

**THE WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN. VOL. IV.  
THE EAGLE'S NEST: TEN LECTURES ON  
THE RELATION OF NATURAL SCIENCE TO  
ART, GIVEN BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF  
OXFORD IN LENT TERM, 1872**

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**JOHN RUSKIN**

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THE  
WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRISTCHURCH, OXFORD.

VOLUME IV.

THE EAGLE'S NEST.



GEORGE ALLEN,  
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.

1880.

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# THE EAGLE'S NEST.

TEN LECTURES

ON THE RELATION OF

NATURAL SCIENCE TO ART,

GIVEN BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN LENT TERM, 1872.

BY

JOHN RUSKIN,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRISTCHURCH, AND HONORARY FELLOW OF CORPUS CHRISTI  
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*SECOND THOUSAND.*

GEORGE ALLEN,

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## P R E F A C E.



THE following Lectures have been written, not with less care, but with less pains, than any in former courses, because no labour could have rendered them exhaustive statements of their subjects, and I wished, therefore, to take from them every appearance of pretending to be so: but the assertions I have made are entirely deliberate, though their terms are unstudied; and the one which to the general reader will appear most startling, that the study of anatomy is destructive to art, is instantly necessary in explanation of the system adopted for the direction of my Oxford schools.

At the period when engraving might have become to art what printing became to literature, the four greatest point-draughtsmen hitherto known, Mantegna, Sandro Botticelli, Durer, and Holbein, occupied themselves in the new industry. All these four men were as high in intellect and moral sentiment as in art-power; and if they had engraved as Giotto painted, with popular and unscientific simplicity, would have left an inexhaustible series

of prints, delightful to the most innocent minds, and strengthening to the most noble.

But two of them, Mantegna and Durer, were so polluted and paralyzed by the study of anatomy that the former's best works (the magnificent mythology of the Vices in the Louvre, for instance) are entirely revolting to all women and children; while Durer never could draw one beautiful female form or face; and, of his important plates, only four, the Melancholia, St. Jerome in his study, St. Hubert, and Knight and Death, are of any use for popular instruction, because in these only, the figures being fully draped or armed, he was enabled to think and feel rightly, being delivered from the ghastly toil of bone-delineation.

Botticelli and Holbein studied the face first, and the limbs secondarily; and the works they have left are therefore (without exception) precious; yet saddened and corrupted by the influence which the contemporary masters of body-drawing exercised on them; and at last eclipsed by their false fame. I purpose, therefore, in my next course of lectures, to explain the relation of these two draughtsmen to other masters of design, and of engraving.