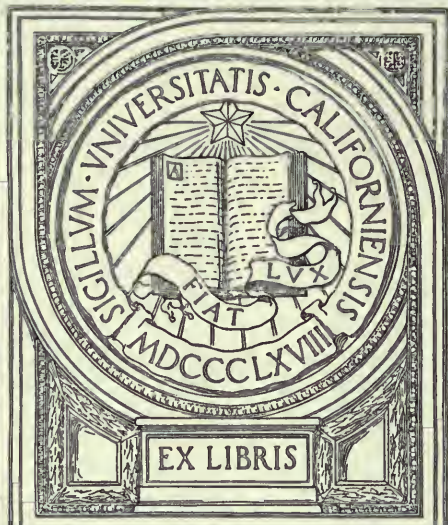
RUSKIN AND TURNER



RUSKIN

BURIAL AT SEA OF
SIR DAVID WILKIE

THESE PAGES RECOUNT LITTLE JOURNEYS MADE TO THE HOMES OF

RUSKIN and TURNER

By ELBERT HUBBARD

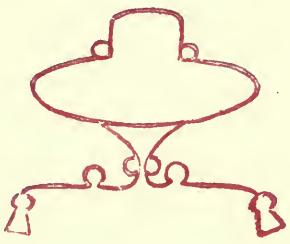
Done into a Book at the ROYCROFT PRINTING SHOP that is in East Aurora, New York, U. S. A.

MDCCCXCVI

OF THIS EDITION BUT FOUR HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-THREE COPIES WERE PRINTED, AND TYPES THEN DISTRIBUTED ✂ EACH COPY IS SIGNED AND NUMBERED AND THIS BOOK IS NUMBER 207

Elbert Hubbard

A LIST OF PHOTOGRAVURE REPRODUCTIONS OF TURNER MASTERPIECES MADE FROM NEGATIVES TAKEN ESPECIALLY FOR THIS BOOK, AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON:



Put roses in their hair, put precious stones on their breasts; see that they are clothed in purple and scarlet, with other delights; that they also learn to read the gilded heraldry of the sky; and upon the earth be taught not only the labours of it but the loveliness.

DEUCALION.

BAY OF BAIX:

CALIGULA'S PALACE AND BRIDGE

RUSKIN AND TURNER

AT WINDERMERE a good friend told me that I must abandon all hope of seeing Mr. Ruskin; for I had no special business with him, no letters of introduction, and then the fact that I am an American made it final. Americans in England are supposed to pick flowers in private gardens, cut their names on trees, laugh boisterously at trifles, and make invidious comparisons. Very properly Mr. Ruskin does not admire these things

Then Mr. Ruskin is a very busy man Occasionally he issues a printed manifesto to his friends requesting them to give him peace A copy of one such circular was shown to me. It runs, "Mr. J. Ruskin is about to begin a work of great importance and therefore begs that in reference to calls and correspondence you will consider him dead for the next two months." A similar notice is reproduced in Arrows of the Chace, and this one thing, I think, illustrates as forcibly as anything in Mr. Ruskin's work the self-contained characteristics of the man himself Surely if a man is pleased to be considered "dead" occasionally, even to his kinsmen and friends, he should not be expected to receive an enemy with open arms to steal away his time. This is assuming, of course, that all individuals who pick flowers in other folks' gardens, cut their names on trees, and laugh boisterously at trifles,

are enemies. I therefore decided that I would simply walk over to Brantwood, view it from a distance, tramp over its hills, row across the lake, and at nightfall take a swim in its waters. Then I would rest at the Inn for a space and go my way

Lake Coniston is ten miles from Grasmere, and even alone the walk is not long. If, however, you are delightfully attended by King's Daughters' with whom you sit and commune now and then on the bankside, the distance will seem to be much less. Then there is a pleasant little break in the journey at Hawkshead Here one may see the quaint old school-house where Wordsworth when a boy dangled his feet from a bench and proved his humanity by carving his initials on the seat. Then this whole country is rich in Wordsworth incident and Wordsworth suggestion. The Inn at the head of Coniston Water appeared very inviting and restful when I saw it that afternoon. Built in sections from generation to generation, half covered with ivy and embowered in climbing roses, it is an institution entirely different from the "Grand Palace Hotel" at Oshkosh. In America we have gongs that are fiercely beaten at stated times by gentlemen of color, just as they are supposed to do in their native Congo jungles. This din proclaims to the "guests" and the public at large that it is time to come in and be fed. But this refinement of civilization is not yet in Coniston and the Inn is quiet and homelike. You may go to bed when you are tired, get up when you choose, and eat when you are hungry.

THERE were no visitors about when I arrived and I thought I would have the coffee room all to myself at luncheon time; but presently there came in a pleasant-faced old gentleman in knickerbockers. He bowed to me and then took a place at the table. He said that it was a fine day and I agreed with him, adding that the mountains were very beautiful. He assented, putting in a codicil to the effect that the lake was very pretty. Then the waiter came for our orders

"Together, I s'pose?" remarked Thomas inquiringly, as he halted at the door and balanced the tray on his finger tips.

"Yes, serve lunch for us together," said the ruddy old gentleman as he looked at me and smiled, "to eat alone is bad for the digestion."

I nodded assent.

"Can you tell me how far it is to Brantwood?" I asked.

"Oh, not far, just across the lake."

He arose and flung the shutter open so I could see the old yellow house about a mile across the water, nestling in its wealth of green on the hillside. Soon the waiter brought our lunch, and while we discussed the chops and new potatoes we talked Ruskiniana. The old gentleman knew a deal more of Stones of Venice and Modern Painters than I; but I told him how Thoreau introduced Ruskin to America and how Concord was the first place in the

New World to recognize this star in the East. And upon my saying this, the old gentleman brought his knife-handle down on the table, declaring that Thoreau and Whitman were the only two men of genius that America had produced. I begged him to make it three and include Emerson, which he finally consented to do

BY AND by the waiter cleared the table preparatory to bringing in the coffee. The old gentleman pushed his chair back, took the napkin from under his double chin, brushed the crumbs from his goodly front, and remarked: "I'm going over to Brantwood this afternoon to call on Mr. Ruskin—just to pay my respects to him, as I always do when I come here. Can't you go with me?" I think this was about the most pleasing question I ever had asked me. I was going to request him to "come again" just for the joy of hearing the words, but I pulled my dignity together, straightened up, swallowed my coffee red hot, pushed my chair back, flourished my napkin, and said: "I shall be much pleased to go."
So we went. We two: he in his knickerbockers and I in my checks and outing shirt. I congratulated myself on looking no worse than he, and as for him, he never seemed to think our costumes were not exactly what they should be; and after all it matters little how you dress when you call on one of nature's noblemen—they demand no livery. We walked around the northern end of Coniston Water, along the eastern edge, past Tent House, where Tennyson once lived (and found it "outrageous quiet,") and a mile farther on we came to Brantwood

The road curves in to the back of the house—which by the way, is the front—and the driveway is lined with great trees that form a complete archway. There is no lodge-keeper, no flower beds laid out with square and compass, no trees trimmed to appear like elephants, no cast-iron

CROSSING THE BROOK

dogs, nor terra cotta deer, and, strangest of all, no sign of the lawn-mower. There is nothing, in fact, to give forth a sign that the great Apostle of Beauty lives in this very old-fashioned spot. Big bowlders are to be seen here and there where nature left them, tangles of vines running over old stumps, part of the meadow cut close with a scythe, and part growing up as if the owner knew the price of hay. Then there are flower beds where grow clusters of poppies and hollyhocks, purple, and scarlet, and white; prosaic gooseberry bushes, plain Yankee pieplant (from which the English make tarts), rue, and sweet marjoram, with patches of fennel, sage, thyme, and catnip, all lined off with boxwood, making me think of my grandmother's garden at Roxbury

On the hillside above the garden we saw the entrance to the cave that Mr. Ruskin once filled with ice, just to show the world how to keep its head cool at small expense. He even wrote a letter to the papers giving the bright idea to humanity—that the way to utilize caves was to fill them with ice. Then he forgot all about the matter.

But the following June when the cook, wishing to make some ice cream as a glad surprise for the Sunday dinner, opened the natural ice-chest, she found only a pool of muddy water, and exclaimed: "Botheration!" Then they had custard instead of ice-cream.

E walked up the steps, and my friend let the brass knocker drop just once, for only Americans give a rat-a-tat-tat, and the door was opened by a white-whiskered butler, who took our cards and ushered us into the library. My heart beat a trifle fast as I took inventory of the room; for I never before had called on a man who was believed to have refused the poet laureatship. A dimly lighted room was this library—walls painted brown, running up to mellow yellow at the ceiling; high book-shelves with a step-ladder, and only five pictures on the walls, and of these three were etchings, and two water colors of a very simple sort; leather covered chairs, a long table in the centre, on which were strewn sundry magazines and papers, also several photographs, and at one end of the room a big fireplace, where a yew log smouldered. Here my inventory was cut short by a cheery voice:

"Ah! now, gentlemen, I am glad to see you."

There was no time nor necessity for a formal introduction. The great man took my hand as if he had always known me, as perhaps he thought he had. Then he greeted my friend in the same way, stirred up the fire, for it was a north of England summer day, and took a seat by the table. We were all silent for a space—a silence without embarrassment

"You were looking at the etching over the fireplace—it was sent to me by a young lady in America," said Mr. Ruskin, "and I placed it there to get acquainted with it. I like it more and more. Do you know the scene?" I knew the scene and explained somewhat about it

MR. RUSKIN has the faculty of making his interviewer do most of the talking. He is a rare listener, and leans forward, putting a hand behind his right ear to get each word you say He was particularly interested in the industrial conditions of America, and I soon found myself "occupying the time," while an occasional word of interrogation from Mr. Ruskin gave me no chance to stop. I came to hear him, not to defend our "republican experiment," as he was pleased to call the United States of America. Yet Mr. Ruskin was so gentle and respectful in his manner, and so complimentary in his attitude of a listener, that my impatience at his want of sympathy for our "experiment" only caused me to perspire a trifle

"The fact of women being elected to mayoralities in Kansas makes me think of certain African tribes that exalt their women into warriors—you want your women to fight your political battles!"

"You evidently hold the same opinion on the subject of equal rights that you expressed some years ago," interposed my companion

"What did I say—really I have forgotten most of the opinions I once held?"

"You replied to a correspondent, saying: 'You are certainly right as to my views respecting the female franchise. So far from wishing to give votes to women, I would fain take them away from most men.'"

"Surely that was a sensible answer. My respect for woman is too great to force on her increased responsibilities.

Then as for restricting the franchise with men I am of the firm conviction that no man should be allowed to vote who does not own property, or who cannot do considerable more than read and write. The voter makes the laws, and why should the laws regulating the holding of property be made by a man who has no interest in property beyond a covetous desire; or why should he legislate on education when he possesses none! Then again, women do not bear arms to protect the state."

"But what do you say to the argument that inasmuch as men do not bear children they have no right to vote: going to war possibly being necessary and possibly not, but the perpetuity of the state demanding that some one bear children?"

"The argument is ingenious but lacks force when we consider that the bearing of arms is a matter relating to statecraft, while the baby question is Dame Nature's own, and is not to be regulated even by the sovereign."

HEN Mr. Ruskin talked for nearly fifteen minutes on the duty of the state to the individual—talked very deliberately, but with the clearness and force of a man who believes what he says and says what he believes. So my friend by a gentle thrust under the fifth rib of Mr. Ruskin's logic caused him to come to the rescue of his previously expressed opinions, and we had the satisfaction of hearing him discourse earnestly and eloquently

Maiden ladies usually have an opinion ready on the subject of masculine methods, and, conversely, much of the world's logic on the "woman question" has come from the bachelor brain

Mr. Ruskin went quite out of his way on several occasions in times past to attack John Stuart Mill for heresy "in

SPITHEAD BOATS RECOVERING
AN ANCHOR

opening up careers for women other than that of wife and mother." When Mill did not answer Mr. Ruskin's newspaper letters, the author of Sesame and Lilies called him a "cretinous wretch" and referred to him as "the man of no imagination." Mr. Mill may have been a cretinous wretch (I do not exactly understand the phrase), but the preface to On Liberty, is at once the tenderest, highest, and most sincere compliment paid to a woman, of which I know

The life of Mr. and Mrs. John Stuart Mill shows that the perfect mating is possible; yet Mr. Ruskin has only scorn for the opinions of Mr. Mill on a subject which Mill came as near personally solving in a matrimonial "experiment" as any other public man of modern times, not excepting even Robert Browning. Therefore we might suppose Mr. Mill entitled to speak on the woman question, and I intimated as much to Mr. Ruskin. "He might know all about one woman, and if he should regard her as a sample of all womankind, would he not make a great mistake?" I was silenced.

RUSKIN AND TURNER

IN Fors Clavigera, Letter LIX, the author says: "I never wrote a letter in my life which all the world is not welcome to read." From this one might imagine that Mr. Ruskin never loved—no pressed flowers in books, no passages of poetry double marked and scored, no bundles of letters faded and yellow, sacred for his own eye, tied with white or dainty blue ribbon; no little nothings hidden away in the bottom of a trunk. And yet Mr. Ruskin has his ideas on the woman question, and very positive ideas they are, too—often sweetly sympathetic and wisely helpful

I see that one of the encyclopedias mentions Ruskin as a bachelor, which is giving rather an extended meaning to the word, for although Mr. Ruskin was married he was not mated. According to Collingwood's account, this marriage was a quiet arrangement between parents. Anyway the genius is like the profligate in this: when he marries he generally makes a woman miserable. And misery is reactionary as well as infectious. Ruskin is a genius.

Genius is unique. No satisfactory analysis of it has yet been given. We know a few of its indications—that's all. First among these is ability to concentrate. No seed can sow genius; no soil can grow it; its quality is inborn and defies both cultivation and extermination

To be surpassed is never pleasant; to feel your inferiority is to feel a pang. Seldom is there a person great enough to find satisfaction is the success of a friend The pleasure that excellence gives is oft tainted by resentment; and so the woman who marries a genius is usually unhappy

Genius is excess: it is obstructive to little plans. It is difficult to warm yourself at a conflagration; the tempest may blow you away; the sun dazzles; lightning seldom strikes gently; the Nile overflows. Genius has its times of straying off into the infinite and then what is the good wife to do for

companionship? Does she protest, and find fault? It could not be otherwise, for genius is dictatorial without knowing it, obstructive without wishing to be, intolerant unawares and unsocial because it cannot help it

The wife of a genius sometimes takes his fits of abstraction for stupidity, and having the man's interests at heart she endeavors to arouse him out of his lethargy by chiding him. Occasionally he arouses enough to chide back; and so it has become an axiom that genius is not domestic.

THERE is no doubt but that Ruskin loved his wife sincerely, or at least thought he did. His love was not tainted with jealousy. He was quite willing she should spend several hours daily with his dear friend Millais, dashing, handsome, healthy Millais. Mr. Ruskin had given Millais a commission to paint Mrs. Ruskin's picture. It was a slow task—this portrait painting. The lady had a splendid, vivacious countenance, changeable as a summer sky, and the expressions that stole over her fine face were so paradoxical, fleeting and confusing that Millais began the task anew each morning for a week and destroyed his sketch the next day, as Penelope raveled the garment she was making for Ulysses. But then came a discovery, an awful discovery: Millais loved the woman, wife of his dear friend, and she loved Millais. Conscience smote them like a two-edged sword and a torment of soul possessed them. But two can endure an agony of this kind better than one. They decided to go to the great man whom they had injured and confess all. They went, hand in hand into his study and, on their knees, told the story of their love and asked for judgment, agreeing to leave the future in his hands. John Ruskin heard them through in patient agony, and gave them his blessing. A divorce was procured on technical grounds and at the altar it was Ruskin who gave his former wife into the keeping of Millais, his friend.

Ruskin and Turner

USKIN'S father was a prosperous importer of wines. He left his son a fortune equal to a little more than one million dollars. But that vast fortune has gone—principal and interest—gone in bequests, gifts and experiments; and to-day Mr. Ruskin has no income save that derived from the sale of his books. Talk about "distribution of wealth"! Here we have it. Turner began life poor and died worth a million dollars. Ruskin began life with an inheritance of a million dollars and is now poor. Ruskin made the fortune of Turner; Turner made the fame of Ruskin. These two men, totally different in temperament, one college-bred, the other self-taught, with varying likes and dislikes, will go down in history linked together; and when the history of art fails to mention one, the other, too, will be lost in the dim, grey waste of oblivion.

The bread-and-butter question has never troubled John Ruskin, except in his ardent desire that others should be fed. His days have been given to study and writing from his very boyhood; he has made money, but he has had no time to save it. He has expressed himself on every theme that interests mankind excepting "housemaid's knee." He has written more letters to the newspapers than "Old Subscriber," "Fiat Justitia," "Indignant Reader," and "Veritas" combined. His opinions have carried much weight and directed attention into necessary lines; but perhaps his success as an inspirer of thought lies in the fact that his sense of humor exists only in a trace, as the chemist might say. Men who perceive the ridiculous would never have voiced many of the things which he has said.

Surely those Sioux Indians who stretched a hay lariat across the Union Pacific railroad in order to stop the run-

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

ning of trains had small sense of the ridiculous. But it looks as if they were apostles of Ruskin, each and all. Some one has said that no man appreciates the beautiful who has not a keen sense of humor: for the beautiful is the harmonious, and the laughable is the absence of fit adjustment. Mr. Ruskin disproves the maxim. But let no hasty soul imagine that Ruskin's opinions on practical themes are not useful. He brings to bear an energy on every subject he touches (and what subject has he not touched?) that is sure to make the sparks of thought fly. His independent and fearless attitude awakens from slumber a deal of dozing intellect and out of this strife of opinion comes truth.

Mr. Ruskin is seventy-four at this writing, but he is as serenely stubborn as he ever was. His opposition to new inventions in machinery has not relaxed a single pulley's turn. You grant his premises and in his conclusions you will find that his belt never slips and his logic never jumps a cog.

RUSKIN AND TURNER

THE life of Mr. Ruskin is as regular and exact as the trains on the Great Western, and his days are more peaceful than ever before. He has regular hours for writing, study, walking, reading, eating and working out of doors, superintending the cultivation of his hundred acres. He told me that he had not varied a half hour in two years from a certain time of going to bed and getting up in the morning. Although his form is bowed, this regularity of life has borne fruit in the rich russet of his complexion, the mild, clear eye, and the pleasure in living in spite of occasional pain, which you know the man feels. His hair is thick and nearly white; the beard is now worn quite long and gives a patriarchal appearance to the fine face. When we arose to leave Mr. Ruskin took a white felt hat from the elk antlers in the hallway and a stout stick from the corner, and offered to show us a nearer way back to the village. We walked down a footpath through the tall grass to the lake, where he called our attention to various varieties of ferns.

We shook hands with the old gentleman and thanked him for the pleasure he had given us. He was still examining the ferns when we lifted our hats and bade him good day. He evidently did not hear us for I heard him mutter: "I verily believe those miserable Cook's tourists that were down here yesterday picked some of my ferns."

TURNER

I believe that these works of Turner's are at their first appearing as perfect as those of Phidias or Leonardo; that is to say, incapable of any improvement conceivable by human mind.

JOHN RUSKIN.

DEATH OF NELSON.

THE beauty of the upper Thames with its fairy house-boats and green banks has been sung by poets, but rash is the minstrel who tunes his lyre to sound the praises of this muddy stream in the vicinity of Chelsea. As yellow as the Tiber and thick as the Missouri after a flood, it comes twice a day bearing upon its tossing tide a unique assortment of uncanny sights and sickening smells from the swarming city of men below. Chelsea was once a country village six miles from London Bridge. Now the far-reaching arms of the metropolis have taken it as her own. Chelsea may be likened to some rare spinster, grown old with years and good works, and now having a safe home with a rich and powerful benefactress. Yet Chelsea is not handsome in her old age, and Chelsea was not pretty in youth, nor fair to view in middle life; but Chelsea has been the foster mother of several of the rarest and fairest souls who have ever made the earth pilgrimage ❧ ❧ And the greatness of genius still rests upon Chelsea ☘ As we walk slowly through its winding ways, by the edge of its troubled waters, among dark and crooked turns, through curious courts, by old gateways and piles of steepled stone, where flocks of pigeons wheel, and bells chime, and organs peal, and winds sigh, we know that all has been sanctified by their presence. Their spirits abide with us, and the splendid beauty

of their visions is about us. For the stones beneath our feet have been hallowed by their tread, and the walls have borne their shadows; so all mean things are transfigured and over all these plain and narrow streets their glory gleams. And it is the great men and they alone that can render a place sacred. Chelsea is now to the lovers of the Beautiful a sacred name, a sacred soil; a place of pilgrimage where certain gods of Art once lived, and loved, and worked, and died. Sir Thomas More lived here and had for a frequent guest Erasmus. Hans Sloane began in Chelsea the collection of curiosities which has now developed into the British Museum. Bishop Atterbury (who claimed that Dryden was a greater poet than Shakespeare), Dean Swift and Dr. Arbuthnot, all lived in Church Street; Richard Steele just around the corner and Leigh Hunt in Cheyne Row; but it was from another name that the little street was to be immortalized If France constantly has forty Immortals in the flesh, surely it is a modest claim to say that Chelsea has three for all time: Thomas Carlyle, George Eliot, and Joseph Mallord William Turner.

TURNER'S father was a barber. His youth was passed in poverty, and his advantages for education were very slight. And all this in the crowded city of London where merit may knock long and still not be heard, and in a country where wealth and title count for much. When a boy, barefoot and ragged, he would wander away alone on the banks of the river and dream dreams about wonderful palaces and beautiful scenes; and then he would trace with a stick in the sands, endeavoring, with mud, to make plain to the eye the things that his soul saw

His mother was quite sure that no good could come from this vagabondish nature, and she did not spare the rod, for she feared that the desire to scrawl and daub would spoil the child. But he was a stubborn lad, with a pug nose and big, dreamy, wondering eyes and a heavy jaw. And when parents see that they have such a son they had better hang up the rod behind the kitchen door and lay aside force and cease scolding. For love is better than a cat-o'-nine-tails, and sympathy saves more souls than threats.

The elder Turner considered that the proper use of a brush was to lather chins. But the boy thought differently, and once surreptitiously took one of his father's brushes to paint a picture; the brush on being returned to its cup was used the next day upon a worthy haberdasher, whose cheeks were shortly colored a vermilion that matched his nose. This lost the barber a customer and secured the boy a thrashing

Young Turner did not always wash his father's shop windows well, nor sweep off the sidewalk properly. Like all boys he would rather work for some one else than "his folks."

When ten years of age the sorrow that came to his boyish

heart was grimmer, ghastlier, than any other sorrow that can cloud the sky of childhood, worse than orphanage, worse than death. The last look at the cold, calm face of the dead may bring with it a tithe of peace: grief gives way to acquiescence, and we are moved to nobler thoughts. By accepting a sorrow we divest it of its sting. But for the darkened mind, where the body lives and the soul has seemingly withdrawn, there is no compensation. In her times of aberration young Turner's mother attacked her children, disowned them, disclaimed them; until there came a time when strong men had to bind her with cords and she was carried screaming away. And these were the last impressions of her who bore him, made on the tender, sensitive heart that hungered for a mother's love.

THE BAY OF BAIX:

APOLLO AND THE SIBYL

THE lad used to run errands for an engraver by the name of Smith—John Raphael Smith. Once when Smith sent the barber's boy with a letter to a certain art gallery with orders to "get the answer and hurry back, mind you!" the boy forgot to get the answer and to hurry back. Then another boy was despatched after the first, and boy Number Two found boy Number One sitting, with staring eyes and open mouth, in the art gallery before a painting of Claude Lorraine's. When boy Number One was at last half forcibly dragged away and reached the shop of his master he got his ears well cuffed for his forgetfulness. But from that day forth he was not the same being that he had been before his eyes fell on that Claude Lorraine

He was transformed, as much so as was Lazarus after he was called from beyond the portals of death and had come back to earth, bearing in his heart the secrets of the grave. From that time he thought of Claude Lorraine during the day and dreamed of him at night, and he stole away into every exhibition where a Claude was to be seen. And now I wish that Claude Lorraine was the subject of this sketch, as well as Turner, for his life is a picture full of the sweetest poetry, framed in a world of dullest prose

The eyes of this boy whom they had thought dreamy, dull, and listless, now shone with a different light. He thirsted to achieve, to do, to become—yes, to become a greater painter than Claude Lorraine. His employer saw the change and smiled at it, but he allowed the lad to put in back-grounds and add the skies to cheap prints, just because the youngster teased to do it

Then one day a patron of the shop came and looking

over the shoulder of the Turner boy, said: "He has skill—perhaps talent." And I think that the Recording Angel should give this man a separate page on the Book of Remembrance and write his name in illumined colors, for he gave young Turner access to his own collection and to his library, and he never cuffed him, nor kicked him, nor called him dunce; whereat the boy was much surprised. But he encouraged the youth to sketch a picture in water colors and then he bought the picture and paid him ten shillings for it; and the name of this man was Doctor Munro.

WHEN young Turner was fourteen, the following year, Dr. Munro had him admitted to the Royal Academy as a student, and in 1790 he exhibited a water color of the Archbishop's Palace at Lambeth

The picture took no prize, and, doubtless was not worthy of one, but from now on Joseph M. W. Turner was an artist, and other hands had to sweep the barber shop

But he sold few pictures—they were not popular. Other artists scorned him, possibly intuitively fearing him, for mediocrity always fears when the ghost of genius does not down at its bidding.

Then Turner was accounted unsociable; besides he was ragged, uncouth, independent, and did not conform to the ways of society; so the select circle cast him out, more properly speaking, did not let him in

Still he worked and exhibited at every Academy Exhibition; yet he was often hungry, and the London fog crept cold and damp through his threadbare clothes. But he toiled on, for Claude Lorraine was ever before him

In 1802, when twenty-seven years of age, he visited France and made a tour through Switzerland, tramping over many long miles with his painting kit on his back, and he brought back rich treasures in the way of sketches and quickened imagination. In the years following he took many such trips, and

came to know Venice, Rome, Florence and Paris as perfectly as his own London

When thirty-three years of age he was still worshipping at the shrine of Claude Lorraine. His pictures painted at this time are evidence of his ideal, and his book, Liber Studiorum, issued in 1808, is modeled after the Liber Veritatis. But the book surpasses Claude's, and Turner knew it, and this may have led him to burst his shackles and cast loose from his idol. For in 1815 we find him working according to his own ideas, showing an originality and audacity in conception and execution that made him the butt of the critics, and caused consternation to rage through the studios of competitors

Gradually it dawned upon a few scattered collectors that things so strongly condemned must have merit, for why should the pack bay so loudly if there were no quarry! So to have a Turner was at least something for your friends to discuss. Then carriages began to stop before the dingy building at 47 Queen Anne Street and broadcloth and satin mounted the creaking stairs to the studio. It happened about this time that Turner's prices began to increase. Like the Sibyl of old, if a customer said "I do not want it," the painter put an extra ten pounds on the price. For Dido Building Carthage, Turner's original price was five hundred pounds. People came to see the picture and they said, "The price is too high." Next day Turner's price for the Carthage was one thousand pounds. Finally Sir Robert Peel offered the painter five thousand pounds for the picture, but Turner said he had decided to keep it for himself, and he did.

CALAIS PIER:

FISHING BOATS DEPARTING FOR SEA
ENGLISH PACKET ARRIVING

IN THE forepart of his career he sold few pictures; for the simple reason that no one wanted them. And he sold few pictures during the latter years of his life, for the reason that his prices were so high that none but the very rich could buy. First the public scorned Turner. Next Turner scorned the public. In the beginning it would not buy his pictures, later it could not.

A frivolous public and shallow press from his first exhibition, when fifteen years of age, to his last, when seventy, made sport of his originalities. But for merit there is a recompense in sneers, and a benefit in sarcasms, and a compensation in hate: for when these things get too pronounced, a champion appears. And so it was with Turner. Next to having a Boswell write one's life, what is better than a Ruskin to uphold one's cause?

Success came slowly; his wants were few, but his ambition never slackened, and finally the dreams of his youth became the realities of his manhood.

When twenty-two Turner loved a beautiful girl—they became engaged. He went away on a tramp sketching tour and wrote his lady-love just one short letter each month. He believed that "absence only makes the heart grow fonder," not knowing that this statement is only the vagary of a poet. When he returned the lady was betrothed to another. He gave the pair his blessing and remained a bachelor—a very confirmed bachelor. Perhaps, however, the reason his fiance proved untrue was not through lack of the epistles he

wrote her, but on account of them. In the British Museum I examined several letters written by Turner. They appeared very much like copy for a Josh Billings Almanac. Such originality in spelling, punctuation, and use of capitals! It was admirable in uniqueness. Turner did not think in words—he could think only in paint. But the young lady did not know this, and when a letter came from her homely little lover she was shocked, then she laughed, then she showed these letters to a nice young man who was clerk to a fishmonger and he laughed, then they both laughed. Then this nice young man and this beautiful young lady became engaged, and they were married at St. Andrew's on a lovely May morning. And they lived happily ever afterward.

ON KINGSTON BANK

TURNER was small, and in appearance plain. Yet he was big enough to paint a big picture, and he was not so homely as to frighten away all beautiful women ☘ But Philip Gilbert Hamerton tells us: "Fortunate in many things, Turner was lamentably unfortunate in this: that throughout his whole life he never came under the ennobling and refining influence of a good woman ❧

Like Plato, Michael Angelo, Sir Isaac Newton, and his own Claude Lorraine, he was wedded to his art. But at sixty-five his genius suddenly burst forth afresh, and his work, Mr. Ruskin says, at that time exceeded in daring brilliancy and in the rich flowering of imagination anything that he had previously done. Mr. Ruskin could give no reason, but rumor says: "A woman."

The one weakness of our hero, that hung to him for life, was the idea that he could write poetry. The tragedian always thinks he can succeed in comedy, the comedian spends hours in his garret rehearsing tragedy; most preachers have an idea that they could have made a quick fortune in business, and many business men are very sure that if they had taken to the pulpit there would now be fewer empty pews. So the greatest landscape painter of modern times imagined himself a poet. Hamerton says that Turner's verse would serve well for remarkable specimens of grammar, spelling, and construction to be given to little boys to correct ❧

TURNER'S studio was plain, dingy, unpainted, uncarpeted, unkempt. He did not decorate with Oriental tissues or strange vases from beyond the sea—or swords or spears or strange artistic bits: his life was simple as that of a carpenter. He surrounded himself with no luxuries, no marble statuary or ebony

cabinets inlaid with malachite or lapis lazuli. His life was plain to severity and stern to the verge of hardship, but to a man in good health, who holds beauty in his heart, there is a satisfaction in simplicity that can never come from the ownership of things. In ownership there is often a curse. One spot in Turner's life over which I like to linger is his friendship with Sir Walter Scott. They collaborated in the production of Provincial Antiquities and spent many happy hours together tramping over Scottish moors and mountains. Sir Walter lived out his days in happy ignorance concerning the art of painting, and although he liked the society of Turner, he confessed that it was quite beyond his ken why people bought his pictures. "And as for your books," said Turner, "the covers of some are certainly very pretty." Yet these men took a satisfaction in each other's society, such as brothers might enjoy, but without either appreciating the greatness of the other.

Turner's temperament was audacious, self-centred, self-reliant, eager for success and fame, yet at the same time scorning public opinion—a paradox often found in the artistic mind of the first class; silent always—with a bitter silence, disdaining to tell his meaning when the critics could not perceive it.

He was above all things always the artist, never the realist. The realist pictures the things he sees; the artist expresses that which he feels. Children, and all simple folk who use pen, pencil, or brush, describe the things they behold. As intellect develops and goes more in partnership with hand, imagination soars and things are outlined that no man can see except he be able to perceive the invisible. To appreciate a work of art you must feel as the artist felt. Now it is very plain that the vast majority of people are not capable of this high sense of sublimity which the creative artist feels; and therefore they do not understand, and not understanding they wax merry, or cynical, or sarcastic, or wrathful, or envious; or they pass by unmoved. And I maintain that those who pass by unmoved are more righteous than they who scoff.

Ruskin and Turner

IF I should attempt to explain to my little girl the awe I feel when I contemplate the miracle of maternity, she would probably change the subject by prattling to me about a kitten that she saw lapping milk from a blue saucer. If I should attempt to explain to some men what I feel when I contemplate the miracle of maternity, they would smile and turn it all into an unspeakable jest. Is not the child nearer to God than the man?

We thus see why Browning is only a joke to many, Whitman an eccentric, Dante insane, and Turner a pretender. These have all sought to express things which the many cannot feel, and consequently they have been, and are, the butt of jokes and gibes innumerable. "Except ye become as little children," etc.—And yet the scoffers are often people of worth. Nothing shows the limitation of humanity as this: genius often does not appreciate genius. The inspired, strangely enough, are like the fools, they do not recognize inspiration

AN Englishman called on Voltaire and found him in bed reading Shakespeare.

"What are you reading?" asked the visitor.

"Your Shakespeare!" said the philosopher; and as he answered he flung the book across the room.

"He's not my Shakespeare," said the Englishman.

Greene, Rymer, Dryden, Warburton, and Dr. Johnson used collectively or individually the following expressions in describing the work of the author of Hamlet: conceit, overreach, word-play, extravagance, overdone, absurdity, obscurity, puerility, bombast, idiocy, untruth, improbability, drivel. Byron wrote from Florence to Murray: "I know nothing of painting, and I abhor and spit upon all

ULYSSES DERIDING
POLYPHEMUS

saints and so-called spiritual subjects that I see portrayed in these churches."

BUT the past is so crowded with vituperation that it is difficult to select—besides that we do not wish to; but let us take a sample of arrogance from yesterday to prove our point and then drop the theme for something pleasanter

Pew and pulpit have fallen over each other for the privilege of hitting Darwin; a Bishop warns his congregation that Emerson is "dangerous;" Spurgeon calls Shelley a sensualist; Dr. Buckley speaks of Susan B. Anthony as the leader of "the short-haired;" Talmage cracks jokes about evolution, referring feelingly to "monkey ancestry;" and a prominent divine of England writes the World's Congress of Religions down as "pious wax-works." These things being true, and all the sentiments quoted coming from "good" but blindly zealous men, is it a wonder that the artist is not understood?

RUSKIN AND TURNER

A BRILLIANT picture called Cologne—Evening, attracted much attention at the Academy Exhibition of 1826. One day the people who often collected around Turner's work were shocked to see that the beautiful canvas had lost its brilliancy, and evidently had been tampered with by some miscreant. A friend ran to inform Turner of the bad news: "Don't say anything. I only smirched it with lampblack. It was spoiling the effect of Laurence's picture that hung next to it. The black will all wash off after the exhibition."

And his tender treatment of his aged father shows the gentle side of his nature. The old barber, whose trembling hand could no longer hold a razor, wished to remain under his son's roof in guise of a servant, but the son said: "No, we fought the world together, and now that it seeks to do me honor you shall share all the benefits." And Turner never smiled when the little wizened old man would whisper to some visitor: "Yes, yes, Joseph is the greatest artist in England, and I am his father."

Turner had a way of sending ten-pound notes in blank envelopes to artists in distress, and he did this so frequently that the news got out finally, but never through Turner's telling, and then he had to adopt other methods of doing good by stealth

I DO not contend that Turner's character was immaculate, but still it is very probable that worldlings do not appreciate what a small part of this great genius touched the mire. To prove the sordidness of the man one critic tells, with visage awfully solemn, how Turner once gave an engraving to a friend and then after a year sent demanding it back. But to a person with a groat's worth of wit the

matter is plain: the dreamy, abstracted artist, who bumped into his next door neighbors on the street and never knew them, forgot he had given the picture and believed he had only loaned it. This is made still more apparent by the fact that, when he sent for the engraving in question, he administered a rebuke to the man for keeping it so long. The poor dullard who received the note flew into a rage —returned the picture—sent his compliments and begged the great artist to "take your picture and go to the devil." Then certain scribblers who through mental disuse had lost the capacity for mirth, dipped their pens in aqua fortis and wrote of the "innate meanness," the "malice prepense," and the "Old Adam" that dwelt in the heart of Turner. No one laughed except a few Irishmen, and an American, who chanced to hear the story.

F TURNER'S many pictures I will mention in detail but two, both of which are to be seen on the walls of the National Gallery. First, the old Temeraire. This warship had been sold out of service and was being towed away to be broken up. The scene was photographed on Turner's brain, and he immortalized it on canvas. We cannot do better than to borrow the words of Mr. Ruskin:

"Of all pictures not visibly involving human pain this is the most pathetic ever painted. The utmost pensiveness which can ordinarily be given to a landscape depends on adjuncts of ruin, but no ruin was ever so affecting as the gliding of this ship to her grave. This particular ship, crowned in the Trafalgar hour of trial with chief victory—surely if ever anything without a soul deserved honor or affection we owe them here. Surely some sacred care might have been left in our thoughts for her; some quiet space amidst the lapse of English waters! Nay, not so. We have stern keepers to trust her glory to—the fire and

the worm. Nevermore shall sunset lay golden robe upon her, nor starlight tremble on the waves that part at her gliding. Perhaps where the low gate opens to some cottage garden, the tired traveller may ask, idly, why the moss grows so green on the rugged wood; and even the sailor's child may not know that the night dew lies deep in the war rents of the old Temeraire."

THE Burial of Sir David Wilkie at Sea has brought tears to many eyes. Yet there is no burial. The ship is far away in the gloom of the offing; you cannot distinguish a single figure on her decks; but you behold her great sails standing out against the leaden blackness of the night and you feel that out there a certain scene is being enacted. And if you listen closely you can hear the solemn voice of the captain as he reads the burial service; then there is a pause—a swift sliding sound —a splash and all is over.

THE FIGHTING TEMERAIRE

PICTURES by Turner to the number of nineteen thousand were left to the British Nation by the artist's will. Many of them, of course, are merely sketches. These pictures are now to be seen in the National Gallery in rooms set apart and sacred to Turner's work. For fear that it may be thought that the number mentioned above is a misprint, let us say that if he had produced one picture a day for fifty years, it would not equal the number of pieces bestowed by his will on the nation. This of course takes no account of the pictures sold during his lifetime, and, as he left a fortune of one hundred and forty-four thousand pounds ($720,000.00), we may infer that not all of his pictures were given away.

RUSKIN AND TURNER

ING of modern painters, he has been called; but neither during life nor at his death was he surrounded by regal trappings. At Chelsea I stood in the little room where he breathed his last, that bleak day in 1851. The unlettered but motherly old woman who took care of him in those last days never guessed his greatness; none in the house or neighborhood knew. To them he was only Mr. Booth, an eccentric old man of moderate means who liked to muse, read, and play with children. He had no callers, no friends; he went to the city every day and came back at night. He talked but little, he was absent-minded, he smoked and thought and smiled and muttered to himself. He never went to church; but once one of the lodgers asked him what he thought of God

"God, God—what do I know of God, what does any one! He is our life—He is the All, but we need not fear Him—all we can do is to speak the truth and do our work. To-morrow we go—where? I know not, but I am not afraid."

Of art, to these strangers, he would never speak. Once they urged him to go with them to an exhibition at Kensington. He smiled feebly, as he lit his pipe, and said, "An Art Exhibition? No, no; a man can show on canvas so little of what he feels, it is not worth the while."

T LAST he died—passed peacefully away, and his attorney came and took charge of the remains. Many are the hard words that have been flung off by heedless tongues about Turner's taking an assumed name and living in obscurity, but "what you call fault I call accent." Surely if a great man and world famous desires to escape the flatterers and the silken mesh of so-called society and live the life of simplicity he

CARTHAGE:

DIDO DIRECTING THE EQUIPMENT
OF THE FLEET

has a right to do so. Again, Turner was a very rich man in his old age; he did much for struggling artists and assisted aspiring merit in many ways. So it came about that his mail was burdened with begging letters and his life made miserable by appeals from impecunious persons, good and bad, and from churches, societies, and associations without number. He decided to flee them all; and he did

The "Carthage," mentioned on a former page, is one of his finest works, and he esteemed it so highly that he requested that when death came his body should be buried, wrapped in its magnificent folds. But the wish was disregarded

His remains rest in the crypt of St. Paul's, beside the dust of Reynolds. His statue, in marble, adorns a niche in the great cathedral, and his name is secure high on the roll of honor. And if for no other reason the name and fame of Chelsea should be deathless as the home of Turner.

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