

JOHN RUSKIN'S IDEAS ON EDUCATION

by

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**Life comes before literature, as the
material always comes before the work.
The hills are full of marble before
the world blooms with statues.**

— Phillips Brooks

Chapter I

JOHN RUSKIN

The why and the wherefore of a man's actions and philosophy are oftentimes linked with his personal and national background. It is the purpose of this chapter to outline Ruskin's family life, his works and his evolution from art critic to social reformer i.e. his personal background.

While we are not primarily interested in his biography nor in his philosophy of art as such, we, nevertheless, touch upon them because they serve as a necessary prelude to his views on education. The man was a reformer in matters artistic and social. As a result, a good part of his writing is didactic. He did not limit himself to pointing out what he considered to be wrong. His was a more positive and constructive mind. Usually he tried to supply mankind with the blueprints for improvement. Because he was teaching so much, his mind frequently dwelt upon matters educational. With a general picture of the man and what he did and what he wanted to do, the reader is in a better position to appreciate his views on education.

Ruskin was born in 1819 with a silver spoon in his mouth. His father, a prosperous wine merchant, was the type of man Matthew Arnold admired and wrote of as ideal. He was a man of cultured tastes. He knew and appreciated painting. He had a taste for Byron's poetry

and was not blind to the merits of Dickens. The elder Ruskin's business made it necessary for him to travel throughout the British Isles and parts of the continent. European architecture interested him always and it delighted him often. John Ruskin, as a boy, travelled much with his father and, needless to say, inherited much of his father's enthusiasm.

His mother, who has been described as a sort of stupid bigot and bully, was one of those persons who sets a high standard for herself and is determined that the members of the family will attain it too. Her love for her son was somewhat like that of Lady Macbeth for the thane of Glamis. She urged him on. She directed his reading. Her Puritan background inspired her to have him read the Bible every day and memorize long passages. In later years Ruskin often expressed his conviction that the Bible should be made required reading for everyone. Said he:

My endeavour has been uniformly to make them trust it more deeply than they do: trust it, not in their own favourite verses only, but in the sum of all; trust it, not as a fetish or talisman, which they are to be saved by daily repetition of; but as a Captain's order, to be heard and obeyed at their peril. (1)

By the age of twelve John Ruskin had been through the Bible six times. It is probably uncharitable and untrue to describe her as the "bete-noire" of his life. That her love for him was a possessive

one there can be little doubt, but that she spoiled his chances for happiness is a moot question — although the popular notion today.

Ruskin saw much of rural England as a boy. His father's summer business journeys became annual family tours. The elder Ruskin may have had in mind Bacon's aphorism about travel being part of education in the younger ones. In any case, John Ruskin's informal education gave him a remarkably fine grounding in art and architecture. His formal education went along apace and in time he entered Christ Church College, Oxford. In 1842 he graduated with a B.A. degree.

As had other illustrious predecessors, such as Milton and Burke, Ruskin disappointed his parents upon graduating by refusing to enter the ministry. Instead he drifted into the precarious field of writing. In his case, however, there was no starving and no living in a garret because of the financial security he enjoyed from his father's sherry trade.

Thanks to the above-mentioned informal education, Ruskin had become an enthusiastic admirer of Turner's landscape art. When the latter was adversely criticized, Ruskin came forward in his defense. The year following his graduation Ruskin published the volume Modern Painters anonymously. His career as an art critic had begun.

Ruskin's physical and mental health, during youthful years, was far from good. In 1816 his grand-

father had lost his mind. Ruskin's own parents were first cousins which probably did not help matters. During his 'teens and after Ruskin was threatened with tuberculosis. His occasional fits of depression were relieved for a while in 1848 when he married Euphemia Gray. What promised to be a happy wedded life failed rather miserably and a few years later led to an annulment. This catastrophe has hitherto been "examined almost exclusively from Ruskin's and from his parents' standpoint".(2) Only recently the John Ruskin-Effie Gray correspondence has come to light and much of this marital unhappiness can now be attributed to a combination of mother-in-law trouble and Ruskin's distressing periodic mental illness.

Ruskin's happiness suffered an additional blow in the public's indifference to his pronouncements on art and architecture. Nor did artists and architects appreciate his writings any more than did the public. He was looked upon as a dilettante and by some as a pretentious amateur. The self-appointed Art Dictator did not take kindly to the fact that he had failed to create much of an impression. His disappointment turned to defiance and, like the fox in the fable, he sullenly and sulkingly decided to waste no more effort on those who were unworthy of his attention.

(2) RUSKIN AND THE WOMEN, by P. Quennell. In The Atlantic Monthly, February, 1947.

From about 1860 Ruskin began to pay much more attention to ideas he had toyed with in his earlier writings. It had been Ruskin's claim that the rise and fall of Gothic architecture in Venice could be traced in the rise of domestic virtue and national worthiness there and in its later decline. This interest in the social scene of a foreign city, with its economic and political ramifications, led Ruskin to an intenser preoccupation with similar matters in England. And so Ruskin began to turn from art criticism to social reform.

This evolution — for evolution it was, in spite of those critics who mistakenly assume that there were two Ruskins — saw the reformer develop out of the art critic as effect follows cause. The devolution of beauty in architecture, he felt, mirrored a similar decline of social harmony. And so the vileness of man became his chief interest. Ugliness in art and architecture became for him a symptom of disease in society.

And, logically enough, he believed that an improvement in these fields could only follow betterment of the social scene. And Ruskin shared Arnold's and Newman's conviction that among other things all was not well in the educational world of the nineteenth century in England.

He felt that people who were not properly taken care of socially, economically and politically could not appreciate art. Admiration of painting and appreciation of architecture stood a much better chance when people were well fed, well housed and

happily employed. When brought face to face with the criminal exploitation of the poor during the heyday of the industrial revolution, Ruskin himself could not think of art but only of reform.

I cannot paint, nor read, nor look at minerals, nor do anything else that I like, and the very light of the morning sky has become hateful to me, because of the misery that I know of, and see signs of, where I know it not, which no imagination can interpret too bitterly. Therefore I will endure it no longer quietly; but henceforth, with any few or many who will help, do my poor best to abate this misery. (3)

Hence the logical evolution of John Ruskin the art critic to John Ruskin the social reformer.

From this time of transition on Ruskin became more and more devoted to the betterment of the poorest of mankind. In 1860 there appeared four articles on social and political economy in Cornhill Magazine. Two years later these essays were republished as a volume entitled Unto This Last. Another four articles on the same subject appeared in Fraser's Magazine in 1862-63 and were later republished as Munera Pulveris. Along with occasional works and lectures on mineralogy, art and architecture, Ruskin continued his social work. Letters on the Ideal State appeared later. Between 1870 and 1884 Ruskin wrote and published almost one hundred letters to workmen and labourers under the general title Fors Clavigera.

(3) Fors Clavigera, by John Ruskin, Boston: Dana Estes and Company, page 4.

Ruskin did not limit himself to the written word. He practised what he preached. He had financed Rossetti, the Pre-Raphaelite, earlier and he now began to finance all sorts of utopian schemes in the economic sphere. He helped found the Working Men's College where he taught for some time. He founded the famous St. George's Guild in 1871 and poured a lot of money into it. He led a group of Oxford undergraduates in building roads in 1874. All this while, Ruskin's personal life continued to be unhappy. What he considered to be his failure as an art critic extended into his life as a reformer. An unfortunate love affair with a child of eleven, Rose LaTouche, did not help matters. The girl was so much younger than Ruskin and could not return his love. This additional blow to his prestige contributed to his depression, languor and listlessness. When Rose died Ruskin came to believe that she was sending messages to him. This mental confusion grew until 1880 when he suffered his first major attack of madness. Other attacks followed in 1881, 1882, 1885, 1886, 1889. He died, sane, from influenza on January 21, 1900.

Thomas Hood, E.B. Browning and Charles Dickens.

Science was on the move. The men of research and study as well as the men of invention were contributing no small share to the making of industrial England. This iron and steam age, with railroads crisscrossing the English countryside joining one factory town with another, is today known as the England of the Industrial Revolution.

With so much going on in the world of action, it is not at all surprising that a corresponding fever of intellectual activity should also have taken place. The publication of Darwin's Origin of Species in mid-century just about brought on a struggle for existence in the highly controversial intellectual jungle of the age. The utilitarianism of Bentham also left its mark on the century. The Oxford Movement shook the Church of England to its very roots and led to a Neo-Catholic school in literature and an even more important second spring of Catholicism in the religious sphere.

All this while, the social and political worlds were progressing. One Reform Bill followed another. Political power was extended to the middle classes. Religious freedom was extended too.

As suggested above, the universities could not remain unaffected by all this. With the creation of a new wealthy class through industry, a new politically articulate class through Reform Bills, and a newly freed religious class through legislation, the attendance at universities increased tremendously.

The old curriculum did not satisfy this new student world. No longer were Oxford and Cambridge limited to the production of clergymen and statesmen chosen from the upper crust of society. More and more science found its way into the institutions of higher learning.

The fever of reform spread to the field of education. The government, which in past centuries had paid little or no attention to education, found itself becoming involved in studying ways and means of improving and extending schooling. Thanks to people like Arnold, Newman, Dickens, Huxley and others, it became more and more evident that change was needed. Arnold deserves credit for the reorganization of the secondary schools. This was essential to university progress, since the latter works upon the raw material provided for it by the former. Newman's Idea of a University, published in 1852, set out the blueprints for improvement. The men of science, led by Huxley — Darwin's bulldog — fought for more science in the universities. In the work just mentioned, by Newman, the Cardinal tells of the controversy between the Edinburgh Review and the University of Oxford along these lines. The latter institution clung to tradition. The academical authorities in this venerable seat of learning believed in impressing youth with the need for true principles and clear thinking. Their notion of education was what has been described as 'liberal'. Philosophy, literature and the rest of the humanities formed the

backbone of their system. The Edinburgh Review people made themselves the spokesmen for the new disciples of science. They judged things in terms of their usefulness. These utilitarians claimed that a liberal education did not advance industry, improve the economic conditions or lead to betterment in any field. Because of this and because it did not train youth for any particular profession, they were all for discarding the Oxford system and introducing a more ' practical ' , vocational, scientific curriculum. This controversy, which took place in the early nineteenth century, continued throughout the early years of the following century and, as a matter of fact, is far from dead at the half way mark of the twentieth century. In his Idea of a University, Newman gives a much more detailed account of this whole controversy. (1) All in all, it was a time of rapid change, great activity and some progress.

While Ruskin's name is usually associated with the expressions 'art critic' and 'social reformer', he did have opinions about education. He was more than an interested spectator. He, too, played a part on the academic stage. Ruskin was the Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford. He was also involved in the organizing of various philanthropic schemes for the educating of the working class. He lectured to the

1) The Idea of a University, by John Henry Cardinal Newman, edited by C.F. Harrold, New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1947, page 136.

workmen in London's Working Men's College in 1854, the year of its foundation. His teaching at Oxford was supposed to concern itself with art, but his catholicity of interests took him far afield. His students received a liberal education from this man who refused to be hedged in by a college calendar and never hesitated to encroach upon the cultural demesnes of his fellow professors. The lectures given by Ruskin were delivered to crowded halls. He appreciated the dramatic or visual element in teaching. He illustrated his remarks by the use of models, specimens, charts and diagrams. His students, therefore saw what he was driving at, just as he saw what education in England should have been driving at. This latter thought takes us to the next chapter wherein the point driven at in this thesis is to be explained.

Chapter III

The Aim of the Thesis.

In the first chapter of this thesis we saw who Ruskin was, when he lived, what he did. The second chapter sketched the Victorian setting in which he shone and the implication throughout was that the whole work would deal with Ruskin and education. To make an understanding of his contribution to education and the particular point of view of this thesis clearer, it described the conditions existing in the world of education of the nineteenth century. It is against this background that we are to view his thoughts about education. The purpose of this third chapter is to establish the precise point, goal or aim of this thesis.

What is the traditional approach to Ruskin ? Are there more than one ? If so, what are they ? To begin with, there are the usual biographies. Most of these go back to the early years of this century. (He died in 1900.) Some of these will be mentioned later in this chapter because they touch upon Ruskin's educational views. For the most part, they were written by men who admired Ruskin very much and there is the inevitable tendency to whitewash him before setting him up on a pedestal as a paragon of virtue and a model for future generations. These biographies are valuable for their record of Ruskinian fact and they are interesting as examples of that school of biography which tended to deify the subject of the biography.

Another group of writers limited their own treatment of Ruskin to one or other of the fields in which he was most active. And, so, we read of Ruskin the art critic or the social reformer. Here we meet with a different type of approach in biography. Here criticism is the keynote. Sometimes Ruskin fares well and at other times the violence of controversy deals roughly with him. With a man of Ruskin's temperament it is almost inevitable that violent likes and dislikes should arise. He was not a gentle and mild man in his pronouncements and stepped on more toes than the average man. In criticizing Whistler's 'Nocturne in Black and Gold', for instance, Ruskin called the painter a coxcomb and accused him of flinging a pot of paint in the public's face. This, by the way, led to a libel suit. His colourful career in the world of art continued when he became a social reformer. His ideas for social reform are praised by some today as they were in his own time. George Bernard Shaw describes him as an out-and-out Communist and admires him for it. However, in the case of Shaw, it is always wise to remember that Chesterton said of Shaw: "Shaw is seen at his best when he is antagonistic. I might say that he is seen at his best when he is wrong. I might also add that he is generally wrong." (1) Other critics damn Ruskin. The Socialists of today in Great Britain claim him as one of the fathers of the movement. It is said

(1) Autobiography, by Gilbert Keith Chesterton, London: Burns Oates and Washbourne Ltd., 1930, p. 224.

that two of the most influential books in the economic thought of Europe during the past century were Das Kapital by Karl Marx and Unto This Last by John Ruskin. One of the minor ironies of history is that while the two books were being written the authors lived within four or five miles of each other in London and never met. Ruskin did not even know that Marx existed. Marx, however, knew the writings of John Ruskin. A popularizer of modern history might well say that Russian Communism and British Socialism were both born in London and at the same time. These things, while interesting, lie beyond the scope of this thesis. There are, too, the usual volumes describing him as a major prophet. Very little has been written along these lines in recent years.

He has, however, come back to our attention in a biographical way — but it is biography with a difference. The pedestal school is gone. The best of the debunking school concentrated on other victims and Ruskin escaped unharmed. Today it is the clinical school of biography which has taken Ruskin apart to see what made him tick. The whole subject came up again a few years ago when Admiral James, the grandson of the Effie Gray who married Ruskin, published the John Everett Millais papers which vindicated the memory of Miss Gray and explained the reasons for the dissolution of the marriage and her subsequent happier marriage with Millais. After all these years of mystery about the whole unfortunate affair, it is good to have the truth throw out the fantastic

Freudian theories that have been advanced as explanations. To satisfy the reader's curiosity, we quote a few lines from a New York Times book review (2) :

He then falls in love with Effie Gray, marries her and discovers that he is impotent. His parents do all they possibly can to ruin Effie's conjugal happiness and in the end the marriage is dissolved and she finally marries the handsome and successful artist Millais. Ruskin thereafter returns to his green-house, and, I am delighted to record, ends by going off his head.

Probably the only real good that has come out of the whole thing with its revelations concerning the marriage has been a strong revival of interest in John Ruskin. This has led others to re-appraise his work. An example of this would be Graham Hough's The Last Romantics about Ruskin, Morris, Yeats and the Rossettis.

This thesis is a similar attempt to re-appraise the man. The aspect of his work dealt with here concerns education. While many of his opinions on education are to be found in Sesame and Lilies and A Joy for Ever, as many more lie broadcast throughout his works because the man never did get around to systematizing his teachings into any pattern.

It is hoped that this thesis will vindicate Ruskin in some measure. He saw evils in education and proposed remedies. The evils are still with us

(2) New York Sunday Times, book review of Peter Quennell's John Ruskin by Harold Nicolson, October 23, 1949.

and his remedies are as sound today as they were then. It is proposed here to examine his thoughts and indicate the practicability of applying them. It is certainly time that credit went where credit is due.

I have long been accustomed, as all men engaged in work of investigation must be, to hear my statements laughed at for years, before they are examined or believed; and I am generally content to wait the public's time. (3)

What has already been written about Ruskin and education? Very little. In J. A. Hobson's (4) work entitled John Ruskin — Social Reformer, one chapter covers the whole subject. Hobson skims over the surface and is satisfied to touch upon the highest of the high-lights of Ruskin's thought. Nowhere does he take time to weigh and consider this thought. The book was published in 1899 — years before the current interest in education.

The centenary of Ruskin's birth was celebrated in 1919. A series of papers on Ruskin was collected and edited by J. H. Whitehouse under the title Ruskin the Prophet. The contributors were John Masefield, Dean Inge, Charles Masterman. (5)

(3) Time and Tide, The Crown of Wild Olive, by J. Ruskin, London: George Allen & Co., Ltd., 1911, page 222

(4) John Ruskin—Social Reformer, by J.A. Hobson, London: James Hisbet & Co., Ltd., 1899,

(5) Ruskin the Prophet, ed. by J.H. Whitehouse, London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.

Shorter pieces by others of less renown were also included. The only mention made of education was in Dean Inge's paper entitled ' Ruskin and Plato '. The main point made was that both Plato and Ruskin wanted education for better citizenship.

Of more recent date was the Annual Lecture On a Master Mind, sponsored by the Henriette Hertz Trust of the British Academy, delivered by R. W. Livingstone in 1945. (6) The whole lecture was printed in a twenty page pamphlet, one page of which touches upon education. Livingstone paid tribute to Ruskin's writings on education, mentioned Ruskin's stress on manual training, quoted five passages from Ruskin and went on to other things.

In this thesis it is planned to go beyond the usual pats on the back. The aim of this work is to point out that what Ruskin proposed as a solution for yesterday's educational problems has either been acted upon, is being acted upon, or could well be acted upon. It is not meant to suggest that the reformers actually followed blueprints prepared by Ruskin, but that they might have. And, finally, it is planned to show, by apt quotation, that Newman in his own day and the Maritains, the Sheens, the Hutchins and Adlers of today have a kindred spirit in Ruskin. In fact,

(6) Ruskin, by R.W. Livingstone, from the proceedings of the British Academy. Vol. XXXI, London: Geoffrey Cumberlege Amen House, 1945.

they have more than that in him. They have a man who said exactly what they are saying, said it more eloquently and received infinitely less credit for saying it than they.

Chapter IVThe Aim of Education

The use of the singular in the title of this chapter is misleading in a plurality of ways. In North American education in the first half of the twentieth century there has been little or no aim in higher education. There have been aims. There have been many goals and chaos was the almost inevitable result. In this babel of clashing ideals the utilitarian values have warred against the cultural. The aristocratic traditions have risen in their ivory towers above the plain of democratic aspirations in education. The religious roots have withstood the storms of secularism in some cases and in others have been overthrown.

A brief glance at the passing academic parade during the first half of the twentieth century reveals a number of aims reflected by different philosophies of life held by the students of different decades.

In the early twenties, at the beginning of the century, in the thirties and in the forties national and international events left their mark on the student world. With the dawn of a new century sincerity seemed to take hold of the average college campus. It was the rah-rah period, if you will, but the individual student believed that he could help make this a better world. Later, the post-World War I student was a worldly-wise individual. Possibly influenced by the Remarques and Hemingways of the Lost Generation, this young scholar

was much better at tearing down than at building. It was a time when iconoclasm was in flower. Byron-like, they delighted in licking their wounds in public. Soon, though, attention turned from Flanders Fields to Wall Street and easy money put the war into the limbo of forgotten things. But this did not last. The terrible depression followed and the student world was stunned. Jobs were scarce. Undergraduates crossed their fingers, kept quiet and waited. Security became the 'summum bonum', but security seemed to be beyond their reach. And so they waited. The 1933 novel by George Weller Not to Eat, Not for Love gave a memorable picture of the typical student of the times. The title, which was a gem by itself, was lifted from Ralph Waldo Emerson who had once described "four snakes gliding up and down a hollow for no purpose that I could see — not to eat, not for love, but only gliding..." That whole generation glided into World War II. And now, the student of the forties has been atom-bombed into realizing that an educational institution is no picnic grounds. He is conscious of 'economic man' as were his immediate predecessors, but, much more, he is conscious of 'spiritual man'. Unfortunately, that consciousness has not crystallized into any clear recognition and appreciation of the whole truth. But the groping is there. He is too knowing to fall for atheism as recent events in some Canadian universities have shown. He feels there should be a goal. An aim must exist and he is unhappy in that he does not know what that aim is.

This chapter is meant to be a general statement of the need for one aim, one common denominator. It is hoped, too, to show that John Ruskin saw this need and spoke out for it. In subsequent chapters a fuller treatment will be given to the various aspects of the glories and shortcomings of education in America.

Much of the confusion in education today is rooted in man's refusal to answer a few simple but necessary questions. Who is to be educated? In other words, what is man? Why is he to be educated? That is to say, what is man's destined end? How is he to be educated? That is, what training will best lead him to that end?

These are fundamental questions and, until they are answered, no amount of high-sounding talk about education will help us. Man is body and soul. Education must have reference to both. The soul is more important, but the body cannot be ignored. The bread of life is spiritual as well as physical. It must be both. Man must realize this. In this realization we find the matter for the synthesis of interdependent elements. The truly educated man is he who orchestrates these diverse factors, who knows what he is and knows where he is going and how to get there.

The self-centered go-getter who loses sight of the greater goal in his blind striving for temporal welfare is not well educated. The superficial individual who always thinks in terms of utility and is lost to all perception of beauty is not a well-

rounded man. The unethical character which has no respect for truth but adds falsehood as an alloy for the sake of serviceability tends towards barbarism.

These are the people who, like Macbeth, jump the life to come and live for the moment upon this bank and shoal of time. And, like Macbeth again, their superficial view leads the foëls the way to dusty death. In their concentration upon earning, they dry up the springs of learning; in their mad scurry-ing they confuse speed for progress.

What Darwin advanced as a theory, they adopt as a rule of life. They cut themselves off from society and without religious or cultural moorings they drift through what they term " the struggle for existence " and frantically strive to survive. The tides push them toward ever-increasing specialization and ever-decreasing broadness of vision. Education, for them, becomes a matter of technique.

They become more and more individualistic. Their individualism tends towards isolation and eccentricity. They cut themselves off depending upon themselves for all things. They let the human family go its way and in their self-imposed isolation they taste unhappiness. In this way they contribute nothing to good citizenship. They are the rotten apple in the barrel of democracy.

This same confusion is to be found in higher education. There too, there are the fields of study that do not fit in to the general scheme of education for man. Because of the failure of our

educational system to trace the superstructure to the roots, the whole fabric is becoming top-heavy and is in danger of toppling. There is need for reform.

When we have succeeded in bringing about a workable synthesis between the individual, society and the supernatural, we shall be on the right track. There is need for soul-searching criticism. Broader horizons reveal necessary relationships. It is the role of education to direct man's aim to one goal. Men of thought are about it today. They might wisely remember Newman's over-all view of the fields of learning.

We consider that all things mount up to a whole, that there is an order and precedence and harmony in the branches of knowledge one with another as well as one by one, and that to destroy that structure is as unphilosophical in a course of education, as it is unscientific in the separate portions of it. We form and fix the sciences in a circle and system, and give them a centre and aim, instead of letting them wander up and down in a sort of hopeless confusion. (1)

The order and harmony called for by Newman in education did not come about. On the contrary, that the above-mentioned causes for concern about education do exist can be seen at a glance. The average man reads of meetings of educators in his evening newspaper. Government inquiries periodically investigate the health of our educational system.

The Idea of a University, by Cardinal Newman, ed. by C.F. Harrold, New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1947, page 394.

Royal Commissions reach out to sound our schools. The post-war invasion of our colleges by veterans quickened the academic pulse and, in many cases, these more mature minds challenged long established ways of educational thinking. Schools themselves sought answers to perplexing questions. At Harvard University a committee studied these matters for two years and then published a 267-page survey entitled General Education in a Free Society. And President Truman prompted a similar study which resulted in the six-volume, 160,000-word Report of the President's Commission on Higher Education. Individual men of thought have also written much on the theme of education. A few random names and the books they wrote will suggest a number of others to the reader. There was Jacques Maritain's Education at the Crossroads, Robert Maynard Hutchins' The Higher Learning in America, Sir Richard Livingstone's The Future in Education and Education for a World Adrift and many others.

Walter Lippmann sounded the keynote in an address when he said:

....what is now required in the educational system is a thorough reconsideration of its underlying assumptions and purposes...They (universities) have lost their purpose, and their graduates today are the actors in the catastrophe which has befallen our civilized worldThus where there was a substance of education there is now a vacuum filled with spontaneous curiosities of teachers and students, evincing no common moral and intellectual discipline.

Yet, the graduates of these modern schools are expected to form a civilized community, to govern themselves, to have a social conscience, and to have a common purpose without a common culture.(2)

Monsignor Fulton Sheen also fulminates against lop-sided education which concentrates upon one aspect of life and ignores the whole picture.

The education of the whole man entails education on three levels: man must be informed about what takes place on the sub-human level, and thus become acquainted with the Natural Sciences; he must become acquainted with what takes place on the Human Level, and hence know the Humanities and Metaphysics. Finally he must become acquainted with what takes place on the supra-human level, and hence be taught something about God and the moral law and his eternal destiny.(3)

Without quoting from the men themselves, one might well add the names of Hutchins and Adler. These Chicago University Thomists have created quite a stir in the academic world by their unorthodox methods and insistent demands for the recognition of a purpose and aim for higher education.

All sincere reformers in the field of advanced learning have pointed out the need for students to see beneath the superficial and grasp and understand the real. In the mind of this writer no one has more clearly and eloquently expressed

(2) Before the American Association for the Advancement of Science at the U. of Pennsylvania, Dec. 29, 1940, printed in The American Scholar (Spring, 1941.).

(3) Philosophies at War, by Msgr. Fulton Sheen, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943, page 150.

this need than Dr. Sydney Smith, President of the University of Toronto, speaking at the Convocation Exercises of the University of Ottawa on June 9, 1946. The graduates, he declared, should:

..have the capacity to divine excellence without having it labelled or tagged for you; you should have the power to think clearly and courageously; you should be endowed with intellectual humility; you should now be able to distinguish money from wealth, interference from influence, notoriety from fame, false pride from self-respect, speed from progress, luxury from elegance, fashion from refinement, respectability from worthiness, volubility from eloquence, and the temporal from the eternal. (4)

And so, we have glanced at the problem of the lack of a goal or aim for education. It is the contention of this thesis that John Ruskin saw the same problem and suggested a remedy. To begin with, he was a bit unhappy about the education of his own day.

Modern 'education' for the most part signifies giving young people the faculty of thinking wrong on every conceivable subject of importance to them. (5)

He also felt that it needed a goal and that all talk about education was pointless until the question of its purpose was settled.

(4) The Fulcrum, news organ of the English-speaking undergraduates of the U. of Ottawa, October, 1946.

(5) Sesame and Lilies, Unto this Last, and The Political Economy of Art, by J. Ruskin, London: Cassell and Co., Ltd., page 70 (footnote).

I want you to feel, with me, that whatever advantage we possess in the present day in the diffusion of education and of literature, can only be rightly used by any of us when we have apprehended clearly what education is to lead to. (6)

This fundamental question has been too often ignored. The result has been confusion and chaos where order should have been. Along with Newman and a number of discerning critics of our educational system today, Ruskin asked the basic question and then proceeded to draw up plans for a true programme of studies in a balanced curriculum.

It might be matter for dispute what processes have the greatest effect in developing the intellect; but it can hardly be disputed what facts it is most advisable that a man entering into life should accurately know. I believe, in brief, that he ought to know three things:

First. Where he is.

Secondly. Where he is going.

Thirdly. What he had best do under those circumstances.

The man who knows these things, and who has had his will so subdued in the learning them, that he is ready to do what he knows he ought, I should call educated; and the man who knows them not, — uneducated, though he could talk all the tongues of Babel. (7)

John Ruskin did not look to education for a means of increasing one's material comfort or social position. He knew that others felt that way.

(6) Sesame and Lilies, by John Ruskin, page 117.

(7) The Stones of Venice, by Ruskin, New York: Peter Fenelon Collier & Son, 1900, vol. iii, pp. 215-216.

He knew it because they had come to him when he was teaching and made it very clear to him that what mattered most was the material element. They judged the value of an education by the wealth and social position it brought. In the following lines Ruskin denounces that philosophy of education:

It happens that I have practically some connection with schools for different classes of youth; and I receive many letters from parents respecting the education of their children. In the mass of these letters I am always struck by the precedence which the idea of a "position in life" takes above all other thoughts in the parents' minds. "The education befitting such and such a station in life," — this is the phrase, this the object, always. They never seek, as far as I can make out, an education good in itself; even the conception of abstract rightness in training rarely seems reached by the writers. It never seems to occur to the parent that there may be an education which in itself is advancement in life; that any other than that may perhaps be advancement in Death. (8)

Ruskin thought of the individual's soul and not of his bank-account. Education, for him, was meant to improve man himself and not his "station in life".

Education is the leading human souls to what is best, and making what is best out of them. (9)

Throughout his writings there is this insistence upon the fundamentals. He was not misled by the frills nor was he blinded by the superficial things in life.

(8) Sesame and Lilies, by Ruskin, pp. 38-39.

(9) Stones of Venice, by Ruskin, vol. iii, p. 220.

In another of his works, Ruskin pictured the ideal product of education.

And the entire object of true education is to make people not merely do the right things, but enjoy the right things:—not merely industrious but to love industry— not merely learned, but to love knowledge— not merely pure, but to love purity— not merely just, but to hunger and thirst after justice. (10)

Today, a common fallacy is to consider a man to be educated if he is a warehouse of facts, a walking encyclopedia or a filing cabinet of information. Ruskin did not so err.

The great leading error of modern times is the mistaking erudition for education. (11)

Earlier in this chapter, President Smith, of Toronto University, was quoted and praised for words he addressed to the graduating class of '46 at the University of Ottawa. Ruskin often spoke along the same lines. For instance:

By sensibility I mean its natural perception of beauty, fitness and rightness; or of what is lovely, decent, and just: faculties dependent much on race, and the primal signs of fine breeding in man; but cultivable also by education, and necessarily perishing without it. True education has, indeed, no other function than the development of these faculties, and of the relative will. It has been the great error of modern intelligence to mistake science for education. You do not educate a man by telling him what he knew not, but by making him what he was not. (12)

(10) Time and Tide, The Crown of Wild Olive, by Ruskin, London: George Allen & Co., Ltd., 1911, p. 268.
 (11) Stones of Venice, by Ruskin, vol. iii, p. 220.
 (12) Essays on Political Economy, by Ruskin, Everyman's Library, London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., pp. 267-268.

It is a truism that beauty and virtue go hand in hand. Beauty, virtue, truth, goodness are all fit subjects of study and admiration. Too often our modern educators dwell with great delight upon what is sordid, mean and base. While doing this they lay the flattering unction to their souls that they are being realistic and facing what they like to call " the facts of life ". Ruskin would countenance no such deceitful nonsense.

All education to beauty is first — in the beauty of gentle human faces round a child; secondly, in the fields — fields meaning, grass, water, beasts, flowers and sky. Without these, no man can be educated humanly. He may be made a calculating machine — a walking dictionary — a painter of dead bodies — a twangler or scratcher on keys or catgut — a discoverer of new forms of worms in mud. But a properly so-called human being — never.....see first that its realities are heavenly. (13)

Chesterton once complained that in our colleges there were too many philosophers and too few students of philosophy. Today we see in our 'progressive' schools that the students are given a great deal of power in self-government and even, in some cases, in administrative matters that properly belong to the authorities. According to the elective system first introduced by President Eliot, of Harvard, the student decides what courses he is to follow. He is not guided, he dictates. The weakness of such a system which places upon inexperienced and unknowing youth the directing of careers and curricula is obvious. Ruskin felt that

instruction could only come from those who knew whereof they spoke and whose judgment could be relied upon as authoritative rather than mere matter of opinion.

Do not talk but of what you know;
do not think but of what you have
materials to think justly upon. (14)

He felt that this was a lesson to be taught to youth and impressed upon them. When one considers the confusing and contradicting opinions which clash in many modern philosophy classes without any reference to guiding principles or basic truths, one is tempted to shout out Ruskin's words from the roof-tops in spite of all the lip-service paid to freedom of opinion and discussion.

It has often been facetiously pointed out that modern man doesn't know where he is going and is in a great hurry to get there. The claim is nonsensical enough to be amusing and true enough to be sad. It is a fact that we confuse speed with progress. Automobiles, trains, planes and ships are always being boasted of because they are faster than ever before. No mention is made of where they are taking us! Wasn't it Arnold, the Victorian, who asked what the use of a train was that took us from a dismal and illiberal life in Islington to an equally dismal and illiberal life in Camberwell? John Ruskin was

(14) Time and Tide, by John Ruskin, p. 103.

another Victorian who refused to be hoodwinked by this mad desire to race all over the surface of the earth.

No changing of place at a hundred miles an hour...will make us one whit stronger, happier or wiser...As for being able to talk from place to place, that is indeed, well and convenient; but suppose you have, originally, nothing to say! We shall be obliged at last to confess what we should long ago have known, that the really precious things are thought and sight, not pace. It does a bullet no good to go fast; and a man, if he be truly a man, no harm to go slow; for his glory is not at all in going, but in being. (15)

And, elsewhere, taking up where Arnold left off, Ruskin wrote:

You have despised Nature: that is to say, all the deep and sacred sensations of natural scenery. The French revolutionists made stables of the cathedrals of France, you have made racecourses of the cathedrals of the earth. (16)

What food for thought there is in the following Ruskinian gem! How common among us is the expression 'killing time'. To what great lengths and effort do we go in our vain and foolish attempts to 'kill time'. True education would have taught us what Ruskin saw so clearly.

A fool always wants to shorten space and time; a wise man wants to lengthen both. A fool wants to kill space and time; a wise man, first to gain them, then to animate them. (17)

p. 320. (15) Munera Pulveris, by John Ruskin, vol. iii,

(16) Sesame and Lilies, by John Ruskin, p. 88.

(17) Frondes Agrestes, by John Ruskin, London: George Allen, 1906, p. 145.

Finally, Ruskin's eyes were indeed open to what many of us are slowly discovering. Man is, by himself, puny and inconsequential, weak and powerless. Man is a social animal and needs his fellow-man. In unity is strength and in co-operation is life. The role of education is to underline our dependence upon God, upon other men and other nations. Self-sufficiency is dead. Isolation has been bombed out of existence. Recognizing our own littleness is the first step towards wisdom. Ruskin said:

False education is a delightful thing, and warms you and makes you every day think more of yourself. And true education is a deadly cold thing and makes you every day think worse of yourself. (18)

With this in mind, his salutary humility inspired him to say:

Every great man is always being helped by everybody, for his gift is to get good out of all things and all persons. (19)

With these truths clearly understood, the lesson of co-operation is more easily learned. Alone we can accomplish little; together the impossible is done. If education produces a sufficient number of these great men, the nation profits thereby.

You are to spend on National Education and to be spent for it, and to make by it, not more money, but better men;... They are to be your 'money's worth'. (20)

- (18) Time and Tide, by Ruskin, p.168.
 (19) Frondes Agrestes, by Ruskin, p.146.
 (20) Crown of Wild Olives, by Ruskin, p.345.

The laissez-faire policy he fears. The skullduggery of modern piratical commercial practices he fears. Modern man must contribute to society and not only take from it.

.....self-interest being but the fulfillment of that which once brought schism into the Policy of angels, and ruin into the Economy of Heaven. (21)

Ruskin believed in working with and for others. Although financially independent he spent himself and the fortune he inherited from his father in various ventures which had for purpose the betterment of the lot of the workers and the eventual prosperity of England. This social consciousness which Ruskin wanted to see developed in all worthwhile citizens is the lifeblood of democracy. Any people which boasts of its self-government and limits its participation in that government to voting on election day is guilty of self-deception -- nay; even, in time, of self-destruction.

Ruskin is not alone in his claim that a well-educated man must know who he is, what he is, where he is going and how to get there. Monsignor Fulton Sheen gets down to the fundamentals when he points out the need for an appreciation of the basic things in education. His stand is the common-sense

(21) Unto This Last, by John Ruskin, London: Cassell and Co., Ltd., page 185.

viewpoint of Catholic teaching:

The prime purpose of education is the making of a man and it is impossible to make a man without giving him the purpose of being a man. Unless we make sense out of life, we fail in education. Life can be bearable without football, without fraternities, without junior proms, without moving pictures, without a cheap press, without a cocktail hour, but life cannot be bearable unless a coordinating and evaluating principle is given to these and all other activities of life. So long as we educate without defining the purpose of life and the standards of life and without developing a sense of right and wrong, we are losing our souls. (22)

The average man or average student of today has no frame of reference. He studies a hodge-podge of subjects with no hierarchy of importance. Philosophy is dismissed as so much 'opinion' and Theology is ignored completely. There seem to be no basic 'musts' among the welter of ideas he is asked to absorb. What is right and what is wrong? What is good and what is evil? Ruskin wanted his students to know these things. Some modern educators join him in wanting the same thing. Sir Richard Livingstone, of Oxford University, writes:

....unless we get a clear and right idea of good and evil, our new order will come to little, if it comes into being at all. It is a task for education in the widest sense, and needs first an educational system which will make it possible and next, within that system, an education which will achieve it. (23)

(22) Philosophies at War, by Msgr. Sheen, pp.159-160.

(23) Education for a World Adrift, by Sir Richard Livingstone, Toronto:MacMillan Co.,p.27.

Clear thinking seems to be a matter of the past or of the future, but not of the present. At least, critics of our educational system imply as much. They have in all generations. One is tempted to classify clear thinking with the humour in the magazine PUNCH. It isn't what it used to be —it never was ! Cardinal Newman insisted upon the importance of the essence of things in education.

It (a university training) teaches him to see things as they are, to go right to the point, to disentangle a skein of thought, to detect what is sophistical, and to discard what is irrelevant. (24)

In an earlier section of this chapter, mention was made of Ruskin's ideas about social consciousness. Ruskin looked upon education in part as a preparation for good citizenship. He also practiced what he preached. Others have preached the same thing. Ruskin is in good company here. For instance, Plato had this to say:

By education I mean that training in excellence from youth upwards which makes a man passionately desire to be a perfect citizen, and teaches him how to rule, and to obey, with justice. This is the only education which deserves the name; the other sort of training, which aims at the acquisition of wealth, is not worthy to be called education at all. (25)

Today, political leaders feel the same way. Selfishness on the personal, national and international

p.157. (24) Idea of a University, by Cardinal Newman,

(25) LAWS I, 643-644, in The Dialogues of Plato.

levels has proven itself to be a barren thing. Men of good will hope to see the politician give way to the statesman. The politician explained that the principle which determined his conduct was "the greatest good for the greatest number". When asked what the greatest number was, he truthfully replied: " Number one ! ". David Lilienthal, former Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, shows the aptness of this remark in the field of education, when he writes:

When my generation was graduated from college, in the Twenties, we had a rather definite philosophy. This guiding general principle can be summed up in this phrase: " Take care of Number One". (26)

Lilienthal then proceeded to point out the fallacy and suggest a Ruskinian remedy.

But to say that "Taking care of Number One" did not work is a masterpiece of understatement. Judged by that implacable and merciless test of results — a prostrating depression followed by a terrible war — it was soon made clear that the philosophy of my generation was somehow tragically in error....What I propose in its stead I can compress in this phrase: " Be an active, living part of the times." (27)

In conclusion, the question of the aim of education seems to be much discussed these days. The experts agree in recognizing a lack of unity in the goals toward which our institutions of higher learning tend. In this chapter we indicated that

(26) FOR UNIVERSAL PUBLIC SERVICE, by David Lilienthal, in the New York Sunday Times, June 27, 1948.

(27) *ibid.*

Ruskin was not ignorant of this problem. By quotation, we attempted to prove that what Ruskin advanced as a solution for the problem was no eccentric whim or impossible scheme. In fact, ancient and modern and even contemporary opinion is remarkably at one with him in proposing a solution for the lack of an aim in education.

Chapter VThe Right to Education

In our democratic system privileges are not or should not be limited to any one group. In theory, at least, all men are created equal and therefore share equal rights and responsibilities. The great French philosopher, Jacques Maritain, expresses the idea in these words:

In a social order fitted to the common dignity of man, college education should be given to all, so as to complete the preparation of the youth before he enters the state of manhood. (1)

Stringfellow Barr, of 'Great Books' fame, feels very strongly along the same lines.

Since liberal education is the sort that enables each man to think as well as his native powers permit, it is by definition appropriate to all men. It is ~~by~~ not for the rich alone, nor the intellectual elite alone...A free society that limits it to a small fraction of its citizens, does so at the peril of its existence. (2)

In spite of the imperfections in our system of education, everyone seems to want an education. Because perfection is not of this world, this universal wish must often go unsatisfied. However, ways and means are always being devised whereby the millions

(1) Education at the Crossroads, by Jacques Maritain, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943, p. 64.

(2) Report of the President, by S. Barr, St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland, July 1942, p. 14.

might attend colleges and universities. In the United States, President Truman's Commission of Higher Education has proposed for 1960 an enrollment of 4.6 million students in American institutions of higher learning. In 1948 there were 2.5 millions enrolled and this was eight times as many as there were at the turn of the century. While the numbers would be smaller for Canada, the tendencies would probably parallel those in the United States.

It is therefore seen that this is a pressing question in our country today. It is introduced into this thesis because John Ruskin had some most interesting ideas concerning the average man's right to an education.

If for the sake of argument you deny the average citizen's having a right to education, you cannot very well deny that it is to the country's advantage to have as many college and university graduates as possible. The effectiveness of all key professions and occupations is in direct proportion to the excellence and thoroughness of education. Our legislators who shape the nation's internal and external policies are in a better position to acquit themselves of their duties and responsibilities when they have enjoyed the benefits of advanced learning. The health of the citizenry will depend in good part upon the excellence of the medical schools. The more important moral health of souls will suffer if the theologians and men of God have not learned how to hold

the shepherd's staff and mastered the art of saving souls. This task can best be prepared for in seminaries and schools of theology. The teachers who mould our youth must be trained in schools of pedagogy. In this war-ridden twentieth century the scientist is a necessary figure upon whom we depend for security against ever-present foes. Turn where you will, education is needed.

Unfortunately, education is also expensive. The wish to gratify the wide desire for education and the ability to satisfy this desire are two different things. Nevertheless, it is widely agreed upon that the desire must be satisfied. The logical agent to turn to for the necessary financial assistance is the government. More and more, we hear of education for good citizenship. When we see totalitarian states taking over the education of youth to warp their minds and make them tools of a false ideology it becomes clear that democratic governments, in a gesture of self-preservation, must gird their citizens with the conviction of the justice and soundness of a system of government based upon the recognition of man's dignity and right to freedom and respect.

Mortimer Adler made this point in an address delivered in the Fall of 1940, when a world at war lent dramatic emphasis to his remarks. Education was best fitted to give democratic man the basis for an intelligent understanding and appreciation of his system of

government, he felt.

.....one cannot have reasons for affirming Democracy and at the same time deny the truths of philosophy and religion.(3)

These, needless to say, can only be learned in school. Thus, it is seen that one aspect of a country's national defence is in an educational system which provides the citizen with the necessary cultural antibodies to counteract the virus of totalitarian infection.

This demand for financial assistance for higher education is all the more insistent when one considers the vast sums of money spent for indifferent and even downright evil purposes. For instance, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics reported that in 1948 Canadians spent \$ 941 million on liquor and tobacco and only \$ 65 million on education. According to statistics published recently (4), in 1932 American colleges and universities spent 420 million dollars which was one percent of the national income that year. In 1947, they spent less than one half of one percent AND THE ENROLLMENT HAD DOUBLED SINCE 1932 !

Our seats of learning need money and we need our seats of learning. The money exists but it is too often channelled into purposeless eddies of waste. Our governments must direct the needed financial assistance to our schools.

(3) God and the Professors, by Mortimer Adler, Our Sunday Visitor Press, Huntington, Indiana, 1940, pp. 32-33.

(4) THE THREEFOLD CRISIS IN OUR UNIVERSITIES, by Seymour Harris, in the New York Sunday Times, Oct. 30, 1949.

The above ideas are not the writer's only. They are being bruited about more and more and the tone is becoming increasingly insistent. Writing in a well-known Canadian newspaper, Rodney Grey had this to say:

Canadian universities face a crisis in their business affairs. To maintain present standards and to make the necessary additions to plant, they must have more money. They can get it only from increased government grants, from appeals to private citizens and from fee increases. (5)

In an interview with correspondents of a leading news magazine of the United States, the Very Reverend J. C. Laframboise, O.M.I., Rector of the rapidly growing University of Ottawa, is quoted as having said:

It (a \$250,000 grant the Ontario government gave the medical school in 1947) was not a grant; it was the first grant. Make no mistake about that. (6)

Principal Wallace of Queen's University echoed the above sentiments.

Qualifications for admission should be intellectual, rather than financial... the university must increase her revenues without raising student fees still higher. The annual government grant is helpful, but by no means large enough to cover the gap between the amount paid by students and the cost of operations. (7)

From coast to coast, university people are being joined by the more serious citizens in their appeals for help before the tides of materialism and

(5) MONEY PROBLEMS ARE HAMSTRINGING OUR CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES, by Rodney Grey. In Saturday Night, April 19, 1949.

(6) TIME magazine, October 25, 1948, p. 24.

(7) from article quoted in footnote (5).

utilitarianism engulf the few remaining islands of dwindling western culture. These citadels of fundamental classic wisdom which are the basis of our democratic way of life are imperilled. They are in need of support. Without that support they will perish and the wellsprings having thereby disappeared, the decline and fall of what we cherish most — freedom, dignity, right — will follow.

The ideas expressed in the preceding paragraphs sound fairly commonplace today. The average reader of the daily press is familiar with the general tenor of these cries of alarm and appeals for governmental support. The average reader also thinks that all this is a development of recent years. The adage about there being nothing new under the sun is true here as elsewhere. All the above ideas and others more revolutionary and startling are to be found in John Ruskin's works. For instance:

The first duty of government is to see that people have food, fuel and clothes. The second, that they have means of moral and intellectual education.(8)

In this one quotation we see in a nut-shell the whole career of John Ruskin. He began as a lover of art and learning who tried to spread that enthusiasm to the people of England. When he met with little or no response he was disappointed. He was also puzzled.

(8) Fors Clavigera, by John Ruskin, Boston: Dana Estes and Co., letter 67, vol. i, p.246.

Why could these people not appreciate beauty ? When he investigated he found that their standard of living was so low that the need for better food, clothing and shelter eclipsed all desire for the finer things of culture. It was then that Ruskin saw the need of taking care of first things first. It was then that he became a social reformer. From that time on he worked for the better material welfare of the people. Only ^{when} this was provided for could they go on to what he had originally wanted to bring them. He looked to the government for aid in these things. For this and similar reasons, he is looked upon as one of the founders or spiritual ancestors of present-day English Socialism. He once appeared before a House of Commons Committee on Public Institutions which was studying a proposal to open museums for the edification and education of the working people. Ruskin was called in to be interrogated because he was an instructor at the Working Men's College and was known to have taken a great interest in the welfare of the people. Ruskin felt that these men had not made the discovery he had made and, therefore, took advantage of the opportunity to point out that it was futile and pointless to talk of improving the cultural standard as long as the living standard was permitted to be as low as it was.

He therefore insisted that steps be taken to improve conditions in both spheres. We are not, in this thesis, primarily interested in his suggestions for

economic reform. We are concerned with his views on education.

Not only did Ruskin want aid from the government, but he considered it to be the duty of state to make education compulsory and to make its aid so extensive that no such thing as tuition fees for students would exist. In his usual categorical manner, he says:

Compulsory ! Yes, by all means ! "Go ye out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in." Compulsory ! Yes, and gratis also. Dei Gratia, they must be taught, as, Dei Gratia, you are set to teach them. I hear strange talk continually, "how difficult it is to make people pay for being educated !" Why, I should think so ! Do you make your children pay for their education, or do you give it to them compulsorily, and gratis ? You do not expect them to pay you for their teaching, except by becoming good children. Why should you expect a peasant to pay for his, except by becoming a good man ? —payment enough, I think, if we knew it. (9)

As statistics quoted above indicated it is a common practice today to contrast the vast sums spent on amusement to the petty sums spent on education. Ruskin was conscious of these disgraceful contrasts too.

It appears that of our public moneys, for every pound that we spend on education we spend twelve either in charity or punishment; ten millions a year in pauperism and crime and eight hundred thousand in instruction, (10)

(9) Time and Tide, The Crown of Wild Olive, by J. Ruskin, London: George Allen & Co., Ltd., 1911, p. 345.
 (10) ibid, p. 346.

In an even more sarcastic vein, Ruskin returns to this same theme in another of his works.

I say first we have despised literature. What do we, as a nation, care about books? How much do you think we spend altogether on our libraries, public or private, as compared with what we spend on our horses?...Or, to go lower still, how much do you think the contents of the book-shelves of the United Kingdom, public and private, would fetch, as compared with the contents of its wine-cellars? (11)

Ruskin proceeded to develop this line of thought with answers that made it clear that education was not receiving the support it deserved. He did not, however, limit himself to this negative approach of pointing out how much money went elsewhere. He went on to emphasize the fact, so fully appreciated today, that education is a most valuable thing. In the vernacular, it pays off handsomely. But it does not necessarily pay off in dollars and cents.

You do not learn that you may live—you live that you may learn. You are to spend on National Education, and to be spent for it, and to make by it, not more money, but better men; to get into this British Island the greatest possible number of good and brave Englishmen. They are to be your "money's worth". (12)

Ruskin insisted upon this need for "good" men. His religious upbringing and great familiarity with Holy Scripture coloured his every thought and

(11) Sesame and Lilies, by J. Ruskin, London: Cassell & Co., Ltd., pp. 81-82.

(12) Time and Tide, The Crown of Wild Olive, by John Ruskin, p. 345.

utterance. (Incidentally, his prose style did not suffer from his frequent reading of the Bible.) There are times when Ruskin sounds very much like Leon Bloy. The following quotation combines the desire for reform with the fiery eloquence of the French 'pilgrim of the absolute'.

'But", it is answered, "they cannot receive education." Why not? That is precisely the point at issue....The rich not only refuse food to the poor; they refuse wisdom; they refuse virtue; they refuse salvation. Ye sheep without shepherd, it is not the pasture that has been shut from you, but the presence. Meat ! perhaps your right to that may be pleadable; but other rights have to be pleaded first. Claim your crumbs from the table, if you will; but claim them as children, not as dogs; claim your right to be fed, but claim more loudly your right to be holy, perfect and pure. (13)

There were times when Ruskin seemed far ahead of his times. Upon occasion he would assume the mantle of the seer and reach out into the future. In the light of what has happened in Canada and the United States in the last decade, how pregnant with meaning are the following lines:

I believe that the masses have a right to claim education from their government; but only so far as they acknowledge the duty of yielding obedience to their government. (14)

Might the lines not well and wisely be read to those educators whose notions of freedom are so confused that they harbour on their campus a variety of shades of

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(13) Unto This Last, by J. Ruskin, London: Cassell & Co., Ltd., p. 187.

(14) Political Economy of Art, by J. Ruskin, London: Cassell & Co., Ltd., p.11.

Red. We have read of schools where undergraduate societies have been formed by pinks and fellow-travellers with the blessing of the authorities !

These nouveaux Russes would be denied the right to free education by Ruskin. How logical his stand is can be appreciated by Canadians who saw a number of their university graduates undermine the very government which made it possible for them to attend school. Surely a man who plans your destruction is not entitled to your support and encouragement. The whole thing smacks of suicidal folly — or, criminal hypocrisy on the part of educators who pay lip-service to the ideals of democracy while, secretly, they genuflect to the Kremlin.

These are not mere theoretical problems. Quite a fuss was created a year or so ago when, in the United States, a student who admitted being a Communist was granted a government scholarship ! What should have been a clear-cut affair denying the scholarship to the student turned out to be a long-drawn out fight over academic freedom. Obviously, confusion does exist. It is about time we turned our backs on some of our modern pseudo-philosophers and sought wisdom in the thought of yesterday. A deep study and understanding of the above-quoted Ruskinian thought would have cleared the air of much Communist-inspired confusion in recent times. Ruskin is not dead. We would be a healthier nation if we remembered that fact. We harp upon rights so much that we forget duties. Ruskin saw both.

Chapter VIVocational Guidance

Chapter V was entitled ' The Right to Education '. This chapter might have been entitled 'The Right to the Right Kind of Education'. Today more than ever before it seems to be most important for the student to have at least some special training in that field in which his aptitudes can be made the most of. In these post-war years North American education is plagued with overflowing campuses, jammed classrooms, over-populated laboratories and understaffed faculties. Under the circumstances, there has inevitably come about a great deal of mass production in education. There was and is so much to be done and so few to do it that the technique of the assembly line had to be introduced into schools.

It has resulted in a monotonous and unhealthy production of mediocrity. There has been little or no time to separate the grain from the chaff. There was a time when the selected few attended university; now the unselected many pretend they study there. The average student receives a twentieth of the individual attention his counterpart received two or three decades ago.

The purpose of this chapter is to record Ruskin's solution for the problem. His remedy would work best under ideal circumstances and as implied

in the preceding paragraphs education today is going through an abnormal period. However, the calm follows the storm. A levelling off in enrolments may well be on its way. To know what to do then to better our educational set-up, we might wisely turn to Ruskin.

Anyone who has done any teaching — or for that matter, anyone who has done any observing — knows from sad experience that an average class runs the gamut of intelligence from A to Z. The teacher of mathematics suffers in trying to teach embryonic poets. The instructor in chemistry finds that the student preparing for journalism is no catalyst in the laboratory. The rhythmic subtleties of Hopkins are lost on the bright light in electrical engineering. Some students are in the wrong course.

Other students shouldn't be in any course. They have not got the necessary intellectual curiosity to enable them to investigate strange fields, not the assimilative powers to retain what they have studied.

The evil arising from this is that the rate of advancement of a class is set by the lowest common denominator. The bright student is almost forced to coast and thereby lulled into idleness. In this way, the best material is wasted. The most is not being made of these potential leaders. Therein lies the problem. Overcrowding in education, as in housing, turns the school into an intellectual slum.

The more truly progressive schools have devised systems whereby such maladjustment can be remedied. A student who is a misfit in one class

might conceivably do very well in another. His talents might open vistas to him that form a blank wall to a classmate. Compulsory orientation plans direct the student along the most helpful paths leading to his chosen career or along paths that put his talents to the best use. Teachers meet individually with the pupils. Together they map out a clear, over-all plan. Together they take a long range view of their choice of a major.

This does not necessarily make for a lopsided training. Concentration upon a major is not to be confused with "specialitis" of which we shall have more to say later. It is true that schooling is ideally meant to learn to live and think intelligently. It should give a broad cultural background rather than a narrow training in a trade. Nevertheless, education can do the former and not neglect the latter completely. Only a utopian would deny that education does make a major contribution to one's professional success. In the words of Jacques Maritain:

The utilitarian aspect of education — which enables the youth to get a job and make a living— must surely not be disregarded, for the children of man are not made for aristocratic leisure. (1)

Rather than allow a student to choose a course because it is easy, or because his friends took it, or because the hours are convenient, or because he can't think of anything else, why not choose with career in mind?

(1) Education at the Crossroads, by J. Maritain, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943, p.10.

Find out what a student's interests, likings and hobbies are and use these as a guide in mapping out the blueprint of his scholastic effort. Find out what his aversions are and waste no time trying to fit a round peg into a square hole.

Today, the better schools put better students into special classes and they advance more rapidly and profitably. There is so much to be done in the world and such great need for the best minds to solve our problems that it is suicidal folly to dull keen intellects and delay eager minds.

The students themselves should be made to appreciate their own equipment and ambitions. This cannot be done in any dim and vague way, but only by giving the student helpful vocational counseling. The average individual has some forte or, at least, some one asset to offer. Does he realize it? Too often he doesn't and as a result drifts through a college course without a glance at the hard economic reality staring him in the face that someday soon he will have to earn a living. Since too few can or will do this for themselves, they should be screened in such a way that they, the school and society benefit.

The ideas about guidance and orientation written of in the preceding paragraphs were not strange to John Ruskin. He saw the problem, foresaw the danger and suggested a solution.

This solution was not to limit the number of people educated, but to direct them into the fields they were cut out for. Let the cream of the crop be destined for leadership and given the necessary training for that task. Prepare those less well endowed with intelligence for earning a livelihood. Give them the means to live in relative comfort, but waste no time in talking above their heads. The distinction is being insisted upon here because some thinkers would deny education to the " masses ", feeling that it is caviare to the general and is probably a source of greater evil than good. They see the Caliban in man and, like Prospero, deem some men incapable of goodness. Toynbee, for instance, puts the whole matter this way:

One unforeseen stumbling-block has been the inevitable impoverishment in the intellectual results of Education when the process is reduced to its elements and is divorced from its traditional, social and cultural background in order to make it "available" for the "masses"The possibility of turning Education to account as a means of amusement for the masses—and of profit for the entrepreneurs by whom the amusement is purveyed—has only arisen since the introduction of Universal Education of an elementary kind; and this new possibility has conjured up a third stumbling-block which is the greatest of all; for it is this that has cheated our educationalists, when they have cast their bread upon the waters, of their expectation of finding it after many days. The bread of Universal Education is no sooner cast upon the waters of social life than a shoal of sharks rises from the depths and devours the

children's bread under the philanthropist's eyes. In the educational history of England, for example, the dates speak for themselves. Universal compulsory gratuitous public instruction was inaugurated in this country in A.D. 1870: the Yellow Press was invented some twenty years later — as soon as the first generation of children from the national schools had come into the labour market and acquired some purchasing power — by a stroke of irresponsible genius which had divined that the educational philanthropist's labour of love could be made to yield the newspapering a royal profit. (2)

This would be the almost inevitable result if all men were to be given the very same training or education. Some soils are barren and desirable plants fail to take root in them. Ruskin had an idea that would help solve this problem.

His TRIAL SCHOOLS were meant to weed out the weak and direct them into fields where their limited abilities would be used, and to take advantage of the more intelligent in preparing them for careers of greater responsibility. He recognized the disparity in the intellectual equipment of men. Writing of education and the aptitudes and talents of students, he wisely pointed out that:

...there are other divinely-appointed differences, eternal as the ranks of the everlasting hills, and as the strength of their ceaseless waters. (3)

(2) A Study of History, by Arnold J. Toynbee, Oxford University Press, 1935, pp.193-194.

(3) Time and Tide, by John Ruskin, London: George Allen and Co., Ltd., 1911, p. 167.

Developing this idea in much greater detail, Ruskin wrote elsewhere:

...whatever the perfectness of the educational system, there must remain infinite differences between the natures and capacities of men; and these differing natures are generally rangeable under the two qualities of lordly, (or tending towards rule, construction, and harmony), and servile (or tending towards misrule, destruction, and discord): and, since the lordly part is only in a state of profitableness while ruling, and the servile only in a state of redeemableness while serving, the whole health of the state depends on the manifest separation of these two elements of its mind. (4)

The differences, he realized, were there and education could do little or nothing about the presence of talent in one person and its absence in another.

You can't manufacture man, any more than you can manufacture gold. You can find him, and refine him: you can dig him out as he lies nugget-fashion in the mountain stream; you bring him home; and you make him into current coin, or household plate, but not one grain of him can you originally produce. (5)

Ruskin saw that among men there was good and bad, wisdom and foolishness. He knew that mankind does not always make the most of the good. And he knew, too, that the fault lay not in our stars but in ourselves that we are underlings.

(4) Unto This Last & Other Essays on Art and Political Economy, by John Ruskin, Everyman's Library, London: J.M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., pp.270-271.

(5) The Political Economy of Art, by John Ruskin, London: Cassell & Co., Ltd., p.14.

Said Ruskin:

...we find that "of thousands of seeds, He (God) often brings but one to bear", often not one; and the one seed which He appoints to bear is allowed to bear crude or perfect fruit according to the dealings of the husbandman with it.... the seeds of good and evil are broadcast among men, just as the seeds of thistles and fruits are; and that, according to the force of our industry, and wisdom of our husbandry, the ground will bring forth to us figs or thistles. So that when it seems needed that a certain work should be done for the world, and no man is there to do it, we have no right to say that God did not wish it to be done; and therefore sent no man able to do it. The probability is, that He sent many men, hundreds of men, able to do it; and that we have rejected them, or crushed them; by our previous folly of conduct or of institution, we have rendered it impossible to distinguish, or impossible to reach them. (6)

Having declared man's " mea culpa " for his failure to use talent to the best advantage, Ruskin began looking about for a solution. What was to be done? How was man to proceed? It became obvious that special training had to go to special aptitudes and talents. Every man could not be profitably thrown into the same mould. It would be necessary to analyse, study and appreciate the man, and then decide how to get the best out of him:

One man is made of agate, another of oak; one of slate, another of clay. The education of the first is polishing; of the second, seasoning; of the third, rending; of the fourth, moulding. It is of no use

(6) The Political Economy of Art, by John Ruskin, London: Cassell & Co., Ltd., p.91.

to season the agate; it is vain to try to polish the slate; but both are fitted, by the qualities they possess, for services in which they may be honored. (7)

This preparation for life, which today has blossomed into the necessary and helpful field of vocational guidance, was a thought which often came to Ruskin. We find it here and there throughout his writings. One of the difficulties in studying Ruskin is this unfortunate habit of his of broadcasting his thought here, there and everywhere. It is the task of the student and admirer of Ruskin to gather these dispersed meditations into a logical order and more available form. In The Crown of Wild Olive, Ruskin returned to the theme.

No teacher can truly promote the cause of education, until he knows the mode of life for which that education is to prepare his pupil. (8)

Ruskin did not want to do away with the differences between men but to measure, manifest and employ them. (9) He advocated the establishment in every important town of 'schools of trial' which would do the pruning and selecting of talent. He developed the idea in a famous passage in his The Political Economy of Art:

(7) The Stones of Venice, by John Ruskin, New York: Peter Fenelon Collier & Son, 1900, vol. iii, pp. 220-1
 (8) The Crown of Wild Olive, by J. Ruskin, London: George Allen & Co., Ltd., 1911, p. 232.
 (9) Time and Tide, by J. Ruskin, p. 167.

But the general principle of trial schools lies at the root of the matter — of schools, that is to say, in which the knowledge that is offered and discipline enforced shall be all part of a great assay of the human soul, and in which the one shall be increased, the other directed, as the tried heart and brain will best bear, and no otherwise....One thing, however, I must say, that in this trial I believe all emulation to be a false motive, and all giving of prizes a false means. All that you can depend upon in a boy, as significative of true power, likely to issue in good fruit, is his will to work for the work's sake, not his desire to surpass his school-fellows; and the aim of the teaching you give him ought to be, to prove to him and strengthen in him his own separate gift, not to puff him into swollen rivalry with those who are everlastingly greater than he; still less ought you to hang favours and ribands about the neck of the creature who is the greatest, to make the rest envy him. Try to make them love him and follow him, not struggle with him. (10)

What sound and rich pedagogical advice is contained in the last part of the foregoing quotation. Ruskin, who did not limit his teaching to Oxford but reached out to broaden the horizons of the working man as well, put first things first. He let competition play second fiddle to true learning. Surpassing a school-fellow in scholastic rivalry may not mean very much if his academic standing is below par. True, you are better than he is. The important thing is that he is not very good. The mediocre is better than the poor, but who wants to be mediocre? Ruskin wanted each student to do his best and not just better than his fellows. If some of our modern schools paid less attention to grades and more

(10) The Political Economy of Art, by John Ruskin, p. 92.

attention to true accomplishment and progress it would be an improvement. Every student and every man can and should do his best; no man can do more.

With Ruskin, all this talk about making the best of every creature was not pious platitude and loose talk. He meant it. He considered it to be a duty and he considered failure to do it a dereliction of duty. Ruskin was a religious man and he described this necessary task as a duty to God.

If, indeed, no effort be made to discover, in the course of their early training, for what services the youths of a nation are individually qualified; nor any care taken to place those who have unquestionably proved their fitness for certain functions, in the offices they could best fulfill,— then, to call the confused wreck of social order and life brought about by malicious collision and competition, an arrangement of Providence, is quite one of the most insolent and wicked ways in which it is possible to take the name of God in vain. (11)

Wiser words were seldom spoken. Ruskin is in very good company in this matter, for St. Thomas Aquinas puts the same thought in these words:

...in human government disorder results when man is set in authority, not because of his excellence in intellect, but because he has usurped the government by bodily force, or because he has been appointed to rule through motives of sensual desire. Nor does Solomon omit to mention this disorder for he says (Eccles. x.5,6.): "There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, as it were by an evil proceeding from the face of the prince; a fool set in high dignity." Now the divine providence is not denied by a disorder of this kind. For it results, by God's permission, from a defect in the lower agents. (12)

(11) Time and Tide, by J. Ruskin, p.20.

(12) Contra Gentiles, by St. Thomas, 3, LXXXI.

Upon sober reflection, Ruskin's views exposed in this chapter strike one as eminently sane. Ruskin recognized the fact that in spite of the fine talk about everyone being born equal, the fact was that, intellectually speaking, there were degrees of intelligence. Such things as aptitudes and abilities exist in one individual that are not to be found in another.

A coming chapter will develop Ruskin's ideas about manual training. In the proper place, his insistence upon everyone doing something along these lines will be treated. The preceding parts of this chapter have mentioned Ruskin's 'Trial Schools'. In these schools, the sizing up of the individual would enable the authorities to guide, direct or orientate him along the paths he was best equipped to follow. In this way, the born leader would receive that training which would enable him to make the most of his talents for his own benefit and that of his country. On the other hand, the student with a practical and scientific type of mind would be directed accordingly.

It would be interesting to find an example of a country whose educational system was based upon Ruskinian principles. Recent news despatches (13) describe coming reforms in the French school system that square remarkably with the principles advocated by John Ruskin.

(13) UPHEAVAL IN SLOW MOTION, Time Magazine, February 6, 1950, p. 35.

During the German occupation Frenchmen began to brood over their plight and a great deal of soul-searching went on. The whole fabric of society was analysed with the greatest care. In the case of education, it was realized that Napoleonic laws, going back to 1806, still existed. Naturally, critics claimed that modern times and problems called for a modernized system of schooling.

The French government did what so many other governments have done in recent years. It set up a commission to investigate, report and suggest needed reforms. After three years work the report was returned. This was in 1947. The French government then did what so many other governments have done throughout the years. It proceeded to ignore the report.

Finally, in December 1949, the Minister of Education Yvon Delbos decided to do something about it. Whether he succeeds or fails will no doubt depend in part upon the ups and downs of French governments. However, the report itself is interesting to any student of Ruskin's views on education.

It is planned to have children attend primary school for six years during which time there will be special emphasis on what *THE* magazine describes as "learning by doing methods". Ruskin (see chapter on Specializing) advocated manual work for children. Following this primary education, France plans to have a two-year orientation programme. During these years every effort is to be made to test the students for

aptitudes and abilities. Ruskin had this same idea in mind when he described his 'Trial Schools'. After this sorting out process, French students are to continue their education or training in manual trade schools, technical schools, or university preparatory schools. In very much the same way, Ruskin wanted to separate the cream of the intellectual crop and prepare them for future leadership.

It is not meant to suggest that these French reforms were actually built according to Ruskin blueprints. It is merely meant to emphasize the fact that Ruskin's ideas were no eccentric, wild and impossibly utopian schemes. His thoughts on education made sense in his day and are still applicable.

Chapter VIIRuskin and Specialization

The history of education has been a record of attempts to strike a suitable balance between that training which produces a man of culture and that which enables a man to maintain a decent standard of living. At different times, in different schools, under different systems these attempts have failed and thereby brought about a renewal of the cry for better compromises. The educators who concentrated upon the acquisition of culture looked down their noses at the science-mad mechanics who thought only in terms of material comfort. The latter described the B.A. degree as that which enabled its holder to scorn the money it made it impossible for him to earn. The purpose of this chapter is to draw a brief sketch of this educational warfare in America especially and to point out that Ruskin saw the opposing camps shaping up and even provided us with the answer to the problem. This answer will be given in part in this chapter and more fully developed in the chapter entitled 'The Heart of Education'.

Without going in to the hundred and one varieties of solution to the curriculum problem, it would probably be fairly accurate to say that the two main camps in North American educational warfare are the followers of John Dewey and the followers of

Robert Maynard Hutchins.

Roughly speaking, Dewey might be compared to the extremists of the French Revolution who wanted a root and branches revolution. They would break completely with the past and erect their new utopia in a vacuum of sorts. To continue with the comparison, Hutchins and company are more like Edmund Burke, who insisted upon building the future upon the tried and true formulae of the past.

Dewey's followers are the advocates of vocational training almost exclusively. They believe in learning by doing and not by being told what to do. They are the materialists belonging to the science school. They are positivists who, whether they admit it or not, relegate philosophy to the field of opinion. They pay it lip service but refuse to grant it supremacy over science. They see no hierarchy among the subjects taught in our seats of higher learning. One subject is as noble and important as another according to their way of thinking. Their Naturalism will not allow any supernatural Theology. Metaphysics is on a par with physics. One opinion equals another. There is no settled truth. The man who concentrates or majors in one field, no matter which, is as well educated and as nicely balanced culturally as any other specialist in any other field. They cannot see the point to

the joke that a specialist is one who learns more and more about less and less until finally he knows everything about nothing.

Dewey's theory of education, which has admittedly had tremendous influence in America, is not always too clear as to the aims of education.

We agree that we are uncertain as to where we are going and where we want to go, and why we are doing what we do. (1)

This is not too surprising in view of the fact that Dewey refuses to look to the past for guidance. Boasting of his system of education as 'liberal', he deplores the cramming of information down the throats of students as the authoritarians do. He insists upon freedom from control of any religious group, dogma, convention or tradition. All this amounts to a foolish refusal to accept truth from past generations and a petulant adolescent insistence upon finding things out for oneself. It leads the student down the labyrinthine ways of specialization and bars him from the heights whence the truth of the past can be seen and assimilated. According to Dewey the things taught must have immediate application. Education should appeal to desire rather than to duty. The desire is created in the student by having him see and understand the immediate application of what is taught.

(1) CHALLENGE TO LIBERAL THOUGHT, by John Dewey. In Fortune, August 1944, p. 155.

A gospel of duty separated from empirical purposes and results tends to gag intelligence. (2)

He does not believe in any law of delayed action in education. He fails to see that seeds planted in youth might well bear fruit in later years. Dewey is a fairly mild man; his disciples are not. Sidney Hook is to Dewey what Huxley was to Darwin —his bulldog. Along with Hook, are Irwin Edmanaa and thousands of American teachers. They are pragmatic, utilitarian, vocational, professional and concentrate on ' how to make a living '.

The exaggerated importance assigned to specialization combined with Dr. Charles Eliot's introduction of the free-elective system at Harvard led to serious lop-sidedness in education. It produced men who were all science and knew little or nothing of the humanities.

The early members of what could for convenience be called the Hutchins-Adler school seemed to lean the other way. Their solution lay in the 100 Great Books. They preached a return to Latin and Greek thinking. They sought wisdom and not technique. Van Doren and Erskine at Columbia, Barr and Buchanan at St. John's, Adler and Hutchins at

(2)German Philosophy and Politics, by John Dewey, N.Y.:Henry Holt, 1915, p.54.

Chicago were the biggest names in this return to Socrates, Plato, Aquinas and others. They claimed some subjects were more important than others. They preached hierarchy in a college calendar. Theology would be king if possible. In Hutchins' own words:

The curriculum, then, should include the knowledge and understanding of the principles of morality. It should include both natural and sacred theology; for how can a man call himself educated who does not grasp the leading ideas that since the dawn of history have animated mankind ? (3)

" Faute de mieux ", in a non-denominational school, metaphysics would top the list. But truth, arrived at deductively as well as inductively, would be sought and they claimed could be found. Educated man would be produced by the exchange and study of ideas in a round table discussion and not found in a laboratory test-tube exclusively.

The educational system or movement sponsored by this group is sometimes called ' Education for Freedom '. Whereas the Dewey followers look for fructiferous results from education, these neo-Newmanites (and neo-Ruskinians !) look for luminiferous results from knowledge. They want a university to be primarily intellectual. And they want it to teach a student how to live

(3) Morals, Religion, and Higher Education, by R.M. Hutchins, U.of Chicago Round Table, January 15, 1950.

rather than how to make a living. These ideas are coming to the general public's attention more and more and the Dewey forces are fighting back. The Catholic schools have lined up with Hutchins in this quarrel. Rev. Leo R. Ward, C.S.C. holds similar views in his Blueprint for a Catholic University (Herder, 1949). The views of Dewey, Hook, etc. are expressed in a book entitled The Authoritarian Attempt to Capture Education, by John Dewey, Sidney Hook and others (New York: King's Crown Press.).

For a while there appeared the danger that the Hutchinites might lose themselves in antiquity and not adjust themselves to the modern world in which we must all live. Fortunately, having seen the blind groping and sad isolationism of the scientists losing themselves in the foggy, foggy dew of Deweyism, they tried not to go to the other extreme. As a result, recent developments have indicated that a happy medium is being struck between the two fields of academic endeavour.

Hutchinism has neatly sidestepped the inevitable accusation of stifling historical provincialism by attracting the world's great scientists to the University of Chicago. These men find Chicago's fluid world of thought to their liking. They have reached out of their scientific laboratories and borrowed from the

technique of the philosopher. Hutchins is not a science-worshipper, but he does recognize our need for it. The scientists themselves are not deified at Chicago, but respected. They are not put up on pedestals, true, but then they are not rebuked or pilloried either. They are recognized as members of a community of scholars with their qualities and their limitations. In being reminded of the latter their eyes are cleared and their horizons widened.

That, roughly speaking, would be a picture of education in North America today. Leaders in the educational fields have recognized the cleavage and spoken out about it on more than one occasion.

During the centenary celebrations at the University of Ottawa in 1948, Dr. Robert C. A. Wallace, Principal of Queen's University, explored the possibilities of the coordination of Canadian higher education. His masterly discussion of the problem was, in good part, an application of the problems exposed in preceding paragraphs to Canada. He said:

There are clearly two different philosophies of education in Canada....They (the English group) were a practical, pioneering people, and expressed the practical things in school and college. They have proved themselves to be excellent applied scientists. The development of the resources of the country has until recent years been largely in their hands. They have laid stress on

science, mathematics, engineering. From a purely material standpoint the emphasis has paid.... But it cannot be said that equal prominence has been given to language and literature, to philosophy, to the fine arts, to religion as has been given to science and applied science. We of the English-speaking community are not distinguished by our fine sense of language, by our philosophical insight, by our deep religious sense. There is a danger that our culture may become somewhat hard, inflexible, materialistic, if too serious an unbalance is created... The French-Canadian background is different..... The languages, ancient and modern, philosophical and metaphysical studies, and instruction in religion provided the basis of the curriculum in the classical colleges.....It would be unfortunate if those who are in Canadian educational life and who are aware of the development of Latin culture and of Anglo-Saxon culture under Canadian skies, should not endeavour to take the best of both, and integrate into a balanced whole.(4)

Any number of differently worded expressions of the same idea can be found in the writings of Livingstone of Oxford, Hutchins and Adler of Chicago, Lippmann of popular pundit fame and a host of others.

For instance, Howard Mumford Jones, the Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University, has this to say:

The true conflict in education is between an increasing demand for technicians of all sorts and an

(4) THE COORDINATION OF CANADIAN HIGHER EDUCATION, by Dr. R. C. Wallace. In the Revue de l'Universite d'Ottawa, Vol. 1. No. 1, Jan.-Mars, 1949.

increasing feeling that the political innocence of our armies reveals so great an ignorance of civic issues as to call for a new deal in values. (5)

The values he feels are so necessary are based upon the Christian conception of the dignity of man and of his inalienable rights to certain freedoms. These can only be understood from a philosophical and moral study of the issues involved. The laboratory is not the cradle of Christianity or democracy. More and more educators are coming to realize the truth of this fundamental fact.

Dr. James Rhyne Killian, President of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, believes that electrical engineers, chemists and other technically trained men should have a deeper understanding of the humanities. In March 1949, in his weekly column in the New York Times, Benjamin Fine gave an account of an interview with President Killian. The latter disclosed at that time that a change was on its way in the M.I.T. curriculum that would introduce more and more courses in the field of general education and the humanities. We quote here a sentence or two from that newspaper interview:

(5) CITIZEN OR MECHANIC ? by Howard Mumford Jones. In the Saturday Review of Literature, Vol. XXVI No. 38, Sept. 18, 1948.

Because engineering programs are crowded with technological subjects, there has been a tendency to drop the so-called "non-essential" courses. But that is an extremely short-sighted move, Dr. Killian feels. (6)

Newspaper reports from the campuses of the nation indicate that the humanities are coming into their own once more. The New York Times recently (7) carried a story that the humanities had regained the lead at Princeton University. To quote from the item itself:

An analysis of undergraduate course selections shows that the average Princeton student is now spending more classroom-hours studying religion, philosophy, English, music and art than the several social sciences, his former preference. (7)

This tendency, if it is indeed a tendency, reflects the philosophy of education of John Ruskin. As will be further developed in the chapter entitled 'The Heart of Education', Ruskin emphasized the importance of the moral element in all true learning as being basic. He then went on to the more specialized forms of training.

Thus far we have exposed the problem of producing an educated man and we have glanced at the opposing factions with their panaceas, their cure-all courses. We have leaned to the

(6) New York Times, Mar. 27, 1949.

(7) New York Times, Jan. 15, 1950.

side of Hutchinism amid the excited shouting of the test-tube tribe.

To the reader of John Ruskin all this is old hat. A Ruskinian scholar doesn't need to read most of the modern 'epoch-making' books offering the 'long-awaited' solution to the problem. Ruskin saw the need for both forms of education. He saw the evil and danger of letting one outdistance the other. He paid tribute to both, gave priority to one and anticipated the best healing measures of our twentieth century thinkers.

Ruskin, who was not a professional educator, wanted education to do the two things at the same time. On the one hand, he wanted the individual to receive the proper education for an enlightened citizen. At the same time, he wanted special training that would make it possible for the student to occupy a sufficiently advanced position in society for him to put his general training to the best use. What good would an individual's general education do if he did not occupy a position of at least some influence? In Ruskin's world and in ours the latter can only come about with sufficient specialized training. Therefore, he advocated a bit of both. The better Victorian reformers agreed in this. Newman admitted the need for concentration in one field in order to earn a living. He merely insisted, along with Ruskin, that it was not the most

important thing.

You see, then, here are two methods of Education: the end of the one is to be philosophical, of the other to be mechanical; the one rises towards general ideas, the other is exhausted upon what is particular and external. Let me not be thought to deny the necessity, or to decry the benefit, of such attention to what is particular and practical, as belongs to the useful or mechanical arts; life could not go on without them....I only say that knowledge, in proportion as it tends more and more to be particular, ceases to be knowledge. (8)

Ruskin was no narrow-minded partisan either. He saw that specialization was good and necessary. However, he realized that philosophical study and work in the humanities might well be lost on some minds. Not only might this education fall on barren ground, but this ground, which might otherwise be productive, could conceivably be lost beyond saving. How often have teachers seen students wasting their time and lives in studying the humanities when their every inclination and talent leaned towards science. Too often they fail in their academic careers and this failure foreshadows similar failure in life. Wrote Ruskin:

For one man who is fitted for the study of words, fifty are fitted for the study of things, and were intended to have a perpetual,

(9) Idea of a University, by Cardinal Newman, ed. by C. F. Harrold, New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1947, pp.99-100.

simple, and religious delight in watching the processes, or admiring the creatures, of the natural universe. Deprived of this source of pleasure, nothing is left to them but ambition or dissipation; and the vices of the upper class of Europe are, I believe, chiefly to be attributed to this single cause. (9)

Ruskin went further. He felt that even the man of books should leave his ivory tower periodically to spend some time at the carpenter's bench. There is a perfect blending of thinking and doing in Ruskin's ideal education.

But for the continual education of the whole people, and for their future happiness, they must have such consistent employment as shall develop all the powers of the fingers, and the limbs, and the brain and that development is only to be obtained by hand-labour. (10)

Elsewhere, Ruskin amplified this idea:

It would be part of my scheme of physical education that every youth in the state—from the king's son downwards,—should learn to do something finely and thoroughly with his hands, so as to let him know what touch meant; and what stout craftsmanship meant; and to inform him of many things besides, which no man can learn but by some severely accurate discipline in doing. (11)

(9) The Stones of Venice, by John Ruskin, New York: Peter Fenelon Collier & Son, 1900, Vol. iii, p. 216.

(10) Time and Tide and The Crown of Wild Olive, by J. Ruskin, London: G. Allen & Co., Ltd., 1911, p. 351.

(11) *ibid.*, p. 134.

Ruskin did not limit his support of the non-philosophic part of education to manual work. He was among the most eloquent and insistent champions of the introduction of science into the University of Oxford. His own catholicity of intellectual curiosity, which extended from art and botany to geology and zoology, was communicated to his students whom he took on various field expeditions.

However, as with Howard Mumford Jones, Robert Maynard Hutchins and Mortimer Adler today, Ruskin insisted upon the priority of moral education.

Without... (moral education)... no man can be educated humanly. He may be made a calculating machine — a walking dictionary — a painter of dead bodies — a twangler or scratcher on keys or cat-gut — a discoverer of new forms of worms in mud. But a properly so-called human being — never..... See first that... (a child's)... realities are heavenly. (12)

In an earlier paragraph of this chapter we quoted from Howard Mumford Jones' article in the Saturday Review of Literature entitled 'Citizen or Mechanic?'. Doesn't Ruskin say the same thing in the following lines?

(12) John Ruskin—His Life and Teaching,
Marshall Mather, London: Frederick Warne & Co.,
1902, p. 102

But to feel their souls withering
 within them unthanked, to find
 their whole being sunk into an
 unrecognized abyss, to be counted
 off into a heap of mechanism,
 numbered with its wheels, and
 weighed with its hammer strokes;
 — this nature bade not, — this
 God blesses not, — this humanity
 for no long time is able to endure. (13)

In our industrial civilization with its
 mass production and assembly lines we too often
 make a tool of man. Because of the world's needs
 we take great pride in being the granary of the
 world and the arsenal of democracy. What we
 don't stop to consider is the tremendous and
 calamitous cost of all this. Ruskin thought of
 it:

We have much studied and much perfected,
 of late, the great civilized invention
 of the division of labor; only we give
 it a false name. It is not, truly speak-
 ing, the labor that is divided; but the
 men:— Divided into mere segments of men—
 broken into small fragments and crumbs
 of life; so that all the little piece of
 intelligence that is left in a man is not
 enough to make a pin, or a nail, but
 exhausts itself in making the point of a
 pin, or the head of a nail. Now it is a
 good and a desirable thing, truly, to
 make many pins in a day; but if we could
 only see with what crystal sands their
 points were polished, — sand of human
 soul, much to be magnified before it can
 be discerned for what it is, — we should
 think there might be some loss in it also. (14)

(13) The Stones of Venice, by John
 Ruskin, Vol.ii, p. 165.

(14) *ibid*, pp. 165-166.

Applying this idea to the broad field of education, which is what Ruskin had in mind, we find that our nineteenth century sage anticipated the great academic discoveries of the educational reformers of today. For too many years now have the side-shows of education been putting the main tent out of business. Courses in cosmetics, hair-cutting and allied top priority fields of cultural study and scientific investigation have made a circus of what was once the serious pursuit of learning. Voices of protest, reminiscent of Ruskin's, are being heard.

I attacked vocationalism, and the University of California announced a course in cosmetology, saying 'The profession of beautician is the fastest growing in this state.' (15)

A careful reading of this chapter would indicate that Ruskin saw eye to eye with today's reformers. In an amazing number of situations and in language that is equally amazing for its resemblance to what is being said today Ruskin spoke out against what he considered to be wrong with education. The point of this thesis is that his nineteenth century words make much sense in this twentieth century.

(15) Education for Freedom, by Robert M. Hutchins, Louisiana State University Press, 1943, p. 19.

Chapter VIIIThe Heart of Education

The heart of this chapter will be the pointing out of Ruskin's insistence upon the primacy of the soul in man and the consequent primacy of religion in education. Before getting to the heart of this matter, however, we deem it necessary to sketch the skeleton, that is, give the setting or atmosphere which brought Ruskin to this conviction. This matter of Ruskin's views of religion in education is all the more important and interesting in that we of this twentieth century face many of the same problems and many of us see the remedy in that very solution suggested by Ruskin.

Offhand it seems strange that Ruskin should have felt it necessary to make a plea for religion in education in a Christian country. However, a glance at history clarifies the matter and justifies Ruskin's alarm.

Going back to beginnings we see that, however wrong, the Anglican Church was full of life and vitality in the seventeenth century. It was a time of growth and development when pamphleteers argued religious questions and the Puritans made the whole population religion-conscious. A

glance at the literature of that century would lend emphasis to the claim that it was a religious age. The King James Version of the Bible belongs to the early part of the century. Later the religious poetry of Milton and the religious prose of Bunyan continued the tradition. With the Restoration, the Puritan influence declined. In the eighteenth century the Anglican Church had lost its grip upon the people to such an extent that Wesley broke away and founded Methodism. The Evangelical Movement was an Anglican counter-attack. In time, it lost much of its earlier vigour. The Anglican Church, therefore, in eighteenth century pulpits had become coldly rational and lost its hold on the hearts of the people. In the nineteenth century, science raised its dangerous head. There followed the sad, unnecessary and clumsy collision between religious and scientific extremists. Both sides in the controversy were guilty of much ignorance of the other side's possession of truth. Human nature being what it is, the ignorance in no way affected the categorical statements coming from the two camps. As the century ran on into the Victorian age, rationalism seemed to gain the upper hand. A good part of Victorian history is an account of the men who fought against it. To quote Chesterton:

The rest of the intellectual history of the time is a series of reactions against it (rationalism), which come wave after wave. They have succeeded in shaking it, but not in dislodging it from the modern mind. The first of these was the Oxford Movement: a bow that broke when it had let loose the flashing arrow that was Newman. The second reaction was one man; without teachers or pupils—Dickens. The third reaction was a group that tried to create a sort of new romantic Protestantism, to pit against both Reason and Rome—Carlyle, Ruskin, Kingsley, Maurice—perhaps Tennyson. (1)

And so we see that Ruskin was among those who fought this form of godlessness. He knew the past and the good things of the past. Ruskin saw, too, how his own age differed from that past. Saturated as he was with the wisdom of former centuries, Ruskin enjoyed the advantage of broader horizons than many of his fellow-Victorians. He was not dazzled by the surface changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution in England. Through the smoke and the steam and the dust Ruskin never lost sight of the basic facts of man's mental and moral welfare. When most people concentrated on what material progress could do for the body, Ruskin cried out in alarm at what it was doing to the mind and soul. As he was always interested in education, he looked to it to see what effects this age of machinery was having on the schools of the land.

(1) The Victorian Age in Literature,
by G. K. Chesterton, New York: Henry Holt & Co.,
1913, p. 40.

What do you suppose was the substance of good education, the education of a knight, in the Middle Ages? What was taught to a boy as soon as he was able to learn anything? First, to keep under his body, and bring it into subjection and perfect strength; then to take Christ for his captain, to live as always in his presence and, finally, to do his devoir — mark the word — to all men. Now, consider first, the difference in their influence over the armies of France, between the ancient word devoir, and the modern word gloire. And, again, ask yourselves what you expect your own children to be taught at your great schools and universities. Is it Christian history, or the histories of Pan and Silemus? Your present education, to all intents and purposes, denies Christ and that is intensely and peculiarly modernism. (2)

We are not Victorians, but we can easily apply the words written above by Ruskin to our schools today. There are those who argue that the subtleties of Christian doctrine are far beyond the grasp of students in primary and secondary schools. These people do not seem to realize that there is a law of delayed action in religious instruction. What is planted as a seed in youth may not take root for a long long time. Later on in life that seed will take root and grow and develop. Then the adolescent or maybe even the man will profit by what was taught him in his childhood. With this in mind, Ruskin called for greater emphasis on religious instruction.

(2) Pre-Raphaelitism, by John Ruskin, Everyman's Library, # 218, J.M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., p. 157.

Ruskin did not limit himself to any such slight criticism of the un-Christian character of education developing in England. Saturated, as he was, with the spirit of the Bible and, therefore, with the appreciation of the importance of religion in life, he detected the evils in many fields not normally associated with the Church. The Industrial Revolution together with the spokesmen of the new science had materialized much English thinking. Ruskin cried out against this tendency;

I know no previous instance in history of a nation's establishing a systematic disobedience to the first principles of its professed religion. The writings which we (verbally) esteem as divine, not only denounce the love of money as the source of all evil, and as an idolatry abhorred of the Deity, but declares mammon service to be the accurate and irreconcilable opposite of God's service; and, whenever they speak of riches absolute, and poverty absolute, declare woe to the rich, and blessing to the poor. Whereupon we forthwith investigate a science of becoming rich, as the shortest road to national prosperity. (3)

While John Ruskin was interested in and spoke out about art, architecture, social economy and everything else which affected the moral health of the nation, he considered the educational system to mark the pulse of the intellectual life of the people. A regular and healthy pulsation

(5) Unto This Last and Other Essays on Art and Political Economy, by John Ruskin, Everyman's Library, London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., p.131.

in this member of the social body was, in Ruskin's mind, indicative of a soundness in the whole of society as well. This was something fundamental. If religion held its own in the schools, all was not lost. The thinking of the nation was something of the soul, whereas political science and economics and allied subjects were of the body. If the soul was healthy, all would be well. Education's task was to care for the soul above all. Therefore, to Ruskin, the place occupied by religion in the curriculum was of paramount importance. And, even there, he saw cause for alarm:

....in the very institutions of which the administration may be considered as the principal test of the genuineness of national religion, those devoted to education, the Pagan system is completely triumphant; and the entire body of the so-called Christian world has established a system of instruction for its youth, wherein neither the history of Christ's Church, nor the language of God's law, is considered a study of the smallest importance; wherein, of all subjects of human inquiry, his own religion is the one in which a youth's ignorance is most easily forgiven. (4)

It is interesting to note how the milder tones of Newman carried the same note of insistence upon the place education should make for religion. To those who said that religion should be off by

(4) The Stones of Venice, by John Ruskin, New York: Peter Fenelon Collier & Son, 1900, Vol. iii, pp. 111-112.

itself and should not be permitted to interfere in education with the more 'practical' subjects, the great Cardinal said:

In a word indeed, and in idea, it is easy enough to divide knowledge into human and divine, secular and religious, and to lay down that we will address ourselves to the one without interfering with the other; but it is impossible in fact. (5)

Newman went beyond that and pointed out that a true university, by its very definition, had to include Theology.

A University, by its very name professes to teach universal knowledge; Theology is surely a branch of knowledge; how then is it possible for it to profess all branches of knowledge, and yet to exclude from the subjects of its teaching one which, to say the least, is as important and as large as any of them? (6)

Finally, he spoke of the relative importance of the various fields of study in a college curriculum and claimed a first place for religion. It was basic. It was, according to Newman, the heart of the matter. And, he added, that the systematic omission of any subject from a school's catalogue upset the whole scheme. Newman thought of the whole thing in terms of cause and effect. Without God there would be nothing. Therefore everything that exists depends upon God. Since any logical study of things should begin with their cause, God must necessarily be

(5) The Idea of a University, by Cardinal Newman, ed. by C.F. Harrold, N.Y.: Longmans, Green & Co., 1947, p. 24. (6) *ibid.* pp. 18-19.

included in a sensible program of studies.

In a word, Religion and Religious Truth are not only a portion, but a condition of general knowledge. To blot it out is nothing short, if I may so speak, of unravelling the web of University Teaching. It is, according to the Greek proverb, to take the Spring from out of the year. (6)

When reading quotations of this kind from Newman and Ruskin one has to remind oneself time after time that the words were written in the nineteenth century and not in last week's latest review of modern education. Anyone familiar with our schools recognizes the identical situation facing our world today. So true is this, that the wise men of today are crying out for the same remedial measures advocated by Ruskin. Jacques Maritain, for instance, who is a spokesman for the Catholic world of thought today as well as for more and more non-Catholic groups, has never ceased insisting upon the absolute necessity for a religious basis for our educational system:

Thus the fact remains that the complete and integral idea of man which is the prerequisite of education can only be a philosophical and religious idea of man.... When I state that the education of man, in order to be completely well grounded, must be based upon the Christian idea of man, it is because I think that this idea

(6) The Idea of a University, by Cardinal Newman, p. 62.

of man is the true one, not because I see our civilization actually permeated with this idea. (7)

Although not a Catholic, Robert Maynard Hutchins agrees with Jacques Maritain in this matter. In an address delivered at Western Michigan College of Education in Kalamazoo, Michigan, on October 25, 1949, Hutchins expressed these ideas very clearly.

The institution (a university) must be committed to taking morality and religion seriously. This commitment involves a third: if the object of higher education is the truth, then, in order to take morality and religion seriously, the institution must believe that there is some truth and some discoverable truth about morality and religion. (8)

Thus far, we have seen Ruskin point out the evil and we have quoted from Maritain and from Hutchins who agreed with much of what Ruskin said. As Christians we applaud the two twentieth century philosophers for their categorical affirmations of faith.

In fairness we should extend that applause to include Ruskin as well, because he expressed the same ideas long ago. He realized that the material

(7) Education at the Crossroads, by Jacques Maritain, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943, p.6.

(8) Morals, Religion, and Higher Education, by R. M. Hutchins, the University of Chicago Round Table, # 617, January 15, 1950, p.26.

things were not enough. Things of the spirit counted too. And they counted for much more than the material things. Justice, honesty, right and decency were far more than words to Ruskin.

For no human actions ever were intended by the Maker of men to be guided by balances of expediency, but by balances of justice. (9)

Applying this thought to the field of education, he wrote:

....to make your children capable of honesty is the beginning of education. (10)

The reader might object that the last two quotations from Ruskin are very vague and general and that they can hardly be given as evidence of firm conviction eloquently expressed. The objection may be valid. Let us go on to see what else Ruskin said that might add weight to the above. Political economy was an up-and-coming science in his day. Ruskin watched its so-called progress very carefully and warned against its going astray. There is a beautiful logic in most of Ruskin's thinking. He knew what the most fundamental truths were and he measured everything in relation to these truths. If the principles of what was new fitted in with the eternal truths

(9) Unto This Last, by John Ruskin, p. 118.

(10) Time and Tide, The Crown of Wild Olive, by John Ruskin, London: G. Allen & Co., Ltd., 1911, p. 45.

taught to him as a child, Ruskin was ready to accept what was new. Otherwise he was on guard.

Modern political economy stands on a precisely similar basis. Assuming, not that the human being has no skeleton, but that it is all skeleton, it founds an ossifient theory of progress on this negation of soul....(11)

We hear many eloquent denunciations of the doctrine of 'economic man' in our Christian press. Our present-day Catholic philosophers are unanimous in their insistence upon the existence of the soul. Monsignor Fulton Sheen can be given as an example of a leading churchman who has never ceased emphasizing this idea.

First, educate the whole man, not the part man. The whole man is not only economic, nor political, nor sexual, but is moral. Because he is moral, he is economic, political, and social, and not vice versa. (12)

Ruskin pointed out the same fact to the political scientists of his day. He played the role of a teacher for men whose education he considered to be false.

It would be so, if the servant were an engine of which the motive power was steam, magnetism, gravitation, or any other agent of calculable force. But he being, on the contrary, an engine whose motive power is a Soul, the force of

(11)Unto This Last, by John Ruskin, p.116.

(12)Philosophies at War, by Ms. r. Sheen, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943, p. 150.

this very peculiar agent, as an unknown quantity, enters into all the political economists' equations, without his knowledge, and falsifies every one of their results.(13)

Even today, the same confusion continues.

In Canada, we are often reminded of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's prediction that the twentieth century would belong to Canada. In these years of post-war expansion, when our northlands are being opened up and exploited, we read headlines about our potential wealth and articles about our natural resources. In all this talk, the material is exaggerated and the spiritual completely ignored. Canada's eastern marine enterprise, increased by the coming of Newfoundland into Confederation, is cried up. The iron-ore of Labrador promises to develop beyond all past expectations. The minerals of northern Quebec and Ontario continue their fabulous yield. Oil is the 'open sesame' in the prairies and talk of another gold rush is heard from the Pacific coast. Seldom, if ever, is anything heard about the moral welfare or future of the country. The worth of the individual citizen is pretty well forgotten in the noise of ticker tape reporting the rise and fall of gold shares. Mines have

(13) Unto This Last, by John Ruskin, p.119.

priority over souls. History repeats itself. Ruskin asked a pointed question inspired by a similar frame of mind in England.

In fact, it may be discovered that the true veins of wealth are purple—and not in Rock, but in Flesh—perhaps even that the final outcome and consummation of all wealth is in the producing as many as possible full-breathed, bright-eyed, and happy-hearted human creatures.Nevertheless, it is open, I repeat, to serious question, whether, among national manufactures, that of Souls of a good quality may not at last turn out a quite leadingly lucrative one? (14)

When we today read of our college graduates having the smallest families, we wonder what kind of philosophy or morality is being taught in our institutions of higher learning. Certainly Ruskin is not receiving the attention he deserves. When next we hear cabinet ministers or leading industrialists boasting of our national wealth, we should answer their statistics and graphs with these words of John Ruskin's:

There is no Wealth but Life....That country is richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy humans. (15)

Believing this as he did, Ruskin looked to education to plant the idea firmly in the nation's mind. In order to do this, education itself would

(14) Unto This Last, by J. Ruskin, pp. 143-144.

(15) *ibid.* p. 185.

have to practice what it preached. Education that limited itself to the mind of man and ignored his soul would be imperfect. The soul of education must be the soul. That was Ruskin's theme. The dozens of other branches of learning would be the limbs and outward flourishes of education. These ideas are by no means out of date.

I take it that most of our educational institutions are and must remain secular, in the sense that they are not controlled by any church and are open to everybody regardless of his religious faith or lack of it. But there is another kind of secularism that besets the higher learning in America, and that is secularism in the sense in which we say that religion is insignificant, it is outmoded, it is equivalent to superstition. This kind of secularism higher education can and should repel...If a college is to think and think about important things, then it must think about morals. (16)

Maritain put it this way:

The task of moral re-education is really a matter of public emergency. Every serious observer recognizes the fact that children have not only to be trained in proper conduct, law observance, and politeness, but that this very training remains deficient and precarious if there is no genuine internal formation. (17)

These ideas were Ruskin's too:

All education must be moral first, intellectual secondarily. Intellectual, before -- much more without -- moral education, is

(16) Morals, Religion, and Higher Education, by R. H. Hutchins, p. 10.

(17) Education at the Crossroads, by Jacques Maritain, p. 93.

in completeness impossible; and in incompleteness, a calamity. (18)

This same idea was further developed by that other Chicagoan, Mortimer Adler, in an address entitled 'God and the Professors' given at the Conference of Science, Philosophy and Religion held in New York in September, 1940. The address proved to be an academic bombshell and the campus of the University of Chicago became the centre of the arena of violent denunciation and most lively debate. We find the essence of Ruskin's thought brought to bear on the international situation of 1940.

Religion cannot be regarded as just another aspect of culture, one among many human occupations, of indifferent importance along with science and art, history and philosophy. Religion is either the supreme human discipline, because it is God's discipline of man, and as such dominates our culture, or it has no place at all. The mere tolerance of religion, which implies indifference to or denial of its claims, produces a secularized culture as much as militant atheism or Nazi nihilism. (19)

Ruskin had enough common sense to think in terms of eternity rather than in terms of time on earth. His knowledge of Christian

(18) Fors Clavigera, by John Ruskin, Boston: Dana Estes & Co., Letter 67, p.250.

(19) GOD AND THE PROFESSORS by M. Adler, Our Sunday Visitor Press, Huntington, Indiana, p. 24.

truths and his insistence upon using them as a frame of reference gave him a sense of perspective that made for clearer vision. Education that set its sights on worldly targets, he recognized as incomplete. In one memorable passage he condemns parents who want an education for their children in order to see them climb the social ladder or live in comfort here below. He takes violent exception to the idea of 'advancement' in society as the summum bonum of education. As usual, he manages to express his opposition to the idea in striking language:

It never seems to occur to the parents that there may be an education which, in itself, is advancement in Life; — that any other than that may perhaps be advancement in Death.... (20)

By the former, of course, he means moral education; and by the latter, worldly education. His views in this matter are strikingly similar to the Catholic position:

Christian education is a cultural process by which the reasonable being ushered into this world is prepared, during the years of childhood and adolescence, to play his part worthily as a citizen of the city of men and as a citizen of the city of God. (21)

(20) Sesame and Lilies, by John Ruskin, Oxford University Press, London, 1912, pp.24-25.

(21) What Is Education?, by Edward Leen, C.S.Sp., New York:Sheed and Ward, 1944, p. 47.

This world's mad pursuit of wealth and proneness to kneel before the Almighty Dollar filled Ruskin with indignation. How many of our schools measure the degree of success of their graduates in terms of dollars and cents! How many of our schools design their whole curriculum in such a way as to push forward the money-making subjects. That is, they direct their students into the study of those subjects which are most likely to prove most highly remunerative. Their education is for earning and not learning. Ruskin reduced the whole thing to its fundamentals in the following passage:

You cannot serve two masters:— you must serve one or other. If your work is first with you, and your fee second, work is your master, and the lord of work, who is God. but if your fee is first with you and your work second, fee is your master, and the lord of fee, who is the Devil; but the lowest of devils —the 'least erected fiend that fell'. So there you have it in brief terms; work first —you are God's servants; fee first —you are the Fiend's. (22)

Ours is a science-mad world. Billions of dollars are spent annually on scientific research, while the study of the humanities withers away for want of financial encouragement. The study of philosophy and theology is carried

(22) The Crown of Wild Olive, by John Ruskin, p. 244.

on by a handful of 'eccentrics' and is completely ignored by the vast majority. Some of the latter pay lip-service to moral training but, in practice, relegate it to the lowest level of the educational structure.

In recent years we have witnessed an upsurge of interest in philosophy and theology. The activities of Hutchins and Adler in this field are too well known to make repetition necessary. worthy of mention, though, because they have been unfairly forgotten, are Ruskin's views. He never tired of repeating himself on this score. Religion in education was described by Ruskin as essential. After all these years we are coming around to his opinion. The straws are in the wind.

Deep, penetrating thought is usually the contribution of the great scholar and philosopher. Because of the profundity of his research and the far-reaching effects of his conclusions, he seldom makes a direct appeal to or impression upon the masses. He does reach the popularizers, however, and it is their function to re-word and water down his thought for popular consumption. And, in this way, the nectar of scholarship filters down through the sieve of the popularizers to anoint the minds of men with the dew of clearer understanding.

An example of this very thing has appeared in our time and we are actually witnessing the spreading of ideas that required many years to arrive at. Arnold Toynbee's is probably one of the greatest names in the field of historical study today. In the past few years his work has become most popular. Because some of the better parts of it are far from being easy to grasp and appreciated fully, the usual interpreters and commentators have appeared. They pass on Toynbee's thought in more easily-digested dribbles.

All this, we feel, is a good thing because some of Toynbee's thought is well worth passing on. For instance, we have seen in this chapter that Ruskin insisted upon having religion at the very core of education. Most of our confused moderns look upon that idea as 'medieval', outworn and most impractical. The machine has replaced the soul, they feel. There is some truth in this because our whole western tradition has reduced itself to a mastery of technology. We may have begun with Christian roots but they have long since ceased to nourish the upper branches. Today our technology stands on its own feet. Ours is an industrial civilization and the machine is our god.

Toynbee makes this point of the primary importance of technology in our western civilization. He claims that it is our technology, rather than our Christian faith, that we have exported to the numerically-superior remaining part of the world. In fact, he denies Christopher Dawson's thesis that our western tradition is the tradition of Christendom. He would very much like to agree with Dawson, but he feels that the Christian tradition has not yet won a complete victory over the pagan tradition — it may never win !

Unfortunately, the technology that we did export is not controlled by Christian principles. Not Christ but the god of power, the lust for rule, is the guiding principle. Toynbee, therefore, sees the day when the non-western parts of the world will have mastered our techniques and thereby mastered us by sheer weight of numbers. The moral is that we must export Christianity and its message of love before we disappear.

Toynbee's broad view of the world and its different cultures enables him to see what our pride-bound minds fail to see. Christianity is not the same thing as the western tradition. Christianity is bigger. It can do without us. It can go on to other peoples, other cultures, other civilizations. When it does, our western tradition will wither away completely. This thought haunts and frightens

Toynbee as he points out that the future of the world lies with the Christian tradition, but that that tradition may not be our western tradition.

The moral of all this is that we must grab before it is too late. We must make up for past folly. Christianity is the root of true and good life in our cultural soil. Because it has not been cared for, the tree-top is trembling. We must go back to the roots, know our Christianity and live it as well. We must do more — we must export it. That can only be done when it becomes the most vital thing in life to us. Our educational system must fill the minds of youth with the all-embracing importance of this thought.

If Toynbee's haunting fear is to be eliminated, part of the cure lies in Ruskin's teaching about religion as the heart of true education.

Chapter IXThe Question of Discipline

Modern education seems to have developed more frills than the education of any two or three past centuries of learning put together. And for the frills there has come into being a highly specialized pedagogical jargon.

Progressive education is a favourite description of the newer systems with those who are critical of the older schooling. These critics are not too sure what the progress is towards, but they will willingly accept and follow any movement — even circular — as progress. They can be eddying about in a cloud of purposeless dust, but as long as there is dust being kicked up by all the activity they are happy.

The child-centered school also has its advocates. The general idea of this system is that the child is to be spoon-fed and coddled along. Regular attendance at classes is rewarded by passing grades. All in all, the teacher has been sweet, the pupil happy and the parents proud. Nothing much was learned, but the education was painless.

Painless education certainly sounds attractive and is, no doubt, a consummation

devoutly to be wished. Unfortunately, under our present system it is too often a disguise or mask for chaotic disorder.

These trial and error systems are not limited to primary and secondary education. In our colleges the same experimenting goes on. We hear of the life-activities centered curriculum, the student-interest centered curriculum, and the professor-interest centered curriculum. In the first case, the categories of the activities of former graduates make up the plan of action for the current curriculum. The second case is an offshoot of the Eliot elective system. The student decides what he wants and the faculty, having no idea of what should go into any college course, caters to his wants. Writing of the third system, Robert Maynard Hutchins says:

The professor-interest centered curriculum is the more usual variety. Each professor and each department want the whole time of the student so that he can be thoroughly trained in the professor's or the department's specialty. Since it is obviously impossible for the student's whole time to be spent in this way, the curriculum is determined by a process of pulling, hauling, and logrolling; and finally emerges as a sort of checkerboard across which the bewildered student moves, absorbing from each square, it is hoped, a little of something that each professor or each department has to offer him. (1)

(1) Morals, Religion, and Higher Education, by R. M. Hutchins, U. of Chicago Round Table, No. 617, January 15, 1950.

As implied in the descriptions of the three systems of curriculum organizing there is no order of subjects based upon relative importance. As much attention goes to the entertainment of the student as to his training. The importance of what the student body so inelegantly calls 'ath-a-letics' is a good example of this.

No doubt, a scholarly treatise could be published on these trends. It would probably take you back to Jean Jacques Rousseau among others. His notion of liberty was so confused (and un-Ruskinian !) that a whole crop of errors crept into his theories of education. Msgr. Fulton Sheen mentions some of them in his recent masterpiece, Philosophy of Religion:

The inspiration which came to Rousseauthat man is naturally good and it is civilization which makes him wicked, is applied to education in his work entitled EmileIn Book II he reminds us that the child should never do anything by obedience. There should never be a command, nor should the child know that we exercise any authority over him. His disorders must never draw from us a single word of reproach. Education in the early stages is purely negative. It does not consist in inculcating virtues positively, nor in inculcating them negatively by holding up the evils of viciousness, as the Greeks did in their dramas, but in permitting the child to develop according to his "natural state", which is good. (2)

(2) Philosophy of Religion, by Msgr. Fulton Sheen, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1948, p. 33.

Much of the foul fauna of modern education has sprung from such insane premises. The notion of not interfering with the child's liberty when he goes off on a wrong tangent, which is so often found in today's progressive schools, finds a sympathetic ear in Rousseau. When a child threatens to misbehave, modern parents are advised to switch his attention. That is what our parents did to us — but they did not call it our ' attention ' !

Today the very words authority and discipline have lost favour through confused thinking. The average mind associates the two ideas with the practices of the dictators and shudders at the very thought. The professional educator, fearful of being called a martinet, goes to the other extreme and lets what he is pleased to call ' democracy in education ' operate in the school. The result is no discipline, no authority, no democracy, but riot, anarchy and dictatorship by the student over faculty and curriculum.

Ruskin saw the evils we deprecate today appearing in his own time. He did his best to point out the problem. For instance:

There is a highly curious feeling in the English mind against educational law; we think no man's liberty should be interfered with till he has done

irrevocable wrong; whereas it is then just too late for the only gracious and kingly interference, which is to hinder him from doing it. (3)

Ruskin was not dazzled, as were the earlier nineteenth century poets and reformers, by all the high-falutin' talk about liberty and the dignity of man. He saw the good, of course, but he also saw the possibility of evil.

That treacherous phantom which men call Liberty...(4)

Moreover, Ruskin did not belong to the school of educators which looks upon a college campus as a necessary evil for the support of the much more important football team. His sentiments in this matter have been echoed in our time by Hutchins of Chicago, who just about killed football at that school. When we read the following sentence from Ruskin, we almost automatically lift our hand in a 'mea culpa' gesture:

We once taught them (youths) to make Latin verses, and called them educated; now we teach them to leap and to row, to hit a ball with a bat,

(3) Unto This Last and Other Essays on Art and Political Economy, by John Ruskin, London: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., p. 272.

(4) The Seven Lamps of Architecture, by J. Ruskin, Boston: Dana Estes & Co., p.188.

and call them educated. (5)

Ruskin was most conscious of the dangers of painless education. He felt the need for discipline in its broad and narrow senses. In his own case he escaped evil because of the protection afforded him by his parents, rather than by personal virtue arrived at by practice.

In the narrower sense of the word, Ruskin demanded strict discipline and even punishment in extreme cases:

It is better and kinder to flog a man to his work, than to leave him idle till he robs, and flog him afterwards. (6)

Elsewhere, he wrote:

Make your educational laws strict, and your criminal ones may be gentle; but, leave youth its liberty, and you will have to dig dungeons for age. (7)

Ruskin, in short, appreciated the value and necessity of guidance in education. The teacher was to direct the student along the way of good conduct and truth and to do this he had to have the necessary authority to interfere when the student went astray.

(5) Sesame and Lilies, by John Ruskin, London: Cassell and Co., Ltd., p. 222.

(6) Essay on Political Economy, by J. Ruskin, p. 284.

(7) *ibid.* p. 272.

...the notion of Discipline and Interference lies at the very root of all human progress or power; that the "Let alone" principle is, in all things which man has to do with, the principle of death; that it is ruin to him, certain and total, if he lets his land alone — if he lets his fellow-men alone — if he lets his own soul alone. (8)

All this confusion in education hinges upon a failure to clarify issues and define terms. The word discipline, for instance, as suggested previously, is interpreted in a broad and in a narrow sense. In the latter case, it is nothing more than a synonym for punishment.

Opposition to this form of discipline is fairly universal. Jacques Maritain summarized the whole thing in one line:

Education by the rod is positively bad education. (9)

There are those, however, who feel that sparing the rod does spoil the child. Samuel Johnson is often given credit for having pointed out that when flogging was forbidden in a school the students learned less. What the students gained at one end, they lost at the other. In some of his pronouncements, Ruskin is in sympathy with the great Doctor. Let us not quibble about

(8)The Political Economy of Art, by J. Ruskin, p. 11.

(9)Education at the Crossroads, by Jacques Maritain, New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1948, p. 32.

the merits or demerits of discipline taken in this narrow sense.

Most of what Ruskin had to say applied to discipline in its broad sense. The Oxford dictionary defines the word as "training of the kind that produces self-control, orderliness, obedience and capacity for co-operation." As an added notion, the Oxford dictionary includes "maintenance of proper subordination in an army or school or the like."

Thus, we see that the effect of true discipline should be the production of law-abiding, morally clear-seeing citizens who have a respect for law and truth and disapprove of unsocial action.

Ruskin wanted to make that end perfectly clear. He also wanted to make people realize that the road to that end would have to be laid out by guides or teachers and that the travelling over it would at times be difficult. Ruskin knew that self-imposed mental discipline, guided by teachers, is as necessary a quality as any other, but, like all the rest, it involves work. The laying out of the road by the teacher was not an infringement upon the liberty of the student. It was and is the task and duty of the teacher. Moreover, protecting the learner from evil was not interfering with his liberty. All these notions, which are still struggling for widespread recognition, are to be found in Ruskin.

The idea of guiding the young was a favourite theme with Ruskin:

Educate, or govern, they are one and the same word. Education does not mean teaching people to know what they do not know. It means teaching them to behave as they do not behave....It is training them into perfect exercise of kindly continence of their bodies and souls. It is a painful, continual, and difficult work; to be done by kindness, by watching, by warning, by precept, and by praise, — but above all — by example. (10)

This is the kind of discipline that Newman had in mind. The great Cardinal looked upon the result of such discipline as something highly desirable.

The result is a formation of mind,— that is, a habit of order and system, a habit of referring every accession of knowledge to what we already know, and of adjusting the one with the other; and, moreover, as such a habit implies, the actual acceptance and use of certain principles as centres of thought, around which our knowledge grows and is located. (11)

To those who insisted that all this interfered with the liberty of the learner, Ruskin pointed out that:

...liberty is lost only when interference hinders, not when it helps. You do not take away a man's freedom by showing him his road — nor by making it smoother for him: nor even

(10) Time and Tide, The Crown of Wild Olive, by J. Ruskin, London: G. Allen & Co. Ltd. 1911, p. 344.

(11) The Idea of a University, by Newman,

London: Longmans, Green & Co. p. 373

by fencing it for him, if there
is an open ditch at the side of it. (12)

Authority is necessary. Ruskin believed
and preached it. Other great men have carried on
his belief and preaching.

The right of the child to be educated
requires that the educator shall have
moral authority over him, and this
authority is nothing else than the
duty of the adult to the freedom of
the youth. (13)

Ruskin, as a true Christian, not only
wanted to protect the young from what was evil,
but wanted to show them what was good as well.
If this was not done, he felt, crime would follow,
Too many of our educators expose students to all
forms and examples of evil. They do this because,
they claim, the student should be familiar with
what these educators call "the facts of life".
They refuse to shelter youth from contagion,
arguing that the freedom of the individual would
thereby be compromised. It is this kind of false
philosophy which explains the fact that on many
college campuses in Canada and the United States
Communists have been invited to lecture to the
students. This was done with the knowledge and,
presumably, with the blessing of the authorities.

(12) Essay on Political Economy, by John
Ruskin, p. 220.

(13) Education at the Crossroads, by
Jacques Maritain, p. 33.

It is the old story of a crazy interpretation of the idea of 'freedom of expression'. Ruskin would not lay that flattering unction to his soul. He did not go to the other extreme, either. His position was the happy medium.

And this being so, it is the practical duty of a wise nation, first to withdraw, as far as may be, its youth from destructive influences; then to try its materail as far as possible, and to lose the use of none that is good. I do not mean by "withdrawing from destructive influences" the keeping of youths out of trials; but the keeping them out of the way of things purely and absolutely mischievous. ... Let your youth labour and suffer; but do not let it starve, nor steal, nor blaspheme. (14)

Ruskin went on from this negative stand to a more constructive proposal. He advocated bringing morally-good models before the student for his edification and imitation. Couldn't we profit by this advice ? In our survey courses of literature, for instance, we study atheists and worse. At the same time we ignore writers whose literary excellence is matched by the high quality of their moral tone. Coventry Patmore, a favourite of Ruskin's, would be an example of a most poetically eloquent spokesman for the Catholic conception of marriage. The study of his works would probably be of greater benefit to a student than an intimate knowledge of the

(14) Political Economy of Art, by J. Ruskin, p. 92.

marital standing of a Byron or a Shelley. For every pagan Swinburne, English Catholic literature can provide us with a Francis Thompson; for an educational reformer who wept over his loss of faith, Catholicism can boast of Newman as more than an equivalent for poor Matthew Arnold; instead of the highly imaginative and prejudiced telling of history found in the works of Wells, Catholic scholarship can offer a Dawson or a Belloc. And so it goes in case after case. It is possible to combine literary excellence with personal excellence. Ruskin was convinced of this:

....to teach reverence rightly is to attach it to the right persons and things; first, by setting over your youth masters whom they cannot but love and respect; next, by gathering for them out of past history, whatever has been most worthy in human deeds and human passion; and leading them continually to dwell upon such instances, making this the principal element of emotional excitement to them; and, lastly, by letting them justly feel, as far as may be, the smallness of their own powers and knowledge, as compared with the attainments of others. (15)

Ruskin's ideas about the danger of crime arising out of a failure to impose discipline were touched upon earlier in this chapter. There can be little doubt that where there is no discipline we find a breeding place for crime.

(15) Time and Tide, by J. Ruskin, p.102.

This principle is true in or out of school. When by the word discipline we mean punishment for crime, we are using the word in its narrowest sense. Discipline also keeps a man on the straight and narrow path. As good an example as any to illustrate this point would be the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Their motto is written in three French words worn on the collar badges of their uniform. These three French words are maintiens le droit. To quote from a former member of that organization, who appeared on a radio program sponsored by the National Broadcasting Company in the United States:

...they (the R.C.M.P.) have worked always on the theory that the greater part of a policeman's work must be spent in the prevention of crime and not in detection...They have become more famous because they have always made themselves friends of all the people...and that friendly attitude... has created...a much healthier respect for the law. (16)

This idea of discipline in its broadest and truest sense was applied by Ruskin to education. He looked to it to produce a respect for law and authority.

May, even as regards lower and more defined crimes, the assigned punishment is not to be thought of as a preventive means; but only as the seal of opinion set by society on

the fact. Crime cannot be hindered by punishment; it will always find some shape or outlet, unpunishable or unclosed. Crime can only be truly hindered by letting no man grow up a criminal —by taking away the will to commit sin; not by mere punishment of its commission. Crime, small and great, can only be truly stayed by education. (17)

Returning to the dictionary's definition of discipline as that training which produces self-control, orderliness, obedience, and capacity for co-operation, we see the wisdom of John Ruskin in this matter. Once more we marvel at the fact that he has been ignored for so long.

(17) Time and Tide, by John Ruskin, p.95.

Chapter X

The Great Books

Since the time of Caxton, experts have divided books into a great number of categories, classifications and types. Bacon's description of the different kinds of books is familiar to most readers. He claimed that some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested. His idea, which he developed in one of his essays, was that while we go through some books, other books are meant to go through us. DeQuincey is famous for dividing the whole field of literature into literature of knowledge and literature of power. Many other critics have suggested their own divisions down through the years.

One division which has been mentioned, but not often enough, is the simple break-down into good and bad books. This is not a reference to the binding, the print or the literary style. It is a moral judgment. The existence of the Catholic Church's Index of Prohibited Books is based upon this distinction. The occasional instances of censorship by civil governments takes into account the existence of the morally good and the morally bad in books. In this matter the common sense of the majority of the

readers of the nation agrees with the decision of the elected representatives.

There are so many books in print today that it is impossible for the individual to read them all. He does not even have time to read all the good ones. In fact, even a voracious reader can only read a small fraction of the latter. Ruskin put it nicely in the following words:

These (great books) are all at your choice; and Life is short. You have heard as much before; yet have you measured and mapped out this short life and its possibilities ? Do you know, if you read this, that you cannot read that; that what you lose today you cannot gain tomorrow ? Will you go and gossip with your housemaid or your stable-boy, when you may talk with queens and kings ? (1)

What a tragedy, then, to see real effort going into the reading of trash. When bad books are read because of invincible ignorance on the part of the reader it is a tragedy; when bad books are read because of vincible ignorance it is a sin.

The descriptive words 'good' and 'bad' can be and are often used as an appreciation or criticism of a book's cultural or educational value. A good book, in this sense of the word, is one from which we can learn. It is a book which

(1) Sesame and Lilies, Unto This Last and The Political Economy of Art, by John Ruskin, London: Cassell and Co., Ltd., p. 50.

will kindle in us the desire for further knowledge. It is a tome which will broaden horizons, create a catholicity of taste and thought, diminish any provincialism and tend toward the forming of an educated man. Many of these books deal with ideas. They are not always easily read.

....this court of the past differs from all living aristocracy in this,— it is open to labor and to merit, but to nothing else....If you will not rise to us, we cannot stoop to you. (2)

These books, indeed, challenge the reader who soon realizes that he is not sitting in judgment upon the book but that it is sitting in judgment upon him. These books are the 'musts' and the best-selling monthly choices of the various book clubs are usually so much worthless pulp and print compared to them.

Of these 'good' books is it also true that enough time does not exist for the reading of them all. The man who craves true learning wisely steers clear of the popular works and goes for guidance to the all-time favourites, the books which have maintained their fascination for men of thought from generation to generation and from century to century. These are so well known that they exist in translation form for the reader who does not happen to have mastered the language they were

written in.

When a reader does finally find a classic, what does he do ? Well, first, here are a few things he doesn't do ! He doesn't lend it. Wasn't it Sir Walter Scott who said that although his friends were poor arithmeticians, they were all good book-keepers ? The American writer of jingles, Gelett Burgess had the following lines written in his own books:

The errant cat, though long astray,
Comes back to home at last one day;
Ah, may this book when lent be feline
Enough to make a homeward beeline !

Most of us long-suffering lenders of books would like to belong to the outspoken Scott-Burgess school, but we have not the courage to speak our minds. Another evil is to let one's respect for the printed word grow so great that the adding of a marginal note or underlining of a key word takes on the crimson hue of sacrilege. It goes without saying that books are not to be bought by colour or by weight. Some people, though, do that very thing — or worse:

His study ! with what authors is it stored ?
In books, not authors, curious is my lord.
To all their dated backs he turns you round;
These Aldus printed, those DuSueil has bound;
Lo, some are vellum, and the rest as good,
For all his lordship knows — but they are wood.
(3)

A discriminate reader is not deceived nor misled

by the hue and cry of the hucksters of the book-trade. The best-sellers are usually horrible examples of the illiteracy and gullibility of the reading public rather than models of fine writing.

The writer of this thesis belongs to the Mortimer Adler school in the matter of reading and writing in books. Do not limit yourself to reading between the lines. It is as important to write between the lines. Adler claims that marking up a book is not an act of mutilation, but an act of love. Needless to say, you must own the book before you display such love ! The books of friends and of libraries are to be denied these added gems of wit and sparkling comment. Adler makes a distinction between reverence for the craft of the printer and the genius of the author. The former means doing what Alexander Pope's friend did —reverencing paper, publisher and print; the latter means appreciating the author's thought and his expression of it. By all means, jot down random thoughts of your own in the text itself and in this way the book becomes part of you.

Thus far, a few general ideas have been expressed relative to the reading of good books. Throughout our school years, in popular magazines and in books we have been told how to find and how to read worthwhile works. The advice is not new. Ruskin covered this ground long before the

Bryces and the Adlers.

Ruskin's views on reading and on great books lie broadcast throughout his works. However, in letters to the Pall Mall Gazette and in the lecture "King's Treasuries", contained in the volume entitled Sesame and Lilies, there can be found a reasonably complete exposition of his opinions.

Possibly inspired by Bacon and DeQuincey, Ruskin also divided books into categories.

For all books are divisible into two classes: the books of the hour, and the books of all time. (4)

A standard example of what Ruskin had in mind would be that of Pope and Swift, the two eighteenth century satirists. Describing Pope as an eighteenth century satirist is not at all misleading because he did give us a picture of the society of that time. He ridiculed the foibles and pretensions, but it was the gloss and manners of the people of Queen Anne's reign that Pope lampooned. Swift, on the other hand, belongs to all centuries. His victim was man —men of all times and of all manners. His savage satire was more universal. His books would therefore be of all time and might even be said to belong to the field of philosophy, whereas Pope's belong

(4) Sesame and Lilies, by J. Ruskin, p.46.

to the eighteenth century and rather belong to history.

To Ruskin, the 'books of all time' were more than gems of printing or models of style. He appreciated these, of course, but he denied supreme value to them. The measure of a truly great book was the grandeur of the author's soul.

He would fain set it down forever,
 engrave it on rock if he could, saying,
 this is the best of me; for the rest,
 I ate and drank and slept, loved and
 hated like another. My life was as
 the vapor, and is not; but this I saw
 and knew,—this, if anything of mine,
 is worth your memory. (5)

Ruskin, in the following passage, develops his idea of what books 'of all time' really means.

...the young reader..should be confirmed
 in the assurance...that there is such a
 thing as essential good, and essential
 evil, in books, in art, and in character:-
 that this essential goodness and badness
 are independent of epochs, fashions,
 opinions or revolutions. (6)

What food for thought in these lines for the sophisticated moderns who so glibly say: "Of course, this is the twentieth century!" Chesterton pilloried this kind of thinking in his delightful book entitled Orthodoxy:

(5) Sesame and Lilies, by Ruskin, p.49

(6) ibid. (preface)

An imbecile habit has arisen in modern controversy of saying that such and such a creed can be held in one age but cannot be held in another. Some dogma, we are told, was credible in the twelfth century, but is not credible in the twentieth. You might as well say that a certain philosophy can be believed on Mondays, but cannot be believed on Tuesdays. You might as well say of a view of the cosmos that it was suitable to halfpast three, but not suitable to half-past four. What a man can believe depends upon his philosophy, not upon the clock or the century. (7)

Ruskin, along with men of true profundity and even along with ordinary men of common sense, saw through the sham of those who harnessed morality to time.

He did value time, though, in another way. He felt it was to be made the most of by the conscientious reader.

Life being very short, and the quiet hours of it few, we ought to waste none of them in reading valueless books. (8)

In introducing Adler's ideas about the method of reading a book in a preceding paragraph, we were inspired by a thought of Ruskin's which might well have served as an inspiration for Adler. If it did not serve as an inspiration for the Chicago sage, it could serve as a table of contents

(7) Orthodoxy, by G.K. Chesterton, New York: John Lane Company, 1909, pp. 125-126.

(8) Sesame and Lilies, by John Ruskin, (preface)

for his book. Ruskin favoured owning a book in order that one might have the liberty and time to read it over and over and write in it and become part of it as it becomes part of you.

The very cheapness of literature is making even wise people forget that if a book is worth reading, it is worth buying. No book is worth anything which is not worth much; nor is it serviceable, until it has been read, and re-read, and loved, and loved again; and marked, so that you can refer to the passages you want in it. (9)

If the following lines from Ruskin were to be read to a modern student who was abreast of the times in matters educational, and were he asked to identify the writer, he would almost certainly name one of the men popularly associated with the 100 Great Books movement of today. What John Ruskin says here has been paraphrased any number of times by our mid-twentieth century educators.

The first use of education was to enable us to consult with the wisest and the greatest men on all points of earnest difficulty. That to use books rightly was to go to them for help; to appeal to them when our own knowledge and power of thought failed; to be led by them into wider sight, purer conception,—than our own, and to receive from them the united sentence of the judges and councils of all time, against our solitary and unstable opinion. (10)

(9) Sesame and Lilies, by J. Ruskin, pp. 82-83.

(10) *ibid*, p. 121.

The French philosopher, Jacques Maritain, is greatly respected in our time. His ideas often agree completely with those of Ruskin. For instance, compare Ruskin's words to these by Maritain:

...the direct reading and study of books written by great authors is the primary educational means;..This...is all the more profitable as the books in question are not too many in number and therefore may be seriously and lovingly scrutinized. (11)

Because of his great respect for the written wisdom of former greats, Ruskin planned to form a library of standard books which could serve the working men he had in mind for his St. George's Company. The first book he chose was the Economist by Xenophon. This "bibliotheca pastorum" was meant to contain some of the gems of past thought. The Books of Moses, the Psalms of David, the Aeneid of Virgil, Dante, Chaucer and many other giants of the past were included. This enthusiasm for the past's great works and his conviction that a well-grounded philosophy of life could be built upon such a foundation does indeed find an echo in the "100 Great Books" movement of today. To read many of our modern periodicals and reviews one would imagine that John Erskine, who taught a number of the great books to a selected group at Columbia from 1920 to 1930, was the originator of the whole idea. Barr and Buchanan at St. John's picked the idea

(11) Education at the Crossroads, by Maritain, New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1943, p.70.

from Erskine. When they became President and Dean at St. John's they introduced the idea on that campus. That was in 1837. Farr and Buchanan, the great books twins, put their school on the map scholastically speaking. The college's motto is "Pacio Liberos ex Liberis Libris Libentius" which translated roughly would add up to something like "I make Free Men out of Children by Means of Books and Balances." Ruskin anticipated their work by many, many years. Newman said in the Victorian age what some of our moderns are amazed to find out for themselves today.

Do not suppose, that in thus appealing to the ancients, I am throwing back the world two thousand years, and fettering Philosophy with the reasonings of paganism. While the world lasts, will Aristotle's doctrine on those matters last, for he is the oracle of nature and of truth. (12)

This is the situation today: the University of Chicago's extension school is trying to spread the 100 Great Books movement throughout America as an experiment in adult education. In various cities classes are being organized from all the strata of society. They meet weekly or monthly and under the chairmanship of two instructors (usually professors from a nearby university) discuss the book of the week or month. The books are a catholic representation of genius. For instance, here are the fifteen authors the

(12) The Idea of a University, by Cardinal Newman, ed. by C. F. Hammond, N.Y.: Longmans, Green & Co.,

extension school chose to begin with:

Plato: Apology, Crito, Gorgias,
 Thucydides: History,
 Aristophanes: Lysistrata, Clouds,
 Aristotle: Ethics, Politics,
 Plutarch: Lives,
 St. Augustine: Confessions,
 St. Thomas: Treatise on Law,
 Machiavelli: The Prince,
 Montaigne: Essays,
 Shakespeare: Hamlet,
 Locke: Of Civil Government,
 Rousseau: The Social Contract,
 Madison et al.: Federalist Papers,
 Smith: The Wealth of Nations,
 Marx: Communist Manifesto. (13)

Hutchins sometimes refers to this whole curriculum as the Great Conversation. The way he describes it, the Great Conversation began with the Greeks, the Hebrews, the Hindus, and the Chinese and has continued to the present day. For the most part, the Great Conversation deals with morals and religion. The questions of the nature and existence of God, the nature and destiny of man, and the organization and purpose of human society are the recurring themes of the Great Conversation. According to Hutchins the object of higher education is to continue and enrich the Great Conversation.

Only a starry-eyed idealist would consider this movement or system of education to be the best of all possible systems. It has, however, much to be said for it. It is a

beginning, a step in the right direction. With more insistence upon basing this study on sound principles and arriving at equally sound conclusions, the movement could escape the charge that the only advantage to be gained from it would be the production of great bookworms. This insistence is being made. An example would be the "Symposium on the First Year's Program of the Great Books Foundation" entitled The Great Books — A Christian Appraisal. In the introduction, written by Father Harold C. Gardiner, S.J., we find:

Any move to broaden the bases of popular culture is, without doubt, a movement in the direction of making truly democratic ideals more operative in American life..... Insofar as the Great Books, therefore, can and will contribute to such a happy conclusion, familiarity with them, and the widening of that familiarity to include all American citizens capable of pursuing their study, is a matter for every citizen's concern and interest....the student should not approach a study of the Great Books with the notion that he is going to find in them only the great, noble, uplifting thoughts that men have conceived. It may be regrettable that such thoughts are not the only ones to be found in books that have moved or shaped our world and its civilization, but.....(14)

The thoughts expressed by this eminent Jesuit are to be found in Ruskin. He, too, could

(14) The Great Books — A Christian Appraisal, edited by H. C. Gardiner, S.J., New York: The Devin-Adair Co., (introduction)

distinguish between the important effect a book had had and the moral value of that book. It was all a question of degrees of greatness. Ruskin's measure of greatness we find in the following quotations:

He is the greatest artist who has embodied, in the sum of his works, the greatest number of the greatest ideas. (15)

Ruskin went on from there to make the point that all art is great according to the greatness of the ideas it conveys, not according to the perfection of the means adopted for conveying them.

Art is valuable or otherwise, only as it expresses the personality, activity and living perception of a good and great human soul. (16)

Ruskin wanted his student to know the greats of the past, but he also wanted him to be able to assess that greatness in terms of morality and truth. This was all the more important in the case of young people because their whole future and, in some cases, the future of the nation depended upon their grasping the essence of the thought of the great intellects and measuring

(15) Modern Painters, by J. Ruskin, London: G. Allen, 1906, Vol. 1, p. 12.

(16) The Stones of Venice, by J. Ruskin, New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1900, Vol. iii, p. 170.

that thought against Christian doctrine. Above all else, Ruskin appreciated the importance of the human soul. When the education of youth was involved, Ruskin did not forget that soul. He was at one with Father Gardiner in recognizing the necessity for a Christian appraisal of the masterpieces of past times. The soul is a delicate thing and Ruskin insisted that it be cared for in a very special way:

The human soul, in youth, is not a machine of which you can polish the cogs with any kelp or brick-dust near at hand; and having got into working order, and good, empty and oiled serviceableness, start your immortal locomotive at twenty-five years old or thirty, express from the Strait Gate on the Narrow Road. The whole period of youth is one essentially of formation, edification, instruction; intaking of stores, establishment in vital habits, hopes and faiths. There is not an hour of it but is trembling with destiny. (17)

There was another thing Ruskin was very particular about. He wanted the student to go to the source and not to get the thoughts of great men at second hand. The watered-down commentary and the more or less accurate analysis left him cold. He realized that going to the original would mean more work. That, to him, was almost a proof that

(17) Modern Painters, by J. Ruskin, Vol. iv, p. 426.

the thought of the author was worth looking for.

And be sure also, if the author is worth anything, that you will not get at his meaning all at once,— nay, that at his whole meaning you will not for a long time arrive in any wise...They do not give it you by way of help, but of reward, and will make themselves sure that you deserve it before they allow you to reach it. (18)

He realized that the ore of a great man's thought could only be extracted that way. Otherwise for every ounce of ore there would be less than an ounce of effort. Ruskin felt that the thought would not be appreciated that way. When man has to work hard for something he values it all the more highly.

The metal you are in search of being the author's mind or meaning, his words are as the rock which you have to crush and smelt in order to get at it. And your pickaxes are your own care, wit, and learning; your smelting furnace is your own thoughtful soul. Do not hope to get at any good author's meaning without those tools and that fire; often you will need sharpest, finest chiselling, and patientest fusing, before you can gather one grain of the metal. (19)

Ruskin was not one to coddle and spoon-feed his students. He believed in effort crowned by success. The latter could not come without

(18) Sesame and Lilies, by J. Ruskin, pp. 52-53.

(19) *ibid.* pp. 53-54.

the former. He was never satisfied with second grade material. Because he considered a translation of Plato by a man named Jowett to be a disgrace to Oxford and to Plato, he undertook to translate the LAWS himself.

This last thought brings up the matter of Ruskin's interest in words and in their precise meaning. This was no mere hobby with him. He wanted all men to share that interest because he considered it to be clouding the issue when words of vague and approximate meaning were used or misused.

And, therefore, first of all, I tell you earnestly and authoritatively (I know I am right in this) you must get into the habit of looking intensely at words, and assuring yourself of their meaning, syllable by syllable — nay, letter by letter. (20)

At first glance, the man's supreme confidence and faith in the importance of his own words is amusing, but on second thought we realize how very right he is. In this twentieth century we are witnessing a dialectical struggle in which words are weapons. Just as in warfare a soldier must be familiar with his weapons, so must we know the meanings of words. We must develop an intelligent respect for the definitions of the

(20) Sesame and Lilies, by Ruskin, p.54.

terms we use. We must also remember that the fog has no respect for the meanings of words.

In fiction, it is true, this Label of tongues can be amusing: "There's glory for you!" continued Humpty Dumpty.— "I don't know what you mean by 'glory'," Alice said. Humpty Dumpty smiled contemptuously.— "Of course you don't — till I tell you. I meant 'there's a nice knock-down argument for you!'" — "But, 'glory' doesn't mean 'a nice knock-down argument'," Alice objected. — "When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean — neither more nor less." — "The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things." — "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master — that's all." In fiction, we repeat, this can be amusing.

However, we live in a non-fiction world.

With Stalin and his henchmen, words are one thing, actions are another. Good words are a mask for concealment of bad deeds.

Just how does Ruskin fit in to this discussion of words used by men of evil in order to deceive? Ruskin saw the same thing happening in his own day. From the following quotation it is clear to us that history does repeat itself.

There are masked words droning and skulking about us in Europe just nowwhich nobody understands, but which everybody uses, and most people will also fight for, live for, or even die for, fancying they mean this or that or the other of things dear to them; for such words wear chameleon cloaks. (21)

Because he saw such dangers, Ruskin insisted upon a correct knowledge of the precise meanings of words. Familiarity with the lineage of language would clear the air of confusion.

...whatever language he (a well-educated gentleman) knows, he knows precisely...Above all, he is learned in the peerage of words, knows the words of true descent and ancient blood.....(22)

Having heard Vishinsky and Gromyko and having been sickened by their evasions and misuse of the words of honest men, we can once more appreciate the soundness and remarkable topicality of Ruskin's thought.

In conclusion, we feel justified in paying tribute to the genius of Ruskin who drew up the blueprints for much of what educational reformers are being applauded for today. Had we not forgotten Ruskin so soon and dismissed him as " one of those stuffy Victorians ", we might well have saved ourselves much unnecessary effort and thought.

(21) and (22) Sesame and Lilies, by John Ruskin, pp.55-56.

Chapter IIEducation for Women

There was a time in the dim and distant past when it was almost universally accepted that men were meant to be the leaders in the world and the bread-winners in the family. Along with this belief went the conviction that a woman's place was in the home. Institutions of higher learning were therefore organized for the teaching and training of men.

Times have changed, though, and with the ever-increasing clamour for women's rights the world has seen women enter the world of education. It began with the founding of various colleges for women and led to coeducation on the primary, secondary, college and university levels. In England, Queen's College was the first one founded for women. The year was 1847. Since then, many others have followed. London University admitted women to its degrees in 1878, the Scotch universities in 1892, Oxford after World War I, and Cambridge has only admitted them recently, if at all. In the United States, Mount Holyoke came into existence in 1837. The more famous Vassar was founded in 1865. Since this chapter will deal in good part

with the Catholic position in the matter, it might be of interest to mention that in 1895 the School Sisters of Notre Dame opened the first four-year college for women under Catholic auspices in the United States. The College of Notre Dame of Maryland is thus known as the "mother" of Catholic women's colleges.

In the early days these schools were tolerated by some, derided by many and enthusiastically supported by a few. Those days are gone. Today the college for women is here to stay. In the academic year 1949-1950 it is estimated that there are 700,000 girls enrolled in American colleges. The number of Catholic men's and women's colleges in the United States totals 189 and only a little under half of these are for women.

After all these years, a fundamental question still remains unanswered. What is the aim of woman's education? Those who shouted most for women's rights harped upon the equality of men and women. It was therefore their plan to give women an identical course of instruction as that given to men. In fact, the majority of these women's colleges were organized along the same lines as the average college for men. Their courses paralleled the curricula of men's

colleges. The result was that women were (and are) being educated to be successful men. The difficulty then was that many of them had to start all over again and learn to become successful women ! This is often necessary because, even today, the 'career woman' is the member of a minority group. Statistics prove this. We are led to doubt this fact because statistics are cried down by the shrill chorus of the overly-loud and frighteningly-eloquent exponents of equal rights for women. However, the majority of the women graduates of these schools do marry. There may be an interval, between graduation and marriage during which they satisfy their egos by holding down some prestige-creating position, but the ways of society are such that in time they fit into nature's niche for them in family life.

The problem is still there. If the majority of women become wives and mothers, should their education be orientated along the lines of man's education ? Should they be trained for earning in order to support themselves, or should they be led along the paths of learning in order to serve as models for their families ? Moreover, the case in question involves both Catholic and non-denominational schools, should they be educated for time or for eternity ?

These are the questions which we hope to answer in this chapter. To begin with we shall point out the Catholic position in the matter. Having done that, we shall go to Ruskin to see how his views square with the stand taken by the Church.

Any intelligent and practical theory of education must be evolved about man against the background of the society in which he lives and in view of his immortal destiny. There is, therefore, the immediate present to consider with its immediate problems and the distant view to keep in mind with its more permanent problems.

Our whole western culture grew upon and out of Christian foundations. The reason the superstructure is tottering today is that the basis of our society has been pretty well forgotten. There has been a slow but certain desertion of the beliefs that went into the original preaching of Christianity. Today, people pay lip-service to religion and false philosophies of freedom have substituted opinion for dogma. One opinion is balanced by another and confusion ensues. Moral principles, no longer based upon unanimously accepted dogma, are on the way out. The name of God is a cause

of embarrassment and material comfort is sought after instead of spiritual peace.

All this has had a shattering influence upon all phases of life. Because education is so fundamental a thing, the effect has been felt there too. Because the education of women is so important a thing, the tragedy has extended to it as well. Woman, from whom life on earth springs and upon whose shoulders rests the task of forming the character of the child, cannot help but react to the moral atmosphere in which she lives. It is therefore of paramount importance that her place in the general plan be determined. Needless to say, the education of woman will be based upon the answer to the question: What is her role to be ?

The Catholic stand is that the laws of God and of nature dictate that woman is meant for motherhood. As a source of life and light for the child, her education should emphasize the spiritual element and enable her to pass on that moral training. This is exactly what the champions of women's rights ignore. They cry out for the complete enjoyment of modern living. Catholics realize that the development of economic and social conditions make education for earning necessary because all women are not

destined for marriage. This type of education is good and necessary, but it is not enough. There must be a broader basis upon which to form the "whole woman". The idea of motherhood can be extended beyond its literal meaning of giving birth to children. Woman, by her very nature, can and should be a source of good. The encyclicals have underlined the role of woman as a refining influence. It is in her power to fight coarseness and immorality. From the citadel of purity she can bring back right principles and necessary virtues. These things are included in the notion of motherhood. The maternal instinct extends to the domain of grace, right and virtue.

This being so, it is necessary to point out to those charged with the education of girls that guiding principles exist. In the encyclicals of the Supreme Pontiffs this theme is an oft repeated one. In the encyclical letter Christian Education of Youth by Pope Pius XI, light is thrown upon this whole problem. His Holiness is speaking of the necessary differences between the desirable education for girls and the necessary education for boys. When the voice of Christendom speaks out from the See of Peter, mankind might wisely turn an attentive ear.

The Creator has ordained and disposed perfect union of the sexes only in matrimony, and, with varying degrees of contact, in the family and in society. Besides there is not in nature itself, which fashions the two quite different in organism, in temperament, in abilities, anything to suggest that there can be or ought to be promiscuity, and much less equality, in the training of the two sexes. These in keeping with the wonderful designs of the Creator are destined to complement each other in the family and in society, precisely because of their differences. (1)

In all education, however, there must be a solid substratum of moral training.

Any training of young minds which neglects or repudiates the feeling and the spirit of the Christian religion is a crime of high treason against Him who is "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." (2)

Catholic thinkers who have written about education have been inspired by the papal pronouncements. Clear thinking, which is typical of Thomistically-trained minds, always insists upon ascertaining from the very beginning what the function of woman is. Father Leen puts it this way:

...to educate girls rightly one must have an adequate notion of what a woman is and of the role

(1) Encyclical Letter of His Holiness Pope Pius XI on Christian Education of Youth, published by The Paulist Press, New York, p.26

(2) The Encyclical- Summi Pontificatus, Sec.IV - The Autonomous State and the Evils It Brings.

she is to play in life.....To understand woman's true role in the world we must go back to the origin of things and see what she was destined for by Almighty God, the Author of Nature. Genesis tells us that God made the woman to be a helpmate of man. If that is the ordination of nature, it is unnatural and therefore bad that she should be a rival. (3)

Because of this, Catholics claim that her education should differ from that of man.

The trend in girls' education that has made it approximate more and more to that of boys is, then, to be deplored. Education is a training for life. The life of man is different from that of woman in nature's scheme. The preparation for their respective roles ought to be different. (4)

All this advice on what education for woman should be sounds eminently sane and comes as no surprise from Catholic sources. However, others who are not Catholic share these convictions. Unfortunately they are too often reluctant to express their thought. Ruskin shared these convictions and did not hesitate or shrink from speaking out eloquently and convincingly. It was the very nature of the man to feel strongly about whatever he believed to be true and important. For Ruskin, truth was not to be silenced but to be heard.

(3) and (4) What Is Education?, by Edward Leen, C.S.Sp., N.Y. Sheed and Ward, 1944, p.230 and p. 235.

Having grown up on the Bible, Ruskin appreciated the gracious influence of a good woman. This great respect for women was also found by Ruskin in the works of the world's great artists. In the essay 'Queen's Gardens' he writes:

Let us see whether the greatest, the wisest, the purest-hearted of all ages are agreed in any wise on this point; let us hear the testimony there has been left by them respecting what they held to be the true dignity of woman and her mode of help to man. (5)

Ruskin then goes on to quote from Shakespeare, Dante, Scott, Patmore and others. All these men in the quotations chosen by Ruskin speak in the highest terms of womanhood. Having gone to these men of wisdom, Ruskin inquires: "Are all these men mistaken or are we?" He leaves the reader with little doubt as to where he stands. Earlier in this chapter mention was made of the maternal instinct of woman and of her influence for good. This idea is found in many places. Isn't the fact that Queen Victoria occupied the throne of England for many years often given as a reason for the lack of coarseness and vulgarity in the literature of that age? Ruskin was a Victorian and he shared this high respect for

(5) Sesame and Lilies, Unto This Last, and The Political Economy of Art, by John Ruskin, London: Cassell and Co., Ltd., p. 121.

womankind. He looked upon her as a source of virtues

You cannot think that the buckling on of the knight's armour by his lady's hand was a mere caprice of romantic fashion. It is the type of an eternal truth: that the soul's armour is never well set to the heart unless a woman's hand has braced it; and it is only when she braces it loosely that the honour of manhood fails. (6)

Before discussing the actual education of woman, Ruskin pointed out it would be necessary to determine what her role in life is meant to be.

We cannot determine what the queenly power of women should be until we are agreed what their ordinary power should be. We cannot consider how education may fit them for any widely-extending duty until we are agreed what is their true constant duty. (7)

His ideas in this matter were not vague and his expression of them was blunt and forceful. His thought is remarkably Catholic in tone and certainly violently opposed to the teachings of the advocates of birth control — or, rather, birth prevention, as Chesterton insisted upon describing it. In Fors Clavigera he mentions:

(6) Sesame and Lilies, by J. Ruskin, p.133.

(7) ibid. p.119.

...the enlightened notion among English young women, derived from M. J. Stuart Hill, - that the 'career' of the woman is too limited a one, and that modern political economy can provide them...with much more lucrative occupations than that of nursing

Ruskin returns to this idea elsewhere in terms that are even more Leon-log-ish!

J' ne puis trouver des termes assez forts pour exprimer la haine et le mépris que je ressens pour l'idée moderne qu'une femme doit cesser d'être mère, fille ou femme pour qu'elle puisse devenir commis ou ingénieur. (9)

While Ruskin put first things first, he nevertheless realized that there was need of education for girls. In addition to motherhood, Ruskin saw in woman the helpmate of man. This help was not a form of slavery but rather a noble partnership.

And not less wrong is to suppose that woman is only the shadow and attendant image of her lord, owing him a thoughtless and servile obedience, and supported altogether in her weakness, by the pre-eminence of his fortitude. This, I say, is the most foolish of all errors respecting her who was made to be the helpmate of man. As if he could be helped effectively by a shadow, or worthily by a slave. (10)

(8) Tora Claviera, by J. Ruskin, Boston: Dana Estes & Co., Lecter XXIV, p. 334.

(9) Arrows of the Chase, by J. Ruskin, Vol. II, p. 21. Boston: L.C. Page & Co.

(10) Sesame and Lilies, by J. Ruskin, p. 120.

He refused to become involved in the foolish argument about the 'superiority' of one sex to the other. He saw that they were different; each completing the other, and being completed by the other. The preceding quotation indicates his idea of woman's role. In order for her to accomplish her task she needs the proper preparation. Said Ruskin:

You bring up your girls as if they were meant for sideboard ornaments, and then complain of their frivolity. Give them the same advantages that you give their brothers; appeal to the same grand instincts of virtue in them; teach them, also, that courage and truth are the pillars of their being. (11)

Here, in Ruskin, we find the same insistence upon the need for fundamentals in morals that we found earlier in papal encyclicals and in the writings of Father Leen. Ruskin was compared to Leon Bloy is a passing remark in an earlier paragraph of this chapter. The two men have this in common that they stubbornly held fast to what they consider to be true. Ruskin sees in woman a potential mother and helpmate. To him, this is her highest calling. Anything else is only incidental and of secondary or minor importance.

(11) Sesame and Lilies, by J. Ruskin, p. 149.

It is of no moment to her own worth or dignity that she should be acquainted with this science or that; but it is of the highest that she should be trained in habits of accurate thought; that she should understand the meaning, the inevitableness, and the loveliness of natural laws....(12)

The reader might be disappointed in Ruskin for failing to see that in many cases modern woman must go out into the world and find employment to support herself. This necessity makes it imperative for her to seek an education that will equip her for the making of a living. This education has to be of a vocational nature. To get along in the world a worldly training is necessary. In fairness to Ruskin it should be pointed out that he lived at a time when women actually were found in the home rather than in the office. The demands for women's rights were just beginning to be heard and he could not be expected to lay down the rules for conditions yet unborn.

In the following quotation, however, he seems to be speaking to our generation rather than to his own.

And if she can have access to a good library of old and classical books, there need be no choosing at all. Keep the modern magazine and novel out of your girl's way; turn her loose into the old library every day, and let her alone.(13)

(12) Sesame and Lilies, by J. Ruskin, p.

(13) *ibid*, pp. 147-148.

On the whole, we see that while Ruskin had little of a constructive nature to say to us about the actual curriculum for an education of an ordinary modern working girl of the world, he did draw the blueprints for that education which is basic and necessary for all women. He described what today's educators are slowly coming to appreciate as the core of a true education. He called for that preparation for life in this world and in the next which Catholic colleges have always claimed to be their aim. The fact that some of the latter institutions have failed to live up to their professed ideals might suggest the thought that a reading of Ruskin would be of great help and inspiration.

Chapter XII

Garden Cities and Adult Education

It has been pointed out before in this thesis that Ruskin began as an art critic and as a lover of beauty. This appreciation which led to a desire to publish his opinions on art can be partly traced to the fact that John Ruskin's father owned some Turner paintings. When the public failed to give Turner the praise Ruskin felt he deserved, Ruskin wrote Modern Painters as a tribute to Turner. From painting he proceeded to architecture. All the while, he enjoyed and studied the beautiful.

His studies led him to the conclusion that beauty in art was produced by human souls that are at peace with themselves and with society. The perfection of art depended upon the social conditions from which it grew. The same thing applied to man's appreciation of beauty.

When Ruskin failed to find the enthusiasm for art that he expected in the English public, he therefore looked for the reason in the social conditions. He came to the conclusion that the latter would have to be greatly improved before the former could ever exist.

What exactly did Ruskin find upon looking at the social scene ? For one thing, 'The Industrial Revolution' was the chapter of history that was being written in the factories and mills of the British Isles. As Goldsmith had predicted in his poem The Deserted Village, written in the eighteenth century, the population of the English cities increased beyond all reason and cheap labour as well as exploitation and unemployment followed. Cities like Liverpool and Manchester trebled their population in fifty years. The result was local over-population, or, as Ruskin described it,

a degree of population locally unmanageable under existing circumstances. (1)

As a result, while the villages and the countryside were being foolishly abandoned, in the cities unemployment usually increased. Ruskin described the existence of the people as

diminished lives in the midst of noise, of darkness, and of deadly exhalation. (2)

He described the city of London in the following terms:

(1) Unto This Last, by John Ruskin, London: Cassell and Co., Ltd., p. 159.

(2) *ibid*, p. 190.

...that great foul city of London there, — rattling, growling, smoking, stinking, — a ghastly heap of fermenting brickwork, pouring out poison at every pore....(3)

While not a complete machino-clast, Ruskin saw the evils that came with the machine. Admitting the increase of English manufactured products, English exports and wealth, he pointed out the decrease in the number of happy human beings. The rugged individualism of the few was leading to the ragged individualism of the many. Men, who were not machines, were being used as such. The operative was being degraded into a machine. Ruskin abhorred the severance of thought from labour.

In all men, however simple and rude, he saw seeds of betterment and these he wished to cultivate and see grow. Recognizing the dignity of man, he wanted him to enjoy a certain leisure. Feeling as he did about big cities, Ruskin had various remedial plans. He advocated garden cities, the recovery of waste lands and government action if necessary to bring these things about. He felt that the big cities of England were too big. In a giant city problems are brobdingnagian too. Transportation, food distribution, community enterprises, etc. are of such vast proportions

(3) The Crown of Wild Olive, by John Ruskin, London: G. Allen & Co., Ltd., 1911, pp. 236-237.

that much time and effort are wasted in the minutiae of planning, not to mention the difficulties of execution. Ruskin preferred five smaller well-nigh self-sufficient towns to one big city. He was one of the early critics of overpopulation in cities.

...you get some curious laying out of ground: that beautiful arrangement of dwelling-house for man and beast, by which we have grouse and blackcock—so many brace to the acre, and men and women —so many brace to the garret. I do often wonder what the angelic builders and surveyors— the angelic builders who build the 'many mansions' up above there; and the angelic surveyors who measured that foursquare city with their measuring reeds — I wonder what they think of the laying out of ground by this nation. (4)

Ruskin and Morris preached in favour of smaller satellite towns and they called them 'garden cities'. Disciples of Ruskin have built them in many parts of England.

These are designed, as we know, not merely with a view to promoting health and an appreciation of beauty, but also to encourage the amenities of life and to solving the question of housing. (5)

Wherever Ruskin looked he saw the old, lovely and sweet Auburns disappearing and being

(4) The Crown of Wild Olive, by John Ruskin, pp. 237-238.

(5) A History of Economic Doctrines, by Gide and Rist, D.C. Heath & Co., Boston, 1913, p. 251.

replaced by crowded and sooty towns. The old towns had not grown according to any plan but their very smallness had prevented the lack of planning from having very serious consequences. However, with the increasing urban population brought about by the rapid and amazing industrial expansion, the rows of dreary houses thrown in amongst smoke-belching factories were becoming a blight on the landscape.

Ruskin saw all this and called for reform. He wanted the people to love beauty. But how could they when they were living amidst ugliness ? The answer was to get them away from the smoke, soot and congestion. The Romans knew of town planning and showed it in their choosing town sites for strategical advantages. Why couldn't England do the same thing with the advantages of better living conditions in mind ? This led Ruskin and Morris to encourage the garden city movement.

These new cities are built with the express purpose of relieving the worst features of industrial life, and are so planned as not to interfere in any way either with the beauties of nature or with the health of the citizens. (6)

Ruskin favoured these towns because his great work of educating the people of England could

(6) A History of Economic Doctrines, by Gide and Rist, p. 513.

best be realized when the living conditions of the people he hoped to teach were improved.

...no great arts were practicable by any people unless they were living contented lives, in pure air, out of the way of unsightly objects, and emancipated from unnecessary mechanical occupation. (7)

Ruskin wanted to set the stage properly for his great dream of educating the people to a sense of appreciation for beauty and a willingness to live as good citizens. Before he could ever dream of educating them, he felt that they had to be better clad, housed and fed. He thought it could be done because the money was there — only it was being directed into the wrong channels. It went on producing more and more ugliness because a small number of men wanted more and more personal wealth.

Though England is a rich country, having worked herself literally black in the face to become so, she finds she cannot afford to keep a Queen any longer. (8)

Ruskin did his part to bring about the improvements he desired. His ideas about education were not limited to the youth of England. Ruskin had plans for education of the adult population as well. He felt that education could prosper

(7) Fors Clavigera, by John Ruskin, Boston: Dana Estes & Co., Vol. i, p. 177.

(8) *ibid.*

best away from the big cities.

...your schools must be in fresh country, and amidst fresh air, and have great extents of land attached to them in permanent estate. (9)

However, he did not wait for the garden cities to come into existence before doing something practical about educating the adult population. Ruskin contributed to the education of the working men by teaching them. When the Christian Socialists in 1854 organized a course of lectures for working men in London Ruskin volunteered to give a few addresses. At different times evening classes of one sort or another were given in some of the big cities. Whenever we read of this education for working men, we run into the names of Kingsley and Ruskin and Maurice. The Rev. F. D. Maurice founded the Working Men's College in 1854. It was when Ruskin heard about this that he wrote to Maurice and volunteered to help. Ruskin was devoted to this work and his philanthropic spirit led him to work for this cause for a number of years. During much of this time Ruskin was present week after week and month after month. Even a cursory reading on adult education in England leads one to

(9) Time and Tide, by John Ruskin, London: George Allen & Co., Ltd., 1911, p.101.

some mention of working men's colleges at Oxford, in London and elsewhere. Many of these were called Ruskin Colleges ! Reading through the works of Ruskin we find that many of his essays were originally lectures given in these colleges. For instance, in The Crown of Wild Olive, the first lecture on 'Work' was delivered before the Working Men's Institute, at Camberwell, on January 24, 1865. In the same book, the second lecture on 'Traffic' was delivered in the Town Hall in Bradford in 1864. Fors Clavigera is a series of letters to working men. Time and Tide is described as twenty-five letters to a working man of Sunderland on the laws of work. In Letter III of Time and Tide, Ruskin refers to the time he had occasion to speak to the members of the London Working Men's College.

In all these talks we find a refusal to talk down to these men because, as Ruskin put it:

I often find working men know
many things which one would
have thought were out of their
way. (10)

Ruskin wanted to prove and succeeded in proving that the labouring classes could be interested in Art. He might almost be said to have wanted to make artists out of artisans.

Ruskin went even further than all this. He founded St. George's Guild which was a private little plan of his for an English agricultural utopia. As in the case of nearly all these 'dream societies' there were plans and rules etc. The part of the whole scheme which interests us is that having to do with education. It was for the schools in this St. George's Guild that Ruskin planned his "Bibliotheca Pastorum" of which we wrote in the chapter on the Great Books. Some of the books were meant for the home library whilst others were to be left in central libraries. Actually, a number of books were purchased. Ruskin's first Guild Museum was situated at Sheffield because this town was an industrial one, it was central, set in a region of scenic beauty and at the same time close to many other industrial towns. In time the Guild faded and, when Ruskin no longer directed it, wandered off into oblivion. We are not particularly interested in its fate.

What we are interested in making a point of is that Ruskin had very definite ideas about educating those who were beyond the normal student age and that he acted upon those ideas.

He wrote about the advantages of breaking up the larger cities into smaller ones. This would, he thought, make it more practicable to teach working men about things beautiful and admirable.

By getting them out of the slums and closer to the loveliness of pure-aired nature, Ruskin felt that the chances of educating them would improve greatly.

In the meantime, Ruskin spent himself in lecturing in the evenings to working men in many of the bigger cities. For years he lectured regularly. When his travels and his health made this impossible, he continued to lecture whenever he could.

Ruskin also spent himself and a considerable amount of money as well in his utopian venture to organize St. George's Guild. Education was an important element in this as in all his other work.

All in all, Ruskin can be looked upon as a pioneer in the field of adult education — a field that is growing by leaps and bounds today.

Chapter XIII

The Seven Lamps of Education

In 1849 John Ruskin wrote The Seven Lamps of Architecture as a defence of Gothic architecture. The principles he applied were the seven lamps. He wrote of 'the lamp of sacrifice', for instance, as a treatment of the principle that the materialistic aims should be sacrificed to the spiritual aims. There were also the lamps of Obedience, Truth, Memory, Power, Life and Beauty.

Let us, in this chapter, borrow Ruskin's outline and apply it to the field of education. We hope to prove that the ideas believed in and preached by Ruskin would make for light. Ruskin's seven lamps of education would be the guiding principles and fundamental bases of the educational structure he advocated erecting.

The peak of the educational system is found in supernatural knowledge and calls for religious instruction. This would be the "Lamp of Faith". Natural knowledge can be broken down into physical and mental. The former would include gymnastics and exercises of that kind. This would be the "Lamp of Health". The knowledge described as 'mental' includes a number of subdivisions. There would be,

for instance, the popular vocational training which might be described as education for earning. In this chapter we shall call this the "Lamp of Utility". In addition to vocational training there exists cultural training which might be described as education for learning. This cultural training covers a vast area. Of cultural interest would be that appeal to aesthetics and imagination found in artistic training. This would be the "Lamp of Beauty". Moral training is something different. It has to do with discipline and might well come under the heading of the "Lamp of Character". Finally, under cultural training, there would come that education primarily directed to the intellect. This would include the study of the principles of philosophy as well as the analysis of scientific facts. The latter deals with facts and the clear-sightedness of the scientist owes much to the "Lamp of Knowledge". Philosophic study, on the other hand, deals with principles and in this case we have the "Lamp of Truth".

For the sake of greater clarity (since we are dealing with lamps) the whole plan of education involving the "Seven Lamps of Education" would be broken down in accordance with the following outline:

The Seven Lamps of Education

Supernatural: religious instruction (Lamp of Faith)

Natural:

Physical: gymnastics, etc. (Lamp of Health)

Mental:

Vocational: education for earning (Lamp of Utility)

Cultural: education for learning

Imaginative: artistic training
(Lamp of Beauty)

Moral: disciplinary training
(Lamp of Character)

Intellectual:

Scientific: dealing with facts
(L. of Knowledge)

Philosophic: dealing with principles
(L. of Truth)

The Purpose of the Seven Lamps

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
 Doctor and Saint, and heard great Argument
 About it and about; but evermore
 Came out by the same Door as in I went.
 (Omar Khayyam's 'Rubaiyat')

This quatrain quoted from the famous Persian suggests the confusion that exists in the minds of men about the aim of education. Part of the theme of this thesis is to prove that anyone guided by Ruskin's "Seven Lamps of Education" would have his way along the path of learning lighted for him through the labyrinthine ways of a variety of opinions and through the quagmire of educational theories. Let it not be thought that this confusion of aim is found only in undergraduates. It is unfortunately also found in the very men who are looked upon as the guides of youth. The names of Hutchins, Adler, Laritain and others

have been mentioned often enough in this thesis for the reader to know where they stand as to the aim of education. The Dewey school has been described as well. Lest the reader conclude that all this argument about aim be past history, we call his attention to a very recent declaration from another key figure in the world of education.

James B. Conant is the twenty-third president of Harvard University. He is more than that. His career has been that of a university administrator, education reformer, international statesman and atomic bomb expert. Because he is the head of what most people consider the greatest university in the United States, his views are listened to with great respect.

The New York Sunday Times of February 12, 1950, carried a news item wherein Conant "warned American educators that attempts to forge a unifying philosophy for this country, comparable with that in Soviet Russia, would seriously endanger our democratic freedom and our educational system."

Conant went on to praise diversity of opinion and called it "the first premise of our whole educational structure". He wants this diversity to be encouraged.

Now, all this sounds very democratic, but there are seeds of danger in this supreme tolerance. How far is that tolerance to extend? Does Conant not recognize truth as being one and indivisible? There is the danger that this chemist-turned-president

is typical of many self-appointed detectors-general of the intellectual failings of his fellow-men. It is our fear that his philosophical premises are not the soundest-

Any philosophy of education is going to depend upon the philosophy of man, the theory of human nature, held by those theorists on education. If one is a materialist or a naturalist or a behaviourist, then obviously everything spiritual or supernatural is irrelevant. If there is no specific or essential difference between man and brute, obviously the school system should be hardly different from a training ring in a circus or menagerie or zoo. If man has neither intellect nor free-will, pedagogy will be reducible to a system of conditioned reflexes and sensory associations will suffice since insight and intellectual thought are myths and delusions.

There is nothing to indicate that Conant's ideas do not imply an unconscious acceptance of such confusion. Conant to the contrary notwithstanding, there is need for a unifying philosophy of education. Otherwise we make Arnold's words about the Victorian age apply to ours:

Each strives, nor knows for what he strives,
And each half lives a hundred different lives.

Chapter 4 of this thesis gives Ruskin's views on the aim of education. His ideas are in direct conflict with those of Conant. Ruskin wants to produce a man who appreciates his place in the community, a man who is guided by universally

accepted standards of truth and justice, a man who belongs to the social body in his recognition of a unifying philosophy. He looked to the "Seven Lamps of Education" to light the way. In the following pages we shall throw light on the lamps themselves.

1. The Lamp of Faith

The gift of tongues without the Holy Ghost
Is but a Babel, not a Pentecost.
(Robert Hillyer)

One unifying philosophy not understood or appreciated by Conant of Harvard is basic religious truth. Had the man studied more philosophy and less chemistry he might think of man as the temple of the Holy Ghost rather than forty odd cents worth of chemicals. Had he read the following lines by Ruskin on the general temper and purposes of modern science he might appreciate the need for a unifying philosophy:

It gives lectures on Botany, of which the object is to show that there is no such thing as a flower; on Humanity, to show that there is no such thing as a Man, but only a Mechanism; no such thing as God, but only a series of forces. (1)

(1) Fors Clavigera, by John Ruskin, Boston: Dana Estes and Company, Letter 5.

With all due respect to the scientist, it is necessary to point out that there are more things between heaven and earth than are dreamed of in their philosophies. It was once suggested that a world government of great scientists and great scholars might do more harm than good. When it was proposed that the control of the atomic bomb be left to the world's scientists, Churchill pointed out that while scientists might well know how to make a bomb, the control of it should be left to the morality of man.

This morality is produced by the study of religion. The "Lamp of Faith" is the greatest guide here. In chapter 2 of this thesis, Ruskin's views on the place of religion in education are given. When scholars become too scholarly they often are blinded by their culture to ordinary morality. They develop contempt for the beliefs of ordinary men. Higher loyalties move in and the canons of moral conduct are forgotten. Examples of this confusion of thought have become depressingly common in late years. The recent confessed treason of Klaus Fuchs is only one of many examples.

The point made in this thesis and found in chapter 2 is that Ruskin's thought in this matter is clear. He is to be listed along with all those modern reformers who cry out for the return of religion to the curriculum.

2. The Lamp of Health

Ruskin had little to say explicitly about the health of the body as taken care of by education but his doctrine is rich in implication or suggestion and indirect allusion. In chapter 12 on 'Garden Cities', we met with Ruskin's desire to carry on education in the purer air of the countryside. When teaching at Oxford, it was Ruskin's custom to take his students out on field work. On one occasion, they became road-builders. This practical aspect of his educational work can, no doubt, be traced to the interest in and love for nature he developed on his many trips through the British Isles and Europe.

Ruskin appreciated the value of health and never lost sight of the need for exercise in education.

Therefore, first teach..." The Laws of Health, and exercises enjoined by them;" and, to this end, your schools must be in fresh country, and amidst fresh air, and have great extents of land attached to them in permanent estate. Riding, running, all the honest, personal exercises of offence and defence, and music, should be the primal heads of this bodily education. (2)

This was not an end in itself but merely a means to the true end of education which was intellectual. Ruskin

(2) Time and Tide, The Crown of Wild Olive, by John Ruskin, London: George Allen and Company, Ltd., 1911, p. 101.

could certainly not be considered to be a spiritual ancestor of such schools as Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. This seat of culture has just begun a new one-credit course in bait-casting ! (3). S.M.U. also offers instruction in weight-lifting, badminton and the modern dance !

3. The Lamp of Utility

Into this Universe, and why not knowing,
 Nor whence, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
 And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
 I know not whither, willy-nilly blowing.
 (Omar Khayyam's 'Ruba'iyat')

because Ruskin saw the truth mentioned here in the tent-maker's quatrain, he insisted upon helping youth find their own talents and in guiding them to their choice of occupation. In chapter 6 of this thesis, Ruskin and his Trial Schools were discussed. Ruskin gave his own students a taste of various kinds of work. As mentioned in the preceding section, he often took them out and saw to it that they worked with their hands. Earlier in this thesis more was said about Ruskin's feeling that all men should be able to do something with their hands. This whole matter is still a controversial subject. Many of our university graduates consider it to be beneath their dignity to

soil their precious hands. As that wonderful Catholic periodical "Integrity" put it:

My daddy was a laborer,
And, good Lord, so were You,
But now that I have my degree,
Must I get dirty too ?

Coming closer to home, here are editorial lines from the Ottawa Journal (July 5, 1949) :

Mr. Pat Conroy, two-fisted secretary-treasurer of the Canadian Congress of Labor, doesn't write books on economics, nor deal much in graphs and charts. But on Saturday, speaking to the International Association of Public Employment Services, he packed more truth into two paragraphs than the economists get into their books. Said he:

" The rising generation and their parents are becoming so damned respectable they don't want to dirty themselves. Every father wants to send his son to college and to keep him as far away as possible from overalls. I don't know what the answer is. Parents are conditioning their children this way. We must bring our parents down to earth. There still is a lot of pioneer work to be done with a pick and a shovel, with grime and sweat and rolled up sleeves and much initiative. And in doing it ourselves we will be so much the better nation."

In our twisted minds and in our false pride we tend to take away the dignity of labor. Ruskin never made that mistake:

The rough work is at all events real, honest, and, generally, though not always, useful; while the fine work is, a great deal of it, foolish and

false, as well as fine, and therefore dishonourable. (4)

Having to do with this matter of "The Lamp of Utility", we might remind the reader of Ruskin's views on specialization (chapter 7) wherein he recognized the need for some special field of effort. At the same time, Ruskin favoured the orchestration of the integrated courses of what we sometimes call a core curriculum. Ruskin, who advocated the introduction of science into Oxford, did not believe in the unlimited power of science. He agreed with duNouy and other leading modern scientists that more was needed. Science provided man with skills but a philosophy of life was also to be given the student. For that reason, Ruskin can be and is listed among those who favour the table d'hote of required courses to the à la carte cafeteria style of atomisation of subject matter.

Too often the fragmentary courses of our universities produce fragments of men. The specialist in science is an ignoramus in everything else. In fact, our seats of learning have seldom devised science courses for students destined for non-scientific fields. Most of these courses are meant for the specialists and consequently there is no teaching of the relation of one science to the others, nor of

(4) The Crown of Wild Olive, by John Ruskin, page 249.

all of them to the broader culture of mankind. The result has been that in life we are led by scientific ignoramuses and in the scientific laboratory we have political and scientific illiterates.

A careful reading of chapters 4 and 7 of this thesis will serve as evidence of the soundness of Ruskin's views concerning these matters and of the similarity of his thought to that of the better modern reformers in education.

4. The Lamp of Beauty

There is no heroic poem in the world but is at bottom a biography, the life of a man; also it may be said, there is no life of a man, faithfully recorded, but is a heroic poem of its sort, rhymed or unrhymed.

—Sir Walter Scott¹¹

These lines of Scott's apply to Ruskin and his heroic efforts to extend the appreciation of beauty to all men. Chapter 1 of this thesis, which gives the life story of John Ruskin, makes clear the fact that the Ruskin story is one long crusade on his part to enrich the lives of other men.

Although many of the things he fought against were ugly, the common theme of what he fought for was beauty. In his Modern Painters and in his Stones of Venice, to choose two among many examples, the reader finds Ruskin's aesthetics

exposed, explained and illustrated. Painting and architecture meant much to him and he was grieved to see materialistic England turn away from these things. The utilitarian philosophy which criss-crossed the English countryside with railroads and thereby disfigured its scenic magnificence was a source of pain to Ruskin. In chapter 4 of this thesis there are to be found quotations by Ruskin about the spreading tentacles of this steel octopus.

There was even beauty in the prose style used by Ruskin to preach his message. Gilbert Keith Chesterton, who was an authority on Victorian writers, pays tribute to Ruskin's style in the following lines:

As an artist in prose he is one of the most miraculous products of the extremely poetical genius of England. The length of a Ruskin sentence is like that length in the long arrow that was boasted of by the drawers of the long bow. He draws, not a cloth-yard shaft but a long lance to his ear; he shoots a spear. But the whole goes light as a bird and straight as a bullet.(5)

The garden city movement which we often trace to Ruskin and other Victorians would be one more example of his devotion to lovely surroundings. Throughout his life and teachings we find the "Lamp of Beauty" shining brightly. What he saw and enjoyed and appreciated, he wanted to share with all men.

(5) The Victorian Age in Literature, by G.K. Chesterton, New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1910, p. 65.

5. The Lamp of Character

Character is based upon such things as belief in God, respect for one's fellow-man and recognition of one's own dignity. It includes a familiarity with decent standards of conduct and a strong desire and determination to live up to them.

In chapter 8 of this work entitled "The Lamp Character" or "The Heart of the Matter" we have exposed Ruskin's views on the need for religion at the core or heart of the curriculum. He feared a soulless philosophy which, acknowledging no higher power, made a mockery of loyalty and justice. Mere scholarship cannot provide mankind with the philosophy of life necessary to satisfy the individual's hunger for peace of soul and mind and society's claims upon the individual.

In chapter 9 of this thesis entitled "Discipline" we find the essence of Ruskin's thought about "The Lamp of Character". Ruskin interpreted the word in its broad and narrow senses and stressed the importance of each. In Ruskin's mind the discipline of the individual paralleled the religious backbone of the curriculum. Both were necessary for the production of the whole man. In St. George's Guild, organized by Ruskin along utopian lines, there existed a solid substratum of discipline as well.

6. The Lamp of Knowledge

Slight not what's near through aiming
at what's far. — Euripides.

It is all very well to speak of aims, ends and goals but these can only be reached by ways, means and skills. Euripides was right. To get at what's far man has to travel over what's near. Something of the same idea was in the mind of the man who pointed out that perfection was made up of trifles but that perfection was no trifle. Man needs equipment to accomplish his task; Churchill asked for the tools to finish the job.

With these sound principles in mind, Ruskin shied away from philosophical abstractions and subtleties as the whole of education. He recognized the need for the practical, down-to-earth mastery of means. His "Trial Schools" and his championing of the introduction of training in science into Oxford point to this.

The very fact that this art critic turned to social reform which included educational reform is indicative of his burning desire to spread learning and culture. Along with so many others, Ruskin realized that the only thing more expensive than education was ignorance.

In Chapter 12 of this thesis an account

is given of the efforts made by Ruskin for the cause of adult education. Throughout his life he held the lamp of knowledge on high in his attempts to dispel the darkness of ignorance. He did his very best to unroll the ample page of time with its rich spoils of knowledge to the people of England.

7. The Lamp of Truth

A great book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life.

— Milton

In chapter 10 of this thesis we find Ruskin's views on great books. He realized, together with his friend Carlyle, that a true university is really a collection of books.

Because he sincerely believed that this was true, he organized libraries for his St. George's Guild. He also insisted that the individuals have their own books and that they own them. In this way, he felt, the books would be thumbed through thoroughly and the thought of the author become that of the reader through familiarity.

Ruskin did not limit himself to the great books (chapter 10); he also wanted it made clear where the books were taking the student (chapter 4). He felt that it was all right to have a train of thought if you had a terminal. Moreover, the

study of the great books was to be carried on against the background of the everlasting truths of religion (chapter 8).

Some educators want a completely technological training because, they claim, the world is ruled by science. Others demand a classical education because, they claim, the classics contain everything of importance ever thought of by man. Other groups have their own pet theories of what education should be. A careful reading of Ruskin's philosophy of education reveals that he wanted to coordinate these fine and necessary things into one balanced whole. His ideas were meant to avoid a lop-sided education.

Lamp-light for Everyone

It was in making education not only common to all, but in some sense compulsory on all, that the destiny of the free Republics of America was practically settled.

— James Russell Lowell

We have seen what the seven lamps of education are and we have tried to tie them in with Ruskin's thought. One last point to be made is that Ruskin agreed with James Russell Lowell that the lamp-light should not be limited to any one class or group. In a free society where justice prevailed, Ruskin wanted all men to receive the advantages of education. He claimed that it was the duty of the government to assure this education.

The same demands are being heard today. President Truman's Commission of Higher Education calls for more buildings, more students, more everything. Expansion is the 'summum bonum' and the accent is on quantity.

Voices of protest have been heard. Chicago's Hutchins is not alone in this. Father Gannon, former President of Fordham, claimed that all this expansion would produce "tides of mediocrity". Robert Gordon Sproul, President of the University of California, spoke the following words to the freshman class in 1947:

I hope you will not take this too personally but I think there are 10,000 too many of you. You would all be happier if somehow the 10,000 could go elsewhere. (6)

Ruskin recognized this danger of overcrowding and had a solution for it. He did not want to see students all stampede into the same fields. It was to prevent this that he advocated the setting up of his trial schools to direct different students into the spheres of activity where they might contribute most to the welfare of the nation. If democracy is to be government by the people, they must be equipped for it by education. We need leadership in democracy and it

must be widespread, otherwise society is ruled by minorities, cliques and in time by a Fuehrer. Ruskin's ideas on this vocational guidance are to found in chapter C.

William Lloyd Garrison once said: "Whenever there is a human being, I see God-given rights inherent in that being, whatever may be the sex or complexion." William Wordsworth wrote:

The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and to command.

Chapter 11 (eleven) of this thesis is an exposition of Ruskin's agreement with Garrison and Wordsworth. John Ruskin had something to say about education. He included education for women and, as usual, his thought in this matter is deserving of careful consideration.

Another group that Ruskin wanted to see enjoy the benefits of the seven lamps of education was the adult working population. Many of these people were underprivileged but their brains were good. Ruskin considered it to be wrong to ignore such potential greatness. God sends men of genius to us and we have to find them and use them to the best advantage. These Ruskinian views on adult education are to be found in chapter 12. His work in this field is going on today in England in various Working Men's Colleges. In America, Hutchins pushed

the Great Books program which in Adult Education has thousands of businessmen attending night seminars in dozens of cities.

The purpose of this chapter was to show that Ruskin supplied much of the power to keep the seven lamps of education burning brightly in the modern world.

Chapter XIVEnvoy

Alas, that Spring should vanish with the Rose !
 That Youth's sweet-scented Manuscript should
 The Nightingale that in the Branches sang, (close !
 Ah, whence, and whither, flown again, who knows !
 (Omar Khayyam's 'Rubaiyat')

We have come to the end of the thesis. It's purpose was not to deify Ruskin. It is sadly realized that in some things he was wrong. He could be unfair and bigoted. Much of what he said dealt with problems of his own day and we read it as we do history. His tone was not always that of sweet reasonableness; he could be violent and pugnacious in his style. These things are unfortunately true and fortunately only part of the picture.

There was much that was good about Ruskin's opinions and more and more people of our time are coming to realize it. Masfield expresses this thought admirably:

I suppose we are all hardened in our beliefs and styles and political opinions and personal hatreds. Yet I know one thing:
 If the figure of Ruskin were to appear here suddenly, with his eager look, and blue eyes and harelip, and were to speak again with that old silver tongue, and to say: "Come on, have done with all this folly; we will remake the world, we will make this England like a beauty among still waters, like a green olive-tree in the house of God forever and ever," we would rise up as he bade us.

These lines of Masfield's which appeared in the book Ruskin the Prophet edited by J. H. Whitehouse are typical of the tributes paid to Ruskin in that volume.

One of the reasons Ruskin has failed to make a greater impression upon our generation is that his thought is not set out in an orderly fashion but broadcast throughout his works. He may have had himself in mind when he wrote:

And be sure also, if the author is worth anything, that you will not get at his meaning all at once,—nay, that at his whole meaning you will not for a long time arrive in any wise. (1)

However, when the effort is made, wisdom is there to be found. His ideas about the reform of education occupied our thoughts in these pages. It was our hope to show the soundness of his thought by comparing it to that of such clear-thinking moderns as Msgr. Fulton Sheen, Jacques Maritain, Robert Maynard Hutchins and others.

In the book Some Memories of Ruskin, Henry Nevinson writes:

I well remember how in the last lecture of one course he so overwhelmed us with solemn awe, that when he closed his book no one moved or spoke. We sat there absolutely silent. We no more thought of the usual thunder of applause than we

(1) Sesame and Lilies, by John Ruskin, London: Cassell & Co., Ltd. pp.52-53.

should have thought of clapping an angel's song that makes the heavens be mute.

After a few seconds, Ruskin looked up as though surprised at the unusual silence. Then he turned to the drawings, made a few casual remarks about them, bringing us back to this present world, and disappeared. The applause broke like a storm.

Could it not be that his views on education have done to us what that one lecture did to those few admirers? Some day soon recognition of his tremendous work may come. This thesis was meant to prove that such recognition is not impossible. Ruskin sank into oblivion for a while it is true, but he may well reappear in all his glory. In the words used by Milton in 'Lycidas':

So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky.

* * * * *

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on; nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.
(Omar Khayyam's 'Rubaiyat')

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