

just. All that I am concerned to point out is, first, that he admits these doctrines to have elements of indisputable truth in them ; and secondly, and more especially, that the doctrines which he brings forward to modify them, are arrived at by a method absolutely identical with that which is employed by these economists themselves. He no less than they deduces certain general conclusions as to how men act with regard to certain definite matters from the ordinary economic assumption that men's conduct, in these connections, is as a rule motivated by self-interest, and that the kind of self-interest here especially in question is centred in considerations of pecuniary gain or loss. His assertion that no one would pay a physician a guinea if other physicians, as good, were willing to take ten-and-sixpence ; and that demand is bound to decline as the price of an article rises, are assertions which would have no meaning or foundation whatsoever, unless their foundation is the fact that, with regard to many economic matters at all events, the behaviour of actual human nature is the behaviour of the "economic man." Such being the case, then, the science of the "common" economists is, on his own unintentional admission, not, as he declares it to be, a science essentially false and nugatory, based on a fantastic abstraction, and ending in insane conclusions ; but a science whose method is sound so far as it goes, and which, within certain limits, gives us a correct account of the laws of human conduct and the results of it.

Ruskin's real desire, though he had not the patience to analyse it, was to preach an impassioned sermon on the moral uses to be made of those laws of human action which the economists had correctly elucidated. What he did was to declare that these laws had no existence at all, although in the very act of doing so he was himself compelled to appeal to them.

The character of his procedure may be farther illustrated thus. Having mercilessly attacked Mill's statement that to be wealthy is to have commodities possessing exchangeable value he declares that the only true definition of wealth is "Life"—meaning that wealth is not real wealth unless it consists of