his needs, while so many around him are wretched; or in his creed, even though he feels it sufficient for his own comfort, since the questioning spirit of the Reformation has broken through the childish peaceful, and too often childish selfish and cruel, confidence of the early religious ages. I have therefore given you the *Melencolia* as the best type of the spirit of labour in which the greater number of

¹ [The original water-colour drawing, one of the grey-paper series made for the *Rivers of France*, but unpublished. "Quite inestimable" Ruskin calls it (Vol. XIII. p. 449); and compare *Lectures on Art*, § 25 (Vol. XX. p. 36). For other references to it, see *Lectures on Landscape*, § 74, and *Art of England*, § 122. Mr. Macdonald made a copy of it for Ruskin, which he there refers to. Ruskin presented the copy to the Felstead Diocesan College, in the Banbury Road, Oxford. For a note on the way in which Turner here laid his colours, see the "Instructions," § 16 (below, p. 249).]

² [In this edition, Vol. VII. p. 312, where a reproduction of the plate is given. In addition to the references given in the note at that place, see Vol. VI. p. 64; Vol. VII. p. lxx.; and Vol. XV. p. 79.]

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strong men at the present day have to work: nevertheless, I must warn you against overrating the depth of the feeling in which the grave or terrible designs of the masters of the sixteenth century were executed. Those masters were much too good craftsmen to be heavily afflicted about anything; their minds were mainly set on doing their work, and they were able to dwell on grievous or frightful subjects all the more forcibly because they were not themselves liable to be overpowered by any emotions of grief or terror.

Albert Dürer, especially, has had credit for deeper feeling than ever influenced him; he was essentially a Nürnberg craftsman, with much of the instinct for manufacture of toys on which the commercial prosperity of his native town has been partly founded: he is, in fact, almost himself the whole town of Nürnberg—become one personality (not without avarice); sometimes, in the exquisitely skilful, yet dreamily passive, way in which he renders all that he saw, great things and small alike, he seems to me himself a kind of automaton, and the most wonderful toy that Nürnberg ever made.¹

5. *The Virgin, with St. George and St. Catherine.*² (John Bellini.)

This is the most accurate type I can find of the best that has yet been done by man in art;—the best, that is to say, counting by the sum of qualities in perfect balance;

¹ [The MS. adds:—

“I have given you in the exercise series his scene from the Apocalypse with the lights of the Seven Churches: he represents them as tallow candles, guttering.”

The woodcut referred to was No. 69 in the Rudimentary Series (below, p. 187), but was afterwards removed; a reproduction of it may be seen at p. 17 of *Dürer*, by H. Knackfuss.]

² [The photograph in the frame is of a picture, formerly in the Pourtales Collection at Paris and now lost sight of. It is of the Madonna and Child, blessing a kneeling donor, and attended by four saints (one of whom is St. George and another of whom may be St. Catherine); the picture is called on the mount of the photograph “La Vierge au Donateur.” It is impossible to say whether the photograph is the example which Ruskin intended by his title, or whether he had subsequently substituted it for one of some other picture by Bellini. He greatly admired the “Virgin, with St. Paul and St. George” (No. 610 in the Venetian Academy)—a picture of which Mr. Fairfax Murray made a copy; also the “Virgin, with St. John and St. Catherine,” in the Redentore (now often ascribed to Bissolo): for references to the pictures in the Redentore, see Vol. X. p. 443 and Vol. XI. p. 399. To the jewel-painting in the picture shown in “Standard No. 5” he refers in *Eagle’s Nest*, § 218 (Vol. XXII. p. 272); in the Pourtales Collection, the Virgin wears a jewelled head-dress; in the Redentore picture, St. Catherine wears jewels on her head and bodice.]

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and ranking errorless workmanship as the first of virtues, generally implying, in an educated person, all others. A partially educated man may do his mechanical work well, yet have many weaknesses: his precision may even be a sign of great folly or cruelty; but a man of richly accomplished mind, who does his mechanical work strictly, is likely to be in all other matters right.

This picture has no fault, as far as I can judge. It is deeply, rationally, unaffectedly devotional, with the temper of religion which is eternal in high humanity. It has all the great and grave qualities of art, and all the delicate and childish ones. Few pictures are more sublime, and none more precise. It will serve us in innumerable ways for future reference; and I like to place it beside Dürer's solemn engraving, on account of the relations of these two men at Venice.

Dürer's words respecting this matter are usually quoted somewhat inaccurately. Here is the quaint old German in, I believe, its authentic form, as it was written to Wilibald Pirkheimer, in Nürnberg, from Venice, 9th of the night, Saturday after Candlemas, 1506 (7th February):¹—

“Ich hab vill guter freund under den Walhen (Wälshen;—Italians), dy mich warnen, das Ich mit Iren Molern nit es und trinck. Auch sind mir Ir vill feind, und machen mein Ding in kirchen ab, und wo sy es mügen bekumen, noch schelten sy es und sagen es sey nit antigisch art, dozu sey es nit gut; aber Sambellinus der hatt mich vor vill Gentilomen fast ser gelobt, er wolt gern etwas von mir haben, und ist selber zu mir kumen, und hat mich gepetten, Ich soll Im etwas machen, er wols woll tzalen. Und sagen mir dy leut alle, wy es so ein frumer man sey, das Ich Im gleich günstig pin. Er ist ser alt und ist noch der pest im gemell, und das Ding, das mir vor eilff jorn so woll hat gefallen, das gefelt mir jtznit mer.”*

* Von Murr, *Journal zur Kunstgeschichte*, x. p. 8. Nürnberg, 1781. Found and translated for me by Mr. R. N. Wornum.

¹ [Compare *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. p. 436), where Ruskin gives another translation of the passage. For further references to Bellini's intercourse with Dürer, see No. 36 (below, p. 24).]

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“I have many good friends among the Italians, who warn me not to eat and drink with their painters. Many also of them are my enemies; they copy my things for the churches, picking them up whenever they can. Yet they abuse my style, saying that it is not antique art, and that therefore it is not good. But Giambellini has praised me much before many gentlemen; he wishes to have something of mine; he came to me and begged me to do something for him, and is quite willing to pay for it.¹ And every one gives him such a good character that I feel an affection for him. He is very old, and is yet the best in painting; and the thing which pleased me so well eleven years ago has now no attractions for me” (speaking of his own work, I presume).

6. *Three Pages of a Psalter*, containing in its Calendar the death-days of the Father, Mother, and Brother of St. Louis,* and, without doubt, written for him by the monks of the Sainte Chapelle, while he was on his last crusade; therefore, before 1270.²

It is impossible, therefore, that you can see a more perfect specimen of the art “che alluminare è chiamata in

* I have placed the manuscript itself, with a separately framed page of its calendar, containing the obituary sentence, written in gold, of the mother of St. Louis, “Obitus Blanchiæ, reginæ Francorum,” on the table in the larger room.³

¹ [Compare *Ariadne Florentina*, § 169 (Vol. XXII. p. 413).]

² [Frame 6 is now blank; and the book itself was only temporarily placed in the Ruskin Drawing School. Ruskin had detached nine leaves in all; six of these were placed by him at Oxford, and three were given to Professor Norton. The six leaves at Oxford were in 1904 exchanged with Mrs. Severn by the Trustees of the Ruskin Drawing School for other objects, and the three leaves in possession of Professor Norton were similarly returned, in order that the Psalter might be preserved intact; it is now in the collection of Mr. Henry Yates Thompson, who has issued the following work: *A Psalter and Hours executed before 1270 for a Lady connected with St. Louis, probably his sister Isabelle of France, Founder of the Abbey of Longchamp, now in the Collection of Henry Yates Thompson*. Described by S. C. Cockerell in relation to the Companion Psalter of St. Louis in Paris, with Photogravures of all the Miniatures by Emery Walker. London: Printed at the Chiswick Press, 1905. Among the examples given in exchange to the Ruskin Trustees were enlargements by Ruskin of two letters from this Psalter, now in the Drawing School (see below, p. 300). For further references to the Psalter, see Vol. XII. pp. lxix., 479; and for other notes by Ruskin on the pages, see *Catalogue of the Rudimentary Series, 1878*, No. 13 (below, p. 270), and *Val d'Arno*, § 59.]

³ [This refers to an earlier arrangement of the collection; the Ruskin Drawing School is now housed in one large room.]

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Parisi”;¹ and you are thus introduced to the schools of all painting, by the very work of which Dante first thought, when he spoke of their successive pride, and successive humiliation.

The three pages contain the beginnings of the 14th, 53rd, and 99th Psalms, with the latter verses of the 13th and 52nd. The large central² letter is the D of “Dixit insipiens in (corde suo)” written. The fool is represented as in haste, disordered and half-naked, lost in a wood without knowing that he is so, eating as he goes, and with a club in his hand. The representation is constant in all early psalters.

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7. *St. Catherine*. Page of Service-book written for the Convent of Beaupré in 1290.³

Rude, but standard, as an example of method in the central schools of illumination.

8. *St. John the Baptist*.⁴ (Cima da Conegliano.)

An example of perfect delineation by the school of colour.

9. *Knight and Death*.⁵ (Dürer.)

An example of perfect delineation by the school of chiaroscuro.

This plate has usually been interpreted as the victory of human patience over death and sin. But I believe later

¹ [*Purgatorio*, xi. 81. See Vol. XII. p. 477, where the passage is cited with its context and translated.]

² [The page here described by Ruskin is shown on Plate V. of the volume described in the note on p. 15.]

³ [For other references to this Service-book, see Vol. XII. p. 494 and *n.*, and *Lectures on Art*, § 146 (eds. 1-3); Vol. XX. p. 138 *n.* See also *Catalogue of Examples*, 11 c (below, p. 60). The page is numbered “375” by Ruskin.]

⁴ [Photograph of the picture in La Madonna dell’ Orto, Venice. Compare Educational Series, No. 20 (below, pp. 77, 115). And see *Lectures on Art*, § 150 (Vol. XX. p. 141), where the example is more fully described.]

⁵ [Frame 9 is now blank, Ruskin having afterwards removed the plate. For a reproduction of it, see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 310), where the subject of the design is discussed. In addition to the passages there referred to in a note, see Preface to *Eagle’s Nest*, and *Ariadne Florentina*, § 37.]

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critics are right in supposing it to be the often-mentioned "Nemesis"; and that the patience and victory are meant to be Death's and the Fiend's, not the rider's.

The design itself, which is the one referred to in the second Lecture (§ 47¹), is not rendered less didactic by its ambiguity. The relations of death to all human effort, and of sin to all human conscience, are themselves so ambiguous that nothing can be rightly said of either, unless it admits of some counter-interpretation. Nevertheless, I believe Dürer's real meaning is not only established by recent inquiry, but sufficiently indicated by his making the tuft on the spear, for catching the blood, so conspicuous. Had he intended the knighthood to be sacred, the spear would have had a banner, as always in his engravings of St. George.

10. *Adam and Eve*.² (Dürer.)

His best plate in point of execution, and in that respect unrivalled. Next to it may be placed the coat of arms with the skull.³ Execution, remember, is to be estimated by the intrinsic value of every line. That is the best in which every separate line is doing the most and truest work.

11. *The "Vierge aux Rochers" of the Louvre*.⁴ (Leonardo.)

The engraving gives a false idea of the picture in many important points; but it is in some respects more pleasing by refusing to follow Leonardo in his extreme darkness, and it accurately enough represents his sense of grace and the

¹ [*i.e.*, in the inaugural *Lectures on Art*: see Vol. XX. p. 55.]

² [For other references to this plate, see below, p. 188; Vol. XI. p. 172 and *n.*; and *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 128, 129, 169.]

³ [The *Catalogue of the Reference Series* (but not the *Catalogue of Examples*) here adds a reference to "Edu. 51." The "Coat of Arms with Skull" is, however, No. 65 in the Rudimentary Series (below, p. 186).]

⁴ [For references to the picture, see Vol. XII. pp. 113, 450, 451, 456, 460; see also Plate XII. in that volume.]