

MY ACQUAINTANCE WITH RUSKIN

TO meet a leader amongst men, in thought or action, on anything like familiar terms, is generally considered worthy of some note. The modern interviewer, with his keen business instinct for copy, has effectually dampened the enthusiastic glow that might arise from such an encounter, and it is fortunate when the accidental association with a famous man is under such circumstances, as to obviate the English tendency to complacency over such a situation, as if some reflected credit accrued from the great man's acquaintance.

I was a very young man when I first met Ruskin. I came under his notice in an Institution entirely unique in its own time, and which, I believe, has no exact parallel in ours. It was at the Workingmen's College in London in 1865. This Institution was formed by a group of eminent men, who had very little in common, except a high ideal of moral responsibility to use their endowments in some