

I do envy Ruskin [he wrote] the authority and eloquence which give such weight and effect to his praise. It is just what I see in a glass darkly that he brings out and lights up with the very best words possible, while we others, who cannot draw, like Shakespeare, have eyes for wonder, but lack tongues to praise (ii. 132).

Another influence which made itself strongly felt in Burne-Jones's life and helped in no small measure to mould his style, was that of Watts. The great painter whom we have lately lost often recalled the July day—in 1857—when Rossetti brought his young follower to Little Holland House and told him that this shy youth, with the blue eyes and dreamy air, was the greatest genius of the age. The two painters soon became intimate, and when Burne-Jones fell seriously ill in the following summer, Mrs. Prinsep, with whom Watts was then living, took the young painter into her house and nursed him during several weeks. At Little Holland House Burne-Jones received much kindness from his hostess and her family, and first met Tennyson, who was then writing the "Idylls of the King," and many prominent artists and literary men. But the debt which he owed to Watts was greater still. It was the elder master who first made him realise his deficiencies in drawing and inspired him with courage and determination to overcome this difficulty. In a letter which he addressed a few years ago to Mr. Comyns Carr, Burne-Jones wrote: "Rossetti gave me courage to commit myself to imagination without shame—a thing both good and bad for me. It was Watts, much later, who compelled me to draw better." No one ever recognised the genius of Burne-Jones more fully than Watts. He would talk by the hour of his friend's rare sense of loveliness and marvellous invention, above all of his supreme power of transforming other men's ideas and of bearing you away into a remote and visionary world of his own, where all was real and all full of beauty. Only he always regretted that so gifted and accomplished a painter should deliberately cut himself off from contemporary thought and feeling and live altogether in the past. One day, soon after Leighton's death,