

sacrifice of intellectual or corporeal liberty and life.

The faults of John Ruskin as a mere intellect are the faults of the enthusiast and idealist, with his faults as a man we have nothing to do. Well would it be for his generation if in the aggregate it were spotless as he. "Ruskin's lavish benevolence," writes Mr. Kennedy, "is a legitimate corollary of his creed. It is the Sermon on the Mount put into practice." To judge an enthusiast with fairness needs something of the enthusiast. An iceberg would be a bad appraiser of tropical sunshine. If the salt have lost his savor cast it out, it will never serve for the effigy of Lot's wife. The thought of a Professor of Logic formulating rules for the poet makes one smile, and forcibly reminds one of the multiplication table's assuming unto itself the fans of a butterfly, wherewith to flutter into the realms of Orpheus and Eros. The ordinary stock-jobber, penny-a-liner, or creature of prosaic prose can never understand John Ruskin, but then he is in good company. His august majesty, George I., could see no beauty in "bainting and boetry." That was his misfortune not his fault. He could not help being a Philistine any more than some cheeses can help being round and very obtuse, especially as regards the rind. No thick-skinned mortal should ever presume to sit in judgment upon the idealist. The result is about as absurd as a rhinoceros' endeavouring to account for the eccentric gyrations and iridescent flights of a dragon-fly. Only the poet could write:

The burnished dragon-fly is thine attendant,  
And tilts against the field,  
And down the listed sunbeam rides resplendent

With steel-blue mail and shield.

To estimate fairly the genius of a man like Ruskin is indeed a very difficult task, unless one can disasso-

ciate one's self from the stock exchange of life, and look down upon its glittering, shallow, and unstable throng from a supream and serener height. To the common-place plodder and speculator Ruskin is a riddle or a crank (a pestilence take the word). His best friends must admit he is an enthusiast, and a master of original paradox, sometimes a little captious and dictatorial—as he has a right to be. So are we all; all dictatorial men. But the unpardonable sin of the arch-critic with the disaffected seems to be his fearless, original, speculative modes of thought, and his fearless and unique expositions of what he thought the truth. Of course his methods lead him into difficulties with the Pharisees of fashion and fossilized dogma, as the fearless exposition of what another once taught as truth culminated in that last tragic scene on Calvary. Truly history repeats itself, and if we do not to-day crucify men's convicted bodies, we are not averse to gibbeting metaphorically their condemned reputations, more especially if the owner of the condemned reputation be helpless and unable to reply. A live dog is better than a dead lion. But the dead lion may have friends not in the same pitiful position, able and willing to stave off the yelp and snarl of puppydom, and at least defend the fair fame of the King of Nature from desecration.

There is a sound moral conveyed in Ruskin's own remarks upon the attacks of certain detractors. Grub Street had been bleating, as is its wont, over his sentimentality. Here is the chastisement awarded: "Because I have passed my life in alms-giving, not in fortune-hunting; because I have laboured always for the honour of others, not my own; and have chosen rather to make men look to Turner and Luini, than to form or exhibit the skill of my own