

all overlaid with gold, it will be truer really than one that should make him halt or begrimed or sully him in the least."

Another influence which counted for much in those early days was that of Ruskin. While Burne-Jones was still at Oxford, "Modern Painters" came to him as "a message of light and joy," and to his great happiness he now saw his hero and found him "even better than his books, which are the best in the world!" "I'm not E. B.-J. any longer, I'm not Ted," he wrote in an ecstasy of delight at receiving a letter from Ruskin. "I've dropped my personality. I'm a correspondent with Ruskin and my future title is 'the man who wrote to Ruskin and got an answer by return'" (i. 127). And to relieve his feelings, he made a drawing of himself, bowed to the ground before a figure of Ruskin, crowned with a halo of light. Ruskin, on his part, was charmed with his new acquaintance, and described him to Seeley as not only a youth of genius, but as the only cultured artist whom he had ever known. The friendship between the two men was a very close one and remained unchanged in spite of frequent differences of opinion. When they travelled together in Italy, Botticelli and Carpaccio inspired them both with the same enthusiasm, but when Burne-Jones added Pollaiuolo and Signorelli to his list of favourite painters, Ruskin would have none of this and fell foul of Burne-Jones's own art. Burne-Jones, on his part, could not but regret the violence with which Ruskin denounced Michelangelo in his later works, and quarrelled with his friend's writings as much as Ruskin objected to his pictures. But this could not alter the strong personal affection and deep admiration which the painter always felt for his old friend, whose true greatness, he always said, would only be recognised by posterity. It was a great joy to him when, in 1883, Ruskin returned to Oxford as Slade Professor, and spoke of him and his art in a manner which made Mr. Swinburne say that he had never before heard Burne-Jones's work praised in really adequate terms.