



# The Elements of Drawing (Dover Art Instruction)

*John Ruskin*

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## **The Elements of Drawing (Dover Art Instruction)** John Ruskin

Can drawing — sound, honest representation of the world as the eye sees it, not tricks with the pencil or a few "effects" — be learned from a book? One of the most gifted draftsmen, who is also one of the greatest art critics and theorists of all time, answers that question with a decided "Yes." He is John Ruskin, the author of this book, a classic in art education as well as a highly effective text for the student and amateur today. The work is in three parts, cast in the form of letters to a student, successively covering "First Practice," "Sketching from Nature," and "Colour and Composition." Starting with the bare fundamentals (what kind of drawing pen to buy; shading a square evenly), and using the extremely practical method of exercises which the student performs from the very first, Ruskin instructs, advises, guides, counsels, and anticipates problems with sensitivity. The exercises become more difficult, developing greater and greater skills until Ruskin feels his reader is ready for watercolors and finally composition, which he treats in detail as to the laws of principality, repetition, continuity, curvature, radiation, contrast, interchange, consistency, and harmony. All along the way, Ruskin explains, in plain, clear language, the artistic and craftsmanlike *reasons* behind his practical advice — underlying which, of course, is Ruskin's brilliant philosophy of honest, naturally observed art which has so much affected our aesthetic.

Three full-page plates and 48 woodcuts and diagrams (the latter from drawings by the author) show the student what the text describes. An appendix devotes many pages to the art works which may be studied with profit.

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