

"Or that ghost of a cloud, which steals by yonder clump of pines; nay, which does *not* steal by them, but haunts them, wreathing yet round them, and yet—and yet, slowly: now falling in a fair waved line like a woman's veil; now fading, now gone: we look away for an instant, and look back, and it is again there. What has it to do with that clump of pines, that it broods by them, and weaves itself among their branches, to and fro? Has it hidden a cloudy treasure among the moss at their roots which it watches thus? Or has some strong enchanter charmed it into fond returning, or bound it fast within those bars of bough? And yonder filmy crescent, bent like an archer's bow above the snowy summit, the highest of all the hill,—that white arch which never forms but over the supreme crest,—how is it stayed there, repelled apparently from the snow—nowhere touching it, the clear sky seen between it and the mountain edge, yet never leaving it—poised as a white bird hovers over its nest?

"Or those war-clouds that gather on the horizon, dragon-crested, tongued with fire;—how is their barbed strength bridled? What bits are these they are champing with their vaporous lips; flinging off flakes of black foam? Leagued leviathans of the Sea of Heaven, out of their nostrils goeth smoke, and their eyes are like the eyelids of the morning. The sword of him that layeth at them cannot hold the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon. Where ride the captains of their armies? Where are the set measures of their march? Fierce murmurers answering each other from morning until evening—what rebuke is this which has awed them into peace? What hand has reined them back by the way by which they came?"

And then follows the moral of all this pageantry of white-drawn vapour, and sunsuffused cloudscape and black

legionry of thunder-rock. The clouds have a soul for Ruskin, an intelligence that appeals with no mistakable meaning. He has just been speaking of the heavens and contrasting them with the firmament. He says, "these heavens, then, 'declare the *glory* of God' that is the light of God, the eternal glory, stable and changeless. . . . 'And the firmament showeth his *handywork*.' The clouds, prepared by the hand of God for the help of man, varied in their ministration—veiling the inner splendour—show, not His eternal glory, but His daily handwork. . . . Compare Job xxxvi. 24: 'Remember that thou magnify his work, which men behold. Every man may see it.' Not so the glory—that only in part; the courses of these stars are to be seen imperfectly, and but by a few. But this firmament, 'every man may see it, man may behold it afar off.' 'Behold. God is great, and we know him not. For he maketh small the drops of water; they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof.'"

Truly may it not be said of Ruskin as of Shelley: "All the fairnesses of the earth were dearest to him as imaging yet more exquisite and diviner beauty.

"He will watch from dawn to gloom
The lake-reflected sun illumine
The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom,
Nor heed nor see what things they be;
But from these create he can
Forms more real than living man
Nurslings of immortality."

One extract more and I have done. Justice doubtless is a good attribute of humanity. A greater is mercy. *Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.* Time was when I was an advocate for the law. I have since passed through the crucible of Time,

"Time the correcter where our judgments err,
The test of love, truth, sole philosopher,"

not without some mental suffering and soul strain, and to-day I stand