THE Rights of Labour

ACCORDING TO

JOHN RUSKIN.

ARRANGED BY

THOMAS BARCLAY.

WITH INTRODUCTION BY

JAMES HOLMES, SEC. AMALGAMATED HOSIERY UNION.

. . . "I know no better definition of the rights of man :- THOU SHALT NOT STEAL : THOU SHALT NOT BE STOLEN FROM : what a Society were that—Plato's Republic. More's Utopia, mere emblems of it ! Give every man what is his—the accurate price of what he has done and been—no more shall any complain, neither shall the earth suffer any more."—CARLYLE.

CHAS. D. MERRICK, PRINTER, 34, CANK STREET, LEICESTER.

He that will not follow truth, is a SLAVE to ERROR, and he that shrinks from the full examination of all opinions on vital questions, is either more in love with his own opinions than with truth, which is egotism: or he is afraid of truth, which is cowardice.

Equality of social condition should be the aim of all good men. The basis of true worth is manhood and womanhood, touched into sweetness by fraternity and justice.

Labour is the great equaliser—and all capable men and women in a happy and progressive community must work either with head or hand or both.

What a revolution would be produced if the words attributed to St. Paul were applied to Modern Society and enforced; "If a man will not work neither should he eat!" What a driving out of Royal and Aristocratic drones would take place; and what a decrease of gout there would be! Then what should the labourer get for his work;—a mere pittance in the form of wages, without any thought as to whether the wages are sufficient or not? No; emphatically no! He should have a full reward in the full produce of labour, so that he might have in health more than enough, then he might provide for sickness when it overtakes him, and a competence for old age, so that life may be made worth living to the workers instead of millions of money accumulating in the hands of a few,—like the Rothschilds—who are said to be worth £200,000,000, not obtained by labour or honest exchange, but from the produce of labour, of which the labourers have been spoiled.

These statements, by many, may be thought extreme, and contrary to our best and greatest thinkers and teachers of Political Economy. Take these words from one who has been called "The Father of Political Economy":—"The produce of labour constitutes the natural recompense or wages of labour." (Wealth of Nations, chap. 8). Thus we see that our statements are strictly in accord with Adam Smith. Labour is the foundation of real dignity, for only by it do we contribute to the well being of one another.

In the title of the pamphlet containing the teachings of the high-toned, moral, and original teacher—John Ruskin—the same truth is implied. In his words are couched some of the truest and noblest ideas. But very few working men have either the time or means to get at the works of great minds like Ruskin, so the arranger of the following extracts has culled from his book—"UNTO THIS LAST," some of the best teachings on the question of labour and wages, which I think has been done wisely and well; and if working men will only drink of the stream brought to their doors, they will be refreshed thereby.

Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the great truths here set forth. On the organization of labour I would specially call your attention to the following points. "Training Schools for youth, in which there shall be taught: (A) the laws of health; (B) habits of gentleness and justice; and (C) the calling by which he (the youth) is to live." These kind of schools exist to day in Sweden, Germany and Switzerland; and to the matter, under the headings —"His scheme,"—"Riches and Wealth."—"Proof,"—"The whole question one of justice,"—"Injustice of the present system,"—"Wages,"—"Cause of Poverty,"—"The true function of the Capitalist," and "Last Words."

Let us all endeavour to become more thoughtful, competent, intelligent as workers, making the best we can of our time, money, and energy, for the improvement of the great body of the world's workers, and help to make it as impossible for the idlers to thrive as it is for the drones to live among the bees.

JAMES HOLMES.

THE
RIGHTS OF LABOUR
According to JOHN RUSKIN.

THE object of this pamphlet is to place before the workers, in a cheap form, the main views of one of the greatest thinkers of any age, on a subject that ought to interest them more than any other. The subject is Political Economy, in other words, the relation of Capital and Labour. Until working men understand thoroughly what this relation is, all hope is vain of bettering their condition *as a class.*

"UNTO THIS LAST," is the book from which the following extracts are taken. It met with bitter opposition from all the usual enemies of the working man—including Press, Priests, and Professors The author had great difficulty in getting it published; a fact not to be wondered at when we consider its revolutionary character, combined with the logic, grace, and vigour, of which he is so capable. The Greeks fabled Plato as born with a nest of bees in his mouth, emblematical of his future honeyed words. They said, if the Gods came down to dwell among men, they would speak the language of Plato. Mr. Ruskin has been aptly termed "The modern Plato;" there can be no doubt the resemblance is strong. Mazzini describes him as "The most analytic mind in Europe." His lofty morality is a reproach to bishopdom. He lashes the hypocrite and scourges the oppressor; Meanness and injustice fall back from his terrific onslaught. Sweet to the innocent and good; Gentle to the erring and unfortunate. True Philosopher; mighty Poet without the name, Prophet too; not a visionary, but one who sees the very truth,—no will-o'-the-wisp, but a beacon-light to lighten men's darkness,—a great teacher, whose clear, brilliant, and powerful language, is but the fitting conductor of original and valuable thought. Such is Ruskin.

In order to estimate him the more accurately, we are going to let him speak for himself, only occasionally making a note or comment.

Mr. Ruskin's Objects.

He informs us in his preface, that his first object is to give an accurate and stable definition of WEALTH, and as he believes "for the first time in plain English." His second object is to show that "the acquisition of wealth is finally possible only under certain moral conditions of society—of which, quite the first, is a belief in the existence, and, even for practical purposes, in the attainability of honesty." A third object is the organization of labour; but this he only casually touches upon, because he thinks it simple "if we can once get a sufficient quantity of honesty," and impossible if we cannot.

His Scheme.

Mr. Ruskin has a scheme of organization of labour, and the most extraordinary part, is that dealing with wages, which, it is contended, should be fixed. "Lest," he says, "the reader should be alarmed by the hints thrown out during the following investigation of first principles, I will state at once the worst of the creed at which I wish him to arrive:

Firstly—There should be training schools for youth, established at government cost and under government discipline, over the whole country; that every child born in the country should, at the parents' wish be permitted, and in certain cases be under penalty required to pass through them; and that in these schools the child should, with other minor pieces of knowledge hereafter to be considered, imperatively be taught, with the best skill of teaching that the country could produce, the following three things:

(A)—The laws of health and the exercises enjoined by them;
(B)—Habits of gentleness and justice; and
(C)—The calling by which he is to live.

Secondly—That in connection with these training schools, there should be established, also entirely under government regulation, manufactories and workshops for the production and sale of every necessary of life, and for the exercise of every useful art. And that, interfering no whit with private enterprise, nor setting any restraints or tax on private trade, but leaving both to do their best and beat the government if they could—there should, at these government manufactories and shops, be authoritatively good and exemplary work done, and pure and true substance sold, so that a man could be sure, if he chose to pay the government price, that he got for his money bread that was *bread*, ale that was *ale*, and work that was *work*.

Thirdly.—That any man or woman, boy or girl, out of employment, should be at once received at the nearest government school, and set to such work as it appeared on trial they were fit for, *at a fixed rate of wages* determined every year. That being found incapable of work through ignorance, they should be taught, or being found incapable of work through sickness should be tended; but that, being found objecting to work, they should be set under compulsion of the strictest nature, to the more painful and degrading forms of necessary toil, especially to that in mines and other places of danger, (such danger being, however, diminished to the utmost by careful regulation and discipline), and the due wages of such work be retained—cost of compulsion first abstracted—to be at the workman's command so soon as he has come to sounder mind respecting the laws of employment.

Lastly.—That for the old and destitute, comfort and home should be provided; which provision, when misfortune had been, by the working of such a system, sifted from guilt, would be honourable instead of disgraceful to the receiver. For (I repeat this passage out of my *Political Economy of Art*, to which the reader is referred for further detail), 'a labourer serves his country with his spade, just as a man in the middle ranks of life serves it with sword, pen or lancet. If the service be less, and, therefore, the wages during health less, then the reward when health is broken may be less, but *not less honourable;* and it ought to be quite as natural and straightforward a matter for a labourer to take his pension from his parish because he has deserved well of his parish, as for a man in higher rank to take his pension from his country, because he has deserved well of his Country."

Principles first.

So far, Mr. Ruskin's scheme of organization, as given in his preface, and which, though apart from his main work, it was thought worth giving. As regards the expense of carrying out his scheme, he contends that the economy in crime alone resulting from the adoption of it, would support it ten times over; as for the rest, he bids the reader remember that "in a science dealing with so subtle elements as those of human nature, it is only possible to answer for the final truth of principles, not for the direct success of plans. What can be immediately accomplished is always questionable; what can be finally accomplished, inconceivable."

What Political Economy is.

We now proceed to Mr. Ruskin's Political Economy proper. Political Economy, he says, "consists in the production, preservation, and distribution, at fittest time and place, of useful or

pleasurable things. The farmer who cuts his hay at the right time; the shipwright who drives his bolts well home in sound wood; the builder who lays good bricks in well-tempered mortar; the housewife who guards against all waste in the kitchen; and the singer who rightly disciplines and never overstrains his voice; are all Political Economists in the true and final sense. Political Economy teaches nations to desire and labour for the things that lead to life, and to scorn and destroy the things that lead to destruction. And if, in a state of infancy, they suppose indifferent things, such as excrescences of shell fish, and pieces of blue and red stone * to be valuable, and spend a large measure of labour which ought to be employed in the extension and ennobling of life, in diving and digging for them, and cutting them into various shapes,—or if in the same state of infancy, they imagine precious and beneficent things, such as air, light and cleanliness, to be valueless . . . and peace, trust, and love, by which alone they can possess or use anything to be prudently exchangeable when the market offers, for gold, iron, and excrescences,—the only science of Political Economy teaches them in all these cases, what is vanity and what substance."

"The object of Political Economy is to get good method of consumption, to use everything and to use it nobly,—consumption absolute is the end, crown and perfection of production. Twenty people can gain money for one who can use it. The question for a nation is not how much labour it employs, but how much life it produces."

What Wealth Is.

Mr. Ruskin goes on to ask what Wealth is; he draws attention to the definition of Mr. Mill, who, he thinks, has written the "most reputed essay of modern times" on the subject. Mr. Mill says, "To be wealthy, is to have a large stock of useful articles." "I accept this definition" says our author, "but let us understand it, 1st.—What does *to have* mean? 2nd.—What is the meaning of *useful?* We will first examine our verb. As thus: Lately in a wreck of a Californian ship, one of the passengers fastened a belt about him with two hundred pounds of gold in it, with which he was found afterwards at the bottom of the sea. Now, as he was sinking—had he the gold? or had the gold him? I presume the reader will see that possession, or *having*, consists not only in the quantity or nature of the thing possessed, but also, (and in a greater degree) in its suitableness to the person possessing it. Therefore we must make the *have* depend upon a *can*, and say the possession of useful articles *which we can use.* Next for our

* Pearls, saphires, and rubies.

adjective. What is the meaning of *useful*?" It depends on the person much more than the article, whether its usefulness or ab-usefulness will be the quality developed in it. When you give a man half-a-crown, it depends on his disposition whether he is rich or poor with it—whether he will buy disease, ruin, and hatred, or buy health, advancement and domestic love. Thus the moral elements—human capacities and dispositions, must be taken into consideration. But the Economists tell us (Mill's Political Economy, Book iii. Chap. i. Sec. 2) moral considerations have nothing to do with Political Economy." Our author, of course, here speaks ironically, and leaves us to draw our own conclusions. Wealth and value are with Mr. Ruskin synonymous terms. Value he derives from Latin *valere*, to be well, or strong in life, (if a man) or valiant; strong for life, (if a thing) or valuable. To be valuable is to avail towards life; to make it so avail is to be valiant; and wealth therefore is "THE POSSESSION OF THE VALUABLE BY THE VALIANT."

Difference between Riches and Wealth.

Mr. Ruskin makes a distinction between Wealth and Riches. "Riches" he says, "is a relative word implying its opposite 'poverty' as positively as the word 'north' implies its opposite 'south.' The force of the guinea you have in your pocket depends wholly on the default of a guinea in your neighbour's pocket. If he did not want it, it would be of no use to you. The degree of power it possesses, depends accurately upon the need or desire he has for it; and the art of making yourself rich in the ordinary mercantile sense, is therefore equally and necessarily the art of keeping your neighbour poor. There is precisely as much poverty or debt on one side, as riches on the other; therefore riches do not necessarily involve an addition to the actual property, or well-being of the state in which they exist. The power of riches is in an inverse proportion to the number of persons who are as rich as ourselves, and who are ready to give the same price for an article of which the supply is limited. 'To become rich we must establish the maximum of inequality in our own favour." These statements Mr. Ruskin attempts to prove by examples.

Proof.

He supposes "Two sailors cast away on an uninhabited coast, maintaining themselves by their own labour. Their Political Economy would consist in careful preservation and just division of their possessions. But suppose that one fell ill at a critical time—say of sowing or harvest and asked the other to

him. The companion might say with perfect justice 'I will do this additional work for you, but you must do as much for me another time. I will count the hours I spend on your ground, and you will give me the same number whenever I need your help, and you are able to give it.' Suppose the disabled man's sickness to continue for several years, what will be the positions of the two men when the invalid is able to resume work? As a *community* they must be poorer than if no sickness had taken place. The healthy man may have toiled with an energy quickened by the enlarged need, but in the end, his own property must have suffered by the withdrawal of his time and thought from it. This is, of course, an example of one only out of many ways in which inequality of possession may be established, giving rise to the mercantile forms of riches and poverty. In the instance before us, one of the men might from the first have directly chosen to be idle, and to put his life in pawn for present ease; or he might have mismanaged his land, and been compelled to have recourse to his neighbour for food and help, pledging his future labour for it. *But what I want the reader to note is the fact* that the establishment of the mercantile wealth which consists in a claim upon labour, signifies a political diminution of the real wealth which consists in substantial possessions.

Take another example, more consistent with the ordinary course of affairs of trade. Suppose three men, instead of two, to form a little isolated republic. Suppose the third man undertakes to superintend the transference of commodities for the other two. If this carrier, or messenger, always brings to each estate, from the other what is chiefly wanted at the right time, the operations of the two farmers will go on prosperously and the largest possible result in produce be obtained. But suppose no intercourse between the land-owners is possible, except through the travelling agent, and that, after a time, this agent, watching the course of each man's agriculture, keeps back the articles entrusted, until there comes a period of extreme necessity for them on one side or the other, and then exacts in exchange for them, all that the distressed farmers can spare of other kinds of produce. He might eventually become possessed of the superfluous produce of the two estates, and in some year of scarcity purchase them both for himself, and maintain the former proprietors thence-forward as his labourers or servants. This would be a case of commercial wealth acquired on the exactest principles of modern Political Economy. But more distinctly even than in the former instance, it is manifest that the wealth of the *state,* or three men considered as a society, is less than it would have been had the merchant been content with juster profit. The operations of the two agriculturalists have

been cramped to the utmost; the continual limitation of the things they wanted at critical times, together with the failure of courage consequent on the prolongation of a struggle for mere existence, without any sense of permanent gain, will have diminished the result of their labor; and the stores finally accumulated by the merchant (the carrier or messenger) will not in anywise be equivalent to those which, had his dealings been honest, would have filled at once the granaries of the farmers and his own.

The Whole Question one of Justice.

"The whole question, therefore, respecting not only the advantage but even the quantity of national wealth, resolves itself finally into one of abstract justice. It is impossible to conclude of any given mass of acquired wealth whether it signifies good or evil, because it may be indicative on the one hand of faithful industries, progressive energies, and productive ingenuities, or, on the other, it may be indicative of ruinous chicane, mortal luxury, merciless tyranny. One mass of money is the outcome of action which has created,—another, of action which has annihilated,—ten times as *much* in the gathering of it; such and such strong hands have been paralysed as if they had been numbed by nightshade; so many strong men's courage broken; this and the other false direction given to labour, and lying image of prosperity set up. That which seems to be wealth, may in verity be only the gilded index of far-reaching ruin—a wrecker's handful of coin gleaned from the beach to which he has beguiled an argosy." Mr. Ruskin concludes this part of the subject with a classification of the people who become rich, and the people who remain poor, respectively, in a community regulated only by supply and demand. The persons who became rich are, generally speaking, "industrious, resolute, proud, covetous, prompt, methodical, sensible, unimaginative, insensitive, and ignorant." The persons who remain poor are, "the entirely foolish, the entirely wise, the idle, the reckless, the humble, the thoughtful, the dull, the imaginative, the sensitive, the well-informed, the improvident, the impulsively wicked, the clumsy knave, the open thief, and the entirely merciful and just person."

Capital.

Mr. Ruskin next discourses of that kind of wealth known as Capital. Capital signifies "head, source, or root. It is a root that does not enter into vital function until it produces something else than a root—something different from itself. Capital that produces nothing *but* capital is only root producing root, bulb issuing in bulb; seed issuing in seed—never in bread. "The best and

simplest type of capital is a well-made ploughshare, and the true question for every capitalist is not 'how many ploughs have you?' but 'where are your furrows?' not, 'how quickly will this capital reproduce itself?' but 'what substance will it furnish good for life? What work construct protective of life? if none, its own reproduction is useless—if worse than none (for capital may destroy life as well as support it) its own reproduction is worse than useless." As might be expected from the foregoing, Mr. Ruskin's views on the employment of capital are utterly at variance with those of current political economy

Injustice of the Present System.

"There is not in history," says he, "record of anything so disgraceful to the human intellect as that the commercial text, "Buy in the cheapest market, sell in the dearest," *could* represent an available principle of economy. Charcoal may be cheap among your roof timbers after a fire, and bricks may be cheap after an earthquake . . . . . There are few bargains in which the buyer can ascertain with precision that the seller would have taken no less—or the seller, that the purchaser would have given no more. This prevents neither from striving to injure the other, nor from accepting for a scientific principle that he is to buy for the least and sell for the most, though what the real least or most may be, he cannot tell. In like manner a just person lays it down for a principle that he is to pay a just price without being able to ascertain precisely the limits of such price. Now it is easier to determine what a man ought to have for his work, than what his necessities will compel him to take for it. There is no equitable reason in a man's being poor, that if he give me a pound of bread to-day I should return him less than a pound of bread to-morrow. Again, I want a horseshoe for my horse. Twenty smiths, or 20,000 smiths, may be ready to forge it; their number does not in one atom's weight affect the question of the equitable payment of the one who *does* forge it. The "robbery of the poor because they *are* poor," says our author elsewhere, "is especially the mercantile form of theft. The ordinary highwayman's opposite form of robbery of the *rich* because they are *rich*, being less *profitable* and more *dangerous* than the robbery of the *poor*, is rarely practised by persons of *discretion*."

Wages.

We must now consider Mr. Ruskin's ideas on the recompense of labour, and the method of the recompense. "Perhaps," says he, "one of the most curious facts in the history of human error, is the denial by the political economist of the possibility of regu-

lating wages so as to fix the rate; while for all the important, and most of the important labour on the earth, wages are already so regulated. We do not sell our Prime-ministership by Dutch auction; nor on the decease of a bishop, whatever may be the advantages of simony, do we (yet) offer his diocese to the clergyman who will take it at the lowest contract. *Sick*, we do not inquire for a physician who takes less than a guinea: Litigious, we never think of reducing six-and-eightpence to four-and-sixpence. The best labour always has been, and is, as *all* labour ought to be, paid by an invariable standard, 'What,' the reader perhaps answers amazedly, 'pay good and bad workmen alike?"

Certainly! You pay with equal fee your good and bad physician and prime-minister, why not your bricklayer? "Nay, but I choose my physician. By all means choose your bricklayer; that is the proper reward of the good workman, to be "chosen." The natural and right system respecting all labour is that it should be paid at a fixed rate, but the good workman employed, and the bad workman unemployed. The false, unnatural, and destructive system is, when the bad workman is allowed to offer his work at half-price, and either take the place of the *good,* or force him by his competition to work for an inadequate sum. So far as you employ it at all, bad work should be paid no less than good work; as a bad clergyman takes his tithes, a bad physician his fee, and a bad lawyer his costs; this I say partly because the best work never was nor ever will be done for money at all, but chiefly because the moment the people know they have to pay the bad and good alike, they will try to discern the one from the other, and not use the bad. A sagacious writer in *The Scotsman* asks me if I should like any common scribbler to be paid by Smith, Elder & Co., as their good authors are? I should if they employed him; but would seriously recommend them, for the scribbler's sake, as well as their own, *not* to employ him. In practice, according to the laws of demand and supply, when two men are ready to do the work, and only one man wants to have it done, the two men underbid each other for it, and the one who gets it to do is underpaid. But when two men want the work done, and there is only one man ready to do it, the two men who want it done overbid each other, and the workman is overpaid." Mr. Ruskin goes in for *just* pay.

On this question of labour and its reward, we will quote one more extract from him: "I have been naturally asked several times, 'But what are you to do with your bad unemployed workmen?' Well, it seems to me the question might have occurred to you before. Your housemaid's place is vacant—you

give £20 a-year. Two girls come for it—one neatly dressed, the other dirtily; one with good recommendations, the other with none. You do not, under these circumstances, usually ask the dirty one if she will come for £15 or £12, and on her consenting take her instead of the well-recommended one. Still less do you try to beat both down by making them bid against each other till you can hire both, one at £12 a-year, the other at £8. You simply take the one fittest for the place and send away the other, not perhaps concerning yourself with the question you now so impatiently put to me. 'What is to become of her?' Verily it is a question of weight. 'Your bad workman, idler, and rogue, what are you to do with him? Meantime, consider whether it may not be advisable to produce as few as possible. If you examine into the history of rogues you will find that they are as truly manufactured articles as anything else, and it is just because our present system of Political Economy gives so large a stimulus to that manufacture, that you may know it to be a false one. We had better seek for a system which will develope honest men, than for one which will deal cunningly with vagabonds.

How to get the most Work out of a man.

The greatest average of work and greatest benefit to the community would be obtained from a servant by our present procedure, if he were an engine of which the motive power was steam, magnetism, gravitation, or any other agent of calculable force. But the largest quantity of work will be done by this curious engine man, when the motive force—that is to say, the will or spirit of the creature is brought to its greatest strength by its own proper fuel; namely, by the affections.

Observe, I am here considering the affections wholly as a motive power; not at all as things in themselves desirable or noble. I look at them simply as an anomalous force, rendering every one of the ordinary Political Economist's calculations nugatory . . . . If the master, instead of endeavouring to get as much work as possible from the servant, seeks rather to render his appointed and necessary work beneficial to him, and to forward his interests in all just and wholesome ways, the real amount of work ultimately done, or of good rendered by the person so cared for, will indeed be the greatest possible. Nor is this one whit less true because indulgence will be frequently abused and kindness met with ingratitude. For the servant who, gently treated, is ungrateful, treated ungently, will be revengeful; and the man who is dishonest to a liberal master, will be injurious to an unjust one. And as

with servants, so with employées. The only means which the master has of doing justice to the men employed by him, is to ask himself sternly whether he is dealing with such as he would with his own son, if compelled by circumstances his son had to take such a position. As the captain of a ship is bound to be the last man to leave his ship in case of wreck, and to share his last crust with the sailors in case of famine, so the manufacturer in any commercial crisis or distress, is bound to take the suffering of it with his men, and even to take more of it for himself than he allows his men to feel—as a father would in a famine, shipwreck, or battle, sacrifice himself for his son.

The true function of the Capitalist.

For the manufacturer's or merchant's function in a state is to *provide* for it as the soldier's is to *defend* it, the physician's to *keep it in health*, and the lawyer's to *enforce justice* in it. It is no more the function of the merchant to get profit, for himself, than it is a teacher's to get his stipend. The stipend is a due and necessary adjunct, but not the object of his life. if he is a true teacher, any more than his fee (or honorarium) is the object of life to a true physician. Each has a work to do irrespective of fee—to be done at any cost. All of which sounds very strange: the only real strangeness in the matter being, nevertheless, that it should so sound. For all this is true, and that not partially nor theoretically, but everlastingly and practically; all other doctrine than this respecting matters political being false in premises, absurd in deduction, and impossible in practice, consistently with any progressive state of national life." It is impossible to do justice to Mr. Ruskin in a short pamphlet like this. Those who are interested in Political Economy (which is essentially the science of the working-man), should co-operate to get his book and study for themselves. One or two more extracts and we must draw to a close.

The Cause of Poverty.

Speaking of the poor, our author says, "Their distress (irrespective of that caused by sloth, minor errors, or crime), arises on the grand scale from the two reacting forces of competition and oppression. In all the ranges of human thought, I know none so melancholy as the speculations of Political Economists on the population question. It is proposed to better the condition of the labourer by giving him higher wages. 'Nay,' says the economist, 'if you raise his wages, he will either people down to the same point of misery at which you found him, or drink your wages away.

He will, I know it!' Who gave him this will? Suppose it were your own son of whom you spoke, declaring to me that you dared not take him into your firm, nor even give him his just labourer's wages, because if you did, he would die of drunkenness, and leave half a score of children to the parish. 'Who gave your son these dispositions?' I should enquire, 'Has he them by inheritance or by education? By one or the other they *must* come; and as in him so also in the poor. Either these poor are of a race essentially different from ours, and unredeemable, (which, however often implied, I have heard none yet openly say,) or else by such care as we have ourselves received, we may make them continent and sober as ourselves—wise and dispassionate as we are—models arduous of imitation."

Are there too many of us?

"There is not yet, nor will yet for ages be, any real over population in the world; but a local over-population, or more accurately, a degree of population locally unmanageable under existing circumstances, for want of forethought and sufficient machinery, necessarily shows itself by pressure of competition; and the taking advantage of this competition by the purchaser to obtain their labour unjustly cheap, consumates at once their suffering and his own. The multiplication of animals is checked only by want of food, and by the hostility of races; the population of the gnat is restrained by the hunger of the swallow, and that of the swallow by the scarcity of gnats. Man, considered as an animal, is indeed limited by the same laws: hunger or plague, or war, are the necessary and only restraints upon his increase—effectual restraints hitherto—his principal study having been how most swiftly to destroy himself, or ravage his dwelling-place; and his highest skill directed to give range to the famine, seed to the plague, and sway to the sword. But, considered as other than an animal, his increase is not limited by these laws, but by his courage and his love. His race has its bounds, but these have not yet been reached, nor will be reached for ages. The art of life has yet to be learned. It is one very awful form of the operations of wealth in Europe that it is entirely capitalists' wealth which supports unjust wars. Just wars do not need so much money to support them. They are waged gratis. Nations like France and England have not grace nor honesty enough in all their multitudes to buy an hour's piece of mind with—purchasing of each other ten millions sterling worth of consternation annually: a remarkable crop—half thorns, half aspen leaves—sown, reaped, and granaried by the '*science*' of the modern Political Economist teaching covetousness instead of truth. . . . .

Last Words.

"Nevertheless, I desire to leave this one great fact clearly stated, *There is no wealth but life*, life including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration. That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings; that man is wealthiest who, having perfected the functions of his own life to the utmost, has also the widest helpful influence, both personal, and by means of his possessions, over the lives of others. Strive then to make Economy the law of the house; strict, simple, generous; waste nothing and grudge nothing; care in no wise to make *more* of money, but care to make *much* of it; remembering always the great, palpable, inevitable fact—the rule and root of all economy—that what one person has, another cannot have; and that every atom of substance, of whatever kind, used or consumed, is so much human life spent—so much life spent either in preventing and slaying of life, or in gaining more. Consider whether, even supposing it guiltless, luxury would be desired by any of us, if we saw clearly at our sides the suffering which accompanies it in the world. Luxury is indeed possible in the future—innocent and exquisite; luxury for all and by the help of all: but luxury at present can only be enjoyed by the ignorant. The cruelest man living could not sit at his feast, unless he sat blindfold. Raise the veil boldly—face the light. What is chiefly needed to-day is the desire for a life rich by *joyful human labour*. Scenes smooth in field, fair in garden, full in orchard; trim, sweet, and frequent in homestead; full of currents of undersound; triplets of birds, murmur and chirp of insects, deep-toned words of men and wayward trebles of childhood. We need examples of people who will show what the maximum quantity of pleasure is that may be obtained by a consistent well-administered competence, modest, confessed, and laborious. Who will decide for themselves that they will be happy in the world, and resolve to seek—not greater wealth, but simpler pleasure; not higher fortune, but deeper felicity: making the first of possession, self-possession;" and "honouring themselves in the calm pursuits of peace."

What working man is there that will not reverence these far-seeing and noble utterances of a great and good man, devoted to the cause of the poor and down-trodden—showing the truth and demanding justice.

At all events, reader, unless you have had a previous introduction, may we not count on having awakened an interest in you to examine still further into the teachings of JOHN RUSKIN.