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THE STYLES OF RUSKIN

BY

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A. B. Illinois Wesleyan University, 1914

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

Ruth M. Hefferman

ENTITLED

The Styles of Ruskin

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DEGREE OF

Master of Arts

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CHAPTER I
FORMATIVE INFLUENCES

The name of Ruskin appears in connection with a variety of subjects and interests. In his many volumes, our author, with his characteristic tone of authority, has spoken on Art, Architecture, Political Economy, Sociology and Ethics; but when one reads Ruskin, no matter what the subject, or what the idea set forth, one cannot fail to be impressed with his style, with the manner in which his thought is expressed. So, although his theories of Art and Political Economy have been mercilessly attacked, today all the world stands up and in one voice declares him to be one of the greatest masters of prose in English Literature. "No writer of prose," says Frederick Harrison, "before or since has ever rolled forth such mighty fantasies, or reached such pathetic melodies in words, or composed long books in one sustained strain of limpid grace."¹ This is but a typical expression of the praise which is everywhere accorded to Ruskin the Stylist. As we feel the power and beauty of his language we wonder where he found this magic power of words which so many seek in vain. Pure genius, but by studying his early life, his temperament, and the influences exerted upon it, we may perhaps find some partial explanation of the way in which this innate genius found expression.

From infancy Ruskin seems to have been destined for a literary career. Along with the cherished hope that their child would one day be a bishop, his parents combined their ambitions for him

¹ Frederick Harrison. "Tennyson, Ruskin, Mill." p. 51-2
as a poet; and the boy himself turned instinctively to the field of letters. At the age of five he was already a book worm, and at six he began active work as a writer. These early compositions were of course almost entirely imitated from what he studied, yet they are most interesting, in that they display not only fairly correct spelling, but also not a little skill in literary expression. "Harry and Lucy, Printed and Composed by a little boy and also drawn" ¹ is a remarkable specimen of Ruskin's work at the age of seven. The great master was himself sufficiently struck with its signs of genius to insert a portion of it in the first volume of "Praeterita." The following is a part of the extract given there. "After this phenomenon was over and also the surprise Harry began to wonder how electricity could get where there was so much water but he soon-observed a rainbow and a-rising mist under it which his fancy soon transformed into a female form. He then remembered the witch of the waters at the Alps who was raised from them by-takeing some water in the-hand and throwing it into the air pronouncing some unintelligable words." ² This is indeed a noteworthy composition for a child of seven; it is especially interesting in that it affords a very early illustration of that later style which so artlessly runs from the purely scientific to the wholly imaginative. It is typical of Ruskin's temperament, of the combination of the scientific observer with the imaginative dreamer. "Harry and Lucy" and a number of such compositions and poems represent the manner in which the boy Ruskin spent much of

¹ "Praeterita, I. p. 65
² ibid. I. p. 69
his play time. Composition was one of his favorite forms of amusement. He made books and poems while other children of his age were engaged in romping games. Like the youths in the Age of Chivalry he acquired consummate skill by playing with the weapons he was one day to wield in deadly earnest.

Ruskin's early education was carried on at home by his father and mother; it was decidedly literary in its manner. In "Praeterita" he tells in his own charming manner of the various influences affecting his literary development. Here we learn that from early youth he was acquainted with great writers. Homer and Scott were his first masters, and he read Pope's translation of the Iliad and Scott's novels on week days, and "Robinson Crusoe" and "Pilgrims Progress" on Sundays. In the evenings his father read Shakespeare, Scott, Pope, Spenser, Byron, Goldsmith, Addison and Johnson to Mrs. Ruskin, and John would sit quietly and listen. The father had excellent literary taste and was a reader of considerable ability. "My father," says Ruskin, "gave me the best example of emotional reading,—reading, observe, proper, not recitation which he disdained and I disliked." 2

To his mother the cultivation of his literary taste owed even a greater debt for it was she who impressed upon him the perfection of the Bible as a model of beautiful and chaste English. Mrs. Ruskin required him to read aloud two or three chapters, and to memorize several verses of the Bible every day. He had to pronounce every word perfectly, even the most difficult ones. In this

1 "Praeterita", I. lff.

2 ibid. I. p. 174
way Ruskin read the Bible through again and again. He himself emphasizes particularly the great influence which this training had upon his style, and its effect is shown continually throughout his works, as we will endeavor to show later in this paper. In speaking of his mother's training he says, "I have next with deeper gratitude to chronicle what I owed to my mother for the resolutely consistent lessons which so exercised me in the scriptures as to make every word of them familiar to my ear in habitual music. I had to learn the whole body of the fine old Scotch paraphrases—and to these, together with the Bible itself, I owe the first cultivation of my ear in sound." ¹ He also attributes his power of taking pains and "the best part"² of his taste in literature to his reading of the Bible, considering it "the most precious and on the whole the one essential part"³ of all his education. The following statement shows how the Bible became to Ruskin the ultimate standard of literary style, saving him from following less perfect models: "From Walter Scott's novels I might easily, as I grew older, have fallen to other peoples novels; and Pope might, perhaps, have led me to take Johnson's English or Gibbon's, as types of language, but, once knowing, the 32nd of Deuteronomy, the 119th Psalm, the 15th of 1st Corinthians, the Surmon on the Mount, and most of the Apocalypse, every syllable by heart, and having always a way of thinking with myself what words meant, it was not possible for me, even in the foolishest times of

¹ "Praeterita", I. 44 ff.
² ibid. I. p. 2
³ ibid. I. 44 ff.
youth, to write entirely superficial or formal English; and the affectation of trying to write like Hooker and George Herbert was the most innocent I could have fallen into.\(^1\) Ruskin's course in Bible continued from the time he was able to read until he entered Oxford. That his mother was not only an insistent but also a capable teacher, as evident from the fact that she occupied the nine years of her engagement to Ruskin's father in cultivating her mind, that she might be a fit companion for her future husband. Ruskin maintains that she acquired "perfect skill in English reading."\(^2\) He also speaks of her influence upon his diction. "My mother," he says, "was both able to teach me, and resolved that I should learn, absolute accuracy of diction and precision of accent in prose; and made me know as soon as I could speak plain, what I have in all later years tried to enforce on my readers, that accuracy of diction means accuracy of sensation, and precision of accent, precision of feeling."\(^3\) Truly Ruskin owed much to that wise and earnest mother, who, amid the various influences at work upon him, ever held up before the mind of the boy, a book which was at once a model and an inspiration. "Perhaps only those who from early life have been saturated with the grand music of scripture can quite understand what a matchless education in language this habit can become to a serious nature and a sensitive ear."\(^4\)

When Ruskin was in his early teens his father started to read Byron to him. The powerful poet made a profound impression

\(^1\) "Praeterita", I. 1 ff.
\(^2\) ibid. I. p. 174
\(^3\) ibid. I. p. 174
\(^4\) Frederic Harrison, "John Ruskin", p. 9
upon Ruskin and he chose Byron as his master in verse, declaring that "his chosen expression was the most concentrated" that he had yet found in literature. Although Ruskin imitated Byron in a number of verses his influence was not a permanent one. "My respect for the structural as opposed fluent, force of the classic measures supported as it was partly by my own architect's instinct for the principle of the pyramid, made me long endeavour, in forming my prose style, to keep the cadences of Pope and Johnson for all serious statement."  

As the above statement suggests Johnson did exert a more permanent influence over Ruskin's style. In his early works he imitated the unique manner of the great Doctor, partly because he "couldn't help it, partly of set and sell set purpose." Ruskin came under the influence of Johnson's style during the journeys through Europe which he frequently took with his father and mother. They travelled leisurely, by carriage, in the way Ruskin lover, and in odd moments his father read to the little party. "And accordingly, in spare hours, and on wet days, the turns and returns of reiterated Rambler and iterated Idler fastened themselves in my ears and mind, nor was it possible for me till long afterward, to quit myself of Johnsonian symmetry and balance in sentences intended, either with swordsman's or paviour's blows, to cleave an enemy's crest, or drive down the oaken pile of a principle-------I valued his sentences not primarily because they were symmetrical, 

1"Praeterita", I. p. 315
2 ibid. I. p. 227
3 ibid. I. p. 344
but because they were just and clear;"¹ It was the Bible, we will remember, which saved Ruskin from adopting Johnson as his model in English.

Such were the influences at work upon the youth of Ruskin; the best of literary styles, and no others were all that he was allowed to know. He had no companions, and seemed to have cared for none. He was alone with nature and the great masters, with "the sky, leaves and pebbles—and flights into regions of romance."² It was a life well suited to him; "I remember," he says," with most pleasure the time when it was most regular and most salutary."³ He studied, read and wrote; during his youth he traveled a great deal over England and Europe, feasting his eyes upon the beauties of nature just as his sensitive ear was responding to the music of the masters. Very early he began the practice of recording his impressions of the beautiful scenery which he saw. Thus did this impressionable boy, "saturated with love of nature and with masterpieces in poetry and prose,"⁴ develop, and gradually discover to himself and the world that he was to be the great Prose-Poet of Nature.

Ruskin's education under various tutors, and even his Oxford career, appear to have had little effect upon his prose style. With nature, the best writers, his own native genius, sensitive ear and responsive soul, he had little need of or aid from pedagogic direction. Some efficient teacher, alive to his possibilities, might have laid a restraining hand upon his enthusiasm, and aided ————————————————————
¹"Praeterita", I. 343 ff.
²ibid. I. 39 ff.
³ibid. I. p. 193
⁴Harrison, "John Ruskin", p. 15
him to keep it in bounds; however, such an influence was not exerted, and time only, taught him with partial success the immense value of reserve. Ruskin sums up the contribution of Oxford in a passage of delightful humor, "I have no space in this story to describe the advantages I never used; nor does my own failure give me right to blame, even were there any use in blaming a system now passed away. Oxford taught me as much Greek and Latin as she could."

For the rest, the whole time I was there my mind was simply in the state of a squash before 'tis a peasod."  

The literary style of Ruskin, the result of this combination of a rare genius with unusual training, is illustrated by various extracts from his diary kept during his early travels. The following is a portion of the diary written when Ruskin was twenty-one years of age: "Sestri, Nov. 4th (1840). Very wet all morning; merely able to get the four miles to this most lovely village, the clouds drifting like smoke from the hills, and hanging in wreaths about the white churches on their woody slopes. Kept in here till three, then the clouds broke, as we got up the woody promontory that overhangs the village. The clouds were rising gradually from the Apennines, fragments entangled here and there in the ravines catching the level sunlight like so many tongues of fire; the dark blue outline of the hills clear as crystal against a pale distant purity of green sky, the sun touching here and there upon their turfy precipices, and the white, square villages along the gulph gleaming like silver to the northwest;--a mass of higher mountains, plunging down in groad valleys dark with olive, their summits at first grey with rain, then deep blue with flying showers--"Praeterita", II. 27 f.
the sun suddenly catching the near woods at their base, already
coloured exquisitely by the autumn, with such a burst of robing,—
penetrating, glow as Turner only could even imagine, set off by the
grey storm behind. To the south, an expanse of sea, varied by re-
flection of white Alpine cloud, and delicate lines of most pure
blue, the low sun sending its line of light—forty miles long—from
the horizon; the surges dashing far below against rocks of black
marble, and lines of foam drifting back with the current into the
open sea. Overhead, a group of dark Italian pine and evergreen oak,
with such lovely ground about their roots as we have in the best
bits of the islands of Derwentwater. This continued till near sun-
set, when a tall double rainbow rose to the east over the fiery woo
woods, and as the sun sank, the storm of falling rain on the moun-
tains became suddenly purple—nearly crimson; the rainbow, its hues
scarcely traceable, one broad belt of crimson, the clouds above all
fire. The whole scene such as can only come once or twice in a
lifetime."

Here we see Ruskin's style at the close of this formative
period. I have quoted the above extract in full because it is so
typical an example of the charms, the idiosyncrasies and the extra-
vagances of Ruskin's early prose. Furthermore its value is greatly
enhanced by the fact that it is the writer's own natural manner of
expression, effected by no thought of a possible reader. Ruskin
himself said, it was "written for my own use——and neither to
please papa, nor to be printed,—with corrections,—by Mr. Harrison"
Here at the outstart is first hand evidence that, though Ruskin's manner of writing may be highly "artistic," it is not artificial nor affected. Here is the typical "Ruskinian" ornate style, with its vivid word pictures, portraying the changing effects of color and form in Nature. Here, too, are the long sentences built up tier after tier, each phrase a stroke of the painter's brush. Here are also punctuation marks in considerable profusion; the dash inevitably found on the pages of Ruskin has already taken its place as a characteristic detail.

We have endeavored in the previous pages to set forth the formative influences on Ruskin's style, believing that a knowledge of the conditions under which the style developed, will be conducive of a true understanding of the resulting product. Having thus obtained a background for our study, we are ready to examine the style of Ruskin during what we shall call the first period of his work, which extended from 1843 to 1860.
CHAPTER II

THE FIRST MANNER

1843-1860

The publication of the first volume of "Modern Painters" in 1843 marks the beginning of Ruskin's career as an "Apostle of Nature and Art." The young "Graduate of Oxford" set out with all the enthusiasm of youth to champion Nature and the great revealer of her charms, J. M. W. Turner. Of the style which characterizes Ruskin's work during this period we have had a suggestive illustration in the extract quoted from Ruskin's note book. And now through the richly adorned portals of "Modern Painters" we are ushered into a gallery of the most gorgeous paintings ever wrought by an artist of words. Here is the style of the prose-poet of Nature for which we have been prepared; it is the luxuriant flamboyant style, rich, impassioned, highly colored, wonderfully graceful, wonderfully rhythmical. It is not the style of conventional criticism, for Ruskin was not primarily a critic; it is the aesthetic treatment of aesthetic subjects by a man of most sensitive and artistic temperament, a man who has all the enthusiasm and conviction of the prophet, and all the intense feeling for rhythm and beauty of the poet. Much of "Modern Painters," "The Seven Lamps Of Architecture" and "The Stones Of Venice" give the reader the same emotional stir as does the movement of impassioned poetry. One even
catches the lyric cry of the poet in the eloquence of Ruskin's lines. Hence the temperament of the author and the nature of his subjects combine in explaining to a considerable degree the character of his stype. Further, in the first volume of "Modern Painters" Ruskin was the voluntary defender and champion of Turner, hence the intense enthusiasm and spirit, which accompanies the desire to establish the fame of the unrecognized great. And in all the leading works of this period and in fact of his entire career, Ruskin is really very much a preacher, setting up his Nature worship and his standards of right, and mercilessly denouncing errors, with all the energy and impetuous eloquence of a zealous missionary.

If one were to point out the field in which Ruskin stands a perfect master, one would, I think, unhesitatingly choose that of descriptive prose. The power, splendor and vitality of Ruskin's descriptions defy comparison. Frederic Harrison has touched the secret underlying the peculiar charm of these descriptions when he says, "In Ruskin's prose perhaps for the first time in literature, there are met the eye of the landscape painter and the voice of the lyric poet."¹ Ruskin is a word painter in no ordinary sense of the term; he has the perception of color and form, light and shade of a Turner, and the sympathy with and understanding of Nature, of a Wordsworth, combined with a control over the varied powers of language peculiarly his own.

In presenting his word paintings Ruskin's method is that of piling up details until the whole picture is presented with life

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and vividness, and often with the effect of climax. His famous descriptions are suggestive rather than expository; he gives not only the picture but its emotional atmosphere as well. We see the object not simply as it is but with the feeling with which the writer himself beheld it, and having caught the spirit of the word artist, we turn from his highly realised picture to nature and find in her, hitherto unnoticed loveliness. The following passages, both descriptions of the Campagna of Rome, are powerful productions of Ruskin the landscapist:

"Perhaps there is no more impressive scene on earth than the solitary extent of the Campagna of Rome under evening light. Let the reader imagine himself for a moment withdrawn from the sounds and motions of the living world, and sent forth alone into this wild and wasted plain. The earth yields and crumbles beneath his foot, tread he never so lightly, for its substance is white, hollow, and carious, like the dusty wreck of the bones of men. The long knotted grass waves and tosses feebly in the evening wind, and the shadows of its motion shake feverishly along the bards of ruin that lift themselves to the sunlight. Hillocks of mouldering earth heave around him, as if the dead beneath were struggling in their sleep, scattered blocks of black stone, four-square, remnants of mighty edifices, not one left upon another, lie upon them to keep them down. A dull purple, poisonous haze stretches level along the desert, veiling its spectral wrecks of massy ruins, on whose rents the red light rests like dying fire on defiled altars. The blue ridge of the Alban mount lifts itself against a solemn space of green, clear, quiet sky. Watch-towers of dark clouds stand stead-
fastly along the promontories of the Apennines. From the plain to the mountains, the shattered aqueducts, pier beyond pier, melt into the darkness, like shadowy and countless troops of funeral mourners, passing from a nation's grave.¹

"It had been wild weather when I left Rome, and all across the Campagna the clouds were sweeping in sulphurous blue, with a clap of thunder or two, and breaking gleams of sun along the Claudian aqueduct lighting up the infinity of its arches like the bridge of chaos. But as I climbed the long slope of the Alban mount, the storm swept finally to the north, and the noble outline of the domes of Albano and graceful darkness of its ilex grove rose against pure streaks of alternate blue and amber, the upper sky gradually flushing through the last fragments of rain-cloud in deep palpitating azure, half ether and half dew. The noon-day sun came slanting down the rocky slopes of La Riccia, and its masses of entangled and tall foliage, whose autumnal tints were mixed with the wet verdure of a thousand evergreens, were penetrated with it as with rain. I cannot call it color, it was conflagration. Purple, and crimson, and scarlet, like the curtains of God's tabernacle, the rejoicing trees sank into the valley in showers of light, every separate leaf quivering with buoyant and burning life; each, as it turned to reflect or to transmit the sunbeam, first a torch and then an emerald. Far up into the recesses of the valley, the green vistas arched like the hollows of mighty waves of some crystalline sea, with the arbutus flowers dashed along their flanks for foam, and

silver flakes of orange spray tossed into the air around them, breaking over the gray walls of rock into a thousand separate stars, fading and kindling alternately as the weak wind lifted and let them fall. Every glade of grass burned like the golden floor of heaven, opening in sudden gleams as the foliage broke and closed above it, as sheet-lightning opens in a cloud at sunset; the motionless masses of dark rock--dark though flushed with scarlet lichen,--casting their quiet shadows across its restless radiance, the foundation underneath them filling its marble hollow with blue mist and fitful sound, and over all--the multitudinous bars of amber and rose, the sacred clouds that have no darkness, and only exist to illumine, were seen in fathomless intervals between the solemn and orbed repose of the stone pines, passing to lose themselves in the last, white, blinding lustre of the measureless line where the Campagna melted into the blaze of the sea.¹

These are both powerful descriptions of the Campagna but with very different points of view, the one occupied with the single impression of solemn evening gloom, the other, a shifting panorama of gorgeous views and changing colors. Ruskin, in his word painting, has the same power which he so admired in Turner, that of presenting the same scene from several points of view and with different effects. He is not satisfied to picture nature at rest; but he sweeps in upon his great canvas all her varying color and form, catching her momentary aspects, her every humor and caprice. "A great man lends a voice to the hills and adds a music to the streams; he looks on the sea, and it becomes more calmly beautiful, on the

clouds and they are more radiantly touched; he becomes a priest of
the mysteries, a dispenser of the charities, of nature, and men call
him poet. Ruskin stands among a select and honored few, who have
thus interpreted nature's meaning, and conveyed her bounty to man-
kind."

In much the same manner are Ruskin's descriptions of paint-
ings and buildings; with the pen he reproduces the picture vividly,
with life and character, putting into it the emotions which it has
inspired in him; thus by recreating the atmosphere of the picture he
communicates to the reader the same impressions which he received
when he looked upon the masterpiece. His description of Turner's
Slave Ship is a superb translation of the language of paint, into
the language of words, preserving as it does the spirit of the orig-
inal:

"It is a sunset on the Atlantic after prolonged storm;
but the storm is partially lulled, and the torn and streaming rain-
clouds are moving in scarlet lines to lose themselves in the hollow
of the night. The whole surface of sea included in the picture is
divided into two ridges of enormous swell, not high, nor local, but
a low, broad heaving of the whole ocean, like the lifting of its
bosom by deep drawn breath after the torture of the storm. Between
these two ridges, the fire of the sunset falls along the trough of
the sea, dyeing it with an awful but glorious light, the intense and
lurid splendor which burns like gold and bathes like blood. Along
this fiery path and valley, the tossing waves by which the swell of

the sea is restlessly divided, lift themselves in dark, indefinite, fantastic forms, each casting a faint and ghastly shadow behind it along the illumined foam. They do not rise everywhere, but three or four together in wild groups, fitfully and furiously, as the under strength of the swell compels or permits them; leaving between them treacherous spaces of level and whirling water, now lighted with green and lamp-like fire, now flashing back the gold of the declining sun, now fearfully dyed from above with the indistinguishable images of the burning clouds, which fall upon them in flakes of crimson and scarlet, and give to the reckless waves the added motion of their own fiery flying. Purple and blue, the lurid shadows of the hollow breakers are cast upon the mist of the night, which gathers cold and low, advancing like the shadow of death upon the guilty ship as it labors amidst the lightning of the sea, its thin masts written upon the sky in lines of blood, girded with condemnation in that fearful hue which signs the sky with horror, and mixes its flaming flood with the sunlight,—and cast far far along the desolate heave of the sepulchral waves, incarnadines the multitudinous sea."

In many of his most elaborate and effective descriptions Ruskin employs the device which he has so characteristically termed "The Pathetic Fallacy." It is one of the ways by which he invests his scene with life, a sort of magic touch which awakens in the reader a sympathetic response. I will give a portion of the highly ornate passage in which life and feeling are thus given to the lowly mosses and lichen, unnoticed perhaps by many, until thus cele-

brated in the prose-poetry of "Modern Painters."

"Meek creatures! the first mercy of the earth, veiling with hushed softness its dintless rocks; creatures full of pity, covering with strange and tender honour the scarred disgrace of ruin—laying quiet finger on the trembling stones, to teach them rest.—

Yet as in one sense the humblest, in another they are the most honoured of the earth-children. Unfading, as motionless, the worm frets them no, and the autumn wastes not. Strong in lowliness, they neither blanch in heat nor pine in frost. To them slow-fingered, constant-hearted, is entrusted the weaving of the dark eternal tapestries of the hills; to them, slow-pencilled, iris-dyed, the tender framing of their endless imagery. Sharing the stillness of the unimpassioned rock, they share also its endurance; and while the winds of departing spring scatter the white hawthorn blossom like drifted snow, and summer dims on the parched meadow the drooping of its cowslip-gold,—far above, among the mountains, the silver lichen-spots rest, star-like, on the stone; and the gathering orange stain upon the edge of yonder western peak reflects the sunsets of a thousand years."

This brilliant power of description only begins an enumeration of the excellences of Ruskin's first manner. The grand style, with its sustained eloquence, its powerful rhetoric, its dramatic movement, its exquisite rhythm, is everywhere present throughout the work of this period. Ruskin complained that his books were read for their "pretty passages," and there is no doubt but that it is the beauty of the language which holds the reader when he is quite

indifferent to the author's theory of Art. And Ruskin's "rightest" and best thoughts strike one with unusual force because of the magnificent mold into which are cast. The style is stimulating in itself; it warms and fires the reader, carrying him on with its ever increasing force to a grand climax of thought and expression. Again and again the words catch fire, rising to convey the writer's enthusiasm. Splendor of diction and imagery combine with sonorous role of line to produce effects of unusual beauty and sublimity. The peroration to the Lamp Of Sacrifice is typical of the impassioned style, vibrating with emotion, and successfully effecting a dramatic climax.

"It is not less the boast of some styles that they can bear ornament, than of others that they can do without it, but we do not often enough reflect that those very styles, of so haughty simplicity, owe part of their pleasureableness to contrast, and would be wearisome if universal. They are but the rests and monotoines of the art, it is to its far happier, far higher, exaltation that we owe those fair fronts of variegated mosaic, charged with wild fancies and dark hosts of imagery, thicker and quaintier than ever filled the depth of midsummer dream; those vaulted gates, trellised with close leaves; those window-labyrinths of twisted tracery and starry light; those misty masses of multitudinous pinnacle and diademed tower; the only witnesses, perhaps, of the faith and fear of nations. All else for which the builders sacrificed, has passed away—all their living interests, and aims, and achievements. We know not for what they laboured, and we see no evidence
of their reward. Victory, wealth, authority, happiness—all have departed, though bought by many a bitter sacrifice. But of them, and their life and their toil upon the earth, one reward, one evidence, is left to us in those gray heaps of deep-wrought stone. They have taken with them to the grave their powers, their honours, and their errors; but they have left us their adoration.¹

Much has been said of the peculiarly musical quality of Ruskin's prose. One can scarcely read a passage of it without being struck with its easy, graceful, flow, its exquisitely modulated cadences. "The melody of Ruskin's prose," says Frederic Harrison, "may be matched with that of Milton and Shelley. I hardly know any other English prose which retains the ring of that ethereal music—echoes of which are more often heard in our poetry than in our prose².

Indeed the prose of the "Graduate of Oxford" stands at the vestibule of poetry and not infrequently enters its actual domain. Mr. Saintsbury says, "You will find in him more actual metre, and especially more actual blank verse, even allowing proportion for his immense volume, than in any great prose writer known to me."---------His astonishing blend of ingenuity and vigour actually carries off, not merely occasional blank heroies, but whole batches and almost paragraphs of them, unnoticed or half-noticed, in the gorgeous flood of colour and infinite symphony of sound."³

In attempting to account for the musical element in Ruskin's prose, Mr. Harrison brings forward the interesting and sug-

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gestive proposition, that Ruskin largely relies for his effects on alliteration and assonance, particularly the latter. That Ruskin uses alliteration to a very considerable degree is readily seen from the passages already quoted, and that assonance plays a noteworthy role is carefully set forth by Mr. Harrison. But these devices do not seem to me sufficient to explain the music of Ruskin's prose. Such an explanation is too simple, too mechanical; and I am inclined to agree with Mr. Cook's statement concerning Harrison's analysis of Ruskin's technique. "To such analysis as this," he says, "Ruskin would perhaps have remarked, in the words which, as he mentions, were used by Tennyson when some one pointed out to the poet various laws deduced from his versification: 'It's all true; I do observe them, but I never knew it.'" The secret of Ruskin's rhythm is found as was the secret of his descriptive art; he had not only "the voice of the lyric poet," but also the ear, the intuitive sense of the melody of language.

Any of the passages given above show Ruskin's gift of rhythm; several of them even show the passing of his prose into verse. The magnificent phrase which closes the description of the "Slave Ship:"

"Incarnadines the multitudinous sea" is an excellent heroic. The "lichen" passage also closes in verse:

"The gathering orange stain
Upon the edge of yonder western peak
Reflects the sunsets of a thousand years."

1 Harrison. "Tennyson, Ruskin, Mill." 57 ff.
The following selection, it seems to me, is a splendid illustration of Ruskin's prose-rhythm at its best. It is rhythmical, but not metrical, and it suggests the effect upon Ruskin's style, of the most important of its formative influences, the English Bible:

"He did not teach them how to build for glory and for beauty; He did not give them the fearless, faithful, inherited energies that worked on and down from death to death, generation after generation, that we might give the work of their poured-out spirit to the axe and the hammer; He has not cloven the earth with rivers, that their white wild waves might turn wheels and push paddles, nor turned it up under as it were fire, that it might heat wells and cure diseases; He brings not up His quails by the east wind only to let them fall in flesh about the camp of men; He has not heaped the rocks of the mountain only for the quarry, nor clothed the grass of the field only for the oven." ¹

The movement of this passage is altogether pleasing and impressive, deriving its charm undoubtedly from Scriptural rhythm. It is built up tier after tier, with effective repetition and balance of clauses producing a delightful impression of gradual rise and fall. The Bible exerted a great and permanent influence over Ruskin's style. It is seen not simply in the movement but in the phrasiology, imagery and allusions; his works have a decided biblical coloring. They are filled with quotations from the Scriptures and references to them; these are so numerous that one comes to think of them as a vital part of Ruskin's style. Take the Bible out

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of Ruskin's works and much of their charm and impressiveness is gone. He himself must have felt this source of strength, for in his most impassioned moments when he wishes to impress the reader with the weight and truth of his thought he turns to the Scriptures for his climax of rhetoric and argument. An eloquent passage in the Introductory of "The Seven Lamps Of Architecture" ends thus:

"The snow, the vapour, and the stormy wind fulfil His word. Are our acts and thoughts lighter and wilder than these—that we should forget it?" ¹

And the following grand finale is taken bodily from the Scriptures:

"And so what lesson we might receive for our earthly conduct from the creeping and laborious things, was taught us by that earthly King who made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones (yet thereafter was less rich toward God). But from the lips of a heavenly King, who had not where to lay His head, we were taught what lessons we have to learn from those higher creatures who sow not, nor reap, nor gather into barns, for their Heavenly Father feedeth them." ²

The influence of the Bible upon Ruskin's prose is the one great and lasting influence exerted upon it. It is noticeable alike in the work of his first and second period, increasing, if anything, in his later works. Mr. Cook estimates that the total number of references to the Bible, traced in the Index to his Complete Works must be about 5,000,³ and Mr. Hudson Shaw in a course of lectures

¹ "The Seven Lamps Of Architecture." p. 10.
on the "Life And Teaching of John Ruskin" points out that there are 450 Scriptural allusions in "Modern Painters" and 600 in "Fors." That signs of Scriptural influence do increase in quite consistent with the ever growing emphasis upon the moral and ethical in Ruskin's life and works.

But there are other than permanent influences effecting the Styles Of Ruskin, and in this period the one deserving special mention is that of Richard Hooker. The second volume of "Modern Painters" is written to a considerable degree after the manner of the "Ecclesiastical Polity;" it is the only one of Ruskin's works which is artificial, in which Ruskin definitely set himself to imitate the style of another. In speaking of the style of the second volume, he says, "The style of the book was formed on a new model, given me by Osborne Gordon. I was old enough now to feel that neither Johnsonian balance nor Byronic alliteration were ultimate virtues in English prose; and I had been reading with care, on Gordon's counsel, both for its arguments and its English, Richard Hooker's, 'Ecclesiastical Polity'. I had always a trick of imitating, more or less, the last book I had read with admiration; and it farther seemed to me that for the purposes of argument, (and my own theme was, according to my notion, to be argued out invincibly,) Hooker's English was the perfectest existing model. At all events, I did the best I then knew how, leaving no passage till I had put as much thought into it as it could be made to carry, and chosen the words with the utmost precision and tune I could give them."
Again in explaining the difference between the first and second volumes of "Modern Painters," he says, "The difference resulted, however, from the simple fact, that the first was written in great haste and indignation, for a special purpose and time—the second, after I had got engaged, almost unawares, in inquiries which could not be hastily nor indignantly pursued." The second volume therefore was a deliberate product, thoughtful, argumentative; and Hooker's style was chosen as a fitting vehicle for this weight of thought. The style, therefore, quite characteristic of Ruskin, is chosen to fit the subject-matter. Hooker's style is very different from that of Ruskin; it is the dignified, classical, balanced prose, unadorned and austere, lacking both wealth of imagery and emotional force. Ruskin adopts this manner, and endeavors to tone down his prose-poetry to its severe model. He succeeds in doing this to a considerable degree, although not infrequently he breaks away from the deliberate, laborious, style and bursts forth in the impassioned prose so typical of his first manner. The opening paragraph of the second volume presents Ruskin's adopted manner. It is stately, deliberate, ponderous, marked by precision and caution, and very careful balance of phrase. The last sentence will, I think, be sufficient to illustrate the Hookeresque style:

"There is not the thing left to the choice of man to do or not to do, but there is some sort or degree of duty involved in his determination; and by how much the more; therefore, our subject becomes embarrassed by the cross influences of variously admitted

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passion, administered discipline, or encouraged affection, upon the minds of men, by so much the more it becomes matter of weight and import to observe by what laws we should be guided, and of what responsibilities regardful, in all that we admit, administer or encourage.\(^1\)

Ruskin himself has given in a few words perhaps the best criticism of this volume. "I intended," he says, "never to have reprinted the second volume of Modern Painters----because it is written in affected imitation of Hooker, and not in my own proper style."\(^2\) And we agree with him that his imitation was unfortunate and are glad that he did not attempt it again. Hooker's style with its many excellences was so very unlike Ruskin's that his work was necessarily stamped with the mark of artificiality. Ruskin tells us that for the first time in his life, he was tired after writing the second volume; probably much of this fatigue was the result of his effort to accommodate his style to a type wholly foreign to his nature.

Conspicuous among the features of this early style is the sentence-paragraph. Ruskin loved long sentences and often allowed them to take on enormous proportions, frequently building them up in clauses, tier after tier, until the result is a gigantic sentence of two or three hundred words, with a profusion of commas, semicolons and dashes, and perhaps several parentheses. The second volume of "Modern Painters" contains probably the longest sentence in English prose; it is composed of 619 words, 80 intermediate punctuations.

\(^1\) "Modern Painters." Vol. II., p. 2.
\(^2\) "Loves Meinie." p. 172.
ination marks, together with five parentheses.\textsuperscript{1} Although long sentences are characteristic of Hooker, they are too noticeably a part of Ruskin's style in all his early work to conclude that they are the result of Hooker's influence. Ruskin, too, seemed to "prefer a single sentence jointed and rejoined, parenthesised and postscripted, till it does the duty of a paragraph, to a succession of orderly sentences each containing the expression of a simple or moderately complex thought."\textsuperscript{2} It seems unnecessary to quote one of these very long sentences, they are very common in Ruskin's prose; the last sentence of the second description given in this chapter contains over 120 words and will show Ruskin's tendency in this direction. Ruskin also employed with considerable mastery the long periodic sentence with its impressive rise and dramatic suspense.

Balance, parallelism and antithesis, and repetition of important words and phrases, are among his literary tools; they are however seldom conspicuous; if Ruskin does employ "Johnsonian balance" he is not noticeably "Johnsonese."

With regard to diction, the volumes of Art criticism testify to Ruskin's mastery. He had a large vocabulary, and a gift of choosing particularly effective and striking words and of finding expressions to convey very fine shades of meaning. His epithets are well chosen and his language shows unmistakably the flavor of the artist; the very names of the great Italian masters and the famous monuments of architecture become a part of his style, just as

\textsuperscript{1} "Modern Painters." Vol. II., 145-6.
\textsuperscript{2} Saintsbury. "Specimens Of English Prose Style." xix., XX.
do the Scriptural allusions; his elaborate use of "color" words and terms descriptive of the rarest kinds of materials and ornaments, make him the Keats of prose. What but "Endymion" can compare with this:

"And round the walls of the porches there are set pillars of variegated stones, jasper and porphyry, and deep-green serpentine spotted with flakes of snow, and marbles, that half refuse and half yield to the sunshine, Cleopatra-like, 'their bluest veins to kiss'--the shadow, as it steals back from them, revealing line after line of azure undulation, as a receding tide leaves the waved sand; their capitals rich with interwoven tracery, rooted knots of herbage, and drifting leaves of acanthus and vine, and mystical signs, all beginning and ending in the Cross; and above them, in the broad archibolts, a continuous chain of language and of life--angels, and the signs of heaven, and the labours of men, each in its appointed season upon the earth; and above these, another range of glittering pinnacles, mixed with white arches edged with scarlet flowers,—a confusion of delight, amidst which the breasts of the Greek horses are seen blazing in their breadth of golden strength, and the St. Mark's lion, lifted on a blue field covered with stars, until at last, as if in ecstasy, the crests of the arches break into a marble foam, and toss themselves far into the blue sky in flashes and wreaths of sculptured spray, as if the breakers on the Lido shore had been frost-bound before they fell, and the sea-nymphs had inlaid them with coral and amethyst."¹

This is why Ruskin is the most "purple" of our great prose writers; and the passage just quoted is one of his most "purple patches." It shows the author's extreme indulgence in highly colored diction and profuse imagery, thus suggesting one of the principle evils of Ruskin's first manner, that of excessive ornament. It is one of the times when, unfortunately, Ruskin allows his style to run away with him.

The faults of Ruskin's flamboyant style, are those of excess, lack of restraint: first, excessive ornament; second, excessive rhythm, that is the passing of his prose into verse; third, excessive sentence elaborating. There can be no doubt that in his early works Ruskin passes the limits of good taste by overloading his style with ornament. He is carried away by his own wonderful power of expression, forgetting that language is only the vehicle of thought in his intoxication with its beauty and melody. When he gives himself up to the charm of words the result is a "purple patch" of "obtrusive lusciousness," which produces a sort of cloying effect upon the reader. It is as though one were taken out of the fresh air into a room heavy with oriental perfume; one is oppressed, satiated.

This prodigal display of imagery laid Ruskin open to the charge of bombast, of disproportion between style and subject, of using the grand manner without the grand theme. Indeed the works and the author testify that there is considerable display and "fine writing" in the productions of the "Graduate of Oxford." Yet before condemning a large portion of Ruskin's ornate prose as bombast, it seems to me that one ought to recognise Ruskin's idea of a grand
subject. Perhaps what seems trivial to many of us, meant a great deal to the writer, and to sweep aside his work as mere verbiage is to judge the work without knowing the man. Ruskin, I think, felt deeply much that bears on its surface the stamp of fine writing. To him the simplest object or truth of nature was a grand subject, hence to him, the subject called for eloquent treatment. Mr. Henry H. Lancaster forgets this when he condemns the "lichen" passage given above as being grotesque, having a style ridiculously out of proportion to the subject, and of being "far worse than even Wordsworth's overpraised lines:

'To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.'"¹

Granting the over-elaboration of Ruskin's rhapsody, I yet maintain that, although such a statement from most people would be bombast yet, in the case of Ruskin and Wordsworth, the very intensity of their Nature-worship saves them from such criticism. Ruskin and Wordsworth were not dressing up insignificant matter for rhetorical effect; they were treating what was to them one of the very grandest of themes. Ruskin's style is to be censured not because of its disproportion to the subject, but because of its excessive profusion of imagery and highly colored rhetoric, regardless of subject, whenever the writer loses control of the instrument over which he so often exhibits consummate mastery.

In much the same way Ruskin's love for the melody of words leads him to overstep the bounds of prose rhythm and to allow his phrases to become distinctly metrical. Here again he passes

the limits of legitimate prose. We must admit however that much, which upon examination proves metrical, passes unnoticed by the general reader. The regular stress and unstress of a phrase is often lost in the varying rhythm of the prose; and I cannot but feel, when I stop to pick out the heroics embedded in the prose, that "'tis murder to dissect."

With regard to excessive length of sentences the style under discussion is clearly defective, the effect of Ruskin's sentence-paragraphs is truly grotesque for no human breath could read them aloud; and although he shows admirable skill in building them up, the thought is at times obscured by the many clauses and parentheses.

It is not fair to Ruskin to leave a criticism of his first manner without giving his own opinion of it. He recognised the excesses of his early style and in his later writings frequently acknowledges them. In the preface to "Sesame and Lilies" written in 1871 he says, "Mingled among these either unnecessary or erroneous statements, I find, indeed, some that might be still of value; but these, in my earlier books, disfiguriously affected language, partly through the desire to be thought a fine writer, and partly, as in the second volume of 'Modern Painter,' in the notion of returning as far as I could to what I thought the better style of old English literature, especially to that of my then favourite in prose, Richard Hooker.

For these reasons,------I shall reprint scarcely anything in this series out of the first and second volumes of 'Modern Painters' and shall omit much of the 'Seven Lamps' and 'Stones of Ven-
ice."¹ Again in the "Preface To The Edition of 1880" of the Seven Lamps Of Architecture he says in the same strain, "But I find the public still like the book--------however overlaid with gilding, and overshot, too splashily and cascade-fashion, with gushing of words."² Thus does Ruskin show himself to be unsparing in his denunciation of the "purpurei panni" of his early works.

Having discussed the distinguishing characteristics of what we have called Ruskin's ornate style, we cannot however leave the period extending from 1843 to 1860 without touching upon another style which, although not prominent and often neglected, is yet distinct manner of Ruskin which manifested itself before 1860, while he was still engaged in writing art criticism. This is what Mr. Cook admirably calls the "quiet style." Ruskin, too, he says, "had a quiet style. He is a master not only of pomps and diapasons, but also of simplicity and limpid grace. In this simpler style 'The Elements Of Drawing' is a masterpiece."³ This book shows that Ruskin could write simple straightforward prose when the occasion demanded it. "The Elements Of Drawing" is composed of "Three Lectures To Beginners;" therefore Ruskin was called upon to write an elementary text book. The style of the book is clear, easy and bright, not at all involved or ornate, at times almost naive in its manner of statement. It is well adapted to its purpose and to those to whom it is addressed. One passage is sufficient to illustrate

¹ Preface to 'Sesame And Lilies.' vi.
this manner and to afford a marked contrast to the style of "Modern Painters." Thus does Ruskin the instructor reveal the secret of artistic skill to his young pupils:

"Now, remember, always what was stated in the outset, that everything you can see in Nature is seen only so far as it is lighter or darker than the things about it, or of a different colour from them. It is either seen as a patch of one colour on a ground of another; or as a pale thing relieved from a dark thing, or a dark thing from a pale thing. And if you can put in patches of colour or shade of exactly the same size, shape, and gradations as those on the object and its ground, you will produce the appearance of the object and its ground. The best draughtsman—Titian and Paul Veronese themselves—would do no more than this; and you will soon be able to get some power of doing it in an inferior way, if you once understand the exceeding simplicity of what is to be done." ¹

Even in the more elaborate treatises on Art there are interspersed passages of clear, matter-of-fact exposition, such as the statements of laws and the applications of them, and the explanations of the numerous drawings and diagrams which illustrate the works.

In what is for us a very significant passage of "The Queen Of The Air" Ruskin declares that he has three ways of writing: "one, with the single view of making myself understood, in which I necessarily omit a great deal of what comes into my head; another, in which I say what I think ought to be said, in what I suppose to be the best words I can find for it.———— and my third way of writing

¹ "The Elements Of Drawing." 46-47.
is to say all that comes into my head for my own pleasure, in the first word that come, retouching them afterwards into (approximate) grammar." The expository passages and "The Elements Of Drawing" represent Ruskin's first way of writing; "Modern Painters," "The Seven Lamps of Architecture," "The Stones Of Venice" and "The Harbours of England" illustrate his second way, and the third we will see delightfully realised in the later works. Ruskin's classification is very interesting and helpful and it will be followed quite consistently throughout this discussion, although I have chosen to present Ruskin's styles under two general headings:

(1) The first manner, covering the period from 1843 to 1860, which division corresponds to the "second way" in Ruskin's classification; (2) The second manner, from 1860 to the close of Ruskin's literary career, which division corresponds to Ruskin's "third way;" the quiet style, or his "first way" appearing at various times throughout his literary product.

In presenting these divisions it is important to note that although Ruskin's style does fall into two fairly well defined manners which correspond in a significant degree with the two phases of his interests, art and social reform, yet there is no sharp and complete change in style corresponding with any set dates or the sudden adoption of any new interest. The change in style was like the change in interests, it was an evolution rather than a revolution, and just as the Art Critic is ever pronouncing moral and ethical judgements so from the "honeyed lips of the Oxford Graduate" frequently come humorous, satirical and dogmatic passages which anticipate the author of "Fors", we look both ways from such a passage
as this:

"Another of the strange and evil tendencies of the present day is to the decoration of the railroad station. Now, if there be any place in which people are deprived of that portion of temper and discretion which is necessary to the contemplation of beauty, it is there. It is the very temple of discomfort, and the only charity that the builder can extend to us is to show us, plainly as may be, how soonest to escape from it. The whole system of railroad travelling is addressed to people who, being in a hurry, are therefore, for the time being, miserable. No one would travel in that manner who could help it—who had time to go leisurely over hills and between hedges, instead of through tunnels and between bands; at least those who would, have no sense of beauty so acute as that we need consult it at the station. The railroad is in all its relations a matter of earnest business, to be got through as soon as possible. It transmutes a man from a traveller into a living parcel. For the time he has parted with the nobler characteristics of his humanity for the sake of a planetary power of locomotion. Do not ask him to admire anything. You might as well ask the wind. Carry him safely, dismiss him soon: he will thank you for nothing else. All attempts to please him in any other way are mere mockery, and insult to the things by which you endeavour to do so. There never was more flagrant nor impertinent folly than the smallest portion of ornament in anything concerned with railroads or near them."

In concluding our discussion of Ruskin's first manner, we may say that in this period we have to do with the work of a man

"The Seven Lamps Of Architecture." 219 ff.
who brought to his task a rare mastery of language and natural gift of expression, a man who, with the combined sensitiveness and perception of the poet and artist, wrote with all the enthusiasm of youth on highly aesthetic subjects. The ornate prose-poetry with all its beauties and excesses is the result. We have noted that Ruskin's style was affected both by permanent and temporary influences; further, that, when subject and purpose demanded it, the author was capable of a simple, lucid style; and finally, we have detected in the body of his early work unmistakable suggestions of the style to come.
CHAPTER III

THE SECOND MANNER

As I suggested in the previous chapter the change in Ruskin's style was a gradual one. It is not an abrupt transition from the first manner to the second, and I am not satisfied with saying that the later style is adequately illustrated by the works of 1860. Between the two periods there is a fairly well defined middle ground in which occurs the subduing of the flamboyant manner and the development of the familiar discursive style, the typical "second manner". I do not wish to set off this transitional period sharply, and suggest only for the sake of approximate definiteness that the works of the period from 1860 to 1870 may be taken to illustrate this stage of change. When we come to "Fors Clavigera" we reach the grand climax of this development and the typical product of the second manner.

Taking up then, this period of transition, we may say that it began even before 1860, for "The Harbours Of England," published in 1856, shows that the toning down of the ornate style had begun; this book, although decidedly in the first manner, is in the first manner held pretty well under control. It represents the ornate style at its best, with its excesses reduced to a minimum. "Unto This Last" published in 1860, the first of Ruskin's works on political economy represents a more decided step away from the early

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1The first "Letter is dated," 1st January, 1871.
style toward the second manner; it shows the transitional process well under way. The literary product of this period is characterized by impetuous eloquence, forceful rhetoric, and by an increasing display of humor, satire and whimsicality. The change in subject matter from art to political economy naturally involved a change in treatment. The wonderful descriptions and highly colored diction which are so much a part of Ruskin's art criticism find comparatively little place in the works on economics. Ruskin is no longer talking of "marble foam" and "sculptured spray," he is talking of starving children and of a base and degraded society. From 1860 on his appeal is more directly ethical than aesthetic; where he was formerly often working to make his readers see and appreciate the beautiful, he now goes deeper into his subject and turns all his eloquence to the task of enforcing the necessity of having a sound body politic before the appreciation or creation of the beautiful is possible. From this time on, even when his subject is art, he almost inevitably turns his discourse into a passionate plea for social service. Ruskin, as we have observed was always very much of a preacher, and it is the style of the religious enthusiast which is predominant here rather than that of word-artist. Such works as "Unto This Last," "The Crown Of Wild Olive" and "Sesame And Lilies" are sermons in the grand style. They are as different from the usual treatise on political economy as his early works were different from conventional art criticism. Here impassioned eloquence and magnificent rhetoric the brilliant descriptive prose of the early works; for the wonderful picture of the Campagna we now have such passages as the famous definition of wealth which show that the
master stylist is with us yet:

"There is no Wealth but Life. Life, including all its powers of love, of joy and of admiration. That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings; that man is richest who, having perfected the functions of his own life to the utmost, has also the widest helpful influence, both personal, and by means of his possessions over the lives of others."

It is the charm of fine thoughts, exquisitely expressed which makes these works inspiring and helpful as literature no matter what may be their value as scientific political economy. If Ruskin's logic does not convince us of the soundness of his economic principles, his eloquence goes very far in arousing in us the spirit which vitalizes them. I give a longer passage from "Unto This Last" typical of the powerful and beautiful rhetoric which characterizes the work:

"No scene is continually and untiringly loved, but one rich by joyful human labour; smooth in field; fair in garden; full in orchard; trim, sweet, and frequent in homestead; ringing with voices of vivid existence. No air is sweet that is silent; it is sweet when full of low currents of under sound—triplets of birds, and murmur and chirp of insects, and deep-toned words of men, and wayward trebles of childhood. As the art of life is learned, it will be found at last that all lovely things are also necessary; the wild flower by the wayside, as well as the tended corn; and the wild birds and creatures of the forest, as well as the tended cat-

1 "Unto This Last." p. 156.
tle; because man doth not live by bread only, but also by the desert manna; by every wondrous word and unknowable work of God."

To this gift of eloquence is added a swift forceful movement, more direct energetic and electric than is usual in his earlier works and a fund of delightful humour and biting satire. The following passage illustrates the effectiveness of this direct curt, forceful manner:

"Stupidity is always the basis of the Judas bargain. We do great injustice to Iscariot, in thinking him wicked above all common wickedness. He was only a common money-lover, and, like all money-lovers, did not understand Christ;—could not make out the worth of Him, or meaning of Him. He never thought he would be killed. He was horror-struck when he found that Christ would be killed; threw his money away instantly, and hanged himself. How many of our present money-seekers, think you, would have the grace to hang themselves, whoever was killed? But Judas was a common, selfish, middle-headed, pilfering fellow; his hand always in the bag of the poor, not caring for them. Helpless to understand Christ, he yet believed in Him, much more than most of us do; had seen Him do miracles, thought He was quite strong enough to shift for Himself, and he, Judas, might as well make his own little bye-perquisites out of the affair. Christ would come out of it well enough, and he have his thirty pieces." 2

Ruskinian humor and satire are often very much alike; there is a mischievous, tantalizing quality of Ruskin's ironic

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1 "Unto This Last." p. 167-8.
humor which is sometimes more effective than his more scathing invective. The miser feels most uncomfortable when he finds himself uttering these sentiments aloud:

"I can indeed nowise prevent this money from falling at last into the hands of others, nor hinder the good of it from becoming theirs, not mine; but at least let a merciful death same me from being a witness of their satisfaction; and may God so far be gracious to me as to let no good come of any of this money of mine before my eyes."\(^1\)

But Ruskin's satire at times becomes the most scathing and merciless invective; his wrath bursts all bounds and he sweeps down upon his foes in a perfect torrent of scorn. Thus does he, in his fiercest mood denounce the violators of the sacred shrines of nature:

"You have despised Nature; that is to say, all the deep and sacred sensations of natural scenery. The French revolutionists made stables of the cathedrals of France; you have made race-courses of the cathedrals of the earth. Your one conception of pleasure is to drive in railroad carriages round their aisles, and eat off their altars. You have put a railroad-bridge over the falk of Schaffhausen. You have tunnelled the cliffs of Lucerne by Tell's chapel; you have destroyed the Clarens shore of the Lake of Geneva; there is not a quiet valley in England that you have not filled with bellowing fire; there is no particle left of English land which you have not trampled coal ashes into—nor any foreign city in which the spread of your presence is not marked among its fair

\(^1\) "Munera Pulveris." p. 194-195.
old streets and happy gardens by a consuming white leprosy of new hotels and perfumers' shops; the Alps themselves, which your own poets used to love so reverently, you look upon as soaped poles in a bear-garden, which, you set yourselves to climb and slide down again, with 'shrieks of delight.' When you are past shrieking, having no human articulate voice to say you are glad with, you fill the quietude of their valleys with gunpowder blasts, and rush home, red with cutaneous eruption of conceit, and voluble with convulsive hiccup of self-satisfaction.........It is pitiful, to have dim conceptions of duty; more pitiful, it seems to me, to have conceptions like these, of mirth.'

Thus it is evident that the wrath of our poet-preacher sometimes led him to be most insulting and abusive. This tendency towards brutality and violence increases in his later works, and is indeed one of the most serious faults of the second manner. Always very emphatic, his dogmatism increases with age; as Harrison expresses it, he "opened every written assertion with 'I know'."

"My way now," says Ruskin, "is to say things plainly, if I can whether they sound harsh or not." And again he says, "I have no terms of English, and can find none in Greek nor Latin, nor any strong language known to me, contemptuous enough to attack the bestial idiotism of the modern theory that wages are to be measured by competition." So it seems that Ruskin was fairly straining the powers

1 "Sesame And Lilies." p. 58, ff.
3 "Munera Pulveris." p. 128.
of language to express his "devine rage against iniquity."

The skill with which Ruskin effects unusual comparisons and contrasts adds much to the life and vigor of his style. He delights in striking and paradoxical effects and is most successful in producing them. It is this quality of Ruskin's literary style which makes one remember such a passage as this:

"I may, however, anticipate future conclusions, so far as to state that in a community regulated only by laws of demand and supply, but protected from open violence, the persons who become rich, are, generally speaking, industrious, resolute, proud, covetous, prompt, methodical, sensible, unimaginative, insensitive and ignorant. The persons who remain poor are the entirely foolish, the entirely wise, the idle, the reckless, the humble, the thoughtful, the dull, the imaginative, the sensitive, the well-informed, the improvident, the irregularly and impulsively wicked, the clumsy knave, the open thief, and the entirely merciful, just, and godly person."¹

This tendency towards unusual and striking expressions finds extreme illustration in the decidedly extravagant and whimsical passages of Ruskin's works. Such passages, as we will see are preeminently characteristic of "Fors" and the later lectures, but they are not infrequently noted in the works under discussion. Such definitions as "Wealth....is the Possession of the Valuable by the Valiant,"² and such generalizations as "borrowers are nearly always ill-spenders, and it is with lent money that all evil is mainly

¹ "Unto This Last." p. 128-9.
² ibid. p. 125.
done, and all unjust war protracted,"\(^1\) are representative of Ruskinian exaggeration and caprice.

The transitional style is in many respects more subdued, more simple and more mature than that of the early prose-poetry; although it retains much of its early beauty it does not go to the extremes of the flamboyant manner nor has it yet taken on the pronounced characteristics of the typical later style. One is now seldom offended by a purple patch or by perceptibly metrical lines, although the prose is most eloquent and rhythmical. The sentence paragraphs are also growing less common; Ruskin always liked long sentences but in his later works they are neither so frequent nor so long as those of "Modern Painters." Probably Ruskin's experience as a lecturer taught him the folly of the gigantic periods which must have baffled his oratorical powers.

There are as we would expect certain differences between the style of Ruskin's lectures and his essays. These are differences which naturally arise out of the influence of an audience over a speaker. The emotional, dramatic element, so essential to oratory enters the addresses and "The Crown Of Wild Olive" and "Sesame And Lilies" show much more sustained eloquence than "Munera Pulveris" and "Unto This Last." They are more directly stimulating, more dramatic, with a more spirited movement, and a pronounced lyrical quality. The following passage presents Ruskin the orator carrying his hearers along with him in the grand sweep of his passionate appeal:

"I am surprised at no depths to which, when once warped from its honour, that humanity can be degraded. I do not wonder at

\(^1\)"The Crown Of Wild Olive." p. 47.
the single-handed murder of a single victim, done by the assassin in the darkness of the railway, or reed shadow of the marsh. I do not even wonder at the myriad-handed murder of multitudes, done boastfully in the daylight, by the frenzy of nations, and the immeasurable, unimaginable guilt heaped up from hell to heaven, of their priests, and kings. But this is wonderful to me—oh, how wonderful!—to see the tender and delicate woman among you, with her child at her breast, and a power, if she would wield it, over it, and over its father, purer than the air of heaven, and stronger than the seas of earth—nay, a magnitude of blessing which her husband would not part with for all the earth itself, though it were made of one entire and perfect chrysolite! to see her abdicate this majesty to play at precedence with her next-door neighbour! This is wonderful—oh, wonderful! to see her with every innocent feeling fresh within her, go out in the morning into her garden to play with the fringes of its guarded flowers, and lift their heads when they are drooping, with her happy smile upon her face, and no cloud upon her brow, because there is a little wall around her place of peace: and yet she knows, in her heart, if she would only look for its knowledge, that, outside of that little rose-covered wall, the wild grass, to the horizon, is torn up by the agony of men, and beat level by the drift of their life-blood.”

The repetition of the same idea in the same phrasing, as is illustrated by the use of "I do not wonder," and "this is wonderful" in the above extract, is a familiar devise by which Ruskin secures suspense and climax. Frequent use of short sentences and of the rhetorical question also give vigour to the style of this per-

Before passing on to "Fors" and the works after 1870, there is another book with another style which falls within our decade and which deserves mention here. "The Ethics Of The Dust" illustrates our author's style accommodated to a new type, a new purpose, and, with the exception of "The Elements Of Drawing," to a new audience. The work consists of "Ten Lectures To Little Housewives On The Elements Of Crystallization." It is written in dialogue and represents a series of informal lectures or conversations, the dramatis personae being the "Old Lecturer" and a number of young girls ranging from the ages of nine to twenty. Ruskin in the "Preface To The Second Edition" tells us that he was very much disappointed when his publishers told him to "write no more in dialogue." It is true that the dialogue is not particularly successful; the Old Lecturer, as is readily imagined, does most of the talking; the remarks of the girls contribute quite a little to the realistic effect. The book is interesting, it seems to me, because it shows Ruskin's effort to adapt his mode of expression to the needs, the interest and the understanding of young girls. It is written in the quiet style, with its simplicity and naïveté; but it is the quiet style brightened with a delightful play of fancy, and softened with a note of tenderness, which alone would reveal the author's well known fondness for young girls. "Of Queens' Gardens" strikes the note of chivalrous devotion to women; "The Ethics Of The Dust" suggests the tender fatherly nature of the man, who, childless himself, ever loved and plead the cause of the child. I will give the conclusion

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1 The Ethics Of The Dust." Preface To Second Edition, p.vii
of what Ruskin considered "the best bit of conversation in the book;"
the Lecturer is speaking:

"Ascertain clearly what is wrong with you; and so far as you know any means of mending it, take those means, and have done; when you are examining yourself, never call yourself merely a 'sinner'; that is very cheap abuse, and utterly useless. You may even get to like it and be proud of it. But call yourself a liar, a coward, a sluggard, a glutton, or an evil eyed, jealous wretch, if you indeed find yourself to be in any wise any of these. Take steady means to check yourself in whatever fault you have ascertained, and justly accused yourself of. And as soon as you are in active way of mending, you will be no more inclined to moan over an undefined corruption. For the rest, you will find it less easy to uproot faults, than to choke them by gaining virtues. Do not think of your faults; still less of others' faults: in every person who comes near you, look for what is good and strong: honor that; rejoice in it; and, as you can, try to imitate it: and your faults will drop off, like dead leaves, when their time comes. If, on looking back, your whole life should seem rugged as a palm tree stem; still never mind, so long as it has been growing; and has its grand green shade of leaves, and weight of honeyed fruit at top." ¹

We come now to the second manner fully developed in "Fors' "Praeterita," and the lectures of the Slade professorship. It is the style so suggestively characterized by Ruskin as his "third way of writing" in which he says all that comes into his head in the first words that come, retouching them afterwards into approximate

¹ "The Ethics Of The Dust." p. 98-9.
grammar. In this second manner we have gotten far away from the
gorgeous imagery and fine writing of the ornate prose. Ruskin now
deliberately turns away from ornament. The charm of the later style
lies in its easy, familiar, tone, its piquancy, its caustic humor,
its stinging satire, and its delightful play of fancy and caprice.
"Fors Clavigera" is par excellence the product of the second manner.
It is a satire on nineteenth century society, but it is like no
other satire ever written. "This wiggling and puzzling miscellany",
says Mr. Cook, "is unique in literature;"¹ "it is a satire on mod-
ern life cast in a form of graceful trifling."² The entire work
consists of ninety-six letters to the working men of England, writ-
en over a period of fourteen years. The book is a mirror of the
intellectual and emotional life of the author throughout this per-
iod; its pages reflect the varying moods, the changing thoughts,
the hope, anger, and despair of a troubled and sensitive soul.
Frederic Harrison has so happily expressed the individual note of
the manner of "Fors" that I will give a portion of his comment:
"It is written in a style of which there is no other example in the
language—a style of unmeasured abandon, of surrender to any fancy,
whim, association of the passing moment. Nothing so utterly incon-
sequent, so rambling, so heterogeneous exists in print. And yet,
the connotations of ideas are so fantastic, and the transitions
so original, that the effect of the whole is charming as well as
exciting."³ The teacher of rhetoric in search of unity, mass and
coherence, will pronounce "Fors"' hopeless;" the most methodical of

³ ibid. p, 184.
Ruskin's works are digressive and "Fors" carries this desultory character to such extremes of incoherence that at times there is unmistakable evidence of the mind diseased.

This rambling, wayward, unintelligible, character of much of "Fors" arises out of Ruskin's writing "all that comes into his head," out of what Mr. Cook calls his habit of "esoteric allusiveness;" he writes down his confused succession of mental reactions without explaining their relevancy, hence the reader is baffled by a mass of apparently disconnected thoughts. Ruskin's works are filled with allusions; indeed one must know the Bible, Classical Mythology, Dante, Chaucer and the whole sweep of English Literature to understand many of Ruskin's arguments and illustrations. It is in his extended use of literary allusions that Ruskin has most noticeably failed to adapt his style to his correspondents the "Workmen And Labourers Of Great Britain." Ruskin also introduced into his works many allusions to contemporary events and newspaper articles which increase one's difficulty in understanding him.

One must read an entire letter to get the full effect of Ruskin's familiar, rambling way of writing with its odd transitions and esoteric allusions; the opening paragraph of Letter XXIV. will show, however, the easy and unconventional manner of the writer, and his characteristic humor and whimsicality:

"My Friends,—

I shall not call you so any more, after this Christmas; first, because things have chanced to me, of late, which have made me too sulky to be friends with anybody; secondly, because in the two years during which I have been writing these letters, not one
of you has sent me a friendly word of answer; lastly, because; even if you were my friends, it would be waste print to call you so, once a month. Nor shall I sign myself "faithfully yours" any more; being very far from faithfully my own, and having found most other people anything but faithfully mine. Nor shall I sign my name, for I never like the look of it; being, I apprehend, only short for "Rough Skin," in the sense of "Pigskin;" (and indeed, the planet under which I was born, Saturn, has supreme power over pigs,)—nor can I find historical mention of any other form of the name, except one I made no reference to when it occurred, as that of the leading devil of four--Red-skin, Blue-skin--and I forget the skins of the other two—who performed in a religious play, of the fourteenth century, which was nearly as comic as the religious earnest of our own century. So that the letters will begin henceforward without address; and close without signature. You will probably know whom they are from, and I don't in the least care whom they go to."

The entire letter is typical of the second manner. It contains information on various subjects from the proper observation of Sunday to the rich man's method of rabbit hunting; classical story, Dante, Chaucer, and recollections from early childhood are called upon enforce and illustrate the thought. It is difficult to show by short extracts the abrupt transitions and the incoherence arising from Ruskin's writing all that comes into his head. I will give a passage containing a transition which Ruskin himself felt called upon to justify:

"That, I repeat, was the one simple, knightly, English-hearted thing to be done; and so far as the 'Interests of England'

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are concerned, her first interest was in this, to be England; and not a filthy nest of tax-gatherers and horse-dealers. For the horse dealer and the man-dealer are alike ignoble persons, and their interests are of little consequence. But the horse-rider and the man-ruler, which was England's ancient notion of a man, and Venice's also, (of which, in abrupt haste, but true sequence, I must now speak,) have interests of a higher kind. But, if you would well understand what I have next to tell you, you must first read the opening chapter of my little Venetian guide, 'St. Mark's Rest,' which will tell you something of the two piazzetta shafts, of which there are now photographs at St. George's Museum; and my Venetian readers, on the other hand, must have this Fors, to tell them the meaning of the statues on the top of said pillars.\

I agree that the transition is in "abrupt haste" but must question its "true sequence." The "St. Ursula" Letter,\(^2\) as a whole, is very typical of the incoherent character of this manner. That it bewildered its readers is very evident from the opening of the next letter; "I am told," Ruskin begins, "that some of my 'most intelligent readers' can make nothing of what I related in last "Fors" about St. Ursula's message to me."\(^3\) I am glad that other "intelligent readers" have been perplexed by the message of St. Ursula.

In criticizing the heterogeneous character of "Fors" we should remember that it is not a definitely planned book, nor an organized collection of essays or lectures, but a collection of "Let-

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1 "Fors Clavigera." Vol. IV., p. 45.
2 ibid. Letter LXXIV.
ters." The form in which Ruskin put his work justifies much of its chaotic nature; then, too, according to his characterization of his "third way of writing," he was writing in this manner for his "own pleasure," spontaneously. I think, too, that he rather enjoyed puzzling and even shocking his readers by his unusual and striking statements.

As for the mad note in Ruskin's later works, the literary expression of this period undoubtedly bears evidence of the mental disorder from which Ruskin continually suffered during the last thirty years of his life. It began at about 1870 and in 1878 the first complete collapse came and Ruskin was compelled to give up his literary activities for a time. In speaking of his illness in the first letter of "Fors" written after his recovery, he says, "And this more or less inflamed, yet still perfectly healthy, condition of mental power, may be traced by any watchful reader, in "Fors," nearly from its beginning,—that manner of mental ignition or irritation being for the time a great additional force, enabling me to discern more clearly, and say more vividly, what for long years it had been in my heart to say." ¹ Such was Ruskin's opinion of the effect of his mental state upon his work. It is very doubtful however that this "inflamed condition" was healthy as Ruskin thought; and the wild, whimsical, tone of "Fors" and of the Lectures of the Slade professorship is explained, I think, largely by the author's mental disorder. The extremely erratic, restless and agitated character of the literary expression is the result of a feverish, excited brain and an abnormally stimulated nervous organism.

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This note deepens as the disease grows, the first Oxford lectures, for instance, being comparatively well ordered and the later ones increasingly inconsequent and wild. Such a passage as the following could scarcely have been written by a man of Ruskin's intelligence and taste when in perfect control of his thoughts. At least I prefer to attribute it to a disturbed mental condition:

"Nay, we might even sufficiently represent the general manner of conclusion in the Darwinian system by the statement that if you fasten a hair-brush to a mill-wheel, with the handle forward, so as to develop itself into a neck by moving always in the same direction, and within continual hearing of a steam-whistle, after a certain number of revolutions the hair-brush will fall in love with the whistle, they will marry, lay an egg, and the produce will be a nightingale."¹

Violent criticism, uncompromising dogmatism and scathing satire are conspicuous characteristics of the second manner; never gracious to his opponents Ruskin became very ill-mannered indeed in his later works. His denunciations became so abusive that one is not surprised to find him in 1877 the defendant in a libel suit. Our American painter Mr. Whistler would not allow Ruskin's characteristic remark that he had "never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face," to pass unchallenged, and he succeeded in a nominal verdict against his denouncer. Henry James in commenting upon the case voices the general sentiment with regard to Ruskin's critical methods. "Mr. Ruskin's language," he says, "quite transgresses the de-

¹ "Loves Meinie." p. 30-1.
cencies of criticism, and he has been laying about him for some years past with such promiscuous violence that it gratifies one's sense of justice to see him brought up as a disorderly character."

The passage from Sesame And Lilies quoted in the first part of this chapter exemplifies the violent and satirical manner. I will give only a couple of further illustrations which show not simply Ruskin's invective but also a literary influence which was to a considerable degree responsible for its manner of expression. I refer to the influence of the literary style of Thomas Carlyle, the avowed master of Ruskin, the social reformer, upon his second manner. Ruskin speaks of Carlyle as "the friend and guide who has urged me to all chief labour." It would be highly improbable that Ruskin could have subjected himself so thoroughly to the philosophy of Carlyle without being affected by the powerful and intensely individual manner in which this philosophy is expressed. Ruskin was always more or less influenced by what he read and his continual reading of Carlyle has left unmistakable traces upon his style. Surely the author of "Sartor" might have spoken thus:

"This gas-lighted, and gas-inspired Christianity, we are triumphant in, and draw back the hem of our robes from the touch of the heretics who dispute it. But to do a piece of common Christian righteousness in a plain English word or deed; to make Christian law any rule of life, and found one National act or hope thereon,—we know too well what our faith comes to for that! You might sooner get lightning out of incense smoke than true action or passion

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2"Munera Pulveris." Preface, p. xxxii.
out of your modern English religion. You had better get rid of the smoke, and the organ pipes, both: leave them, and the Gothic windows, and the painted glass, to the property man; give up your carburetted hydrogen ghost in one healthy expiration, and look after Lazarus at the doorstep."

And Ruskin's "modest proposal" is entirely in the manner of Dean Swift and Carlyle:

"But, putting the baby-poisoning, pigeon-shooting, and rabbit-shooting of today in comparison with the pleasures of the German Madonna, and her simple company: and seeing that the present effect of peace upon earth, and well-pleasing in men, is that every nation now spends most of its income in machinery for shooting the best and bravest men, just when they were likely to have become of some use to their fathers and mothers, I put it to you, my friends all, calling you so, I suppose for the last time,......whether it would not be more kind and less expensive, to make the machinery a little smaller; and adapt it to spare opium now, and expenses of maintenance and education afterwards, (besides no end of diplomacy) by taking our sport in shooting babies instead of rabbits?"

I do not attribute Ruskin's increasing violence to the influence of Carlyle but only certain aspects of the way in which it is expressed. As his early works show, Ruskin was quite capable of expressing his wrath and his dogmatism without the aid of Carlyle. It is when he descends upon his victims with such expressions as "miserable jockeys," "ineffable blockheads" and "low-foreheaded

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3 ibid. p. 430, Vol. II.
4 ibid. p. 435
and long-tongued races of demented men,"¹ that Ruskin is Carlysean. The fierce lightning bolts which Ruskin was "copiously and desperately pouring into the black world of anarchy all around him"² were the product of his own "divine rage;" he simply added to them some of the mighty tailor's characteristic thunder to produce the vituperative storms of "Fors."

Frederic Harrison says that vehement language was with Ruskin a literary intoxication rather than a moral fault. Ruskin's statement, previously quoted, concerning his search through English, Greek and Latin for strong terms, would to some extent substantiate this judgment. But here again, it seems to me that the explanation lies ultimately in the physical and mental condition of Ruskin during his later years; it lies in the author's high-strung temperament and its reaction against the violent criticism which his work received. The last thirty years of Ruskin's life were years of physical and mental illness, of bitter disappointment and despair. He felt keenly the failure of his works to bring about social reform, and the wild note in his writings is the cry of a "tender spirit, morbidly outraged at the sight of grossness and cruelty."³ "It is not my work that drives me mad," he said,"but the sense that nothing comes of it."⁴ He met the storms of criticism which descended upon his cherished dreams with arrogant defiance and scorn; "the more he felt himself out of touch with the world round him, the

¹ "Fors Clavigera." Vol. IV., p. 176.
² "The Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle And Ralph Waldo Emerson." 1834-1872. Vol. II., p. 388.
⁴ ibid. p. 154.
greater license did he allow his pen." Thus the violence of Ruskin's language is neither simply the product of literary intoxication nor moral fault; it is the frenzied expression of an abnormally sensitive and morbid nature in the throes of mental and physical suffering and despair.

Although "Fors" is the most typical work in the second manner, there is yet another product of this period, whose style differs in several interesting respects from "Fors," "Praeterita," the last and to me the most delightful of Ruskin's works, is composed of the reminiscences of a particularly charming old man, told in a particularly charming way. It is the work of a consummate stylist and master of language but the stylist is wholly outside of his literary work-shop sitting back in his armchair completely relaxed. It is a triumph of the art of artlessness. In speaking of the sketches which comprise the work, Ruskin says, "I have written them therefore, frankly, garrulously, and at ease; speaking of what it gives me joy to remember at any length I like." Here, as is usual, Ruskin's comment upon his style is a very illuminating one; it is its naive frankness and perfect ease which makes the style of "Praeterita" unique in the English language. Again Charles Eliot Norton in a letter printed in the third volume of "Praeterita" says, "There is a sweet tone in it, such as becomes the retrospect of a wise man as he summons the scenes of past life before his eyes." Here Norton hits upon the mellow peaceful note of "Praeterita" which is so pleasing an aspect of it and which is so different

3 ibid. Vol. III., P. 84.
from the restless, disturbed character of "Fors." "I do not mean this book to be in any avoidable way disagreeable or querulous," the author says, "but expressive generally of my native disposition—which, though I say it, is extremely amiable, when I'm not bothered: I will grumble elsewhere when I must." Both "Fors" and "Praeterita" are rambling and unstudied, but the storm and stress of "Fors" now gives way to the calm of old age; the violent dogmatism is gone and in its place is the "sweet tone" such as becomes the retrospect of a wise man." As he frankly confesses in the beginning of "Praeterita" he "tried always in "Fors" to say things, a little piquantly,"and," he continues, "the rest of the things related in this book will be told as plainly as I can."¹ Thus in "Praeterita" he makes no effort to say things in a striking manner; the playful, quiet humor of the book is thoroughly spontaneous and natural. He continues to write just what strikes his reminiscent fancy, going carelessly from one thought to the next. In one paragraph, for instance, he is speaking very pathetically of the death of Turner and of Prout, and the very next paragraph opens with "And my dog Wisie was he dead too?"² Then follows a delightful account of the adventures of Wisie. The following extract is typical of the style of "Praeterita:"

"Thus Vevay, year after year, became the most domestic of all our foreign homes. At Venice, my mother always thought the gondola would upset; at Chamouni, my father, that I should fall into the Mer de Glace; at Pisa, he would ask me, 'What shall I give

² ibid. Vol. III., p. 43.
the coachman? and at Florence, dispute the delightfulness of Cimabue. But at Vevay, we were all of a mind. My father was professionally at home in the vineyards,—sentimentally in the Bosquet de Julie; my mother liked apple orchards and narcissus meads as much as I did; and for me, there was the Dent du Midi for eternal snow, in the distance; the Rochers de Naye, for climbing, accessibly near; Chillon for history and poetry; and the lake, in the whole breadth of it from Lausanne to Meillerie, for Turnerian mist effects of morning, and Turnerian sunsets at evening; and moonlights,—as if the moon were one radiant glacier of frozen gold. Then if one wanted to go to Geneva for anything, there were little steamers,—no mortal would believe, now, how little; one used to be afraid an extra basket of apples would be too much for them, when the pier was full of market people."

Strangely enough in the pages of "Praeterita" there are not only reminiscences of the events of Ruskin's early life but there are combined with the familiar graceful flow of the second manner distinct reminiscences of the early prose-poet and word artist of the ornate style. The prose-poet of nature is never completely transformed into the social reformer. Whenever there comes a glimpse of natures loveliness through the smoke and filter of modern industrialism, the pen of Ruskin is ever ready to catch that glimpse and make it lasting. "Praeterita" contains some of Ruskin's most exquisite word pictures among which the famous description of the Rhone deserves especial mention!

"Waves of clear sea are, indeed, lovely to watch, but they are always coming or gone, never in any taken shape to be seen for a

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1 "Praeterita." Vol. III., p. 74-75.
second. But here was one mighty wave that was always itself, and every fluted swirl of it, constant as the wreathing of a shell. No wasting away of the fallen foam, no pause for gathering of power, no helpless ebb of discouraged recoil; but alike through bright day and lulling night, the never-pausing plunge, and never-fading flash, and never-hushing whisper, and, while the sun was up, the ever-an-
swering glow of unearthly aqua-marine, ultramarine, violet-blue, gentian-blue, peacock-blue, river-of-paradise blue, glass of a paint-
ed window melted in the sun, and the witch of the Alps flinging the spun tresses of it for ever from her snow."

From the above survey of Ruskin's style from 1860 to the close of his literary career, it is evident that there was first a transitional period covering the years from 1860 to 1870, which was characterized by magnificent rhetoric and impassioned eloquence, and by the subduing of the ornate style on the one hand, and the in-
creasing display of humor, satire, and whimsicality, on the other. Then out of this transitional style came the second manner with its familiar, discursive flow, its pungent humor, its keen and scathing satire, its whimsicality, perversity and incoherence, embodied in "Fors Clavigera" and the Oxford lectures. This same general manner we have seen mellowed and sweetened in "Praeterita" the last work of the aged writer. Our study of this period has shown further that Ruskin's style was variously accommodated to the subject matter, the form of the discourse, and the kind of audience for which the work was prepared. We have seen that Ruskin's later style was influenced by Carlyle's powerful rhetoric, and that the extreme waywardness,

1 "Praeterita." Vol. II., p. 131.
extravagance and brutality of the second manner are largely explained by the physical and mental disorders and by the sorrows and disappointments which undermined the sensitive nature of Ruskin during the last thirty years of his life. Finally we have noted in Ruskin's last work distinct reminiscences of the early prose-poetry. "Praeterita" as well as "Modern Painters" was written by the "Graduate Of Oxford."
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