

## PREFACE.



THE Chapter which is here put before the reader can be well considered as a separate piece of work, although it contains here & there references to what has gone before in *The Stones of Venice*. To my mind, and I believe to some others, it is one of the most important things written by the author, & in future days will be considered as one of the very few necessary and inevitable utterances of the century. ¶ To some of us when we first read it, now many years ago, it seemed to point out a new road on which the world should travel. And in spite of all the disappointments of forty years, and although some of us, John Ruskin amongst others, have since learned what the equipment for that journey must be, and how many things must be changed before we are equipped, yet we can still see no other way out of the folly and degradation of Civilization. ¶ For the lesson which Ruskin here teaches us is that art is the expression of man's pleasure in labour; that it is possible for man to rejoice in his work, for, strange as it may seem to us to-day, there have been times when he did rejoice in it; and lastly, that unless man's work once again becomes a pleasure to him, the token of which change will be that beauty is once again a natural and necessary accompaniment of produc-