

**THE WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN,
VOLUME VI: THE CROWN OF THE
WILD OLIVE. FOUR LECTURES ON
INDUSTRY AND WAR**

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The Works of John Ruskin, Volume VI: The Crown of the Wild Olive. Four Lectures on Industry and War by John Ruskin

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JOHN RUSKIN

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INDUSTRY AND WAR**

THE
WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRISTCHURCH, OXFORD.

VOLUME VI.

THE CROWN OF WILD OLIVE.



LONDON: PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR
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1873

THE
CROWN OF WILD OLIVE.

FOUR LECTURES

ON

INDUSTRY AND WAR.

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, M.A.

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRISTCHURCH, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART.

* And indeed it should have been of gold, had not Jupiter been so poor.
ARISTOPHANES (*Plutus*).

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THE
CROWN OF WILD OLIVE.

INTRODUCTION.*

I. TWENTY YEARS ago, there was no lovelier piece of lowland scenery in South England, nor any more pathetic, in the world, by its expression of sweet human character and life, than that immediately bordering on the sources of the Wandle, and including the low moors of Addington, and the villages of Beddington and Carshalton, with all their pools and streams. No clearer or diviner waters ever sang with constant lips of the hand which 'giveth rain

* Called the 'Preface' in former editions; it is one of my bad habits to put half my books into preface. Of this one, the only prefatory thing I have to say is that most of the contents are stated more fully in my other volumes; but here, are put in what, at least, I meant to be a more popular form, all but this introduction, which was written very carefully to be read, not spoken, and the last lecture on the Future of England, with which, and the following notes on it, I have taken extreme pains.

from heaven ;' no pastures ever lightened in spring-time with more passionate blossoming ; no sweeter homes ever hallowed the heart of the passer-by with their pride of peaceful gladness,—fain-hidden—yet full-confessed. The place remains (1870) nearly unchanged in its larger features ; but, with deliberate mind I say, that I have never seen anything so ghastly in its inner tragic meaning,—not in Pisan Maremma,—not by Campagna tomb,—not by the sand-isles of the Torcellan shore,—as the slow stealing of aspects of reckless, indolent, animal neglect, over the delicate sweetness of that English scene : nor is any blasphemy or impiety, any frantic saying, or godless thought, more appalling to me, using the best power of judgment I have to discern its sense and scope, than the insolent defiling of those springs by the human herds that drink of them. Just where the welling of stainless water, trembling and pure, like a body of light, enters the pool of Carshalton, cutting itself a radiant channel down to the gravel, through warp of feathery weeds, all waving, which it traverses with its deep threads of clearness, like the chalcedony in moss-agate, starred here and there with the white grenouillette ; just in the very rush and murmur of the first spreading currents, the human wretches of the place cast their street and house foulness ; heaps of dust and slime,

.

and broken shreds of old metal, and rags of putrid clothes ; which, having neither energy to cart away, nor decency enough to dig into the ground, they thus shed into the stream, to diffuse what venom of it will float and melt, far away, in all places where God meant those waters to bring joy and health. And, in a little pool behind some houses farther in the village, where another spring rises, the shattered stones of the well, and of the little fretted channel which was long ago built and traced for it by gentler hands, lie scattered, each from each, under a ragged bank of mortar, and scoria, and bricklayer's refuse, on one side, which the clean water nevertheless chastises to purity ; but it cannot conquer the dead earth beyond : and there, circled and coiled under festering scum, the stagnant edge of the pool effaces itself into a slope of black slime, the accumulation of indolent years. Half-a-dozen men, with one day's work, could cleanse those pools, and trim the flowers about their banks, and make every breath of summer air above them rich with cool balm ; and every glittering wave medicinal, as if it ran, troubled only of angels, from the porch of Bethesda. But that day's work is never given, nor, I suppose, will be ; nor will any joy be possible to heart of man, for evermore, about those wells of English waters.

2. When I last left them, I walked up slowly