151. “Sonnet to a Cloud,” December 1831 to January 1832, MSS V, VIII. Printed PJR, 1:102; Works, 2:332.

See no. 148 for dating. Follows no. 147 in MS V; in MS VIII, nos. 148-50 and stanzas 5-12 of no. 135 intervene between no. 147 and this poem. In MS VIII, entitled merely “Sonnet.”

SONNET TO A CLOUD

Thou little roamer of the northern blast

Mantling the brow of ruby fringèd morn

So swift so transient whither art thou borne

Hither and thither by the breezes cast

Hast shadowed sultry Araby or past

Lumed by the lightening on the gloomy storm

Or dimmed the lustre of the moonès horn

Or swept oer mountain summit fleet and fast

Or darkened oer the bosom of the brine

Or wanton fled the summer breezes sigh

And floated oer a thirsty scorching clime

Fading upon the clear and azure sky

Methinks I see thee like the wing of time

Melting away into eternity

Textual note.--As compared with the edited version in Works, Ruskin’s fair copy in MS V and his draft in MS VIII have all lines are flush left, without the editors’ indentations; and first letters of lines and place names are capitalized. MS VIII version entirely unpunctuated; MS V unpunctuated, except for accents on “fringèd” (line 2) and “moonès” (line 7).

6, MS V, Works lightening] lightning MS VIII

7, MS V moonès] moons MS VIII; Works moonè’s

8, MS V mountain summit] mountains summit MS VIII; Works mountain-summit,

10, MS V wanton fled] wanton <chased> fled MS VIII; Works wanton, fled

11, MS V a thirsty] a <sultry> thirsty MS VIII; Works a thirsty,

13, MS V Methinks I see thee] Me<thought>thinks I see the MS VIII; Works --Methinks I see thee