

beginning to have honest representations of nature. No one who returns to England after a few years' absence, can fail to be struck with the change, and no one who knows anything whatever of the literary history of the period, can fail to attribute it to Mr. Ruskin.

The present volume contains four sections of the whole work, the first is on 'Leaf Beauty', the second on 'Cloud Beauty'; the third on 'Ideas of Relation,' which is subdivided into 'Invention Formal,' and 'Invention Spiritual.' The most interesting sections are the two first, because they deal with points which come more or less under the observation of all of us, in a manner which no one has before attempted. They interpret nature—that is, they come between us and our observation of things, and tell us not only what to admire, but why we should admire it. Those who cannot sympathize with painting may at least sympathize with nature. In treating of 'Leaf Beauty,' Mr. Ruskin divides leaves generally into shield-bearers and sword-bearers, the former class being that in which the buds are protected by leaves, and the latter that in which they are protected by spines. The latter class will have most sympathy here in Canada, and thus speak for themselves in Mr. Ruskin's pages:

"Also it may be well for lowland branches to reach hither and thither for what they need, and to take all kinds of irregular shape and extension. But the pine is trained to need nothing, and to endure everything. It is resolutely whole, self-contained, desiring nothing but rightness, content with restricted completion. Tall or short, it will be straight. Small or large, it will be round. It may be permitted also to these soft lowland trees that they should make themselves gay with show of blossom, and glad with pretty charities of fruitfulness. We builders with the sword have harder work to do for man, and must do it in close-set troops. To stay the sliding of the mountain snows, which would bury him; to hold in divided drops, at our sword points, the rain, which would sweep away him and his treasure fields, to nurse in shade among our brown fallen leaves the trickling that feeds the brooks in drought, to give massive shield against the winter wind, which shrieks through the bare branches of the plain.—such service must we do him steadfastly while we live. Our bodies, also, are at his service; softer than the bodies of other trees, though our toil is harder than theirs. Let him take them as pleases him, for his houses and ships. So also it may be well for these timid lowland trees to tremble with all their leaves; or turn their paleness to the sky, if but a rush of rain passes by them, or to let fall their leaves at last, sick and sore. But we pines must live carelessly amidst the wrath of clouds. We only wave our branches to and fro when the storm pleads with us, as men toss their arms in a dream. And finally, these weak lowland trees may struggle fondly for the last remnants of life, and send up feeble saplings again from their roots when they are cut down. But we builders of the sword perish boldly, our dying shall be perfect and solemn, as our warring, we give up our lives without reluctance and for ever."

In the section on 'Cloud Beauty,' the disciple of Turner is more true and unapproachable than perhaps in any other part of his volumes. Turner's clouds are like sunsets in Italy, made perpetual; Ruskin's description of clouds is all that a photograph can be in its want of colour. The analysis which this volume gives both of their form and colour must be closely studied, nor will it bear abbreviation, but we cannot avoid finding room for one passage from the chapter on Rain, 'the Angel of the Sea,' which is in the author's most natural style:

"The moss-lands have an infinite advantage, not only in sight, but in liberty; they are the freest ground in all the world. You can only traverse the great woods by crawling like a lizard, or climbing like a monkey—the great acids with slow steps and veiled head. But bare-headed, and open-eyed, and free-limbed, commanding all the horizon's space of changeable light, and all the horizon's compass of tossing ground, you traverse the moss-land. In discipline it is severe as the desert, but it is a discipline compelling to action, and the moss-lands seem, therefore, the rough schools of the world, in which its strongest human frames are knit and tried, and so sent down, like the northern winds, to brace and brighten the languor into which the repose of more favoured districts may degenerate. It would be strange, indeed if there were no beauty in the phenomena by which this great renovating and purifying work is done. And it is done almost entirely by the great Angel of the Sea—rain;—the Angel, observe, the messenger sent to a special place on a special errand. Not the diffused perpetual presence of the burden of mist, but the going and returning of intermittent cloud. All turns upon that intermittence. Soft moss on stone and rock;—cave-fern on tangled glen;—way side well—perennial, patient, silent, clear; stealing through its square font of rough hewn stone; ever thus deep—no more—which the winter wreck sullies not, the summer thirst wastes not, incapable of stain as of decline—where the fallen leaf lies undecayed, and the insect darts unflinching. Crossed brook and over eddying river, lifted even in flood scarcely over its stepping stones,—but through all sweet summer keeping tremulous music with harp-strings of dark water among the silver fingering of the pebbles. Far away in the south the strong ever-gods have all basted, and gone down to the sea. Wasted and burning white furnaces of blasting sand, their broad beds lie ghastly and bare;

but here the soft wings of the Sea Angel droop still with dew, and the shadows of their plumage fall on the hills, strange laughings and glitterings of silver streamlets, born suddenly, and twined about the mossy heights in trickling tinsel, answering to them as they wave."

Mr. Ruskin has been very much twitted with inconsistencies—that is, his opinions although expressed dogmatically at first, have expanded in the course of time. There is a blunt and fearless honesty about all his writings, which is very refreshing in these days of shallow thinking and timid utterance. What he believes he believes with his whole soul, and states with his whole energy. But in the course of years, opinions upon art, like all opinions except those which are based immediately upon an inspired revelation, necessarily become modified; they are living, and as Mr. Ruskin himself says in this volume, "they show their life by being capable of nourishment, and therefore of change." If this is remembered, the taunts of captious critics will fall harmless to the ground, and we believe that our readers will accept from us, in the case of this book, the testimony which the *Times* long ago gave to the 'Stones of Venice,' that it will "elevate taste and intellect, raise the tone of moral feeling, kindly benevolence towards men, and increase the love and fear of God."

Art and Science.

THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION.

In an age like this when the interests of true science and religion are so closely allied, we need not apologize for dwelling at length upon the Oxford meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Next week we hope to give some accounts of the meetings of the various sections. We have only room at present for portions of the President's address.

On June 27th the Sheldonian theatre at Oxford was filled with a large and brilliant assembly, including the most eminent men of science, not only in England but in Europe. The Chancellor (Lord Derby,) and Vice-Chancellor (Dr. Jenne) were present. The Prince Consort opened the proceedings by resigning the Presidency into the hands of his successor Lord Wrottesley. The new President began his address by paying a noble compliment to Oxford for the exertions which the University had made in the cause of science. He spoke of her distinguished professorial staff, of the school of Physical science, of the academic rewards which were bestowed upon its study, and above all of the magnificent Museum upon which nearly £100,000 had been expended within the last five years.

"Oxford, then, has shown herself fully equal to her glorious mission, and it was only a fitting sequel to such enlightened conduct, that she should be entrusted with the grateful task of educating the heir-apparent to the Throne of the most popular Sovereign who ever swayed the sceptre of this vast Empire."

Lord Wrottesley then proceeded to give a summary of recent results and experiments in the various branches of Science, commencing with Astronomy. After mentioning the important results attained by private observations in England, he gave a sketch of the various classes of phenomena to which observation had been directed. One of these was comets, of which his Lordship said:

"Of all the phenomena of the heavens, there are none which excite more general interest than comets—those vagrant strangers, the gipsies as they have been termed of our solar system, which often come we know not whence, and at periods when we least expect them. And such is the effect produced by the strangeness and suddenness of their appearance, and the mysterious nature of some of the facts connected with them, that while in ignorant times they excited alarm, they now sometimes seduce men to leave other employments and become astronomers. Now, though the larger and brighter comets naturally excite most general public interest, and are really valuable to astronomers, as exhibiting appearances which tend to throw light on the internal structure of those bodies, and the nature of the forces which must be in operation to produce the extraordinary phenomena observed, yet some of the smaller telescopic comets are, perhaps, more interesting in a physical point of view. Thus the six periodical comets, the orbits of which have been determined with tolerable accuracy, and which return at stated intervals, are extremely useful, as being likely to disclose facts of which, but for them, we should possibly have ever remained ignorant. Thus for example, when the comet of Encke, which performs its revolution in a period of a little more than three years, was observed at each return, it disclosed the important and unexpected fact, that its motion was continually accelerated. At each successive approach to the sun it arrives at its perihelion sooner and sooner, and there is no way of accounting for this so satisfactory as that of supposing that the space, in which the planetary and cometary motions are performed, is everywhere pervaded by a very rarified atmosphere or other, so thin as to exercise no perceptible effect on the movements of massive solid bodies as the planets, but substantial enough to exert a very important influence on more attenuated substances moving