144. “Dash” (“Was there ever like Dashy”), November 16, MSS V, VIII. Printed PJR, 1:274-75; Works, 2:282-83n.

 Untitled in MS VIII; in MS V, title written “DASH” and followed by an epigraph, “Et canes incipiant ululare” (and the dogs will begin to howl). In both manuscripts, dated by Ruskin.

DASH

Et canes incipiant ululare

Was there ever like Dashy

A dog half so splashy

Amid all the species canine

Or even so good

Though he sometimes with mud

Defiles his hair white as the foam of the brine

No other dog equals the dog that is mine

2

There never was one

Half so good at a bone

So nicely and neatly he gnaws it

As if he were starving

He dont care a farthing

For the spit and the phiz of the cat as she paws it

Bur from her our Dash most successfully claws it1

3

Upon his hind legs

Most politely he begs

For any nice stray bit of meat sir

You cannot resist him

He has such a system

As he looks in your face and jumps up on your seat sir

That you give him a nice bit of something to eat sir

4

With looks quite appealing

It quite hurts his feeling

If you but attempt for to fondle the cat sir

Kicks up such a row

And he will not allow

That you should but give her a comforting pat sir

Or stroke while she’s purring the fur of her back sir

5

He has been a fine round

For twice lost and twice found

In the city of London the dogy has been

And you may opine sir

How tedious the time sir

Appeared that rolled on those same periods tween

What a pity he cant tell us what he has seen

6

But Ive said enough

Lest you think this a puff

Though he really deserveth to be sir a bust in2

And if you want my name

Why dear sir I remain

A praiser of Dash who delighteth a crust in

And your most obedient wee Johnny Ruskin

 1See textual note for lines 13-14: the draft in MS VIII reverses “claws” and “paws,” so that the cat is clawing, and Dash pawing--probably Ruskin’s intended reading, and the fair copy is in error.

 2A bust in--Collingwood suggests the meaning “to be put in a bust,” i.e. sculptured (PJR, 275).

 Textual note.--Copytext from MS V. As compared with the edited version in Works, Ruskin’s fair copy in MS V and draft in MS VIII have lines flush, without the editors’ indentations; stz. 1 (only) unnumbered. Capitalizations are shown accurately in Works, except for a few failures to capitalize in MS VIII. MS V unpunctuated, except for apostrophe in line 28. MS VIII unpunctuated, except for parentheses in line 35 shown in Works (not in MS V).

 3, MS V, PJR, Works Amid] Amidst MS VIII

 7, MS V, PJR, Works dog equals the dog] dog<s> equal[s] the dog MS VIII, with the s struck and added in pencil--possibly a change by John James

 13, MS V phiz of the cat as she paws it] phiz [fizz] of the cat as she claws it PJR, Works; MS VIII phiz of the cat as she claws it

 14, MS V claws it] paws it MS VIII, PJR, Works