# THE LETTERS

OF

## PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

CONTAINING MATERIAL NEVER BEFORE COLLECTED

ROGER INGPEN

NEW EDITION WITH ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

Vol. I



G. BELL AND SONS, LTD.

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#### ERRATUM:

P. viii., l. 1-5.—The illustrations here referred to are not included in this edition.

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### Preface

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To Mary Shelley we owe both the first collected edition of Shelley's poems with her notes on the poet's life and work, as well as the first collection of Shelley's correspon-The letters in her small but admirable collection, which was made public in 1840, at once established Shelley's right to be acknowledged as one of the great letter-writers of the nineteenth century. All the letters in Mrs. Shelley's selection were written from abroad, and it includes a greater portion of that splendid series of letters in which Shelley described his impressions of travel in Switzerland and Italy to Thomas Love Peacock. As far back as 1823, the year after Shelley's death, his "Letters from Italy" were announced to form a portion of the "Posthumous Poems," then preparing for publication. But the poems were issued in 1824 without the letters, as Shelley's father had forbidden the publication of anything of the nature of biography regarding his son under pain of stopping his allowance to Mary Shelley. She was, therefore, out of consideration for the welfare of her son, Percy Shelley, both forced to withhold her husband's letters from the world and deterred from writing his life. When at length (in 1839 and 1840) she was permitted to edit Shelley's poems and letters, the ban against publishing any biographical details was not withdrawn. And for that reason all those personal touches and allusions, which are the essential characteristics of familiar correspondence were eliminated from the first collection of Shelley's correspondence. Sir Timothy Shelley died in 1844. Shelley survived him until 1851; she contributed, however, nothing more to Shelley literature. None the less hers remained for forty years the only available collection of the poet's letters, although, in the meantime, much of his

correspondence had appeared in various memoirs, such as Hogg's unfinished "Life of Shelley," Lady Shelley's "Shelley Memorials," Peacock's articles on Shelley, and Dr. Richard Garnett's "Relics of Shelley."

In the years 1876-1880, Mr. H. Buxton Forman issued his Library Edition of Shelley's Works in verse and prose, including a reprint of Mrs. Shelley's edition of her husband's correspondence with many additional letters; he was moreover enabled by collating some of them with the original manuscripts to restore a number of important passages which had been hitherto omitted. Two small but noteworthy selections have appeared since Mr. Buxton Forman's edition, both of which, however, partake more of the nature of anthologies than of collections of Shelley's correspondence; namely, the "Selected Letters" edited by the late Dr. Richard Garnett for the "Parchment Library" and the volume edited by Mr. Ernest Rhys for the "Camelot Classics": a useful collection of Shelley's Essays and Letters which has undoubtedly done much to make known to a large public the beauties of Shelley's prose. What Mr. Buxton Forman has done for the text of Shelley's published writings, Professor Dowden has done for the biography of the poet. Since the publication of his "Life of Shelley" in 1886, no one can pretend to write on the subject without having constant recourse to that work. Professor Dowden's scholarship, his ardent sympathy for Shelley, his insight and skill in disentangling the difficult knots in the poet's life, and the exceptional opportunities that he has had of studying the private papers in the hands of the Shelley family and of others, enabled his work easily to survive the criticism even of such writers as Matthew Arnold and Churton Collins, and have contributed to make it the greatest monument to Shelley's genius that has yet appeared, or, we may venture to think, that is likely to appear in our generation.

The task of preparing the present edition of Shelley's correspondence has been rendered practicable mainly

through the help of Professor Dowden, Mr. Thomas J. Wise, and Mr. H. Buxton Forman, C.B., to all of whom my debt is very heavy. Professor Dowden has not only permitted me to make use of a large number of important letters first printed in his "Life of Shelley," but he has also supplied me with copies of, and thus allowed me to print, many hitherto unpublished letters of the poet. He has, moreover, with unremitting kindness, given me his advice on innumerable points, and, without of course, incurring any responsibility for my mistakes, examined the proofs of a great portion of the work. In thanking him for his assistance, I must acknowledge the constant use that I have made of his "Life of Shelley."

Mr. Wise, who was one of the first to encourage me in my design to edit a collection of Shelley's correspondence, has not only most generously allowed me to reprint the letters to Elizabeth Hitchener, William Godwin, Jane Clairmont, and Leigh Hunt, from his privately printed volumes, but has also furnished me with copies of many unpublished letters. Mr. Buxton Forman has kindly permitted me to use those letters of Shelley which were reprinted from his collection in Professor Dowden's "Life of Shelley": he has also allowed me to print some letters, the publication of which is directly in his control, from other sources, and given me leave to use the text of Shelley's correspondence in his Library Edition. only used this text, however, when I have not been able to obtain access to the original letter, or when it contains variations from Mrs. Shelley's and other editions.

Mr. William Michael Rossetti may be regarded as the first systematic editor of Shelley's poetry. His "Memoir of Shelley" is packed with valuable criticism of the poet's life, and has for forty years remained an authority; I have to thank him for a most interesting note on Shelley's early friend, Edward Graham. To Mr. Rossetti I further am indebted for the use of his chronology of Shelley's letters to Hogg, which, with one or two exceptions,

I have adopted; and for permission to reproduce the interesting drawing of a tree made by Shelley when at Eton, the hitherto unpublished sketch of the Protestant cemetery at Rome, and the portrait of Shelley's uncle, Captain Pilfold.

Mr. Bertram Dobell (who has made several important contributions to Shelley literature, including an edition of Shelley's letters to Elizabeth Hitchener) and Mr. V. Cameron Turnbull have both read through all the proofs of this book, and I have to thank them and Mr. Walter de la Mare for some very useful suggestions.

In addition to the above it is a privilege to express my obligations to Miss Alice L. Bird, by whose generosity the nation was enabled to acquire the manuscript of Keats's "Hyperion," for permission to reprint from the original letters of Shelley in her possession; to Mrs. Alfred Morrison for a like favour with regard to all the original Shelley letters (two of which are now printed for the first time) in her most valuable and most interesting collection: to Mr. Walter Leigh Hunt for the addition of two unpublished letters to Hogg; to Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., Ltd., for confirming Professor Dowden's permission to reprint the Shelley letters from his "Life of Shelley," and for the use of a letter in Mr. Kegan Paul's "Life of William Godwin"; and to Mr. John Murray for the use of some of Shelley's letters from Mr. Prothero's edition of Byron's letters. I also gratefully acknowledge contributions of letters or suggestions from Mrs. Rossetti Angeli, Bodley's Librarian, Mr. William Brown, Dr. W. C. Coupland, Miss Greaves, Mr. John A. Hookham, Mr. E. Luther Livingston, Mr. Ernest Dressel North, Mr. Thomas Seccombe, Mr. J. W. Williams, and Mr. John H. Wrenn. Although I have taken every precaution against the invasion of private rights, there may be some owners of letters to whom an apology is due.

I have attempted, whenever possible, to collate my text with the original letters; but in a great many cases this

has, unfortunately, not been practicable. I have, however, been able to make some important additions to the printed letters to Elizabeth Hitchener, and I have, in these letters, with very slight variations, followed Shelley's rather peculiar punctuation.

My single aim and intention in compiling these volumes was to gather together, in easy and convenient form, as large a number of Shelley's letters as present circumstances would permit. As far as the mere numerical object was concerned, I have been successful beyond my utmost hopes. In witness whereof I may be allowed to mention that the following pages contain a total, including a few fragments, of about 480 letters, that is to say, considerably more than three times as many as have appeared in any one previous collection. Of these, thirty-eight letters, so far as I am aware, have not been printed before, and upwards of fifty contain hitherto unpublished matter.

R. I.

May, 1909.

#### NOTE

In this new edition I have made some corrections, and have added a few letters omitted from the first issue of my collection of Shelley's correspondence.

By the courtesy of Lord Abinger and my friend M. A. Koszul I am able to include in the appendix passages from several of Shelley's letters to Thomas Jefferson Hogg, from his printed versions, with corrections made by the late Lady Shelley from the original manuscripts. The copies of these corrected letters, which are in the possession of Lord Abinger, were first printed by M. Koszul in his valuable and fascinating work La Jeunesse de Shelley. These letters throw an extraordinary light on Hogg's method of altering Shelley's correspondence to suit his own ends, and confirm that wide-spread feeling of distrust

with which his printed text of Shelley's letters has been Thanks are due to the authorities of held for many years. the Bodleian Library, the delegates of the Clarendon Press, and Prof. A. Koszul, for permission to print the transcripts of Shelley's two drafts of letters to the Editor of Olliers' Literary Miscellany. To Mr. William Michael Rossetti and to Mrs. Helen Rossetti Angeli I have again to acknowledge my To Mr. Rossetti, among other acts of kindgrateful thanks. ness, I am indebted for many important suggestions and Mrs. Angeli, and her publishers, Messrs. Methuen & Co., Ltd., have permitted me to reprint from her Shelley and his Friends in Italy, Shelley's letter to Signora Dionigi, with her translation. Its peculiar interest lies in the probability that it is the only letter of Shelley extant in Italian.

Nov. 7, 1911.

In preparing this book for republication in Bohn's Standard Library, I have availed myself of the opportunity of making some additions, and of amending the text where possible by correcting misprints and collating a few of the letters with the originals. I thankfully acknowledge the courtesy of Prof. Dott. Commendatore Guido Biagi, who has collated for me the three letters of Shelley to Medwin, senior, which are preserved in the Mediceo-Laurenzian Library at Florence. Mrs. Walton has very kindly allowed me to print for the first time an interesting letter in her possession.

R. I.

*May*, 1914.



## Notes on Shelley's Correspondents

#### WILLIAM THOMAS BAXTER

was a Dundee merchant, and the father of Mary Shelley's friend, Isobel Baxter, who afterwards became the wife of David Booth, a brewer of Newburg, Fifeshire. Booth was twenty-nine years his wife's senior, a stern Republican and an old friend of William Godwin, and when in 1809 his father-in-law visited London, he carried with him Booth's introduction to the Skinner Street philosopher. As a result of this visit, Mary Godwin spent a holiday at the Baxters' house in Scotland, where she became a very close friend of Isobel, the youngest of Baxter's five daughters. The two girls continued to correspond until July, 1814, when Mary Godwin eloped with Shelley; but the intimacy was renewed after her marriage to the poet in 1816. During the autumn of 1817 Baxter and Booth came to London with the intention of settling there, and Baxter paid a visit to the Shelleys at Marlow. In a letter to his daughter, Mrs. Booth, dated Oct. 3, 1817, he gives his impressions of "As to Shelley," he says, "I confess to you the Marlow Hermit. I was very much deceived by the preconceived estimate I had formed of him, and very agreeably disappointed in the man I found him to be. I had somehow or other imagined him to be an ignorant, silly, half-witted enthusiast, with intellect scarcely sufficient to keep him out of a madhouse, and morals that fitted him only for a brothel; how much then was I surprised and delighted to find him a being of rare genius and talent, of truly republican frugality and plainness of manners, and of a soundness of principle and delicacy of moral tact that might put to shame (if shame they had) many of his detractors, and with all this so amiable that you have only to be half an hour in his company to convince you that there is not an atom of malevolence in his whole composition. Is there any wonder that I should become attached to such a man, holding out the hand of kindness and friendship towards me? Certainly not." Baxter enclosed with this letter Shelley's proposal that Mrs. Booth should accompany him and Mary on a visit to Italy. This proposal so exasperated Mr. Booth that he not only insisted that the correspondence between his wife and Mary Shelley should be discontinued, but also prevailed upon Baxter to break off his intimacy with Shelley. He had hoped to do this by neglecting to answer Shelley's letter, but Shelley pressed for an explanation of his silence, and Baxter was at last compelled to offer some excuse for his neglect; Shelley's reply, printed on p. 578, apparently closed the correspondence. Previous to this rupture, in the winter of 1817, when Shelley was doing what he could to alleviate the sufferings of the poor at Great Marlow, it was to William Baxter that he applied for help in

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procuring a supply of blankets and sheeting for distribution among his needy neighbours. Shelley evidently retained kindly feelings for Baxter, as he did not neglect to take leave of him (on March 3, 1818) before he left England for the last time.

#### Brookes & Co..

of Chancery Lane, Shelley's bankers. The chief interest of the purely business letters to this firm is that they furnish excellent specimens of the poet's autograph, as he invariably signed his name to them (as he did to few other of his correspondents) in full.

#### W. BRYANT,

a money-lender, with whom Shelley was in negotiation when he was attempting to raise money for Godwin in 1816-1818. Shelley, who describes him as "a Sussex man," says that Bryant wrote to ask him if he would sell a reversion on a small estate in that county (p. 457). Shelley addressed Bryant in one of his letters at Worth Rectory, which is some twelve miles from Field Place. Perhaps it is only a coincidence that Worth Hall was where Shelley's friend, Edward Graham, appears to have died in 1852.

#### George Gordon, Sixth Lord Byron (1788-1824)

Shelley appears to have first made the acquaintance of Byron's poetry while he and Hogg were living at Poland Street, in April, 1811. Hogg states that shortly after their expulsion from Oxford, Shelley bought a copy of "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," one morning, "at a bookseller's in Oxford Street. He put it under his arm, and we walked into the country; when we were sufficiently removed from observation, he began to read it aloud. He read the whole poem aloud to me with fervid and exulting energy, and all the notes. He was greatly delighted with the bitter wrathful satire. . . . Notwithstanding his admiration of the poem, he did not express, as was his course whenever he was pleased with any work, a desire or determination to become personally acquainted with the author. He did not foresee that their lives would be blended and bound up together, as they were subsequently; still less did he anticipate that the irate satirist would be his executor, and as such, at the expiration of a few short years, would preside at obsequies, so strange, so mournful." Some years later, however, probably in 1813, Shelley sent a copy of "Queen Mab" to Byron with a letter. The poem reached Byron, who is said to have admired its opening lines, but he never received the letter. Shelley's earliest meeting with Byron was at Geneva on May 25, 1816. They made an excursion together round the Lake, and during the remainder of Shelley's stay in Switzerland, till August 18, the two poets were constantly in each other's society. Shelley returned to England with a MS. copy of the third canto of "Childe Harold," of which, with "The Prisoner of Chillon," Byron had entrusted him with the correction for the press. The outcome of this association was certainly beneficial to the author of "Childe Harold." Trelawny states that Godwin observed to him "'that Shelley must have been of great



use to Byron, as from the commencement of their intimacy at Geneva, he could trace an entirely new vein of thought emanating from Shelley, which ran through Bryon's subsequent works, and was so peculiar that it could not have arisen from any other source.' This was true. Byron was but superficial on points on which Shelley was most profound—and the latter's capacity for study, the depth of his thoughts as well as their boldness, and his superior scholarship, supplied the former with exactly what he wanted: and thus a portion of Shelley's aspirations were infused into Byron's Ready as Shelley always was with his purse or person to assist others, his purse had a limit, but his mental wealth seemed to have none; for not only to Byron, but to anyone disposed to try his hand at literature, Shelley was ever ready to give any amount of mental labour." Byron's character probably first appeared in its true light to Shelley when in 1818 he began to correspond with him about the custody of Allegra. In the August of that year he visited Byron at Venice. They did not meet again until August, 1821, when Shelley went to see Byron at Ravenna and learnt of the Hoppner slander, for which Byron himself was primarily responsible. His treachery in suppressing the letter in which Mary Shelley had defended her husband against those villainous charges, incredible as it may appear, was established beyond doubt when it was found unopened among Byron's papers after his death. Yet Byron liked Shelley, and one of his reasons for settling at Pisa in 1822 was to be near him; but his presence in that town became unendurable to Shelley, who before long betook! himself to Lerici. In the March of that year Byron wrote to Moore those memorable words about Shelley: "He is, to my knowledge, the *least* selfish and the mildest of men—a man who has made more sacrifices of his fortune and feelings for others than any I ever heard Byron was present with Trelawny and Leigh Hunt at the burning of Shelley's body at Via Reggio in August, 1822. Under: Shelley's will Byron was named as one of two executors with a legacy of £2,000. The will was not however proved until twenty years after Byron's death, on the decease of Sir Timothy Shelley.

It has been suggested by Mr. Buxton Forman that Byron's familiar name "Albé," which frequently occurs in Shelley's correspondence, was formed from the initials L. B., for Lord Byron; while Prof. Dowden points out that it may be the short for "Albaneser," by which name Byron was known, probably after having sung, on one occasion, an Albanian song, for Shelley and Mary.

#### CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (1798-1879)

was born on April 27, 1798, the daughter of William Godwin's second wife by her former husband, who apparently died shortly after her birth. She was, says Professor Dowden, "a dark-haired, dark-eyed, olive-cheeked girl, quick to observe, to think, to feel; of brilliant talents; ardent, witty, wilful; a lover of music and poetry, and gifted with an exquisite voice for song," although, he adds, her sense of time was said by a competent authority to have been very defective. "In disposition she was romantic, yet with

a lively sense of reality, of untrained temper, making eager demands on life, with a capacity for sore fretting against the bars of fate; pleasure-loving, at times indolent, yet able to undergo much irksome toil; possessed of generous qualities, and of qualities dangerous to her own happiness and that of others." The name by which she was known in her family, Jane, was discarded by her for Clare or Claire, when, in 1814, she accompanied Shelley and Mary to Switzerland. It is said that her ability to speak French induced them to prevail upon her to join them. She was at that date turned sixteen, having, as she stated, just come home from a boarding school kept by a French lady where she had spent two and a half years. Mrs. Godwin followed the fugitives to Calais, but Claire refused to be persuaded to return with her mother. As Dr. Garnett points out, this ill-advised adventure "was the source of most of the calumnies directed against Shelley, to which subsequent events gave additional plausibility." In May, 1816, Shelley and Mary visited the Continent for a second time, and Claire went with them as before. At Geneva they met Byron, and, eager for romance, Claire seems to have forced herself upon him. It is doubtful if the Shelleys were ignorant of this intrigue and of the fact that Claire and Byron had met previously in London when she was seeking an engagement as an actress at Drury Lane Theatre. Shelleys' return to England Claire continued to live with them, and in January, 1817, gave birth to a daughter at Bath, subsequently named Allegra, the reputed father was Byron, who agreed to be responsible for the care of the child. The Shelleys left England for the last time in March, 1818, and Claire once more became one of their party.

Although warned by Shelley against parting with Allegra, Claire consented to her being placed in Byron's care at Venice, but as he had refused to meet or correspond with Claire, the child was taken to him by a nurse in May, 1818, and the correspondence fell to Shelley's lot. In August Claire went to Venice in the company of Shelley, who prevailed upon Byron to let her have access to Allegra. After a short stay with her mother the child went back to Venice, and was subsequently taken by Byron to Ravenna. Here she became so unruly that his servants could not control her.; she was consequently placed in the care of some nuns in a convent at Bagnacavallo, her father paying double fees to ensure her being well cared for. In resigning Allegra to Byron, Claire practically had resigned all claim over the child, but when she heard that Allegra had gone to the convent, she held that the compact. to the effect that the child was always to remain in the care of one of her parents, had been broken. She therefore addressed some pathetic letters to Byron, and to an extent managed to involve Shelley in the correspondence. Byron was hard and callous; the affair, however, was brought to an unhappy conclusion by the death of the child on April 19, 1822. Through Byron's spite Claire's name became linked with Shelley's in the vile Hoppner scandal. Claire's presence in the Shelleys' household was not on the whole successful, as she did not get on at all well with Mary.

and she subsequently accepted an engagement as governess at Florence in the family of Professor Bojti. After Shelley's death she continued to live on the Continent, and was in the situation of a governess in Russia. On the death of Sir Timothy Shelley she received a legacy under Shelley's will. Miss Clairmont subsequently resided in Paris, and in Florence, where she was remembered for her acts of charity, and where she died unmarried on March 19, 1879, having for some time previously been a Roman Catholic. From the specimens of her correspondence, printed in Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," she seems to have been an excellent letter-writer. She kept a journal and made a translation of "Faust." She once wrote a novel for which she did not succeed in finding a publisher, and she subsequently expressed her intention of writing another showing the evils arising from irregular unions, as illustrated by the lives of Shelley and Byron.

#### AMELIA CURRAN (d. 1847)

was the daughter of the Irish statesman, John Philpot Curran, whom Shelley met at Dublin during his first visit to Ireland early in 1812. Miss Curran was living at that date in England, and Shelley first saw her at Godwin's house in the autumn of 1812. Describing this meeting to Miss Nugent, Harriet Shelley says (in her letter, Jan. 16, 1813) that what she saw of Miss Curran she "did not like. She said begging was a trade in Dublin. To tell you the truth, she is not half such an Irishwoman as myself, and that is why I did not feel disposed to like her. Besides she is a coquette, the most abominable thing in the world." Shelley's next meeting with Miss Curran was at Rome in April, 1819, where Mary and Claire recognised her while driving in the Borghese Gardens. The next day, says Prof. Dowden, "they left a card at Miss Curran's, and on Tuesday, April 27, had the pleasure of receiving at their lodgings their old acquaint-Miss Curran had some skill at painting; Mary Shelley was a beginner in the art. Morning after morning the two friends spent together happily employed. When the day for leaving Rome arrived Miss Curran was at work on two portraits—one of Claire, who had given a couple of sittings, and one of Shelley begun upon that morning (May 7). This portrait, begun when Shelley was but lately recovered from a feverish illness, the hasty work of an imperfectly trained amateur, is that by which Shelley's face is most widely known." Mary Shelley did not like the portrait, and Miss Curran, when leaving Italy, thinking it worthless, was about to burn the picture with other lumber, but she happily rescued it just as the fire was scorching it. The picture was afterwards treasured by Mary Shelley, and was subsequently, on the death of Shelley's daughter-in-law, bequeathed to the nation. Miss Curran also painted portraits of William Shelley and Mary Shelley, was commissioned by Shelley to design a monument to William, and undertook to copy for him the so-called Guido portrait of Beatrice Cenci. Miss Curran lived as a recluse. She was not a professional artist, and did not exhibit at the public galleries: her life seems to have been uneventful. We get a glimpse, however, of her from a letter of Lady

Morgan, written from Rome on Feb. 4, 1820. "With great difficulty," she says, "I have at last got at Miss Curran; she leads the life of a hermit. She is full of talent and intellect, pleasant, interesting and original; and she paints like an artist." Miss Curran left Rome for a time: in 1822 she was in Paris, but she returned to Rome and fixed her residence there in 1840. She was received into the Roman Catholic Church by Cardinal Odescalchi, and died in Rome on August 30, 1847.

#### Mr. Dorville

was Vice-Consul at Venice, during Hoppner's Consul-Generalship, He knew all about Allegra, and Byron, who was acquainted with him, pronounced Dorville a "good fellow."

Edward Law, First Baron Ellenborough (1750-1818), fourth son of Edward Law, Bishop of Carlisle, was born at Great Salkeld, Cumberland, and educated at Charterhouse and Peterhouse, Cambridge. He entered at Lincoln's Inn and on being called to the Bar, went the northern circuit. He took silk in 1787, and was retained as leading counsel for Warren Hastings at his trial in 1788, and opened the defence. He was made lord chief justice and Baron Ellenborough in 1802, which office he held till 1818, within two months of his death. Ellenborough was concerned with several cases that interested Shelley, although personally unacquainted with him. At the trial of Leigh and John Hunt in 1811 for the publication of a "seditious libel" in an Examiner article on military flogging, Ellenborough was on the bench, and although he urged the jury to return a verdict of "Guilty," the defendants were acquitted. In March, 1812, Ellenborough heard the case against Daniel Isaac Eaton, a bookseller, for blasphemous libel in publishing in a magazine the third part of Paine's "Age of Reason." Eaton was found guilty, and was sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment at Newgate, during the first month of which he had to stand in the pillory for an hour in the Old Bailey. It was on this occasion (while he was living at Lynmouth) that Shelley addressed an indignant protest in his vigorous "Letter to Lord Ellenborough." The letter was printed at Barnstaple for private circulation, but nearly all the copies were destroyed by the printer. Lord Ellenborough was also the judge in the treasury prosecution of Leigh Hunt and his brother in December, 1812, for libel on the Prince Regent in the notorious article in the Examiner entitled "The Prince on St. Patrick's Day." The Hunts were found guilty and sentenced each to two years' imprisonment with a fine of £500. Shelley aptly described Ellenborough's address, in which he spoke of the Prince's infidelity to his wife as a "misfortune" which had overtaken him, as "so barefaced a piece of time-servingness that I am sure that his heart must have laughed at his lips as he pronounced it." The "Letter to Lord Ellenborough" was quoted as evidence against Shelley in the Chancery proceedings in 1817, in which he attempted to obtain the custody of his children. The pamphlet had, even at that early date, practically disappeared, for Shelley himself was unable to procure a copy.

Maria Gisborne was the daughter of a Mr. James, an English merchant at Constantinople, who, leaving his wife and child in England in practically a state of destitution and penury, returned to the East. When Maria was about eight years old, her mother resolved to go in quest of her husband, and with this object in view sailed for Constantinople in the hope of obtaining some redress from him, but she was mortified that he would not receive her. Mr. James, however, was so delighted with his little girl, that he contrived to have her stolen and secreted until he had persuaded his wife, by the promise of an annuity, to return to England. Little Maria was then brought home and carefully educated, but while still a child in years, she was quite a little woman in appearance and manners, and entered the society of the European merchants and diplomatists at Constantinople. Having no one to look after her, she was left to herself and practically ran wild. When Maria was fifteen her father left Constantinople and took her with him to She had shown considerable talent for painting and music: it was intended that she should be placed as a pupil with Angelica Kaufmann, and Barry, who had seen some of her work, urged her to take up art as a profession. Maria James, however, who had become a very beautiful and accomplished woman, attracted the admiration of and was married to Willey Reveley, a young English architect, then travelling on the Continent. Her father refused to recognise the marriage, and the young couple returned to England with means so restricted as to be little removed from actual poverty. Mr. Reveley became interested in politics, and identified himself enthusiastically with the Liberal side. He made the acquaintance among other politicians of William Godwin and Thomas Holcroft. Mrs. Shelley says that "there was a gentleness and yet a fervour in the minds both of Mrs. Reveley and Godwin that led to sympathy. He was ready to gratify her desire for knowledge, and she drank eagerly of the philosophy which he offered. It was a pure but warm friendship, which might have grown into another feeling had they been differently situated." On the death of Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin in giving birth to a girl, who afterwards became Mrs. Shelley. Mrs. Reveley took charge of the infant, and when two years later she was left a widow, Godwin proposed marriage to her. She, however, declined to accept him, and married in 1800 John Gisborne, who had been engaged, but without success, as a merchant. In 1801 Mr. and Mrs. Gisborne with Henry Reveley, the son of her first marriage, left England for Rome. Mr. Gisborne devoted himself to the education of his step-son, and although possessed of considerable culture himself, Gisborne was, as Shelley says, "a man who knows I cannot tell how many languages, and has read almost all the books you can think of; but all they contain seems to be to his mind what water is to a river. His liberal opinions are all the reflections of Mrs. Gisborne's, a very amiable, accomplished, and completely unprejudiced woman." Some years later, in 1815. Mr. Gisborne made another attempt to engage in trade at Leghorn, and hoped to obtain the vice-consulship for that place, but his

endeavours again met with failure. In May, 1818, when Shelley and Mary were at Leghorn, they met the Gisbornes. Mary Shelley describes Mrs. Gisborne at this time as "a lady of great accomplishments, and charming for her frank and affectionate nature. She had the most intense love of knowledge, a delicate and trembling sensibility, and preserved freshness of mind after a life of considerable adversity. As a favourite friend of my father we had sought her with eagerness, and the most open and cordial friendship was established between us." That Shelley had a high regard for Mrs. Gisborne is evident from many expressions of admiration for her good qualities in his correspondence. She assisted him in his Spanish studies, and he addressed to her the beautiful poetical letter from the Gisbornes' house at Leghorn, that had been lent to him during their temporary absence in England. Shelley's friendship with Mrs. Gisborne was only severed by his death, and Mary derived comfort in the days of her widowhood in corresponding with her "foster-mother." There was one break, however, in the friendship, a mere passing cloud, owing to an unfortunate misunderstanding arising over the steam-engine that Henry Reveley had undertaken to build for Shelley, and on this occasion the poet's fiery temper got the better of him. Shelley professed to put up with John Gisborne (whom he regarded as a stupid bore) solely for his wife's sake, and he did not hesitate to tell his friends what he thought of him, nor to make fun of Gisborne's impossible nose. He entrusted him, however, when he went to England, with the correction of his "Prometheus." Peacock, who knew Gisborne, considered that Shelley's estimate was unjust, and remarked, "I found Mr. Gisborne an agreeable and well-informed man."

#### WILLIAM GODWIN (1756-1836); MARY JANE GODWIN

When Shelley began to correspond with Godwin in the early days of 1812 he hailed him as the incarnate exponent of "Political Justice," whereas that work, like the days of storm and stress that produced it, was a thing of the past in the life of the philosopher. William Godwin, one of the thirteen children of John Godwin, a dissenting minister of Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, was born at that place on March 3rd, 1756. He received his schooling at Hindolveston, was with a tutor at Norwich, and after serving as an usher at his old school, he entered, in 1773, the Presbyterian College at For five years he was a minister at Ware, Stowmarket and Beaconsfield, during which time he became an Unitarian and republican, and by 1787 he was an atheist and was depending on literature for a living. His first important work, which brought him fame and procured him one thousand guineas, was published in 1793, and was entitled "An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness." Although he attacked most of the existing laws and customs of this country and was especially severe on marriage, he deprecated violence, and therefore escaped prosecution as his book made no appeal to the In the novel, "Things as they are, or the Adventures of Caleb Williams," 1794, Godwin's gifts as an imaginative artist

are seen to such advantage as to overpower entirely the philosophy which he intended to promulgate in that work. He was, however, ready to assist his friends Holcroft, Horne Tooke, and Thelwall when they were arraigned on a charge of high treason, and it was mainly owing to his able defence that they were acquitted. In 1797 Godwin married Mary Wollstonecraft, with whom he had lived for some months previously; his explanation for taking this step was that she expected to become a mother. Her death took place not long after in giving birth to a daughter, who afterwards become Shelley's second wife. In 1796 Godwin had published a collection of essays with the title "The Enquirer," and now he set himself to write the "Memoirs of Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin" and to edit her "Posthumous Works." Many years of hard work followed during which he produced a novel, "St. Leon," in 1799; "Antonio," a tragedy, 1800; a "Life of Chaucer," 1803; and another novel, "Fleetwood; or the New Man of Feeling," in 1804. On the death of his wife, Godwin had proposed marriage to Harriet Lee, and afterwards to Mrs. Reveley (Mrs. Gisborne), but he met with a refusal from both ladies. He married, however, in 1801, Mrs. Mary Jane Clairmont, a widow with two children, who lived as his next door neighbour and who is said to have once addressed the question to him from her balcony: "Is it possible that I behold the immortal Godwin?" About the year 1805 Godwin commenced business as a publisher and bookseller of scholastic and juvenile publications. He issued some school-books of his own composition under the pseudonym of Edward Baldwin, and among other works Lamb's "Tales from Shakespeare," his "Adventures of Ulysses," "Mrs. Leicester's School," and an English Grammar by William Hazlitt.

Mrs. Godwin undertook the management of the shop in Skinner Street, Snow Hill, and despite Godwin's habit of addressing her in his letters as "My dear love," it is very probable that he stood in awe of her. She had a violent temper, was habitually untruthful, and treated Fanny Imlay and Mary Godwin with great harshness. Even her own children, Claire and Charles Clairmont, found her unendurable and were forced to quit their home. No one whom she encountered was safe from her malicious tongue. Shelley, who was one of her chief victims, used to say that when he was obliged to dine with Mrs. Godwin he would "lean back in his chair and languish into hate." (1) She was also an aversion of Lamb, who described her as "the bad baby" and as "a very disgusting woman, and wears green spectacles."

On January 2, 1812, Shelley addressed his first letter to Godwin, who was at the time entirely unknown to him. The letter was answered, and a brisk correspondence ensued; but it was not until early in the October of that year, when Shelley came to London, that he met Godwin for the first time. A fortnight previously, however, it should be mentioned, Godwin had visited Lynmouth in the expectation of spending a holiday with the Shelleys, but he

(1) Dowden's "Shelley," Vol. II, p. 173.

was disappointed in finding that they had already departed from that place. Godwin's early intercourse with Shelley was marked by the kindly interest of a distinguished man of letters in the welfare of a young man of great ability and promise. Shelley, however, soon learnt that Godwin was hampered by very serious money difficulties, and in May, 1814, he made an attempt to assist him in raising funds to relieve him of his embarrassments. August, 1814, Shelley's elopement with Mary resulted in an estrangement from Godwin, who had been accused of selling his daughter. Godwin did not disdain, however, to receive money from Shelley, although he returned a cheque with the demand that it should be made payable to another name than his own as he did not wish it to be known that Shelley was assisting him. Their correspondence at this time was entirely devoted to money affairs: Godwin's letters were studiously insolent, while Shelley's replies were courteous and forbearing. With Shelley's marriage to Mary in December, 1816, a reconciliation took place between him and Godwin. The acquaintance continued on more or less friendly terms until after Shelley had left England for Italy, but the correspondence seems at length to have practically ceased. Godwin's affairs in the meantime had reached an acute stage and Shelley once more hoped to assist him, but on examination, it become evident that nothing that he could do would avail to extricate Godwin from his debts. and he was forced in August, 1820, to refuse him any further aid. Godwin, whose hopes had been raised by Shelley's enquiries, complained in the bitterest language of his son-in-law's decision; yet he had received by this date between £4,000 and £5,000, which had cost Shelley four times that amount to raise.

Although much of Godwin's time was spent in dealing with his money difficulties, he never entirely neglected his literary work, and later books comprised "An Essay on Sepulchres," 1808; "Faulkner," a tragedy, 1807; a "Life of Edward and John Phillips, nephews of Milton," 1815; "Mandeville," a novel (reviewed by Shelley), 1817; "On Population," a criticism of Malthus, 1820; "History of the Commonwealth," 1824-1828; "Cloudesley," 1830; and "Thoughts on Man," 1834. In 1833 he received the sinecure post of Yeoman-Usher from Lord Grey, and he died the following year.

#### EDWARD FERGUS GRAHAM (? 1787-1852)

Of Edward Graham, Shelley's earliest regular correspondent, little seems to be known. In the Gentleman's Magazine for June, 1852, there is a notice of the death of an Edward Graham at Worth Hall, Sussex, at the age of sixty-five. If this actually relates to Shelley's friend, it would fix the year of his birth as 1787. Graham's father was in the Army, and says Hogg, who met him at Field Place, he made the tea, supported Mr. Timothy Shelley in his after-dinner conversation, and generally acted as his factotum. Young Graham, who showed a talent for music, was educated at the expense of Mr. Shelley, in whose house he grew up, and, according to the statement of a common friend of theirs quoted by Professor Dowden, he and

Bysshe "were like brothers." In the year 1810 Graham was living in London, and a pupil of Joseph Woelff, a well-known German musi-There is a reference to Graham's musical gifts in an cian of the day. unpublished letter, recently sold by auction, dated from Field Place on April 22, probably in the year 1810, in which Shelley sent Graham a copy of his poem "St. Irvyne's Tower," with four more verses than are printed in his novel "St. Irvyne." It appears that Graham had expressed a desire "at Christmas" to try his powers of composition with some of Shelley's poetry, and in reminding him of this wish, Shelley gave his friend leave to set the lines to music if he though it worth while. Young Graham made himself useful to his patron's son, who whenever he was in London seemed to have regarded Graham's rooms in Vine Street, Piccadilly, as his headquarters: "Direct me to Graham's" is a frequent request in Shelley's earlier letters, which likewise contain numerous commissions for his friend. Graham's name disappears from Shelley's correspondence about the middle of the year 1811. Perhaps his father's relations with Mr. Timothy Shelley prevented him from keeping up with Shelley. Mr. W. M. Rossetti, who has very kindly favoured me with some reminiscences of Graham during the last years of his life, says: "It may have been towards the spring of 1845, when I was fifteen years of age, that Mr. Edward Graham began calling on my father, Gabriele Rossetti, at our house, 50 Charlotte Street (now Hallam Street), Portland Place. After that he continued, for perhaps a year and a half, calling pretty frequently, more especially in the early afternoon of Sundays. He was a musician, and I suppose a teacher of music. I don't know what his specialty may have been, but fancy he had composed some airs. Mr. Graham was a remarkably fine, genial-looking man, well turned of fifty, I presume, when I saw him first: tending towards corpulence, with regular features, blue eyes, and an extremely fresh rosy complexion. His manner was agreeable and friendly. In conversation he did not show any particular ability or marked turn of character—rather the reverse. When first he came to our house he presented the appearance of a very healthy man, but later on he was subject to ill-health, and I fancy he may not have lived beyond the year 1850 or so.

"My father left Naples for Malta in 1821, and Malta for London in 1824. When Graham appeared in 1845 he greeted my father quite on the terms of an old and cordial acquaintance, and I think it likely that they may have first met in Malta, and little if at all in ensuing years. At any rate, it was Graham who gave my father notice of an event which occurred in Malta in 1846—the death of the Right Honble. John Hookham Frere, who had been, in the years 1821 to 1824, a most valuable and highly-prized friend to my father in Malta.

"Mr. Graham showed me two very early verse-compositions, addressed to himself, by Shelley—one of them, I think, remains still unpublished; and some remarks written by Coleridge, which I have quoted in my edition of that poet ('Moxon's Popular Poets'), and again in the volume named 'Lives of Famous Poets.' As I was

then already a very fervent admirer of Shelley, I must no doubt have asked Graham as to his reminiscences of the poet, but I cannot remember his having told me anything of a noticeable kind."

#### Mr. HAYWARD

was an attorney, and William Godwin's legal adviser, whose name figures in Shelley's letters in 1815-6 when he was raising money for Godwin's benefit.

#### ELIZABETH HITCHENER (b. 1782?)

Elizabeth Hitchener's father is said to have been formerly a smuggler, who had changed his name from Yorke to that of Hitchener. He afterwards kept a public house in the neighbourhood of Hurstpierpoint, Sussex, where his daughter had a school. She owed little to her parents, and before she was ten, she was sent to the school of a Miss Adams, whose favourite pupil she became, and who treated her with the affection of a mother. Writing in 1812, Miss Hitchener spoke of her former schoolmistress as the mother of her soul, who had kept a school for thirty-seven years, "but having too much virtue for the age, she has ever been an object of persecution. She is still compelled to continue it, and I have long sighed to offer her an asylum. This was my principal motive for engaging in a school; but till I am independent of my parents I durst not." Shelley first met Miss Hitchener when on a visit to his uncle, Captain Pilfold, at Cuckfield, in June, 1811. Her school was not far distant from the captain's house, and she numbered among her pupils one of his daughters. Miss Hitchener's views were liberal, and she was quite ready to discuss the subjects of religious philosophy and philanthropy, which possessed for Shelley at that date so great a fascination. He was charmed with his new friend, whom he soon invested with all the virtues and attributes he most admired, and with characteristic enthusiasm he at once enlisted her among his correspondents. Miss Hitchener's letters soon become scarcely less ardent than Shelley's, and he realised that his marriage to Harriet Westbrook at the end of August, 1811, would cause her considerable surprise. She would have heard of the event from the Pilfolds, but some six weeks later he wrote her a letter explaining his reasons for taking that step. Shelley met Miss Hitchener again on his visit to Cuckfield in October, 1811, and she soon afterwards acknowledged Harriet as the "sister" and Shelley as "the brother" of her "soul." Harriet now having joined in the correspondence, it became even more intimate, and the necessity of finding a name for her presented "Miss Hitchener," they decided, was too formal, and they could not call her Eliza, as Miss Westbrook who was one of the family, possessed that name; so she suggested Portia (or Porcia), but this did not long meet with favour, and was afterwards changed for that of Bessy. Her correspondence with Shelley became at length the talk of Hurstpierpoint and the neighbourhood, and Mrs. Pilfold seems to have made mischief on hearing that her nephew and his wife were endeavouring to induce the village schoolmistress to give up her school and become one of their family. But

after some hesitation, Shelley's entreaties, supported by Harriet's, overcame Miss Hitchener's discretion, and she therefore took her fate into her own hands, closed her school, left Hurstpierpoint, paid a visit to the Godwins on her way through London, and arrived at Lynmouth about the middle of July, 1812. In a letter to Miss Nugent written from Lynmouth on August 4, Harriet says "Our friend, Miss Hitchener, is come to us. She is very busy writing for the good of mankind. She is very dark in complexion, with a quantity of black hair, she is taller than me or my sister, and as thin as it is possible to be . . . her age is 30, she looks like as if she was only 24, and her spirits are excellent, she laughs and talks all day long." She seems, therefore, at first to have made a favourable impression on the Shelleys, but the impression was not of long duration. In corresponding with Elizabeth Hitchener, Shelley had been addressing a creation more or less of his imagination, and when she came to live under his roof he soon became disillusioned: her popularity declined rapidly and she was removed from her pedestal among the wise, the disinterested, and the virtuous. The whole household were soon against her: Shelley doubted her republicanism and recoiled from her masculinity; Harriet believed that she was setting her cap at Shelley, and even Eliza Westbrook had conceived an aversion for the poor woman. At the end of August the Shelleys left Lynmouth for Tremadoc, Miss Hitchener accompanying them, but in the early days of October they had had already enough of her society and were anxious to be quit of it. They brought her to London, and as she had been induced to give up her school and occupation, Shelley proposed to compensate her with an annuity of £100 a year. She took her departure from the Shelleys' household, probably on November 8, much to the relief of all concerned. A month later, on December 3, Shelley makes a last reference to Miss Hitchener in a letter to Hogg, as "the Brown Demon," and even in terms more objectionable. Miss Hitchener returned to Sussex where the "Newspaper Editor" in Fraser's Magazine "saw her at the house of her father, sitting alone with one of Shelley's works before her. Her fine black eye lighted up, her well-formed Roman countenance was full of animation, when I spoke of Shelley." Medwin speaks of her as "an esprit fort, ceruleanly blue," who "fancied herself a poetess. I only know one anecdote of her," he says, "which Shelley used to relate, laughing till the tears ran down his cheeks. She perpetrated an ode, proving that she was a great stickler for the rights of her sex, the first line of which ran thus:

"'All, all are men-women and all!'"

Miss Hitchener was the author of two books: "The Fireside Bagatelle: containing Enigmas of the chief Towns of England and Wales. London, 1818"; a copy of this little volume in my possession bears an inscription in the author's handwriting. Her second work, a poem in blank verse entitled "The Weald of Sussex," appeared in 1822. Miss Hitchener, with her sister, conducted a school at Edmonton in after years, when she earned the esteem of her pupils. Later she married an officer in the Austrian army

and went abroad. After her death, her correspondence with Shelley was left in the hands of the late Mr. Henry Slack, and it was first examined and transcribed by Mr. W. M. Rossetti. Mr. D. F. MacCarthy made considerable use of the correspondence in his "Early Life of Shelley," 1872, but Mr. Thomas J. Wise was the first to print the letters fully when he issued them in 2 small volumes for private circulation. Mr. B. Dobell edited and published an excellent edition of the letters in 1908, printing the text from the plates of Mr. Wise's impression. The MSS. of the original correspondence were presented to the British Museum in 1907 by the Rev. Charles Hargrove, to whom they had been left by Mr. Slack's widow. For the present work the letters have been collated with the originals, and some passages hitherto unprinted have been restored.

#### Thomas Jefferson Hogg (1792-1862)

The eldest son of the seven children of John Hogg, D.L. and barrister-at-law of Lincoln's Inn, was born at Norton, co. Durham, on May 24, 1792. He was sent to the Royal Grammar School at Durham, and in January, 1810, he went to University College. Oxford. At the beginning of Michaelmas term of that year, that is at the end of October, he happened "to sit next to a freshman at dinner. It was his first appearance in hall. His figure was slight and his aspect remarkably youthful, even at our table, where all were very young. He seemed thoughtful and absent. He ate little. and had no acquaintance with anyone." The freshman was Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Hogg was destined to become his most intimate friend, the biographer of his early years, and especially of his brief career at Oxford. Hogg claimed to have assisted Shelley with "The Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson," and also, with perhaps more justice, to have written a portion of the lost novel, "Leonora." In March, 1811, Shelley in circulating his anonymous pamphlet, "The Necessity of Atheism," brought himself under the notice of the heads of his college, who called upon him to affirm or deny its authorship. He declined to answer their questions, and Hogg, who was known to be his inseparable companion, was then summoned; he also refused to give any account of the pamphlet. The two friends were therefore peremptorily expelled the University, and they left Oxford at eight o'clock on the following day (March 26th) for London, and found some lodgings at Poland Street, Oxford Street. After spending a month together, Hogg left London for Ellesmere in Shropshire, for a short holiday, and then settled down to his legal training in a conveyancer's office at York. Shelley continued to correspond with Hogg with whom he endeavoured to arrange a match with his sister Elizabeth, notwithstanding that Hogg was unacquainted with her. On August 24th or 25th Shelley eloped with Harriet Westbrook to Edinburgh, where Hogg joined the young couple shortly afterwards, returning with them about the end of September or beginning of October to York. But on his arrival at that city, Shelley was obliged to hasten to London on business, and left his bride in the care of Hogg, who was tempted to make love to

Harriet seems to have sent for her sister Eliza to protect her from Hogg's attentions, and she made Shelley acquainted with his friend's treachery immediately on his return. An explanation followed, and Shelley, believing that Hogg was repentant, forgave him, but without taking leave of him, Shelley at once left for Keswick with Harriet and his sister-in-law. From the correspondence which afterwards ensued, Hogg attempted to justify himself to Shelley, who was not, however, deceived by his sophistry, and broke off all communication with him. When Shelley was in London at the beginning of November, 1812, he called on Hogg, a reconciliation took place between the two friends, and the intimacy, practically on the old footing, was resumed. Hogg was invited to Tanyrallt in the spring of 1813, but the visit was put off owing to the assault on Shelley at that place, and his departure for Ireland. was arranged that Hogg should meet Shelley in Dublin, but on arriving in that city, he learnt that the poet had gone to Killarney and Hogg returned home without seeing him. Shelley was in London in April, 1813, and from that date until he left England for the last time in March, 1818, Hogg was constantly in his society, and he continued to correspond with him occasionally from Italy. Hogg entered the Middle Temple, was called to the bar in 1817, and for many years attended the Durham and Northumberland sessions and assizes, and obtained some practice. Although painstaking and clear-headed, he did not make a successful counsel: he was too reserved and lacked quickness and eloquence. In 1833 he became one of the Municipal Corporation Commissioners for England and Wales, and afterwards was for more than twenty years revisingbarrister for Northumberland, Berwick, and the Northern boroughs. Hogg paid his addresses to Mrs. Williams in 1823 on her return to England after Edward Ellerker Williams had met his death with Shelley in the ill-fated Don Juan, and he consented to qualify himself for her hand by making a tour on the Continent. His travels were issued in 1827 with the title "Two Hundred and Nine Days of the Journal of a Traveller on the Continent," and in the meantime he was united to the lady of his choice. He became one of J. S. Mill's circle of admirers, and continued on terms of intimacy with Hunt, Peacock, Coulson, and others of Shelley's friends. Hogg was a distinguished linguist: his knowledge of Greek was profound, and he was thoroughly versed in French, German, Spanish, and Italian.

It is as the biographer of Shelley that Hogg claims remembrance. In the New Monthly Magazine for 1832 and 1833 he contributed a series of articles describing Shelley's life at Oxford. These papers, which were revised somewhat drastically, though probably improved by the editor of that magazine, Edward Lytton-Bulwer, were acknowledged by Mary Shelley and Shelley's friends generally as presenting a most faithful picture of the poet; and it was naturally supposed that Hogg would make an excellent biographer of his friend. About the year 1855 the Shelley family commissioned him to write Shelley's life, and entrusted him for that purpose with a mass of correspondence and documents. On the

appearance in 1858 of the first two volumes of the work, it was received with unqualified disapprobation by the family, who withdrew the materials from his hands, and no more volumes were issued and apparently the book was never completed. Hogg's book, which, to say the least of it, is an unconventional biography, carries the life of Shelley down to the spring of 1814. It might be described with certain reservations as the confessions of Thomas Jefferson Hogg, with some recollections of his friend P.B.S. The book is an ollapodrida of random reminiscences and amusing anecdotes highly spiced with the cynical humour of a shrewd man of the world. Incomplete as the book is, it is destined to live.

Besides this unfinished life of Shelley, Hogg wrote a novel which was published in 1814 with the title of "The Memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff," of which Shelley wrote a critique in the *Critical Review* for December, 1814. He contributed in 1822 an article on Apuleius to the *Liberal*, and in 1840 "Recollections of Childhood" to Bulwer's *Monthy Chronicle*, which was ridiculed by Thackeray, besides articles on Antiquities and Alphabets to the "Encyclopaedia Britannica." Mr. Walter Leigh Hunt, who tells me that he remembers meeting Hogg in old age, described him as a shy, reserved, and somewhat disappointed man, who passed his last days as a studious

recluse.

#### Thomas Hookham, Junr. (1787-1867),

the son of Thomas Hookham, of Huntingdonshire, who was born in 1739 or 1740. As a young man the elder Hookham travelled in Holland and Germany, and is said to have married a lady belonging to the family of the Earl of Barrymore. In the year 1764, having come into the possession of a considerable sum of money, he founded the circulating library which bore his name for over a hundred years at Old Bond Street, although it is said to have been established at some other place. Besides the library, Hookham opened about the year 1794, a suite of reading-rooms which he dignified with the name of the Literary Assembly, under the patronage of the Prince of Wales and the Royal Dukes, where subscribers had access to an extensive reference library as well as to the English and foreign periodicals. In the meantime he started publishing in New Bond Street—the firm was later known as Hookham & Carpenter, their chief business was the issuing of works of fiction and memoirs of the circulating library order, the most noteworthy being "The Romance of the Forest," "The Sicilian Romance," and "The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne" of Mrs. Radcliffe. Hookham died at Lower Tooting in 1819 in his eightieth year. In 1811, when the younger Thomas Hookham was about twenty-five—a little man of about five feet high,—he and his brother, Edward T. Hookham, were publishing books on their own account at their father's library, 15 Old Bond Street, for in that year they issued the Chevalier Lawrence's Utopian romance, "The Empire of the Nairs, or the Rights of Women;" in 1812 their names appeared on the title-pages of the second edition of Peacock's poems, "The Genius of the Thames," and "The Philosophy of Melancholy," and in 1813

T. Hookham issued Hogg's romance, "Memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff," of which Shelley wrote a review. Shelley possibly made Hookham's acquaintance through Peacock whom he may have met in 1812 on one of his walking tours in Wales. From Shelley's earliest letter to Hookham (July 29, 1812), which appears to have been preserved, it is evident that it was preceded by others that have not survived; but in Hookham he had found a young man much after his own heart, who although brought up as a member of the Church of England, is said, like his brother, to have become an Unitarian with leanings towards freethought and republicanism. correspondence was continued on friendly lines, and it was to Hookham that Shelley applied for a loan after the assault at Tanyrallt. In March, 1813, Shelley sent Hookham from Dublin the MS. of "Queen Mab," saying that he desired it to be printed and published immediately. The poem was issued as "printed by P. B. Shelley" (with the address of 23 Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square, the house of Mr. Westbrook), on the title-page. Shelley's name also appears at the end of the volume. Neither Hookham's name nor that of the actual printer occurs in the book. The late Mr. Edward Hookham, a nephew of Thomas Hookham, stated that "Queen Mab" was responsible for Shelley's quarrel with Hookham. He is said to have destroyed all the copies of the "Letter to Lord Ellenborough" that Shelley had sent him, except the one copy that he retained for his own use. We do not know whether he was successful in satisfying Shelley with the wisdom of this holocaust, but a coolness between the poet and Hookham was evident after the former came to London in April, 1813. By that time "Queen Mab" was in the printer's hands, and when Shelley delivered the notes for the poem, it is not unlikely that his publisher, alarmed at their unmeasured frankness, had declined to be connected with the book. Shelley's association, however, with the Bond Street publisher was not entirely discontinued. Hookham espoused the cause of Harriet Shelley, and it is to his honour that he endeavoured to be riend her after her separation from her husband. Whether rightly or wrongly, Shelley imputed to him some of the causes of his misery and poverty in London during the winter of 1814. Hookham, however, bore Shelley's anger with good grace and made considerable efforts to assist him out of his difficulties. At a later date he acted as a mediator between Shelley and Harriet during her last days, and it fell to his unhappy lot to acquaint Shelley with the fact of her death. At the beginning of May, 1816, Shelley left England for a tour in Switzerland, but before the date of his return (about the 9th of September) Thomas Hookham had started on a walking tour in Switzerland. In December, 1817, Hookham, in conjunction with the Olliers, published the Shelleys' "History of a Six Weeks' Tour through a part of Switzerland, Germany, and Holland," and on February 1st, 1818, he published his own travels anonymously in a foolscap octavo volume of 242 pages with the title "A Walk Through Switzerland, in September, 1816, 'Long, long be my heart with such memories filled!' London: Printed for T. Hookham, jun., Old Bond Street, and Baldwin, Cradock and Joy, Paternoster Row,

The book is well written and evidently the work of a cultivated and well-read man, and, like Shelley's, is in the form of letters, but beyond that point it bears little resemblance to the "History of a Six Weeks' Tour," as he traversed only a small portion of the ground covered by Shelley. Lausanne, however, suggests the usual reference to Gibbon, and Lake Geneva inspires him with thoughts of Rousseau. With the publication of Shelley's book his association with Hookham came to an end. He presented him with a copy of "Laon and Cythna," and continued, even when living in Italy, to subscribe to the Library in Old Bond Street, but he probably did not correspond. In later life Thomas Hookham became acquainted with Sir Percy and Lady Shelley, who acquired the letters that Shelley had addressed to him, and the rare pamphlets that he had received from the poet's hands; he also assisted them in forming their collection of Shelley letters. Hookham died in 1867, like his father, in his eightieth year, and the Library, formed shortly afterwards into a limited liability company, has since disappeared.

#### Mrs. Hooper

Mrs. Hooper was Shelley's landlady at Lynmouth in whose house the poet lodged during the July and August of 1812, with his wife and her sister, Eliza Westbrook. Here Miss Hitchener came in the middle of July. On September 19, after the Shelleys had left Lynmouth for three weeks, Godwin arrived, and called on Mrs. Hooper. In a letter to his wife he expressed himself as delighted with her; "She is a good creature." he said, "and quite loved the Shelleys. They lived here nine weeks and three days. They went away in a great hurry, in debt to her and two more. They gave her a draft upon the Honourable Mr. Lawless, brother to Lord Cloncurry, and they borrowed of her twenty-nine shillings, besides 43 that she got for them from a neighbour, all of which they faithfully returned when they got to Ilfracombe, the people not choosing to change a banknote which had been cut in half for safety in sending it by the post. But the best news is that the woman says they will be in London in a fortnight." Mrs. Hooper's house has been pulled down and another erected on its site. Its position was pointed out to the late Miss Mathilde Blind, by a daughter of Mrs. Hooper, a Mrs. Blackmore, then eighty-one, who retained a vivid recollection of Shelley. particulars are noted in Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley."

#### Dr. Hume (1781-1857)

John Robert Hume was born at Renfrewshire and received his medical education at Glasgow and Edinburgh. He had been Wellington's physician in the Peninsula, and he continued to act as the Duke's medical adviser in England, which office he also held for the Duke of Cambridge. He was an M.D. of St. Andrew's, 1816, L.R.C.P. 1819, a Commissioner of Lunacy in 1836, and an inspector-general of hospitals. When Chancery decided that Shelley was not to have the custody of his two children by Harriet, Ianthe and Charles Bysshe, his proposal in 1818 that Dr. and

Mrs. Hume should act as their guardians was approved by the Master in Chancery. Dr. Hume agreed to bring the children up according to the principles of the Church of England, and in attending to their religious education he undertook that they should be furnished with no books that would be likely to shake their faith in any of the great points of the established religion, and among their books expurgated editions of Shakespeare, Pope, and Hume's "History of England" were especially named. The boy was to be placed at the age of seven in a good private school—whence he was to pass to a public school and afterwards to one of the Universities. The girl was to be educated at home by Mrs. Hume, if necessary with the assistance of suitable masters. The fee for the education of the children was fixed at £200 a year, £120 of which was to be paid by Shelley and the remaining £80 was to be derived from Mr. Westbrook's £2,000 4 per cent. securities. Charles Bysshe Shelley did not survive his father many years: he died at the age of twelve in 1826. Ianthe Eliza, who afterwards became Mrs. Esdaile, died in 1876.

JAMES HENRY LEIGH HUNT (1784-1859); MARIANNE HUNT was a son of the Rev. Isaac Hunt, of Barbados, born at Southgate, Middlesex, and educated from the age of seven to fifteen at Christ Hospital (1791-1799). As a boy he amused himself by writing verses, and a collection of these was published in 1801 by subscription under the title "Juvenilia." Three years later Hunt began life as a journalist by contributing to The Traveller, and in 1808 he became editor, and his brother, John Hunt, publisher, of the Examiner, which was conducted on an independent policy, but with advanced liberal and humanitarian views. On February 24, 1811, an article appeared in the paper on military floggings, and a Government prosecution followed; but the Hunt brothers were acquitted. Shelley was at Oxford at the time and he addressed a letter to Leigh: Hunt to congratulate him on the result of his case. Hunt, however, was soon in trouble again. On March 22, 1812, an article appeared in the Examiner from his pen entitled "The Prince on St. Patrick's Day," in which the Prince was mercilessly taken to task, and described as "a corpulent gentleman of fifty." Leigh Hunt and his brother were again put on trial, but on this occasion they lost their case and were sentenced to two years' imprisonment with a fine of £500 each. Shelley proposed that Hookham should start a subscription for the Hunts, and he put his name down for £20. He must have also written direct to Hunt, who says in his "Autobiography" that the imprisonment brought him acquainted with Shelley, "I had seen little of him before, but he wrote to me making me a princely offer, which at the time I stood in no need of." Leigh Hunt's first meetings with Shelley were restricted to a 'few short visits which did not produce intimacy." Thornton Hunt, in a note to his father's "Autobiography," from which the above is quoted, says that Mr. Rowland Hunter "first brought Leigh Hunt and his most valued friend personally together. Shelley had brought a manuscript poem which proved by no means suited to the

publishing house in St. Paul's Churchyard, but Mr. Hunter sent the young reformer to seek the counsel of Leigh Hunt." In the spring of 1816 Leigh Hunt moved to Hampstead, where Shelley visited him in December. In the same month Hunt contributed an article to the Examiner on "Young Poets," dealing with the work of Shelley, John Hamilton Reynolds, and John Keats. On the day after Shelley's return to Bath from his visit to Hunt he learnt of the suicide of Harriet Shelley, and he at once returned to London to claim his children. Leigh Hunt's sympathy at this time did much to sustain Shelley "against the weight and horror" of the event, and the anxiety of the Chancery proceedings that followed it. Henceforth Shelley counted Leigh Hunt among his most valued friends and correspondents, and they were frequently at each others' houses. Shelley was always ready to aid with his purse or his advice, and Hunt never lost an opportunity to defend his friend when assailed, as he too often was, by the press. Shelley's last day in London, Tuesday, March 10, 1818, was spent at his lodgings in the company of Leigh Hunt and his wife. In his correspondence with Hunt from abroad the affectionate side of Shelley's character is seen at its best, and in that beautiful letter dedicating "The Cenci" to Hunt, he pays the highest possible tribute to his sterling qualities as a friend. Hunt at this time was much bothered with money matters; he had a large family to provide for and some domestic troubles, and although he was most industrious, he failed to make any headway. It was suggested to Shelley by Byron that Hunt should be asked to come to Italy and found the quarterly review, which was afterwards known as The Liberal, Byron was to provide the funds and pay Hunt's expenses. It was not suggested, however, that he should depend entirely on the review for his support. Shelley had often expressed a wish that Hunt should join him in Italy, and Hunt was only too glad of this opportunity to do so. But he made the fatal mistake of throwing up the editorship of the Examiner and of bringing his entire family with him, consisting of his wife and seven children. He set sail for Italy in November, 1821, and the boat after being tossed about in the channel, went into Plymouth. Here the Hunts settled down for the winter, and started again in the following spring and arrived at Leghorn on July 1st, 1822. Shelley went to meet his friend, and after seeing him and his family comfortably settled in the apartments provided for them by Byron in his palace, he set out for Lerici on his last voyage.

Hunt was present at the cremation of Shelley's body, of which ceremony he has left a vivid description in his "Autobiography"; he also wrote the Latin inscription for Shelley's tomb. Having lost his friend, it was now necessary for Hunt to treat with Byron direct regarding the *Liberal*, but things did not go smoothly. Byron did not get on with him, the review failed, and was discontinued with the fourth number. Hunt was now stranded in a foreign country without any regular means of support, and practically without friends. He managed to make a meagre living by writing articles for English periodicals, and he returned to England in 1825. Three

years later his "Lord Byron and some of his Contemporaries" was published and it raised a storm of indignation from all of Byron's admirers, and their name was legion. The book was written while Hunt was still smarting from the treatment that he had received from Byron, and he lived to regret it. But it contains much that is interesting besides the portion devoted to Byron. Hunt gives some particulars of his own life which afterwards formed the basis of his "Autobiography"; also recollections of Shelley, Keats, Lamb, and other of his contemporaries, besides some letters of Shelley and Trelawny's account of his cremation. Leigh Hunt's life henceforth was almost entirely devoted to work. He possessed but little capacity for business, but his misfortunes were not, as has been so often represented, entirely of his own making. He was a painstaking, industrious worker, whose modest wants were few and easily supplied. Mrs. Leigh Hunt's health had been very bad, and in the year 1822 her life was despaired of. She survived, however, for many years, until 1857; and it is painful to add that she proved a source of the greatest unhappiness to her husband. It has only recently been made public (by Mr. H. W. Nevinson in the Nation for May 22, 1909) that Mrs Leigh Hunt was totally incapable of managing her house, and that the secret of Hunt's borrowing proclivities is explained by her intemperate habits.

One of Mary Shelley's first acts, on the death of Sir Timothy in 1844, was to carry out Shelley's intention of settling \$\int 120\$ a year

on Leigh Hunt.

#### FANNY IMLAY (1794-1816)

was born in Paris, the daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft and Gilbert Imlay, with whom she lived as his wife for some time (chiefly in Paris during the Terror), and to whom she addressed those pathetic letters which were given to the world by William Godwin after her Fanny's birth, and many references to her babyhood are detailed in these letters. In 1795 Mary Wollstonecraft went to Sweden and Norway on business as Imlay's accredited agent, and she took her child with her, but shortly after her return to England she found herself deserted by Imlay. Some months of misery followed and then Mary renewed her acquaintance with William Godwin and married him in 1797, but she died five months later. Fanny Imlay was henceforth known as Fanny Godwin, and was brought up with her half-sister, Mary, in the Godwin household. In 1801 Godwin married Mrs. Clairmont, a formidable step-mother, who besides being an accomplished liar, possessed an ungovernable temper and a malicious tongue. Happiness was out of the question in the house of such a woman, but after Mary Godwin, accompanied by Mrs. Godwin's daughter, Claire Clairmont, eloped with Shelley in 1814, Fanny's life became unendurable. It was rendered even more miserable later when Mrs. Godwin declared that Shelley and Fanny were in love with one another. There is every reason to suppose that the girl was attracted to Shelley, as most women were, and her letters show that she was keenly interested in everything concerning him, but it is unlikely that Shelley entertained anything

except a brotherly regard for her. It is said that Fanny did not know her own history until she was grown up, and that she was much upset when it was disclosed to her. Forbidden to associate with Mary or Shelley, and unequal to support alone the vagaries of Mrs. Godwin's temper, she left home one autumn day in 1816, with the apparent intention of visiting an aunt in Ireland, and proceeding to Swansea in loneliness and despair, she ended her short and unhappy life by a self-administered dose of laudanum.

#### JOHN KEATS (1795-1821)

The name of Keats was associated with that of Shelley in Leigh Hunt's Examiner article on "Young Poets" of December 1st, 1816. Henceforth, until Shelley left England for ever in March, 1818, he and Leigh Hunt were frequently together, and probably the two young poets met at Hunt's house. Keats's name occurs in the extracts from Mary Shelley's diary for February, 1817, printed by Professor Dowden in his "Life of Shelley," either as a visitor to the Shelleys at their London lodgings, or as Leigh Hunt's guest at Hampstead; but he had/declined an invitation to Marlow, as he feared that Shelley's influence might hamper the development of his powers. Keats's first volume of poems appeared in 1817, and Mr. Dix states, in his "Pen and Ink Sketches," that Shelley interested himself in its production. This statement is not, however, borne out by Keats's remark in his letter to Shelley when he says, "I remember you advising me not to publish my first blights on Hampstead Heath." On February 4, 1818, Shelley, Keats, and Leigh Hunt each wrote a sonnet in friendly rivalry on the River Nile. From Mary Shelley's diary it would appear that Shelley met Keats a few days later, probably for the last time, at Hunt's house on February 11, 1818. Besides the letter to Keats printed in this collection, Shelley wrote to him when he heard of his arrival in Italy (see p. 856). Lord Houghton says in his "Life and Letters of Keats," "He had received a most kind letter from Mr. Shelley, anxiously inquiring about his health, offering him advice as to the adaptation of diet to the climate, and concluding with an urgent invitation to Pisa, where he could assure him every comfort and attention. But for one circumstance, it is unfortunate that this offer was not accepted, as it might have spared at least some annoyance to the sufferer, and much painful responsibility, extreme anxiety, and unrelieved distress to his friend." Keats died at Rome on Feb. 23, 1821. Shelley, who did not care for Keats's earlier poetry, and confessed that he read "Endymion" with difficulty, praised some passages in that poem, and was loud in his admiration of "Hyperion": it is strange, however, that he spoke but slightingly of the other poems in Keats's last volume. Leigh Hunt's own copy of this book, which was found in the pocket of Shelley's jacket, turned back as if he had reen reading it when the boat was overcome by the sudden squall that wrecked it, was burnt with Shelley's body. It is mainly then to Shelley's admiration for "Hyperion," that we owe the "Adonais," his elegy on the death of the younger poet.

#### SIR JAMES HENRY LAWRENCE (1773-1840)

was the son of Richard James Lawrence of Fairfield, Jamaica. He received his education at Eton and in Germany. One of his earlier works was a poem published in 1791 entitled "The Bosom Friend." Two years later he produced an essay on the Nair Caste in Malaber. regarding marriage and inheritance, which essay was inserted by Wieland in his Merkur. The subject evidently fascinated Lawrence for in 1800 he contributed a romance on the same theme to a German periodical with the title of "Das Paridies der Liebe," subsequently reprinted in volume form as "Das Reich des Nairen." Lawrence afterwards translated the book into French and English: the latter version appeared in 1811 under the title of "The Empire of the Nairs." This book attracted the notice of Shelley and led him to write to Lawrence, but it does not appear that the correspondence was continued. A collection of Lawrence's miscellaneous pieces in poetry and prose was published as "The Etonian out of Bounds." In 1803 while Lawrence and his father were travelling on the Continent they were detained as prisoners of war at Verdun by Napoleon, and this adventure he made the subject of a play entitled "The Englishman at Verdun," and dealt with the same incident afterwards in a book entitled "The Picture of Verdun, or the Englishman Detained in France": an entertaining work in which this writer is seen at his best. Lawrence died unmarried on Sept. 26, 1840. On the title-pages of his books he describes himself as "Sir James Lawrence, Knight of Malta": he was generally spoken of as" The Chevalier Lawrence."

#### THOMAS MEDWIN (1788-1869); THOMAS CHARLES MEDWIN

Thomas Medwin was born at Horsham, the third son of the attorney of that place, Thomas Charles Medwin. Concerning his relationship to Shelley, Medwin says "Miss Michell, Sir Bysshe's first wife, was my grandfather's first cousin; and my mother bore the same degree of consanguinity to Miss Pilfold [Shelley's Mother], their fathers being brothers." Shelley's correspondence with the elder Medwin is chiefly concerned with business, but Medwin lent his young relative a sum of money when he eloped with Harriet Westbrooke; Shelley, however, when trouble arose, was most anxious to shield Medwin from any charge of having connived in the affair. The younger Medwin was sent to Syon House School, Brentford. where Shelley shortly afterwards followed him. He matriculated at Oxford in 1805, became a lieutenant in the 24th Light Dragoons, went with his regiment to India, and described some of his adventures there in "The Angler in Wales." He issued subsequently, through the Olliers, at Shelley's recommendation, "Sketches in Hindoostan and other poems," 1821, but apparently without He was placed on half-pay in July, 1819, with the rank of captain, and he seems to have afterwards served in the 1st Life Guards, but at length he finally quitted the service.

Medwin visited Italy in the autumn of 1821, and at Pisa he was introduced by Shelley to Byron at the Lanfranchi Palace. Here he stayed from Nov. 20, 1821, to March, 1822, and then went

to Rome, but returned to Pisa in the August after Shelley's death. During the time he was acquainted with Byron he took notes of his talk and published them after the poet's death as Conversations of Lord Byron, 1824. The book was very successful and was reprinted in Paris and New York and translated into German, but the descriptions of Byron were held to be somewhat inaccurate. Medwin spent most of his life on the Continent; and in 1825 married in Italy Anne, Baroness Hamilton of Sweden, by whom he had two daughters, both of whom married Italian noblemen: he later separated from his wife. Medwin, however, continued his literary work, and in 1833 edited "The Shelley Papers," with a memoir which he afterwards expanded into a book of two volumes as a life of Shelley. The book contains some interesting particulars of Shelley's early life, especially of his schooldays, but it is carelessly written and Medwin's uncertain memory makes it untrustworthy. Among other books Medwin wrote a little volume, printed in Geneva, entitled "Oswald and Edwin." This book is referred to in Shelley's correspondence. He also wrote "Ahasuerus the Wanderer," 1823, and translated the "Agamemnon" and "Prometheus." At length he returned from the Continent to his birthplace, Horsham, where he died in 1869. Medwin seems to have taken himself and his work rather seriously, and was regarded in the Shelley circle as a bore, but Shelley suffered him with more than usual patience.

#### THOMAS MOORE (1779-1852)

As a youth, Shelley had a high regard for the opinion of Thomas Moore, and managed to draw him into correspondence in regard to his poem "Laon and Cythna." When he sent that poem to a publisher, probably Longman, he suggested that Moore should be asked to read it, and on its appearance sent Moore a copy, and afterwards the book in its altered form as "The Revolt of Islam." Moore guessed the authorship of Shelley's "Six Weeks' Tour," the allusions to Byron in that work giving him a clue to the authors. In later years Moore seems to have grown afraid of Shelley's influence on Byron, and although Shelley would not admit that he affected Byron's work, Byron did, as a matter of fact, derive considerable benefit from his association with Shelley. The allusions to Shelley in Moore's "Life of Byron" are by no means generous: it is not improbable that Murray's opinion affected Moore's views there expressed.

#### JOHN MURRAY (1778-1843)

John Murray's father, also named John, was a Scotchman, and an officer in the Navy. The younger Murray settled in London and founded the publishing house, that still bears his name, in 1768, at No. 32 Fleet Street. Besides publishing for Byron, Scott, Borrow, and Southey, Murray founded the Tory Quarterly Review. He declined to publish Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein," and judging from certain remarks in Byron's correspondence, he does not seem to have liked Shelley, whose democratic views evidently repelled him. John Murray maintained friendly relations with the authors

whose books he published, and Byron addressed to him some of his best letters. He was rather over-jealous of Byron's reputation, and did not put his name to the first edition of "Don Juan." He also destroyed Byron's "Memoirs," having purchased the right to do so from Moore for a large sum of money.

## CHARLES HOWARD, ELEVENTH DUKE OF NORFOLK (1746-1815),

familiarly known as "Jockey of Norfolk," was the only son of Charles, tenth Duke. His boyhood was passed at Greystoke Castle, Cumberland, where his education was entrusted to Roman Catholic tutors, but he does not appear to have profited to any extent by their instructions. Although he possessed considerable ability he never attained to any degree of culture—he was, however, on attaining his majority, elected a Fellow, and in 1794 became President of the Royal Society. He engaged at an early age in politics; in 1774 he interested himself in the Carlisle election, and in the years 1780 and 1784, after he had turned Protestant, was returned as member for that borough, holding in the latter year a Lordship of the Treasury during the short administration of the Duke of Portland. On the death of the ninth Duke, in 1777, Charles Howard assumed the courtesy title of the Earl of Surrey, and succeeded his father in 1786 as eleventh Duke. In the meantime he had shown his courage by wearing his hair close cropped at a time when the powdered queue was in universal use by persons of his rank. He was now recognised as leader of the advanced Whig party, but he gave great offence in 1798 when at a great political dinner at the "Crown and Anchor" tavern he proposed the toast "Our sovereign's health: the majesty of the people!" Two days later he was deprived of his command of the West Riding of Yorkshire Regiment and the Lord-Lieutenancy for his revolutionary opinions. The Duke was loud and aggressive in manner, a bon vivant, and given to an over-indulgence in wine. "Nature, which had cast him in her coarsest mould," says Wraxall, "had not bestowed on him any of the external insignia of high His person, large, muscular, and clumsy, was destitute of grace or dignity, though he possessed much activity. He might indeed have been mistaken for a grazier or butcher by his dress and appearance, but intelligence was marked in his features, which were likewise expressive of frankness and sincerity." It may be added that he was not over-clean in his habits, and had an habitual objection to soap and water. He was twice married, first in 1767 to Marian, daughter and heiress of John Coppinger, of Ballyvolune, co. Cork; she died in the following year. His second wife, whom he married in 1771, was Frances, daughter and heiress of Charles Fitzroy Scudamore, of Holme Lacey, Hereford: she became insane and died in 1820. The Duke died in 1815 without issue, but he had several illegitimate children.

With all his faults the Duke was known to have performed kind actions, among which will be remembered a fatherly interest in Shelley, whom he endeavoured to persuade to engage in a political career. He also attempted to reconcile Shelley with his father,

but it would be difficult to conceive two men more utterly unlike in ideas and person than the corpulent Duke of Norfolk and the author of "Queen Mab."

#### CATHERINE NUGENT

When Shelley and Harriet visited Dublin in February, 1812, they made the acquaintance of a Miss Catherine Nugent, age forty, an ardent patriot, and a shop-assistant to Mr. Newman, a furrier, who was engaged in business in Grafton Street. Shelley evidently first made Miss Nugent's acquaintance, for in writing to her on May 7, 1812, he says "Tho' you are Harriet's correspondent, remember that you were first my friend." The correspondence with Miss Nugent, which was continued by Harriet Shelley for many years, contains much that is interesting, and in her later letters written after her separation from Shelley not a little that is pathetic.

#### CHARLES OLLIER (1788-1859); JAMES OLLIER

Charles Ollier, who was descended from a family of French Protestants, started life as a clerk at Coutts's bank. About the year 1816 he founded a publishing house in partnership with his brother James, who looked after the commercial side of the business. Among his earlier books he issued Leigh Hunt's "Foliage" and the second edition of "Rimini." Leigh Hunt doubtless introduced him to Shelley, for whom he first published "A History of a Six Weeks' Tour," and this was followed by one of the "Hermit of Marlow" pamphlets and most of Shelley's other books. In 1820 Ollier brought out the first and only number of his Literary Miscellany, to which Peacock contributed his "Four Ages of Poetry." This article interested Shelley so much that he began a reply to it which was to comprise three parts, one of which only was completed. Ollier was a sincere lover of poetry, and he admired Keats's work sufficiently to undertake the publication of his first volume in 1817. Keats, however, attributed the failure of the book to Ollier's neglect, and he issued his next volume with another publisher. Ollier himself was a writer and produced several stories. namely "Altham," 1818; "Inesella," 1821; "Ferrans," 1842; and "Fallacies of Ghost Dreams and Omens," 1845. In later years his business failed, and he became literary adviser to Bentley, which position he held for many years.

#### J. J. PASCHOUD

was a printer and bookseller at Geneva to whom Shelley wrote respecting a translation of Godwin's "Political Justice" which he agreed to undertake. Paschoud's name also appears as the printer of Medwin's "Oswald and Edwin: an Oriental Sketch," 1820.

#### THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK (1785-1866),

the only son of a London glass-merchant, passed his early years at Chertsey, and at a private school at Englefield Green. From the age of sixteen Peacock studied on his own account, chiefly at the British Museum, reading extensively in English, French, Greek,



Latin and Italian literature, and becoming an accomplished scholar. Much of his time was devoted to writing verse, and in 1806, when he was nineteen, he published a small volume entitled "Palmyra and Other Poems," which was followed in 1810 by the first part of "The Genius of the Thames" (re-issued two years later with the second part) and "The Philosophy of Melancholy," 1812. Peacock was fond of natural scenery and was particularly attracted to Wales, where in 1812, while he was on one of his long walking tours, he is said to have first met Shelley. Peacock states that he saw Shelley for the first time in 1812, just before he went to Tany-They may, however, have been brought together in London by Thomas Hookham, who published for Peacock, and who sent Shelley some of his poems in August, 1812. In a letter to Hookham from Lynmouth, 1812, acknowledging these poems of Peacock's, Shelley speaks of him as "your friend." He says that he considers the conclusion of "Palmyra" as one of the finest pieces of poetry that he has ever read, and regrets that his powers are so circumscribed as to prevent him from becoming extensively useful to What views, political and social, Peacock possessed were the very reverse of Shelley's, but they formed a sympathetic companionship in their Greek studies. When Shelley came to London in April, 1813, Peacock and he probably spent much of their time together; and in the autumn of that year Peacock accompanied Shelley and Harriet to the Lake District and Edinburgh. Shelley parted from his wife in the summer of 1814, and Peacock's sympathies were with Harriet, but probably he did not interfere in the In the autumn of 1815 Peacock joined Shelley and Mary in an excursion on the Thames to Lechlade in Gloucestershire, which may have been the origin of that passion for boating which held Shelley to the end of his life. Shelley visited Switzerland for the second time in May, 1816, and selected Peacock, perhaps on account of his love of scenery, as the correspondent to whom to address his descriptive travel letters. On his return to England, Shelley stayed with Peacock at Great Marlow, Bucks, and in order to be near him he took a house in the same town and contemplated settling there for good. His health, however, broke down, and being recommended to go abroad, he left Marlow early in 1818, and after a brief visit to London where he continued to see Peacock, he quitted England for the last time in March of that year. Peacock's influence on Shelley was in every respect beneficial; besides encouraging him in his Greek studies and interesting him in sculpture, he took him to the theatre and the opera, and generally attempted to widen his friend's somewhat restricted view of life. Peacock was also a gainer by the association, for Shelley not only addressed to him his best letters from Italy, but conferred an annuity on him of £100 a year, appointed him as one of his executors and made him a handsome provision in his will. Peacock's life, apart from Shelley, was uneventful. He held an appointment in the East India Company from 1819 to 1856, retiring on a pension of £1,333 a year, and in 1820, he married Miss Gryffydh, "the beauty of Carnarvonshire," by whom he had a son and three daughters, one of whom became:

the first wife of George Meredith. He wrote seven novels' "Headlong Hall," 1816; "Melincourt," 1817; "Nightmare Abbey," 1818, in which he is supposed to have introduced Shelley in the character of Scythrop; "Maid Marian," 1822; "The Misfortunes of Elphin," 1829; "Crochet Castle," 1831; and "Gryll Grange," 1860. To Fraser's Magazine for 1858, 1860, and 1862, Peacock contributed his memoirs of Shelley, a series of papers of the utmost interest and value, which, however, disappointed his contemporaries on account of his cold and impartial treatment of the subject. "The laughing Philosopher," as Peacock was called, was tall and commanding in appearance, a lover of good living, with strong prejudices, which form not the least attractive feature of his delightful stories.

#### JANETTA PHILLIPS

Dr. W. C. Coupland states that Miss Phillips's relatives were mostly resident in Bridgwater and its neighbourhood. She was the author of a little book issued to subscribers, bearing the title, "Poems by Janetta Phillips, Oxford. Printed by Collingwood & Co., 1811." From the correspondence it would appear that Shelley offered to defray the expenses of printing the volume, and that probably owing to his expulsion from Oxford this offer was declined. The contents of the volume hardly seems to justify Shelley's "generous estimate."

#### HENRY REVELEY

was the son of Mrs. Gisborne by her first husband, Willey Reveley. He was taken while still quite young to Italy, where he was educated by his step-father, John Gisborne; he afterwards went to the University of Pisa, and "distinguished himself by his scientific attainments." He applied for permission to complete his studies at the University of Paris, but his request was refused by Napoleon. With all his ability, Reveley was unsuccessful in his attempt to obtain employment as an engineer in Italy. Even the engine that Shelley employed Reveley to build for his steamboat was doomed to failure for want of funds. While he was engaged in constructing this engine, it became evident that Reveley experienced a difficulty in writing a letter in English, whereupon Shelley undertook to give him lessons. Claire Clairmont confessed that Reveley, who knew her history, desired to marry her, but she could not make up her mind to have him. He married in 1824 a sister of Copley Fielding, the painter, herself an artist. Reveley afterwards held for three years a Government appointment at the Cape, from which he was unjustly discharged, and then went to Western Australia, where he was practically the founder of the city of Perth. These particulars of Reveley's life are derived from an interesting account of him in Professor Dowden's "Life of Shelley."

#### Thomas "Clio" Rickman (1761-1834)

was the son of John Rickman, of "The Cliffe," Lewes, a Quaker who intended his son for the medical profession. At the age of seventeen he became acquainted with Thomas Paine and with him

joined the Headstrong Club, where his precocious gift for writing verse earned for him the name of "Clio." His association with Paine and an imprudent marriage were the means of alienating him from his family. He turned to bookselling for a livelihood, first at Leadenhall Street, and afterwards at 3 Upper Marylebone Street, where he spent the remainder of his days. In this house Paine lodged with him in 1791, and completed the second part of his "Rights of Man." Paine and Rickman were now "the centre of an admiring circle" which included Mary Wollstonecraft, Romney Horne Tooke, and others interested in liberal ideas. "Poetical Scraps," 2 vols., 1803, which Shelley ordered in his letter, contains among its list of subscribers the name of Timothy Shelley, and possibly the book was familiar to Shelley in his father's house. Rickman, who survived two wives, left several children whom he named Paine, Washington, Rousseau, Petrarch, and Volney. He produced a considerable number of books, pamphlets, and verses, and he contributed to the Yellow Dwarf. His portrait was painted by Hazlitt.

#### ARCHIBALD HAMILTON ROWAN (1751-1834),

a son of Gavin Hamilton, he assumed the name of Rowan on inheriting some property from his grandfather. He went to Queen's College, Cambridge, and after three years' residence in Paris, he settled in Ireland, and joined the Society of United Irishmen, 1791, and was an ardent advocate of Catholic emancipation. In 1792 Rowan was tried, on a false charge, of circulating a seditious tract, was found guilty and imprisoned. He escaped, however, to France, and afterwards to America, but on receiving a pardon in 1803 he returned once more to Ireland.

### Joseph Severn (1793-1879)

was the young artist who accompanied John Keats to Italy in 1820, and nursed him with great devotion through his last illness. He was one of the small number of English people who gathered round Shelley's grave when his ashes were buried in the English Cemetery at Rome. Severn was Consul at Rome, and was buried there beside Keats, fifty-eight years after the death of his friend.

### HARRIET SHELLEY (1795-1816)

was the daughter of John Westbrook, who had made sufficient by 1811 as a tavern-house keeper in Mount Street, London, to retire from business, and was living in a house in Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square. Mr. Westbrook was known by the name of "Jew Westbrook," from his swarthy appearance, and his other daughter Eliza, some fifteen years Harriet's senior, resembled him in possessing dark eyes, and a quantity of coarse black hair. But Harriet Westbrook was a beauty: Miss Hellen Shelley describes her "as a very handsome girl, with a complexion quite unknown in those days—brilliant in pink and white—with hair quite like a poet's dream." Peacock says that 'she had a good figure, light, active and graceful. Her features were regular and well

·proportioned. Her hair was light brown, and dressed with taste and simplicity. In her dress she was simplex munditis. Her complexion was beautifully transparent, the tint of the blush rose shining through the lily. The tone of her voice was pleasant; her speech the essence of frankness and cordiality; her spirits always cheerful: her laugh spontaneous, hearty and joyous." When Shelley and Harriet first met she was a schoolfellow of Mary and Hellen Shelley at Miss Fenning's school on Clapham Common. In January, 1811, Shelley and his cousin, Charles Grove, called at Mr. Westbrook's with a present for Harriet from Mary Shelley, and from that time Shelley and Harriet corresponded with one another. When Shelley was living in London after his expulsion from Oxford he was frequently at the Westbrooks' house, apparently at Eliza's invitation, and he visited Harriet at Clapham when she returned to school. Older than her fellow pupils, Harriet was tormented by them chiefly on account of her correspondence with Shelley. has been said that one of his letters was discovered by her schoolmistress, who dismissed her from the school. On July 15 Shelley arrived at Cwm Elan, on a visit to his cousin, Thomas Grove, and about a fortnight later he heard from Harriet that attempts were being made to force her to return to school. Shelley at once returned to London, and proposed marriage as a means of escape from her unhappy position, and towards the end of August, probably the 24th, they left London in a hackney coach for Edinburgh. Shelley took the preliminary steps for marriage according to the Scottish law, but it is doubtful if he completed the form (see p. 137). Hogg, who had joined Shelley at Edinburgh, was compelled to return to York at the beginning of October, and Shelley and Harriet accompanied him. But business called Shelley to London on his arrival at York, and he left Harriet in the care of his friend, who at once began to annoy her with his attentions. She acquainted Shelley of the circumstances on his return, and after an explanation with Hogg, who seemed repentant and was forgiven, Shelley departed from York with Harriet for Keswick. Harriet's life is so much bound up with Shelley's until the summer of 1814, that it is unnecessary to describe it in detail. Her separation from Shelley has been summarised in a note which will be found on page 421 of this work, and her unhappy death is also referred to in another note on page 532; while some of her letters, written after Shelley left her, are printed in an appendix at page 991.

#### MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT SHELLEY (1797-1851)

was born in London on August 30, 1797, the only child of William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, who died a few days after her birth. The child was at once taken charge of by Mrs. Reveley, who became Mrs. Gisborne, after she had refused the hand of William Godwin. Mary was devoted to her father, but she could not get on with her step-mother, and her childhood had been far from happy. Shortly before she completed her fifteenth year she spent a holiday of four months in Dundee, at the home of Mr. David Baxter, who had several daughters near her own age, and one of the

girls, Isobel Baxter, became Mary's intimate friend and corre-The day after her return home, Nov. 11, 1812, is spondent. remarkable from the fact that she then saw Shelley for the first He was dining at Godwin's house with Harriet, and Eliza Westbrook, and although there was apparently nothing noteworthy in the meeting, Shelley could not but have looked with interest on the daughter of Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft. From June 3rd, 1813, to March 30, 1814, Mary was absent from home on another visit to the Baxters. Godwin records in his diary for May 5, 1814, that "Shelley called," and it is probable that Mary saw the young poet on that occasion for the second time. In his endeavours to raise money for the relief of Godwin's embarrassments, Shelley was frequently at Skinner Street during the ensuing weeks. Mary was now an interesting and intelligent girl in her seventeenth year, who before long attracted Shelley as perhaps no woman had before attracted him. Mrs. Marshall states in her "Life of Mary Shelley" (I do not know her authority) that during the visit of Shelley and Harriet to Scotland in 1813, the first shadow arose between them. It is evident that during the early months of 1814 Harriet's manner was changed towards him, and that his friendship with Mrs. Boinville, her sister, and her daughter, had tended to widen the breach between husband and wife. It so happened then that when Mary Godwin came into Shelley's life, he was lonely and in want of sympathy. Their intimacy soon grew into love on both sides, and on July 28, 1814, Mary united her fate with Shelley's and fled with him to Switzerland. They returned to England in the autumn to face some months of poverty, but early in 1815, Sir Bysshe Shelley died, and Shelley received a settled income from his father which enabled him henceforth to live in comfort. They went to Switzerland for the second time in May, 1816, when they met Byron at Geneva. Extracts from the journal that Mary kept were subsequently published in 1817 with some of Shelley's letters as a History of a Six Week's Tour." But the holiday bore other fruit; during a period of rainy weather, Shelley, Mary, Byron, and Polidori, his physician, amused themselves by reading ghost stories, and they each agreed to write one. Mary Shelley set to work on Frankenstein," which was ultimately published in 1818.

Shelley learnt of Harriet's death in December, 1816, and on the 30th of that month he married Mary Godwin. Her history for the next six years is so much a part of Shelley's that there is no occasion to describe it here. Her grief at the loss of her two children, William and Clara, was mitigated by the birth of a son (afterwards Sir Percy Florence Shelley) at Florence in 1819. After Shelley's death in July, 1822, Mary Shelley remained in Italy until August, 1823, when she returned to London. Her life henceforth was devoted to his memory, and the education of her son. One of her first tasks was to collect material for a volume of Shelley's "Posthumous Poems," which was published in 1824, the expenses being guaranteed by B. W. Procter, T. L. Beddoes, and T. F. Kelsall.

In 1823, Mary Shelley published her novel "Valperga," the proceeds of which she gave to her father. Other novels from her pen

followed: "The Last Man" in 1826, "Perkin Warbeck" in 1829, and "Lodore" in 1835, which, as Prof. Dowden discovered, is a veiled autobiography, describing the author's privations in London during the year 1814. Sir Timothy made a meagre provision for Mary Shelley and her son, but only on condition that she suppressed the "Posthumous Poems" (after more than 300 copies had been sold) and abstained from publishing any memoir of Shelley during her father-in-law's lifetime. These conditions were somewhat relaxed by 1839, when she gave to the world a valuable edition of Shelley's poems with her notes, and in the following year edited his "Essays, Letters from abroad, Translations and Fragments." From 1840 to 1843 Mary Shelley with her son paid several visits to the Continent, and in 1844 her last book, "Rambles in Germany and Italy," was On the death of Sir Timothy Shelley in 1844, the bequests under Shelley's will were paid, and she found herself in a position of comfort. She attempted to write Shelley's life, but did not continue the task. Her death occurred at Chester Square, London, on February 1, 1851, and she was buried at Bournemouth, whither the remains of her father and mother were afterwards conveyed.

#### SIR TIMOTHY SHELLEY, BART. (1753-1844),

was the son of Bysshe Shelley, who in 1806 was created the first Timothy was born in London in 1753 and married in 1791 Elizabeth, daughter of Charles Pilfold, of Effingham, Surrey. By her he had seven children: Percy Bysshe, the eldest; Elizabeth, who died unmarried in 1831; Helen, who died an infant in 1793; Mary, married in 1819 to Daniel F. Haynes, of Lonsome, Surrey; Hellen; Margaret; and John, married in 1827 to Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Charles Bowen, of Kilnacourt, Ireland. "In appearance," says Professor Dowden, "Sir Timothy was slight of figure, tall, very fair, with blue Shelley eyes. He had a better heart than his father, and not so clear a head. Bysshe knew his province and kept to it. Timothy Shelley had a wrong-headed way of meaning well and doing ill; he had a semi-illiterate regard for letters, a mundane respect for religion; his views on morals were of the most gentlemanly kind, but not exactly touched with enthusiasm; he dealt in public affairs without possessing public spirit, and gave his party an unwavering vote when a member of the House of Commons; in private life he was kindly, irritable, and despotic." It was this despotism that made friendly relations impossible between Shelley and his father. When Shelley made any step towards reconciliation it was met by impossible conditions from Sir Timothy with whom he had nothing in common, and for many years father and son were engaged in disputes about settlements and property. Sir Timothy agreed on the death of Sir Bysshe in 1815 to allow Shelley a yearly income of £1,000. On the death of Shelley, Sir Timothy offered to provide for his grandson Percy on condition that Mary Shelley gave up all further claims to the child. Although this proposal was not accepted, he helped Mary with the education of her boy, but he made it impossible for a biography of Shelley to appear until after his death.

#### Horace Smith (1779-1849)

was joint-author with his brother James, of the celebrated "Rejected Addresses," which were published in 1812. Horace had already written some novels, and he followed the "Addresses" with other parodies, though without the same success. Smith had received a training in a merchant's office, and as soon as it was over, he went on to the Stock Exchange, where he was so successful as to be able to retire from business in 1820. He was keenly interested in literature, and in 1817 he visited Shelley at Marlow. Shelley went abroad, Smith continued to correspond with him, he undertook to manage the poet's business affairs in London, and was able to render him services on several occasions, sometimes by advancing money; his help was especially valuable when he managed to conciliate Shelley's father who had temporarily stopped his son's income. Smith promised to visit Shelley in Italy towards the end of 1821, but his wife was taken ill on the journey, and he stopped at Versailles—the journey was, however, not pursued, as Shelley's death occurred a few months later. Horace Smith was a general favourite: Shelley had the greatest admiration for him, and has paid a tribute to his good qualities in the "Letter to Maria Gisborne." Although an amusing parodist, Smith's serious poetry was not successful; his pastoral drama "Amarynthus the Nympholept," which excited Shelley's interest, however, may be reckoned as one of his best works.

#### **ROBERT SOUTHEY (1774-1843)**

Shelley's personal association with Southey was brief, and it made little or no impression on the younger poet. He was, however, at the time a most ardent admirer of Southey's poetry, the study of which left its mark in Shelley's earlier verse. In the autumn of 1811, shortly after his marriage, Shelley came to Keswick with his wife, and her sister Eliza Westbrook. There, at Greta Hall, Southey was living a quiet industrious life, free from the strife of political factions. When the two poets met, Shelley was full of enthusiasm for his proposed campaign in Ireland, and Southey with the best intentions in attempting to dissuade him from his purpose, was not judicious in his methods. Shelley left Keswick disillusioned and disappointed with Southey's views, but still appreciating his poems. The opening passages of "Queen Mab" were modelled on Southey's "Thalaba the Destroyer." Shelley was Shelley was at one time convinced that Southey was the writer of the savage Quarterly Review article, and he wrote to ask him either to acknowledge or disavow it. Southey was able to disclaim all knowledge of the reviewer, but in his reply he called Shelley to task in regard to his treatment of Harriet, and expressed his detestation of Shelley's views.

### JOHN JAMES STOCKDALE (1770-1847)

was the eldest son of John Stockdale, a Cumberland man who founded a publishing business in London about 1783, and married Mary Ridgway, sister of a well-known Piccadilly publisher of that name. The younger Stockdale was admitted to the freedom of

the Stationers Company in 1802, compiled a number of books himself, and gained a reputation by issuing fiction (Miss Owenson's, for instance), and poetry at the authors' expense. In 1826 Stockdale became notorious as the publisher of the scandalous "Memoirs of Harriet Wilson," which he probably wrote, and his "Budget" in which he printed Shelley's correspondence with him. In later years he was involved in a series of actions against Hansard, which were finally decided against him.

#### Edward John Trelawny (1792-1881)

Trelawny, who was born the same year as Shelley, was, with the exception of Jane Williams, the last to survive of his correspondents. Belonging to a famous Cornish family, he entered the Navy at the age of eleven, but, owing to the rigour of the life, he deserted and joined a privateer. After some years of adventure in the East, he returned to England, and in 1821 visited Switzerland and Italy, where at Pisa he became acquainted through Williams with Shelley and Byron. When Shelley and Williams were drowned, Trelawny superintended their cremation, and arranged the interment of the poet at the Protestant Cemetery in Rome. He afterwards followed Byron to Greece, when he took part in the war of independence in that country. On his return to England he courted Mary Shelley, but without success, and published his "Adventures of a Younger Son," 1830, founded on his early life. But his most notable work published in 1858 was his "Recollections of the Last Days of Shelley and Byron." The account of the burning of Shelley's body had already appeared in Leigh Hunt's "Lord Byron and Some of his Contemporaries," 1828. What Hogg did for Shelley's youth, and Peacock for his early manhood, Trelawny performed for Shelley's last days. The book was based on notes taken at the time, and presents Shelley to the life, as he was in the year 1822. years after the appearance of the "Recollections," in 1878, Trelawny re-cast and expanded that work and issued it in two volumes with the title "Records of Shelley, Byron, and the Author." The "Records" are more pretentious than the "Recollections." Many additions were made, and some of the stories altered, but the earlier book still remains the better one.

Trelawny's last days were passed in England. A man of gigantic frame, he was vigorous to the end, and was much sought after by those who delighted to honour the last of Shelley's friends. He was always ready to talk about Shelley and Byron, and notes of his conversation have been published by Mr. W. M. Rossetti and Mr. Richard Edgcumbe; Mr. H. Buxton Forman is now preparing a life of Trelawny. He died on August 13, 1881, and after the cremation of his body, the ashes were conveyed to Rome and interred in the grave that he had long ago prepared for them beside Shelley's, in the Protestant cemetery.

### JANE WILLIAMS (d. 1884)

Edward Ellerker Williams was born on April 23, 1793, and like Shelley he went to Eton. His father was an officer in the army of



the East India Company, who died on the homeward voyage in June, 1809. Williams first entered the navy, but about the year 1811, he obtained a commission in the Eighth Dragoon Guards and "About 1819," says Dr. Richard Garnett, "he went to India. returned to England with the lady to whom he had united himself, sister of General John Wheeler Cleveland, of the Madras Army, and the Jane immortalized in so many of Shelley's poems." The Williamses arrived in Italy in the summer of 1821, and were introduced to the Shelleys at Pisa by Thomas Medwin. The two families became very intimate, and spent much of their time together, living as they did in the same building, but on separate floors. The guitar with which Shelley presented Jane Williams is now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Williams was associated with Shelley in the ill-fated Ariel or Don Juan, and the two friends perished together in that boat, and were cremated on the seashore on succeeding days, under Trelawny's direction. When Mrs. Williams returned to England Thomas Jefferson Hogg sought her hand, and she accepted him. She died in 1884, and by her direction a box containing the ashes of Edward Ellerker Williams was interred with her own remains at Kensal Green.

#### JOHN WILLIAMS

was agent to William Alexander Madocks, M.P., the founder of Tremadoc, and Shelley's landlord at Tanyrallt. Shelley shows from his letters that he liked Williams, and he was a good deal in his company when he was endeavouring to raise money for the Tremadoc embankment.

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### Letters of Shelley

Vol. I.

### I. EARLY LETTERS

July 18, 1803, to March 2, 1811

ETON—" Zastrozzi"—" St. Irvyne"—Correspondence with Graham
—The Fiendmonger—Stockdale—" Original Poems by Victor and
Cazire"—" The Wandering Jew"—Oxford—" Posthumous
Fragments of Margaret Nicholson"—Correspondence with Hogg
—" Leonora"—The Missing "Satire" of 1811—Harriet Grove—
Elizabeth Shelley—" A Poetical Essay on the Existing State of
Things"—Peter Finnerty—Harriet Westbrook—" The Necessity
of Atheism"—Letter to Leigh Hunt.

## 1. To KATE ——1 (Horsham)

Monday, July 18, 1803.

DEAR KATE,

We have proposed a day at the pond next Wednesday; and, if you will come to-morrow morning, I would be much obliged to you; and, if you could any how bring Tom over to stay all the night, I would thank you. We are to have a cold dinner over at the pond, and come home to eat a bit of roast chicken and peas at about nine o'clock. Mama depends upon your bringing Tom over to-morrow, and, if you don't, we shall be very much disappointed. Tell

Shelley's cousin, Thomas Medwin.

1

7-(2285)

Apparently Shelley's earliest extant letter, written a few days before he completed his eleventh year. It was addressed to an aunt (name not given) of Thomas Medwin, who first printed it in his "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 370.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Perhaps this was Warnham Pond, the haunt of the "Great Tortoise," which is mentioned by Miss Hellen Shelley in her letter printed by Hogg, "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 7.

the bearer not to forget to bring me a fairing,—which is some ginger-bread, sweetmeat, hunting-nuts, and a pocket-book. Now I end.

I am not

Your obedient servant.

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Miss KATE,
Horsham, Sussex.
Free P. B. Shelley.

### 2. To Longman & Co. (London)

ETON COLLEGE.

May 7, 1809.

#### GENTLEMEN,

It is my intention to complete and publish a Romance, of which I have already written a large portion, before the end of July.—My object in writing it was not pecuniary, as I am independent, being the heir of a gentleman of large fortune in the county of Sussex, and prosecuting my studies as an Oppidan at Eton; from the many leisure hours I have, I have taken an opportunity of indulging

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Timothy Shelley as a member of Parliament possessed the privilege of franking his letters; here Shelley has playfully assumed his father's prerogative.

Probably Shelley's first published book / "Zastrozzi," / a Romance / By / P. B. S. / quotation from "Paradise Lost," / London: / Printed for G. Wilkie and J. Robinson, / 57 Paternoster Row, / 1810. / Mr. D. F. MacCarthy states that "Zastrozzi" was published on June 5, 1810. Mr. H. Buxton Forman, who was the first to publish this letter, in his edition of Shelley's Prose Works, Vol. III, 329, states that Messrs. Longman's memorandum on the original is "We shall be happy to see the MS. when finished."

Montem lists of 1805 and 1808. When he came to Eton he was placed in the upper fourth form. In 1805 he was in the remove; in 1808 in the upper fifth; and when leaving in 1810 in the sixth form." The Rev. George Bethell, Shelley's tutor, an assistant-master, afterwards Vice-Provost, was "kind and good-humoured, but unluckily the dullest man in Eton." The house in which Shelley boarded was pulled down in 1863. (See "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 22, 25.)

my favourite propensity in writing. Should it produce any pecuniary advantages, so much the better for me, I do not expect it. If you would be so kind as to answer this, direct it to me at the Rev. George Bethell's. Might I likewise request the favour of secresy until the Romance is published.

I am,

Your very humble servant,
PERCY SHELLEY.

Be so good as to tell me whether I shall send you the original manuscript when I have completed it or one corrected, etc.

## 3. To Edward Fergus Graham (London)

ETON, April 1, 1810.

MY DEAR GRAHAM.

I will see you at Easter,—next Friday I shall be in London, but for a very short time—unable to call on you till Passion week—Robinson will take no trouble about the reviewers, let everything proper be done about the venal villains and I will settle with you when we meet at Easter.—We will all go in a posse to the bookseller's in Mr. Grove's barouche and four—Shew them that we are no Grub Street garretteers—but why Harriet more than any one else—a faint essay I see in return for my enquiry for Caroline—

We will not be cheated again—let us come over Jock, 2 for

<sup>2</sup> "Jock" was apparently J. Robinson, the publisher of "Zastrozzi," mentioned above.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Groves were Shelley's maternal cousins. There were three brothers, Thomas, the eldest, of Lincoln's Inn Fields, and probably the owner of the barouche and four; John, a surgeon; Charles Henry, who was successively an officer in the navy, a surgeon, and a clergyman; and two sisters, Harriet, mentioned in this letter, Shelley's first love; and Charlotte.

if he will not give me a devil of a price for my Poem and at least £60 for my new Romance in three Volumes the dog shall not have them.

Pouch the reviewers—£10 will be sufficient I should suppose, and that I can with the greatest ease repay when we meet at Passion week. Send the reviews in which "Zastrozzi" is mentioned to Field Place, the British review is the hardest, let that be pouched well.—My note of hand if for any larger sum is quite at your service, as it is of consequence in fiction to establish your name as high as you can in the literary lists.

Adieu.

Yours most devotedly, PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

Let me hear how you proceed in the business of P. B. S. Reviewing.

[Addressed outside], EDWARD GRAHAM, Esq., No. 29 Vine Street, Piccadilly.

### 4. To Edward Fergus Graham<sup>2</sup> (London)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM], Monday [April 23, 1810].

My DEAR GRAHAM,

At half after twelve do you be walking up and down the

I am able to print this interesting letter (in the true style of "Zastrozzi"), I believe for the first time, through the kindness of Mrs. Alfred Morrison. The letter, which is evidently a hoax, is the joint composition of Shelley and his eldest sister, Elizabeth

(1)794-1831).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Evidently Shelley's second and last novel / "St. Irvyne"; / or, / "The Rosicrucian," / a Romance. / By / a gentleman / of the University of Oxford. / London: / Printed for J. J. Stockdale, / 41 Pall Mall, / 1811, which, however, only made one volume. See Shelley's letter to Stockdale, Dec. 10, 1810.

avenue of trees near Clapham Church, and when you see a Post Chaise stop at Mrs. Fenning's 1 door, do you advance towards it, and without observing who are inside of it speak to them—An eventful and terrific mystery hangs over it—you are to change your name from Edward Fergus Graham to William Grove—prepare therefore for something extraordinary. There is more in a cucumber than you are aware of—in two cucumbers indeed; they are now almost 2s. 6d. a piece—reflect well upon that !!!—All this is to be done on Tuesday [April 24], neither Elisbh. or myself cares what else you have to do.

If Satan had never fallen Hell had been made for thee!

Send two "Zastrozzis" to Sir J. Dashwood in Harley Street, directed to F. Dashwood, Esq.—Send one to Ransom Morland's to be directed to Mr. Chenevix.

I remain,

Yours devotedly, P. B. Shelley.

N.B.—The avenue is composed of vegetable substances moulded in the form of trees called by the multitude Elm trees. Elisabeth calls them so, but they all lean as if the wind had given them a box on the ear, you therefore will know them—Stalk along the road towards them—and mind and keep yourself concealed as my Mother brings a blood-stained stiletto which she purposes to make you bathe in the life-blood of her enemy.

Never mind the Death-demons, and skeletons dripping with the putrefaction of the grave, that occasionally may blast your straining eyeball.—Persevere even though Hell and destruction should yawn beneath your feet.

¹ Shelley's two younger sisters, Mary (born 1797) and Hellen (born 1799) were at Mrs. Fenning's school, Church House, which stood on the north side of Clapham Common, near the "Old Town," directly facing Trinity Church. The site is now occupied by Nelson Terrace.

Think of all this at the frightful hour of midnight, when the Hell-demon leans over your sleeping form and inspires those thoughts which eventually will lead you to the gates of destruction.

[Signed by] ELISABETH SHELLEY.

DEAR GRAHAM,

### Eliza. Shelley

the fiend of the Sussex solitudes shrieked in the wilderness at midnight—he thirsts for thy detestable gore, impious Fergus.—But the day of retribution will arrive.

H + D + means Hell Devil.

### [Written by Elizabeth Shelley]

DEAR GRAHAM,

We really expect you to meet us at Clapham in the way described by the *Fiendmonger*: should you not be able to be there in time we will call at Millers Hotel<sup>1</sup> in hopes you will be able to meet us there, but we hope to meet you at Clapham, as Vine Street is so far out of our way to L[incoln's Inn] Fields, and we wish to see you.

Your sincere Friend,

E. SHELLEY.

DEATH + HELL + DESTRUCTION if you fail.

Mind and come for we shall seriously expect your arrival,

I think the trees are on the left hand of the church. P.B.S.

[Addressed outside],
EDWARD FERGUS H + D + GRAHAM, Esq.,
(No. 29) Vine Street,
Piccadilly,
London.

[Postmarks], Horsham. Ap. 24. 1810.

Miller's Hotel, Westminster Bridge, was patronised by Sir Timothy Shelley, when in London.

### 5. To EDWARD FERGUS GRAHAM (London)

ETON COLL[EGE], May 29, 1810.

### My DEAR GRAHAM.

Another letter from Merle<sup>1</sup> and such a high flyer, perhaps you have not lately seen. It takes up an entire sheet in his small writing. Will he not leave me alone? I shall write to him to-day.<sup>2</sup> No I shall not write to him at all. I shall leave him entirely to his own ideas.

He talks about his "proud youth disdaining," and it is altogether so mysterious and unintelligible an epistle, that not knowing how the devil to answer it I shall leave it quite alone.

It says he wishes to conceal his sorrows and his guilt. May I ask you, Graham, out of curiosity, what he means by either? in short I am resolved to have no more to do with him, not even for drawing utensils, as I fear the man has some deep scheme. Where does he come from, and who is he?

Will you write to Mary<sup>3</sup> under cover to Miss Pigeon, Clapham Common, Surrey, where I wish you to send the books, also for Mary. They are all very well, and would be delighted at a letter from you.

My mother has had a violent bilious fever; she is now getting much better.

Shelley's sister.

It was suggested by Mr. Forman that William Henry Merle, author of "Costança, a Poem," and some novels, was the anonymous writer of "A Newspaper Editor's Reminiscences," published in Fraser's Magazine in June, 1841. But Dr. Garnett informed Mr. Rossetti, apparently with assurance, that he was Gibbons Neale. The writer of these recollections of Shelley was then an assistant at Ackermann's, the art publisher in the Strand, and he may have been the Merle mentioned in this letter. The "Newspaper Editor" states that he had an interview with Shelley at Horsham after his expulsion from Oxford, which "closed with an indignant protest from Merle against Shelley's attacks on Christianity."—Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 124.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> This sentence is scored out in the original letter.

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I had a letter from Harriet 1 this morning in which she tells me the crayons will do very well. Will you pay Merle the 11s., for I do not like to owe that kind of man anything, though I believe he is a liberal fellow; but I have seen too much of the world not to suspect his motives.

Your most affectionate,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Will you come on the 4th? How is my father?

In the name of the most merciful God—"Arabian Nights." Will you send a "Zastrozzi" directed to the Revd. — Sayer, Leominster, near Arundel. Send it directly. I have written to say it was coming.

[Addressed outside],
EDWARD FERGUS GRAHAM, Esq.,
29 Vine Street, Piccadilly, London.
[Postmark], May 30, 1810.

6. To John Joseph Stockdale (41 Pall Mall, London)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM], September 6, 1810.

SIR,

I have to return you my thankful acknowledgment for the receipt of the books, which arrived as soon as I had any reason to expect, the superfluity shall be balanced as soon as I pay for some books which I shall trouble you to bind for me.—

I enclose you the title-page of the Poems, 8 which you

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Harriet Grove.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For Speech Day at Eton, June 4th.

<sup>3</sup> Stockdale states in his Budget, 1826-7, that Shelley introduced himself to him early in the autumn of 1810. In consequence of some difference with his printer, Shelley requested Stockdale "to extricate him from a pecuniary difficulty": apparently by taking up the publication of his volume of Poems. On September 17th, 1810, Stockdale received "1,480 copies of a thin royal 8vo volume [64 pp.] in sheets"; and with the following title / "Original Poetry; "/By Victor and Cazire. / Call it not vain:—They do not err, / who say, that, when the poet dies/Mute Nature mourns her worshipper. / "Lay of the Last Minstrel." / Worthing: / Printed by C. and W. Phillips, / For the Authors; / and sold by J. J. Stockdale, 41 Pall Mall, / and all other Booksellers. / 1810. / The book (price 4s. in boards), was

will see you have mistaken on account of the illegibility of my hand-writing. I have had the last proof impression from my printer this morning, and I suppose the execution of the work will not be long delayed. As soon as it possibly car, it shall reach you, and believe me, Sir, grateful for the interest you take in it.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient, humble servant, PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside], Mr. STOCKDALE, Bookseller, 41 Pall Mall, London.

[Franked by]
T. SHELLEY.

### 7. To Edward Fergus Graham

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],
Friday [September], 1810.

DEAR GRAHAM,
This is the other song:

1

How stern are the woes of the desolate mourner,
As he bends in still grief o'er the hallowed bier,
As enanguished he turns from the laugh of the scorner,
And drops to Perfection's remembrance a tear.

advertised the day following in the Morning Chronicle of September 18. The poems were the joint work of Shelley and his sister Elizabeth; and when Stockdale informed the poet that the volume contained a poem by M. G. Lewis, "he expressed the warmest resentment at the imposition practised on him by his coadjutor, and entreated me to destroy all the copies, of which about one hundred had been put into circulation." Dr. Garnett was the first to recall public attention to Shelley's volume, "Victor and Cazire," in his article "Shelley in Pall Mall," Macmillan's Magazine, 1860, based on the long-forgotten papers in Stockdale's Budget. But no copy of the book came to light until 1898. In that year one was found in the family library by Mr. V. E. G. Hussey, a grandson of the Rev. Charles Henry Grove, brother of Harriet Grove, to whom many of the poems are addressed. A facsimile of the volume was at once issued by Mr. John Lane, with an interesting introduction by the late Dr. Richard Garnett. Mr. T. J. Wise acquired this rare volume, of which now only three copies are known. Eve" has since been identified as the offending poem.

No. 5 of the Songs in "St. Irvyne," Chap. IX, p. 171, Edit. 1811.

When floods of despair down his pale cheek are streaming, When no blissful hope o'er his bosom is beaming, Or if lulled for a time, soon he starts from his dreaming, And finds torn the soft ties to affection so dear.

Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley

2

Oh! when shall day dawn on the night of the grave,
Or summer succeed to the winter of Death,
Rest awhile hapless victim and Heaven will save,
The spirit that faded away with the breath.
Eternity points to its amaranth bower,
Where no clouds of fate o'er the sweet prospect [lower,]
Unspeakable pleasure of goodness the dower,
Where woe fades away like the mist on the heath.

You will show all this to Woelff, but you do not tell me how the other passes off. You well know I am not much of a hand at love songs, you see I mingle metaphysics with even this, but perhaps in this age of Philosophy that may be excused. You have not done what I told you. The Morning Chronicle at least has not inserted it. I shall expect to hear a full account of all your proceedings.

The purse [?] will arrive by to-morrow's coach. I need not tell you again how anxiously I desire its acceptance, but of that you will judge when you recollect my last letter on the subject. Adieu—I cannot get a frank. Write soon.

I am, yours ever,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

What think you of our Poetry? What is said of it?—no flattery, remember.

<sup>&</sup>quot;While" instead of "time" in "St. Irvyne."

<sup>\*</sup> This word, which is omitted in the transcript, is supplied from "St. Irvyne."

<sup>\*</sup> Joseph Woelff (1772-1814) musician and pianist, a native of Salzburg, of whom Graham was a pupil. He died in London.

<sup>See note to letter to Stockdale, Sept. 6, 1810.
"Original Poetry, by Victor and Cazire."</sup> 

## 8. To John Joseph Stockdale (London)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM], September 28, 1810.

SIR,

I sent, before I had the pleasure of knowing you, the MS. of a poem to Messieurs Ballantyne & Co., 1 Edinburgh; they have declined publishing it with the enclosed letter. I now offer it to you, and depend upon your honour as a gentleman for a fair price for the copyright. It will be

It is interesting to note that two extracts from "The Wandering Jew" were printed by Shelley as headings to Chap. VIII (p. 14' and Chap. X (p. 186) of his novel, "St. Irvyne," namely lines 4' 443-451, 780-790 of the Shelley Society's reprint. The cour printed as a heading for Chap. II of the novel (p. 44)—

"The fiends of fate are heard to rave,

And the death angel flaps his broad wing o'er the wave."

seem to suggest lines 841-2 of the poem—

"When the sightless fiends of the tempest rave,
And hell-birds howl o'er the storm-blacken'd wave."

The ballad on p. 47 of "St. Irvyne" was probably written for "The Wandering Jew," as it commemorates the death of Rosa, who is one of the characters in the poem.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Messrs. John Ballantyne & Co. offer the following ingenious excuse for declining to publish "The Wandering Jew," that "Even Walter Scott is assailed on all hands at present, by our Scotch spiritual and evangelical magazines and instructors, for having promulgated atheistical doctrines in the 'Lady of the Lake.'" The MS. never reached Stockdale's hands, although it seems to have been returned to Shelley. It was partly printed in The Edinburgh Literary Journal for June 27th and July 4th, 1829. The editor of this periodical states that the MS. of the poem was left for publication by Shelley, with an Edinburgh literary gentleman (Mr. Ballantyne), presumably when he visited Edinburgh in August, 1811. The preface is dated January, 1811, and the MS. bore the titles of "The Wandering Jew," or "The Victim of the Eternal Avenger." Shelley's duplicate copy of the poem was sent on to Stockdale (see his letter to Stockdale, Dec. 2, 1810), and it ultimately appeared in the pages of Fraser's Magazine in 1831, where it was apparently regarded as an unpublished work. This version differs considerably from the Edinburgh text. Thomas Medwin claimed that he was the joint author of the poem, but his account of it is not very satisfactory. "The Wandering Jew," edited with a valuable introduction by Mr. Bertram Dobell, was issued by the Shelley Society in 1887.

sent to you from Edinburgh. The subject is "The Wandering Jew." As to its containing Atheistical principles, I assure you I was wholly unaware of the fact hinted at. Your good sense will point out to you the impossibility of inculcating pernicious doctrines in a poem, which, as you will see is so totally abstract from any circumstances which occur under the possible view of mankind.

I am, Sir,

Your obliged and humble servant, PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Mr. STOCKDALE,
Bookseller,
41 Pall Mall, London.

### 9. To JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE (41 Pall Mall, London)

University Coll[ege], Oxford,<sup>1</sup> Sunday, November 11, 1810

SIR,

I wish you to obtain for me a book which answers to the following description. It is an Hebrewessay, demonstrating that the Christian religion is false, and is mentioned in

<sup>1</sup> Shelley signed his name as a student in the books of University College, Oxford, on April 10, 1810, and went into residence early in Michaelmas term.

<sup>\*</sup> Mr. B. Dobell tells me that the book to which Shelley refers Isaac Ben Abraham's "Mr. Dotto," or Faith Strengthed," Translated by Moses Mocatta. Printed but not published. 51. Mr. Dobell, in his Catalogue of Books printed for private culation, London, 1908, describes the book as follows: The anslator in his address states that the work is intended exclusively or distribution among the Hebrew community. It was originally composed by Isaac Ben Abraham, an Israelite, a native of Lithunia. The work was published A.M. 5393; in De Rossi's "Dizionario Istorico" the author is designated as the most powerful opponent and refutant of the doctrines of Christianity that had ever appeared among the Jews. "The grand design of his polemics (as he himself tells us) is to establish and make manifest the sublime truth of Israel's Faith, and expose and refute the erroneous views on which Christianity is founded."

one of the numbers of the Christian Observer 1 of last spring, by a clergyman, as an unanswerable, yet sophistical argument.—If it is translated in Greek, Latin, or any of the European languages, I would thank you to send it me.

I am, Sir, your humble servant.

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside], Mr. STOCKDALE, Bookseller, Pall Mall, London.

### 10. To JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE (41 Pall Mall, London)

University Coll[ege, Oxford], Nov[ember] 14, 1810.

DEAR SIR,

I return you the Romance<sup>2</sup> by this day's coach. I am much obligated by the trouble you have taken to fit it for the press.

I am, myself, by no means a good hand at correction, but I think I have obviated the principal objections which you allege.

Ginotti, as you will see, did not die by Wolfstein's hand, but by the influence of that natural magic which, when the secret was imparted to the latter, destroyed him. Mountfort being a character of inferior import, I did not think it necessary to state the catastrophe of him, as at best it could be but uninteresting. Eloise and Fitzeustace are married and happy, I suppose, and Megalena dies by the same means as Wolfstein. I do not myself see any other explanation that is required. As to the method of publishing it, I think as it is a thing which almost mechanically sells to circulating libraries, etc., I would wish it to be published on my own account.

I am surprised that you have not received the "Wandering Jew," and in consequence write to Mr. Ballantyne to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Dr. Garnett failed to find any such reference in the Christian Observer.

<sup>3 &</sup>quot;St. Irvyne."

mention it; you will doubtless, therefore, receive it soon. Should you still perceive in the romance any error of flagrant incoherency, etc., it must be altered, but conceive it will (being wholly so abrupt) not require it.

I am, your sincere humble servant, PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Shall you make this in one or two volumes? Mr. Robinson, of Paternoster Row, published "Zastrozzi." [Addressed outside].

Mr. STOCKDALE, Bookseller,

41 Pall Mall, London.

### 11. TO JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE (41 Pall Mall, London)

Uni[versity] Coll[ege, Oxford], Monday, 19 November, 1810.

MY DEAR SIR,

I did not think it possible that the Romance would make but one small volume, it will at all events be larger than "Zastrozzi." What I mean as "Rosicrucian" is the elixir of eternal life which Ginotti has obtained, Mr. Godwin's romance of "St. Leon" turns upon that superstition; I enveloped it in mystery for the greater excitement of interest, and on a re-examination, you will perceive that Mountfort physically did kill Ginotti, which must appear from the latter's paleness.—

Will you have the goodness to send me Mr. Godwin's "Political Justice?" 1

When do you suppose "St. Irvyne" will be out? If you have not yet got the "Wandering Jew" from Mr. B[allantyne], I will send you a MS. copy which I possess.

Yours sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside], Mr. STOCKDALE, Bookseller,

41 Pall Mall, London.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "St. Leon," by William Godwin, published in 1799. His "Enquiry Concerning Political Justice" appeared in 1793.

### 12. To Edward Fergus Graham

[University College], Oxford, Nov[ember] 30, 1810.

My DEAR GRAHAM,

I enclose a £5 note which is all I can immediately spare; I shall see you in a fortnight. Whenever you mention money make it visible, as since having looked over your letter I can find nothing like it.—The part of the Epithalamium which you mention (i.e., from the end of Satan's triumph) is the production of a friend's mistress; it had been concluded there, but she thought it abrupt and added this; it is omitted in numbers of the copies,—that which

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This letter relates to / Posthumous Fragments / of / Margaret Nicholson; / Being poems found amongst the papers of that / noted female who attempted the life / of the King in 1786. / Edited by / John Fitzvictor. / Oxford: / Printed and sold by J. Munday. / 1810./ Hogg, who has given an account of this book in his "Life of Shelley," says that the poems were written by Shelley in good faith, with the exception of the Epithalamium, which was the work of "some rhymster of the day." On showing the poems to Hogg, he suggested that they should be turned into burlesque verses, to which proposal Shelley agreed, and Hogg assisted him in the design. The book, however, shows no signs of burlesque, save perhaps the title-page and the Epithalamium. The strange title was an afterthought. Margaret Nicholson, the mad washerwoman who made an attempt on the life of George III, had been sent to a lunatic asylum and was still living in 1810. The pamphlet was advertised in The Oxford and City Herald of Nov. 17, 1810, as "Just Published, price 2s." Mr. Henry Slatter, in the Biographical Summary to the Fourth Edition of Robert Montgomery's "Oxford," says that Shelley was brought to Oxford by his father, who placed him at University, his own College. Not liking the accommodation of an inn, Mr. Timothy Shelley went to a house where he had formerly lodged while at the University, and here he learnt that a son of his late landlord, Mr. Slatter, had become a partner in a bookselling and printing business. Mr. Shelley went to the shop, where he told his son to "buy whatever he required in books or stationery, and said, 'My son here,' pointing to him, 'has a literary turn; he is already an author, and do pray indulge him in his printing freaks; ' one of the works alluded to was his Romance of 'St. Irvyne; or the Rosicrucian:' he soon put the parties to the test by writing some fugitive poetry, entitled 'Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson,' a work almost still-born, and directing the profits to be applied to Mr. Peter Finnerty."

I sent to my Mother of course did not contain it—I shall possibly send you the abuse to-day, but I am afraid that they will not insert it—But you mistake; the Epithalamium will make it sell like wildfire, and as the Nephew¹ is kept a profound secret, there can arise no danger from the indelicacy of the Aunt—It sells wonderfully here, and is become the fashionable subject of discussion—What particular subject do you mean, I cannot make out I confess.—Of course to my Father, Peg is a profound secret; he is better and recovering very fast.—How is the King and what is thought of Political affairs?

Will you tell me what I owe you?

Yours affect.,

P. B. SHELLEY.

### 13. To John Joseph Stockdale (41 Pall Mall, London)

[University College], Oxford, Dec[ember] 2, 1810.

DEAR SIR

Will you, if you have got two copies of the "Wandering Jew" send one of them to me, as I have thought of some corrections which I wish to make,—your opinion on it will likewise much oblige me.

When do you suppose that Southey's "Curse of Kehama" will come out? I am curious to see it, and when does "St. Irvyne" come out?

I shall be in London the middle of this month, when I will do myself the pleasure of calling on you.

Yours sincerely,

[Addressed outside], Mr. STOCKDALE, Bookseller, 41 Pall Mall, London. P. B. SHELLEY.

<sup>1</sup> John Fitzvictor is described in the short advertisement to the book as the author's nephew.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Published towards the end of Dec., 1810; an advertisement of the poem "In 4to, price, £1 11s. 6d., boards. Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme & Brown, Paternoster Row," appeared in The Morning Chronicle for Dec. 26, 1810.

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### 14. TO JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE (41 Pall Mall, London) F[IELD] P[LACE, HORSHAM], December 18, 1810.

MY DEAR SIR.

I saw your advertisement of the Romance, 1 and approve of it highly; it is likely to excite curiosity.—I would thank you to send copies directed as follows:-

Miss Marshall, Horsham, Sussex.

T. Medwin, Esq., Horsham, Sussex.

T. J. Hogg, Esq., Rev. [John] Dayrell's, Lynnington Dayrell, Buckingham, and six copies to myself.—In case the "Curse of Kehama" has yet appeared, I would thank you for that likewise.—I have in preparation a novel2; it is principally constructed to convey metaphysical and political opinions by way of conversation, it shall be sent to you as soon as completed, but it shall receive more correction than I trouble myself to give to wild romance and poetry—

Mr. Munday, of Oxford, will take some Romances; I do not know whether he sends directly to you, or through the medium of some other bookseller. I will inclose the Printer's account for your inspection in a future letter.

Dear Sir,

Yours sincerely, PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside], Mr. STOCKDALE, Bookseller. 41 Pall Mall, London.

<sup>1</sup> A copy of the first edition of "St. Irvyne" was offered for sale by Messrs. Sotheby on July 22, 1908, and knocked down for £200. In this volume was inserted the following note in Shelley's hand-"The Author's respectful compts. to his Uncle, Mr. Parker, and begs his acceptance of the enclosed Romance. Mr. Parker's initial opinion on the book would be regarded an honor. Field Place, Dec. 10, 1810." On the verso is written "From Percy Bysshe Shelley to his Uncle, enclosing his romance of 'The Rosicrucian.'" Robert Parker, F.S.A., of Maidstone, had married Hellen, the eldest daughter of Sir Bysshe Shelley. A copy of the romance which Shelley presented to Robert Southey, was sold on June 8, 1875, for £4, 18s. 0d.

Probably Shelley's novel "Leonora," see p. 18.

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### 15. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (Lincoln's Inn Fields)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM]. Dec[ember] 20, 1810.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The moment which announces your residence, I write. There is now need of all my art; I must resort to deception.

My father called on S[tockdale] in London, who has converted him to sanctity. He mentioned my name, as a supporter of sceptical principles. My father wrote me, and I am now surrounded, environed by dangers, to which compared the devils, who besieged St. Anthony, were all inefficient. They attack me for my detestable principles; I am reckoned an outcast; yet I defy them, and laugh at their ineffectual efforts. 1

S[tockdale] will no longer do for me; I am at a loss whom to select. 2 S[tockdale]'s skull is very thick, but I am afraid

<sup>1</sup> Stockdale states in his Budget that he had "given some delicate hints" to Mr. Timothy Shelley regarding his suspicions of the younger Shelley's "predispositions against revealed religion," and he prints the following letter on the subject: "Field Place, 23 Dec., 1810.—Sir, I take the earliest opportunity of expressing to you my best thanks for the very liberal and handsome manner in which you imparted to me the sentiments you held towards my son, and the open and friendly communication. I shall ever esteem it, and hold it in Remembrance. I will take an opportunity of calling on you again, when the call at St. Stephen's Chapel enforces my attendance by a call of the House. My son begs me to make his compliments to you. I have the honour to be, sir, Your very humble and obedient servant, T. Shelley. [To] Mr. Stockdale."

\* Shelley is evidently here again speaking of his novel, "Leonora" (said to have been written in collaboration with Hogg), to which he refers in the preceding letter. Mr. Henry Slatter, of the firm of Munday & Slatter, the Oxford printers of "Margaret Nicholson," stated in the fourth edition of Robert Montgomery's "Oxford" that "Leonora" was put into the hands of his firm. The printing of it, however, was stopped "in consequence of discovering that he [Shelley] had woven free opinions throughout the work." The novel was afterwards taken to Mr. King, the printer at Abingdon, but the expulsion of Shelley and Hogg from Oxford brought the work to an end. L in the following paragraph is evidently Munday, The Dying Gladiator mentioned at the foot of the next page was the subject of the Oxford Prize poem for 1810. It

was gained by G. R. Chinnery.

that he will not believe my assertion; indeed, should it gain credit with him, should he accept the offer of publication, there exist numbers who will find out, or imagine, a real tendency; and booksellers possess more power than we are aware of in impeding the sale of any book containing opinions displeasing to them. I am disposed to offer it to Wilkie and Robinson, Paternoster Row, and to take it there myself; they published Godwin's works, and it is scarcely possible to suppose that any one, layman or clergyman, will assert that these support Gospel doctrines. If that will not do, I must print it myself. Oxford, of course, would be most convenient for the correction of the press.

Mr. L[Munday?]'s principles are not very severe; he is more a votary to Mammon than God.

O! I burn with impatience for the moment of the dissolution of intolerance; it has injured me. I swear on the altar of perjured Love to revenge myself on the hated cause of the effect, which even now I can scarcely help deploring. Indeed, I think it is to the benefit of society to destroy the opinion which can annihilate the dearest of its ties. Inconveniences would now result from my ewning the novel, which I have in preparation for the press. I give out, therefore, that I will publish no more; every one here, but the select few who enter into its [? my] schemes believe my assertion. I will stab the wretch in secret. Let us hope that the wound which I inflict, though the dagger be concealed, will rankle in the heart of the adversary.

My father wished to withdraw me from college: I would not consent to it. There lowers a terrific tempest, but I stand, as it were, on a pharos, and smile exultingly at the vain beating of the billows below.

So much for egotism!

Your poetry pleases me very much; the idea is beautiful, but I hope that the contrast is not from nature. The verses on the Dying Gladiator are good, but they seem

composed in a hurry. I am composing a satirical poem; I shall print it at Oxford, unless I find, on visiting him, that R[obinson] is ripe for printing whatever will sell. In case of that, he is my man.

It is not William Godwin, who lives in Holborn: it is John, no relation to the other.

As to W., I wrote to him when in London, by way of a gentle alterative. He promised to write to me when he had time, seemed surprised at what I said, yet directed to me as the Reverend: his amazement must be extreme.

I shall not read Bishop Prettyman, or any more of them, unless I have some particular reason. Bigots will not argue; it destroys the very nature of the thing to argue; it is contrary to *faith*. How, therefore, could you suppose

<sup>2</sup> William Godwin was living at Skinner Street, Holborn Hill, which connected High Holborn with Newgate Street before the viaduct was built. John Godwin was William Godwin's brother.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mr. Forman draws attention in his "Shelley Library," p. 23, to a "missing satire of 1811" by Shelley, and suggests that he here refers to it. It cannot be positively asserted that the Satire, if ever printed, has been identified, but Mr. Forman has discovered a pamphlet bearing, as he says, "so many points of contact with Shelley" that he describes it "in the hope that someone may either bring forward other and better evidence of its being his, or such evidence of its being someone else's." . . . The title runs: /Lines / addressed / to / His Royal Highness / the / Prince of Wales, / on his Being appointed Regent. / By Philopatria, Jun. / Quotations from Horace / London. / Printed for Sherwood, Neely, and Jones. / Paternoster Row; / and sold by all other booksellers. / 1811. / The publishers of this volume are those whose names appeared on the title-page of "Laon and Cythna," and one of the firm of the printers, Hamelin & Seyfang, namely C. F. Seyfang, "was the printer of 'Swellfoot the Tyrant,' another Shelley pamphlet about George IV." Mr. Forman further points out the similarity of the name on the title-page of the Satire to "Philobasileus." the signature of a letter to Graham written in the summer of 1811 (see p. 101), which contains an allusion suggesting that Shelley had in mind the Horatian motto on the title of the pamphlet.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> W. was probably one of the many persons of note to whom Shelley addressed letters on religious matters; in this case the subject seems to have been the Athanasian Creed.

that one of these *liberal* gentlemen would listen to scepticism, on the subject even of St. Athanasius's sweeping anathema?

I have something else to tell you, and I will in another letter.

Love! dearest, sweetest power! how much are we indebted to thee! How much superior are even thy miseries to the pleasures which arise from other sources! how much superior to "fat, contented ignorance" is even the agony which thy votaries experience! Yes, my friend, I am now convinced that a monarchy is the only form of government (in a certain degree) which a lover ought to live under. Yet in this alone is subordination necessary. Man is equal, and I am convinced that equality will be the attendant on a more advanced and ameliorated state of society. But this is assertion, not proof,—indeed, there can be none, then you will say, excuse my believing it; willingly.

"St. Irvyne" is come out; it is sent to you at Dr. Dayrell's; you can get one in London by mentioning my name to Stockdale; you need not state your own, and as names are not *now* inscribed on the front of every existing creature, you run no risk of discovery in person, if it be a crime or a sin to procure my Novel.

How can you fancy that I shall ever think you mad; am not I the wildest, the most delirious of enthusiasm's offspring? On one subject I am cool, toleration; yet that coolness alone possesses me that I may with more certainty guide the spear to the breast of my adversary, with more certainty ensanguine it with the heart's blood of Intolerance—hated name!

Adieu! Down with Bigotry! Down with Intolerance! In this endeavour your most sincere friend will join his every power, his every feeble resource. Adieu!

## 16. To THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG (Lincoln's Inn Fields)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],
December 23, '1810.

My DEAR FRIEND,

The first desire which I felt on receiving your letters, was instantly to come to London, that a friend might sympathise in those sorrows which are beyond alleviation. That I cannot do this week; on Sunday or Monday next I will come if you still remain in town.

Why will you add to the never dying remorse which my egotizing folly has occasioned, for which, as long as its

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley had known his cousin, Harriet Grove, from childhood, and his warm regard for her had grown during the years 1809-1810 into love. According to Medwin's statement she had written a part of "Zastrozzi," and some of the poems in the "Victor and Cazire" volume were addressed to her. She was of the same age as Shelley, and is said to have resembled him in appearance. The Rev. Charles Henry Grove (writing in 1857) says that "Bysshe was at that time [having just left Eton] more attached to my sister Harriet than I can express, and I recollect well the moonlight walks we four had at Strode, and also at St. Irving's; that, I think, was the name of the place, then the Duke of Norfolk's, at Horsham. (St. Irving's Hills, a beautiful place, on the right-hand side as you go from Horsham to Field Place, laid out by the famous Capability Brown, and full of magnificent forest trees, waterfalls, and rustic seats. The house was Elizabethan. All has been destroyed.) That was in the year 1810. After our visit at Field Place, we went to my brother's house in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where Bysshe, his mother, and Elizabeth joined us, and a very happy month we spent. Bysshe was full of life and spirits, and very well pleased with his successful devotion to my sister. In the course of that summer, to the best of my recollection, after we had retired into Wiltshire, a continual correspondence was going on, as, I believe, there had been before, between Bysshe and my sister Harriet. But she became uneasy at the tone of his letters on speculative subjects, at first consulting my mother, and subsequently my father also on the subject. led at last, though I cannot exactly tell how, to the dissolution of an engagement between Bysshe and my sister, which had previously been permitted, both by his father and mine."—Hogg's "Shelley," Vol. II, pp. 550-1. In this letter he describes his feelings at her rejection of him, but he did not realize that it was hopeless for some time afterwards; in the meantime he employed his favourite sister Elizabeth to attempt at a reconciliation. In the letters immediately following he dwells on the subject of his separation from Miss Grove.

fatal effects remain, never can I forgive myself, by accusing yourself of a feeling as intrusive, which I cannot but regard as another part of that amiability which has marked your character since first I had the happiness of your friendship? Where exists the moral wrong of seeking the society of one whom I loved? what offence to reason, to virtue, was there in desiring the communication of a lengthened correspondence, in order that both, she and myself, might see, if by coincidence of intellect we were willing to enter into a closer, an eternal union? No, it is no offence to reason, or virtue; it is obeying its most imperious dictates, it is complying with the designs of the Author of our nature: can this be immorality? Can it be selfishness, or interested ambition, to seek the happiness of the object I am sure your own judgment, your own of attachment? reason, must answer in the negative. Let me now ask you what reason was there then for despair, even supposing my love to have been incurable?

Her disposition was in all probability divested of the enthusiasm by which mine is characterised, could therefore hers be prophetic? She might not be susceptible of that feeling which arises from an admiration of virtue, when abstracted from identity.

My sister attempted sometimes to plead my cause, but unsuccessfully. She said:

"Even supposing I take your representation of your brother's qualities and sentiments, which as you coincide in and admire, I may fairly imagine to be exaggerated, although you may not be aware of the exaggeration; what right have I, admitting that he is so superior, to enter into an intimacy which must end in delusive disappointment, when he finds how really inferior I am to the being which his heated imagination has pictured?"

This was unanswerable, particularly as the prejudiced description of a sister, who loves her brother as she does, might, indeed *must*, have given to her an erroneously exalted idea of the superiority of my mental attainments.

You have said that the philosophy which I pursued is not uncongenial with the strictest morality; you must see that it militates with the received opinions of the world; what, therefore, does it offend; but prejudice and superstition, that superstitious bigotry, inspired by the system upon which at present the world acts, of believing all that we are told as incontrovertible facts?

I hope that what I have said will induce you to allow me still, and all the more, to remain your friend.

I hope that you will soon have an opportunity of seeing, of conversing, with Elizabeth.

How sorry I am that I cannot invite you here now. I will tell you the reason when we meet. Believe me, my dear friend, when I assert that I shall ever continue so to you. I have reason to lament deeply the sorrows with which fate has marked my life; I am not so deeply debased by it, however, [but] that the exertions for the happiness of my friend shall supersede considerations of narrower and selfish interests, but that his woes should claim a sigh before one repining thought arose at my own lot. I know the cause of all human disappointment—worldly prejudice; mine is the same, I know also its origin,—bigotry.

Adieu! Write again. Believe me your most sincere friend. Adieu!

P. B. S.

# 17. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (Lincoln's Inn Fields)

Field Place [Horsham],
Dec[ember] 26, 1810.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Why do you express yourself so flatteringly grateful to me, when I ought to experience that sensation towards you in the highest manner of which our nature is capable? Why do you yet suppose that you have offended against

<sup>1</sup> In his "Life of Shelley" Hogg has printed this word as "that."

any of those rules for our conduct which we ought to regard with veneration?

What is delicacy? Come, I must be severe with myself, I must irritate the wound which I wish to heal.

Supposing the object of my affections does not regard me, how have you transgressed against its dictates; in what have you offended? What is delicacy? Let us define it in the light in which you take it. I conceive it to be that inherent repugnance to injuring others, particularly as regarding the objects of their dearer preference, which beings of superior intelligence feel. In what, then, let me ask again, if I do not think you culpable, in what, then, have you offended? Tell me, then, my dear friend, no more of sorrow, no more of remorse, at what you have said. Circumstances have operated in such a manner, that the attainment of the object of my heart was impossible, whether on account of extraneous influences, or from a feeling which possessed her mind, which told her not to deceive another, not to give him the possibility of disappointment. I feel I touch the string which, if vibrated, excites acute pain, but truth and my real feelings, which I wish to give you a clear idea of, overcome my resolve never to speak on the subject again. It is with reluctance to my own feelings that I have entered into this cold disquisition, when your heart sympathizes so deeply in my affliction; but for Heaven's sake consider, and do not criminate yourself, do not wrong the motives which actuated you upon so feeble a ground as that of delicacy. I do this, I say this in justice as well as friendship; I demand that you should do justice to yourself, then no more is required to give you at all events a consciousness of rectitude.

I read most of your letters to my sister; she frequently inquires after you, and we talk of you often. I do not wish to awaken her intellect too powerfully; this must be my

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> His sister, Elizabeth Shelley.

apology for not communicating all my speculations to her. Thanks, truly thanks for opening your heart to me, for telling me your feelings towards me. Dare I do the same to you? I dare not to myself, how can I to another, perfect as he may be? I dare not even to God, whose mercy is great. My unhappiness is excessive; but I will cease; I will no more speak in riddles, but now quit for ever a subject which awakens too powerful susceptibilities for even negative misery. But that which injured me shall perish! I even now by anticipation hear the expiring vell of intolerance! Pardon me! My sorrows are not so undeserved as you believe; they are obtrusive to narrate to myself; they must be so to you. Let me wish you an eternity of happiness! I wish you knew Elizabeth, she is a great consolation to me; but if all be well, my wishes on that score will soon be accomplished. On Monday night you will see me. I cannot bear to suffer alone. Adieu! I have scarce a moment's time, only to tell you how sincerely I am your friend.

# 18. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (London)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],
Dec[ember] 28, 1810.

My DEAR FRIEND,

The encomium of one incapable of flattery is indeed flattering. Your discrimination of that chapter is more just than the praises which you bestow on so unconnected a thing as the romance taken collectively. I wish you very much to publish a tale; send one to a publisher. Oh, here we are in the midst of all the uncongenial jollities of Christmas, when you are compelled to contribute to the merriment of others—when you are compelled to live under the severest of all restraints, concealment of feelings pregnant enough in themselves, how terrible is your lot! I am learning abstraction, but I fear that my proficiency

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000658999 http://www.hathitrust.org/access\_use#pd-google Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 18:38 Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.or will be but trifling. I cannot, dare not, speak of myself. Why do you still continue to say, Do not despond, that you must not despair?

I admit that this despair would be unauthorized, when it was rational to suppose that at some future time mutual knowledge would awaken reciprocity of feeling.

Your letter arrived at a moment when I could least bear any additional excitement of feelings. I have succeeded now in calming my mind, but at first I knew not how to act; indecision and a fear of injuring another, by complying with what perhaps were the real wishes of my bosom, distracted me. I do not tell you this by way of confession of my own state, for I believe that I may not be sufficiently aware of what I feel myself, even to own it to myself. Believe me, my dear friend, that my only ultimate wishes now are for your happiness and that of my sisters. At present a thousand barriers oppose any more intimate connexion, any union with another, which, although unnatural and fettering to a virtuous mind, are nevertheless unconquerable.

I will, if possible, come to London on Monday [Dec. 31], certainly some time next week. I shall come about six o'clock, and will remain with you until that time the next morning, when I will tell you my reasons for wishing to return. Adieu. Excuse the shortness of this, as the servant waits. I will write on Sunday. [Dec. 30.]

Yours most sincerely.

## 19. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (Lincoln's Inn Fields, London)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

Jan[uary] 2, 1811.

My DEAR FRIEND,

I cannot come to London before next week. I am but just returned to Field Place from an inefficient effort. Why do you, my happy friend, tell me of perfection in

Is she not gone? And yet I breathe, I live! But adieu to egotism; I am sick to death at the name of self. Oh, your theory cost me much reflection: I have not ceased to think of it since your letter came, which was put into my hands at the moment of departure on Sunday morning. Is it not, however, founded on that hateful principle? it self which you propose to raise to a state of superiority by your system of eternal perfectibility in love? Were this frame rendered eternal, were the particles which compose it, both as to intellect and matter, indestructible, and then to undergo torments such as now we should shudder to think of even in a dream,—to undergo this, I say, for the extension of happiness to those for whom we feel a vivid preference; then would I love, adore, idolize your theory—wild, unfounded as it might be: but no. I can conceive neither of these to be correct, considering matters in a philosophical light, it evidently appears (if it is not treason to speak thus coolly on a subject too deliriously ecstatic) that we were not destined for misery. then, shall happiness arise from? Can we hesitate? Love. dear love, and though every mental faculty is bewildered by the agony, which is in this life its too constant attendant. still is not that very agony to be preferred to the most thrilling sensualities of epicurism?

I have wandered in the snow, for I am cold, wet, and mad. Pardon me, pardon my delirious egotism; this really shall be the last. My sister is well; I fear she is not quite happy on my account, but is much more cheerful than she was some days ago. I hope you will publish a tale; I shall then give a copy to Elizabeth, unless you forbid it. I would do it not only to show her what your ideas are on the subject of works of imagination, and to interest her, but that she should see her brother's friend in a new point of view. When you examine her character you will find humanity, not divinity, amiable as the former may sometimes be: however, I, a brother, must not write treason against my sister; so I will check my volubility. Do not

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000658999 http://www.hathitrust.org/access\_use#pd-google GMT Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 Generated at University of Penns Public Domain, Google-digitized direct your next letter to Field Place, only to Horsham. To-morrow I will write more connectedly.

Yours sincerely.

## 20. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (London)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

Jan[uary] 3, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Before we deny or believe the existence of anything, it is necessary that we should have a tolerably clear idea of what it is. The word "God," a vague word, has been, and will continue to be, the source of numberless errors, until it is erased from the nomenclature of philosophy. Does it not imply "the soul of the universe, the intelligent and necessarily beneficient, actuating principle." This it is impossible not to believe in; I may not be able to adduce proofs, but I think that the leaf of a tree, the meanest insect on which we trample, are, in themselves, arguments more conclusive than any which can be advanced, that some vast intellect animates infinity. If we disbelieve this, the strongest argument in support of the existence of a future state instantly becomes annihilated. I confess that I think Pope's

All are but parts of one stupendous whole, (1)

something more than poetry. It has ever been my favourite theory, for the immoral soul, "never to be able to die, never to escape from some shrine as chilling as the clay-formed dungeon, which now it inhabits"; it is the future punishment which I can most easily believe in.

Love, love *infinite in extent*, eternal in duration, yet (allowing your theory in that point) perfectible, should be the reward; but can we suppose that this reward will arise, spontaneously, as a necessary appendage to our

<sup>(1) &</sup>quot;Essay on Man," I, line 267.

nature, or that our nature itself could be without cause a first cause—a God? When do we see effects arise without causes? What causes are there without corresponding effects? Yet here, I swear—and as I break my oaths, may Infinity, Eternity blast me-here I swear that never will I forgive intolerance! It is the only point on which I allow myself to encourage revenge; every moment shall be devoted to my object, which I can spare; and let me hope that it will not be a blow which spends itself, and leaves the wretch at rest,—but lasting, long revenge! I am convinced, too, that it is of great disservice in society—that it encourages prejudices which strike at the root of the dearest, the tenderest of its ties. Oh! how I wish I were the avenger !—that it were mine to crush the demon; to hurl him to his native hell, never to rise again, and thus to establish for ever perfect and universal toleration, I expect to gratify some of this insatiable feeling in poetry. shall see—you shall hear—how it has injured me. She is no longer mine! she abhors me as a sceptic, as what she Oh, bigotry! When I pardon this last. was before! this severest of thy persecutions, may Heaven (if there be wrath in Heaven) blast me! Has vengeance, in its armoury of wrath, a punishment more dreadful? Yet, forgive me, I have done; and were it not for your great desire to know why I consider myself as the victim of severer anguish [? I do not think] that I could have entered into this brief recital.

I am afraid there is selfishness in the passion of love, for I cannot avoid feeling every instant as if my soul was bursting; but I will feel no more! It is selfish. I would feel for others, but for myself—oh! how much rather would I expire in the struggle! Yes, there were a relief! Is suicide wrong? I slept with a loaded pistol and some poison, last night, but did not die. I could not come on Monday, my sister would not part with me; but I must—I will see you soon. My sister is now comparatively happy; she has felt deeply for me. Had it not been for her—had

it not been for a sense of what I owed to her, to you, I should have bidden you a final farewell some time ago. But can the dead feel; dawns any day-beam on the night of dissolution?

Pray publish your tale; demand one hundred pounds for it from any publisher;—he will give it in the event. It is delightful, it is divine—not that I like your heroine—but the poor Mary is a character worthy of Heaven. I adore her!

Adieu, my dear friend. Your sincere,

P. B. S.

W——¹ has written. I have read his letter. It is too long to answer. I continue to dissipate Elizabeth's melancholy by keeping her as much as possible employed in poetry. You shall see some to-morrow. I cannot tell you when I can come to town. I wish it very much.

#### 21. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (University College, Oxford)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

Jan[uary] 6, 1811.

#### My DEAR FRIEND,

Dare I request one favour for myself—for my own sake? not the keenest anguish which the most unrelenting tyrant could invent, should force me to request from you so great a sacrifice of friendship. It is a beloved sister's happiness which forces me to this. She saw me when I received your letter of yesterday. She saw the conflict of my soul. At first she said nothing; and then she exclaimed, "Redirect it, and send it instantly to the post!" Believe me, I feel far more than I will allow myself to express, for the cruel

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See p. 20.

It has been suggested by Mr. Wise that Shelley guessed this letter contained some references to the painful subject of Miss Grove, and that his sister Elizabeth induced him to return it unread to Hogg.

disappointments which I have undergone. Write to me whatever you wish to say; you may say what you will on other subjects; but on that I dare not even read what you would write. Forget her? What would I have not given up to have been thus happy? I thought I knew the means by which it might have been effected. Yet I consider what a female sacrifices when she returns the attachment even of one whose faith she supposes inviolable. Hard is the agony which is indescribable, which is only to be felt. Will she not encounter the opprobrium of the world; and what is more severe (generally speaking) the dereliction and contempt of those who before had avowed themselves most attached to her? I did not encourage the remotest suspicion. I was convinced of her truth, as I was of my own existence. Still was it not natural in her, even although she might return the most enthusiastic prepossessions arising from the consciousness of intellectual sympathy, ignorant, as she was, of some of my opinions, of my sensations (for unlimited confidence is requisite for the existence of mutual love) to have some doubts—some fears? Besides, when in her natural character her spirits are good, her conversation animated, and she was almost in consequence ignorant of the refinements in love, which can only be attained by solitary reflection. Forsake her! Forsake one whom I loved! Can I? Never! But she is gone—she is lost to me for ever; for ever! There is a mystery which I dare not [try?] to clear up; it is the only point on which I will be reserved to you. I have tried the methods you would have recommended. I followed her. I would have followed her to the end of the earth, but—If you value the little happiness which yet remains, do not mention again to me, sorrows which, if you could share in, would wound a heart, which it now shall be my endeavour to heal of those pains which, through sympathy with me, it has already suffered. I will crush Intolerance. I will, at least, attempt it. To fail even in so useful an attempt were glorious!

#### I inclose some poetry:1

Oh! take the pure gem to where southerly breezes,
Waft repose to some bosom as faithful as fair,
In which the warm current of love never freezes,
As it rises unmingled with selfishness there,
Which, untainted by pride, unpolluted by care,
Might dissolve the dim icedrop, might bid it arise,
Too pure for these regions, to gleam in the skies.

Or where the stern warrior, his country defending,
Dares fearless the dark-rolling battle to pour,
Or o'er the fell corpse of a dread tyrant bending,
Where patriotism red with his guilt-reeking gore,
Plants liberty's flag on the slave-peopled shore,
With victory's cry, with the shout of the free,
Let it fly, taintless spirit, to mingle with thee.

For I found the pure gem, when the daybeam returning, Ineffectual gleams on the snow-covered plain, When to others the wished-for arrival of morning Brings relief to long visions of soul-racking pain; But regret is an insult—to grieve is in vain: And why should we grieve that a spirit so fair Seeks Heaven to mix with its own kindred there?

But still 'twas some spirit of kindness descending
To share in the load of mortality's woe,
Who over thy lowly-built sepulchre bending
Bade sympathy's tenderest tear-drop to flow.
Not for thee, soft compassion, celestials did know,
But if angels can weep, sure man may repine,
May weep in mute grief o'er thy low-laid shrine.

And did I then say, for the altar of glory,

That the earliest, the loveliest of flowers I'd entwine,
Tho' with millions of blood-reeking victims 'twas gory,
Tho' the tears of the widow polluted its shrine,
Tho' around it the orphans, the fatherless pine?
Oh! Fame, all thy glories I'd yield for a tear
To shed on the grave of a heart so sincere.

I am very cold this morning, so you must excuse bad writing, as I have been most of the night pacing a churchyard. I must now engage in scenes of strong interest.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In an autograph MS. copy of Shelley's, this poem is named "On an Icicle that clung to the grass of a grave," and is dated (perhaps incorrectly) 1809.

<sup>3-(2285)</sup> 

You see the subject of the foregoing. I send it, because it may amuse you. Your letter has just arrived; I will send W——'s¹ to University, when I can collect them. If it amuses you, you can answer him; if not, I will.

I will consider your argument against the Non-existence of a Deity. Do you allow that some supernatural power actuates the organization of physical causes? It is evident so far as this, that if power and wisdom are employed in the continual arrangement of these affairs, that this power. etc., is something out of the comprehension of man, as he now exists; at least if we allow that the soul is not matter. Then, admitting that this actuating principle is such as I have described, admitting it to be finite, there must be something beyond this which influences its actions and all this series advancing, as if it does in one instance, it must to infinity, must at last terminate, if it can terminate, in the existence which may be called a Deity. And if this Deity thus influences the actions of the Spirits (if I may be allowed the expression), which take care of minor events (supposing your theory to be true), why is it not the soul of the Universe; in what is it not analogous to the soul of man? Why too is not gravitation the soul of a clock? I entertain no doubt of the fact, although it possesses no capabilities of variation; if the principle of life (that of reason put out of the question, as in the cases of dogs. horses, and oysters) be soul, then gravitation is as much the soul of a clock, as animation is that of an oyster. think we may not inaptly define Soul as the most supreme. superior, and distinguished abstract appendage to the nature of anything.

But I will write again: my head is rather dizzy to-day, on account of not taking rest, and a slight attack of typhus. Adieu! I will write soon.

Your sincerest,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See pp. 20, 31, 43.

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## 22. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (University College, Oxford)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

Jan[uary] 11, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I will not now consider your little Essay, which arrived this morning; I wait till to-morrow. It coincides exactly with Elizabeth's sentiments on the subject, to whom I read it: indeed it has convinced her, although from my having a good deal to do to-day, I cannot listen to so full an exposition of her sentiments on the subject, as I would wish to send you. I shall write to you to-morrow on this matter; and if you clear up some doubts which yet remain, dissipate some hopes relative to the perfectibility of man generally considered, as well as individually, I will willingly submit to the system, which at present I cannot but strongly reprobate.

How can I find words to express my thanks for such generous conduct with regard to my sister with talents and attainments, such as you possess, to promise what I ought not perhaps to have required, what nothing but a dear sister's intellectual improvement could have induced me to demand. What can I say on the subject of your letter concerning Elizabeth? Is it not dictated by the most generous and disinterested of human motives? I have not shown it to her yet, I need not explain the reason. On this point you know all.

There is only one affair of which I will make the least cloud of mystery; it is the only point on which I will be a solitary being! To be solitary, to be reserved in communicating pain, surely cannot be criminal; it cannot be contrary to the strictest duties of friendship.

She is gone! She is lost to me for ever! She married!2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Perhaps Shelley's love affair with Miss Grove.

<sup>\*</sup> Hogg prints "She is married." Peacock suggests the above emendation, as Shelley probably alludes to Miss Harriet Grove's engagement to Mr. Heylar, for her marriage to him did not take place

Married to a clod of earth; she will become as insensible herself; all those fine capabilities will moulder!

Let us speak no more on the subject. Do not deprive me of the little remains of peace which yet linger; that which arises from endeavours to make others happy!

The Poetry, which I sent you, alluded not to the subject of my nonsensical ravings. I hope that you are now publishing one of your tales. L[Munday?] would do it as well as anyone; if you [do not] choose to publish a book at Oxford, you can print it there; and I will engage to dispose of five hundred copies. S[tockdale] professes to be acquainted with your family; hinc illæ lacrymæ! I attempted to enlighten my father, mirabile dictu! He for a time listened to my arguments; he allowed the impossibility (considered abstractedly) of any preternatural interferences by Providence. He allowed the utter incredibility of witches, ghosts, legendary miracles. But when I came to apply the truths, on which we had agreed so harmoniously, he started at the bare idea of some facts generally believed never having existed, and silenced me with an Equine argument, in effect with these words:—" I believe, because I do believe."

My mother imagines me to be in the high road to Pandemonium, she fancies I want to make a deistical coterie of all my little sisters: how laughable!

You must be very solitary at Oxford; I wish I could come there now; but for reasons which I will tell you at meeting, it is delayed for a fortnight. I have a Poem with

until the autumn of 1811. On October 28 of that year he wrote from York to Charles Grove: "How do you like Mr. Heylar? A new brother as well as a new cousin [Shelley's bride was the new cousin] must be an invaluable acquisition." Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 101.

¹ The poem to which Shelley alludes was apparently rejected by Mr. Munday. It may afterwards have been published as. " / A Poetical Essay / on the / Existing State of Things. / Quotation from 'The Curse of Kehama,' / By a / Gentleman of the University of Oxford. / For assisting to maintain in Prison / Mr. Peter Finnerty, / Imprisoned for a Libel, / London: Sold by B. Crosby

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Yes! the arms of Britannia victorious are bearing Fame, triumph, and glory, wherever they speed, Her Lion his crest o'er the nations is rearing. Ruin follows, it tramples the dying and dead, Thy countrymen fall, the blood-reeking bed Of the battle-slain sends a complaint-breathing sigh, It is mixed with the shoutings of Victory. Old Ocean to shrieks of despair is resounding, It washes the terror-struck nations with gore, With Horror the fear-palsied earth is astounding. And murmurs of fate fright the dread-convulsed shore. The Andes in sympathy start at the roar, Vast Ætna, alarmed, leans his flame-glowing brow, And huge Teneriffe stoops with his pinnacled snow. The ice mountains echo, the Baltic, the Ocean, Where Cold sits enthroned on his column of snows, Even Spitzbergen perceives the terrific commotion, The roar floats on the whirlwind of sleet, as this blows Blood tinges the streams as half-frozen they flow, The meteors of war lurid flame thro' the air, They mix their bright gleam with the red polar star.

and Co., / and all other Booksellers. / 1811." / The late Mr. D. F. MacCarthy was the first to show that such a book by Shelley was actually published. Hitherto, no copy has come to light, but the book was advertised with the above title in the Oxford Herald of March 2, 1811, with the addition "Literature, Just Published, Price Two Shillings." In addition to Mr. MacCarthy's researches, Mr. W. M. Rossetti found a reference to the poem in a contemporary account of Shelley, in a letter from C. Kirkpatrick Sharpe dated from Christchurch, Oxford, March 15, 1811, included by Lady Charlotte Bury in her anonymous "Diary Illustrative of the Times of George the Fourth." 1838 (Vol. I, pp. 54-56). "We have lately had a literary sun shine forth upon us here, before whom our former luminaries must hide their diminished heads—a Mr. Shelley, of University College, who lives upon arsenic, aqua-fortis, half-an-hour's sleep in the night, and is desperately in love with the memory of Margaret Nicholson. He has published what he terms the Posthumous Poems, printed for the benefit of Mr. Peter Finnerty, which, I am grieved to say, though stuffed full of treason, is extremely dull, but the Author is a great genius, and if he be not clapped up in Bedlam or hanged, will certainly prove one of the sweetest swans on the tuneful margin of the Charwell. . . . Our Apollo next came

All are brethren, and even the African bending
To the stroke of the hard-hearted Englishman's rod,
The courtier at Luxury's palace attending,
The senator trembling at Tyranny's nod,
Each nation which kneels at the footstool of God
All are brethren—then banish distinction afar,
Let Concord and Love heal the miseries of War!

out with a prose pamphlet in praise of Atheism, which I have not yet seen, and there appeared a monstrous romance in one volume. called 'St. Ircoyne [sic] or the Rosicrucian.' . . . Shelley's last exhibition is a 'Poem on the State of Public Affairs.'" Peter Finnerty (1766-1822) was born at Loughrea, Co. Galway, and during the Irish Rebellion in 1798 became printer of the Dublin Press. In connection with this journal he was indicted for a political libel, and although defended by Curran, was sentenced to imprisonment and his press and types were destroyed. On his release, he went to England and became a reporter on the Morning Chronicle. the request of Sir Home Popham, Finnerty accompanied the expedition to Walcheren for the avowed purpose of writing the history of the expedition, but on his arrival at that place, he was ordered to return to England. Smarting under what he considered an unjust exercise of authority, he addressed a letter in the Morning Chronicle, for Jan. 23, 1810, to Lord Castlereagh, whom Leigh Hunt says "he plainly accused of an intention to harass and destroy him, and reminded the Viscount of the tyrannous and horrible cruelties practised upon the people of Ireland during his administration in that country." On Feb. 7, 1811, Finnerty was brought up for judgment, and sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment in Lincoln jail. Shelley was deeply interested in the case of Finnerty, and his name appears in the Oxford Herald for March 2, 1811, as a subscriber of one guinea to a fund for the unfortunate journalist, and he alludes to him in the "Address to the Irish People." The Dublin Weekly Messenger for March 7, 1812, after commenting on Shelley's speech at the Fishamble Theatre, says, "We have but one word more to add. Mr. Shelly [sic], commiserating the sufferings of our distinguished countryman, Mr. Peter Finnerty, whose exertions in the cause of political freedom he much admired, wrote a very beautiful poem, the profits of which we understand, from undoubted authority, Mr. Shelly remitted to Mr. Finnerty; we have heard they amounted to nearly a hundred pounds. This fact speaks a volume in favour of our new friend." It is interesting to note that both C. P. Sharpe in the above letter and H. Slatter in his note to Montgomery's "Oxford" state that the profits of "Margaret Nicholson" were to be devoted to Finnerty. Besides D. F. MacCarthy's "Shelley's Early Life," Mr. Forman's invaluable "Shelley Library" should be consulted for a full account of this poem.

<sup>1</sup> In a MS. copy of these verses with a different order of stanzas, and some variations of text, they are described as "Fragment of a Poem the original idea of which was suggested by the cowardly and

infamous bombardment of Copenhagen."

These are Elizabeth's. She has written many more, and I will show you at some future time the whole of the composition. I like it very much, if a brother may be allowed to praise a sister. I will write to-morrow.

Yours with affection,

P. B. S.

Can you read this?

## 23. TO JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE (41 Pall Mall, London)

[FIELD PLACE, HORSHAM,]
January 11, 1811.

DEAR SIR,

I would thank you to send a copy of "St. Irvyne" to Miss Harriet Westbrook, 1 10 Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square. In the course of a fortnight I shall do myself the pleasure of calling on you: with respect to the printer's bill, 2 I made him explain the distinction of the costs, which I hope are intelligible.

Do you find that the public are captivated by the title-page of "St. Irvyne"?

Your sincere, P. B. Shelley.

Apparently for the printing of "Victor and Cazire." See note

on p. 125, to Shelley's letter to Hogg, July 30, 1811.

This is the first mention of Harriet Westbrook's name in Shelley's correspondence. The mistake in the number of her house, (it should be 23), seems to show that it was unfamiliar to him Shelley's sisters were schoolfellows of Harriet Westbrook at Mrs. Fenning's school at Clapham. Charles H. Grove, writing in Hogg's "Shelley" (Vol. II, p. 552), shows that Shelley and Harriet Westbrook were already acquainted with one another. He says: "During the Christmas vacation of that year [1810], and in January, 1811, I spent part of it with Bysshe at Field Place, and when we returned to London, his sister Mary sent a letter of introduction with a present to her schoolfellow, Miss Westbrook, which Bysshe and I were to take to her. I recollect we did so, calling at Mr. Westbrook's house. I scarcely know how it came about, but from that time Bysshe corresponded with Miss Westbrook."

#### 24. To THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG (University College, Oxford)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM], Jan[uary] 12, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter with the extremely beautiful enclosed poetry came this morning. It is really admirable; it touches the heart; but I must be allowed to offer one critique upon it. You will be surprised to hear that I think it unfinished. You have not said that "the ivy, after it had destroyed the oak, as if to mock the miseries, which it caused, twined around a pine which stood near." It is true, therefore, but does not comprehend the whole truth. As to the stuff which I sent you, I write all my poetry of that kind from the feelings of the moment; if therefore it neither has allusion to the sentiments which rationally might be supposed to possess me, or to those which my situation might awaken, it is another proof of that egotizing variability, whilst I shudder to reflect how much I am in its power. To you I dare represent myself as I am: wretched to the last degree—sometimes one gleam of hope, one faint solitary gleam, seems to illumine the darkened prospect before me—but it has vanished. fear it will never return. My sister will, I fear, never return the attachment which would once again bid me be calm. Yes! In this alone is my feeble anticipation of peace But what am I? Am I not the most degraded placed! of deceived enthusiasts? Do I not deceive myself? I never, never can feel peace again. What necessity is there for continuing in existence? But Heaven! Eternity! Love! My dear friend, I am yet a sceptic on these subjects; would that I could believe them to be, as they are represented; would that I could totally disbelieve them! But no! That would be selfish. I still have firmness enough to resist this last, this most horrible of errors. Is my despair the result of the hot, sickly love which inflames the admirers of Sterne or Moore?<sup>1</sup> It is the conviction of unmerited unkindness, the conviction that, should a future world exist, the object of my attachment would be as miserable as myself, is the cause of it.

I here take God (and a God exists) to witness, that I wish torments, which beggar the futile description of a fancied hell, would fall upon me; provided I could obtain thereby that happiness for what I love, which, I fear, can never be? The question is, what do I love? It is almost unnecessary to answer. Do I love the person, the embodied identity, if I may be allowed the expression? No! I love what is superior, what is excellent, or what I conceive to be so; and I wish, ardently wish, to be profoundly convinced of the existence of a Deity, that so superior a spirit might derive some degree of happiness from my feeble exertions; for love is heaven, and heaven is love. You think so, too, and you disbelieve not the existence of an eternal, omnipresent Spirit. Am I not mad? Alas! I am, but I pour out my ravings into the ear of a friend who will pardon them. Stay! I have an idea. I think I can prove the existence of a Deity—A First Cause. will ask a materialist, how came this universe at first? He will answer, By chance. What chance? I will answer in the words of Spinoza: "An infinite number of atoms had been floating from all eternity in space, till at last one of them fortuitously diverged from its track, which, dragging with it another, formed the principle of gravitation, and in consequence the universe." What cause produced this change, this chance? For where do we know that causes arise without their corresponding effects; at least we must here, on so abstract a subject, reason analogically. Was not this then a cause, was it not a first cause? Was not this first cause a Deity? Now nothing remains but to prove that this Deity has a care, or rather that its

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Dr. John Moore (1729-1802) physician, and the author of some books of travel and three novels:—"Zeluco" (1786), "Edward" (1796) and "Mordaunt" (1800).

only employment consists in regulating the present and future happiness of its creation. Our ideas of infinite space, etc., are scarcely to be called ideas, for we cannot either comprehend or explain them; therefore the Deity must be judged by us from attributes analogical to our situation. Oh, that this Deity were the soul of the universe, the spirit of universal, imperishable love! Indeed I believe it is: but now to your argument of the necessity of Christianity. I am not sure that your argument does not tend to prove its unreality. If it does not, you allow, you say, that love is the only true source of rational happiness: one man is capable of it, why not all?

The callibility of man preterite, I allow, but because men are, and have been callible, I see no reason why they should always continue so. Have there not been fluctuations in the opinions of mankind; and as the stuff which soul is made of must be in every one the same, would not an extended system of rational and moral unprejudiced education render each individual capable of experiencing that degree of happiness to which each ought to aspire, more for others than self? Hideous, hated traits of Superstition. Oh! Bigots, how I abhor your influence; they are all bad enough—but do we not see Fanaticism decaying? is not its influence weakened, except where Faber, Rowland Hill, and several others of the Armageddon heroes maintain their posts with all the obstinacy

\* Rowland Hill (1744-1833), an evangelical preacher, the author of "Village Dialogues," 1810, and some hymns; not to be confused with Sir Rowland Hill, of penny-postage fame.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> George Stanley Faber (1773-1854) was scholar of University College, Oxford, 1790, and Fellow of Lincoln, 1793. From 1805 to 1808 he was Vicar of Stockton-upon-Tees, some two miles from Norton, where the Hoggs lived. He was probably a friend of Hogg's father, and may have suggested University as the college for his son. The author of several controversial works, "The Origin of Pagan Idolatry," 1816, a "prescientific" work, is cited by the "Dictionary of National Biography" as characteristic. It is evident that Shelley corresponded with Faber, and that the "F——" which occurs in many of his letters stands for his name.

of long-established dogmatism? How I pity them; how I despise, hate them! S[tockdale] knows Mr. D. would publish your tale. I am beyond measure anxious for its appearance. Adieu! Excuse my mad arguments; they are none at all, for I am rather confused, and fear, in consequence of a fever, they will not allow me to come on the 26th, but I will. Adieu!

Your affectionate friend,

P. B. S.

You can inclose to Timothy Shelley, Esq., M.P.

25. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (University College, Oxford)

Jan[uary] 14, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND.

Your letter and that of W——.¹ came to-day; yours is excellent, and, I think, will fully (in his own mind) convince Mr. W——. I inclosed five sheets of paper full this morning, and sent them to the coach with yours. I sate up all night to finish them; they attack his hypothesis in its very basis, which, at some future time, I will explain to you; and I have attempted to prove, from the existence of a Deity and a Revelation, the futility of the superstition upon which he founds his whole scheme.

I am sorry to see that you even remotely suspected me of being offended with you. How I wish that I could persuade you that it is impossible! I am really sleepy; could you suppose that I should be so apathetic as ever to sleep again till my last slumber? But it is so, and I shall take a walk in St. Leonard's Forest to dissipate it. Adieu! You shall hear from me to-morrow.

Your sincere friend,

P. B. S.

Stockdale has behaved infamously to me; he has abused

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See pp. 20, 31, 34.

the confidence I reposed in him in sending him my work; and he has made very free with your character, of which he knows nothing, with my father. I shall call on Stockdale on my way that he may explain. May I expect to see your Tale printed?

## 26. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (Oxford)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

Jan[uary] 16, 1811.

My DEAR FRIEND,

You will hear from me to-morrow. I have, to-day, scarcely time but to tell you that I do not forget you. You tell me that it will show greatness of soul to rise after such a fall as mine. Ah! what pain must I feel when I contradict the flattering view which you have taken of my character. Do I not know myself? Do I not feel the acutest poignancy of mortification amounting to actual misery? Alas! I must, with Godwin, say that in man, imperfect as: he now exists, there is never a motive for action unmixed: that the best has its alloy, the worst is commingled with virtue. What does my mortification arise from? Surely not wholly for myself, not wholly for the happiness of the being whom I have lost. Did I know, were I convinced, that I felt for nothing but Her, no self-reproach would tell me that my pangs were disgraceful. But now, when I fear, when I feel, that, in spite of myself, regret for the high happiness which I have lost is mingled with the other consideration, do I feel, too, that it is disgraceful, degrading! Adieu! I will write to-morrow.

<sup>3</sup> To Oxford.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Possibly "The Necessity of Atheism."

## 27. To Thomas Jefferson · Hogg (University College, Oxford)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],
January 17, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I shall be with you as soon as possible next week. You really were at Hungerford, whether you knew it or not. You tell me nothing about the tale which you promised me. I hope it gets on in the press, I am anxious for its appearance. Stockdale certainly behaved in a vile manner to me, 1 no other bookseller would have violated the confidence reposed in him. I will talk to him in London, where I shall be on Tuesday. Can I do anything for you there?

You notice the peculiarity of the expression "My Sister" in my letters. It certainly arose independent of consideration, and I am happy to hear that it is so.

Your systematic cudgel for blockheads is excellent. I tried it on with my father, who told me that thirty years ago he had read Locke, but this made no impression. The "equus et res" are all that I can boast of; the "pater" is swallowed up in the first article of the catalogue. You tell me nothing of the tale; I am all anxiety about it. I am forced hastily to bid you adieu.

## 28. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (Oxford)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

[No date.]

[January 23, 1811?]

My DEAR FRIEND,

You are all over the country. I shall be at Oxford on Friday or Saturday evening. I will write to you from London. My father's prophetic prepossession in your favour is become as high as before it was to your prejudice. Whence it arises, or from what cause, I am inadequate to

<sup>1</sup> See note on p. 47.

say; I can merely state the fact. He came from London full of your praises; your family, that of Mr. Hogg, of Norton House, near Stockton-upon-Tees. Your principles are now as divine as before they were diabolical. I tell you this with extreme satisfaction, and, to sum up the whole, he has desired me to make his compliments to you and to invite you to make Field Place your head-quarters for the Easter vacation. I hope you will accept of it. I fancy he has been talking in town to some of the northern Members of Parliament who are acquainted with your family. However that may be, I hope you have no other arrangement for Easter which can interfere with granting me the pleasure of introducing you personally here.

You have very well drawn your line of distinction between instinctive and rational motives of action; the former are not in our own power, yet we may doubt if even these are purely selfish, as congeniality, sympathy, unaccountable attractions of intellect, which arise independent frequently of any considerations of your own interest, operating violently in contradiction to it, and bringing on wretchedness, which your reason plainly foresees, which yet, although your judgment disapproves of, you take no pains to obviate. All this is not selfish. And surely the operations of reason, of judgment, in a man whose judgment is fully convinced of the baseness of any motive, can never be consonant with it.

Adieu! Your affectionate.

29. JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE (41 Pall Mall, London)

[University College], Oxford, 28th of January, 1811.

Sir,

On my arrival at Oxford my friend Mr. Hogg communicated to me the letters which passed in consequence of your misrepresentations of his character, the abuse of that

confidence which he invariably reposed in you. I now, Sir, desire to know whether you mean the evasions in your first letter to Mr. Hogg, your insulting attempt at coolness in your second, as a method of escaping sately from the opprobrium naturally attached to so ungentlemanlike an abuse of confidence (to say nothing of misrepresentations) as that which my father communicated to me; or as a denial of the fact of having acted in this unprecedented, this scandalous manner. If the former be your intention I will compassionate your cowardice, and my friend pitying your weakness will take no further notice of your contemptible attempts at calumny. If the latter is your intention, I feel it my duty to declare, as my veracity and that of my father is thereby called in question, that I will never be satisfied, despicable as I may consider the author of that affront, until my friend has ample apology for the injury which you have attempted to do him. I expect an immediate, and demand a satisfactory letter.

Sir, I am,

Your obedient humble servant, PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside.]

<sup>1</sup> Stockdale had represented to Shelley's father, apparently with good intentions, that his son's scepticism was due to Hogg's influence; and Shelley had repeated the bookseller's apprehension to his friend. Whereupon Hogg addressed in succession two letters, couched in violent language, to the unfortunate Stockdale. In the first letter, dated from Oxford, Jan. 21, 1811, Hogg says: "The bare mention of the MS., with which I entrusted you, to anyone was an unparalleled breach of confidence. There have been instances of booksellers who have honourably refused to betray the authors whose works they have published altho' actions were brought against them. I believe that one gentleman had honour enough to submit to the pillory rather than disgrace himself by giving up the name of one who had confided in him, however unworthy he might be of such generous treatment." The MS. referred to here was suggested by Mr. MacCarthy to be that of Shelley's "Necessity of Atheism"; and Peter Finnerty was the gentleman who submitted to the ordeal of the pillory.

#### 30. To Edward Fergus Graham (Fragment)

I do not wish or desire you to accuse yourself to my father, nor when he speaks to me will I any longer suffer him to continue in that opinion or error. As to Stockdale, I have a bad opinion of him. . . I have some hopes from our Poetry, more of which I send you. . . The enclosed Poetry is to be added to the rest to go to Longmans. Ask £20,000,000 for them.

#### 31. To EDWARD FERGUS GRAHAM (Vine Street, London)

February 13, 1811.

DEAR GRAHAM,

I send you a book, 1 you must be particularly intent about it. Cut out the title-page, and advertise it in eight famous papers; and in the Globe, advertise the advertisement in the third page. I wish you to be particularly quick about it. I will write more to-morrow. Now can only say silence and despatch.

Your friend,

PERCY SHELLEY.

ED. GRAHAM, Esq., Vine Street, Piccadilly, London.

Hogg describes the origin of this pamphlet. Shelley had a passion

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The Necessity of Atheism." I have found the record of a letter addressed by Shelley to Graham in 1811, but with no more definite date, which evidently was written shortly after the above, in which he says: "You need not advertise the Atheism, as it is not yet published, we are afraid of the Legislature's power with respect to Heretics."... An advertisement of this pamphlet, however, had already appeared in the Oxford Herald of February 9th.

<sup>&</sup>quot;To be had of the Booksellers of London and Oxford, with the title of the pamphlet (but without the imprint), which is as follows—

<sup>&#</sup>x27;The /Necessity of Atheism./ Quod clara et perspicua demonstratione careat / pro vero habere / mens omnino nequit humana. / Bacon de Augment Scient. / Worthing: / Printed by C. & W. Phillips. 'Sold in London and Oxford.'" /

#### 32. To LEIGH HUNT (As Editor of The Examiner)

University College, Oxford, March 2, 1811.

SIR,

Permit me, although a stranger, to offer my sincerest congratulations on the occasion of that triumph, so

for controversial discussion, not only with his friends, but frequently with correspondents, as often as not personally unknown to him. In order "to facilitate his epistolary disquisitions, he printed a short abstract of some of the doctrines of Hume. It was a small pill, but it worked powerfully; the mode of operation was this:—He enclosed a copy in a letter, and sent it by the post, stating with modesty and simplicity, that he had met accidentally with the little tract, which appeared unhappily to be quite unanswerable. Unless the fish was too sluggish to take the bait, an answer of refutation was forwarded to an appointed address in London, and then in a vigorous reply he would fall upon the unwary disputant and break his bones. The strenuous attack sometimes provoked a rejoinder more carefully prepared, and an animated and protracted debate ensued; the party cited, having put in his answer, was fairly in court, and he might get out of it as he could."—" Life of Shelley, Vol. I, p. 272 Henry Slatter, writing in the fourth edition of Robert Montgomery's "Oxford," says that Shelley himself strewed the shop windows and counters of Munday and Slatter, his booksellers in Oxford, unknown to them, with copies of "The Necessity of Atheism," and gave instructions to their shopman to sell them as fast as he could at the charge of sixpence each. Shortly afterwards, a judicious friend of the booksellers (the Rev. John Walker, B.C.L., Fellow of New College) dropped in, and was attracted by the novelty of the title to examine the contents of the pamphlet. He at once inveighed against the dangerous tendency of the pamphlet, and at his advice, the copies were immediately burned, in the gentleman's presence, in the back kitchen. Shelley informed Munday and Slatter that he had sent a copy of his pamphlet to every bishop in the kingdom, to the Vice-Chancellor, and the heads of houses in Oxford, and other dignitaries, addressing them under the fictitious signature of "Jeremiah Stukeley." The same bookseller sent "a friendly hint" to the Worthing printers of "The Necessity of Atheism," "warning them of the dangerous tendency of disseminating such vile principles, and the liability they ran of a prosecution by the Attorney-General, at the same time advising the destruction of every remaining copy, together with the MS. copy, types, etc." Mr. Slatter, however, preserved a copy of the pamphlet for his own use, and it is now in the collection of Mr. Thomas J. Wise.

<sup>1</sup> "An article which had appeared in the Examiner for Feb. 24,

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highly to be prized by men of liberality; permit me also to submit to your consideration, as one of the most fearless enlighteners of the public mind at the present time, a scheme of mutual safety, and mutual indemnification for men of public spirit and principle, which if carried into effect, would evidently be productive of incalculable advantages: of the scheme the following is an address to the public, the proposal for a meeting, and shall be modified according to your judgment, if you will do me the honour to consider the point.

The ultimate intention of my aim is to induce a meeting of such enlightened and unprejudiced members of the community, whose independent principles expose them to evils which might thus become alleviated; and to form a methodical society, which should be organized so as to resist the coalition of the enemies of liberty, which at present renders any expression of opinion on matters of policy dangerous to individuals. It has been for want of societies of this nature, that corruption has attained the height at which we now behold it; nor can any of us bear in mind the very great influence, which some years since was gained by *Illuminism*, without considering that a society of equal extent might establish national liberty on as firm a basis as that which would have supported the visionary schemes of a completely equalized community.

1811, on the savagery of military floggings with the title 'One Thousand Lashes,' reprinted from a provincial journal, had attracted the attention of the Attorney-General, and a criminal information for seditious libel was filed against Leigh and John Hunt." The case was heard before Lord Ellenborough, who exhorted the jury to convict, but the defendants were ably supported by Brougham, who obtained for them a verdict of "Not guilty." This made the third government prosecution against the Examiner that had failed. Professor Dowden, whose note on this letter in his "Life of Shelley" (I, 112) I have used, says that Shelley had read, probably in the Abbé Barruel's "Mémoires pour Servir à l'Histoire du Jacobinisme," how Spartacus Weishaupt founded the Society of Illuminists, not so many years ago, for the defence and propagation of free thought and revolutionary principles; he remembered how formidable that society had grown."

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Although perfectly unacquainted with you privately, I address you as a common friend to *liberty*, thinking that in cases of this urgency and importance, etiquette ought not to stand in the way of usefulness.

My father is in parliament, and on attaining twenty-one, I shall in all probability fill his vacant seat. On account of the responsibility, to which my residence in the University subjects me, I, of course, dare not publicly avow all I think, but the time will come when I hope that my every endeavour, insufficient as this may be, will be directed to the advancement of liberty.

I remain, sir,

Your most obedient servant,

P. B. SHELLEY.

#### II. POLAND STREET AND FIELD PLACE

#### April 5-July 4, 1811

SHELLEY and Hogg expelled from Oxford—Their residence in Poland Street—Correspondence with Hogg—Harriet Westbrook—Rev. G. S. Faber—Shelley's allowance—Poems by Janetta Philipps—Elizabeth Shelley—Eliza Hitchener—The Prince Regent's fête—Miss Owenson's "Missionary."

#### 33. To Timothy Shelley<sup>1</sup>

[15] POLAND STREET [LONDON],
[After April 5, 1811.]

My DEAR FATHER,

As you do me the honour of requesting to hear the determination of my mind as the basis of your future actions, I feel it my duty, although it gives me pain to wound "the sense of duty to your own character, to that of your family, and your feelings as a Christian," decidedly to refuse my assent to both the proposals in your letter, and to affirm that similar refusals will always be the fate

¹ The expulsion of Shelley and Hogg from Oxford took place on March 25th, 1811, and at 8 o'clock on the morning of the following day they left the University city on the top of a coach for London. The same night they spent at a coffee house near Piccadilly. On March 28 they found some lodgings in Poland Street, off the Oxford Road (now Oxford Street), which appealed to Shelley because they reminded him of Miss Jane Porter's novel "Thaddeus of Warsaw," and of freedom.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Of April 5, 1811, in which he requested that Shelley should instantly return to Field Place, put himself under a tutor of his (Mr. Timothy Shelley's) choice, and break off all relations with his friend Hogg.

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000658999 / http://www.hathitrust.org/access\_use#pd-google GMT at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 18:38 Public Domain, Google-digitized of similar requests. With many thanks for your great kindness,

I remain your affectionate dutiful son,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

#### 34. To John Hogg

15 POLAND STREET [LONDON],
[April, 1811.]

SIR,

I accompanied (at his desire) Mr. Jefferson Hogg to Mr. C., who was intrusted with certain propositions to be offered to my friend. I was there extremely surprised; no less hurt than surprised, to find my father in his interview with Mr. C. had, either unadvisedly or intentionally, let fall expressions which conveyed an idea that Mr. Jefferson Hogg was the "original corruptor" of my principles. That on this subject (notwithstanding his long experience) Mr. T. Shelley must know less than his son, will be conceded; and I feel it but justice, in consequence of your feelings, so natural, [?after] what Mr. C. communicated, positively to deny the assertion; I feel this tribute, which I have paid to the just sense of horror you entertain, to be due to you as a gentleman. I hope my motives stand excused to your candour.

Myself and my friend have offered concessions; painful, indeed, they are to myself, but such as on mature consideration we find due to our high sense of filial duty.

Permit me to request your indulgence for the liberty I have taken in thus addressing you.

I remain your obedient humble servant, P. B. Shelley.

To John Hogg, Esq.

In connexion with this letter, Hogg said that he "did not believe that Mr. T. Shelley ever let fall the expressions that were imputed to him." Yet Mr. Shelley addressed a letter to Hogg on March 27, 1811, two days after his expulsion, saying that he could not receive him at Field Place for the Easter Vacation in accordance with his son's invitation.—("Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 311, 329.)

## 35. To John Joseph Stockdale (41 Pall Mail, London)

15 POLAND STREET, OXFORD STREET [LONDON],
April 11, 1811.

SIR.

Will you have the goodness to inform me of the number of copies which you have sold of "St. Irvyne." Circumstances may occur which will oblige me, in case of their event, to wish for my accounts suddenly, perhaps you had better make them out.

Sir.

Your obedient servant,
P. B. Shelley.

## 36. To J. SLATTER<sup>2</sup> (London)

[15 POLAND STREET, LONDON, Postmark] April 16, 1811.

SIR.

Directly I get my affairs a little settled, I will send you the £20 you were so kind as to lend me.—I have not yet heard from Munday, suppose I shall soon.

Directly the trunks come I will send Mr. B.'s writings. Y[ou]r obliged Ser[v]ant,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Mr. SLATTER,
At the upholsterer's,
Corner of Sloane Street.
[Knightsbridge, London.]

1 "St. Irvyne," it will be remembered, was published at Shelley's

In the notes to Robert Montgomery's "Oxford" quoted above, Henry Slatter says that when Shelley was expelled from Oxford, having no money whatever, he "went to the house where his father had lodged when he brought him to Oxford, and obtained the loan

## 37. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (Ellesmere)

[15] POLAND STREET [LONDON],
April 18, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Certainly this place is a little solitary, 1 but as a person cannot be quite alone when he has even got himself with him, I get on pretty well. I have employed myself in writing poetry, and as I go to bed at eight o'clock, time passes quicker than it otherwise might.

of £20 to enable him to pay his travelling expenses to London, leaving a written memorandum of his having borrowed it, but which, to this hour, has never been redeemed." Mr. J. Slatter, coming to London shortly after Shelley left Oxford, called at Shelley's lodgings, and not finding the poet at home, left a note requesting him to repay the money he had had, to which application Shelley sent the above note. "Mr. B.'s writings" were probably "the large historical and political work relative to Sweden," for the printing of which, Mr. Slatter says, Shelley had made himself responsible. The work was by a literary character of the name of Browne or Bird, who having sought Shelley's aid in bringing it out, a purchase of the copyright was agreed upon. Shelley managed to raise £600 on the security of his printers, and as he failed to repay this sum, they were ultimately called upon to settle both principal and interest. "The printing, however, of the work was not far proceeded with, although new type was laid down and paper bought, Shelley having left Oxford so suddenly, without making any provision for its printing, other than by placing a part of the MS. in the printer's hands, with a promise of sending the remainder and of rendering justice to them by taking on himself all the responsibility for the money raised on his account, for the purchase of the work, and also the risk in printing and publishing, the moment he had it in his power—thus becoming a patron at the expense of others, and almost to the entire ruin at that time of the printers and their families! That it was his intention at the time of entering into the engagement, none who knew him could have doubted; but his prospects suddenly changed, and with them almost the recollection, apparently, of his having been at Oxford, faded also from his memory.

<sup>1</sup> Hogg tells us ("Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 334) that after spending a month with Shelley in London, he left him, and with a college friend, proceeded to Ellesmere, in Shropshire, to spend a short

holiday before settling down to his legal training at York.

Yesterday I had a letter from Whitton 1 to invite me to his house; of course the answer was negative. I wrote to say that I would resign all claim to the entail if he 2 would allow me two hundred pounds a year, and divide the rest among my sisters. Of course he will not refuse the offer. You remarked that, in Lord Mount Edgecombe's hermitage, I should have nothing to talk of but myself; nor have I anything here, except I should transcribe the jeux-d'esprit of the maid.

Mr. Pilfold<sup>3</sup> has written a very civil letter; my mother intercepted that—sent to my father, <sup>4</sup> and wrote to me to come, inclosing the money. I, of course, returned it.

Miss Westbrook has this moment called on me, with her sister. It certainly was very kind of her. Adieu!

The post goes.

Yours, P. B. S.

## 38. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (Ellesmere)

LONDON,

April 24, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You have, with wonderful sagacity, no doubt, refuted an argument of mine, the very existence of which I had

\* That is, Shelley's father.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mr. Timothy Shelley's solicitor.

<sup>\*</sup> Shelley's maternal uncle, Captain John Pilfold, who desired to reconcile Shelley with his father. He had fought with Nelson in the battle of the Nile, and had commanded a frigate at Trafalgar. He now lived with his wife and children at Cuckfield, a distance of about ten miles from Field Place. (Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 152.) In a letter dated Jan. 6, 1814, printed on p. 397 of this volume, Captain Pilfold wrote from Nelson Hall, Lindfield, which is not far from Cuckfield.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The intercepted letter was evidently No. 33, which Mrs. Shelley may have thought was not calculated to improve the relations per ween Shelley and his father.

forgotten. Something singularly conceited, no doubt, by the remarks you make on it. Fine flowery language, you say; well, I cannot help it; you see me in my weakest moments. All I can tell you of it is, that I certainly was not laughing, as you conjecture. This circumstance may go against me. I do not know that it will, however, as I have by no means a *precise* idea of what the subject of this composition was.

"The Galilean is not a favourite of mine," a French author writes. The French write audaciously—rashly. "So far from owing him any thanks for his favours, I cannot avoid confessing that I owe a secret grudge to his carpentership—charpenterie. The reflecting part of the community, that part in whose happiness we philosophers have so strong an interest—certainly do not require his morality, which, where there is no vice, fetters virtue. Here we all agree. Let this horrid Galilean rule the Canaille then! I give them up." And I give them up; I will no more mix politics and virtue, they are incompatible.

My little friend Harriet W[estbrook] is gone to her prison-house. She is quite well in health; at least so she says, though she looks very much otherwise. I saw her yesterday. I went with her [? and her] sister to Miss H[awkes'?] and walked about Clapham Common with them for two hours. The youngest is a most amiable girl; the eldest is really conceited, but very condescending. I took the sacrament with her on Sunday. You say, I talk philosophically of her kindness in calling on me. She is very charitable and good. I shall always think of it with gratitude, because I certainly did not deserve it, and she exposed herself to much possible odium. It is, perhaps, scarcely doing her a kindness—it is, perhaps, inducing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The school at Clapham Common, originally kept by Mrs. Fenning, but afterwards by Miss Hawkes.

Eliza Westbrook.

<sup>\*</sup> That is, Harriet Westbrook.

positive unhappiness—to point out to her a road which leads to perfection, the attainment of which, perhaps, does not repay the difficulties of the progress. What do you think of this? If trains of thought, development of mental energies influence in any degree a future state; if this is even possible—if it stands on at all securer ground than mere hypothesis; then is it not a service? Where am I gotten? perhaps into another ridiculous argument. I will not proceed, for I shall forget all I have said, and cannot, in justice, animadvert upon any of your critiques.

I called on John Grove this morning. 1 I met my father in the passage, and politely inquired after his health. He looked as black as a thunder-cloud, and said, "Your most humble servant!" I made him a low bow, and wishing him a very good morning—passed on. He is very irate about my proposals. I cannot resign anything till I am twenty-one. I cannot do anything, therefore I have three more years to consider of the matter you mentioned. I shall go down to Field Place soon. I wait for Mr. Pilfold's arrival, with whom I shall depart. He is resolved (the old fellow) that I shall not stay at Field Place. If I please —as I shall do for some time—I will. This resolution of mine was hinted to him: "Oh! then I shall take his sister away before he comes." But I shall follow her, as her retirement cannot be a secret. This will probably lead me to wander about for some time. You will hear from me, however, wherever I am. If all these things are useless, you will see me at York, or at Ellesmere, if you still remain there. The scenery excites mournful ideas. I am sorry to hear it; I hoped that it would have had a contrary effect. May I indulge the idea that York is as stupid as Oxford. And yet you did not wander alone amid the mountains? I think I shall live at the foot of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> At Lincoln's Inn Fields. Shelley's cousin, John Grove, the surgeon, states that all Bysshe's letters to him were destroyed, when he left London for Edinburgh, presumably for his medical studies.

Snowdon. Suppose we both go there directly? Do not be surprised if you see me at Ellesmere. Yes, you would, for it would be a strange thing. I am now nearly recovered. Strange that Florian could not see the conclusions from his own reasoning. How can the hope of a higher reward stimulating an action make it virtuous, if the essence of virtue is disinterested, as all who know anything of virtue must allow, as he does allow. How inconsistent is this religion! How apt to pervert the judgment, and finally the heart of the most amiably-intentioned who confide in it! I wish I was with you in the mountains; could not we live there?

Direct to 15 Poland Street. I write to-morrow to York.
Your affectionate friend,

P. B. S.

Your B—1 is worse than stupid; he is provoking. Have you really no one to associate with—not even a peasant, a child of nature, a spider? And this from the hermit, the philosopher? Oh, you are right to laugh at me. I finished the little poem, one stanza of which you said was pretty; it is, on the whole, a most stupid thing, as you will confess, when I some day inflict a perusal of it on your innocent ears. Yet I have nothing to amuse myself with, and if it does not injure others and you cannot avoid it, I do not see much harm in being mad.

You even vindicate it in some almost inspired stanzas, which I found among my transcriptions to-day.

Adieu! I am going to Miss W[estbrook]'s to dinner. Her father is out. I will write to-morrow.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This may have been the college friend with whom Hogg left London for Ellesmere, possibly the Burdon mentioned elsewhere in Shelley's correspondence.

### 39. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

15 POLAND STREET [LONDON],
April 26, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Why do I so? I will not philoso-I indulge despair. phize; it is, perhaps, a poor way of administering comfort to myself to say that I ought not to be in need of it. I fear the despair which springs from disappointed love is a passion—a passion, too, which is least of all reducible to reason. But it is a passion, it is independent of volition; it is the necessary effect of a cause, which must, I feel, continue to operate. Wherefore, then, do you ask, Why I indulge despair? And what shall I tell you, which can make you happier, which can alleviate even solitude and regret. Shall I tell you the truth? Oh, you are too well aware of that, or you would not talk of despair. Shall I say that the time may come when happiness shall dawn upon a night of wretchedness? Why should I be a false prophet, if I said this? I do not know, except on the general principle that the evils in this world powerfully overbalance its pleasures; how, then, could I be justified in saying this? You will tell me to cease to think, to cease to feel; you will tell me to be anything but what I am; and I fear I must obey the command before I can talk of hope.

I find there can be bigots in philosophy as well as in religion; I, perhaps, may be classed with the former. I have read your letter attentively. Yet all religionists do judge of philosophers in the way which you reprehend; faith is one of the highest moral virtues—the foundation, indeed, upon which all others must rest; and religionists think that he who has neglected to cultivate this has not performed one-third of the moral duties, as Bishop Warburton dogmatically asserts. The religionists, then, by this very Faith, without which they could not be religionists, think the most virtuous philosopher must have neglected one-third of the moral duties.

If, then, a religionist, the *most* amiable of them, regards the best philosopher as far from being virtuous, has not a philosopher reason to suspect the amiability of a system which inculcates so glaringly uncharitable opinions? Can a being, amiable to a high degree, possessed, of course, of judgment, without which amiability would be in a poor way, hold such opinions as these? Supposing even they were supported by reason, they ought to be suspected as leading to a conclusion ad absurdum; since, however, they combine irrationality and absurdity with effects on the mind most opposite to retiring amiability, are they not to be more than suspected? Take any system of religion, lop off all the disgusting excrescences, or rather adjuncts, retain virtuous precepts, qualify selfish dogmas (I would even allow as much irrationality as amiability could swallow, but uncombined with immorality and self-conceitedness); do all this, and I will say it is a system which can do no harm, and, indeed, is highly requisite for the vulgar. But perhaps it is best for the latter that they should have it as their fathers gave it them; that the amiable, the inquiring should reject it altogether.

Yet I will allow that it may be consistent with amiability, when amiability does not know the deformity of the wretched errors, and that they really are as we behold them. I cannot judge of a system by the flowers which are scattered here and there; you omit the mention of the weeds, which grow so high that few botanists can see the flowers; and those who do gather the latter are frequently, I fear, tainted with the pestilential vapour of the former.

The argument of supremacy is really amiable, without that I should give up the remotest possibility of success. Yet that applies but to the existence of a Creator, that is inconsequential: the inquirer here, the amiable inquirer, does not pause at the world, lest she should be left supreme; she advances one step higher, not being aware, or not caring to be aware, of the infinity of the staircase which she ascends. This is irrational, but it is not unamiable,—it does not

involve the hateful consequences of selfishness, self-conceitedness, and the subserviency of faith to the volition of the believer, which are necessary to the existence of "a spurious system of theology."

A religionist, I will allow, may be more amiable than a philosopher, although in one instance reason is allowed to sleep, that amiability may watch. Yet, my dear friend, this is not Intolerance, nor can that odious system stand excused on this ground, as its very principle revolts against the dear modesty which suggests a dereliction of reason in the other instance. I again assert—nor, perhaps, are you prepared to deny, much as your amiable motive might prompt you to wish it—that religion is too often the child of cold prejudice and selfish fear. Love of a Deity, of Allah, Bramah (it is all the same), certainly springs from the latter motive; is this love? You know too well, it is not. Here I appeal to your own heart, your own feelings. At that tribunal I feel that I am secure. I once could almost tolerate intolerance,—it then merely injured me once; it merely deprived me of all that I cared for, touching myself, on earth; but now it has done more, and I cannot forgive.

Eloisa said, "I have hated myself, that I might love thee, Abelard." When I hear a religionist prepared to say so, as her sincere sentiments, I then will allow that in a *few* instances the virtue of religion is separable from the vice.

She is not lost for ever! How I hope that may be true; but I fear I can never ascertain, I can never influence an amelioration, as she does not any longer permit a "philosopher" to correspond with her. She talks of duty to her Father. And this is your amiable religion!

You will excuse my raving; my dear friend; you will not be severe upon my hatred of a cause which can produce such an effect as this. You talk of the dead; do we not exist after the tomb? It is a natural question, my friend,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This seems to relate to Miss Harriet Grove.

when there is nothing in life: yet it is one on which you have never told me any solid grounds for your opinions.

You shall hear from me again soon. I send some verses. I heard from F.<sup>1</sup> yesterday. All that he said was: My letters are arrived.—G. S. F.

My dear friend, your affectionate, P. B. Shelley.

T. J. Hogg, Post Office, York.

### 40. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (Ellesmere)

Lincoln's Inn Fields [London],
April 28, 1811.

I am now at Grove's. I don't know where I am, where I will be. Future, present, past, is all a mist; it seems as if I had begun existence anew, under auspices so unfavour-Yet no! That is stupid! My poor little friend? has been ill, her sister sent for me the other night. I found her on a couch pale; her father is civil to me, very strangely; the sister is too civil by half. She began talking about I philosophized, and the youngest said she had such a headache, that she could not bear conversation. Her sister then went away, and I stayed till half-past Her father had a large party below, he invited twelve. me; I refused. Yes! The fiend, the wretch, shall fall! Harriet will do for one of the crushers, and the eldest (Emily), 3 with some taming, will do, too. They are both very clever, and the youngest (my friend) is amiable. Yesterday she was better, to-day her father compelled her to go to Clapham, whither I have conducted her, and I am now returned. Why is it, that the moment we two

4 By "we two," Shelley seems to mean Hogg and himself.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Rev. G. S. Faber. See note on p. 42.

Harriet Westbrook.

The eldest Miss Westbrook was generally known as "Eliza"; this may be a slip of the pen, or she may have possessed both names. She was nearly twice the age of her sister Harriet, at this date.

are separated, I can scarcely set bounds to my hatred of intolerance; is it feeling? is it passion? I would willingly persuade myself that it is neither; willingly would I persuade myself that all that is amiable, all that is good, falls by its prevalence, and that I ought unceasingly to attempt its destruction. Yet, you say that millions of bad are necessary for the existence of a few pre-eminent in excellence. Is not this a despotism of virtue, which is inconsistent with its nature? Is it not the Asiatic tyrant who renders his territory wretched to fill his seraglio? the shark, who must glut his maw with millions of fish, in order that he may exist? I have often said that I doubted your divinities, and if this interference follows the established hypothesis of their existence, I do not merely doubt, but hope that my doubts are founded on truth.

I think, then, that the *term* "superior" is bad, as it involves this horrible consequence. Let the word "perfect," then, be offered as a substitute; to which each who aspires may indulge a hope of arriving; or rather every one (speaking of *men*)<sup>1</sup> may hope to contribute to woman's arrival, which, in fact, is themselves advancing; although, like the shadow preceding the figure, or the spiral, it always may advance, and never touch.

My sister does not come to town, nor will she ever, at least I can see no chance of it. I will not deceive myself; she is lost, lost to everything; Intolerance has tainted her—she talks cant and twaddle. I would not venture thus to prophesy without being most perfectly convinced in my own mind of the truth of what I say. It may not be irretrievable; but, yes, it is! A young female, who only once, only for a short time, asserted her claim to an unfettered use of reason, bred up with bigots, having before her eyes examples of the consequences of scepticism, or even of philosophy, which she must now see to lead directly to the former. A mother, who is mild and tolerant, yet

<sup>1</sup> Hogg may have claimed that men were "superior" to women.

narrow-minded; how, I ask, is she to be rescued from its influence?

I tell you, my dear friend, openly, the feelings of my mind, the state of its convictions on every subject; this, then, is one, and I do not expect that you will say, "It must be so painful to your feelings, that I hope you will never again mention it." I do not expect you to say, "I had rather you were under a pleasing error; it is not a friendly act to dissipate the mists, which hide a frightful prospect." On other subjects you have soared above prejudices, you have investigated them, terrible as they may have appeared, and resolved to abide by the result of that investigation. And you have abided by it. Why then should there yet remain a subject on which you profess yourself fearful to inquire? I will not allow you to say incompetent. Error cannot in any of its shapes be good, I cannot conceive the possibility.

You talk of the credulity of mankind, its proneness to superstition, that it ever has been a slave to the vilest of errors. Is your inference necessary, or direct, that it ever will continue so? You say that "I have no idea how society could be freed from false notions on almost every subject." No; nor would the first man in the world, supposing that there ever was one, at the moment of his arriving to his estate, have any conception how a fertile piece of land would look without weeds; he stares at it, and thinks it is least of all fitted for his conveniences, when a stricter searching into its nature would convince him that it was calculated to contribute to them with a sufficient proportion of labour, more than the barer land, which appeared clear.

Dares the lama, most fleet of the sons of the wind,

The lion to rouse from his skull-covered lair?

When the tiger approaches can the fast-fleeting hind
Repose trust in his footsteps of air?

No! Abandon'd he sinks in a trance of despair,

The monster transfixes his prey,

On the sand flows his life-blood away;

Whilst India's rocks to his death-yells reply.

Protracting the horrible harmony.

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Yet the fowl of the desert, when danger encroaches,
Dares fearless to perish defending her brood,
Though the fiercest of cloud-piercing tyrants approaches,
Thirsting—aye, thirsting for blood;
And demands, like mankind, his brother for food;
Yet more lenient, more gentle than they;
For hunger, not glory, the prey
Must perish. Revenge does not howl in the dead,
Nor ambition with fame crown the murderer's head.

Though weak, as the lama, that bounds on the mountains,
And endued not with fast-fleeting footsteps of air,
Yet, yet will I draw from the purest of fountains,
Though a fiercer than tiger is there.
Though more dreadful than death, it scatters despair,
Though its shadow eclipses the day,
And the darkness of deepest dismay
Spreads the influence of soul-chilling terror around,
And lowers on the corpses, that rot on the ground.

They came to the fountain to draw from its stream,
Waves too pure, too celestial, for mortals to see;
They bathed for a while in its silvery beam,
Then perish'd, and perish'd like me.
For in vain from the grasp of the Bigot I flee;
The most tenderly loved of my soul
Are slaves to his hated control.
He pursues me, he blasts me! 'Tis in vain that I fly:
What remains, but to curse him,—to curse him and die?

There it is—a mad effusion of this morning! I had resolved not to mortgage before you left London; I told you that I should divide it with my sisters, and leave everything else to fate.

Your affectionate friend, P. B. S.

## 41. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

15 POLAND STREET [LONDON],
April 29, 1811.

My DEAR FRIEND,

Father is as fierce as a lion again. The other day he

was in town. John Grove saw him and succeeded in flattering him into a promise, that he would allow me £200 per annum, and leave me alone.

The Misery; for now he has left town, and written to disannul all that he before promised. Gelidum Nemus<sup>1</sup> is flattering like a courtier, and will, I conjecture, bring him about again. He wants me to go to Oxford to apologize to the Master, etc. No, of course!

I suppose you are now at York. I wish I could come and join you, particularly as I fear you think too much on subjects which are better for oblivion than memory.

Write something—will you make a novel?—engage in some pursuit which can interest you. I wish you would allow me to be your Dr. Willis. I would not, as I threatened in the Piazza, confine you in a dark room—no, I would advise a regimen the very opposite to that which I then recommended. You say the scenery of Wales is too beautiful. Yet, why not allow that to interest you? why not cultivate the taste for poetry, which it is useless to deny that you possess?

Indeed, I wish to come to York. I shall as soon as I can, not that I mean the strain detains me, as I am nearly well, but I want to settle pecuniary matters. I am quite well off in that now. Remember it is idle to talk of money between us, and little as it may do for polities, with us, you must allow the possession of bullion, chattels, etc., is common. Tell me, then, if you want cash, as I have nearly drained you, and all delicacy, like sisters stripping before each other, is out of the question.

Our beautiful lady tells me that "the post is ready." So adieu!

Your affectionate.

I will write when I hear from you. This goes to York.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> John Grove,

### 42. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

London, [No date: about May 1, 1811.]

My DEAR FRIEND.

Your two letters were delivered to me. Believe me that I will not so soon give up a being whom I considered so amiable. I will not yet decide; but your conclusion is to the point, and terribly just. Unequivocal traces of her having yielded to the guidance of the *first* motives can be found. Are we then to despair?

But I quit the subject; the experiment shall be made, and I will abide by the result. I anxiously, eagerly anticipate the moment of trial. Moment! Ought it not rather to be years; or rather ought years even to decide a question so important?

You sent me some beautiful verses; but I am not accustomed to be flattered, and you will make me either vain past bearing, or confused past recovery, if you talk so of my weak essays of procedure on "the steep ascent" of perfectibility. Why, how dare I attempt to climb a mountain, when I have no guide to point out the path, but a few faint sparks, which at intervals illumine the gloom? For these even am I not more indebted to you than to myself?

Certainly a saint may be amiable; she may be so, but then she does not understand—has neglected to investigate—the religion which retiring, modest prejudice leads her to profess. But one who certainly never has investigated the matter—seen the slight grounds upon which these dogmas rest,—surely the glaring inconsistencies of every system of mythology must strike her? Surely she can find benefits enough to return thanks to her Creator for without having recourse to the mythological personages of superstition? Otherwise, by your criterion of amiability, that woman would deserve our most fervent attachment who worshipped all the Roman Pantheon, old or new.

I will write to-morrow. I am now called to Miss Westbrook; I was too hasty in telling my first unfavourable impression: she is a very clever girl, though rather affected. No! I do not know that she is. I have been with her to Clapham. I will tell you an anecdote. Harriet Westbrook has returned thither, as I mentioned. They will not speak to her; her schoolfellows will not even reply to her questions; she is called an abandoned wretch, and universally hated, which she remunerates with the calmest contempt. My third sister, Hellen, is the only exception. She, in spite of the *infamy*, will speak to Miss Westbrook, because she cannot see how she has done wrong. 1 There are some hopes of this dear little girl; she would be a divine little scion of infidelity, if I could get hold of her. I think my lessons here must have taken effect. I write to-morrow.

### 43. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

6 S[OUTH] BUILD[INGS], LONDON,
May 8, 1811.

### My DEAR FRIEND,

Again I write to you from S[outh] B[uildings]. I have received very few of your letters; they have been sent to Portland Street, and I cannot recover them. There is one to-day from Yoxford; are you there? You have reason—you have a right to be surprised that I am not at Field Place, that I did not instantly fly thither in spite of everything. I will explain as soon as possible. You will hear that I am there in the course of a few days.

The estate is *entirely* entailed to me, totally out of the power of the enemy. He is yet angry beyond measure—pacification is remote; but I will be at peace, vi et armis.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Harriet Shelley's letter to Miss Hitchener from Dublin, March 14, 1812, p. 279.

I will enter his dominions, preserving a Quaker-like carelessness of opposition. I shall manage à l'Amèrique, and seat myself quietly in his mansion, turning a deaf ear to any declamatory objections.

A few days ago I had a polite note from a man of letters, to whom I had been named, to invite me to breakfast. I complied, and dined with him on Sunday. He is a Deist, despising superstition, etc., etc., yet having a high veneration for the Deity, as he affirmed. And, in consequence, a long argument arose between him and some of his acquaintance; that a Deist certainly means the same as an Atheist; they differ but in name. He would not allow this, with him the Deity is neither omnipotent, omnipresent, nor identical. He destroys, too, all those predicates in non, against which they entered their protest. He says, that God is comprehensible, not doubting but an adequate exertion of reason (which, he says, is by no means to be despaired of) would lead us from a contemplation of his works to a definite knowledge of his attributes, which are not unlimited. Now, here is a new kind of God for you!

In practice, such a Deist as this is, as they told him, an Atheist; for he believes that the Creator is by no means perfect, but composed of good and evil, like man, and producing that mixture of these principles which is evident everywhere. He is a man of cultivated mind, and certainly exalted notions, and his friends do not entirely despair of rescuing him out of this damnable heresy from reason. His wife is a most sensible woman; she is by no means a bigot, but rather Deistically given. It is a curious fact that they were married when they were both Wesleyan Methodists, and subsequently converted each other.

Solitude is most horrible, in despite of the  $d\phi i\lambda a v \tau la$  which, perhaps, vanity has a great share in; but certainly not with my own good will. I cannot endure the horror, the evil, which comes to self in solitude.

I spend most of my time at Miss Westbrook's. I was a great deal too hasty in criticizing her character. How

often have we to alter the impressions which first sight, or first anything, produces. I really now consider her as amiable, not perhaps in a high degree, but perhaps she is. I most probably now am prejudiced, for you cannot breathe, you cannot exist if no traits of loveliness appear in coexistent beings. I think, were I compelled to associate with Shakespeare's Caliban, with any wretch—with the exception of Lord Courtney, my father, Bishop Warburton, or the vile female who destroyed Mary—1 that I should find something to admire.

What a strange being I am; how inconsistent, in spite of all my boasted hatred of self: this moment thinking I could so far overcome Nature's law, as to exist in complete seclusion, the next starting from a moment of solitude—starting from my own company, as if it were that of a fiend—seeking anything rather than a continued communion with self. Unravel this mystery, but—no, I tell you to find the clue which even the bewildered explorer of the cavern cannot reach.

I long for the moment to see my sisters; you shall then hear from me even oftener.

I lost three letters, which I had written to you, in my carelessness. Adieu! My dear friend, believe me ever attentive to your happiness.

I wish that vile family despotism, and the viler despotism of society, could never stand between the happiness of two beings. Excuse the  $\phi \iota \lambda a \nu \tau \iota a$ , it would constitute mine. Adieu!

Your eternal friend.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Prof. Dowden says ("Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 156), "Mary was an unhappy girl known to Hogg, who had embodied part of her story in his unpublished novel 'Leonora.' Shelley hated Warburton because he 'dogmatically asserts' that one who 'has neglected to cultivate faith, has not performed one-third of the moral duties.'" See Shelley to Hogg, April 26, 1811, p. 60.

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### 44. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

[23 CHAPEL STREET, LONDON, Post-mark, May? 12, 1811.]

I found this moment all your letters. They were in Great Portland Street. I blush when I write the direction to you. How salacious a street!

So you are in solitude. I wish I could be with you. I wish you could manage to come to town.

£200 per annum is really enough—more than I can want—besides, what is money to me? What does it matter if I cannot even purchase sufficient genteel clothes? I still have a shabby great coat, and those whose good opinion constitutes my happiness, would not regard me the better, or the worse, for this, or any other consequence of poverty. £50 per annum would be quite enough.

Why, you wish to be a Grandee! When heaven takes your father you will probably be in possession—as his eldest son—of some £3,000 per annum, that perhaps convertible from 3 into 5 per cent. property. I should not know how to act with such a store; but—no, I would not possess about half of it! Yet well do I see why you would not reject it; you think it would possibly add to the happiness of some being, to whom you cherish a remote hope of approximative union—the indissoluble, sacred union of Love:

Why is it said thou canst not live
In a youthful breast and fair.
Since thou eternal life canst give,
Canst bloom for ever there?
Since withering pain no power possest,
Nor age, to blanch thy vermeil hue,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The date of this letter is given by Hogg as May 2, but from Shelley's reference in No. 43 to the missing letters (which he had now recovered) it would seem to have followed that letter. Possibly the post-mark is May 12. The letters appear to have been sent to Great Portland Street in mistake for Poland Street.

Nor time's dread victor, death, confess'd, Though bathed with his poison dew, Still thou retain'st unchanging bloom, Fix'd tranquil, even in the tomb. And oh! when on the blest reviving The day-star dawns of love, Each energy of soul surviving More vivid, soars above, Hast thou ne'er felt a rapturous thrill, Like June's warm breath, athwart thee fly, O'er each idea then to steal, When other passions die? Felt it in some wild noonday dream, When sitting by the lonely stream, Where Silence says, Mine is the dell; And not a murmur from the plain, And not an echo from the fell, Disputes her silent reign.

Excuse this strange momentary mania! I am now at Miss Westbrook's. She is reading Voltaire's "Dictionnaire Philosophique." I am writing to you, but I broke off a page ago. Have you hope? Can you have hope? Then, indeed, are you fitted for an Orlando Speroso—if there is such an Italian word. I have faint hopes: I have some it is true—just enough to keep body and soul together; but you—. I almost despair. I have not only to conquer all the hateful prejudices of superstition, not only to conquer duty to a father—duty, indeed, of all kinds—but I see in the background a monster more terrific. Have you forgotten the tremendous Gregory—the opinion of the world, its myriads of hateful champions, its ten thousands of votaries who deserved a better fate, yet compulsatorily were plunged into this—. I tremble when I think of it.

Yet marriage, Godwin says, is hateful, detestable. A kind of ineffable, sickening disgust seizes my mind when I think of this most despotic, most unrequired fetter which prejudice has forged to confine its energies. Yes! This is the fruit of superstition, and superstition must perish before this can fall! For men never speak of the author of religion as of what he really was, but as being what the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Godwin's "Political Justice."

world have made him. Antimatrimonialism is as necessarily connected with scepticism as if religion and marriage began their course together. How can we think well of the world? Surely these moralists suppose young men are like young puppies (as, perhaps, generaliter they are), not endowed with vision until a certain age. Adieu!

### 45. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

Cuckfield, [? May 13, 1811. 1

Have you forgotten it? Have you forgotten that "laws were not made for men of honour?" Your memory may fail; it is human; but the infernal conclusions you have drawn, which I see you cannot, will not admit is too much. There are some points on which reasoning is inefficient to convince the mind. No one could persuade me of the tortoise and Achilles business, even although they might say that I must believe it, because they had proved it, and I could find no flaw in their reasoning. I could not endure the bare idea of marriage, even if I had no arguments in favour of my dislike; but I think that I have. I shall begin à la Faber; how far I proceed thus, you have to judge.

Your first assertion, on which stands all the rest, does not profess to be founded on proof; but the long-established opinion—uncontroverted, undisputed, except by occasional characters of brilliancy, or darkness—that it is a duty to comply with the established laws of your country—this I deny. Then virtue does not exist; or if it does, exists in so indefinite a manner—Proteus-like so

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mr. Rossetti suggests the above date, which is given as August 9, 1811, by Hogg in his "Life of Shelley."

changes its appearances with every varying climate, that what is a crime in England becomes not merely venial, perhaps praiseworthy at Algiers; that each petty river, each chain of mountains, an arm of the sea constitutes a line of distinction between two different kinds of duties. to both of which it is requisite that virtue should adapt itself. What constitutes real virtue?—motive, or consequence? Surely the former, In proportion as a man is selfish, so far has he receded from the motive which constitutes virtue. I have left the proof to Aristotle. we take Godwin's criterion: Expediency? Oh! surely Any very satisfactory general reform is, I fear, impracticable: human nature, taken in the mass, if we compare it with instances of individual virtue, is corrupt beyond all hope;—for these laws are necessary: these are not men of honour; they are not beings capable of exalted notions of virtue; they cannot feel the passions of soft tenderness, the object of whose regard is distinct from selfish Is it right that of these the world should be com-Certainly not, were the evil to be obviated; posed? but it is not to be obviated: all essays of benevolent reformers have failed. Any step, however small, towards such obviation, is, however, good, as it tends to produce that which, though impossible, yet were it possible, would be desirable. On this plan, then, do I recommend antimatrimonialism. It is a feeling which (as we take it, and as it is now the subject of discussion) can at once be experienced by minds which at least adore virtue. It is, then, of general application; and if every one loved, then every one would be happy. This is impossible; but certain it is that the more that love the more are blest. Shall, then, the world step forward—that world which wallows in selfishness and every hateful passion, the consequence of an absence of reason; shall that world give laws to souls, who smile superior to its palsying influence, who let the tempest of prejudice rave unheeded, happy in the consciousness of the ἀφιλαυτία of motive. Oh! no. Can

you compare Eloisa and a ruffian? Eloisa, who sacrificed all self for another! Macheath, who sacrificed every other for himself! These motives are wide apart as the antipodes —wide as the characters themselves—wide as virtue and Take, then, your criterion, and measure by that. For God's sake, if you want more argument, read the Marriage Service before you think of allowing an amiable, beloved female to submit to such degradation. But you are convinced by force; but I do not admire the source of conviction; it is knightlike. I am no admirer of knights: their obedience was not founded on reason: and if we were errants, you should have the tilting all to yourself. Now, my friend, what can you want with six hundred pounds per annum? Surely you, with an amiable being, could easily live on half. Believe me, these are very secondary considerations. There! stay! I am wandering. But is the Antigone immoral? Did she wrong, when she acted in direct, in noble violation of the laws of a prejudiced; You will, I know, have candour to acknowledge that your premises will not stand; and I now most perfectly agree with you that political affairs are quite distinct from morality—that they cannot be united.

To-morrow I go to Field-place. Direct henceforward there, till you hear again; as, if they have removed Elizabeth, I shall follow her. My letters will then be more interesting, as they will be filled with what is equally so to both. Heaven defend me from a disappointment!

Misses Westbrook are now very well. I have arranged a correspondence with them, when I will impart more of the character of the eldest.

Believe me, your most affectionate, P. B. S.

Direct, until farther orders, to Captain Pilfold, Cuckfield, Sussex.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Captain of the highwaymen in Gay's "Beggars' Opera."

### 46. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

[FIELD PLACE, HORSHAM], May 15, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I now write to you from hence. I have at last reached the place of my destination. I know you will anxiously await this. On my arrival I found my sister ill. She has been confined with a scarlet fever. The ignorance of these country physicians has, I think, prolonged her confinement. She is now much better, but scarcely able to articulate from a sore throat. You shall hear more when I write again. I must acknowledge that some emotions of pleasure were mingled with those of pain, when I found that illness had prevented her writing to me.

I have come to terms with my father. I call them very good ones. I am to possess £200 per annum. I shall live very well upon it, even after the legal opinion which you inclosed. I am also to do as I please with respect to the choice of abode. I need not mention what it will be. When do you come to London? at what time?—a year; six months; four months?

F[aber] will be written to to-day; you may depend upon the execution of my palavering energies. It would be a strange—I do not know a stranger composition than would be the mélange, which you spoke of. Try—compose it. The "Confessions of Rousseau" I am sure I could not. are the only things of the kind that have appeared, and they are either a disgrace to the confessor, or a string of falsehoods, probably the latter. But the world would say that ours were the latter. Nor could I blame them for such an opinion, as probable truth is to be the judge of testimony, and singularity must be improbable, or it would not be singularity; nor do I think that it has often come under the observation of the world that two young men

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Rev. George Stanley Faber.

should hold such arguments, come to such conclusions, and take such singular criterions for reasoning. the last strangest? How goes on your tale?1 I have heard nothing of it. As for mine 2 I cannot get an answer from L[Munday?]. Do they tremble? I thought the A[bingdon?] printer was too stupid; and I defy a zealot to say it does not support orthodoxy. If an author's own assertion in his own book may be taken as an avowal of his intentions, it does support orthodoxy. I could not do more, and yet they say Mine is not printable; it is as bad as Rousseau, and would certainly be prosecuted. All danger about prosecution is over; it was never more than a hum.

I will tell you a piece of the most consummate hypocrisy I ever heard of. A relation of mine was walking with my uncle (who, by the bye, has settled matters admirably for me), says this Wiseacre, to tell you the truth, I am a Sceptic."

"Ah! eh!" thought the Captain, "old birds are not to be caught with chaff."

"Are you, indeed?" was the cold reply, and no more was got out of him.

I tell you this as the Captain told it me. Is this irrational being really convinced of what men have attained by the use of reason? If he is, he is a disgrace to reason, and I am sorry that the cause has gained weakness by the

<sup>1</sup> Hogg's novel was apparently distinct from the book mentioned in the following note. The MS. of this novel seems to have been sent to Shelley subsequently. It can hardly have been Hogg's "Memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff," published pseudonymously in 1813, as Shelley does not appear to have seen that story before publication. See p. 414.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Probably "Leonora," Shelley's novel, which he appears to have offered to Mr. Munday, but fears that the Abingdon printer may have alarmed them by describing the unorthodox nature of the book. See p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> The "relation" was Shelley's father, from the context below.
4 Captain Pilfold.

accession of weakness. But he is nothing—no-ist, professes no-ism, but superbism and irrationalism. He has forbidden my intercourse with my sister, but the Captain brought him to reason; he prevents it, however, as much as possible, which is very little.

My mother is quite rational; she says, "I think prayer and thanksgiving are of no use. If a man is a good man, philosopher, or Christian, he will do very well in whatever future state awaits us." This I call liberality!

You shall hear from me soon again. I write to F[aber]. I know you will excuse a long letter, as I am going to read to Elizabeth.

Your ever affectionate friend.

Inclose to T. SHELLEY, Esq., M.P.

### 47. To Janetta Philipps

Field Place, May 16, 1811.

I address you wholly unacquainted, unintroduced, except through the medium of your exquisite poetry, 1

<sup>1</sup> Whether Shelley defrayed the printing expenses of this volume or not does not seem quite clear. The volume with the title "Poems. by Janetta Philipps, Oxford, printed by Collingwood and Co., 1811, was issued to subscribers, of which there is a list occupying ten pages, containing the names of Mr. P. B. Shelley (six copies); Miss Shelley, Field Place; Miss Hellen Shelley; Mrs. Grove, Lincoln's Inn Fields (three copies); Miss H. Westbrook; Thomas Medwin, Esq., Horsham; Mr. Munday, Bookseller, Oxford; Mr. Graham, 29 Vine Street, Piccadilly; and Mr. Philipps (six copies); the last named was probably a relative of the author, who subscribed for the same number as Shelley, no one else taking as many copies. From the following letter it would appear that Miss Philipps declined Shelley's offer to print her poems, and that they were issued by The sale of the 525 copies of the book accounted subscription. for in the list contained in the volume would be sufficient to defray the printer's bill. Dr. W. C. Coupland, who first printed these interesting letters in his "Gain of Life," and who has generously given me leave to reprint them, states that Miss Philipps' "relatives and acquaintances were mostly resident in Bridgwater and its neighbour-She does not seem to have been related to Phillips, the Worthing printer, whose name was spelt differently.

nor know I any circumstances which can apologize for this breach of etiquette, but Mr. Strong having in consequence of the very different views which we have taken of religion, declined the slightest communication with me on the subject of your poems. An enthusiastic adorer of genius, I expressed my admiration of the genius which I found in the MSS. in question, and I confess should have selected some of those which Mr. S. rejected for publication. I offered to print the MS. at my own expense, as it would make even some balances with my printer. I still solicit Mr. S. promised that he would deliver the that honour. MS. to me for that purpose, as fearing my intention might shock the delicacy of a noble female mind, I intended to conceal it entirely; that, however, will now be pardoned, as you see the necessity of the avowal.

On my expulsion from Oxford, as author of a metaphysical pamphlet, Mr. S., very much shocked at my principles, I am, therefore, obliged refused further correspondence. to address you, as I am still anxious that every power that I have should be devoted to the development of genius, and am conscious that no unprejudiced mind would esteem me more or less for my differing with it on the speculative points of religion. It is, perhaps, necessary to state in obviation of any misconception on the subject of my sentiments that the pamphlet which I distributed among the learned questioned the existence of a Deity. justice to myself I must also declare that a proof of his existence, or even the divine mission of Christ, would in no manner alter one idea on the subject of morality.

Your most sincere friend,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Under cover to
T. Shelley, Esq., M.P.,
Field Place, Horsham, Sussex.
Miss Janetta Philipps.

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### 48. To Janetta Philipps

MADAM,

I confess I was surprised, extremely surprised, at the receipt of your letter. Why are we here? What does man exist for? Surely not for his own happiness, but as a more perfect instrument of that of others. This even common morality will tell, for this we do not want any theological system, not even the belief of a God, the anticipation of his kingdom. How, then, obligations! Surely one being is not obliged to another for a performance of his duty never the most rigid. If obligation exists it must arise from doing to another an unrequited, unrequitable kindness. But I should have a reward, I should feel pleasure in adding to the comforts of genius. What! two rewards for one simple performance of evident duty my own feelings and obligations from you. This is far too much.—I thought there were some souls which soared above the mean prejudice of the world. I am but a novice in it. I stare about me wondering at the fatuity of its slaves who wilfully destroy their own happiness.—And pecuniary obligation! What is there in an acceptance of this political substitute for other things peculiarly ignoble? It is the world's opinion. Do you still, then, persist in your resolve, and why? I shall perhaps hear from you again; your letter possibly may contain more briefly the determination of that of to-day. If it does, I shall be surprised, but shall feel that I have no longer a right to trespass on the time of a being not one of whose opinions coincide with mine.—As you mention Religion, I will say, that my rejection of revealed proceeds from my perfect conviction of its insufficiency to the happiness of man—to this source I can trace murder, war, intolerance my rejection of natural arises wholly from reason. was an enthusiastic Deist, but never a Christian.

Your sincere,

P. B. SHELLEY,

Miss Janetta Philipps, 6—(2285)



## 49. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

Field Place, May 17, 1811.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Your letters have never reached me. These sallies of imagination are not noticed by vulgar postmen! but you know my direction now. Elizabeth is quite recovered in health.

It is most true that the mass of mankind are Christians only in name; their religion has no reality. So little, indeed, that they almost confess the world to be the only reason for their yet retaining their mummeries. Christ is not the Son of God: the world is eternal, their practice would seem to declare. There almost all are agreed, and in the speculative points of religion they seem to be as Atheistical as the most determined Materialist could desire. But what is this speculation—a dry inactive knowledge of what really is, not influencing the conduct? One would suppose that the annihilation of superstition would involve the fall of the world's opinion; but if the world's opinion were destroyed, superstition would be of little consequence, even if it did exist, which is indeed not very probable, as there would then be no temptations to self-deception. The opinion of the world, the loss of which is attended with much inconvenience, with the loss of reputation, which is by some considered as synonymous with virtue; this is the support of many prejudices. Certain members of my family are no more Christians than Epicurus himself was; but they regard as a sacred criterion the opinion of the world: the discanonization of this saint of theirs is impossible until something more worthy of devotion is pointed out; but where eyes are shut, nothing can be seen! They would ask, are we wrong to regard the opinion of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley's Sister.

world; what would compensate us for the loss of it? Good heavens! What a question? It is not to be answered by a word! So I have but little of their confidence: the confidence of my sister even is diminished, that confidence once so unbounded: but it is to be regained. But enough of this! In letters, behold me enthusiastic, Quixotic, resolved, convinced, that things shall be as I order them,—that all my plans shall succeed. But I shall anticipate all your castle-buildings, so adieu to this subject also!

Why will you not send me some poetry? I wish to see it directly.

#### TO THE MOONBEAM

Moonbeam, leave the shadowy vale,

To bathe this burning brow.

Moonbeam, why art thou so pale,
As thou walkest o'er the dewy dale,
Where humble wild flowers grow?

Is it to mimic me?
But that can never be;
For thine orb is bright,

And the clouds are light,

That at intervals shadow the star-studded night.

Now all is deathly still on earth,

Nature's tired frame reposes,

And ere the golden morning's birth

Its radiant hues discloses,

Flies forth its balmy breath.

But mine is the midnight of Death,

And nature's morn,

To my bosom forlorn,

Brings but a gloomier night, implants a deadlier thorn.

Wretch! Suppress the glare of madness Struggling in thine haggard eye,
For the keenest throb of sadness,
Pale Despair's most sickening sigh,
Is but to mimic me;
And this must ever be,
When the twilight of care,
And the night of despair,

Seem in my breast but joys to the pangs that wake there.

There is rhapsody! Now, I think, after this, you ought to send me some poetry. Pray which of the Miss

Westbrooks do you like? They are both very amiable, I do not know which is favoured with your preference. As to your manner, call it manner, if you will; perhaps it is proper thus to express a thing, which I thought was inexpressible. Call it so, then, for I know no other name.

How gets on your onion-loving Deist? Pray, what is there in onions and red herrings which can make her less amiable? She is not very handsome either: Oh! that is all imagination.

I have written to F[aber]; I wrote the moment your letter came, and make no doubt but he will think me a very good young man. I cannot so deeply see into the inferences of actions, as to come to the odd conclusion, which you observed in the matter of Miss Westbrook. Where we have *facts*, they are superior to all the reasoning in the world. I should like to see your letter to F[aber].

Your ever affectionate.

## 50. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

SUNDAY, 19th May, 1811. Captain Pilfold's, Cuckfield.

Your letter found me here this morning. Strange! you have not received one of mine, and I have written almost every day during my stay in London.

I go to Field-place to-morrow, whence you will hear from me again. I will write to F[aber]. Poor fool! His Christian mildness, his consistent forgiveness of injuries amuses me; he is "le vrai esprit de Christianisme," which Helvetius talks of; he would call this a Christian.

I am now with my uncle; he is a very hearty fellow, and has behaved very nobly to me, in return for which I have illuminated him. A physician named Dr. J—— dined with us last night, who is a red-hot saint; the Captain attacked

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him, warm from "The Necessity," and the Doctor went away very much shocked.

You have before this certes received some of my letters. I expect to hear from you often; you will constantly receive accounts from Field-place, whither direct in future. I received a beautiful little poem of yours; I did not acknowledge it, I believe, but I was not the less pleased. It is a melancholy subject, why will you continue to think on it? But you say "Melancholy is as necessary in poetry as breath to life, the Muses being the daughters of Memory, and consequently of Sadness." Miss Westbrook, the elder. I have heard from to-day; she improves upon acquaintance; or is it only when contrasted with surrounding indifference and degradation? But all excellence is comparative—exists by comparison; I have therefore a right. The younger is in prison; there is something in her more noble, yet not so cultivated as the elder—a larger diamond, yet not so highly polished. Her indifference to, her contempt of surrounding prejudice, are certainly fine. But perhaps the other wants opportunity. I confess that I cannot mark female excellence, or its degrees, by a print of the foot, a waving of vesture, etc., as you can; but perhaps this criterion only holds good where an angel, not a mortal, is in the case.

Why will you compliment "St. Irvyn[e]"? I never saw Delisle's, but mine must have been pla——2.

Adieu! My dear friend, believe me eternally yours. You shall hear to-morrow.

In haste.

Yours affectionately,

P. B. SHELLEY.

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The Necessity of Atheism." See p. 48.

<sup>\*</sup> Mr. H. Buxton Forman suggests in his edition of Shelley's Prose Works (Vol. I, p. xii), that both "Zastrozzi" and "St. Irvyne" may have been adapted by Shelley from the German, although his acquaintance with that language, if any, must have been very slight. Perhaps Shelley meant to write that his German original must have been "plagiarized" from some romance or drama by Delisle—Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley" (Vol. I, p. 94).

### 51. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM], May 21, 1811.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

She is quite well; she is perfect in health! Now, that is enough; we have no fever to sympathize in: but who can minister to a mind diseased? She is very gay, very lively. I did not show her your last letter; it was too grave; and I think it is barbarous to diminish what the possessor considers a pleasure, although I have always considered that volatility of character evinces no capabilities for great affections. It is a kind of self-satisfaction in trivial things that is constantly exerting itself; it is a species of continually awakened pride; but it is not constitutional; it used not, however, to be the character of my sister—serious, contemplative, affectionate; enthusiastically alive to the wildest schemes; despising the world.

Now, apathetic to all things, except the trivial amusements and despicable intercourse of restrained conversation; bowing before that hellish idol, the world; appealing to its unjust decisions, in cases which demand a trial at the higher tribunal of conscience. Yet I do not despair; what she once was she has a power to be again; but will that power ever be exerted? I do not hesitate to say, that I think she is not worthy of us; once she was: once the fondest, warmest wish which ever I cherished was to witness the eternal perfectibility of a being, who appeared to me made for perfection. But she is now not what she was; she is not the singular, angelic being, whom I loved, whom I adored: ? mourn her as no more. I consider the sister, whose happiness is mine, as dead.

Yet have I not hopes of a resuscitation? Certainly, or I would not tear my heart with the narration. But it is necessary that you should be informed of the real state of the case.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Apparently Elizabeth Shelley.

I will think no more of her, for she has murdered thought. Yes; I will think, and devote myself with ardour! On me,—yes, on me, descends the whole weight of my affliction! What right had I, day after day, to expatiate upon to another, to magnify to myself the excellence of a being who might change, who has changed? What right had I to seek to introduce you to the destroyer?

I leave Field-place to-night; but return on Friday. Your eternally affectionate,

P. B. SHELLEY.

# 52. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

CUCKFIELD,

May 26, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Inclosed is F[aber]'s letter. Why have I not heard from you for a week, or more?

I take the opportunity of the Old Boy's absence in London to persuade my mother and Elizabeth, who is now quite well, to come to Cuckfield; because there they will be three, or more, days absent from this Killjoy, as I name him. I anxiously expect to hear from you to-morrow. Adieu. Keep up your spirits!

Yours most affectionately,

P. B. S.

## 53. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

CUCKFIELD, June 2, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have nothing to tell you which you will like to hear. The affected contempt of narrowed intellects for the exertion of mental powers, which they either will not, or cannot comprehend, is always a tale of disgust. What must it be, when involving a keen disappointment? I have hesitated

for three days on what I should do, what I should say. I am your friend, you acknowledge it. You have chosen me, and we are inseparable; not the little tyranny of idiots can affect it; not the misrepresentations of the interested. You are then my friend. I am sensible, and you must be sensible, that it is in conformity to the most rigid duty that I would advise you how I have combated with myself.

What is Passion? The very word implies an incapacity for action, otherwise than in unison with its dictates. What is reason? It is a thing independent, inflexible; it adapts thoughts and actions to the varying circumstances, which for ever change—adapts them so as to produce the greatest overbalance of happiness. And to whom do you now give happiness? Not to others, for you associate with but few: those few regard you with the highest feelings of admiration and friendship; but perhaps there is but one;—and here is self again—not to yourself: for the truth of this I choose yourself, as a testimony against you. I think; reason; listen; cast off prejudice; hear the dictates of plain common sense—surely is it not evident? I loved a being, an idea in my own mind, which had no real existence. I concreted this abstract of perfection, I annexed this fictitious quality to the idea presented by a name; the being, whom that name signified, was by no means worthy This is the truth: Unless I am determinedly blind -unless I am resolved causelessly and selfishly to seek destruction, I must see it. Plain! is it not plain? I loved a being; the being, whom I loved, is not what she was; consequently, as love appertains to mind, and not body, she exists no longer. I regret when I find that she never existed, but in my mind; yet does it not border on wilful deception, deliberate, intentional self-deceit, to continue to love the body, when the soul is no more? As well might I court the worms which the soulless body of a beloved being generates—be lost to myself, and to those who love me for what is really amiable in me—in the damp, unintelligent vaults of a charnel-house. Surely, when it is carried to the

dung-heap as a mass of putrefaction, the loveliness of the flower ceases to charm. Surely it would be irrational to annex to this inertness the properties which the flower in its state of beauty possessed, which now cease to exist, and then did merely exist, because adjoined to it. Yet you will call this cold reasoning? No; you will not! this would be the exclamation of the uninformed Werter, not of my noble friend. But, indeed, it is not cold reasoning, if you saw me at this moment. I wish I could reason coldly, I should then stand more chance of success. But let me reconsider it myself—exert my own reasoning powers; let me entreat myself to awake. This——I do not know what I say. I go to Field-place; to-morrow you shall hear again. I go to Field-place now: this moment, I have rung the bell for the horse.

### Your eternal Friend.

I wrote to her to entreat that she would receive my letter kindly; I wrote very long. This is the answer<sup>1</sup>. Are you deaf, are you dead? I am cold and icy, but I cannot refrain. Stay, I will come soon.—Adieu!

### 54. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],
June 5, 1811.

### DEAR MADAM,

I desired Locke to be sent to you from London, and the Captain has two books which he will give you . . . "The Curse of Kehama," and Ensor's "National Education."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In Shelley's letter to Hogg of May 17, 1811 (p. 83), he says "the confidence of my sister (Elizabeth) even is diminished, that confidence once so unbounded: but it is to be regained." Here Shelley's attempts to induce his sister to "assert her claim to an unfettered use of reason" (p. 64) were evidently not received by her with sympathy.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> George Ensor (1769-1841), a writer of political books, whose philosophical essay "The Independent Man," was published in 1806, "National Education" in 1811, and some works attacking the English Government of Ireland, "Anti-union: Ireland as it ought to be," 1831, and a "Defence of the Irish," 1825.

The latter is the production of a very clever man. may keep the poem as long as you please, but I shall want the latter in the course of a month or two-before which. however, I shall have the pleasure of seeing you. our arguments are too long, and too candidly carried on, to make any figure on paper. Feelings do not look so well as reasonings on black and white. If, however, secure of your own orthodoxy, you would attempt my proselytism. believe me I should be most happy to subject myself to the danger. But I know that you, like myself, are a devotee at the shrine of Truth. Truth is my God; and say he is Air, Water, Earth, or Electricity, but I think yours is reducible to the same simple Divinityship. Seriously, however, if you very widely differ, or differ indeed in the least, from me on the subject of our late argument, the only reason which would induce me to object to a polemical correspondence, is that it might deprive your time of that application which its value deserves: mine is totally vacant.

Walter Scott has published a new poem, "The Vision of Don Roderick." I have ordered it. You shall have it when I have finished. I am not very enthusiastic in the cause of Walter Scott. The aristocratical tone which his writings assume does not prepossess me in his favour, since my opinion is that all poetical beauty ought to be subordinate to the inculcated moral . . . that metaphorical language ought to be a pleasing vehicle for useful and momentous instruction. But see Ensor on the subject of poetry.

Adieu. Your sincere

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Horsham, June Six, 1811,
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
[Franked by] Brighton.
T. Shelley.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In the Morning Chronicle for June 14, 1811, "The Vision of Don Roderick" is advertised as "In the press and will be published in a few days."

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# 55. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER<sup>1</sup> (Hurstpierpoint)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],
June 11, 1811.

#### MY DEAR MADAM,

With pleasure I engage in a correspondence which carries its own recommendation both with my feelings and my reason. . . I am now, however, an undivided votary of the I do not know which were most complimentary: but as you do not admire, as I do not study, this aristocratical science, it is of little consequence. Am I to expect an enemy or an ally in Locke? Locke proves that there are no innate ideas, that in consequence, there can be no innate speculative or practical principles, thus overturning all appeals of feeling in favor of Deity, since that feeling must be referable to some origin. There must have been a time when it did not exist; in consequence, a time when it began to exist. Since all ideas are derived from the senses, this feeling must have originated from some sensual excitation, consequently the possessor of it may be aware of the time, of the circumstances, attending its commencement. . . . Locke proves this by induction too clear to admit of rational objection. He affirms, in a chapter of whose reasoning I leave your reason to judge, that there is a God; he affirms also, and that in a most unsupported way, that the Holy Ghost dictated St. Paul's writings. Which are we to prefer? The proof or the affirmation?... To a belief in Deity I have no objection on the score of feeling: I would as gladly, perhaps with greater pleasure, admit than doubt his existence. . . . I now do neither, I have not the shadow of a doubt. . . . My wish to convince you of his non-existence is twofold: first on the score of truth, secondly because I conceive it to be the most summary way of eradicating Christianity. . . . I plainly

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In these letters to Miss Hitchener the dots are not to be taken as signs of omission, but as Shelley's mode of punctuation.

tell you my intentions and my views. . . . I see a being whose aim, like mine, is virtue . . . Christianity militates with a high pursuit of it . . . Hers is a high pursuit of it . . . she is therefore not a Christian. Yet wherefore does she deceive herself? Wherefore does she attribute to a spurious, irrational (as proved), disjointed system of desultory ethics, insulting, intolerant theology—that high sense of calm dispassionate virtue which her own meditations have elicited? Wherefore is a man who has profited by this error to say: "You are regarded as a monster in society; eternal punishment awaits your infidelity?" "I do not believe it," is your reply. "Here is a book," is the rejoinder. "Pray to the being who is here described, and you shall soon believe." Surely, if a person obstinately wills to believe,—determines spite of himself, spite of the refusal of that part of mind to admit the assent, in which only can assent rationally be centred, wills thus to put himself under the influence of passion, all reasoning is superfluous. . . . Yet I do not suppose that you act thus (for action it must be called, as belief is a passion); since the religion does not hold out high morality as an apology for an aberration from reason . . . In this latter case, reason might sanction the aberration, and fancy become but an auxiliary to its influence. Dismiss then Christianity. in which no arguments can enter . . . passion and reason are in their natures opposite. Christianity is the former, and Deism (for we are now no further) is the latter. . . . What then is a "God"? It is a name which expresses the unknown cause, the suppositious origin of all existence. When we speak of the soul of man, we mean that unknown cause which produces the observable effect evinced by his intelligence and bodily animation, which are in their nature conjoined, and (as we suppose, as we observe) inseparable. The word God then, in the sense which you take it analogises with the universe, as the soul of man to his body, as the vegetative power to vegetables, the stony power to stones. Yet, were each of these adjuncts taken away, what would

1

be the remainder? What is man without his soul? he is not man . . . What are vegetables without their vegetative power? stones without their stony? Each of these as much constitutes the essence of men, stones, etc., as much make it to be what it is, as your "God" does the universe. In this sense I acknowledge a God, but merely as a synonime [sic] for the existing power of existence. . . . I do not in this (nor can you do, I think) recognize a being which has created that to which it is confessedly annexed as an essence, as that without which the universe would not be what it is. It is therefore the essence of the universe, the universe is the essence of it. It is another word for the essence of the universe. You recognize not in this an identical being to whom are attributable the properties of virtue, mercy, loveliness—imagination delights in personification; were it not for this embodying quality of eccentric fancy we should be to this day without a God. . . . Mars was personified as the god of war, Juno of policy, etc. But you have formed in your mind the Deity of virtue; this personification beautiful in Poetry, inadmissible in reasoning, in the true style of Hindoostanish devotion, you have adopted. . . . I war against it for the sake of truth. There is such a thing as virtue, but what, who, is this Deity of virtue? . . . Not the Father of Christ, not the source of the Holy Ghost; not the God who beheld with favor the coward wretch Abraham, who built the grandeur of his favourite Jews on the bleeding bodies of myriads, on the subjugated necks of the dispossessed inhabitants of Canaan. But here my instances were as long as the memoir of his furious King-like exploits, did not contempt succeed to hatred. Did I now see him seated in gorgeous and tyrannic majesty, as described, upon the throne of infinitude. . . . if I bowed before him, what would virtue say? virtue's voice is almost inaudible, yet it strikes upon the brain, upon the heart. . . . The howl of self-interest is loud . . . but the heart is black which throbs solely to its note. . . . You say our theory is the same: I believe it.

Then why all this? The power which ma[de]1 me a scribbler knows! I have just finished a novel of the day— "The Missionary," by Miss Owenson. 2 It dwells on ideas which when young I dwelt on with enthusiasm, now I laugh at the weakness which is past. . . . "The Curse of Kehama," which you will have, is my most favorite poem; yet there is a great error—faith in the character of the divine Kailyal. . . . Yet I forgot . . . I intended to mention to you something essential. I recommend reason. -Why? Is it because, since I have devoted myself unreservedly to its influencing, I have never felt happiness? I have rejected all fancy, all imagination; I find that all pleasure resulting to self is thereby completely annihilated. I am led into this egotism, that you may be clearly aware of the nature of reason, as it affects me. I am sincere: will you comment upon this?

Adieu. A picture of Christ hangs opposite in my room: it is well done, and has met my look at the conclusion of this. Do not believe but that I am sincere... but am I not too prolix?

Yours most sincerely,

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Horsham, June Eleven, 1811,
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton.

[Franked by]
T. SHELLEY.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Letter torn here.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Sydney Owenson, afterwards Lady Morgan, 1783?-1859, and Irish novelist of considerable repute in her day. She began with a volume of poems in 1801, which was followed by "The Wild Irish Girl," 1806, "The Missionary," published by Stockdale in 1811, and many other novels, books of travel, and an autobiography. She married Sir Thomas Charles Morgan, a physician, in 1812. See another reference to "the Missionary," pp. 103-4, 109.

#### 56. To Thomas Jefferson Hoge (York)

FIELD PLACE, HORSHAM,
[June 16, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND.

I wish I thought as you do; but I cannot; it is all in Unwilling as I am, conviction stares me in my face, and mocks my lingering credulity. Oh! that you were That artifice the most subtle, of which degraded beings are capable, has been used, I doubt not; but although this tallies with the wishes of the artificers, a very different cause from their machinations effected it. change, a great and important change, has taken place in my sister. Every little action, which formerly used to be so eloquent; every look, which was wont to be so expressive of openness, are enlisted in the service of prejudice. All is studied art; it has superseded, not combined with, nature. It is in vain that you try to persuade me to deceive myself longer. Your letter came this morning; I burnt that I shuddered even to look at a page of it; one of mine. the flames destroyed it. Your letter came: the experiment you recommend has been tried within these few days, repeatedly, but without the slightest effect. Scorn the most virulent, neglect and affected pity for my madness, are all "You and your mad friend! that I can obtain in reply. Those, whom I have seen, and who have seen me, make but little excuse for your folly." This is all that I could hear; nothing else she would say. Then, far from being in the least affected by all I can say of my vexation, her spirits are uncommonly lively. I sometimes attempt the same liveliness, to see if congeniality even in folly would effect anything. No; even this is in vain; she is then, and then only, constantly silent. Oh! my friend, who is likeliest to be right? he who muses at a distance on the abstract idea of perfection, that I once dreamed, annexing it to a being whom one present cannot attribute it to?—one, too, who is, I may add, passionately prejudiced to that side of the question, the truth of which he has not admitted, or rather rejected deliberately.

I shall see you in July. I am invited to Wales<sup>1</sup>, but I shall go to York: what shall we do? How I long again for your conversation! The ideas here rise in solitude; they pass through a mind as solitary; unheeded, gloomy retrospection introduces them—anticipation even gloomier bids them depart to make way for others; these will on; still, still will they urge their course, till Death closes all. Wherefore should we linger? Unhappiness, disappointment, enthusiasm, and subsequent apathy follow our steps. Would it not be a general good to all human beings that I should make haste away? So you stay, stay, to make thousands happy: one is unworthy of you; and all my wishes are closed, since I have seen that union impossible and unjust, which once was my fondest vision. For myself, I know what an unstable, deceitful thing Love is; but still did I wish to involve myself in the pleasing delusion. The mist dissipates, the light is strong and clear; I am not blind, nor are you;—shall I be? It is neither to my own, nor to the being's happiness which I desired, that I should longer continue so! Where is she whom I adored? Alas! Where is virtue? Where is perfection? Where I cannot Is there another existence? No! Then I can never reach it. Is there another existence? Yes! I shall live there, rendering and rendered happy.

Perhaps the flowers think like this; perhaps they moralize upon their state, have their attachments, their pursuits of virtue; adore, despond, hope, despise. Alas! then do we, like them, perish; or do they, likewise, live for ever?

But am I not a philosopher? Do I not pursue virtue, for virtue's sake? Why, then, do I wander wildly? Why

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Either to the house of his cousin, Mr. Thomas Grove, or to that of Mr. Westbrook at Aberystwyth. See pp. 102, 113.

do I write madly? Why has sleep forsaken me? Why are you and my sister for ever present to my mind? Except when selfishness bids me start at what I am now—at what I once was—Adieu!

I am going to take the sacrament. In spite of my melancholy reflections, the idea rather amuses and soothes me. You shall hear from me soon again. I write very often, but have not always courage to send my letters.—Believe me.

Your's ever affectionately,

P. B. S.

[Addressed outside],
Horsham, June Sixteen, 1811.
T. J. Hogg, Esq.,
Mrs. Doughty's,
Coney Street,
[Franked by] York.
T. Shelley.

# 57. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],
June 20, 1811.

#### MY DEAR MADAM,

Your letter, though dated the 14th, has not reached me "Reason sanctions an aberration until this moment. from reason." I admit it. or rather on some subjects I conceive it to command a dereliction of itself. . . . I mean by this is an habitual analysis of our own thoughts. It is this habit, acquired by length of solitary labour, never then to be shaken off which induces gloom, which deprives the being thus affected of any anticipation or retrospection of happiness, and leaves him eagerly in pursuit of virtue, yet (apparent paradox!) pursuing it without the weakest stimulus. . . . It is this then against which I intended to caution you, this is the tree of which it is dangerous to eat, but which I have fed upon to satiety. . . . We look around us . . . we find that we exist, we find ourselves 7-(2285)

reasoning upon the mystery which involves our being . . . we see virtue and vice, we see light and darkness, each is separate, distinct; the line which divides them is glaringly perceptible; yet how racking it is to the soul, when enquiring into its own operations, to find that perfect virtue is very far from attainable, to find reason tainted by feeling, to see the mind when analysed exhibit a picture of irreconcileable inconsistencies, even when perhaps a moment before, it imagined that it had grasped the fleeting Phantom of virtue. But let us dismiss the subject. . . . It is still my opinion, for reasons before mentioned, that Christianity strongly militates with virtue. . . . Both yourself and Lyttelton are guilty of a mistake of the term Christian. A Christian is a follower of the religion which has constantly gone by the name of Christianity, as a Mahometan is of Mahometanism . . . each of these professors ceases to belong to the sect which either word means, when they set up a doctrine of their own, irreconcileable with that of either religion, except in a few instances in which common and self-evident morality coincides with its tenets. then morality, virtue which they set up as the criterion of their actions, and not the exclusive doctrine preached by the founder of any religion.—Why! your religion agrees as much with Bramah, Zoroaster, or Mahomet, as with Virtue is self-evident, consequently I act in unison with its dictates, where the doctrines of Christ do not differ from virtue; there I follow them. Surely you then follow virtue, or you equally follow Bramah and Mahomet as Christ. Your Christianity, therefore, does not interfere with virtue; and why? Because it is not Christianity! . . .

Yet you still appear to court the delusion, how is this? Do I know you as well as I know myself? . . . Then it is that this religion promises a future state, which otherwise were a matter at least of doubt. Let us consider. A false view of any subject when a true one is attainable, were best avoided, inasmuch as truth and falsehood are in themselves good and bad. . . . All that natural reason enables us

to discover, is that we now are, that there was a time when we were not; that the moment even when now we are reasoning is a point before and after which is eternity. . . . Shall we sink into the nothing from whence we have arisen? But could we have arisen from nothing? We put an acorn into the ground. In process of time it modifies the particles of earth, air and water by infinitesimal division so as to produce an oak. That power which makes it to be this oak, we may call its vegetative principle, symbolizing with the animal principle, or soul of animated existence. . . . An hundred years pass. The oak moulders in putrefaction —it ceases to be what it is; its soul is gone. Is then soul annihilable? Yet one of the properties of animal soul is consciousness of identity. If this is destroyed, in consequence the soul (whose essence this is) must perish. But as I conceive (and as is certainly capable of demonstration) that nothing can be annihilated, but that everything appertaining to nature, consisting of constituent parts infinitely divisible, is in a continual change, then do I suppose—and I think I have a right to draw this inference that neither will soul perish; that in a future existence it will lose all consciousness of having formerly lived elsewhere,—will begin life anew, possibly under a shape of which we have now no idea. But we have no right to make hypotheses—this is not one: at least I flatter myself that I have kept clear of supposition.

What think you of the bubbling brooks and mossy banks at Carlton House, —the allées vertes, etc.? It is said that

¹ The Prince Regent's fête, described as on a scale "of unprecedented magnificence," which was given at Carlton House on June 19, 1811. An account of the preparations for the fête is given in the Morning Chronicle of June 15, 1811. The same paper, in the issue for June 21, contains, in a long description of the banquet, the following passages: "His Royal Highness The Prince Regent entered the State apartments about a quarter past nine o'clock, dressed in a scarlet coat, most richly and elegantly ornamented in a very novel style with gold lace, with a brilliant star of the Order of the Garter. . . . The conservatory presented the fine effect of a lofty aisle in an ancient cathedral. . . . The grand table extended

this entertainment will cost £120,000. Nor will it be the last bauble which the nation must buy to amuse this overgrown bantling of Regency. How admirably this growing spirit of ludicrous magnificence tallies with the disgusting splendours of the stage of the Roman Empire which preceded its destruction! Yet here are a people advanced in intellectual improvement wilfully rushing to a revolution, the natural death of all great commercial empires, which must plunge them in the barbarism from which they are slowly arising.

"Don Roderick" is not yet come out, when it is you shall see it.—Adieu.

Yours most sincerely,
PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton,
Sussex.

#### 58. To EDWARD FERGUS GRAHAM

[Undated. Apparently after June 19, 1811.]

If Graham, within that democratical bosom of thine, yet lingers a spark of loyalty, if a true and firm king's man ever found favour in thy sight, if thou art not totally hardened to streamlets, whose mossy banks invite the

the whole length of the conservatory, and across Carlton House to the length of 200 feet. . . . Along the centre of the table, about six inches above the surface, a canal of pure water continued flowing from a silver fountain, beautifully constructed at the head of the table. Its faintly waving, artificial banks were covered with green moss and aquatic flowers, gold and silver fish, gudgeons, etc., were seen to swim and sport through the bubbling current, which produced a pleasing murmur when it fell, and formed a cascade at the outlet. At the head of the table above the fountain sat his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, on a throne of crimson velvet, trimmed with gold. The throne commanded a view of the company," consisting of, among other persons of distinction, the Bourbon Princes. Shelley again refers to the banquet in the following letter to Graham.

repose of the wanderer. . . . If, I repeat, yet thou lovest thy rulers, and kissest the honeyed rod:.-Then-Graham do I conjure thee, by the great George our King, by our noble Prince Regent and our inimitable Commander-in-Chief, then do I conjure thee by Mrs. Clarke, the Duke of Kent and Lord Castlereagh, together with Lord Grenville, that thou wilt assist me, (as heretofore thou didst promise) in my loyal endeavour to magnify, if magnification be possible, our Noble Royal Family. High let them soar . . . high as the expanse of the empyrean, and may no invidious louse dare to interrupt the reveries of frensied enthusiasm.— In fine Græme, thou hast an harp of fire and I a pen of honey. Let then the song roll . . . wide let it roll . . . Take thou thy tuning fork . . . for the ode is coming—lo! Fargy thou art as the bard of old, I as the poet of other times. . . . When kings murdered men; then was the lay of praise poured upon their ears . . . when adulation fled afar, and truth, white-robed seraph, descended to whisper into royal ears. . . . They were not so rude as to say "Thou Tyrant." No! nor will I... see if I do.

PHILOBASILEUS.

[Outside the sheet is written this version of the Marseillaise:—]

Tremble kings despised of man!
Ye traitors to your Country,
Tremble! Your parricidal plan
At length shall meet its destiny...
We all are soldiers fit to fight,
But if we sink in glory's night
Our mother Earth will give ye new,
The brilliant pathway to pursue
Which leads to Death or Victory.

#### 59. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],
June 21, 1811.

DEAREST FRIEND,

I shall be with you in three weeks; possibly less. Take lodgings for me at York; if possible at Mrs. Doughty's.

It is best to be beforehand, as lodgings may be scarce. What pleasure is even the anticipation of an unrestrained converse! I shall leave Field-place in a fortnight. Old Westbrook has invited me to accompany him and his daughters to a house they have at Aberystwith, in Wales. I shall stay about a week with him in town; then I shall come to see you, and get lodgings.

How I wish that I could think exactly like you; that I could effectually imitate your sentiments—sentiments which inspire language that acts almost like magic. When I read your letters, I think exactly, completely like you; I wonder, I am shocked at my own depravity, in doubting what then appears so evident—yet how evident!

I lay down your letter, I look around me, I consider, I behold the true state of the case. Machinations have indeed succeeded, but they are the machinations of worldly interest. It is true; it is true, I am on the spot, I observe it; I am not only cool, but most violently prejudiced to that opinion, against which now conviction presses.

Yet how is this? Fallen as she is, I almost think that I could participate in her views; that I could adjust the glittering tinsel ornament of anticipated matrimonialism; that I could, like a fashionable brother, act as a jackal for husbands. Yet no; this were too much. Anything but this last, this only severe trial of prejudiced attachment! But yet, I could watch her steps; and even in this degraded state could I essay to minister to her happiness, even when she became bound to some fool in a bond fit only for a Jewess; even then I could rack my phiz into a smile to please her. But this must not be. I am not thus to be sacrificed; and much as I wish to think like you, yet I think it were imbecile to model my opinion upon yours in that only point, where there are many chances for my being right, were I the least enlightened of men-many chances for your being wrong, although being what you On every other point, I believe that my opinion is yours; wholly unreservedly yours. It is a sacrifice which I

acknowledge is due to your superiority, where we have opportunities of having an equal view of the contested subject. But here! Do you not see you are under the influence of a tyrannical preconception, which you acknowledge increases somewhat under all these disadvantages?

Surely a man under a misguiding preconception is not a judge of the merits of its object, particularly when these merits are principally founded on two, or three, poems, confessedly not the subjects of universal approbation. founded on the testimony of a brother ardently prejudiced: he then the sport of unreflecting sensation, alive to enthusiasm the most irrational; he than whom the gale that blows was not more variable in anything, but friendship;—on the testimony of one who seized on some detached, noble sentiments, and then ascribed to her, whose they were, perfection, divinity—all the properties which the wildest religious devotee ascribes to the Deity, whom he adores. Had I then been sacrificing at the altar of the Indian Camdeo, the God of mystic love; you, I am sure, will never become an unreflecting votary at its shrine. consider, I remember: there is one point of sympathy Matrimony, I know, is a word dear to you; between you. -does it vibrate in unison with the hidden strings of rapture—awaken divine anticipation? Is it not the most horrible of all the means which the world has had recourse to, to bind the noble to itself? Yet this is the subject of her constant and pointed panegyric. It is in vain that I seek to talk to her. It is in vain that I represent, or rather endeavour to represent, the futility of the world's opinion.

"This then, is the honourable advice of a brother!"
"It is the disinterested representation of a friend!" To which unanswered, followed a sneer, and an affected sportiveness of gaiety that admitted of no reply.

Have you read a new novel, "The Missionary," by Miss Owenson? It is a divine thing —Luxima, the Indian

priestess, were it possible to embody such a character, is perfect. "The Missionary" has been my companion for some time; I advise you to read it. How much I admire the sentiments in your tale! You give up the world; you resign it, and all its vanities. You are right, and so do it! Political, or literary, ambition is VICE. Nothing but one thing is virtue.—Adieu!

Your eternal Friend.

Yet I should almost regret your tale! How I wish you could send me the MSS.; but perhaps it would not be prudent; it might miscarry.

# 60. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM], SUNDAY, June 23, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND.

You appear at last rational. I can find an excuse for madness, because I myself am often mad; but I am better pleased when I can pay the tribute of merited applause to reason, exerted, too, under discouraging circumstances. Your letter this morning betrays very much of the latter. You no longer blindly consider scepticism as blasphemy; you are sensible that what is human may be imperfect. From the vivid nature of the feelings which human beings excited, you are unwilling to admit it. You do right then; you act reasonably. I rejoice that you are resolved to think for yourself. I rejoice that you have at length fixed a criterion by which you may be decided on this interminable subject.

Come, then, my dear friend: happy, most happy, shall I be if you will share my little study; happy that you come on an errand so likely to soothe me, and restore my peace. There are two rooms in this house, which I have taken exclusively to myself; my sister will not enter them, and

no one else shall: these you shall inhabit with me. You must content yourself to sleep upon a mattress; and you will be like a State prisoner. You must only walk with me at midnight, for fear of discovery. My window commands a view of the lawn, where you will frequently see an object that will amply repay your journey—the object of my fond affections. Time and opportunity must effect that in my favour with [her?]<sup>2</sup>, which entreaties cannot; indeed, I do not think it advisable to say too much on the subject; but more when we meet.

Do not trouble yourself with any baggage; I have plenty of clean things for you.

The mail will convey you from York to London, whence the Horsham coach will bring you to Horsham; (news!) there I will meet you at midnight, whence you shall be conveyed to your apartment.

Come, then, I entreat you; I will return with you to York. I almost insist on your coming. I shall fully expect you.

Yours most affectionately.

# 61. To Elizabeth Hitchener (London)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],
June 25, 1811.

#### MY DEAR MADAM.

Do not speak any more of my time thrown away, or you will compel me in my own defence, to say things, which although they could not share in the nature, would participate in the appearance of compliment. What you say of the fallen state of Man, I will remark upon. . . . Man is fallen . . . how is he fallen? You see a thing imperfect

practice. Elizabeth Shelley died unmarried in 1831.

\* Hogg prints "him," but "her" would seem to be the appropriate word.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This "mad" plan of Shelley's to exhibit his sister Elizabeth to Hogg, whose union he desired, was of course never put into practice. Elizabeth Shelley died unmarried in 1831.

and diminutive, but you cannot infer that it had degenerated to this state, without first proving that it had anteriorly existed in a perfect state. Apply this rule, the accuracy of which is unquestionable, to Man. Look at History, even the earliest, what does it tell you of Man? An ancient tradition recorded in the Bible, upon the truth or falsehood of which this depends, tells you that Man once existed in a superior state . . . but how are you to believe this? how in short is this to be urged as a proof of the truth of the Scriptures, which itself depends upon the previously demonstrated truth or fallacy of them?... You look around, you say, and see in everything a wonderful harmony conspicuous. How know you this? Might not some animal, the victim of man's capricious tyranny. itself possibly the capricious tyrant of another, reason thus? "How wretched, how peculiarly wretched is our state, in man all is harmony, their buildings arise in method, their society is united by bonds of indissolubility. . . . All nature but that of horses, is harmonical; and he is born to misery only because he is a horse." . . . Yet this reasoning is yours. Surely this applies to all nature, surely this may be called harmony, but then it is the harmony of irregular confusion, which equalizes everything by being itself unequal, wherever it acts. . . .

This brings me again to the point which I aim at: the eternal existence of Intellect. . . . You have read Locke. You are convinced that there are no innate ideas, and that you do not always think when asleep. . . . Yet, let me enquire: in these moments of intellectual suspension do you suppose that the soul is annihilated? You cannot suppose it, knowing the infallibility of the rule—"From nothing, nothing can come: to nothing, nothing can return;" as, by this rule, it could not be annihilated, or if annihilated could not be capable of resuscitation. This brings me to the point. Those around the lifeless corpse are perfectly aware that it thinks not: at least they are aware that when scattered thro' all the changes which matter undergoes, it

cannot then think. You have witnessed one suspension of intellect in dreamless sleep . . . you witness another in From the first, you well know that you cannot infer any diminution of intellectual force. How contrary then to all analogy to infer annihilation from Death, which you cannot prove suspends for a moment the force of mind. . . . This is not hypothesis, this is not assumption, at least I am not aware of the admission of either. Willingly would I exclude both—would influence you to their total exclusion. Yet examine this argument with your reason, tell me the result. . . . You wish to "pass among those who, like you, have deceived themselves." I defy you to produce to me one who like you has deceived herself. Deceive the world like yourself, and I will no longer object to the immoral influence of Christianity; in short, let the world be Christians, like you. . . let them not be Christians, and they would not be Christians. . . . Atheism appears a terrific monster at a distance; dare to examine it, look at its companions . . . it loses half its terrors. In short, treat the word Atheism as you have done that of Christianity: it is not then much. I do not place your wish for justification to prejudice, but to the highest the noblest of motives. You have named your God. The worship of that God is clear, self-evident, perspicuous: it alone ennobles no absurdities, it alone is unceremonious, it alone refuses to contradict natural analogies, can be the subject of no disputes, the countenancer of no misconceptions. . . . Since we conversed on the subject, I have seen no reason to change my political opinions. . . . In theology, enquiries into our intellect, it[s] eternity or perishability.—I advance with caution and circumspection. I pursue it in the privacy of retired thought, or the interchange of friendship. . . . but in politics . . . here I am enthusiastic. I have reasoned, and my reason has brought me on this subject to the end of my enquiries. I am no aristocrat, nor any "crat" at all; but vehemently long for the time when man may dare to live in accordance with Nature and Reason,

in consequence [sic]<sup>1</sup> with Virtue . . . to which I firmly believe that Religion, its establishment, Polity, and its establishments, are the formidable, though destructible, barriers. We heard from the Captain the other day: I am happy to find that my aunt is recovering. On Monday I shall be in London on my way to Wales, where I purpose to spend the summer. My excursion will be on foot for the purpose of better remarking the manners and dispositions of the peasantry. I shall call on you in London, and write to you from the resting-places of my movements.

Your sincere Friend,

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Horsham, June Twenty-six, 1811.
Miss Hitchener,
Mr. Puffers,
No. 23 New Millman Street,
near the Foundling,
London.
[Franked by] T. Shelley.

62. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

[Field Place, about June 27th, 1811.]

I wrote to you on Sunday. Reason have you to say that I was unreasonable. I was mad! You know that very little sets my horrid spirits in motion. I drank a glass or two of wine at my mother's instigation, then began raving. She, to quiet me, gave me pens, ink, and paper, and I wrote to you. Elizabeth is, indeed, an unworthy companion of the Muses. I do not rest much on her poetry now. Miss Philipps<sup>2</sup> betrayed twice the genius: greater amiability, if to affect the feeling is a proof of an excess of the latter. I am sure you cannot deny that you are unprejudiced on this head.

I am a perfect hermit: not a being to speak with! I sometimes exchange a word with my mother on the subject

Perhaps Shelley meant to write consonance. \* See p. 78.

of the weather, upon which she is irresistibly eloquent: otherwise all is deep silence! I wander about this place. walking all over the grounds, with no particular object in view. I cannot write, except now and then to you sometimes to Miss Westbrooks. My hand begins to hurry, The only thing that has and I am tired and ennuied. interested me, if I except your letters, has been one novel. It is Miss Owenson's "Missionary," an Indian tale; will you read it? It is really a divine thing; Luxima, the Indian, is an angel. What a pity that we cannot incorporate these creations of fancy; the very thoughts of them thrill the soul! Since I have read this book, I have read no But I have thought strangely! I transcribe for you a strange mélange of maddened stuff, which I wrote by the midnight moon last night.

Sweet star, which gleaming o'er the darksome scene Through fleecy clouds of silvery radiance flyest, Spanglet of light on evening's shadowy veil, Which shrouds the day-beam from the waveless lake, Lighting the hour of sacred love; more sweet Than the expiring morn-star's paly fires. Sweet star! When wearied Nature sinks to sleep, And all is hushed,—all, save the voice of Love, Whose broken murmurings swell the balmy blast Of soft Favonius, which at intervals Sighs in the ear of stillness, art thou aught but Lulling the slaves of interest to repose With that mild, pitying gaze! Oh, I would look In thy dear beam till every bond of sense Became enamoured——

Hopes, that swell in youthful breasts,
Leave they this, the waste of time?
Love's rose a host of thorns invests;
Cold, ungenial is the clime,
Where its honours blow.
Youth says, The purple flowers are mine
Which die the while they glow.

Dear the boon to Fancy given,
Retracted whilst it's granted:
Sweet the rose which lives in heaven,
Although on earth 'tis planted,
Where its honours blow,
While by earth's slaves the leaves are riven
Which die the while they glow.

Age cannot Love destroy,
But perfidy can blast the flower,
Even when in most unwary hour
It blooms in Fancy's bower.
Age cannot Love destroy,
But perfidy can rend the shrine
In which its vermeil splendours shine.

#### Ohe! jam satis dementiæ! I hear you exclaim.

I have been thinking of Death and Heaven for four days. What is the latter? Shall we set off? Is there a future life? Whom shall we injure by departing? Should we not benefit some? I was thinking last night, when from the summer-house I saw the moon just behind one of the chimneys, if she alone were to witness our departure? But I do not talk thus, or even think thus, when we are together. How is that? I scarce dare then, but now I dare?

I shall see you in three weeks. I am coming to York, in my way to Wales; where possibly I shall not go. Be that as it may, you shall see me. I intend to pedestrianize. The post-fellow wants the letter.

Believe me your most affectionate.

You will hear on Monday.

# 63. To Thomas Jefferson · Hogg (York)

Cuckfield, July 1, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND.

I have despatched a letter to my sister, inclosing your last letter to me. I shall be there on Sunday. I hope I shall have a favourable answer.

If her interest in me has weight; if she regards me as a friend and brother, she cannot refuse. But no! This coercion! You shall hear on Sunday.

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#### 64. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

FIELD PLACE, July 4, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am surprised! For the sake of everything for which we live, listen to reason. If you will not listen to me, see the chapter in *Locke*, which F[aber] ought to have read, and profited by.

What is Enthusiasm, whether in religion, politics, or morality? all equally, inextricably fatuous; yours is in the last. You seek the happiness of another, under an idea that she is most amiable. Even admitting the last, is it not wrong when you see that you cannot contribute to her happiness, to render yourself unfit to do so to another? But do I not admit this? And yet it seems false. Who, surely, is the better judge? you—who never beheld her, never heard her converse, and, in addition to this—or I. who—still I am confessedly strongly prejudiced—prejudiced like religious votaries, who reason, whilst they can, and when that ceases to be possible, they feel. From this last there is no appeal. Certainly I do not mean to imitate these. And I still ask, who is the better judge? I must be like one of these, or you, dispassionate, cool; cool you cannot but be, and probably dispassionate. Little as you may be disposed to credit my feelings concerning άφιλαυτία, I have here no interest to act otherwise than I say. How, then, do I still persist in—. I own it; it was the fondest wish of my heart, and bitterly was I disappointed at its annihilation. I own it: I desired, eagerly desired to see myself and her irrevocably united by the rites of the Church, but where the high priest would have been Love<sup>1</sup>; I pictured to myself Elysium

¹ It is important to state in regard to this passage, which was supposed by some to have been misprinted by Hogg, (or to have had some mysterious meaning), that it was proved by Professor Dowden to Mr. Rossetti "that there is no misprint in this letter,

in beholding my only perfect one daring the vain world, smiling at its silly forms, setting an example of perfection to an universe. I do not estimate, as you know, from relationship: I am cool, I hope. I should now grieve to see myself sacrificed, when there may exist a less imperfect being, and I might be perhaps considered as not wholly unworthy of her.

You do not flatter; you do not temporise; you are as severe with me as you can be. I own I cannot bear, you tell me, to see you sacrificing yourself, and everyone who really esteems you. I write to-morrow.

Your ever affectionate.

and also no mystery about it. Shelley, an avowed enemy of the legal marriage-bond, simply says that he would have wished Hogg and Elizabeth to unite without marriage, and would wish to act in like manner himself when the time should come." Mr. W. M. Rossetti's "Memoir of Shelley," 1886, p. iii. I quote Professor Dowden's explanation of this passage from the Athenaum of May 14. 1887: "Shelley's words and my interpretation are as follows: I desired, eagerly desired,' writes Shelley, 'to see myself and her [his sister Elizabeth] irrevocably united by the rites of the Church. but where the high priest would have been love'; i.e., Shelley, looking back at the failure of his own love affair with his cousin, Harriet Grove, and the more recent failure of his plan for Hogg's union with his sister Elizabeth, says: 'My eager desire was to see myself united [he avoids the word married, which might imply a ceremony to my cousin, and see my sister united to you, Hogg, each without vow or ceremony.' 'The institution of marriage,' Godwin had written, 'is a system of fraud. . . . Marriage is a law and the worst of laws.' Shelley had accepted Godwin's principles, and desired to see them carried into act. The reviewer speaks of my skating here 'over thin ice.' No; I tread on solid ground, and Mr. Rossetti, whose candour the reviewer commends, in rejecting the odious theory is by my side."

#### III. HARRIET WESTBROOK

#### July 15-October 28, 1811

SHELLEY at Cwm Elan—"Mr. Peyton"—On Equality—F. D. Browne—Burdon's Poem—Shelley's Mother—Stockdale's Account—Harriet Westbrook—Thoughts on Matrimony—Shelley's Marriage—At York—At Cuckfield—"Sister of my Soul"—The Marriage-Settlement—Harriet's School-days—The Duke of Norfolk.

# 65. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

[Postmark, RHAYADER.] [? July 15, 1811.]

I am just arrived 1. I have only time to say that I am most sincerely yours, and I will explain on Wednesday why I could not come to York. No post here but three times a-week.

P. B. S.

# 66. To Elizabeth Hitchener (London)

Cwm Elan, Rhayader,
Radnorshire,
South Wales.

[Postmark—15th July, 1811.]

#### My dear Madam,

Your letter has just reached me, or rather has been given

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> At Cwm Elan, an estate of ten thousand acres which had been purchased by Shelley's cousin, Thomas Grove. This place, of which Shelley had heard much from Harriet Grove, and which he greatly desired to see, was situated five miles south-east of Rhayader, in Radnorshire. It was destroyed towards 1894 in a water-supply scheme for Birmingham.

to me after my recovery from a short but violent nervous illness. It was occasioned by several nights of sleeplessness, and days of pressing and urgent business; nothing else could have prevented my calling on you in town, but my occupation was of such a nature as would neither admit of delay or rest, and Stoic as I profess myself, whilst yet this chain of clay fetters our nobler energies, it will at times subdue them, it will at times remind us, and that forcibly, how mutually dependent on each other are mind and body. . . . Well here I now am, and shall postpone the pleasure of your conversation, tho' let me hope not of your correspondence, until the period of my return to I hope I am superior to etiquette, indeed if I am not I bely my own professions, and daring to be free court slavery. . . But this is not my disposition, and when I say the "pleasure of your correspondence," I mean to say that the ideas which those words excite are actually present. —Did you observe in the papers an account of the trial of a wretch at Tortola for the murder of his slave: if not, read it, and remark his address to the jury . . . "I have a proper sense of religion, and I fear not." This man's cruelties might have made Nero triumph in his comparative humanity, yet "he fears not." Is this criterion then so sure to supersede that of self-evident morality as to make a villain exult in death like Brutus? Surely this teaches us two things—that Religion is bad for man; that the exultation of Brutus will last, that of the tyrant cannot! I met with a fine passage the other day in Helvétius, a French writer. "Modes of worship differ, they are therefore the work of men-Morality is accordant, universal, and uniform, therefore it is the Work of God "-or, as I should say, it is Morality which I cannot but consider as synonymous with the Deist's God. This country of Wales is excessively grand; rocks piled on each other to tremendous heights, rivers formed into cataracts by their projections. and valleys clothed with woods, present an appearance of enchantment. But why do they enchant—why is it more

affecting than a plain, it cannot be innate, is it acquired? Thus does knowledge lose all the pleasure which involuntarily arises by attempting to arrest the fleeting phantom as it passes . . . vain, almost like the chemist's ether it evaporates under our observation: it flies from all but the slaves of passion and sickly sensibility who will not analyse a feeling.

I will relate you an anecdote, it is a striking one; the only adventure I have met with here. My window is over the kitchen, in the morning I threw it up, and had hardly finished dressing when "for Charity's dear sake" met my These words were pronounced with such sweetness that on turning round I was surprised to find them uttered by an old beggar, to whom in a moment the servant brought some meat. I ran down and gave him something:-he appeared extremely grateful. I tried to enter into conversation with him . . . in vain. I followed him a mile asking a thousand questions. At length I quitted him, finding by this remarkable observation that perseverance was "I see by your dress that you are a rich man. They have injured me and mine a million times—you appear to be well intentioned, but I have no security of it while you live in such a house as that, or wear such clothes as those. It would be charity to quit me."

Now adieu.

Believe me

Yours most sincerely,

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Miss HITCHENER,
Mr. PUFFER'S,
near the Foundling,
London.

[Re-directed, not in Shelley's handwriting],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
near Brighton.

# 67. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

Cwm Elan, Rhayader.
[No date. ? July 22, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

John Grove has sent one of your letters; I fancy the last. I am now at Rhayader. The post comes in here but three times a-week, and goes out two hours after its arrival. Cwm Elan is five miles thence, and I have ridden to Rhayader, and now write in the post-office. Pray write. Confide in me. Believe that I am yours most sincerely. What have you to say? What, have you no secret? Write; you know that everything which you confide will be for ever held in the inviolable confidence of friendship. It would be a great injustice to suppose that my own will detained me from York. Nothing but absolute and positive necessity could have superseded my determined intention.

You will hear from me on Thursday, at least, I shall write then. Adieu!

Your eternally faithful,

P. B. S.

Miss Westbrook, Harriet, has advised me to read Mrs. Opie's "Mother and Daughter." She has sent it hither, and has desired my opinion with earnestness. What is this tale? But I shall read it to-night.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Amelia Opie's "Adeline Mowbray, or the Mother and Daughter," 1804.

# 68. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

Cwm Elan, Rhayader, Radnorshire.
[No date. ? July 25, 1811.]

#### MY DEAREST FRIEND.

I had a letter from my father; all is found out about my inviting you to Horsham, and my proposed journey to York, which is thereby for a while prevented. God send he does not write to your father; it would annoy him. I threw cold water on the rage of the old buck. I question whether he has let the family into the secret of his discovery, which must have been magically effected.

I had, previously to my intention to coming to York, accepted an invitation of a cousin of mine here to stay a week or two; whence I intended to proceed to Aberystwith, about thirty miles off. I then changed my mind, in order to accompany you to York. As you made no secret of this, I mentioned in a letter to my father from London that such was my intention. He returned for answer, on the Thursday, that I might go, but that I should have no money from him if I did. The case therefore became one of extreme necessity; I was forced to submit, and now I am here. Do not think, however, but that I shall come to see you long before you come to reside in London; but open warfare will never do, and Mr. Peyton, which will be my nom de guerre, will easily swallow up Mr. Shelley. I shall keep quiet here for a few weeks.

I have heard of the miscarriage of one of my letters to you, by the pillage of the Rhayader mail. I shall write very often, and enclose Elizabeth's letters, when I have them.

This is most divine scenery; but all very dull, stale, flat, and unprofitable: indeed, this place is a very great bore.



I shall see the Miss Westbrooks again soon; they were very well, in Condowell, when I heard last; they then proceed to Aberystwith, where I shall meet them.

The post here is only three times a-week, and that very uncertain, irregular and unsafe.

Let me hear soon from you. I will write every post-day.

Your most affectionate.

P. B. SHELLEY.

# 69. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

Cwm Elan, Rhayader,
Radnorshire.
[July 25, 1811.]

#### MY DEAR MADAM,

Be assured that, as long as you are what you are, as long as I am what I am—which is likely to continue until our transmigration—you will always occupy a most exalted place in my warmest esteem. I am no courtier, aristocrat. or loyalist: therefore you may believe that your correspondence would be resigned with the pain of having lost a most valuable thing when I tell you so. I am truly sorry to hear that my aunt has not recovered . . . I shall write to the Captain to-day. . . . You say that equality is unattainable: so, will I observe, is perfection; yet they both symbolize in their nature, they both demand that an unremitting tendency towards themselves should be made; and, the nearer society approaches towards this point the happier will it be. No one has yet been found resolute enough in dogmatizing to deny that Nature made man equal; that society has destroyed this equality is a truth

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not more incontrovertible. It is found that the vilest cottager is often happier than the proud lord of his manorial rights. Is it fit that the most frightful passions of human nature should be let loose, by an unnatural compact of society, upon this unhappy aristocrat? Is he not to be pitied when by an hereditary possession of a fortune which if divided would have very different effects, he is as it were predestined to dissipation, ennui, self-reproach, and to crown the climax, a deathbed of despairing inutility? It is often found that the peasant's life is embittered by the commission of crime . . . (yet can we call it crime? certainly when we compare the seizure of a few shillings from the purse of a nobleman to preserve a beloved family from starving, to the destruction which the unrestrained propensities of this nobleman scatter around him, we may almost call it virtue). To what cause are we to refer this? The noble has too much, therefore he is wretched and wicked, the peasant has too little. . . . Are not then the consequences the same from causes which nothing but equality can annihilate? and, altho' you may consider equality as impossible, yet, admitting this, a strenuous tendency towards it appears recommended by the consequent diminution of wickedness and misery which my system holds out. . . . is this to be denied?

Ridicule perfection as impossible. . . . Do more: prove it by arguments which are irresistible. Let the defender of perfection acknowledge their cogency. Still, a strenuous tendency towards this principle, however unattainable, cannot be considered as wrong. You are willing to dismiss for the present the subject of Religion. As to its influence on individuals, we will. But it is so intimately connected with politics, and augments in so vivid a degree the evils resulting from the system before us, that I will make a few remarks on it. Shall I sum up the evidence? It is needless . . . the persecutions against the Christians under the Greek Empire, their energetic retaliations, and burning each other, the excommunications bandied between the

popes of Rome and the patriarchs of Constantinople, their influence upon politics, war, assassination, the Sicilian Vespers, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, Lord G. Gordon's mob, and the state of Religious things at present, can amply substantiate my assertions. . . . And Liberty!—Poor Liberty! even the religionists who cry so much for thee use thy name but as a mask, that they alone may seize the torch, and show their gratitude by burning their Deliverer. I should doubt the existence of a God who if he cannot command our reverence by Love, surely can have no demand upon it, from Virtue, on the score of terror. this empire of terror which is established by Religion, Monarchy is its prototype, Aristocracy may be regarded as symbolizing with its very essence. They are mixed: one can now scarce be distinguished from the other; equality in politics, like perfection in morality, appears now far removed from even the visionary anticipations of what is called "the wildest theorist." I, then, am wilder than the wildest. I am happy that you like "Kehama." Is not the chapter where Kailyal despises the leprosy grand? You would like also "Joan of Arc," by Southey.— Whenever I have any new books, I will send them to you.

I will write again soon. I now remain, with the highest esteem,

Yours sincerely,

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Sussex.

[Postmark], 27 July, 1811.

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#### 70. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

Cwm Elan, July 26, 1811.

#### MY DEAR MADAM.

I wrote to you yesterday in a great hurry, at least very much interfered with. I began politics, and altho', from the mental discussion which I have given the subject, I do not think my arguments are inconclusive, still they may be obscure.—What I contend for is this.—Were I a moral legislator, I would propose to my followers that they should arrive at the perfection of morality. Equality is natural, at least many evils totally inconsistent with a state which symbolizes with Nature prevail in every system of inequality. I will assume this point, therefore, even although it be your opinion, or my opinion that equality is unattainable except by a parcel of peas or beans, still political virtue is to be estimated in proportion as it approximates to this ideal point of perfection, however unattainable.— But what can be worse than the present aristocratical system? Here are in England ten millions, only 500,000 of whom live in a state of ease; the rest earn their livelihood with toil and care.—If therefore these 500,000 aristocrats, who possess resources of various degrees of immensity, were to permit these resources to be resolved into their original stock; that is, entirely to destroy it, if each earned his own living (which I do not see is at all incompatible with the height of intellectual refinement, then I affirm that each would be happy and contented, that crime and the temptation to crime would scarcely exist.—" But this paradise is all visionary."—Why is it visionary? Have you tried? The first inventor of a plough doubtless was looked upon as a mad innovator: he who altered it from its original absurd form doubtless had to contend with great prejudices in its disfavor. But is it not worth while that (altho' it may not be certain) the remaining 9,500,000 victims to its infringement [should] make some exertions in favour of a system

evidently founded on the first principles of natural justice? If two children were placed together in a desert island, and they found some scarce fruit, would not justice dictate an equal division? If this number is multiplied to any extent of which number is capable, if these children are men, families,—is not justice capable of the same extension and multiplication? Is it not the same, are not its decrees invariable? and, for the sake of his earth-formed schemes, has the politician a right to infringe upon that which itself constitutes all right and wrong? Surely not. I know why you differ from me on this point. It is because you suspect yourself of partiality for the cause against which you argue. I must say, my friend and fellow-traveller in the path of truth, that this is wrong. You are unworthy of the suspicion with which you regard yourself. I am now with people who, strange to say, never think: I have, however, much more of my own society than of theirs.

Nature is here marked with the most impressive characters of loveliness and grandeur, once I was tremulously alive to tones and scenes . . . the habit of analysing feelings I fear does not agree with this. It is spontaneous, and, when it becomes subject to consideration, ceases to exist. . . . But you do right to indulge feeling where it does not militate with reason: I wish I could too. This valley is covered with trees, so are partly the mountains that surround it. Rocks, piled on each other to an immense height, and clouds intersecting them,—in other places, waterfalls 'midst the umbrage of a thousand shadowy trees, form the principal features of the scenery. I am not wholly uninfluenced by its magic in my lonely walks, but I long for a thunderstorm.

Adieu: let me soon hear from you.

Your most sincere friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Sussex.
[Postmark], 29 July, 1811.

# 71. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

CWM ELAN, RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE,
[No date. ? July 28, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

To-morrow I shall hear from you, but cannot be able to answer your letter. The post is here what the waves in hell were to Tantalus.

I have heard from the Westbrooks, and from my mother: the latter cannot yet have received your last letter to me, as epistolary communications take some time in going to Sussex from York via Rhayader.

I have been to church to-day; they preach partly in Welsh, which sounds most singularly. A christening was performed out of an old broken slop-basin. This country is highly romantic; here are rocks of uncommon height, and picturesque waterfalls. I am more astonished at the grandeur of the scenery than I expected. I do not now much regard it; I have other things to think of.

I have had no cause to alter my opinion; I do not think that I am at liberty to entertain any hopes. I suppose, whilst York Minster exists, that you will indulge them yourself on my account.

Now, there is Miss F. D. Browne<sup>1</sup> (certainly a tigress), yet she surpasses my sister in poetical talents—this every dispassionate criticism *must* allow: that lovely extract of her poems certainly surpasses any of Elizabeth's, and it was Elizabeth's poetry that first so strongly attracted my

¹ Felicia Dorothea Browne (1796-1835), better known as Mrs. Hemans. Her "Poems," printed at Liverpool in 1808 at the age of twelve, were followed the same year by "England and Spain, or Valour and Patriotism." Medwin states that these poems "made a powerful impression on Shelley," who addressed some letters to the youthful poetess, but that her mother wrote to Medwin's father begging him to use his influence with Shelley to stop the correspondence. Medwin adds that Mrs. Hemans in after life was an admirer of Shelley's poetry, and "in some measure modelled her style after his."

attention, charmed, and, as you were pleased to say, bewitched me; and which you admired, unless you were influenced by the vague, unconnected, prejudiced praises with which I would at times speak of Elizabeth.

For the rest, it is now far from being my wish that you should think more of the past. I foresee that all regrets cherished on that head will end in aggravating disappointment; I do not say despair, for I have too good an opinion of my firmness to suppose that I would yield to despair. Besides, wherefore should I love her? A disinterested appreciation of what is in itself excellent; this is good, if it is so—but what I felt was a passion. It was, I suppose, involuntary: passion can evidently be neither disinterested, or its opposite. It is not, then, the business of reason to conquer passion, particularly when I received all the evidences of her loveliness from the latter, and none from the former. Ought I not to doubt the worthiness of what depends on the mere impulses of the latter, for what could reason have to do with it any more than with peeping at a lady through a window. I do not know, on considering, however, if the lover would not display more reason then than at any other period of his passion, since for *once* he consented to refer to the evidence of his senses. Let me hope that I shall be dispassionate: I did execrate my existence once, when I first discovered that there was no chance of our being united. To enjoy your society and that of my sister has now for some months been my aim. She is not what she was; you continue the same, and ever may you be so!

I am here for the present, absolutely because I have no money to come to York, and because I must come there incog. I am what the sailors call banyaning. I do not see a soul; all is gloomy and desolate. I amuse myself, however, with reading Darwin, climbing rocks, and exploring this scenery. Amusement!

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802), the author of "The Botanic Garden," "The Temple of Nature," etc.

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.32000000658999 http://www.hathitrust.org/access use#pd-google Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 18:38 GMT Public Domain, Google-digitized I have seen the papers, and Burdon's poem. <sup>1</sup> It is certainly admirable as an architectural poem; but do not let *me* be considered *envious* when I say, that it appears to me to want energy, since the very idea of my being able to write like it is eminently ludicrous. I wonder whether B— is a fool or a hypocrite; he *must* be the latter.

Have you read "The Missionary"? It is a beautiful thing. It is here, and I could not help reading it again; or do you not read novels? Adieu!

Your sincere Friend.

#### 72. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

CWM ELAN, RHAYADER,
[No date. ? July 30, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Only two hours elapse between the exit and entrance of the post. Your letter to me was sent to my mother, who is very much interested in you.

I have at this moment no money, as Philipps's and the other debt have drained me; you will see me when I can get some. Although I am not so degraded as to talk to you of pecuniary obligations, yet is it not almost too bad

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Apparently the Oxford Prize-poem by Richard Burdon, of Oriel College, entitled "Parthenon," 1811, which Shelley may have seen in some newspaper. It is reprinted in the collection of Prize Poems.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Philipps' debt. This has been thought to refer to the printer's account for the poems of Janetta Philipps. The debt may, however, have been for the printing of "Original Poetry by Victor and Cazire" and "The Necessity of Atheism," both of which were printed by C. and W. Phillips, of Worthing, although the above spelling of the name is that of the poetess and not of the printers. On the other hand, the sale of the 525 copies to the persons named in the list of subscribers must have well covered the cost of printing the volume. Stockdale, the publisher of the "Original Poetry," says in his *Budget* with reference to the account for printing this book, "I know it was paid."

to subsist on you? No! I must stay here for a short time, because to contend against impossibilities may do for a lover, but will not for a mortal.

In the meantime, believe that I am not inattentive to my own interests. As things have been so quiet, I rather acquiesce in your opinion, that artifice may have been resorted to. As I returned no answer, my indiscretion, of which I have given two or three specimens, cannot either substantiate or annihilate his guesses.

I am all solitude, as I cannot call the society here an alternative of it. I must stay here, however, to recruit my finances, compelled now to acknowledge poverty an evil.

Your jokes on Harriet Westbrook amuse me: it is a common error for people to fancy others in their own situation, but if I know anything about love, I am *not* in love. I have heard from the Westbrooks, both of whom I highly esteem.

Adieu! I am going to ride with Mrs. Grove to Rhayader. I will write on Thursday.

Yours sincerely.

# 73. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

RHAYADER, [No date, ? August 1, 1811.]

My DEAREST FRIEND,

I do not accuse you of temporizing, or if I did, I retract that accusation. I have not read "Adeline," but shall, as soon as I can get it. Here one is as remote from the communications of friendship as the business of stupidity; it is a very high price to pay for the exemption from the latter, for which reason, it is my intention, as soon as financial strength will permit me to evacuate these solitudes to come to York.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See footnote, p. 116.

When I come, I will not come under my own name, it were to irritate my father needlessly; this is entirely a philautian argument, but without the stream, of which he is the fountain head, I could not get on. We must live, if we intend to live; that is, we must eat, drink, and sleep, and money is the necessary procurer of these things.

Your letter was sent to my mother last post-day; she feels a warm interest in you, as every woman must, and I am well assured that she will do nothing prejudicial to our interests. She is a good, worthy, woman; and although she may in some cases resemble the fish and pheasant ladies, honoured with your animadversions of this morning, yet there is one altitude which they have attained, to which, I think, she cannot soar—Intolerance. I have heard frequently from her since my arrival here; she is of opinion that my father could not, by ordinary means have become acquainted with the proposed visit. I regard the whole as a finesse, to which I had supposed the Honourable Member's head-piece unequal. But the servants may—No, they do not even know your name.

I have heard from my sister since I came here; but her letter merely contains an account of a thunderstorm, which demolished a cottage of my father's. I will not, therefore, send it you. Adieu! Each post-day, till we meet, will carry a letter.

Yours sincerely.

The progress of our novel is but slow; however, I have written one more letter; it is for you to answer it:

"I find you still obstinate in what I call your error, as I am in what you must consider a damnable heterodoxy.

¹ In Shelley's letter to Hogg (May 15, 1811, p. 77) he alludes to a suggestion of Hogg's, apparently for a joint "composition or mélange." From the above reference and specimen letter that follows, it would seem that the work was already in progress, and had taken the form of a novel, in a series of letters written by Shelley and Hogg, dealing with subjects actually under discussion by the two friends. I can find no other allusions to this work in Shelley's correspondence.

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I am truly surprised! The peep at church cannot have influenced you one way or the other; but it may; for it is the only sensual intelligence that you have received of this fair one. I cannot call it intellectual, as even in the short view of her face which you had, you cannot pretend to guess her moral qualities; unless you intend to support, that the countenance is the index of the soul, which I cannot suppose you admit. Will you now, coolly, if possible, dispassionately, examine your own soul, and that which now seems almost necessarily annexed to its essence, your love for Sophia. Trace the grounds on which you love her, the origin of this passion; the things which strengthened, and the things which have weakened it. If you will do this, without either ridiculing my difference of opinion from yours, or employing any kind of declamation, overslurring or sophistry, you will then, perhaps, convince me of what you regard as truth founded on proofs of resistless cogency, or, you will come to a knowledge of the incorrectness of your own ideas. of these is to be desired, since, if you, or I, be wrong, this error, wherever it lies, will necessarily terminate in disappointment."

# 74. JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE (41 Pall Mall, London)

Cwm Elan, Rhayader, Radnorshire,
August 1, 1811.

SIR.

Your letter has at length reached me: the remoteness of my present situation must apologize for my apparent neglect. I am sorry to say, in answer to your requisition, that the state of my finances renders immediate payment perfectly impossible. It is my intention at the earliest

period in my power to do so, to discharge your account. I am aware of the imprudence of publishing a book so ill-digested as "St. Irvyne," but are there no expectations of its sale? My studies have, since my writing it, been of a more serious nature. I am at present engaged in completing a series of moral and metaphysical essays—perhaps their copyright would be accepted in lieu of part of my debt?

Sir, I have the honour to be Your very humble servant, PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside], Mr. J. J. STOCKDALE, 41 Pall Mall, London.

## 75. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

[Postmark, Rhayader.]
[No date; probably about August 3, 1811.]

#### MY DEAR FRIEND.

You will perhaps see me before you can answer this; perhaps not; Heaven knows! I shall certainly come to York, but *Harriet Westbrook* will decide whether now or in three weeks. Her father has persecuted her in a most horrible way, by endeavouring to compel her to go to school. She asked my advice: resistance was the answer, at the

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With regard to this account, Stockdale, writing in his Budget, in 1827, testifies to Shelley's "honour and rectitude, and my conviction that he would vegetate, rather than live, to effect the discharge of every honest claim upon him. I will now repeat," he adds, "that such opinion has not been shaken, although I have never received, directly or indirectly, one farthing of my just claims, which, principal and interest together, cannot be less than £300." Poor Stockdale does not seem to have been captivated by the suggestion of "a series of moral and metaphysical essays," but he attempted to realise something from the unsold copies of "St. Irvyne" in 1822, by binding them up with a new title-page bearing that date.

same time that I essayed to mollify Mr. W[estbrook] in vain! And in consequence of my advice she has thrown herself upon my protection.

I set off for London on Monday. How flattering a distinction!—I am thinking of ten million things at once.

What have I said? I declare, quite *ludicrous*. I advised her to resist. She wrote to say that resistance was useless, but that she would fly with me, and threw herself upon my protection. We shall have £200 a year: when we find it run short, we must live, I suppose, upon love! Gratitude and admiration all demand that I should love her *for ever*. We shall see you at York. I will hear your arguments for matrimonialism, by which I am now almost convinced. I can get lodgings at York, I suppose. Direct to me at Graham's, 18 Sackville Street, Piccadilly.

Your inclosure of £10 has arrived; I am now indebted to you £30. In spite of philosophy, I am rather ashamed of this unceremonious exsiccation of your financial river. But, indeed, my dear friend, the gratitude which I owe you for your society and attachment ought so far to overbalance this consideration as to leave me nothing but that. I must, however, pay you when I can.

I suspect that the strain is gone for ever. 3 This letter

\* See p. 67.

¹ Professor Dowden says ("Life of Shelley," Vol. I, page 174), "the 'ludicrous thing' is that Harriet should have chosen as a protector a youth of nineteen, expelled from College, estranged in some degree from his family, and at the present moment in want of money."

In a letter from Shelley's cousin, Charles H. Grove, printed in Hogg's "Life of Shelley" (Vol. II, p. 534), he says "whilst on the visit [to Cwm Elan] his [Shelley's] continued correspondence with Miss W[estbrook] led to his return to London, and subsequent elopement with her. He corresponded with me, also, during that period, and wrote me a letter concerning what he termed his summons to link his fate with another [in his despair, it would seem, at having lost the love of his cousin, Harriet Grove], closing his communication thus [adapting the words of Macbeth]—

<sup>&</sup>quot;Hear it not, Percy, for it is a knell, Which summons thee to heaven or to hell!"

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will convince you that I am not under the influence of a strain.

I am thinking at once of ten million things. I shall come to live near you, as Mr. Peyton.

Ever your most faithful friend,

P. B. S.

I shall be at 18 Sackville Street; at least direct there. Do not send more cash; I shall raise supplies in London.

## 76. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

London, Aug[ust] 10, 1811.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I understand that there is a letter for me at Cwm Elan. I have not received it. Particular business has occasioned my sudden return. I shall be at Field Place to-morrow, and shall possibly see you before September.

My engagements have hindered much devotion of time to a consideration of the subject of our discussion. I here see palaces the thirtieth part of which would bless with every requisite of habitation their pampered owners . . . theatres converted from schools of morality into places for the inculcation of abandonment of every moral principle, whilst the haughty aristocrat, and the commercial monopolist. unite in sanctioning by example the depravities to which the importations of the latter give rise. All monopolies are bad. I do not, however, when condemning commercial aggrandizement, think it in the least necessary to panegyrize hereditary accumulation.—Both are flagrant encroachments on liberty, neither can be used as an antidote for the poison of the other. . . . We will suppose even the best aristocrat, yet look at our Noblemen: take the Court Calendar, hear even what the world, who judges favourably of grandeur, narrates concerning their actions. The very

encomia which it confers are insults to reason. . . . Take the best aristocrat. He monopolizes a large house, gold dishes, glittering dresses: his very servants are decked in magnificence. How does one monopoly differ from another,—that of the mean Duke from that of the mean pacer between the pillars of the exchange? Having once established the position that a state of equality (if attainable), were preferable to any other, I think that the unavoidable inference must induce us to confess the irrationality of aristocracy. . . . Intellectual inequality could never be obviated until moral perfection be attained: then all distinctions would be levelled.

Adieu.

[Addressed outside, letter torn],
Miss [HITCHENER],
[Hurstpier]point,
[Sus]sex.

## 77. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

[Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, No date. ? August 14, 1811].

MY DEAR FRIEND,

My arguments have been yours. They have been urged by the force of the gratitude which this occasion excited. But I yet remain in London; I remain embarrassed and melancholy. I am now dining at Grove's. Your letter has just been brought in; I cannot forbear just writing this. Your noble and exalted friendship, the prosecution of your happiness, can alone engross my impassioned interest. I never was so fit for calm argument, as now. This, I fear, more resembles exerted action than inspired passion. I shall take another opportunity to-morrow of answering your long, interesting, and conclusive letter of yesterday.

Your Friend,

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#### 78. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

LONDON,

August 15, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The late perplexing occurrence which called me to town, occupies my time, engrosses my thoughts. I shall tell you more of it when we meet, which I hope will be soon. It does not, however, so wholly occupy my thoughts, but that you and your interests still are predominant.

I have a rival in my sister's affections; do not tremble. for it is not one whom I have occasion to dread, if I fear merely those who are likely to be successful. His chances of success are equal to my own. He has the opportunity of frequently seeing and conversing with Elizabeth: yet his conversation is not such as is likely to produce any alteration in the resolve which she has taken, not to encourage his addresses. It is J[ohn] G[rove]; she knows him well, and has known him long. Charles [H. Grove] informed me of it, and I left London yesterday, though now returned purposely to converse with my sister on the subject. J[ohn] G[rove] is certainly not a favoured lover, nor ever will be. I thought she appeared rather chagrined at the intelligence: she fears that she will lose an entertaining acquaintance, who sometimes enlivens her solitude by his conversion into the more serious character of a lover. I do not think she will, as his attachment is that of a cool. unimpassioned selector of a companion for life. I do not think the better of my cousin for this unexpected affair.

I could tell you something, and will; you will then coincide with me. This, however, is an object of secondary importance. I know, from what I tell you, that others might be elevated by hope; but I would say to them—Beware; for although her rejection of the bare idea of G[rove] was full and unequivocal, I have no reason to suppose that it proceeded from any augmented leniency for another. I know how deep is the gulf of despair, and

I will not therefore increase any one's height; but must still think how unfortunate it is for any wooer that he ever heard her very name; he must long for the time when he will forget her, but which he now will say can never come!

I am now returned to London; direct to me as usual, at Graham's. My father is here, wondering, possibly, at my London business. He will be more surprised soon, possibly!

My unfortunate friend, Harriet, is yet undecided; not with respect to me, but herself. How much, my dear friend, have I to tell you! In my leisure moments for thought, which since I wrote have been few, I have considered the important point on which you reprobated my hasty decision. The ties of love and honour are doubtless of sufficient strength to bind congenial souls—they are doubtless indissoluble, but by the brutish force of power; they are delicate and satisfactory. Yet the arguments of impracticability, and what is even worse, the disproportionate sacrifice which the female is called upon to make—these arguments, which you have urged in a manner immediately irresistible, I cannot withstand. Not that I suppose it to be likely that I shall directly be called upon to evince my attachment to either theory. I am become a perfect convert to matrimony, not from temporizing, but from your arguments; nor, much as I wish to emulate your virtues and liken myself to you, do I regret the prejudices of anti-matrimonialism from your example or No. The one argument, which you have urged assertion. so often with so much energy: the sacrifice made by the woman, so disproportioned to any which the man can give, —this alone may exculpate me, were it a fault, from uninquiring submission to your superior intellect.

Write to Graham's: you will hear from me again soon. All that I have told you here is in confidence. Adieu!

Yours eternally affectionate,

Percy B. S.

## 79. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint),

[? LONDON],

August 19th, [1811].

#### MY DEAR MADAM,

Your letter yesterday disappointed me, not because it set me right in one of those trivial sacrifices to custom, which I am wont thro' their real unimportance to overlook, but because, in place of liberal ideas which have ever marked those characters of your mind which I have had an opportunity of observing, I noticed that you said: "Tho' you should have disregarded the real difference that exists between us." You remind me thus of a misfortune which I could never have obviated, not that the sturdiest aristocrat could suppose that a real difference subsisted between me, who am sprung from a race of rich men, and you whom talents and virtue have lifted from the obscurity of poverty. If there is any difference, surely the balance of real distinction would fall on your side.—You remind me of what I hate, despise and shudder at, what willingly I would not and the part from which I can emancipate myself in this detestable coil of primæval prejudice, that will I free myself from.—Have I not forsworn all this? am I not a worshipper of equality? it was the custom even with the Jews never to insult the Gods of other nations, why then do you put a sarcasm so galling upon the object of my adoration? Let us consider. . . . In a former letter you say that "Nature has decidedly distinguished degrees among a degenerate race." Admit for a moment that the composition of soul varies in every recipient, still Nature must have been blind to give a kingdom to a fool, a dukedom to a sensualist, an empire to a tyrant. If she thus distinguishes degrees, how does the wildest anarchy differ from Nature's law? or rather how are they not by this account synonymous?—Again: Soul may be proved to be, not that which changes its first principles in every new recipient, but an elementary essence, an essence of first

principles which bears the mark of casual [or] of intended impressions. For instance... the non-existence innate ideas is proved by Locke; he challenges any one to find an idea which is innate. This is conclusive. If no ideas are innate, then all ideas must take their origin subsequent to the transfusion of the soul. In consequence of this indisputable truth, intellect varies but in the impressions with which casuality or inattention has marked it. Where is now Nature, distinguishing degrees? or rather do you not see that Art has assumed that office, even in the gifts of the mind? I see the impropriety of dining with you—even of calling upon you. I shall not willingly, however, give up the friendship and correspondence of one whom however superior to me my arrogance calls an equal.

Adieu. Yours most sincerely,

PERCY S.

Excuse the haste in which I write this.

[Addressed outside],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Sussex.

## 80. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York),

[York],

[August 25, 1811.]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Direct to the Edinburgh Post-Office—my own name. I passed to-night with the Mail. Harriet is with me. We are in a slight pecuniary distress. We shall have seventy-five pounds on Sunday [September 1], until when can you send £10? Divide it in two. 1

Yours,

PERCY SHELLEY.

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;When Bysshe finally came to town to elope with Miss W[estbrook]," says Charles H. Grove in the letter quoted in the

note on p. 130, "he came as usual, to Lincoln's Inn Fields, and I was his companion on his visits to her, and finally accompanied them early one morning,—I forget now the month, or the date, but it might have been September,—in a hackney-coach to the 'Green Dragon' in Gracechurch Street, where we remained all day, till the hour when the mail-coaches start, when they departed in the northern mail for York." Prof. Dowden points out that Shelley left London in the evening either of Saturday, August 24, or Sunday, August 25, and the place of departure, it would seem from Cary's "Travelling Companion," was probably not the "Green Dragon," as stated above, but the "Bull and Mouth," in Bull and Mouth Street. The sum of £75, which Shelley expected to receive on September 1, would evidently be the quarterly allowance of £50 from his father (which, of course, never reached him), and the rest of the amount from another source

-perhaps a loan from Mr. Medwin, or Captain Pilfold.

Shelley at once took the preliminary steps for his marriage with Harriet, but no actual proof has as yet been established that such a marriage was legalized. A writer in Chambers' Journal for March 31, 1900, throws some important light on Shelley's so-called Edinburgh marriage. He says, "In regard to a public or regular Scotch marriage at that time two requisites were necessary: first, due proclamation of banns, and, secondly, celebration by a minister of religion. Shelley may have taken the first step in a regular marriage, but it is plain he did not go further. By Act 8, Assembly 1784, session clerks were prohibited from proclaiming parties until the leave of the minister had been obtained. Further, they could not proclaim banns until the parties had resided six weeks in the parish; otherwise they had to be proclaimed in the church of the parish where their ordinary residence was. If the session clerk did not know that they had been resident for six weeks in the parish, or that they were unmarried, and not within the forbidden degrees, they were required to bring a certificate signed by two householders and an elder." Such a certificate, evidently falsified, was discovered by Mr. James G. Ferguson, city session clerk at Edinburgh, among the city archives. The document, which is contained in a register of certificates for the proclamation of banns of marriage "of soldiers, carters, smiths, and labourers," is as follows: August. Mr. Percy Bysshe Shelley, Farmer, Sussex, and Miss Harreit [sic] Westbrook, St. Andrew's Parish, Daughter of Mr. John Westbrook, London. That the parties are free unmaried [sic], of legal age, not within the forbidden Degrees, and she has resided in Edinburgh upwards of Six Weeks is certified by Mr. Patrick Murray, Teacher, and Mr. Wm. Cumming, Hostler, both of Edinburgh, and the Bridegroom. Entd. (signed by) Percy Bysshe Willm. Cumming. Patr. Murray." This certificate was afterwards entered in the books of the Register House, Edinburgh: "August 28, 1811. Percy Bysshe Shelley, farmer, Sussex, and Miss Harriet Westbrook, St. Andrew's Church Parish, daughter of Mr. John Westbrook, London." The writer quoted above, adds, "Banns had to be proclaimed on three successive Sundays. Under this condition, 16th September was the earliest date on which the

poet might have had the blessing of the Church. A case before the law-courts in 1825 shows that the law in this matter was loosely observed; and the Court of Session then declared to be clandestine a marriage following on a certificate of banns which had been issued by a parish clerk without any proclamation ever having been made, as was frequently the practice. This last may have been the mode of procedure in Shelley's case, and it seems unlikely that any marriage ceremony was ever performed. It is also more than probable that the certificate of proclamation which the clerk would issue to Shelley was the 'marriage lines' which Harriet sent to her father." Although such a marriage was a clandestine one, it might, by the Scottish law, be legally binding. As Prof. Dowden says, "The united ages of bride and bridegroom made thirty-five." The young couple took apartments on the ground floor of a newlybuilt house in George Street, where Hogg shortly afterwards joined They left Edinburgh, probably at the end of September or the beginning of October by post-chaise for York; Hogg says "the end of October," which cannot be correct, from the date of the next letter.

Although I have not succeeded in obtaining any of Shelley's letters from Edinburgh, it is evident that he must have written many from that city. Hogg tells us that on the day of his arrival at Edinburgh, he ascended Arthur's Seat with Harriet, while Bysshe went home to write letters; and that "Shelley went every morning himself, before breakfast, to the post-office for his letters, of which he received a prodigious number." He also states "At Edinburgh, as elsewhere, Bysshe received many letters. His uncle, Captain Pilfold, was the most useful of his correspondents at this time, for not only did he write cheerful, friendly, hearty letters, some of which I read, but he kindly supplied his peccant nephew with money. The cloud-compelling son of Sir Bysshe was fulminating and furious, darting his franked lightnings on all sides. His letter to my father is a good specimen of a mild thunderbolt: 'To John Hogg. Norton—Field Place, 8 September, 1811. Dear Sir,—I wrote to you in London by advice of a gentleman in the law, who I had advised with respecting my son having withdrawn himself from my protection, and set off for Scotland with a young female, though at that time it was conjectured he might make York in his way. This morning I have a letter from a gentleman [? Captain Pilfold] who had heard from him, that he was at Edinburgh, and that H[ogg] had joined him there. I think it right to give you the information, as from one parent to another, both of whom have experienced so much affliction and anxiety. God only knows what can be the end of all this disobedience. I am, Sir, Your very obedient servant, T. Shelley.'"—" Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 439, 444, 465.

#### 81. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

YORK. MISS DANCER'S, CONEY STREET.<sup>1</sup>
[8 October, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND.

May I still call you so, or have I forfeited by the equivocality of my conduct the esteem of the wise and virtuous? have I disgraced the professions of that virtue which has been the idol of my love whose votaries have been the brothers and sisters of my soul? When last I saw you I was about to enter into the profession of physic.<sup>2</sup> I told you so, I represented my views as unembarrassed; myself at liberty to experiment upon morality, uninfluenced by the possibility of giving pain to others. You will know that my relational connexions were such as could have no hold but that of consanguinity: how weak this is may be referred to the bare feeling to explain. . . . I saw you. . . . in one short week how changed were all my prospects . . . how are we the slaves of circumstances—how bitterly I curse their bondage. Yet this was unavoidable. You will enquire how I, an Atheist, chose to subject myself to the ceremony of marriage,—how my conscience could consent to it . . . this is all I am now anxious of elucidating. Why I united myself thus to a female as it is not in itself immoral, can make no part in diminution of my rectitude . . . this, If misconceived, may. I am indifferent to reputation, all are not. Reputation and its consequent advantages are rights to which every individual may lay claim, unless he has justly forfeited them by an immoral action. . . . Political rights also, which justly appertain equally to each, ought only to be forfeited by immorality. Yet both of these must be dispensed with if two people live together without

The Shelleys' lodgings at York were at a dismal and povertystricken house, the dingy dwelling of certain dingy old milliners. —Hogg's "Life of Shelley." Vol. I, pp. 470-1.

—Hogg's "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 470-1.

2 Charles H. Grove says that when Shelley came to London in April, 1811, after his expulsion from Oxford, he [Grove] was attending Mr. Abernethy's anatomical lectures. The thought of anatomy, especially after a few conversations with my brother

having undergone the ceremony of marriage. How unjust this is! Certainly it is not inconsistent with morality to evade these evils. How useless to attempt by singular examples to renovate the face of society, until reasoning has made so comprehensive a change as to emancipate the experimentalist from the resulting evils, and the prejudice with which his opinion (which ought to have weight, for the sake of virtue) would be heard by the immense majority !— These are my reasons. Will you write to me? Shall we proceed in our discussions of nature and morality? more . . . will you be my friend, may I be yours? The shadow of worldly impropriety is effaced by my situation, our strictest intercourse would excite none of those disgusting remarks with which females of the present day think right to load the friendships of opposite sexes. would be transgressed by your even living with us. Could you not pay me a visit? My dear friend Hogg, that noble being, is with me, and will be always, but my wife will abstract from our intercourse the shadow of impropriety. How happy should I be to see you. need to tell you this, and my happiness is not so great that it becomes a friend to be sparing in that society which constitutes its only charm. I will close this letter. I have enough to say, but will wait for your answer until I write Your great friend, again.

.[Addressed outside],

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Sussex.

[Postmark], 10, 1811. York.

#### 82. To Elizabeth Hitchener

York,

[10] October, 1811.

P. B. SHELLEY.

I write to-day, because not to answer such a letter as yours instantly, eagerly—I will add, gratefully—were

[John Grove], became quite delightful to Bysshe, and he attended a course with me, and sometimes went also to St. Bartholomew's Hospital."—Hogg's "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 552.

impossible, but I shall be at Cuckfield on Friday night. My dearest friend (for I will call you so), you who understand my motives to action, which, I flatter myself, unisonize with your own, you, who can contemn the world's prejudices, whose views are mine, I will dare to say I love: nor do I risk the possibility of that degrading and contemptible interpretation of this sacred word, nor do I risk the supposition that the lump of organized matter which enshrines thy soul excites the love which that soul alone dare claim. . . . Henceforth will I be yours—yours with truth, sincerity and unreserve. Not a thought shall arise which shall not seek its responsion in your bosom, not a motive of action shall be unenwafted by your cooler reason: and, by so doing, do I not choose a criterion more infallible than my own consciousness of right and wrong (tho' this may not be required)? for what conflict of a frank mind is more terrible than the balance between two opposing importances of morality? This is surely the only wretchedness to which a mind who only acknowledges virtue its master can feel. I leave York to-night for Cuckfield. where I shall arrive on Friday. 1 That mistaken man, my father, has refused us money, and commanded that our names should never be mentioned. . . . Sophisticated by falsehood as society is I had thought that this blind resentment had long been banished to the regions of dullness, comedies and farces, or was used merely to augment the difficulties, and consequently the attachment of the hero and heroine of a modern novel. I have written frequently to this thoughtless man, and am now determined to visit him, in order to try the force of truth, tho' I must confess

¹ Apparently October 11, which was a Friday. Hogg says that "the next morning" [after Shelley's arrival at York] "Bysshe announced that he must go to London that night by the mail, to see Whitton (his father's solicitor), and that he "departed as he resolved to do." During Shelley's absence, Harriet's sister, Eliza Westbrook, arrived. ("Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 473, 475.) It was natural, too, that Shelley should seek the help of his uncle, Captain Pilfold, at Cuckfield, in his attempts to make terms with his father.

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I consider it nearly as hyperbolical as "music rending the knotted oak." Some philosophers have ascribed indefiniteness to the powers of intellect; but I question whether it ever would make an ink-stand capable of free-agency. Is this too severe? but, you know, I, like the God of the Jews, set myself up as no respecter of persons, and relationship is considered by me as bearing that relation to reason which a band of straw does to fire. I love you more than any relation; I profess you are the sister of my soul, its dearest sister, and I think the component parts of that soul must undergo complete dissolution before its sympathies can perish.

Some Philosophers have taken a world of pains to persuade us that congeniality is but romance. . . certainly reason can never either account for, or prove the truth of, feeling. . . . I have considered it in every possible light; and reason tells me that death is the boundary of the life of man, yet I feel, I believe the direct contrary. . . . senses are the only inlets of knowledge, and there is an inward sense that has persuaded me of this. How I digress, how does one reasoning lead to another, involving a chain of endless considerations! Certainly, everything is connected, both in the moral and physical world there is a train of events, and (tho' not likely) it is impossible to deny, but that the turn which my mind has taken originated from the conquest of England by William of Normandy. By the bye, I have something to talk to you of-Money. . . . I covet it.— "What you? you a miser, you desire gold, you a slave to the most contemptible of ambitions!" No, I am not; but I still desire money, and I desire it because It commands labor, it gives I think I know the use of it. leisure, and to give leisure to those who will employ it in the forwarding of truth is the noblest present an individual can make to the whole. I will open to you my views . . . on my coming to the estate which, worldly considered is mine, but which actually I have not more, perhaps not so great a right to, as you, justice demands that it should be

shared between my sisters? Does it, or does it not? Mankind are as much my brethren and sisters as they: all ought to share. This cannot be; it must be confined. But thou art a sister of my soul, he is its brother: surely these have a right. Consider this subject, write to me on Divest yourself of individuality: dare to place self at a distance which I know you can, spurn those bugbears gratitude, obligation, and modesty . . . the world calls these "virtues," they are well enough for the world. It wants a chain, it hath forged one for itself, but with the sister of my soul I have no obligation, to her I feel no gratitude, I stand not on etiquette, alias insincerity. The ideas excited by these words are varying, frequently. unjust, always selfish. Love in the sense in which we understand it, needs not these succedanea. Consider the questions which I have proposed to you. I know you are above that pretended confession of your own imbecility which the world has nicknamed modesty, and you must be conscious of your own high worth. To underrate your powers is an evil of greater magnitude than the contrary, the former benumbs, whilst the latter excites to action. My friend Hogg and myself consider our property as common, that the day will arrive when we shall do the same is the wish of my soul, whose consummation I most eagerly anticipate.

My uncle is a most generous fellow, had he not assisted us, we should still [have] been chained to the filth and commerce of Edinburgh. Vile as aristocracy is, commerce—purse-proud ignorance and illiterateness—is more contemptible. . . . I still see Religion to be immoral. When I contemplate these gigantic piles of superstition—when I consider too the leisure for the exercise of mind. which the labour which erected them annihilated—I set them down as so many retardations of the period when truth becomes omnipotent. Every useless ornament, the pillars, the iron railings, the juttings of wainscot, and as Southey says, the cleaning of grates—are all exertions of bodily

Oct. 12

labor which tho' trivial, separately considered, when united, destroy a vast proportion of this invaluable leisure. . . . How many things could we do without! How unnecessary are mahogany tables, silver vases, myriads of viands and liquors, expensive printing, that, worst of all. Look even [around some] little habitation,—the dirtiest cottage, which [exhibits] myriads of instances where ornament is sacrificed to cleanliness or leisure. Whither do I wander? Certainly I wish to prove, by my own proper prowess, that the chain The letter at Field Place has been which I spoke of is real. opened and read, exposed to all the remarks of impertinence. not that they understood it. Henceforth I shall have no secrets for [? from] you; and indeed I have much then to tell you—wonderful changes! Direct to me at the Captain's until you hear again, but I only stay two days in Sussex, but I shall see you.

Sister of my soul, adieu.

With, I hope, eternal love, Your

PERCY SHELLEY.

#### 83. To Elizabeth Hitchener

Cuckfield, [Saturday, 12 October, 1811?]

I do not know that I shall have time to see you my dear friend whilst in Sussex, on Monday or Tuesday I must return. The intervening periods will be employed in the hateful task of combating prejudice and mistake. Yet our souls can meet, for these become embodied on paper, all else is even emptier than the breath of fame. . . . I omitted mentioning something in my last: 'tis of your visiting us. You say that at some remote period, etc. What is this remote period? when will it arrive? The term is indefinite and friendship cannot be satisfied with this. I do not mean to-day, to-morrow, or this week, but

the time approaches when you need not attend the business of the school, then you have your own choice to make of the place of your intermediate residence. . . . If that choice were in favour of me. . . . I shall come to live in this county. My friend Hogg, Harriet, my new sister, . . . could but be added to these the sister of my soul, that I cannot hope: but still she may visit us.

I have long been convinced of the eventual omnipotence of mind over matter: adequacy of motive is sufficient to anything, and my golden age is when the present potence will become omnipotence: this will be the millennium of Christians, when "the lion shall lie down with the lamb," tho' neither will it be accomplished to complete a prophecy. or by the intervention of a miracle. This has been the favourite idea of all religions, the thesis on which the impassioned and benevolent have delighted to dwell. it not be the task of human reason, human powers,—whose progression in improvement has been so great since the remotest tradition, tracing general history to the point where now we stand? The series is infinite—can never Now you will laugh at what I am about to tell end. . . . you. Whence think [you] this reasoning has arisen? Just [conceive] its possible origin! Never [could] you have [conceived] that three days on the outside of a coach caused it. [Yet] so it is. I am now at Cuckfield; I arrived this morning; and, tho' three nights without sleep, I feel now neither sleepy nor fatigued. This is adequacy of motive. During my journey I had the proposed end in view of accumulating money to myself for the motives which I stated in my last letter. I know I have something more to tell you—I forget what. The Captain is talking. . . . I must settle my plan of attack for to-morrow.

Adieu, my dear friend.

Your Percy S.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The letter is torn; the words in square brackets were supplied by Mr. T. J. Wise.

10—(2285)

I am happy to hear what I have just heard. You are to come to dine here, and bring Emma on Monday 21st, in the coach.

[Addressed outside],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Sussex.

## 84. To Thomas Charles Medwin (Horsham)

CUCKFIELD,

Oct.[ober] 21, 1811.

DEAR SIR.

I understand that to obviate future difficulties, I ought now to make marriage-settlements. I entrust this to your management, if you will be kind enough to take the matter in hand. In the course of three weeks or a month, I shall take the precaution of being re-married, before which I believe these adjustments will be necessary. I wish the sum settled on my wife in case of my death to be £700 per annum. The maiden name is Harriett Westbrook, with two T's—Harriett.

Will you be so kind as to address me at Mr. Westbrook's, 23 Chapel Street, Grosvenor-square? We most probably go to London to-morrow. We shall see Whitton, when I shall neither forget your good advice, nor cease to be grateful for it.

With kind remembrances to your family,

Yours most gratefully,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley did re-marry Harriet, but not until March 24, 1814. See p. 416.

1

## 85. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint).

Mr. Stricklands, Blake St., York.<sup>1</sup>
[26 October, 1811?]

It is no "generosity": it is justice—bare, simple justice. Oh to what a state must poor human nature have arrived when simply to do our duty merits praise. . . . Let us delight in the anticipation (though it may not be our lot to breathe that air of Paradise) that the time will arrive when all that now is called generosity will be simply barely duty. . . . But you shall not refuse it. Private feelings must not be gratified at the expense of public benefit by your refusal: deeply would the latter suffer. I know you speak from conviction, nor except from conviction should I allow you to act as far as concerns me. It is impossible that you should do otherwise. Yet I hope to produce that conviction. You cannot be convinced—quite convinced. It is impossible that any one should thoroughly know themselves, particularly in an instance like this where self-deceit is so likely to creep in from the contagious sophistications of society, and, assuming the garb of virtue, represent itself to you as its substance.—I know you to be superior to that mock modesty of self-depreciation . . . this therefore has no weight.—See yourself, then as you are. I esteem you more than I esteem myself . . . am I not right therefore of giving you at least equal opportunities of conferring on mankind the benefits of that which has excited this esteem? You may then share your possessions with that friend whom I ardently long to know and to love, but who must receive the tribute of gratitude from you, tho' if she has made you what you are, what claims may not just retribution make upon me in her behalf?

When Shelley returned to York from his visit to Cuckfield he changed his lodgings.—Hogg's "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 9.

I have thus said what I think, at least two years before I can accomplish the projects which I have to execute. "It is the mere prodigality of promise," would the slave of others' opinion exclaim, "never to be executed, two months will dissipate the sickly ravings . . . it demands two years of uniform opinion!" Let them thus rave, 'tis their element, but, whilst the sister of my soul, the friend of my heart, knows its unchangeableness, how futile are these gnat-bites. But it is necessary that the world should not know this: to preserve in some measure the good opinion of prejudice is necessary to its destruction. This must be the most secret of communications. Thine are most sacredly secret to me.—But the time you lose in thus acquiring money for the noblest of human purposes would be saved by your acceptance of my offer. There are two years, however, to argue this subject in. We have now begun; I am convinced that I shall conquer.

When may I see the woman who indeed deserves my love if she was thy instructress? let not the period be very distant. I already reverence her as a Mother. How useful are such characters! how they propagate intellect, and add to the list of the virtuous and free! Every error conquered, every mind enlightened, is so much added to the progression of human perfectibility. Sure such as you then, ought to possess the amplest leisure for a task to the completion of which each of those excellencies which excite my love for you are [? is] so adapted. Believe that I do not flatter, suspect me not of rash judgment. My judgment of you has been unimpassioned; tho' now unimpassionateness is over, and I could not believe you other than the being I have hitherto considered as enshrined in the identity of Elizabeth Hitchener. I hesitate not a moment to write to you. Rare though it be in this existence communion with you can unite mental benefit with

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Miss Hitchener's schoolmistress and friend to whom she had referred in one of her letters to Shelley.

pure gratification. I will explain however the circumstances which caused my marriage . . . these must certainly have caused much conjecture in your mind. Some time ago when my sister 1 was at Mrs. Fenning's school, she contracted an intimacy with Harriet.—At that period I attentively watched over my sister, designing, if possible, to add her to the list of the good, the disinterested, the free. I desired therefore to investigate Harriet's character: for which purpose I called on her, requested to correspond with her, designing that her advancement should keep pace with, and possibly accelerate, that of my sister. Her ready and frank acceptance of my proposal pleased me. and, tho' with ideas the remotest to those which have led to this conclusion of our intimacy, [I] continued to correspond with her for some time. The frequency of her letters became greater during my stay in Wales, I answered them; they became interesting. They contained complaints of the irrational conduct of her relations, and the misery of living where she could love no one. Suicide was with her a favourite theme, her total uselessness was urged in its defence. This I admitted, supposing she could prove her inutility, [and that she] was powerless. letters became more and more [gloomy]. At length one assumed a tone of such despair as induced me to quit Wales precipitately.—I arrived in London. I was shocked at observing the alteration of her looks. Little did I divine its cause; she had become violently attached to me, and feared that I should not return her attachment. Prejudice made the confession painful. It was impossible to avoid being much affected. I promised to unite my fate with hers. I staid in London several days, during which she

<sup>1</sup> Mary Shelley. See note p. 39.

<sup>\*</sup> Hogg remarks that Harriet was always dwelling on the subject of suicide. "Early in our acquaintance," he says, "the good Harriet asked me, 'What do you think of suicide?'" She would at times seem to have been almost obsessed with the idea of self-destruction.

recovered her spirits. I had promised at her bidding to come again to London. They endeavoured to compel her to return to a school where malice and pride embittered every hour; she wrote to me. I came to London. I proposed marriage, for the reasons which I have given you, and she complied.—Blame me if thou wilt, dearest friend, for still thou art dearest to me: yet pity even this error if thou blamest me. If Harriet be not, at sixteen, all that you are at a more advanced age, assist me to mould a really noble soul into all that can make its nobleness useful and lovely. Lovely it is now, or I am the weakest slave of error. Adieu to this subject until I hear again from you.—Write soon, in pity to my suspense.—We did not call on Whitton as we passed.—We find he means absolutely nothing: he talks of disrespect, duty, etc. I observed that you were much shocked at my mother's depravity. 1 I have heard some reasons (and as mere reasons they are satisfactory) that there is no such thing as moral depravity. But it does not prove the non-existence of a thing that it is not discoverable by reason; feeling here affords us sufficient proof. I pity those who have not this demonstration, tho' I can scarce believe that such exist. Those who really feel the being of a God, have the best right to believe it. They may, indeed, pity those who do not; they may pity me but until I feel it I must be content with the substitute, Reason.—Here is a letter!—well, answer some of it, though I allow 'tis terribly long.

Southey has published something new—"The Bridal of

¹ It is not clear what Shelley means by his mother's depravity. She must have disapproved of her son's rather dubious marriage, and having hitherto been his ally, she would most probably have resented its clandestine nature in strong terms. One cannot place much reliance on Medwin's story (told in his "Life of Shelley") of, on some occasion when Shelley was visiting Field Place, in the absence of his father on his Parliamentary duties, his mother attempted to obtain his signature to a document by a simulated display of affection, and that he, detecting the ruse, declined to sign the paper.

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Ferrandez: "1 have you seen it? Have you read "St. Leon" or "Caleb Williams"?

Adieu, dear Friend. Believe me Ever yours sincerely, PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Have you heard anything of Captain P[ilfold's] proceedings at F[ield] P[lace]? 8—I have more to say, but no more room, so adieu.

[Addressed outside]. Single sheet,
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Sussex.

## 86. To Charles, Duke of Norfolk (London)

Mr. Strickland's, Blake Street, York.
October 28, 1811.

MY LORD DUKE,

As I experienced from you such an undeserved instance of friendly interposition in the spring, as I am well aware how much my father is influenced by the mediation of a third person, and as I know none to whom I could apply with greater hopes of success than to yourself, I take the liberty of soliciting the interference of your Grace with my father in my behalf. You have probably heard of my marriage. I am sorry to say that it has exasperated

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Southey's "Garci Ferrandez" is to be found in his collected poems, among the Ballads and Metrical tales, where it bears the date of Bristol, 1801.

<sup>\*</sup> Two novels by William Godwin, published respectively in 1799, and 1794.

<sup>\*</sup> See Timothy Shelley's letter to John Hogg quoted in the note on p. 138.

Prof. Dowden prints the following extract from an unpublished letter from Shelley to his cousin Henry Charles Grove, dated York, October 29, 1811. "I am much obliged to you for your advice respecting Monsieur le Duc. I have availed myself of it, and expect the most salutary effects."—"Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 201.

my father to a great degree, surely greater than is consistent with justice, for he has not only withheld the means of subsistence which his former conduct and my habits of life taught me to expect as reasonable and proper, but has even refused to render me any, the slightest assistance. He referred me on application to a Mr. Whitton, whose answers to my letters vaguely complained of the disrespectfulness of mine to my father. These letters were calculated to make his considerations of my proceedings less severe. My situation is consequently most unpleasant: under these circumstances I request your Grace to convince my father of the severity of his conduct, to persuade him that my offence is not of the heinous nature that he considers it, to induce him to allow me a sufficient income to live with tolerable comfort.

I am also particularly anxious to defend Mr. Medwin from any accusations of aiding and assisting me, which my father may bring against him. I am convinced that a statement of plain truth on this head will remove any prejudice against Mr. M. from the mind of your Grace. That he did lend me £52 when I left Field-place is most true. But it is equally true that he was ignorant of my intentions; that he was ignorant of the purposes to which I was about to apply the money; that he expressed his regret that he had unknowingly been instrumental in my schemes, and that he declined lending me an additional sum when he was aware of them.

I apologize for thus trespassing on your goodness, and conclude by expressing my hopes of your compliance with my request, of the consequent success, and of subscribing myself

Your Grace's

Very obliged hum[ble] ser[vant],

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF NORFOLK, St. James' Square, London, [Postmark], Oct. 30, 1811. . ::

#### IV. KESWICK

#### November 6, 1811—January 29, 1812

SHELLEY'S reason for leaving York—Hogg's treachery—Chestnut Cottage—Chemical experiments—Visit to the Duke of Norfolk—William Calvert—Shelley's "Werther" letter—Captain Pilfold—Robert Southey—James Montgomery—"Hubert Cauvin"—Mrs. Lovell—Correspondence with William Godwin—Preparations for the Irish Campaign—Shelley writes his "Address to the Irish People"—"The Devil's Walk"—Poems—Sir Bysshe.

#### 87. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

[TOWNHEAD.] KESWICK, Wednesday night. [? November 6, 1811.]

You were surprised at our sudden departure; I have no time, however, now, either to account for it or enter into the investigation which we agreed upon. I have arrived at this place after some days of incessant travelling,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley left York, according to Mr. D. F. MacCarthy ("Shelley's Early Life," p. 118), on Tuesday, October 29th. The date of this letter is probably November 6th, which was a Wednesday. Shelley, who stayed at Richmond on his way, may not have written to Hogg immediately on arriving at Keswick. The reason for his sudden departure, without taking leave of Hogg, is explained in the following letters to Miss Hitchener; Hogg implies that it was merely the result of caprice. He says he received eight letters from Shelley while he was at Keswick, none of which bore a date or postmark. We know that there was at least one more (No. 105), and from Shelley's allusions to his correspondence with Hogg at this time, in his letters to Miss Hitchener, it seems probable that Hogg suppressed entire letters, or at least passages of letters from those that he printed. In suiting his own ends Hogg never seems to have scrupled to alter any of Shelley's letters that he utilised in his life of the poet. See appendix. Absolute reliance, therefore, cannot be placed on any of these letters to Hogg, and least of all can one accept unreservedly those written to him from Keswick.

which has left me no leisure to write to you at length. To-morrow you will hear more.

With real, true interest, I constantly think of you, believe me, my friend, so sincerely am I attached to you. I can never forget you.

Yours, Percy S.

Will you send my box per coach to Mr. D. Crosthwaite's, <sup>1</sup> Town Head, Keswick, Cumberland.

#### 88. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

[Townhead, Keswick, ? November 8, 1811.]

My friend will be surprised to hear of me from Keswick in Cumberland: more so will she be astonished at the occasion. It is a thing that makes my blood run cold to think of. I almost lose my confidence in the power of truth, its unalterableness. Human nature appears so Even those in whom we place unlimited depraved. confidence, between whom and yourself suspicion never came, appear depraved as the rest. High powers appear but to present opportunities for occasioning superior misery. Can it be thus always? You know how I have described Hogg, my enthusiasm in his defence, my love for You know I have considered him but little below perfection. I have spoken to you of him—have described him not with the exaggerations but with the truth of friendship; I have resolved because I am your friend to make you the depository of a secret . . . it is to me a most terrible one. Hogg is a mistaken man—vilely, dreadfully mistaken. But you shall hear; then judge of the extent of the evil which I deplore . . . That he whom my fond expectations had pictured the champion of virtue, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Where the Shelleys lodged during their first days at the Lakes.

enemy of prejudice, should himself become the meanest slave of the most contemptible of prejudices, is indeed dreadful. But listen. How fast you read this, I fancy I behold you. You know I came to Sussex<sup>1</sup> to settle my affairs, and left Harriet at York under the protection of You know the implicit faith I had in him, the unalterableness of my attachment, the exalted thoughts I entertained of his excellence. Can you then conceive that he would have attempted to seduce my wife? that he should have chosen the very time for this attempt when I most confided in him, when least I doubted him?—Yet when did I ever doubt him?—yet my friend this is the case. And such an attempt . . . you may conceive his sophistry; you may conceive the energy of vice, for energy is inseparable from high powers; but never could you conceive. never having experienced it, that resistless and pathetic eloquence of his, never the illumination of that countenance. on which I have sometimes gazed till I fancied the world could be reformed by gazing too . . . you—you have never seen him, never heard him; or Harriet would have stood first in your regards as the heroic, or the unfeeling, who could have done other than as he directed. The latter she Conjecture, conceive friend how I love you, how firm my reliance is on your principles, how impossible to be shaken is my faith in your nobleness. Then, then imagine what I have felt at losing by so terrible a reverse, a friend like you—lost too not only to me but to the world! Virtue has lost one of its defenders, vice has gained a prose-The thought makes me shudder. But must it be thus, cannot I prevent it? cannot I reason with him? Is he dead, cold, gone, annihilated? None, none of these! therefore not irretrievable—not fallen like Lucifer, never to rise again! Before I quitted York, I spoke to him. Our conversation was long . . . he was silent, pale, overwhelmed, the suddenness of the disclosure, and oh I hope

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See p. 139.

its heinousness had affected him. I told him that I pardoned him freely, fully completely pardoned, that not the least anger against him possessed me. His vices and not himself were the objects of my horror and my hatred. I told him I yet ardently panted for his real welfare; but that ill-success in crime and misery appeared to me an earnest of its opposite in benevolence. I engaged him to promise to write to me. You can conjecture that my letters to him will be neither infrequent nor short. little time to-day, but I pay this short tribute to friendship. Never dearest friend may you experience a disappointment Write. I am at Mr. D. Crosthwaite's. so keen as mine. Townhead, Keswick, Cumberland. The scenery is awfully grand: it even affects me in such a time as this. write to me. I am in need of your sympathy. and her sister liked this part of the country; and I was, at the moment of our sudden departure, indifferent to all places. A letter I suppose is waiting for me at York. H[ogg] will forward them. Adieu, my almost only friend. Yours eternally, sincerely,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Sussex.
[Postmark], Nov. 11, 1811.

## 89. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

Post Office, Keswick, Cumberland; not Mr. D. Crosthwaite's.
[? November, 1811.]

I promised to write to you to-day, my dear friend, but again another day has elapsed in the occupation of preparing our residence, and night has come on, when the post leaves us.

We all greatly regret that "your own interests, your own real interests," should compel you to remain at present at York. But pray, write often; Your last letter I have read, as I would read your soul.

We remain at Keswick. We settle here, at least for some time. I will never go to the South again. Adieu.

Yours most affectionately, most unalterably,

Percy Shelley.

#### 90. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York).

KESWICK, CUMBERLAND.
[? November, 1811.]

Your letters are arrived. You did right in anticipating that Richmond was only a resting place, and *Keswick* is our residence, to which place I wish you could follow us immediately.

I stand alone. I feel that I am nothing: a speck in an universe!

All this is true: yet have I not been wretched, and was my wretchedness less keen, because it was undeserved? Was it undeserved? What is desert? Are you not he whom I love, whom I deem capable of exciting the emulation, and attracting the admiration of thousands. I have ever esteemed you as a superior being, and take you for one who was to give laws to us poor beings, who grovel beneath. We shall meet again soon; but I must live some little time, I fear, by myself; and if my firmness is not sufficient to bear pain without hope of reward, I know that soon we meet again.

Your letters are kind and sincere. I had no time when I wrote last. If I thought we were to be long parted, I should be wretchedly miserable—half mad! I look on Harriet: she is before me; she is somewhat better. Has she convinced you that she is?

Oh! what a spot is this! Here nature has exhausted

the profusion of her loveliness! Will you come; will you share my fortunes, enter into my schemes, love me as I love you, be inseparable, as once I fondly hoped we were?

This is not all past, like a dream of the sick man, which leaves but bitterness—a fleeting vision. Oh! how I have loved you! I was even ashamed to tell you how!

And now to leave you for a long time! No; not for a long time! Night comes; Death comes! Cold, calm Death. Almost I would it were to-morrow. There is another life—are you not to be the first there? Assuredly, dearest, dearest friend. Reason with me still; I am like a child in weakness.

Your letters came directly after dinner;—how could any one read them unmoved? Calm, wise; are you then with me, and I forbear wishing that Death would yawn.—Adieu!

Cannot you follow us?—why not? But I will dare to be good—dare to be virtuous; and I will soon seize once more what I have for a while relinquished, never, never again to resign it.

#### 91. To Elizabeth Hitchener

[CHESTNUT COTTAGE, KESWICK,<sup>1</sup>
November 12, 1811.]

Your letter of the 1st hath this moment reached me. I answer it according to our agreement, which shall be inviolable. Truly did you say that, at our arising in the morning, Nature assumes a different aspect. Who could

¹ In connection with Chestnut Cottage, Professor Dowden gives the following delightful anecdote in his "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 200: "The tenants of Chestnut Cottage may have appeared to some of the rural gentry little better than a pair of strayed children. 'Was the garden let with your part of the house?' asked a member of the Southey family. 'Oh, no,' replied Mrs. Shelley—a matron who was still almost a school-girl,—'The garden is not ours; but then you know, the people let us run about in it, whenever Percy and I are tired of sitting in the house.'"

have conjectured the circumstances of my last letter? Friend of my soul this is terrible, dismaying: it makes one's heart sink, it withers vital energy. Had a common man done so, 'twould have been but a common event, but a common mistake. Now! if for a moment the soul forgets (as at times it will) that it must enshrine the body for others, how beautiful does death appear, what a release from the crimes and miseries of mortality! To be condemned to feed on the garbage of grinding misery, that hungry hyæna mortal life!—But no I will not, I do not repine, dear being, I am thine again: thy happiness shall again predominate over this fleeting tribute of self-interest. Yet who would not feel now? O'twere as reckless a task to endeavour to annihilate perception while sense existed, as to blunt the sixth sense to such impressions as these. Forgive me, dearest friend! I pour out my whole soul to you. I write by fleeting intervals, my pen runs away with my senses. The impassionateness of my sensations grows upon me. Your letter, too, has much affected me. Never, with my consent, shall that intercourse cease which has been the day-dawn of my existence, the sun which has shed warmth on the cold drear length of the anticipated prospect of life. Prejudice might demand this sacrifice, but she is an idol to whom we bow not. The world might demand it; its opinion might require, but the cloud which fleets over you mountain were as important to our happiness, to our usefulness.—This must never be, never whilst this existence continues; and, when Time has enrolled us in the list of the departed, surely this one friendship will survive to bear our identity to heaven. What is love, or friendship? Is it something material—a ball, an apple, a plaything which must be taken from one to be given to another? Is it capable of no extension, no communication? Lord Kaimes defines love to be a particularization of the general passion, but this is the love of sensation, of sentiment the absurdest of absurd vanities, it is the love of pleasure,

not the love of happiness. The one is a love which is selfcentred, self-devoted, self-interested: it desires its own interest: it is the parent of jealousy. Its object is the plaything which it desires to monopolize. Selfishness, monopoly, is its very soul; and to communicate to others part of this love were to destroy its essence, to annihilate this chain of straw.—But Love, the Love which we worship, -Virtue, Heaven, disinterestedness-in a word. Friendship, which has as much to do with the senses as with yonder mountains, that which seeks the good of all, the good of its object first, not because that object is a minister to its pleasures, not merely because it even contributes to its happiness, but because it is really worthy, because it has powers, sensibilities, is capable of abstracting self, and loving virtue for virtue's own loveliness, desiring the happiness of others not from the obligation of fearing hell or desiring Heaven, but for pure simple unsophisticated Virtue.

You will soon hear again. Adieu, my dearest friend. Continue to believe that when I am insensible to your excellence, I shall cease to exist.

Yours most sincerely, inviolably, eternally, Percy S.

I have filled my sheet before I was aware of it. I told Harriet of your scruples, for which there is not the slightest foundation. You have mistaken her character, if you consider her a slave to this meanest of mean jealousies. She desires to add something. I have scarcely room for her.

Southey lives at Keswick. I have been contemplating the outside of his house. More of him hereafter.

Write: I need not tell you, write. I am in need of your letters.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Greta Hall, where Southey settled, in September, 180°, and spent the rest of his life.

Harriet desires her love to you and begs you will not entertain so unfavourable an opinion of her. She desires me to say that she longs to see you,—to welcome you to our habitation, wherever we are, as my best friend and sister.

Direct me at Chestnut Cottage, Mr. Dayer's [? Dare], Keswick, Cumberland.

# 92. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

KESWICK.

[? November, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND.

I have just finished reading your long letter to Harriet. It is late, or the post is so; therefore I may not say all I wish; indeed, that is not possible: words cannot express half my reasonings, the thousandth part of my feelings. Can I not feel; do we not sympathize? Cannot I read your soul, as I have read your letter, which I believe I have generally considered to be a copy of the former. My letters have always been, as well as my conversations with you, transcripts of my thoughts

I did not concert my departure from Richmond, nor that from York. Why did I leave you? I have never doubted you—you, the brother of my soul, the object of my vivid interest; the theme of my impassioned panegyric. But, for the present, Adieu!

It is nine; it is ten. Expect to hear to-morrow. I will then answer your letter.

Ever your Friend,
PERCY SHELLEY.

11-(2285)



## 93. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

KESWICK, Thursday.
[? November 14, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND.

We live now at Keswick. You do not come to us; but pray, write. You may send my trunk. Open all my letters that come to York.

I have obeyed what you say in your letter of to-day; I have not told you that I am miserable; indeed I cannot be so miserable as I was when I wrote those letters. If you were to see me now, you would see me very calm; as I am sure you are. Your long letter of advice has been my companion, my study, since I received it.

Adieu! Be happy! My dear friend, adieu!

Ever yours, with sincerity,

Percy Shelley.

#### 94. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

Keswick, Chestnut Hill, Cumberland.
[November 14, 1811.]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Probably my letters have not left Keswick sufficiently long for your answer, I have more to tell you, however, which relates to this late terrible affair.

The day we left him he wrote several letters to me, the first evidently in the frenzy of his disappointment (for I had not told him the time of our departure). "I will have Harriet's forgiveness, or blow my brains out at her feet." The others being written in moments of tranquillity, appeared immediate alarm on that score.—You are already surprised, shocked, I can conceive it. Oh, it is terrible; this stroke has almost withered my being.

Were it not for that dear friend whose happiness I so much prize, which at some future period I may perhaps constitute; did I not live for an end, an aim, sanctified, hallowed. . . I might have slept in peace. Yet no not quite that: I might have been a colonist of Bedlam. Stay: I promised to relate the circumstances. . . I will proceed historically. I had observed that Harriet's behaviour to my friend had been greatly altered, I saw she regarded him with prejudice and hatred. I saw it with great pain, and remarked it to her. Her dark hints of his unworthiness alarmed me, yet alarmed me vaguely; for believe me, this alarm was untainted with the slightest suspicion of his disloyalty to virtue and friendship. Conceive my horror when on pressing the conversation, the secret of his unfaithfulness was divulged. . . I sought him, and we walked to the fields beyond York. I desired to know fully the account of this affair. I heard it from him, and I believe he was sincere. All I can recollect of that terrible day was that I pardoned him freely, fully pardoned him, that I would still be a friend to him, and hoped soon to convince him how lovely virtue was, that his crime not himself was the object of my detestation, that I value a human being not for what it has been, but for what it is, that I hoped the time would come when he would regard this horrible error with as much disgust as I did—He said he was pale, terror-struck, remorseful. character is not his own; it sits ill upon him, it will not long be his. His account was this—He came to Edinburgh he saw me; he saw Harriet. He loved her (I use the word because he used it; you comprehend the different ideas it excites under different modes of application), he loved her. This passion, so far from meeting with resistance was encouraged,—purposely encouraged, from motives which then appeared to him not wrong.—On our arrival at York, he avowed it.—Harriet forbade other mention, yet forebore to tell me, hoping she might hear no more of it. On my departure from York to Sussex (when you saw me), he urged the same suit, urged it with arguments of detestable sophistry. "There is no injury to him who knows it not: why is it wrong to permit my love, if it does not alienate affection?" These failed of success. At last, Harriet talked to him much of its immorality: and (though I fear her arguments were such as could not be logically superior to his) he confessed to her his conviction of having acted wrong, and, as some expiation, proposed instantly to inform me by letter of the whole. This Harriet refused to permit, fearing its effect upon my mind at such a distance: she could not know when I should return home. I returned the very next day.

This, as near as I recollect, was the substance of what cool consideration can extract from his account. circumstances are true, Harriet's account coincides. have since written to him frequently, and at great length. His letters are exculpatory: you shall see them.—Adieu at present to the subject. No, my dearest friend, I will never cease to write to you. I never can cease to think of you. Happiness, fleeting creation of circumstances, where art thou? I read your letter with delight; but this delight is even mixed with melancholy. And you! Tell me that you too are unhappy,—the cup of my misfortunes is then emptied to the dregs. Yet did you not say that we should stimulate each other to virtue? Shall I be the first to fail? No, this listless torpor of regret will never do, it never shall possess me. Behold me then reassuming myself, deserving your esteem,—you, my second self-

Harriet has laughed at your suppositions. She invites you to our habitation wherever we are: she does this sincerely, and bids me send her love to you. Eliza, her sister, is with us. She is I think a woman rather superior to the generality. She is prejudiced; but her prejudices I do not consider unvanquishable. Indeed I have already conquered some of them.

The scenery here is awfully beautiful. Our window

commands a view of two lakes, and the giant mountains which confine them. But the object most interesting to my feelings is Southey's habitation. He is now on a journey: when he returns, I shall call on him.

Adieu, dearest friend.

Ever yours, with true devotement and love,

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Single [sheet],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Sussex.

[Postmark], November 18, 1811.

# 95. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

Keswick. [? November, 1811.]

My DEAR FRIEND,

Our letters are delayed terribly—two of yours together! The thing is, we are not *in*, but near, Keswick. You will hear from me to-morrow.

I do not know that absence will *certainly* cure love; but this I know, that it fearfully augments the intensity of friendship.

I do not know where the passage exists of which you speak in the latter part of your letter. But this will not do: I must look for it.

Believe me yours, till you hear again.

I write in Keswick, just as the post is going out.

Your true, sincere,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Pray, take care of your friend.

#### 96. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

Keswick, Cumberland.
[November 20, 1811.]

Writing is slow, soulless, incommunicative. I long to talk with you; my soul is bursting. Ideas, millions of ideas, are crowding into it: it pants for communion with you. Your letter, too, has affected me deeply. must not quite despair of human nature. Our conceptions are scarcely vivid enough to picture the degree of crime, of degradation, which sullies human society—but what words are equal to express their inadequacy to picture its hidden virtue? My friend, my dear only friend, never doubt virtue so long as yourself exists. Be yourself a living proof that human nature is a creation of its own, resolves its own determinations, that on the vividness of these depends the intensity of our characters. terrible, a soul-appalling fall . . . but it was not, it could not be a fall never to rise again. It shall not, if I can retrieve it. He 1 desires to live with us again. His supplications (if his letters are, as mine have been, the language of his soul) have much of ardency, passionateness, and But this must not be. I have endeasincerity, in them. youred to judge on this subject, if possible, with disinterestedness; and I think I owe to Harriet's happiness and his reformation that this should not be. Keen as might have been my feelings, I think, if virtue compelled it, I could have lived with him now. You say he mistook the love of virtue for the practice. I think that you have endeavoured to separate cause and effect. No cause do I esteem so indissolubly annexed to its effect as the real sincere love of virtue to the disinterested practice of its dictates. . . You seem to have confounded love of Virtue with talking

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> That is, Hogg.

of the love of Virtue. Yet was not his conduct most nobly disinterested at Oxford? This appeared real love of Virtue. Then what a fall. . But not a remediless one. . . How are we to tell a tree? not even by its fruits. Are changes possible so quick, so sudden? I am immersed in a labyrinth of doubt. My friend I need your advice, your reason: my own seems almost withered. Will you come here in your Christmas Holydays? Harriet delights so much in this place that I do not think I can quit it. Will you come here? The poison-blast of calumny will not dare to infect you. Besides, what is the world? Eliza Westbrook is here, it is not likely, therefore, that anything would be said. We will never part in spirit: we are too firmly convinced of what we are ever to fear Let the Christian talk of faith, but I am convinced failure. that the wildest bigot who ever carried fury and fanaticism thro' a country never could so firmly believe his idol as I believe in you.—Be you but false, and I have no more to accomplish, my work is done, my usefulness is ended.

You talk of religion,—the influence human depravity gained over your mind towards acceding to it.—But, for this purpose, the religion of the Deist, or the worshipper of virtue would suffice, without involving the persecution, battles, bloodshed, which countenancing Christianity countenances.—I think, my friend, we are the devoutest professors of true religion I know,—if the perverted and prostituted name of "religion" is applicable to the idea of devotion of Virtue. "The just man made perfect" I doubt not of: but to this simple truth where is the necessity of annexing fifty contradictory dogmas, in order that men may destroy each other to know which is right? You see even now I can write against Christianity, "the enormous faith of many made for one."

I write this hasty letter by return of post, because I do not wish to excite the anxiety you name: it is a terrible feeling. My friend, my dearest friend, adieu. One blessing has Fate given, to counterpoise all the evil she has

thrown into my balance; and, when I cease to estimate this blessing—a true, dear friend—may I cease to live!

Your true, sincere, affectionate,

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton,
Sussex.
[Postmark], November 20, 1811.

#### 97. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

Keswick, Nov. 23, 1811—Saturday.

#### MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Your letter reached me one day too late, on account of a tempest happening, and delaying the mail. It hath at length reached me; and dear, sacredly dear, to me is every line of it. I feel as if this occurrence had deprived me of the breath of life which now with such eagerness I inhale. Oh friendship like ours, its most soul-lulling comforts can. ought never to be called selfish—for, altho' we give each other pleasure, our love is not selfish. Reasoning is necessary to selfishness, and the delight I feel in bracing my mind with the energies of yours is involuntary. It is the remote result of reason; but, in cases of this nature, it is necessary that a pleasure should immediately arise from the cool calculation of degree of benefit resulting to itself, before it can be called selfishness.—Your letter has soothed, tranquillized me: it seems as if every bitter disappointment had changed its bitter character.

I could have borne to die, to die eternally, with my once-loved friend. I could coolly have reasoned, to the conclusions of reason I could have unhesitatingly submitted; earth seemed to be enough for our intercourse,

on earth its bounds appeared to be stated, as the event hath dreadfully proved. But with you—your friendship seems to have generated a passion to which fifty such fleeting inadequate existences as these appear to be but the drop in the bucket, too trivial for account. With you, I cannot submit to perish like the flower of the field. I cannot consent that the same shroud which shall moulder around these perishing frames shall enwrap the vital spirit which hath produced, sanctified (may I say, eternized?) a friend-. ship such as ours. Most high and noble feelings are referable to passion: but these—these are referable to reason (certainly inspiration hath nothing to do with the latter). I say, passion is referable to reason, but I mean the great aspiring passions of disinterested Friendship, Philanthropy. It is necessary that reason should disinterestedly determine, the passion of the virtuous will then energetically put its decrees in execution. Your fancy does not run away with your reason, but your too great dependence on mine does.—Preserve your individuality, reason for yourself, compare and discuss with me. I will do the same with you: for are you not my second self, the stronger shadow of that soul whose dictates I have been accustomed to obey? I have taken a long solitary ramble to-day. These gigantic mountains piled on each other, these water-falls, these million-shaped clouds tinted by the varying colours of innumerable rainbows hanging between yourself and a lake as smooth and dark as a plain of polished jet—oh, these are sights attunable to the contemplation. I have been much struck by the grandeur of its imagery. here sports in the awful waywardness of her solitude, the summits of the loftiest of these immense piles of rock seem but to elevate Skiddaw and Helvellyn. Imagination is resistlessly compelled to look back upon the myriad ages whose silent change placed them here; to look back when perhaps this retirement of peace and mountainsimplicity was the pandemonium of druidical imposture, the scene of Roman pollution, the resting-place of the

savage denizon of these solitudes with the wolf.—Still. still further. Strain thy reverted fancy when no rocks, no lakes, no cloud-soaring mountains, were here; but a vast, populous and licentious city stood in the midst of an immense plain, myriads flocked towards it, London itself scarcely exceeds it in the variety, the extensiveness of consummateness of its corruption! Perhaps ere Man had lost reason, and lived an happy, happy race: no tyranny, No Priestcraft, No War.—Adieu to the dazzling picture! I have been thinking of you and of Human Nature, your letter has been the partner of my solitude. or rather I have not been alone for you have been with me. Ought I to grieve? I? and hath not Fate been more than kind to me? Did I expect her to lavish on me the inexhaustible stores of her munificence? Yet hath she not done so? What right have I to lament, to accuse her of barbarity? Hath she not given you to me? Oh how pitiful ought all her other boons, how contemptible ought all her injuries, now to be considered, and you to share my sorrows, Oh am I not doubly now a wretch to cherish them? I will tear them from my remembrance. I cannot be gay -gaiety is not my nature: I have seen too much ever to be so.—Yet I will be happy: and I claim it as a sacred right too that you should share my happiness. be very long at this distance from you.

I transcribe a little Poem I found this morning. It was written some time ago; but, as it appears to show what I then thought of eternal life, I send it.

#### TO MARY

WHO DIED IN THIS OPINION

Maiden quench the glare of sorrow
Struggling in thine haggard eye:
Firmness dare to borrow
From the wreck of destiny;
For the ray morn's bloom revealing
Can never boast so bright an hue
As that which mocks concealing,
And sheds its loveliest light on you.

/ https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.32000000658999 Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 18:38 GMT / https://hdl.har Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.org/access use#pd-google Yet is the tie departed
Which bound thy lovely soul to bliss?
Has it left thee broken-hearted
In a world so cold as this?
Yet, though, fainting fair one,
Sorrow's self thy cup has given,
Dream thou'lt meet thy dear one,
Never more to part, in heaven.

Existence would I barter
For a dream so dear as thine,
And smile to die a martyr
On affection's bloodless shrine.
Nor would I change for pleasure
That withered hand and ashy cheek,
If my heart enshrined a treasure
Such as forces thine to break.

Pardon me for thus writing on. I preserve no connexion. I do not hesitate, I do not pause one moment, in writing to you. It seems to me as if some spirit guided my pen.

I feel with you. I will stifle all these idle regrets. I will sympathize with you. Write to me your sensations, your feelings, ah, I fear I have monopolised them! Would that this terrible sensation had not forced me to call them thus into action. But to share grief is a sacred right of friendship—to share every thought, every idea. Remember, this is a sacred right. But why need I remind you of what neither of us is in any danger of forgetting? Harriet will write to you: I have persuaded her. May she not share the sunshine of my life? Oh! lovely sympathy thou art indeed life's sweetest, only solace, and is not my friend the shrine of sympathy? I hear nothing of my temporal affairs. The D[uke] of N[orfolk] hath written to me: I have answered his letter, he is polite enough. In truth, I do not covet any ducal intercourse or interference. I suppose this is inevitable and necessary. I have not seen Southey: he is not now at Keswick. Believe that on his return I will not be slow to pay homage to a really great man.

Oh I have much, much to say. Methinks words can

scarcely embody ideas: how wretchedly inadequate are letters!

Adieu dearest of friends. Never do I for one moment forget how eternally, sincerely, I am

Yours,
Percy S.

Your letters are six days in coming. Perhaps one of those hateful Sundays has been envious of my solace.

[Addressed outside],

A single sheet,

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton, Sussex.

[Postmark], Nov. 26, 1811.

## 98. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

Keswick, Cumberland, Sunday, Nov. 24, 1811.

I answer your letter my dearest friend not by return of Post, because the Keswick post comes in at seven and goes out at nine, and we are some distance. Your letters revive me, they resuscitate my slumbering hopes. languid flame of life, which before burns feebly, glows at communication with that vivid spark of friendship. "Love" I do not think is so adequate a sign of the idea: its usual signification involves selfish monopoly, the sottish idiotism of frenzy-nourished fools, as once I was. let that era be blotted from the memory of my shame, when purity, truth, reason, virtue, all sanctify a friendship which shall endure when the "love" of common souls shall sleep where the shroud moulders around their soulless bodies.—What a rhapsody! But with you I feel half inspired; and then feel half ashamed lest my inspiration like that of others, result from a little vanity.

I am discouraged. His 1 letters of late appear to me to betray cunning, deep cunning. But I may be deceived: oh! that I were in all that these five weeks had brought forth—His letters are long, but they never express any conviction or unison, they appear merely calculated to bring about what he calls "intimacy on the same happy terms as formerly." This I have positively forbade the very thought of; I tell him that I am open to reason, I wish, ardently wish, that he would reason sincerely: but that, were I even convinced that his conduct resulted from disinterested love of Virtue, he could not live with us, as I should thereby barter Harriet's happiness for his shortlived pleasure,—since my friend if it is true that such passions are unconquerable (which I do not believe), how much greater ascendency will they gain when under the immediate influence of their original excitement—Love of what? Not love of my wife, for love seeks the happiness of its object, even when combined with the common-place infatuation of novels and gay life (oh no! I don't know that). Love of self: aye, as genuine and complete as the most bigoted believer in original sin could desire to defile mankind,—these fine susceptibilities, to which casual deformity and advanced age are such wonderful cures and preventatives. But these have nothing to do with real love, with friendship. Suppose your frame were wasted by sickness, your brow covered with wrinkles, suppose age had bowed your form till it reached the ground. would you not be as lovely as now? Yet one of these beings would pass that intellect, that soul, that sensibility, with as much indifference as I would show to the nightstar of a ball-room, the magnet of the apes, asses, geese, its inhabitants. So much for real [? false] and so much for true love. The one perishes with the body whence on earth it never dares to soar, the other lives with the soul which was the exclusive object of its homage. Oh if this

<sup>1</sup> Hogg's.

last be but true. You talk of a future state: "is not this imagination," you ask, "a proof of it?" To me it appears so: to me everything proves it. But what we earnestly desire we are very much prejudiced in favor of. It seems to me that everything lives again.—What is the Soul? Look at vonder flower. The blast of the North sweeps it from the earth; it withers beneath the breath of the destroyer. Yet that flower hath a soul: for what is soul but that which makes an organized being to be what it is, -without which it would not be so? On this hypothesis, must not that (the soul) without which a flower cannot be a flower exist, when the earthly flower hath perished? Yet where does it exist, in what state of being? have not flowers also some end which Nature destines their being to answer? Doubtless, it ill becomes us to deny this because we cannot certainly discover it; since so many analogies seem to favour the probability of this hypothesis. I will say, then, that all Nature is animated, that microscopic vision, as it hath discovered to us millions of animated beings whose pursuits and passions are as eagerly followed as our own; so might it, if extended, find that Nature itself was but a mass of organized animation. Perhaps the animative intellect of all this is in a constant rotation of change, perhaps a future state is no other than a different mode of terrestrial existence to which we have fitted ourselves in this mode. Is there any probability in this supposition? On this plan, congenial souls must meet; because, having fitted themselves for nearly the same mode of being, they cannot fail to be near each other. Free-will must give energy to this infinite mass of being, and thereby constitute Virtue. If our change be in this mortal life, do not fear that we shall be among the grovelling souls of heroes, aristocrats, and commercialists.— Adieu to this.

I have scribbled a great deal; all my feeling, all my ideas as they arise, are thus yours. My dear friend believe that thou art the cheering beam which gilds this wintry

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000658999 http://www.hathitrust.org/access\_ 18:38 Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitr day of life, perhaps ere long to be the exhaustless sun which shall gild my millenniums of immortality. Adieu, my dearest friend.

Ever, ever yours, PERCY S.

[Addressed outside],
single sheet,
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Sussex.

## 99. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

Keswick, Cumberland.
[26 November, 1811.]

Your letters are like angels sent from heaven on missions of peace. They assure me that existence is not valueless, they point out the path which it is paradise to tread. And yet my dearest friend I am not satisfied that we should be so far asunder. Methinks letters are but imperfect pictures of the mind, they give the permanent and energetic outline, but a thousand minutiæ of varied expressions are omitted in the portraiture. I am therefore sorry that you cannot come now. Cannot the sweet little nurslings of liberty<sup>1</sup> come? But I will not press you. Strange prejudices have these country people! I must relate one very singular one. The other night I was explaining to Harriet and Eliza the nature of the atmosphere, and, to illustrate my theory, I made some experiments on hydrogen gas, one of its constituent parts. This was in the garden, and the vivid flame was seen at some distance. A few days after, Mr. Dare entered our cottage, and said he had something to say to me. "Why, sir," said he, "I am not satisfied with you. I wish you to leave my house." "Why, sir?" "Because the country talks very

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The American children whom Miss Hitchener was educating (see p. 235).

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strangely of your proceedings. Odd things have been seen at night near your dwelling. I am very ill satisfied with this. Sir, I don't like to talk of it: I wish you to provide yourself elsewhere."—I have, with much difficulty, quieted Mr. D.'s fears. He does not, however, much like us; and I am by no means certain that he will permit us to remain.

Have you found a house? I have your promise—next Midsummer will be my holidays. Heavens! were I the charioteer of time, his burning wheels would rapidly attain the goal of my aspirations. You believe, firmly believe me. How invaluably dear ought now to be that credit, when an example so terrible has warned you to be sceptical. . That I believe in you cannot be wonderful, for the first words you spoke to me, the manner, are eternal earnests of your taintlessness and sincerity. But wherefore do I talk thus, when we know, feel, each other; when every sentiment is reciprocal; when congeniality, so often laughed at, both have found proof strong as internal evidence can afford? I do not love him now: bear witness for me, thou reciprocity of thought, that I do not! It is, it is true—too true: what you say is conclusive. . . It tallies too well with what I have yet to tell you. Oh I have been fearfully deceived. . . It is not the degradation of imposition that I lament, but that a character moulded, as I imagined, in all the symmetry of Virtue, should exhibit the loathsome deformity of Vice—that a saviour should change to a destroyer.—But adieu to that now.

I shall not accuse my friend of endeavouring to insinuate the tenets of a religion in one sentence, the foundation, the corner-stone, of which she defies all the powers that exist to make her believe, in the next. Miss Weekes' marriage induces you to think marriage an evil. I think it an evil—an evil of immense and extensive magnitude, but I think a previous reformation in morals—and that a general and a great one—is requisite before it may be remedied. Man is the creature of circumstances, and these, casual circumstances, custom hath made unto him

a second nature. That which hath no more to do with virtue than the most indifferent actions of our lives hath been exalted into its criterion, and, from being considered so, hath become one of its criterions. Marriage is monopolizing, exclusive, jealous, the tie which binds it bears the same relation to "friendship in which excess is lovely" that the body doth to the soul. Everything which relates simply to this clay-formed dungeon is comparatively despicable, and, in a state of perfectible society, could not be made the subjects of either virtue or vice. The most delicious strains of music, viands the most titillating to the palate, wines of the most exquisite flavor, if it be innocent to derive delight from them (supposing such a case), it surely must be as innocent in whosesoever company it were derived. A law to compel you to hear this music, in the company of such a particular person, appears to me parallel to that of Marriage. Were there even now such a law as this, were this exclusiveness reckoned the criterion of virtue, it certainly would not be worth the while of rational people to "offend their weak brothers," as St. Paul says, "by eating meats placed before the idols." It ill would become them to risk the peace of others, however prejudiced, by gaining to themselves what from their souls they hold in contempt. Am I right? It delights me to discuss and to be sceptical: thus we must arrive at truth —that introducer of Virtue and Usefulness.

Have you read Godwin's 2 "St. Leon"—1 his "Inquirer"—his 3 "Political Justice"—his 4 "Caleb Williams"?—1 is very good. 2 is good, very good. 3 is long, sceptical, good. 4 is good.—I put them in the order that I would advise you to read them. I understand you when you say we are free. Liberty is the very soul of friendship, and from the very soul of liberty art thou my friend; aye, and such a sense as this can never fade.

"Earthly those passions of the earth Which perish where they had their birth, But love is indestructible."

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I almost wish that Southey had not made the Glendoveer a male: these detestable distinctions will surely be abolished in a future state of being.

"The holy flame for ever burneth:
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth."

Might there not have been a prior state of existence? might we not have been friends then? The creation of soul at birth is a thing I do not like. Where we have no premisses, we can therefore draw no conclusions. It may be all vanity: but I cannot think so.

I may be in Sussex soon. I do not know where I shall be: but wherever I am, I shall be with you in spirit and in truth. Do not think I am going to insinuate Christianity, though I think it is as likely a thing as that you should. I annihilate God; you destroy the Devil: and then we make a heaven entirely to our own mind. It must be owned that we are tolerably independent. As to your ghostly director, who told you to put out your sun of common sense in order that he might set up his rushlight, I can scarcely believe that he ever even imagined a "call."

When shall you change your abode? Are you fixed at Hurst for some years? I wish to know, as this will enable me to determine on some place of residence near to yours.

This country is heavenly: I will describe it when I have seen more of it. I wish to stay, too, to see Southey. You may imagine, then, that I was very humble to Mr. Dare: I should think he was tolerably afraid of the Devil. I have heard from Hogg since, often: his letters give me little hope, he still earnestly desires to live with us. You have brought me into a dilemma concerning his conduct, from which it is impossible to escape. I do not love him. I have examined his conduct, I hope with cool impartiality; and I grieve to find the conclusion thus unfavourable. I hope you are indebted (as you call it) to the coolness of my judgment for my opinion of you. I have repeatedly told you what I think of you. I consider you one of those

ţ,

beings who carry happiness, reform, liberty, wherever they go. To me you are as my better genius—the judge of my reasonings, the guide of my actions, the influencer of my usefulness. Great responsibility is the consequence of higher powers. I am, as you must be, a despiser of the mock-modesty of the world, which is accustomed to conceal more defects than excellencies. I know I am superior to the mob of mankind: but I am inferior to you in everything but the equality of friendship.

But my paper ends. Adieu. I bid adieu to-day to what is to me inexpressibly dear, your society.

Ever yours unalterably,

Percy S.

Tuesday morning. On what day does this letter reach you?

Harriet desires me to send her love, and hopes you will answer her letter very soon.

[Addressed outside].
single sheet,
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton, Sussex.

#### 100. To Thomas Charles Medwin (Horsham)

Keswick, Cumberland, Nov[ember] 26, 1811.

My DEAR SIR,

We are now in this lovely spot, where for a time we have fixed our residence. The rent of our cottage, furnished, is £1 10s. 0d. per week. We do not intend to take up our abode here for a perpetuity, but should wish to have a house in Sussex. Perhaps you would look out for one for us. Let it be in some picturesque retired place—St. Leonard's Forest, for instance. Let it not be nearer to London than Horsham, nor near any populous manufacturing dissipated town. We do not covet either a propinquity to barracks. Is there any possible method of raising money without exorbitant

interest until my coming of age? I hear that you and my father have had a rencontre. I was surprised that he dared to attack you, but men always hate those whom they have injured; this hatred was, I suppose, a stimulus which supplied the place of courage. Whitton has written to me to state the impropriety of my letters to my mother and sister; this letter I have returned with a passing remark on the back of it. I find that affair on which those letters spoke is become the general gossip of the idle newsmongers of Horsham. They give me credit of having invented it. They do my invention much honour, but greatly discredit their own penetration.

My kind remembrances to all friends, believe me, dear sir, Yours most truly,

P. B. SHELLEY.

We dine with the Duke of N[orfolk] at Graystock [Greystoke] this week. Believe me, I shall not forget you altho' his Grace has thought fit to leave that part of my epistle unanswered.

[Addressed outside], T. C. Medwin, Esq., Horsham, Sussex.

# 101. To Thomas Charles Medwin (Horsham)

Keswick, Cumberland, Nov[ember] 30, 1811.

MY DEAR SIR,

When I last saw you, you mentioned the possibility, alluding at the same time to the imprudence of raising money even at my present age, at 70 per cent. We are now so poor as to be actually in danger of every day being deprived of the necessaries of life. In two years, you hinted that I could obtain money at legal interest. "My poverty, and not my will consents" (as Romeo's apothecary says), when I request you to tell me the readiest method of doing this. I could repay the principal and interest

on my coming of age, with very little detriment to my ultimate expectations. In case you see obvious methods of effecting this, I would thank you to remit me a small sum for immediate expenses . . . if not, on no account do so, as some degree of hazard must attend all my acts under age, and I am resolved never again to expose you to suffer for my imprudence.

Mr. Westbrook has sent a small sum, with an intimation that we are to expect no more; this suffices for the immediate discharge of a few debts; and it is nearly with our very last guinea that we visit the Duke of N[orfolk], at Greystoke, to-morrow. We return to Keswick on Wednesday. I have very few hopes from this visit. That reception into Abraham's bosom appeared to me to be the consequence of some infamous concessions, which are, I suppose, synonymous with duty.—Love to all.

My dear Sir,

Yours most truly, PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside], T. C. MEDWIN, Esq., Horsham, Sussex.

#### 102. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

CHESTNUT HILL, KESWICK.
[? December 1, 1811.]

My DEAR FRIEND.

What you say of my superiority is perfectly erroneous. Consider a little, and you will discover this. The great apparent cause of it is my insensibility; perhaps you are not prepared to boast of yours; I am sure you are not.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley expected to stay at Greystoke until Wednesday, December 4, but he seems to have extended his visit until December 8 or 9, probably the latter date as the 8th was a Sunday.—See MacCarthy's "Shelley's Early Life," p. 121.

If Harriet's state of health did not intervene between our meeting again immediately, to-morrow willingly would I return to York; aye, willingly, and be happy thus to prove and to indulge my friendship.

"Absence extinguishes small passions, and kindles great

ones." It is so in love, and so it is with friendship.

My friend, you say I ought always to set you an example of firmness. What! I, the weakest, the most slavish of beings that crawl on the earth's face, to you?

This is a sweet spot! But, oh heavens, my soul is half sick at this terrible world, where nature seems to own no monster in her works, but man. They quarrel for straws; they part on these quarrels; and two lovers, whose existences seemed entwined, separate because—you can complete the portraiture yourself from my history.

Harriet has written to you; what she has said, I know not. I have not been able to write for a day or two to you, owing to having been ill from the poison of laurel leaves—I have now.

Your letters of to-day have arrived; I have read that to Harriet; she showed it me. I know how much I owe you; I feel it all. Believe me, your letter has delighted and affected me. I will write again to-morrow.

Your real, true, sincere Friend,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Will you send us Mr. S[trickland]'s bill?<sup>1</sup>

#### 103. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (York)

CHESTNUT COTTAGE, CUMBERLAND,
[? December 10, 1811.

We returned to Keswick last night. All your letters I have found here, which have arrived in my absence. To

Probably Monday, December 9th.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For Shelley's lodgings at Blake Street, York.

I could not consent to the injury of Harriet's health—to the destruction of her nerves. You must know what you yourself are. Mock modesty can never have concealed from you the fascination which your society spreads. It were impossible to think of the friendship of such a being, and not to say that were worthier of attainment than fame, or pleasure, or the attachment of all other beings. To give up this, even for a few weeks, must be a sacrifice—how great an one my heart alone car testify. Yet this I now resign for a while. I resign it for Harriet's health; possibly for my own (though I think not). I need only tranquillity.

If I were free, I were unceasingly yours, though I do not think you infallible. I think you capable of great things, and in such, as well as in the stores of such a mind as yours, can I conceive no pleasure equal to the participation.

I returned to Keswick yesterday. Your letters in the meantime were *not* forwarded to me.

Our stay here is so uncertain, that I know not one day where we may be the next.

Your real Friend, P. B. Shelley.

## 104. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

[Keswick, 10 December, 1811?]

My DEAREST FRIEND,

I have just found your letters. Three of them were here on our return from Greystoke. What will you think of not hearing from me so long? Not that I have forgotten you. Your letters were indeed a most valuable treasure. I have just finished reading them. I shall answer them to-morrow.

We met several people at the Duke's. One in particular

struck me. He was an elderly man, who seemed to know all my concerns; and the expression of his face, whenever I held the arguments, which I do everywhere, was such as I shall not readily forget. I shall have more to tell of him, for we have met him before in these mountains, and his particular look then struck Harriet.

Adieu, my dearest friend. I am compelled to break off in the middle of my letter by the conviction that this may be too late. You will hear from me to-morrow.

Yours, ever yours,
PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Sussex.
[Postmark], Dec. 12.

## 105. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg<sup>2</sup> York)

[KESWICK,

? December, 1811.]

You deceive yourself terribly, my friend; it is another source of proof to me that you should have written to [Harriet], as you have.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. William Calvert, of Greta Bank, Cumberland, with whom Shelley became on terms of intimacy before he left the Lake District, was the son of a former steward to the Duke of Norfolk. His brother Raisley was Wordsworth's generous benefactor.

In Hogg's copy Charlotte's name appears throughout, for which I have now substituted Harriet's. The date of the letter is unknown, but it would seem to have been written before Shelley's letter to Miss Hitchener of December 15.

It convinces me at the same time of your real sincerity, great, self-deceptive, continued vehemence of passion, which borrows respect, deference from distance. It convinces me more forcibly than ever how unfit it is that you should live near us; it convinces me that I, by permitting it, should act a subservient part in the promotion of yours and [Harriet's] misery. I am more and more convinced, that from a connection such as this, even intellectual, nothing but misery can arise: your passions impose upon your reason, if this is not evident to your apprehension. I either actually do, or merely affect to put self out of the question; this we will not discuss; if similar effects follow, the consideration of causes must be useless labour. You sav you fear that you have lost my good opinion. opinion" is very comprehensive, certainly. I no longer estimate your powers of resisting passion so highly as Certainly, I no longer consider your reason as once I did. superior to the sophistry of feeling, as once it was. can I? to what have you yielded? How terrible, how complete has been the perversion of that reason I once almost fancied omnipotent! I admit the distinction which you make between mistake and crime. I heartily acquit you of the latter. Yet how great has been your mistake; even now does it continue. You never could think it virtue to act as you desired. You might, indeed, have been so far imposed upon by feeling as to imagine that virtue did not forbid it. I said I thought you were insincere-I do not wonder that you shudder at the accusation. It appears to me perfectly natural that you should at the same time be disguising, veiling, palliating; you should think yourself the pattern of disinterestedness, which once you were, which once I hope again to behold you. vou were insincere. I said so because I thought so. think so; but you are imposed upon by feeling the contamination of falsehood is far, far from you. One expression in your long letter, your last letter, convinces me that you are still enthralled by feeling. It is merely an instance.

Dec.

"I must, I will convince you," etc. "I must,—or, the alternative is terrible but decided. You shall believe," etc., "or, when too late, you shall feel." This gives me pain. This proves to me that, so far from being now under the guidance of reason, you wish to enforce my belief in you by an act, which itself is inadequate to the excitement of any belief, but that of your selfishness, or to revenge my want of it by this very act, which you know would embitter my existence. Else what means "you shall feel when too late?"

This, my friend, is not convincing. It might be enough (supposing I thought you remained in the state of mind which dictated that) to make me say, I believe in you, but not to make me believe in you. What will then make me again believe you to be what you were? Simply to resume that character which once gained the credence, the loss of which you complain of. Think, reason, methodize. Your present incapacity for all these; my conviction that your exposure to [Harriet's] attractions would augment that incapacity, are the limits of the change of my opinion regarding you. It appears to me that I am acting as your friend—your disinterested friend—by objecting to your living near us at present. Certainly, I am depriving myself of the very great pleasure of your society: this, however, is necessary; to this I submit.

You hint in your letter to [Harriet] your obligation to me for introducing you to her. Certainly, if I deserve any disservice at your hands, it is for unwittingly exposing you to the temptation and consequent misery of this very intercourse. Here, again, I see that feeling peeping out which would destroy our hopes again. Think not that I am otherwise than your friend; a friend to you, now more fervent, more devoted than ever, for misery endears to us those whom we love. You are, you shall be my bosom friend. You have been so but in one instance, and there you have deceived yourself. Still, let us continue what we have ever been. I will remain unchanged, so shall you hereafter. Let us forget this affair; let us erase from the

memory that ever it had being. Consider what havoc one year, the last year of our lives, has made in memory. How can you say, then, that good will not come; that we shall not again be what we were! Good and evil are in an ever-varying routine of change. If I am wretched this month, the arising of another may see me happy.

You will say, perhaps, that it is well for me to reason; I am cold, phlegmatic, unfeeling, that I compromise for those sins which I love, by railing against those, which are matters of indifference. In the first part of this charge there may be some truth, I have more than once felt the force of this. Is constitutional temperament the criterion of morality? Believe me, that this more than excuses to me the present irrationality, incongruity, and inconsistency of your words and actions; I cannot avoid, however, seeing, that they are incongruous, nor seeing it, avoid earnestly desiring, that they may be otherwise.

Prove to me satisfactorily that virtue exists not, that it is a fabric as baseless as a schoolboy's vision—then take life, I will no more with it. I would not consent to live. to breathe, to vegetate, if this vegetation simply went on to imbibe for no other end, than its own proper nutriment the juices which surrounded it. Does the vegetable reason on the good it does to the air, when it absorbs azote? does the panther destroy the antelope for the public good? does the lion love the lioness for his sake or her own? Prove, that man too is necessarily this; my last act may be an act of this very selfishness, but it would be an act precluding the possibility of more of it, and I would leave the world to such, as could bear to inhabit its surface. Prove this, and I will say you have acted wisely. The argument concerning morality mentioned in your last letter was intended for this. But though I think you insincere (though without being conscious of it), I do not think that this is your opinion now; yet, stay, what did I remark in your letter to [Harriet]? It proves, at the same time, the insincerity, undisguisedness of your passion. Yet the

insincerity, which I have remarked as secretly betraying you.

You talk of female excellence, female perfection. Man is in your declamation a being infinitely inferior, whose proudest efforts at virtue are but mockeries of his impotence. [Harriet] is the personification of all this contrast to man, the impassionateness of the most ardent passion, that ever burned in human breast could never have dictated a compliment (I will not say, a piece of flattery) more excessive. She perceived it (for she has shown me your letter), and remarked with much indignation on the repetition of that continued flattery, which you had made your theme ever since she knew you. I wish you would investigate the sources of this passion, my dear friend; you would find it derived its principal source from sensation.

Let your "too, too great susceptibility of beauty," your very own sincere expression in your letter to [Harriet] suffice to convince you of the true state of your feelings. This caused your error primarily: nor can I wonder. I do not condemn, I pity; nor do I pity with contempt, but with sympathy, real sympathy. I hope I have shown you that I do not regard you as a smooth-tongued traitor; could I choose such for a friend; could I still love him with affection unabated, perhaps increased? Reason, plain reason, would tell you this could not be. How far gone must you have been in sophistry, self-deception, to think sensation in this, in any instance laudable.

I am not happy. I tell you so. My last letter was written in the acuteness of feeling; but do you wish that I should be happy? Reassure yourself, and then be assured, that not a wish of my heart will remain ungratified, as respects you. I have but one other wish beside; to that, at present, I will not allude more. [Harriet] will write to you to-morrow. May I require, that, as one proof of self conquest, you will throw the letter into the fire, suppressing all thoughts of adoration, which I strongly suspect to arise from mere sensation, sentiment. But the

letter will arrive first: it will be pressed to the lips, folded to the heart, imagination will dwell upon the hand that wrote it; how easy the transition to the wildest reveries of ungratified desire!

Oh! how the sophistry of the passions has changed you! The sport of a woman's whim, the plaything of her inconsistencies, the bauble with which she is angry, the footstool of her exaltation! Assert yourself, be what you were. Love, adore; it will exalt your nature, bid you, a man, be a God! Combine it, if you will, with sensation, perhaps they are inseparable; be it so. But do not love one, who cannot return it, who if she could, ought to stifle her desire to do so. Love is not a whirlwind, that it is unvanquishable!

## 106. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

Keswick, Cumberland, [December 11, 1811.]

You received a fleeting letter from me yesterday. An immediate acknowledgment of your letters I judged equal in value to the postage of a blank sheet of paper. Your letters, my dearest friend, are to me an exhaustless mine of pleasure. (Fatigued with aristocratical insipidity,) left alone scarce one moment by those senseless monopolizers of time that form the court of a Duke, who would be very well as a man, how delightful to commune with the soul which is undisguised—whose importance no arts are necessary or adequate to exalt! I admire your father, but I do not think him capable of sympathizing with you. I you know consider mind to be the creature of education: that, in proportion to the characters thereon impressed by circumstances or intentions, so does it assume the appearances which vary with these varying events. Divest

every event of its improper tendency, and evil becomes annihilate. Thus then I am led to love a being, not because it stands in the physical relation of blood to me, but because I discern an intellectual relationship. It is because chance hath placed us in a situation most fit for rendering happiness to our relations, that if higher considerations intervene not, makes it our duty to devote ourselves to this object. This is your duty, and nobly do you fulfil it. Your father, I plainly see, has some mistakes. Cannot you reason him out of that rough exterior? It has the semblance of sincerity—in reality is it not deceit? Your attention to his happiness is at once so noble, so delicate, so desirous of accomplishing its design, that how could he fail if he knew it, to give you that esteem and respect, besides the love which he does? Methinks he is not your equal, not an exception to the general rule of my belief; that I have not found you equalled. . . Were he so, would he not discern your attentions? No: he must be like you, before I can ever institute a comparison between your characters. Of your mother I have not much opinion. She appears to me one of those every-day characters by whom the stock of prejudice is augmented rather than decreased. Obedience (were society as I could wish it) is a word which ought to be without meaning. If Virtue depended on duty, then would prudence be virtue, and imprudence Vice; and the only difference between the Marquis Wellesley and William Godwin would be that the latter had more cunningly devised the means of his own benefit. This cannot be. Prudence is only an auxiliary of virtue, by which it may become useful.— Virtue consists in the motive. Paley's "Moral Philosophy" begins: "Why am I obliged to keep my word? Because I desire Heaven, and hate Hell." Obligation and duty, therefore, are words of no value as the criterion of excellence.—So much for obedience—Parents and Children. Do you agree to my definition of Virtue—Disinterestedness?—Why do I enquire? I am as little inclined as you

are to quarrel with [——]: I am as much obliged to him for the complex idea, tyranny. You do understand Locke, this is one of his complex ideas. The ideas of power, evil, pain, together with a very clear perception of the two latter which may almost define the idea hatred, together with other minor ideas, enter into its composition.

What you say about residing near is true. We cannot either get a house there immediately. At midsummer, perhaps before, we see you here: that is certain. Oh how. you will delight in this scenery! These mountains are now capped with snow, the lake, as I see it hence, is glassy and calm. Snow-vapours, tinted by the loveliest colours of refraction, pass far below the summits of these giant rocks. The scene, even in a winter sunset, is inexpressibly lovely. The clouds assume shapes which seem peculiar to these regions. What will it be in summer? What when you are here? Oh give me a little cottage in that scene. Let all live in peaceful little houses—let temples and palaces rot with their perishing masters! Be society civilized, be you with us, grant eternal life to all; and I will ask not the paradise of religionists! I think the Christian heaven (with its Hell) would be to us no paradise: but such a scene as this!

How my pen runs away with me! We design, after your Visit (which Heaven knows, I wish would never end), to visit Ireland. We are very near Port-Patrick. If you could extend your time, could you not accompany us? But am I not building on a foundation more flimsy than air? Can I look back to the last year, and decide with certainty on anything but the eternity of my regard for you? Every day augments the strength for [of?] my friendship for you, dearest friend. Every day makes me feel more keenly that our being is eternal. Every day brings the conviction how futile, how inadequate, are all reasonings to demonstrate it. Yet are we—are these

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This word is illegible in the MS.

souls which measure in their circumscribed domain the distance of you orbs—are we but bubbles which arise from the filth of a stagnant pool, merely to be again re-absorbed into the mass of its corruption? I think not: I feel not. Can you prove it? Yet the eternity of man has ever been believed. It is not merely one of the dogmas of an inconsistent religion, though all religions have taken it for their foundation. The wild American, who never heard of Christ, or dreamed of original sin, whose "Great Spirit" was nothing but the Soul of Nature, could not reconcile his feelings to annihilation: he too has his Paradise. And in truth is not Iroquois's "human life perfected" better than to "circle with harps the golden throne" of one who dooms half of his creatures to eternal destruction?—Thus much for the Soul. I have now my dear friend in contemplation a Poem. 1 I intend it to be by anticipation a picture of the manners, simplicity, and delights of a perfect state of society, tho' still earthly. Will you assist me? I only thought of it last night. I design to accomplish it, and publish. After, I shall draw a picture of Heaven. I can do neither without some hints from you, the latter I think you ought to make. I told you of a strange man I met the other day: I am going to see him. 2 I shall also see Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, there. I shall then give you a picture of them. 3 I owe you several letters,

<sup>a</sup> Mr. William Calvert. See p. 184.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Was this Shelley's first idea for the poem which ultimately developed into "Queen Mab"?

Of the Lake poets, Shelley only met Southey. At the time of Shelley's visit, Coleridge was delivering his lectures in London, and he did not return to Greta Hall until after Jan. 27th, 1812, the date of the last lecture. De Quincey, who did not meet Shelley either (although in later life he was much in sympathy with his work), is responsible for the assertion that the young poet did not encounter Wordsworth or John Wilson. Of Shelley, Coleridge said "I might have been of use to him, and Southey could not; for I should have sympathized with his poetics, metaphysical reveries, and the very word metaphysics is an abomination to Southey, and Shelley would have felt that I understood him."

oh, much—to say. But never can I express the abundance of pleasure which your three letters have given me. Surely my dearest friend you must have known by intuition all my thoughts to write me as you have done. Give my love to Anne¹: what does she think of me? You delight me by what you tell me of her. Every prejudice conquered, every error rooted out, every virtue given, is so much gained in the cause of reform. I am never unmindful of this: I see that you are not. Tell Anne that if she would write to me, I would answer her letters. Now, my dearest friend, adieu. This paper is at an end, but what I have to say is not. I owe you several letters, and shall not fail in the payment.

What think you of my undertaking? Shall I not get into prison? Harriet is sadly afraid that his Majesty will provide me with a lodging, in consideration of the zeal which I evince for the bettering of his subjects. I think I shall also make a selection of my younger poems for publication. You will give me credit for their morality. Well, adieu, my dearest friend—thou to whom every thought, every shade of thought, is owing, since last I wrote. Adieu.

Your sincerest,

Percy S.

Harriet sends her love to you: the dear girl will write to you.

[Addressed outside], Single.

Miss Hitchener, Hurstpierpoint, Sussex.

[Postmark], Dec. 14, 1811.

Shelley's proposed visit to Ireland.
 13—(2285)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Apparently one of Miss Hitchener's pupils. See another reference to her in letter No. 117, p. 233.

#### 107. To Timothy Shelley

Keswick, Cumberland, Dec[ember] 13, 1811.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have lately returned from Greystoke, where I had been invited by the Duke of Norfolk, that he might speak with me of the unhappy differences which some of my actions have occasioned.—The result of his advice was that I should write a letter to you, the tone of whose expression should be sorrow that I should have wounded the feelings of persons so nearly connected with me. Undoubtedly I should thus express the real sense of my mind, for when convinced of my error no one is more ready to own that conviction than myself, nor to repair any injuries which might have resulted from a line of conduct which I had pursued.—

On my expulsion from Oxford you were so good as to allow me £200 per ann[um]; you also added a promise of my being unrestrained in the exercise of the completest free agency. In consequence of this last I married a young lady whose personal character is unimpeachable. action (admitting it to be done) in its very nature required dissimulation, much as I may regret that I had descended to employ it. My allowance was then withdrawn; I was left without money 400 miles from one being I knew, every day liable to be exposed to the severest exile of penury. Surely something is to be allowed for human feelings, when you reflect that the letters you then received were written in this state of helplessness and dereliction. And now let me say that a reconciliation with you is a thing which I very much desire; accept my apologies for the uneasiness which I have occasioned; believe that my wishes to repair any uneasiness is firm and sincere.—I regard these family differences as a very great evil, and I much lament that I should in any wise have been instrumental in exciting them.

I hope you will not consider what I am about to say an insulting want of respect or contempt; but I think it my duty to say that however great advantages might result from such concessions, I can make no promise of concealing my opinions in political or religious matters. I should consider myself culpable to excite any expectation in your mind which I should be unable to fulfil. What I have said is actuated by the sincerest wish of being again upon those terms with you which existed some time since. employed hypocrisy to heighten the regret which I feel for having occasioned uneasiness. I have not employed meanness to concede what I consider it my duty to withhold. Such methods as these would be unworthy of us both. I hope you will consider what I have said, and I remain, dear father, with sincerest wishes for our perfect right understanding,

> Yours respectfully and affectionately, P. B. Shelley.

## 108. To Elizabeth Hitchener (Hurstpierpoint)

KESWICK [CUMBERLAND], SUNDAY, December 15 [1811].

MY DEAREST FRIEND.

You will before now have my last letter, I have felt the distrustful recurrences of the post-office, which you felt when no answer to all your letters came. I have regretted that visit to Greystoke, because this delay must have given you uneasiness.

I have since heard from Captain P[ilford]. His letter contains the account of a meditated proposal, on the part of my father and grandfather, to make my income immediately larger than the former's, in case I will consent to entail the estate on my eldest son, and, in default of issue, on my brother. Silly dotards! do they think I can be thus bribed and ground into an act of such contemptible

injustice and inutility, that I will forswear my principles in consideration of £2,000 a year, that the good-will I could thus purchase, or the ill-will I could thus overbear, would recompense me for the loss of self-esteem, of conscious rectitude? And with what face can they make to me a proposal so insultingly hateful. Dare one of them propose such a condition to my face—to the face of any virtuous man—and not sink into nothing at his disdain? That I should entail £120,000 of command over labor, of power to remit this, to employ it for beneficent purposes, on one whom I know not-who might, instead of being the benefactor of mankind, be its bane, or use this for the worst purposes, which the real delegates of my chancegiven property might convert into a most useful instrument of benevolence!-No! this you will not suspect me of. What I have told you will serve to put in its genuine light the grandeur of aristocratical distinctions, and to show that contemptible vanity will gratify its unnatural passion at the expense of every just, humane, and philanthropic consideration,-

"Tho' to a radiant angel linked Will sate itself in a celestial bed, And prey on garbage."

I have written this to you just as I have received the Captain's letter. . . My indignant contempt has probably confused my language, and rendered my writing rather illegible. But it is my custom to communicate to you, my dearest friend,—to that brain of sympathetic sensibility—every idea as it comes, as I do to my own.

Hogg at length has declared himself to be one of those mad votaries of selfishness who are cool to destroy the peace of others, and revengeful when their schemes are foiled, even to idiotism. In answer to a letter in which I strongly insisted on the criminality of exposing himself to the inroads of a passion which he had proved himself unequal to control, and endangering Harriet's happiness, he has talked of my "consistency in despising religion,

despising duelling, and despising sincere friendship "with some hints as to duelling to induce me to meet him in that manner. I have answered his letter; in which I have said I shall not fight a duel with him, whatever he may say or do; that I have no right either to expose my own life, or take his—in addition to the wish which I have, from various motives, to prolong my existence. Nor do I think that his life is a fair exchange for mine; since I have acted up to my principles, and he has denied his, and acted inconsistently with any morality whatsoever. That if he would show how I had wronged him, I would repair it to the uttermost mite; but I would not fight a duel. Now, dearest partner of that friendship which once he shared, now I am at peace. He is incapable of being other but the every-day villain who parades St. Tames's Street, tho' even as a villain will he be eminent and imposing.—The chances are now much against my ever influencing him to adopt habits of benevolence and This passion of animal love which has philanthropy. seized him, this which the false refinements of society have exalted into an idol to which its misguided members burn incense, has intoxicated him, and rendered him incapable of being influenced by any but the consideration of self-love. . . How much worthier of a rational being is friendship, which tho' it wants none of the impassionateness which some have characterized as the inseparable of the other, yet retains judgment, which is not blind tho' it may chance to see something like perfection in its object, which retains its sensibility, but whose sensibility is celestial and intellectual, unallied to the grovelling, passions of the Earth.

Southey has changed. I shall see him soon, and I shall reproach him for his tergiversation.—He to whom Bigotry, Tyranny, Law was [sic] hateful, has become the votary of these idols in a form the most disgusting.—The Church of England, its Hell and all, has become the subject of his panegyric, the war in Spain, that prodigal waste of human

blood to aggrandize the fame of statesmen, is his delight, The constitution of England—with its Wellesley, its Paget, and its Prince—are inflated with the prostituted exertions of his Pen. I feel a sickening distrust when I see all that I had considered good, great, or imitable, fall around me into the gulf of error. But we will struggle on its brink to the last, and if compelled we fall—we shall have at all events the consolation of knowing that we have struggled with a nature that is bad, and that this nature [not?] the imbecility of our proper cowardice, has involved us in the ignominy of defeat. Wordsworth (a quondam associate of Southey), yet retains the integrity of his independence; but his poverty is such that he is frequently obliged to beg for a shirt to his back. <sup>1</sup>

Well, dearest friend, adieu. Changes happen.... friends fall around us, what once was great sinks into the imbecility of human grandeur. Empires shall fade, kings shall be peasants, and peasants shall be kings: but never will we cease to regard each other, because we will never cease to deserve it.

My Harriet desires her love to you. Yours most imperishably, and eternally,

P. B. SHELLEY.

I shall write again. Do these letters come as a single sheet?

[Addressed outside], single sheet. Keswick. Miss HITCHENER, Hurstpierpoint, Sussex. [Postmark], Dec. 18, 1811.

#### 109. To Timothy Shelley

KESWICK [CUMBERLAND],
Dec[ember] 23, 1811.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter which arrived last night gave me much

<sup>1</sup> Wordsworth's circumstances were at this time somewhat narrow, but he was never so poverty-stricken as Shelley represents.

pleasure; I hasten to acknowledge it, and to express my satisfaction that you should no longer regard me in an unfavourable light.—

Mr. Westbrook at present allows for his daughter's subsistence £200 per ann[um], which prevents any situations occurring with similar unpleasantness as that at Edinburgh.

My principles still remain the same as those which caused my expulsion from Oxford. When questions which regard the subject are agitated in society I explain my opinions with coolness and moderation. You will not, I hope, object to my train of thinking. I could disguise it, but this would be falsehood and hypocrisy.

Believe that what I have said is dictated by the sincerest sentiments of respect.

I hope I shall sometimes have the pleasure of hearing from you, and that my mother and sisters are well; Mr. Whitton opened a letter addressed to the former. I know not what may be the precise state of that affair which is there alluded to, but I cannot consider myself blameable for having interfered.

I beg my love to my mother and sisters, and remain, with sentiments of respect.

Your affectionate son, P. B. Shelley.

# 110. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

KESWICK [CUMBERLAND], December 26, 1811.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I have delayed writing for two days, that my letters might not succeed each other so closely as one day.—I have also been engaged in talking with Southey. You

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley first met Southey at the house of Mr. William Calvert. Southey gives an interesting impression of Shelley in a letter to

may conjecture that a man must possess high and estimable qualities, if with the prejudices of such total difference from my sentiments I can regard him great and worthy.— In fact Southey is an advocate of liberty and equality. He looks forward to a state when all shall be perfected, and matter become subjected to the omnipotence of mind, but he is now an advocate for existing establishments. He says he designs his three statues in "Kehama" to be contemplated with republican feelings, but not in this age. . . Southey hates the Irish, he speaks against Catholic Emancipation, and Parliamentary reform. In all these things we differ, and our differences were the subjects of a. long conversation. Southey calls himself a Christian, but he does not believe that the Evangelists were inspired . . . he rejects the Trinity, and thinks that Jesus Christ stood precisely in the same relation to God as himself. Yet he calls himself a Christian: now if ever there were a definition of a Deist, I think it could never be clearer than this confession of faith. 1—But Southey, though far from being a man of great reasoning powers, is a great Man. He has all that characterizes the poet,—great eloquence, tho' obstinacy in opinion, which arguments are the last thing that can shake. . . He is a man of virtue, he will never belie what he thinks. . . His professions are in strict compatibility with his practice.—More of him another time. With Calvert, the man whom I mentioned to you in that pigmy letter, we have now become acquainted. He knows everything that relates to my family and myself-my expulsion from Oxford, the opinions that caused it are no

Grosvenor C. Bedford, dated January 4, 1812, from Keswick, and published in his "Correspondence," Vol. III, pp. 325, 326. Professor Dowden has printed the passage in his "Life of Shelley," (Vol. I, p. 211).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Professor Dowden points out in his "Life of Shelley" (Vol. I, p. 213) that this description of Southey's religious opinions would seem to agree better with his earlier years than those of 1811-1812. His contributions to the *Edinburgh Annual Register* for 1812 show that he was a supporter of the Church of England.

secrets to him.—We first met Southey at his house.—He has been very kind to us. The rent of our cottage was two guineas and a half a week, with linen provided. He has made the proprietor lower it to one guinea, and has lent us linen himself. We are likely therefore to continue where we are, as we have engaged, on these terms, for three months.—After that, we will augment his rent.

Believe [me] my most valued friend, that I am no less than yourself an admirer of sincerity and openness, mystery is hateful and foreign to all my habits: I wish to have no reserves. Were the world composed of such individuals as that which shares my soul, it should be the keeper of my conscience.—But I do not know whether, in the first place, the circumstance of Hogg's apostacy is such as would in any wise contribute to benefit by its publication; and, not knowing this, should I not be highly criminal to risk anything by its disclosure? Tho' I have much respect and love for my uncle and aunt, 2 and indeed can never be sufficiently thankful for their unlimited kindness, yet I know that no good end save explicitness is to be answered by this explanation; and my uncle's indignation would be so great that I have frequently pictured to myself the possibility of [its] outstepping the limits of justice. My aunt, too, would be voluble in resentment, and I am conscious that she suspected, long before its event, the occurrence of this terrible disappointment. To you I tell everything that passes in my soul, even the secret thoughts sacred alone to sympathy. But you are my dearest friend; and, so long as the present system of things continues (which I fear is not yet verging to its demolition), so long must some distinction be established between those for whom you have a great esteem, a high regard, and those who are to you what Eliza Hitchener is to me. Since I

<sup>2</sup> Captain and Mrs. Pilfold.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Shelley's letter to T. C. Medwin of November 26, 1811, where he gives the rent of his cottage as thirty shillings a week; this may, however, have been a slip of the pen.

Dec. 26

have answered Hogg's letter, I have received another. It was not written until after the receipt of my answer. strain is humble and compliant: he talks of his quick passions, his high sense of honour. I have not answered it nor shall I. 1 He has too deeply plunged into Hypocrisy for my arguments to affect any change. I leave him to his fate. Would that I could have rescued him! It is an unavailing wish . . . the last one that I shall breathe over departed excellence. . . How I have loved him you can feel, but he is no longer the being whom perhaps 'twas the warmth of my imagination that pictured. . . I love no longer what is not that which I loved.—Do not praise me so much: my counsellor will overturn the fabric she is erecting.—You strengthen me in virtue, but weaken not the energy of your example by proposing your so high esteem as a reward for acting well. I know none of my principles who would do otherwise. This proposal will be (if made) a proof of the imbecility of aristocracy. I have been led into reasonings which make me hate more and more the existing establishment, of every kind. I gasp when I think of plate and balls and titles and Kings. I have beheld scenes of misery.—The manufacturers are reduced to starvation. My friends the military are gone to Nottingham. . . Curses light on them for their motives. if they destroy one of its famine-wasted inhabitants.— But if I were a friend to the destroyed, myself about to perish, I fancy that I could bless them for saving my friend the bitter mockery of a trial.—Southey thinks that a revolution is inevitable: this is one of his reasons for supporting things as they are. But let us not belie our principles. They may feed and may riot and may sin to the last moment.—The groans of the wretched may pass unheeded till the latest moment of this infamous revelry,—till the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley appears to have refrained from corresponding with Hogg for nearly a year. The next letter to him, printed in his "Life of Shelley," is dated December 3, 1812.

storm burst upon them, and the oppressed take ruinous vengeance on the oppressors.—I do not proceed with my poem: the subject is not now to my mind. I am composing some essays which I design to publish in the summer. The minor Poems I mentioned you will see soon: they are about to be sent to the Printers. I think it wrong to publish anything anonymously, and shall annex my name, and a preface in which I shall lay open my intentions, as the poems are not wholly useless.

"I sing, and Liberty may love the song."

Can you assist my graver labours?

Harriet complains that I hurt my health, and fancies that I shall get into prison.—The dear girl sends her love to you: she is quite what is called "in love" with you. What do you advise me about Hogg and my uncle? If you think best, I will tell him. Do you be my mentor, my guide, my counsellor, the half of my soul. I demand it. I never heard of Parkinson. I have not room to say anything of Xenophanes, I shall send for the "Organic Remains," etc. You will like the "Political Justice": for its politics you are prepared. (I hope you have got the first edition), the chapters on Truth and sincerity are impressively true, but I anticipate your opinions.

<sup>2</sup> James Parkinson (d. 1824), a Hoxton surgeon and apothecary; besides some medical works he wrote popular books on health and education and "Organic Remains of a Former World," 1804-11, three vols.

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Shelley did not succeed in the endeavour to publish his minor poems. While at Dublin, he put them into the hands of R. and J. Stockdale, junr., of 62 Abbey Street, a firm of printers (unconnected with the London publisher of the same name), who refused, however, to proceed with the work until paid. It seems likely that a part of the volume was set up, as Shelley experienced some difficulty in recovering the manuscript. (See Harriet Shelley's letters to Miss Nugent, pp. 365, 380.) A manuscript volume of unpublished verse, undoubtedly that here referred to, belonging to this period of Shelley's life, in the possession of his grandson, Mr. Charles E. J. Esdaile, was made use of by Professor Dowden in his "Life of Shelley."

I have neglected ten thousand things—in my next. I will live beyond this life.

Yours, yours most imperishably, PERCY S.

If they charge you a double sheet show this, 1 or open it before them, and they will retract.

[Addressed outside],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Süssex.
[Postmark], Dec. 30, 1811.

## 111. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

Keswick [Cumberland],

Jan[uary] 2, 1812.

MY DEAREST FRIEND.

Your immense sheet, and the voluminousness of your writing, and my pleasure, demand an equivalent. give it at length: but do not flatter me so much as to suppose that I can equal you in interest. Your style may not be so polished . . . sometimes I think it is not so legal as mine: but words are only signs of ideas, and their arrangement only valuable as it is adapted adequately to express them. Your eloquence comes from the soul: It has the impassionateness of nature. I sometimes doubt the source of mine, and suspect the genuineness of my sincerity. . . But I do not think I have any reason: no, I am firm, secure, unchangeable. . . Pardon this scepticism; but I will incorporate, for the inspection of my second conscience, each shadow, however fleeting, each idea which worth or chance imprints on my recollection.—You have loved God, but not the God of Christianity. . . A God of pardons and revenge, a God whose will could change the order of the universe, seems never to have been the object

<sup>1</sup> Marked outside: "This is only a large single sheet."

of your affections. . . I have lately had some conversation with Southey which has elicited my true opinions of God. He says I ought not to call myself an atheist, since in reality I believe that the universe is God. I tell him I believe that God is another signification for the Universe. I then explain:—I think reason and analogy seem to countenance the opinion that life is infinite; that, as the soul which now animates this frame was once the vivifying principle of the infinitely lowest link in the Chain of existence, so is it ultimately destined to attain the highest . . . that everything is animation (as explained in my last letter); and in consequence being infinite we can never arrive at its termination. How, on this hypothesis, are we to arrive at a First Cause?—Southey admits and believes this.—Can he be a Christian? Can God be Three? Southey agrees in my idea of Deity, the mass of infinite intelligence. . . I, you, and he, are constituent parts of What is now to be thought this immeasurable whole. of Jesus Christ's divinity? To me it appears clear as day that it is the falsehood of human-kind.

You seem much to doubt Christianity. I do not: I cannot conceive in my mind even the possibility of its genuineness. . . I am far from thinking you weak and imbecile. . . you must know this. I look up to you as a mighty mind. . . I anticipate the era of reform with the more eagerness as I picture to myself you the barrier between violence and renovation.—Assert your true character, and believe one who loves you for what you are to be sincere. Knowing you to be thus great, I should grieve that you countenanced imposture. . . Love God, if thou wilt, I do not think you ever feared Him, but recollect what God is.

If what I have urged against Christianity is insufficient, read its very books, that a nearer inspection may contribute to the rectifying any false judgment. Physical considerations must not be disregarded, when physical improbabilities are asserted by the witnesses of a contested

question. Bearing in mind that disinterestedness is the essence of virtuous motive, any dogmas militating with this principle are to be rejected. Considering that belief is not a voluntary operation of the mind, any system which makes it a subject of reward or punishment cannot be supposed to emanate from one who has a master-knowledge of the human mind. All investigations of the era of the world's existence are incongruous with that of Moses. Whether it is probable that Moses or Sir Isaac Newton, knew astronomy best? Besides, Moses writes the history of his own death; which is almost as extraordinary a thing to do as to describe the creation of the world. much for Christianity . . . this only relates to the truth of it . . . do not forget the weightier consideration of its direct effects. Southey is no believer in original sin: he thinks that which appears to be a taint of our nature is in effect the result of unnatural political institutions: there He thinks the prejudices of education, and sinister influences of political institutions, adequate to account for all the specimens of vice which have fallen within his observation. You talk of Montgomery. We all sympathise with him, and often think and converse of him. I am going to write to him to-day. His story is a terrible one . . . it is briefly this:—His father and mother were Moravian missionaries. They left their country to convert the Indians: they were young, enthusiastic, and excellent. The Indians savagely murdered Montgomery was then quite a child . . but the impression of this event never wore away. When he grew up, he became a disbeliever of Christianity, having very much such principles as a virtuous enquirer of truth. the meantime he loved an apparently amiable female. . He was about to marry her. Having some affairs in the West Indies, he went to settle them before his marriage. On his return to Sheffield, he actually met the marriageprocession of this woman, who had in the meantime chosen another love. He became melancholy-mad: the horrible events of his life preyed on his mind. He was shocked at having forsaken a faith for which a father and mother whom he loved had suffered martyrdom. The contest between his reason and his faith was destroying. He is now a Methodist. Will not this tale account for the melancholy and religious cast of his poetry?—This is what Southey told me, word for word.

### POET'S EPITAPH \*

Art thou a Statesman, in the van
Of public business born and bred?
First learn to love one living man;
Then mayest thou think upon the dead.

Art thou a lawyer? Come not nigh:
Go, carry to some other place.
The hardness of thy coward eye,
The falsehood of thy sallow face.

Art thou a man of rosy cheer,
A purple man right plump to see?
Approach: but, Doctor, not too near!
This grave no cushion is for thee.

Physician art thou—one all eyes—!
Philosopher—a fingering slave—
One who would peep and botanize
Upon his mother's grave?

\* Wordsworth's "A Poet's Epitaph" was written in 1799, first published in the second volume of the "Lyrical Ballads," 1800, from which Shelley copied eight of the fifteen stanzas, with

variations.

I James Montgomery (1771-1854), the Sheffield poet, was born in Ireland, the son of a Moravian missionary. He was put to school in Yorkshire, and in 1783 his parents went to Barbadoes, where they both died. Beginning life as a grocer's apprentice at Mirfield, Montgomery obtained employment in 1792 at a Sheffield newspaper office, and four years later, he became editor of the Sheffield Iris, a weekly journal in which he advocated political and religious liberty, and which he continued to conduct until 1825. He was twice prosecuted by the Government and sent to jail, where he wrote his "Prison Amusements," 1797. "The Wanderer of Switzerland" appeared in 1806, "The West Indies" in 1809, followed by many other poems and hymns. Influences of Shelley's poetry are said to be noticeable in his later work. He is remembered now chiefly as the author of some well-known hymns.

Wrapped closely in thy sensual fleece,
Pass quickly on: and take, I pray,
That he below may rest in peace,
Thy pin-point of a soul away.

But who is he, with modest looks, And clad in homely russet-brown, Who murmurs near the running brooks A music sweeter than their own?

And you must love him, ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love.
All outward shows of sky and earth,
Of sea and valley, he hath viewed;
And impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him in solitude.

I have transcribed a piece of Wordsworth's poetry. It may give you some idea of the Man. How expressively keen are the first stanzas! I shall see this man soon.

I wish I knew your mother: I do not mean your natural but your moral mother. I have many thanks to give to her. I owe her much: more than I can hope to repay, yet not without the reach of an attempt at remuneration. I look forward to the time when you will live with us: I think you ought at some time. If then principle still directs you to take scholars, this will be no impediment: but I think you might be far more usefully employed. Your pen—so overflowing, so demonstrative, so impassioned—ought to trace characters for a nation's perusal, and not make grammar-books for children. This latter is undoubtedly a most useful employment: but who would consent that such powers should always be so employed? This is, however, a subject of consideration for afterwards.

My Poems will make their appearance as soon as I can find a printer. As to the poem, I have for the present postponed its execution; thinking that, if I can finish my essays, and a tale in which I design to exhibit the cause of the failure of the French Revolution, and the state of morals and opinions in France during the latter years of

its monarchy<sup>1</sup>.—Some of the leading passions of the human mind will of course have a place in its fabric. I design to exclude the sexual passion, and think the keenest satire on its intemperance will be complete silence on the subject. I have already done about 200 pages of this work, and about 150 of the essays.

Now, you can assist me, and you do assist me. I must censure my friend's inadequate opinion of herself; for truly inadequate must it be if it inequalizes our intellectual powers. Have confidence in yourself: dare to believe "I am great."

I fear you cannot read my crossed writing: indeed, I very much doubt whether the whole of my scribbling be 'not nearly illegible. Adieu, my dearest friend. Harriet sends her love. Eliza, her sister, is a very amiable girl. Her opinions are gradually rectifying; and altho' I have never spoken of her to you before, it is injustice to her to conceal [her] from you so long. I have said nothing of Godwin-nothing of a thousand topics I had to write on.—But I admire Godwin as much as you can. I shall write to him too to-day or to-morrow. I do not suppose that he will answer my address. I shall, however, call on him whenever I go to London. I am not sure that Southey is quite uninfluenced by venality. He is disinterested, so far as respects his family; but I question if he is so, as far as respects the world. His writings solely support a numerous family. His sweet children are such amiable creatures that I almost forgive what I suspect. wife is very stupid: Mrs. Coleridge is worse. Mrs. Lovel[1], who was once an actress, is the best of them 2.

This sentence is left unfinished. Shelley speaks of a series of moral and metaphysical essays, which he contemplated writing, in his letter to Stockdale (No. 73). The tale seems to have been "Hubert Cauvin," mentioned later, which was never published.

Southey shared Greta Hall with Coleridge, whose wife (née Fricker) was Mrs. Southey's sister. Mrs. Lovell, another of Mrs. Southey's sisters, was the widow of Robert Lovell (1770? -1796), a young poet who had participated with Coleridge and Southey in 14—(2285)

Adieu, my friend and fellow-labourer; and never think that I can be otherwise than devoted to you till annihilation.

Yours for ever.

P. B. SHELLEY.

Southey says I am not an Atheist, but a Pantheist.

[Addressed outside],
single sheet,
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton, Sussex.
Jan. 3, 1812.

### 112. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

KESWICK, CUMBERLAND,
January 3, 1812.

You will be surprised at hearing from a stranger. No introduction has, nor in all probability ever will authorize that which common thinkers would call a liberty; it is, however, a liberty which, although not sanctioned by custom, is so far from being reprobated by reason, that the dearest interests of mankind imperiously demand that a certain etiquette of fashion should no longer keep "man at a distance from man," or impose its flimsy fancies between the free communication of intellect.

the Pantisocratic scheme. He had estranged himself from his wealthy Quaker father by marrying, in 1794, Mary Fricker, who had attempted to help her bankrupt father by becoming an actress. Coleridge, Southey, and Lovell engaged to write a tragedy on "The Fall of Robespierre," but Lovell's contribution was rejected, and afterwards re-written by Southey. A volume entitled "Poems by Bion and Moschus," by Southey and Lovell, appeared at Bristol in 1794, and two years later Lovell died of a fever, being nursed during his illness by Mrs. Southey. The elder Lovell refused to assist his son's widow, on account of her former association with the stage, so Southey, with his never-failing generosity, provided her and her infant son with a home. Mrs. Lovell died at the age of ninety, having spent her remaining days, after Southey's death, with his daughter Kate.

The name of Godwin has been used to excite in me feelings of reverence and admiration. I have been accustomed to consider him a luminary too dazzling for the darkness which surrounds him. From the earliest period of my knowledge of his principles, I have ardently desired to share, on the footing of intimacy, that intellect which I have delighted to contemplate in its emanations.

Considering, then, these feelings, you will not be surprised at the inconceivable emotions with which I learned your existence and your dwelling. I had enrolled your name in the list of the honourable dead. I had felt regret that the glory of your being had passed from this earth of ours. It is not so; you still live, and, I firmly believe, are still planning the welfare of human kind.

I have but just entered on the scene of human operations; yet my feelings and my reasonings correspond with what yours were. My course has been short, but eventful. I have seen much of human prejudice, suffered much from human persecution, yet I see no reason hence inferrible which should alter my wishes for their renovation. ill treatment I have met with has more than ever impressed the truth of my principles on my judgment. I am young, I am ardent in the cause of philanthropy and truth; do not suppose that this is vanity; I am not conscious that it influences this portraiture. I imagine myself dispassionately describing the state of my mind. I am young; you have gone before me, I doubt not are a veteran to me in the years of persecution. Is it strange that, defying prejudice as I have done, I should outstep the limits of custom's prescription, and endeavour to make my desire useful by a friendship with William Godwin?

I pray you to answer this letter. Imperfect as may be my capacity, my desire is ardent and unintermitted. Half an hour would be at least humanely employed in the experiment. I may mistake your residence; certain feelings, of which I may be an inadequate arbiter, may induce you to desire concealment; I may not, in fine, have

an answer to this letter. If I do not, when I come to London, I shall seek for you. I am convinced I could represent myself to you in such terms as not to be thought wholly unworthy of your friendship; at least, if desire for universal happiness has any claim upon your preference, that desire I can exhibit. Adieu! I shall earnestly await your answer.

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, at M. J. GODWIN'S, Juvenile Library, Skinner Street, London,

## 113. To Elizabeth Hitchener (Lewes)

Keswick, Cumberland, Jan. 7, 1812.

I have delayed writing to you for two days.—I wronged myself more than you. I have been partly unwilling to break in on some writings I am engaged in; partly in depression. Believe me with what pleasure I return to you.

My dearest friend, I have thought of you and this moment am resolved no longer to think without you. Do not fear—I shall not be prisoned. I am yet but a viper in the egg, they say, I have all the venom, but I cannot sting. Besides, they shall not get at me: they cannot. I shall refer to Blackstone: he will tell me what points are criminal, and what innocent, in the eye of the law. I do not therefore anticipate a prison. I need not tell you I do not fear it. But yes, I do. It would curtail much of our Harriet's happiness, it would excite too vividly your sympathy, and might obviate my performance of many acts of usefulness which if I have liberty I can effect. Godwin yet lives: if Government, at one time, could have destroyed any man, Godwin would have ceased to be. Thomas Pain[e] died a natural death: his writings were

far more violently in opposition to Government than mine perhaps ever will be. I desire to establish on a lasting basis the happiness of human-kind. Popular insurrections and revolutions I look upon with discountenance. If such things must be, I will take the side of the People; but my reasonings shall endeavour to ward it from the hearts of the Rulers of the Earth, deeply as I detest them. How does Sir Thomas Burdett continue to live? Certainly, if Mr. Percival could have killed him, I do believe he indubitably would have done so. 1 No, my dearest friend, fear not that I shall be destroyed. They cannot, they dare not: I do not dispute that they would if they could. Miss Adams 2—I cannot pardon her for racking you with these fears: friend of my soul, cast them off. A beam from the house may destroy you: but I live in hopes that it will not. I feel assured that you are at Hurst in safety. If I did not think so, I could defy the Bishops themselves to paint a hell so red where I would not go to meet you. Harriet has written to you to-day. She has informed you of our plans. In a month I shall have completed a tale illustrative of the causes of the failure of the French Revolution to benefit mankind.

From the direction of this letter, Miss Hitchener had evidently been staying with her friend, Mrs. Adams, her former instructress, to whom she alludes as "the mother of my soul."

A slip of the pen for Sir Francis Burdett, Bart. (1770-1844), the Radical politician who, as Member for Westminster, had denounced the Government so mercilessly that when (in 1810) he indiscreetly denied the right of the House to commit a popular orator for libel, he was sent to the Tower. Sir Francis was ardently supported by the people, and released on the prorogation of Parliament. "It is evident," says Mr. MacCarthy in "Shelley's Early Life," p. 292, "that while Shelley was living at Lynmouth in 1812, he was in constant correspondence with Sir Francis Burdett; in fact, his letters were so numerous as to attract the notice of the postmaster at Barnstaple, who communicated with Mr. (subsequently Sir) Francis Freeling." These letters have not been published; perhaps they were not preserved. The Hon. Spencer Percival (1762-1812) was Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time of Shelley's letter, and three months later (May 11th, 1812), was assassinated in the lobby of the House of Commons by a madman.

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At the conclusion of that month we think of going to Dublin, where I shall print it; in May, to receive your visit in Wales-fifty miles nearer than Cumberland. In fact, my friend, at this Keswick, though the face of the country is lovely, the people are detestable. The manufacturers with their contamination have crept into the peaceful vale, and deformed the loveliness of Nature with human taint. The debauched servants of the great families who resort contribute to the total extinction of morality. Keswick seems more like a suburb of London than a village of Cumberland. Children are frequently found in the river, which the unfortunate women employed in the manufactory destroy. Wales is very different, and there you shall visit us. The distance is somewhat shorter, the scenery quite as beautiful. Southey says Expediency ought to [be] made the ground of politics, but not of morals. I urged that the most fatal error that ever happened in the world was the separation of political and ethical science; that the former ought to be entirely regulated by the latter, as whatever was a right criterion of action for an individual must be so for a society, which was but an assemblage of individuals; "that politics were morals comprehensively enforced." Southey did not think the reasoning conclusive, he has a very happy knack when truth goes against him, of saying: "Oh! when you are as old as I am, you will think with me," this talent he employed in the above instance. Nothing can well be more weak. If a thing exists, there can always be shown reasons for its existence. If there cannot, it still may exist, but never can be the subject of mortal faith.

You will see in my "Hubert Cauvin" (the name of the tale) that I have spoken of expediency, insincerity, mystery; adherence to which I do not consider the remotest occasion of violence and blood in the French Revolution. Indeed, their fatal effects are to be traced in every one instance of human life where vice and misery enter into the features of the portraiture. I do not think so highly of Southey

as I did. It is to be confessed that to see him in his family, to behold him in his domestic circle, he appears in a most amiable light.—I do not mean that he is or can be the great character which once I linked him to. His mind is terribly narrow, compared to it. Once he was this character,—everything you can conceive of practised virtue.—Now he is corrupted by the world, contaminated by Custom: it rends my heart when I think what he might have been! Wordsworth and Coleridge I have yet to see. I now send you some Poetry: the subject is not fictitious. It is the overflowings of the mind this morning.

### MOTHER AND SON

T

She was an aged woman, and the years

Which she had numbered on her toilsome way
Had bowed her natural powers to decay.

She was an aged woman; yet the ray
Which faintly glimmered through her starting tears,
Pressed into light by silent misery,
Hath soul's imperishable energy—

She was a cripple, and incapable
To add one mite to gold-fed luxury:

And therefore did her spirit dimly feel
That poverty, the crime of tainting stain,
Would merge her in its depths, never to rise again.

Η

One only son's love had supported her.

She long had struggled with infirmity,
Lingering to human life-scenes; for to die,
When fate has spared to rend some mental tie,
Would many wish, and surely fewer dare.
But, when the tyrant's bloodhounds forced the child
For his curst power unhallowed arms to wield,
Bend to another's will, become a thing
More senseless than the sword of battlefield—
Then did she feel keen sorrow's keenest sting;
And many years had passed ere comfort they would bring.

#### III

For seven years did this poor woman live In unparticipated solitude. Thou mightst have seen her in the forest rude Picking the scattered remnants of its wood.



If human, thou mightst then have learned to feel.
The gleanings of precarious charity
Her scantiness of food did scarce supply.
The proofs of an unspeaking sorrow dwelt
Within her ghastly hollowness of eye:
Each arrow of the season's change she felt.
Yet still she groans, ere yet her race were run,
One only hope: it was—once more to see her son.

#### IV

It was an eve of June, when every star

Spoke peace from heaven. . . .

She rested on the moor. 'Twas such an eve

When first her soul began indeed to grieve:

Then he was there; now he is very far!

The sweetness of the balmy evening

A sorrow o'er her aged soul did fling,

Yet not devoid of rapture's mingled tear:

A balm was in the poison of the sting!

The aged sufferer for many a year

Had never felt such comfort. She suppressed

A sigh—and, turning round, clasped William to her breast!

#### V

And, tho' his form was wasted by the woe
Which tyrants on their victims love to wreak,
Tho' his sunk eyeballs and his faded cheek
Of slavery's violence and scorn did speak,
Yet did the aged woman's bosom glow!
The vital fire seemed reillumed within,
By this sweet unexpected welcoming.
Oh consummation of the fondest hope
That ever soared on fancy's wildest wing!
O tenderness that found'st so sweet a scope!
Prince who dost pride thee on thy mighty sway,
When thou canst feel such love, thou shalt be great as they.

#### VI

Her son, compelled, the country's foes had fought,
Had bled in battle; and the stern control
Which ruled his sinews and coerced his soul
Utterly poisoned life's unmingled bowl,
And unsubduable evils on him brought.
He was the shadow of the lusty child
Who, when the time of summer season smiled,
Did earn for her a meal of honesty,
And with affectionate discourse beguiled
The keen attacks of pain and poverty;
Till Power, as envying her this only joy,
From her maternal bosom tore the unhappy boy.

### VII

And now cold charity's unwelcome dole
Was insufficient to support the Pair;
And they would perish rather than would bear
The law's stern slavery, and the insolent stare
With which law loves to rend the poor man's soul—
The bitter scorn, the spirit-sinking noise
Of heartless mirth which women, men, and boys,
Wake in this scene of legal misery.

The facts are real: that recorded in the last fragment of a stanza is literally true. The poor man said: "None of my family ever came to parish, and I would starve first. I am a poor man; but I could never hold my head up after that."—Adieu, my dearest friend. Think of the poetry which I have inserted as a picture of my feelings, not a specimen of my art. I shall write to you soon again. Your letters give me perpetual food for thought and discussion. Southey has got off more hardly than he otherwise would have done, in consequence of them. Not that I ever will abet expediency, either in morals or politics. I never will do ill that good may come, at least, so far.

Adieu. Harriet desires her love. My dearest friend, adieu.

### Your eternal

PERCY B. S.

I find you begin to doubt the eternity of the soul: I do not.—More of that hereafter.

[Addressed outside],
single sheet,
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton, Sussex.

[Re-directed to]
Mrs. Adams,
School Hall,
Lewes.

[Postmark], Brighton, 12 Jan., 1812.

## 114. TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

Keswick, January 10,71812.

SIR,

It is not otherwise to be supposed than that I should appreciate your avocations far beyond the pleasure or benefit which can accrue to me from their sacrifice. The time, however, will be small which may be mis-spent in reading this letter; and much individual pleasure as an answer might give me, I have not the vanity to imagine that it will be greater than the happiness elsewhere diffused during the time which its creation will occupy.

You complain that the generalizing character of my letter renders it deficient in interest; that I am not an individual to you. Yet, intimate as I am with your character and your writings, intimacy with yourself must in some degree precede this exposure of my peculiarities. It is scarcely possible, however pure be the morality which he has endeavoured to diffuse, but that generalization must characterize the uninvited address of a stranger to a stranger.

I proceed to remedy the fault. I am the son of a man of fortune in Sussex. The habits of thinking of my father and myself never coincided. Passive obedience was inculcated and enforced in my childhood. I was required to love, because it was my duty to love: it is scarcely necessary to remark, that coercion obviated its own intention. I was haunted with a passion for the wildest and most extravagant romances. Ancient books of Chemistry and Magic were perused with an enthusiasm of wonder, almost amounting to belief. My sentiments were unrestrained by anything within me; external impediments were numerous, and strongly applied; their effect was merely temporary.

From a reader, I became a writer of romances; before

the age of seventeen I had published two, 1 "St. Irvyne" and "Zastrozzi," each of which, though quite uncharacteristic of me as now I am, yet serves to mark the state of my mind at the period of their composition. I shall desire them to be sent to you: do not, however, consider this as any obligation to yourself to misapply your valuable time.

It is now a period of more than two years since first I saw your inestimable book on "Political Justice; "2 it opened to my mind fresh and more extensive views; it materially influenced my character, and I rose from its perusal a wiser and a better man. I was no longer the votary of romance; till then I had existed in an ideal world—now I found that in this universe of ours was enough to excite the interest of the heart, enough to employ the discussions of reason; I beheld, in short, that I had duties to perform. Conceive the effect which the "Political Justice" would have upon a mind before jealous of its independence and participating somewhat singularly in a peculiar susceptibility.

My age is now *nineteen*; at the period to which I allude I was at Eton. No sooner had I formed the principles

<sup>2</sup> Shelley requests Stockdale to send him a copy of "Political Justice" in a letter from Oxford, Nov. 19, 1810. He may, however, already have seen the book before that date.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Here Shelley was in error: he was born on August 4th, 1792; "Zastrozzi" was published in April, 1810, when he was seventeen and eight months, and "St. Irvyne" appeared in December of the same year, when he was four months over eighteen. Thomas Medwin, in his recollections of Shelley's school-days at Zion House Academy, Brentford, speaks of his love of reading, and especially refers to certain blue books "that were to be bought for sixpence, and embodied stories of haunted castles, bandits, murderers, and other grim personages"—his special favourite was "Peter Wilkins," which made him wish "for a winged wife, and little winged cherubs of children. . . ." Richardson, Fielding and Smollett were little to Shelley's taste. Anne Radcliffe's works pleased him most, particularly "The Italian," but the Rosa-Matilda school, especially a strange, wild romance entitled "Zofloya, or the Moor," a Monk-Lewisy production, where his Satanic Majesty, as in "Faust," plays. the chief part, enraptured him. The two novels he afterwards wrote, entitled "Zastrozzi" and "[St. Irvyne or] The Rosicrucian," were modelled after this ghostly production.—"Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 29-31.

which I now profess, than I was anxious to disseminate their benefits. This was done without the slightest caution. I was twice expelled, but recalled by the interference of my father. I went to Oxford. Oxonian society was insipid to me, uncongenial with my habits of thinking. I could not descend to common life: the sublime interest of poetry, lofty and exalted achievements, the proselytism of the world, the equalization of its inhabitants, were to me the soul of my soul. You can probably form some idea of the contrast exhibited to my character by those with whom I was surrounded. Classical reading and poetical writing employed me during my residence at Oxford.

In the meantime I became, in the popular sense of the word "God," an Atheist. I printed a pamphlet, avowing my opinion, and its occasion. I distributed this anonymously to men of thought and learning, wishing that Reason should decide on the case at issue; it was never my intention to deny it. Mr. Coplestone, at Oxford, among others, had the pamphlet; he showed it to the Master and the Fellows of University College, and I was sent for. I was informed, that in case I denied the publication no more would be said. I refused, and was expelled.

It will be necessary, in order to elucidate this part of my history, to inform you that I am heir by entail to an estate of £6,000 per annum. My principles have induced me to regard the law of primogeniture an evil of primary magnitude. My father's notions of family honour are incoincident with my knowledge of public good. I will never sacrifice the latter to any consideration. My father has ever regarded me as a blot, a defilement of his honour. He wished to induce me by poverty to accept of some commission in a distant regiment, and in the interim of my absence to prosecute the pamphlet, that a process of outlawry might make the estate, on his death, devolve to my younger brother. These are the leading points of the history of the man before you. Others exist, but I have thought proper to make some selection, not that it is my

design to conceal or extenuate any part, but that I should by their enumeration quite outstep the bounds of modesty. Now, it is for you to judge whether, by permitting me to cultivate your friendship, you are exhibiting yourself more really useful than by the pursuance of those avocations, of which the time spent in allowing this cultivation would deprive you. I am now earnestly pursuing studious habits. I am writing "An inquiry into the causes of the failure of the French Revolution to benefit mankind." My plan is that of resolving to lose no opportunity to disseminate truth and happiness.

I am married to a woman whose views are similar to my own. To you, as the regulator and former of my mind, I must ever look with real respect and veneration.

Yours sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

# 115. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

Keswick,

Jan[uary] 16, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

That so prompt and so kind an answer should have relieved my mind I had scarcely dared to hope; to find that he—who as an author had gained my love and confidence, whose views and habits I had delighted to conjecture from his works, whose principles I had adopted, and every trace of whose existence is now made sacred, and I hope, eternally so, by associations, which throw the charm of feeling over the deductions of reason—that he, as a man, should be my friend and my adviser the moderator of my enthusiasm, the personal exciter and strengthener of my virtuous habits: all this was more than I dared to trust

myself to hope, and which now comes to me almost like a ray of second existence.

Without the deceit of self-flattery, which might lead me to think that my intellectual powers demanded your time, those circumstances, which arbitrarily—or, as may be said, fortuitously—place me in a situation capable hereafter of considerably influencing the actions of others, induce me to think that I shall not "in publica commoda peccem, si longo sermone morer tua tempora."

I know not how to describe the pleasure which your last letter has given me; that William Godwin should have a "deep and earnest interest in my welfare," cannot but produce the most intoxicating sensations. It may be my vanity which is thus flattered, but I am much deceived in myself, if love and respect for the great and worthy form not a very considerable part of my feelings.

I cannot help considering you as a friend and adviser, whom I have known very long; this circumstance must generate a degree of familiarity, which will cease to appear surprising to you, when the intimacy, which I had acquired with your writings, so much preceded the information which led to my first letter. It may be said, that I have derived little benefit or injury from artificial education. I have known no tutor or adviser (not excepting my father) from whose lessons and suggestions I have not recoiled with disgust.

The knowledge which I have, whatever it may be (putting out of the question the age of the grammar and the hornbook) has been acquired by my unassisted efforts. I have before given you a slight sketch of my earlier habits and feelings—my present are, in my own opinion, infinitely superior—they are elevated and disinterested: such as they are, you have principally produced them.

With what delight, what cheerfulness, what good will, may it be conceived, that I constitute myself the pupil of him, under whose actual guidance my very thoughts have hitherto been arranged.

You mistake me, if you think that I am angry with my father. I have ever been desirous of a reconciliation with him, but the price which he demands for it is a renunciation of my opinions, or, at least, a subjection to conditions which should bind me to act in opposition to their very spirit. It is probable that my father has acted for my welfare, but the manner in which he has done so will not allow me to suppose that he has felt for it, unconnectedly with certain considerations of birth; and feeling for these things was not feeling for me. I never loved my father—it was not from hardness of heart, for I have loved and do love warmly.

You say, "Being yet a scholar, I ought to have no intolerable itch to become a teacher." I have not, so far as any publications of mine are irreconcilable with the general good, or so far as they are negative. I do not set up for a judge of controversies, but into whatever company I go I have introduced my own sentiments, partly with a view, if they were any wise erroneous, that unforeseen elucidations might rectify them; or, if they were not, that I should contribute my mite to the treasury of Wisdom and Happiness. I hope, in the course of our communication, to acquire that sobriety of spirit which is the characteristic of true heroism. I have not heard, without benefit, that Newton was a modest man: I am not ignorant that vanity and folly delight in forwardness and assumption. But I think there is a line to be drawn between affectation of unpossessed talents and the deceit of self-distrust, by which much power has been lost to the world; for

> Full many a flower is born to blush unseen, And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

This line may be called "the modesty of nature." I hope I am somewhat anxious not to outstep its boundaries. I will not again crudely obtrude the question of atheism on the world. But could I not, at the same time, improve my own powers and diffuse true and virtuous principles?

Many with equally confined talents to my own are by publications scattering the seeds of prejudice and selfish-Might not an exhibition of truth, with equal elegance and depth, suffice to counteract the deleterious tendency of their principles? Does not writing hold the next place to colloquial discussion in eliciting and classing the powers of the mind? I am willing to become a scholar—nay, a pupil. My humility and confidence, where I am conscious that I am not imposed upon, and where I perceive talents and powers so certainly and undoubtedly superior, is unfeigned and complete. I have desired the publications of my early youth to be sent to you. You will perceive that "Zastrozzi" and "St. Irvyne" were written prior to my acquaintance with your writings—the "Essay on Love," a little poem<sup>1</sup>—since. I had, indeed, read "St. Leon" before I wrote "St. Irvyne," but the reasonings had then made little impression.

In a few days we set off to Dublin. I do not know exactly where we shall be; but a letter addressed to Keswick will find me. Our journey has been settled some time. We go principally to forward as much as we can the Catholic Emancipation.

Southey, the poet, whose principles were pure and elevated once, is now the paid champion of every abuse and absurdity. I have had much conversation with him. He says, "You will think as I do when you are as old." I do not feel the least disposition to be Mr. S.'s proselyte.

In the summer we shall be in the north of Wales. Dare I hope that you will come to see us? Perhaps this is

¹ Mr. D. F. MacCarthy suggests that as Shelley does not mention in this list of his publications "The Poetical Essay on the Existing State of Things," he may here refer to it under "the altered title of the 'Essay on Love.' The word 'Essay' gives great probability to this supposition" ("Shelley's Early Life," p. 105). "It seems likely," says Mr. Forman ("Shelley Library," p. 16), "that the 'Essay on Love' was one of the occasional trifles which A Newspaper Editor believed to have been printed at Horsham at the cost of Sir Bysshe."

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an unfeasible neglect of your avocations. I shall hope it until you forbid me.

I remain, with the greatest respect,
Your most sincere and devoted,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London

# 116. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

[Keswick, Cumberland, January 20, 1812.]

It is now a whole week since I have addressed my friend, my dearest friend, the partner of my thoughts. But the thought of you has enlivened and animated my intermediate employments; has added pleasure to the pleasure which I have received; and has contributed, with my dear Harriet's love, to disarm a terrible headache which I have had. I have been obliged, by an accession of nervous attack, to take a quantity of laudanum, which I did very unwillingly and reluctantly, and which I should not have done, had I been alone:—I am now quite recovered. When the mind is at ease, illness does not continue long. I have something Godwin has answered my letters, and he is to tell you. now my friend; he shall be yours—share with me this acquisition, more valuable than the gifts of Princes. His letters are like his writings, the mirror of a firm and elevated mind. They are the result of the experience of ages, which he condenses for my instruction. It is with awe and veneration that I read the letters of this veteran in persecution and independence. He remains unchanged. I have no soul-chilling alteration to record of his character, the unmoderated enthusiasm of humanity still characterizes him. He preserves those principles of extensive and independent action which alone can give energy and 15-(2285)

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vigor. Like Southey he does not change. The age of the body has [not] induced the age of the soul: tho' his shell is mouldering, the spirit within seems in no wise to participate in the decay. I have unfolded to him the leading traits of my character, and the leading events of my life. I have certainly won his good opinion. He says: "At present I feel for you all those motives of interest that can be crowded into the case of a young man I never saw. First, you appear to be in some degree the pupil of my writings; and I feel so far as if I were in a measure responsible for your conduct. Secondly, from your account of what you have done (tho' nothing you have written has fallen in my way), I cannot but conclude that you possess extraordinary powers. Thirdly, as a man of family born to a considerable fortune, it is of the more importance how you conduct yourself; for money is one of the means a man may possess of being extremely useful to his species."

But you shall see his letters; perhaps shall see himself. Oh if he would come to Wales, and meet you. I think he is old, but age with Godwin, must be but the perfecting of his abilities, but the fruit of that blossom that unfolded itself so beautifully in adolescence.—Adieu to Godwin. Now of Southey. He has lost my good opinion. private virtues can compensate for public language like The following passage is Southey's writing: the Ed[inburgh] An[nual] Register. "We are not displeased at the patriotic expedient to which the worthy Sir Francis" (italics in original) "has thus recourse; as it seems to show how contemptible are the Burdettite and Wardleite members, whose nature is debased by the vile views of faction, and whose unmanly feelings and ungenerous hearts forbid their sympathy in a case which—to the everlasting honour of the country be it related—so deeply interests" (speaking of Spain) "with keen solicitude the fond bosoms of a people "-(now mark this disgusting abominable flattery, and horrible lie—I can't contain myself)—" who, in duly appreciating his transcendent virtues, prove themselves deserving the best Monarch that ever adorned a throne." -Now what think you of this? I can only exclaim with Bolingbroke, "Poor human nature!" We have now serious thoughts of immediately going to Ireland. Southey's conversation has lost its charm; except it be the charm of horror at so hateful a prostitution of talents. I hasten to go to Ireland. I am now writing an "Address" to the poor Irish Catholics. 1 Part of it will be in the following After describing their miseries, I select you a passage which may give you some idea of my views.— "Think of your children, and your children's children; and take great care (for it all rests with you) that whilst one tyranny is destroyed, another more fierce and terrible. does not spring up. Take care of smooth-faced men who talk indeed of freedom, but who will cheat you into slavery.—Can there be worse slavery than depending for the safety of your souls on another man? Is one man more favored than another by God? No: if God makes any distinction, they are favored according to the good they do, not according to the rank or profession they hold. God loves a poor man as well as a priest, Jesus Christ has

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;An Address, / to the / Irish People, / By Percy Bysshe Snelley. / Advertisement / Dublin: / 1812. / Price 5d." The advertisement is as follows: "The lowest possible price is set on this publication, because it is the intention of the Author to awaken in the minds of the Irish poor, a knowledge of their real state, and suggesting rational means of remedy.—Catholic Emancipation, and a Repeal of the Union Act (the latter, the most successful engine that England ever wielded over the misery of fallen Ireland,) being treated of in the following address, as grievances which unanimity and resolution may remove, and association, conducted with peaceable firmness, being earnestly recommended, as means for embodying that unanimity and firmness, which must finally be successful." Shelley sent the first sheet of the pamphlet in proof, or as it was being printed, to Miss Hitchener, apparently on Feb. 20, and an early copy to Godwin on Feb. 24, 1812. On the following day it was advertised in the Dublin Evening Post, as "This day is published, price Fivepence, to be had of all the Booksellers." Shelley, in writing to Miss Hitchener on January 26th, says that the "Address to the Irish will be printed as Paine's works are, and pasted on the walls of Dublin." The typography and the coarse paper of the pamphlet certainly bear resemblance to the cheap editions of Paine's tracts.

said as much, he has given him a soul as much to himself. The worship that a good Being must love is that of a simple affectionate heart that shows its purity in good doings, and not in ceremonies, confessions, masses, burials, wonders, and processions. Take care that you are not led away by these things. Doubt everything that leads you not to love and charity with all men, and think of the word "heretic" as of a word invented by some selfish knave for the ruin and misery of the world, to answer his own paltry and narrow ambition." You see my friend what I am about. I consider that the state of Ireland as constituting a part of a great crisis in opinions. You shall see the pamphlet when it comes out: it will be cheaply printed, and printed in large sheets to be stuck about the walls of Dublin. I am eager and earnest to be there, and [? wish] that you were with me. My true and dear friend, why should we be separated? When may we unite? What might we not do, if together. If two hearts panting for the happiness and liberty of mankind, were joined by union and proximity, as they are by friendship and sympathy. What might we not expect? certainly a more extended proselytism than either separately can effectuate. How Harriet and her sister long to see you and how Ilong to see you, never to part with you again. How I could tell to you a thousand feelings and thoughts to which letters are inadequate; how plans that now die away unformed, might then be elicited and modified! We might write, and talk, and hypothesize, theorize, and Oh let the time come. It may and will neither be to-day nor to-morrow, nor this month nor next: but write of it in your next I entreat you. The ties that bind you to Hurst are not eternal; and it will be worth while to consider, since you are destined to move in an eccentric and comprehensive orbit, how far your duties at H[urst] are compatible with these, or how far they are to be neglected if a wider field is exhibited. Have you any idea of marrying? I do not think from several things you have

said on that subject that you have. It does not appear to me that there is any friend sufficiently dear to you. I might have omitted this question. I will do as much: I will answer it. You have not. Then you shall live with us,—at least—some time hence. This time shall be indefinite now. Harriet is above the littleness of jealousy, of which you at first suspected her. She will see this letter; and already feels for you the same kind of affection that I do, though not with the same intensity. Certainly, any one who got hold of this letter would think I was a Bedlamite. well, you do not; and my reputation for madness is too well-established to gain any firmness or addition from this letter.

I have received your note from Brighton (I make more differences between acquaintances, and friends or dear friends, than between notes, letters, and volumes). What bears and monkeys should I suppose were your associates. if you did not add to their happiness! or rather would they not be stones, petrifactions? You certainly tell me truism when you egotize at all. This is owing to your want of vanity, or rather want of self-sufficiency, a little more of which I wish to make you have.—I love you to talk of yourself: it is more to me than all you can say on any other subject. Not but what everything that you say gives me the greatest pleasure. I have heard from my uncle, who is going to send me £50.—Despairing of his power to do so, I had previously written to request the D[uke] of Norfolk to lend me £100: so, if the Duke complies, we shall be very rich. I shall likewise make money in Ireland. All the money I get shall be squeezed out of The poor cannot understand and would not buy my poems: therefore I shall print them expensively. My metaphysics will be also printed expensively,—the first edition, that is (I am vain enough to hope for a second). The "Address to the Irish" shall be printed very cheap,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Captain Pilfold.

Jan 20

and I shall wilfully lose money by it. I shall distribute [it] throughout Ireland, either personally or by means of booksellers. The novel will be printed cheaply.—How do you get on about money? This is a vile question to mention in our correspondence, but tell me. Pecuniary obligations are things too silly to be named among us: I never feel these things. I have reasons for my insensibility. It all depends on love of fame, and fear of infamy; which but for the opportunities which the one gives and the other takes away of being beneficent, are entitled to our completest contempt. Answer this.

Here follows a few stanzas which may amuse you. I was once rather fond of the Devil.<sup>2</sup>

Ī

The Devil went out a-walking one day,
Being tired of staying in Hell.
He dressed himself in his Sunday array;
And the reason that he was dressed so gay
Was to cunningly pry
Whether under the sky
The affairs of earth went well.

#### II

He poked his hot nose into corners so small
One would think that the innocents there,
Poor creatures! were just doing nothing at all,
But settling some dress, or arranging some ball:
The Devil saw deeper there.

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Hubert Cauvin."

<sup>\*</sup> Shelley afterwards re-wrote this poem (which is obviously in imitation of the verses by Southey and Coleridge), and printed it as a broadside, it may be surmised, in Dublin. While living at Lynmouth, in August of this year, Shelley instructed Daniel Hill, the Irishman in his employment, to distribute the "Devil's Walk" and "The Declaration of Rights" (another of Shelley's broadsides), but the man was apprehended at Barnstaple and imprisoned for distributing printed papers without a printer's name. The two broadsides were discovered by Mr. W. M. Rossetti in the Public Record Office, and made known to the public in his article in The Fortnightly Review for January 1, 1871. See also MacCarthy's "Shelley's Early Life," pp. 347-351.

#### III

He peeped in each hole, to each chamber stole,
His promising live-stock to view.
Grinning applause
He just shows his claws:
And Satan laughed in the mirth of his soul
That they started with fright
From his ugly sight
Whose works they delighted to do.

#### IV

A Parson with whom, in the house of prayer,
The Devil sate side by side,
Bawled out that, if the Devil were [there],
His presence he couldn't abide.
"Ha ha!" thought Old Nick,
"That's a very stale trick:
For, without the Devil,
O favourite of evil,
In thy carriage thou wouldst not ride!"

#### V

He saw the Devil [? a Lawyer] a viper slay
Under his brief-covered table:
It reminded the Devil marvellously
Of the story of Cain and Abel.

### VI

Satan next saw a brainless king;
Many imps he saw near there on the wing:
In a house as hot as his own.
They flapped the black pennon, and twisted the sting,
Close to the very throne.

### VII

"Ah ah!" cried Satan, "the pasture is good!

My cattle will here thrive better than others!

They will have for their food

News of human blood:

They will drink the groans of the dying and dead,
And supperless never will go to bed,

Which will make 'em as fat as their brothers."

### VIII

The Devil was walking in the Park,
Dressed like a Bond Street beau:
Nor, although his visage was rather dark,
And his mouth was wide, his chin came out,
And something like Castlereagh was his snout,
He might be called so-so.

IX

Why does the Devil grin so wide,
And show the horse teeth within?—
Nine and ninety on each side,
By the clearest reckoning!

Here the poetry ends. The fact is, he saw the Prince reviewing a regiment of hussars. Well, is not this trifling? A most teasing thing if you are not in a laughing mood. But I can laugh or weep with you. Well, write soon. We are not going to Ireland this week or next, but soon, I hope. I have changed the shape of my paper, because I am afraid they make you pay double; and you are a very naughty girl if you do this.

Harriet will write soon: she sends her love to you. By the bye, tell Mrs. Adams that I love her, and will see her whenever I come to Sussex. Do not make your seal so large, for you destroy a great deal of what I value.

Yours beyond this being

Most imperishably,

P. B. S.

You have said no more of the immortality of the soul. Do you not believe it? I do; but I cannot tell you why in a letter—at least, not clearly. You will want some feelings which are to me cogent and resistless arguments. Do not consider it a gloomy subject: do not think me prejudiced. We will reason, and abide by the result. I shall get Godwin's opinion of this when I can.

[Addressed outside],
single sheet,
Miss HITCHENER,
Capt. PILFOLD's,
Cuckfield, Sussex.

[Re-directed to]
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton,
[Postmark], Jan. 20, 1812,

# 117. **fo** Elizabeth Hitchener (Hurstpierpoint)

[Keswick, Cumberland], Jan[uary] 26, 1812.

MY DEAREST FRIEND.

I eagerly answer your letter. It contains very bad news. I grieve at human nature; but am so far from despairing that I can readily trace all that is evil, even in the youngest, to the sophistications of society. It will not appear surprising that some original taint of our nature has been adopted as an opinion by the unthinking, when they perceive how very early depraved dispositions are exhibited. But, when it is considered what exhaustless pains are taken by nurses and Parents to make wrong impressions on the infant mind, I cannot be surprised at the earliest traits of evil and mistake. I truly sympathize with your wrongs, these are, however, of such a nature as will so frequently occur that we must strive to consider them with unfeelingness, and let conscious rectitude inspire an honourable pride which shall infuse elevated tranquillity into the soul. —I did not expect this return of kindness from Anne<sup>1</sup>; she is a character who will now mingle in the mass of common life: the seeds which you have sown will spring up among tares and brambles, the dreary intercourse of daily life will blast the suckers ere they even attain adolescency. Here is an addition to that daily load of disappointment which weighs upon the mind, and checks the passionateness of hope. I will, however, cling to those who are deservedly now the landing-places of my expectancy; and, when they fail, human nature will be to me an unweeded garden, and the face of Earth hold no monster so heartless and unnatural as Man. Think not for one moment that I have doubted you. The confidence that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See p. 193.

I have in the purity and immutableness of your principles surpasses even that which I possess of my own.—These expressions are blasphemous to love and friendship, think of them as of the ebullitions of a train of fleeting thought, as of the cloud which momentarily obscures the moon, then sails into the azure of night.—Harriet has told you of a circumstance which has alarmed her 1. I consider it as a complete casual occurrence which, having met with once, we are more likely not to meet with again. The Man evidently wanted to rifle my pockets: my falling within the house defeated his intention. There is nothing. in this to alarm you. I was afraid you might see it in the newspaper, and fancy that the blow had injured me. Dismiss all fears of assassins and spies and prisons. Let me have your confident hopes of safety and success, as well as the earnest good wishes which I fancy I hear you breathing to fill the sails of our packet, and be like ministrant angels to us. All is now prepared for Ireland, except the arrival of our £100, daily expected from Whitton the attorney. (By-the-bye, my father has allowed me £200 per ann [um], attended with the compliment that he did it to prevent my cheating strangers.) All is prepared. I have been busily engaged in an "Address to the Irish," which will be printed as Paine's works were, and pasted on the walls of Dublin. My Poems will be printed there, "Hubert [Cauvin]," and the Essays.

We shall then meet in Wales. I shall try to domesticate

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Harriet's letter to Miss Hitchener (to which she and Shelley refer) has been lost. It contained particulars of an assault made on Shelley about seven o'clock on Sunday night, January 19. "Alarmed by an unusual noise, he went to the door of his cottage, opened it and instantly received a blow which struck him to the ground, where for a time he remained senseless. Mr. Dare, his landlord, hearing the disturbance, rushed into the house, and the assailants, perceiving that he was alarmed, fled immediately." Professor Dowden gives this account from a contemporary description of the assault in the Cumberland Pacquet. Certain residents in Keswick regarded the affair as nothing more serious than a dream or hallucination of Shelley's brain. ("Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 227.)

in some antique feudal castle whose mouldering turrets are fit emblems of decaying inequality and oppression; whilst the ivy shall wave its green banners above like Liberty, and flourish upon the edifice that essayed to crush As to the ghosts, I shall welcome them, altho' its root. Harriet protests against my invoking them. But they would tell tales of times of old; and it would add to the picturesqueness of the scenery to see their thin forms flitting through the vaulted charnels. Perhaps the Captain will come, and my aunt and the little things: perhaps you will bring the dear little Americans, 1 and my mother, Mrs. Adams. Perhaps Godwin will come—I shall try to induce him.—These castles are somewhat aërial at present. but I hope it is not a crime, in this mortal life, to solace ourselves with hopes. Mine are always rather visionary. In the basis of this scheme, however, if you and I live, we will not be disappointed. I hear from my uncle that Sir B[ysshe] Shelley 2 is not likely to live long—that he will

<sup>1</sup> Miss Hitchener's pupils. See p. 175.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Sir Bysshe Shelley, Bart. (1731-1815) the grandfather of Percy Bysshe Shelley, was the son of Timothy Shelley of Christ Church, Newark, New Jersey, where he was born on June 21st, 1731. Beginning life with little or no fortune, Bysshe Shelley (according to Medwin) exercised the profession of a quack doctor, and married the widow of a miller. There is nothing to support this statement, the truth of which even the inaccurate Medwin did not vouch. No mention is made of this early marriage in the pedigree (printed by Mr. Buxton Forman in the first volume of his edition of Shelley's Prose works), and the church records at Newark are said to have been destroyed by the King's troops in the American War. rumour may, however, have given rise to Shelley's allusion to Sir Bysshe's three wives. Six feet high, remarkably handsome and possessed of polished manners and address, Bysshe Shelley had returned to England by 1751, for in that year, at the age of twentyone, he married, without the consent of her guardians, an heiress, Mary Catherine, daughter of the Rev. Theobald Michell, by whom he had a son Timothy (father of the poet) and two daughters, and became possessed of the property of Field Place, Horsham. Mrs. Shelley died at the age of twenty-six, and nine years after her death Bysshe Shelley married another heiress, Elizabeth Jane Sydney, daughter of William Perry, of Penshurst, Kent, who was descended from the family of Sir Philip Sydney, and who bore him three sons and two daughters. Her first son became the baronet.

soon die. He is a complete atheist, and builds all his hopes He has acted very ill to three wives. on annihilation. He is a bad man. I never had respect for him: I always regarded him as a curse on society. I shall not grieve at his death. I will not wear mourning: I will not attend his funeral. I shall think of his departure as of that of a hard-hearted reprobate. I will never countenance a lying estimation of my own feelings. I have the vanity to think that you will be pleased with my "Address to the Irish." It is intended to familiarize to uneducated apprehensions ideas of liberty, benevolence, peace, and toleration. It is secretly intended also as a preliminary to other pamphlets to shake Catholicism on its basis, and to induce Quakerish and Socinian principles of politics, without objecting to the Christian religion, which would be no good to the vulgar just now, and cast an odium over the other principles which are advanced. The volume of poetry will be I fear an inferior production: it will be only valuable to philosophical and reflecting minds who love to trace the early state of human feelings and opinions,---who can make allowances for some bad versification. None is more qualified than yourself my friend to come to a right judgment on this score, tho' a consideration of your

Sir John Shelley-Sydney, of Penshurst, and his son was in 1835 created Baron de l'Isle and Dudley. Bysshe Shelley, a staunch Whig, and an adherent to the Duke of Norfolk's party, was rewarded for his loyalty in 1806 with a baronetcy. Though he had built Castle Goring at a cost of more than £80,000, he latterly became miserly and eccentric in his habits, and lived during the last twenty or thirty years of his life in a small cottage at Horsham, waited on by a single servant, and he frequented the village tap-rooms. He seems to have been generally disliked by his family, and especially by his son Timothy, but he showed an interest in his grandson Percy. In the "Newspaper Editor's Reminiscences," printed in Fraser's Magazine for June, 1841, it is stated that Sir Bysshe used to supply Shelley with money, and would defray the printing of the boy's fugitive pieces which issued from the press of a Horsham printer named Phillips. Sir Bysshe died on January 6, 1815, and was buried at Horsham.

partiality for the author will prevent him from thinking you infallible in things that regarded his mental powers:— "Hubert" I have told you of. Southey regrets our going. The Calverts were much against it; nay, all of them violently, except Mrs. C[alvert], who wishes us success heartily. We shall have success: I am perfectly confident of the impossibility of failure. Let your pure spirit animate our proceedings. Oh that you were with us. You have said you are not handsome, but, though the sleekness of your skin, the symmetry of your form, might not attract the courtiers of Dublin Castle, yet that tongue of energy, and that eye of fire, would awe them into native insignificance, and command the conviction of those whose hearts vibrate in unison with justice and benevolence.— Dinner surprised me in the midst of my letter. I have since seen yours to Harriet. Oh my dearest friend, do not suffer the little ingratitude of one of the vipers of the world to sting you too severely. Do not feel.—Yes, do feel, that I may feel with you; that every vibration of your nerves may be assimilated to mine, mine to yours. Dare all !—You have mistaken Harriet: she is not pregnant. It was a piece of good fortune which I could not expect. I can truly imagine your hopes and feelings concerning the possibility of this circumstance. I hope to have a large family of children: It will bind you and me closer, and Harriet. I, who believe in the omnipotence of education, have no fears for their eventual well-being.

Harriet has filled up most of this letter, whilst I have been writing to the Captain. Do not consider this as a letter: I owe you one now. You shall have full payment.

I am now, as Harriet can tell you, quite recovered from the little nervous attack I mentioned. Do not alarm yourself either about murderers, spies, government, prisons, or nerves. I must, as I said, have hopes, and those very confident ones, from you, to fill the sails of our packet to Dublin.

The post-woman waits; and therefore, my dearest

friend, I bid you adieu. Happiness and hope attend my dearest friend until we meet at the Post-office, Dublin!

Yours P. B. S.

I have made a strong, though vulgar appeal to the feelings of the postmaster, as to my veracity about the single sheet. 1

### [Written by Harrist]

### MY DEAR MADAM,

Your letter has given me great pain, when I think that one so amiable should be made the sport of an unfeeling and prejudiced woman. I had loved this Anne, for I thought her amiable and sensible: but how often are we deceived in children; you are unhappy my dear friend about her; and what can we do to restore your felicity? Would that you were here! How do I every day hate the foolish customs of society that shackle all our projects! You beg me to pardon you for committing a very slight error, it is now your turn to pardon me. I have sent you a letter<sup>2</sup> which I am afraid will add to your melancholy: vet it is true what I have said, and now I am quite angry that I sent it, yet I was afraid you might hear the circumstance much more dreadful than it really was; but do not, my dear Madam, suffer yourself to be alarmed at it; for now all is quiet and tranquil, nor do we expect any more alarms, and if we have, which is not at all likely, we are well guarded.—I hope you will not let it prey upon you, but endeavour to forget it as soon as read, and indeed if you have not read it before you receive this, let me beg of you to burn it unopened.

Percy is writing to Captain Pilfold: he means to put him right in respect to what my aunt has told him. He has therefore made me fill up this large sheet. I wish he had done it himself, as to a certainty it would be much

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See the direction of this letter, p. 239.

<sup>\*</sup> This is the lost letter alluded to above by Shelley.

more entertaining than this. He is much better than he has been for some time; and I hope as he gets stronger, he will outgrow his nervous complaints. Next week we think of going to Ireland: therefore you had better direct your next letter to the Post Office, Dublin. I need not tell [you] I wish we were there; tho' I have never been on the sea, therefore I do not know what an effect it may have upon me, tho' now I can bear the journey better than if I were you know what; which I do not expect will be the case for some time, years perhaps. But now adieu to that subject.—I am reading a new thing written after the Revolution; but there are none of the great characters mentioned, therefore I am quite disappointed. Southey has lent them to us. I shall write again to-morrow as I have a great deal to say. In the meantime believe me

Your most affectionate sincere friend,

H. S.

[Addressed outside],
Single sheet, by God
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton, Sussex.
[Postmark], Jan. 28.

# 118. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

KESWICK, CUMBERLAND, [Postmark], January 28, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter has reached me on the eve of our departure for Dublin. I cannot deny myself the pleasure of answering it, although we shall probably have reached Ireland before an answer to this can arrive. You do us a great and essential service by the enclosed introduction to Mr. Curran<sup>1</sup>;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> John Philpot Curran (1750-1817), the Irish orator, who, at the date of Shelley's visit to Ireland, was Master of the Rolls. He defended Archibald Hamilton Rowan in 1792, as well as the patriots of the Irish Rebellion of 1798, and was strongly opposed to the

he is a man whose public character I have admired and respected. You offer an additional motive for hastening our journey. I have not long been married. My wife is the partner of my thoughts and feelings. My state at the period of our first knowledge of each other was isolated and friendless; hers was embittered by family disagreements and a system of domestic oppressions. We agreed to unite our fates, and the reasons that operated to induce our submission to the ceremonies of the Church were the many advantages of benefiting society which the despotism of custom would cut us off from in case of our nonconformity. My peculiar reasons were considerations of the unequally weighty burden of disgrace and hatred which a resistance to this system would entail upon my companion. A man, in such a case, is a man of gallantry and spirit—a woman loses all claim to respect and politeness. She has lost modesty, which is the female criterion of virtue, and those whose virtues extend no farther than modesty regard her with hatred and contempt.

You regard early authorship [as] detrimental to the cause of general happiness. I confess this has not been my opinion, even when I have bestowed deep, and I hope, disinterested thought upon the subject.

If any man would determine, sincerely and cautiously, at every period of his life, to publish books which should contain the real state of his feelings and opinions, I am willing to suppose that this portraiture of his mind would be worth many metaphysical disquisitions; and one, whose mind is strongly imbued with an ardent desire of communicating pleasurable sensations, is of all others the least

Union. His daughter Sarah, who was deeply in love with the hapless Robert Emmet, did not long survive his execution. With such a record, and with his sympathy for the wrongs of his Catholic countrymen, it is not surprising that Godwin looked to Curran to befriend Shelley. In later years, when Shelley was in Italy he became acquainted with Curran's daughter Amelia, who was living at Rome. It was she who painted the familiar portrait of Shelley now in the National Portrait Gallery, London.

likely to publish any feelings or opinions, but such as should excite the reader to discipline in some sort his mind into the same state as that of the writer.

With these sentiments, I have been preparing an address to the Catholics of Ireland, which, however deficient may be its execution, I can by no means admit that it contains one sentiment which can harm the cause of liberty and happiness. It consists of the benevolent and tolerant deductions of philosophy reduced into the simplest language, and such as those who by their uneducated poverty are most susceptible of evil impressions from Catholicism may clearly comprehend. I know it can do no harm; it cannot excite rebellion, as its main principle is to trust the success of a cause to the energy of its truth. It cannot "widen the breach between the kingdoms," as it attempts to convey to the vulgar mind sentiments of universal philanthropy, and whatever impressions it may produce, they can be no others but those of peace and harmony; it owns no religion but benevolence, no cause but virtue, no party but the world. I shall devote myself with unremitting zeal, as far as an uncertain state of health will permit, towards forwarding the great ends of virtue and happiness in Ireland, regarding as I do the present state of that country's affairs as an opportunity which if I, being thus disengaged, permit to pass unoccupied, I am unworthy of the character which I have assumed. Enough of Ireland!

I anticipated in my own mind your sentiments on the remark which you quoted from my last letter concerning my father. I am not a stranger to the immense complexity of human feelings, but when I find generosity so exceedingly outweighed in any one's conduct by the contrary, and less extended principle, then I despair of good fruits, seeing marks of barrenness. I have a great wish of adding to my father's happiness, because the filial connection seems to render it, as it were, more particularly in my power; but it is impossible. A little time since, he sent to me a letter, through his attorney, renewing an allowance of two hundred 16—(2285)

pounds per annum, but with this remark, "that his sole reason for so doing was to prevent my cheating strangers." The insult contained in these words, as applied to me, excites no feelings of repulsion or hatred towards him, but it makes me despair of conciliation when I see how rooted is his prejudice against me.

I find myself near the end of my paper. My egotism appears inexhaustible. My relation of pupilage with regard to you in a manner excuses this apparent vanity. I wish to put you in possession of as much of my thoughts and feelings as I know myself. I shall regard as a most inestimable blessing my happy audacity in casting aside the trammels of custom, and drinking the streams of your mind at their fountain-head.

I will say no more of Wales at present. We have determined next summer to receive a most dear friend, of whom I shall speak hereafter, in some romantic spot. Perhaps I shall be able to prevail on you and your wife and children to leave the tumult and dust of London for a while. However that may be, I shall certainly see you in London. I am not yet of age. At that time, I have great hopes of being enabled to offer you a house of my own. Philanthropy is confined to no spot.—Adieu!

Direct your next—" Post Office, Dublin."

My wife sends her respects.

Believe me, in all sincerity of heart, yours truly, sincerely, P. B. Shelley.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

# 119. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

[Greta Bank,] Keswick [Cumberland], [January 29, 1812.]

On Monday we depart for Ireland. This is probably the last letter you will receive from Keswick. We are

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Hitchener.

staying at Calvert's, and our £100 has arrived. Prospects appear fair; but I have learned to doubt of the result of all human enterprises, whilst my language and my countenance express the confidence of enthusiasm, and my heart rebels against the dismal suggestions of possible evil.

I do not ask you wherefore you are unhappy my dearest friend because I sympathize with every feeling which the unkindness of ingratitude excites in you, but I tell you to subdue it, for our sakes, and for the sake of that world to which I will suppose that you are destined to be an ornament and a glory.—Your present state is isolated and friendless; even worse, daily ingratitude and unexpected duplicity cut you to the heart. You suffer the severities of ill fortune, and all the dreary intercourse of daily life is unmingled by consolation, save the infrequent post-days. And what can letters do? They can becalm the soul, but not all day, they can tell you that you are beloved; can prove to you that I am yours; but this only at intervals. With what bitter force will ingratitude and duplicity recur. This is more than duty demands: for a devotement like yours some recompense is to be expected. I will find one for you—tho' here a corner of self comes in.—Come and live with us. You are not one to start at this. will the world say? What they please, precisely. who know anything of our public and private character will believe any scandal as soon as Sir F. Burdett's friends would give credit to the story of his keeping five mistresses in Tottenham Court Road. This is one of the Morning Post stories. Nor will the world's whispers affect our usefulness. In what manner? Who will credit that, when I made a Scotch marriage with a woman who is handsome, that any criminality, of the nature of infidelity, can be attached to me? Who will believe, when they read our publications, but that our conduct is in some degree regulated by such impressions, and repeated endeavours to counteract general demoralization? And supposing

after all that they did believe this, are we answerable for their silly notions? Is our usefulness and happiness, which latter must in some degree conduce to the former, to be sacrificed to opinion? Is expediency to be the rule of our conduct? Ought minds unisonous in reason and feeling to be separated by the inferences which others may draw from their conduct? Let us attempt to form this Paradise, and defy the destroyers. consistent Calm reasoning will defeat the most terrible. Besides, you may be eminently useful: the union of our minds will be much more efficacious than a state of separate endeavour.—I shall excite you to action, you will excite me to just specu-We should mutually correct each other's weaknesses, and confirm our powers. Harriet, Eliza, and Percy, all join to entreat that you will attempt to come . . . to consider the point without having decided against us previously. How extensive might not be your usefulness, how improved and confirmed your speculations of justness! What admirable and excellent greatness might you not add to the grandeur and firmness of your present character— And I! how firm and collected should I not become. I should possibly gain the advantage in the exchange of qualities, but my powers are such as would augment yours. —I perceive in you the embryon of a mighty intellect which may one day enlighten thousands. How desirous ought I not to be, if I conceive that one spark which glimmers through mine should kindle a blaze by which nations may rejoice. . . Am I not earnest that you should come? —but consider this point. We have enough money for all of us. There is no doubt but that you could do more good with us than at Hurst. Explain your plan to your father: tell him that your considerations of usefulness lead you to join yourself with us. I will not insult your confidence by supposing that you can fear [but] that you will be independent amongst us. Whenever you come, you have nothing to do but to throw yourself into the mail, and when you come at the end of your journey. I

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shall be waiting for you. In the summer we shall see you. Can you make up your mind never to leave us? How consummate then might not our publications be, how directed by the close analysis of reasoning, how animated by the emanations of your warmer heart! Have you no money? Write and say so. If not we can easily spare some: we shall have superfluity in Dublin.—Will you well consider this? Oh, my dearest friend, when I think of the uncertainty and transitoriness of human life and its occupations, when I consider its fleeting prospects and its fluctuating principles, how desirous am I to crowd into its sphere as much usefulness as possible.—We have but a certain time allotted us in which to do its business: how much does it become us to improve and multiply this time: and to regard every hour neglected, mis-spent, or unimproved, as so much lost to the cause of virtue, liberty, and happiness. I hope to be compelled to [have] recourse to laudanum no more. My health is re-established, and I am now strong in hope and nerve. Your hopes must go with us: I must have no horrible forebodings. Everybody is not killed that goes to Dublin. Perhaps many are now on the road for the very same purpose as that which we propose. As to what you say of the Duke of Norfolk. it is quite unfounded. The D[uke] is a deist. The Duke is far from the best of the English noblemen: he is not a moral man, but certainly is not attached to Catholicism. He desires and votes for Reform, tho' he has not virtue enough to begin it in his own person. He is in every respect a character of mediocrity, depend upon it, I have nothing to fear either from him or his emissaries. Duke is as [little] my friend as he is yours—he merely desires to gratify his own family, his own borough-interest. -" Passive virtue is " not " your sphere of action:" most active you ought to be. Come, come to Ireland. Arrange your affairs, give up school, it is a noble field. Energies like yours ought to be unconfined. Write for what money you want. You do not fear the journey;

the hatred of the world is despicable to you. Come, come, and share with us the noblest success, or the most glorious martyrdom. Here is an appeal to the feelings of a noble mind. I ought to be ashamed of myself. Consider merely the considerations of usefulness, and put out of the question all foolish rant of persuasion. Yet come: it is right that you should come. Assert your freedom—the freedom of truth and nature.

You will hear from me again. Adieu, my dearest friend. I shall write, before we leave K[eswick], again.

Yours

### [Written by Harriet]

Why is my dear friend unhappy, and why are you not with us? Why will you suffer the opinion of the world to keep you from us, and to make yourself unhappy; would it not be better to leave the world to itself, and come and be happy whilst it is in your power? Remember life is short. What shall I say to bring you to us? there nothing we can urge to shake you? Why are we separated? Should we not be more useful all together? You would, by your arguments, countenance ours: as you are older than I am, therefore people would not think what I say so foolish. Then why will you not join us? I am well convinced that, if you were in Ireland, you might do as much good as Percy. Indeed I am hurt at the idea of your being unhappy: and why would you be the slave of a world that has persecuted you, and which continues to wound you in every way it can? O my friend, what I say may have no weight. I know I am much younger than yourself, and that your judgment is much superior to mine. You have seen more of the world than myself, yet, if you knew how ardent we are to have you near us, I am sure you would comply. cannot wait till the summer: you must come to us in Ireland. I am Irish: I claim kinship with them. have done with the English: I have witnessed too much

of John Bull, and I am ashamed of him. 1 Till I am disappointed in the brothers and sisters of my affection, I will claim kindred with those brave sons of the ocean; and when I am deceived in them, it will be enough. I have never told you of my sister, 'tis well: words can never sufficiently express her kindness and goodness to She is my more than mother. What do I not owe to her gentle care? Everything. When you see her you will form your judgment of her. I did think before I was acquainted with you, that she was the best and most superior woman in the world. I do not say I have changed my opinion: that remains fixed. I have only so far changed it as to think there are some like her; but, as to being better, that I cannot think. She begs me to tell you that she is no lover of forms and ceremonies. She has long loved and admired you my dear friend: so do not call her "Miss Westbrook." She is your sister, and mine. How oft have I blessed that Providence who has given Did you but know her as I do, you me such a treasure. would not wonder at my love for her, her amiable qualities gain her friends in all who have the happiness of knowing her. But I will say no more, as I am unable to do her justice. I know not if you have bad weather in Sussex. Here it is so uncertain you never know if the morrow will be fine; all this week has been very stormy, and last night and to-day it has never ceased. We are spending the last week with our amiable friends [the] Calverts. We are so much indebted to them, they have been extremely kind and attentive. She is a most amiable woman, and I wish you were here to see her. She saw us reading your last letter, at which she was very much surprised, the length was so uncommon. You will think of us next Monday night: then we set sail. 'Twill be either pleasure or not: I suspect we shall be very sick. We will write from the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Harriet Shelley meant to imply that she was Irish in her sympathies. See her letter to Miss Nugent of April 16, 1812, p. 294.

Isle of Man, if you do not hear from us before. There seems to be sad work in Ireland; but I hope Percy will escape all prosecutions. I hope we shall hear from you again soon. When we do not hear from you it is quite a blank.

I must now say adieu. I hope you will put the most favourable constructions on what we have said. Keep up your spirits, and believe me ever

Your sincere, affectionate friend,

H. S.

[Addressed outside],
single sheet,
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton, Sussex.
Jan. 29 [Postmark], Feb. 1, 1812.

# V.—SHELLEY'S IRISH CAMPAIGN February 3—March 20, 1812

THE Shelleys at Whitehaven—Southey and Mrs. Calvert—The Shelleys' arrival at Dublin—Lines from "Queen Mab"—Verses on The Mexican Revolution and "To Ireland"—Tom Paine's works—Hamilton Rowan—"Proposals for an Association"—The Dublin poor—John Lawless—Shelley's speech—Harriet's school-days—"Declaration of Rights"—Catherine Nugent—Shelley and Lawless' History of "Ireland"—The Irish campaign abandoned.

# 120. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint).

[WHITEHAVEN,<sup>1</sup> February 3, 1812.]

MY DEAREST FRIEND.

We are now at Whitehaven—which is a miserable manufacturing sea-port Town. I write to you a short letter to inform you of our safety, and that the wind which will fill the sails of our packet to-night is favourable and fresh.—Certainly it is laden with some of your benedictions, or with the breath of the disembodied virtuous who smile upon our attempt. We set off to-night at twelve o'clock, and arrive at the Isle of Man, whence you will hear from us to-morrow morning; thence we proceed, when the wind serves, to Dublin. We may be detained some days in the Island; if the weather is fine, we shall not regret it, at all events we shall escape this filthy town and horrible inn.—Now do you not think of us with other feelings than those of hope and confidence. I know that belief is not a voluntary action of the mind, but I think

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley, his wife and Eliza Westbrook probably left Keswick on Sunday, February 2nd.

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your confidence would not be groundless. To give you an idea of the perfect fearlessness with which Harriet and Eliza accompany my attempt, they think of no inconveniences but those of a wet night and sea-sickness, which in fact we find to be the only real ones. Assassination, either by private or public menace, appear[s] to me to be the phantom of a mind whose affectionate friendship has outran the real state of the case. Assure yourself that such things are now superannuated and unfeasible. Give me as I have before said, the confidence of your hope, the sanguineness of your certainty, joined to that concern for welfare which we mutually felt. For my friend wrong me not by thinking that, in this bustle of present events, and enthusiastic anticipation of future, you are forgotten or unheeded, or lightly remembered. No, your coöperation and presence is wanting to perfect the present, and with the certainty of hope do I conceive of you in the future as a friend, and dear friend, who will form the foreground of the future which my fancy designs. We felt regret at leaving Keswick. I passed Southey's house without one sting. He is a man who may be amiable in his private character, stained and false as is his public one, he may be amiable; but, if he is, my feelings are liars, and I have been so long accustomed to trust to them in these cases, that the opinion of the world is not the likeliest criminator to impeach their credibility. But we left the Calverts. I hope some day to show you Mrs. Calvert; I shall not forget her, but will preserve her memory as another flower to compose a garland which I intend to present to you.— Assure yourself that it is a fragrant one; that if it breathes not of heaven, I am an impostor, and a silly gardener that picks weeds where roses grow. I confess that I cannot expect you will come to us now. If you do, if you do, it will be a piece of good fortune for which my mind will be unprepared, but which it will hail with more delight than the magi did "the day-spring from on high."—But in the summer, when you come to us,—if you depart I shall say

you are "the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears, and hearkeneth not to the voice of the charmer." I stop the wheels of the former sentence for a minute, just to say that I do not even allegorize myself by the "charmer." I entreat you, do not allow the ingratitude of that little viper Anne to disturb you—nor think it anything like an appearance of original sin. I do not tell you, by the former, to staunch the beating arteries of your heart of sensibility—turn the channel to some better and some greater object—"the welfare of general man," even sympathize with me in Dublin. Of the latter, I will give you a reason hereafter, indeed I believe that I have given you many already.— Well, adieu. Harriet and Eliza in excellent spirits, bid you an affectionate adieu.—Pray, what are you to be called when you come to us? for Eliza's name is Eliza, and Miss Hitchener is too long, too broad, and too deep. —Adieu.

Yours

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint, Sussex.
[Postmark], Feb. 6, 1812.

### 121. To Elizabeth Hitchener

DUBLIN,

February 13, 1812.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Last night we arrived safe in this city. It was useless to have written to you before. Now I have only time for a line to tell you of our safety. We were driven by a storm quite to the north of Ireland, and yesterday was the end of our journey thence.—Expect to hear more; all is well.

Your affectionate

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Written by Harriet]

I have no time:—the day after to-morrow. Direct to us—

Mr. Dunn's, No. 7 Sackville Street, Dublin.

Write soon.

[Addressed outside],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Sussex, England.
[Postmark], Feb. 16, 1812.

# 122. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

Dublin,
7 Sackville Street,
February 14, 1812.

Mr. Dunn's, Woollen Draper.

At length I can write to you. I have been anxiously desirous to put matters in train for my enterprise, this has engaged me. How eagerly do I fly to you! My dearest friend, think not that you were forgotten yesterday: you were the boldest foreground in the picture of my fancy.— I have read all your letters. They came at breakfast yesterday, after I had sent my hasty guarantee of our safety.—Now I have read them. What feelings have they excited! The words gratitude, sympathy, and hope, are surely too unimpassioned to express them. At length however you are free from anxiety for our safety, as here we have nothing to apprehend but Government, which will not, assure yourself, dare to be so barefacedly oppressive as to attack my "Address": it will breathe the spirit of peace, toleration, and patience. In short, in a few posts it will be sent to you.—I shall continue to write to you as freely as from Keswick: whether our letters be inspected or not I cannot tell. If they are, this I know—that

their hatred to me will not thereby become stronger, or their conviction of my discontentedness clearer; as my name, which will be prefixed to the "Address," will show that my deeds are not deeds of darkness, nor my counsels those of mystery and fear. Dread nothing for me. course of my conduct in Ireland (as shall the entire course of my life) shall be marked by openness and sincerity.— The peace and toleration which I recommend can make no good men my enemies: I should blush to call a bad man my friend.—Your letter, my friend, has added energy to my hopes, tenfold activity to my exertions here. We will meet you in Wales, and never part again. You shall not cross the Channel alone: it will not do. In compliance with Harriet's earnest solicitations, I entreated you instantly to come and join our circle; to resign your school, all, everything, for us and the Irish cause. This could not be done, I now see plainly. Consistently with the duties which you have imposed upon yourself—duties which I ought to have respected—it could not be done. But the warmth of our hearts ran away with the coolness of our heads: forgive the fault of friendship.—But summer will come.

The ocean rolls between us. O thou ocean, whose multitudinous billows ever lash Erin's green isle, on whose shores this venturous arm would plant the flag of liberty, roll on! And with each wave whose echoings die, amid thy melancholy silentness shall die a moment too—one of those moments which part my friend and me! I could stand upon thy shores, O Erin, and could count the billows that, in their unceasing swell, dash on thy beach, and every wave might seem an instrument in Time the giant's grasp to burst the barriers of Eternity. Proceed, thou giant, conquering and to conquer! March on thy lonely way.—The nation fall beneath thy noiseless footstep—pyramids that for millenniums have defied the blast, and laughed at lightnings, thou dost crush to nought. Yon monarch in his solitary pomp is but the fungus of a winter day that

thy light footstep presses into dust. Thou art a conqueror, Time! All things give way before thee, but "the fixed and virtuous will," the sacred sympathy of soul which was when thou wert not, which shall be when thou perishest. 1

Summer will come, and with it thou, more welcome than its genial breeze, more welcome than the long lightsome day when the sophistication of candle-light is almost dispensed with, when we quit the woe and pride that mars the city's peace, and seek the rarer instances of human misery and vice which relieve the contemplation in the country.—Dearest friend, come to us all—at midsummer, never to part again.—Lose in our little circle the taunts of the unthinking, the pride of the worldling, the lowliness 2 of grandeur. Come: for the severe virtue that has guided thee thus far points out now a path whereon friendship has scattered flowers. Nothing shall prevent our eternal union in the summer. I ought to count myself a favoured mortal, with such a wife and friend (these human names and distinctions perhaps are necessary in the present state of society). You see I look forward to the period in which pain and evil, the consequences or concomitants of selfish passion, shall cease. Now as to the means. Your dear little Americans may come and live with us. (Suppose there was a little stranger to play with them: this is, however, a hope which I do not anticipate but at some distance.) It appears to me that a plain representation of your views and motives to your father, told in all their energetic simplicity of singleness, would best reconcile him to your Welsh plan. Would he call it visionary. all very well in theory, but impracticable, and useless were it practicable? Is he one who makes a distinction between the profession of certain principles, and acting up to that profession? If he is, then he is a man unworthy of my high-souled friend. He would then deserve

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Some of the lines in this paragraph appeared as verse, with variations of text, in section IX of "Queen Mab."

Perhaps Shelley meant to write "loneliness."

not the unexampled sacrifice of her devotion, a sacrifice of what might thrill millions with feelings of virtue, and breathe a soul into the corpse of a nation. For much do I expect from you: to whom much is given, from these much is expected. Nature, God, or Chance, has given you talents which have risen above the disadvantages of indigence and low birth, which are to you topics of glory incommunicable to me—and (a paraphrase on the narrowness that marked Nelson's dying hour) "The world expects every being to do its duty."—But your father is not this man—he is not hardened to the perception of truth; his eyelids are not sealed to its emanations. He will approve Shortly perhaps he will behold the of your coming. glorious fruits of a tree the natural scion of his own, and, so far as depends on himself, I hope a moral one. As to money, after that period you need demand none from £400 per an. 1 will be quite enough for us all: our publications would supply the deficiency. Well do I know that economy is the greatest generosity; and altho' we cannot practise it so strictly in Dublin as I could wish. This will, however, be but short. Have you heard [that] a new republic is set up in Mexico? I have just written the following short tribute to its success. 2

I
Brothers! between you and me,
Whirlwinds sweep and billows roar:
Yet in spirit oft I see
On thy wild and winding shore
Freedom's bloodless banners wave,
Feel the pulses of the brave
Unextinguished in the grave—
See them drenched in sacred gore,
Catch the warrior's gasping breath
Murmuring "Liberty or death."

<sup>1</sup> Besides the £200 a year from Shelley's father, Mr. Westbrook contributed a similar sum. (See p. 199.)

<sup>\*</sup> This poem appears in the MS. volume of Shelley's early poems, in the possession of Shelley's grandson, Mr. Esdaile, with additional stanzas and the title "To the Republicans of North America." The title of the lines following is supplied by Prof. Dowden in his edition of Shelley's poems (Macmillan & Co., 1890), q.v.

#### II

Shout aloud! Let every slave,
Crouching at Corruption's throne,
Start unto a man, and brave
Racks and chains without a groan:
And the castle's heartless glow,
And the hovel's vice and woe,
Fade like gaudy flowers that blow—
Weeds that peep, and then are gone;
Whilst, from misery's ashes risen,
Love shall burst the Captive's prison.

#### III

Cotopaxi! bid the sound
Through thy sister-mountains ring,
Till each valley smile around
At the blissful welcoming!
And O thou stern Ocean deep,
Thou whose foamy billows sweep
Shores where thousands wake to weep
Whilst they curse a villain king,
On the winds that fan thy breast
Bear thou news of Freedom's rest!

#### IV

Ere the day-star dawn of love,
Where the flag of war unfurled
Floats with crimson stain above
The fabric of a ruined world—
Never! but to vengeance driven
When the patriot's spirit shriven
Seeks in death its native heaven!
There, to desolation hurled,
Widowed love may watch thy bier,
Balm thee with its dying tear.

## [To Ireland]

Bear witness, Erin, when thine injured iste Sees summer on its verdant pastures smile, Its cornfields waving in the winds that sweep The billowy surface of thy circling deep,—
Thou tree whose shadow o'er the Atlantic gave Peace, wealth, and beauty, to its friendly wave, its blossoms fade,

And blighted are the leaves that cast its shade, Whilst the cold hand gathers its scanty fruit, Whose chillness struck a canker to its root.

These are merely sent as lineaments in the picture of my mind. On these topics I find that I sometimes can write poetry when I feel—such as it is.

Do I not know, my friend, what you feel for the sacred cause of truth and liberty? Am I not assured of your devotedness to virtue? Do I doubt the pleasure with which you would offer yourself a sacrifice? No, never! Do not encourage within yourself such a supposition, even whilst you form in your mind a disavowal of its reality. I believe in you; and, when I say that I believe in you, I mean with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my strength. Well-my "Address" will soon come out. It will be instantly followed by another, 1 with downright proposals for instituting associations for bettering the condition of human-kind. I—even I, weak, young, poor, as I am—will attempt to organize them, the society of peace and love. Oh! that I may be a successful apostle of this only true religion, the religion of Philanthropy.—At all events, I will have a Debating Society, and see what will grow out of that. This is the crisis for the attempt. Have you heard of the Mexico affair? You cannot be vain. Attempt it for my sake: attempt it, and you will come to have a right idea of your own powers. The most useful death that I can conceive of, as happening to you, must be far less beneficial to mankind than an existence of but a year, such as yours will be. Do not think I have set up the trade of prophesying, but I can deduce moral effects from moral causes. In a few days I shall have more, much more, to tell you. Godwin has introduced me to Mr. Curran. I took the letter

17-(2285)

¹ Shelley's second Irish pamphlet entitled "Proposals / for an / association / of those / Philanthropists, / who convinced of the inadequacy of the / moral and political state of Ireland to / produce benefits which are nevertheless / attainable are willing to unite to ac-/complish its regeneration. / By / Percy Bysshe Shelley. / Dublin: / Printed by J. Eton, Winetavern Street." The tract was published on Monday, March 2nd, 1812, if Shelley carried out his intention as expressed in his letter to Miss Hitchener of February 27, 1812.

this morning: he was not at home. I I shall see him soon. I have not seen Flower's book. I have that on the Organic Remains to read with you. You have not seen Tom Paine's works. Eliza is going to employ herself in collecting the useful passages, which we shall publish. She is now making a red cloak, which will be finished before dinner. Now, my dearest friend, you will remember me, as I remember [you]. The thought of your approbation is to me more exhilarating than the applause of thousands. You animate me. I wish this letter now had reached you. Do not fear postmasters. Harriet sends her love: Eliza longs to see you.

Believe · me

Your

PERCY SHELLEY.

### [Written by Harrist]

MY DEAR SISTER,

I have not yet answered your kind letters, but depend upon it I shall very soon: they are not lost upon me. Suppose you in the meantime believe me your affectionate friend and sister H. S.

[Addressed outside],
single [sheet],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton, Sussex,
England.

<sup>2</sup> Evidently Benjamin Flower (1755-1829), a political writer. He was imprisoned for a libel on Bishop Watson in 1799, and edited The Cambridge Intelligencer and The Political Register, 1807-1811. It is not clear what book is referred to by Shelley.

¹ Curran was then living on the south side of St. Stephen's Green, at a house that was subsequently occupied by Sir Benjamin Guinness (the restorer of St. Patrick's Cathedral), "who erected shortly before his death the new and imposing front and portico to his house by which it is now easily recognised."—D. F. MacCarthy's "Shelley's Early Life," p. 148.

# 123. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

[7 Lower Sackville St., Dublin, 20 February, 1812?]

I send you the first sheet of my first "Address" as it comes out. The style of this, as you will perceive, is adapted to the lowest comprehension that can read. It will be followed by another in my own natural style though in the same strain. This one will make about 30 such pages as the enclosed: the other as much. Expect to hear soon. Happiness be with you.

My dear friend

Yours.

[Addressed outside],
[Franked by] DUKE OF NORFOLK.
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton, Sussex, England.
Contains a letter.(2)

# 124. To Elizabeth Hitchener

[Dublin, February 24, 1812?]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Your letter dated 19 [February] reached me this morning.

—It is with pain that I find that ten days must

(\*) This is written by the postmaster.

This note is written on the sheet of the Correspondent newspaper, which contains the substance of Mr. Parnell's speech in the House of Commons on Catholic Emancipation. The sheet is evidently the wrapper which came from the printer, and is directed on one of the margins, "Mr. Percy Shelley." Another sheet of the Correspondent preserved among the Hitchener letters bears the date of "Friday, March 12, 1812," on the margin of which Shelley has scrawled some rough sketches; one has the appearance of a man snatching a dart from a figure of death. The cover bearing the frank has been pasted on to the newspaper.

intervene between our question and answer. Things go on in Ireland as you shall hear. I have much food for interest and occupation of mind in the events of each day. I earnestly desire your society, and will not be satisfied until I am convinced that it is to be ours irretrievably; that no considerations will deprive us of it. Impelled as I am by the conviction, powerful and resistless, that the general good would be best promoted by our united efforts, it is not without pain that I should see this important benefit sacrificed to a vague feeling, undescribable, and indefinite even in the mind wherein alone it lives. Those feelings ought to be checked, in a noble and virtuous mind, which have not for their basis the immutable relations of the universe.—I can plainly see that "your desire to procure your own subsistence" is a mixture of a strong perception of the necessity of usefulness; and some portion of this undefined feeling, which is the result of certain prejudices respecting money, lodging, clothes, etc., which, combined in an infinite variety of modifications, have entered your mind so artfully as to gain reception, where had their unworthiness been known, they would not have been admitted. Usefulness is your end and aim. the cement of our attachment, it is the spirit of our life. We have a certain object to attain, and a given time in which to attain it. It is fit that all our actions tend to this ultimate.—What is usefulness? How is it best attained? True independence is necessary, but because the chance and circumstance of birth has placed in another the power of having a house, a table, a set of chairs, some beds and other accommodations, are you dependent on that person by accepting them?—You have a right to them. Eliza keeps our common stock of money, for safety, in some hole or corner of her dress; but we are not all dependent on her, altho' she gives it out as we want it.— You will not be dependent on any one by coming to us.— If dependence would exist anywhere, we should depend on you, during your continuance amongst us, for happiness

and associated intellect. Let us leave to the grovelling sons of commerce and aristocracy that selfish gratitude (if this name is not polluted by the application) which calls participation of power (for money is power) a favor. By living with us, altho' you gained none of this power, you would earn by your usefulness more wages than I, were I the treasurer of an Empire, could discharge. As self-constituted steward of universal happiness, I could never repay you.-My dearest friend, these are vain distinctions; believe me that they are. Let us in the great pursuit in which we are engaged, consider ourselves as little as possible in the light of individuals who have separate interests to gratify, and separate ends to answer. -Do not think it necessary to the great ends of our being that persons whose pursuits are disinterested, and who love each other, must, to preserve the genuine condition of their nature, live three hundred miles apart, and make money; altho' if they were together, they might occupy a house in which there would be chairs, tables, beds, glasses, plates, and food, enough for them all. For what are all these . . . obligations? Now it comes home. You cannot resist the ludicrousness and unworthiness of physical obligations between you and I. The moral obligations that are between us I admit and own. The gratitude, or the high mental yearning, that I feel annexed with the idea of your identity I own: with pride and pleasure I own it. You think too meanly of yourself, too highly of At all events, our spirits unite in one object. Why will you thus separate us by a distinction trifling as it is worldly, and whose very inconsequence is proved by the value which the children of fashion and folly set upon it? You may not when among us procure your own subsistence:—how much nobler a task to procure the happiness of those who love you, even if this were all. Besides your writings, which, if they do not bring money, will I am too, now, incapable of at all events be useful. writing, compared to what I shall be when I personally

am enlightened with the emanations of your genius, and invigorated by the deductions of your reason.—" Desire never fails to generate capacity."—Oh throw aside this prejudice. You do not doubt my friendship, I do not doubt yours. Let us mingle our identities inseparably, and burst upon tyrants with the accumulated impetuosity of our acquirements and resolutions. I am eager, firm, convinced. What I have met with here you will find in my other letter. Friend of my soul, adieu. It is with the united force of all our opinions that I attack this subsisting scheme of yours. I proceed in the next sheet after I have been to the printer's. 1

# 125. TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

[7 Lower Sackville Street,] Dublin, Feb[ruary] 24, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

A most tedious journey by sea and land has brought us to our destination. I have delayed a few days informing you of it, because I enclose with this a little pamphlet, which I have just printed, and thereby save a double expense. I have wilfully vulgarized the language of this pamphlet, in order to reduce the remarks it contains to the taste and comprehension of the Irish peasantry, who have been too

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This intention, it appears, remained unfulfilled.

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;The Address to the Irish People," which Shelley sent through the post as a newspaper. The packet was charged as a letter, and Godwin was made to pay heavily for the mistake. In his reply to Shelley, March 4, 1812, he alludes to his misfortune good-humoredly: "To descend from great things to small, I can perceive that you are already infected with the air of that country. Your letter with its enclosures cost me by post £1 1s. 8d.; and you say in it that 'you send it in this way to save expense.' The post always charges parcels that exceed a sheet or two by weight, and they should therefore always be forwarded by some other conveyance."—Hogg's "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 90. Others who suffered by Shelley's mode of conveying his pamphlet were Mr. Westbrook and Miss Hitchener.

long brutalized by vice and ignorance. I conceive that the benevolent passions of their breasts are in some degree excited, and individual interests in some degree generalized, by Catholic disqualifications and the oppressive influence of the Union Act; that some degree of indignation has arisen at the conduct of the Prince, which might lead to blind insurrections. A crisis like this ought not to be permitted to pass unoccupied or unimproved. I have another pamphlet in the press, earnestly recommending to a different class the institution of a philanthropic society. No unnatural unanimity can take place, if secessions of the minority on any question are invariably made. It might segregate into twenty different societies, each coinciding generically, though differing specifically.

We have had a most tedious voyage. We were driven by a storm completely to the North of Ireland, in our passage from the Isle of Man. Harriet (my wife) and Eliza, (my sister-in-law) were very much fatigued, after twenty-eight hours' tossing in a galliot during a violent gale. They are now tolerably recovered. I am exceedingly obliged by your letter of introduction to Mr. Curran. His speeches had interested me before I had any idea of coming to Ireland. It seems that he was the only man who would engage in behalf of the prisoners during the times of horror of the Rebellions. I have called upon him twice, but have not found him at home.

I hope that the motives which induce me to publish thus early in life do not arise from any desire of distinguishing myself any more than is consistent with and subordinate to usefulness. In the first place, my physical constitution is such as will not permit me to hope for a life so long as yours—the person who is constitutionally nervous, and affected by slight fatigue at the age of nineteen, cannot expect firmness and health at fifty. I have therefore resolved to husband whatever powers I may possess, so that they may turn to the best account. I find that whilst my mind is actively engaged in writing or discussion, that it gains

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strength at the same time—that the results of its present power are incorporated. I find that subjects grow out of conversation, and that though I begin a subject in writing with no definite view, it presently assumes a definite form, in consequence of the method that grows out of the induced train of thought. I therefore write, and I publish, because I will publish nothing that shall not conduce to virtue, and therefore my publications, so far as they do influence, shall influence to good. My views of society, and my hopes of it, meet with congenial ones in few breasts. But virtue and truth are congenial to many. I will employ no means but these for my object, and however visionary some may regard the ultimatum that I propose, if they act virtuously they will, equally with myself, forward its accomplishment; and my publications will present to the moralist and metaphysician a picture of a mind, however uncultured and unformed, which had at the dawn of its knowledge taken a singular turn; and to leave out the early lineaments of its appearance would be to efface those which the attrition of the world had not deprived of right-angled Thus much for egotism. originality.

I am sorry that you cannot come to Wales in the summer. I had pictured to my fancy that I should first meet you in a spot like that in which Fleetwood met Ruffigny¹; that then every lesson of your wisdom might become associated in my mind with the form of nature where she sports in the simplicity of her loveliness and magnificence, and each become imperishable together. This must not be as yet. I will, however, hope that at some future time the sunset of your evening days may irradiate my soul in scenes like these. I will come to London next autumn. A very dear friend² has promised to visit us in Merionethshire in the summer, and I will own that I am not sufficient of a Stoic not to perceive that the grand and ravishing shapes of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Characters in one of Godwin's novels.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Miss Hitchener.

nature add to the joys of friendship. Besides, you must know that I either am, or fancy myself something of a Poet.

You speak of my wife: she desires with me to you, and to all connected with you, her best regards. She is a woman whose pursuits, hopes, fears, and sorrows were so similar to my own, that we married a few months ago. I hope in the course of this year to introduce her to you and yours, as I have introduced myself to you. It is only to those who have had some share in making me what I am that I can be thus free.—Adieu!

You will hear from me shortly. Give my love and respects to every one with whom you are connected. I feel myself almost at your fireside.

Yours very sincerely, P. B. Shelley.

Have they sent you the books? I send the little book for which I was expelled. I have not changed my sentiments. I know that Milton believed Christianity, but I do not forget that Virgil believed ancient Mythology.

To Mr. W. Godwin, London.

### 126. To Hamilton Rowan

7 Lower Sackville Street, [Dublin] Feb[ruary] 25, 1812.

SIR,

Although I have not the pleasure of being personally known to you, I consider the motives which actuated me in writing the inclosed 1 sufficiently introductory to authorize me in sending you some copies, and waiving ceremonials in a case where public benefit is concerned. Sir, although an Englishman, I feel for Ireland; and I have left the country in which the chance of birth placed me for the sole

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The copy of the "Address to the Irish People," enclosed with this letter was kept by Rowan to the day of his death at the age of 84, and was seen by Mr. MacCarthy; it has since disappeared.

purpose of adding my little stock of usefulness to the fund which I hope that Ireland possesses to aid me in the unequal yet sacred combat in which she is engaged. In the course of a few days more I shall print another small pamphlet, which shall be sent to you. I have intentionally vulgarized the language of the inclosed. I have printed 1,500 copies, and am now distributing them throughout Dublin.

Sir, with respect,
I am your obedient humble servant,
P. B. Shelley.

# 127. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

7 LOWER SACKVILLE STREET, [DUBLIN], February 27 [1812].

Do not think that I neglect you. I am actively employed in what should prove to you my attachment.— I am strengthening those indissoluble bonds that bind our friendship. For two days I have omitted writing to you, but each day has been filled up with the employment of disseminating the doctrines of Philanthropy and Freedom: —I have already sent 400 of my little pamphlets into the world, and they have excited a sensation of wonder in Dublin: 1,100 yet remain for distribution. Copies have been sent to sixty public-houses. No prosecution is yet attempted.—I do not see how it can be. Congratulate me, my friend, for everything proceeds well; I could not expect more rapid success. The persons with whom I have got acquainted approve of my principles; and think the truths of the equality of man, the necessity of a reform and the probability of a revolution, undeniable. they differ from the mode of my enforcing these principles, and hold expediency to be necessary in politics, inasmuch as it is employed in its utmost latitude by the enemies of innovation. I hope to convince them of the contrary of this. To expect that evil will produce good, or false-hood generate truth, is almost as rational as to conceive of a patriot king, or a sincere Lord of the Bedchamber.

My friend, my dearest friend, do you pant to be with us? If there is any truth in the sympathy of virtuous souls, you do; for I feel that I desire your presence, and that not merely for the inexpressible gratification of immediate communion, but because you would share with me the high delight of awakening a noble nation from the lethargy of its bondage, and because the resources of your powerful intellect would mature schemes, and organize those of mine which yet are immature,—for expectation is on the tiptoe. I send a man out every day to distribute copies, with instructions how and where to give them. His accounts correspond with the multitudes of people who possess them. I stand at the balcony of our window, and watch till I see a man who looks likely. I throw a book to him.

On Monday [March 2], my next book 1 makes its appearance. This is addressed to a different class, recommending and proposing associations. I have in my mind a plan for proselytizing the young men at Dublin College. Those who are not entirely given up to the grossness of dissipation are perhaps reclaimable.—I know how much of good there is in human nature, spite of the overwhelming torrent of depravity which education unlooses. I see little instances of kindness and goodwill, almost everywhere, surely education, or impressions intentionally induced upon the mind, might foster and encourage the good, as it might eradicate the evil. This "Philanthropic Association" of ours is intended to unite both of these. Whilst you are with us in Wales, I shall attempt to organize one there, which shall correspond with the Dublin one. Might I not extend

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Proposals for an Association," etc.

them all over England, and quietly revolutionize the country? How is Sussex disposed? is there much intellect there? We must have the cause before the effect. I cannot bear to hear people talk of the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Was that period glorious when, with a presumption only equalled by their stupidity, and a shortsightedness incommensurable but with the blindest egotism, Parliament affected to pass an Act delivering over themselves, and their posterity to the remotest period of time, to Mary and William, and their posterity? I saw this Act yesterday for the first time; and my blood boils to think that Sidney's and Hampden's blood was wasted thus, that even the "Defenders of Liberty," as they were called, were sunk thus low, and [should] thus attempt to arrest the perfectibility of human nature. I have not read B. Flower, but I will. I have heard of him. was a Calvinist, he is not now. I speak thus positively, merely from a small advertisement of his that I have seen. —I will get his book, and write to him, and you may thus become acquainted with him. Did you ever read the Abbé Barruel's "Memoirs of Jacobitism?" Although it is half filled with the vilest and most unsupported falsehoods, it is a book worth reading. To you who know how to distinguish truth, I recommend it.—My youth is much against me here. Strange that truth should not be judged by its inherent excellence, independent of any reference to the utterer! To improve on this advantage. the servant gave out that I was only 15 years of age. person who was told this, of course, did not believe it.

I have not yet seen Curran. I do not like him for accepting the office of Master of the Rolls.—O'Connor,¹ brother to the rebel Arthur, is here: [I have] written to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> D. F. MacCarthy says that Roger O'Connor (1762–1834) is alluded to here. He was one of the United Irishmen; arrested in 1797, but liberated the following year. He was imprisoned for some years with his brother Arthur, and re-arrested on a charge of robbing the Galway coach, but acquitted. He was father of Fergus O'Connor (1794–1855), the Chartist leader.

him.—Do not fear what you say in your letters.—I am resolved.—Good principles are scarce here. The public papers are either oppositionist or ministerial: one is as contemptible and narrow as the other. I wish I could change this. I of course am hated by both these parties. The remnant of united Irishmen, whose wrongs make them hate England, I have more hopes of. I have met with no determined Republicans, but I have found some who are democratifiable. I have met with some waverers between Christianity and Deism. I shall attempt to make them reject all the bad, and take all the good, of the I have often thought that the moral sav-Tewish books. ings of Jesus Christ might be very useful, if selected from the mystery and immorality which surrounds them; it is a little work I have in contemplation. 1 We shall leave this place at the end of April. I need not be idle in Wales: there you will come to us. Bring the dear little Americans, resign your school, and live with us for ever.—I have a firm persuasion in my own mind that duty and usefulness, as well as happiness and friendship, approve, sanction, and demand this plan. We have in this world some work to do, and only a certain time allotted us to do it in. How persuasive an argument for the combined exertion of intellectual power.

### [Written by Harriet]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Percy has given me his letter to fill up, but what I'm to say I really do not know. Oh! yesterday I received a most affectionate letter from dear Mrs. C[alvert]. Now don't you be jealous when I mention her name. She is afraid we shall effect no good here, and that our opinion will change of the Irish. We have seen very little of them as yet, but when Percy is more known, I suppose we shall know more at the same time. My pen is very bad, according

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The "little work" may have taken the form of the "Biblical Extracts" to which Shelley refers later in a letter to Hookham, p. 373.

to custom. I'm sure you would laugh were you to see us give the pamphlets. We throw them out of window, and give them to men that we pass in the streets. For myself I am ready to die of laughter when it is done, and Percy looks so grave, yesterday he put one into a woman's hood of a cloak. She knew nothing of it, and we passed her. I' could hardly get on, my muscles were so irritated.

### [Written by Shelley]]

I have been necessarily called away whilst Harriet has been scribbling. You may guess how much my time is taken up, by my dereliction of you.

Adieu. The post will go. You will soon hear again from

Your affectionate and unalterable Percy.

Addressed outside],
single sheet,
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton, Sussex,
England.

# 128. TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

[7 Lower] SACKVILLE STREET, DUBLIN,
March 8, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter affords me much food for thought; guide thou and direct me. In all the weakness of my inconsistencies, bear with me; the genuine respect which I bear for your character, the love with which your virtues have inspired me, is undiminished by any suspicion of externally constituted authority; when you reprove me, reason

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The balcony of 7 Lower Sackville Street, from which Shelley and Harriet threw the copies of "The Address to the Irish People," was removed in 1884.

speaks; I acquiesce in her decisions. I know that I am vain, that I assume a character which is perhaps unadapted to the limitedness of my experience, that I am without the modesty which is so generally considered an indispensable ornament to the ingenuousness of youth. I attempt not to conceal from others, or myself, these deficiencies, if such they are. That I have erred in pursuance of this line of conduct I am well aware: in the opposite case, I think that my errors would have been more momentous and overwhelming. "A preponderance of resulting good is imagined in every action." I certainly believe that the line of conduct which I am now pursuing will produce a preponderance of good; when I get rid of this conviction, my conduct shall be changed.

Inquiry is doubtless necessary, nay, essential. I am eagerly open to every new information. I attempt to read a book which attacks my most cherished sentiments as calmly as one which corroborates them. I have not read your writings slightly; they have made a deep impression on my mind; their arguments are fresh in my memory; I have daily occasion to recur to them, as allies in the cause which I am here engaged in vindicating. To them, to you, I owe the inestimable boon of granted power, of arising from the state of intellectual sickliness and lethargy into which I was plunged two years ago, and of which "St. Irvyne" and "Zastrozzi" were the distempered, although unoriginal visions.

I am not forgetful or unheeding of what you said of associations. But "Political Justice" was first published in 1793; nearly twenty years have elapsed since the general diffusion of its doctrines. What has followed? Have men ceased to fight? Have vice and misery vanished from the earth? Have the fireside communications which it recommends taken place? Out of the many who have read that inestimable book, how many have been blinded by prejudice; how many, in short, have taken it up to gratify an ephemeral vanity, and when the hour of its novelty had

passed, threw it aside, and yielded with fashion to the arguments of Mr. Malthus?

I have at length proposed a Philanthropic Association, which I conceive not to be contradictory, but strictly compatible with the principles of "Political Justice." The "Address" was principally designed to operate on the Irish mob. Can they be in a worse state than at present? Intemperance and hard labour have reduced them to The oyster that is washed and driven at the mercy of the tides, appears to me an animal of almost equal elevation in the scale of intellectual being. Is it impossible to awaken a moral sense in the breasts of those who appear so unfitted for the high destination of their nature? Might not an unadorned display of moral truth, suited to their comprehensions, produce the best effects? The state of society appears to me to be retrogressive. there be any truth in the hopes which I so fondly cherish, then this cannot be. Yet, even if it be stationary, the eager activity of philanthropists is demanded. the last twenty years with impatient scepticism, as to the progress which the human mind has made during this period. I will own that I am eager that something should be done. But my association. In some Suggestions 1 respecting it, I have the following—"That any number of persons who meet together for philanthropical purposes, should ascertain by friendly discussion those points of opinion wherein they differ and those wherein they coincide, and should, by subjecting them to rational analysis, produce an unanimity founded on reason, and not the superficial agreement too often exhibited at associations for mere party purposes; that the minority, whose belief could not subscribe to the opinion of the majority on a division in any question of moment and interest, should recede."

"Some associations might, by refinement of secessions, contain not more than three or four members." I do not

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> These "Suggestions" do not appear to have been printed.

think a society such as this is incompatible with your chapter on associations; it purposes no violent or immediate measures; its intentions are a facilitation of inquiry, and actually to carry into effect those confidential and private communications which you recommend. I send you with this the proposals, which will be followed by the "suggestions."

I had no conception of the depth of human misery until now. The poor of Dublin are assuredly the meanest and most miserable of all. In their narrow streets thousands seem huddled together,—one mass of animated filth. With what eagerness do such scenes as these inspire me! How self confident, too, do I feel in my assumption to teach the lessons of virtue to those who grind their fellow beings into worse than annihilation. These were the persons to whom, in my fancy, I had addressed myself: how quickly were my views on this subject changed; yet how deeply has this very change rooted the conviction on which I came hither.

I do not think that my book can in the slightest degree tend to violence. The pains which I have taken, even to tautology, to insist on pacific measures; the necessity which every warrior and rebel must lie under to deny almost every passage of my book before he can become so, must at least exculpate me from tending to make him so. I shudder to think, that for the very roof that covers me, for the bed whereon I lie, I am indebted to the selfishness of man. A remedy must somewhere have a beginning. Have I explained myself clearly? Are we now at issue?

I have not seen Mr. Curran. I have called repeatedly, left my address and my pamphlet. I will see him before I leave Dublin. I send a newspaper and the "proposals." I had no conception that the packet I sent you would be

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The second Irish pamphlet, "Proposals for an Association of Philanthropists." Shelley here excuses himself for having sent Godwin the "Address to the Irish People" through the post as a newspaper, much to the philosopher's misfortune. See note to letter No. 125, p. 262.

sent by the post; I thought it would have reached you per coach.

Harriet joins in respects to you. Is your denial respecting Wales irrevocable? Would not your children gain health and spirits from the jaunt?

With sincerest respect, yours,
P. B. Shelley.

You will see the account of ME in the newspapers. I am vain, but not so foolish as not to be rather piqued than gratified at the eulogia of a journal. I have repeated my injunctions concerning "St. I[rvyne]" and "Z[astrozzi.]" Expenditure is used in my address in a moral sense.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

### 129. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

17 GRAFTON STREET, [Dublin], March 10, 1812.

MY BELOVED FRIEND,

Your letters have arrived. I snatch time from circumstances of overwhelming interest to converse with you. My brain has scarcely time to consult my heart, or my heart to consult my brain; yet with the remaining nature. with thee who constituted the Trinity of my Essence, I will converse. I cannot recount all the horrible instances of unrestricted and unlimited tyranny that have met my ears,—scarcely those which have personally occurred to An Irishman has been torn from his wife and family in Lisbon, because he was an expatriate, and compelled to serve as a common soldier in the Portuguese army, by that monster of anti-patriotic inhumanity Beresford, the idol of the belligerents. You will soon see a copy of his letter, and soon hear of my or Sir F. Burdett's exertions in his favor. He shall be free. This nation shall awaken. It is attended with circumstances singularly characteristic

of cowardice and tyranny. My blood boils to madness to think of it. A poor boy, whom I found starving with his mother in a hiding-place of unutterable filth and misery. whom I rescued, and was about to teach to read,—has been snatched, on a charge of false and villainous effrontery. to a magistrate of Hell, who gave him the alternative of the tender or of military servitude. He preferred neither. yet was compelled to be a soldier. This has come to my knowledge this morning. I am resolved to prosecute this business to the very jaws of Government, snatching (if possible) the poison from its fangs. A widow-woman with three infants were taken up by two constables. I remonstrated, I pleaded: I was everything that my powers could make me. The landlady was overcome. The constable relented: and, when I asked him if he had a heart. he said—To be sure he had, as well as another man, but that he was called out to business of this nature sometimes twenty times in a night. The woman's crime was stealing a penny loaf. She is, however, drunken, and nothing that I or anyone can do can save her from ultimate ruin and starvation. I am sick of this city, and long to be with you and peace. The rich grind the poor into abjectness, and then complain that they are abject. They goad them to famine, and hang them if they steal a loaf.—Well, adieu to this! My own dearest friend, in the midst of these horrors thou art our star of peace—we look to thee for happiness; and, partial tho' the state of earth may render it, still will it be incomparable, and prophetic of that era when pain and vice shall vanish altogether. Your new suggestion of our joining you at Hurst is divine: it shall be so. I have not shown Harriet or E[liza] your letter yet: they are walking with a Mr. Lawless 1 (a valuable man) whilst I write this, but I venture to read delightful assent

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> John Lawless (1773-1837), the Irish agitator, familiarly known as "Honest Jack Lawless," was a distant cousin of the second Lord Cloncurry. Refused admittance to the Irish Bar in consequence of his connection with the United Irish Movement, he subsequently became the editor of *The Weekly Messenger*. He possibly wrote the

in the look of their hearts, and that without turning over a page. We will quit Wales with you: but more of that. —Besides, I would not live far from my uncle<sup>1</sup>; I value, love and respect him. He was against this expedition; besides [? but] conscience is a tribunal from which I dare not to appeal. In a day or two I shall make up a parcel to you, which will come per coach. It is a terrible mistake, that of the last. The blundering honest Irishman a we have committed it. Send me the Sussex papers. Insert, or make them insert, the account of me. It may have a good effect on the minds of the people, as a preparation. I send you two to-night. The Association proceeds slowly, and I fear will not be established. Prejudices are so violent, in contradiction to my principles, that more hate me as a freethinker than love me as a votary of freedom. You will see my letter, next week, to the Editor of the panegyrizing paper. Some will call it violent. I have at least made a stir here, and set some men's minds afloat. I may succeed; but I fear I shall not, in the main object of the Association.—Dublin is the most difficult of

notice of Shelley's speech at the Aggregate Meeting of Catholics of Ireland, which appeared in that paper for March 7th, 1812. This meeting took place on Friday, February 28th, 1812, at the Fishamble Street Theatre, which was (according to the Morning Chronicle), "brilliantly illuminated. The boxes were filled with ladies, full dressed, and the whole is represented as having a very imposing effect." D. F. MacCarthy, whose "Shelley's Early Life" contains an invaluable history of the poet's Irish campaign, found references to Shelley's speech in the Dublin Evening Post, Saunders' News Letter, and The Freeman's Journal of Feb. 29, also The Hibernian Journal and The Patriot of March 2, the last-named paper containing the longest report. The Freeman's Journal says: "Mr. Shelley, an English gentleman (very young), the son of a Member of Parliament, rose to address the meeting. He was received with great kindness. . . ." The resolution (the 6th) to which Shelley spoke, was seconded by Mr. Wyse, afterwards the Rt. Hon. Sir Thomas Wyse (1791-1862), the politician and diplomatist.

<sup>1</sup> Captain Pilfold at Cuckfield, Sussex.

Daniel Hill (or Healey), Shelley's servant.

<sup>\*</sup> Presumably in having made Miss Hitchener pay heavily for the postage of "The Address to the Irish People" which he sent to her as a newspaper. See p. 262.

all. In Wales, I fear not: in Lewes, fear is ridiculous, I am certain.—Your book—that is a beautiful idea: cherish the spirit, and keep it alive. The Republic of Mexico proceeds and extends. I have seen American papers, but have not had time to read them. I only know that the spirit of Republicanism extends in South America, and that the prevailing opinion is that there will soon be no province which will recognize the ancient dynasty of Spain. —I am in hopes of getting a share in the management of a paper here. I have daily had numbers of people calling on me: none will do. The spirit of Bigotry is high.

#### [Written by Harrist]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

A few days since, I received your letter, but which I do not attempt to answer at present. As you may suppose, we are full of business. Has Percy mentioned to you a very amiable man of the name of Lawless? He is very much attached to the cause, yet dare not act. Percy has spoken to him of you, and he wishes very much to know all about you. We have this morning been introduced to his wife, who is very near her confinement: she is a very nice woman, though not equal to him. Your last letter has delighted me. The plan of keeping on your house is truly admirable: but what is to be done with your scholars—those you spoke of in your letter? perhaps you might still continue to keep them. But of that more when we meet.

What has the Duke of Norfolk been saying of us? Now tell me, as I think I can confute his lordship. Write to us soon. When will all this be at an end? When you are among us. How I long for the time! Do, dear, dear, what am I to call you? hasten your departure for us. To Midsummer! That will be such an immense

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This prophecy has at length been fulfilled, but it was not until after the Spanish-American war of 1898 that Spain ceased to hold colonies in America. She abolished her colonial office as being "no longer necessary," in January, 1899.

time before it arrives. Do you know, I am so sick of this world that I long to be in another. Strange thing! I am [sure] you will say: yet, if you were here, you would do the same. But why do I say "here"? Do we not find tyranny and oppression everywhere? have you not plenty of it, even in your peaceful village? 'tis everywhere. -yes! there is one spot where it is not-America. We know an American: he says he has not seen a beggar there for this 8 years. How good you are thus to busy yourself about us, in this way!—Amiable woman! if I had known thee before, it would have been delightful: but I must be content I know you now, and this blessing I should not have had if I had never been to Clapham. So I must be content, and think myself very happy that I did go, though then I was not aware of the happiness that would result.

Send us the paper in which you have inserted the "Address!" I have sent you this, and hope you will receive it safe—though, to tell the truth, I have my doubts upon that head. You know we have heard from Godwin—such letters. You must long to read them I am sure.

I shall now finish my sad scrawl.

[Addressed outside],
[Franked by] T. SHELLEY, Esq., M.P.
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton, Sussex,
England.

### 130. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

17 GRAFTON STREET,
DUBLIN,
March 14, 1812.

#### [Written by Harriet]

Why does my dear friend continually mislead herself, and thus apply to my judgment which is so inferior to her

own? 'tis true you have mixed more in the world than myself.—My knowledge has been very confined on account of my youth, and the situation in which I was placed. intercourse with mankind has therefore been much less than you may imagine. When I lived with my Father. I was not likely to gain much knowledge, as our circle of acquaintance was very limited, he not thinking it proper that we should mix much with society. In short, we very seldom visited those places of fashionable resort and amusement which, from our age, might have been expected. 'Twas but seldom I visited my home, school having witnessed the greater part of my life. But do not think from this that I was ignorant of what was passing in the great world: books and a newspaper were sufficient to inform me of these. Tho' then a silent spectator, yet did I know that all was not as it ought to be. I looked with a fearful eve upon the vices of the great; and thought to myself 'twas better even to be a beggar, or to be obliged to gain my bread with my needle, than to be an inhabitant of those great houses, when misery and famine howl around. will tell you my faults, knowing what I have to expect from your friendship. Remember my youth: and, if any excuse can be made let that suffice. In London you know there are military as well as anywhere else. quite a child. I admired these red-coats. This grew up with me; and I thought the military the best as well as [the] most fascinating men in the world, though at the same time I used to declare never to marry one. was not so much on account of their vices as from the idea of their being killed. I thought, if I married anyone, it should be a Clergyman. Strange idea this, was it not? But being brought up in the Christian religion, 'twas this first gave rise to it. You may conceive with what horror I first heard that Percy was an atheist; at least, so it was given out at Clapham. At first I did not comprehend the meaning of the word: therefore, when it was explained, I was truly petrified. I wondered how he could live a

moment, professing such principles, and solemnly declared that he should never change mine. I little thought of the rectitude of these principles; and, when I wrote to him, I used to try to shake them, making sure he was in the wrong, and that myself was right; yet I would listen to none of his arguments, so afraid I was that he should shake my belief. At the same time I believed in eternal punishment, and was dreadfully afraid of his supreme Majesty the Devil: I thought I should see him if I listened to his arguments. I often dreamed of him, and felt such terror when I heard his name mentioned: this was the effect of a bad education; and living with Methodists. however, this is entirely done away with, and my soul is no longer shackled with such idle fears. You cannot suppose, my dear friend, that I suspect you of jealousy: 'twould be entertaining an idea wholly unworthy of you. Jealousy is a passion known only to the illiberal and selfish part of mankind, who have been corrupted and spoilt by the world: but this forms no part of you,—'tis utterly As to that feeling which prompted you to write about gaining your own subsistence, I do not know by what name to define it. It could not be pride: at least. if it were, I must call it a virtuous pride that you would not be dependent upon another for subsistence when you had the means of being independent. This would be all very well, to persons that you did not love: but to us, who (I may say with truth) possess so much of your love, it is entirely ill-founded. You have given up this wild scheme, I make no doubt: indeed, your letter avows as much. To continue to think so now would be unworthy of the warmth of that friendship you have solemnly sworn to keep inviolate. Such a valuable friendship as ours ought not to be intruded on by such worldly cares: it is too sublime and too sure. Therefore I pray thee take no thought what ye shall eat, and what ye shall wear. Our living is different to those worldlings, and you may or not adopt it as you think fit. You do not know that

we have forsworn meat, and adopted the Pythagorean system. 1 About a fortnight has elapsed since the change, and we do not find ourselves any the worse for it. What do you think of it? Many say it is a very bad plan: but, as facts go before arguments, we shall see whether the general opinion is true or false. We are delighted with it, and think it is the best thing in the world. As yet there is but little change of vegetables; but the time of year is coming on when there will be no deficiency. Your wishes coincide with mine. I see you are as eager to meet us as we are you; in one of my letters I am so eager that I have begged you to leave Hurst and join us in Wales before Mid[summer]; but you have explained some of your reasons, and I retract my words, tho' not my wishes.

Have you heard anything of the Habeas Corpus Act being suspended? I have been very much alarmed at the intelligence, tho' I hope it is ill-founded. If it is not, where we shall be is not known; as from Percy's having made himself so busy in the cause of the poor Country, he has raised himself many enemies who would take advantage of such a time, and instantly execute their vengeance upon him. That this may not be the case I hardly dare to hope. What can be their reason for so doing is best known to themselves. That many innocent victims will suffer is a foreboding that my heart trembles at; yet so it will be, I'm most fearful, and how is this to be remedied? God knows, and not me: but more of this when I hear how it is decided. I do not like the name you have taken2: but mind, only the name. You are fully worthy of it; but, being a name so much out of the

Mr. MacCarthy suggests that the name *Portia* by which Harriet addresses Miss Hitchener in her letter of March 18, 1812, should be *Porcia*, the daughter of Cato and wife of Brutus. Was this the name that Miss Hitchener had selected, and to which Harriet here refers?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> From this, the first reference to Shelley's vegetarianism, which played no inconsiderable part in his life, it would appear that he first adopted the "system" at the beginning of March, 1812. See note on p. 284.

common way, it excites so much curiosity in the mind of the hearer. This is my only reason for not liking it. I had thought it would have been one more common, and more pleasing to the ear.

I must now bid my beloved sister adieu.

Do not write under the seal.

[Written by Shelley]

You will hear from me soon: part of me has written to you. I do not like Lord Fingal, or any of the Catholic aristocracy. Their intolerance can be equalled by nothing but the hardy wickedness and falsehood of the Prince. My speech was misinterpreted. 1 I spoke for more than an The hisses with which they greeted me when I spoke of religion, though in terms of respect, were mixed with applause when I avowed my mission. The newspapers have only noted that which did not excite disapprobation. As to an Association, my hopes daily grow fainter on that subject, as my perceptions of its necessity gain strength.—I shall soon however have the command of a Newspaper with Mr. Lawless, of whom I shall tell you this will be a powerful engine of amelioration. Mr. L., though he regards my ultimate hopes as visionary, is willing to acquiesce in my means. He is a republican.

Adieu. Believe that we are yours. We will live with you at Hurst. What think you of a journey to Italy in the autumn?

I hope, my beloved friend, that you have conquered that nervous headache which you mention. Do not *think* too much; do not feel too keenly. Blunt neither sensation nor reflection by anything but occupation. For you, this occupation ought sometimes to be trivial.

My dear friend, adieu.

[Addressed outside],
single sheet,
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton, Sussex (England).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See note to letter No. 129, p. 275.

#### HARRIET SHELLEY TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

[This letter enclosed in a box containing copies of Shelley's pamphlet "An Address to the Irish People" and his broadside Declaration of Rights," was never delivered to Miss Hitchener, having been seized at Holyhead. The letter is now in the Public Record Office. The "Declaration of Rights" was a composition of Shelley's so termed, consisting of thirty-one axioms, printed in Dublin as a broadsheet, "in favour," as Mr. W. M. Rossetti says, " of absolute control by the commissioning body, the nation at large, over its delegates, the Government; advocating also unlimited freedom of opinion and expression, the abolition of war, and so on." Mr. Rossetti, who was the first to draw attention to the "Declaration" in The Fortnightly Review, Jan., 1871, shows certain points of resemblance between Shelley's sheet and "the two most famous similar documents in the history of the great French Revolution the one adopted by the constituent assembly in August, 1789, and the other proposed in April, 1793, by Robespierre." The copy contained in this box, with Harriet Shelley's letter, was sent by the Post Office agent for the Packet Boats at Holyhead, to the Secretary to the General Post Office, Mr., afterwards, Sir Francis Freeling. See note to letter 116, p. 227, and Mr. MacCarthy's "Shelley's Early. Life," pp. 308, 323.

> Dublin, March 18, [1812].

MY DEAR PORTIA,

As Percy has sent you such a large Box so full of inflammable matter, I think I may be allowed to send a little, but not [of] such a nature as his. I sent you two letters in a newspaper, which I hope you received safe from the intrusion of Post-masters. I sent one of the Pamphlets to my Father in a newspaper, which was opened and charged, but which was very trifling when compared to what you and Godwin paid.

I believe I have mentioned a new acquaintance of ours, a Mrs. Nugent, who is sitting in the room now and talking to Percy about Virtue. You see how little I stand upon ceremony. I have seen her but twice before, and I find her a very agreeable, sensible woman. She has felt most severely the miseries of her country, in which she has been a very active member. She visited all the Prisons in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Miss Catherine Nugent became a regular correspondent of Harriet Shelley's, and her letters, from transcripts made from the originals (in 1881) by Mr. Alfred Webb, were subsequently printed in the New York Nation in 1889. Mr. Webb had previously lent his transcripts to Professor Dowden while he was writing his "Life of Shelley," giving him leave to use any information in them, but requesting him (out of consideration for Miss Nugent's niece, who was then living) neither to quote from, nor to refer to the correspondence in his work. Mr. T. J. Wise afterwards privately printed the letters. These letters throw such an important light on the lives of Shelley and his wife, that I feel no excuse is needed for including

time of the Rebellion, to exhort the people to have courage and hope. She says it was a most dreadful task; but it was her duty, and she would not shrink from the performance of it. This excellent woman, with all her notions of Philanthropy and Justice, is obliged to work for her subsistence—to work in a shop which is a furrier's; there she is every day confined to her needle. Is it not a thousand pities that such a woman should be so dependent upon others? She has visited us this evening for about three hours, and is now returned home. The evening is the only time she can get out in the week; but Sunday is her own, and then we are to see her. She told Percy that her country was her only love, when he asked her if she was

them in the present collection of Shelley's correspondence. I do so by the kindness of Professor Dowden, who now owns the original correspondence, and who has enabled me to print the letters correctly. Dr. Anster, who was acquainted with Miss Nugent, refers to her in his article on Shelley in the North British Review for 1847. He says: "One copy of Shelley's pamphlet ["The Address to the Irish People"] was obtained through an Irish friend of Shelley's, whose acquaintance with the poet originated accidentally. A poor man offered the pamphlet for a few pence—its price stated on the titlepage was fivepence. On being asked how he got it, he said a parcel of them were given him by a young gentleman who told him to get what he could for them—at all events to distribute them. Inquiry was made at Shelley's lodgings to ascertain the truth of the vendor's story. He was not at home, but when he heard of it he went to return the visit, and a kindly acquaintance thus arose. Shelleys, husband and wife, were then Pythagoreans. Shelley spoke as a man believing in the metempsychosis, and they did not eat animal food. They seem, however, to have tolerated it; for on one occasion a fowl was murdered for our friend's dinner. Of the first Mrs. Shelley, the recollection of our friend is faint, but is of an amiable and unaffected person, very young and very pleasing, and she and Shelley seemed much attached." The "poor man" referred to above was evidently Daniel Hill (or Healey), who was in Shelley's employment. The letter containing the allusion to the murdered fowl is the following:—

"Sunday morng. [? March 15, 1812] "17 Grafton Street [Dublin].

"Mrs. Shelley's comps. to Mrs. Nugent, and expects the pleasure of her company to dinner, 5 o'clock, as a murdered chicken has been prepared for her repast."

[Addressed outside], Mrs. Nugent, 101 Grafton Street.

This letter was followed by another note, without date—

"Wednesday. 17 Grafton St. [Dublin].

"If you are not engaged will you give us your company this evening as Mr. S. is not at home."

The rest of Harriet's correspondence with Catherine Nugent will be found in its chronological order.

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.32000000658999 Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 18:38 Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.or married. She called herself Mrs., I suppose on account of her age, as she looks rather old for a Miss. She has never been out of her country, and has no wish to leave it.

This is St. Patrick's night, and the Irish always get very tipsy on such a night as this. The Horse Guards are pacing the streets. and will be so all the night, so fearful are they of disturbances, the poor people being very much that way inclined, as Provisions are very scarce in the southern counties. Poor Irish People, how much I feel for them. Do you know, such is their ignorance, that when there is a drawing-room held, they go from some distance to see the people who keep them starving to get their luxuries; they will crowd round the state carriages in great glee to see those within who have stripped them of their rights, and who wantonly revel in a profusion of ill-gotten luxury, whilst so many of those harmless people are wanting Bread for their wives and children. What a spectacle! People talk of the fiery spirit of these distressed creatures, but that spirit is very much broken and ground down by the oppressors of this poor country. I may with truth say there are more Beggars in this city than any other in the world. They are so poor they have hardly a rag to cover their naked limbs, and such is their passion for drink, that when you relieve them one day you see them in the same deplorable situation the next. Poor creatures, they live more on whiskey than anything, for meat is so dear they cannot afford to purchase any. If they had the means I do not know that they would, whiskey being so much cheaper, and to their palates so much more desirable. Yet how often do we hear people say that poverty is no evil. I think if they had experienced it they would soon alter their tone. To my idea it is the worst of all evils, as the miseries that flow from it are certainly very great; the many crimes we hear of daily are the consequences of Poverty and that to a very great degree; I think the Laws are extremely unjust-

they condemn a Person to Death for stealing 13 shillings and 4 pence.

Disperse the "Declarations." Percy says the farmers are very

fond of having something posted upon their walls.

Percy has sent you all his Pamphlets with the "Declaration of Rights," which you will disperse to advantage. He has not many of his first "Address," having taken great pains to circulate them through this city.

All thoughts of an Association are given up as impracticable. We shall leave this noisy town on the 7th of April, unless the Habeas Corpus Act should be suspended, and then we shall be obliged to leave

here as soon as possible. Adieu.

¹ This shows that Harriet's letter was written on the 17th of March, and not on the "18th," as she has dated it. Unless, indeed, the usual St. Patrick's Ball at Dublin Castle was for some reason held on the 18th of March, instead of the 17th, in the year 1812.

#### 131. To WILLIAM GODWIN

17 Grafton Street [Dublin],
March 18, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have said that I acquiesce in your decision, nor has my conduct militated with the assertion. 1 I have withdrawn from circulation the publications wherein I erred, and am preparing to quit Dublin. It is not because I think that such associations as I conceived, would be deleterious. that I have withdrawn them. It is possible to festinate, or retard, the progress of human perfectibility; such associations as I would have recommended would be calculated to produce the former effect; the refinement of secessions would prevent a fictitious unanimity, as their publicity would render ineffectual any schemes of violent innovation. I am not one of those whom pride will restrain from admitting my own short-sightedness, or confessing a conviction which wars with those previously avowed. My schemes of organizing the ignorant I confess to be ill-timed. cannot conceive that they were dangerous, as unqualified publicity was likewise enforced; moreover, I do not see that a peasant would attentively read my address, and, arising from the perusal, become imbued in sentiments of violence and bloodshed.

It is indescribably painful to contemplate beings capable of soaring to the heights of science, with Newton and Locke, without attempting to awaken them from a state of lethargy so opposite. The part of this city called the Liberty, exhibits a spectacle of squalidness and misery, such as

¹ Godwin in his letter to Shelley of March 14, 1812, shows his disapprobation of the poet's Irish Campaign, and concludes: "I wish to my heart you would come immediately to London. I have a friend who has contrived a tube to convey passengers sixty miles an hour. Be youth your tube! I have a thousand things I could say orally, more than I can say in a letter, on this important subject. Away! You cannot imagine how much all the females of my family, Mrs. G. and three daughters, are interested in your letters and history."—Hogg's "Shelley," Vol. II, p. 99.

might reasonably excite impatience in a cooler temperament than mine. But I submit; I shall address myself no more to the illiterate. I will look to events in which it will be impossible that I can share, and make myself the cause of an effect which will take place ages after I have mouldered in the dust; I need not observe that this resolve requires stoicism. To return to the heartless bustle of ordinary life, to take interest in its uninteresting details; I cannot. Wholly to abstract our views from self, undoubtedly requires unparalleled disinterestedness. There is not a completer abstraction than labouring for distant ages.

My association scheme undoubtedly grew out of my notions of political justice, first generated by your book on that subject. I had not, however, read in vain of confidential discussions, and a recommendation for their general adoption; not in vain had I been warned against a fictitious unanimity. I have had the opportunity of witnessing the latter at public dinners. The peculiarity of my association would have consisted in combining the adoption of the former with the rejection of the latter. Moreover, I desired to sink the question of immediate grievance in the more general and remote consideration of a highly perfectible state of society. I desired to embrace the present opportunity for attempting to forward the accomplishment of that event, and my ultimate views looked to an establishment of those familiar parties for discussion which have not yet become general.

It appears to me that on the publication of "Political Justice" you looked to a more rapid improvement than has taken place. It is my opinion, that if your book had been as general as the Bible, human affairs would now have exhibited a very different aspect.

I have read your letters—read them with the attention and reverence they deserve. Had I, like you, been witness to the French Revolution, it is probable that my caution would have been greater. I have seen and heard enough to make me doubt the omnipotence of truth in a society so

constituted as that wherein we live. I shall make you acquainted with all my proceedings; if I err, probe me severely.

If I was alone, and had made no engagements, I would immediately come to London: as it is, I defer it for a time. We leave Dublin in three weeks.

A woman of extraordinary talents, whom I am so happy as to enroll in the list of those who esteem me, has engaged to visit me in Wales. Mrs. Shelley earnestly desires me to make one last attempt to induce you to visit Wales. If you absolutely cannot, may not your amiable family, with whom we all long to become acquainted, breathe with us the pure air of the mountains? Lest there be any informality in the petition, Mrs. Shelley desires her regards to Mrs. Godwin, and family, urging the above. Miss Westbrook, my sister-in-law, resides with us; and, in one thing at least, none of us are deficient, viz., zeal and sincerity.

Fear no more for any violence, or hurtful measures, in which I may be instrumental in Dublin. My mind is now by no means settled on the subject of associations: they appear to me in one point of view useful, in another deleterious. I acquiesce in your decisions. I am neither haughty, reserved, nor unpersuadable. I hope that time will show your pupil to be more worthy of your regard than you have hitherto found him; at all events, that he will never be otherwise than sincere and true to you.

P. B. SHELLEY.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

## 132. To Thomas Charles Medwin (Horsham)

Dublin, No. 17 Grafton Street, March 20, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

The tumult of business and travelling has prevented my addressing you before.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Miss Elizabeth Hitchener.

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I am now engaged with a literary friend in the publication of a voluminous History of Ireland, of which two hundred and fifty pages are already printed, and for the completion of which, I wish to raise two hundred and fifty pounds. I could obtain undeniable security for its payment at the expiration of eighteen months. Can you tell me how I ought to proceed? The work will produce great profits.

As you will see by the Lewes paper, I am in the midst of overwhelming engagements. My kindest regards to all your family. Be assured I shall not forget you or them.

My dear Sir,

Yours very truly, P. B. Shelley.

[Addressed outside],
T. C. Medwin, Esq.,
Horsham, Sussex, England.

19-(:235)

Ireland, from the Earliest Period to the Reign of George I. By John Lawless, Esq., a member of the Catholic Board, Dublin, 1814."

Mr. MacCarthy says ("Shelley's Early Life," p. 298), "The work, though not published till 1814, was well known to be in preparation shortly after Shelley left Dublin. The following curious allusion to it will be found in Dr. Brenan's Milesian Magazine for July, 1812, p. 87. 'Jack Squintum' was the sobriquet of John Lawless in this scurrilous publication: "'Jack Squintum's History of Ireland.' The public will learn, with much attention, that a history of Ireland, from the Creation to the present hour, is about to be published by that illustrious literator, 'Jack Squintum.'""

# VI. NANTGWILLT April 16—June 18, 1812

The Voyage from Ireland—Seeking for a House in Wales—A. Nantgwillt—Miss Hitchener and the Sussex Scandal-mongers—Harriet's Illness—Miss Hitchener Invited to Nantgwillt—Mr. Hitchener—At Mr. Grove's—"A Letter to Lord Ellenborough."

#### 132A. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

NANTGWILLT, RHAYADER,
RADNORSHIRE.
[? April 16, 1812.]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

How surprised you must be at my long silence. what may you not attribute it? What fears, suspicions, misgivings, may not have come over you. Believe me, [I] have felt them all, but I was unwilling to write to you when I could tell you of nothing but our little distresses. Every day for this fortnight have I anticipated that the next would be the last of our wanderings, and that then I might welcome you to something like a home. Dublin, and arrived at Holyhead after a passage of wearisome length. We have traversed the whole of Wales and heard no tidings of a house; every inn we stopped at was the subject of new hopes, and new disappointments. We came from Barmouth to Aberystwith, thirty miles, in an open boat; and at length have arrived at Rhayader —the very spot where I spent last summer, and are about to take a house which its tenant is forced to quit, from

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Shelleys left Dublin on Saturday, April 4, and arrived at Nantgwillt on April 14.

Bankruptcy; it is within a mile of Mr. Grove's.—The house is a good one; what I mean by good is that there is plenty of room for all of us. There are 200 acres of arable land, including some woodland, and the whole subject to the moderate rent of £98 a year, which I hope to make the farming more than pay. The house is not yet our own, altho' we reside here; but will be so in the course of a month. Oh my friend, what shall I say of the scenery? but you will enjoy it with us, which is all that is wanting to render it a perfect Heaven.

I know the misgivings that come over us when we have not heard from a friend for a long time; and when we think that he might have written, that he is cooled in the ardency of his attachment, and that other occupations have more charms for him than friendship.—But it is not so with me. I will not here re-assert all my assertions of friendship; but a hint that my perceptions of your excellences are unbounded, is enough between such as us.— The end of June is the time fixed for our meeting. Oh that the hours which divide that time from the present may roll fast! But it will come. Time's pace never varies: the hopes of those who sigh for a reunion, and the fears of those who anticipate a separation, hasten not its inevitable arrival. I have a plan in embryo. In June we will part no more. This house is large; it will contain Could not your father accompany you? seven bedrooms. He understands a farm, and its management would be an amusement to him. He might then always enjoy your society, which he cannot now; and it might be a comfort to his declining years to see you independently settled for it would be independent. Now consider this. You have ere this received our box and its contents. 1 I paid the carriage as far as I could, that is, across the Channel; and I am positive that it did not come by the post. "Declaration of Rights" would be useful in farm-houses:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The box never arrived. See note to Harriet Shelley's letter of March 18, 1812.

Williams, the Ratcliffe Highway murderer (of Mr. Marr's family) here alluded to, had destroyed two families, and then committed suicide. The Examiner for Jan. 5, 1812, contains a grim account of the night interment of Williams at the crossing of four roads in Whitechapel with a wooden stake driven through his body. De Quincey has immortalised Williams in his essay "On Murder, Considered as one of the Fine Arts," and Charles Lamb, on asking his kind-hearted friend, George Dyer, what he thought of Williams, drew from him that incomparable reply: "I should think, Mr. Lamb, he must have been rather an eccentric character."

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¹ The Prince Regent's reckless extravagance and debauchery, while the country was suffering from great depression and poverty, were subjects of severe censure in the Radical newspapers of the time; and Leigh Hunt's comments had been unusually severe. In the Examiner for March 22, 1812, appeared the article entitled "The Prince on St. Patrick's Day," which led to Leigh Hunt and his brother, John Hunt, being sentenced to two years' imprisonment, and fined £500 each. Questions had been raised in the House of Commons on March 23 regarding the Prince Regent's debts, the increased incomes of the Queen and Princesses, and the salary of Colonel McMahon, who had been appointed to the new office of Keeper of the Privy Purse.

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.32000000658999 http://www.hathitrust.org/access\_use#pd-google Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 18:38 Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.or all very apathetical on the subject of politics. We will converse on what can be done here when you come. How will the Groves admire our conduct? What will they think of you? If you think it will have any good effect, I will write a letter to the Chairman, or whatever you call him, of your book-club, recommending some further organization of the society. What think you of this? I have written some verses on Robert Emmett, which you shall see, and which I will insert in my book of Poems.

We are now embosomed in the solitude of mountains, woods, and rivers—silent, solitary, and old, far away from any town; six miles from Rhayader, which is nearest. A ghost haunts this house, which has frequently been seen by the servants. We have several witches in our neighbourhood, and are quite stocked with fairies and hobgoblins of every description. Well, my dear friend, I have no larger paper, and therefore must say adieu. Recollect that I am still your friend completely and unalterably. Harriet and Eliza send their love. Harriet is now writing to Mrs. Nugent, an excellent woman whom we discovered in Dublin, and of whom she will tell you.—Adieu.

Yours eternally,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
single sheet,
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton, Sussex.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Prof. Dowden in his "Life of Shelley" (Vol. I, p. 208), prints two verses from an unpublished poem of seven stanzas on Robert Emmett. It is possible that this poem may have been written in Dublin.

The following is Harriet Shelley's letter alluded to above, written to Catherine Nugent two days after the Shelleys arrived at Nantgwillt. It is valuable, for at least one reason, in enabling the date to be fixed of Shelley's departure from Dublin, and his arrival at Nantgwillt.

Direct, Nantgwillt, Rhayader, Radnorshire, South Wales,

April 16 [1812].

My DEAR MRS. NUGENT,—After travelling over an immense tract of country in the hopes of finding a house in which it would be our greatest joy to welcome a native of that country so dear to my recollection, tho' at the same time so painful to the feelings of one who unfortunately, being an Englishwoman, must never hope to see realised her warmest wishes in behalf of a nation so deserving of every happiness which this and the next world can afford. You know when we left Dublin [on Saturday, April 4] the wind was against us: but by making several tacks we contrived to get out of harbour, and continued sailing 36 hours when we had been informed that at the most we should certainly be no more than 12 hours. There is no dependence upon the word of a sailor, you may have heard me say, and now I am more confirmed in it. We did not arrive at Holyhead till near 2 o'clock on Monday morning. Then we had above a mile to walk over rock and stone in a pouring rain before we could get to the inn. The night was dark and stormy; but the sailors had lanterns, or else I think it would have been better to have remained on board. As soon as we could get supper we did. We did not eat anything for 36 hours, all the time we were on board, and immediately began upon meat; you will think this very extraordinary, but Percy and my sister suffered so much by the voyage, and we were so weakened by the vegetable system, that had they still continued it would have been seeking a premature grave. I fared the best of any as I slept most part of the time. On Tuesday [April 7] we began travelling, and that day week [April 14] we found our way here. Strange as it may appear, we have been all through North Wales to find a house, but not one presented itself, nor should we have this if a very unpleasant circumstance had not taken place. person to whom it belongs was a sea-captain, and a brother in-law of his has involved him in bankruptcy by very unfair means, and has himself absconded with £2,000, therefore now all this man's property is to go to satisfy the creditors. He was his partner in this country's bank and has defrauded many people of their money. The beauty of this place is not to be described. It is quite an old family house, with a farm of 200 acres meadow land. The rent is 498 a year, which we think very cheap; but by letting a part of the farm we can reduce it to £20 per annum. I must now say adieu. We all unite in kind regards, and believe me your sincere friend, H.S.

[Addressed outside],
Mrs. Nugent,
No. 101 Grafton Street,
Dublin, Ireland.

#### 133. TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

NANTGWILLT, RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE, SOUTH WALES, April 25, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

At length we are in a manner settled. The difficulty of obtaining a house in Wales (like many other difficulties) is greater than I had imagined. We determined, on quitting Dublin, to settle in Merionethshire, the scene of Fleetwood's early life, 1 but there we could find not even temporary accommodation. We traversed the whole of North and part of South Wales fruitlessly, and our peregrinations have occupied nearly all the time since the date of my last.

We are no longer in Dublin. Never did I behold in any other spot a contrast so striking as that which grandeur and misery form in that unfortunate country. How forcibly do I feel the remark which you put into the mouth of Fleetwood, that the distress which in the country humanizes the heart by its infrequency, is calculated in a city, by the multiplicity of its demands for relief, to render us callous to the contemplation of wretchedness. Surely the inequality of rank is not felt so oppressively in England. Surely something might be devised for Ireland, even consistent with the present state of politics, to ameliorate its Curran at length called on me. I dined twice condition. at his house. Curran is certainly a man of great abilities, but it appears to me that he undervalues his powers when he applies them to what is usually the subject of his conversation. I may not possess sufficient taste to relish humour, or his incessant comicality may weary that which I possess. He does not possess that mould of mind which I have been accustomed to contemplate with the highest feelings of respect and love. In short, though Curran indubitably possesses a strong understanding and a brilliant fancy, I should not have beheld him with the feelings of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Godwin's novel, "Fleetwood," was published in 1805.

admiration which his first visit excited, had he not been your intimate friend.

Nantgwillt, the place where we now reside, is in the neighbourhood of scenes marked deeply on my mind by the thoughts which possessed it when present among them. The ghosts of these old friends have a dim and strange appearance when resuscitated in a situation so altered as mine is, since I felt that they were alive. 1 I have never detailed to you my short, yet eventful life; but when we meet, if my account be not candid, sincere, and full, how unworthy should I be of such a friend and adviser as that whom I now address! We are not yet completely certain of being able to obtain the house where now we are. has a farm of two hundred acres, and the rent is but ninety-eight pounds per annum. The cheapness, beauty, and retirement make this place in every point of view desirable. Nor can I view this scenery-mountains and rocks seeming to form a barrier round this quiet valley. which the tumult of the world may never overleap; the guileless habits of the Welsh-without associating your presence with the idea, that of your wife, your children, and one other friend, to complete the picture which my mind has drawn to itself of felicity. Steal, if possible, my revered friend, one summer from the cold hurry of business, and come to Wales.—Adieu!

Harriet desires to join me in kindest remembrances to yourself, Mrs. G., and family. She joins also in earnest wishes that you would all visit us.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

¹ Since Shelley's visit to Cwm Elan in the summer of 1811, after his rejection by Harriet Grove, and his expulsion from Oxford, many important events had taken place in his life. During that year he had married Harriet Westbrook, had lost the friendship (at least for a time) of his friend Hogg, and had conducted a campaign in Ireland; he had also begun and continued a voluminous correspondence with William Godwin and Elizabeth Hitchener. Shelley commemorated his feelings on revisiting these scenes, in a poem entitled "The Retrospect: Cwm Elan, 1812," first printed by Professor Dowden in his "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 270-4.

### 134. TO THOMAS CHARLES MEDWIN (Horsham)

NANTGWILLT, RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE,
April 25, 1812.

DEAR SIR,

After all my wanderings I have at length arrived at Nantgwillt, near Mr. T. Grove's. I could find no house throughout the north of Wales, and the merest chance conducted me to this spot. Mr. Hooper, the present proprietor is a bankrupt, and his assignees are empowered to dispose of the lease, stock, and furniture, which I am anxious to purchase. They will all be taken at a valuation, and Mr. T. Grove has kindly promised to find a proper person to stand on my side. The assignees are willing to give me credit for eighteen months, or longer, but being a minor my signature is invalid. Would you object to join your name in my bond, or rather, to pledge yourself for my standing by the agreement when I come of age? The sum is likely to be 6 or 700 £.

The farm is about 200 acres, 130 acres arable, the rest wood and mountain. The house is a very good one, the rent 98£, which appears abundantly cheap.

My dear sir, now pray answer me this question by return of post, as I am at present in an unpleasant state of suspense with regard to this affair, as so eligible an opportunity for settling in a cheap, retired, romantic spot will scarcely occur again.

Remember me kindly to all your family.

I remain, dear Sir, Yours very truly,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
T. C. MEDWIN, Esq.,
Horsham, Sussex,



#### 135. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

NANTGWILLT, [RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE], April 29th, 1812.

Harriet has not been able to write to you. She is now recovering from a bilious attack which so overpowered her with languor that she could not hold a pen. I wonder not that the confidence which my friend ought to have in such a self as hers, is shaken by the number of her enemies, until I think of their despicable qualities; and then I recur to the friendlessness of her present situation to account for the self-desertion by which you are overwhelmed. Arouse yourself! Yet a little, bear the sternness of your thorny solitude, bear desertion, contumely, and hatred (for it is the contumely and hatred of those who know you not) and friendship and duty will soon strew on a path too flinty yet the flowers of hope and peace. dearest friend, do not think of not living with us. because a few paltry village-gossips repeat some silliness of their own invention till they believe it, shall those resolves be shaken which ought to survive the shock of elements and crash of worlds? What is there in the Captain's disapproval? he has been an uncle to me, I owe him gratitude for his kindness; but am I prescribed to take his word? I have examined this affair on every side, and I withdraw not an iota of my former convictions. —It raises a smile of bitterness at the world when I think on the only possible report which Mrs. Pilfold can have treated you with. What will she have recourse to next? I unfaithful to my Harriet! You a female Hogg! Common sense should laugh such an idea to scorn, if indignation

would wait till it could be looked upon !—But, my friend, I do not believe there are any reports abroad in this country concerning us; Mrs. Pilfold of Cuckfield is the origin of them all. You may have another enemy. Mrs. P[ilfold] wants you in the country to educate her child. She has made these reports, and then reported them to detain you. I see how it is. She has imposed on her husband. His nature is as open and unsuspecting as hers is artful and intriguing. 1 Last night, when your letter came, I did reconsider the plan. It looked almost like a blasphemy: on truth when I had done. I blushed in my soul that I had doubted immutable and eternal rectitude. I will do so no more. You have probably considered it. I doubt not the result of your deliberations being favourable. Whatever it may now be, I have such confidence in the omnipotence of truth that it must be so ultimately. Harriet has just said, "She shall not stay away:" and never was there a prophesy that is so creditable to truth and friendship. Adieu. Keep up your spirits: it will soon be over, it is the probationary state before we all enter the heaven of virtue and friendship.

**Scandal** 

My dearest of friends, sustain yourself for your unalterable friend.

Harriet and Eliza send their love: they will not hear of any alteration.

In haste, yours ever faithfully,

Percy.

[Addressed outside], Miss HITCHENER, Hurstpierpoint, Brighton, Sussex.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Certain scandalous reports regarding Shelley and Miss Hitchener were at this time being circulated, without any foundation, throughout Hurstpierpoint, Cuckfield, and Horsham. Shelley, as we see, believed that his aunt, Mrs. Pilfold, had originated these scandals fearing that her children were in danger of losing an excellent governess if Miss Hitchener paid her promised visits.

# 136. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

[NANTGWILLT, RHAYADER,
RADNORSHIRE,
April 29, 1812.]

I write this scrap (I have time for no more) because I have just received your last. I will write on Thursday, our next post-day. Harriet is still so unwell as to be unable to write. She desires her kindest love, however, and joins with Eliza and myself in determining never to submit to a repeal of our plans. Pray write me an account of the reports. I find that I have mistaken their nature. At all events, my beloved friend, keep up your spirits, keep up your resolves.—May you not be mistaken in attributing excellences to your father which he does not possess! Both he and the Captain seem at least to share some of their qualities with the mule. I think Mrs. Pilfold has made these reports. But, whatever caused them, of what consequence are they to you? I have written to the Captain: the letter is calculated to make his soul start back to see it.—Never doubt what the heart and the head are unanimous in approving. Never doubt your own purity. Believe that I am firmly yours, and that Harriet and Eliza determine that you shall be ours.

Adieu. Depend upon it that no one can have read our letters. Mrs. P. has been pumping you, and then drenching you with the water. You are not their equal in cunning. Well, adieu; time howls.

Your most sincere and true

[Addressed outside],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton, Sussex.



### 137. To Mr. HITCHENER (Brighton)

NANTGWILLT, RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE, SOUTH WALES, April 30, 1812.

SIR,

I am your daughter's friend, o' whom you may have You will consider it a sufficient introducheard her speak. tion when her peace of mind is the subject of this intrusion. The late letters which I have received from my friend have evinced considerable distress of mind arising from reports circulated to the disadvantage of her reputation. which reports appear not to be without connexion with me, and my little circle. It was not until we had determined on the plan of living together, of pursuing conjointly those avocations for which we had severally acquired a taste, that any of these calumnies reached her ear, and they would have passed unnoticed by her and me in the silence of merited contempt, if some unaccountable infatuation had not gained them a sufficient degree of credit from you, to disapprove of the plan on which we had determined. —Sir, my moral character is unimpeached, and unimpeachable, I hate not calumny so much as I despise it. the world thinks of my actions ever has, and I trust ever will, be a matter of the completest indifference. daughter shares this sentiment with me, and we both are resolved to refer our actions to one tribunal only, that which Nature has implanted within us. I am married. My wife loves your daughter, she laughs at whatever the scandal of a few gossips out of employment might whisper, nor is she willing to sacrifice the inestimable society of her friend to the good opinion of the good people of Hurst or Horsham at tea party or card table assembled. So far as myself and Mrs. Shelley are concerned, we are irrevocably resolved that no expedient shall be left untried on our part to induce our friend to share the prosperity or adversity of her lot with us. Much as the strong affection which she



bears you has prejudiced me in your favour, yet I would take my own opinion, particularly when it springs from my own reasonings and feelings, before that of any man. And you will forfeit the esteem that I have thus acquired for your character, if you endeavour by parental command to change the decision of [a] free-born soul. I understand that there is woven in the composition of your character a jealous watchfulness over the encroachments of those who happen to be born to more wealth and name than yourself. You are perhaps right. It need not be exerted now. I have no taste for displaying genealogies, nor do I wish to seem more important than I am.

Yours sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Mr. HITCHENER,
Friar's Oak,
Brighton, Sussex.

### 138. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

NANTGWILLT, [RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE,] Friday Even., [May 1, 1812].

Harriet still continues ill. I have sent for the nearest Physician (40 miles from this place) and as he is not yet arrived, shall send again to-morrow. Her indisposition has begun to wear so serious an appearance that, tho' not alarmed, I am anxious, as, without any visible cause, any violent fever or relaxations, her weakness has increased so much that she cannot walk across the room without assistance. A week ago I said: "Give me Nantgwillt; fix me in this spot so retired, so lovely, so fit for the seclusion of those who think and feel. Fate, I ask no more." Little then did I expect my Harriet's illness, or that flaming opposition which the mischievous and credulous around you are preparing against the most cherished wishes of my heart. Now I say: "Fate, give my Harriet health, give my Portia peace, and I will excuse

the remainder of my requisition." Oh my beloved friend, let not the sweet cup be dashed from the lips of those who alone can appreciate its luxury, at the instant that Fate has yielded it to their power! I have longer arguments than this expostulation in store. Yet surely this comprehends them. Does not joy include the good which we would do?

Well, my dear friend, Harriet will recover: oh, certainly she will! Her illness is of a nature comparatively slight, and I am weak to think so gloomily of it as I do sometimes. Yet she has been ill a week. Then I try to console myself: —How many weeks has not this frame tossed on a bed of bodily pain, with a mind scarcely less diseased than the body! Amongst all my thoughts, you are not forgotten: Friend of my soul, you are not forgotten. You are to my fancy as a thunder-riven pinnacle of rock, firm amid the rushing tempest and the boiling surge; Aye! stand for ever firm, and, when our ship anchors close to thee, the crew will cover thee with flowers! Well, to the point.— I have written to my uncle, and written to your Father: ask them to show the letters.—Harriet is so languid that she can scarcely speak; yet she did bid me to say that she hoped nothing would induce you to desert us, and to declare that she was irrevocably convinced that we ought all to live together. What! Are there beings on this world who think and feel as we do, and should the bigots to world-religion (for I can call by no better name the God that inspired the Captain's arguments, and your father's claims), should they enchain the "souls whose valour made them free?" I can think with no patience, my toleration to the hateful race of vipers that crawl upon this earth is exhausted, when I find that they have stung There is a charm against their venom which thou, my friend, hast borne about thee-which thou bearest about thee still-which thou wilt ever bear. Repose thy perfect confidence in me: I cannot confide in a being more than I do in thee. I never admit it to be possible that you are other than I have seen and known thee. I esteem, revere and love every part of your character. My Harriet's attachment to you will even exceed mine. She is warmer and more affectionate than my heart, which in its time, has had so much rubbing that it ought to be hard by this time. Your father and the Captain are near you, we are far: and yet, my friend, when you hear their arguments, persuasions, and threats, I think you sometimes turn your mind towards us, and ask, "What would Percy's little circle think of this? What would they say?"

Adieu. You will hear from me at greater length, as I have much to say, and much to answer.

Yours indissolubly,

[Addressed outside], P. B. S.

Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton, Sussex.
[Postmark], May 2, 1812.

### 139. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

NANTGWILLT, [RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE.]

May 7, 1812.

Harriet is much recovered. Her fever has left her, and she will, to-morrow or next day, inform you herself of her convalescence. Do you keep up your spirits, new-string your resolutions, and all will go well.

"But screw your courage to the sticking-place, And we'll not fail."

Your letter from Cuckfield to Harriet in Dublin has this day arrived. And so our dear friends are determined to destroy our peace of mind if we live together; determined, all for our good, to make us all the most miserable wretches on earth. Now this it must be confessed is truly humane and condescending. But how is it to be managed? Where will they begin? In what manner will they destroy our peace of mind, without eradicating that conscious integrity whence it springs? Thinking the pickaxe of vulgar

cunning, however sharp, not equal to the demolition of the noblest tree in the forest of the soul, we may, I assume, pass over the consideration of damage that cannot be effected. And what new thing have they advanced to \* shake this cherished plan? That you are to be my Mistress! that you refused it whilst I was single, but that my marriage takes away all objections that before stood in the way of this singular passion! They certainly seem to have acquired a taste of fabricating the most whimsical and impossible crimes. Whence, for instance, could they have taken (but from the annals of Centaurs and chimæras,) the idea of a passion whose delicacy shrank from the idea of union with its unengaged object, but whose timid scruples were completely overcome when that object was the husband of another? Trust me, my friend. they are the extemporaneous effusions of Mrs. Pilfold's brain, fertile in instant expedients, prepared to tell a thousand falsehoods to support an untruth at first perhaps unthinkingly advanced. These shapeless and undigested charges bear all the marks of her ever-ready calumny, which would hold out the right hand in affection, and with the left tear your very heartstrings! She is the woman! Now, my friend, are we or are we not to sacrifice an attachment in which far more than you and I are immediately implicated,—in which far more than these dear beings are remotely concerned? And to sacrifice to what? To the world! to the swinish multitude, to the indiscriminating million, to such as burnt the House of Priestley, such as murdered Fitzgerald, such as erect Barracks in Marylebone, such as began and such as continue this liberticide war, such wretches as dragged Redfern to slavery, or (equal in unprincipled cowardice) the slaves who permit such things: for of these two classes is composed what may be called the world. 1 But, my beloved friend, the good

¹ Joseph Priestley (1733-1804), natural philosopher and theologian, whose reply to Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution," 1793, led to a Birmingham riot, during which his house was 20—(2285)

will not rail at us. They will not say we are the slaves of contemptible passions—we who aspire to the eminence which they have gained—Godwin will not say so—In fine that conscience which [is] seated on a throne above the restless turbulence of interested feelings will acquit at its tribunal actions and thoughts incapable of sullying its purity.

Are we, or are we not to sacrifice the immediate energizing of those reforms which the thoughtless and the every-day beings cannot conceive of as practicable or useful?—to sacrifice these plans, ideas communicated, ameliorated, and passed thro' the fire of *unbiassed* discussions—those plans which your soul cannot help bursting now to realize. And sacrificed to what? Eternal Truth, wherefore do I libel thy immutable name by holding this argument any longer with the most impassioned and unbending of thy votaries?

My friend, my dearest friend, you must—you shall—be with us, all our schemes, even of walks or rides, will be unfinished without you. Every day, every hour, that I discuss your coming, the good that will result appears more certain, and its opportunities more frequent, the evil vanishes.—For tell me one evil that will result, think of one good which your residence with us will not have a tendency to accomplish. Now you say that you will first visit us. Do so, and let this morning's visit [usher] in the day of endless being; at least, last as long as this life. Consider how little it is, in comparison to the eternal changes which await to commence at our dissolution.—

wrecked by the mob, and most of his papers and instruments were destroyed. Lord Edward Fitzgerald (1763-1798) was one of the United Irishmen. He went to France to assist in the invasion of Ireland, and on his return was wounded while being arrested, and died a few days afterwards of his injuries. In the House of Commons on March 13th, 1812, it was stated that the new [Marylebone] Barracks in Regent's Park were to cost £138,000. A sum of £13,800,000 had been expended on the erection of barracks since the commencement of the war in the Peninsula in 1809,

Consider how foolish it would be, were you to pay a morning visit to Miss Weekes, or any other country gossip, and ran twenty times out of the room because it was proper. Now determine on nothing until this summer visit, but how can your resolves be unbiassed, if you propose to take your scholars again? Dismiss them, then, at Midsummer, and come to us, undetermined and open to conviction.

We are not yet settled in this place. The size of the residence, with respect to the number of bedrooms, is very desirable. How many amiable beings may not be destined to occupy them! We have already determined on your apartment: I think you will come.

I wrote to your father and to the Captain. The Captain told me that the reports were as you have stated them to be. He professed to disbelieve the "Mistress" business, but asserted that I certainly was very much attached to you. I certainly should feel quite as much inclined to deny my own existence as to deny this latter charge; altho' I took care to assure him that, in the vague sense which he had annexed to the word "love," he was utterly mistaken. I have answered this letter of his. When you see him, request to look at the correspondence. I have only one copy (and that torn) of Redfern's letter: I enclose it. It is a horrible case.

Tell me in your next how your political affairs get on. Who are your agents? What have you done? Take care of letting any of the "Declarations" get into the hands of priests or aristocrats. Adieu: bear in mind our love—Harriet's, mine, and Eliza's. Steel your heart to the poisoned-shafts of calumny: let them rebound from the adamantine rock. Ever beloved friend, adieu.

Your most truly and unalterably,

P. B. S.

[Addressed outside],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton, Sussex.



## 140. To CATHERINE NUGENT (Dublin)

Nantgwillt, Rhayader, Radnorshire, North Wales, May 7, 1812.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Harriet is now recovering from an intermittent brought on by the fatigues of our journey. I have been considerably anxious about her tho' I have no doubt but that in a short time she will be able to thank you for your kind letter, and inform you herself of her convalescence. Your letter arrived yesterday morning. Accept our sincerest united thanks, for tho' you are Harriet's correspondent, remember that you were first my friend. I shall not readily forget the greatness of mind on your part that presented me with a knowledge of you.

How unequally has the detestable system by which human beings govern their affairs distributed poverty How much do you suffer from the disand wealth. Had you the millions which the Prince will tribution. possess how would England not be benefited! he compelled to sit in Mr. Newman's shop and sew fur on to satin, in what would she be injured? That this remark is not meant for flattery you will believe. your opinion of your own abilities is far too low. regard to the notions you may have framed of abstract perfection, I know not how true or how false your opinion of yourself may be; but this I know, that with regard to what human nature is, your character is formed to excite that esteem and attachment which our little party feels for you.

I fear that hunger is the only excitement of our English riotings; any change which they may produce appears to me likely to be devoid of principle and method. I sincerely hope that a just indignation against that crowned coward and villain the Prince does prevail, but I do not think that it has gained any strength. The local Militia,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Miss Nugent was employed in the shop of Mr. Newman, a furrier.

that body of soldiery nearest approaching and immediately mingling with the character of citizen, have been called out near Carlisle and other great towns to quell the populace. That the Government has dared to call the local [forces] into action appears to be an evidence that at least they do not think that disaffection to Government (except so far as directly connected with starvation) has any share in these tumults. War with America appears in a manner now inevitable. Ministers have been at some ministerial work in that country, viz., Capt. Henry and Sir [paper torn] Craig. 1 Redfern's letters have not yet been distributed. They were packed in a box which we left at Holyhead, but which we expect by the carrier to-night. Remember me to Reynolds; tell him I shall not be idle about Redfern, and that as soon as I have done anything I will write to him. We expect to take possession of this house and farm on Thursday next. Accept, my esteemed friend, from that time the sincerest welcome that our warm hearts can give you. Believe that if anything can add to the pleasure we shall receive from your visit it will be the earliness of the period which you fix for its commencement. With sincerest wishes for your peace and health, in which Harriet and Eliza join, believe me

> Yours most truly, P. B. Shelley.

¹ General Sir James Henry Craig (1748-1812), formerly Governor of Canada, was supposed to have employed Captain John Henry "to go to Boston to find out how the minds of the People were then affected, and whether they would be inclined to break the Union." Great Britain and America were on the point of hostilities, and it appeared that Captain Henry had made the disclosure regarding his dead, chief to the United States, alleging that the government authorities had refused to give him his due reward. Correspondence with Lord Liverpool and with Sir James Craig on the subject was referred to by President Madison in his message to the Houses of Congress, and questions were raised in the Houses of Lorids and Commons. The British Government, while blaming the action of the late Sir James Craig, repudiated any responsibility in the steps he had taken. America, however, declared war with Great Britain on June 18, 1812.

Did you see Sir F. Burdett's speech on the Marylebone Barracks?<sup>1</sup>

[Addressed outside],
Mrs. NUGENT,
No. 101 Grafton Street,
Dublin, Ireland.

## 141. To Mr. HITCHENER (Brighton)

Nantgwillt, May 14, 1812.

SIR.

If you have always considered character a possession of the first consequence you and I essentially differ. If you think that an admission of your inferiority to the world would leave any corner by which yourself and character may aspire beyond its reach, we differ there again. short, to be candid, I am deceived in my conception of your character.—I had some difficulty in stifling an indignant surprise on reading the sentence of your letter in which you refuse my invitation to your daughter. you entitled to do this? Who made you her governor? did you receive this refusal from her to communicate to me? No you have not——. How are you then constituted to answer a question which can only be addressed to her? believe me such an assumption is as impotent as it is im-You may cause your daughter much anxiety, many troubles, you may stretch her on a bed of sickness. you may destroy her body, but you are defied to shake her mind.—She is now very ill. You have agitated her mind until her frame is seriously deranged; take care, Sir, you may destroy her by disease, but her mind is free: that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Sir Francis Burdett's speech in the House of Commons on May 1st, 1812, regarding the question of erecting new barracks in Marylebone Park, in which he was called to order for "throwing a slur on the Army."

you cannot hurt.—Your ideas of *Propriety* (or to express myself clearer, of morals) are all founded on considerations of profit. I do not mean money, but profit in its extended sense:—as to your daughter's welfare on that she is competent to judge or at least she alone has a right to decide. With respect to your own compact you of course do right to consult it, that she has done so you ought to be more grateful than you appear.—But how can you demand as a right what has been generously conceded as a favor; you do right to consult your own comfort, but the whole world besides may surely be excused.

Neither the laws of Nature, nor of England, have made children private property.

Adieu, when next I hear from you, I hope that time will have liberalized your sentiments.

Yours truly, P. B. Shelley.

[Addressed outside],
Mr. HITCHENER,
Friar's Oak,
Brighton, Sussex.

# 142. To Elizabeth Hitchener (Hurstpierpoint)

NANTGWILLT, [RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE], [Tuesday], June 2, 1812.

I have not written to you now for a fortnight! What a time! soon, however, we shall have a mode of communication more endearing, delightful and immediate. Nothing shall ever prevent our meeting. The opposition of the narrow-minded and worldly shall only render more speedy and decisive what they are now inefficient to hinder! One fortnight more, and we meet; fortnight

fly fast and leave the last of my wishes completed! I have been ill with an inflam[m]atory fever, from which I am now completely recovered. I feared to write to you with a hand unsteady, and a head disordered with illness. Harriet was delegated to the task, she is no unworthy substitute.

I rejoice to think that you, my dearest friend, will speedily be our eternal inmate. Rejoice, did I say? It is a word frigid and inexpressive of the idea which it is meant to excite.

I have much to talk to you of. Innate Passions, God, Christianity, etc., when we meet. Would not "co-existent with our organization" be a more correct phrase for passions than "innate?" I think I can prove to you that our God is the same. If every day takes from the fever of my opposition to Christianity, it adds to its system a determinedness, it adds to the perfect and full conviction I feel of its falsehood and mischief.—We are not yet certain of possessing Nantgwillt; it would provoke me to resign what I have intended to make the asylum of distressed virtue, the rendezvous of the friends of liberty and truth. On Friday, however, it will be fixed. I shall immediately furnish our largest room as a Library, for which I shall have credit on my future remaining prospects. I think this luxury is one that we are entitled to, if we are entitled to any advantage from our fortune, even if we put out of consideration the knowledge that a library will give us of building the house we shall possess for the benefit of the Human race. It will cost £50 to come to Hurst and return to Nantgwillt if everything proceeds quietly (as our union is by right, national right, the property of all the members of our society, of which you are henceforth considered as one). I think you had better come to Nantgwillt alone. If we cannot get Nantgwillt we shall come up to London before the 25th, where we shall meet you and shall be equally inseparably united. Time, place, and circumstance can now make no difference in our

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000658999 Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 18:38 GMT / https://hdl.han Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.org/access\_use#pd-google meeting. You have been ill; dearest friend take care of yourself—your life is inexpressibly valuable and important. Adieu. You shall hear on Friday.

Your most faithful and affectionate [Signature apparently torn off.]

[Addressed outside],
Miss HITCHENER,
Hurstpierpoint,
Brighton, Sussex.
[Postmark], 6 June, 1812.

# 143. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

NANTGWILLT,

June 3, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

I hasten to dissipate the unfavourable impressions you seem to have received from my silence. Mrs. Godwin, in a letter to my wife, mentions the existence of your letter in Ireland. This I have never been able to recover; indeed, I am confident that the date of your last was considerably anterior to the 30th of March.

My health has been far from good since I wrote to you, and I have been day after day tormented, and rendered anxious by the delay of legal business necessary to secure this house to us. I do not say that anything can absolutely excuse any neglect to you; but the constant expectancy that the succeeding day would bring a train of thought more favourable than the present, together with your expected letter, may be permitted to palliate it.

I hope, my venerated friend, that you will soon permit the time to arrive when you may know me as I am—when you may consult those lineaments which cannot deceive and be placed in a situation which will obviate the possibility of delusion.

I revert with pleasure to the latter part of your letter, 1 and entreat you to erase from your mind the impressions which occasioned the former. They shall never, assure yourself, find occasion of renewal. Until my marriage, my life had been a series of illness, as it was, of a nervous and spasmodic nature, which in a degree incapacitated me for study. I nevertheless, in the intervals of comparative health, read romances, and those the most marvellous ones, unremittingly, and pored over the reveries of Albertus Magnus and Paracelsus, the former of which I read in Latin, and probably gained more knowledge of that language from that source than from all the discipline of Eton. fondness for natural magic and ghosts abated, as my age increased. I read Locke, Hume, Reid, and whatever metaphysics came in my way, without, however, renouncing poetry, an attachment to which has characterized all my wanderings and changes. I did not truly think and feel, however, until I read "Political Justice," though my thoughts and feelings, after this period, have been more painful, anxious and vivid—more inclined to action and less to theory. Before I was a republican: Athens appeared to me the model of governments; but afterwards, Athens bore in my mind the same relation to perfection that Great Britain did to Athens.

I fear that I am wanting in that mild and equable benevolence concerning which you question me; still I flatter myself that I improve: at all events, I have willingness, and "desire never fails to generate capacity." My knowledge of the chivalric age is small: do not conceive that I intend it to remain so. During my existence, I have incessantly speculated, thought, and read. A great

Godwin's letter of March 30, 1812, in which he refers to that part of Shelley's of March 24, where the young philanthropist says "I will look to events, in which it will be impossible I can share, or make myself the cause of an effect, which will take place ages after I have mouldered into dust." Godwin bids Shelley not to be discouraged, and tells him to "sow the seed, and after a season, and when you least look for it, it will germinate and produce a crop."

deal of this labour nas been uselessly directed; still I am willing to hope that some portion of the stores thus improvidently accumulated, will turn to account. I have just finished reading "La Système de la Nature," par M. Mirabaud. Do you know the real author? It appears to me a work of uncommon powers.

I write this to you by return of post, solicitous, as quickly as possible, to reassure you of my fidelity and truth. I will soon write one more at length, and with answers more satisfactory to the questions in the latter part of yours.

Believe me, with sincerest respect,

Yours most truly, P. B. Shelley.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

## 144. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

Cwm Elan, [Saturday] June 6, 1812.

You see where we are. Nantgwillt is not ours, nor will it be. Mrs. Hooper, the possessor, has chosen to quarrel

On the day following the date of this letter Harriet Shelley wrote as follows to Catherine Nugent on the subject of Nantgwillt—Direct, Cwm Elan, Rhayader, Radnorshire, S[outh] W[ales]

June 7 [1812].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,—So long a time has passed since we have had the pleasure of hearing from you, that the various conjectures arising in our minds as to the cause required explanation. I am sure of this, should you chance to receive my letter. But in the meantime let me tell you all our disappointments. First, then, you will see from the date of this that we are not at our beloved Nantgwillt. Alas, that charming spot is, I am afraid, never destined to

¹ This book was not by J. B. de Mirabaud, as it seems to imply; he died shortly before its appearance, but by Baron D'Holbach (1723-1789), one of the French Encyclopaedists. It is sometimes attributed (without any apparent authority) to Helvétius. Professor Dowden suggests that Shelley may have been led to "Le Système de la Nature" (1770), "the extreme philosophical outcome of eighteencentury materialism," by a mention of it in Godwin's "Political Justice." A long extract from the work is given among the notes to "Queen Mab." Edit. 1813, pp. 174–182.

with us because we cannot give satisfactory security; and for a time (a very short one) we are resident at Mr. Grove's.—But you shall meet us, dear friend: all the varyings and fluctuations of every-day affairs shall leave our meeting unchangeable.—What! may I not say that one is a moral, the other a physical, event—that one depends upon "the virtuous will," the other upon the changeable

The possessor cannot settle with Percy, and indeed he be ours! has acted such a villainous part that we have been obliged to leave him, and for a few days take up our residence at Mr. Grove's, about a mile and half from our favourite residence. You may imagine our sorrow at leaving so desirable a spot, where every beauty seems centred. I had hoped to have seen you there; but I'm afraid I must relinquish and with sorrow so fallacious a wish. We have some thoughts of going to Italy till Percy is of age, as the same difficulty will attend us wherever we go. One very great inducement to go to Italy is the warmth of the climate, as Percy's health is so extremely delicate that the cold air of this country is not likely to benefit him. What have you thought upon the murder of the Prime Minister? Undoubtedly it was very distressing, but the man's composure is astonishing. I think he was a Methodist from his behaviour. I am sorry for his family. It had been better if they had killed Lord Castlereagh. He really deserved it; but this poor Mr. P[ercival] I believe was a very good private character. Do you not think it nonsense for all the little towns and villages to send petitions to the Prince upon the occasion. I suppose Ireland has not done anything half so silly. How do your poor countrymen go on? I hope things are not so scarce there as here. How very lovely the weather is now. Summer comes at last and with it brings disappointments, for you are not the only one I had hoped to have seen at Nantgwillt. Godwin's children were to come to us; but our evil genius has stepped in and forbid us that happiness. We are to begin travelling again soon and where to bend our steps I know not; but we think of going to the seaside until our passports come. We must remain here until we receive remittances from London. Percy is related to Mr. Grove, and his wife is a very pleasant woman, tho' too formal to be agreeable. He is a very proud man. Therefore you may guess how we pass our time. Do you ever see Mr. Lawless? We hear from him sometimes. As to the poems I have no idea how and when they will come out. The printers are very slow in their operations. I must now conclude in hopes of hearing from you soon. Believe me your sincere affectionate friend. H. S.

Percy and Eliza desire to be remembered.

[Addressed outside],
Mrs. NUGENT,
No. 101 Grafton Street,
Dublin, Ireland.

impressions of sensuality?—But to the point.—Do not fear that my father will withdraw the allowance. I know the hidden springs of his character; and pride would not suffer him to withdraw what pride only actuated him to give.—I have sent a draft to town by to-day's post for the quarterly £50, which shall take us to London. where we will meet with you, or at Hurst as you think fit: when we shall become inseparable, and will talk over all the plans which float in all our brains as to our future manner of life. As to your house being on the terms you describe, I do not see anything peremptory in that. If we think it most conducive to unselfishness to fix on it as a residence, undoubtedly we will fix there without hesitation. But might not both your and my connexions considerably curtail our exertions? Might not our central situation with relation to all our well-meaning enemies expose us and our views continually to their aggressions, which, contemptible as they might be with respect to our own peace of mind, would assume an entirely different aspect with regard to our usefulness? Might not my father, offended in our residence in Sussex, withdraw his allowance? Might not the Captain think a well-directed hostility effectual towards disuniting us? Might not your father, lastly, led on by the unculture of his mind, form conclusions of the utmost asperity and injustice? These are considerations which tho' not presenting insurmountable obstacles, are yet subjects for consideration at our meeting.

Adieu. I write in haste, and shall answer your letter the day after to-morrow. Dearest friend, this is a letter of business. Adieu. We all unite in love to her whom we all love inexpressibly.

Your

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton, Sussex.

[Postmark], June 9, 1812.

### 145. To ELIZABETH HITCHENER (Hurstpierpoint)

CWM ELAN,

June 11, 1812.

MY DEAREST FRIEND.

The news of your postscript does not much surprise me. It was to have been expected that no means would have [been] left unattempted by the genius of intrigue and malice. You must know that I regard charges of resembling Lovelace with contemptuous indifference. They affect me but on one account: I fear they have an ill effect on you.—But I should expect that they would excite in you only a smile of bitterness and unbelief.

We cannot have Nantgwillt, and are now remaining at Mr. Grove's until remittances enable us to move. expenses with which our board, lodging, etc., have been attended, will leave us possessed of a sum not sufficient to undertake a journey into Sussex, compatibly with independence when we arrive.—You know, my friend, how much each of us regrets the necessity that detains us from instantly flying to you: but you likewise know that nothing but an unconquerable necessity interposes between friendship and its duties. We therefore determine to proceed to Ilfracombe, a town in the north of Devonshire, sixty miles from Rhayader. We shall at all events get lodgings there for the present; and there is a Coach from London to Barnstaple, which is close to Ilfracombe, by which you may be quickly conveyed to those whose bosoms throb for your arrival.—Our journey to Ilfracombe cannot exceed £8: our journey to Sussex must at least be £30. With the difference of these two sums a house is procurable at Ilfracombe, or near it, which shall be the sanctuary of happiness. As soon as you can arrange your affairs, take a place in the coach for London, Mr. Westbrook will give you a bed, and the next morning he will see you safe in the Barnstaple coach.

Have you enough money for the journey? If not, write to us, and we will send [some] as soon as the £50 arrives. If possible, however, do not wait for the intervention of another letter and its answer. Our well-meaning enemies are determined to oppose your departure with every kind of method—take your method of defeating them: let it be plain and simple.—There is no necessity either to conceal or make public your departure: I recommend not secrecy, but calm firmness.

#### [Written by Harrist]

DEAREST FRIEND.

Your letter makes me very happy as I think I may count upon seeing you very soon. I wish I could come to you, but fate has willed that we should meet at Ilfracombe w[h]ither we shall hasten as soon as the means are ours. For the present I am tied Leg and Wing by the chains of ——? to this enchanting place. Keep up your spirits and let not the whisperings of envy and malice deter you from so happy an undertaking, be firm and determined. I would come if I could, and that I could not expect. God bless you and enable you to arrive.

[Addressed outside], single sheet, Miss HITCHENER, Hurstpierpoint. Brighton, Sussex. [Postmark], June 13, 1812.

## 146. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

Cwm-Rhayader, June 11, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

I will no longer delay returning my grateful and cordial acknowledgments for your inestimable letter of March 30. That it is most affectionate and kind, I deeply feel and thankfully confess. I can return no other answer, than

that I will become all that you believe and wish me to be. I should regard it as my greatest glory, should I be judged worthy to solace your declining years; it is a pleasure, the realization of which I anticipate with confident hopes, and which it shall be my study to deserve. I will endeavour to subdue the impatience of my nature, so incompatible with true benevolence.

I know that genuine philanthropy does not permit its votaries to relax, even when hope appears to languish, or to indulge bitterness of feeling against the very worst, the most mistaken of men.

To these faults in a considerable degree I plead guilty; at all events, I have now a stimulus adequate to excite me to the conquest of them.

I yet know little of the chivalric age. The ancient romances in which are depicted the manners of those times, never fell in my way. I have read Southey's "Amadis of Gaul" and "Palmerin of England," but at a time when I was little disposed to philosophize on the manners they describe. I have also read his "Chronicle of the Cid." It is written in a simple and impressive style, and surprised me by the extent of accurate reading evinced by the references. But I read it hastily, and it did not please me, so much as it will on a reperusal, seasoned by your authority and opinion. It requires no great study to attain an intimate knowledge of Grecian and Roman history; it requires but common feeling to appreciate and acknowledge the resplendent virtues with which it is replete. The first doubts, which arose in my boyish mind concerning the genuineness of the Christian religion, as a revelation from the divinity, were excited by a contemplation of the virtues and genius of Greece and Rome. Shall Socrates and Cicero perish, whilst the meanest hind of modern England inherits eternal life?

I mean not to affirm that this is the first argument with which I would combat the delusions of superstition; but it certainly was the first that operated to convince me

that they were delusions. What do you think of Eaton's trial and sentence? I mean not to insinuate that this poor bookseller has any characteristics in common with Socrates, or Jesus Christ, still the spirit which pillories and imprisons him is the same which brought them to an untimely end—still, even in this enlightened age, the moralist and reformer may expect coercion analogous to that used with the humble yet zealous imitator of their endeavours. I have thought of addressing the public on the subject, and indeed have begun an outline of the address. May I be favoured with your remarks on it before I send it to the world?

We are unexpectedly compelled to quit Nantgwillt. I hope, however, before long time has elapsed, to find a house. These accidents are unavoidable to a minor. I hope wherever we are, you, Mrs. Godwin, and your children will come this summer.

I do not suppose we shall remain here longer than a week. All letters directed here will securely and certainly be forwarded. Harriet desires to join me in everything that is respectful and affectionate to yourself, Mrs. G., and family, my venerated friend. Believe me to remain yours most sincerely.

P. B. SHELLEY.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

### 146a. To Elizabeth Hitchener

June [18, 1812.]

We shall come at any rate. Something on which we cannot calculate has happened: means utterly unknown to us have been practised upon you. Friendship and justice command that we should do all that can be done—I hope the time will never come when we shall be deaf to

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> It took the form of "A letter to Lord Ellenborough," etc. See Shelley's letter to Hookham, July 29, 1812.

their appeals.—I calculate that, on our arrival at Chepstow, £13 will remain. This may suffice for our journey by coaches across the country to you. Then we shall be penniless, and for our return to Chepstow where Eliza will remain, depend upon your exertions with Mr. H[owell]. You had better mention my responsibility, which, if I can see Mr. Howell when I come, I will personally give. Affairs have now arrived at a crisis. I perceive by your letter the necessity of our journey, it is playing a momentous game. It demands coolness and resolution—such coolness as contempt for our adversaries has given Harriet and me. Calm yourself, collect yourself, my dearest friend. How little ought the commonplace cant of prejudice to affect you. How little ought your mighty soul to be shaken by the whisper of a worldling!

Let us show that truth can conquer falsehood.—Let us show that prejudice is impotent when the resolution of friendship and virtue is awakened. It is a glorious cause: martyrdom in such a cause were superior than victory in any other. If what Mr. and Mrs. P[ilfold] and Co, have said of me had been, as it will be, unconnected with your peace, it would amuse me excessively. Even now I can sometimes not help smiling, though the smile is a bitter one, when the train of their conspiracies comes across me.

About next Thursday you may expect us. I am not positive as to the day, but next week we shall be with you. Prepare yourself to leave a scene rendered hateful by impotent malice. If you can [procure] no money, I should conceive that my attempts would not be quite unsuccessful. I know not, however, how this may be. Money is our slave, not our master: it is a slave whose services we are all equally entitled to command. The best wishes, the sincerest love, of all, await you until we meet.

Yours unalterably,

P. B. SHELLEY.

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.32000000658999 Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 18:38 Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.or Even if we are gone, Eliza will be there. You may direct to the Post Office at Chepstow.

I think that you had better communicate to no one the contents of this letter. It could answer no good purpose, and might engender in Mrs. P[ilfold]'s brain some new scheme of malice.

I have been writing a defence of Eaton. To-day I have not coolness enough to go on.

[Addressed outside],

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton, Sussex.

[Postmark], 22 June, 1812.

### 147. To LORD ELLENBOROUGH 1

[June, 1812.]

MY LORD,

As the station to which you have been called by your country is important, so much the more awful is your

A Letter / to / Lord Ellenborough, / occasioned by the Sentence which he passed on / Mr. D. I. Eaton, / as Publisher of / The Third Part of Paine's "Age of Reason." / Deorum offensa, Diis curae. / "It is contrary to the mild spirit of the Christian Religion, for no / sanction can be found under that dispensation which will warrant a / ; Government to impose disabilities and penalties upon any man, on / account of his religious opinions." [Hear, Hear.] / Marquis Wellesley's Speech. Globs, July 2. / This letter was printed at Barnstaple by Mr. Style; see Mr. J. R. Chanter's "Sketches of the Literary History of Barnstaple, 1866," p. 55. Most of the copies of the pamphlet were destroyed by Mr. Style on examining its contents, but seventy-five copies were sent by Shelley to Hookham. Only one copy is at present known to have survived, namely that which was preserved by Hookham and which passed from him to Sir Percy Shelley; it is now in the Bodleian Library. The pamphlet was not published; a revised portion was afterwards included as a note to "Queen Mab," and Lady Shelley printed some extracts in her "Shelley Memorials." It remained for Mr. H. Buxton Forman to give the first verbatim reprint of the Letter in his excellent edition of Shalley's Prose Works, 1880, Vol. I, p. 403. "Daniel Isaac Eaton, a bookseller of Ave Maria Lane, London, was in March, 1812, prosecuted by the Court of King's Bench for publishing, at his 'Ratiocinatory, or Magazine for Truth and Good Sense, a blasphemous and profane libel on the Holy Scriptures, entitled 'The Age of

responsibility, so much the more does it become you to watch lest you inadvertently punish the virtuous and reward the vicious.

You preside over a Court which is instituted for the suppression of crime, and to whose authority the people submit on no other conditions than that its decrees should be conformable to justice.

If it should be demonstrated that a judge had condemned an innocent man, the bare existence of laws in conformity to which the accused is punished would but little extenuate The inquisitor, when he burns an obstinate his offence. heretic, may set up a similar plea; yet few are sufficiently blinded by intolerance to acknowledge its validity. It will less avail such a judge to assert the policy of punishing one who has committed no crime. Policy and morality ought to be deemed synonymous in a court of justice, and he whose conduct has been regulated by the latter principle, is not justly amenable to any penal law for a supposed violation of the former. It is true, my Lord, laws exist which suffice to screen you from the animadversion of any constituted power, in consequence of the unmerited sentence which you have passed upon Mr. Eaton; but there are no laws which screen you from the reproof of a nation's disgust; none which ward off the just judgment of posterity, if that posterity will deign to recollect you.

Reason: Part the Third. By Thomas Paine.' He was found guilty, and Lord Ellenborough sentenced him on May 8 to eighteen months' imprisonment at Newgate, and during the first month to stand in the pillory for an hour in the Old Bailey. On May 26, amid the waving of hats and cheering of the crowd, Eaton, then upwards of sixty, underwent his public punishment, and not a voice or arm was raised against him." Prof. Dowden's "Shelley," Vol. I, p. 289. In 1793 Eaton had been indicted for selling the Second Part of Paine's "Rights of Man," and again in 1794 for a supposed libel on George III in "Politics for the People," but was acquitted. sought a refuge in America, but was outlawed in 1796. He translated from the French, and published in 1810 Baron d'Holbach's "The True Sense and Meaning of the System of Nature." In 1813 he was tried for publishing "Ecce Homo," but owing to his age, he was not brought up for judgment. He died in 1814.

By what right do you punish Mr. Eaton? What but antiquated precedents, gathered from times of priestly and tyrannical domination, can be adduced in palliation of an outrage so insulting to humanity and justice? Whom has he injured? What crime has he committed? Wherefore may he not walk abroad like other men, and follow his accustomed pursuits? What end is proposed in confining this man, charged with the commission of no dishonourable action? Wherefore did his aggressor avail himself of popular prejudice, and return no answer but one of commonplace contempt to a defence of plain and simple sincerity? Lastly, when the prejudices of the jury as Christians, were strongly and unfairly inflamed 1 against this injured man, as a Deist, wherefore did not you, my Lord, check such unconstitutional pleading, and desire the jury to pronounce the accused innocent or criminal 2 without reference to the particular faith which he professed?

In the name of justice, what answer is there to these questions? The answer which Heathen Athens made to Socrates is the same with which Christian England must attempt to silence the advocates of this injured man. "He has questioned established opinions." Alas! the crime of inquiry is one which religion never has forgiven. Implicit faith and fearless inquiry have in all ages been irreconcileable enemies. Unrestrained philosophy has in every age opposed itself to the reveries of credulity and fanaticism. The truths of astronomy demonstrated by Newton have superseded astrology; since the moderndiscoveries in chemistry, the philosopher's stone has no longer been deemed attainable. Miracles of every kind have become rare in proportion to the hidden principles which those who study nature have developed. That which is false will ultimately be controverted by its own falsehood. That which is true needs but publicity to be acknowledged.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See the Attorney-General's Speech.—(S.)

By Mr. Fox's bill (1791) juries are, in cases of libel, judges both of the law and the fact.—(S.)

It is ever a proof that the falsehood of a proposition is felt by those who use power and coercion, not reasoning and persuasion, to procure its admission. Falsehood skulks in holes and corners, "it lets I dare not wait upon I would, like the poor cat in the adage," except when it has power, and then, as it was a coward, it is a tyrant; but the eagleeye of truth darts thro' the undazzling sunbeam of the immutable and just, gathering there wherewith to vivify and illuminate a universe!

Wherefore, I repeat, is Mr. Eaton punished? Because he is a Deist. And what are you, my Lord? A Christian, Ha, then! the mask has fallen off; you persecute him because his faith differs from yours. You copy the persecutors of Christianity in your actions, and are an additional proof that your religion is as bloody, barbarous, and intolerant as theirs. If some Deistical bigot in power (supposing such a character for the sake of illustration) should in dark and barbarous ages have enacted a statute making the profession of Christianity criminal; if you, my Lord, were a Christian bookseller, and Mr. Eaton a Judge, those arguments which you consider adequate to justify yourself for the sentence you have passed must likewise suffice, in the suppositionary case, to justify Mr. Eaton in sentencing you to Newgate and the pillory for being a Christian. Whence is any right derived, but that which power confers, for persecution? Do you think to convert Mr. Eaton to your religion by embittering his existence? You might force him by torture to profess your tenets, but he could not believe them, except you should make them credible, which perhaps exceeds your Do you think to please the God you worship by this exhibition of your zeal? If so, the Demon to whom some nations offer human hecatombs is less barbarous than the Deity of civilised society.

You consider man as an accountable being—but he can only be accountable for those actions which are influenced by his will.

Belief and disbelief are utterly distinct from and un+ They are the apprehension of the connected with volition. agreement or disagreement of the ideas which compose any proposition. Belief is an involuntary operation of the mind, and, like other passions, its intensity is purely proportionate to the degrees of excitement. Volition is essential to merit or demerit. How, then, can merit or demerit be attached to what is distinct from that faculty of the mind whose presence is essential to their being? I am aware that religion is founded on the voluntariness of belief, as it makes it a subject of reward and punishment; but before we extinguish the steady ray of reason and common sense, it is fit that we should discover, which we cannot do without their assistance, whether or no there be any other which may suffice to guide us through the labyrinth of life.

If the law de hæretico comburendo had not been formally repealed, I conceive that, from the promise held out by your Lordship's zeal, we need not despair of beholding the flames of persecution rekindled in Smithfield. Even now the lash that drove Descartes and Voltaire from their native country, the chains which bound Galileo, the flames which burned Vanini, again resound:—And where? in a nation that presumptuously calls itself the sanctuary of Under a government which, whilst it infringes the very right of thought and speech, boasts of permitting the liberty of the press, a man is pilloried and imprisoned because he is a Deist, and no one raises his voice in the indignation of outraged humanity. Does the Christian God, whom his followers eulogize as the Deity of humility and peace—He, the regenerator of the world, the meek reformer—authorise one man to rise against another, and, because lictors are at his beck, to chain and torture him as an Infidel?

When the Apostles went abroad to convert the nations, were they enjoined to stab and poison all who disbelieved the divinity of Christ's mission; assuredly, they would

have been no more justifiable in this case than he is at present who puts into execution the law which inflicts pillory and imprisonment on the Deist.

Has not Mr. Eaton an equal right to call your Lordship an Infidel as you have to imprison him for promulgating a different doctrine from that which you profess! What do I say? Has he not even a stronger plea? The word Infidel can only mean anything when applied to a person who professes that which he disbelieves. The test of truth is an undivided reliance on its inclusive powers; the test of conscious falsehood is the variety of the forms under which it presents itself, and its tendency towards employing whatever coercive means may be within its command, in order to procure the admission of what is unsusceptible of support from reason or persuasion. A dispassionate observer would feel himself more powerfully interested in favor of a man, who, depending on the truth of his opinions, simply stated his reasons for entertaining them, than in that of his aggressor, who, daringly avowing his unwillingness or incapacity to answer them by argument, proceeded to repress the energies and break the spirit of their promulgator by that torture and imprisonment whose infliction he could command.

I hesitate not to affirm that the opinions which Mr. Eaton sustained, when undergoing that mockery of a trial, at which your Lordship presided, appear to me more true and good than those of his accuser; but were they false as the visions of a Calvinist, it still would be the duty of those who love liberty and virtue to raise their voice indignantly against a reviving system of persecution—against the coercively repressing any opinion, which, if false, needs but the opposition of truth; which, if true, in spite of force must ultimately prevail.

Mr. Eaton asserted that the scriptures were, from begin ning to end, a fable and imposture, that the Apostles were

<sup>1</sup> See the Attorney-General's speech (Shelley's note).

liars and deceivers. He denied the miracles, the resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. He did so; and the Attorney-General denied the proposition which he asserted, and asserted that which he denied. What singular con-None, but that the clusion is deducible from this fact? Attorney-General and Mr. Eaton sustained two opposite The Attorney-General puts some obsolete and tyrannical laws in force against Mr. Eaton, because he publishes a book tending to prove that certain supernatural events, which are supposed to have taken place eighteen centuries ago, in a remote corner of the world, did not actually take place. But how is the truth or falsehood of the facts in dispute relevant to the merit or demerit attachable to the advocates of the two opinions? No man is accountable for his belief, because no man is capable of directing it. Mr. Eaton is therefore totally blameless. What are we to think of the justice of a sentence which punishes an individual against whom it is not even attempted to attach the slightest stain of criminality?

It is asserted that Mr. Eaton's opinions are calculated to subvert morality. How? What moral truth is spoken of with irreverence or ridicule in the book which he published? Morality, or the duty of a man and citizen, is founded on the relations which arise from the association of human beings, and which vary with the circumstances produced by the different states of this association. This duty, in similar situations, must be precisely the same in all ages and The opinion contrary to this has arisen from a supposition that the will of God is the source or criterion of morality. It is plain that the utmost exertion of Omnipotence could not cause that to be virtuous which actually is vicious. An all-powerful Demon might, indubitably, annex punishments to virtue and rewards to vice, but could not by these means effect the slightest change in their abstract and immutable natures. Omnipotence could vary, by a providential interposition, the relations of human society; in this latter case, what before

was virtuous would become vicious, according to the necessary and natural result of the alteration; but the abstract natures of the opposite principles would have sustained not the slightest change. For instance, the punishment with which society restrains the robber, the assassin, and the ravisher, is just, laudable, and requisite. We admire and respect the institutions which curb those who would defeat the ends for which society was established; but, should a precisely similar coercion be exercised against one merely who expressed his disbelief of a system admitted by those entrusted with the executive power, using at the same time no methods of promulgation but those afforded by reason, certainly this coercion would be eminently inhuman and immoral; and the supposition that any revelation from an unknown power avails to palliate a persecution so senseless, unprovoked, and indefensible, is at once to destroy the barrier which reason places between vice and virtue, and leave to unprincipled fanaticism a plea whereby it may excuse every act of frenzy which its own wild passions, and the inspirations of the Deity, have engendered.

Moral qualities are such as only a human being can To attribute them to the Spirit of the Universe, or to suppose that it is capable of altering them, is to degrade God into man, and to annex to this incomprehensible Being qualities incompatible with any possible definition of its nature. It may be here objected: -Ought not the Creator to possess the perfections of the creature? No. To attribute to God the moral qualities of man, is to suppose him susceptible of passions, which, arising out of corporeal organisation, it is plain that a pure Spirit cannot A bear is not perfect except he is rough, a tiger is not perfect if he be not voracious, an elephant is not perfect if otherwise than docile. How deep an argument must not that be which proves that the Deity is as rough as a bear, as voracious as a tiger, and as docile as an ele-But even suppose, with the vulgar, that God is a

venerable old man, seated on a throne of clouds, his breast the theatre of various passions analogous to those of humanity, his will changeable and uncertain as that of an earthly king; still, goodness and justice are qualities seldom nominally denied him, and it will be admitted that he disapproves of any action incompatible with those qualities. Persecution for opinion is unjust. With what consistency, then, can the worshippers of a Deity whose benevolence they boast embitter the existence of their fellow being, because his ideas of that Deity are different from those which they entertain? Alas! there is no consistency in those persecutors who worship a benevolent Deity; those who worship a Demon would alone act consonantly to these principles by imprisoning and torturing in his name.

Persecution is the only name applicable to punishment inflicted on an individual in consequence of his opinions. What end is persecution designed to answer? Can it convince him whom it injures? Can it prove to the people the falsehood of his opinions? It may make him a hypocrite and them cowards; but bad means can promote no good end. The unprejudiced mind looks with suspicion on a doctrine that needs the sustaining hand of power.

Socrates was poisoned because he dared to combat the degrading superstitions in which his countrymen were educated. Not long after his death Athens recognised the injustice of his sentence; his accuser, Melitus, was condemned, and Socrates became a demigod.

Jesus Christ was crucified because he attempted to supersede the ritual of Moses with regulations more moral and humane—his very judge made public acknowledgment of his innocence, but a bigoted and ignorant mob demanded the deed of horror—Barabbas the murderer and traitor was released. The meek reformer Jesus was immolated to the sanguinary Deity of the Jews. Time rolled on, time changed the situations, and with them the opinions of men.

The vulgar, ever in extremes, became persuaded the

crucifixion of Jesus was a supernatural event. Testimonies of miracles, so frequent in unenlightened ages, were not wanting to prove that he was something divine. This belief, rolling through the lapse of ages, met with the reveries of Plato and the reasonings of Aristotle, and acquired force and extent, until the divinity of Jesus became a dogma, which to dispute was death, which to doubt was infamy.

Christianity is now the established religion: he who attempts to impugn it must be contented to behold murderers and traitors take precedence of him in public opinion; though, if his genius be equal to his courage, and assisted by a peculiar coalition of circumstances, future ages may exalt him to a divinity, and persecute others in his name, as he was persecuted in the name of his predecessors in the homage of the world.

The same means that have supported every other popular ' belief, have supported Christianity. War, imprisonment, murder, and falsehood; deeds of unexampled and incomparable atrocity have made it what it is. We derive from our ancestors a belief thus fostered and supported: we quarrel, persecute, and hate for its maintenance. Does not analogy favour the opinion that, as, like other systems, Christianity has arisen and augmented, so like them it will decay and perish; that, as violence, darkness, and deceit, not reasoning and persuasion, have procured its admission among mankind, so, when enthusiasm has subsided, and time, that infallible controverter of false opinions, has involved its pretended evidences in the darkness of antiquity, it will become obsolete; that Milton's poem alone will give permanency in the remembrance of its absurdities; and that men will laugh as heartily at grace, faith, redemption, and original sin, as they now do at the metamorphoses of Jupiter, the miracles of Romish saints, the efficacy of witchcraft, and the appearance of departed spirits.

Had the Christian Religion commenced and continued by the mere force of reasoning and persuasion, by its

self-evidence, excellence and fitness, the preceding analogy would be inadmissible. We should never speculate on the future obsoleteness of a system perfectly conformable to nature and reason: it would endure so long as they endured; it would be a truth as indisputable as the light of the sun, the criminality of murder, and other facts, physical and moral, which, depending on our organisation and relative situations, must remain acknowledged as satisfactory, so long as man is man. It is an incontrovertible fact, the consideration of which ought to repress the hasty conclusions of credulity, or moderate its obstinacy in maintaining them, that, had the Jews not been a barbarous and fanatical race of men, had even the resolution of Pontius Pilate been equal to his candour, the Christian Religion never could have prevailed, it could not even have existed. Man! the very existence of whose most cherished opinions depends from a thread so feeble, arises out of a source so equivocal, learn at least humility; own at least that it is possible for thyself also to have been seduced by education and circumstance into the admission of tenets destitute of rational proof, and the truth of which has not yet been satisfactorily demonstrated. Acknowledge at least that the falsehood of thy brother's opinions is no sufficient reason for his meriting thy hatred. What! because a fellow being disputes the reasonableness of thy faith, wilt thou punish him with torture and imprisonment? If persecution for religious opinions were admitted by the moralist, how wide a door would not be open by which convulsionists of every kind might make inroads on the peace of society! How many deeds of barbarism and blood would not receive a sanction! But I will demand. if that man is not rather entitled to the respect than the discountenance of society, who, by disputing a received doctrine, either proves its falsehood and inutility (thereby aiming at the abolition of what is false and useless), or gives to its adherents an opportunity of establishing its excellence and truth. Surely this can be no crime. Surely the individual who devotes his time to fearless and unrestricted inquiry into the grand questions arising out of our moral nature ought rather to receive the patronage, than encounter the vengeance, of an enlightened legislature. I would have you to know, my Lord, that fetters of iron cannot bind or subdue the soul of virtue. From the damps and solitude of its dungeon it ascends, free and undaunted, whither thine, from the pompous seat of judgment, dare not soar. I do not warn you to beware lest your profession as a Christian should make you forget that you are a man; but I warn you against festinating that period, which, under the present coercive system, is too rapidly maturing, when the seats of justice shall be the seats of venality and slavishness, and the cells of Newgate become the abode of all that is honourable and true.

I mean not to compare Mr. Eaton with Socrates or Jesus: he is a man of blameless and respectable character; he is a citizen unimpeached with crime; if, therefore, his rights as a citizen and a man have been infringed, they have been infringed by illegal and immoral violence. But I will assert that, should a second Jesus arise among men; should such a one as Socrates again enlighten the earth; lengthened imprisonment and infamous punishment (according to the regimen of persecution revived by your Lordship) would effect what hemlock and the cross have heretofore effected, and the stain on the national character, like that on Athens and Judea, would remain indelible, but by the destruction of the history in which it is recorded. When the Christian Religion shall have faded from the earth, when its memory like that of Polytheism now shall remain. but remain only as the subject of ridicule and wonder. indignant posterity would attach immortal infamy to such an outrage; like the murder of Socrates, it would secure the execration of every age.

The horrible and wide-wasting enormities, which gleam like comets through the darkness of gothic and superstitious ages, are regarded by the moralist as no more than the

necessary effect of known causes; but, when an enlightened age and nation signalises itself by a deed becoming none but barbarians and fanatics, philosophy itself is even induced to doubt whether human nature will ever emerge from the pettishness and imbecility of its childhood. The system of persecution, at whose new birth, you, my Lord, are one of the presiding midwives, is not more impotent and wicked than inconsistent. The press is loaded with what are called (ironically, I should conceive) proofs of the Christian religion: these books are replete with invective and calumny against infidels; they presuppose that he who rejects Christianity must, be utterly divested of reason and feeling; they advance the most unsupported assertions, and take as first principles the most revolting dogmas. The inferences drawn from these assumed premises are imposingly logical and correct; but, if a foundation is weak, no architect is needed to foretell the instability of the superstructure. If the truth of Christianity is not disputable, for what purpose are these books written? If they are sufficient to prove it, what further need of controversy? If God has spoken, why is the universe not convinced? If the Christian religion needs deeper learning, more painful investigation to establish its genuineness, wherefore attempt to accomplish that by force, which the human mind can alone effect with satisfac-If, lastly, its truth cannot be demonstrated, tion to itself? wherefore impotently attempt to snatch from God the government of his creation, and impiously assert that the Spirit of Benevolence has left that knowledge most essential to the well-being of man, the only one which, since its promulgation, has been the subject of unceasing cavil, the cause of irreconcileable hatred? Either the Christian religion is true, or it is not. If true it comes from God, and its authenticity can admit of doubt and dispute no further than its Omnipotent Author is willing to allow If true it admits of rational proof, and is capable of being placed equally beyond controversy, as the principles which have been established concerning matter and mind, by Locke and Newton; and in proportion to the usefulness of the fact in dispute, so must it be supposed that a benevolent being is anxious to procure the diffusion of its knowledge on the earth,—If false, surely no enlightened legislature would punish the reasoner, who opposes a system so much the more fatal and pernicious as it is extensively admitted; so much the more productive of absurd and ruinous consequences, as it is entwined by education, with the prejudices and affections of the human heart, in the shape of a popular belief.

Let us suppose that some half-witted philosopher should assert that the earth was the centre of the universe, or that ideas could enter the human mind independently of sensation This man would assert what is demonstrably or reflexion. incorrect; he would promulgate a false opinion. would he therefore deserve pillory and imprisonment? By no means; probably few would discharge more correctly the duties of a citizen and a man. I admit that the case above stated is not precisely in point. The thinking part of the community has not received as indisputable the truth of Christianity, as they have that of the Newtonian system. A very large portion of society, and that powerfully and extensively connected, derives its sole emolument from the belief of Christianity, as a popular faith.

To torture and imprison the asserter of a dogma, however ridiculous and false, is highly barbarous and impolitic. How, then, does not the cruelty of persecution, become aggravated when it is directed against the opposer of an opinion yet under dispute, and which men of unrivalled acquirements, penetrating genius, and stainless virtue, have spent, and at last sacrificed, their lives in combating!

The time is rapidly approaching, I hope that you, my Lord, may live to behold its arrival, when the Mahometan, the Jew, the Christian, the Deist, and the Atheist, will live together in one community, equally sharing the benefits which arise from its association, and united in the bonds

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000658999 http://www.hathitrust.org/access use#pd-google GMT Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 18:38 Public Domain, Google-digitized of charity and brotherly love. My Lord, you have condemned an innocent man: no crime was imputed to him—and you sentenced him to torture and imprisonment. I have not addressed this letter to you with the hope of convincing you that you have acted wrong. The most unprincipled and barbarous of men are not unprepared with sophisms to prove that they would have acted in no other manner, and to show that vice is virtue. But I raise my solitary voice to express my disapprobation, so far as it goes, of the cruel and unjust sentence you passed upon Mr. Eaton—to assert, so far as I am capable of influencing, those rights of humanity which you have wantonly and unlawfully infringed.

My Lord, Yours, etc.

22-(2285

# VII. LYNMOUTH, TANYRALLT, AND SECOND VISIT TO DUBLIN

June 30, 1812—April 3, 1813

Correspondence with Hookham—"Le Système de la Nature"—On the study of the classics—Godwin invited to Lynmouth—Irish History—Sir James Lawrence—"Queen Mab"—T. L. Peacock's Poems—In London—Shelley reconciled to Hogg—Departure of Miss Hitchener—At Tremadoc—Fanny Imlay and Harriet—Shelley's Book List—"Biblical Extracts"—The Trial of John and Leigh Hunt—Shelley Assaulted at Tanyrallt—Second Visit to Ireland.

#### HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

Direct Lymouth, near Barnstaple, Devonshire, June 30, [1812].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

Now that we are again settled(1) I take up the pen in the hopes of giving that pleasure which I received from reading your letter. I received it during my stay at Cwm Elan, and a few days after we left that lovely spot, and its amiable hostess for a journey to Chepstow where we were in hopes of finding a house that would suit us, and where we might with pleasure receive the visit of one whose presence like the sun would make happy those who beheld her. Your letter damped the joy I felt at reading it, by seeing that you could not come to us this summer, for I had hoped tho' we had left Nantgwillt that we should have been sure of a visit from you. However, I will say no more about it, as you must be the best judge of your own affairs, and I doubt not that were we to draw you from your own country we should be the means, tho' innocently, of depriving many of your unfortunate countrymen of that relief you know so well how to bestow. I will say, then, though I am a loser by it, Continue. oh, amiable woman, the path marked out to thee by virtue and humanity, and let not the whisperings of selfishness in us take thee

<sup>(1)</sup> Prof. Dowden says that Shelley reached Lynmouth probably by June 25 or 26. The cottage that they occupied has been pulled down and another built on the site. The landlady was a Mrs. Hooper, whose niece retained a vivid recollection of Shelley and who pointed out to the late Miss Mathilde Blind, the precise situation of the cottage.—" Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 278-9.

from so laudable an undertaking. We may yet meet ere this world shall close our eyes, and that we both desire it our hearts are the best judges. I will now tell you how we came into Devon. When we arrived at Chepstow we found the house not half built, and by no means large enough for our family.(1) I did not regret it as the country was by no means beautiful. We then proceeded into this country, and came to this place in our way to Ilfracombe and the beauty of it has made us residents here for the summer months, when we think of going to London for the winter. It combines all the beauties of our late residence with the addition of a fine bold We have taken the only cottage there was, which is most beautifully situated, commanding a fine view of the sea, with mountains at the side and behind us. Vegetation is more luxurious here than in any part of England. We have roses and myrtle creeping up the sides of the house, which is thatched at the top. It is such a little place that it seems more like a fairy scene than anything in reality. All the houses are built in the cottage style, and I suppose there are not more than 30 in all. We send to Barnstaple for everything, and our letters come but twice a week. It is 18 miles from [here], therefore we ought to be able to [paper torn—? manage] very well on a horse to get there. We have an immense precipice to descend into the valley, about 2 miles in length, which no carriage can come down. It seems as if nature had intended this place should be so romantic, and shut out from all other intercourse with the neighbouring villages and towns. We still have our Irishman, Daniel [Hill or Healy], whom you may remember in Grafton Street. I am afraid we shall be obliged to part with him, as we do not find him that useful servant we expect to find he would have been. Percy has some thoughts of sending him to Dublin to see after his poems that are at the printers, but whether he will or not it is impossible to say. We have not heard from Mr. Lawless now for some time. I suppose his present employment (to my idea not very laudable) fills up his time so much that he cannot think of his absent friends. I hope this is not the case as I should be sorry, knowing him to be an Irishman, if it were true. I think he is a man of very great talents and abilities; but I am afraid that Mr. Curran will never lend him a helping hand. I must now say adieu, my dear friend, and may you ever feel that happiness which springs from conscious integrity and goodness of heart. Percy and Eliza desire to be most kindly remembered, and believe me ever your truly sincere and affectionate friend.

HARRIET.

[Addressed outside],
 Mrs. Nugent,
 No. 101 Grafton Street,
 Dublin, Ireland.

<sup>(1)</sup> Godwin had told Shelley of this "nice cottage" at Chepstow, "near Tintern Abbey and Piecefield."

### 148. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

LYMOUTH, BARNSTAPLE, July 5, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR.

I write to acknowledge the pleasure I anticipate in the perusal of some letters from you and yours, which have not yet reached us. The post comes to Lymouth but twice in a week, and some allowance is to be made for the casualties which attend an event by which we have been unexpectedly unsettled. We were all so much prepossessed in favour of Mr. Eton's house, 1 that nothing but the invincible objection of scarcity of room would have induced us, even after seeing it, to resign the pre-determination we had formed of taking it. We now reside in a small cottage, but the poverty and humbleness of the apartments is compensated for by their number, and we can invite our friends with a consciousness that there is enclosed space wherein they may sleep, which was not to be found at Mr. Eton's. I will, in the absence of other topics, explain to you my reason for fixing upon this residence. I am, as you know, a minor, and as such depend upon a limited income (£400 per annum) allowed by my relatives. Upon this income justice and humanity have many claims, and the necessary expenses of existing in conformity to some habitudes which may be said to be interwoven with our being dissipate the remainder. I might, it is true, raise money on my prospects, but the percentage is so enormous that it is with extreme unwillingness I should have recourse to

¹ Some of the names that appear in Shelley's correspondence at this time are confusing owing to their similarity. There were Eaton, the prosecuted bookseller, about whom Shelley addressed his letter to Lord Ellenborough, and Mr. Eton, the landlord of the Chepstow cottage; Mrs. Hooper at Nantgwillt, and Mrs. Hooper, Shelley's Lynmouth landlady. Shelley had published through Stockdale in London, and had endeavoured to arrange with a Dublin Stockdale to print his poems.

a step, which I might then be induced to repeat, even to a ruinous frequency and extent. The involvement of my patrimony would interfere with schemes on which it is my fondest delight to speculate. I may truly, therefore, be classed generically with those minors who pant for twentyone, though I trust that the specific difference is very, very The expenses incurred by the failure of our attempt wide. in settling at Nantgwillt have rendered it necessary for us to settle for a time in some cheap residence, in order to recover our pecuniary independence. I will still hope that you and your estimable family will, before much time has elapsed, become inmates of our house. This house boasts not such accommodations as I should feel satisfied in offering you, but I will propose a plan which, if it meets your approbation, may prove an interlude to our meeting, and become an earnest that much time will not elapse before I have a friend 1; but first I will make you its occurrence. in some measure acquainted with her. She is a woman with whom her excellent qualities made me acquainted. Though deriving her birth from a very humble source, she contracted, during youth, a very deep and refined habit of thinking; her mind, naturally inquisitive and penetrating, overstepped the bounds of prejudice, she formed for herself an unbeaten path of life.

By the patronage of a lady, whose liberality of mind is singular, this woman at the age of twenty was enabled to commence the conduct of a school. She concealed not the uncommon modes of thinking which she had adopted, and publicly instructed youth as a Deist and a Republican. When I first knew her, she had not read "Political Justice," yet her life appeared to me in a great degree modelled upon its precepts. Such is the woman, who is about to become an inmate of our family. She will pass through London, and I shall take the liberty of introducing to you one whom

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Eliza Hitchener, who when passing through London on her way to visit the Shelleys, supped and slept at Godwin's house on July 14.

I do not consider unworthy of the advantage. As soon as we recover our financial liberty, we mean to come to London. Why may not Fanny<sup>1</sup> come to Lymouth with Miss Hitchener (such is her name) and return with us all to London in the autumn? I entreat you to look with a favourable eye upon this request, and indeed our hearts long for a personal intercourse with those to whom they are devoted; and I fear, from the tenor of Mrs. Godwin's] letter, that we must give up the hope of seeing you. disappointed hope determines us to journey to London as soon as we can. This place is beautiful, it equals— Harriet says it exceeds-Nantgwillt. Mountains certainly of not less perpendicular elevation than 1,000 feet are broken abruptly into valleys of indescribable fertility and grandeur. The climate is so mild, that myrtles of an immense size twine up our cottage, and roses blow in the open air in winter. In addition to these is the sea, which dashes against a rocky and caverned shore, presenting an ever-changing view. All "shows of sky and earth, of sea and valley" are here. Adieu! Believe how devotedly and sincerely I must now remain yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

I write this letter by return of post, and send purposely to Barnstaple. I have *more* to say, but will reserve it until I receive the letters which are on the way.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

### 149. To WILLIAM GODWIN

LYMOUTH,

July 7, 1812.

My dear Sir,

The person whom I sent yesterday to the post-town has returned. He brought those letters from you and yours which have been forwarded from Cwm Elan to Chepstow.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Fanny Imlay, the daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft and Gilbert Imlay. Godwin treated her as a daughter, and she was known by his name.

It is a singular coincidence, that in my last letter I entered into details respecting my mode of life, and unfolded to you the reasons by which I was induced, on being disappointed in Mr. Eton's house, to seek an unexpensive retirement. I feel my heart throb exultingly when, as I read the misgivings of your mind concerning my rectitude. 1 I reflect that I have to a certain degree refuted them by anticipation. My letter, dated the 5th, will prove to you that it is not to live in splendour, which I hate—not to accumulate indulgences, which I despise, that my present conduct was adopted. Most unworthy, indeed, should I be of that high destiny which he, who is your friend and pupil, must share, if I was not myself practically a proselyte to that doctrine, by promulgating which with unremitting zeal and industry I have become the object of hatred and suspicion.

Our cottage—for such, not nominally, but really, it is exceeds not in its accommodations the dwellings of the peasantry which surround it. Its beds are of the plainest, I may say the coarsest materials, and from the single consideration, that accommodations for personal convenience were glaringly defective, did I refrain in my last letter from pressing the request, whose concession is nearest to my desires, that you would come to this lovely solitude, and bring to a conclusion that state of acquaintance which stands between us—perject intimacy. I was beginning a sentence in the middle of the second page of my letter, in which I should have pressed you to come here, when Harriet interrupted me, bade me consider that your health was delicate, that our rooms were complete servants' rooms. I finished the sentence as it stands. She added, that we would hasten our journey to London, and that you all should live with us. It was the thought of the moment; I send it you without comment, as it arose. See my Yet, my esteemed and venerated friend, accept defence.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See note to letter No. 151, p. 346.

my thanks—consider yourself as yet more beloved by me, for the manner in which you have reproved my suppositionary errors; and ever may you, like the tenderest and wisest of parents, be on the watch to detect those traits of vice which, yet undiscovered, are nevertheless marked on the tablet of my character, so that I pursue undeviatingly the path which you first cleared through the wilderness of life.

I said, in my last letter, that there are certain habitudes in conformity to which it is almost necessary that persons, who have contracted them, should exist. By this I do not mean that a splendid mansion, or an equipage, is in any degree essential to life; but that if I was employed at the loom, or the plough, and my wife in culinary business and housewifery, we should, in the present state of society, quickly become very different beings, and, I may add, less useful to our species. Nor, consistently with invincible ideas of delicacy, can two persons of opposite sexes, unconnected by certain ties, sleep in the same apartment. Probably, in a regenerated state of society, agriculture and manufacture would be compatible with the most powerful intellect and most polished manners—probably delicacy. as it relates to sexual distinction, would disappear—vet now, a plough-boy can with difficulty acquire refinement of intellect; and promiscuous sexual intercourse, under the present system of thinking, would inevitably lead to consequences the most injurious to the happiness of man-Mr. Eton's house had not sufficient bed-rooms. scarcely sufficient for ourselves, and you and your family must sleep, for, my dear friend, believe me that I would not wil ingly take a house for any time, whither you could Have I written desultorily? Is my explanation of habitudes incorrect, or indistinct? Pardon me, for I am anxious to lose no time in communicating my sentiments.

Harriet is writing to Fanny; if she is particular in her invitation of Fanny, it is not meant exclusively. There

are a sufficient quantity of bed-rooms, and if the humbleness of their quality is no objection, I need not say—Come, thou venerated and excellent friend, and make us happy.— Adieu!

Believe me, with the utmost sincerity and truth,

Ever yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

(Single sheet.) To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

150. To Thomas Hookham (Old Bond Street, London)

LYMOUTH,

July 29, 1812.

(Fragment)

Shelley mentions in this letter his having forwarded to Hookham twenty-five copies of his Letter to Lord Ellenborough, and continues:—

I beg you to accept of them, that you may show them to any friends who are not informers. I shall not persist in my intention of procuring a publisher. Possessing the knowledge I now possess, it would be unjust in me to attempt to draw upon any one the indignation of bigotry and despotism. I have changed, therefore, my former plan to that of gratuitous distribution. In case that you could dispose of more than those which I now send, I beg that you will not hesitate a moment in informing me. I have several works, some unfinished, some yet only in contemplation; they are principally in the form of poems or essays. As soon as any one of them is completed I will send it to you, and shall take it as an additional favour if you can, consistently with safety, publish it. I have received the parcel safe. I would thank you to send in addition Milton's Prose Works, "Elements of Chemical Philosophy," by Sir H. Davy (to be published August 1), "Medical Extracts," Hartley "On Man," "Rights of Women," by Mary Wollstonecraft.

# 151. TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

LYMOUTH,

July 29, 1812.

MY DEAR GODWIN,

I have never seen you, 1 and yet I think I know you; I think I knew you even before I ever heard from you, whilst yet it was a question with me, whether you were living or dead. It has appeared to me that there are lineaments in the soul, as well as in the face; lineaments, too, less equivocal and deceptive, than those which result from mere physical organization. This opinion may be illusory; if I find it so, it shall be retracted. You say, three letters of yours have been unanswered. I waited to know whether those of mine contained any topics worthy of notice, or discussion. I find they do not; therefore, let us pass on.

To begin with Helvétius. I have read "Le Système de la Nature," and suspect this to be Helvétius's by your charges

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In the undated letter of Godwin to Shelley printed by Hogg in his "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 141, he says: "Our acquaintance is a whimsical, and, to a certain degree, anomalous one. I have never seen your face,—

<sup>&#</sup>x27;Your face, my Thane, is a book, where men May read strange matters,'

and till I have seen a man's face, I may say, in good sooth, I do not know him. Would that this whimsical and anomalous state of our acquaintance were brought to a conclusion!" He then continues that not being able to read Shelley's character in a legitimate way, he is reduced to collect traits of his character as they offer themselves in his correspondence. "I am half afraid that I have got a glimpse of a new one—that perhaps I may not altogether approve—this day." It appears that Shelley had addressed a letter to Mr. Eton, at Mrs. Godwin's, declining to take the cottage at Chepstow, of which Eton was the landlord, stating that "the insufficiency of house-room is a vital objection. Godwin, who opened and read this letter, was displeased with Shelley for his motives in rejecting the cottage. With "mild severity" the philosopher rebuked his young friend (with an allowance from his father of "only £200 a year") for his want of prudence and warned him against indulgence in luxuries.

against it. 1 It is a book of uncommon powers, yet too obnoxious to accusations of sensuality and selfishness. Although, like you, an irreconcileable enemy to the system of self-love, both from a feeling of its deformity and a conviction of its falsehood, I can by no means conceive how the loftiest disinterestedness is incompatible with the In fact the doctrine which affirms strictest materialism. that there is no such thing as matter, and that which affirms that all is matter, appear to me perfectly indifferent in the question between benevolence and self-love. I cannot see how they interfere with each other, or why the two doctrines of materialism and disinterestedness cannot be held in one mind as independently of each other, as the two truths that a cricket-ball is round and a box square. Immateriality seems to me nothing but a simple denial of the presence of matter, of the presence of all the forms of being with which our senses are acquainted, and it surely is somewhat inconsistent to assign real existence to what is a mere negation of all that actual world to which our senses introduce us.

I have read Berkeley,<sup>2</sup> and the perusal of his arguments tended more than anything to convince me that immaterialism, and other words of general usage, deriving all their force from mere predicates in non, were invented by the pride of philosophers to conceal their ignorance, even from themselves. If I err in what I say, or if I differ from you, though in this point I think I do not, reason stands arbiter between us. Reason, if I may be permitted to personify it, is as much your superior, as you are mine. An hour and a thousand years are equally incommensurate with eternity. With respect to Helvétius's opinion to the omnipotence of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The book was by Baron D'Holbach. See note to letter No. 143, 315.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Shelley read Berkeley at Keswick; Southey borrowed a copy belonging to Charles Lloyd (the friend of Lamb and Coleridge), and Shelley was especially struck with Lloyd's marginal notes. See Shelley's Letter to Leigh Hunt, Sept. 27, 1819.

education, there I submit to your authority, because authority, derived from experience such as yours, is reason. I will own that the opinion of Helvétius, until very lately, has been mine.

You know that in most points I agree with you. you in "Political Justice," I agree with you. "Enquirer" is replete with speculations, in which I sympathize, yet the arguments there in favour of classical learning failed to remove all my doubts on that point. am not sufficiently vain and dogmatical to say that now I have no doubts on the deleteriousness of classical education; but it certainly is my opinion—nor has your last letter sufficed to refute it—that the evils of acquiring Greek and Latin considerably overbalance the benefit. But why, because I think so, should it even be supposed necessary by you to warn me against fearing that you feel displeasure. Assure yourself that the picture of you in the retina of my intellect is a standing proof to me that its original is capable of extending to opinions the most unlimited toleration, and that he will scan with disgust nothing but a defect of the heart. Let Reason, then, be arbiter between us. Yet sometimes I am struck with dismay when I consider that, placed where you are, high up on the craggy mountain of knowledge, you will scarcely condescend to doubt, even sufficiently for the purposes of discussion, that opinion which you hold, although by that doubting you might fit me for following your footsteps. Yet I will explain my reasons for doubting the efficacy of classical learning as a means of forwarding the interests of the human race.

In the first place, I do not perceive how one of the truths of "Political Justice" rests on the excellence of ancient literature. That Latin and Greek have contributed to form your character it were idle to dispute, but in how great a degree have they contributed? Are not the reasonings on which your system is founded utterly distinct from and unconnected with the excellence of Greece and Rome? Was not the government of republican Rome.

and most of those of Greece, as oppressive and arbitrary, as liberal of encouragement to monopoly, as that of Great Britain is at present? And what do we learn from their poets? As you have yourself acknowledged somewhere, "they are fit for nothing but the perpetuation of the noxious race of heroes in the world." Lucretius forms. perhaps, the single exception. Throughout the whole of their literature runs a vein of thought similar to that which you have so justly censured in Helvétius. Honourand the opinion either of contemporaries, or more frequently of posterity—is set so much above virtue as, according to the last words of Brutus, to make it nothing but an empty Their politics sprang from the same narrow and corrupted source. Witness the interminable aggressions between each other of the states of Greece; the thirst of conquest with which even republican Rome desolated the earth—they are our masters in politics, because we are so immoral as to prefer self-interest to virtue, and expediency to positive good. You say that words will neither debauch our understandings, nor distort our moral feelings. You say that the time of youth could not be better employed than in the acquisition of classical learning. But words are the very things that so eminently contribute to the growth and establishment of prejudice: the learning of words before the mind is capable of attaching correspondent ideas to them, is like possessing machinery with the use of which we are so unacquainted as to be in danger of misusing But words are merely signs of ideas. How many evils, and how great, spring from the annexing inadequate and improper ideas to words! The words honour, virtue, duty, goodness, are examples of this remark. Besides, we only want one distinct sign for one idea. Do you not think that there is much more danger of our wanting ideas for the signs of them already made, than of our wanting these signs for inexpressible ideas? I should think that natural philosophy, medicine, astronomy, and, above all, history,

would be sufficient employments for immaturity; employments which would completely fill up the era of tutelage, and render unnecessary all expedients for losing time well by gaining it safely.

Of the Latin language, as a grammar, I think highly. is a key to the European languages, and we can hardly be said to know our own without first attaining a complete knowledge of it. Still, I cannot help considering it as an affair of minor importance, inasmuch as the science of things is superior to the science of words. Nor can I help considering the vindicators of ancient learning—I except you, not from politeness, but because you, unlike them, are willing to subject your opinions to reason—as the vindicators of a literary despotism; as the tracers of a circle which is intended to shut out from real knowledge. and to which this fictitious knowledge is attached, all who do not breathe the air of prejudice, or who will not support the established systems of politics, religion, and morals. I have as great a contempt for Cobbett as you can have, but it is because he is a dastard and a time-server; has no humanity, no refinement; but were he a classical scholar, would he have more? Did Greek and Roman literature refine the soul of Johnson? Does it extend the views of the thousand narrow bigots educated in the very bosom of classicality?

> in publica commoda peccem Si longo sermone morer tua tempora,

says Horace at the commencement of his longest letter.

Well, adieu! All join in kindest love to your amiable family, of whom I have forgotten to speak, but not to think; and I remain,

Very truly and affectionately yours,
P. B. Shelley.

To Mr. W. Godwin, London.

#### HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

LYNMOUTH, August 4 [1812].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

Your affectionate letter gave us very great pleasure. from those we love when it is not in our power to see them constitutes one of the greatest joys in existence. You may suppose how we laughed at the idea of the tempter, tho' how such a horrible looking creature should gain admittance to the garden of Eden at once surprises me and turns the sanctity of the whole into a burlesque. I suppose the ingenious discoverer has very good reasons and arguments to support his cause, tho' we may doubt if we like; the idea is truly ridiculous and laughable and how do the people take this new mode of accounting for how all the sin in the world arose. Will they believe it as soon as they would the other? If they do I shall be inclined to think their belief is a mere matter of form and not an involuntary act. If they go on in this way we shall next hear, I suppose, of its being a bear or lion or anything else. I thank you in Percy's name for your kind offer of services, tho' at the same time we cannot accept it. The case is this. His printer refuses to go on with his poems until he is paid. Now such a demand is seldom made, as printers are never paid till the profit rising from the sale of the work comes in, and Percy agreed with him to this effect, and as long as we staid in Dublin he wore the mask which is now taken off. However, I am in great hope that Mr. Lawless will get them from him. He is coming to London on business and then we shall see. I wish to think well of him because he is your countryman, tho' there is too much of the (man of the world) about him. Perhaps he is different out of the city. not I shall still admire his talents, tho' I have no high opinion of him. What do you think of Cobbett? A man that can change his opinions so quickly I do not admire, and particularly when he could write of Sir F. Burdett in such an abusive and contradictory a way. It seems to me that Cobbett merely changes his sentiments as occasion requires or as best suits his interests. I hope I am mistaken, tho' his behaviour looks very like it. Percy has sent you a defence of D. I. Eaton. It must not be published, but you [will] give us your opinion of it. What think you of Lord Stanhope?—divine being, how beautifully he speaks. We have sent him one as well as Sir F. Burdett. Did you see a clergyman enter into his defence? I do not remember his name, but it was a very wonderful thing to hear a clergyman wish for universal toleration. He said his standing in the pillory was an honour to him. I think the public mind is very much in favour of Mr. Eaton. It looks well, does it not? Our friend, Miss Hitchener, is come to us. She is very busy writing for the good of mankind. She is very dark in complexion, with a great quantity of long black hair. She talks a great deal. If you like great talkers she will suit you. She is taller than me or my sister, and as thin as it is possible to be. I hope you will see her some day. I should think that next summer you might take a peep

You may judge how much we all wish to see you. being an Irish woman must interest us in your happiness independently of our knowing the amiable qualities that you possess. I have read Miss Owenson's "Missionary" and much do I admire the author. I am now reading her "Novice of St. Dominick." I regret not having known her when I was in Dublin. Her Patriotic Sketches have won my heart. She speaks so feelingly of your dear country, that I love her for it. Miss Hitchener has read your letter and loves you in good earnest—her own expression. I know you would love her did you know her. Her age is 30. She looks like as if she was only 24 and her spirits are excellent. She laughs and talks and writes all day. She has seen the Godwins, and thinks Godwin different to what he seems, he lives so much from his family, only seeing them at stated hours. We do not like that, and he thinks himself such a very great man. He would not let one of his children come to us first because he had not seen our faces. Just as if writing to a person in which we express all our thoughts, was not a sufficient knowledge of them. I knew our friend [Miss Hitchener], whom we call Bessy, just as well when we corresponded as I do now. Such excuses sit not well upon so great a literary character as he is. I might have expected such an excuse from a woman of selfish and narrow mind, but not from Godwin's. I must now finish. They all unite in love and affection to my dear little Irishwoman, and believe me more than ever your sincerely attached and affectionate friend,

[Addressed outside],
Mrs. Nugent,
No. 101 Grafton Street,
Dublin, Ireland.

### 152. To CATHERINE NUGENT

(Written by Harriet)

LYNMOUTH,

August 11 [1812].

My DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

Your friend and our friend, Bessy, has been reading "Pieces of Irish History," and is so much enraged with the characters there mentioned that nothing will satisfy her desire of revenge but the printing and publishing of them to exhibit to the world those characters which are (shameful to say) held up as beings possessing every amiable quality, whilst their hearts are as bad as it is possible to be. They will be shown to the world in a new light, and it will remain

to be seen if that world does not repay them as they so eminently deserve. Percy thinks of printing it by subscription. 500 subscribers at seven shillings each will amply repay the printing and publishing. Percy intends to print some proposals for printing Pieces of Irish History. saying that everyone whether Irish or English ought to We depend upon you for many subscribers, read them. as being upon the spot where so many of your exalted and brave countrymen suffered martyrdom. I should think there were very many who would be glad to put their names to it. There must be many still smarting under the wounds they have seen their brave companions suffer, and all from this hated country of mine. Good God, were I an Irishman or woman how I should hate the English. It is wonderful how the poor Irish people can tolerate them. writing to one who from her example shows them how they ought to tolerate this barbarous nation of ours. God, we are not all alike, for I too can hate Lord Castlereagh as much as any Irishman. How does my heart's blood run cold at the idea of what he did in your unfortunate country. How is it that man is suffered to walk the streets in open daylight? Oh, if I were to meet him I really think I could fly at him and tear him to pieces! I have drawn a likeness of him and Percy says it is a very good one. You know I have no pretensions to drawing, but sometimes I take up the pen and sketch faces. I have not preserved the horrible countenance, but if I were to meet it I should it for him (sic). I cannot bear Curran; what use is he to your country? Was he active at the time of the Union? No, if he had been, tho' his life had been the sacrifice, Ireland would have been saved. I have no patience with Curran. I shall convert Mr. Lawless I hope from his idol. It is too sickening to hear him talk of Curran as he does. We are going to the valley of Llangothlin. It is much nearer to Ireland than we are here or even at Nantgwillt. If we are there next summer I hope we shall see you. Bessie wishes very much to see 23-(2285)

you. Your last letter won her heart instantly. Reading "Pieces of Irish History" has made her so low-spirited. She possesses too much feeling for her own happiness. I am in great hopes she will get the better of her low spirits. May I ask how are your spirits and your health? If they are but as good as I wish them to be it will make me very happy. You do not let your feelings get the better of your reason. If you do I am extremely sorry, as I shall know from that you are not as happy as you ought to be. They all unite in the kindest regards to the dear little Irishwoman, and believe me most sincerely your attached friend,

H. S.

#### (Written by Shelley)

I shall print proposals for publishing by subscription, and if you could send us any names you would much benefit the *Cause*. We determine at any rate to publish the Irish History. It is a matter of doubt with me whether any bookseller will dare put his name to it. This will be no obstacle.

### 153. To ——1

[Lymouth, Barnstaple], August 12, 1812.

DEAR SIR,

Your reasons do not convince me. A human being is a member of the community, not as a limb is a member of the body, or as what is a part of a machine, intended only to contribute to some general, joint result. He was created not to be merged in the whole as a drop in the ocean, or as a particle of sand on the sea-shore, and to aid only in composing a man. He is an ultimate being, made for his own perfection as his highest end, made to maintain an

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The original of this letter is in the Bodleian Library, but I fear that its authenticity cannot be established.

individual existence, and to serve others only as far as consists with his own virtue and progress. Hitherto governments have tended greatly to obscure this importance of the individual, to depress him in his own eyes, to give him the idea of an outward interest more important than the invisible soul, and an outward authority more important than his own secret conscience. Rulers have called the private man the property of the State, meaning generally by the State themselves; and thus the many have been immolated to the few, and have even believed that this was their highest destination. These views cannot be too earnestly withstood. Nothing seems to me so needful as to give to the mind the consciousness—which governments have done so much to suppress—of its own separate work. Let the individual feel that he is placed in the community not to part with his individuality, or to become a tool. To me the progress of society consists in nothing more than in bringing out the individual, in giving him a consciousness of his own being, and in quickening him to strengthen and elevate his mind.

No man, I affirm, will serve his fellow-beings so effectually, so fervently, as he who is not their slave; as he who, casting off every yoke, subjects himself to the law of duty in his own mind. For this law enjoins a disinterested and generous spirit. Individuality, or moral self-subsistence, is the secret foundation of an all-comprehending love. man so multiplies his bonds with the community as he who watches most jealously over his own perfection. There is a beautiful harmony between the good of the State and the moral freedom and dignity of the individual. Were it not so, were these interests in any case discordant, were an individual ever called to serve his country by acts debasing his own mind, he ought not to waver a moment as to the good which he should prefer. Property, life, he should joyfully surrender to the State. But his soul he must never stain or enslave. In my next I shall proceed to point out some of the means by which this spiritual liberty may

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be advanced. I have neither inclination nor room to say more.—Write soon, and believe me ever yours.

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

### 154. To Sir James Henry Lawrence Knight of Malta

Lymouth, Barnstaple, Devon, August 17, 1812.

SIR.

I feel peculiar satisfaction in seizing the opportunity which your politeness places in my power, of expressing to you personally (as I may say) a high acknowledgment of my sense of your talents and principles, which, before I conceived it possible that I should ever know you, I sincerely entertained. Your "Empire of the Nairs," which I read this spring, succeeded in making me a perfect convert to its doctrines. I then retained no doubts of the evils of marriage,—Mrs. Wollstonecraft reasons too well for that; but I had been dull enough not to perceive the greatest argument against it, until developed in the "Nairs," viz., prostitution both legal and illegal.

I am a young man, not yet of age, and have now, been married a year to a woman younger than myself. Love seems inclined to stay in the prison, and my only reason for putting him in chains, whilst convinced of the unholiness of the act, was, a knowledge that, in the present state of society, if love is not thus villainously treated, she, who is most loved, will be treated worse by a misjudging world. In short, seduction, which term could have no meaning.

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The Empire of the Nairs; or, the Rights of Woman. Am Utopian Romance, in twelve Books [and 4 vols.]. By James Lawrence, author of 'The Bosom Friend,' 'Love, an Allegory,' etc.," was published by Hookham in 1811. This romance, which deals with the Nair caste in Malabar, was originally written in German and published in 1800; it was afterwards re-written in French and finally in English.

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in a rational society, has now a most tremendous one; the fictitious merit attached to chastity has made that a fore-runner of the most terrible ruins, which, in Malabar, would be a pledge of honour and homage. If there is any enormous and desolating crime, of which I should shudder to be accused, it is seduction. I need not say how much I admire "Love;" and little as a British public seems to appreciate its merit in never permitting it to emerge from a first edition, it is with satisfaction I find, that justice has conceded abroad what bigotry has denied at home.

I shall take the liberty of sending you any little publication I may give to the world. Mrs. S. joins with myself in hoping, if we come to London this winter, we may be favoured with the personal friendship of one whose writings we have learned to esteem.

Yours very truly,
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

## 155. To THOMAS HOOKHAM (Old Bond Street)

Lynmouth, Barnstaple, Aug[ust] 18, 1812.

DEAR SIR,

Your parcel arrived last night, for which I am much obliged. Before I advert to any other topic, I will explain the contents of mine in which this is enclosed. In the first place, I send you fifty copies of the Letter. I send you a copy of a work which I have procured from America and which I am exceedingly anxious should be published It developes, as you will perceive by the most superficial

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> To Lord Ellenborough. See note, p. 323.

reading, the actual state of republicanized Ireland, and appears to me, above all things, calculated to remove the prejudices which have too long been cherished of that oppressed country. I enclose also two pamphlets which I printed and distributed whilst in Ireland some months ago (no bookseller daring to publish them). They were on that account attended with only partial success, and I request your opinion as to the probable result of publishing them with the annexed suggestions in one pamphlet, with an explanatory preface, in *London*. They would find their way to Dublin.

You confer on me an obligation, and involve a high compliment, by your advice. I shall, if possible, prepare a volume of essays, moral and religious, by November; but, all my MSS. now being in Dublin, and from peculiar circumstances not immediately obtainable, I do not know I enclose also, by way of specimen, all that whether I can. I have written of a little poem<sup>3</sup> begun since my arrival in England. I conceive I have matter enough for six more You will perceive that I have not attempted to temper my constitutional enthusiasm in that poem. Indeed, a poem is safe: the iron-souled Attorney-General would scarcely dare to attack [it]. The Past, the Present, and the Future, are the grand and comprehensive topics of this poem. I have not yet half exhausted the second of them.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "An Address to the Irish People," and "Proposals for an Association of those Philanthropists, etc."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The unpublished "Suggestion" to which Shelley refers in letter No. 128, p. 272.

Which subsequently developed into "Queen Mab; / a Philosophical Poem: / with notes." / By / Percy Bysshe Shelley. / "Ecrasez l'infame: / Correspondence de Voltaire," / quotations from "Lucretius" and "Archimedes" / London: / Printed by P. B. Shelley, / 23 Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square, / 1813." This poem was finished by February, 1813, and issued privately. Shelley cut out the title-page, dedication (to Harriet) and the imprint at the end of the volume, of many of the copies circulated by him.

I shall take the liberty of retaining the two poems 1 which you have sent me (Mr. Peacock's), and only regret that my powers are so circumscribed as to prevent me from becoming extensively useful to your friend. The poems abound with a genius, an information, the power and extent of which I admire, in proportion as I lament the object of their application. Mr. Peacock conceives that commerce is prosperity; that the glory of the British flag is the happiness of the British people; that George III, so far from having been a warrior and a tyrant, has been a patriot. To me it appears otherwise; and I have rigidly accustomed myself not to be seduced by the loveliest eloquence or the sweetest strains to regard with intellectual toleration that which ought not to be tolerated by those who love liberty, truth, and virtue. I mean not to say that Mr. Peacock does not love them; but I mean to say that he regards those means [as] instrumental to their progress, which I regard [as] instrumental to their destruction. (See "Genius of the Thames," pp. 24, 26, 28, 76, 98.) At the same time, I am free to say that the poem appears to be far beyond mediocrity in genius and versification, and the conclusion of "Palmyra" the finest piece of poetry I ever read. I have not had time to read the "Philosophy of Melancholy," and of course am only half-acquainted with that genius and those powers whose application I should consider myself rash and impertinent in criticising, did I not conceive that frankness and justice demand it.

Apparently the following volumes, "The Genius of the Thames, Palmyra, and other Poems. By T. L. Peacock. The Second Edition. London. Published by T. Hookham, junior, and E T. Hookham, Old Bond Street. Gale & Curtis, Paternoster Row, and Ballantyne & Co., Edinburgh. 1812," and "The Philosophy of Melancholy, a poem in Four Parts, with a Mythological Ode. By T. L. Peacock, London. Printed by William Bulmer & Co., Shakespeare Press, for T. Hookham, junior, and E. T. Hookham, Old Bond Street, Gale & Curtis, Paternoster Row; and John Ballantyne & Company, Edinburgh, 1812." The first part of "The Genius of the Thames" and "Palmyra" were originally published respectively in 1810 and 1806.

I should esteem it as a favour if you would present the enclosed letter to the Chevalier Lawrence. I have read his "Empire of the Nairs;" nay, have it. Perfectly and decidedly do I subscribe to the truth of the principles which it is designed to establish.

I hope you will excuse, nay, and doubt not but you will, the frankness I have used. Characters of our liberality are so wondrous rare, that the sooner they know each other, and the fuller and more complete that knowledge is, the better.

Dear Sir, permit me to remain,

Yours very truly,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

I am about translating an old French work, professedly by M. Mirabaud—not the famous one —"La Système de la Nature." Do you know anything of it?

[Addressed],
To T. HOOKHAM, Esq.,
Bond Street,
London.

<sup>1</sup> See note on p. 356.

<sup>2</sup> Shelley seems to refer to the French statesman, M. de Mirabeau.

The book was by Baron d'Holbach. See note on p. 315.

On August 19, the day after this letter was written, Daniel Healey, Shelley's Irish servant whom he had brought with him from Dublin, was arrested at Barnstaple while distributing and posting up copies of Shelley's "Declaration of Rights." On being brought before the Mayor he gave his name as Hill, and stated that a gentleman had given him five shillings to post up and distribute the papers. The Mayor, not satisfied with Healey's account of how he became possessed of the papers, caused inquiries to be made about the man's master, and learnt that Shelley was viewed with suspicion at Lynton and Lynmouth. The man was convicted in a fine of £200, and in lieu of payment, to go to jail for six months. Shelley, unable to pay this fine, arranged that for the payment of fifteen shillings a week his man should be granted certain immunities and privileges.—Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 297.

# 156. To John Williams (Tremadoc)

St. James's Coffee-House, London,<sup>1</sup>
Nov[ember] 7, 1812.

MY DEAR WILLIAMS,

I received your long and kind letter, and although press of business does not permit me to answer to its length, I do hope that it may not be considered deficient in kindness. I need not assure you of the pleasure which I receive from the intelligence of the safety and success of the embankment, of the honourable perseverance of the men, or your own good hopes and spirits. You know my feelings on all these things. I have too often expressed my unabated and unconquerable ardour for the success of you and your enterprises to need repetition now.

On Thursday [November 12] next we set out for Tanyrallt and expect to be with you on the ensuing Monday [November 16]. The Duke of Norfolk has just returned to London. I shall call upon him this morning, and shall spare no pains in engaging his interests, or perhaps his better feelings, in ours and our country's cause. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley, probably aware that he was being watched at Lynmouth, had hastily left that place, apparently towards the end of August, and crossing the Bristol Channel at length settled near Tremadoc, in a house called Tan-yr-allt. This house had been built by William Alexander Madocks (1774-1824), M.P. for Boston, who let it to Shelley at a considerable rent, but on easy terms. Mr. Madocks had reclaimed from the sea a large tract of marsh land in Carnarvonshire, upon which he had built a new town, named Tremadoc, after its enterprising founder. At the time of Shelley's visit to this town the embankment which was being built to protect it was in danger of destruction by the sea. Shelley at once became keenly interested in the fate of the embankment, and not only proceeded to canvass the district for subscriptions, heading the list with a sum of £100, but he went up to London with his wife, Eliza Westbrook and Miss Hitchener, to forward his object. Shelley's object in seeing the Duke of Norfolk was to solicit a subscription for the Tremadoc embankment. Hogg says that he was informed that the Duke politely answered that he had no funds at his immediate disposal.—"Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 173. During this

I see no hope of effecting, on my part, any grand or decisive scheme until the expiration of my minority. In Sussex I meet with no encouragement. They are a parcel of cold, selfish, and calculating animals, who seem to have no other aim or business, on earth, but to eat, drink, and sleep; but in the meanwhile my fervid hopes, my ardent desires, my unremitting personal exertions (so far as my health will allow), are all engaged in that cause, which I will desert but with my life. Can you hire a trustworthy under manservant, as we shall require three in all? Believe me, I feel the attention of the Nanney family very deeply.

Harriet is now writing to Mrs. Madocks to express her sense of her kindness. I do think that your country owes more than I can express to the disinterestedness and activity and patriotism of that admirable lady.

Harriet and the ladies unite with me in sincerest best wishes, and believe me,

Your true friend, PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

P.S.—I am much better than when you last saw me. If I can manage to-day I shall call on the Doctor. Mr. Bedwell will settle the £70 affair.

visit of Shelley to London, he was reconciled to his friend Hogg. At the beginning of November, he called unexpectedly on Hogg at his chambers in the Temple one evening at ten o'clock.

Some three weeks after the Shelleys had left Lynmouth, William Godwin arrived at that place with the object of paying a visit to his young friend. In a letter from Lynmouth to his wife, dated September 19, 1812, Godwin tells her that "The Shelleys are gone! have been gone these three weeks. . . . I have been to the house where Shelley lodged, and I bring good news. I saw the woman of the house [Mrs. Hooper] and I was delighted with her. She is a good creature, and quite loved the Shelleys. They lived here nine weeks and three days. They went away in a great hurry, in debt to her and two more. They gave her a draft upon the Honourable Mr. Lawless, brother to Lord Cloncurry, and they borrowed of her twenty-nine shillings, besides £3 that she got for them from a neighbour, all of which they faithfully returned when they got to Ilfracombe, the people not choosing to change a bank note which had been cut in half for safety in sending it by the post. But the best news is that the woman

HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT
LEWIS'S HOTEL, ST. JAMES'S STREET, LONDON.
Undated. ? 1812.

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

You will smile at my address, wondering how and where we have been during the long interval which has taken place since the receipt of your last letter. I believe I mentioned that we were going to the Vale of Langollen there to remain at least for the winter season; but I know not how it is that whenever we fix upon any particular place of residence something comes to take us to another. Instead of going to Langollen we went to a New town which is called Tremadoc. It is built upon land that has been saved from the sea by a Mr. Madocks, M.P. for Boston. The character of this man is such as to call forth our warmest admiration and esteem. He is what we call a true patriot in every sense of the word. He loves his country dearly, and always stands up for the interests and welfare of the poor. He is building an embankment which does honour to him and is an ornament to his country; but unfortunately possessing only a small fortune, when compared with the immense sums that others possess, he has not sufficient to finish the undertaking which has cost him 12 years' hard labour. We came up to London in the hopes of raising a subscription that would finish it; but as yet nothing is done. Bysshe's being a minor lays us under many unpleasant affairs, and makes us obliged to depend upon in a great measure the will of others, in the manner of raising money, and without which nothing is to be done. We have seen the Godwins.1 Need I tell you that I love them all? You have read his works, therefore you know how you feel towards the author. His manners are so soft and pleasing that I defy even an enemy to be displeased with him. We have the pleasure of seeing him daily, and upon his account we determine to settle near London. For long journeys do not agree with him, having never been in the habit of travelling when a young man. There is one of the daughters [Fanny Imlay] of that dear Mary Wolstoncroft [sic] living with him. She is 19 years of age, very plain, but very sensible. The beauty of her mind fully overbalances the plainness of her countenance. another daughter of hers, who is now in Scotland. She is very much like her mother, whose picture hangs up in his study. She must have been a most lovely woman. Her countenance speaks her a woman who would dare to think and act for herself.

says they will be in London in a fortnight. This quite comforts my heart." ("Shelley Memorials," pp. 41-2.) In the following letters, Harriet tells her friend about Tremadoc, gives her impressions of the Godwins, and describes how Shelley managed to shake off Miss Hitchener.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mary Godwin had been in Scotland on a visit to her friends the Baxters since June, 1812. She returned home, however, by Oct. 10, and on the following day the Shelleys dined at the Godwins' when it is possible Shelley may have first seen his future wife.

you could share the pleasure we enjoy in her company. He is quite a family man. He has one son by his present wife, a little boy of nine years old. He is extremely clever, and will, I have no doubt, follow the same enlightened path that Godwin has before him. Godwin is particularly fond of Curran and I am to be introduced to him (Curran) on Sunday. How comes he [(paper torn)] in England, can you solve this [problem]? You know that Mrs. Godwin keeps a [bookseller's] shop. She conducts the whole herself. [I am] in great hopes she will succeed. They are sometimes very much pressed for enough ready money. They require such an immense capital; but taking everything as it goes, I think they will succeed. The many trials that Mrs. Godwin has had to encounter makes me very much inclined to believe her a woman of great fortitude and unyielding temper of mind. There is a very great sweetness marked in her countenance. In many instances she has shown herself a woman of very great magnanimity and independence of character. Oh, if you could see them all to-morrow. I am going to stay all day with them. G. is very much taken with Percy. He seems to delight so much in his society. He has given up everything for the sake of our society. It gives me so much pleasure to sit and look at him. Have you ever seen a bust of Socrates, for his head is very much like that? Percy, Bessey and Eliza desire to be remembered most affectionately to you. Percy says he wishes you to go to Stockdale's, and get all his manuscript poems and other pieces. I am afraid you will be obliged to use a little manœuvre to get them. In the first place, you can say you wish to look at them, and then you may be able to steal them away from him. I leave it all to you, knowing you will do your best in the way to obtain them, and believe me ever most sincerely your attached friend,

H. SHELLEY.

P.S.—If I have said anything wrong pray forgive me.

[Addressed outside],
Mrs. Nugent,
No. 101 Grafton Street,
Dublin, Ireland.

## HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT STRATFORD-UPON-AVON.

November 14 [1812].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

My last letter to you was from London, which place I left on Friday the 13th, and am now in my way to Tanyrallt, our beautiful Welsh cottage. The reason of your silence I am at a loss to account for, unless your answer has not been delivered to me, a circumstance not at all impossible, considering the hotel we lodged at. Do not think from this that we were backward in our enquiries every day respecting letters. They are and always will be the first objects of our solicitude, when coming from so dear a friend as yourself.

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The lady I have so often mentioned to you, of the name of Hitchener, has to our very great happiness left us. We were entirely deceived in her character as to her republicanism, and in short everything else which she pretended to be. We were not long in finding out our great disappointment in her. As to any noble disinterested views, it is utterly impossible for a selfish character to feel them. She built all her hopes on being able to separate me from my dearly loved Percy, and had the artfulness to say that Percy was really in love with her, and was only his being married that could keep her within bounds. Now Percy had seen her twice before his marriage. He thought her sensible but nothing more. She wrote continually, and at last I wrote to her, and was very much charmed with her letters. We thought it a thousand pities that such a mind as hers appeared to be should be left in a place like that she inhabited. We were therefore very urgent for her to come and live with us; which was no sooner done than we found out our mistake. It was a long time ere we could possibly get her away, till at last Percy said he would give her £100 per annum. And now, thank God, she has left us never more to return. We are much happier now than all the time she was with us. Have you been able to get the poems from Stockdale? If not it cannot be helped, but do pray write to us, for we are quite uneasy at not hearing from you for so long a time. Direct your letters to me at Tanyrallt, near the town of Tremadoc (in Carnarvonshire, North Wales). It is 260 miles from London, but the loveliest place I have seen many a day. We are not far from Ireland. If you could so manage it as to come to us in the Spring, you know not the happiness you would confer upon our little circle, which is now just as you beheld it in your own native air. I have got the Irish Melodies, which I intend to study. If you know of any good old Irish song I should esteem it a favor to hear of it. I must now say adieu, and believe me most truly your affectionate friend.

Percy and Eliza desire not to be forgotten.

[Addressed outside],
Mrs. Nugent,
No. 101 Grafton Street.

o. 101 Grafton Street, Dublin, Ireland.

## 157. To Mrs. Hooper (Lynmouth)

LONDON,

December [? November] 19, 1812.

DEAR MRS. HOOPER,

I send you £20, out of the debt of £30 that I owe you. The remainder I will send as soon as I can.

Your well-wisher,

P. B. SHELLEY.

### 158. To Thomas Jefferson · Hogg

TANYRALLT [TREMADOC],
Dec[ember] 3, 1812.

My DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter begins with the Duke of Norfolk. 1 I stared, when I saw his name; from the very moment I parted from you to the moment of the receipt of your letter, I had thought no more of the Duke of Norfolk than of the man in the moon. I will this instant sit down, and do penance for my involuntary crime by writing a long and wheedling letter to his Grace, and you shall be duly informed of the success of the experiment. I have no hopes, however, of bending my father, but by the mere force of gross interest, and therefore suppose it equally impossible, that he should come to terms before I am of age, as that he should hold out at the expiration of my minority. Be it as it may, I will give him a fair chance, I will put on my most goodhumoured and conciliatory countenance, which Heaven knows, will in this case have something of the Grimgriffinhoff in it after all. When I see him, though I shall say the civilest things imaginable, yet I shall not look as if I liked him, because I do not like him.

You think that, because your reasonings on the subject of moral and political science have led you wide of me, you are regarded by me with less complacency; but good intention is the essence of merit, and any qualification so involuntary as belief, or opinion, is surely a defective standard by which to measure out esteem. It is only

¹ Shelley was apparently very short of money, and had perhaps applied for a loan to Hogg, who suggested that he should write to the Duke. In an unpublished letter to John Williams at Ynys Towyn, dated Dec. 4, 1812, Shelley says: ". · . not having sixpence of ready money, I am placed in a most awkward situation by this mistake."

when conviction is influenced by debasing and unworthy motives, that it becomes in any degree criminal.

Of such motives I do not accuse you, and you appear tainted with some portion of that illiberality, of which you indirectly accuse me, by the very spirit of suspicion, which produces that accusation.

You misinterpret my feelings on the state of the moral world, when you suppose that the bigotry of commonplace republicanism, or the violence of faction, enters into them at all.

I certainly am a very resolved republican (if the word applies), and a determined sceptic; but although I think their reasonings very defective, I am clearly aware that the noblest feelings might conduct some few reflecting minds to Aristocracy and Episcopacy. Hume certainly was an aristocrat, and Locke was a zealous Christian.

The Brown Demon, 1 as we call our late tormentor and schoolmistress, must receive her stipend. I pay it with a heavy heart and an unwilling hand; but it must be so. She was deprived by our misjudging haste of a situation, where she was going on smoothly: and now she says that her reputation is gone, her health ruined, her peace of mind destroyed by my barbarity; a complete victim to all the woes mental and bodily, that heroine ever suffered! This is not all fact; but certainly she is embarrassed and poor, and we being in some degree the cause, we ought to obviate She is an artful, superficial, ugly, hermaphroditical beast of a woman, and my astonishment at my fatuity, inconsistency, and bad taste was never so great, as after living four months with her as an inmate. What would Hell be, were such a woman in Heaven?

The society in Wales is very stupid. They are all aristocrats and saints: but that, I tell you, I do not mind in the least: the unpleasant part of the business is, that they hunt people to death, who are not so likewise.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Poor Miss Elizabeth Hitchener, who seems, from an entry in Godwin's diary, to have left the Shelleys on or before November 8.

Miss Westbrook is perfectly well. Harriet unites with me in wishing you all possible good, and I am your very sincere friend.

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Write soon, for your letters amuse us ALL.

159. To Thomas Hookham (Old Bond Street)

[Tanyrallt, near Tremadoc, Carnarvonshire, Dec[ember] 3, 1812.]

The parcel of books is not yet arrived. I own I am rather anxious concerning it, as the irregularity of the coaches to this solitude among mountains frequently causes mistakes. I have read Mr. Peacock's verses. Independently of their poetical merit, they are accurately descriptive of the exquisite souls by whom I am encompassed. Bigotry is so universally pervading, that the best are deeply tainted. I was speaking of Mr. Peacock to a lady who knew him during his residence in Wales. In many respects she is a woman of considerable merit, and, except in religious matters, a model of toleration. "Oh!" she said, "there Mr. Peacock lived in a cottage near Tan-y-bwlch, associating with no one, and hiding his head, like a murderer, but," she added, altering her voice to a tone of appropriate gravity, "he was worse than that, he was an atheist!" I exclaimed much against the intolerance of her remark, without producing the slightest effect. She knows very well that I am an infidel; but perhaps she does not do There is more philosophy in one square me justice! inch of any tradesman's counter than in the whole of It is the last stronghold of the most vulgar and commonplace prejudices of aristocracy. Lawyers of unexampled villainy rule and grind the poor, whilst they

¹ Probably the lady was Mrs. Madocks, the wife of Shelley's landlord. Mr. Madocks was absent from Tremadoc during the period of Shelley's stay at Tanyrallt.

cheat the rich. The peasants are mere serfs, and are fed and lodged worse than pigs. The gentry have all the ferocity and despotism of the ancient barons, without their dignity and chivalric disdain of shame and danger. The poor are as abject as samoyads, and the rich as tyrannical as bashaws.

#### 160. To FANNY IMLAY

[TANYRALLT], Dec[ember] 10, 1812

DEAR FANNY,

So you do not know whether it is proper to write to me? Now, one of the most conspicuous considerations that arise from such a topic is—who and what am I? I am one of those formidable and long-clawed animals called a man. and it is not until I have assured you that I am one of the most inoffensive of my species, that I live on vegetable food, and never bit since I was born, that I venture to obtrude myself on your attention. But to be serious. I shall feel much satisfaction in replying, with as much explicitness as my nature is capable of, to any questions you may put to me. I know that I have in some degree forfeited a direct claim on your confidence and credit, and that of your inestimable circle; but if you will believe me as much as you can, I will be as sincere as I can. certainly am convinced that, with the exception of one or two isolated instances, I am so far from being an insincere man that my plainness has occasionally given offence, and caused some to accuse me of being defective in that urbanity and toleration which is supposed to be due to society. Allow me, in the absence of the topics which are eventually to be discussed between us, to assume the privilege you have claimed, and ask a question. How is Harriet a fine You indirectly accuse her in your letter of this lady? 24-(2285)

offence—to me the most unpardonable of all. and simplicity of her habits, the unassuming plainness of her address, the uncalculated connection of her thought and speech, have ever formed in my eyes her greatest charms: and none of these are compatible with fashionable life, or the attempted assumption of its vulgar and noisy éclat. You have a prejudice to contend with in making me a convert to this last opinion of yours, which, so long as I have a living and daily witness to its futility before me, I fear will be insurmountable. The second accusation (the abruptness of our departure) has more foundation, though in its spirit it is not less false and futile than the first. , indeed, I confess it, have appeared insensible It4 unfeeling, it must have appeared an ill return for all kind greetings we had received at your house, to leave in haste and coldness—to leave even the enlightened and alous benevolence of Godwin ever [active] for good, and never deterred or discouraged in schemes for rectifying our perplexed affairs—to bid not one adieu to one of you: but, had you been placed in a situation where you might justly have balanced all our embarrassments, qualms and fluctuations, had seen the opposite motives combating in our minds for mastery, had felt some tithe of the pain with which at length we submitted to a galling yet unappealable necessity, you would have sympathized rather than condemned, have pitied rather than criminated, us unheard. Say the thath: did not a sense of the injustice of our supposed unkindness add some point to the sarcasms which we found occasionally in your last letter? . . .

If all my laughs were not dreadful, Sardonic grins, disgraceful to the most hideous of Cheshire cats, I should certainly laugh at two things in your last letter. The one is, "not knowing whether it is proper to write to me," lest—God knows what might happen; and the other is, comparing our movement to that of a modern novel. Now a novel (modern or ancient) never moves but as the reader moves, and I, being a reader, if I take up one of these

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<u>:</u>

similitudes of our progress, never can get beyond the third line in the second page; therefore you ought rather to have compared a novel to a snail rather than to us.

Now, my dear Fanny, do not be angry at either my laughs, my criticisms, or my queries. They proceed from levity, my proper view of things, and my desire of setting them before you in what I consider a right light.

Your questions shall be answered with precision; and, if hope in my quality as a man be not too tremendous, I shall acquire from the result an interesting and valuable correspondent.

With much esteem, your true friend, P. B. Shelley.

To Miss Fanny Godwin. 1

## 161. To CLIO RICKMAN (London)

Tanyrallt, Tremadoc, Carnarvonshire, North Wales, December 24, 1812.

SIR,

In a letter which I received from you on a different subject, you expressed your willingness to receive my orders.—I am now in want of some books, a list of which I enclose, and I prefer employing a countryman, and a man of a liberal and enlightened mind, to a stranger.—I should wish for such editions of the classics I have mentioned as have translations subjoined; or, if such are not obtainable, translations separate.—I prefer them in the cheapest form.

Sir, I remain,

Your very ob[edien]t s[ervan]t,
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

P.S.—If the box which contains the books is sent to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Fanny Imlay went by the name of Godwin. See the biographical note at the beginning of Vol. I.

Mr. Bedwell, 6 Tooley St., Canterbury Square, Southwark, it will reach me safely (directed as above).

Turn over.

I would prefer the books in boards.

[Addressed outside], Mr. Clio Rickman, Bookseller,

No. 7 Upper Marylebone St., London.

[Postmark], 28. 12. 1812. [The seal bears the word] Liberty.

Original and translation, if possible, united—

Æschylus. **Epicurus** Celsus Ptolemæus Confusius (a translation only) Euripides **Polybius Tacitus Procopius** Hippocrates Diodorus Siculus Lucius Florus Justin of Samaria (the original **Pythagoras** Theophrastus Titus Livius Josephus Sappho

Shakespeare's works (cheap edition)
Cowley's works
Blackstone's "Commentaries"
Sir W. Jones's works
Lord Monboddo "on the origin and progress of language"
Robertson's "History of Scotland"
do. "History of America"

Robertson's "Historical Disquisition on India" Bishop Berkeley's works Garcilaso de la Vega Spallanzani's works (either English or Italian) Les Ouvres de Diderot do. Condorcet Roscoe's "History of the Houses of Medicis" Sir W. Drummond's Essay on a Punic Inscription " Darwin's "Temple of Nature"
Trotter on "Nervous Temperament" "Essay on "Drunkendo. ness "

Poems by Clio Rickman

"Metrical Tales" by Southey
Southey's "Thalaba"
Wordsworth's Poems, 4 vols.
Coleridge's Poems
Tooke's "Diversions of Purley"
Godwin's "Enquirer"
do. "Caleb Williams"
do. "St. Leon"
do. "Fleetwood"

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# 162. To THOMAS HOOKHAM (Old Bond Street)

TANYRALLT, [TREMADOC],
Dec[ember] 17, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR.

You will receive the "Biblical Extracts" in a day or two by the twopenny post. I confide them to the care of a person going to London. Would not Daniel I. Eaton publish them? Could the question be asked him in any manner?

I am also preparing a volume of minor poems, respecting whose publication I shall request your judgment, both as publisher and friend. A very obvious question would be—Will they sell or not? Subjoined is a list of books which I wish you to send me very soon. I am determined to apply myself to a study that is hateful and disgusting to my very soul, but which is, above all studies, necessary for him who would be listened to as a mender of antiquated abuses. I mean that record of crimes and miseries, History. You see that the metaphysical works to which my heart hankers are not numerous in this list. One thing will you take care of for me—that those standard and respectable works on history, etc., be of the cheapest possible editions. With respect to metaphysical works, I am less scrupulous.

Spinoza<sup>2</sup> you may or may not be able to obtain. Kant is translated into Latin by some Englishman. I would prefer that the Greek classics should have Latin or English

<sup>1</sup> The "Biblical Extracts" has never been published. Daniel I. Eaton was the publisher whom Shelley defended in his letter

to Lord Ellenborough. See note on p. 323.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Professor Dowden quotes the following from this list ("Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 336):—Kant, Spinoza, Hume's "Essays," Darwin's "Zoonomia." Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, and Plutarch [these four recommended by Godwin], with translations into Latin or English, as well as the original texts. Gillies "History of Greece," Vertot's (French) "Histoire de la Rome" ["Revolution romaines"], Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," Adolphus's "History of England from the Accession of George III to 1783," Spenser's "Faerie Queene," Count Rumford "On Stoves,"

versions printed opposite. If not to be obtained thus, they must be sent otherwise.

Do you know anything of the famous French Encyclo-pédie composed by Voltaire, D'Alembert, etc.? It is a book I should much wish to have. Is it to be obtained? Could you obtain it?... There is a work by a French physician, Cabanis, that I wish you also to send.

Mrs. Shelley is attacking Latin with considerable resolution, and can already read many odes in Horace. She unites with her sister and myself in best wishes to yourself and brother.

> Your very sincere friend, P. B. Shelley.

[Addressed], T. Hookham, Esq., 15 Bond Street, London.

### 163. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

TANYRALLT [TREMADOC],
Dec[ember] 27, 1812.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter to Harriet contains some hints of the possibility of your being at leisure in a short time. I sincerely hope that your schemes will allow a visit to Tanyrallt. The advantage of a mail within seventeen miles would entirely obviate any hitch in the affair. We all anxiously wish you would come, and hope that your hint was something better than a mere lure for the opportunity of refusal.

We are all surprised at the complaints of cold which issue from London. For a day or two, indeed, it bit a little in the first of the morning, but nothing more.

Moor's "Hindu Pantheon," Southey's "History of Brazil." Hogg says ("Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 178) that on Dec. 21, 1812, Shelley writes to London for "Marcus Antoninus, Seneca, and Plato." Professor Dowden suggests the fragment containing this request to have been written on Dec. 17, after Shelley had posted the above letter to Hookham.

Believe me that I sympathize in your feelings on Buonaparte and Peace, very warmly. Buonaparte is a person to whom I have a very great objection; he is to me a hateful and despicable being. He is seduced by the grossest and most vulgar ambition into actions which only differ from those of pirates by virtue of the number of men and the variety of resources under his command. His talents appear to me altogether contemptible and commonplace: incapable as he is of comparing connectedly the most obvious propositions, or relishing any pleasure truly enrapturing. Excepting Lord Castlereagh, you could not have mentioned any character but Buonaparte whom I contemn and abhor more vehemently. With respect to those victories in the North; if they tend towards peace, they are good; if otherwise, they are bad. This is the standard by which I shall ultimately measure my approbation of them. At the same time, I cannot but say that the first impression which they made on me was one of horror and regret. 1

Brougham's defence was certainly not so good as it might have been; it was fettered by the place wherein he stood. Entire liberty of speech was denied. He could not speak treason; he could not commit a libel; and therefore his client was not to be defended on the basis of moral truth. He was compelled to hesitate when truth was rising to his lips; he could utter that which he did utter only by circumlocution and irony. The speech of the Solicitor-General appeared to me the consummation of all shameless insolence, and the address of Lord Ellenborough so barefaced a piece of timeservingness, that I am sure his heart must have laughed at his lips as he pronounced it.<sup>2</sup>

On Wednesday, Dec. 9, 1812, in the Court of King's Bench,

The Examiner for Dec. 20, 1812, says: "If the Russian Bulletins are to be believed, Buonaparte has not now a corporal's guard left out of his whole 'grand army,' and they are without shoes, according to the ministerial papers. Considering that Napoleon and his army have been so completely surrounded by the Russians, the news of their capture is rather tardy in its arrival."

I have as yet received no answer from the Duke of Norfolk. I scarcely expect one. I do not see that it is the interest of my father to come to terms during my non-age; perhaps even not after. Do you know, I cannot prevail upon myself to care much about it. Harriet is very happy as we are; and I am very happy. I question if intimacy with my relations would add at all to our tranquillity. They would be plotting and playing the devil, or showing us to some people who would do so; or they would be dull; or they would take stupid likes or dislikes, and they certainly might cramp our liberty of movement. In fact, I have written to the Duke. I can say to my conscience, "I have done my best;" but I shall not be very unhappy, if I fail.

I continue vegetable; Harriet means to be slightly animal, until the arrival of Spring. My health is much improved by it; though partly perhaps by my removal from your nerve-racking and spirit-quelling metropolis.

We are divided between two opinions: Whether you

John Hunt, the printer, and Leigh Hunt, the Editor of the Examiner, were charged before Lord Ellenborough and a special jury for having "With intention to traduce and vilify his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, Regent of the United Kingdom, and to bring his Royal Highness into hatred, contempt and disgrace on the 22nd of March [1812] in the 52nd year of the King, published a libel against the Prince Regent." Then followed a passage quoted from the Examiner article entitled "The Prince on St. Patrick's Day," in which certain phrases of unmeasured panegyric applied to the Prince Regent in the Tory press, appeared with Leigh Hunt's unflattering comments, concluding with the following: "... This Adonis in Loveliness was a corpulent gentleman of fifty ! In short, that this delightful, blissful, wise, pleasurable, honourable, virtuous, true, and immortal PRINCE was a violator of his word, a libertine over head and ears in debt and disgrace, a despiser of domestic ties, the companion of gamblers and demireps, a man who has just closed half a century without one single claim on the gratitude of his country or the respect of posterity." Although ably defended by their friend Brougham, who had succeeded in obtaining an acquittal of the Hunts on a previous government prosecution, in 1811, he was prohibited, from the nature of the case, from producing any proofs on behalf of his clients, and they were pronounced guilty, sentence being deferred.

really will allow us the heartfelt pleasure of seeing you here this winter: or whether your suggestion was a quiz. My dear friend, I remain,

> Yours very affectionately, PERCY B. SHELLEY.

## 164. To Thomas Hookham (Old Bond Street)

TANYRALLT [TREMADOC], January 2, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR,

On reflection, I feel rather chagrined that I excepted against the Georgics. I fear it may withhold your hand, when you would otherwise send me some really valuable work. I assure you I am quite reconciled to Professor Martyn. 1 Harriet will probably derive some assistance from his translation, when she has mastered Horace. Now to answer your questions. The "Tractatus Theologico politicus" and the "Opera Posthuma" of Spinoza will fully suffice, at least, for the present. With respect to Kant, there is a work of his, and, as I judged, the only one, which has been translated into Latin by some Dr. This, which is his most celebrated work, is the only one I require; and I have no choice between a Latin, a French, or an English translation. My poems will, I fear, little stand the criticism even of friendship, some of the later ones have the merit of conveying a meaning in every word, and all are faithful pictures of my feelings at the time of writing them. But they are, in a great measure, abrupt and obscure—all breathing hatred of Government and religion, but, I think, not too openly for publication. One fault they are indisputably exempt from, that of being a volume

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Dr. Thomas Martyn (d. 1816), Physician at Chelsea, and Professor of Botany at Cambridge, author of "Dissertations and Critical Remarks on the Æneids of Virgil, with a life of the author," 1770.

of fashionable literature. I doubt not but your friendly hand will clip the wings of my Pegasus considerably. I think that the type and size of Godwin's "Essay on Sepulchres" would be a good model for the "Biblical Extracts." At all events I would wish them to be sent to the press. If you cannot have access to Eaton 250 copies would suffice. Small Christmas, or Easter offerings of a neat little book have frequently a surprising effect. The Emperors of China seem to form a singular exception to the usual doltishness of the regal race. I sympathize with his Imperial Majesty, but might not a preface be as efficacious in preventing the circulation of Biblical poison as a penal law?

Accept my warmest thanks for your kindness respecting the money affair—I may in a future letter trouble you with a few more enquiries on the subject. The post is just going out. We hope to see you here early in the spring. Harriet and her sister unite with me in best wishes to yourself and brother.

> Yours very truly, P. B. Shelley.

# 165. To Thomas Hookham (Old Bond Street)

TANYRALLT, TREMADOC, Jan[uary] 16, 1813.

I am provoked by the stupidity of the people who were to send the box. . . .

I certainly wish to have all Kant's works. My question concerning the "Encyclopédie" was more of curiosity than a want.

I expect to have "Queen Mab" and the other Poems

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;In China the circulation of the Old and New Testaments had been proscribed by Imperial Edicts." (Dowden's "Shelley," Vol. I, p. 339.)

finished by March. "Queen Mab" will be in ten cantos, and contain about 2,600 lines. The other poems contain probably as much more. The notes to "Q. M." will be long and philosophical; I shall take that opportunity which I judge to be a safe one, of propagating my principles, which I decline to do syllogistically in poem. A poem very didactic is, I think, very stupid.

I do not think that Sir W. Drummond's arguments have much weight. His "Œdipus [Judaicus]" has completely failed in making me a convert.

P.S. The thermometer is twelve degrees below freezing; this is Russian cold!<sup>2</sup>

1 In its published form it is divided into nine cantos and contains 2,289 lines. Prof. Dowden says that "the figures in Shelley's letter are not quite clear, and may be 2,800, which would agree more closely with the statement about the other poems."

On the same date as this note Harriet wrote the following letter

to Catherine Nugent—

TANYRALLT, Jan[uar]y 16. [1813.]

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

The sight of your well-known hand was like intelligence from the dead to the living. Shall I say that it gave me only pleasure? no, that is too cold a word to convey the feelings of happiness, in which we all alike participated. I am sorry to hear you have been so much engaged, as I cannot bear the idea of a woman like yourself being obliged to do that which so many are better qualified to perform. I saw with very great sorrow the ruin of so many of your valuable manufactories. I knew how many of your unfortunate countrymen suffered all the miseries of famine before, and now there must be many more. That the wounds of thy beloved country may soon be healed for ever, is the first wish of an Englishwoman who only regrets her being born among those inhuman beings who have already caused so much misery wherever they turn their steps. All the good I wrote of Mr. Madocks I recant. I find I have been dreadfully deceived respecting that man. We are now living in his house, where formerly nothing but folly and extravagance reigned. Here they held their midnight revels, insulting the spirit of nature's sublime scenery. The sea which used to dash against the most beautiful and grand rocks, for grand indeed they are, and the mind is lost in the contemplation of them towering above one another, and on the opposite side the most jagged mountains, whose peaks are generally covered in clouds, was, to please his stupid vanity and to celebrate his name, turned from its course, and now we have for a bold fine sea, which there used to be, nothing but a sandy marsh

### 166. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

TANYRALLT [TREMADOC], Feb[ruary] 7, 1813.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have been teased to death for the last fortnight. Had you known the variety of the discomfitures I have undergone, you would attribute my silence to anything but unkindness or neglect. I allude to the embankment affairs, in which I thoughtlessly engaged; for when I come

uncultivated and ugly to the view. How poor does this work of man seem when standing on one of the mountains we see them all rising one behind the other as tho' they had stood the iron grasp of time many centuries. Then to look down on this embankment which viewed from the height looks as if a puff of wind from the mountains would send it to oblivion like its founder's name. The harm that man has done through his extravagance is incalculable. Here he built the town of Tremadoc, and then almost ruined its shopkeepers by never paying their just debts. We have been the means of saving the bank from utter destruction, for which I am extremely glad, as that person who purchases it will reap very great benefit from it. I admire your song much, and am determined to set it to some very plaintive tune. I have seen Miss Curran: she resides in England. What I saw of her I did not like. She said begging was a trade in Dublin. To tell you the truth, she is not half such an Irishwoman as myself, and that is why I did not feel disposed to like Besides, she is a coquette, the most abominable thing in the world. I met her at Godwin's house, alas [paper torn] Godwin he, too, is changed, and [filled] with prejudices, and besides, too, he expects such universal homage from all persons younger than himself, that it is very disagreeable to be in company with him on that account, and he wanted Mr. Shelley to join the Wig [sic] party and do just as they pleased, which made me very angry, as we know what men the Wigs [sic] are, now. He is grown old and unimpassioned, therefore is not in the least calculated for such enthusiasts as we are. He has suffered a great deal for his principles, but that ought to make him more staunch in them, at least it would me. Eliza and Percy desire their kindest regards to you, with many thanks for your embassy to Stockdale, who will hear from Mr. S. soon. Adieu, dearest friend to liberty and truth, and that you may ever be happy is the first prayer of your affectionate friend,

H. SHELLEY.

¹ Shelley's zeal for the "embankment affairs" was such that, according to Mrs. Williams, he helped her husband to write letters, "and was in the office from morning to night, using every means in his power to show his kind interest." (Quoted by Prof. Dowden, Vol. I, 319.) See note on p. 361.

/ https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.32000000658999 Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 18;38 GMT / https://hdl.har Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.org/access use#pd-google home to Harriet, I am the happiest of the happy. I forget whether I have expressed to you the pleasure which you know I must feel at your visit in March. I hope it will be early in the month, and that you will arrange matters so in London, that it may be protracted to the utmost possible length.

We simple people live here in a cottage extensive and tasty enough for the villa of an Italian Prince.<sup>2</sup> The rent, as you may conceive, is large, but it is an object with us that they allow it to remain unpaid till I am of age.

What said Harriet of America?3

You must take your place in the mail as far as Capel Cerrig, and inform me of the time you mean to be there, and I will meet you. I do not think that you have ever visited this part of North Wales. The scenery is more strikingly grand in the way from Capel Cerrig to our house than ever I beheld. The road passes at the foot of Snowdon; all around you see lofty mountain peaks, lifting their summits far above the clouds, wildly-wooded valleys below, and dark tarns reflecting every tint and shape of the scenery above them. The roads are tremendously rough; I shall bring a horse for you, as you will then be better able to see the country than when jumbled in a chaise.

"Mab" has gone on but slowly, although she is nearly

4 "Queen Mab."

<sup>1</sup> Hogg had promised to visit the Shelleys at Tanyrallt "during the Spring Circuit, that is to say, at the beginning of March."

<sup>\*</sup> Tanyrallt is built in the Italian style, or what would now be known as a commodious bungalow with one storey and a verandah.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Did Shelley ever think of going to America? We know that he sympathized with the Mexican Revolution, and he had been told that America was a place where beggars practically were unknown (Letter No. 122). In a letter of C. Kirkpatrick Sharpe, printed in Lady Charlotte Bury's "Diary Illustrative of the Times of George the Fourth," 1838, Vol. I, p. 91, he says in writing from Christ Church, Oxford, Oct., 1811, "The ingenious Mr. Shelley hath been expelled from the University on account of his atheistical pamphlet. Was ever such bad taste and barbarity known? He behaved like a hero, 'he showed to Fortune's frowns a brow serene,' and declared his intention of emigrating to America."

finished. They have teased me out of all poetry. With some restrictions. I have taken your advice, though I have not been able to bring myself to rhyme. The didactic is in blank heroic verse, and the descriptive in blank lyrical measure. If an authority is of any weight in support of this singularity, Milton's "Samson Agonistes," the Greek Choruses, and (you will laugh) Southey's "Thalaba" may be adduced. I have seen your last letter to Harriet. will answer it by next post. I need not say that your letters delight me, but all your principles do not. species of pride which you love to encourage appears to me incapable of bearing the test of reason. Now, do not tell me that Reason is a cold and insensible arbiter. Reason is only an assemblage of our better feelings—passion considered under a peculiar mode of its operation. chivalric pride, although of excellent use in an age of Vandalism and brutality, is unworthy of the nineteenth century. A more elevated spirit has begun to diffuse itself, which, without deducting from the warmth of love, or the constancy of friendship, reconciles all private feelings to public utility, and scarce suffers true Passion and true Reason to continue at war. Pride mistakes a desire of being esteemed for that of being really estimable. I scarce think that the mock humility of ecclesiastical hypocrisy is more degrading and blind. I remember when over our Oxford fire we used to discuss various subjects; fancy me present with you in spirit, and own "how vain is human pride!" Perhaps you will say that my Republicanism is proud; it certainly is far removed from pot-house democracy, and knows with what smile to hear the servile applauses of an inconsistent mob. But though its cheeks could feel without a blush the hand of insult strike, its soul would shrink neither from the scaffold nor the stake, nor from those deeds and habits which are obnoxious to slaves My Republicanism, it is true, would bear with in power. an aristocracy of chivalry and refinement before an aristocracy of commerce and vulgarity; not, however, from

pride, but because the one I consider as approaching most nearly to what man ought to be. So much for Pride!

Since I wrote the above, I have finished the rough sketch of my poem. As I have not abated an iota of the infidelity or cosmopolicy of it, sufficient will remain, exclusively of innumerable faults, invisible to partial eyes, to make it very unpopular. Like all egotists, I shall console myself with what I may call, if I please, the suffrages of the chosen few, who can think and feel, or of those friends whose personal partialities may blind them to all defects. I mean to subjoin copious philosophical notes.

Harriet has a bold scheme of writing you a Latin letter. If you have an Ovid's "Metamorphoses," she will thank you to bring it. I do not teach her grammatically, but by the less laborious method of teaching her the English of Latin words, intending afterwards to give her a general idea of grammar. She unites with me in all kindest wishes.

# 167. To Thomas Hookham<sup>2</sup> (Old Bond Street)

[Tanyrallt, NEAR TREMADOC], [Postmark], 19 February, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am boiling with indignation at the horrible injustice and tyranny of the sentence pronounced on Hunt and his brother; and it is on this subject that I write to you. Surely the sea! of abjectness and slavery is indelibly stamped upon the character of England.

Although I do not retract in the slightest degree my wish for a subscription for the widows and children of those

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley's copy of Ovid's "Metamorphoses," with his signature on the title-page is in the collection of Mr. H. B. Forman.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> This letter has been reconstructed from the imperfect (?) copy printed in "Shelley Memorials," and the extracts in Hogg's "Life of Shelley."

poor men hung at York, 1 yet this £1,000 which the Hunts are sentenced to pay is an affair of more consequence. Hunt is a brave, a good, and an enlightened man. Surely the public, for whom Hunt has done so much, will repay in part the great debt of obligation which they owe the champion of their liberties and virtues; or are they dead, cold, stone-hearted, and insensible—brutalized by centuries of unremitting bondage? However that may be, they surely may be excited into some slight acknowledgment of his merits. Whilst hundreds of thousands are sent to the tyrants of Russia, he pines in a dungeon, far from all that can make life desired.

Well, I am rather poor at present; but I have £20 which is not immediately wanted. Pray, begin a subscription for the Hunts; put down my name for that sum, and, when I hear that you have complied with my request, I will send it you. Now if there are any difficulties in the way of this scheme of ours, for the love of liberty and virtue, overcome them. Oh! that I might wallow for one night in the Bank of England!

You would very much oblige me if you would collect all possible documents on the Procession of the Equinoxes,

¹ Prof. Dowden says that "when in Jan., 1813, the execution of fourteen of the riotous frame-makers known as Luddites took place at York, Shelley and Harriet were eager to start a subscription in London for the destitute widows and orphans of the victims. "Put down my sister's name, Mr. Shelley's, and mine for two guineas each," wrote Harriet to Hookham, "if this meets your approbation, and we will enclose the sum."—("Life of Shelley," Vol. I, 323.)

Lord Ellenborough had passed sentence on Leigh and John Hunt, on Feb. 4, 1812, of a fine of £500 each, imprisonment of two years, John Hunt in Coldbath Field, and Leigh Hunt in the Surrey County Jail, and at the expiration of that term each were to give a security, in £500 each and two sufficient securities in £250, for their good behaviour during five years. The Hunts, however, refused to accept any assistance and paid the fine. Shelley not only proposed this subscription, but he also wrote to Leigh Hunt, for he tells us in his "Autobiography": "It was [this] imprisonment that brought me acquainted with my friend of friends, Shelley. I had seen little of him before; but he wrote to me making me a princely offer, which at the time I stood in no need of."

as also anything that may throw light upon the question of, whether or not the position of the Earth on its poles is not yearly becoming less oblique. It is an astronomical affair.

"Queen Mab" is finished and transcribed. I am now preparing the notes, which shall be long and philosophical. You will receive it with the other poems. I think that the whole should form one volume; but of that we can speak hereafter.

As to the French "Encyclopédie," it is a book which I am desirous—very desirous—of possessing; and, if you could get me a few months' credit (being at present rather low in cash), I should very much desire to have it. How long will the poems be printing after they have been received?

My dear sir, excuse the earnestness of the first part of my letter. I feel warmly on this subject, and I flatter myself that, so long as your own independence and liberty remain uncompromised, you are inclined to second my desires.

Your very sincere friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

P.S.—If no other way can be devised for this subscription, will you take the trouble on yourself of writing an appropriate advertisement for the papers, inserting, by way of stimulant, my subscription?

On second thoughts, I enclose the £20.

### 168. To Thomas Hookham (London)

[Tanyrallt, Tremadoc, March 3, 1813.]

DEAR SIR,

I have just escaped an atrocious assassination. 1 Oh,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The assault on Shelley referred to in this letter (on the night of Friday, Feb. 26), and related in detail by Harriet Shelley in her letter to Hookham of March 11, 1813, p. 391, remained for ninety-two 25—(2285)

send £20 if you have it! You will perhaps hear of me no more!

Your friend,
PERCY SHELLEY.

Mr. Shelley is so dreadfully nervous to-day, from being

years one of the inexplicable incidents of the poet's life, and was variously described by his biographers as either an hallucination of Shelley's brain or a trick to escape from his creditors at Tremadoc. To the Century Magazine for Oct., 1905, however, Miss Margaret L. Crofts contributed the following well attested account of Shelley's adventure. It appears that "Shelley was in the habit of climbing up the Roman steps near Tanyrallt to the rocky height, which was a grazing place for sheep. Here Shelley had more than once put an end to the life of a sheep affected with scab or some other lingering disease. It was his habit to carry pistols, and in his pity for the helpless creatures, he would put an end to them by a kindly shot. This habit of Shelley's had so exasperated a rough specimen of the Welsh mountain sheep-farmer, named Robin Pant Evan, that he and his friends came down to Tanyrallt on that wild February night, and Evan fired a shot through the window, not meaning to murder anyone, but to give the inconvenient meddler a good fright. Shelley's pistol flashed in the pan. Robin entered the room, wrestled with him, knocked him down, and then escaped through the window. It was his rough face and form that Shelley afterwards saw standing near the beech-tree; and when Shelley gazed out, all bewildered with the night alarm and the shaking, he thought he saw the devil. Robin gained his end, for Shelley and Harriet and her sister left the place next day never to return." When trying to describe the assault to Mrs. Williams, Shelley sketched on a screen a figure of the man by whom he had been attacked; the screen has unhappily disappeared, but a reproduction from a copy of the sketch accompanies the article. Some years after the event, the same Robin Pant Evan confessed his part in this night adventure to certain members of the Greaves family who were living at Tanyrallt between 1847 and 1865. Miss Greaves, who now occupies Tanyrallt, has very courteously communicated to me some interesting particulars of the house. Peacock, who visited Tanyrallt in the summer of 1813, says that he "heard the matter much talked of. Persons who had examined the premises on the following morning had found that the grass of the lawn appeared to have been much trampled and rolled on, but there were no footmarks on the wet ground except between the beaten spot and the window; and the impression of the ball on the wainscot showed that the pistol had been fired towards the window, and not from it."—Fraser's Magazine, June, 1858.

up all night, that I am afraid what he has written will alarm you very much. We intend to leave this place as soon as possible, as our lives are not safe as long as we remain. It is no common robber we dread, but a person who is actuated by revenge, and who threatens my life and my sister's as well. If you can send us the money, it will greatly add to our comfort.

Sir, I remain your sincere friend,

H. SHELLEY.

T. HOOKHAM, Esq.

# 169. To John Williams (Tremadoc)

MY DEAR WILLIAMS.

I am surprised that the wretch who attacked me has not been heard of. Surely the inquiries have not been sufficiently general, or particular?

Mr. Nanney requests that you will order that some boards should be nailed against the broken window of Tanyrallt. We are in immediate want of money. Could you borrow twenty-five pounds in my name, to pay my little debts? I know your brother could lend me that sum. I think you could ask him on such an occasion as this.

My dear Williams, yours very truly,

P. B. SHELLEY.



# 170. To John Williams (Tremadoc)

[Postmark], BANGOR,
[After March 5, 1813.]

MY DEAR WILLIAMS,

I have received a letter from Leeson, which I enclose. His statement of this fact I know on reflection to be perfectly correct, with the exception of the latter part of his letter which is twisted in this way by his malice.

Did I not know the unalterable goodness of your heart, and had I not a confidence not to be shaken in your general rectitude, I should feel staggered at this deceit.

But I can trace all the springs of your conduct—all the windings of your mind are known to me.

ROBERT LEESON(1) to P. B. SHELLEY.

Morfa Lodge, March 5, 1813.

Sir,—Having heard from several quarters that you lie under almistake relative to the manner in which I was put in possession of a pamphlet signed "P. B. Shelley," I think it a pity that you should not be undeceived. I beg to tell you that it was not given to me by Mr. Ashstone, nor taken by him from John Williams' house,—but was handed to me by John Williams with a remark that it contained matter dangerous to the State, and that you had been in the practise of haranguing 500 people at a time when in Ireland. So much for your friend.

Sir, I remain yours, Rob. Leeson.

(1) Robert Leeson, as we see from Harriet's letter of March 11, was supposed to have had a hand in the Tanyrallt outrage. This Prof. Dowden discredited in his "Life of Shelley," although he was, of course, without the facts that have recently come to light. He describes Leeson as "an eminently loyal and disagreeable Englishman, who had learnt in the early Tremadoc days from effusive. Miss Hitchener of Shelley's authorship of a seditious pamphlet and the risk of a Government prosecution." "An envious, unfeeling sort of man," declares Mrs. Williams, "not very particular what he said of anyone," and who had charged Shelley to the face with his utterance of sedition. Mrs. Williams said that "when Mr. Shelley asked for his informant, Mr. Leeson pointed to my husband; but when the three met, Mr. Leeson made an apology, and confessed he had been told by Miss Hitchener."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The following—

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000658999 http://www.hathitrust.org/access\_use#pd-google Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 18:38 Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.or In justice to the good, I, whilst I pity the bad I find, I am still obliged to disapprove.—I should not have been offended with you, had you told me the truth. You know me but little, whilst I know you very well.

Hence you suspect, and I confide. Let me have the comfort of knowing that when I vouch for your word, I vouch for what is true. As I told you when we parted unless you are explicit and unreserved to me I am fighting in the dark. I am and shall continue to be your friend, but I should be your friend to little purpose unless I were also your confidant.

You will hear from us again soon in Dublin. I shall believe you in future, but never deceive me again.

My dear Williams,

Your true friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Mr. JOHN WILLIAMS,
Ynnis Towyn,
Tremadoc.

# 171. TO THOMAS HOOKHAM (London)

Bangor Ferry, March 6, 1813.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In the first stage of our journey towards Dublin we met with your letter. How shall I express to you what I felt of gratitude, surprise, and pleasure—not so much that the remittance rescued us from a situation of peculiar perplexity, but that one there was, who, by disinterested and unhesitating confidence, made amends to our feelings, wounded by the suspicion, coldness, and villainy of the world. If the discovery of truth be a pleasure of singular purity, how far surpassing is the discovery of virtue!

I am now recovered from an illness brought on by watching, fatigue, and alarm; and we are proceeding to

Dublin to dissipate the unpleasant impressions associated with the scene of our alarm.

We expect to be there on the 8th. 1 You shall then hear the detail of our distresses. The ball of the assassin's pistols (he fired at me twice) penetrated my nightgown and pierced the wainscot. He is yet undiscovered, though not unsuspected, as you will learn from my next.

Unless you knew us all more intimately, you cannot conceive with what fervour and sincerity my wife and sister join with me to you in gratitude and esteem.

Yours ever faithfully and affectionately, PERCY B. SHELLEY.

P.S.—Though overwhelmed by our own distresses, we are by no means indifferent to those of liberty and virtue. From the tenor of your letter I augur that you have applied the £20 I sent to the benefit of the Hunts. I am anxious to hear further of the success of this experiment. My direction is—35 Great Cuffe Street, Dublin. By your kindness and generosity we are perfectly relieved from all pecuniary difficulties. We only wanted a little breathing time, which the rapidity of our persecutors was unwilling to allow us. We shall readily repay the £20 when I hear from my correspondent in London, but when can I repay the friendship, the disinterestedness, and the zeal of your confidence?

T. HOOKHAM, Esq.

172. To John Williams. (Tremadoc)

50 Great Cuffe St[reet], Dublin,
[? after March 9], 1813.

MY DEAR WILLIAMS,

I write to tell you that we have safely arrived in Dublin. Our passage was very tedious and stormy. It made us all

<sup>1</sup> The Shelleys arrived at Dublin on March 9th.

This was the address of Shelley's friend, John Lawless.

so ill that we are scarcely recovered. Well, we are arrived in Dublin, but so poor that, unless we find some friend, I know not what we shall do. I do not think that we can manage to live until the arrival of Mr. Caldecott's expected loan. We are in a foreign country where our name even is scarcely known, and where no one will give us credit for a farthing. You are surrounded by your friends, and though poor have some hope of refuge in necessity. You would oblige me by asking your brother to lend me £25. I know that if you wish to do this you can do it. Your brother is a man worth £5,000, and surely it would be an act of common friendship only to accommodate me with this sum until the arrival of the amount of Caldecott's loan.

I shall know by your compliance with this request whether the absence of friends is a cooler for friendship or not.

I remain, with the greatest zeal for your interests, Your sincere friend,

[Addressed outside],
Mr. John Williams,
Tremadoc,
Carnarvon.

P. B. SHELLEY.

# 173. To Thomas Hookham (London)

[Cuffe Street, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin, March, 1813.]

MY DEAR SIR,

Harriet related to you the mysterious events which caused our departure from Tanyrallt. 1 Was at that time

<sup>1</sup> Harriet Shelley to Thomas Hookham 35 Cuffe Street, Stephen's Green, Dublin, March 11 [1813].

MY DEAR SIR,

We arrived here last Tuesday [March 9], after a most tedious passage of forty hours, during the whole of which time we were dreadfully ill. I am afraid no diet will prevent us from the common lot of suffering when obliged to take a sea voyage.

so nervous and unsettled as to be wholly incapable of the task. Do not, however, conceive that for one moment I lose the grateful recollection of your kindness and attention.

Mr. S. promised you a recital of the horrible events that caused us to leave Wales. I have undertaken the task, as I wish to spare him, in the present nervous state of his health, everything that can recall to his mind the horrors of that night, which I will relate.

On Friday night, the 26th of February, we retired to bed between ten and eleven o'clock. We had been in bed about half-an-hour, when Mr. S. heard a noise proceeding from one of the parlours. He immediately went downstairs with two pistols, which he had loaded that night, expecting to have occasion for them. He went into the billiard room, where he heard footsteps retreating; he followed into another little room, which was called an office. He there saw a man in the act of quitting the room through a glass window which opens into the shrubbery. The man fired at Mr. S., which he avoided. Bysshe then fired, but it flashed in the pan. The man then knocked Bysshe down, and they struggled on the ground. Bysshe then fired his second pistol, which he thought wounded him in the shoulder, as he uttered a shriek and got up, when he said these words: "By God, I will be revenged! I will murder his wife; I will ravish your sister! By God. I will be revenged!" He then fled—as we hoped for the night. Our servants were not gone to bed, but were just going, when this horrible affair happened. This was about eleven o'clock. We all assembled in the parlour, where we remained for two hours. Mr. S. then advised us to retire, thinking it impossible he would make a second attack. We left Bysshe and the manservant, who had only arrived that day, and who knew nothing of the house, to sit up. I had been in bed three hours when I heard a pistol go off. I immediately ran downstairs, when I perceived that Bysshe's flannel gown had been shot through, and the windowcurtain. Bysshe had sent Daniel to see what hour it was, when he heard a noise at the window. He went there, and a man thrust his arm through the glass and fired at him. Thank Heaven! the ball went through his gown and he remained unhurt, Mr. S. happened to stand sideways; had he stood fronting, the ball must have killed him. Bysshe fired his pistol, but it would not go off; he then aimed a blow at him with an old sword which we found in the house. The assassin attempted to get the sword from him, and just as he was pulling it away Dan rushed into the room, when he made his escape.

This was at four in the morning. It had been a most dreadful night; the wind was as loud as thunder, and the rain descended in torrents. Nothing has been heard of him; and we have every reason to believe it was no stranger, as there is a man of the name of Leeson, who the next morning that it happened went and told the shopkeepers of Tremadoc that it was a tale of Mr. Shelley's

I send you my poem. <sup>1</sup> To your remarks on its defects I shall listen and derive improvement. No duty of a friend is more imperious than an utter sincerity and unreservedness [in] criticisms, and none of which a candid mind can be the object with more inward complacency and satisfaction. At the same time, in spite of its various

to impose upon them, that he might leave the country without paying his bills. This they believed, and none of them attempted

to do anything towards his discovery.

We left Tanyrallt on Saturday, and stayed till everything was ready for our leaving the place, at the Solicitor-General of the county's house, who lived seven miles from us. This Mr. Leeson has been heard to say that he was determined to drive us out of the country. He once happened to get hold of a little pamphlet which Mr. S. had printed in Dublin; this he sent up to Government. (1) In fact, he was for ever saying something against us, and that because we were determined not to admit him to our house, because we had heard of his character; and from many acts of his we found that he was malignant and cruel to the greatest degree.

The pleasure that we experienced at reading your letter you may conceive at the same time when every one seemed to be plotting

against us.(2)

Pardon me if I wound your feelings by dwelling on this subject. Your conduct has made a deep impression on our minds, which no length of time can erase. Would that all mankind were like thee.

(3) Mr. Shelley and my sister unite with me in kind regards;

whilst I remain.

Yours truly,

H. SHELLEY.

- (1) See Shelley's letter to Williams and footnote, p. 388.
- (\*) This sentence and the signature is from Hogg's transcript.
- (\*) The paper is here clipped or torn, and the following words remain: "When thou whom we had . . . the horrible suspicion . . . from the task when called upon in a moment like that." Prof. Dowden's note. Hogg prints this sentence as "when those who a few weeks back, had been offering their services, shrunk from the task, when called upon in a moment like that." Hogg states that Harriet wrote to him from Tanyrallt an account of the catastrophe a day or two after it happened. To the best of his recollection, it was precisely similar word for word, indeed, to her letter to Hookham of March 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Queen Mab," which was printed without either the motto from Shakespeare or a preface.

errors, I am determined to give it to the world<sup>1</sup>.... If you do not dread the arm of the law, or any exasperation of public opinion against yourself, I wish that it should be printed and published immediately.

The notes are preparing, and shall be forwarded, before the completion of the printing of the poem. I have many other poems which shall also be sent. The notes will be long, philosophical, and anti-Christian. This will be unnoticed in a note.

Do not let the title-page be printed before the body of the poems. I have a motto to introduce from Shakespeare, and a preface.

I shall expect no success. Let only 250 copies be printed—a small neat quarto, on fine paper, and so as to catch the aristocrats. They will not read it, but their sons and daughters may.

All join in best feelings towards you.

Your faithful friend,

[P. B. SHELLEY.]

### 174. To John Williams

35 Cuff Street, Stephen's Green, Dublin, March 21, 1813.

MY DEAR WILLIAMS,

I have received your letter. Nothing less entered my mind than the accusing, or even in the slightest degree suspecting, you of treachery. The contents of my letter from Bangor is the amount of my charge against you. You, like all other men, are to a certain degree defective and inconsistent. True friendship bears to hear, and bears to tell, of faults.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Here, for the sake of Shelley's signature on the other side, an autograph hunter snipped out a piece of the letter: the words remain, "I shall know at what a loss . . . all my future literary worth . . . . cease the memory of its deficiencies." Professor Dowden's note.

Bedwell has written to tell me that all my bills are returned protested. I know not what to do. If Caldicott will advance £400, I must commission you to discharge the demands at Tremadoc against me: if he will not, I must be content that Leeson's lies should gain credit, and never return again.

Have you heard again from the mortgagees? Does Bedwell press on you for his debt? How go on your concerns?—Mine are in a bad state. I have no friends in Ireland who are not poorer than myself.

Enclosed is a—, which Ellen took as the price of a—. 1

There is a box of books directed to me at Carnarvon, which I am extremely anxious to receive. Could you see to forward it, and pay the duty—2d. per lb.? The other box I wish to be sent to the care of Mrs. Nanney.

Harriet and Eliza desire to be kindly remembered.

Your sincere friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
JOHN WILLIAMS, Esq.,
Tremadoc, Carnarvonshire.
North Wales.

### 175. To John Williams

35 Gt. Cuffe Street,
[Stephen's Green, Dublin],
March 30, 1813.

MY DEAR WILLIAMS,

I feel much obliged by your friendly exertion to procure the small sum I stand in need of, I did not desire the request as a test of your goodness, and if I said so, it was the dictate rather of our extreme distress than any doubt I entertained of you. I have received a very dictatorial and unpleasant letter from Mr. Bedwell, which I have answered in an unbending spirit. He is a friendly and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> [Letter torn.]

well-meaning man, but I must not be treated like a schoolboy. I told him in my letter that I pay friendship with friendship and money with money. The letter which you have sent me of Miss H[itchener]'s is the most artful production I ever read. It is suited to what she believes to (be) your character, and my supposed ignorance of But in truth she is a woman of desperate views and dreadful passions, but of cool and undeviating revenge. Her affected contempt of this feeling puts me in mind of the man who said "Damn my bones and blood if I ever swear, damn me if I do." Her artifice in one part of the letter is too palpable for success. She can assume the character of Christian or Infidel as it suits her purpose. I laughed heartily at her day of retributions, and at her idea of bringing you, me, and herself before a being whom a few months ago she was the first to deny. If you write to her you may tell her (but not from me) that her threat of confiscation and death savour so little of vengeance or intimidation that my heart is quite subdued by the bewitching benevolence of her intentions, but that I fear the government (tho' perhaps the weakest in the world) is not so miserably silly or wicked as to help the wiles of a soured and disappointed woman—with respect to her friendliness to Harriet in her answer to yours, of that you are the best judge and to that you will answer " with the fear of the Lord before your eyes."

Altho', my dear Williams, I am a very hardened sinner and without doubt shall be damned to all eternity, yet in this life I am ready to do anything for my country and my friends that will serve them, and among the rest for you,

Whose affectionate friend I continue to be,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Harriet and Eliza unite in kind remembrance. Perhaps it were as well to send this letter to Miss Hitchener. I am above all secrecy, and her threats are surely calculated rather to amuse than alarm any but little boys and girls

(Written by Harriet Shelley)

Do not send this letter to Miss H. and do not answer hers. 1

176. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

CORK HOTEL, DUBLIN,
March 31, 1813.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

We have just arrived in Dublin 2—had you remained here

<sup>1</sup> The following letter throws an interesting sidelight on the foregoing correspondence—

FROM CAPTAIN PILFOLD TO JOHN WILLIAMS

Nelson Hall, Lindfield, Sussex,

Jany. 6, 1814.

SIR.

There is an old proverb "Better late than never," I therefore take this opportunity to thank you for your letter of the 21 of Feby., 1813, in which you completely refuted Miss Hitchener's charge against Miss Westbrook and Mrs. Shelley of having offered you the least possible insult. Mr. Shelley is my nephew, and I need not tell you how difficult I found it, to reconcile Miss Hitchener's story with their known moral and virtuous good characters. My only having heard this story has given such offence that I have never heard from them since, Wishing you all possible health and happiness to enjoy their delightful company,

I am yours, etc.,

JOHN PILFOLD.

P.S. I was also pleased to find from your letter that Mr. Shelley had so honourably and on the first application discharged his debt to your brother, whom Miss H[itchener] did not describe as a poor man, but one to whom such a loss would be serious. Your expressions of gratitude towards Mr. and Mrs. Shelley for their great kindness towards you, does credit to you as a man of feeling.

Hogg's promised visit to Tanyrallt had been abandoned owing to the assault on Shelley at that place, and his flight to Ireland. As a compensation, Hogg was invited to Dublin, from whence several letters (since lost) were addressed to him, pressing him When Hogg arrived at 35 Cuffe Street, Dublin, he was to come. informed that Shelley, Harriet, Miss Westbrook, and the servant, probably Daniel Healey, had gone off to Killarney. After spending a week or ten days in Dublin, Hogg, vexed at this fruitless journey, returned in the Post Office Packet for Holyhead. (Hogg's "Shelley," Vol. II, p. 217 et seqq.) According to Hogg, Shelley had occupied a cottage on the lake at Killarney. This place made a deep and lasting impression on the poet, for in a letter to Peacock from Milan on April 20, 1818, Shelley says that "Lake" [Como] exceeds anything I ever beheld in beauty, with the exception of the Arbutus Islands of Killarney."

but one day, you would have seen us. We travelled night and day, from the receipt of your note. My Harriet insists on accompanying me. Her spirits, and the hope of seeing you here, supported her through two days and nights of hard travelling: 240 English miles.

You falsely supposed that her note was in answer to yours. We did not receive yours until Monday noon. On Monday evening we began travelling on Irish roads with Irish horses and chaise. We reached Cork at one the next day, took the mail, and to-day, Wednesday, at three o'clock arrived. We shall soon be with you in London; Eliza and our servant remain in Killarney. 1

You ought not to accuse me of reserve towards you. It is the inconceivable blindness and matter of fact stupidity of Lawless that deserve your reprehension; but had you staid one day longer, you would have heard the words of sincerity and friendship from my own lips. As soon as I shall consider the fatigue as overcome, I shall come to London. I must by some means raise money for the journey here, but I am not one to stick at difficulties.

Do not write to us here. We shall be on our way before your letter could arrive.

Harriet unites in kind remembrances.

Your very sincere friend,

PERCY B. S.

Harriet will write to-morrow.

### 177. To John Williams

[No date.]

DEAR SIR,

Will you have the goodness to call upon Mr. Wakeman at Carnarvon, to receive the sum of £2 0s. 0d. which he has to pay for a box of ours, but the box has been sent to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "At the end of March, 1813, Shelley and Harriet came from Killarney in great haste, leaving Miss Westbrook there, with a large library, but without money, that there might be no temptations to discontinue her studies."—Hogg's "Shelley," Vol. II, p. 389.

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Chester, therefore he is to pay you the money. I find the carrier has a little Bill against us. Will you pay him and send the box which he returns to London to Mr. Westbrook's, 23 Chapel Street. If it came to us at Grosvenor Square the Custom house London men would take it, as it contains gin.

To Mr. John Williams, Tremadoc, Carnarvonshire.

#### 178. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

Dublin, April 3, [? 1], 1813.

MY DEAR FRIEND.

I wrote yesterday before I had seen Lawless, under the one and only impression of disappointment at not meeting you here. That, however, shall speedily be remedied. I have raised a small sum of money, and to-morrow evening [April 2] we embark for Holyhead.

I have been very much pleased at what Lawless has said of you. The first ten words he spoke entirely dissipated all the ill-humour I had cherished against him. He had done what I could not conceive any one, who dined with you, could have neglected. He had been open with you.

Of course you will not write to us here. Above all do not send, or dream of procuring for us any money; we will do those matters well. The property of friends at least is in common. On Monday evening we shall be in London.

I write from Lawless's. I am very much pleased and flattered by his account of you.

Harriet is quite well. She writes to-day. My dear friend, all happiness attend you.

Yours affectionately,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

### VIII. LAST DAYS WITH HARRIET

April 5, 1813—April 14, 1814

SHELLEY'S Return to London—Negotiations with his Father—The Duke of Norfolk—The birth of his eldest child, Ianthe—John Frank Newton—Revisits the Lakes—At Edinburgh—"The Refutation of Deism"—At Bracknell—Mrs. Boinville and her Daughter—Italian Studies.

### 179. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

[23 Chapel Street, London, April 5, 1813.]
[No date.]

My DEAR FRIEND, 1

We have just arrived. We are now at 23 Chapel Street, but will see you, or write to-morrow morning.

Yours affectionately,

P. B. S.

To Thomas Jefferson Hogg 35 Great Cuffe Street, Dublin, May 3, 1813.

DEAR SIR.

I take the liberty of troubling you with these few lines to be informed by you how our good friends the Shelleys are, from whom I have heard but once since they left this country. I did flatter myself with a letter from my friend long before this, and now begin to apprehend some serious cause for his not writing. I hope no such cause has interposed, and if not, you will much oblige me by telling him how anxious both Mrs. Lawless and I are to hear from him and Mrs. Shelley. I suppose Miss Westbrook has long since arrived with you.

I remain,
Your very humble servant,
JOHN LAWLESS.

400

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> There was some anxiety on the part of Mr. Lawless at the Shelleys' sudden departure from Dublin, and not hearing from him for a month he at length wrote to Hogg for tidings of his friend. The following correspondence is printed by Hogg in his "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 259—

#### 180. To Timothy Shelley

Cooke's Hotel,
Albemarle Street, [London], 
May 4, 1813.

My DEAR FATHER,

I once more presume to address you to state to you my sincere desire of being considered worthy of a restoration to the intercourse with yourself and my family which I have forfeited by my follies. Some time since I stated my feelings on this subject in a letter to the Duke of

#### (First Indorsement)

#### TO HARRIET SHELLEY

SUNDAY MORNING.

DEAREST HARRIET,

I am very sorry that Bysshe is unwell. It is hard that his heart should be so good, and his head so bad: I wish you had as much influence over the latter as over the former. Mr. Lawless has had the goodness to send me the paper, on which I write. Bysshe will answer him. I met Mr. and Mrs. Newton, as I returned last night; they ordered me to tell you that they would take tea with you this evening. Adieu!

Yours truly, T. J. H[ogg.]

### (Second Indorsement)

To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

Bysshe is better now, and wishes for your company this evening, at eight o'clock, to meet the Newtons.

HARRIET.

¹ Hogg says (Vol. II, 389) that the Shelleys "remained a few days at a hotel in Dover Street, and then Harriet took lodgings in Half-Moon Street, accounting the situation fashionable; they stayed there several months, and then went to Pimlico to be near the B[oinville]s, which was esteemed very desirable; and there I think Ianthe was born. In August following Shelley came of age. There was a little projecting window in Half-Moon Street, in which Shelley might be seen from the street all day long, book in hand, with lively gestures and bright eyes; so that Mrs. N[ewton] said, he wanted only a pan of clear water and a fresh turf to look like some young lady's lark, hanging outside for air and song." I have not seen any letters of Shelley addressed from Half-Moon Street, or Pimlico; it seems possible that after he left the hotel he may have continued to use it as an address for letters.

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Norfolk. I was agreeably surprised by a visit from him the other day, and much regretted that illness prevented me from keeping my appointment with him on the succeeding morning. If, however, I could convince you of the change that has taken place in some of the most unfavourable traits of my character, and of my willingness to make any concessions that may be judged best for the interest of my family, I flatter myself that there would be little further need of his Grace's interference. I hope the time is approaching when we shall consider each other as father and son with more confidence than ever, and that I shall no longer be a cause of disunion to the happiness of my family. I was happy to hear from John Grove, who dined with us yesterday, that you continue in good health. My wife unites with me in respectful regards. 1

Cooke's Hotel, Albemarle Street, London, May 21 [1813].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

I find the longer a time elapses before I make my apology for not having written before, the more awkward I feel at the idea of addressing you. My greatest consolation, however, is derived from thisthat you will not attribute my silence to neglect, but to the hurry and bustle of a city. I am ashamed to say I have written to no one since I arrived here, if that can extenuate my crime. You would pardon me if you knew in what a state of confusion I live. a description of it is impossible. Even now there are two waiters in the room to lay our cloth for dinner, and you well know the movements of a waiter are far from silent. I have been in London a long time, though it seems to me that I have only been here a few days. Mr. Shelley's family are very eager to be reconciled to him. and I should not in the least wonder if my next letter was not sent from his Paternal roof, as we expect to be there in a week or two. His father has been in town, when, at the earnest solicitation of his cousin, Bysshe wrote to him. He has not yet answered the letter: but we expect it daily. Their conduct is most surprising, after treating us like dogs they wish for our Society. I hope it will turn out well, tho' I hardly dare suppose so. My sister has joined me some time. You may suppose I was not a little pleased to see her

¹ In the following letter to Catherine Nugent, Harriet alludes to Shelley's negotiations with his father for a reconciliation, and it would appear from Harriet's next letter (p. 406) that Shelley's mother and sisters wished him and Harriet to visit Field Place. Unhappily the terms of peace, laid down by his father, made this reconciliation impossible.

### 181. To Charles, Duke of Norfolk (Norfolk House)

Cooke's Hotel, Albemarle Street, [London], Friday Morning, [May 28, 1813].

My LORD DUKE,

I sincerely regret that any of your valuable time should have been occupied in the vain and impossible task of reconciling myself and my father. Allow me, however, to express my warmest gratitude for the interest you have so kindly taken in my concerns, which have thus unexpectedly terminated in disunion and disappointment.

I was prepared to make my father every reasonable concession, but I am not so degraded and miserable a slave as publicly to disavow an opinion which I believe to be true. Every man of common sense must plainly see that a sudden renunciation of sentiments seriously taken up is as unfortunate a test of intellectual uprightness as can possibly be devised. I take the liberty of enclosing my

again. We have not got our boxes yet that were sent from Cork to Bristol, and when we shall see them again is uncertain. Mr. Ryan dines with us to-day. I give him meat, but we have all taken to the vegetable regimen again, which I shall not leave off, for I find myself so much better for it, that it would be very great injustice to eat flesh again. Have you seen Mr. Lawless? He wrote to us from Prison a few weeks ago, but I do not suppose he was there, because Ryan knew nothing about it, and he is only just arrived from there. This is franked by La Touche, for I feel it is not worth postage. I hope to hear from you soon, tho' I feel I do not deserve it; but you are too kind to take any advantage over me. Mr. Shelley continues perfectly well, and his Poem of "Queen Mab" is begun [apparently, to be printed], tho' it must not be published under pain of death, because it is too much against every existing establishment. It is to be privately distributed to his friends, and some copies sent over to America. Do you [qy. know] any one that would wish for so dangerous a gift? If you do, tell me of them, and they shall not be forgotten. Adieu! All unite in kind regards to you, and I remain your sincerely attached friend,

H. SHELLEY.

Direct to this hotel.

[Addressed outside],
Mrs. Nugent,
No. 101 Grafton Street,
St. Stephen's Green, Dublin.

father's letter 1 for your Grace's inspection. I repeat what I have said from the commencement of this negociation, in which private communications from my father first induced me to engage, that I am willing to concede anything that is reasonable, anything that does not involve a compromise of that self-esteem without which life would be a burthen and a disgrace.

Permit me to repeat the unalterable recollection I cherisn of your kindness, and to remain,

My Lord Duke,

Your very faithful obt. Servt.,

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

# 182. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (London)

COOKE'S HOTEL [LONDON],
WEDNESDAY MORN. (June [3], 1813).

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Harriet writes in this. I only desire that I were always as anxious to confer on you all possible happiness, as she is.

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Shelley to P. B. Shelley Miller's Hotel [London],

26 May, 1813.

MY DEAR BOY,

I am sorry to find by the contents of your letter of yesterday that I was mistaken in the conclusion I drew from your former letter, in which you assured me a change had taken place in some of the most unfavourable Traits in your Character, as what regards your avow'd opinions are in my Judgment the most material parts of Character requiring amendment; and as you now avow there is no change effected in them, I must decline all further Communication, or any Personal Interview, until that shall be Effected, and I desire you will consider this as my final answer to anything you may have to offer.

If that Conclusion had not operated on my mind to give this answer, I desire you also to understand that I should not have received any Communication but through His Grace the Duke of Norfolk, as I know his exalted mind will protect me at the moment and with the World.

I beg to return all usual remembrance.

I am, Yr. Affecte. Father, T. Shelley. She tells you, that she invites you this evening. It will be better than our lonesome and melancholy interviews.

Your very affectionate,

P. B. SHELLEY.

I am very sure that Harriet will be as kind as ever. I could see, when I spoke to her (if my eyes were not blinded by love), that it was an error, not of the feelings, but of reason. I entreat you to come this evening. I send this by the servant, that there may be no delay.

## 183. TO THOMAS CHARLES MEDWIN (Horsham)

Cooke's Hotel, Albemarle Street, [London, Postmark], 16 June, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR.

It is some time since I have addressed you, but as our interests are interwoven in a certain degree by a community of disappointment, I shall do so now without ceremony.

I was desirous of seeing you on the subject of the approaching expiration of my minority, but hourly expecting Mrs. Shelley's confinement, I am not able to leave her for the present.

I wish to know whether at that epoch, you would object to see me through the difficulties with which I am surrounded.

You may depend on my grateful remembrance of what you have already done for me, and suffered on my account, whether you consent or refuse to add to the list of my obligations to you. The late negotiations between myself and my father have been abruptly broken off by the latter. This I do not regret, as his caprice and intolerance would not have suffered the wound to heal.

I know that I am heir to large property. How are the papers to be seen? Have you the least doubt but that I

am the safe heir to a large landed property? Have you any certain knowledge on the subject?

If you are coming to town soon, I should be most happy to see you; or, after Mrs. Shelley's confinement, I will visit you at Horsham.

Mrs. S. unites in her remembrances to all your family. Yours very sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

### 184. To Thomas Charles Medwin (Horsham)

Cooke's Hotel, Dover Street [London], June 21, 1813.1

MY DEAR SIR,

Mrs. Shelley's confinement may take place in one day,

Cooke's Hotel, Dover Street, Piccadilly, June 22nd, [1813].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

The kind expressions contained in your last letter gave me sincere pleasure, feeling as I did that I had not acted according to my ideas of right and wrong in delaying to write to you. I am sorry to hear that poor Lawless is confined [in prison]. If he had taken his friends' advice all his debts would have been settled long ago; but pride, that bane of all human happiness, unfortunately stepped in and marred all his good prospects. Mr. Ryan is still in London; but I expect to hear daily of his leaving us. Have you had any good weather, for ours is miserable? Our summer has not yet commenced. The fruit is still sour for want of sun, and will continue so from the present appearance of the weather. Our Irish servant [Daniel Healey] is going to leave us. Poor fellow, he pines after his dear Ireland, and is at the same time very ill. He was never of any use to us; but so great was his attachment that we could not bear to send him away. Mr. Shelley has broken off the negotiation, and will have no more to say to his son, because that son will not write to the people of Oxford, and declare his return to Christianity. Did you ever hear of such an old dotard? It seems that so long as he lives, Bysshe must never hope to see or hear anything of his family. This is certainly an unpleasant circumstance, particularly as his mother wishes to see him, and has a great affection for him. What think you of Bonaparte? To most of the Irish he is a great

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> On the day after Shelley wrote this letter, Harriet addressed the following to Catherine Nugent—

or not until six weeks. In this state of uncertainty, I would unwillingly leave town even for a few hours. I therefore should be happy to see you so soon as you could make a journey to town convenient. Depend upon it that no artifice of my father's shall seduce me to take a life interest in the estate. I feel with sufficient force, that I should not by such conduct be guilty alone of injustice to myself, but to those who have assisted me by kind offices and advice during my adversity.

Mrs. S. unites in best wishes to you and yours.

My dear Sir,

Your very obliged PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside], T. C. MEDWIN, Esq., Horsham, Sussex.

## 185. To Thomas Charles Medwin (Horsham)

Cooke's Hotel, Dover Street, [London],
June 28, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am happy to inform you that Mrs. Shelley has been

favourite. I only wish we had peace. So long a war as this has been is indeed too dreadful to continue much longer. How is your health? I am afraid you sit too close to your business [paper torn, word lost] to enjoy good health; yet, as the winter is gone, surely you need not make any more warm tippets! That will be time enough next November. We have not seen much of Godwin, for his wife is so dreadfully disagreeable that I could not bear the idea of seeing her. Mr. S. has done that away, tho', by telling G. that I could not bear the society of his darling wife. Poor man, we are not the only people who find her troublesome. Mr. S. joins me and Eliza in kind regards to you, and believe me yours with esteem,

[Addressed outside],
Mrs. NUGENT,
No. 101 Grafton Street,
St. Stephen's Green, Dublin.

.....

safely delivered of a little girl, and is now rapidly recovering.

I would not leave her in her present state, and therefore still consider your proposal of fixing the interview in London as most eligible.

I need not tell you that the sooner that I have the pleasure of seeing you, the sooner my mind, and that of my wife, will be relieved from a most unpleasant feeling of embarrassment and uncertainty. You may entirely confide in my secrecy and prudence.

I desire my very best remembrances to all yours, and remain,

My dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

[Addressed outside], T. C. MEDWIN, Esq., Horsham, Sussex. P. B. SHELLEY.

# 186. To Thomas Charles Medwin (Horsham)

Cooke's Hotel, Dover Street [London], July 6, 1813.

My dear Sir,

I shall be most happy to see you at six o'clock, to dinner, to-morrow. I think this plan is the best. Mrs. Shelley unites with me in best remembrances to all your family.

I remain,

Yours very faithfully,

[Addressed outside], T. C. MEDWIN, Esq., Horsham, Sussex. P. B. SHELLEY.

¹ Shelley's eldest child, born shortly before the date of this letter, was named Ianthe Elizabeth. Ianthe is the name of the lady in "Queen Mab," which also saw the light this year; the name of Elizabeth, was that of Shelley's favourite sister, and also of Harriet's sister. Professor Dowden prints some verses by Shelley, "To Ianthe, September, 1813" ("Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 376). Ianthe Shelley became Mrs. Esdaile, and died in June, 1876; her descendants are Shelley's only living representatives.

### 187. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

COOKE'S HOTEL, [LONDON],
FRIDAY [July 8, 1813].

MY DEAR FRIEND.

Medwin, the attorney of Horsham, stayed so late on the night of my promised visit, that I could not come. Last night your short note arrived, also beyond its hour, and the N[ewton]s<sup>1</sup> had already taken me with them. This night the N[ewton]s have a party at Vauxhall; if you will call here at *nine* o'clock we will go together.

What can your notes mean; how suspicious you have become. I will not insert one but. Leonora has arrived. Medwin dines with me. Harriet is quite well, and her infant better.

Your affectionate friend, P. B. Shelley.

### 188. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

HIGH ELMS, BRACKNELL,
July 27, 1813.

My DEAR FRIEND,

I was disappointed at being unable to call on you on Sunday morning [July 25]. My presence was required at home, but as I shall be in town in a few days, I expect

2 Does this relate to "Leonora," the novel so called, jointly produced by Shelley and Hogg while at Oxford? (See p. 18.)

¹ Shelley made the acquaintance of John Frank Newton, (author of "The Return to Nature, or a Defence of the Vegetable Regimen," 1811) through the Godwins, when he visited London in October and November, 1812. Shelley made use of Newton's book in his vegetarian note to "Queen Mab," which was afterwards reprinted in 1813, as a separate pamphlet. At the Newtons' house in Chester Street, Shelley was admitted to a circle of very charming people, among whom were Mrs. Boinville (sister to Mrs. Newton), and her daughter Cornelia, who afterwards became Mrs. Turner. When the Shelleys took a furnished house at Bracknell and Mrs. Boinville went to live in the same village, the intimacy of the two families continued.

still to have the pleasure of seeing you before your journey to the North.

Tell me when you depart from London. I am anxious to see you, or if I cannot, to write to you at greater length. It is far more probable that we shall remain here until the Spring.

I know you will be happy even to receive these few lines, and therefore I do not wait until to-morrow, when I should write a longer letter.

Your very affectionate Friend,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

#### HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

HIGH ELMS HOUSE, BRACKNELL, BERKSHIRE, August 8 [1813].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

I confess I have been guilty of seeming unkindness in not writing before; but such a multiplicity of business has occupied me ever since the receipt of your last that I have not had a moment to spare, even to you, my good friend. The babe is quite well, and very much grown. She is indebted to you for many kind enquiries, which one day she will thank you for in person. Mr. S. is of age, but no longer heir to the immense property of his sires. They are trying to take it away, and will I am afraid succeed, as it appears there is a flaw in the drawing up of the settlement, by which they can deprive him of everything. This is a beautiful idea, and well worthy the noble men who have formed it, among whom I suspect a certain great personage. They have put it into Chancery, though I fancy it can and will be kept an entire secret. You may suppose that we will do everything to prevent this shameful abuse of property, as we are convinced that more good would be effected if we have it, than if they regain it. We are now in a house 30 miles from London, merely for convenience. How long we remain is uncertain, as I fear our necessities will oblige us to remove to a greater distance. Our friends the Newtons are trying to do everything in their power to serve us; but our doom is decided. You who know us may well judge of our feelings. To have all our plans set aside in this manner is a miserable thing. Not that I regret the loss, but for the sake of those I intended to benefit. Mr. S. unites with me and Eliza in kind regards, whilst believe me your firmly attached friend,

H. S.

#### HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

HIGH ELMS HOUSE, BRACKNELL, BERKS, Sep. 10 [1813].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

I hasten to answer your last letter and to give you the same hopes which we entertain about the subject of my last. Mr. Shelley has seen his father and told him of what he heard, which he denied, and received him very kindly. Since then his lawyer has employed a council (sic). His opinion is at present tending (sic). I have no doubt now, tho' I had at first, that they can take it away. I have a very bad opinion of all lawyers in general, and I rather think Mr. S.'s lawyer was either told so by someone, or he thought it necessary to employ a councel. They are forever playing a losing game into each other's hands. I am very sorry to hear you have been so ill. I hope sincerely you will soon recover, and do not, I pray you, sit so close to your business; for it is not one that contributes to the happiness of the many, only the few, who ought not, in my opinion, to indulge in such useless luxuries at the expense of so many who are even now at a loss for food. Of late we have had many arguments concerning the respect that all men pay to property. Now what do you think of this affair? I wish much to know if your ideas on this subject correspond with ours! I will not tell you what they are yet as I have an excellent reason which you will acknowledge when you hear it. The post has just brought me a letter from Mr. Shelley's sister, who says that her father is doing all in his power to prevent his being arrested. I think even his family pride must long to give way on the present occasion. [Paper torn] keeps everything a secret, but Mrs. Shelley tells her son everything she hears. I will write again soon and tell you everything that takes place. With every good wish for your happiness, in which we all unite, believe me most affectionately your friend,

H. SHELLEY.

We think of going to our favourite Nantgwillt, but not yet. You will certainly hear from me again at this house before we can go. Let me hear from you soon.

#### HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

[Low Wood Inn, Westmoreland], (1) Sunday, October 11 [1813].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

We are again among our dear mountains. One week has sufficed to perform a journey of more than 300 miles, with my sweet babe,

<sup>(1)</sup> In the autumn of 1813, Shelley's thoughts turned once more towards Wales, and by October he seems to have thought of revisiting the Lakes. The carriage which he procured some months before was called into service, and besides Harriet, her little daughter

who I am most thankful to say has received no injury from the journey. I am now staying at Low Wood Inn, which is close to the Lake of Winandermere in Westmoreland. We do not wish any one to know where we are. Therefore if any one should ask you I rely upon [your] friendship for not satisfying their curiosity. Have you seen Daniel? We were obliged to discharge him, for his conduct was so unprincipled that it was impossible to have him in our service any longer. Is Mr. Lawless out of prison yet? he not taken us in as he did, Bysshe would have done something for him; but his behaviour was altogether so dishonest that Mr. Shelley will not do anything for him at present. If he wished it he could not, for he is obliged to pay 3 for 1, which is so ruinous that he will only raise a sufficient [sum] to pay his debts. In November he is to see his father; but I do not expect they will settle anything, for Mr. S. will never give way to his son in the least. How has your health been since I heard from you last? I sincerely hope you are better, and that you will take care of yourself, I wish you could see my sweet babe. She is so fair, with such blue eyes, that the more I see her the more beautiful she looks. Some day, my dear friend, I hope you will come to England, and pay us a visit. When we get our dear Nantgwillt, then I may make sure of you. Mr. S. joins me and Eliza in kind regards to you, and may you ever be happy is the best and first wish of your sincere friend,

H. SHELLEY.

Direct your letter to me at Mrs. Calvert's, Greta Bank, Keswick, Cumberland.

#### HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

Edinburgh,

October 20 [1813].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

My last letter was written from the lakes of Cumberland, where we intended to stay till next Spring; but not finding any house that would suit us we came on to this far-famed city. A little more than two years has passed since I made my first visit here to be united to Mr. Shelley. To me they have been the happiest and longest years of my life. The rapid succession of events since that time make the two years appear unusually long. I think the regular method of measuring time is by the number of different ideas which a rapid succession of events naturally give rise to. When I look back to the time before I was married I seem to feel I have lived a

Ianthe, and Eliza Westbrook, Shelley persuaded his friend Peacock to accompany them. The party reached Warwick by October 6, and a few days later they reached Low Wood Inn. After visiting the Calverts and failing to obtain a house, they decided to push on to Edinburgh, where they arrived about the middle of October. I have drawn upon Professor Dowden's "Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 391-3, for the above note.

Tho' my age is but eighteen, yet I feel as if I was much Why are you so silent, my dear friend? I earnestly hope you are not ill. I am afraid it is nearly a month since I heard from you. I know well you would write oftener if you could. What is your employment on a Sunday? I think on those days you might snatch a few minutes to gratify my wishes. Do not direct your letter to me at Mrs. Calvert's; but to the post office in this city. We think of remaining here all this winter. Tho' by no means fond of cities, yet I wished to come here, for when we went to the lakes we found such a set of human beings living there that it took off all our desire of remaining among the mountains. This City is, I think, much the best. The people here are not so intolerant as they are in London. Literature stands on a higher footing here than anywhere else. My darling babe is quite well, and very much improved. Pray let me hear from you soon. Tell me if I can do anything for you. Mr. Shelley joins me and Eliza in kind regards to you, whilst I remain your affectionate friend,

H.S.

Do not tell anyone where we are.

#### HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

No. 36 Frederick Street, Edinburgh, [Postmark, "23 Nov., 1813."]

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

Your letter called forth the most lively feelings of regret. It is so long a time since I received a letter from you that I began to feel the greatest anxiety on your account. How much do I feel for your ill state of health. Tell me if I can be of any service to you. How are you situated with respect to personal comfort and attendance? Have you anyone by you who can sympathize with you? If you have not let me come and attend you. It is the office of a friend to soothe the languid moments of illness. The mind looks for sympathy more at such a time than when in perfect health. I am afraid Lawless has practised upon you, as he did upon us. Some time back he wrote to Mr. S. about Daniel, who lived with us, saying we had not treated him well. Now the truth is this—we were very fond of this man: he appeared so much attached to us, with so much honesty and simplicity, that we kept him tho' of no use whatever. For the whole time he stayed with us he never did anything. Afterwards he turned out very ungrateful, and behaved so insolent that we were obliged to turn him away. This is the man Lawless wrote about; but do not think I am offended at what you say of him, as I know it proceeds from the goodness of your heart, and I only wish the object were more deserving of your kind-There has been no conciliation between Mr. [S. and?] his Their opinions are so contrary, that I do not think there is the least chance of their being reconciled. His father is now ill with the gout; but there is no danger I suppose. If there was he would send for his son and be reconciled to him. I sincerely hope

this will find you better. You know what pleasure it would give me to render you any service. Therefore do not let a false opinion of justice keep you from applying to me in anything in which I can serve you. Mr. Shelley and Eliza join me in all good wishes for the recovery of your health, and believe me most firmly, your attached friend,

H. SHELLEY.

### 189. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

[36 Frederick Street], Edinburgh, <sup>1</sup>
Nov[ember] 26, 1813.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I have written to you several times since I received your letter at Bracknell. My letters were directed to you at Stopton in Durham, but I suppose that you had nothing particular to communicate in return—as, indeed, their contents were not of extraordinary importance.

I am happy to hear that you have returned to London, as I shall shortly have the pleasure of seeing you again. I shall return to London alone. My evenings will often be spent at the N[ewton]'s, where, I presume, you are no unfrequent visitor.

Your novel is now printed.<sup>2</sup> I need not assure you with what pleasure this extraordinary and animated tale is perused by me. Every one to whom I have shown it

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Professor Dowden says that the Shelleys reached Edinburgh by mid October, or a little later. They stayed at 36 Frederick Street.

<sup>\*</sup> Hogg's novel, "Memoirs / of / Prince Alexy. Haimatoff. / Translated from / the original Latin MSS. / under the inspection of / the Prince, / By / John Brown, Esq. / London: / Printed for T. Hookham, / 15 Old Bond Street, / 1813." pp. 236, 12 mo., published Nov. 8, 1813. Although a copy of this rare little book was secured by the British Museum in 1878, Professor Dowden was the first to identify it as Hogg's, and he made known the discovery in his article, "Some Early Writings of Shelley," published in the Contemporary Review, Sept., 1884, when he also drew attention to the fact that Shelley had reviewed the book in the Critical Review for December, 1814. Shelley's review, and a part of Professor Dowden's article, were issued together in 1886 as one of the Shelley Society's publications under the editorship of Mr. Thomas J. Wise.

agrees with me in admitting that it bears indisputable marks of a singular and original genius. Write more like this. Delight us again with a character so natural and energetic as Alexy—vary again the scene with an uncommon combination of the most natural and simple circumstances: but do not persevere in writing after you grow weary of your toil; "aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus;" and the swans and the Eleutherarchs are proofs that you were a little sleepy.

I have for some time given myself to study. I have read "Tacitus," many of Cicero's philosophical works (who is, in my estimation, one of the most admirable characters the world ever produced), and Homer's "Odyssey." I am now studying Laplace, "Systeme du Monde," and am determined not to relax until I have attained considerable proficiency in the physical sciences.

I have examined Hume's reasonings with respect to the non-existence of external things, and, I confess, they appear to me to follow from the doctrines of Locke. What am I to think of a philosophy which conducts to such a conclusion?—Sed hæc hactenus.

A new acquaintance is on a visit with us this winter. He is a very mild, agreeable man, and a good scholar. His enthusiasm is not very ardent, nor his views very comprehensive: but he is neither superstitious, ill-tempered, dogmatical, or proud.

I have translated the two Essays of Plutarch,  $\pi\epsilon\rho i$   $\sigma a\rho\kappa o\phi a\gamma ias$ , which we read together. They are very excellent. I intend to comment upon them, and to reason in my preface concerning the Orphic and Pythagoric system of diet. Adieu! Believe me to be ever sincerely attached to you. My dear friend,

I am yours affectionately,

P. B. SHELLEY.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Thomas Love Peacock.

Shelley apparently is here referring to his work, "/A / Refutation / of / Deism: / in / a Dialogue. / ■TNETOIN / London: /

190. To —

EDINBURGH. 28 Nov[ember, 1813.]

## (Fragment)

. . . I have been compelled since I last wrote yesterday, to draw upon you for £30 for short date. I have to request that you would not return it, as the consequences would be, our being driven out of our lodgings. As the emergency is very pressing I doubted not but that I might depend upon your friendly assistance until the raising of £5,000

#### 191. To Timothy Shelley

BRACKNELL,

March 13, 1814.

I lament to inform you that the posture of my affairs is so critical that I can no longer delay to raise money by the sale of post-obit bonds to a considerable amount. I trust

Printed by Schulze and Dean, / 13 Poland Street, / 1813," / where he quotes from Plutarch's essay on eating flesh. There is no reference to the subject in the short preface. Professor Dowden has had the good fortune to come across two copies of this exceedingly rare book, one of which he purchased for the British Museum. This copy was formerly the property of Thomas Hookham, and it bears his name on the fly leaf. Mr. Buxton Forman states in his "Shelley Library" that an extract from this work was printed in The Model Republic for Feb., 1843. I am informed by my friend, Mr. John A. Hookham, that his cousin, Thomas Hookham, a son of Shelley's friend, was a contributor to the Model Republic at about this date, and although I do not know of what his contributions consisted, it is not unlikely that he may have sent in the extract from his father's copy of "a Refutation of Deism," which was printed in that periodical.

<sup>1</sup> In his negotiations with the money lenders Shelley probably realised how important it was that the validity of his marriage as a minor in Edinburgh should not be questioned. Perhaps he remembered that he had only partially fulfilled the conditions of the Scottish marriage laws. On March 22nd Shelley and Godwin went to Doctor's Commons to obtain a licence, and on March 24, Shelley and Harriet were married at St. George's, Hanover Square, by Edward Williams, curate, in the presence of Harriet's father,

Mr, John Westbrook, and another witness.

that the many expedients which I have employed to avoid this ruinous measure will testify the reluctance with which my necessities compel me at length to have recourse to it. I need not urge the vast sacrifices which money-lenders require, nor press upon your attention that I put it out of my power to unsettle the estate in any manner by conceding to their demands. Upon your good wishes and consoling assurances I rely with the most entire confidence. I know that you do not lack the will but only the power of doing everything which I could reasonably expect. But surely my grandfather must perceive that his hopes of preserving and perpetuating the integrity of the estate will be frustrated by neglecting to relieve my necessities; he knows that I have the power, which, however reluctantly, I shall be driven to exert, of dismembering the property should I survive himself and you. I do not take the liberty of frequently addressing you, but I hope the urgency of the occasion will be thought sufficient to excuse the present exercise of the licence you permitted.

### 192. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

BRACKNELL,

March 16, 1814.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I promised to write to you, when I was in the humour. Our intercourse has been too much interrupted for my consolation. My spirits have not sufficed to induce the exertion of determining me to write to you. My value, my affection for you, have sustained no diminution; but I am a feeble, wavering, feverish being, who requires support and consolation, which his energies are too exhausted to return.

I have been staying with Mrs. B[oinville] 1 for the last

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The following description of Mrs. Boinville is derived from Prof. Dowden's charming sketch of that lady in his "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 378 et seqq., to which the reader is referred. Harriet <sup>27</sup>—(2285)

month; I have escaped, in the society of all that philosophy and friendship combine, from the dismaying solitude of myself. They have revived in my heart the expiring flame of life. I have felt myself translated to a paradise, which has nothing of mortality, but its transitoriness; my heart sickens at the view of that necessity, which will quickly divide me from the delightful tranquillity of this happy home—for it has become my home. The trees, the bridge, the minutest objects, have already a place in my affections.

Boinville and her sister Cornelia, Mrs. Newton, were daughters of Mr. Collins, a cultured, liberal-minded and wealthy West Indian planter who resided in England. His house was visited by many of the constitutional emigrants from France, among whom was M. de Boinville, an émigré, formerly a fermier général, whose property had been confiscated by the revolutionary government. When M. de Boinville declared his love to Miss Collins, and her father objected to the match on the score of his poverty, she decided to elope with her lover to Gretna Green, where she was united to him by the blacksmith; the couple were afterwards married a second time according to the rites of the Church of England. Mrs. Boinville had an income of her own, on which she and her husband managed Their daughter Cornelia, born in 1795, afterwards became In 1812 M. de Boinville went to Russia with Napoleon and died during the retreat from Moscow in February, 1813, shortly after the death of his wife's father, Mr. Collins. The sorrow that had clouded the life of Mrs. Boinville had turned her hair quite white, but a certain youthful beauty of her face was still retained. In allusion to her appearance, Shelley named her Maimuna in recollection of the mysterious spinner in Southey's "Thalaba," for

"Her face was as a damsel's face, And yet her hair was gray."

In a letter from Bracknell to the cynical Hogg, dated March 11, 1814, Mrs. Boinville says in allusion to Shelley's visit: "I will not have you despise homespun pleasures. Shelley is making a trial of them with us, and likes them so well, that he is resolved to leave off rambling, and to begin a course of them himself. Seriously, I think his mind and body want rest. His journeys after what he has never found, have racked his purse and his tranquillity. He is resolved to take a little care of the former in pity to the latter, which I applaud, and shall second with all my might. He has deeply interested us. In the course of your intimacy he must have made you feel what we now feel for him. He is seeking a house close to us; and, if he succeeds, we shall have an additional motive to induce you to come among us in the summer."

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My friend, you are happier than I. You have the pleasures as well as the pains of sensibility. I have sunk into a premature old age of exhaustion, which renders me dead to everything, but the unenviable capacity of indulging the vanity of hope, and a terrible susceptibility to objects of disgust and hatred.

My temporal concerns are slowly rectifying themselves; I am astonished at my own indifference to their event. I live here like the insect that sports in a transient sunbeam, which the next cloud shall obscure for ever. I am much changed from what I was. I look with regret to our happy evenings at Oxford, and with wonder at the hopes which in the excess of my madness I there encouraged. Burns says, you know,

Pleasures are like poppies spread, You seize the flower—the bloom is fled; Or like the snow-falls in the river, A moment white—then lost for ever.

Eliza<sup>1</sup> is still with us—not here!—but will be with me when the infinite malice of destiny forces me to depart. I am now but little inclined to contest this point. I certainly hate her with all my heart and soul. It is a sight which awakens an inexpressible sensation of disgust and horror, to see her caress my poor little Ianthe, in whom I may hereafter find the consolation of sympathy. I sometimes feel faint with the fatigue of checking the overflowings of my unbounded abhorrence for this miserable wretch. But she is no more than a blind and loathsome worm, that cannot see to sting.

I have begun to learn Italian again. I am reading

A month later Eliza Westbrook took her final departure from the Shelley household. Mrs. Boinville again writing to Hogg from Bracknell, on April 18, 1814, says: "Mrs. N[ewton] is wonderfully recovered. Air and exercise, and friendly conversation, are just restoring her good looks. Shelley is again a widower; his beauteous half went to town on Thursday with Miss Westbrook, who is gone to live. I believe, at Southampton."

Beccaria, "Dei delitti e pene." His essay seems to contain some excellent remarks, though I do not think that it deserves the reputation it has gained. Cornelia assists me in this language. Did I not once tell you that I thought her cold and reserved? She is the reverse of this, as she is the reverse of everything bad. She inherits all the divinity of her mother.

What have you written? I have been unable even to write a common letter. I have forced myself to read "Beccaria" and Dumont's "Bentham." I have sometimes forgotten that I am not an inmate of this delightful home—that a time will come which will cast me again into the boundless ocean of abhorred society.

I have written nothing, but one stanza, which has no meaning, and that I have only written in thought:

Thy dewy looks sink in my breast;
Thy gentle words stir poison there;
Thou hast disturbed the only rest
That was the portion of despair!
Subdued to Duty's hard control,
I could have borne my wayward lot;
The chains that bind this ruined soul
Had cankered then—but crushed it not.

This is the vision of a delirious and distempered dream, which passes away at the cold clear light of morning. Its surpassing excellence and exquisite perfections have no more reality than the colour of an autumnal sunset. Adieu!

Believe me truly and affectionately yours, P. B. Shelley.

I hear that you often see the N[ewton]s. Present my kindest regards to Mrs. N[ewton]; remember me also to her husband, who, you know, has quarrelled with me, although I have not consented to quarrel with him.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Cesare Marchese de Beccaria (1735?-1794). The book which Shelley was reading (on Crimes and Punishments), is an argument against capital punishment and tortures, published in 1764, and was the outcome of Beccaria's studies of the French encyclopædists. The essay was received in France with enthusiasm, notably by Voltaire and Diderot, who published commentaries.

## 193. To John Williams

[April 14, 1814]

(Fragment)

DEAR WILLIAMS,

If I were not absent from London I would certainly see you. But I have gone to some distance.

It is perfectly impossible that I should meet the bill in September next. I have no prospect of getting money until my Grandfather's death. I should only decieve [sic] you, and increase your distress by signing such a bond.

I wish that you would call upon my Solicitor, Mr. Amory, 59 Old Bond Street, as I am unable to come to town. He would instruct you in the best possible security I can give you, and that you shall have. He is averse to my granting any post-obits. I am willing, however, to do so to three times the amount of the sum, therefore if this proposal pleases you, do not go to Mr. Amory.

JOHN WILLIAMS, Esq. [Endorsed, P. B. Shelley, Esq. April 14, 1814.]

193a. To JOHN WILLIAMS
(Tremadoc) .

15 OLD BOND STREET [LONDON],
May 14, 1814.

MY DEAR WILLIAMS,

I have just arrived in Town and find your letter. I earnestly entreated you to refer me to some person here, to whom I would give all that you wish on receiving a receipt in full of everything to which I stand bound. I now repeat this request, and beg you to appoint such a person with the least possible delay.

I sincerely sympathise in your distresses which are

increased by your own remissness, at least in this instance—I regret that I did not see you when in Town.

Yours faithfully,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside]
MR. JOHN WILLIAMS,
Ynys-y-Towyn,
Tremadoc, Carnarvonshire,
North Wales.

Eliza Westbrook, who had lived with the Shelleys during the whole of their married life, must be reckoned as an important factor in our consideration of Shelley's separation from Harriet. Had she left their house some months earlier, events might have ordered themselves differently. The intense loathing with which Shelley regarded his sister-in-law finds expressions in his letter to Hogg on March 16, 1814, and a month later she departed from the Shelley The cold and unsympathetic manner that Harriet assumed towards Shelley at this time may have been caused by his undisguised dislike of her beloved sister. "His violent antipathy," says Hogg, with regard to Shelley's aversion to Eliza Westbrook, "was probably not less unreasonable than his former excess of deference, and blind compliance and concession towards a person whose counsels and direction could never have been prudent, safe or judicious." At this most critical period Harriet foolishly allowed herself to be influenced by Eliza Westbrook, and she was probably acting under her advice when some months earlier she prevailed upon Shelley (whose affairs were extremely embarrassed) to provide her with a carriage, silver-plate and expensive clothes. The idea that she should care for such things was altogether repugnant to him, who had formerly said of Harriet that "the ease and simplicity of her habits" constituted in his eyes her greatest charm. After the birth of her first child (which she refused to suckle, notwithstanding Shelley's desire that she should do so), Harriet's manner underwent a change. "Her studies," Hogg tells us, "which had been so constant and exemplary, had dwindled away to nothing, and Bysshe had ceased to express any interest in them, and to urge her. as of old, to devote herself to the cultivation of her mind. I called upon her, she proposed a walk, if the weather was fine. instead of the vigorous and continuous readings of preceding years. The walk commonly conducted us to some fashionable bonnet-shop; the reading, it is not to be denied, was sometimes tiresome, the contemplation of bonnets was always so. When I called upon Bysshe, Harriet was often absent; she had gone out with Eliza. gone to her father's. Bysshe himself was sometimes in London, and sometimes at Bracknell, where he spent a good deal of his time in visiting certain friends [Mrs. Boinville and her daughter] with whom at this period he was in close alliance, and upon terms of the greatest intimacy, and by which connection his subsequent conduct. I think, was much influenced." ("Life of Shelley," Vol. II, pp. 500-1.)

According to Mrs. Boinville's letter to Hogg of April 18, 1814 ("Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 533), Shelley was then at Bracknell. Harriet had gone to town, presumably to her father's, and Eliza Westbrook had taken her departure. Although Harriet had now become cold and proud, Shelley still hoped to regain her love, and in some verses inscribed "To Harriet, 1814" (first printed in Professor Dowden's "Life of Shelley." Vol. I, p. 413), he makes a pathetic appeal for her affection. Whether Harriet was moved by this appeal or not, we do not know. She evidently never intended to alienate herself from Shelley, but she was living in Bath during the early days of July, while Shelley had remained in London since the end of May, excepting for a period of ten days from June 8th to the 18th. Shelley, however, still continued to correspond with Harriet, as is shown by the following letter which she addressed to Thomas Hookham on July 6 or 7, 1814, from 6 Queen's Square, Bath. "MY DEAR SIR,

"You will greatly oblige me by giving the enclosed to Mr. Shelley. I would not trouble you, but it is now four days since I have heard from him, which to me is an age. Will you write by return of post, and tell me what has become of him. If you tell me that he is well I shall not come to London; but if I do not hear from you or him, I shall certainly come, as I cannot endure this dreadful state of suspense. You are his friend, and you can feel for me.

"I remain yours truly,
"H. S."

Although Shelley's own pecuniary affairs in 1814 were most unsatisfactory, his admiration for Godwin was such that he engaged to help him out of his embarrassments by assisting him to raise a sum of money, said to be no less than three thousand pounds. This was the first of these negotiations on behalf of Godwin which continued to be such a source of trouble to Shelley almost till his last days. He had not been to Godwin's house since March 22 when he went with him to procure his marriage license. But it was now necessary for Shelley to be much in Godwin's company, and after he returned to London on July 18 he joined the Skinner Street household each day at dinner. It was during these days that Shelley first came into contact with Mary Godwin, who had just returned from Scotland on a visit to the Baxters. On June 8, the date of Lord Cochrane's trial, Hogg first saw Mary Godwin. Shelley in Cheapside, and walked with him through Newgate Street to Godwin's shop in Skinner Street. Shelley enquired for Godwin, who was not at home, and while he was waiting for the philosopher in his bookroom, "the door was partially and softly opened. A thrilling voice called 'Shelley!' A thrilling voice answered 'Mary!' And he darted out of the room, like an arrow from the bow of the far-shooting king. A very young female, fair and fair-headed, pale indeed, with a piercing look, wearing a frock of tartan, an unusual dress in London at the time, had called him out of the room. He was absent a very short time—a minute or two, and then returned. 'Godwin is out; there is no use in waiting.' So we continued our walk along Holborn. 'Who was that, pray?' I asked; 'a

daughter?' 'Yes.' 'A daughter of William Godwin?' 'The daughter of Godwin and Mary.'"

Suggestions have been made that Harriet was unfaithful to Shelley before their separation, and that she was in love with a Major Ryan who is mentioned in her correspondence with Miss Nugent. Apparently there is nothing to support this supposition; on the contrary, the evidence is entirely in her favour. Peacock, Hogg and Hookham, all of whom knew her intimately, believed her to be perfectly innocent of any guilt, and Thornton Hunt and Trelawny shared the same belief. On the other hand, Shelley is said to have been convinced to the contrary in July, 1814, and to have held this opinion to the day of his death. But if Shelley had not thought her guilty, the fact that he was certain she no longer loved him was sufficient in his sight to make it impossible for him to live with Harriet as her husband.

The convictions on the subject of marriage that he had expressed in "Queen Mab" in 1813 remained his convictions in 1814. He felt he was free to give his heart to Mary, with whom he was now deeply in love. Harriet did not realise that she had lost Shelley, and she came to London at his request on July 14, when Shelley disclosed to her his position. Peacock says "The separation did not take place by mutual consent. I cannot think that Shelley ever so represented it. He never did so to me: and the account which Harriet herself gave me of the entire proceeding was decidedly contradictory to any such supposition. He might well have said, after seeing Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, 'Ut vidi! ut perii!' Nothing that I ever read in tale or history could ever present a more striking image of a sudden, violent, irresistible, uncontrollable passion, than that under which I found him labouring when, at his request, I went up from the country to call on him in London. Between his old feelings towards Harriet, from whom he was not then separated, and his new passion for Mary, he showed in his looks, in his gestures, in his speech, the state of a mind, suffering, 'like a little Kingdom, the nature of an insurrection.' His eyes were bloodshot, his hair and dress disordered. He caught up a bottle of laudanum and said 'I never part from this.' He added 'I am always repeating your lines from Sophocles-

Man's happiest lot is not to be:
And when we tread life's thorny steep
Most blest are they, who earliest free
Descend to earth's eternal sleep.'

Again he said more calmly: 'Everyone who knows me must know that the partner of my life should be one who can feel poetry and understand philosophy. Harriet is a noble animal, but she can do neither.' I said, 'It always appeared to me that you were very fond of Harriet.' Without affirming or denying this, he answered: 'But you did not know how I hated her sister.'"—Fraser's Magazine, Jan., 1860.

In connection with this subject, an important letter—dated Nov. 20, 1814—should be consulted giving Harriet Shelley's version of the causes that led to her separation from Shelley. (See Appendix.)

#### IX FIRST VISIT TO THE CONTINENT

August 13, 1814—June 22, 1815

ELOPEMENT with Mary Godwin—Friendly Letter to Harriet—Continental Tour—Dark Days—Stolen Interviews—Letter from Mary—Isabel Baxter—The Sussex Farmer—The "Ancient Language"—Meeting in Gray's Inn Gardens—Death of Sir Bysshe Shelley—Shelley Refused Admission at Field Place—Receives Income of £1,000—Pays Income of £200 to Harriet—Tour in Devonshire.

#### 194. To HARRIET SHELLEY 1

TROYES, 120 miles from Paris on the way to SWITZERLAND, August 13, 1814.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I write to you from this detestable town; I write to show that I do not forget you; I write to urge you to come

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley eloped with Mary Godwin from London on July 28, 1814. She left her father's shop in Skinner Street, before five o'clock that morning, accompanied by Jane Clairmont (the second Mrs. Godwin's daughter by her first marriage), and a few steps brought them to the corner of Hatton Garden, where Shelley was waiting with a post chaise. It is said that Jane was unaware of Mary's intended elopement, until she was persuaded to enter the chaise; and that she accompanied the lovers because she knew how to speak French, and they did not. At Dartford they took four horses, so as to gain speed. Dover was reached by four o'clock in the afternoon, and by six a small boat had been engaged and was ready to take them to Calais, a journey which they were informed would only take them two hours. After a long, stormy, and somewhat perilous passage, Calais was reached the next morning Mrs. Godwin, who arrived at Calais shortly after the fugitives, had followed them down from London, and she endeavoured to persuade her daughter, Jane, to return with her, but without success. Shelley and these two young girls, in silk dresses, then resumed their journey. Passing through Boulogne and Abbeville, they reached Paris on August 2, and being detained there for some days for want of funds, they left again on August 8. Shelley purchased an ass to carry the luggage and Mary when she was tired, he and Jane intending to foot it to Switzerland. The ass proved useless and was sold, and a mule was purchased in its place. The journey then continued, but Shelley having sprained his ankle on August 12, was compelled

to Switzerland, where you will at last find one firm and constant friend, to whom your interests will be always dear—by whom your feelings will never wilfully be injured. From none can you expect this but me—all else are either unfeeling or selfish, or have beloved friends of their own, as Mrs. Boinville, to whom their attention and affection is confined.

The same night Troyes was reached, where the travellers found accommodation at a filthy inn, and where Shelley wrote the above letter to Harriet. Here the mule was sold and an open carriage was purchased for five napoleons, and an incompetent driver was engaged. A week later they were at Neuchatel inquiring in vain for letters. A small supply of money was obtained, and with it Shelley pressed on to the Lake of Lucerne, and took two rooms in a chateau at Brunnen at a guinea a month for six months. They did not, however, stay there more than 48 hours, having resolved to return home by water. Taking advantage of the Reuss and the Rhine they could reach England without travelling a league on land. This they made a brave attempt to do, travelling through Germany and Holland, although sometimes they found it necessary to take a land conveyance. Rotterdam was at length reached, and from that place they sailed on September 8, arriving in London on September 13, and three days later they had taken lodgings at 56 Margaret Street, Cavendish Square. Prof. Dowden says: "Shelley's relations with Harriet, though at times they wore a friendly appearance, could hardly be sound or happy at heart. From the Continent he had written to her as though each of the now-divided pair might be sincerely regardful of the other's interests; and, if we may trust Miss Clairmont, he had sent from Calais or Paris, through Harriet, directions to his bankers to honour her calls for money as far as his account permitted. On landing penniless from Rotterdam, Shelley drove to his bankers, and ascertained that all his money had been drawn. Failing elsewhere to procure the means of paying for his passage and the smaller charges of waterman and coachman, he applied, says Miss Clairmont, to Harriet, and not without success, although to the twenty pounds which she handed to him were added the reproaches of an injured wife." ("Life," Vol. I, 463-4.) Shelley and Mary kept a journal from the day of their union until Shelley's death. Some extracts from Mary's journal were afterwards published in 1817 together with a few of Shelley's letters belonging to the year 1816, and an account of his visit to the Continent for that year, etc., as "History of a Six Weeks' Tour, Through a part of France, Switzerland, Germany and Holland. . . ." Professor Dowden has given a charming account of this tour in his "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 439-460, with extracts from "Shelley's Journal"; the episode reads like a passage from Rousseau's "Confessions" Confessions."

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I will write at length from Neufchatel, or you direct your letters "d'étre laissé à la Bureau de Poste Neufchatel" -until you hear again. We have journeyed from Paris on foot, with a mule to carry our baggage; and Mary, who has not been sufficiently well to walk, fears the fatigue of walking. We passed through a fertile country, neither interesting from the character of its inhabitants nor the beauty of the scenery. We came 120 miles in four days; the last two days we passed over the country that was the seat of war. I cannot describe to you the frightful desolation of this scene; village after village entirely ruined and burned, the white ruins towering in innumerable forms of destruction among the beautiful trees. The inhabitants were famished; families once independent now beg their bread in this wretched country; no provisions; accommodation; filth, misery, and famine everywhere. (You will see nothing of this on your route to Geneva). I must remark to you that, dreadful as these calamities are, I can scarcely pity the inhabitants; they are the most unamiable, inhospitable, and unaccommodating of the human We go by some carriage from this town to Neufchatel, because I have strained my leg and am unable to walk. I hope to be recovered by that time; but on our last day's journey I was perfectly unable to walk. resigned the mule to me. Our walk has been, excepting this, sufficiently agreeable; we have met none of the robbers they prophesied at Paris. You shall hear our adventures more detailed if I do not hear at Neufchatel that I am soon to have the pleasure of communicating to you in person, and of welcoming you to some sweet retreat I will procure for you among the mountains. I have written to Peacock to superintend money affairs; he is expensive, inconsiderate, and cold, but surely not utterly perfidious and unfriendly and unmindful of our kindness to him; besides, interest will secure his attention to these things. I wish you to bring with you the two deeds which Tahourdin has to prepare for you, as also a copy of the settlement.

Do not part with any of your money. But what shall be done about the books? You can consult on the spot. With love to my sweet little Ianthe, ever most affectionately yours.

S.

I write in great haste; we depart directly.

## 195. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN [London,

MONDAY, October 24, 1814.]

Staples Inn is within the jurisdiction of Middlesex. You may meet me with perfect safety at Adams', No. 60 Fleet Street; I shall be in the shop precisely at twelve o'clock. This separation is a calamity not to be endured patiently; I cannot support your absence. I thought that it would be less painful to me; but I feel a solitariness and a desolation of heart where you have been accustomed to be. But, my beloved, this will not last; prudence and self-denial will discomfort our enemies. I shall meet you soon; be punctual. Bring the letters. 1

#### 196. To Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin

[London, Afternoon of Monday, October 24, 1814.]

I could not meet you at Adams'; I was unable to come

<sup>1</sup> The period between Shelley's return from France in September, 1814, and January, 1815, when the death of Sir Bysshe took place, was one of dire poverty and privation for Shelley and Mary. Prof. Dowden says that "the days of sorest trial, including those of severance [of Mary] from Shelley, lay between October 23rd and November 9th." On Saturday evening, October 22, a letter, addressed to Shelley, was handed into his lodgings in St. Pancras. The letter was from Fanny Godwin, who warned Shelley, it would seem, of some design against his personal liberty, in which directly or indirectly the Hookham brothers were believed to be concerned. The debt was apparently one of Harriet's, for which, of course, Shelley was responsible, and perhaps Hookham had informed the creditor-Chartres-of Shelley's address. He endeavoured to raise £50 for Chartres's debt; but apparently he did not succeed, for Harriet promised to raise the money herself. Shelley, however, had to leave the St. Pancras lodgings for fear of arrest for debt. (Dowden's "Shelley," Vol. I, 488-490.)

before one, and of course I missed you. My own beloved girl, we shall soon be restored to each other. The wretchedness of our separation I am convinced will endow me with eloquence and energies adequate to the peril. I am mournful and dejected now, but it is exquisite pleasure that I feel compared with the happiest moments of former times. Yes; a few days—perhaps a few hours—and the most inveterate of our enemies cannot deprive us of each other.

I have spent the day at Ballachy's [one of the "lawyers' holes."] I have been indefatigable in painting to him the horrid aspect of my affairs; he is indolent and listless, but not like the Hookhams—a cool villain. He sent for a friend of his, Mr. Watts, a stockbroker.

Mr. Watts is an old, somewhat benevolent-looking, bald-headed man. He said he would perhaps lend me £400; he will give his answer on Thursday [October 27]. He seemed touched by my misfortunes, and indignant at the treachery of the Hookhams. I have reason to think that, if he lends me this money on post-obit, I may place the action to the credit of human nature.

My imagination is confounded by the uniform prospect of the perfidity, wickedness, and hardheartedness of mankind.

Mary most amply redeems their blackest crimes! But I confess to you that I have been shocked and staggered by Godwin's cold injustice. The places where I have seen that man's fine countenance bring bitterness home to my heart to think of his cutting cruelty.

I care not for the Hookhams; I'll tear their hearts out by the roots, with irony and sarcasm, if I find that they have dared to lift a thought against me. But in my absence from you, light of my life, my very spirit of hope. I have at moments almost felt despair to think how cold and worldly Godwin has become.

When, when shall I meet you? I am at the London Coffee House. Write to me, but do not send a porter; send Peacock, or come yourself. Our exa approprior.

I send you the *Times* newspaper; see where I have marked with ink, and stifle your horror and indignation till we meet.<sup>1</sup>

I so passionately love my own Mary that we must not be absent long. Give my love to Jane. I think that she has a sincere affection for you.<sup>2</sup>

Εμον κριτεριον των αγαθων τοδε. 3

[LONDON, TUESDAY, October 25, 1814.]

For what a minute did I see you yesterday. Is this the way my beloved, we are to live till the 6th? In the morning when I wake I turn to look for you. Dearest Shelley, you are solitary and uncomfortable. Why cannot I be with you, to cheer you and press you to my heart? Ah! my love, you have no friends; why then should you be torn from the only one who has affection for you? But I shall see you to-night, and this is the hope that I shall live on through the day. Be happy, dear Shelley, and think of me! Why do I say this, dearest, and only one? I know how tenderly you love me, and how you repine at your absence from me. When shall we be free from fear of treachery? I send you the letter I told you of from Harriet, and a letter we received yesterday from Fanny (1); the history of this interview I will tell you when I come, but perhaps as it is so rainy a day Fanny will not be allowed to come at all. I was so dreadfully tired yesterday that I was obliged to take a coach home. Forgive this extravagance, but I am so very weak at present, and I had been so agitated through the day, that I was not able to stand; a morning's rest, however, will set me quite right again; I shall be well when I meet you this evening. Will you be at the door of the Coffee House at five o'clock, as it is disagreeable to go into such places? I shall be there exactly at that time, and we can go into St. Paul's, where we can sit down.

I send you "Diogenes," as you have no books.(\*) Hookham was so ill-tempered as not to send the book I asked for.

- \* "This is my test of people that are good."
- (1) This letter made appointments for a meeting between Fanny and Clara.
  - (2) Probably a translation of Wieland's "Diogenes."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The late Mr. W. J. Craig discovered in the *Times* for Saturday, October 22, 1814, a letter of over two columns on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, giving very dreadful pictures of the horrors of the slavers' caravans, chiefly drawn from Mungo Park's "Travels," a book from which Shelley read aloud to Mary in December, 1814.

From Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin to Shelley

## 197. To' Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin

[? Same day as last, October 25, 1814.]

I have written an extremely urgent letter to Harriet to induce her to send money. I have written also to Hookham, who did not call upon Peacock. I have told Harriet that I shall be at Pancras when her answer arrives. I shall see you to-night, my beloved Mary, fear not. have confidence in the fortunate issue of our distresses. am desolate and wretched in your absence; I feel disturbed and wild even to conceive that we should be separated. But this is most necessary, nor must we omit caution even on our unfrequent meetings. Recollect that I am lost if the people can have watched you to me. I wander restlessly about; I cannot read or even write; but this will soon pass. I should not inflict my own Mary with my dejection; she has sufficient cause for disturbance to need consolation from me. Well, we shall meet to-day. I cannot write, but I love you with so unalterable love that the contemplation of me will serve for a letter. see Hookham, do not insult him openly; I have still hopes. We must not resign an inch of hope. I will make this remorseless villain loathe his own flesh in good time; he shall be cut down in his season; his pride shall be trampled into atoms; I will wither up his selfish soul by piecemeal.

Σμερδυαισι γαμφηλαισι συριξων φονου.1

198. To Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin

[? THURSDAY MORNING, October 27, 1814.]

I write to tell you when you come to bring the £5 with

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Hissing forth murder with awful jaws." (Æschylus. "Prometheus" 355.)

you. Perhaps it were as well to bring the pistols to Davidson's. 1

All is yet confused and undecided. I write this at Ballachy's.

Do not on any account call at Peacock's or write to him again. I will explain at three o'clock.

I am full of business and of hopes.

Watch if you are followed.

My dearest, best Mary, let me see your sweet eyes full of happiness when we meet; all will be well. I hope to have deserved many kisses.<sup>2</sup>

#### 199. To Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin

[NIGHT of October 27, 1814.]

Oh! my dearest love, why are our pleasures so short and so interrupted? How long is this to last?

Know you, my best Mary, that I feel myself, in your absence, almost degraded to the level of the vulgar and impure. I feel their vacant, stiff eyeballs fixed upon me, until I seem to have been infected with their loathsome meaning—to inhale a sickness that subdues me to languor. Oh! those redeeming eyes of Mary, that they might beam upon me before I sleep! Praise my forbearance—oh! beloved one—that I do not rashly fly to you, and at least

#### \* MARY TO SHELLEY.

[THURSDAY MORNING, October 27, 1814, in reply to the last.] My own Love,

I do not know by what compulsion I am to answer you, but your porter says I must; so I do.

By a miracle I saved your £5 and I will bring it. I hope, indeed, oh my loved Shelley, we shall indeed be happy.

I meet you at three and bring heaps of Skinner Street news. Heaven bless my love and take care of him.

HIS OWN MARY.

¹ Shelley had parted with his solar microscope for £5 to Davidson, a pawnbroker, of Skinner Street.

secure a moment's bliss. Wherefore should I delay; do you not long to meet me? All that is exalted and buoyant in my nature urges me towards you, reproaches me with the cold delay, laughs at all fear and spurns to dream of prudence. Why am I not with you?

Alas! we must not meet.

I have written a long letter to Jane, though in no mood for writing; I have directed it in a feigned hand to surprise her.

I did not, for I could not, express to you my admiration of your letter to Fanny; the simple and impressive language in which you clothed your argument, the full weight you gave to every part, the complete picture you exhibited of what you intended to describe, was more than I expected.

How hard and stubborn must be the spirit that does not confess you to be the subtlest and most exquisitely fashioned intelligence; that among women there is no equal mind to yours! And I possess this treasure! How beyond all estimate is my felicity! Yes; I am encouraged—I care not what happens; I am most happy.

Meet me to-morrow at three o'clock in St. Paul's, if you do not hear before.

Adieu; remember love at vespers before sleep. I do not omit my prayers.

### 200. To Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin

[FRIDAY NIGHT, October 28, 1814.]

My beloved Mary, I know not whether these transient meetings produce not as much pain as pleasure. What have I said? I do not mean it. I will not forget the sweet moments when I saw your eyes—the divine rapture of the few and fleeting kisses. Yet, indeed, this must cease; indeed we must not part thus wretchedly to meet

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amid the comfortless tumult of business; to part, I know not how.

Well, dearest love, to-morrow—to-morrow night. That eternal clock! oh, that I could "fright the steeds of lazy-paced Time!" I do not think that I am less impatient now than formerly to re-possess—to entirely engross—my own treasured love. It seems so unworthy a cause for the slightest separation. I could reconcile it to my own feelings to go to prison if they would cease to persecute us with interruptions. Would it not be better, my heavenly love, to creep into the loathliest cave so that we might be together?

Mary, love, we must be re-united. I will not part from you again after Saturday night. We must devise some I must return. Your thoughts alone can waken mine to energy; my mind, without yours, is dead and cold as the dark midnight river when the moon is down. It seems as if you alone could shield me from impurity and vice. If I were absent from you long, I should shudder with horror at myself; my understanding becomes undisciplined without you. I believe I must become in Mary's hands, what Harriet was in mine. Yet how differently disposed—how devoted and affectionate—how, beyond measure, reverencing and adoring the intelligence that governs me! I repent me of this simile; it is unjust; it is false. Nor do I mean that I consider you much my superior, evidently as you surpass me in originality and simplicity of mind. How divinely sweet a task it is to imitate each others' excellences, and each moment to become wiser in this surpassing love, so that, constituting but one being, all real knowledge may be comprised with the maxim γνωθι σεαυτον (know thyself), with infinitely more justice than its narrow and common application!

I enclose you Hookham's note; what do you think of it?

My head aches; I am not well; I am tired with this comfortless estrangement from all that is dear to me.

My own dearest love, good-night.

I meet you at Staples Inn at twelve to-morrow—half an hour before twelve.

I have written to Hooper and Sir J. Shelley. 1

#### 201. To Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin

[WEDNESDAY MORNING, November 2, 1814.]

MY BELOVED GIRL,

I think it dangerous that you should see me to-day, or at least until evening. I suspect that your or Jane's coming here might afford an occasion of discovery against which it would be impossible to provide by any foresight. I consent to resign this exquisite pleasure only because it is so clearly apparent to me that the most horrid consequences might ensue. I think that you had better continue to send to the Hookham's in the course of the day to learn

## <sup>1</sup> Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin to Shelley (A fragment)

[FRIDAY NIGHT,

Oct. 28, 1814.]

So this is the end of my letter, dearest love. What do they mean? (1) I detest Mrs. Godwin; she plagues my father out of his life; and these — Well, no matter. Why will Godwin not follow the obvious bent of his affections, and be reconciled to us? No; his prejudices, the world, and she—do you not hate her my love?—all these forbid it. What am I to do?—trust to time, of course, for what else can I do? Good-night, my love; to-morrow I will seal this blessing on your lips. Dear, good creature, press me to you, and hug your own Mary to your heart. Perhaps she will one day have a father: till then be everything to me, love, and, indeed, I will be a good girl and never vex you. I will learn Greek, and-but when shall we meet when I may tell you all this, and you will so sweetly reward me? Oh! we must meet soon, for this is a dreary life. I am weary of it: a poor widowed deserted thing, no one cares for her; but ah, love, is not that enough? I have a very sincere affection for my Shelley. But good night; I am wofully tired and sleepy. Sleeping I shall dream of you, ten to one, when you, naughty one, have quite forgotten me. Take me—one kiss—well, that is enough.

(1) Referring to Mrs. Godwin's letter. Note by Professor Dowden.

the course of Mrs. Stewart's affair. 1 It is this, of course, which I dread. How lonely and desolate are these solitary nights! This wretched and comfortless waking I cannot contemplate without a feeling that approaches to despair! How terrible if month after month I should pass without you, or only to see you by snatches or moments! All now depends on avoiding Mrs. Stewart. I shall not remain at Peacock's—I will not incur the risk. A few days—perhaps a few hours—will terminate our difficulties. Love me, my dearest, best Mary, love me in confidence and security; do not think of me as one in danger, or even in sorrow. The remembrance and expectation of such sweet moments as we experienced last night consoles, strengthens, and redeems me from despondency; there is eternity in these moments; they contain the true elixir of immortal life. My best love, adieu. 2

[Addressed], MARY.

The following is Mary's reply:

<sup>2</sup> [Thursday Night, November 3, 1814.]

DEAREST LOVE,—I am so out of spirits; I feel so lonely; but we shall meet to-morrow; so I will try to be happy. Gray's Inn Gardens is, I fear, a dangerous place; yet can you think of no other? I received your letter to-night. I wanted one, for I had not received one for nearly two days; but do not think I mean anything by this, my love (1). I know you took a long, long walk yesterday, and so you could not write; but I, who am at home, who do not walk out, I could write to you all day, love. Another circumstance has made me feel more solitary—that letter I received to-day.(2) Dear Shelley,

(1) Shelley's letter of Wednesday morning, directed "Mary," had been delivered early by hand. Note by Professor Dowden.

(2) A letter bringing to a close Mary's relations with her girl-friend in Dundee, Isabel Baxter. The letter was written by Mr. David Booth, a man remarkable for his talents and force of character, of whom we shall hear again. Miss Isabel Baxter was engaged to be married (if she was not already married) to Mr. Booth. Journal, November 3: "Received a letter from Mr. Booth; so all my hopes are over then. Ah! Isabel, I did not think you would act thus." Note by Professor Dowden.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mrs. Stewart was one of the creditors. Note by Professor Dowden.

### 202. To Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin

THURSDAY EVENING [November 3, 1814.]

I received both your letters this evening, they were apparently written at different times. The post is too uncertain and dilatory to be endured.

The threatened arrest of Godwin on Thursday I have not

you will say I was deceived; I know I am not. I know her unexampled frankness and sweetness of character; but what must that character be who resists opinions preach—Oh dear! what am I writing? I am indeed disappointed. I did think Isabel perfectly unprejudiced. She adores the shade of my mother. But then a married man. It is impossible to knock into some people's heads that Harriet is selfish and unfeeling, and that my father might be happy if he chose. By that cant of selling his daughter I should half suspect that there has been some communication between the Skinner Street folks and them. Heigho, love, such is the world. How you philosophize and reason about love! Do you know, if I had been asked I could not have given one reason in its favour, yet I have as great opinion as you concerning its exaltedness; and love very tenderly, to prove my theory. Adieu for the present; it has struck eight, and in an hour or two I will wish you good-night. Well, so now I am to write a good-night, with the old story of "I wish I could say it to you." Yes, my love, it has indeed become an old story, but I hope the last chapter is come. I shall meet you to-morrow, love; if you do but get money, and indeed you must, we will defy our enemies and our friends (for aught I see they are all as bad as one another), and we shall not part again. Is not that a delightful word? It shall cheer my dreams.

Oh! how I long to be at our dear home, where nothing can trouble us, neither friends nor enemies! Don't be angry at this love, for you know that they are all a bad set; but Nantgwillt—do you not wish to be settled there, in a house you know, love, with your own Mary—nothing to disturb you, studying, walking? Oh! it is much better, believe me, not to be able to see the light of the sun for the mountains than for houses.

You do not say a word in your letter, you naughty love, to ease one of my anxieties—not a word of Lambert, of Harriet, of Mrs. Stewart, of money, or anything—but all the reasonings you used to persuade Mr. Peacock love was a good thing. Now you know I did not want converting; but my love, do not be displeased at my chattering in this way, for you know that the expectation of a letter from you when absent always makes my heart jump, so do you think it says nothing when one actually arrives?

Your own Mary, who loves you so tenderly.

heard of before this moment. So soon as I have finished this letter I shall seek for Lambert 1; if my interference would ever have been effectual, it may still be so, as I learn that three days are always allowed before any proceeding is commenced. I should have delayed writing until after this visit, if I did not fear to lose the eight-o'clock delivery. I have seen the Farmer<sup>2</sup>; he requires that some responsible person should guarantee the payment of the money. I shall offer Hookham an indemnity to perform this piece of service. I suspect that these are very powerful persuasive reasons that will assist my plea. Of course I have yet heard no more of Ballachy. I am full of confidence and hope on this affair; I hardly doubt the event. Unless I were thus fully confident, I would not venture to excite your expectations. But to-morrow at three—at three you will meet me at Gray's Inn Gardens, and the result will then be known!

My beloved Mary, do I not love you? Is not your image the only consolation to my lonely and benighted condition? Do I not love you with a most unextinguishable love? a feeling that well compensates for the altered looks of those who love none but themselves. What sentiment but disgust and indignation is excited by the desertion of those who fly because they think constancy imprudent!

The feeling is sweet, most ennobling, and producing a celestial balm, with which the sick and weary spirit reposes upon one who may not be doubted; to whom the slightest taint of suspicion is death—irrevocable annihilation. To-morrow, blest creature, I shall clasp you again—for ever. Shall it be so? This is the ancient language, that love alone can translate. Best, dearest, adieu—one kiss.

I have most hopes of the Sussex Farmer.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Godwin's creditor.

A Sussex farmer, from whom Shelley hoped for a loan. Prof. Dowden's Note.

## 203. To Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin

[FRIDAY, Nov. 4, 1814.]

So my beloved boasts that she is more perfect in the practice than I in the theory of love. Is it thus? No, sweet Mary, you only meant that you loved me more than you could express; that reasoning was too cold and slow for the rapid fervour of your conceptions. Perhaps, in truth, Peacock had infected me; my disquisitions were cold—my subtleties unmeaningly refined; and I am a harp responsive to every wind—the scented gale of summer can wake it to sweet melody, but rough cold blasts draw forth discordances and jarring sounds.

My own love, did I not appear happy to-day? For a few moments I was entranced in most delicious pleasure; yet I was absent and dejected. I knew not when we might meet again, when I might hold you in my arms, and gaze on your dear eyes at will, and snatch momentary kisses in the midst of one happy hour, and sport in security with my entire and unbroken bliss. I was about to returnwhither? oh! I knew not, nor was it matter for concern -from you, from our delightful peace to the simple expectation of felicity. I shall be happy is not so divine as I am. "To be content to let 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would," like the poor cat i' the adage," to those who love is feverish agitation and sickening disquietude; and my poor Mary that loves me with such tenderness and truth—is her loneliness no pain to me? But to-morrow night at half-past twelve !2

I called on Lambert at five, when we parted; he was absent from town; I am to meet him to-morrow morning.

\* The second Saturday night, when the bailiffs lost their power for twenty-four hours.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mary and Clara had met Shelley in Gray's Inn Gardens. Clara was perhaps in the way, for she enters in her journal, "I am much disappointed in Shelley to-day. I thought him uniformly kind and considerate, but I find him act as weakly as other people."

I called on Pike; he proposes £12,000 ready money for the reversion of Goring Castle. Before I conclude anything it shall be fairly valued. I should think myself fortunate to get this price, although the expense of the building was so immense.

Hookham has been with me. I do not despair of arranging something with Charles, 1 so that £100 may be placed at my disposal. Hookham is to meet me with Charles on 'Change to-morrow. I shall previously have disposed of Ballachy to my purpose, and entertain some confidence of success.<sup>2</sup> H. seems interested in the affair. will go to the London Coffee House to-morrow and call for my letters. I hope to hear from Sir John [Shelley-Sidney.] Mrs. Stewart's affair, which I have most of all at heart that relentless enemy of all comfort—remains as it did. H. urges Tahourdin to complete it; but she will not be present. I expect to hear from Hooper to-morrow. it is my letters are full of money, whilst my being overflows with unbounded love and elevated thoughts. How little philosophy and affection consort with this turbid scene this dark scheme of things finishing in unfruitful death! There are moments in your absence, my love, when the bitterness with which I regret the unrecoverable time wasted in unprofitable solitude and worldly cares is a most painful weight; you alone reconcile me to myself and to my beloved hopes.

Good-night my excellent love, my own Mary.

### 204. To Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin

1814. [Date uncertain.\*]

Meet me at one and not at three, at St. Paul's. I will be

\* I find it difficult to assign this letter to November 7 or 8, yet it is more difficult to place it elsewhere. Note by Proj. Dowden.

I Charles Clairmont, a son of Mrs. Godwin by her first husband.
The journal tells us (October 31) of Ballachy's "rascally proposition for £300 a year till his [Shelley's] father's death for £15,000 of post-obit."

there at one. Your "good-night," my own love, came most welcome. I did not forget to kiss you ειδωλου Κευου before I slept, and I slept last night, thanks to your sweet "good-night." I think we had better immediately get other lodgings, as now all danger but from Mrs. Stewart is over. What think you of Pimlico or Sloane Street? Talk of this with Jane before you come.

#### 205. To Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin

[Tuesday, Nov. 8, 1814.]

Call on me at four o'clock.

I have heard nothing. I have sent to Hookham; his answer is that he will call in the course of the day.

I shall now go out and seek lodgings; I shall not decide on them until I have Hookham's answer.

I saw Hogg last night; I am disappointed in him, though my expectations were very moderate.

I cannot write.

My dearest, best love, only one day more, and we meet. Your affection is my only and sufficient consolation. I find that I have no personal interest in any human being but you, and you I love with my whole nature.

#### 206. To Mr. HAYWARD

13 Arabella Road,
Pimlico, [London],
April 7, 1815.1

DEAR SIR,

I wish you would as soon as convenient inform me of the terms on which the security granted to Mr. Billing would be cancelled. It is important to me that you should allow no further delay to take place in this communication.

¹ On Jan. 6, 1815, Sir Bysshe Shelley died, and his son Timothy, Shelley's father, succeeded to the baronetcy. Shelley went to Field Place, but by his father's orders he was refused admittance. By June Sir Timothy agreed to an arrangement by which Shelley was to receive an income of £1,000 a year. He at once sent Harriet

I think the lease of the House ought to be advertised for auction without delay.

Your obliged, etc., servant, P. B. Shelley

### 207. To John Williams

At Mrs. Wadling's,
Torquay, Devonshire,
June 22, 1815.

DEAR WILLIAMS.

I have some idea of visiting Merionethshire again, particularly if I should hear of any house which would afford any probability of suiting me. I write to you, therefore, to inquire whether there is in any remote and solitary situation a house to let for a time, with the prospect of purchase when my affairs will permit. I did not ask Mr. Nanney the terms of Dolmgleneyx; perhaps you can inform me of them. I assure you that it was not without much inconvenience that I paid the bond of £100. I would, if possible, have relieved you from the whole, but I have no hesitation in promising a final arrangement in the autumn. It will not suit me to purchase any house at present, but should the solitude and beauty of any place you can recommend or obtain for me induce me to wish to make it my permanent residence, I should have the command of money in the winter sufficient to enable me to possess it; still it best accords with my purpose to try at first.

Yours truly,

P. B. SHELLEY.

£200 to pay her debts, and he arranged for a sum of £200 a year to be paid to her in quarterly instalments. With the annuity of £200 which Mr. Westbrook allowed his daughter, she was provided with an income of £400 a year. Shelley probably remained in London until June. Mrs. Shelley says that in the summer of 1815 he made a tour along the coast of Devonshire; on June 22 (the date of the next letter), he was at Torquay, and on July 27 Mary dates a letter to Shelley, who was looking for a house, from Clifton. In August the Shelleys settled in a house at Bishopgate.

# X. BISHOPGATE—" ALASTOR" August, 1815—April 24, 1816

IMPROVED Health—Thames Excursion to Lechlade—Classical Studies—Financial Correspondence with Godwin—Charles Clairmont—Birth of William Shelley—Negotiations with Timothy Shelley—Deed of Disclaimer—Godwin's "harshness and cruelty"—"Alastor" Published—Letter to Southey—Godwin's "Pecuniary Distress"—Shelley's Tribute to Mary—A" base fee."

### 208. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

BISHOPGATE, 1
August, 1815.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am glad to hear of your safe arrival and the innocent symptoms of diseased action which you detail. My life has been very regular and undisturbed by new occurrences since your departure. My health has been considerably improved under Lawrence's care, and I am so much more free from the continual irritation under which I lived, as

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Peacock says (Fraser's Magazine, Jan., 1860, p. 97) "In the Summer of 1815, Shelley took a furnished house at Bishopgate, the eastern entrance of Windsor Park, where he resided till the summer of 1816 . . . I was then living at Marlow, and frequently walked over to pass a few days with him. At the end of August, 1815, we made an excursion on the Thames to Lechlade, in Gloucestershire, and as much higher as there was water to float our skiff. It was a dry season, and we did not get much beyond Inglesham. . . We started from, and returned to Old Windsor, and our excursion occupied about ten days. This was, I think, the origin of Shelley's taste for boating, which he retained to the end of his life." Besides Shelley and Peacock, Mary and Charles Clairmont were of the party. Shelley's letter to Hogg, referred to in the next, describing the excursion is not forthcoming, but Prof. Dowden has printed in his "Shelley," I, p. 528, an amusing letter dated Sep. 16, 1815, from Charles Clairmont to his sister Jane (self-named, and henceforth known, as Clare or Claire), giving an account of the water-party. At Oxford they stayed from seven in the evening till four o'clock the next afternoon. After seeing the Bodleian Library and the

to devote myself with more effect and consistency to study. I have read some of the orations of Cicero. That against Verres contains some passages of wonderful power, although on the whole I consider them inferior in the interest they produced to those of his metaphysical essays which I have read. This must surely spring from their intrinsic inferiority, for it is unusual that an address to the passions should awaken less interest than an appeal to reason. I have begun also the "Pharsalia." My opinions on the relative merits of Lucan and Virgil is no less unpopular than some of the others I entertain.

It excites my wonder to consider the perverted energies of the human mind. That so much benevolence and talent, as the missionary who travelled with you seemed to possess, should be wasted in such profitless endeavours, nor serve to any other end than to expose its possessor to perpetual disappointment. Yet who is there that will not pursue phantoms, spend his choicest hours in hunting after dreams, and wake only to perceive his error and regret that death is so near? One man there is, and he is a cold and calculating man, who knows better than to waste life, but who alas! cannot enjoy it. Even the men who hold dominion over nations fatigue themselves by the interminable

Clarendon Press, they "visited the very rooms where the two noted infidels, Shelley and Hogg (now, happily, excluded the society of the present residents), pored, with the incessant and unwearied application of the alchymist, over the certified and natural boundaries of human knowledge." When they reached Lechlade, and could proceed no further on account of the water-weeds, Shelley wanted to go on, and to traverse various rivers and canals until they reached the Falls of the Clyde, a distance of two thousand miles. was given up when it was ascertained that the Commissioners required £20 for the privilege of passing the Severn Canal. Clairmont adds "We have all felt the good effects of this jaunt, but in Shelley the change is quite remarkable; he has now the ruddy, healthy complexion of the autumn upon his countenance, and he is twice as fat as he used to be." Peacock was in error in stating that Shelley resided at Bishopgate till the summer of 1816, as he started for his second visit to the Continent at the beginning of the May of that year. The last letter that I have been able to find dated from Bishopgate is on Feb. 26, 1816, to William Godwin.

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pursuit of emptiest visions; the honour and power which they seek is enjoyed neither in acquirement, possession or retrospect; for what is the fame that attends the most skilful deceiver or destroyer? What the power which awakens not in its progression more wants than it can supply?

You will see in the papers that continuance of the same system which the Allies had begun to pursue; and a most spirited remonstrance of the King of France's ministers against the enormities of their troops. In considering the political events of the day I endeavour to divest my mind of temporary sensations, to consider them as already historical. This is difficult. Spite of ourselves the human beings which surround us infect us with their opinions; so much as to forbid us to be dispassionate observers of the questions arising out of the events of the age.

It is already the end of August. Those leaves have lost their summer glossiness which, when I see you again, will be fluttering in the wind of autumn. Such is mortal life.

Your affectionate friend,

P. B. S.

## 209. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

BISHOPGATE, September, 1815.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter has lain by me for the last week, reproaching me every day. I found it on my return from a water excursion on the Thames, the particulars of which will have been recounted in another letter. The exercise and dissipation of mind attached to such an expedition have produced so favourable an effect on my health, that my habitual dejection and irritability have almost deserted me, and I can devote six hours in the day to study without difficulty. I have been engaged lately in the commencement of several literary plans, which, if my present temper

of mind endures, I shall probably complete in the winter. I have consequently deserted Cicero, or proceed but slowly with his philosophic dialogues. I have read the Oration for the poet Archias, and am only disappointed with its brevity.

I have been induced by one of the subjects which I am now pursuing to consult Bayle. I think he betrays great obliquity of understanding and coarseness of feeling. I have also read the four finest books of Lucan's "Pharsalia"—a poem, as it appears to me, of wonderful genius and transcending "Virgil." Mary has finished the fifth book of the "Æneid," and her progress in Latin is such as to satisfy my best expectations.

The east wind—the wind of autumn—is abroad, and even now the leaves of the forest are shattered at every gust. When may we expect you? September is almost passed, and October, the month of your promised return, is at hand, when we shall be happy to welcome you again to our fireside.

No events, as you know, disturb our tranquillity. Adieu

Ever affectionately yours,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

## 210. To WILLIAM LAING (Edinburgh)

London, September 27, 1815.

Sir,

On unpacking the books which arrived from Edinburgh, I discovered the following have been omitted, doubtless thro' mistake:

Drummond's "Academical Questions." Euripides' "Hippolytus" (Marsh).

Euripides' "Heraclidæ" (Elmsley).

Hoogeveen's "De Particulis."

I should feel myself much obliged if you would send these

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000658999 http://www.hathitrust.org/access\_use#pd-googl 18:38 at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 Generated at University of Penns Public Domain, Google-digitized books, which have undoubtedly been mislaid and confounded with yours—addressed to me at Mr. Hookham, Old Bond Street.

Your obedient servt., P. B. Shelley.

[Addressed outside],
Mr. WILLIAM LAING,
Bookseller,
Edinburgh.

## 211. To Mr. HAYWARD (London)

BISHOPGATE, October 19, 1815.

DEAR SIR.

If I do not mistake you are Mr. Godwin's legal adviser in a suit proceeding against him from Mr. Hogan. The debt I imagine is £200 or £250. The object of my letter is to learn (if you think yourself justified in favouring me with the information) Mr. Godwin's precise situation with respect to this suit. I have heard that it must arrive at its conclusion next term, that there are no means of delay. I am anxious to know how far that statement is correct. If, however, it is impossible to prolong it beyond the beginning of next month, I wish to enquire whether Mr. Hogan is absolutely determined not to accommodate the affair in any manner short of the actual payment of the debt and costs, or whether Mr. Godwin has offered no security which he considers safe. In the latter case I imagine that I could suggest thro' my own liability a means of relieving Mr. Godwin from the action. You would oblige me by not informing Mr. Godwin of my application, until it shall appear that it is likely to be attended with some favourable issue.

Your very obedient servant,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

—. HAYWARD, Esq., Took's Court, London.

## 212. To LACKINGTON, ALLEN & Co. (London)

BISHOPGATE, Dec[ember] 17, 1815

GENTLEMEN,

The parcel arrived safe containing most of the books of the original order.

I wish any edition of Quintus Curtius, which is not extremely dear, and which contains the supplements of Freinhemius, to be sent as early as convenient.

Your obedient ser[van]t,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Messrs. Lackington & Co.
Finsbury Square,
London.
[Postmark] Dec. 18, 1815.

## 213. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

BISHOPGATE,
January 7,1 1815, [for 1816.]

SIR,

I will endeavour to give you, as clear as possible a history of the proceedings between myself and my father.

A small portion of the estates to which I am entitled in reversion were comprehended in the will of Mr. John Shelley, my great-uncle, and devised to the same uses as the larger portion which was settled on my father's marriage jointly by my grandfather and father. This portion was valued at £18,000, which my father purchased of me with

<sup>1</sup> Shelley probably came to London during the ensuing week, for he addressed the following note to his banker from Hanover Square, on "January 11, 1816. Mr. Shelley presents his compliments to Messrs. Brookes and Co., and requests the favour of their taking a receipt from Mr. John Billing, of Quality Court, when they pay a check which he will present for £13. 2s. 6d.—Messrs. Brooks & Co., Bankers, 25 Chancery Lane."

an equivalent of £11,000. I signed on this occasion two deeds; the one was to empower my attorney to suffer what is called a recovery, the other a counterpart of the deed of conveyance.

Before these transactions, however, and at the very commencement of our negotiations, I signed a deed which was the preliminary and the basis of the whole business. grandfather had left me the option of recovering a life estate in some very large sum (I think £140,000) on condition that I would prolong the entail, so as to possess only a life estate in my original patrimony. These conditions I never intended to accept, although Longdill considered them very favourable to me, and urged me by all means to grasp at the offer. It was my father's interest and wish that I should refuse the conditions, because my younger brother would inherit, in default of my compliance with them, this life estate. Longdill and Whitton 1 therefore made an agreement that I should resign my rights to this property, and that my father, in exchange for this concession, should give me the full price of my reversion. compliance with the terms of this agreement, I signed a deed importing that I disclaimed my grandfather's property. My father did not sign his part of the agreement, because he could not do so without forfeiting the new entail (which says that whoever in whatsoever manner endeavours to break through the intentions of the testator shall not enjoy the fortune), but Mr. Whitton engaged tacitly to Longdill that my father would buy the reversion on the terms already settled.

Now Whitton professes my father's willingness to proceed, but urges every consideration calculated to delay the progress of the affair. Longdill told me that he saw Whitton wished to procure as much delay as possible, but that he still thought that it was their intention not entirely to give up the negotiation. Whether both Whitton and Longdill

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Longdill and Whitton were the attorneys of Shelley and Sir Timothy Shelley respectively.

<sup>29-(2285)</sup> 

are not quietly making their advantage out of the inexperience and credulity of myself and my father is a doubt that has crossed my mind.

You say that you will receive no more than £1,250 for the payment of those encumbrances from which you think I may be considered as specially bound to relieve you. I would not desire to persuade you to sell the approbation of your friends for the difference between this sum and that which your necessities actually require, but the mention of your friends has suggested a plan to my mind which possibly you may be able to execute. You have undoubtedly some well-wishers who, although they would refuse to give you so large a sum as £1,200, might not refuse to lend it you on security which they might consider as I think you could lay before any rich unexceptionable. friend such a statement of your case as that, if he could refuse to lend £1,200 on my security his desire of benefiting you must be exceedingly slight. There is every probability in favour of the arrangement with my father being completed within the year. I can give evidence of the negotiation between us.

If this prospect should fail, I still remain heir to property of £6,000 or £7,000 a year. Why not ask Grattan or Mackintosh, or Lord Holland, whom I have heard named as your. . . [The rest of this letter is wanting.]

## 214. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

BISHOPGATE, Jan[uary] 18, 1816.

SIR,

I consent to sell an annuity which shall produce enough to cover Hogan's demand, on these conditions:—

That you shall agree to pay the interest until I am able

to discharge the principal. I shall take your word for the fulfilment of this part of the contract.

That entire secrecy should be observed. It will be necessary that the solicitor who engages in the management of the affair should defer registering the annuity for judgment for the period of a year.

Do you know the quarter whence the money can be produced? I would prefer any other than Hayward, for reasons which I could enumerate if it were necessary.

The person who proposed to lend £1,000, would probably lend a quarter of that sum. You had better apply to him in the first instance, and enquire whether he will do so. I, not residing in London, am obviously incompetent to conduct the affair.

Clairmont informs me that in a former instance he explained with you on the subject of the claim which you urge, to be repaid the £200 subtracted by me from the £1,200 of nominal debt which he agreed to state on your part, for the purpose of putting me in possession of the £200. He told you that he believed you to be mistaken in your construction of my message, and on explaining with me, I confirmed his remembrance of the real state of the arrangement.

Perhaps it is well that you should be informed that I consider your last letter to be written in a certain style of haughtiness and encroachment, which neither awes nor imposes upon me. But I have no desire to transgress the limits which you placed to our intercourse, nor in any future instance will I make any remarks but such as arise from the strict question in discussion.

Perhaps you do well to consider every word irrelevant to that question which does not regard your personal advantage.

P. B. SHELLEY.

I forgot to inform you that no paper has been signed by my father which regards the affair of the estate. The general intention and fundamental basis of the business have been stated and admitted in many instances by Whitton in writing, though I should conceive not in a manner which constitutes a legal obligation.

[Addressed outside],
W. Godwin, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill,
London.

# 215. TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

BISHOPGATE, January 21, 1816.

SIR,

It is impossible to procure any letter from Whitton, or any evidence of the affair with my father. Any attempt to possess myself of such a document would risk an entire destruction of my prospects in that quarter. But I apprehend that a reference to my banker would answer the same end. It would prove to the inquirer that I am in the regular receipt of £800 per annum. I should conceive that a person who had an opportunity of making fifteen per cent. of so small a sum as £200 or £300 would consider this fact a sufficient assurance of the safety of his loan.

Particularly when he reflects in addition upon the strong presumption which he can deduce from various circumstances of the approaching settlement of my affairs.

If the person who applied to you is, contrary to my expectation, disposed to think differently of the matter, then let Hayward be applied to.

There are some objections to Hayward, some of which incite me to require caution in treating with him, some demand explanation, and are only worth considering as they impede the loan.

1st. Secrecy is to be secured, which is somewhat difficult, unless his own interest is implicated.

2nd. This real or pretended want of confidence in my representations is to be overcome.

When I applied to him for the purpose of borrowing money for my own wants he inquired whether by the late arrangement with my father all incumbrances on the estate were cancelled. I replied in the affirmative since, although I did not know that Nash had been actually paid, yet an offer being then pending by which he was to receive £4,500 for what he purchased from me the year before at £2,600, I did not doubt, nor did Longdill doubt, but that he would resign on these terms his claim on the estate.

I spoke, therefore, according to my belief, according to the real fact, and according to the purpose for which alone it imported him to know when I replied that the estate was no longer incumbered. But, indeed, I know not whether Hayward would presume to make this accusation to anyone, whom he knew had direct communication with me, or concerning whom it might not reasonably be doubted whether the misrepresentations did not as probably originate with any informer or with himself. Hayward is to be applied to, if your person fails. But I hope the necessity will not arise. If you clearly perceive that there is no other mode of raising the money, I do not require a day's delay. You can either apply to Hayward, or I will write to him, as you choose.

If Hayward refuses, and we can raise money on my security in no manner, did it never suggest itself to you, that your signature joined with mine might effect what neither would effect singly?

With respect to the question which you asked on the subject of the £200, I certainly never gave Clairmont the smallest ground for the representation on which your mistake rests. I accept, and thank you for your explanation. If you really think me vicious, such haughtiness as I imputed to you is perhaps to be excused. But I, who do not agree with you in that opinion, cannot be expected

to endure it without remonstrance. I can easily imagine how difficult it must be, in addressing a person whom we despise or dislike, to abstain from phrases, the turn of which is peculiar to the sentiments with which we cannot avoid regarding such a person. Perhaps I did wrong to feel so deeply or notice so readily a spirit of which you seem to have been unconscious.

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
W. Godwin, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill, London.

# 216. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

BISHOPGATE,

January 23,1 1816.

SIR.

I fear that it is quite impossible to procure any documents from Longdill. I do not mean to say that if the loan cannot be procured without it, I will refuse to attempt to procure them. But Longdill is now out of town, and the few days that will pass during his absence may be employed in discovering whether we can do without him.

Hayward, it seems, must be applied to. Let this be done without delay. I should conceive that the same advantages which made it appear probable that the person you mentioned would find the money, would operate with greater force on Hayward.

I told Hayward that I did not know when the affair with my father would terminate, or even whether it might not be entirely abandoned.

<sup>1</sup> On the day following, Jan. 24, William, the son of Shelley and Mary Godwin was born; he was named after his grandfather, William Godwin, baptised on March 9, 1818, died at Rome, June 7, 1819, and was buried, like his father, in the Protestant Cemetery at Rome.

I conceive that he relied in reality far more on my present income than my future expectations, and that if he declines to advance any additional loan, it will spring not from any doubt of the validity of my security, but because some object which he might have contemplated in his former services was not obtained.

As soon as we have procured Hayward's answer, we shall be certain that he will advance the money, or that he will not.

If he decides in the negative, I will lose no time in taking whatever measures may appear good to you for procuring it from some other quarter.

I am most undoubtedly in earnest, as much so as I should have been last November, had such explanations been made as I have since received, and the same spirit of promptitude shown to share with me the burthens incident to the pecuniary difficulties with which I have been so long surrounded.

I hope that you will not refrain from applying to Hayward on the ground that these letters from Whitton may possibly be procured. I have not myself even seen them that I recollect; and it is most likely that they would be found to express only a general intention on my father's part to divide the estates, a fact of which Hayward certainly entertains no doubt. I am, indeed, earnest that you should not defer to put the question to Hayward.

I am sorry that I cannot appeal to my memory for the precise words of the message which you received with the £1,000 in the spring. I am certain only that it was not, because I am aware of arrangements made in my own mind, by which it could not be such as you represent Clairmont to have delivered it. My meaning was that you should receive no more than that £1,000 until the second settlement with my father, which was then expected in November. I consider that giving in your debt at £1,200, as an accommodation to me, enabling me to procure, as I did, £200, which I should not otherwise have received.

My message certainly in some manner expressed this view of the subject to Clairmont, and no other. 1

P. B. SHELLEY.

(Addressed outside],
W. Godwin, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill, London.

# 217. TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

BISHOPGATE.

January 25, 1816.

SIR,

Longdill told me a week ago that he was then going into the country for ten days. Relying on your information, however, I have written to him, requesting that he will immediately see Whitton, inform him of my dissatisfaction on the subject of his delay, and extort some satisfactory answer. This he was to have done ten days ago. At least until the result of this measure is known to me, I am unwilling to excite suspicions in Longdill that I am in treaty for borrowing money on annuity. The mode of address which you suggest would undoubtedly appear unnatural to me. I might destroy L.'s confidence in the regularity and prudence of my conduct at a time when perhaps the whole success of the affair with my father depends on its preservation.

Hayward, in November, was profuse in his professions both of willingness and ability to procure me money on annuity. If I wanted £1,000 he said that he could readily procure the sum. He knew at that period the uncertainty [of] the negotiations with my father. Perhaps he may believe that the chances are now multiplied against the probability of its accomplishment. At least, it appears

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The £1,200 which Shelley had promised to procure for Godwin had been included by Sir Timothy in reckoning his son's debts.

to me, that the additional security which he would feel from your assertions that the interest was safe, may be considered sufficient to overbalance these contingencies. I feel unwilling, until you should have urged him on to this point, and extorted from him a declaration whether in the last resort he would refuse to serve you by negotiating the loan, to accede to the doubtful and difficult measure of obtaining the letters to which I have alluded, from Longdill. Add to which, it is very doubtful if they would, when procured, be serviceable or satisfactory.

A Mr. Bryan[t], a Sussex man, has written to me to know whether I would sell the reversion of a small estate in that country, on terms of 5 per cent. I have replied, that I cannot do so, being under engagement to sell the whole estate to my father; but if this engagement should be annulled, I should be glad to listen to his proposal.

He writes in answer, that "he could find me purchasers at a fair price for sev[era]l things." He says he dines every day, during term, at Anderton's Coffee House, Fleet Street. If you entertain any doubt of Hayward, perhaps you had better see this Bryant, or I will do so, or write to him as appears good to you. But I am certainly anxious that you should urge Hayward to a decisive and immediate reply. I will spare no pains, or any danger which it is not evident ruin to incur, but that you shall have the money in March. If Hayward fails, do not fear an ultimate failure. I am persuaded that my situation is now widely different, and far more commanding and respectable than when I with difficulty procured money to live.

You seem strangely to have misunderstood the affair in April. Certainly I did fix on £1,200 as your contingent from the sum then raised, on purpose to apply £200 to my own demands; which I should have been unable so to apply without your co-operation, unless, indeed, instead of £1,000 I had given you only £800, which your refusal to have co-operated in this manner would have compelled me, in self defence, however reluctantly, to do. I thought

you understood and acquiesced in this arrangement. There is nothing remarkable in this foolish mistake but the unskilfulness or unfaithfulness of our interpreters, and it is well that such imperfect intercourse did not, as in many instances it might, have produced more serious errors.

I should come to town willingly on the business of this loan, when it appears that my presence is required. Hayward eventually refuses to negotiate it for us, then I certainly think some personal discussion is needed. could perhaps then make clear to you the reasonableness of my reluctance to apply to Longdill. But I shall leave this subject henceforth entirely to your own feelings. Probably my feelings on such an occasion would not be less distressing than your own. So far as those feelings are concerned, I should certainly reluctantly entertain the idea of such an interview. But I would not sacrifice anything essential to the raising of this money to exempt myself from the sensations, however painful, which could not fail to arise on meeting a man, who having been once my friend, would receive me with cold looks and haughty words.

Frances and Mrs. Godwin will probably be glad to hear that Mary has safely recovered from a favourable confinement, and that her child is well.

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
W. Godwin, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill, London.

## 218. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

BISHOPGATE,

January 28, 1816.

Sir,

A letter which I received from Longdill by yesterday's post decides, I fear, the question of applying to him for

the letters of Whitton. I will briefly recapitulate the contents. It says that in compliance with my requests he has applied to Whitton. He tells me that W. has by no means been idle in the affair. My father wishes to bring the matter to bear, but he judges it necessary previously to ask the Lord Chancellor's advice. This Long-dill also considers essential even to my interest. The bill to be given in is now before counsel. Longdill's expression is, that it will cause considerable delay. It is evident now that my father's intentions are sincere. What time the Chancery affair will take we cannot know.

This much, however, is certain, that my Father desires to settle the thing, however awkward and long are the measures he takes for that settlement.

The arrangement in the spring could not be completed without a Chancery suit, though it is certain that there is not the smallest ground for a similar proceeding in the present instance. In all probability it is of a much simpler nature. I cannot obviously now procure Whitton's former letters. But surely Hayward can substantiate if he would take the trouble to inquire in an underhand and professional manner the facts which I now relate. These facts I imagine are sufficient to satisfy him if he only requires such satisfaction as he was contented with last autumn.

I forgot to answer one question. Nash's suit is nominally instituted by me, but really by my father, and for his interests and at his expense.

P. B. SHELLEY.

Since I wrote the former page, I have discovered Longdill's letter, which I thought I had mislaid. I enclose it for you to read and if you please to use.

Of course if you show it to Longdill you will use due caution about the last paragraph of it.

[Addressed outside],
W. Godwin, Esq.,
41 Skipner Street,
Snow Hill, London.

# 219. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

6 GARDEN COURT, TEMPLE [LONDON],<sup>1</sup>
Friday night, February 16, 1816.

SIR,

In the course of a few weeks I shall certainly leave the neighbourhood of London, and possibly even execute my design of settling in Italy. I have felt it necessary to decide on some such measure in consequence of an event which I fear will make even a more calamitous change in your prospects.

It is the opinion of the lawyers that my father ought not to complete the intended affair with me and that he cannot arrange any other. If you do not feel it necessary to explain with me in person on this subject, I can state the detail in a letter. Such, however, is the bare fact. The impossibility of effecting anything by post-obit or sale of reversion has been already adverted to by me. far from retracting any engagement made for your benefit, but I cannot refrain from suspecting under these new circumstances how far I am justified, even by my sincere zeal for your interests, in signing the deed which, Hayward informs me, is in progress. You will believe that I am the more disinterested in what I say when I inform you that my own difficulties suspended by the intended settlement now come upon me with tenfold weight, so that I have every prospect of wanting money for my domestic expenditure.

I intended to have left town at two o'clock to-morrow; I will not do so, if you wish to see me. In that latter case, send a letter by a porter to Mr. Hogg's, of Garden Court, Temple, making your own appointment.

Yet I do not know that it is best for you to see me. On me it would inflict deep dejection. But I would not refuse anything which I can do, so that I may benefit

<sup>1</sup> This letter was written at Hogg's chambers.

a man whom, in spite of his wrongs to me, I respect and love.

Besides I shall certainly not delay to depart from the haunts of men. Your interests may suffer from your own fastidiousness; they shall not be injured by my wayward hopes and disappointments.

I shall write to you by Sunday's post if I receive no answer to this letter.

Jane, of course, is with you. She is uninformed as to the latest and most decisive particulars relating to the overthrow of my hopes.

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
WILLIAM GODWIN, Esq.
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill.

# 220. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

London,

February 17, 18162.

SIR,

I hasten to relieve your anxiety. I have seen Hayward and arranged with him to sign the deed at twelve o'clock next Monday week. In what I have said to him, as you will discover, I have taken every imaginable precaution that you should not be disappointed.

P. B. S.

[Addressed outside],
WILLIAM GODWIN, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Jane Clairmont.

This letter is endorsed (at the head) by Charles Clairmont, as follows:—

<sup>&</sup>quot;The date of this letter is written in Godwin's handwriting—Most probably to remember by the date when the deed would be signed.—Ch. CLAIRMONT."

# 221. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

BISHOPGATE, February 18, 1816.

SIR,

You will have received my letter in answer to yours sent to Garden Court in the course of Saturday evening. This will entirely satisfy you as to my intentions about the deed. I promised you further details by this post on the subject of the affair with my father. It is the opinion of the most eminent lawyers that my father cannot become a party to the projected arrangements without forfeiting the property devised by my grandfather's will. In consequence of this opinion, and for the purpose of ascertaining some other point not necessarily connected with my immediate interest, they recommend a suit in Chancery. They are desirous that their own opinion, however well founded, should be confronted with the Lord Chancellor's. It is, moreover, the duty of one of the Counsel, Mr. Butler, as trustee, to be extremely cautious in his conduct. Longdill entertains no doubt that the issue of this appeal will be unfavourable to my views. He considers the question indeed as already decided, and the proceedings in Chancery, so far at least as they regard that part of the affair, entirely superfluous.

I understand that the existence of two or three words in the will occasions this most unexpected change. The words are these:—"For the time being"—the application of those words to the present case is explained to be, that in case my father should survive myself and my infant son, my younger brother, at the expiration of his minority, might require my father to fulfil those conditions of the will which he would incapacitate himself from fulfilling by cutting off the entail. It is altogether a most complex affair, the words of the will being equivocal to a singular degree. A new difficulty arises also from the

import of my signature to the Deed of Disclaimer, as it is called, given in the presumption of the completion of this settlement. One thing alone is certain, that until my father's death I shall receive no portion of the estate.

How does this information affect your prospects? Does anything remain to be done by me? You have entire knowledge of my resources, my situation, and my disposition towards you; what do you think I can do, or I ought to do, to set you free?

I informed you that I should be in town on Monday week, at twelve o'clock, to sign the deed at Hayward's. My letter of Friday night asserts that I should not be in town again before I left the neighbourhood; but I did not foresee that the deed would not be ready at Hayward's or that there would be so much difficulty and expense in conveying it to Bishopgate.

P. B. SHELLEY.

Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

# 222. TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

BISHOPGATE,

February 21, 1816.

Sir,

I saw Turner yesterday, who engaged to convey to you by that night's post a reassurance on the points which he called on me to ascertain. I should have written to you myself if I had not returned too late from a long walk with Turner, in which I endeavoured to make him understand as clearly as possible the present state of my affairs and my dispositions towards you.

I shall certainly not leave this country, or even remove to a greater distance from the neighbourhood of London, until the unfavourable aspect assumed by my affairs shall appear to be unalterable; or until all has been done by me which it is possible for me to do for the relief of yours. This was my intention from the moment that I first received an intimation of the change. I wrote to you for the purpose of giving you an opportunity of making my assistance as available to you as possible before I departed.

When I wrote to you from London I certainly was more firmly persuaded than now of the inefficacy of any further attempt for the settlement of my affairs. You have suggested a view of the question that makes me pause. At all events I shall remain here, or in this neighbourhood, for the present, and hold myself in readiness to do my utmost towards advancing you the money.

You are perhaps aware that one of the chief motives which strongly urges me either to desert my native country, dear to me from many considerations, or resort to its most distant and solitary regions, is the perpetual experience of neglect or enmity from almost every one but those who are supported by my resources. I shall cling, perhaps, during the infancy of my children to all the prepossessions attached to the country of my birth, hiding myself and Mary from that contempt which we so unjustly endure. I think, therefore, at present of only settling in Cumberland, or Scotland. In the event, the evils which will flow to my children from our desolate and solitary situation here point out an exile as the only resource to them against that injustice which we can easily despise. will observe that the mere circumstance of our departing to the North of England and not immediately putting into effect our Italian scheme, it is strictly within the limits of the most formal intercourse that you should know. I might have misunderstood Turner, for I did not urge him to explain or literally repeat expressions, but it appeared to me from his conversation that you had communicated with him on the subject of our ancient intimacy, and of the occasion of its close, in a manner that expressed to a certain degree of interest in my future prospects. determined on that account to present to you a real picture https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000658999 http://www.hathitrust.org/access GMT Pennsylvania University of Penns 1, Google-digitized at Generated

of my feelings, inasmuch as they would influence my plan of residence. If this exposure should be indifferent to you, silence will afford an obvious protection against additional mistake.

P. B. SHELLEY.

I expect anxiously the plan to which you allude as an infallible expedient for my father to adopt that he might settle with me.

I confess my hopes on that subject are very faint. Hayward wrote to-day to say that he had everything ready for Monday, twelve o'clock. I shall be punctual.

[Addressed outside],
W. Godwin, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill, London.

# 223. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

BISHOPGATE, February 26, 1816. Monday night.

I wish to God Turner's delusion had assumed any other shape, or that the painful task of destroying its flattering effects was reserved for someone less interested in your concerns than myself. He has entirely misapprehended the whole case. But I will endeavour to state it clearly.

I possessed in January, 1815, a reversion expectant on the death of the survivor of my grandfather and father, approaching so nearly to the nature of an absolute reversion, that by a few ceremonies I could, on these contingencies failing, possess myself of the fee-simple and alienate the whole.

My grandfather had exerted the utmost power with which the law invested him to prevent this ultimate alienation, but his power terminated in my person, and was exercised 30-(2285) only to the restraint of my father. The estate of which I now speak is that which is the subject of the settlement of 1792.

My grandfather's will was dedicated by the same spirit which had produced the settlement. He desired to perpetuate a large mass of property. He therefore left the moiety of about £240,000 to be disposed of in the following manner. My father was to enjoy the interest of it during his life. After my father's death I was to enjoy the interest alone in like manner, conditionally, on my having previously deprived myself of the absolute power which I now possess over the settled estates of 1792; and so accept the reversion of a life annuity of £12,000 or £14,000 per an. in exchange for a reversion of landed property of 6, 7, or 8,000 per an. All was reversion. I was entitled, in no view of the case, to any immediate advantage.

My grandfather's will limited my option of accepting these conditions to one year from the date of his death. But I did not hesitate a moment to refuse them, nor until Longdill informed me that it was my father's desire and interest that I should act as I intended to act, did I see any necessity of making a secret of my resolution. I allowed Longdill, however, to manage these affairs in his own way; and he agreed with Whitton that I should refuse to accept my grandfather's legacy and that my father should purchase of me my interest in the settled estates at a fair price. The project of this arrangement was very satisfactory to me, as I saw myself about to realize the very scheme best suited to the uncertainty of my health and the peculiarity of my views and situation, by the sacrifice of that which I never intended to accept.

I signed the deed of disclaimer for the purpose of making my father certain of my intentions, so that our operations need not wait for the expiration of the year appointed by my grandfather's will. If, as Turner says, I have the power to stand in the same situation with respect to my grandfather's will now as on the day of his death, that power is entirely worthless, and must, as you see, be placed out of our consideration.

Now lawyers say that my father dares not buy my interest in the settled estates of 1792, because such an act might induce a forfeiture of the additional income he derives from concurring with the intentions of the will.

After this clear recapitulation of facts, with which I had imagined you to be fully acquainted, I entreat you not to adopt Turner's delusive inference, that because "I am ready and desirous to fulfil my engagements your difficulties are therefore at an end."

Your letter of this morning, indeed, throws a new light on Turner's intervention, at least as I regard it. The mistake, the vital mistake, he has made appears to me by no means consistent with the legal acuteness you describe him to possess. I cannot help thinking that you transfer your just appreciation of his taste and his wit to a subject on which the very subtlety essential to these qualifications leads him astray. Or perhaps you are right in this judgment, and he is not enough interested for you, not enough your friend to force his attention to the point. If he would think or act for your or my interests as for his own, then possibly he might deserve your opinion.

If, after this explanation, you continue to think that his suggestions would be valuable, I will contrive to see him without delay.

But without rejecting whatever Turner's kindness or experience could afford, are there no means at arriving at the same end? You do not understand the state of my affairs so exactly as a lawyer could explain it to you. You believe that I, from ignorance of law and the usages of the world, let pass opportunities of settling with my father. Cannot you explain the exact situation in which you stand with me to Sir James Mackintosh? He, I am informed, really desires to serve you but is unable. If he knew how much of your future comfort depends on your having a true conception of the state of my affairs,

surely he would with pleasure enter into such explanations with me as would make him master of the subject. His various life makes his experience far more valuable than that of Turner, even if you should judge that this latter surpassed him in intrinsic mental worth.

I will not add to the length of this letter by explaining a circumstance of no real moment but which asks a good many words; I shall so soon see either Turner or some other interlocutor on your part.

I trust to your kindness that you will forbear showing this letter to Turner. I have spoken my real doubts of his efficiency which, should an occasion require, I would not shrink to repeat in his presence. But he is apt to take offence, and I am too generally hated not to feel that the smallest kindness from an old acquaintance is valuable.

P. B. SHELLEY.

February 27.

I open this letter to mention that for some days I shall be quite incapable of active exertion. I was seized last night with symptoms of irritable fever, and my state requires rest to prevent serious effects.

[Addressed outside],
WILLIAM GODWIN, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill, London.

# 224. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

13 Norfolk Street, London,
March 6, 1816.

Sir,

The first part of your letter alludes to a subject in which my feelings are most deeply interested, and on which I could wish to receive an entire explanation. I confess that I do not understand how the pecuniary engagements

subsisting between us in any degree impose restrictions on your conduct towards me. They did not, at least to your knowledge or with your consent, exist at the period of my return from France, and yet your conduct towards me and your daughter was then precisely such as it is at present. Perhaps I ought to except the tone which you assumed in conversation with Turner respecting me, which, for anything that I learn from you, I know not how favourably he may not have perverted. In my judgment, neither I, nor your daughter, nor her offspring, ought to receive the treatment which we encounter on every side. It has perpetually appeared to me to have been your especial duty to see that, so far as mankind value your good opinion, we were dealt justly by, and that a young family, innocent and benevolent and united, should not be confounded with prostitutes and seducers. My astonishment, and I will confess when I have been treated with most harshness and cruelty by you, my indignation has been extreme, that, knowing as you do my nature, any considerations should have prevailed on you to have been thus harsh and cruel. I lamented also over my ruined hopes, hopes of all that your genius once taught me to expect from your virtue, when I found that for yourself, your family, and your creditors, you would submit to that communication with me which you once rejected and abhorred, and which no pity for my poverty or sufferings, assumed willingly for you, could avail to extort. Do not talk of forgiveness again to me, for my blood boils in my veins, and my gall rises against all that bears the human form, when I think of what I, their benefactor and ardent lover, have endured of enmity and contempt from you and from all mankind.

I cannot mix the feelings to which you have given birth with details in answer to your views of my affairs. I can only say that I think you are too sanguine, but that I will do all that I can not to disappoint you. I see much difficulty and some danger, but I [am] in no temper to overrate my own inconveniences. I shall certainly remain

in London some days, perhaps longer, as affairs appear to require. Meanwhile, oblige me by referring to the letter in which I mention Bryant, and enclose me his direction as soon as possible. I have left his letter at Bishopgate. I will take an early opportunity of replying to your letter at length, if no other mode of explanation suggests itself.

[Addressed outside],
W. Godwin, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill.

## 225. To Robert Southey

Messrs. Longdill & Co.,
5 Gray's Inn Square, [London],
March 7, 1816.]

MY DEAR SIR,

I cannot refrain from presenting you with a little poem, 1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The little volume was "Alastor; / or, / The Spirit of Solitude: / and other Poems. By / Percy Bysshe Shelley. / London: / Printed for Baldwin, Craddock, and Joy, Pater-/noster Row; and Carpenter and Son, / Old Bond-Street: / By S. Hamilton, Weybridge, Surrey. / 1816." The other poems in the volume are the verses (1) "O! there are spirits of the air," supposed to have been addressed to Coleridge; (2) "Stanzas—April, 1814"; (3) "Mutability"; (4) "The pale, the cold, and the moony smile"; (5) "A summer-evening church-yard"; (6) "To Wordsworth"; (7) "Feelings of a Republican on the Fall of Bonaparte"; (8) "Superstition"; (9) "Sonnet. From the Italian of Dante"; (10) "Translated from the Greek of Moschus; " (11) "The Dæmon of the World. A Fragment" from "Queen Mab." In Mrs. Shelley's note on "Alastor" she says "In the summer of 1815, after a tour along the southern coast of Devonshire and a visit to Clifton, he [Shelley] rented a house on Bishopgate Heath, on the borders of Windsor Forest, where he enjoyed several months of comparative health and tranquil happiness. The later summer months were warm and dry. Accompanied by a few friends, he visited the source of the Thames, making the voyage in a wherry from Windsor to Cricklade. His beautiful stanzas (5) in the churchyard at Lechlade were written on that 'Alastor' was composed on his return. He spent his days under the oak-shades of Windsor Great Park; and the magnificent woodland was a fitting study to inspire the various descriptions of forest scenery we find in the poem." Peacock says that when Shelley was at a loss for a title for his poem, "I proposed

the product of a few serene hours of the last beautiful autumn. I shall never forget the pleasure which I derived from your conversation, or the kindness with which I was received in your hospitable circle during the short period of my stay in Cumberland some years ago. The disappointment of some youthful hopes, and subsequent misfortunes of a heavier nature, are all that I can plead as my excuse for neglecting to write to you, as I had promised from Ireland. The true weight of this apology you cannot know. Let it be sufficient that, regarding you with admiration as a poet, and with respect as a man, I send you, as an intimation of those sentiments, my first serious attempt to interest the best feelings of the human heart, believing that you have so much general charity as to forget, like me, how widely in moral and political opinions we disagree, and to attribute that difference to better motives than the multitude are disposed to allege as the cause of dissent from their institutions.

Very sincerely yours,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

# 226. TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

13 NORFOLK STREET, [LONDON],

March 7, 1816.

SIR,

The hopes which I had conceived of receiving from you the treatment and the consideration which I esteem to be justly due to me were destroyed by your letter dated

that which he adopted. The Greek word 'Αλάστωρ is an evil genius, κακοδαίμων, though the sense of the two words is somewhat different as in the Φανείς 'Αλάστωρ ἡ κακὸς δαίμων ποθέν, of Æschylus. The poem treated the Spirit of Solitude as a spirit of evil. I mention the true meaning of the word, because many have supposed 'Alastor' to be the name of the hero of the poem."

the 5th. The feelings occasioned by this discovery were so bitter and so excruciating that I am resolved for the future to stifle all those expectations which my sanguine temper too readily erects on the slightest relaxation of the contempt and the neglect in the midst of which I live. I must appear the reverse of what I really am, haughty and hard, if I am not to see myself and all that I love trampled upon and outraged. Pardon me, I do entreat you, if, pursued by the conviction that where my true character is most entirely known, I have met with the most systematic injustice, I have expressed myself with violence, overlook a fault caused by your own equivocal politeness, and I will offend no more.

We will confine our communications to business.

I have left a note at Anderton's Coffee House appointing an interview with Bryant. If I have a fair offer on the subject of reversion, there is at once an end to the objections which I should be inclined to make to any other arrangement from the supposition of my father's settling in some manner on the basis of the original proposal.

If Bryant is in earnest I will make Longdill treat with him. Longdill will not consent to treat with him unless his terms approach to reasonableness. I do not scruple to promise you the advance if it can be managed thus.

I have a vital objection to auction, or any enquiries among professed money-lenders. I should suffer more in my negociation with my father for such measures, which would probably be unsuccessful, than from a fair bargain which might be carried into effect.

The affair with Nash has a tendency the opposite to that which you attributed to it.

It is now in Chancery, though from what fund it is to be paid no one knows, and will infallibly be decided in my favour. It will be decided that he is to receive his capital and five per cent., and no more. This proves that the bond is good property, but that all speculations by which more than five per cent. is to be made (as no one

will advance money without larger profit) will be annulled by the Chancellor.

I entirely agree with you on the subject of raising money on annuity.

I plainly see how necessary immediate advances are to your concerns, and will take care that shall fail in nothing which I can do to procure them.

I shall remain in town at least another week, that I may give every possible attention to this subject. My own concerns are decided, I fear, already.

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
W. Godwin, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill.

# 227. TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

LONDON.

March 9, 1816.

SIR,

I have made an appointment with Bryant which he has not kept, probably because he has not called at the coffee house yet. I do not regret this neglect as I think, under the circumstances I am about to mention, that a negotiation with him would be safest postponed.

Since Wednesday I have been daily expecting a message from Longdill to require my signature for the answer in Chancery. Not having heard from him I called this morning—the answer was ready. In the progress of conversation I asked Longdill how soon he thought the question would be decided. He replied coldly, he supposed in a month or two, that he scarcely knew the mode which Whitton designed to adopt, but that it ought to be very indifferent to me, since it would certainly be decided that we must not touch the estates. It happened at this period of

the conversation that Whitton came in. His manner and tone on the subject were the very reverse of Longdill's. He blamed Longdill for having neglected to send for me to sign the answer yesterday, which delay he observed would prevent our cause from being heard on Wednesday, the day which he had provided. He seemed to regret that one day had been lost, he said that the production of the infant had already procrastinated the proceedings much to the displeasure of Sir Timothy. He expressed on my father's account the greatest anxiety for the approaching decision, and that in a manner that makes me hope that it is possible that Mr. Hart and Butler and Sir T. Romilly should be in the wrong. Whitton expresses much confidence in the expectation that the decision will enable me and my father to divide the whole estates.—It is advisable under these circumstances to suspend all other negotiations. The cause must be heard some day next week.

[Addressed outside],
W. Godwin, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street.
Snow Hill.

# 228. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

13 Norfolk Street, London, March 16, 1816.

SIR,

Turner has been with you, and he will have informed you that I have been active in the endeavour to raise money. I have seen Dawe, and attempted by every possible inducement to urge him to make the advance. He has not refused, and even has promised that if he can procure any money he would willing[ly] lend it.

I have seen Bryant also, but nothing can be done with him until the question between my father and myself is https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.32000000658999 http://www.hathitrust.org/access GMT Pennsylvania on at Generated Public Dom

disposed of. This cause is to come on and to receive judgment next Tuesday.

[Addressed outside], W. Godwin, Esq., 41 Skinner Street,

## 229. TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

13 Norfolk Street, London, March 21, 1816.

SIR,

I have not been unemployed in attempting to raise money, though I fear ineffectually. I have seen Bryant twice, and I fear that nothing favourable will result from my negotiation with him; he has promised, however, to write if he should be able to do anything. My principal hope is Dawe, from whom I think money might be obtained if Turner would undertake to persuade him. Can you suggest any other means than those in which I have engaged?

The decision in Chancery is postponed until to-morrow (Thursday). I shall inform you of the event immediately.

P. B. Shelley.

[Addressed outside],
W. Godwin, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill.

# 230. TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

[26] MARCHMONT STREET, [LONDON], March 29, 1816.

I had a long and most painful conversation with Turner last night on the subject of your pecuniary distress.—I. am not, as he, I fear, leaves you to infer, unwilling to do

my utmost, nor does my disposition in the least depend on the question of your demonstrating personal kindness to myself or Mary.—I see that, if anything is to be done, it must be done instantly. You know my habitual, my constitutional inability to deal with monied men. I have no friend who will supply my deficiencies,—none who interest themselves in my own, much less in your concerns, which I have, as much as one man can make those of another, made my own. Can you not yourself see these money-lenders? Hayward's partner was in Chancery yesterday when he heard my title to the reversion admitted to be excellent, and my powers, over that which I pretend to, unimpeached.—Would H[ayward] advance money on post-obit bond or deferred annuity? Can you not see him?

I shall be absent from town to-day, to-morrow, and a part of the following day. Fanny can communicate, should anything important occur, with Mary on the subject. Her sentiments in all respects coincide with mine; her interest is perhaps greater; her judgment, from what she knows of our situation, of what ought or can be done, is probably more calm and firm.—

Chancery, as you have heard, has given a doubtful and hesitating opinion. Whatever is to be done for me will be reluctantly done.

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
W. Godwin, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill.

231. TO W. BRYANT

26 MARCHMONT STREET,
BRUNSWICK SQUARE [LONDON],
April 8, 1816.

DEAR SIR,

I request that if any enquiries are made respecting the

negotiation in which we are at present engaged, you take every possible care to give no information to the enquirer, or allow it to be suspected that any negotiation at all is pending.—My father has been made acquainted with the application for the register of my birth at Warnham, and has been informed of the address to which it was sent. It is of great importance to me, as I am to be saved from additional domestic dissensions, to allow the real fact not to transpire, at least, until the business is concluded.

Your obed[ient] ser[van]t,

P. B. SHELLEY.

I hope speedily to hear from you.

[Addressed outside],

— BRYANT, Esq.,

West Place,

West Square, St. George's Fields.

## 232. TO W. BRYANT

26 MARCHMONT STREET, [LONDON],
April 14, 1815. [? 1816.]

DEAR SIR,

Do not trouble yourself about my interest in the timber—my father can only cut under the restraint of an injunction from Chancery, and is bound by that injunction to bring the money into court to await the decision of the case. You misunderstood me—I only said that Mr. Whitton had informed me that it was not my father's intention to touch the timbers which Dr. Bethune considers ornamental. I was led to interest myself in this by understanding from you that Dr. Bethune would lend me £500. I have indeed the most urgent necessity for the advance of such a sum. Do you think any friends of yours at Worth, do you think Dr. Bethune would lend it to me on my bond at a year or eighteen months? I should assuredly be able to pay it when due, since the affair with my father

would either have gone off altogether, and then I could make a security on the estate, or we should have agreed on terms, and I should be in immediate possession of my share of the reversion. I am in awkward circumstances for want of £500, and if you stand my friend in procuring it for me, you may depend upon my showing myself a friend to you. Dear Sir,

Your obliged serv't.,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

W. BRYANT, Esq.,
Worth Rectory,
East Grinstead, Sussex.

## 233. TO W. BRYANT

26 MARCHMONT STREET,
BRUNSWICK SQUARE [LONDON],
April 24, 1816.

DEAR SIR,

In reply to the proposal made by you some months since to me on the part of Dr. Bethune, I wrote the other day to say that I would sell him the reversion at a fair price. answer to your request as to the nature of the title I can convey (?) accept the following statement. The estates, of which this of Dr. Bethune is a part, are given, by settlements dated August, 1791, to my father for life, to me in remainder. On my father's death by recovery I obtain the fee of these estates. I can make a deed which shall be binding upon myself in case I survive my father, and which shall be binding upon my infant son if I do not survive my father, either to alienate any particular estate, or to pay a certain sum of money. I have levied a fine and acquired this power, which I believe is called a base fee, which as I have before stated I am fully competent to convey. If I and my infant son should die before my father the security falls to the ground. But Dr. B. or any person might insure my life against my father's to whatever amount he should be beneficially interested. He need

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sustain no loss in any case; and would only fail in his object of obtaining possession of the farm in question, if, what is very improbable, my father should survive not only me, but both myself and my infant son.

Dear Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

233A. TO JOHN MURRAY (London)

BISHOPGATE, NEAR EGHAM, Jan]uary], 16, 1816.

SIR.

I take the liberty of sending you a copy of all the sheets, but the last, of a vol. of poems<sup>1</sup> which it is my intention to publish. I send them for the purpose of enabling you to judge whether you would become the publisher and on what terms.

I should certainly prefer to sell the copyright. But I am aware that an Author cannot expect much encouragement for his first poetical production before the public shall have passed their judgment on its merits. I have therefore printed 250 copies with the view of offering it to publication so as to meet the opinions of the publisher as to its probability of success.

I have written to Mr. Hamilton, the printer, to send you the sheet which is deficient, title-page, etc.

I beg to apologize for addressing you as a total stranger.

Your obedient servant,
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
MR. MURRAY, BOOKSELLER.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Alastor," etc., which was apparently declined by Murray. See note on p. 470.

# 233B. TO CARPENTER & SON (Old Bond Street, London)

BISHOPGATE, NEAR EGHAM, Feb[ruar]y 6, 1816.

GENTLEMEN,

In consequence of your advice with which you were so kind as to favour my friend Mr. Scharper, I have made arrangements with Messrs. Baldwin & Co. for the publication of the small vol. of Poems left for your inspection a week or two ago. I expect they will be ready for publication in the course of a few days, at which time Messrs. B. & Co. have my directions to furnish you with copies. As your names appear in the title-page and advertisements, application for the work at the West end of the Town will, of course, be made at your house, and I doubt not you will use your utmost exertions for its success.

Gentlemen, I remain,
I remain, your obliged and faithful svt..
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[END OF VOL. I]

LONDON: PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED, DUKE STREET, STAMFORD STREET, S.E., AND GREAT WINDMILL STREET, W.

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# THE LETTERS

OF

# PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

CONTAINING MATERIAL NEVER BEFORE COLLECTED

## EDITED BY ROGER INGPEN

NEW EDITION WITH ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

Vol. II



LONDON G. BELL AND SONS, LTD. 1915 K

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### Letters of Shelley

Vol. II

#### XI. SECOND VISIT TO THE CONTINENT

May 3-August 18, 1816

The Chancery Decision—Route of Second Continental Journey—Geneva: Villa Diodati—Meeting with Byron—Excursion round the Lake of Geneva—"History of a Six Weeks' Tour"—"Hymn to Intellectual Beauty"—Yvoire—Evian—Meillerie—Marie Louise—A Narrow Escape—Castle of Chillon—Clarens—Vevai—Lausanne—Gibbon—Seeking a Home—Further Travels Contemplated—Shelley's "Mont Blanc"—Journey to Chamouni—An Avalanche—Glacier des Bossons—Buffon's Theory—Entry in Visitors' Album—Montanvert—Return to St. Martin—"Monk" Lewis—"Frankenstein"—"The Vampire"—Departure from Geneva—Palaces of Fontainebleau and Versailles—Rouen—Havre—With Peacock at Great Marlow.

# 234. · TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

Dover.1

May 3, 1816.

No doubt you are anxious to hear the state of my concerns. I wish that it was in my power to give you a more favourable view of them than such as I am compelled to present. The limited condition of my fortune is regretted by me, as I imagine you well know, because among other designs of a sim lar nature I cannot at once put you in

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Peacock says, "In the early summer of 1816, the spirit of restlessness again came over him [Shelley], and resulted in a second visit to the Continent." Shelley remained for some days in London awaiting the decision of Chancery. Besides Shelley, Mary and their little boy, William, Clare Clairmont was of the party. Paris was reached on May 8. The journey lay over the same ground that they had traversed on foot nearly two years before, in 1814, through Troyes, and as far as Neufchatel. Here they took another road, through Dijon, Dôle, Poligny, Champagnolles, Les Rousses, to Geneva, where they put up at the Hotel de Sécheron.

possession of all that would be sufficient for the comfort and independence which it is so unjust that you should not have already received from society.

Chancery has decided that I and my father may not touch the estates. It has decided also that all the timber, worth it is said £60,000, must be cut and sold, and the money paid into court to abide whatever equities may hereafter arise. This you already know from Fanny.

All this reduces me very nearly to the situation I described to you in March, so far as relates to your share in the question. I shall receive nothing from my father except in the way of charity. *Post-obit* concerns are very doubtful, and annuity transactions are confined within an obvious and very narrow limit.

My father is to advance me a sum to meet, as I have alleged, engagements contracted during the dependence of the late negotiation. This sum is extremely small, and is swallowed up almost in such of my debts and the liquidation of such securities as I have been compelled to state in order to obtain the money at all. A few hundred pounds will remain; you shall have £300 from this source in the course of the summer. I am to give a post-obit security for the sum, and the affair at present stands that the deeds are to be drawn in the course of six weeks or two months; and that I am to return for their signature, and to receive the money. There can be no doubt that, if my application in other quarters should not be discovered by my father, the money will be in readiness for you by the time that Kingdom's discounts recur.

I am afraid nothing can be done with Bryant. He promised to lend me £500 on my mere bond; of course he failed, and this failure presents no good augury of his future performances. Still the negotiation is open, and I cannot but think that the only, or at least the best, chance for success would be your interference. Perhaps you would dislike to be mistaken for my personal friend, which it would be necessary you should appear, provided

you acquiesce in this suggestion. I am confident that it would be a most favourable circumstance. It is necessary, I must remark, that secrecy should at present be observed.

Hayward has also an affair in hand. He says he thinks he can get me £300 on post-obit.

Neither Bryant nor Hayward know that I have left England, and as I must in all probability, nay certainly, return in a few weeks to sign these deeds, if the people should agree, or at least to get the money from my father, I thought it might relax their exertions to know that I was abroad. I informed them that I was gone for a fortnight or three weeks into the country. I have not even disengaged my lodgings in Marchmont Street.

The motives which determined me to leave England, and which I stated to you in a former letter, have continued since that period to press on me with accumulated force.

Continually detained in a situation where what I esteem a prejudice does not permit me to live on equal terms with my fellow-beings, I resolved to commit myself to a decided step. Therefore I take Mary to Geneva, where I shall devise some plan of settlement, and only leave her to return to London, and exclusively devote myself to business.

I leave England, I know not, perhaps for ever. alone, to see no friend, to do no office of friendship, to engage in nothing that can soothe the sentiments of regret almost like remorse, which, under such circumstances, everyone feels who quits his native land. I respect you, I think well of you, better perhaps than of any other person whom England contains; you were the philosopher who first awakened, and who still as a philosopher to a very great degree regulates my understanding. It is unfortunate for me that the part of your character which is least excellent should have been met by my convictions of what was right to do. But I have been too indignant, I have been unjust to you—forgive me; burn those letters which contain the records of my violence, and believe that, however, what you erroneously call fame and honour separate

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us, I shall always feel towards you as the most affectionate of friends.

P. B. SHELLEY.

Address-Poste Restante, Geneva.

I have written in great haste, expecting every moment to hear that the Pacquet sails.

[Addressed outside],
— Godwin, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
London.

#### 235. To Thomas Love Peacock

Hotel de Sécheron, Geneva,
May 15, 1816.

After a journey of ten days, we arrived at Geneva. The journey, like that of life, was variegated with intermingled rain and sunshine, though these many showers were to me, as you know, April showers, quickly passing away, and foretelling the calm brightness of summer.

The journey was in some respects exceedingly delightful, but the prudential considerations arising out of the necessity of preventing delay, and the continual attention to pecuniary disbursements, detract terribly from the pleasure of all travelling schemes.

You live by the shores of a tranquil stream, among low and woody hills. You live in a free country, where you may act without restraint, and possess that which you possess in security; and so long as the name of country

¹ Shelley and his little party moved by the end of May from the hotel to a cottage known as Campagne Chapuis, or Campagne Mont Alègre, about two miles from Geneva, near Coligny, on the opposite side of the Lake. The cottage, separated from the water's edge only by a small garden, stood five or eight minutes' walk below the villa Diodati, where Milton, returning from Italy in 1639, had visited his friend, Dr. John Diodati, the Genevan professor of theology. A vineyard lay between Shelley's cottage and the villa, where, haunted by the British tourist and gossip-monger, Byron took refuge on June 10.—Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 14.

and the selfish conceptions it includes shall subsist, England, I am persuaded, is the most free and the most refined.

Perhaps you have chosen wisely, but if I return and follow your example, it will be no subject of regret to me that I have seen other things. Surely there is much of bad and much of good, there is much to disgust and much to elevate, which he cannot have felt or known who has never passed the limits of his native land.

So long as man is such as he now is, the experience of which I speak will never teach him to despise the country of his birth—far otherwise, like Wordsworth, he will never know what love subsists between that and him until absence shall have made its beauty more heartfelt; our poets and our philosophers, our mountains and our lakes, the rural lanes and fields which are so especially our own, are ties which, until I become utterly senseless, can never be broken asunder.

These, and the memory of them, if I never should return, these and the affections of the mind, with which, having been once united, [they] are inseparable, will make the name of England dear to me for ever, even if I should permanently return to it no more.

But I suppose you did not pay the postage of this, expecting nothing but sentimental gossip, and I fear it will be long before I play the tourist properly, I will, however, tell you that to come to Geneva we crossed the Jura branch of the Alps.

The mere difficulties of horses, high bills, postillions, and cheating, lying aubergistes, you can easily conceive; fill up that part of the picture according to your own experience, and it cannot fail to resemble.

The mountains of Jura exhibit scenery of wonderful sublimity. Pine forests of impenetrable thickness, and untrodden, nay, inaccessible expanse, spreading on every side. Sometimes descending, they follow the route into the valleys, clothing the precipitous rocks, and struggling with knotted roots between the most barren clefts.

Sometimes the road winds high into the regions of frost, and there these forests become scattered, and loaded with snow.

The trees in these regions are incredibly large, and stand in scattered clumps over the white wilderness. Never was scene more awfully desolate than that which we passed on the evening of our last day's journey.

The natural silence of that uninhabited desert contrasted strangely with the voices of the people who conducted us, for it was necessary in this part of the mountain to take a number of persons, who should assist the horses to force the chaise through the snow, and prevent it from falling down the precipice.

We are now at Geneva, where, or in the neighbourhood, we shall remain probably until the autumn. I may return in a fortnight or three weeks, to attend to the last exertions which L[ongdill] is to make for the settlement of my affairs; of course I shall then see you; in the meantime it will interest me to hear all that you have to tell of yourself.

P. B. SHELLEY.

236. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

EVIAN, SAVOIE,
June 23, 1816.
[Sunday.]

SIR,

Your letter reached me the moment before I set off on a little tour of the borders of the lake. I write this [reply] <sup>1</sup> from the first post town I arrive at.

<sup>&</sup>quot;A client of the solicitor to whom Shelley had referred Godwin, as likely to assist in obtaining money, offered to purchase a farm from Shelley for the sum of seventeen hundred pounds; but no progress in the negotiation could be made without a copy of the settlement of 1791, and Shelley was not on the spot to procure it. 'This,' wrote Godwin, 'is the first fruits of your unfortunate absence. Bryant says that he can find you purchasers for other things.'"—Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 20.

You know that we are not on those intimate terms as to permit that I should have minutely explained to you the motives which determined my departure, or that, if explained, you would have judged them with the judgment of a friend. I can easily imagine that you were disquieted by it. But I have ever been most unwillingly the cause of disquiet to you, meaning you all possible good.

I entirely approve of your seeing Bryant, and I think, if no unappreciated circumstances render the farm in question more valuable than he states, that the terms his client offers are unusually favourable. But I think if you undertake the business, you ought to ascertain this. The property need not actually be valued, as the expense of valuation is proportionately immense, but a clearer conception of its value than the purchaser's assertion or even the rental affords, might, I should conceive, be obtained by one so clear-sighted and experienced in these affairs as yourself. But perhaps I am unjust to you to suppose that you would not in all these respects consider my property as my own.

There is a copy of the settlement, as I imagine, at Jew King's, which he said he would sell for ten pounds. Enclosed is a note, which, as probably it is inconvenient to you to pay this sum, directs my bankers to give as much to Mr. Martin. I have put this name, supposing that you would not like your own to be stated.

I dare say you can get the settlement for £5, if, as I strongly believe, it is yet in King's possession. If it is not, I can think of no other resource than Longdill, from whom I conceive that a copy might be obtained on the ground of your having on a former occasion lent me a copy, and my not having returned it, and his having collected all the copies belonging to me, and the person to whom this copy belongs having a right to it. You remember that you borrowed what I now speak of from a law student, that you lent it to me, and that it was never returned. In the present state of the negotiations with

Bryant the utmost care must be taken that no circumstances relating to it transpires. I hope that you were impressed with the necessity of secrecy on this point. Nothing but my persuasion that you will act as if you were, engages my consent to the negotiations.

May I request that if you obtain the settlement that you will cause a copy to be made and keep it for me?

The style of this letter, I fear, will appear to you unusual. The truth is that I feel the unbounded difficulty of making myself understood on the commonest topic, and I am obliged to adopt for that purpose a cold and stiff set of phrases. No person can feel deeper interest for another or venerate their character and talents more sincerely, or regret more incessantly his own impotent loneliness, than I for you and yours.

Remember me kindly to Fanny both for her own and for her sister's sake.

P. B. SHELLEY.

Address still Geneva. I shall have returned in a few days from this date.

[Addressed outside],
WILLIAM GODWIN, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill, London,
Angleterre.

### 237. To Thomas Love Peacock<sup>1</sup>

Montalegre, near Coligni, Geneva, July 12, [1816].

It is nearly a fortnight since I have returned from Vevai. This journey has been on every account delightful, but

<sup>&</sup>quot;'During his [Shelley's] stay in Switzerland he became acquainted with Lord Byron. They made an excursion round the Lake of Geneva, of which he sent me the detail in a diary. This diary was published by Mrs. Shelley ['History of a Six Weeks' Tour,' 1817], but without introducing the name of Lord Byron, who is throughout called 'my companion.' The diary was first published during Lord Byron's life, but why his name was concealed I do not know. Though

most especially, because then I first knew the divine beauty of Rousseau's imagination, as it exhibits itself in "Julie." It is inconceivable what an enchantment the scene itself lends to those delineations, from which its own most touching charm arises. But I will give you an abstract of our voyage, which lasted eight days, and if you have a map of Switzerland, you can follow me.

We left Montalegre at half-past two on the 23rd of June. The lake was calm, and after three hours of rowing we arrived at Hermance, a beautiful little village, containing a ruined tower, built, the villagers say, by Julius Cæsar. There were three other towers similar to it, which the Genevese destroyed for their own fortifications in 1560.

the changes are not many, yet the association of the two names gives it great additional interest." (T. L. Peacock in Fraser's Magazine, Jan. 1860.) Byron left England for the last time on April 25th, 1816, and arrived at Geneva on May 25 (about ten days after Shelley), the two poets met for the first time on May 27. "My route," says Byron in a letter to Murray (June 27, 1816), "through Flanders, and by the Rhine to Switzerland, was all I expected, and more." According to Thomas Moore, Shelley had sent Byron some years previously a copy of "Queen Mab" with "a letter, in which after detailing at full length all the accusations he had heard brought against his character, he added that, should these charges not have been true, it would make him happy to be honoured with his acquaintance. The book alone, it appears, reached its destination, —the letter having miscarried,—and Lord Byron was known to have expressed warm admiration of the opening lines of the poem." ("Life of Byron," 1844, p. 315.) Miss Clairmont (perhaps unknown to Shelley and Mary) had already met Byron, having called on him in England to solicit his ififluence at Drury Lane to secure for her a theatrical engagement. Mrs. Shelley, in the notes to her husband's poems for 1816, says that "The Hymn to Intellectual Beauty 'was conceived during his [Shelley's] voyage round the Lake [of Geneva] with Lord Byron." She adds that Shelley "occupied himself during this voyage by reading the 'Nouvelle Héloïse' for the first time. The reading it on the very spot where the scenes are laid, added to the interest; and he was at once surprised and charmed by the passionate eloquence and earnest enthralling interest that pervades this work. There was something in the character of Saint-Preux, in his abnegation of self, and in the worship he paid to love, that coincided with Shelley's own disposition; and, though differing in many of the views, and shocked by others, yet the effect of the whole was fascinating and delightful."

We got into the tower by a kind of window. The walls are immensely solid, and the stone of which it is built so hard, that it yet retained the mark of chisels. The boatman said that this tower was once three times higher than it is now. There are two staircases in the thickness of the walls, one of which is entirely demolished, and the other half-ruined, and only accessible by a ladder. The town itself, now an inconsiderable village inhabited by a few fishermen, was built by a Queen of Burgundy, and reduced to its present state by the inhabitants of Berne, who burnt and ravaged everything they could find.

Leaving Hermance, we arrived at sunset at the village of Nerni[er]. After looking at our lodgings, which were gloomy and dirty, we walked out by the side of the lake. It was beautiful to see the vast expanse of these purple and misty waters broken by the craggy islets near to its slant and "beached margin." There were many fish sporting in the lake, and multitudes were collected close to the rocks to catch the flies which inhabited them.

On returning to the village, we sat on a wall beside the lake, looking at some children who were playing at a game like nine-pins. The children here appeared in an extraordinary way deformed and diseased. Most of them were crooked, and with enlarged throats; but one little boy had such exquisite grace in his mien and motions, as I never before saw equalled in a child. His countenance was beautiful for the expression with which it overflowed. There was a mixture of pride and gentleness in his eyes and lips, the indications of sensibility, which his education will probably pervert to misery or seduce to crime; but there was more of gentleness than of pride, and it seemed that the pride was tamed from its original wildness by the habitual exercise of milder feelings. My companion gave him a piece of money, which he took without speaking, with a sweet smile of easy thankfulness, and then with an unembarrassed air turned to his play. All this might scarcely be; but the imagination surely could not forebear to breathe

into the most inanimate forms, some likeness of its own visions, on such a serene and glowing evening, in this remote and romantic village, beside the calm lake that bore us hither.

On returning to our inn, we found that the servant had arranged our rooms, and deprived them of the greater portion of their former disconsolate appearance. They reminded my companion of Greece; it was five years, he said, since he had slept in such beds. The influence of the recollections excited by this circumstance on our conversation gradually faded, and I retired to rest with no unpleasant sensations, thinking of our journey to-morrow, and of the pleasure of recounting the little adventures of it when we return.

The next morning we passed Yvoire, a scattered village with an ancient castle, whose houses are interspersed with trees, and which stands at a little distance from Nerni, on the promontory which bounds a deep bay, some miles in extent. So soon as we arrived at this promontory, the lake began to assume an aspect of wilder magnificence. The mountains of Savoy, whose summits were bright with snow, descended in broken slopes to the lake: on high the rocks were dark with pine forests, which become deeper and more immense, until the ice and snow mingle with the points of naked rock that pierce the blue air; but below, groves of walnut, chestnut, and oak, with openings of lawny fields, attested the milder climate.

As soon as we had passed the opposite promontory, we saw the river Drance, which descends from between a chasm in the mountains, and makes a plain near the lake, intersected by its divided streams. Thousands of besolets, beautiful water-birds, like sea-gulls, but smaller, with purple on their backs, take their station on the shallows where its waters mingle with the lake. As we approached Evian, the mountains descended more precipitously to the lake, and masses of intermingled wood and rock overhung its shining spire.

We arrived at this town about seven o'clock, after a day which involved more rapid changes of atmosphere than I ever recollect to have observed before. The morning was cold and wet; then an easterly wind, and the clouds hard and high; then thunder showers, and wind shifting to every quarter; then a war blast from the south, and summer clouds hanging over the peaks, with bright blue sky between. About half-an-hour after we had arrived at Evian, a few flashes of lightning came from a dark cloud, directly overhead, and continued after the cloud had dispersed. "Diespiter per pura tonantes egit equos:" a phenomenon which certainly had no influence on me, corresponding with that which it produced on Horace.

The appearance of the inhabitants of Evian is more wretched, diseased, and poor, than I ever recollect to have seen. The contrast indeed between the subjects of the King of Sardinia and the citizens of the independent republics of Switzerland, affords a powerful illustration of the blighting mischiefs of despotism, within the space of a few miles. They have mineral waters here, eaux savonneuses they call them. In the evening we had some difficulty about our passports, but so soon as the syndic heard my companion's rank and name, he apologised for the circumstance. The inn was good. During our voyage, on the distant height of a hill, covered with pine-forests, we saw a ruined castle, which reminded me of those on the Rhine.

We left Evian on the following morning, with a wind of such violence as to permit but one sail to be carried. The waves also were exceedingly high, and our boat so heavily laden, that there appeared to be some danger. We arrived, however, safe at Meillerie, after passing with great speed mighty forests which overhung the lake, and lawns of exquisite verdure, and mountains with bare and icy points, which rose immediately from the summit of the rocks, whose bases were echoing to the waves.

We here heard that the Empress Maria Louisa had slept

at Meillerie before the present inn was built, and when the accommodations were those of the most wretched village in remembrance of St. Preux. How beautiful it is to find that the common sentiments of human nature can attach themselves to those who are the most removed from its duties and its enjoyments, when Genius pleads for their admission at the gate of Power. To own them was becoming in the Empress, and confirms the affectionate praise contained in the regret of a great and enlightened A Bourbon dared not even to have remembered nation. Rousseau. She owed this power to that democracy which her husband's dynasty outraged, and of which it was however, in some sort, the representative among the nations of the earth. This little incident shows at once how unfit and how impossible it is for the ancient system of opinions, or for any power built upon a conspiracy to revive them, permanently to subsist among mankind. We dined there, and had some honey, the best I have ever tasted, the very essence of the mountain flowers, Probably the village derives its name and as fragrant. from this production. Meillerie is the well-known scene of St. Preux's visionary exile; but Meillerie is indeed enchanted ground, were Rousseau no magician. Groves of pine, chestnut, and walnut overshadow it; magnificent and unbounded forests to which England affords no parallel. In the midst of these woods are dells of lawny expanse, inconceivably verdant, adorned with a thousand of the rarest flowers, and odorous with thyme.

The lake appeared somewhat calmer as we left Meillerie, sailing close to the banks, whose magnificence augmented with the turn of every promontory. But we congratulated ourselves too soon; the wind gradually increased in violence, until it blew tremendously; and, as it came from the remotest extremity of the lake, produced waves of a frightful height, and covered the whole surface with a chaos of foam. One of our boatmen, who was a dreadfully stupid fellow, persisted in holding the sail at a time when the boat

was on the point of being driven under water by the hurricane. On discovering his error, he let it entirely go, and the boat for a moment refused to obey the helm; in addition, the rudder was so broken as to render the management of it very difficult; one wave fell in, and then another. My companion, an excellent swimmer, took off his coat, I did the same, and we sat with our arms crossed, every instant expecting to be swamped. The sail was however again held, the boat obeyed the helm, and still in imminent peril from the immensity of the waves, we arrived in a few minutes at a sheltered port, in the village of St. Gingoux.

I felt in this near prospect of death a mixture of sensations, among which terror entered, though but subordinately. My feelings would have been less painful had I been alone; but I knew that my companion would have attempted to save me, and I was overcome with humiliation, when I thought that his life might have been risked to preserve mine. When we arrived at St. Gingoux, the inhabitants, who stood on the shore, unaccustomed to see a vessel as frail as ours, and fearing to venture at all on such a sea, exchanged looks of wonder and congratulation with our boatmen, who, as well as ourselves, were well pleased to set foot on shore. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;I have traversed all Rousseau's ground with the 'Héloïse' before me; and am struck to a degree that I cannot express, with the force and accuracy of his descriptions and the beauty of their reality: Meillerie, Clarens, and Nevy, and the Château de Chillon are places of which I shall say little, because all I could say must fall short of the impressions they stamp. Three days ago, we were most nearly wrecked in a squall off Meillerie, and driven to shore. I ran no risk, being so near the rocks, and a good swimmer; but our party were wet and incommoded a good deal. The wind was strong enough to blow down some trees, as we found on landing; however, all is righted, and right." (Byron to John Murray, June 27, 1816.) Moore also alludes to the adventure on the Lake: "Towards the end of June, Lord Byron, accompanied by his friend Shelley, made a tour in his boat round the Lake. In the squall off Meillerie, which he [Byron] mentions, their danger was considerable. In the expectation, every moment, of being obliged to swim for his life, Lord Byron had already thrown off his coat, and, as Shelley was no

St. Gingoux is even more beautiful than Meillerie; the mountains are higher, and their loftiest points of elevation descend more abruptly to the lake. On high, the aerial summits still cherish great depths of snow in their ravines, and in the paths of their unseen torrents. One of the highest of these is called Roche de St. Julien, beneath whose pinnacles the forests became deeper and more extensive; the chestnut gives a peculiarity to the scene, which is most beautiful, and will make a picture in my memory, distinct from all other mountain scenes which I have ever before visited.

As we arrived here early, we took a voiture to visit the mouth of the Rhone. We went between the mountains and the lake, under groves of mighty chestnut trees, beside perpetual streams, which are nourished by the snows above, and form stalactites on the rocks, over which they fall. We saw an immense chestnut tree, which had been overthrown by the hurricane of the morning. The place where the Rhone joins the lake was marked by a line of tremendous breakers; the river is as rapid as when it leaves the lake, but is muddy and dark. We went about a league farther on the road to La Valais, and stopped at a castle called La Tour de Bouverie, which seems to be the frontier of Switzerland and Savoy, as we were asked for our passports, on the supposition of our proceeding to Italy.

On one side of the road was the immense Roche de St. Julien, which overhung it; through the gateway of the castle we saw the snowy mountains of La Valais, clothed in clouds, and, on the other side, was the willowy plane of the Rhone, in a character of striking contrast with the rest of the scene, bounded by the dark mountains that overhang Clarens, Vevai, and the lake that rolls between.

swimmer, insisted upon endeavouring, by some means, to save him. This offer, however, Shelley positively refused; and seating himself quietly upon a locker, and grasping the rings at each end firmly in his hands, declared his determination to go down in that position, without a struggle." (Moore's "Life of Byron," 1844, p. 320.)



In the midst of the plain rises a little isolated hill, on which the white spire of a church peeps from among the tufted chestnut woods. We returned to St. Gingoux before sunset, and I passed the evening in reading "Julie."

As my companion rises late, I had time before breakfast, on the ensuing morning, to hunt the waterfalls¹ of the river that fall into the lake at St. Gingoux. The stream is, indeed, from the declivity over which it falls, only a succession of waterfalls, which roar over the rocks with a perpetual sound, and suspend their unceasing spray on the leaves and flowers that overhang and adorn its savage banks. The path that conducted along this river sometimes avoided the precipices of its shores, by leading through meadows; sometimes threaded the base of the perpendicular and caverned rocks. I gathered in these meadows a nosegay of such flowers as I never saw in England, and which I thought more beautiful for that rarity.

On my return, after breakfast, we sailed for Clarens, determining first to see the three mouths of the Rhone, and then the castle of Chillon; the day was fine, and the water calm. We passed from the blue waters of the lake over the stream of the Rhone, which is rapid even at a great distance from its confluence with the lake; the turbid waters mixed with those of the lake, but mixed with them unwillingly. (See "Nouvelle Héloïse," Lettre 17, Part 4.) I read "Julie" all day; an overflowing, as it now seems, surrounded by the scenes which it has so wonderfully peopled, of sublimest genius, and more than human sensibility. Meillerie, the castle of Chillon, Clarens, the mountains of La Valais and Savoy, present themselves

Wordsworth's "Louisa, after accompanying her on a mountain excursion."

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Take all that's mine' beneath the moon,'
If I with her but half a noon
May sit beneath the walls
Of some old cave, and mossy nook,
When up she winds along the brook
To hunt the waterfalls."

to the imagination as monuments of things that were once familiar, and of beings that were once dear to it. They were created indeed by one mind, but a mind so powerfully bright as to cast a shade of falsehood on the records that are called reality.

We passed on to the castle of Chillon, and visited its dungeons and towers. These prisons are excavated below the lake; the principal dungeon is supported by seven columns, whose branching capitals support the roof. Close to the very walls, the lake is eight hundred feet deep; iron rings are fastened to these columns, and on them were engraven a multitude of names, partly those of visitors, and partly doubtless of the prisoners, of whom now no memory remains, and who thus beguiled a solitude which they have long ceased to feel. One date was as ancient At the commencement of the Reformation, and as 1670. indeed long after that period, this dungeon was the receptacle of those who shook, or who denied the system of idolatry, from the effects of which mankind is even now slowly emerging.

Close to this long and lofty dungeon was a narrow cell, and beyond it one larger and far more lofty and dark, supported upon two unornamented arches. Across one of these arches was a beam, now black and rotten, on which prisoners were hung in secret. I never saw a monument more terrible of that cold and inhuman tyranny, which it had been the delight of man to exercise over man. was indeed one of those many tremendous fulfilments which render the "pernicies humani generis" of the great Tacitus so solemn and irrefragable a prophecy. gendarme, who conducted us over this castle, told us that there was an opening to the lake, by means of a secret spring, connected with which the whole dungeon might be filled with water before the prisoners could possibly escape!

We proceeded with a contrary wind to Clarens against a heavy swell. I never felt more strongly than on landing

at Clarens, that the spirit of old times had deserted its once cherished habitation. A thousand times, thought I, have Julia and St. Preux walked on this terraced road, looking towards these mountains which I now behold; nay, treading on the ground where I now tread. From the window of our lodging our landlady pointed out "le bosquet de Julie." At least the inhabitants of this village are impressed with an idea that the persons of that romance In the evening we walked thither. had actual existence. It is indeed Julia's wood. The hay was making under the trees; the trees themselves were aged, but vigorous and interspersed with younger ones, which are destined to be their successors, and in future years, when we are dead, to afford a shade to future worshippers of nature, who love the memory of that tenderness and peace of which this was the imaginary abode. We walked forward among the vineyards, whose narrow terraces overlook this affecting scene. Why did the cold maxims of the world compel me at this moment to repress the tears of melancholy transport which it would have been so sweet to indulge, immeasurably, even until the darkness of night had swallowed up the objects which excited them.

I forgot to remark, what indeed my companion remarked to me, that our danger from the storm took place precisely in the spot where Julie and her lover were nearly overset, and where St. Preux was tempted to plunge with her into the lake.

On the following day we went to see the castle of Clarens, a square strong house, with very few windows, surrounded by a double terrace that overlooks the valley, or rather the plain of Clarens. The road which conducted to it wound up the steep ascent through woods of walnut and chestnut. We gathered roses on the terrace, in the feeling that they might be the posterity of some planted by Julie's hand. We sent their dead and withered leaves to the absent.

We went again to "the bosquet de Julie," and found that

1

the precise spot was now utterly obliterated, and a heap of stones marked the place where the little chapel had once stood. Whilst we were execrating the author of this brutal folly, our guide informed us that the land belonged to the convent of St. Bernard, and that this outrage had been committed by their orders. I knew before, that if avarice could harden the hearts of men, a system of prescriptive religion has an influence far more inimical to natural sensibility. I know that an isolated man is sometimes restrained by shame from outraging the venerable feelings arising out of the memory of genius, which once made nature even lovelier than itself; but associated man holds it as the very sacrament of his union to forswear all delicacy, all benevolence, all remorse; all that is true, or tender, or sublime.

We sailed from Clarens to Vevai. Vevai is a town more beautiful in its simplicity than any I have ever seen. Its market-place, a spacious square interspersed with trees, looks directly upon the mountains of Savoy and La Valais, the lake, and the valley of the Rhone. It was at Vevai that Rousseau conceived the design of "Julie."

From Vevai we came to Ouchy, a village near Lausanne. The coasts of the Pays de Vaud, though full of villages and vineyards, present an aspect of tranquillity and peculiar beauty which well compensates for the solitude which I am accustomed to admire. The hills are very high and rocky, crowned and interspersed with woods. Waterfalls echo from the cliffs, and shine afar. In one place we saw the traces of two rocks of immense size, which had fallen from the mountain behind. One of these lodged in a room where a young woman was sleeping, without injuring her. The vineyards were utterly destroyed in its path, and the earth torn up.

The rain detained us two days at Ouchy. We, however, visited Lausanne, and saw Gibbon's house. We were shown the decayed summer-house where he finished his History, and the old acacias on the terrace, from which he saw

Mont Blanc, after having written the last sentence. There is something grand and even touching in the regret which he expresses at the completion of his task. It was conceived amid the ruins of the Capitol. The sudden departure of his cherished and accustomed toil must have left him, like the death of a dear friend, sad and solitary.

My companion gathered some acacia leaves to preserve in remembrance of him. I refrained from doing so, fearing to outrage the greater and more sacred name of Rousseau; the contemplation of whose imperishable creations had left no vacancy in my heart for mortal things. Gibbon had a cold and unimpassioned spirit. I never felt more inclination to rail at the prejudices which cling to such a thing, than now that "Julie" and Clarens, Lausanne and the "Roman Empire," compelled me to contrast between Rousseau and Gibbon. 1

When we returned, in the only interval of sunshine

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Byron mentions the acacia leaves in his letter to John Murray: "Ouchy, near Lausanne, June 27, 1816. I am thus far (kept back by stress of weather) on my way back to Diodati (near Geneva) from a voyage in my boat round the Lake; and I enclose you a sprig of Gibbon's acacia and some rose-leaves from his garden, which with part of his house I have just seen. You will find honourable mention in his 'Life' made of this 'acacia,' when he walked out on the night of concluding his history. The garden and summerhouse, where he composed, are neglected, and the last utterly decayed; but they still show it as his 'cabinet,' and seem perfectly aware of his memory." The following is the memorable passage in Gibbon's "Life" to which Byron and Shelley allude: "It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a berceau, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom, and perhaps the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatsoever might be the futur date of my History, the life of the historian must be short and precarious."

during the day, I walked on the pier which the lake was lashing with its waves. A rainbow spanned the lake, or rather rested one extremity of its arch upon the water, and the other at the foot of the mountains of Savoy. Some white houses, I know not if they were those of Meillerie, shone through the yellow fire.

On Saturday, the 30th of June, we quitted Ouchy, and after two days of pleasant sailing arrived on Sunday evening at Montalegre.

## 238. TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

GENEVA,

July 17, 1816.

SIR,

I write by this post to Mr. Hume, giving the authority which you request. Before this letter arrives you will, however, have received another from me affording a solution of the questions contained in your last, and rendering that request superfluous. The delay which has occurred in writing to Mr. Hume and to you arose simply from my expecting by every post an acknowledgment of the letters to which you allude. I need not again assert that I think Mr. Turner neither a good man nor a good judge of men. He acted in your affairs with duplicity, and accused me indirectly of the duplicity which he was conscious attached to his own conduct.

Mr. Turner was, in the instance which you state, and will be in every instance, deceived in his judgment of me, for no other reason than because he suspects me to be like himself.

I recommend to you caution in ascertaining the value of the estates before you allow the deeds to be drawn, as of course, although the business is nominally confided to Mr. Hume, you are really the agent.

I suppose it will be necessary to despatch the deeds

hither for signature; a power of attorney, I fear, would not suffice. However that may be, let us choose first the easiest and the quietest, next, the securest plan. I shall not remain longer at Geneva than affairs require, and hope to have the earliest and minutest intelligence from you on a question so important to us both.

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
W. Godwin, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill, London,
Angleterre.

#### 239. To Thomas Love Peacock

Geneva, July 17, 1816.

My opinion of turning to one spot of earth and calling it our home, and of the excellences and usefulness of the sentiments arising out of this attachment, has at length produced in me the resolution of acquiring this possession.

You are the only man who has sufficient regard for me to take an interest in the fulfilment of this design, and whose tastes conform sufficiently to mine to engage me to confide the execution of it to your discretion.

I do not trouble you with apologies for giving you this commission; some slight negotiations about the letting of a house—the superintendence of a disorderly garden, some palings to be mended, some books to be removed and set up. I require only rural exertion, walks, and circuitous wanderings.

I wish you would get all my books and all my furniture from Bishopgate, and all other effects appertaining to me. I have written to . . . to secure all that belongs to me there to you. I have written also to L[ongdill] to give up possession of the house on the 3rd of August.

When you have possessed yourself of all my affairs, I wish you to look out for a home for me and Mary and

William, and the kitten, who is now en pension. I wish you to get an unfurnished house, with as good a garden as may be, near Windsor Forest, and take a lease of it for fourteen or twenty-one years. The house must not be too small. I wish the situation to resemble as nearly as possible that of Bishopgate, and should think that Sunning Hill, or Winkfield Plain, or the neighbourhood of Virginia Waters, would afford some possibilities.

Houses are now exceedingly cheap and plentiful; but I entrust the whole of this affair entirely to your own discretion.

I shall hear from you, of course, as to what you have done on this subject, and shall not delay to remit you whatever expenses you may find it necessary to incur. Perhaps, however, you had better sell the useless part of the Bishopgate furniture—I mean those odious curtains, etc.

Will you write to L[ongdill] to tell him that you are authorized on my part to go over the inventory with Lady L——'s people on the third of August, if they please, and to make whatever arrangements may be requisite. I should be content with the Bishopgate house, dear as it is, if Lady L—— would make the sale of it a post-obit transaction. I merely suggest this, that if you see any possibility of proposing such an arrangement with effect, you might do it.

My present intention is to return to England, and to make that most excellent of nations my perpetual resting place. I think it is extremely probable that we shall return next spring—perhaps before, perhaps after, but certainly we shall return.

On the motives and on the consequences of this journey, I reserve much explanation for some future winter walk or summer expedition. This much alone is certain, that before we return we shall have seen, and felt, and heard, a multiplicity of things which will haunt our talk and make us a little better worth knowing than we were before our departure.

If possible, we think of descending the Danube in a boat, of visiting Constantinople and Athens, then Rome and the Tuscan cities, and returning by the south of France, always following great rivers. The Danube, the Po, the Rhone, and the Garonne; rivers are not like roads, the work of the hands of man; they imitate mind, which wanders at will over pathless deserts, and flows through nature's loveliest recesses, which are inaccessible to anything besides. They have the viler advantage also of affording a cheaper mode of conveyance.

This eastern scheme is one which has just seized on our imaginations. I fear that the detail of execution will destroy it, as all other wild and beautiful visions; but at all events you will hear from us wherever we are, and to whatever adventures destiny enforces us.

Tell me in return all English news. What has become of my poem? I hope it has already sheltered itself in the bosom of its mother, Oblivion, from whose embraces no one could have been so barbarous as to tear it except me.

Tell me of the political state of England—its literature, of which when I speak Coleridge is in my thoughts; — yourself, lastly your own employments, your historical labours.

I had written thus far when your letter to Mary dated the 8th arrived. What you say of Bishopgate of course modifies that part of this letter which relates to it. I confess I did not learn the destined ruin without some pain, but it is well for me perhaps that a situation requiring so large an expense should be placed beyond our hopes.

You must shelter my roofless Penates, dedicate some new temple to them, and perform the functions of a priest in my absence. They are innocent deities, and their worship neither sanguinary nor absurd.

Leave Mammon and Jehovah to those who delight in

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Alastor or the Spirit of Solitude and other Poems." 1816.

wickedness and slavery—their altars are stained with blood or polluted with gold, the price of blood. But the shrines of the Penates are good wood fires, or window frames intertwined with creeping plants; their hymns are the purring of kittens, the hissing of kettles; the long talks over the past and dead, the laugh of children, the warm wind of summer filling the quiet house, and the pelting storm of winter struggling in vain for entrance. In talking of the Penates, will you not liken me to Julius Cæsar dedicating a temple to Liberty?

As I have said in the former part of my letter, I trust entirely to your discretion on the subject of a house. Certainly the Forest engages my preference, because of the sylvan nature of the place, and the beasts with which it is filled. But I am not insensible to the beauties of the Thames, and any extraordinary eligibility of situation you mention in your letter would overwhelm our habitual affection for the neighbourhood of Bishopgate.

Its proximity to the spot you have chosen is an argument with us in favour of the Thames. Recollect, however, we are now choosing a fixed, settled, eternal home, and as such its internal qualities will affect us more constantly than those which consist in the surrounding scenery, which whatever it may be at first, will shortly be no more than the colours with which our own habits shall invest it.

I am glad that circumstances do not permit the choice to be my own. I shall abide by yours as others abide by the necessity of their birth.

P. B. S.

· 240. To Thomas Love Peacock

Hotel de Londres, Chamouni, July 22, 1816.

Whilst you, my friend, are engaged in securing a home for us, we are wandering in search of recollections to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Peacock was living at Great Marlow, in Buckinghamshire

embellish it. I do not err in conceiving that you are interested in details of all that is majestic or beautiful in nature; but how shall I describe to you the scenes by which I am now surrounded? To exhaust the epithets which express the astonishment and the admiration—the very excess of satisfied astonishment, where expectation scarcely acknowledged any boundary, is this to impress upon your mind the images which fill mine now, even till it overflow? I too have read the raptures of travellers; I will be warned by their example; I will simply detail to you all that I can relate, or all that, if related, would enable you to conceive, what we have done or seen since the morning of the 20th when we left Geneva. <sup>1</sup>

We commenced our intended journey to Chamouni at half-past eight in the morning. We passed through the champagn country, which extends from Mont Saléve to the base of the higher Alps. The country is sufficiently fertile, covered with cornfields and orchards, and intersected by sudden acclivities with flat summits. The day was cloudless and excessively hot, the Alps were perpetually in sight, and as we advanced, the mountains, which form their outskirts, closed in around us. We passed a bridge over a stream, which discharges itself into the Arve. The Arve itself, much swollen by the rains, flows constantly to the right of the road. <sup>2</sup>

¹ This opening paragraph was not included by Shelley in the "History of a Six Weeks' Tour." It was first printed by Charles S. Middleton in his life of Shelley from a copy of the letter made by Mrs. Shelley which was accidentally left among other papers at Marlow, where they fell into Middleton's hands. Peacock alludes to the subject in his "Memoirs of Shelley," Fraser's Magazine, Jan., 1860.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> Shelley's poem, "' Mont Blanc,' was inspired by a view of that mountain, and its surrounding peaks and valleys, as he lingered on the Bridge of Arve on his way through the Valley of Chamouni. Shelley makes the following mention of this poem in his publication of the 'History of a Six Weeks' Tour,' and Letters from Switzerland. 'The poem entitled "Mont Blanc" is written by the author of the two letters from Chamouni and Vevai. It was composed under the immediate impression of the deep and powerful feelings excited by

As we approached Bonneville through an avenue composed of a beautiful species of drooping poplar, we observed that the cornfields on each side were covered with inundation. Bonneville is a neat little town, with no conspicuous peculiarity, except the white towers of the prison, an extensive building overlooking the town. At Bonneville the Alps commence, one of which, clothed by forests, rises almost immediately from the opposite bank of the Arve.

From Bonneville to Cluses the road conducts through a spacious and fertile plain, surrounded on all sides by mountains, covered like those of Meillerie with forests of intermingled pine and chestnut. At Cluses the road turns suddenly to the right, following the Arve along the chasm, which it seems to have hollowed for itself among the perpendicular mountains. The scene assumes here a more savage and colossal character: the valley becomes narrow, affording no more space than is sufficient for the river and the road. The pines descend to the banks, imitating, with their irregular spires, the pyramidal crags, which lift themselves far above the regions of forest into the deep azure of the sky, and among the white dazzling clouds. The scene, at the distance of half-a-mile from Cluses, differs from that of Matlock in little else than in the immensity of its proportions, and in its untameable inaccessible solitude, inhabited only by the goats which we saw browsing on the rocks.

Near Maglans, within a league of each other, we saw two waterfalls. They were no more than mountain rivulets, but the height from which they fell, at least of twelve hundred feet, made them assume a character inconsistent with the smallness of their stream. The first fell from the overhanging brow of a black precipice on an

the objects which it attempts to describe; and as an undisciplined overflowing of the soul, rests its claim to approbation on an attempt to imitate the untamable wildness and inaccessible solemnity from which these feelings sprang.'" (Mrs. Shelley's notes to the Poems, for 1816.)



enormous rock, precisely resembling some colossal Egyptian statue of a female deity. It struck the head of the visionary image, and gracefully dividing there, fell from it in folds of foam more like a cloud than water, imitating a veil of the most exquisite woof. It then united, concealing the lower part of the statue, and hiding itself in a winding of its channel, burst into a deeper fall, and crossed our route in its path towards the Arve.

The other waterfall was more continuous and larger. The violence with which it fell made it look more like some shape which an exhalation had assumed, than like water, for it streamed beyond the mountain, which appeared dark behind it, as it might have appeared behind an evanescent cloud.

The character of the scenery continued the same until we arrived at St. Martin (called in the maps Sallanches), the mountains perpetually becoming more elevated, exhibiting at every turn of the road more craggy summits, loftier and wider extent of forests, darker and more deep recesses.

The following morning we proceeded from St. Martin, on mules, to Chamouni, accompanied by two guides. We proceeded, as we had done the preceding day, along the valley of the Arve, a valley surrounded on all sides by immense mountains, whose rugged precipices are intermixed on high with dazzling snow. Their bases were still covered with the eternal forests, which perpetually grew darker and more profound as we approached the inner regions of the mountains.

On arriving at a small village at the distance of a league from St. Martin, we dismounted from our mules, and were conducted by our guides to view a cascade. We beheld an immense body of water fall two hundred and fifty feet, dashing from rock to rock, and casting a spray which formed a mist around it, in the midst of which hung a multitude of sunbows, which faded or became unspeakably vivid, as the inconstant sun shone through the clouds. When we approached near to it, the rain of the spray reached us, and our clothes were wetted by the quick-falling but minute particles of water. The cataract fell from above into a deep craggy chasm at our feet, where, changing its character to that of a mountain stream, it pursued its course towards the Arve, roaring over the rocks that impeded its progress.

As we proceeded, our route still lay through the valley, or rather, as it had now become, the vast ravine, which is at once the couch and the creation of the terrible Arve. We ascended, winding between two mountains, whose immensity staggers the imagination. We crossed the path of a torrent, which three days since had descended from the thawing snow, and torn the road away.

We dined at Servoz, a little village, where there are lead and copper mines, and where we saw a cabinet of natural curiosities, like those of Keswick and Bethgelert. We saw in this cabinet some chamois' horns, and the horns of an exceedingly rare animal called the bouquetin, which inhabits the deserts of snow to the south of Mont Blanc: it is an animal of the stag kind; its horns weigh, at least twenty-seven English pounds. It is inconceivable how so small an animal could support so inordinate a weight. The horns are of a very peculiar conformation, being broad, massy, and pointed at its ends, and surrounded with a number of rings, which are supposed to afford an indication of its age: there were seventeen rings on the largest of these horns.

From Servoz three leagues remain to Chamouni—Mont Blanc was before us—the Alps, with their innumerable glaciers on high all around, closing in the complicated windings of the single vale—forests inexpressibly beautiful, but majestic in their beauty—intermingled beech and pine, and oak, overshadowed our road, or receded, whilst lawns of such verdure as I have never seen before, occupied these openings, and gradually became darker in their recesses. Mont Blanc was before us, but it was covered with cloud;

its base, furrowed with dreadful gaps, was seen above. Pinnacles of snow intolerably bright, part of the chain connected with Mont Blanc, shone through the clouds at intervals on high. A never knew-I never imaginedwhat mountains were before. The immensity of these aerial summits excited, when they suddenly burst upon the sight, a sentiment of ecstatic wonder, not unallied to And remember this was all one scene, it all pressed home to our regard and our imagination. Though it embraced a vast extent of space, the snowy pyramids which shot into the bright blue sky seemed to overhang our path; the ravine, clothed with gigantic pines, and black with its depth below, so deep that the very roaring of the untameable Arve, which rolled through it, could not be heard above—all was as much our own, as if we had been the creators of such impressions in the minds of others as now occupied our own. Nature was the poet, whose harmony held our spirits more breathless than that of the divinest. /

As we entered the valley of Chamouni (which in fact. may be considered as a continuation of those which we have followed from Bonneville and Cluses,) clouds hung upon the mountains at the distance perhaps of 6,000 feet from the earth, but so as effectually to conceal, not only Mont Blanc, but the other aiguilles, as they call them here. attached and subordinate to it. We were travelling along the valley, when suddenly we heard a sound as the burst of smothered thunder rolling above; yet there was something in the sound that told us it could not be thunder. Our guide hastily pointed out to us a part of the mountain opposite, from whence the sound came. It was an avalanche. We saw the smoke of its path among the rocks. and continued to hear at intervals the bursting of its fall. It fell on the bed of a torrent, which it displaced, and presently we saw its tawny-coloured waters also spread themselves over the ravine, which was their couch.

We did not, as we intended, visit the Glacier des Bossons

to-day, although it descends within a few minutes' walk of the road, wishing to survey it at least when unfatigued. We saw this glacier, which comes close to the fertile plain. as we passed. Its surface was broken into a thousand unaccountable figures; conical and pyramidical crystallizations, more than fifty feet in height, rise from its surface. and precipices of ice, of dazzling splendour, overhang the woods and meadows of the vale. This glacier winds upwards from the valley, until it joins the masses of frost from which it was produced above, winding through its own ravine like a bright belt flung over the black region of pines. There is more in all these scenes than mere magnitude of proportion: there is a majesty of outline; there is an awful grace in the very colours which invest these wonderful shapes—a charm which is peculiar to them, quite distinct even from the reality of their unutterable greatness.

July 24.

Yesterday morning we went to the source of the Arvei-It is about a league from this village; the river rolls forth impetuously from an arch of ice, and spreads itself in many streams over a vast space of the valley, ravaged and laid bare by its inundations. The glacier by which its waters are nourished, overhangs this cavern and the plain, and the forests of pine which surround it, with terrible precipices of solid ice. On the other side rises the immense glacier of Montanvert, fifty miles in extent. occupying a chasm among mountains of inconceivable height, and of forms so pointed and abrupt, that they seem to pierce the sky. From this glacier we saw, as we sat on a rock, close to one of the streams of the Arvei-ron, masses of ice detach themselves from on high, and rush with a loud dull noise into the vale. The violence of their fall turned them into powder, which flowed over the rocks in imitation of waterfalls, whose ravines they usurped and filled.

In the evening, I went with Ducrée, my guide, the only

tolerable person I have seen in this country, to visit the glacier of Bossons. This glacier, like that of Montanvert. comes close to the vale, overhanging the green meadows and the dark woods with the dazzling whiteness of its precipices and pinnacles, which are like spires of radiant crystal, covered with a network of frosted silver. glaciers flow perpetually into the valley, ravaging in their slow but irresistible progress the pastures and the forests which surround them, performing a work of desolation in ages, which a river of lava might accomplish in an hour. but far more irretrievably; for where the ice has once descended, the hardiest plant refuses to grow; if even, as in some extraordinary instances, it should recede after its progress has once commenced. The glaciers perpetually move onward, at the rate of a foot each day, with a motion that commences at the spot where, on the boundaries of perpetual congelation, they are produced by the freezing of the waters which arise from the partial melting of the eternal snows. They drag with them, from the regions whence they derive their origin, all the ruins of the mountains, enormous rocks, and immense accumulations of sand and stone. These are driven onwards by the irresistible stream of solid ice; and when they arrive at a declivity of the mountain, sufficiently rapid, roll down, I saw one of these rocks which had scattering ruin. descended in the spring (winter here is the season of silence and safety), which measured forty feet in every direction.

The verge of a glacier, like that of Bossons, presents the most vivid image of desolation that it is possible to conceive. No one dares to approach it; for the enormous pinnacles of ice which perpetually fall, are perpetually reproduced. The pines of the forest, which bound it at one extremity, are overthrown and shattered, to a wide extent, at its base. There is something inexpressibly dreadful in the aspect of the few branchless trunks, which, nearest to the ice rifts, still stand in the uprooted soil.

The meadows perish, overwhelmed with sand and stones. Within this last year, these glaciers have advanced three hundred feet into the valley. Saussure, the naturalist, says, that they have their periods of increase and decay: the people of the country hold an opinion entirely different; but as I judge, more probable. It is agreed by all, that the snow on the summit of Mont Blanc and the neighbouring mountains perpetually augments, and that ice, in the form of glaciers, subsists without melting in the valley of Chamouni during its transient and variable summer. If the snow which produces this glacier must augment, and the heat of the valley is no obstacle to the perpetual existence of such masses of ice as have already descended into it, the consequence is obvious; the glaciers must augment and will subsist, at least until they have overflowed this vale.

I will not pursue Buffon's sublime but gloomy theory —that this globe which we inhabit will, at some future period, be changed into a mass of frost by the encroachments of the polar ice, and of that produced on the most elevated points of the earth. Do you, who assert the supremacy of Ahriman, imagine him throned among these desolating snows, among these palaces of death and frost, so sculptured in this their terrible magnificence by the adamantine hand of necessity, and that he casts around him, as the first essays of his final usurpation, avalanches, torrents, rocks, and thunders, and above all these deadly glaciers, at once the proof and symbols of his reign; add to this, the degradation of the human species—who, in these regions, are half deformed or idiotic, and most of whom are deprived of anything that can excite interest This is part of the subject more mournful or admiration. and less sublime; but such as neither the poet nor the philosopher should disdain to regard.

This morning we departed, on the promise of a fine day, to visit the glacier of Montanvert. In that part where it fills a slanting valley, it is called the Sea of Ice. This

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valley is 950 toises, or 7,600 feet, above the level of the sea. We had not proceeded far before the rain began to fall, but we persisted until we had accomplished more than half of our journey, when we returned, wet through.

Chamouni,
July 25.

We have returned from visiting the glacier of Montanvert, or as it is called the Sea of Ice, a scene in truth of dizzying wonder. The path that winds to it along the side of a mountain, now clothed with pines, now intersected with snowy hollows, is wide and steep. The cabin of Montanvert is three leagues from Chamouni, half of which distance is performed on mules, not so sure-footed but that on the first day the one which I rode fell in what the guides call a mauvais pas, so that I narrowly escaped being precipitated down the mountain. We passed over a hollow covered with snow, down which vast stones are accustomed to roll. One had fallen the preceding day, a little time after we had returned: our guides desired us to pass quickly, for it is said that sometimes the least sound will accelerate their descent. We arrived at Montanvert. however, safe. 1

On all sides precipitous mountains, the abodes of unrelenting frost, surround this vale: their sides are banked

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;In the visitors' album at the Chartreuse at Montanvert Shelley observed that his last predecessor had written some platitudes about 'Nature and Nature's God.' The author of 'Queen Mab' took up the pen, and signed his name with this definition εἶμι φιλάνθρωπος δημωράτικός τ'ἄθεός τε. The spelling, at which Mr. Swinburne expresses the horror of a Hellenist, is copied literatim. Some one added μωρός; and that was possibly the most sensible performance of the three." (Mr. W. M. Rossetti's "Memoir of Shelley," p. 64.) "Mr. Swinburne is said to have copied the inscription from a leaf of the Travellers' book bound up in a copy of 'The Revolt of Islam' in the possession of the late Lord Houghton. Byron on discovering the entry in the visitors' book is reported to have defaced the words, in the presence of Lord Broughton. ("Italy; Remarks made on Several Visits," Vol. I, pp. 1, 2.)

up with ice and snow, broken, heaped high, and exhibiting terrific chasms. The summits are sharp and naked pinnacles, whose overhanging steepness will not even permit snow to rest upon them. Lines of dazzling ice occupy here and there their perpendicular rifts, and shine through the driving vapours with inexpressible brilliance: they pierce the clouds like things not belonging to this earth. The vale itself is filled with a mass of undulating ice, and has an ascent sufficiently gradual even to the remotest abysses of these horrible deserts. It is only half a league (about two miles) in breadth, and seems much less. exhibits an appearance as if frost had suddenly bound up the waves and whirlpools of a mighty torrent. We walked some distance upon its surface. The waves are elevated about twelve or fifteen feet from the surface of the mass. which is intersected by long gaps of unfathomable depth, the ice of whose sides is more beautifully azure than the In these regions everything changes, and is in motion. This vast mass of ice has one general progress, which ceases neither day nor night; it breaks and bursts for ever: some undulations sink while others rise: it is never the The echo of rocks, or of the ice and snow which fall from their overhanging precipices, or roll from their aerial summits, scarcely ceases for one moment. would think that Mont Blanc, like the god of the Stoics, was a vast animal, and that the frozen blood for ever circulated through his stony veins.

We dined (M[ary], C[lare], and I) on the grass, in the open air, surrounded by this scene. The air is piercing and clear. We returned down the mountain sometimes encompassed by the driving vapours, sometimes cheered by the sunbeams, and arrived at our inn by seven o'clock.

Montalegre, July 28.

The next morning we returned through the rain to St. Martin. The scenery had lost something of its immensity,

thick clouds hanging over the highest mountains; but visitings of sunlight intervened between the showers, and the blue sky shone between the accumulated clouds of snowy whiteness which brought them; the dazzling mountains sometimes glittered through a chasm of the clouds above our heads, and all the charm of its grandeur remained. We repassed Pont Pellisier, a wooden bridge over the Arve, and the ravine of the Arve. We repassed the pine forests which overhang the defile, the château of St. Michael; a haunted ruin, built on the edge of a precipice, and shadowed over by the eternal forest. We repassed the vale of Servoz, a vale more beautiful, because more luxuriant, than that of Chamouni. Mont Blanc forms one of the sides of this vale also, and the other is inclosed by an irregular amphitheatre of enormous mountains, one of which is in ruins, and fell fifty years ago into the higher part of the valley; the smoke of its fall was seen in Piedmont, and people went from Turin to investigate whether a volcano had not burst from among the Alps. It continued falling many days, spreading, with the shock and thunder of its ruin, consternation into the neighbouring In the evening we arrived at St. Martin. vales. next day we wound through the valley, which I have described before, and arrived in the evening at our home.

We have bought some specimens of minerals and plants, and two or three crystal seals, at Mont Blanc, to preserve the remembrance of having approached it. There is a cabinet of histoire naturelle at Chamouni, just as at Keswick, Matlock, and Clifton; the proprietor of which is the very vilest specimen of that vile species of quack, that, together with the whole army of aubergistes and guides, and indeed the entire mass of the population, subsist on the weakness and credulity of travellers as leeches subsist on the sick. The most interesting of my purchases is a large collection of all the seeds of rare alpine plants, with their names written upon the outside of the papers that contain them. These I mean to colonise in my garden in England, and to

permit you to make what choice you please from them. They are companions which the Celandine—the classic Celandine—need not despise; they are as wild and more daring than he, and will tell him tales of things even as touching and sublime as the gaze of a vernal poet.

Did I tell you that there are troops of wolves among these mountains? In the winter they descend into the valleys, which the snow occupies six months of the year, and devour everything that they can find out of doors. A wolf is more powerful than the fiercest and strongest dog. There are no bears in these regions. We heard, when we were in Lucerne, that they were occasionally found in the forests which surround that lake.

Adieu. S.

## JOURNAL

GENEVA, SUNDAY, 18 August, 1816.

See Apollo's Sexton, who tells us many mysteries of his trade. We talk of Ghosts. Neither Lord Byron nor M[atthew] G[regory] L[ewis] seem to believe in them; and they both agree, in the very face of reason, that none could believe in ghosts without believing in God. I do not think that all the persons who profess to discredit these visitations, really discredit them; or, if they do in the daylight, are not admonished, by the approach of loneliness and midnight, to think more respectfully of the world of shadows.

Lewis recited a poem, which he had composed at the request of the Princess of Wales. The Princess of Wales,

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775-1818), called "Apollo's Sexton" in "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," but better known now as "Monk Lewis" on account of his notorious novel, "Ambrosio, or the Monk," 1795, beloved by Shelley as a boy. Lewis, educated at Westminster, Christ Church, Oxford, and Weimar, was a pleasant, sociable man, and a friend of the Prince Regent, Byron and Scott, and author of "The Castle Spectre," 1798, "The Bravo of Venice," 1804, and other gruesome plays and novels. In 1795 he became a member of Parliament, and in 1812 inherited two large estates in Jamaica. He died on a voyage from the West Indies, where he had been endeavouring to ameliorate the condition of his slaves.

he premised, was not only a believer in ghosts, but in magic and witchcraft, and asserted, that prophecies made in her youth had been accomplished since. The tale was of a lady in Germany.

This lady, Minna, had been exceedingly attached to her husband, and they had made a vow that the one who died first should return after death to visit the other as a ghost. She was sitting one day alone in her chamber, when she heard an unusual sound of footsteps on the stairs. The door opened, and her husband's spectre, gashed with a deep wound across the forehead, and in military habiliments, entered. She appeared startled at the apparition: and the ghost told her, that when he should visit her in future, she would hear a passing bell toll, and these words distinctly uttered close to her ear, "Minna, I am here." On inquiry, it was found that her husband had fallen in battle on the very day she was visited by the vision. The intercourse between the ghost and the woman continued for some time, until the latter laid aside all terror. and indulged herself in the affection which she had felt for him while living. One evening she went to a ball, and permitted her thoughts to be alienated by the attentions of a Florentine gentleman, more witty, more graceful. and more gentle, as it appeared to her, than any person she had ever seen. As he was conducting her through the dance, a death-bell tolled. Minna, lost in the fascination of the Florentine's attentions, disregarded, or did not hear the sound. A second peal, louder and more deep, startled the whole company, when Minna heard the ghost's accustomed whisper, and raising her eyes, saw in an opposite mirror the reflection of the ghost, standing over her. She is said to have died of terror.

Lewis told four other stories—all grim. 1

Thursday, 29th August.-We depart from Geneva, at

In the preface to Mrs. Shelley's "Frankenstein" (1818) (which Shelley wrote for her), she says "I passed the summer of 1816 in the

nine in the morning. The Swiss are very slow drivers; besides which we have Jura to mount; we, therefore, go on a very few posts to-day. The scenery is very beautiful, and we see many magnificent views. We pass Les Rousses, which, when we crossed in the spring, was deep in snow. We sleep at Morrez.

Friday, 30th.—We leave Morrez, and arrive in the evening at Dôle, after a various day.

Saturday, 31st.—From Dôle we go to Rouvray, where we sleep. We pass through Dijon; and, after Dijon, take a different route than that which we followed on the two other occasions. The scenery has some beauty and singularity in the line of the mountains which surround the Val de Suzon. Low, yet precipitous hills, covered with vines or woods, and with streams, meadows, and poplars, at the bottom.

Sunday, September 1st.—Leave Rouvray, pass Auxerre, where we dine; a pretty town, and arrive at two o'clock, at Villeneuve le Guiard.

Monday, 2nd.—From Villeneuve le Guiard, we arrive at Fontainebleau. The scenery around this palace is wild and even savage. The soil is full of rocks, apparently granite, which on every side break through the ground. The hills are low, but precipitous and rough. The valleys,

environs of Geneva. The season was cold and rainy, and in the evenings we [presumably Shelley, Mary, Clare Clairmont, Byron, 'Monk' Lewis, and Polidori—Byron's travelling physician] crowded around a blazing wood fire, and occasionally amused ourselves with some German stories of ghosts, which happened to fall into our hands. These tales excited in us a playful desire for imitation. Two other friends (a tale from the pen of one of whom would be far more acceptable to the public than anything I can ever hope to produce) and myself agreed to write each a story, founded on some supernatural occurrence. The weather, however, suddenly became serene; and my two friends left me on a journey among the Alps, and lost, in the magnificent scenes which they present, all memory of their ghostly visions. The following tale ['Frankenstein'] is the only one which has been completed." Other stories, however, were written—Byron's "fragment printed with 'Mazeppa,'" and "The Vampire," by Dr. Polidori, based on Byron's sketch.

equally wild, are shaded by forests. In the midst of this wilderness stands the palace. Some of the apartments equal in magnificence anything that I could conceive. The roofs are fretted with gold, and the canopies of velvet. From Fontainebleau we proceed to Versailles, in the route towards Rouen. We arrive at Versailles at nine.

Tuesday, 3rd.—We saw the palace and gardens of Versailles and le Grand et Petit Trianon. They surpass Fontainebleau. The gardens are full of statues, vases, fountains, and colonnades. In all that essentially belongs to a garden they are extraordinarily deficient. orangery is a stupid piece of expense. There was one orange-tree, not apparently so old, sown in 1442. We saw only the gardens and the theatre at the Petit Trianon. The gardens are in the English taste, and extremely pretty. The Grand Trianon was open. It is a summer palace, light, yet magnificent. We were unable to devote the time it deserved to the gallery of paintings here. a portrait of Madame de la Vallière, the repentant mistress of Louis XIV. She was melancholy, but exceedingly beautiful, and was represented as holding a skull, and sitting before a crucifix, pale, and with downcast eyes.

We then went to the great palace. The apartments are unfurnished; but even with this disadvantage, are more magnificent than those of Fontainebleau. They are lined with marble of various colours, whose pedestals and capitals are gilt, and the ceiling is richly gilt with compartments of painting. The arrangement of these materials has in them, it is true, something effeminate and royal. Could a Grecian architect have commanded all the labour and money which was expended on Versailles, he would have produced a fabric which the whole world has never equalled. We saw the Hall of Hercules, the balcony where the King and the Queen exhibited themselves to the Parisian mob. The people who showed us through the palace, obstinately refused to say anything about the Revolution. We could not even find out in which chamber

the rioters of the 10th August found the king. We saw the Salle d'Opéra, where are now preserved the portraits of the kings. There was the race of the House of Orleans. with the exception of Egalité, all extremely handsome. There was Madame de Maintenon, and beside her a beautiful little girl, the daughter of La Vallière. The pictures had been hidden during the Revolution. We saw the library of Louis XVI. The librarian had held some place in the ancient court near Marie-Antoinette. He returned with the Bourbons, and was waiting for some better situation. He showed us a book which he had preserved during the Revolution. It was a book of paintings, representing a tournament at the Court of Louis XIV; and it seemed that the present desolation of France, the fury of the injured people, and all the horrors to which they abandoned themselves, stung by their long sufferings, flowed naturally enough from expenditures so immense, as must have been demanded by the magnificence of this tournament. The vacant rooms of this palace imaged well the hollow show of monarchy. After seeing these things we departed towards Hâvre, and slept at Auxerre.

Wednesday, 4th.—We passed through Rouen, and saw the cathedral, an immense specimen of the most costly and magnificent gothic. The interior of the church disappoints. We saw the burial-place of Richard Cœur de Lion and his brother. The altar of the church is a fine piece of marble. Sleep at Yvetot.

Thursday, 5th.—We arrived at Hâvre, and wait for the packet—wind contrary. 1 S.

¹ The Shelleys left Havre on Sept. 7 and arrived at Portsmouth on Sept. 8, after a passage of twenty-four hours. Shelley went to London, while Mary, Clare, William, and the Swiss nurse Elise, remained at Bath. Shelley and Mary afterwards visited Peacock at Great Marlow, Sept. 20-24—"a period," says Peacock, "of unbroken sunshine. The neighbourhood of Marlow abounds with beautiful walks; the river scenery is also fine. We took every day a long excursion either on foot or on the water. He took a house there, partly, perhaps principally, for the sake of being near me. While it was being fitted and furnished, he resided at Bath."—Fraser's Magazine, Jan., 1860.

## XII. MARLOW-"THE REVOLT OF ISLAM"

## September 29, 1816—March 12, 1818

A Byron Calumny—Helping Godwin again—Correcting "Childe Harold"—Suicide of Fanny Imlay—Leigh Hunt—His article on Shelley, Reynolds and Keats—"An Object of Compassion"—"Rimini"—Peacock's Novels—Suicide of Harriet Shelley—Her Life after the Separation—Hunt's Sustaining Friendship—Shelley Marries Mary—Godwin's "Evidence"—Shelley Refused the Custody of his Children—Birth of Allegra—"The Hermit of Marlow"—Letters to Leigh Hunt—Coleridge's "Sybilline Leaves"—"Frankenstein"—Horace Smith—"Laon and Cythna"—Mary's Book Refused—Shelley in London again—Proposed visit to Italy—Allegra—"Laon and Cythna" Explained—"An Address to the People"—Ill-health—Malthus—Baxter and Booth—"Revolt of Islam"—Ollier's Refusal—"History of a Six Weeks' Tour"—Ollier's "Altham"—Last Days in England.

#### 241. To LORD BYRON

[5 ABBEY CHURCHYARD], BATH, September 29, 1816.

## (Fragment)

... I saw Kinnaird, and had a long talk with him. He informed me that Lady Byron was now in perfect health, that she was living with your sister. I felt much pleasure from this intelligence. I consider the latter part of it as affording a decisive contradiction to the only important calumny that ever was advanced against you. On this ground, at least, it will become the world hereafter to be silent. . .

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Hon. Douglas James William Kinnaird (1788-1830), Byron's friend, younger brother of Charles, eighth Baron Kinnaird, and a member of Ransom's, where Byron banked.

# 242. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

5 ABBEY CHURCHYARD, BATH, [Postmark, Bath], October 2, 1816.

I am exceedingly sorry to disappoint you again. I cannot send you £300, because I have not £300 to send. I enclose within a few pounds, the wrecks of my late negociation with my father. <sup>1</sup>

In truth I see no hope of my attaining speedily to such a situation of affairs as should enable me to discharge my engagements towards you. My father's main design, in all the transactions which I have had with him has gone to tie me up from all such irregular applications of my fortune. In this he might have failed had he not been seconded by Longdill, and between them both I have been encompassed with such toils as were impossible to be evaded. When I look back I do not see what else I could have done than submit: what is called firmness would have, I sincerely believe, left me in total poverty.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley had promised to send Godwin £300 on the expectation of receiving a considerable sum from his father to pay certain debts contracted on the faith of a successful issue of his negotiations of the spring. But these expectations were not realised, and Shelley was therefore unable to fulfil his promise to Godwin, who was sorely disappointed, having given a bill on demand for that amount to an exacting creditor. Godwin's novel, "Mandeville," was progressing favourably, but everything depended on his tranquillity of mind. He had told Shelley in August that the book would be better than "St. Leon," and would take place, next after "Caleb Williams."
"I am in good tone and anxious to proceed. The tone I must confess is kept up with considerable effort, and is only preserved by a faith that relates to you, and a confident hope that the relief so long expected from your quarter will at length be fully realized. If I am disappointed in this, if my affairs in the meantime go to a wreck that can no longer be resisted, then the novel will never be Such an appeal as this was particularly moving to Shelley, who prized inordinately Godwin's imaginative work; but to fulfil his engagements was not in his power. Such money as he had, however, he sent without delay."—Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 46.

In the present instance I expected to have saved 5 or £600; 300 of which, as I informed you, were devoted to you. I have saved only 248, my father having made an indispensable condition that all my debts should be paid. I do not think that anything can be done with Bryant. Turner, had he chosen, might have managed the affair with Dawe. But nothing is more evident than that this person has some malignant passions which he seeks to gratify at my expense and at yours.—I do not indeed know what can be done, except through private confidence.

Shall I conclude this unwelcome letter by assuring you of the continuance of those dispositions concerning your welfare which I have so often expressed? Shall I say that I am ready to co-operate in whatever plan may be devised for your benefit.

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
WILLIAM GODWIN, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill,
London.

243. TO JOHN MURRAY (London)

No. 5 ABBEY CHURCHYARD, BATH, Oct[ober] 2, 1816.

MY DEAR SIR,

Be so kind as to address the proofs of "Childe Harold," when you print it, to me according to the above address. I shall remain here probably during the whole winter, and you may depend on no attention being spared on my part to render the proofs as correct as possible.

I imagine that Lord Byron is anxious that the poem should be committed to the press as soon as possible; the time of publication of course depends upon your own discretion. For myself, I cannot but confess the anxiety I feel that the public should have an early opportunity of confirming—I will not say by a more extensive, but

by a profounder species of approbation—the superior merit which private judgment has already assigned to it. 

I have the honour to be, Dear Sir,

Your very obliged obedient servant,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

244. To John Murray (London)

5 ABBEY CHURCHYARD, BATH,<sup>2</sup> Oct[ober] 30, 1816.

DEAR SIR.

I observe with surprise that you have announced the appearance of "Childe Harold" and "Prisoner of Chillon" for so early a date as the 23rd of November. I should not do my duty to Lord Byron, who entrusted me with the MSS. of his Poems, if I did not remind you that it was his particular desire that I should revise the proofs before publication. When I had the pleasure of seeing you in London, I think I stated his Lordship's wishes on this subject to you, remarking at the same time that his wishes did not arise from a persuasion that I should pay more

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¹ Shelley had brought the MS. of "Childe Harold," canto iii, with him from Switzerland, and although Byron had sent another copy to John Murray, he desired that in some particulars the MS. entrusted to Shelley should be preferred. In a letter from Byron to Murray, from Diodati, Geneva, Sept. 29, 1816, he says: "with regard to the price, [for "Childe Harold"] I have fixed none, but left it to Mr. Kinnaird, Mr. Shelley and yourself to arrange. Of course, they would do their best; and as to yourself, I knew you would make no difficulties." Shelley occupied himself with correcting Byron's proofs while at Bath, and the book was published before the end of the year.

<sup>\*</sup> Early in October, Fanny Imlay had suddenly left Godwin's house, and had travelled through Bath and Bristol to Swansea. She did not visit Mary at Bath, but wrote from Bristol in such an alarming tone that Shelley immediately started for that town, but was unable to obtain any tidings of her. On Fanny's arrival at the Mackworth Arms Inn, Swansea, on the night of Oct. 9, she retired to rest, and she was found the next morning lying dead, with a bottle of laudanum beside her. Shelley went again on the 10th to Bristol, but it was not until two days later that he brought Mary the news of her unhappy sister's death.

attention to its accuracy than any other person whom you might select; but because he communicated it to me immediately after composition, and did me the honour to entrust to my discretion, as to whether certain particular expressions should be retained or changed. All that was required was that I should see proofs before they were finally committed to the press. I wrote to you some weeks since, to this purpose. I have not received any answer.

Some mistake must have arisen, in what manner I cannot well conceive. You must have forgotten or misunderstood my explanations; by some accident you cannot have received my letter. Do me the favour of writing by return of Post, and informing me what intelligence I am to give Lord Byron respecting the commission with which I was entrusted.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

P.S.—I remark that it is advertised as "The Prisoners of Chillon." Lord Byron wrote it "Prisoner."

245. To J. J. PASCHOUD (Geneva)

12 NEW BOND ST[REET], BATH, Nov[ember] 9, 1816.

(Fragment)

[Directing the forwarding of some books.]

... The translation which I have engaged to make of "Political Justice" shall not be delayed, if I understand from you that you continue to wish that it should be done...

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed to]
Monsieur Paschoud,
Librarie,
Geneve, en Suisse.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This is the address where Clare Clairmont was lodging.

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## 246. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

Ватн, November 24, 1816.

SIR,

I lament exceedingly that you supposed it possible, or even esteem it right, that I should submit to such a proposal as Dawe's. I lament that you could even permit me to accede to such an imposture. You will therefore be disappointed at my refusal—you will think me insensible, unjust, insincere. I regret that I must inspire you with such feelings, but I am persuaded that it is my duty not to submit to terms of so exorbitant a nature.

The conclusion of your letter adds to the reluctance of my refusal, but it does not render it the less firm.

I enclose a letter to Hume written principally for the purpose of being shown to Dawe. Possibly he will change his tone when he finds his tricks ineffectual. For nothing is more evident than that all he says are the excuses and subterfuges of a money-broker.

You will observe from the rough calculation in my letter to H. that he asks very nearly 25 per cent., and that I should throw away not £1,000, but £2,800.

The principles which pronounce on the injustice of my hereditary rights, are such, as rightly limited and understood, are far dearer to me than life.

But these principles teach me to set a high value on the power with which their violation may one day intrust me. They instruct me to be more, not less, cautious in alienating it.

Indeed, it would be no inconsiderable evil if such a remorseless, mean-spirited wretch as Dawe were to be presented with £2,800!

My refusal is therefore firm.—But depend on it that what could be done in 1814 could be done, and that on even better terms, now. Do not despair. Even Dawe



may retract and relent, or someone be found less exorbitant. I applied about a fortnight since to a quarter from which I had formerly obtained a supply, but have not received an answer.

The letters have arrived so late to-day, that I am obliged to write in haste if I would reply by return of post.

[Addressed outside],
W. Godwin, Esq.,
41 Skinner Street,
Snow Hill,
London,

# 247. To LEIGH · HUNT (Hampstead)

MARLOW, Dec[ember] 8, 1816.

I have received both your letters yesterday and to-day, and I accuse myself that my precipitancy should have given you the vexation you express. Your letters, however, give me unmingled pleasure, and that of a very exalted kind. I have not in all my intercourse with mankind experienced sympathy and kindness with which I have been so affected or which my whole being has so sprung forward to meet and to return. My communications with you shall be such as to attempt to deserve this

On Dec. 1st Shelley received at Bath a letter from Leigh Hunt, to which this letter is obviously a reply. In Mary's journal on December 6, she says: "Letter from Shelley; he has gone to visit Leigh Hunt," but he went to Peacock's house at Marlow first, from which this letter was written. Shelley was staying here while seeking for a house, and Mary, writing from Bath to Marlow on December 6, gives him some advice on the subject. "But in the choice of a residence, dear Shelley," she says, "pray be not too quick or attach yourself too much to one spot. Ah! were you indeed a winged Elf, and could soar over mountains and seas, and could pounce on the little spot! A house with a lawn, near a river or lake, noble trees or divine mountains—that should be our little mouse-hole to retire to. But never mind this; give me a garden, and absentia Claire, and I will thank my love for many favours."

I was exceedingly delighted. The story of the poem has an interest of a very uncommon and irresistible character,—though it appeared to me that you have subjected yourself to some rules in the composition which fetter your genius, and diminish the effect of the conceptions. Though in one sense I am no poet, I am not so insensible to poetry as to read "Rimini" unmoved.—When will you send me your other poems?

Peacock is the author of "Headlong Hall,"—he expresses himself much pleased by your approbation—indeed, it is approbation which many would be happy to acquire! He is now writing "Melincourt" in the same style, but, as I judge, far superior to "Headlong Hall." He is an amiable man of great learning, considerable taste, an enemy to every shape of tyranny and superstitious imposture. I am now on the point of taking the lease of a house among these woody hills, these sweet green fields, and this delightful river—where, if I should ever have the happiness of seeing you, I will introduce you to Peacock. I have nothing to do in London, but I am most strongly tempted to come, only to spend one evening with you; and if I can I will, though I am anxious as soon as my employments here are finished to return to Bath.

Last of all—you are in distress for a few hundred Pounds; <sup>2</sup>—I saw Lord Byron at Geneva, who expressed to me the high esteem which he felt for your character and worth.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Besides the boyish collection of "Juvenilia, 1801, the following volumes of Leigh Hunt's poetry had been published, "The Feast of the Poets," 1814, and 1815, "The Descent of Liberty, a Mask," 1815, and "The Story of Rimini," 1816.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> In Mary's letter of December 6, quoted above, she there alludes to a sum of money that Shelley had already sent to Hunt. "Leigh Hunt has not written. I would advise a letter addressed to him at the *Examiner* office, if there be no answer to-morrow. He may not be at the Vale of Health, for it is odd that he does not acknowledge the receipt of so large a sum." Prof. Dowden suggests that this money may have been conveyed to Hunt either for his private wants, or as a contribution to the relief of the distressed poor in Spitalfields, on whose behalf Hunt had pleaded in the *Examiner*."—" Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 61.

I cannot doubt that he would hesitate in contributing at least £100 towards extricating one whom he regards so highly from a state of embarrassment. I have heard from him lately, dated from Milan; and as he has entrusted me with one or two commissions, I do not doubt but my letter would reach him by the direction he gave me. If you feel any delicacy on the subject, may I write to him about it? My letter shall express that zeal for your interests which I truly feel, and which would not confine itself to those barren protestations if I had the smallest superfluity.

My friend accepts your *interest* and is contented to be a Hebrew for your sake. But a request is made in return which in courtesy cannot be refused. There is some little literary luxury, some enjoyment of taste or fancy you have refused yourself, because you have not felt, through the difficulty of your situation, that you were entitled to indulge yourself in it. You are entreated,—and a refusal would give more pain than you are willing to inflict—to employ the enclosed in making yourself a present of this luxury, that may remind you of this not unfriendly contest, which has conferred a value on £5 which I believe it never had before.

Adieu,

Most affectionately yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

I will send you an "Alastor."
[Addressed outside],
LEIGH HUNT, Esq.,
Vale of Health,

Hampstead, Near London.

248. To Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (Bath)

London, December 15 [16], 1816<sup>1</sup>.

I have spent a day, my beloved, of somewhat agonizing

<sup>1</sup> Shelley returned to Bath on Dec. 14, from his visit to Leigh Hunt at Hampstead, and was much pleased with his new friend. On the day following he received the terrible tidings of Harriet

sensations, such as the contemplation of vice and folly and hard-heartedness, exceeding all conception, must produce. Leigh Hunt has been with me all day, and his delicate and tender attentions to me, his kind speeches of you, have sustained me against the weight of the horror of this event.

The children I have not got. I have seen Longdill, who recommends proceeding with the utmost caution and resoluteness; he seems interested. I told him I was under contract of marriage to you, and he said that, in such an event, all pretence to detain the children would cease. Hunt said very delicately that this would be soothing intelligence to you. Yes, my only hope, my darling love,

Shelley's suicide. After her separation from Shelley, Harriet had lived for some time at her father's house in Chapel Street. Mary writes in her diary in April, 1815, "We hear that Harriet has left her father's house," and shortly afterwards there is a record of two visits paid to her by Shelley. But in June, 1816, she addressed a letter to Mr. Newton from 23 Chapel Street, from which it would seem that she was still on good terms with her family. It has been stated that her father's door was shut against her by order of her sister. In November Shelley had applied to Thomas Hookham for news of Harriet, but in vain. Her last lodgings were at a house in Queen Street, Brompton, from which place she disappeared on Nov. 9th, and about a month later, on Dec. 15th, Hookham wrote to Shelley to say that her body had been taken out of the Serpentine on Dec. 10: that little information respecting her was laid before the jury at the coroner's inquest, and that her name had been given as that of Harriet Smith. He also mentioned that had she lived a little longer she would have given birth to a child. Shelley was deeply shocked at this awful calamity. Leigh Hunt, who was with him at this time, says "he never forgot it. For a time it tore his being to pieces." Shelley did not, however, regard himself as responsible for Harriet's tragic end. In writing to Southey some years later, he said: "I take God to witness, if such a Being is now regarding both you and me, and I pledge myself, if we meet, as perhaps you expect, before Him after death, to repeat the same in His presence—that you accuse me wrongfully. I am innocent of ill, either done or intended." Although Shelley had parted from his wife, he had not only made ample provision for her and his children, but had kept in touch with her movements. On the day that he received the news from Hookham, he went to London to claim his two children; he could not, however, have arrived till the evening, so that this letter must have been dated 15th instead of 16th by mistake.

this will be one among the innumerable benefits which you will have bestowed upon me, and which will still be inferior in value to the greatest of benefits—yourself. It is through you that I can entertain without despair the recollection of the horrors of unutterable villainy that led to this dark, dreadful death. I am to hear to-morrow from Desse<sup>1</sup> whether or no I am to engage in a contest for the children. At least it is consoling to know that its termination in your nominal union with me—that after having blessed me with a life, a world of real happiness—mere form appertaining to you will not be barren of good. . .

Everything tends to prove, however, that beyond the shock of so hideous a catastrophe having fallen on a human being once so nearly connected with me, there would in any case have been little to regret. Hookham, Longdill, every one, does me full justice; bears testimony to the upright spirit and liberality of my conduct to her. There is but one voice in condemnation of the detestable Westbrooks. If they should dare to bring it before Chancery, a scene of such fearful horror would be unfolded as would cover them with scorn and shame.

How is Claire? I do not tell her, but I may tell you how deeply I am interested in her safety. I need not recommend her to your care. Give her any kind message from me, and calm her spirits as well as you can. I do not ask you to calm your own.

I am well in health though somewhat faint and agitated; but the affectionate attentions shown me by Hunt have been sustainers and restoratives more than I can tell. Do you, dearest and best, seek happiness—where it ought to reside—in your own pure and perfect bosom; in the thoughts of how dear and how good you are to me; how wise and how extensively beneficial you are perhaps destined to become.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Westbrook's attorney.

Remember my poor babes, Ianthe and Charles. How tender and dear a mother they will find in you—darling William, too! My eyes overflow with tears. To-morrow I will write again.

Your own affectionate Shelley.

# 249. To CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (Bath)

London, December 30, 1816.

DEAREST CLARE,

Your letter to-day relieved me from a weight of painful anxiety. Thank you, too, my kind girl for not expressing much of what you must feel, the loneliness and the low spirits which arise from being entirely left. Nothing could be more provoking than to find all this unnecessary. However, they will now be satisfied and quiet.

We cannot come to-morrow, there being no inside place in any of the coaches, or in either of the mails. I have secured a place for Wednesday (January 1, 1817)—the day following that on which you will receive this letter—so that you will infallibly see us on that evening. I may say that it was by a most fortunate chance that I secured the places that I did.

The ceremony, 1 so magical in its effects, was undergone this morning at St. Mildred's Church in the City. Mrs. G[odwin] and G[odwin] were both present, and appeared to feel no little satisfaction. Indeed Godwin throughout has shown the most polished and courteous attentions to me and Mary. He seems to think no kindness too great in compensation for what has passed. I confess I am not entirely

<sup>1</sup> Shelley's marriage to Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, on the morning of December 30, 1816, the date of this letter.

deceived by this, though I cannot make my vanity wholly insensible to certain attentions paid in a manner studiously flattering. Mrs. G. presents herself to me in her real attributes of affectation, prejudice and heartless pride. Towards her, I confess I never feel an emotion of anything but antipathy. Her sweet daughter is very dear to me.

We left the Hunts yesterday morning, and spent the evening at Skinner Street, not unpleasantly. We had a bed in the neighbourhood and breakfasted with them before the marriage. Very few inquiries have been made of you, and those not of a nature to show that their suspicions have been alarmed. Indeed, all is safe there.

I write to Clairmont by to-day's post, inclosing him £20. So that you see our expected advantage from added income this quarter comes to very little. Do not answer our letter, as we shall be on our way to you before it can reach London. The G.'s give the most singular account of Mrs. Boinville, etc.

I will not tell you how dreadfully melancholy Skinner Street appears with all its associations. The most horrid thought is how people can be merry there! But I am resolved to overcome such sensations. If I do not destroy them I may be myself destroyed.

The Baxters, we hear, have suddenly lost all their fortune, and are reduced to the lowest poverty.

Adieu, my dear. Keep up your spirits and manage your health till we come back. It will be Wednesday evening at nine o'clock. Adieu, my dear—kiss Willy and yourself for me.

Ever affectionately yours.

P. B. SHELLEY.

Mary can't write, being all day with Mrs. G.

[Addressed outside],
Mrs. CLAIRMONT,
12 New Bond Street, Bath.

# 250. To Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (Bath)

London, January 11, 1816 [error for 1817].

MY DEAR LOVE.

I relate to you all that I have learned and all that has happened first. I saw Longdill early this morning, and have spent the whole day at his chambers. From him I learned that, after receiving notice from Desse of Chancery proceedings, he had made himself acquainted with the law of the point. The only manner in which I could get at the children in the common course of law is by habeas corpus, and that supposes a delay of some weeks. You will see that the whole thing must be decided in Chancery before that time, and that if I could succeed at common law, my situation would be still the same with respect to Chancery, and that possession would in no manner ameliorate, but rather the contrary, my situation. Their process is the most insidiously malignant that can be conceived. They have filed a bill to say that I published "Queen Mab," that I avow myself to be an Atheist and a republican, with some other imputations of an infamous nature. This, by Chancery law, I must deny or admit upon oath, and then it seems that it rests in the mere discretion of the Chancellor to decide whether those are fit grounds for refusing me my children. They cannot have them at any rate; my father or my nearest relations are the persons whom the Chancellor will intrust with them, if they must be denied me. therefore sheer revenge. If I admit myself, or if Chancery decides that I ought not to have the children because I am an infidel: then the W[estbrook]s will make that decision a basis for a criminal information or common libel attack.

But there is hopes by watchful resistance that the whole of this detestable conspiracy will be overthrown. For if the Chancellor should decide not to hear their cause; and if an answer on oath is so convincing as to effect this, they are defeated. They do not tell Harriet's story, I mean the circumstances of her death, in their allegations against me.—They evidently [would]<sup>1</sup> but that it makes against themselves. They attack you and Godwin by stating that I became acquainted with you whilst living with Harriet, and that Godwin is the author of "Political Justice," and other impious and seditious writings.

I learnt just now from Godwin that he has evidence that Harriet was unfaithful to me four months before I left England with you. If we can succeed in establishing this, our connection will receive an additional sanction. and plea be overborne. On the 19th the Chancellor begins to sit, and it must be decided instantly—from the nature of the case. I know not when, or whether at all, before that day I can return to Bath. How painful in these difficult, and in one sense tremendous circumstances it is to me to be deprived of the counsel of your judgment and the consolation of your dear presence! I must remain in London—I must attend to every, the minutest stage of the answer which is to be drawn up on my side. My story is what I have to tell. My evidence and my witnesses must be collected in the short space of five days. Besides I must be present. How much depends on this! Almost all besides that inviolable happiness which whilst you and your affection remains to me, can never pass away, is suspended perhaps on the issue of this trial-2

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The word 'would' seems to have been omitted."

<sup>\*</sup> Shelley was at Bath on Jan. 3, 1817, as he addressed a note to his bankers on that date from 5 Abbey Churchyard, but early in the month he again left Mary and Clare Clairmont and proceeded to London, his object being to consult with his lawyers regarding the case that was to come on shortly for hearing in the Court of Chancery respecting the custody of his children by Harriet, Ianthe Eliza and Charles Bysshe. The plaintiffs in the case were the children, who, at the time of their mother's death, were in the care of a clergyman at Warwick. The defendants comprised John Westbrook and his daughter Eliza, Mr. Higham, Mr. Farthing Beauchamp (whom Eliza

## 251. To Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (Bath)

London, [? January, 1817.]

Cheer up, my beloved Mary; I have firm friends here. I am not, as might have happened once, to be oppressed in secrecy and solitude. Depend, too, on the utmost foresight and caution to be used on my part. I am to attend a consultation of counsel early on Monday morning.

How is sweetest babe? How do his fair blue eyes look to-day? Kiss him tenderly for me.

How is poor Clare? Give my love to her, and read her or tell her the substance of my letter. I hope her spirits are not much [word undeciphered] in her present situation. She will see that in a matter so serious as that in which I am engaged I cannot return.

Now my darling Pecksie, don't fancy I am disquieted so as to be unwell. Don't think I have any of those misgivings and perturbations which vitally affect the heart. I am, it is true, earnest and active, but as far as relates

Westbrook afterwards married), Shelley and Sir Timothy Shelley. The case was heard before Lord Chancellor Eldon on Friday, Jan. 24, 1817, his judgment being given on March 27. He considered Shelley's "principles as highly immoral," and that he would not be justified in delivering the children over to their father exclusively for their education. It was not formally decided to whom the education of the children should be entrusted until Shelley was in Italy. But he was allowed to propose the names of persons for that office, and after the rejection of his solicitor, Longdill, Dr. and Mrs. Hume of Hanwell, were accepted. The boy was to be placed at a private school until the age of seven, when he was to pass to a public school and one of the universities: the girl was to be educated at home by Mrs. Hume. The allowance for the children's maintenance was fixed at £200, £80 of which were to be paid by Mr. Westbrook, and £120 by Shelley. Professor Dowden has given an exhaustive account of these Chancery proceedings in his "Life of Shelley," from which the brief particulars in this note are derived.

During his absence, Clare Clairmont gave birth (on Jan. 12) to a girl, the daughter of Lord Byron, whom they called Alba, until later the names of Clara Allegra were chosen.

<sup>1</sup> Shelley's pet name for Mary. It has been suggested that he borrowed it from Mrs. Trimmer's tale of "The Robins."

to all highest hopes and you, my only treasure, quite happy. So adieu. You shall hear to-morrow night if possible.

Your own affectionate

SHELLEY.

Don't be disappointed if I send not by the mail. Maybe I can't.

# 252. To Clara Mary Jane Clairmont (Bath)

[London, Postmark] Jan[uary] 30, 1817.

Mary has written to you, dearest Clare, in better spirits, and as a reward of her good spirits, with better news than I. In fact, that about Hunt was overruled. It only serves to exhibit the malice of these monsters.

I have little doubt in my own mind but that they will finally succeed in the criminal part of the business. I mean that some such punishment as imprisonment and fine will be awarded me, by a jury. But do not disquiet yourself. Do not allow this to be a matter of present agitation to you. It is not a thing that can be decided within six months, an interval pregnant with many hopes and fears, and if well cultivated fruitful in joys which might make a bower of roses of the worst dungeon that tyranny could invent. Don't tease yourself, Clara. The greatest good you can do me is to keep well and quiet yourself, and of that you are well aware.

Mary tells me that she never engaged the lodgings for a month, or that if she did so, one fortnight of the time is already past.

[Addressed outside],
Miss Jane Clairmont,
P. B. Shelley, Esq.,
12 New Bond Street,
Bath.

#### 253. To WILLIAM GODWIN

[GREAT MARLOW], March 9, 1817.

MY DEAR GODWIN,

I wish you knew me better than to be vexed or disappointed at anything I do. Either circumstances of petty difficulty and embarrassment find some peculiar attraction in me, or I have a fainter power of repulsion with regard to them. Certain it is that nothing gives me serener and more pure pleasure than your society, and that if in breaking an engagement with you I have forced an exercise of your philosophy upon you, I have in my own person incurred a penalty which mine has yet taught me to alleviate. It gives me pain too that I cannot send the whole amount you want. I enclose a cheque to within a few pounds of my possessions. This is, in fact, the most unlucky time for me; I shall never be so low again. I do much rely on loans, or indeed on any one besides Dawe.

We are immersed in all kinds of confusion here. Mary said you meant to come hither soon enough to see the leaves come out. Which leaves did you mean, for the wildbriar buds are already unfolded? And what of "Mandeville," and how will he bear to be transplanted here? All my people, little Willy not excepted, desire their kindest love to you. I beg to unite in kind remembrances to Mrs. Godwin, whose health is I hope improved, and remain my dear friend.

Yours,

To

P. B. SHELLEY.

Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

### 254. To Charles Ollier

[Before March 14, 1817.]

DEAR SIR,

I inclose you the Revise<sup>1</sup> which may be put to press

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley's pamphlet "A Proposal / for putting / Reform to the Vote / Throughout the Kingdom. / By the Hermit of

when corrected, and the sooner the better. I inclose you also a list of persons to whom I wish copies to be sent from the Author, as soon as possible. I trust you will be good enough to take the trouble off my hands.—

Do not advertise sparingly: and get as many booksellers as you can to take copies on their own account. Sherwood, Neely & Co., Hone of Newgate Street, Ridgeway, and

Marlow. / For a full account of this pamphlet and of the public events that led Shelley to propose a plebiscite see Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 108, and Mr. H. Buxton Forman's preface to the Shelley Society facsimile of the manuscript of this tract, issued in 1887, in which this letter was first printed. Leigh Hunt was undoubtedly interested in the pamphlet, as it was printed and published by his friends Reynell, and the Olliers who are here mentioned for the first time in Shelley's correspondence.

[1 The list mentioned in the above letter.]

Sir Francis Burdett, M.P.\* Mr. Peters, of Cornwall. Mr. Brougham, M.P.\* Lord Grosvenor.\* Lord Holland.\* Lord Grey.\* Mr. Cobbett.\* Mr. Waithman.\* Mr. Curran.

Hon. Douglas Kinnaird.\* Hon. Thos. Brand, M.P.\* Lord Cochrane, M.P. Sir R. Heron, M.P. The Lord Mayor.\*

Mr. Montague Burgoyne Major Cartwright.\*

Messrs. Taylor, Sen. and Jun., of Norwich.

Mr. Place, Charing Cross.\* Mr. Walker, of Westminster.

Lord Essex.\*

Capt. Burnet, M.P.\*

The Birmingham Hampden Club (5 copies).

Mr. I. Thomas, St. Albans, Mon. Mr. Philipps, Whitston, Mon. Mr. Andrew Duncan, Provost of Arbroath. Mr. Alderman Godbehere.\*

Mr. Jones Burdett.\*

Mr. Hallet, of Berkshire (5 copies).

The London Hampden Club (10 copies).

The Editors of the Statesman,\* the Morning Chronicle,\* and the Independent Whig.\*

Mr. Montgomery (the Poet), of Sheffield.

Mr. R. Owen, of Lanark.

Mr. Madocks, M.P.

Mr. George Ensor.

Mr. Bruce.

Mr. Sturch (of Westminster).\*

Mr. Creevy, M.P.

Genl. Sir Ř. Ferguson, M.P.\*

Mr. H. Buxton Forman says that "against the names marked with the asterisks the word sent was written in the original list, and not by Shelley. This appears to have been done in Messrs. Ollier's office, and shows that the copies were really sent to the persons thus indicated." The list is interesting as giving the names of a number of men in whose opinions Shelley was more or less interested.

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.32000000659054 http://www.hathitrust.org/access use#pd-google GMT 18:45 Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hath Stockdale are people likely to do so.—Send 20 or 30 copies to Messrs. Hookham & Co., Bond Street, without explanation. I have arranged with them.

Send twenty copies to me addressed to Mr. Hunt, who will know what to do with them if I am out of town.—

Your very obedient Ser[van]t,

P. B. SHELLEY.

## 255. To CHARLES OLLIER (London)

MARLOW,

March 14, 1817.

### (Fragment)

... Mr. Hunt has, I believe, commissioned you to get for me a proof impression of a print done from a drawing by Harlowe of Lord Byron. . . How does the pamphlet sell?

P. B. SHELLEY.

Mr. OLLIER, Bookseller.

## 256. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

MARLOW,

March 22, 1817.

MY DEAR GODWIN,

Marshall's proposal is one in which, however reluctantly, I must refuse to engage. <sup>1</sup> It is that I should grant bills to the amount of his debts, which are to expire in thirty months. This is a situation in which it might become me to place myself for the sake of some very dear friend, or some person who might have an irresistible public claim, but which, if it were only in the possible arrival of such

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Godwin had drawn up in 1816 an appeal for assistance on behalf of his friend, James Marshall.

emergencies, I feel that with respect to Marshall I am bound to avoid. Do not infer that I deny him to have just claims on my assistance, which, if I were in possession of my paternal estate, I should hasten to fulfil.

It was spring when I wrote to you, and winter when your answer arrived. But the frost is very transitory, every bud is ready to burst into leaf. It is a nice distinction you make between the development and the complete expansion of the leaves. The oak and the chestnut, the latest and the earliest parents of foliage, would afford you a still subtler subdivision, which would enable you to defer the visit from which we expect so much delight for six weeks. I hope we shall really see you before that time, and that you will allow the chestnut or any other impartial tree, as he stands in the foreground, to be considered as a virtual representation of the rest.

Will is quite well and very beautiful. Mary unites with me in presenting her kind remembrances to Mrs. Godwin, and begs her most affectionate love to you.

Yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Have you read "Melincourt?" It would entertain you. Will you be kind enough to pay Newberry, the newsman, for me? I enclose cheque.

To

Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

257. To Leigh and Marianne Hunt (London

GREAT MARLOW,

June 29, 1817.

My DEAR FRIENDS,

I performed my promise, and arrived here the night

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Peacock's novel, "Melincourt," was published anonymously by Hookham, in 1817. A French translation appeared in the following year, and many years later, in 1856. when the novel was re-issued, it appeared as "Melincourt, or Sir Oran Haut-Ton."

after I set off. Everybody up to this minute has been and continues well. I ought to have written yesterday, for to-day, I know not how, I have so constant a pain in my side, and such a depression of strength and spirits, as to make my holding the pen whilst I write to you an almost intolerable exertion. This, you know, with me is transitory. Do not mention that I am unwell to your nephew<sup>1</sup>; for the advocate of a new system of diet is held bound to be invulnerable by disease, in the same manner as the sectaries of a new system of religion are held to be more moral than other people, or as a reformed parliament must at least be assumed as the remedy of all political evils. No one will change the diet, adopt the religion, or reform parliament else.

Well, I am very anxious to hear how you get on, and I intreat Marianne to excite Hunt not to delay a minute in writing the necessary letters, and in informing me of the result. Kings are only to be approached through their ministers; who indeed, as Marianne should know to her cost, if she don't take care, are responsible not only for all their commissions, but, a more dreadful responsibility, for all their omissions. And I know not who has a right to the title of King, if not according to the Stoics, he to whom the King of Kings had delegated the prerogative of lord of the creation.

Let me know how Harry gets on, and make my best respects to your brother and Mrs. Hunt. Adieu.

Always most affectionately yours, P. B. S.

(By Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley)

You may see by this letter that Shelley is very unwell—he always writes in this manner when ill. He was well yesterday until the evening, but to-day he is worse than

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The son of Leigh Hunt's brother John, also mentioned in this letter. Henry L. Hunt was afterwards a London publisher. His name appears with his father's on the title page of Shelley's "Posthumous Poems," 1824.

I have known him for some time. Perhaps the decrease of heat in the weather has to do with it.

The babes are all well. John has been a very good boy, and Mary better within the last day or two. Swynburne (sic) is quite well.

What about the Alpha Cottage? It is dear and I should think too far from the theatres, is there another choice?

Please Mary Anne send flannel for petticoats and flannels, and a pattern of the latter, and lawn not too expensive with a pattern shirt and cap.

The statues are not of a snowy but of a milky whiteness, but I think begin to look more creamy to-day.

Miss Kent is very attentive to the children. She bids me tell you that they are well, and that she does not write to-day.

How do you like Canova—one of you write and tell me a little news of yourselves.

You know the news we have had concerning the little faithless Clare is of course unhappy and consequently cross or so. I do not wonder that she should be unhappy I suppose she is over head and ears in love with some. Venetian. Give our love to Thornton. <sup>1</sup>

Adieu, little babes.—Take care not to loose one another in the streets for fear one of you should be kidnapped, but take hold of one another's hands and walk pretty.

## Affectionately yours,

M. W. S.

[Postmark] 10 o'clock, Jy. 1, 1817.

[Addressed outside],
LEIGH HUNT, Esq.,
J. HUNT, Esq.,
Maida Vale, Paddington,
London.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> John, Mary and Swinburne, were children of Leigh Hunt who had evidently been staying with the Shelleys. Marianne (usually so spelt), was Leigh Hunt's wife, Miss (Bessy) Kent, her sister, and Thornton was the Hunts' eldest son.

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"Sibylline Leaves"

258. Messrs. Ollier

(London)

MARLOW,

July 13, 1817.

DEAR SIR.

Be so obliging to send me immediately "Sibylline Leaves, 1 by S. T. Coleridge." I should receive it the same night if on receipt of this you would have the goodness to send wherever it is published, and direct the messenger to take it to the Marlow Coach office before he returns.

Dear Sir.

Your very obedt. Sevt.

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside], Messrs. Ollier, Welbeck Street, London.

#### 259. To Charles Ollier

(London)

MARLOW,

August 3, 1818 [for 1817].

DEAR SIR,

I send you with this letter a manuscript, 2 which has been consigned to my care by a friend in whom I feel considerable interest. I do not know how far it consists with your plan of business to purchase the copyrights, or a certain interest in the copyrights, of any works which should appear to promise success. I should certainly

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Sibylline Leaves" was published in 1817.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Of Mary Shelley's novel, which John Murray and Ollier declined to publish. It was afterwards issued by another firm of publishers with the following title: "Frankenstein; /or, / The Modern Prometheus, / in three volumes. / [quotation from "Paradise Lost"] Vol. I, etc. / Printed for / Lackington, Hughes, Harding, Mavor & Jones, / Finsbury Square, / 1818."

be highly prized by the individuals to whom they are addressed. Clare [? word torn] thanks you, which she does very sincerely, for the music. Mary continues pretty well and sends her kind love and thanks for all favours. Bye-the-bye I have sent a MS. 1 to Ollier concerning the true author of which I entreat you to be silent, if you should be asked any question. Mary's love to Marianne. She is very anxious about a nurse, and hopes Marianne will be kind enough to send an answer to her letter as soon as she can.

I have arrived at the 380th stanza of my Poem. 2

Ever my dear Hunt,

Most faithfully and affectionately yours, P. B. S.

## 231. To CHARLES OLLIER (London)

MARLOW,

August 8, 1817.

DEAR SIR,

I wish you to send me together with "Lalla Rookh," if it will be ready in a few days, a copy of Dr. Percy's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein," which Ollier declined to publish. 2" Laon and Cythna; / or / The Revolution / of / The Golden City:/ a vision of the Nineteenth Century. / In the Stanza of Spenser. / By / Percy B. Shelley. / ΔΟΣ ΠΟΥ ΣΤΩ ΚΑΙ ΚΟΣΜΟΝ ΚΙΝΗΣώ/ Archimedes. / London. / Printed for Sherwood, Neely & Jones, Paternoster-/ Row; and C. and J. Ollier, Welbeck Street: / By B. McMillan. Bow-Street, Covent-Garden. / 1818." Mrs. Shelley says, in her note to this poem, that it "was written in his boat, as it floated under the beech groves at Bisham, or during his wanderings in the neighbouring country which is distinguished for its peculiar beauty." According to Peacock, Shelley wrote "Laon and Cythna" in the summer of 1817, "chiefly on a seat on a high prominence in Bisham wood, where he passed whole mornings with a blank book and a pencil." Shelley tells us in his preface that little more than six months were occupied in its composition. "That period has been devoted to the task with unremitting ardour and enthusiasm." It was completed by September 23rd, 1817.

"Northern Antiquities." If the former is not at present ready I wish the latter to come immediately.

May I trouble you with a commission, and is it in your range of transactions to undertake it? I published some time since a poem called "Alastor," at Baldwin's: the sale, I believe, was scarcely anything, but as the printer has sent me in his account I wish to know also how my account stands with the publisher. He had no interest in the work, nor do I know anyone else had. It is scarcely worth while to [do] anything more with it than to procure a business-like reply on the subject of the amount of what is to pay or receive. In case this commission is unusual or disagreeable to you for any reason of which I may be ignorant, I beg that you will not scruple to decline it.

I hope "Frankenstein" did not give you bad dreams, and remain, dear sir,

Your very obedient servant,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Can you lend me the sixth volume of Gibbon's "Rome"? Mr. Ollier.

Bookseller.

3 Welbeck Street, London.

#### 262. To Marianne Hunt

(Written by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley)

MARLOW,

August 16, 1817.

MY DEAR MARIANNE,

In writing your congratulations to Shelley on his birthday did not your naughty heart smite you with remorse? Did you not promise to look at some brooches, and send me the descriptions and prices?—But the 4th of August arrived and I had no present!

I am exceedingly obliged to you for the loan of the caps. But a nurse. I have a great aversion to the having a Marlow woman,—but I must be provided by the 20th.

<sup>1</sup> Word torn off.

What am I to do? I dare say Mrs. Lucas is out at present, but she may be disengaged by that time.

I am sorry to observe by your letter that you are in low spirits. Cheer up, my dear little girl, and resolve to be happy. Let me know how it is with you, and how your health is as your time advances. If it were of any use I would say a word or two against your continuing to wear stays. Such confinement cannot be either good for you or the child; and as to shape, I am sure they are very far from becoming.

We are all well here. Our dog, who is a malicious beast whom we intend to send away, has again bitten poor little William without any provocation, for I was with him, and he went up to him to stroke his face when the dog snapped at his fingers. Miss Alba is perfectly well and thriving. She crows like a little cock, although (as Shelley bids me say) she is a hen.

Our sensations of indignation have been a little excited this morning by the decision of the Master of Chancery. He says the children are to go to this old clergyman in Warwickshire, who is to stand instead of a parent. An old fellow whom no one knows, and [who] never saw the children. This is somewhat beyond credibility did we not see it in black and white. Longdill is very angry that his proposition is rejected, and means to appeal from the Master to the Lord Chancellor.

I cannot find the sheet of Mrs. T. W. I send you two or three things of yours—the stone cup and the soap dish must wait until someone goes up to town.

I am afraid Hunt takes no exercise or he would not be so ill. I see, however, that you go to the play tolerably often. How are you amused?

The gown must not be dear. But you are as good a judge as I of what to give Milly as a kind of payment from Miss Clifford's mamma for the trouble she has had.

Longdill thought £100 per annum sufficient for both

Shelley's children, to provide them with clothes and everything. Why then should we pay £70 for A[llegra]?

The country is very pleasant just now, but I see nothing of it beyond the garden. I am *ennuied*, as you may easily imagine, from want of exercise which I cannot take. The cold bath is of great benefit to me. By-the-bye, what are we to do with it? Have you a place for its reception? It is of such use for H[unt]'s health that you ought not to be without it; we can easily get another. If you should chance to hear of any very amusing book send it in the parcel if you can borrow it from Ollier.

Adieu. Take care of yourself, and do not be dispirited. All will be well one day I do not doubt.

I send you £3.

Shelley sends his love to you all, and thanks for your good wishes and promised present. Pray when is this intended parcel to come?

Affectionately yours,

M. W. S.

#### (Written by Shelley)

I will write to Hunt to-morrow or the day after. Meanwhile kindest remembrances to all, and thanks for your dreams in my favour. Your incantations have not been quite powerful enough to expel evil from all revolutions of time. Poor Mary's book came back with a refusal, which has put me rather in ill spirits. Does any kind friend of yours, Marianne, know any bookseller, or has any influence with one? Any of those good tempered Robinsons? All these things are affairs of interest and preconception.

You have seen Clarke about this loan. Well, is there any proposal—Anything in bodily shape? My signature makes any security infallible in fact though not in law,—even if they would not take Hunt's—I shall have more to say on this.

The while-

Your faithful friend.

P. B. S.

## 263. To LACKINGTON, ALLEN & Co. (London)

Great Marlow, Bucks, August 22, 1817.

GENTLEMEN,

I ought to have mentioned that the novel which I sent you is not my own production, but that of a friend who not being at present in England cannot make the correction you suggest. As to any mere inaccuracies of language I should feel myself authorized to amend them when revising proofs. With respect to the terms of publication, my first wish certainly was to receive on my friend's behalf an adequate price for the copyright of the MS. As it is, however, I beg to submit the following proposal, which I hope you will think fair, particularly as I understand it is an arrangement frequently made by Booksellers with Authors who are new to the world.—It is that you should take the risk of printing, advertising, etc., entirely on yourselves and, after full deduction being made from the profits of the work to cover these expenses that the clear produce, both of the first edition and of every succeeding edition should be divided between you and the author. I cannot in the author's part disclaim all interest in the first edition, because it is possible that there may be no demand for another, and then the profits, however small, will be all that will accrue.

I hope on consideration that you will not think such an arrangement as this unreasonable, or one to which you will refuse your assent.

Gentlemen, I am
Your very obt. sert.,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Messrs. Lackington, Allen & Co.,
Finsbury Square,
London.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mrs. Shelley's "Frankenstein."

## 264. To Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (Marlow)

[London],<sup>1</sup>
October 6, 1817.

555

You will not see me to-morrow. I will try, if possible, to come by the Wednesday's coach, if I do not hear anything in the meantime from you to detain me.

My own Mary, would it not be better for you to come to London at once? I think we could quite as easily do something with the house if you were in London—that is to say, all of you—as in the country.

In that case I would advise the packing up of all the books which we determined to take with us in a large box, and sending them here in the first instance. I would then lock up the library, and leave the cook in the house until something was done; first seeing Maddocks, and putting the safety of the whole in his charge. I mean you should do that if you like this proposal, if not write instantly, directing to Longdill's, or else I shall not get your letter in time. Write at all events, and if you negative my proposal, I will come down the same evening, if possible or at least will write by the coach, and come down the next.

We must go to Italy, on every ground. This weather does me great mischief. I nurse myself, and these kind people nurse me with great care. I think of you, my own beloved, and study the minutest things relative to my health. I suffer to-day with violent pain in the side, which prevents me to-day from going out at all. I have

¹ Shelley went to London on September 23 (with the manuscript of his poem) accompanied by Clare, to consult Mr. William Lawrence, a pupil of Abernethy, with regard to his health. He visited Hunt at his new residence, 13 Lisson Grove, during the latter part of his stay in town. The physician recommended change of air and scene, and Shelley was inclined towards spending the winter in Italy, on his own account, and in order to place Alba (the name by which Allegra was known at this time) under her father's care.

thus put off engagements with Longdill and Godwin, which must be done to-morrow.

I have borrowed £250 from Horace Smith, which is now at my banker's.

Dearest and best of living beings, how much do your letters console me when I am away from you! Your letter to-day gave me the greatest delight; so soothing; so powerful, and quiet are your expressions, that it is almost like folding you to my heart. To-morrow, therefore, beloved, I shall not come, but the day after certainly, if you decide on that.

I should take rather spacious lodgings if you come up. I shall forget none of your commissions.

Kiss all the little ones; poor little William—is he so cold?—and Alba and Clara. 1

My most affectionate love to Claire, and tell her that I have offered her book to Lackington and to Taylor and Hessey, and that they have both declined.

I can scarcely write to-day, but shall be better to-morrow. Adieu, my dearest love; twenty kisses to your sweet lips.

P. B. S.

# 265. To Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (Marlow)

[London, October 8, 1817.]

My sweetest and only Love,

The anxiety which I have suffered for the last two days has been very great. I did not get your letter till this morning, or rather this evening, when I went to Longdill's. I sent and went in vain to Hookham's. I am now relieved, and perhaps she whom I love far more than myself, and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley's daughter, Clara Everina, born on September 2, 1817, and named after Clare Clairmont, and (apparently) Mary Shelley's aunt, Everina Wollstonecraft.

whose anxieties are far more painful to me than my own, is at this moment wondering if I shall come this evening, and will be so disappointed if I do not. I shall not come. I waited and waited for your letter, and was too late for the coach.

Now, dearest, let me talk to you. I think we ought to go to Italy. I think my health might receive a renovation there, for want of which, perhaps, I shall never entirely overcome that state of diseased action which is so painful to my beloved. I think Alba ought to be with her father. This is a thing of incredible importance to the happiness, perhaps, of many beings. It might be managed without our going there. Yes; but not without an expense which would in fact suffice to settle us comfortably in a spot where I might be regaining that health which you consider so valuable. It is valuable to you, my own dearest I see too plainly that you will never be quite happy till I am well. Of myself I do not speak, for I feel only for you.

First, then, Money. I am sure that if I ask Horace Smith he will lend me £200 or even £250 more. I did not like to do it from delicacy, and a wish to take only just enough; but I am quite certain he would lend me the money.

Next, the House. We have decided at all events to quit it. 1 Let us look the truth boldly in the face. We gave we will say £1,200 for the house. Well, we can get if we like £60 a year for the bare walls, and sell the furniture so as to realize £75 for every £100. This is losing scarcely anything, especially if we consider it in fact only so much money borrowed on post-obits, which in fact is cheaper than ever before. But all this is nothing. Godwin? Well, I am trying what I can do now, and I am not quite hopeless. I forgot about the house to mention the other

In a letter from Marlow to Mr. W. T. Baxter, Dec. 3, 1817, Mary Shelley says: "This house is very damp; all the books in the library are mildewed. We must quit it. Italy is yet uncertain."

side of the alternative, which is, to let it furnished. This is not so well. My advice is that you should come to town, and soon prepare for departure.

I shall be with you, my beloved, to-morrow evening; but I may not, as I have an appointment with Longdill, which it is barely possible should not be.

#### 266. To a Publisher<sup>1</sup>

13 Lisson Grove North, October 13, 1817.

SIR.

I send you the four first sheets of my poem entitled "Laon and Cythna, or the Revolution of the Golden City."

I believe this commencement affords a sufficient specimen of the work. I am conscious, indeed, that some of the concluding cantos, when "the plot thickens" and human passions are brought into more critical situations of development, are written with more energy and clearness; and that to see a work of which unity is one of the qualifications aimed at by the author in a disjointed state is, in a certain degree, unfavourable to the general impres-If, however, you submit it to Mr. Moore's judgment, he will make due allowance for these circumstances. The whole poem, with the exception of the first canto and part of the last, is a more human story without the smallest intermixture of supernatural interference. canto is indeed in some measure a distinct poem, though very necessary to the wholeness of the work. this because if it were all written in the manner of the first canto, I could not expect that it would be interesting

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> It is not known to whom this letter was addressed, but Prof. Do wden suggests a member of the firm of Longman & Co., who had lately published Moore's "Lalla Rookh." It was written from Leigh Hunt's house.

to any great number of people. I have attempted in the progress of my work to speak to the common elementary emotions of the human heart, so that though it is the story of violence and revolution, it is relieved by milder pictures of friendship and love and natural affections. The scene is supposed to be laid in Constantinople and modern Greece, but without much attempt at minute delineation of Mahometan manners. It is in fact a tale illustrative of such a Revolution as might be supposed to take place in an European nation, acted upon by the opinions of what has been called (erroneously, as I think) the modern philosophy, and contending with antient notions and the supposed advantage derived from them to those who support them. It is a revolution of this kind that is the beau ideal, as it were, of the French Revolution, but produced by the influence of individual genius and not out of general knowledge. The authors of it are supposed to be my hero and heroine, whose names appear in the title. My private friends have expressed to me a very high, and therefore I do not doubt, a very erroneous judgment of my work. However, of this I can determine neither way. I have resolved to give it a fair chance, and my wish, therefore, is, first, to know whether you would purchase my interest in the copyright—an arrangement which, if there be any truth in the opinions of my friends Lord Byron and Mr. Leigh Hunt of my powers, cannot be disadvantageous to you; and, in the second place, how far you are willing to be the publisher of it on my own account if such an arrangement, which I should infinitely prefer, cannot be made.

I rely, however, on your having the goodness at least to send the sheets to Mr. Moore, and ask his opinion of their merits.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your very obedient servant,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

## 267. To Lackington & Co. (London)

Albion House, [Marlow].
October 28, 1817.

GENTLEMEN,

I thought it necessary just to say that I shall not find it necessary in future to trouble the printer with any considerable alteration such as he will find in the present sheet, and that which immediately preceded it. But the alterations will be found of the last importance to the interest of the tale.<sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen, Your obedt. Servt.,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Messrs. Lackington & Co.

268. To CHARLES OLLIER (London)

19 Mabledon Place, [Euston Road, London].
November 12, 1817.

DEAR SIR,

I enclose what I have written of a pamphlet on the subject of our conversation the other evening. I wish it to be sent to press without an hour's delay—I don't think the whole will make a pamphlet larger or so large as my last, but the printer can go on with this and send me a proof and the rest of the MSS. shall be sent before evening.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein."

<sup>&</sup>quot;An Address to the People on the Death of the Princess Charlotte. By the Hermit of Marlow." It is stated that the pamphlet was not published and that not more than twenty copies were printed. No copy of the original address is known to have survived, but a reprint, by Thomas Rodd (not later than 1843) with the motto "We pity the Plumage, but forget the Dying Bird" is not uncommon.

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000659054 http://www.hathitrust.org/access use#pd-google GMT Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 18:45 Public Domain, Google-digitized If you should have any objections to publish it you can state them as soon as the whole is printed before the title goes to press, though I don't think that you will, as the subject though treated boldly is treated delicately.

Your obedient servant, P. B. Shelley.

## 269. To Charles Ollier (London)

#### MARLOW,

Nov[ember] 25, 1817.

DEAR SIR,

I have not yet seen the announce[ment] of "Laon and Cythna" in the public papers.—Be so good as not to let it be delayed a day longer, as the books are now ready.

I wish a parcel of twelve to be sent to me as soon as you can get them put in boards. If you will send me the account of the expense of the advertisements I will transmit you the money the moment they appear. Dear Sir,

Your most obet.,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Send one of Hunt's Examiner 1 the first thing.—Dante? and the "Spectator"?

Mr. Ollier,
Bookseller,
3 Welbeck Street,
London.
[Postmark, 26 Nov., 1817.]

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¹ The Examiner for November 30 contained a long extract from "Laon and Cythna": "... a poem just published by Percy Shelley," beginning "I had a little sister whose fair eyes" down to "the enchanted waves that child of glory sung." Shelley may have contributed this quotation, or perhaps he was aware that Hunt intended to print it, and wished to have a copy of the paper as soon as it appeared. Dante and the "Spectator" may have been books that Shelley had ordered.

## 270. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

MARLOW,

December 1, 1817.

MY DEAR GODWIN,

"Mandeville" has arrived this evening—Mary is now reading it; and I am like a man on the brink of a precipice, or a ship whose sails are all to wind for the storm. What do you mean by saying that you shall be in a state of unusual disquiet for the next two weeks? Is it money or literary affairs? I am extremely sorry to hear that Ireson has put you off. I am to the last degree serious and earnest in the affair, and I can place no trust but in Evans. I have written to Longdill as enclosed. My health has suffered somewhat of a relapse since I saw you, attended with pulmonary symptoms. I do not found much hope on physicians; their judgments are all dissimilar, and their prescriptions alike ineffectual. I shall, at all events, quit this damp situation as soon as an opportunity offers and I am strongly impelled to doubt whether Italy might not decide in my frame the contest between disease and youth in favour of life. 1 The precariousness arising out of these considerations makes me earnest that something should be done, and speedily, with Evans. I shall then be free, whatever I ought to do. Until then I consider myself bound to you. Adieu.

Most affectionately yours,

P. B. S.

My best respects to Mrs. Godwin. Does she think of paying us a visit?

Clare bids me say that the enclosed thing is a measure, and that she sends her love to her mother.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See p. 565.

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## 271. To LACKINGTON & Co. (London)

MARLOW,

Dec[ember] 3, 1817.

GENTLEMEN,

Inclosed is a dedication which has been transmitted to me by the author of "Frankenstein," and which should be printed as is customary immediately subsequent to the Title. How soon do you propose to publish it?

Your very obed. Servant,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

To Messrs. Lackington & Co., Finsbury Square, London.

#### 272. To CHARLES OLLIER (London)

MARLOW,

Dec[ember] 3, 1817.

DEAR SIR.

That M'Millan<sup>2</sup> is an obstinate old dog, and as loathsome as he is impudent; 'tis a mercy, as the old women say, that I got him through the poem at all.

Let him print the Errata, and say at the top if he likes, that it was all the Author's fault, and that he is as immaculate as the Lamb of God. Only let him do it directly, or if he won't, let someone else.

I forgot to say that "Alastor" might be advertised at the end of the advertisement of this poem. If there should be a demand for a second edition of "Alastor," I should reprint it, with many others in my possession now.

¹ The dedication appeared in the book in the following words "To William Godwin, author of 'Political Justice,' 'Caleb Williams,' etc. These volumes are respectfully inscribed by the author.''

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The printer of "Laon and Cythna," who produced an edition of 750 copies at Shelley's expense. M'Millan had probably drawn attention to some of these passages in the poem to which Ollier afterwards took objection. See p. 569.

I should be glad to hear any news that is authentic and that won't mask the feeling of the people, public or private, respecting the Poem.

I am tolerably indifferent as to whether it be good or bad.

On the opposite page you will find a thing to print with the errata.

Will you be so obliging as to charge yourself with sending the enclosed advertisement to the *Morning Chronicle* and the *Times*, to be inserted twice in each. I enclose this letter in a parcel to London. Dear Sir,

Your obliged servant,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

## 273. To Charles Ollier (London)

MARLOW,

Dec[ember] 7, 1817.

DEAR SIR,

Pray be so good as to send me if possible by return of coach, the "Purgatorio" and "Paradise" of Dante, in English and Italian, by Carey [sic] and what other books may be ready, also the "Dionysiaca" of Nonnus. It is likeliest to be found at Priestley's, the classical bookseller.

I am, Sir, your obliged

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

# 274. TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

MARLOW,

December 7, 1817.

[Friday.]

My DEAR GODWIN,

To begin with the subject of most immediate interest:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The translation of Dante, by the Rev. Henry Francis Cary (1772-1844). The "Inferno" was published in 1805, and was followed by the "Purgatorio" and "Paradiso" in 1814.

close with Richardson; and when I say this, what relief should I not feel from a thousand distressing emotions, if I could believe that he was in earnest in his offer! I have not heard from Longdill, though I wish earnestly for information.

My health has been materially worse. My feelings at intervals are of a deadly and torpid kind, or awakened to a state of such unnatural and keen excitement, that, only to instance the organ of sight, I find the very blades of grass and the boughs of distant trees present themselves to me with microscopical distinctness. Towards evening, I sink into a state of lethargy and inanimation, and often remain for hours on the sofa, between sleep and waking, a prey to the most painful irritability of thought. Such, with little intermission, is my condition. The hours devoted to study are selected with vigilant caution from among these periods of endurance. It is not for this that I think of travelling to Italy, even if I knew that Italy would relieve me. But I have experienced a decisive pulmonary attack; and, although at present it has passed away without any very considerable vestige of its existence. yet this symptom sufficiently shows the true nature of my disease to be consumption. It is to my advantage that this malady is in its nature slow, and, if one is sufficiently alive to its advances, is susceptible of cure from a warm In the event of its assuming any decided shape, it would be my duty to go to Italy without delay; and it is only when that measure becomes an indispensable duty that, contrary to both Mary's feelings and to mine, as they regard you, I shall go to Italy. I need not remind you (besides the mere pain endured by the survivors) of the train of evil consequences which my death would cause I am thus circumstantial and explicit, because you seem to have misunderstood me. It is not health. but life, that I should seek in Italy; and that, not for my own sake—I feel that I am capable of trampling on all such weakness—but for the sake of those to whom my life may

be a source of happiness, utility, security, and honour, and to some of whom my death might be all that is the reverse.

I ought to say I cannot persevere in the meat diet. What you say of Malthus fills me, as far as my intellect is concerned, with life and strength. I believe that I have a most anxious desire that the time should quickly come that, even so far as you are personally concerned, you should be tranquil and independent. But when I consider the intellectual lustre with which you clothe this world, and how much the last generation of mankind may be benefited by that light flowing forth without the intervention of one shadow, I am elevated above all thoughts which tend to you or myself as an individual, and become, by sympathy, part of those distant and innumerable minds to whom your writings must be present.

I meant to have written to you about "Mandeville" 1 solely; but I was so irritable and weak that I could not write, although I thought I had much to say. read "Mandeville," but I must read it again soon, for the interest is of that irresistible and overwhelming kind, that the mind in its influence is like a cloud borne on by an impetuous wind-like one breathlessly carried forward, who has no time to pause or observe the causes of his I think the power of "Mandeville" is inferior career. to nothing you have done; and, were it not for the character of Falkland, 2 no instance in which you have exerted that power of creation which you possess beyond all contemporary writers, might compare with it. Falkland is still alone; power is, in Falkland, not, as in "Mandeville," tumult hurried on by the tempest, but tranquillity standing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley's critique of Godwin's "Mandeville," which had been recently published, appeared in the form of a letter, in the last number of the *Examiner* for 1817 with the initials E. K., that is, Elfin Knight, Mary's familiar name for Shelley.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> In Godwin's novel, "Caleb Williams."

unshaken amid its fiercest rage. But "Caleb Williams" never shakes the deepest soul like "Mandeville." It must be said of the latter, you rule with a rod of iron. The picture is never bright; and we wonder whence you drew the darkness with which its shades are deepened, until the epithet of tenfold might almost cease to be a metaphor. The noun smorfia1 touches some cord within us with such a cold and jarring power, that I started, and for some time could scarce believe but that I was Mandeville, and that this hideous grin was stamped upon my own face. style and strength of expression, "Mandeville" is wonderfully great, and the energy and the sweetness of the sentiments scarcely to be equalled. Clifford's character, as mere beauty, is a divine and soothing contrast; and I do not think—if, perhaps, I except (and I know not if I ought to do so) the speech of Agathon in the Symposium of Plato—that there ever was produced a moral discourse more characteristic of all that is admirable and lovely in human nature—more lovely and admirable in itself—than that of Henrietta to Mandeville, as he is recovering from Shall I say that, when I discovered that she madness. was pleading all this time sweetly for her lover, and when at last she weakly abandoned poor Mandeville, I felt an involuntary and, perhaps, an unreasonable pang? Adieu! Always most affectionately yours,

P. Ś.

To

Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

275. To William Thomas Baxter

MARLOW,

Dec[ember] 10, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR,

We have neither heard from you announcing any

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Italian for "grimace."

intelligence of your own family, or, what is of far less consequence, the receipt of my cheque for £7.1

We heard at once of Mr. Booth's illness and recovery, and I hope he is so far recovered and so much at leisure as to make it no compliment to say that we wish you would visit us here once more. Mary desires me to give you her kindest remembrances, and to ask if you have heard from Isabel and the others in the North and how they are.

Most truly yours,
P. B. Shelley.

<sup>1</sup> This amount was in payment for some blankets (such as were supplied to the British officers while serving in the Peninsula) that Shelley had asked Baxter to obtain for him from Scotland, for distribution to the poor at Marlow. Mrs. Shelley says that while visiting the poor in the winter of 1817-18 he sustained a severe attack of ophthalmia.

<sup>2</sup> David Booth, a brewer of Newburg, Fifeshire, was a man of advanced political and religious opinions, and a friend of William Godwin, to whom he introduced his friend William Thomas Baxter. a Dundee merchant, when he visited London in 1809. Baxter, who had five daughters of his own, invited Mary Godwin to Scotland, where she arrived in June, 1812, and she stayed there some months. Isabel Baxter, the youngest of the family, became a close friend of Mary, with whom she corresponded on her return to London until July, 1814, when, after another visit to Scotland, Mary eloped with Shelley. In the meantime David Booth married Isabel Baxter, who was twenty-nine years his junior, and insisted that the correspondence between his wife and Mary should cease. In 1817, after Shelley's marriage with Mary, the correspondence was renewed, and in the autumn of that year Mr. Booth and Mr. Baxter came to London. During September Baxter visited Marlow and was most favourably impressed by Shelley. Mr. Booth, however, declined to meet the poet, and when he heard that his wife had been invited to accompany the Shelleys on their proposed visit to the Continent, he insisted that her correspondence with Mary (which had been resumed without his knowledge) should be discontinued. On Dec. 3 Mrs. Shelley had addressed a chatty letter (mentioning the cheque) to Mr. Baxter, asking why Mrs. Booth had not written to her. Baxter did not reply, Shelley wrote him the above letter. account of Shelley's association with the Baxter family, from which the particulars in this note are derived, was contributed by Miss Isobel Stuart to the Star in Feb. and March, 1894. Shelley's two letters are here reprinted from these articles by kind permission of the editor of that newspaper.

# 276. To Charles Ollier (London)

MARLOW,

December 11, 1817.

DEAR SIR.

It is to be regretted that you did not consult your own safety and advantage (if you consider it connected with the non-publication of my book) before your declining the publication, after having accepted it, would have

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Laon and Cythna." Peacock says: "In this poem he [Shelley] had carried the expression of his opinions, moral, political and theological, beyond the bounds of discretion. The terror which, in those days of persecution of the press, the perusal of the book inspired in Mr. Ollier, the publisher, induced him to solicit the alteration of many passages which he had marked. Shelley was for some time inflexible; but Mr. Ollier's refusal to publish the poem as it was, backed by the advice of all his friends, induced him to submit to the required changes. Many leaves were cancelled, and it was finally published as "The Revolt of Islam; / a Poem, / In twelve cantos. / By / Percy Bysshe Shelley. / London: / Printed for C. and J. Ollier, 3 Welbeck-Street; / By B. M'Millan, Bow-Street, Covent Garden." / Of "Laon and Cythna" "only three copies had gone forth. One of these had found its way to the Quarterly Review, and the opportunity was readily seized of pouring out on it one of the most malignant effusions of the odium theologicum that ever appeared even in those days, and in that periodical." Peacock adds that when Ollier positively refused to publish the poem as it was "Shelley had no hope of another publisher. He for a long time refused to alter a line: but his friends finally prevailed on him to Still he could not, or would not, sit down by himself to alter it, and the whole of the alterations were actually made in successive sittings of what I may call a literary committee. contested the proposed alterations step by step: in the end, sometimes adopting, more frequently modifying, never originating, and always insisting that his poem was spoiled." (Fraser's Magazine, Jan., 1860, March, 1862.) It would appear that the alterations were practically made on Dec. 15 when Ollier was at Marlow (see p. 575). Shelley, however, may have discussed the subject previously with Peacock, who was probably at Shelley's house when the alterations were actually made.

operated to so extensive and serious an injury to my views as now. The instances of abuse and menace which you cite were such as you expected, and were, as I conceived, prepared for. If not, it would have been just to me to have given them their due weight and consideration before. You foresaw, you foreknew, all that these people would say. You do your best to condemn my book before it is given forth, because you publish it, and then withdraw; so that no other bookseller will publish it, because one has already rejected it. You must be aware of the great injury which you prepare for me. If I had never consulted your advantage, my book would have had a fair hearing. But now it is first published, and then the publisher, as if the author had deceived him as to the contents of the work —and as if the inevitable consequence of its publication would be ignominy and punishment—and as if none should dare to touch it or look at it—retracts, at a period when nothing but the most extraordinary and unforeseen circumstances can justify the retraction.

I beseech you to reconsider the matter, for your sake no less than for my own. Assume the high and secure ground The people who visit your shop, and the of courage. wretched bigot who gave his worthless custom to some other bookseller, are not the public. The public respect talent; and a large portion of them are already undeceived with regard to the prejudices which my book attacks. You would lose some customers, but you would gain others. Your trade would be diverted into a channel more consistent with your own principles. Not to say that a publisher is in no wise pledged to all the opinions of his publications, or to any; and that he may enter his protest with each copy sold, either against the truth or the discretion of the principles of the books he sells. is a much more important consideration in the case. are, and have been to a certain extent, the publisher. don't believe that, if the book was quietly and regularly published, the Government would touch anything of a

character so refined, and so remote from the conceptions of the vulgar. They would hesitate before they invaded a member of the higher circles of the republic of letters. But, if they see us tremble, they will make no distinctions; they will feel their strength. You might bring the arm of the law down upon us by flinching now. Directly these scoundrels see that people are afraid of them, they seize upon them and hold them up to mankind as criminals already convicted by their own fears. You lay yourself prostrate, and they trample on you. How glad they would be to seize on any connection of Hunt's by this most powerful of all their arms—the terrors and self-condemnation of their victim. Read all the ex officio cases, and see what reward booksellers and printers have received for their submission.

If, contrary to common sense and justice, you resolve to give me up, you shall receive no detriment from a connection with me in small matters, though you determine to inflict so serious a one on me in great. You shall not be at a farthing's expense. I shall still, so far as my powers extend, do my best to promote your interest. On the contrary supposition, even admitting you derive no benefit from the book itself—and it should be my care that you shall do so—I hold myself ready to make ample indemnity for any loss you may sustain.

There is one compromise you might make, though that would be still injurious to me. Sherwood and Neely wished to be the principal publishers. Call on them, and say that it was through a mistake that you undertook the principal direction of the book, as it was my wish that it should be theirs, and that I have written to you to that effect. This, if it would be advantageous to you, would be detrimental to, but not utterly destructive of, my views. To withdraw your name entirely, would be to inflict on me a bitter and undeserved injury.

Let me hear from you by return of post. I hope that you will be influenced to fulfil your engagement with me,

and proceed with the publication, as justice to me, and, indeed, a well-understood estimate of your own interest and character, demand. I do hope that you will have too much regard to the well-chosen motto of your seal 1 to permit the murmurs of a few bigots to outweigh the serious and permanent considerations presented in this letter. To their remonstrances you have only to reply, "I did not write the book; I am not responsible; here is the author's address—state your objections to him. do no more than sell it to those who inquire for it; and, if they are not pleased with their bargain, the author empowers me to receive the book and to return the money." As to the interference of Government, nothing is more improbable [than] that in any case it would be attempted; but, if it should, it would be owing entirely to your perseverance in the groundless apprehensions which dictated your communication received this day, and conscious terror would be perverted into an argument of guilt.

I have just received a most kind and encouraging letter from Mr. Moore on the subject of my poem. I have the fairest chance of the public approaching my work with unbiassed and unperverted feeling: the fruit of reputation (and you know for what purposes I value it) is within my reach. It is for you, now you have been once named as publisher, and have me in your power, to blast all this, and to hold up my literary character in the eye of mankind as that of a proscribed and rejected outcast. And for no evil that I have ever done you, but in return for a preference which, although you falsely now esteem injurious to you, was solicited by Hunt, and conferred by me, as a source and a proof of nothing but kind intentions.

Dear Sir.

I remain your sincere well-wisher,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;In omnibus libertas."

#### 277. To WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

GREAT MARLOW,

December 11, 1817.

My DEAR GODWIN,

If I had believed it possible you should send any part of my letter to the Chronicle I should have expressed more fully my sentiments of "Mandeville" and of the author; as it is. I cannot but be glad that you should think any opinion of mine relating to your book worthy of being presented to the public. The effect of your favourable consideration of my powers, as they relate to the judgement of the degree and kind of approbation due to the intellectual exertions of others, has emboldened me to write not a volume, but a more copious statement of my feelings as they were excited by "Mandeville." This I have sent to the Examiner. If Hunt does not insert it. I will send it to you for your own reading, though it was so written as to be more interesting to the public than to yourself. I have read and considered all that you say about my general powers, and the particular instance of the poem in which I have attempted to develop them. Nothing can be more satisfactory to me than the interest which your admonitions express. But I think you are mistaken in some points with regard to the peculiar nature of my powers, whatever be their amount. I listened with deference and self-suspicion to your censures of "Laon and Cythna;" but the productions of mine which you commend hold a very low place in my own esteem, and this reassured me, in some degree at least. The poem was produced by a series of thoughts which filled my mind with unbounded and sustained enthusiasm. I felt the precariousness of my life, and I resolved in this book to leave some records of myself. Much of what the volume contains was written with the same feeling, as real, though  $K_{e_0}$ not so prophetic, as the communications of a dying man. I never presumed, indeed, to consider it anything approaching faultless: but, when I considered contemporary



productions of the same apparent pretensions, I will own that I was filled with confidence. I felt that it was in many respects a genuine picture of my own mind. I felt that the sentiments were true, not assumed: and in this have I long believed that my power consists in sympathy and that part of imagination which relates to sentiment and contemplation. I am formed, if for anything not in common with the herd of mankind, to apprehend minute and remote distinctions of feeling, whether relative to external nature or the living beings which surround us, and to communicate the conceptions which result from considering either the moral or the material universe as a Of course I believe these faculties, which perhaps comprehend all that is sublime in man, to exist very imperfectly in my own mind. But when you advert to my chancery paper, a cold, forced, unimpassioned, insignificant piece of cramped and cautious argument; and to the little scrap about "Mandeville," which expressed my feelings indeed, but cost scarcely two minutes' thought to express, as specimens of my powers, more favourable than that which grew as it were from "the agony and bloody sweat" of intellectual travail; surely I must feel that in some manner I am mistaken in believing that I have any talent at all, or you in the selection of the specimens of it. Yet, after all, I cannot but be conscious, in much of what I write, of an absence of that tranquillity which is the attribute and accompaniment of power. This feeling alone would make your most kind and wise admonitions, on the subject of the economy of intellectual force, valuable to me. And, if I live, or if I see any trust in coming years, doubt not but that I shall do something, whatever it might be, which a serious and earnest estimate of my powers will suggest to me, and which will be in every respect accommodated to their utmost limits.

This dry and frosty weather fills me with health and spirits; I wish I could believe that it would last: Shall we now see you soon? Why could you not for a day or two

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at least leave town? Mrs. Godwin, too; how is she? and does she not mean to take embargo off her own person? Mary unites with me in best love.

My dear Godwin,

Most affectionately yours,

P. B. S.

To

Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

278. To CHARLES OLLIER (London)

MARLOW,

December 13, 1817.

DEAR SIR,

The contents of your letter this morning certainly alters the question. No one is to be blamed, however heavy and unexpected is my disappointment. It is of the greatest importance that we should meet immediately, and, if the state of my health would have permitted I should have come to Town immediately on the receipt of your letter. As it is, I send my servant (that no delay or mistake may take place) with this note.

I need not say that I should be happy to see you if you could contrive to spend a few days with us. But my present letter is written under the persuasion that you could spare no day [letter torn ? so or as] conveniently as Sunday, and in a strong feeling of the necessity of instant communication with you.

The mails which pass within a short distance of my house leave Piccadilly at eight o'clock, and you will find a friendly welcome and a warm fire at the end of your journey.

I ought to say that I have received no parcel from you. Your very obliged ser[van]t,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In regard to altering certain passages in "Laon and Cythna," Mary states in her journal that Ollier came down to Marlow on Sunday, Dec. 14; on Dec. 15 the alterations were made in the poem, and finished on the following day, when Ollier returned to London.

#### 279. To Thomas Moore (Devizes)

Albion House, Marlow, December 16, 1817.

DEAR SIR,

The present edition of "Laon and Cythna" is to be suppressed, and it will be republished in about a fortnight under the title of "The Revolt of Islam," with some alterations which consist in little else than the substitution of the words friend or lover for that of brother and sister. The truth is, that the seclusion of my habits has confined me so much within the circle of my own thoughts, that I have formed to myself a very different measure of approbation or disapprobation for actions than that which is in use among mankind; and the result of that peculiarity, contrary to my intention, revolts and shocks many who might be inclined to sympathise with me in my general views.—As soon as I discovered that this effect was produced by the circumstance alluded to, I hastened to cancel it—not from any personal feeling of terror, or repentance, but from the sincere desire of doing all the good and conferring all the pleasure which might flow from so obscure a person as myself. I don't know why I trouble you with these words, but your kind approbation of the opening of the Poem has emboldened me to believe that the account of my motives might interest you.

The little volume which you have been quicksighted enough to attribute to its real authors is composed of two letters written by me signed S., and some other letters and the Journal signed M., written by Mrs. Shelley. I ought to say that the Journal was written some years ago—the style of it is almost infantine, and it was published in the idea that the Author would never be recognized.—The letters from Geneva were written in the summer of 1816, and the voyage round the lake, described in one of them

¹ Originally written " &."

<sup>&</sup>quot; History of a Six Weeks' Tour, &c.," London, 1817.

was made in the society of Lord Byron, and its memory derives from that circumstance the light of an enchantment which can never be dissolved. I mention this because you were often the theme of our conversations, from which I learned that you were intimate with him. I ought to say that Mrs. Shelley, tho' sorry that her secret is discovered, is exceedingly delighted to hear that you have derived any amusement from our book. Let me say in her defence that the Journal of the Six Weeks' Tour was written before she was seventeen, and that she has another literary secret which I will in a short time ask you to keep in return for having discovered this.

What right have I to have written all this to you?

Dear Sir. Y[ours] very obliged

and sin[cerely],

PER[CY B. SHELLEY].

[Addressed outside], [THOMA]s MOORE, Esq., Sloperton Cottage, Devizes, Wilts.

(Endorsed by another hand, "Mr. SHELLEY".)

#### 280. To Charles Ollier (London)

MARLOW,

MONDAY NIGHT. [Probably December 22, 1817.]

DEAR SIR,

I cannot but say that I am extremely desirous that all the copies that have been given forth should, if possible, be returned. If it is *not* possible, I cannot help it.

Do just as you like about Mr. Barton.

I wish, on publication, copies to be sent to all the principal Reviews.

Your obliged sert.,

Percy B. S.

Mr. OLLIER.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The letter is torn: I have supplied the words in brackets. Vol. ii—7—(2285)

#### 281. To CHARLES OLLIER (London)

MARLOW,

December 27, 1817.

DEAR SIR,

I am surprised that I have not received the remainder of the proofs of the Poem. <sup>1</sup> I wish them to be sent immediately; and as soon after as possible perfect copies of the book. I have succeeded in procuring the return of two of the copies from Ebers's. <sup>2</sup> Have you been equally fortunate in the application of request you made to the other purchasers?

It ought to be *now advertised* as to be published January 10th.

Dear Sir, your obliged servant, P. B. Shelley.

[Addressed outside],
Mr. Chas. Ollier,
73 Welbeck St.,
London.

#### 282. To WILLIAM THOMAS BAXTER

MARLOW.

December 30, 1817.

My dear Sir,

Your candid explanation is very welcome to me, 3 as it relieves me from a weight of uncertainty, and is consistent

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Presumably the cancelled sheets for "The Revolt of Islam."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ebers's British and Foreign Circulating Library, 27 Old Bond Street.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Mr. Booth had influenced his father-in-law (who was his junior by ten years) to break off all relations with Shelley, and Baxter had hoped to do so by leaving his letters unanswered. But on Dec. 25 Shelley wrote again; his letter has not been preserved, but he appears to have complained that Baxter had changed in his manner and not only declined to visit him, but did not think his invitations worth the formality of a refusal. Baxter in his reply of Dec. 29 repudiated the charge of having changed in his manner, and though oppressed with a sense of Shelley's kindness and attention, he

with my own mode of treating those who honour me with their friendship—which is, either to maintain with them a free and unsuspicious intercourse, or explicitly to state to them my motives for interrupting or circumscribing it, as soon as they arise within my own mind.

I understand by your letter that you decline, in the name of your family, an intercourse which I believe had its sole foundation in the intimacy of Isabel and Mary. This intercourse entirely originated in an unsolicited advance

excused himself for not visiting Marlow on account of business. He added: "The station your rank and fortune gives you in society, the sphere which it entitled you to move in, are such as I cannot in good conscience introduce my family into, as it could only tend to give them notions and habits of life wholly unsuited to my circumstances, and the humility of their expectations. pendence of fortune, too, has given you a freedom of thought and action entirely inconsistent with the customs, manners, and prejudices of European society with which I have been at pains to imbue their minds, and which I wish not to see eradicated. On all these accounts, although I had not been withheld by business, I should have found myself called on to refrain from visiting you, and to allow that such intimacy to gradually die away, which had nothing in common between us to support it." On receiving the above letter of Dec. 30, Baxter showed it to Mr. Booth, who wrote to Shelley on Jan. 2, 1819: "You have amused yourself in sketching the characters of Mr. Baxter and me. They are composite They are composite pictures, and, as a pair of portraits, form together a ludicrous mystical divinity, combining the abstract principles of good and evil, of divinity and demon. With Mr. Baxter you are perhaps entitled to use such freedom, but I apprehend that you have had With Mr. Baxter you are perhaps too little intimacy with me to authorise you to become my calum-I have never been yours. I have never accused you of an opinion or of an action which I have not seen avowed and vindicated by your name. I know you only as a stranger. I have never sought your friendship or your correspondence, I have therefore violated no presumptive compact in declining either." After referring to Mary's elopement with Shelley, and her estrangement from her father and Mrs. Booth, and to the renewal of her correspondence with his wife at Godwin's request, he concludes by saying that Baxter's last letter was sent off without him seeing it, and that he "certainly should not have suggested any expression which could have called forth remarks about rank or station. In these I never would acknowledge inferiority." On March 2, before Shelley left England, he took leave of Mr. Baxter; but Mrs. Booth, although in town, neither called nor communicated with Mary Shelley.

on their part: a change in their opinions and feelings produced it then, and now concludes it. Mary renewed with pleasure the friendship of her early years. I considered her friends as mine, and found much satisfaction, distinct from that duty, in discovering in you, the first of the new circle to whom I was introduced, a man of virtue and talent with whose feelings and opinions I perpetually found occasions of sympathy. To me, a secluded valetudinarian, all this was quite an event. Mary for three whole years had been lamenting the loss of her friend, and was made miserable and indignant that her friendship had been sacrificed to opinions which she supposed had already received their condemnation in the mind of every enlight-Young and ardent ened reasoner on moral science. spirits confound theory and practice. I saw that all this was in the natural order of things, and it is neither my habit to feel indignation or disappointment at the inconsistencies of mankind. People who had one atom of pride or resentment for injury or neglect would have refused the renewal of an intimacy which had already been once dissolved on a plea, in their conception, to the last degree unworthy and erroneous.

I thus see your determination to deprive Mary of the intercourse of her friend, and most highly respect the motives, as I know they must exist in your mind, for this proceeding. May I ask precisely what those motives are? You do not distinctly say, but only allude to certain free opinions which I hold, inconsistent with yours. We had a good deal of discussion about all sorts of opinions, and I thought we agreed on all—except matters of taste; and I don't think any serious consequences ought to flow from a controversy whether Wordsworth or Campbell be the greater poet. Yet I would not be misapprehended. Though I have not a spark of pride or resentment in this matter, I disdain to say a word that should tend to persuade you to change your decision. On any such change you know where to find a man constant and sincere in his

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predilections. But all I now want is to know the plain truth.

Mr. Booth is no doubt a man of great intellectual acuteness and consummate skill in the exercise of logic. never met a man by whom, in the short time we exchanged ideas, I felt myself excited to so much severe and sustained mental competition, or from whom I derived so much amusement and instruction. It would have given me much pleasure to have cultivated his acquaintance. But I know that this desire could not be reciprocal. Nor is it difficult to apprehend the cause of this distinction. Am I not right in my conjecture in attributing to Mr. Booth the change in your sentiment announced in your letter? His keen and subtle mind, deficient in those elementary feelings which are the principles of all moral reasoning, is better fitted for the detection of error than the establishment of truth, and his pleadings, urged or withdrawn with sceptical caution and indifference, may be employed with almost equal force as an instrument of fair argument or sophistry. In matters of abstract speculation we can readily recur to the first principles on which our opinions rest, and thus confute a sophism or derive instruction from an argument. But in the complicated relations of private life, it is a practice difficult, dangerous, and rare to appeal to an elementary principle; the motives of the sophist are many and secret; the resources of his ingenuity as numerous as the relations respecting which it is exercised. Mr. Booth's reasonings may be right; they may be sincere; he may be conscientiously impressed with views widely differing from mine. But be frank with me, my dear sir, is it not Mr. Booth who has persuaded you to see things in this way since your last visit, when no such considerations as you allege in your letter were present to your thoughts? The only motive that suggests this question is an unwillingness to submit to the having my intimacies made the sport of secret and unacknowledged manœuvres.

I need not say that your expressions of kindness and

service are flattering to me, and that I can say with great truth that I should consider myself honoured if at any time it were possible that you should make the limited power which I possess a source of utility to you.

My dear Sir,

Yours most sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

(P.S. added by Mary Shelley.)

MY DEAR SIR,

You see I prophesied well three months ago, when you were here. I then said that I was sure that Mr. Booth was averse to our intercourse, and would find some means to break it off. I wish I had you by the fire here in my little study, and it might be "double, double, toil and trouble," but I could quickly convince you that your girls are not below me in station, and that in fact I am the fittest companion for them in the world; but I postpone the argument until I see you, for I know (pardon me) that viva voce is all in all with you.

# 283. To CHARLES OLLIER (London)

MARLOW,

Jan[uary] 11, 1818.

DEAR SIR,

I ought to have received copies of the "Revolt of Islam"—send six—be sure. Pray send them instantly, as I ought to have exchanged the other for them long ago. Keep it well advertised, and write for money directly the other is gone—"Alastor" may be adv[ertised] with it.

I enclose this note by the Coach.

Your obedient servant,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Mr. Charles Ollier,
Bookseller,
3 Welbeck St.,
Cavendish Square.

## 284. To CHARLES OLLIER (London)

MARLOW,

Jan[uary] 15, 1818.

DEAR SIR,

Pray send me the copies of my Poem which I requested immediately or write and assign some reason for their detention. On second thoughts I wish ten, not six to be sent. I should have written before, but that I have expected their arrival every night by the coach.

Inclosed is ten pounds—which be so good as to say that you have received safe—that no delay may take place in vigorously advertising. I think I said that I wish under the new circumstances that a copy should be sent to each of the Reviews.

Your obedient servant,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Do you hear anything said of "Frankenstein"?

Mr. CHARLES OLLIER,
Bookseller,
3 Welbeck Street,
Cavendish Sq.,
London.

# 285. To CHARLES OLLIER (London)

[MARLOW,]
Jan[uary] 16, 1818.

DEAR SIR,

Enclosed is a check for (within a few shillings) the amount of your bill. Can't you make the Booksellers subscribe more of the Poem?

Your most obedient servt.,

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

#### 286. To CHARLES OLLIER (London)

MARLOW,

January 22, 1818.

DEAR SIR.

I write now simply to request you to send me Chapman's "Hymns," as they have been published by Triphook, together with any of the numbers of the Collection of Poetry which he is printing. Pray send them immediately without waiting for the other books. I mean if possible by to-morrow's coach.

Munday, an Oxford bookseller, happened to call on me and I requested him to send for some copies of the Poem, and advertise it in the Oxford Papers. He will probably use my name with you for that purpose.

Don't relax in the advertising. I suppose that at present that it scarcely sells at all. If you see any reviews or notices of it in any periodical paper pray send it me—it is part of my reward—the amusement of hearing the abuse of the bigots.

Dear Sir, your very obliged servant,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Mr. Chas. Ollier, Bookseller, 3 Welbeck St., London.

# 287. To CHARLES OLLIER (London)

MARLOW,

Jan[uary] 22, 1818.

DEAR SIR,

I take the opportunity of a parcel to town to say that I have no objections—or rather that it is my wish that a copy of the "Revolt of Islam" should be sent to Valpy. 1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Probably John Abraham Valpy (1787-1854), the editor and printer.

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.32000000659054 use#pd-qoogle nia on 2022-06-29 18:45 GMT / h http://www.hathitrust.org/access Pennsylvania ed at University of Penns Domain, Google-digitized Pray send me Hunt's new poems 1 as soon as they appear, as well as "Altham." 2

Dear Sir, your faithful servant,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Will the books ever be bound?

Mr. Chas. Ollier, 3 Welbeck St., Cavendish Square.

#### 288. To CHARLES OLLIER<sup>3</sup> (London)

Marlow,4 Jan[uary] 25, 1818.

DEAR SIR.

Be so good as to send copies of the Poem with my compliments to Mr. Co[u]lson and Sir James Mackintosh. Do

<sup>1</sup> Leigh Hunt's volume "Foliage; or Poems, Original and Translated," was published early in 1818, by C. & J. Ollier. See Shelley's letter to Hunt, March 22, 1818.

<sup>2</sup> "Altham and his Wife; a Domestic Tale," by Charles Ollier,

was issued this year, also by C. and J. Ollier.

• This letter is in the writing of Mrs. Shelley.

Miss Clairmont notes in her journal that the house at Marlow was sold on this day. From the extracts in Mary Shelley's journal printed by Prof. Dowden ("Life of Shelley," Vol. II, pp. 183-4) it appears that Shelley left Marlow for London on February 7th, Clare followed with Willy and Allegra on the 9th; Mary departed on the following day. Shelley's last days in England were spent in the pleasant society of Hunt, Hogg, Peacock and Horace Smith. He lodged at Great Russell Street, Covent Garden: in the same street where the Lambs were then living. Mary Lamb was a visitor. He also saw Keats, Novello, Baxter, and Godwin; and he went to the theatre and opera. Peacock says: "I saw him for the last time on Tuesday, the 10th of March. The evening was a remarkable one, as being that of the first performance of an opera of Rossini in England, and of the first appearance here of Malibran's father, Garcia. He performed Count Almaviva in the "Barbiere di Siviglia"; Fodor was Rossina; Naldi, Figaro; Ambrogetti, Bartolo; and Angrisani, Basilio. I supped with Shelley and his travelling companions after the opera. They departed early the next morning."

Two days before leaving England, on March 9, Mary writes in her journal "Christening the children." The register at St. Giles in

you think you could get for me for copies some original drawings in Indian ink, etc.? There are such things to be had, I know, but I do not know exactly where.

You ought to continue to advertise the poem vigorously. Shall be glad to receive the bound books.

Your obedient sert.,

Last No. of the Quarterly.

P. B. SHELLEY.

Mr. CHARLES OLLIER,
3 Welbeck St.,
Cavendish Square,
London.

## 289. To Brookes & Co. (London)

Dover, March 12, 1818.

#### GENTLEMEN,

In my absence I wish no other bill to be honoured but the following:

 Mr. Peacock
 ... £30—15 days.

 Mr. Godwin
 ... 150—one month.

 Mr. Ollier
 ... 30— Do.

Mr. Madocks

(for accounts at Marlow) 117—four months. Should any other be presented for payment, I request that payment be refused, as they depend upon Conditional engagements with friends in England who ought to be prepared to meet them.

Gentlemen, I have the honour to be, Your most obed. Sert., PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

the Fields records the baptism of William, and Clara Everina, children of Percy Bysshe Shelley, Esq., and Mary Wollstonecraft, his wife, of Great Marlow, co. Bucks (late of Great Russell Street); the first born Jan. 24, 1816, the second Sept. 2, 1817; also Clara Allegra, reputed daughter of Rt. Hon. George Gordon, Lord Byron, Peer, of no fixed residence, travelling on the Continent, by Clara Mary Jane Clairmont, born Jan. 17, 1817. The officiating clergyman was Charles Macarthy.

# XIII. EARLY ITALIAN IMPRESSIONS "ROSALIND AND HELEN"

March 13—November 9, 1818

The Journey to Italy—Leigh Hunt's Poems—Passage of the Echelles—Italian Women—Lake Como—Milan Cathedral—Leghorn—The Gisbornes—The Baths of Lucca—Bathing—Godwin's "Malthus"—"Rosalind and Helen"—Florence—Venice—The Hoppners—Byron—Clare and Allegra—I Cappuccini—Death of Clara Shelley—"Prometheus Unbound"—Journey to Naples—Ariosto and Tasso—Pictures at Bologna.

## 290. To LEIGH HUNT (London)

CALAIS,

March 13, 1818.

[Friday.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

After a stormy but very short voyage we have arrived at Calais, and are at this moment on the point of proceeding. We are all very well, and in excellent spirits. Motion has always this effect upon the blood, even when the mind knows that there are causes for dejection.

With respect to Tailor and Hessey (sic) 1 I am ready to certify, if necessary in a Court of Justice, that one of them said he would give up his (qy. their) copyright for the £20; and that in lieu of that he would accept the profits of "Rimini" until it was paid.

Yours ever affectionately,

P. B. SHELLEY.

## Pray write to Milan.

<sup>1</sup> "Taylor and Hessey" was a firm of London publishers.
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### Written by Mary Shelley

Shelley is full of business, and desires me to finish this hasty notice of our safety. The children are in high spirits and very well. Our passage was stormy but very short. Both Alba and William were sick, but they were very good and slept all the time. We now depart for Italy, with very fine weather and good hopes.

Farewell, my dear Friend, may you be happy, Your affectionate friend,

MARY W. S.

[Addressed outside],
Mr. Leigh Hunt,
13 Lisson Grove North,
Paddington, London,
Angleterre.

### 291. To Leigh Hunt

Lyons,<sup>1</sup>
March 22, 1818.

MY DEAR FRIEND.

Why did you not wake me that night before we left England, you and Marianne? I take this as rather an unkind piece of kindness in you; but which, in consideration of the six hundred miles between us, I forgive.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mary Shelley's journal tells us that they arrived at Calais on March 12, and departed on the following day, and travelled through Douay, La Fere, Rheims, Dizier, Langres, Dijon, Macon, and reached Lyons on Saturday, the 21st, at half-past eleven. The following day Shelley wrote to Byron, "who had refused to correspond with Clare, informing him that Allegra had come thus far on the way." (Dowden's "Shelley," II, p. 108.) On the 25th they left Lyons.

<sup>\*</sup> Shelley's last day in London, Tuesday, March 10, 1818, was spent at his lodgings in Great Russell Street, in the company of Leigh Hunt and his wife. Mary adds in her journal: "Mary Lamb calls, Papa in the evening; our adieus." During the evening Shelley fell into a sleep from which he was not awakened, and his friends departed without taking leave of him.

We have journeyed towards the spring, that has been hastening to meet us from the south; and though our weather was at first abominable, we have now warm sunny days, and soft winds, and a sky of deep azure, the most serene I ever saw. The heat in this city to-day is like that of London in the midst of summer. My spirits and health sympathize in the change. Indeed, before I left London, my spirits were as feeble as my health, and I had demands on them which I found it difficult to supply.

I have read "Foliage:" with most of the poems I am already familiar. What a delightful poem "The Nymphs" is! especially the second part. It is truly poetical, in the intense and emphatic sense of the word. If six hundred miles were not between us, I should say what a pity that glib² was not omitted, and that the poem is not as faultless as it is beautiful. But, for fear I should spoil your next poem I will not let slip a word upon the subject.

Give my love to Marianne and her sister, and tell Marianne she defrauded me of a kiss by not waking me when she went away, and that, as I have no better mode of conveying it, I must take the best, and ask you to pay the debt. When shall I see you again? Oh, that it might be in Italy! I confess that the thought of how long we may be divided makes me very melancholy. Adieu, my dear friend. Write soon.

Ever most affectionately yours, P. B. S.

To LEIGH HUNT, Esq.

292. JOURNAL: PASSAGE OF THE ECHELLES

Thursday, March 26, [1818].

We travel towards the mountains, and begin to enter the

In the phrase, "the glib sea-flowers."

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Foliage; or, Poems Original and Translated. By Leigh Hunt. Published by Ollier in 1818. The volume contains a poem "To Percy Shelley."

valleys of the Alps. The country becomes covered again with verdure and cultivation, and white chateaux and scattered cottages among woods of old oak and walnut trees. The vines are here peculiarly picturesque; they are trellissed upon immense stakes, and the trunks of them are moss-covered and hoary with age. Unlike the French vines, which creep lowly on the ground, they form rows of interlaced bowers, which, when the leaves are green and the red grapes are hanging among those hoary branches, will afford a delightful shadow to those who sit upon the moss underneath. The vines are sometimes planted in the open fields, and sometimes among lofty orchards of apple and pear trees, the twigs of which were just becoming purple with the bursting blossoms.

We dined at Les Echelles, a village at the foot of the mountain of the same name, the boundaries of France and Savoy. Before this we had been stopped at Port Bonvoisin, where the legal limits of the French and Sardinian territories are placed. We here heard that a Milanese had been sent back all the way to Lyons, because his passport was unauthorised by the Sardinian Consul, a few days before, and that we should be subjected to the same treatment. We, in respect to the character of our nation I suppose, were suffered to pass. Our books, however, were, after a long discussion, sent to Chambery, to be submitted to the censor; a priest, who admits nothing of Rousseau, Voltaire, etc., into the dominions of the King of Sardinia. All such books are burned.

After dinner we ascended Les Echelles, winding along a road cut through perpendicular rocks, of immense elevation, by Charles Emanuel, Duke of Savoy, in 1582. The rocks, which cannot be less than a thousand feet in perpendicular height, sometimes overhang the road on each

A canon who had met Sir Timothy Shelley at the Duke of Norfolk's happened to be present at the inspection, and so the books were allowed to pass.—Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 189.

side, and almost shut out the sky. The scene is like that described in the Prometheus of Æschylus. Vast rifts and caverns in the granite precipices, wintry mountains with ice and snow above; the loud sounds of unseen waters within the caverns, and walls of toppling rocks, only to be scaled as he describes, by the winged chariot of the ocean nymphs.

Under the dominion of this tyranny, the inhabitants of the fertile valleys, bounded by these mountains, are in a state of most frightful poverty and disease. At the foot of this ascent, were cut into the rocks at several places, stories of the misery of the inhabitants, to move the compassion of the traveller. One old man, lame and blind, crawled out of a hole in the rock, wet with the perpetual melting of the snows of above, and dripping like a shower-bath.

The country, as we descended to Chambery, continued as beautiful; though marked with somewhat of a softer character than before: we arrived a little after night-fall.

#### 293. To Thomas Love Peacock

MILAN,

April, 1818.

My DEAR PEACOCK,

Behold us arrived at length at the end of our journey—that is, within a few miles of it—because we design to spend the summer on the shore of the Lake of Como. Our journey was somewhat painful from the cold—and in no other manner interesting until we passed the Alps: of course I except the Alps themselves; but no sooner had we arrived at Italy, than the loveliness of the earth and the serenity of the sky made the greatest difference in my sensations. I depend on these things for life; for in the smoke of cities, and the tumult of human kind, and the chilling fogs and rain of our own country, I can hardly be said to live. With what delight did I hear the woman, who conducted us to

see the triumphal arch of Augustus at Susa, speak the clear and complete language of Italy, though half unintelligible to me, after that nasal and abbreviated cacophony of the French! A ruined arch of magnificent proportions in the Greek taste, standing in a kind of road of green lawn, overgrown with violets and primroses, and in the midst of stupendous mountains, and a blonde woman, of light and graceful manners, something in the style of Fuseli's Eve, were the first things we met in Italy.

This city is very agreeable. We went to the opera last night—which is a most splendid exhibition. The opera itself was not a favourite, and the singers very inferior to our own. But the ballet, or rather a kind of melodrame or pantomimic drama, was the most splendid spectacle I ever saw. We have no Miss Melanie¹ here—in every other respect, Milan is unquestionably superior. The manner in which language is translated into gesture, the complete and full effect of the whole as illustrating the history in question, the unaffected self-possession of each of the actors, even to the children, made this choral drama more impressive than I could have conceived possible. The story is Othello, and strange to say, it left no disagreeable impression.

I write, but I am not in the humour to write, and you must expect longer, if not more entertaining, letters soon—that is, in a week or so—when I am a little recovered from my journey. Pray tell us all the news with regard to our own offspring, whom we left at nurse in England as well as those of our friends. Mention Cobbett and politics too—and Hunt—to whom Mary is now writing—and particularly your own plans and yourself. You shall hear more of me and my plans soon. My health is improved

¹ Peacock says that in the season of 1817, he persuaded Shelley to accompany him to the opera. "The performance was 'Don Giovanni'... followed by a ballet, in which Mlle. Melanie was the principal danseuse. He was enchanted with this lady; said he had never imagined such grace of motion; and the impression was permanent."

1

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000659054 2022-06-29 18:45 Pennsylvania on eed at University of Penns Domain, Google-digitized already—and my spirits something—and I have many literary schemes, and one in particular—which I thirst to be settled that I may begin. I have ordered Ollier to send you some sheets, etc., for revision.

Adieu.—Always faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

294. To Thomas Love Peacock

MILAN,

April 20, 1818.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

I had no conception that the distance between us, measured by time in respect of letters, was so great. have but just received yours dated the 2nd—and when you will receive mine written from this city somewhat later than the same date, I cannot know. I am sorry to hear that you have been obliged to remain at Marlow; a certain degree of society being almost a necessity of life, particularly as we are not to see you this summer in Italy. But this, I suppose, must be as it is. I often revisit Marlow in thought. The curse of this life is, that whatever is once known, can never be unknown. You inhabit a spot, which before you inhabit it, is as indifferent to you as any other spot upon earth, and when, persuaded by some necessity, you think to leave it, you leave it not; it clings to you—and with memories of things, which, in your experience of them, gave no such promise, revenges your Time flows on, places are changed; friends desertion. who were with us, are no longer with us; yet what has been seems yet to be, but barren and stripped of life. See, I have sent you a study for "Nightmare Abbey."

Since I last wrote to you we have been to Como, looking for a house. This lake exceeds anything I ever beheld in beauty, with the exception of the arbutus islands of Killarney. It is long and narrow, and has the appearance

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See p. 397.

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of a mighty river winding among the mountains and the forests. We sailed from the town of Como to a tract of country called the Tremezina, and saw the various aspects presented by that part of the lake. The mountains between Como and that village, or rather cluster of villages, are covered on high with chestnut forests (the eating chestnuts, on which the inhabitants of the country subsist in time of scarcity), which sometimes descend to the very verge of the lake, overhanging it with their hoary branches. But usually the immediate border of this shore is composed of laurel-trees, and bay, and myrtle, and wild fig-trees, and olives which grow in the crevices of the rocks, and overhang the caverns, and shadow the deep glens, which are filled with the flashing light of the waterfalls. Other flowering shrubs, which I cannot name, grow there also. On high, the towers of village churches are seen white among the dark forests. Beyond, on the opposite shore, which faces the south, the mountains descend less precipitously to the lake, and although they are much higher, and some covered with perpetual snow, there intervenes between them and the lake a range of lower hills, which have glens and rifts opening to the other, such as I should fancy the abysses of Ida or Parnassus. Here are plantations of olive, and orange, and lemon trees. which are now so loaded with fruit, that there is more fruit than leaves—and vineyards. This shore of the lake is one continued village, and the Milanese nobility have their The union of culture and the untameable profusion and loveliness of nature is here so close, that the line where they are divided can hardly be discovered. the finest scenery is that of the Villa Pliniana; so called from a fountain which ebbs and flows every three hours, described by the younger Pliny, which is in the courtyard. This house, which was once a magnificent palace, and is now half in ruins, we are endeavouring to procure. It is built upon terraces raised from the bottom of the lake, together with its garden, at the foot of a semicircular

precipice, overshadowed by profound forests of chestnut. The scene from the colonnade is the most extraordinary, at once, and the most lovely that eye ever beheld. On one side is the mountain, and immediately over you are clusters of cypress-trees, of an astonishing height, which seem to pierce the sky. Above you, from among the clouds, as it were, descends a waterfall of immense size, broken by the woody rocks into a thousand channels to the lake. On the other side is seen the blue extent of the lake and the mountains, speckled with sails and spires. The apartments of the Pliniana are immensely large, but ill furnished and antique. The terraces, which overlook the lake, and conduct under the shade of such immense laurel-trees as deserve the epithet of Pythian, are most delightful. We staid at Como two days, and have now returned to Milan, waiting the issue of our negotiation about a house. Como is only six leagues from Milan, and its mountains are seen from the cathedral.

This cathedral is a most astonishing work of art. built of white marble, and cut into pinnacles of immense height, and the utmost delicacy of workmanship, and loaded with sculpture. The effect of it, piercing the solid blue with those groups of dazzling spires, relieved by the serene depth of this Italian heaven, or by moonlight when the stars seem gathered among those clustered shapes, is beyond anything I had imagined architecture capable of producing. The interior, though very sublime, is of a more earthly character, and with its stained glass and massy granite columns overloaded with antique figures, and the silver lamps, that burn for ever under the canopy of black cloth beside the brazen altar and the marble fretwork of the dome, give it the aspect of some gorgeous sepulchre. There is one solitary spot among these aisles, behind the altar, where the light of day is dim and yellow under the storied window, which I have chosen to visit, and read Dante there.

I have devoted this summer, and indeed the next year,

to the composition of a tragedy on the subject of Tasso's madness, which I find upon inspection is, if properly treated, admirably dramatic and poetical. But, you will say, I have no dramatic talent; very true, in a certain sense; but I have taken the resolution to see what kind of a tragedy a person without dramatic talent could write. It shall be better morality than "Fazio," and better poetry than "Bertram," at least. You tell me nothing of "Rhododaphne," a book from which, I confess, I expected extraordinary success.

Who lives in my house at Marlow now, or what is to be done with it? I am seriously persuaded that the situation was injurious to my health, or I should be tempted to feel a very absurd interest in who is to be its next possessor. The expense of our journey here has been very considerable—but we are now living at the hotel here, in a kind of

¹ Mrs. Shelley tells us in her note on "Prometheus Unbound" that during the first year of Shelley's residence in Italy "the poetical spirit within him speedily revived with all the power, and with more than all the beauty of his first attempts. He meditated three subjects as the groundwork for lyrical dramas. One was the story of Tasso; of this a slight fragment of a song of Tasso remains. The other was one founded on the book of Job, which he never abandoned in idea, but of which no trace remains among his papers. The third was the 'Prometheus Unbound.'"

By Henry Hart Milman (1791-1868), Dean of St. Paul's. This tragedy was produced at Covent Garden in 1815. Peacock said that he remembered Shelley's absorbed attention to Miss O'Neill's performance of *Bianca* in "Fazio," "and it is evident to me that she was always in his thoughts when he drew the character of *Beatrice* in the 'Cenci.' With the exception of 'Fazio,' I do not remember his having been pleased at any performance at an English theatre."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "Bertram," a tragedy by the Rev. Charles Robert Maturin, was produced with success at Drury Lane in 1816, through the influence of Byron.

<sup>4 &</sup>quot;Rhododaphne, or The Thessalian Spell," a poem by Peacock, which was published anonymously in 1818 by Hookham. Shelley's review of this book was probably the last piece of literary work done by him in England. Mary records in her journal for Friday, Feb. 20, 1818, "copy Shelley's critique on 'Rhododaphne.'" (Dowden, II, p. 183.) It was first printed by Mr. H. Buxton Forman in Shelley's Prose Works, Vol. III, p. 19.

Pension, which is very reasonable in respect of price, and when we get into a menage of our own, we have every reason to expect that we shall experience something of the boasted cheapness of Italy. The finest bread, made of a sifted flour, the whitest and the best I ever tasted, is only one English penny a pound. All the necessaries of life bear a proportional relation to this. But then the luxuries, tea, etc., are very dear,—and the English, as usual, are cheated in a way that is quite ridiculous, if they have not their wits about them. We do not know a single human being, and the opera, until last night, has been always the same. Lord Byron, we hear, has taken a house for three years, at Venice; whether we shall see him or not, I do not know. The number of English who pass through this town is very great. They ought to be in their own country in the present Their conduct is wholly inexcusable. The people here, though inoffensive enough, seem both in body and soul a miserable race. The men are hardly men; they look like a tribe of stupid and shrivelled slaves, and I do not think that I have seen a gleam of intelligence in the countenance of man since I passed the Alps. The women in enslaved countries are always better than the men; but they have tight-laced figures, and figures and mien which express (O how unlike the French!) a mixture of the coquette and prude, which reminds me of the worst characteristics of the English. 1 Everything but humanity is in much greater perfection here than in France. cleanliness and comfort of the inns is something quite English. The country is beautifully cultivated; altogether, if you can, as one ought always to do, find your

¹ These impressions of Shelley, with regard to the Italians, formed in ignorance, and with precipitation, became altogether altered after a longer stay in Italy. He quickly discovered the extraordinary intelligence and genius of this wonderful people, amidst the ignorance in which they are carefully kept by their rulers, and the vices, fostered by a religious system, which these same rulers have used as their most successful engine.—Note by Mrs. Shelley.

happiness in yourself, it applace to live in.

sh hightful and commodious

Adieu.—Your affectionate friend, P. B. S.

## 295. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg (London)

MILAN,

April 30, 1818.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received your note a few hours before I left England, and have designed to write to you from every town on the route; but the difficulty not so much of knowing what to say as how to say it prevented me till this moment. I am sorry that I did not see you again before my departure. On my return, which will not perhaps take place so soon as I at first expected, we shall meet again; meanwhile my letters to Hunt and Peacock are, as it were, common property, of which, if you feel any curiosity about me which I neglect to satisfy myself, you are at liberty to avail yourself. To-morrow we leave this city for Pisa, where, or in its neighbourhood, we shall remain during the summer.

The Italians—at least those whom I have seen—are a very different people from the French. They have less character; and the women especially seem a very inferior race of beings. Their manners, so far as I can judge from their mien and physiognomy, are at once prudish and coquettish; their features bony; their figures thin; and those who have any claims to beauty have a beauty superficial and of a cold and unfeeling character. Their voices have none of that winning persuasiveness of those

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Perhaps their final meeting was when Hogg dined with Shelley in London (apparently in Great Russell Street) on Sunday, Feb. 15, 1818. This is the last mention of Hogg in the extract printed by Prof. Dowden from Mary's journal at this date.

of France, but are hard and without inflexion or variety of But this holds good, as far as I know, only to Milan. as my experience extends no further. The architecture of the cathedral of this city exceeds anything I ever saw in the Gothic style: it is far superior to York Minster or Westminster Abbey. The Opera is very good and the house larger or at least as large as that of London. have Mad. Camporese here as the prima donna—a cold and unfeeling singer and a bad actress. The best singer is Their ballets, which are a kind of a man called David. pantomimic dance illustrative of some story, are much superior to anything of the kind in England. they are wholly unlike anything represented on our stage, being a combination of a great number of figures grouped with the most picturesque and even poetical effect, and perpetually changing with motions the most harmoniously interwoven and contrasted with great effect. Othello is represented in one of these ballets, and the story is so well told in action as to leave upon the mind an impression as of a real tragedy.

We have been to the Lake of Como, and indeed had some thought of taking our residence there for the summer. The scenery is very beautiful, abounding among other things with those green banks for the sake of which you represented me as wandering over the world. You are more interested in the human part of the experience of travelling; a thing of which I see little and understand less, and which, if I saw and understood more, I fear I should be little able to describe. I am just reading a novel of Wielland's called "Aristippus," which I think you would like. It is very Greek, though perhaps not religious enough for a true Pagan. If you can get it otherwise, do not relad it in the French translation, as the impudent translator has omitted much of the original, to accommodate it, as he says, to the "fastidious taste and powerful understanding of his countrymen."

I have read some Greek but not much on my journey--

two or three plays of Euripides—and armong them the "Ion," which you praised and which [I think] is exquisitely beautiful. But I have [now] made some Italian book from my [wish] to learn the language, so as to speak it. I have been studying the history of Tasso's life, with some idea of making a drama of his advertures and misfortunes [ ] such a subject would suit English poetry. Do not tell—

Address Poste Restante, Pisa.

Most sincerely yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

If you see Miss Lamb<sup>2</sup> present my compts., and tell her that I did not pass thro' Paris, but that I put her letter in the nearest post. Remember me also to Dr. . .

### 296. To Thomas Love Peacock

MILAN,

April 30, 1818.

My DEAR PEACOCK,

I write simply to tell you to direct your next letters, Poste Restante, Pisa. We have engaged vetturino for that city, and leave Milan to-morrow morning. Our journey will occupy six or seven days.

Pisa is not six miles from the Mediterranen, with which it communicates by the river Arno. We shall pass by Piacenza, Parma, Bologna, the Apennines and Florence.

[THOMAS J. HOGG], Esq., [8 Garden Court],

Temple, London, Angleterre.

Endorsed, probably in Hogg's writing. "The est letter Shelley wrote from Italy."

<sup>8</sup> See p. 588.

Part of the letter is injured. Prof. Dowden is supplied some of the words in brackets conjecturally. Most of the address of this letter is carefully scored through, but some wids can still be deciphered. It seems to have been—

and I will endeavour to tell you something of these celebrated places in my next letter; but I cannot promise much, for, though my health is much improved, my spirits are unequal, and seem to desert me when I attempt to write.

Pisa, they say, is uninhabitable in the midst of summer—we shall do, therefore, what other people do, retire to Florence, or to the mountains. But I will write to you our plans from Pisa, when I shall understand them better myself.

You may easily conjecture the motives which led us to forego the divine solitude of Como. To me, whose chief pleasure in life is the contemplation of nature, you may imagine how great is this loss.

Let us hear from you once a fortnight. Do not forget those who do not forget you.

Adieu.—Ever most sincerely yours,
P. B. Shelley.

### 297. To Thomas Love Peacock

Livorno, 1

June 5, 1818.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

We have not heard from you since the middle of April—that is, we have received only *one* letter from you since our departure from England. It necessarily follows that some accident has intercepted them. Address, in future, to the care of Mr. Gisborne, Livorno—and I shall receive

According to Shelley's statement in this letter, they would have reached Pisa on May 7. Prof. Dowden says that Shelley, unaccompanied by Mary or Clare, "went to the Bagni di Lucca towards the end of May, probably in quest of a house. Mary's journal tells us that they arrived at Leghorn on May 9, and on that day they made the acquaintance of Mrs. Gisborne, who "calls in the evening with her husband; she is reserved yet with easy manners." Throughout the ensuing week they meet the Gisbornes every day.—Dowden's "Shelley," II, 209.

them, though sometimes somewhat circuitously, yet always securely.

We left Milan on the 1st of May, and travelled across the Apennines to Pisa. This part of the Apennines is far less beautiful than the Alps; the mountains are wide and wild, and the whole scenery broad and undetermined the imagination cannot find a home in it. The Plain of the Milanese, and that of Parma, is exquisitely beautiful it is like one garden, or rather cultivated wilderness; because the corn and the meadow-grass grow under high and thick trees, festooned to one another by regular festoons of vines. On the seventh day we arrived at Pisa, where we remained three or four days. A large disagreeable city, almost without inhabitants. We then proceeded to this great trading town, where we have remained a month, and which, in a few days, we leave for the Bagni di Lucca, a kind of watering-place situated in the depths of the Apennines; the scenery surrounding this village is very fine.

We have made some acquaintance with a very amiable and accomplished lady, Mrs. Gisborne, who is the sole attraction in this most unattractive of cities. We had no idea of spending a month here, but she has made it even agreeable. We shall see something of Italian society at the Bagni di Lucca, where the most fashionable people resort.

When you send my parcel—which, by-the-by, I should request you to direct to Mr. Gisborne—I wish you could contrive to enclose the two last parts of Clarke's "Travels," relating to Greece, and belonging to Hookham. You know I subscribe there still—and I have determined to take the *Examiner* here. You would, therefore, oblige me, by sending it weekly, after having read it yourself, to the same direction, and so clipped, as to make as little weight as possible.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Rev. Edward Daniel Clarke (1769-1822), whose "Travels" in six volumes were published in 1810-1823.

I write as if writing where perhaps my letter may never arrive.

With every good wish from all of us,

Believe me most sincerely yours,

P. B. S.

## 298. To John and Maria Gisborne (Leghorn)

Bagni di Lucca, <sup>1</sup>
July 10, 1818.

You cannot know, as some friends in England do, to whom my silence is still more inexcusable, that this silence is no proof of forgetfulness or neglect.

I have, in truth, nothing to say, but that I shall be happy to see you again, and renew our delighted walks, until the desire or the duty of seeing new things hurries us away. We have spent a month here in our accustomed solitude, with the exception of one night at the Casino; and the choice society of all ages, which I took care to pack up in a large trunk before we left England, have revisited us here. I am employed just now, having little better to do, in translating into my faint and inefficient periods the divine eloquence of Plato's "Symposium;" only as an exercise, or, perhaps, to give Mary some idea of the manners and feelings of the Athenians—so different on many subjects from that of any other community that ever existed.

We have almost finished Ariosto-who is entertaining

i On June 11 the Shelleys moved to the Baths of Lucca. An example of Shelley's innumerable acts of generosity is shown in two unpublished letters written at this time. The first of them is written from the Baths of Lucca on the 28th of June, 1818, to Charles Ollier requesting him to pay £10 on the application of a person unnamed, but who will bring with him an undated note signed A.B. In a later letter to Ollier, undated but apparently written in August, 1818, Shelley asks him to honour a draft for £20, when presented by the same A.B.

and graceful, and sometimes a poet. Forgive me, worshippers of a more equal and tolerant divinity in poetry, if Ariosto pleases me less than you. Where is the gentle seriousness, the delicate sensibility, the calm and sustained energy, without which true greatness cannot be? He is so cruel, too, in his descriptions; his most prized virtues are vices almost without disguise. He constantly vindicates and embellishes revenge in its grossest form; the most deadly superstition that ever infested the world. How different from the tender and solemn enthusiasm of Petrarch—or even the delicate moral sensibility of Tasso, though somewhat obscured by an assumed and artificial style.

We read a good deal here—and we read little in Livorno. We have ridden, Mary and I, once only, to a place called Prato Fiorito, on the top of the mountains: the road, winding through forests, and over torrents, and on the verge of green ravines, affords scenery magnificently fine. I cannot describe it to you, but bid you, though vainly, come and see. I take great delight in watching the changes of the atmosphere here, and the growth of the thunder showers with which the moon is often overshadowed, and which break and fade away towards evening into flocks of delicate clouds. Our fire-flies are fading away fast; but there is the planet Jupiter, who rises majestically over the rift in the forest-covered mountains to the south, and the pale summer lightning which is spread out every night, at intervals, over the sky. No doubt Providence has contrived these things, that, when the fire-flies go out, the low-flying owl may see her way home.

Remember me kindly to the Machinista. 1

With the sentiment of impatience until we see you again in the autumn,

I am, yours most sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Henry Reveley, Mrs. Gisborne's son by a former marriage, so called on account of his occupation, that of an engineer.

## 299. To Thomas Love Peacock BAGNI DI LUCCA,

July 25, 1818.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

I received on the same day your letters marked 5 and 6, the one directed to Pisa, and the other to Livorno, and I can assure you that they are most welcome visitors.

**Atmospheric Effects** 

Our life here is as unvaried by any external events as if we were at Marlow, where a sail up the river or a journey to London makes an epoch. Since I last wrote to you, I have ridden over to Lucca, once with Clare, and once alone; and we have been over to the Casino, where I cannot say there is anything remarkable, the women being far removed from anything which the most liberal annotator could interpret into beauty or grace, and apparently possessing no intellectual excellences to compensate the deficiency. I assure you it is well that it is so, for these dances, especially the waltz, are so exquisitely beautiful that it would be a little dangerous to the newly unfrozen senses and imaginations of us migrators from the neighbourhood of the pole. As it is—except in the dark there could be no peril. The atmosphere here, unlike that of the rest of Italy, is diversified with clouds, which grow in the middle of the day, and sometimes bring thunder and lightning, and hail about the size of a pigeon's egg, and decrease towards the evening, leaving only those finely woven webs of vapour which we see in English skies, and flocks of fleecy and slowly-moving clouds, which all vanish before sunset; and the nights are for ever serene, and we see a star in the east at sunset—I think it is Jupiter —almost as fine as Venus was last summer; but it wants a certain silver and aerial radiance, and soft yet piercing splendour, which belongs, I suppose, to the latter planet by virtue of its at once divine and female nature. I have forgotten to ask the ladies if Jupiter produces on them the same effect. I take great delight in watching the changes of the atmosphere. In the evening Mary and I

to the composition of a tragedy on the subject of Tasso's madness, which I find upon inspection is, if properly treated, admirably dramatic and poetical. But, you will say, I have no dramatic talent; very true, in a certain sense; but I have taken the resolution to see what kind of a tragedy a person without dramatic talent could write. It shall be better morality than "Fazio," and better poetry than "Bertram," at least. You tell me nothing of "Rhododaphne," a book from which, I confess, I expected extraordinary success.

Who lives in my house at Marlow now, or what is to be done with it? I am seriously persuaded that the situation was injurious to my health, or I should be tempted to feel a very absurd interest in who is to be its next possessor. The expense of our journey here has been very considerable—but we are now living at the hotel here, in a kind of

¹ Mrs. Shelley tells us in her note on "Prometheus Unbound" that during the first year of Shelley's residence in Italy "the poetical spirit within him speedily revived with all the power, and with more than all the beauty of his first attempts. He meditated three subjects as the groundwork for lyrical dramas. One was the story of Tasso; of this a slight fragment of a song of Tasso remains. The other was one founded on the book of Job, which he never abandoned in idea, but of which no trace remains among his papers. The third was the 'Prometheus Unbound.'"

<sup>\*</sup> By Henry Hart Milman (1791-1868), Dean of St. Paul's. This tragedy was produced at Covent Garden in 1815. Peacock said that he remembered Shelley's absorbed attention to Miss O'Neill's performance of *Bianca* in "Fazio," "and it is evident to me that she was always in his thoughts when he drew the character of *Beatrice* in the 'Cenci.' With the exception of 'Fazio,' I do not remember his having been pleased at any performance at an English theatre."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "Bertram," a tragedy by the Rev. Charles Robert Maturin, was produced with success at Drury Lane in 1816, through the influence of Byron.

<sup>4 &</sup>quot;Rhododaphne, or The Thessalian Spell," a poem by Peacock, which was published anonymously in 1818 by Hookham. Shelley's review of this book was probably the last piece of literary work done by him in England. Mary records in her journal for Friday, Feb. 20, 1818, "copy Shelley's critique on 'Rhododaphne.'" (Dowden, II, p. 183.) It was first printed by Mr. H. Buxton Forman in Shelley's Prose Works, Vol. III, p. 19.

Pension, which is very reasonable in respect of price, and when we get into a menage of our own, we have every reason to expect that we shall experience something of the boasted cheapness of Italy. The finest bread, made of a sifted flour, the whitest and the best I ever tasted, is only one English penny a pound. All the necessaries of life bear a proportional relation to this. But then the luxuries, tea, etc., are very dear,—and the English, as usual, are cheated in a way that is quite ridiculous, if they have not their wits about them. We do not know a single human being, and the opera, until last night, has been always the same. Lord Byron, we hear, has taken a house for three years, at Venice; whether we shall see him or not, I do not know. The number of English who pass through this town is very They ought to be in their own country in the present Their conduct is wholly inexcusable. The people crisis. here, though inoffensive enough, seem both in body and soul a miserable race. The men are hardly men; they look like a tribe of stupid and shrivelled slaves, and I do not think that I have seen a gleam of intelligence in the countenance of man since I passed the Alps. The women in enslaved countries are always better than the men; but they have tight-laced figures, and figures and mien which express (O how unlike the French!) a mixture of the coquette and prude, which reminds me of the worst characteristics of the English. Everything but humanity is in much greater perfection here than in France. cleanliness and comfort of the inns is something quite English. The country is beautifully cultivated; altogether, if you can, as one ought always to do, find your

¹ These impressions of Shelley, with regard to the Italians, formed in ignorance, and with precipitation, became altogether altered after a longer stay in Italy. He quickly discovered the extraordinary intelligence and genius of this wonderful people, amidst the ignorance in which they are carefully kept by their rulers, and the vices, fostered by a religious system, which these same rulers have used as their most successful engine.—Note by Mrs. Shelley.

and graceful, and sometimes a poet. Forgive me, worshippers of a more equal and tolerant divinity in poetry, if Ariosto pleases me less than you. Where is the gentle seriousness, the delicate sensibility, the calm and sustained energy, without which true greatness cannot be? He is so cruel, too, in his descriptions; his most prized virtues are vices almost without disguise. He constantly vindicates and embellishes revenge in its grossest form; the most deadly superstition that ever infested the world. How different from the tender and solemn enthusiasm of Petrarch—or even the delicate moral sensibility of Tasso, though somewhat obscured by an assumed and artificial style.

We read a good deal here—and we read little in Livorno. We have ridden, Mary and I, once only, to a place called Prato Fiorito, on the top of the mountains: the road, winding through forests, and over torrents, and on the verge of green ravines, affords scenery magnificently fine. I cannot describe it to you, but bid you, though vainly, I take great delight in watching the changes come and see. of the atmosphere here, and the growth of the thunder showers with which the moon is often overshadowed, and which break and fade away towards evening into flocks of delicate clouds. Our fire-flies are fading away fast; but there is the planet Jupiter, who rises majestically over the rift in the forest-covered mountains to the south, and the pale summer lightning which is spread out every night, at intervals, over the sky. No doubt Providence has contrived these things, that, when the fire-flies go out, the low-flying owl may see her way home.

Remember me kindly to the Machinista. 1

With the sentiment of impatience until we see you again in the autumn,

I am, yours most sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Henry Reveley, Mrs. Gisborne's son by a former marriage, so called on account of his occupation, that of an engineer,

## 299. To Thomas Love Peacock Bagni di Lucca,

July 25, 1818.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

I received on the same day your letters marked 5 and 6, the one directed to Pisa, and the other to Livorno, and I can assure you that they are most welcome visitors.

Our life here is as unvaried by any external events as if we were at Marlow, where a sail up the river or a journey to London makes an epoch. Since I last wrote to you, I have ridden over to Lucca, once with Clare, and once alone; and we have been over to the Casino, where I cannot say there is anything remarkable, the women being far removed from anything which the most liberal annotator could interpret into beauty or grace, and apparently possessing no intellectual excellences to compensate the deficiency. I assure you it is well that it is so, for these dances, especially the waltz, are so exquisitely beautiful that it would be a little dangerous to the newly unfrozen senses and imaginations of us migrators from the neighbourhood of the pole. As it is—except in the dark there could be no peril. The atmosphere here, unlike that of the rest of Italy, is diversified with clouds, which grow in the middle of the day, and sometimes bring thunder and lightning, and hail about the size of a pigeon's egg, and decrease towards the evening, leaving only those finely woven webs of vapour which we see in English skies. and flocks of fleecy and slowly-moving clouds, which all vanish before sunset; and the nights are for ever serene, and we see a star in the east at sunset—I think it is Jupiter —almost as fine as Venus was last summer; but it wants a certain silver and aerial radiance, and soft yet piercing splendour, which belongs, I suppose, to the latter planet by virtue of its at once divine and female nature. I have forgotten to ask the ladies if Jupiter produces on them the same effect. I take great delight in watching the changes of the atmosphere. In the evening Mary and I

often take a ride, for horses are cheap in this country. In the middle of the day, I bathe in a pool or fountain, formed in the middle of the forests by a torrent. It is surrounded on all sides by precipitous rocks, and the waterfall of the stream which forms it falls into it on one side with perpetual dashing. Close to it, on the top of the rocks, are alders, and above the great chestnut trees, whose long and pointed leaves pierce the deep blue sky in strong relief. The water of this pool, which, to venture an unrythmical paraphrase, is "sixteen feet long and ten feet wide," is as transparent as the air, so that the stones and sand at the bottom seem, as it were, trembling in the light of noonday. It is exceedingly cold also. My custom [is] to undress, and sit on the rocks, reading Herodotus, until the perspiration has subsided, and then to leap from the edge of the rock into this fountain—a practice in the hot weather excessively refreshing. This torrent is composed. as it were, of a succession of pools and waterfalls, up which I sometimes amuse myself by climbing when I bathe, and receiving the spray over all my body, whilst I clamber up the moist crags with difficulty.

I have lately found myself totally incapable of original composition. I employed my mornings, therefore, in translating the "Symposium," which I accomplished in ten days. Mary is now transcribing it, and I am writing a prefatory essay. I have been reading scarcely anything but Greek, and a little Italian poetry with Mary. We have finished Ariosto together—a thing I could not have done again alone.

"Frankenstein" seems to have been well received; for although the unfriendly criticism of the *Quarterly* is an evil for it, yet it proves that it is read in some considerable

You see a little muddy pond of water, never dry; I've measured it from side to side:
'Tis three feet long, and two feet wide.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mr. Buxton Forman shows that Shelley was thinking of an early version of Wordsworth's poem "The Thorn."—

degree, and it would be difficult for them with any appearance of fairness, to deny it merit altogether. Their notice of me, and their exposure of their true motives for not noticing my book, shews how well understood an hostility must subsist between me and them.

The news of the result of the elections, especially that of the metropolis, is highly inspiring. I received a letter, of two days' later date, with yours, which announced the unfortunate termination of that of Westmoreland. I wish you had sent me some of the overflowing villainy of those apostates. What a beastly and pitiful wretch that Wordsworth! That such a man should be such a poet! I can compare him with no one but Simonides, that flatterer of the Sicilian tyrants, and at the same time the most natural and tender of lyric poets.

What pleasure would it have given me if the wings of imagination could have divided the space which divides us, and I could have been of your party. I have seen nothing so beautiful as Virginia Water—in its kind. my thoughts for ever cling to Windsor Forest, and the copses of Marlow, like the clouds which hang upon the woods of the mountains, low trailing, and though they pass away, leave their best dew when they themselves have faded. You tell me that you have finished "Nightmare Abbey." I hope that you have given the enemy no quarter. Remember, it is a sacred war. We have found an excellent quotation in Ben Jonson's "Every Man in his Humour." I will transcribe it, as I do not think you have these plays at Marlow.

"MATTHEW. O, it's only your fine humour, sir. Your true melancholy breeds your fine wit, sir. I am melancholy myself divers times, sir; and then do I no more but take pen and paper presently, and overflow you half a score or a dozen of sonnets at a sitting.

- "ED. KNOWELL. Sure, he utters them by the gross.
- "STEPHEN. Truly, sir; and I love such things out of measure.

"ED. KNOWELL. I' faith, better than in measure, I'll undertake.

"MATTHEW. Why, I pray you, sir, make use of my study; it's at your service.

"STEPHEN. I thank you, sir; I shall be bold, I warrant you. Have you a stool there to be melancholy upon?"—
"Every Man in his Humour," Act 3, scene i.

The last expression would not make a bad motto. 1

## 300. TO WILLIAM GODWIN (London)

BAGNI DI LUCCA, July 25, 1818.

MY DEAR GODWIN,

We have, as yet, seen nothing of Italy which marks it to us as the habitation of departed greatness. The serene sky, the magnificent scenery, the delightful productions of the climate, are known to us, indeed, as the same with those which the ancients enjoyed. But Rome and Naples—even Florence, are yet to see; and if we were to write to you at present a history of our impressions, it would give you no idea that we lived in Italy.

I am exceedingly delighted with the plan you propose of a book, illustrating the character of our calumniated Republicans. It is precisely the subject for Mary; and I imagine that, but for the fear of being excited to refer to books not within her reach, she would attempt to begin it here, and order the works you notice. I am unfortunately little skilled in English history, and the interest which it excites in me is so feeble, that I find it a duty to

<sup>1</sup> Peacock adopted this passage as a second motto (omitting E. Knowell's interlocutions) for his novel, "Nightmare Abbey," which was published this year (1818).

In Godwin's letter to Shelley from Skinner Street, June 18, 1818, he sketches the plan of a book "to be called The Lives of the Commonwealth's Men." Godwin says that he will never write it himself, but he thought that Mary might like to do so, and he adds a list of books to be consulted. Godwin, however, did write some years later a "History of the Commonwealth of England," 1824-28.

attain merely to that general knowledge of it which is indispensable.

Mary has just finished Ariosto with me, and, indeed, has attained a very competent knowledge of Italian. She is now reading "Livy." I have been constantly occupied in literature, but have written little—except some translations from Plato, in which I exercised myself, in the despair of producing anything original. The "Symposium" of Plato, seems to me one of the most valuable pieces of all antiquity; whether we consider the intrinsic merit of the composition, or the light which it throws on the inmost state of manners and opinions among the ancient Greeks. I have occupied myself in translating this, and it has excited me to attempt an Essay upon the cause of some differences in sentiment between the Ancients and Moderns, with respect to the subject of the dialogue.

Two things give us pleasure in your last letters. The resumption of Malthus, and the favourable turn of the general election. If Ministers do not find some means, totally inconceivable to me, of plunging the nation in war, do you imagine that they can subsist? Peace is all that a country, in the present state of England, seems to require,

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<sup>1</sup> Godwin writes to Mary on July 7, 1818, that "I am now over head and ears in my answer to Malthus." This book, "On Population," was published by Longman on Nov. 25, 1820, at the author's expense. In the same letter he says, "The Westminster election closes on Saturday, and the result of the whole in this division is, that the metropolis, which sends eight members—four for London, two for Westminster, and two for Southwark—has not sent, in its whole number, one old supporter of the present Administration. The members for Westminster are Romilly and Burdett; for Southwark, Calvert, a veteran Foxite, and Sir Robert Wilson; and for London Alderman Wood, Alderman Morp, and Waithman (all staunch Oppositionists), and Mr. Wilson, a new man, who will in all probability vote for Government, but who is at least not an old supporter. Sir William Curtis for London—their right-hand man is thrown out. The consequence of all this is, that everybody is of opinion that, if time had been given, and these examples had been sufficiently early, the general defeat of the Ministry would have been memorable. As it is, it is computed that the Ministerial majority will immediately be diminished by forty or fifty votes; and sanguine people say, nobody can tell what that may end in."

to afford it tranquillity and leisure for attempting some remedy; not to the universal evils of all constituted society, but to the peculiar system of misrule under which those evils have been exasperated now. I wish that I had health or spirits that would enable me to enter into public affairs, or that I could find words to express all that I feel and know.

The modern Italians seem a miserable people, without sensibility, or imagination, or understanding. Their outside is polished, and an intercourse with them seems to proceed with much facility, though it ends in nothing, !. and produces nothing. The women are particularly empty, and though possessed of the same kind of superficial grace, are devoid of every cultivation and refinement. They have a ball at the Casino here every Sunday, which we attend—but neither Mary nor Claire dance. do not know whether they refrain from philosophy or protestantism.

I hear that poor Mary's book, "Frankenstein," is attacked most violently in the Quarterly Review. We have heard some praise of it, and among others, an article of Walter Scott's in Blackwood's Magazine. 1

If you should have anything to send us—and, I assure you, anything relating to England is interesting to uscommit it to the care of Ollier the bookseller, or Peacock; they send me a parcel every quarter.

My health is, I think, better, and, I imagine, continues to improve, but I still have busy thoughts and dispiriting cares, which I would shake off-and it is now summer.-A thousand good wishes to yourself and your undertakings.

Ever most affectionately yours,

P. B. S.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

<sup>&</sup>quot;from the Baths of Lucca <sup>1</sup> Shelley wrote probably in acknowledgment of the article."—Dowden, II, p. 303.

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## 301. To Brookes & Co. (London)

BAGNI DI LUCCA, July 31, 1818.

## GENTLEMEN,

I think I excepted especially a note of Fifty Pounds to Mr. Godwin from those which I requested you not to pay. If otherwise I beg you would have the goodness now to pay it, and to explain on my part to Mr. Godwin how the matter stands.

I would thank you also to transmit to me the present state of my accounts.

I remain, Gentlemen, Your obliged Servant, PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Messrs. Brookes & Co.,
By favour of W. Godwin, Esq.

### 302. To Thomas Love Peacock

BAGNI DE LUCCA, Aug[ust] 16, 1818.

## My DEAR PEACOCK,

No new event has been added to my life since I wrote last: at least none which might not have taken place as well on the banks of the Thames as on those of the Serchio. I project soon a short excursion, of a week or so, to some of the neighbouring cities; and on the tenth of September we leave this place for Florence, when I shall at least be able to tell you of some things which you cannot see from your windows.

I have finished, by taking advantage of a few days of inspiration—which the Camænæ have been lately very backward in conceding—the little poem I began sending

to the press in London. Ollier will send you the proofs. Its structure is slight and aery; its subject ideal. The metre corresponds with the spirit of the poem, and varies with the flow of the feeling. I have translated, and Mary has transcribed the "Symposium," as well as my poem; and I am proceeding to employ myself on a discourse, upon the subject of which the "Symposium" treats, considering the subject with reference to the difference of sentiments respecting it, existing between the Greeks and modern nations: a subject to be handled with that delicate caution which either I cannot or I will not practise in other matters, but which here I acknowledge to be necessary. Not that I have any serious thought of publishing either this discourse or the "Symposium," at least till I return to England, when we may discuss the propriety of it.

"Nightmare Abbey" finished. Well, what is in it? What is it? You are as secret as if the priest of Ceres had dictated its sacred pages. However, I suppose I shall see in time, when my second parcel arrives. My first is yet absent. By what conveyance did you send it?

Pray, are you yet cured of your Nympholepsy? 'Tis a sweet disease: but one as obstinate and dangerous as any—even when the Nymph is a Poliad.<sup>2</sup> Whether such

<sup>&</sup>quot;Rosalind and Helen, /a modern eclogue; /with /other Poems:/By / Percy Bysshe Shelley, / London: / Printed for C. and J. Ollier, / Vere Street, Bond Street, / 1819." 8vo. Mrs. Shelley says that this poem "was begun at Marlow, and thrown aside—till I found it; and, at my request it was completed... during the summer of 1818 at the Baths of Lucca." It was published in the Spring of 1819, with "Lines written among the Euganean Hills," the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty," and "Ozymandias."

Peacock says, "I suppose I understood this at the time; but I have now not the most distant recollection of what it alludes to." Shelley, who had brought Leigh Hunt's "Foliage" with him to Italy, had read in the poem entitled "The Nymphs" of "Oreads, Napeads, Limniads, Nepheliads," and as Prof. Dowden says, they "probably suggested to Shelley the word "Poliad," a city nymph, which appears in this letter." ("Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 188.) Peacock adds that he abandoned the design of the Nympholeptic tale on seeing the announcement of Horace Smith's "Amarynthus the Nympholept."

be the case or not, I hope your nympholeptic tale is not abandoned. The subject, if treated with a due spice of Bacchic fury, and interwoven with the manners and feelings of those divine people, who, in their very errors, are the mirrors, as it were, in which all that is delicate and graceful contemplates itself, is perhaps equal to any. What a wonderful passage there is in "Phœdrus"---the beginning, I think, of one of the speeches of Socrates 1in praise of poetic madness, and in definition of what poetry is, and how a man becomes a poet. Every man who lives in this age and desires to write poetry, ought, as a preservative against the false and narrow systems of criticism which every poetical empiric vents, to impress himself with this sentence, if he would be numbered among those to whom may apply this proud, though sublime, expression of Tasso: "Non c'è in mondo chi merita nome di creatore, che Dio ed il Poeta."

The weather has been brilliantly fine; and now, among these mountains, the autumnal air is becoming less hot, especially in the mornings and evenings. The chestnut woods are now inexpressibly beautiful, for the chestnuts have become large, and add a new richness to the full foliage. We see here Jupiter in the east; and Venus, I believe, as the evening star, directly after sunset.

More and better in my next. Mary and Claire desire their kind remembrances.—Most faithfully your friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

¹ The passage alluded to is this:—"There are several kinds,' says Socrates, "of divine madness. That which proceeds from the Muses taking possession of a tender and unoccupied soul, awakening, and bacchically inspiring it towards songs and other poetry, adorning myriads of ancient deeds, instructs succeeding generations, but he who, without this madness from the Muses, approaches the poetical gates, having persuaded himself that by art alone he may become sufficiently a poet, will find in the end his own imperfection, and see the poetry of his cold prudence vanish into nothingness before the light of that which has sprung from divine insanity."—"Platonis Phædrus," p. 245a.—Peacock's note.

## 303. To Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (Bagni di Lucca)

FLORENCE, 1
THURSDAY, 11 o'clock,
(August 20, 1818).

### DEAREST MARY.

We have been delayed in this city four hours, for the Austrian minister's passport, but are now on the point of setting out with a vetturino, who engages to take us on the third day to Padua; that is, we shall only sleep three nights on the road. Clare's plans with regard to Albè have undergone a good deal of modification, and her present impression is that I should call on Albè whilst she remains either at Fusina or Padua, so as not to irritate him by entering the same city, but not to conceal—and there I think she is right—her having departed from Lucca. The worst of this plan is, that it will not succeed, and that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley had written to Byron from Lyons on March 22, 1818, telling him that he had brought Allegra so far on her journey; he also wrote from Milan inviting Byron to visit him when he could, and to take the child into his charge. Although Byron had refused to correspond with Clare, she wrote to him on April 21st to comply with his desire to have the possession of Allegra, notwithstanding that he had made it clear in writing that Clare's farewell to the child must be absolute and final. Soon after the despatch of her letter, Shelley heard at the Milan post-office from a Venetian some sinister reports of Byron's way of life. But Clare, having decided, would not withdraw, although Shelley seems to have warned her that she was in danger of losing the child altogether. Accordingly, on April 28, Elise, Mary's Swiss maid, set out with Allegra for Venice, and remained with the child as nurse. Allegra was subsequently placed in the charge of Mrs. Hoppner, wife of the English Consul-General at Venice. As the months passed, Clare's longing to see her little girl increased, and after the receipt of some letters from Elise, she decided to go to Venice in order to induce Byron to let her see the child. She therefore left the Baths with Shelley as travelling companion, probably on August the 18th or 19th, the day before Shelley wrote this letter. See Shelley's letter to Peacock, Oct. 8, 1818, in which he gives the approximate date of his departure as the "day after I wrote to you" [on Aug. 16]. I have derived this note from Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," in most cases using his words.

she will never be quite satisfied that all has been done. But we shall see. Yesterday's journey, performed in a one-horse cabriolet, almost without springs, over a rough road, was excessively fatiguing. [Clare] suffered most from it; for, as to myself, there are occasions in which fatigue seems a useful medicine, as I have felt no pain in my side—a most delightful respite—since I left you. The country was various and exceedingly beautiful. Sometimes there were those low cultivated lands, with their vine festoons, and large bunches of grapes just becoming purple—at others we passed between high mountains, crowned with some of the most majestic Gothic ruins I ever saw, which frowned from the bare precipices, or were half seen among the olive-copses. approached Florence, the country became cultivated to a very high degree, the plain was filled with the most beautiful villas, and, as far as the eye could reach, the mountains were covered with them; for the plains are bounded on all sides by blue and misty mountains. The vines are here trailed on low trellises or reeds interwoven into crosses to support them, and the grapes, now almost ripe, are exceedingly abundant. You everywhere meet those teams of beautiful white oxen, which are now labouring the little vine-divided fields with their Virgilian ploughs and carts. Florence itself, that is the Lung' Arno (for I have seen no more), I think is the most beautiful city I have yet seen. It is surrounded with cultivated hills, and from the bridge which crosses the broad channel of the Arno, the view is the most animated and elegant I You see three or four bridges, one apparently supported by Corinthian pillars, and the white sails of the boats, relieved by the deep green of the forest, which comes to the water's edge, and the sloping hills covered with bright villas on every side. Domes and steeples rise on all sides, and the cleanliness is remarkably great. On the other side there are the foldings of the Vale of Arno above; first the hills of olive and vine, then the chestnut woods, and then the blue and misty pine forests, which invest the aërial Apennines, that fade in the distance. I have seldom seen a city so lovely at first sight as Florence.

We shall travel hence within a few hours, with the speed of the post, since the distance is 190 miles, and we are to do it in three days, besides the half-day, which is somewhat more than sixty miles a day. We have now got a comfortable carriage and two mules, and, thanks to Paolo, have made a very decent bargain, comprising everything, to Padua. I should say we had delightful fruit for breakfast—figs, very fine—and peaches, unfortunately gathered before they were ripe, whose smell was like what one fancies of the wakening of Paradise flowers.

Well, my dearest Mary, are you very lonely? Tell me truth, my sweetest, do you ever cry? I shall hear from you once at Venice, and once on my return here. If you love me you will keep up your spirits—and at all events tell me truth about it; for I assure you I am not of a disposition to be flattered by your sorrow, though I should be by your cheerfulness; and above all, by seeing such fruits of my absence as were produced when we were at Geneva. 1 What acquaintances have you made? I might have travelled to Padua with a German, who had just come from Rome, and had scarce recovered from a malarial fever, caught in the Pontine Marshes, a week or two since; and I conceded to [Clare's] intreaties—and to your absent suggestions, and omitted the opportunity, although I have no great faith in such species of contagion. not very hot—not at all too much so for my sensations, and the only thing that incommodes me are the gnats at night, who roar like so many humming-tops in one's earand I do not always find zanzariere. 2 How is Willmouse and little Ca?<sup>3</sup> They must be kissed for me—and you must particularly remember to speak my name to William,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> When she began to write "Frankenstein."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Mosquito curtains.

<sup>3</sup> Shelley's two children, William and Clara.

and see that he does not quite forget me before I return. Adieu—my dearest girl, I think that we shall soon meet. I shall write again from Venice. Adieu, dear Mary!

I have been reading the "Noble Kinsmen," in which, with the exception of that lovely scene, to which you added so much grace in reading to me, I have been disappointed. The Jailor's Daughter is a poor imitation, and deformed. The whole story wants moral discrimination and modesty. I do not believe that Shakespeare wrote a word of it.

## 304. To Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (Bagni di Lucca)

VENICE,

SUNDAY MORNING, [August 23, 1818.]

MY DEAREST MARY,

We arrived here last night at twelve o'clock, and it is now before breakfast the next morning. I can, of course, tell you nothing of the future; and though I shall not close this letter till post time, yet I do not know exactly when that is. Yet, if you are very impatient, look along the letter and you will see another date, when I may have something to relate.

Clare changed her plan of remaining at Padua, partly from the badness of the beds, which indeed are full of those insects, inexpressible by Italian delicacy, and partly from the strangeness and solitude of the place. At present I believe I shall call on the Albaneser with a letter from her, and without any direct interference on my own part. He will not be up yet, and the interval she proposes to employ in a visit to Mrs. Hoppner. All this casts, as you see, "ominous conjecture on the whole success."

I came from Padua hither in a gondola, and the gondoliere, among other things, without any hint on my part, began talking of Lord Byron. He said he was a giovinotto Inglese, with a nome stravagante, who lived very luxuriously, and spent great sums of money, [and had lately received] two of his daughters over from England, [of whom one] looked nearly as old as himself. This man, it seems, was one of Lord B.'s gondolieri. No sooner had we arrived at the inn, than the waiter began talking about him—said that he frequented Mrs. Hoppner's conversazioni very much.

Our journey from Florence to Padua contained nothing which may not be related another time. At Padua, as I said, we took a gondola—and left it at three o'clock. gondolas are the most beautiful and convenient boats in They are finely carpeted and furnished with black, and painted black. The couches on which you lean are extraordinarily soft, and are so disposed as to be the most comfortable to those who lean or sit. The windows have at will either Venetian plate-glass flowered, or Venetian blinds, or blinds of black cloth to shut out the The weather here is extremely cold—indeed, sometimes very painfully so, and yesterday it began to rain. We passed the laguna in the middle of the night in a most violent storm of wind, rain, and lightning. It was very curious to observe the elements above in a state of such tremendous convulsion, and the surface of the water almost calm; for these lagunas, though five miles broad, a space enough in a storm to sink a gondola, are so shallow that the boatmen drive the boat along with a pole. sea-water, furiously agitated by the wind, shone with sparkles like stars. Venice, now hidden and now disclosed by the driving rain, shone dimly with its lights. were all this while safe and comfortable, except that Clare was now and then a little frightened in our cabin. [It was midnight when they reached their hotel.] Well, adieu, dearest: I shall, as Miss Byron 1 says, resume the pen in the evening.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Harriet Byron is one of the characters in Richardson's novel, "Sir Charles Grandison."

SUNDAY NIGHT, 5 o'clock in the morning.

Well, I will try to relate everything in its order. After breakfast we took a gondola and went to the Hoppner's. 1 Clare went in first, and I, who had no idea of calling, sat in the gondola. Soon, a servant came down and requested me to go up-stairs. I found Mr. Hoppner and Clare, and soon after Mrs. Hoppner, a most agreeable and amiable lady, who instantly paid Clare the kindest atten-They received me with great politeness, and expressed the greatest interest in the event of our journey. Soon after—for Mrs. Hoppner sent for them instantly came Elise and little Ba, so grown you would hardly know her; she is pale and has lost a good deal of her liveliness, but is as beautiful as ever, though more mild. The account which they gave of Albè unfortunately corresponds too justly with most of what we have heard, though doubtless with some exaggeration. We discussed a long time the mode in which I had better proceed with him, and at length determined that Clare's being there should be concealed, as Mr. Hoppner says that he often expresses his extreme horror of her arrival, and the necessity which it would impose on him of instantly quitting Venice. The Hoppners enter into all this as if it were their own dearest concern.

At three o'clock I called on Lord Byron: he was delighted to see me, and our first conversation of course consisted in the object of my visit.<sup>2</sup>

The success of this is yet doubtful, though certainly the spirit in which he receives the request, and the anxiety he shows to satisfy us and Clare, is very unexpected. He says he does not like her [Allegra] going away to Florence for so long a time, because the Venetians will think that

<sup>3</sup> See note on p. 616.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Richard Belgrave Hoppner (1786-1872), second son of John Hoppner, R.A., studied painting with the intention of becoming an artist. He was appointed English Consul at Venice in 1814. His wife was of Swiss nationality.

he has grown tired of her and dismissed her; and he has already the reputation of caprice. Then he said, "Why, Clare will be as unwilling to part with her again as she is to be absent from her now, and there will be a second renewal of affliction and a second parting. But if you like she shall go to Clare to Padua for a week" (when he said this he supposed that you and the family were there); "and in fact," said he, "after all, I have no right over the child. If Clare likes to take it, let her take it. I do not say what most people would in that situation, that I will refuse to provide for it, or abandon it, if she does this; but she must surely be aware herself how very imprudent such a measure would be."

Well, my dear Mary, this talk went off, for I did not see in that moment how I could urge it further, and I thought that at least many points were gained in the willingness and good humour of our discussion. So he took me in his gondola—much against my will, for I wanted to return to Clare at the Hoppners', who was anxiously waiting for me, across the laguna to a long sandy island, which defends Venice from the Adriatic. When we disembarked, we found his horses waiting for us, and we rode along the sands of the sea, talking. Our conversation

¹ Shelley has immortalised this ride with Byron on the Lido, "the bank of land which breaks the flow Of Adria towards Venice," in his "Julian and Maddalo," and has given us a picture of Allegra, now nineteen months old, as she appeared to him at this time—

A lovelier toy sweet Nature never made;
A serious, subtle, wild, yet gentle being;
Graceful without design, and unforeseeing;
With eyes—oh! speak not of her eyes! which seem
Twin mirrors of Italian Heaven, yet gleam
With such deep meaning as we never see
But in the human countenance. With me
She was a special favourite: I had nursed
Her fine and feeble limbs, when she came first
To this bleak world; and yet she seemed to know
On second sight her ancient playfellow,
Less changed than she was by six months or so.
For, after her first shyness was worn out,
We sate there rolling billiard balls about. . . .

consisted in histories of his wounded feelings, and questions as to my affairs, and great professions of friendship and regard for me. He said, that if he had been in England at the time of the Chancery affair, he would have moved heaven and earth to have prevented such a decision. We talked of literary matters, his Fourth Canto, which, he says, is very good, and indeed repeated some stanzas of great energy to me; and "Foliage," which he quizzes immoderately. When we returned to his palace—which

## (The letter is here torn)

The Hoppners are the most amiable people I ever knew. Do you know that they put off a journey of pleasure solely that they might devote themselves to this affair, and all with so much ease, tenderness, and delicacy. They are much attached to each other, and have a nice little boy, seven months old. Mr. Hoppner paints beautifully, and this excursion, which he has just put off, was an expedition to the Julian Alps, in this neighbourhood—for the sake of sketching, to procure winter employment. He has only a fortnight's leisure, and he has sacrificed two days of it to strangers whom he never saw before. Mrs. Hoppner has hazel eyes and sweet looks—rather Maryish.

Well, but the time presses; I am now going to the banker's to send you money for the journey, which I shall address to you at Florence, Post-office. Pray come instantly to Este, 3 where I shall be waiting in the utmost

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> When Shelley's children, by his first wife, were taken from him by order of Chancery, see ante, p. 538.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The Fourth Canto of "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," published in 1818.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Lord Byron had placed his villa I Cappuccini, near Este, at Shelley's disposal. Hoppner formerly lived at this house, and Byron had now rented it of him, though he never occupied it. In her notes to Shelley's poems of 1818, Mrs. Shelley describes I Cappuccini as "a villa built on the site of a Capuchin convent, demolished when the French suppressed religious houses; it was situated on the very over-hanging brow of a low hill at the foot of a range of higher ones. The house was cheerful and pleasant; a

anxiety for your arrival. You can pack up directly you get this letter, and employ the next day on that. The day after, get up at four o'clock, and go post to Lucca, where you will arrive at six. Then take a vetturino for Florence to arrive the same evening. From Florence to Este is three days' vetturino journey—and you could not, I think, do it quicker by the post. Make Paolo 1 take you to good inns, as we found very bad ones; and pray avoid the Tre Mori at Bologna, perche vi sono cose inespressibili nei letti. I do not think you can, but try to get from Florence to Bologna in one day. Do not take the post, for it is not much faster and very expensive. I have been obliged to decide on all these things without you: I have done for the best-and, my own beloved Mary, you must soon come and scold me if I have done wrong, and kiss me if I have done right-for, I am sure, I do not know which -and it is only the event that will show. We shall at least be saved the trouble of introduction, and have formed acquaintance with a lady [Mrs. Hoppner] who is so good, so beautiful, so angelically mild, that were she as wise too, she would be quite a Mary; but she is not very accomplished. Her eyes are like a reflection of yours. Her manners are like yours when you know and like a person.

vine-trellised walk, a Pergola, as it is called in Italian, led from the hall door to a summer-house at the end of the garden, which Shelley made his study, and in which he began the 'Prometheus'; and here also, as he mentions in a letter, he wrote 'Julian and Maddalo'; a slight ravine, with a road in its depth, divided the garden from the hill, on which stood the ancient castle of Este, whose dark massive wall gave forth an echo, and from whose ruined crevices owls and bats flitted forth at night, as the crescent moon sank behind the black and heavy battlements. We looked from the garden over the wide plain of Lombardy, bounded to the west by the fair Apennines, while to the east the horizon was lost in misty distance. After the picturesque but limited view of mountain, ravine, and chestnut wood at the Baths of Lucca, there was something infinitely gratifying to the eye in the wide range of prospect commanded by our new abode." Mary set out for Este on August 31. Her little girl, Clara, was taken ill on the journey, and when she arrived the child's condition was serious.

<sup>1</sup> Shelley's servant, who afterwards married Elise.

Do you know, dearest, how this letter was written? By scraps and patches, and interrupted every minute. The gondola is now come to take me to the banker's. Este is a little place, and the house found without difficulty. I shall count four days for this letter: one day for packing, four for coming here—and on the ninth or tenth day we shall meet.

I am too late for the post—but I send an express to overtake it. Enclosed is an order for fifty pounds. If you knew all that I had to do!—

Dearest love, be well, be happy, come to me—confide in your own constant and affectionate P. B. S.

Kiss the blue-eyed darlings for me, and do not let William forget me. Ca<sup>1</sup> cannot recollect me.

## 305. To Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (I Cappuccini—Este)

Padua, Mezzogiorno,<sup>2</sup> September 22, 1818.

MY BEST MARY,

I found at Mount Selice a favourable opportunity for going to Venice, where I shall try to make some arrangement for you and little Ca. to come for some days, and shall meet you, if I do not write anything in the meantime, at Padua, on Thursday morning [September 24.] Clare says she is obliged to come to see the Medico, whom we missed this morning, and who has appointed as the only hour at which he can be at leisure—half-past eight in the morning. You must, therefore, arrange matters so that you should come to the Stella d'Oro a little before that hour—a thing to be accomplished only by setting out at half-past three in the morning. You will by this means arrive at Venice very early in the day, and avoid the heat,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Clara Shelley was just a year old, having been born at Marlow on Sept. 3rd, 1817. She died Sept. 24th, 1818.

On Sept. 16th Mary writes in her Journal that Shelley and Clare go to Padua.

which might be bad for the babe, and take the time, when she would at least sleep great part of the time. Clare will return with the return carriage, and I shall meet you, or send you to Padua.

Meanwhile remember "Charles the First"—and do you be prepared to bring at least some of "Myrrha" translated; bring the book also with you, and the sheets of "Prometheus Unbound," which you will find numbered from one to twenty-six on the table of the pavilion. My poor little Clara, how is she to-day? Indeed I am somewhat uneasy about her, and though I feel secure that there is no danger, it would be very comfortable to have some reasonable person's opinion about her. The Medico at Padua is certainly a man in great practice, but I confess he does not satisfy me.

Am I not like a wild swan to be gone so suddenly? But, in fact, to set off alone to Venice required an exertion. I felt myself capable of making it, and I knew that you desired it. What will not be—if so it is destined—the lonely journey through that wide, cold France? But we shall see. As yet I do not direct to you Lady Shelley. 2

Adieu, my dearest love—remember "Charles I" and "Myrrha." I have been already imagining how you will conduct some scenes. The second volume of "St. Leon" begins with this proud and true sentiment—"There is nothing which the human mind can conceive, which it may not execute." Shakspeare was only a human being.

Adieu till Thursday.—Your ever affectionate

P. B. S.

<sup>2</sup> Prof. Dowden suggests that perhaps Shelley had received news which led him to expect his father's death; in which case he would

have to return to England.

¹ Mrs. Shelley states in her notes to Shelley's poems of 1822 that he had recommended her to attempt a play on Charles I. This passage evidently relates to Mary's work on the subject; and to a translation of Alfieri's "Myrrha" upon which she was apparently engaged. Shelley's fragments of his drama "Charles the First" belong to a later period.

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### 306. To CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT

[Venice.] Mrs. Hoppner's, Friday. [September 25, 1818.]

MY DEAR CLARE,

We arrived at Venice yesterday [September 24] about five o'clock. 1 Our little girl had shown symptoms of increased weakness and even convulsive motions of the mouth and eyes, which made me anxious to see the physician. As she passed from Fusina to the Inn, she became worse. I left her on landing and took a gondola for Dr. Alietti. 2 He was not at home.—When I returned, I found Mary in the hall of the Inn in the most dreadful distress.

Worse symptoms had appeared. Another Physician had arrived. He told me there was no hope. In about an hour—how shall I tell you—she died—silently, without pain. And she is now buried.

The Hoppners instantly came and took us to their house—a kindness I should have hesitated to accept, but this unexpected stroke reduced Mary to a kind of despair.

She is better to-day.

I have sent a message to Albè, to say that I cannot see him to-day—unless he will call here. Mary means to try and persuade him to let Allegra stay.

All is miserable enough—is it not? but must be borne [one line is here erased]—And above all, my dear girl, take care of yourself.

Your affectionate friend,

P. B. S.

[Addressed outside], Signora CLAIRMONT.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Aglietti died in May, 1836, aged 79.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mrs. Shelley says in her journal, Thursday, September 24, [1818]: "We go to Venice with my poor Clara, who dies the moment we get there. Mr. Hoppner comes, and takes us away from the inn to his house." Clara was buried on the Lido.—Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, pp. 230-1.

#### 307. To Thomas Love Peacock

[I CAPPUCCINI], ESTE, 1 October 8, 1818.

#### My DEAR PEACOCK,

I have not written to you, I think, for six weeks. I have been on the point of writing many times, and have often felt that I had many things to say. But I have not been without events to disturb and distract me, amongst which is the death of my little girl. She died of a disorder peculiar to the climate. We have all had bad spirits enough, and I, in addition, bad health. I intend to be better soon: there is no malady, bodily or mental, which does not either kill or is killed.

We<sup>2</sup> left the Baths of Lucca, I think, the day after I wrote to you [Monday, Aug. 17]—on a visit to Venice partly for the sake of seeing the city. We made a very delightful acquaintance there with a Mr. and Mrs. Hoppner. the gentleman an Englishman, and the lady a Swissesse. mild and beautiful, and unprejudiced, in the best sense of the word. The kind attentions of these people made our short stay at Venice very pleasant. I saw Lord Byron. and really hardly knew him again; he is changed into the liveliest and happiest-looking man I ever met. He read me the first canto of his "Don Juan"—a thing in the style of "Beppo," but infinitely better, and dedicated to Southey, in ten or a dozen stanzas, more like a mixture of wormwood and verdigrease than satire. \* Venice is a wonderfully fine city. The approach to it over the laguna, with its domes and turrets glittering in a long line over the blue

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mary says in her journal, Tuesday, Sept. 29: "Leave Venice and arrive at Este at night. Claire is gone with the children [William and Allegra] to Padua. Wednesday, Sep. 30. The chicks return. Transcribe 'Mazeppa.' Go to the opera in the evening."— Dowden's "Shelley," II, p. 232.

That is, Shelley and Miss Clairmont; Mrs. Shelley having

remained at the Bagni di Lucca.

Byron states that he began to write the first canto of "Don Juan" at Venice on Sept. 6, and finished on Nov. 1, 1818. The dedication was not printed with the first edition of the canto, 1819.

waves, is one of the finest architectural delusions in the world. It seems to have—and literally it has—its foundations in the sea. The silent streets are paved with water, and you hear nothing but the dashing of the oars, and the occasional cries of the gondolieri. I heard nothing of Tasso.¹ The gondolas themselves are things of a most romantic and picturesque appearance; I can only compare them to moths of which a coffin might have been the chrysalis. They are hung with black, and painted black, and carpeted with grey; they curl at the prow and stern, and at the former there is a nondescript beak of shining steel, which glitters at the end of its long black mass.

The Doge's palace, with its library, is a fine monument of aristocratic power. I saw the dungeons, where these scoundrels used to torment their victims. They are of three kinds—one adjoining the place of trial, where the prisoners destined to immediate execution were kept. I could not descend into them, because the day on which I visited it was festa. Another under the leads of the palace, where the sufferers were roasted to death or madness by the ardours of an Italian sun: and others called the Pozzi-or wells, deep underneath, and communicating with those on the roof by secret passages-where the prisoners were confined sometimes half up to their middles in stinking water. When the French came here, they found only one old man in the dungeons, and he could not But Venice, which was once a tyrant, is now the next worse thing, a slave; for in fact it ceased to be free or worth our regret as a nation, from the moment that the oligarchy usurped the rights of the people. Yet, I do not imagine that it was ever so degraded as it has been since the French, and especially the Austrian yoke. The Austrians take sixty per cent. in taxes, and impose free quarters on the inhabitants. A horde of German soldiers, as vicious and more disgusting than the Venetians themselves,

<sup>1</sup> From the gondolieri, who are in the habit of reciting from Tasso.

the willing delusion. This inkstand has an antique, rather than an ancient appearance. Three nymphs lean forth from the circumference, and on the top of the lid stands a cupid, winged and looking up, with a torch in one hand, his bow in the other, and his quiver beside him. A medal was bound round the skeleton of Ariosto, with his likeness impressed upon it. I cannot say I think it had much native expression; but, perhaps, the artist was in fault. On the reverse is a hand, cutting with a pair of scissors the tongue from a serpent, upraised from the grass, with this legend—Pro bono malum. What this reverse of the boasted Christian maxim means, or how it applies to Ariosto, either as a satirist or a serious writer, I cannot exactly tell. The cicerone attempted to explain, and it is to his commentary that my bewildering is probably due if, indeed, the meaning be very plain, as is possibly the case.

There is here a manuscript of the entire "Gerusalemme Liberata," written by Tasso's own hand; a manuscript of some poems, written in prison, to the Duke Alfonso; and the satires of Ariosto, written also by his own hand; and the Pastor Fido of Guarini. The Gerusalemme, though it had evidently been copied and recopied, is interlined. particularly towards the end, with numerous corrections. The handwriting of Ariosto is a small, firm, and pointed character, expressing, as I should say, a strong and keen, but circumscribed energy of mind; that of Tasso is large. free, and flowing, except that there is a checked expression in the midst of its flow, which brings the letters into a smaller compass than one expected from the beginning of the word. It is the symbol of an intense and earnest mind, exceeding at times its own depth, and admonished to return by the chillness of the waters of oblivion striking upon its adventurous feet. You know I always seek in Twhat I see the manifestation of something beyond the present and tangible object; and as we do not agree in physiognomy, so we may not agree now. But my business is to relate my own sensations, and not to attempt to inspire others with them. Some of the MSS. of Tasso were sonnets to his persecutor, which contain a great deal of what is called flattery. If Alfonzo's ghost were asked how he felt those praises now, I wonder what he would say. But to me there is much more to pity than to condemn in these entreaties and praises of Tasso. It is as a bigot prays to and praises his god, whom he knows to be the most remorseless, capricious, and inflexible of tyrants, but whom he knows also to be omnipotent. Tasso's situation was widely different from that of any persecuted being of the present day; for, from the depth of dungeons, public opinion may now at length be awakened to an echo that would startle the oppressor. But then there was no hope. There is something irresistibly pathetic to me in the sight of Tasso's own handwriting, moulding expressions of adulation and entreaty to a deaf and stupid tyrant, in an age when the most heroic virtue would have exposed its possessor to hopeless persecution, and—such is the alliance between virtue and genius—which unoffending genius could not escape.

We went afterwards to see his prison in the hospital of Sant' Anna, and I enclose you a piece of the wood of the very door, which for seven years and three months divided this glorious being from the air and the light which had nourished in him those influences which he has communicated, through his poetry, to thousands. The dungeon is low and dark, and when I say that it is really a very decent dungeon, I speak as one who has seen the prisons in the doges' palace of Venice. But it is a horrible abode for the coarsest and meanest thing that ever wore the shape of man, much more for one of delicate susceptibilities and elevated fancies. It is low, and has a grated window, and being sunk some feet below the level of the earth, is full of unwholesome damps. In the darkest corner is a mark in the wall where the chains were riveted, which bound him hand and foot. After some time, at the instance

of some Cardinal, his friend, the Duke allowed his victim a fireplace; the mark where it was walled up yet remains.

At the entrance of the Liceo, where the library is, we were met by a penitent; his form was completely enveloped in a ghost-like drapery of white flannel; his bare feet were sandalled; and there was a kind of net-work visor drawn over his eyes, so as entirely to conceal his face. I imagine that this man had been adjudged to suffer this penance for some crime known only to himself and his confessor, and this kind of exhibition is a striking instance of the power of the Catholic superstition over the human mind. He passed, rattling his wooden box for charity. 1

Adieu.—You will hear from me again before I arrive at Naples.

Yours, ever sincerely, P. B. S.

#### 309. To Thomas Love Peacock

Bologna, Monday, Nov[ember] 9, 1818.

#### MY DEAR PEACOCK,

I have seen a quantity of things here—churches, palaces, statues, fountains, and pictures; and my brain is at this moment like a portfolio of an architect, or a print-shop, or a commonplace-book. I will try to recollect something of what I have seen; for, indeed, it requires, if it will obey, an act of volition. First, we went to the cathedral, which contains nothing remarkable, except a kind of shrine, or rather a marble canopy, loaded with sculptures, and supported on four marble columns. We went then to a palace—I am sure I forget the name of it—where we saw a large gallery of pictures. Of course, in a picture gallery you see three hundred pictures you forget, for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "These penitents ask alms, to be spent in masses for the souls in purgatory."—Mrs. Shelley's note.

I remember, however, an interone you remember. esting picture by Guido, of the Rape of Proserpine, in which Proserpine casts back her languid and half-unwilling eyes, as it were, to the flowers she had left ungathered in the fields of Enna. There was an exquisitely executed piece of Correggio, about four saints, one of whom seemed to have a pet dragon in a leash. I was told that it was the devil who was bound in that style—but who can make anything of four saints? For what can they be supposed to be about? There was one painting, indeed, by this master. Christ beatified, inexpressibly fine. It is a half figure, seated on a mass of clouds, tinged with an ethereal, rose-like lustre; the arms are expanded; the whole frame seems dilated with expression; the countenance is heavy, as it were, with the weight of the rapture of the spirit; the lips parted, but scarcely parted, with the breath of intense but regulated passion; the eyes are calm and benignant; the whole features harmonised in majesty The hair is parted on the forehead, and and sweetness. falls in heavy locks on each side. It is motionless, but seems as if the faintest breath would move it. The colouring. I suppose, must be very good, if I could remark and understand it. The sky is of pale aërial orange, like the tints of latest sunset; it does not seem painted around and beyond the figure, but everything seems to have absorbed, and to have been penetrated by its hues. not think we saw any other of Correggio, but this specimen gives me a very exalted idea of his powers.

We went to see heaven knows how many more palaces—Ranuzzi, Marriscalchi, Aldobrandi. If you want Italian names for any purpose, here they are; I should be glad of them if I was writing a novel. I saw many more of Guido. One, a Samson drinking water out of an ass's jaw-bone, in the midst of the slaughtered Philistines. Why he is supposed to do this, God, who gave him this jaw-bone, alone knows—but certain it is, that the painting is a very fine one. The figure of Samson stands in strong

relief in the foreground, coloured, as it were, in the hues of human life, and full of strength and elegance. Round him lie the Philistines in all the attitudes of death. One prone, with the slight convulsion of pain just passing from his forehead, whilst on his lips and chin death lies as heavy as sleep. Another leaning on his arm, with his hand, white and motionless, hanging out beyond. In the distance, more dead bodies; and, still further beyond, the blue sea and the blue mountains, and one white and tranquil sail.

There is a Murder of the Innocents, also, by Guido, finely coloured, with much fine expression—but the subject is very horrible, and it seemed deficient in strength at least, you require the highest ideal energy, the most poetical and exalted conception of the subject, to reconcile you to such a contemplation. There was a Jesus Christ crucified, by the same, very fine. One gets tired, indeed, whatever may be the conception and execution of it, of seeing that monotonous and agonised form for ever exhibited in one prescriptive attitude of torture. Magdalen, clinging to the cross with the look of passive and gentle despair beaming from beneath her bright flaxen hair, and the figure of St. John, with his looks uplifted in passionate compassion; his hands clasped, and his fingers twisting themselves together, as it were, with involuntary anguish; his feet almost writhing up from the ground with the same sympathy; and the whole of this arrayed in colours of diviner nature, yet most like nature's self. Of the contemplation of this one would never weary.

There was a "Fortune," too, of Guido; a piece of mere beauty. There was the figure of Fortune on a globe, eagerly proceeding onwards, and Love was trying to catch her back by the hair, and her face was half turned towards him; her long chestnut hair was floating in the stream of the wind, and threw its shadow over her fair forehead. Her hazel eyes were fixed on her pursuer, with a meaning look of playfulness, and a light smile was hovering on her

lips. The colours which arrayed her delicate limbs were ethereal and warm.

But, perhaps, the most interesting of all the pictures of Guido which I saw was a Madonna Lattante. She is leaning over her child, and the maternal feelings with which she is pervaded are shadowed forth on her soft and gentle countenance, and in her simple and affectionate gestures—there is what an unfeeling observer would call a dulness in the expression of her face; her eyes are almost closed; her lip depressed; there is a serious, and even a heavy relaxation, as it were, of all the muscles which are called into action by ordinary emotions: but it is only as if the spirit of love, almost insupportable from its intensity, were brooding over and weighing down the soul, or whatever it is, without which the material frame is inanimate and inexpressive.

There is another painter here, called Franceschini, a Bolognese, who, though certainly very inferior to Guido, is vet a person of excellent powers. One entire church, that of Santa Catarina, is covered by his works. I do not know whether any of his pictures have ever been seen in England. His colouring is less warm than that of Guido, but nothing can be more clear and delicate; it is as if he could have dipped his pencil in the hues of some serenest and star-shining twilight. His forms have the same delicacv and aërial loveliness; their eyes are all bright with innocence and love; their lips scarce divided by some gentle and sweet emotion. His winged children are the loveliest ideal beings ever created by the human mind. These are generally, whether in the capacity of Cherubim or Cupid, accessories to the rest of the picture; and the underplot of their lovely and infantine play is something almost pathetic from the excess of its unpretending beauty. One of the best of his pieces is an Annunciation of the Virgin:—the Angel is beaming in beauty; the Virgin, soft retiring, and simple.

We saw, besides, one picture of Raphael—St. Cecilia:

this is in another and higher style; you forget that it is a picture as you look at it; and yet it is most unlike any of those things which we call reality. It is of the inspired and ideal kind, and seems to have been conceived and executed in a similar state of feeling to that which produced among the ancients those perfect specimens poetry and sculpture which are the baffling models of succeeding generations. There is a unity and a perfection in it of an incommunicable kind. The central figure, St. Cecilia, seems rapt in such inspiration as produced her image in the painter's mind; her deep, dark, eloquent eyes lifted up; her chestnut hair flung back from her forehead—she holds an organ in her hands—her countenance, as it were, calmed by the depth of its passion and rapture. and penetrated throughout with the warm and radiant light of life. She is listening to the music of heaven, and, as I imagine, has just ceased to sing, for the four figures that surround her evidently point, by their attitudes, towards her; particularly St. John, who, with a tender yet impassioned gesture, bends his countenance towards her, languid with the depth of his emotion. At her feet lie various instruments of music, broken and unstrung. Of the colouring I do not speak; it eclipses nature, yet it has all her truth and softness.

We saw some pictures of Domenichino, Caracci, Albano, Guercino, Elizabetta Sirani. The two former—remember, I do not pretend to taste—I cannot admire. Of the latter there are some beautiful Madonnas. There are several of Guercino, which they said were very fine. I dare say they were, for the strength and complication of his figures made my head turn round. One, indeed, was certainly powerful. It was the representation of the founder of the Carthusians exercising his austerities in the desert, with a youth as his attendant, kneeling beside him at an altar; on another altar stood a skull and a crucifix; and around were the rocks and the trees of the wilderness. I never saw such a figure as this fellow. His face was

wrinkled like a dried snake's skin, and drawn in long hard lines: his very hands were wrinkled. He looked like an animated mummy. He was clothed in a loose dress of death-coloured flannel, such as you might fancy a shroud might be, after it had wrapped a corpse a month or two. It had a yellow, putrified, ghastly hue, which it cast on all the objects around, so that the hands and face of the Carthusian and his companion were jaundiced by this sepulchral glimmer. Why write books against religion, when we may hang up such pictures? But the world either will not or cannot see. The gloomy effect of this was softened and, at the same time, its sublimity diminished, by the figure of the Virgin and Child in the sky, looking down with admiration on the monk, and a beautiful flying figure of an angel.

Enough of pictures. I saw the place where Guido and his mistress, Elizabetta Sirani, were buried. This lady was poisoned at the age of twenty-six, by another lover, a rejected one of course. Our guide said she was very ugly, and that we might see her portrait to-morrow.

Well, good-night, for the present. "To-morrow to fresh fields and pastures new."

November 10.

To-day we first went to see those divine pictures of Raffael and Guido again, and then rode up the mountains, behind this city, to visit a chapel dedicated to the Madonna. It made me melancholy to see that they had been varnishing and restoring some of these pictures, and that even some had been pierced by the French bayonets. These are symptoms of the mortality of man, and perhaps, few of his works are more evanescent than paintings. Sculpture retains its freshness for twenty centuries—the Apollo and the Venus are as they were. But books are perhaps the only productions of man coeval with the human race. Sophocles and Shakspeare can be produced and reproduced for ever. But how evanescent are paintings! and must

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necessarily be. Those of Zeuxis and Apelles are no more; and perhaps they bore the same relation to Homer and Æschylus that those of Guido and Raffael bear to Dante and Petrarch. There is one refuge from the despondency of this contemplation. The material part, indeed, of their works must perish, but they survive in the mind of man, and the remembrances connected with them are transmitted from generation to generation. The poet embodies them in his creations; the systems of philosophers are modelled to gentleness by their contemplation; opinion, that legislator, is infected with their influence; men become better and wiser; and the unseen seeds are perhaps thus sown which shall produce a plant more excellent even than that from which they fell. But all this might as well be said or thought at Marlow as Bologna.

The chapel of the Madonna is a very pretty Corinthian building—very beautiful indeed. It commands a fine view of these fertile plains, the many-folded Apennines, and the city. I have just returned from a moonlight walk through Bologna. It is a city of colonnades, and the effect of moonlight is strikingly picturesque. There are two towers here—one 400 feet high—ugly things, built of brick, which lean both different ways; and with the delusion of moonlight shadows, you might almost fancy that the city is rocked by an earthquake. They say they were built so on purpose; but I observe in all the plain of Lombardy the church towers lean.

Adieu.—God grant you patience to read this long letter, and courage to support the expectation of the next. Pray part them from the *Cobbetts* on your breakfast table—they may fight it out in your mind.

Yours ever most sincerely,

P. B. S.

# XIV. ROME AND NAPLES. "PROMETHEUS UNBOUND"

November 20, 1818—June 8, 1819

THE Journey to Rome—Spoleto—The Cataract of the Velino—At Naples—The Quarterly Review—"Childe Harold" and Byron—Impressions of Rome—The Coliseum—The Vatican—At Baiæ—Vesuvius—Pompeii—The Lago d'Agnano and the Caccia d'Ischieri—Pesto—Pictures at Naples—Rome—The Baths of Caracalla—The Forum—St. Peter's—The Pantheon—The Arch of Titus—Mrs. Boinville—Holy Week at Rome—"Prometheus Unbound"—Fettered Criminals—Death of William Shelley.

#### 310. To Thomas Love Peacock

ROME,

November 20, 1818.

#### MY DEAR PEACOCK,

Behold me in the capital of the vanished world! But I have seen nothing except St. Peter's and the Vatican, overlooking the city in the mist of distance, and the Dogana, where they took us to have our luggage examined, which is built between the ruins of a temple to Antoninus Pius. The Corinthian columns rise over the dwindled palaces of the modern town, and the wrought cornice is changed on one side, as it were, to masses of wave-worn precipices, which overhang you, far, far on high.

I take advantage of this rainy evening, and before Rome has effaced all other recollections, to endeavour to recall the vanished scenes through which we have passed. We left Bologna, I forget on what day, and passing by Rimini, Fano, and Foligno, along the Via Flaminia and Terni,

have arrived at Rome after ten days' somewhat tedious, but most interesting journey. The most remarkable things we saw were the Roman excavations in the rock, and the great waterfall of Terni. Of course you have heard that there are a Roman bridge and a triumphal arch at Rimini, and in what excellent taste they are built. The bridge is not unlike the Strand bridge, 1 but more bold in proportion, and of course infinitely smaller. From Fano we left the coast of the Adriatic, and entered the Apennines, following the course of the Metaurus, the banks of which were the scene of the defeat of Asdrubal: and it is said (you can refer to the book) that Livy has given a very exact and animated description of it. I forget all about it, but shall look as soon as our boxes are opened. Following the river the vale contracts, the banks of the river become steep and rocky, the forests of oak and ilex which overhang its emerald-coloured stream, cling to their abrupt About four miles from Fossombrone, the precipices. river forces for itself a passage between the walls and toppling precipices of the loftiest Apennines, which are here rifted to their base, and undermined by the narrow and tumultuous torrent. It was a cloudy morning, and we had no conception of the scene that awaited us. Suddenly the low clouds were struck by the clear north wind, and like curtains of the finest gauze, removed one by one, were drawn from before the mountain, whose heavencleaving pinnacles and black crags overhanging one another, stood at length defined in the light of the day. The road runs parallel to the river, at a considerable height, and is carried through the mountain by a vaulted cavern. marks of the chisel of the legionaries of the Roman Consul are yet evident.

We passed on day after day, until we came to Spoleto, I think the most romantic city I ever saw. There is here an aqueduct of astonishing elevation, which unites two

Now known as Waterloo Bridge.

rocky mountains—there is the path of a torrent below, whitening the green dell with its broad and barren track of stones, and above there is a castle, apparently of great strength and of tremendous magnitude, which overhangs the city, and whose marble bastions are perpendicular with the precipice. I never saw a more impressive picture; in which the shapes of nature are of the grandest order, but over which the creations of man sublime from their antiquity and greatness, seem to predominate. The castle was built by Belisarius or Narses, I forget which, but was of that epoch.

From Spoleto we went to Terni, and saw the cataract of Water the Velino. The glaciers of Montanvert and the source of the Arveiron is the grandest spectacle I ever saw. is the second. Imagine a river sixty feet in breadth, with a vast volume of waters, the outlet of a great lake among the higher mountains, falling 300 feet into a sightless gulf of snow-white vapour, which bursts up for ever and for ever, from a circle of black crags, and thence leaping downwards, made five or six other cataracts, each fifty or a hundred feet high, which exhibit, on a smaller scale, and with beautiful and sublime variety, the same appearances. But words (and far less could painting) will not express it. Stand upon the brink of the platform of cliff, which is directly opposite. You see the evermoving water stream down. It comes in thick and tawny folds, flaking off like solid snow gliding down a mountain. It does not seem hollow within, but without it is unequal, like the folding of linen thrown carelessly down; your eye follows it, and it is lost below; not in the black rocks which gird it around, but in its own foam and spray, in the cloud-like vapours boiling up from below, which is not like rain, nor mist, nor spray, nor foam, but water, in a shape wholly unlike anything I ever saw before. It is as white as snow, but thick and impenetrable to the eye. The very imagination is bewildered in it. A thunder comes up from the abyss wonderful to hear; for, though it

ever sounds, it is never the same, but, modulated by the changing motion, rises and falls intermittingly; we passed half-an-hour in one spot looking at it, and thought but a few minutes had gone by. The surrounding scenery is, in its kind, the loveliest and most sublime that can be conceived. In our first walk we passed through some olive groves, of large and ancient trees, whose hoary and twisted trunks leaned in all directions. We then crossed a path of orange trees by the river side, laden with their golden fruit, and came to a forest of ilex of a large size, whose evergreen and acorn-bearing boughs were intertwined over our winding path. Around, hemming in the narrow vale, were pinnacles of lofty mountains of pyramidical rock clothed with all evergreen plants and trees; the vast pine, whose feather foliage trembled in the blue air, the ilex, that ancestral inhabitant of these mountains, the arbutus with its crimson-coloured fruit and glittering leaves. After an hour's walk, we came beneath the cataract of Terni, within the distance of half a mile; nearer you cannot approach, for the Nar, which has here its confluence with the Velino, bars the passage. We then crossed the river formed by this confluence, over a narrow natural bridge of rock, and saw the cataract from the platform I first mentioned. We think of spending some time next year near this waterfall. The inn is very bad, or we should have stayed there longer.

We came from Terni last night to a place called Nepi, and to-day arrived at Rome across the much-belied Campagna di Roma, a place I confess infinitely to my taste. It is a flattering picture of Bagshot Heath. But then there are the Apennines on one side, and Rome and St. Peter's on the other, and it is intersected by perpetual dells clothed with arbutus and ilex.

Adieu—very faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

## 311. To LEIGH HUNT (London)

Naples,1

December 22, 1818.

MY DEAR FRIEND.

A letter from you is always so pleasant that one never feels less inclined to complain of the long absence of such a pleasure than at the moment when it is conferred. Neither Ollier's parcel nor any of the letters it contains have arrived. I do confess we had been saying now and then, "Well, this is just like Hunt"—as indeed it was a little, but we never attributed your silence to neglect or want of affection. You don't tell me if your book is published yet, or is about to be published soon. As to my little poem, I can only lament that it is not more worthy of the lady whose name it bears; though it may derive, it cannot confer, honour on the situation where you have placed it.

I saw the Quarterly at Venice, and was much pleased with the Review of "Frankenstein" though it distorts the story. As to what relates to yourself and me, it makes me melancholy to consider the dreadful wickedness

<sup>1</sup> Shelley left Rome on Nov. 27, a day in advance of Mary and Clare, and proceeded to Naples, where he arrived two days later.

2 " Marianne's Dream "

<sup>&</sup>quot;Our winter was spent at Naples," says Mrs. Shelley. "Here he wrote the fragments of 'Marenghi' and 'The Woodman and the Nightingale,' which he afterwards threw aside. [Also 'Stanzas written in Dejection, near Naples.'] At this time Shelley suffered greatly in health. He put himself under the care of a medical man, who promised great things, and made him endure severe bodily pain, without any good results. Constant and poignant physical suffering exhausted him; and though he preserved the appearance of cheerfulness, and often greatly enjoyed our wanderings in the environs of Naples and our excursions on its sunny sea, yet many hours were passed when his thoughts shadowed by illness, became gloomy, and then he escaped to solitude, and in verses which he hid from fear of wounding me, poured forth morbid but too natural bursts of discontent and sadness. . . . We lived in utter solitude."—Note to the Poems of 1818.

of heart which could have prompted such expressions asthose with which the anonymous writer exults over my domestic calamities, and the perversion of understanding with which he paints your character. There can be no doubt with respect to me, that personal hatred is inter-. mingled with the rage of faction. I know that Southey on one occasion said to a friend of his that he on his own! knowledge knew me to be the blackest of villains. we consider who makes this accusation, and against whom I need only rebut such an accusation by silence and a smile. I thought, indeed, of writing to Southey; but that, as he is really guilty, would have only exposed me to misrepresentation, and I shall on my return seek an opportunity of expostulating with him in person, and enquiring by what injury I have awakened in his heart such dreadful hatred: and if, indeed, I have injured him unintentionally, to endeavour to repair it; and if not, to require that he should produce his proof of my meriting the appellation heemploys. As far as the public is concerned, it is not for him whom Southey accuses, but for him whom all the wise and good among his contemporaries accuse of delinquency to all public faith and honour, to defend himself. Besides, I never will be a party in making my private affairs or those of others to be topics of general discussion. can know them but the actors? And if they have erred, or often when they have not erred, is there not pain enough to punish them? My public character as a writer of verses -as a speculator on politics, or morals, or religion-as the adherent of any party or cause—is public property; and my good faith or ill faith in conducting these, my talent, my penetration, or my stupidity, are all subjects of I am almost certain that Southey, not Gifford, wrote that criticism on your poems. I never saw Gifford in my life, and it is impossible that he should have taken a personal hatred to me. Gifford is a bitter partisan, and has a very muddled head; but I hear from those who know him that he is rather a mild man personally, and I

don't know that he has ever changed sides. So much for myself. As far as you are concerned, I can imagine why Southey should dislike you, as the *Examiner* has been the crown of thorns worn by this unredeemed Redeemer for many years.

Do you ever see Peacock? He will tell you all about where we go, what we do or see; and, as I wrote him an account of these things, I do not like writing twice over the same things. There are two Italies—one composed of the green earth and transparent sea, and the mighty ruins of ancient time, and aërial mountains, and the warm and radiant atmosphere which is interfused through all The other consists of the Italians of the present day, their works and ways. The one is the most sublime and lovely contemplation that can be conceived by the imagination of man; the other is the most degraded, disgusting, and odious. What do you think? Young women of rank actually eat—you will never guess what—garlick! Our poor friend Lord Byron is quite corrupted by living among these people, and, in fact, is going on in a way not very worthy of him. We talked a good deal about you, and among other things he said that he wished you would come to Italy, and bade me tell you that he would lend you the money for the journey (£400 or £500) if you were prevented by that consideration. Pray could you not make it in some way even profitable to visit this astonishing country? We return to Venice next Spring. What an inexpressible pleasure it would give us to meet you there! I fear (if you will allow me to touch on so delicate a subject) it would be hardly possible for you to bring all your family, but you would know best. I should not wonder if Peacock would join you, and then the ensuing Spring we would all return together. Italy has the advantage of being exceeding cheap, when you are once there; particularly if you go to market yourself, otherwise the cheating makes it approach English prices. If you are indifferent as to seeing

France, you may sail from London to Livorno, and we would meet then a month earlier than at Venice. I don't think you need feel at all uncomfortable at accepting Lord Byron's offer (if *I could* make it, you know that I would not give you this advice) as 'twas very frankly made, and it would not only give him great pleasure, but might do him great service, to have your society. Write to me quickly what you think of this plan, on which my imagination delights itself.

Mine and Mary's love to Marianne and Miss K[ent] and all the little ones. Now pray write directly, addressed as usual to Livorno, because I shall be in a fever until I know whether you are coming or no. I ought to say I have neither good health or good spirits just now, and that your visit would be a relief to both.

Most affectionately and sincerely your friend, P. B. S.

Ollier has orders to pay Marianne £5. I owe her part of it, and with the other I wish her to pay £1 10s. 0d. to the tailor who made my habit if he calls for it. His charge will be more, but do not pay it him.

[Addressed outside],
Leigh Hunt, Esq.,
8 York Buildings,
New Road,
London.
Inghilterra.

#### 312. To Thomas Love Peacock

NAPLES,

December 22, 1818.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

I have received a letter from you here, dated November 1st; you see the reciprocation of letters from the term of our travels is more slow. I entirely agree with what you say about "Childe Harold." The spirit in which it is written is, if insane, the most wicked and mischievous

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insanity that ever was given forth. It is a kind of obstinate and self-willed folly, in which he hardens himself. I remonstrated with him in vain on the tone of mind from which such a view of things alone arises. For its real root is very different from its apparent one. Nothing can be less sublime than the true source of these expressions of contempt and desperation. The fact is, that first, the Italian women with whom he associates are perhaps the most contemptible of all who exist under the moon—the most ignorant, the most disgusting, the most bigoted; countesses smell so strongly of garlick that an ordinary Englishman cannot approach them. Well, L. B. is familiar with the lowest sort of these women, the people his gondolieri pick up in the streets. He associates with wretches who seem almost to have lost the gait and physiognomy of man, and who do not scruple to avow practices which are not only not named, but I believe seldom even conceived in England. He says he disapproves, but he endures. He is heartily and deeply discontented with himself; and contemplating in the distorted mirror of his own thoughts Marin the nature and the destiny of man, what can he behold but objects of contempt and despair? But that he is a great poet, I think the address to ocean proves. And he has a certain degree of candour while you talk to him, but unfortunately it does not outlast your departure. No, I do not doubt, and, for his sake, I ought to hope, that his present career must end soon in some violent circumstance.

Since I last wrote to you, I have seen the ruins of Rome, the Vatican, St. Peter's, and all the miracles of ancient and modern art contained in that majestic city. The impression of it exceeds anything I have ever experienced in my travels. We stayed there only a week, intending to return at the end of February, and devote two or three months to its mines of inexhaustible contemplation, to which period I refer you for a minute account of it. We visited the Forum and the ruins of the Coliseum every day. The Coliseum is unlike any work of human hands I ever saw

It is of enormous height and circuit, and the arches built of massy stones are piled on one another, and jut into the blue air, shattered into the forms of overhanging rocks. It has been changed by time into the image of an amphitheatre of rocky hills overgrown by the wild olive, the myrtle, and the fig-tree, and threaded by little paths, which wind among its ruined stairs and immeasurable galleries: the copsewood overshadows you as you wander through its labyrinths, and the wild weeds of this climate of flowers bloom under your feet. The arena is covered with grass, and pierces like the skirts of a natural plain, the chasms of the broken arches around. But a small part of the exterior circumference remains—it is exquisitely light and beautiful; and the effect of the perfection of its architecture, adorned with ranges of Corinthian pilasters, supporting a bold cornice, is such as to diminish the effect of its greatness. The interior is all ruin. I can scarcely believe that when encrusted with Dorian marble and ornamented by columns of Egyptian granite, its effect could have been so sublime and so impressive as in its present It is open to the sky, and it was the clear and sunny weather of the end of November in this climate when we visited it, day after day.

Near it is the arch of Constantine, or rather the arch of Trajan; for the servile and avaricious senate of degraded Rome ordered that the monument of his predecessor should be demolished in order to dedicate one to the Christian reptile, who had crept among the blood of his murdered family to the supreme power. It is exquisitely beautiful and perfect. The Forum is a plain in the midst of Rome, a kind of desert full of heaps of stones and pits; and though so near the habitations of men, is the most desolate place you can conceive. The ruins of temples stand in and around it, shattered columns and ranges of others complete, supporting cornices of exquisite workmanship, and vast vaults of shattered domes distinct with regular compartments, once filled with sculptures of ivory or brass.

The temples of Jupiter, and Concord, and Peace, and the Sun, and the Moon, and Vesta, are all within a short distance of this spot. Behold the wrecks of what a great nation once dedicated to the abstractions of the mind! Rome is a city, as it were, of the dead, or rather of those who cannot die, and who survive the puny generations which inhabit and pass over the spot which they have made sacred to eternity. In Rome, at least in the first enthusiasm of your recognition of ancient time, you see nothing of the Italians. The nature of the city assists the delusion, for its vast and antique walls describe a circumference of sixteen miles, and thus the population is thinly scattered over this space, nearly as great as London. Wide wild fields are enclosed within it, and there are grassy lanes and copses winding among the ruins, and a great green hill, lonely and bare, which overhangs the Tiber. The gardens of the modern palaces are like wild woods of cedar, and cypress, and pine, and the neglected walks are overgrown with weeds. The English burying-place is a green slope near the walls, under the pyramidal tomb of Cestius, and is, I think, the most beautiful and solemn cemetery I ever beheld. To see the sun shining on its bright grass, fresh, when we first visited it, with the autumnal dews, and hear the whispering of the wind among the leaves of the trees which have overgrown the tomb of Cestius, and the soil which is stirring in the sunwarm earth, and to mark the tombs, mostly of women and young people who were buried there, one might, if one were to die, desire the sleep they seem to sleep. Such is the human mind, and so it peoples with its wishes vacancy and oblivion.

I have told you little about Rome; but I reserve the Pantheon, and St. Peter's, and the Vatican, and Raffael, for my return. About a fortnight ago I left Rome, and Mary and Clare followed in three days, for it was necessary to procure lodgings here without alighting at an inn. From my peculiar mode of travelling I saw little of the country,

but could just observe that the wild beauty of the scenery and the barbarous ferocity of the inhabitants progressively On entering Naples, the first circumstance that engaged my attention was an assassination. A youth ran out of a shop, pursued by a woman with a bludgeon, and a man armed with a knife. The man overtook him, and with one blow in the neck laid him dead in the road. On my expressing the emotions of horror and indignation which I felt, a Calabrian priest, who travelled with me, laughed heartily, and attempted to quiz me, as what the English call a flat. I never felt such an inclination to beat any one. Heaven knows I have little power, but he saw that I looked extremely displeased, and was silent. same man, a fellow of gigantic strength and stature, had expressed the most frantic terror of robbers on the road; he cried at the sight of my pistol, and it had been with great difficulty that the joint exertions of myself and the vetturino had quieted his hysterics.

But external nature in these delightful regions contrasts with and compensates for the deformity and degradation We have a lodging divided from the of humanity. sea by the royal gardens, and from our windows we see perpetually the blue waters of the bay, forever changing, yet forever the same, and encompassed by the mountainous island of Capreæ, the lofty peaks which overhang Salerno, and the woody hill of Posilipo, whose promontories hide from us Misenum and the lofty isle Inarime, 1 which, with its divided summit, forms the opposite horn of the bay. From the pleasant walks of the garden we see Vesuvius; a smoke by day and a fire by night is seen upon its summit, and the glassy sea often reflects its light or shadow. The climate is delicious. We sit without a fire, with the windows open, and have almost all the productions of an English summer. The weather is usually like what Wordsworth calls "the first fine day of March;"

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The ancient name of Ischia."—Mrs. Shelley's note.

sometimes very much warmer, though perhaps it wants that "each minute sweeter than before," which gives an intoxicating sweetness to the awakening of the earth from its winter's sleep in England. We have made two excursions, one to Baiæ and one to Vesuvius, and we propose to visit, successively, the islands, Pæstum, Pompeii, and Beneventum. 1

We set off an hour after sunrise one radiant morning in a little boat; there was not a cloud in the sky, nor a wave upon the sea, which was so translucent that you could see the hollow caverns clothed with the glaucous sea-moss, and the leaves and branches of those delicate weeds that pave the unequal bottom of the water. As noon approached, the heat, and especially the light, became We passed Posilipo, and came first to the eastern point of the bay of Puzzoli<sup>2</sup>, which is within the great bay of Naples, and which again incloses that of Baiæ. Here are lofty rocks and craggy islets, with arches and portals of precipice standing in the sea, and enormous caverns, which echoed faintly with the murmur of the languid tide. This is called La Scuola di Virgilio. We then went directly across to the promontory of Misenum, leaving the precipitous island of Nesida on the right. Here we were conducted to see the Mare Morto, and the Elysian fields; the spot on which Virgil places the scenery of the Sixth Æneid. Though extremely beautiful, as a lake, and woody hills, and this divine sky must make it, I confess my disappointment. The guide showed us an antique cemetery, where the niches used for placing the cinerary urns of the dead yet remain. We then coasted the bay of Baiæ to the left, in which we saw many picturesque and interesting ruins; but I have to remark that we never disembarked but we were disappointed—while from the boat the effect of the scenery was inexpressibly delightful. The colours of the

<sup>2</sup> Pozzoli on p. 656.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The date of the excursion to Baiæ was Dec. 8, that of Vesuvius Dec. 16; and Pompeii was visited on Dec. 22.

water and the air breathe over all things here the radiance of their own beauty. After passing the bay of Baiæ, and observing the ruins of its antique grandeur standing like rocks in the transparent sea under our boat, we landed to visit lake Avernus. We passed through the cavern of the Sibyl (not Virgil's Sybil) which pierces one of the hills which circumscribe the lake, and came to a calm and lovely basin of water, surrounded by dark woody hills, and profoundly solitary. Some vast ruins of the temple of Pluto stand on a lawny hill on one side of it, and are reflected in its windless mirror. It is far more beautiful than the Elysian fields—but there are all the materials for beauty in the latter, and the Avernus was once a chasm of deadly and pestilential vapours. About half a mile from Avernus. a high hill, called Monte Nuovo, was thrown up by volcanic fire.

Passing onward we came to Pozzoli, the ancient Dicæarchea, where there are the columns remaining of a temple to Serapis, and the wreck of an enormous amphitheatre, changed, like the Coliseum, into a natural hill of the overteeming vegetation. Here also is the Solfatara, of which there is a poetical description in the Civil War of Petronius, beginning—"Est locus," and in which the verses of the poet are infinitely finer than what he describes, for it is not a very curious place. After seeing these things we returned by moonlight to Naples in our boat. What colours there were in the sky, what radiance in the evening star, and how the moon was encompassed by a light unknown to our regions!

Our next excursion was to Vesuvius. We went to Resina in a carriage, where Mary and I mounted mules, and Clare was carried in a chair on the shoulders of four men, much like a member of parliament after he has gained his election, and looking, with less reason, quite as frightened. So we arrived at the hermitage of San

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mr. Buxton Forman suggests that this should read "by the overteeming vegetation."

Vesuvius

Salvador, where an old hermit, belted with rope, set forth the plates for our refreshment.

Vesuvius is, after the glaciers, the most impressive exhibition of the energies of nature I ever saw. It has not the immeasurable greatness, the overpowering magnificence, nor, above all, the radiant beauty of the glaciers; but it has all their character of tremendous and irresistible strength. From Resina to the hermitage you wind up the mountain, and cross a vast stream of hardened lava, which is an actual image of the waves of the sea, changed into hard black stone by enchantment. The lines of the boiling flood seem to hang in the air, and it is difficult to believe that the billows which seem hurrying down upon you are not actually in motion. This plain was once a sea of liquid fire. From the hermitage we crossed another vast stream of lava, and then went on foot up the cone this is the only part of the ascent in which there is any difficulty, and that difficulty has been much exaggerated. It is composed of rocks of lava, and declivities of ashes; by ascending the former and descending the latter, there is very little fatigue. On the summit is a kind of irregular plain, the most horrible chaos that can be imagined; riven into ghastly chasms, and heaped up with tumuli of great stones and cinders, and enormous rocks blackened and calcined, which had been thrown from the volcano upon one another in terrible confusion. In the midst stands the conical hill from which volumes of smoke, and in the fountains of liquid fire, are rolled forth forever. mountain is at present in a slight state of eruption; and # a thick heavy white smoke is perpetually rolled out, interrupted by enormous columns of an impenetrable black ju bituminous vapour, which is hurled up, fold after fold, vinto the sky with a deep hollow sound, and fiery stones are rained down from its darkness, and a black shower of dishes fell even where we sat. The lava, like the glacier, creeps on perpetually, with a crackling sound as of sup There are several springs of lava; and in pressed fire. Vol., ii—12-(2285)

one place it rushes precipitously over a high crag, rolling down the half-molten rocks and its own overhanging waves; a cataract of quivering fire. We approached the extremity of one of these rivers of lava; it is about twenty feet in breadth and ten in height; and as the inclined plane was not rapid, its motion was very slow. We saw the masses of its dark exterior surface detach themselves as it moved, and betray the depth of the liquid flame. In the day the fire is but slightly seen; you only observe a tremulous motion in the air, and streams and fountains of white sulphurous smoke.

At length we saw the sun sink between Capreæ and Inarime, and, as the darkness increased, the effect of the We were, as it were, surfire became more beautiful. rounded by streams and cataracts of the red and radiant fire; and in the midst, from the column of bituminous smoke shot up into the air, fell the vast masses of rock, white with the light of their intense heat, leaving behind them through the dark vapour trains of splendour. We descended by torch-light, and I should have enjoyed the scenery on my return, but they conducted me, I know not how, to the hermitage in a state of intense bodily suffering, the worst effect of which was spoiling the pleasure of Mary and Clare. Our guides on the occasion were complete savages. You have no idea of the horrible cries which they suddenly utter, no one knows why; the clamour, the vociferation, the tumult. Clare in her palanquin suffered most from it; and when I had gone on before, they threatened to leave her in the middle of the road, which they would have done had not my Italian servant promised them a beating, after which they became quiet. Nothing, however, can be more picturesque than the gestures and the physiognomies of these savage people. And when, in the darkness of night, they unexpectedly begin to sing in chorus some fragments of their wild but sweet national music, the effect is exceedingly fine.

Since I wrote this, I have seen the museum of the city.

Such statues! There is a Venus; an ideal shape of the most winning loveliness. A Bacchus, more sublime than any living being. A Satyr, making love to a youth: in which the expressed life of the sculpture, and the inconceivable beauty of the form of the youth, overcome one's repugnance to the subject. There are multitudes of wonderfully fine statues found in Herculaneum and Pompeii. We are going to see Pompeii the first day that the sea is waveless. Herculaneum is almost filled up; no more excavations are made; the king bought the ground and built a palace upon it.

You don't see much of Hunt. I wish you could contrive to see him when you go to town, and ask him what he means to answer to Lord Byron's invitation. He has now an opportunity, if he likes, of seeing Italy. What do you think of joining his party, and paying us a visit next year; I mean as soon as the reign of winter is dissolved? Write to me your thoughts upon this. I cannot express to you the pleasure it would give me to welcome such a party.

I have depression enough of spirits and not good health, though I believe the warm air of Naples does me good. We see absolutely no one here.

Adieu, my dear Peacock,

Affectionately your friend,

P. B. S.

## 313. To Thomas Love Peacock

NAPLES,

Jan[uary] 26th, 1819.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

Your two letters arrived within a few days of each other, one being directed to Naples, and the other to Livorno. They are more welcome visitors to me than mine can be to you. I writing as from sepulchres, you from the habitations of men yet unburied; though the sexton, Castle-cagh, after having dug their grave, stands with his spade

in his hand, evidently doubting whether he will not be forced to occupy it himself. Your news about the bank-note trials is excellent good. Do I not recognise in it the influence of Cobbett? You don't tell me what occupies Parliament. I know you will laugh at my demand, and assure me that it is indifferent. Your pamphlet I want exceedingly to see. Your calculations in the letter are clear, but require much oral explanation. You know I am an infernal arithmetician. If none but me had contemplated "lucentemque globum lunæ, Titaniaque astra," the world would yet have doubted whether they were many hundred feet higher than the mountain tops.

In my accounts of pictures, I am more pleased to interest. you than the many; and this is fortunate, because, in the first place, I have no idea of attempting the latter, and if I did attempt it, I should assuredly fail. A perception: of the beautiful characterises those who differ from ordinary men, and those who can perceive it would not buy enough to pay the printer. Besides, I keep no journal, and the only records of my voyage will be the letters I send you. The bodily fatigue of standing for hours in: galleries exhausts me; I believe that I don't see half that I ought, on that account. And then we know nobody; and the common Italians are so sullen and stupid, it's impossible to get information from them. where the people seem superior to any in Italy, I cannot fail to stumble on something more. O, if I had health and strength, and equal spirits, what boundless intellectual improvement might I not gather in this wonderful country At present I write little else but poetry, and little of that My first act of "Prometheus" is complete, and I think you would like it. I consider poetry very subordinate to moral and political science, and if I were well, certainly I would aspire to the latter; for I can conceive a great work, embodying the discoveries of all ages, and harmon ising the contending creeds by which mankind have been ruled. Far from me is such an attempt, and I shall by

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content, by exercising my fancy, to amuse myself, and perhaps some others, and cast what weight I can into the scale of that balance, which the Giant of Arthegall holds. 1 Since you last heard from me, we have been to see Pompeii, and are waiting now for the return of spring weather, to visit, first, Pæstum, and then the islands; after which we shall return to Rome. I was astonished at the remains of this city; I had no conception of anything so perfect yet remaining. My idea of the mode of its destruction was this: -First, an earthquake shattered it, and unroofed almost all its temples, and split its columns; then a rain of light small pumice-stones fell; then torrents of boiling water, mixed with ashes, filled up all its crevices. A wide, flat hill, from which the city was excavated, is now covered by thick woods, and you see the tombs and the theatres, the temples and the houses, surrounded by the uninhabited wilderness. We entered the town from the side towards the sea, and first saw two theatres; one more magnificent than the other, strewn with the ruins of the white marble which formed their seats and cornices, wrought with deep, bold sculpture. In the front, between the stage and the seats, is the circular space, occasionally occupied by the chorus. The stage is very narrow, but long, and divided from this space by a narrow enclosure parallel to it, I suppose for the orchestra. On each side

<sup>&</sup>quot;The allusion is to the 'Fairy Queen,' Book V, canto 3. The Giant has scales, in which he professes to weigh right and wrong, and rectify the physical and moral evils which result from inequality of condition. Shelley once pointed out this passage to me, observing, 'Artegall argues with the Giant; the Giant has the best of the argument; Artegall's iron man knocks him over into the sea and drowns him. This is the usual way in which power deals with opinion.' I said, 'That was not the lesson Spenser intended to convey.' 'Perhaps not,' he said; 'it is the lesson which he conveys to me. I am of the Giant's faction.' In the same feeling with respect to Thomson's 'Castle of Indolence,' he held that the Enchanter in the first canto was a true philanthropist, and the Knight of Arts and Industry in the second an oligarchical impostor overthrowing truth by power."—Fraser's Magazine, March, 1860, p. 319.

are the consuls' boxes, and below, in the theatre at Herculaneum, were found two equestrian statues of admirable workmanship, occupying the same place as the great bronze lamps did at Drury Lane. The smallest of the theatres is said to have been comic, though I should doubt. From both you see, as you sit on the seats, a prospect of the most wonderful beauty.

You then pass through the ancient streets; they are very narrow, and the houses rather small, but all constructed on an admirable plan, especially for this climate. The rooms are built round a court, or sometimes two, according to the extent of the house. In the midst is a fountain, sometimes surrounded with a portico, supported on fluted columns of white stucco; the floor is paved with mosaic, sometimes wrought in imitation of vine leaves, sometimes in quaint figures, and more or less beautiful, according to the rank of the inhabitant. There were paintings on all, but most of them have been removed to decorate the royal museums. Little winged figures, and small ornaments of exquisite elegance, yet remain. is an ideal life in the forms of these paintings of an incomparable loveliness, though most are evidently the work of very inferior artists. It seems as if, from the atmosphere of mental beauty which surrounded them, every human being caught a splendour not his own. In one house you see how the bed-rooms were managed:—a small sofa was built up, where the cushions were placed; two pictures, one representing Diana and Endymion, the other Venus and Mars, decorate the chamber; and a little niche, which contains the statue of a domestic god. The floor is composed of a rich mosaic of the rarest marbles, agate, jasper, and porphyry; it looks to the marble fountain and the snow-white columns, whose entablatures strew the floor of the portico they supported. The houses have only one storey, and the apartments, though not large, A great advantage results from this, are very lofty. wholly unknown in our cities. The public buildings.

whose ruins are now forests, as it were, of white fluted columns, and which then supported entablatures, loaded with sculptures, were seen on all sides over the roofs of the houses. This was the excellence of the ancients. private expenses were comparatively moderate; dwelling of one of the chief senators of Pompeii is elegant indeed, and adorned with most beautiful specimens of art, but small. But their public buildings are everywhere marked by the bold and grand designs of an unsparing magnificence. In the little town of Pompeii (it contained about twenty thousand inhabitants), it is wonderful to see the number and the grandeur of their public buildings. Another advantage, too, is that, in the present case, the glorious scenery around is not shut out, and that, unlike the inhabitants of the Cimmerian ravines of modern cities, the ancient Pompeians could contemplate the clouds and the lamps of heaven; could see the moon rise high behind Vesuvius, and the sun set in the sea, tremulous with an atmosphere of golden vapour, between Inarime Misenum.

We next saw the temples. Of the temple of Æsculapius little remains but an altar of black stone, adorned with a cornice imitating the scales of a serpent. His statue, in terra-cotta, was found in the cell. The temple of Isis is more perfect. It is surrounded by a portico of fluted columns, and in the area around it are two altars, and many ceppi for statues; and a little chapel of white stucco, as hard as stone, of the most exquisite proportion; panels are adorned with figures in bas-relief, slightly indicated, but of a workmanship the most delicate and perfect that can be conceived. They are Egyptian subjects, executed by a Greek artist, who has harmonized all the unnatural extravagances of the original conception into the supernatural loveliness of his country's genius. They scarcely touch the ground with their feet, and their wind-uplifted robes seem in the place of wings. The temple in the midst raised on a high platform, and approached by steps, was decorated with exquisite paintings, some of which we saw in the museum at Portici. It is small, of the same materials as the chapel, with a pavement of mosaic, and fluted Ionic columns of white stucco, so white that it dazzles you to look at it.

Thence through the other porticos and labyrinths of walls and columns (for I cannot hope to detail everything to you), we came to the Forum. This is a large square, surrounded by lofty porticos of fluted columns, some broken, some entire, their entablatures strewed under them. The temple of Jupiter, of Venus, and another temple, the Tribunal, and the Hall of Public Justice, with their forests of lofty columns, surround the Forum. Two pedestals or altars of an enormous size (for, whether they supported equestrian statues, or were the altars of the temple of Venus, before which they stand, the guide could not tell), occupy the lower end of the Forum. At the upper end, supported on an elevated platform, stands the temple of Jupiter. Under the colonnade of its portico we sate, and pulled out our oranges, and figs, and bread, and medlars (sorry fare, you will say), and rested to eat. Here was a magnificent spectacle. Above and between the multitudinous shafts of the sun-shining columns was seen the sea, reflecting the purple heaven of noon above it, and supporting, as it were, on its line the dark lofty mountains of Sorrento, of a blue inexpressibly deep, and tinged towards their summits with streaks of new-fallen snow. Between was one small green island. To the right was Capreæ, Inarime, Prochyta, and Misenum. Behind was the single summit of Vesuvius, rolling forth volumes of thick white smoke, whose foam-like column was sometimes darted into the clear dark sky, and fell in little streaks along the wind. Between Vesuvius and the nearer mountains, as through a chasm, was seen the main line of the loftiest Apennines, to the east. The day was radiant and warm. Every now and then we heard the subterranean thunder of Vesuvius; its distant deep peals

seemed to shake the very air and light of day, which interpenetrated our frames, with the sullen and tremendous sound. This scene was what the Greeks beheld (Pompeii, you know, was a Greek city). They lived in harmony with nature; and the interstices of their incomparable columns were portals, as it were, to admit the spirit of beauty which animates this glorious universe to visit those whom it inspired. If such is Pompeii, what was Athens? What scene was exhibited from the Acropolis, the Parthenon, and the temples of Hercules, and Theseus, and the Winds? The islands and the Ægean sea, the mountains of Argolis, and the peaks of Pindus and Olympus, and the darkness of the Bœotian forests interspersed?

From the Forum we went to another public place; a triangular portico, half enclosing the ruins of an enormous It is built on the edge of the hill overlooking the temple. That black point is the temple. In the apex of the triangle stands an altar and a fountain, and before the altar once stood the statue of the builder of the portico. Returning hence, and following the consular road, we came to the eastern gate of the city. The walls are of enormous strength, and enclose a space of three miles. On each side of the road beyond the gate are built the tombs. unlike ours! They seem not so much hiding-places for that which must decay, as voluptuous chambers for immortal spirits. They are of marble, radiantly white; and two, especially beautiful, are loaded with exquisite bas-reliefs. On the stucco-wall that encloses them are little emblematic figures, of a relief exceedingly low, of dead and dying animals, and little winged genii, and female forms bending in groups in some funereal office. higher reliefs represent, one a nautical subject, and the other a Bacchanalian one. Within the cell stand the cinerary urns, sometimes one, sometimes more. said that paintings were found within; which are now, as has been everything moveable in Pompeii, removed,

and scattered about in royal museums. These tombs were the most impressive things of all. The wild woods surround them on either side; and along the broad stones of the paved road which divides them, you hear the late leaves of autumn shiver and rustle in the stream of the inconstant wind, as it were, like the step of ghosts. The radiance and magnificence of these dwellings of the dead, the white freshness of the scarcely-finished marble, the impassioned or imaginative life of the figures which adorn them, contrast strangely with the simplicity of the houses of those who were living when Vesuvius overwhelmed them. <sup>1</sup>

I have forgotten the amphitheatre, which is of great magnitude, though much inferior to the Coliseum. I now understand why the Greeks were such great poets; and, above all, I can account, it seems to me, for the harmony, the unity, the perfection, the uniform excellence, of all their works of art. They lived in a perpetual commerce with external nature, and nourished themselves upon the spirit of its forms. Their theatres were all open to the mountains and the sky. Their columns, the ideal types of a sacred forest, with its roof of interwoven tracery, admitted the light and wind; the odour and the freshness of the country penetrated the cities. Their temples were mostly upaithric; and the flying clouds, the stars, or the deep sky, were seen above. O, but for that series of wretched wars which terminated in the Roman conquest of the world; but for the Christian religion, which put the finishing stroke on the ancient system; but for those changes that conducted Athens to its ruin—to what an eminence might not humanity have arrived!

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;I stood within the city disinterred;
And heard the autumnal leaves, like light footfalls
Of spirits passing through the streets; and heard
The mountain's slumberous voice at intervals
Thrill through those roofless halls."
—"Ode to Naples."

In a short time I hope to tell you something of the museum of this city.

You see how ill I follow the maxim of Horace, at least in its literal sense: "nil admirari"—which I should say, "prope res est una"—to prevent there ever being anything admirable in the world. Fortunately Plato is of my opinion; and I had rather err with Plato than be right with Horace.

At this moment I received your letter, indicating that you are removing to London. I am very much interested in the subject of this change, and beg you would write me all the particulars of it. You will be able now to give me perhaps a closer insight into the politics of the times than was permitted you at Marlow. Of H—— I have a very slight opinion. There are rumours here of a revolution in A ship came in twelve days [since] from Catalonia, and brought a report that the king was massacred; that eighteen thousand insurgents surrounded Madrid; but that before the popular party gained head enough, seven thousand were murdered by the Inquisition. Perhaps you know all by this time. The old king of Spain is dead here. Cobbett is a fine υμενοποιος—does his influence increase or diminish? What a pity that so powerful a genius should be combined with the most odious moral qualities.

We have reports here of a change in the English ministry—to what does it amount? for, besides my national interest in it, I am on the watch to vindicate my most sacred rights, invaded by the chancery court.

I suppose now we shall not see you in Italy this spring, whether Hunt comes or not. It's probable that I shall hear nothing from him for some months, particularly if he does not come. Give me ses nouvelles.

I am under an English surgeon here, who says I have a disease of the liver, which he will cure. We keep horses, as this kind of exercise is absolutely essential to my health.

Elise 1 has just married our Italian servant, and has quitted us; the man was a great rascal, and cheated enormously: this event was very much against our advice.

I have scarcely been out since I wrote last.

Adieu!—Yours most faithfully,

P. B. S.

#### 314. To Thomas Love Peacock

NAPLES,

February 25th, 1819.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

I am much interested to hear your progress in the object of your removal to London, especially as I hear from Horace Smith of the advantages attending it. There is no person in the world who would more sincerely rejoice in any good fortune that might befall you than I should.

We are on the point of quitting Naples for Rome. scenery which surrounds this city is more delightful than any within the immediate reach of civilized man. think I have mentioned to you the Lago d'Agnano and the Caccia d'Ischieri, and I have since seen what obscures those lovely forms in my memory. They are both the craters of extinguished volcanos, and Nature has thrown forth forests of oak and ilex, and spread mossy lawns and clear lakes over the dead or sleeping fire. The first is a scene of a wider and milder character, with soft sloping wooded hills, and grassy declivities declining to the lake, and cultivated plains of vines woven upon poplar trees, bounded by the theatre of hills. Innumerable wild waterbirds, quite tame, inhabit this place. The other is a royal chace, and is surrounded by steep and lofty hills, and only accessible through a wide gate of mossy oak, from the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A Swiss girl whom the Shelley's had engaged as nursery-maid two years before, at Geneva.

vestibule of which the spectacle of precipitous hills, hemming in a narrow and circular vale, is suddenly disclosed. The hills are covered with thick woods of ilex, myrtle, and laurustinus; the polished leaves of the ilex, as they wave in their multitudes under the partial blasts which rush through the chasms of the vale, glitter above the dark masses of foliage below, like the white foam of waves upon a deep blue sea. The plain so surrounded is at most three miles in circumference. It is occupied partly by a lake, with bold shores wooded by evergreens, and interrupted by a sylvan promontory of the wild forest, whose mossy boughs overhang its expanse, of a silent and purple darkness, like an Italian midnight; and partly by the forest itself, of all gigantic trees, but the oak especially, whose jagged boughs, now leafless, are hoary with thick lichens, and loaded with the massy and deep foliage of the ivy. The effect of the dark eminences that surround this plain, seen through the boughs, is of an enchanting solemnity. (There we saw in one instance wild boars and a deer, and in another—a spectacle little suited to the antique and Latonian nature of the place—King Ferdinand in a winter enclosure, watching to shoot wild boars.) The underwood was principally evergreen, all lovely kinds of fern and furze; the cytisus, a delicate kind of furze with a pretty yellow blossom, the myrtle, and the myrica. The willow trees had just begun to put forth their green and golden buds, and gleamed like points of lambent fire among the wintry forest. The Grotta del Cane, too, we saw, because other people see it; but would not allow the dogs to be exhibited in torture for our curiosity. The poor little animals 1 stood moving their tails in a slow and dismal manner, as if perfectly resigned to their condition -a cur-like emblem of voluntary servitude. The effect of the vapour, which extinguishes a torch, is to cause suffocation at last, through a process which makes the

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Several dogs are kept for exhibition, but only one is exhibited at a time."—Note by T. L. Peacock.

lungs feel as if they were torn by sharp points within. So a surgeon told us, who tried the experiment on himself.

There was a Greek city, sixty miles to the south of Naples called Posidonia, now Pesto, where there still subsist three temples of Etruscan<sup>1</sup> architecture still perfect. From this city we have just returned. The weather was most unfavourable for our expedition. After two months of cloudless serenity, it began raining cats and dogs. first night we slept at Salerno, a large city situate in the recess of a deep bay; surrounded with stupendous mountains of the same name. A few miles from Torre del Greco we entered on the pass of the mountains, which is a line dividing the isthmus of those enormous piles of rock which compose the southern boundary of the bay of Naples, and the northern one of that of Salerno. On one side is a lofty conical hill, crowned with the turrets of a ruined castle, and cut into platforms for cultivation; at least every ravine and glen, whose precipitous sides admitted of other vegetation but that of the rock-rooted ilex: on the other, the æthereal snowy crags of an immense mountain, whose terrible lineaments were at intervals concealed or disclosed by volumes of dense clouds, rolling under the tempest. Half a mile from this spot, between orange and lemon groves of a lovely village, suspended as it were on an amphitheatral precipice, whose golden globes contrasted with the white walls and dark green leaves which they almost outnumbered, shone the sea. A burst of the declining sunlight illumined it. The road led along the brink of the precipice towards Salerno. Nothing could be more glorious than the scene. immense mountains covered with the rare and divine vegetation of this climate, with many-folding vales, and deep dark recesses, which the fancy scarcely could penetrate, descended from their snowy summits precipitously Before us was Salerno, built into a declining to the sea.

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The architecture is Doric."—Note by T. L. Peacock.

plain, between the mountains and the sea. Beyond, the other shore of sky-cleaving mountains, then dim with the mist of tempest. Underneath, from the base of the precipice where the road conducted, rocky promontories jutted into the sea, covered with olive and ilex woods, or with the ruined battlements of some Norman or Saracenic fortress. We slept at Salerno, and the next morning before daybreak proceeded to Posidonia. The night had been tempestuous, and our way lay by the sea sand. It was utterly dark, except when the long line of wave burst. with a sound like thunder, beneath the starless sky, and cast up a kind of mist of cold white lustre. When morning came, we found ourselves travelling in a wide desert plain. perpetually interrupted by wild irregular glens, and bounded on all sides by the Apennines and the sea. times it was covered with forest, sometimes dotted with underwood, or mere tufts of fern and furze, and the wintry dry tendrils of creeping plants. I have never, but in the Alps, seen an amphitheatre of mountains so magnificent. After travelling fifteen miles we came to a river, the bridge of which had been broken, and which was so swollen that the ferry would not take the carriage across. We had, therefore, to walk seven miles of a muddy road, which led to the ancient city across the desolate Maremma. was scented with the sweet smell of violets of an extraordinary size and beauty. At length we saw the sublime and massy colonnades, skirting the horizon of the wilderness. We entered by the ancient gate, which is now no more than a chasm in the rock-like wall. Deeply sunk in the ground beside it, were the ruins of a sepulchre, which the ancients were in the custom of building beside the public way. first temple, which is the smallest, consists of an outer range of columns, quite perfect, and supporting a perfect architrave and two shattered frontispieces. 1 The proportions are

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The three temples are amphiprostyle; that is, they have two prospects or fronts, each of six columns in the two first, and of nine in the Basilica. See Major's 'Ruins of Paestum.' 1768."—Note by T. L. Peacock.

extremely massy, and the architecture entirely unornamented and simple. These columns do not seem more than forty feet high, 1 but the perfect proportions diminish the apprehension of their magnitude; it seems as if inequality and irregularity of form were requisite to force on us the relative idea of greatness. The scene from between the columns of the temple, consists on one side of the sea, to which the gentle hill on which it is built slopes. and on the other, of the grand amphitheatre of the loftiest Apennines, dark purple mountains, crowned with snow and intersected there by long bars of hard and leadencoloured cloud. The effect of the jagged outline of mountains, through groups of enormous columns on one side, and on the other the level horizon of the sea, is inexpressibly grand. The second temple is much larger, and also more perfect. Beside the outer range of columns, it contains an interior range of column above column, and the ruins of a wall, which was the screen of the penetralia. With little diversity of ornament, the order of architecture is similar to that of the first temple. The columns in all are fluted, and built of a porous volcanic stone, which time has dyed with a rich and yellow colour. The columns are one-third larger, and like that of the first, diminish from the base to the capital, so that, but for the chastening effect of their admirable proportions, their magnitude would, from the delusion of perspective, seem greater, not less, than it is; though perhaps we ought to say, not that this symmetry diminishes your apprehension of their magnitude, but that it overpowers the idea of relative greatness, by establishing within itself a system of relations, destructive of your idea of its relation with other objects, on which our ideas of size depend.

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The height of the columns is respectively 18 feet 6 inches, and 28 feet 5 inches and 6½ lines, in the two first temples; and 21 feet 6 inches in the Basilica. This shows the justice of the remarks on the difference of real and apparent magnitude."—Note by T. L. Peacock.

temple is what they call a Basilica; three columns alone remain of the interior range; the exterior is perfect, but that the cornice and frieze in many places have fallen. This temple covers more ground than either of the others, but its columns are of an intermediate magnitude between those of the second and first.

We only contemplated these sublime monuments for two hours, and of course could only bring away so imperfect a conception of them, as is the shadow of some half-remembered dream.

The royal collection of paintings in this city is sufficiently miserable. Perhaps the most remarkable is the original study by Michael Angelo of the "Day of Judgment," which is painted in fresco on the Sixtine chapel of the Vatican. It is there so defaced as to be wholly indistinguishable. I cannot but think the genius of this artist highly overrated. He has not only no temperance, no modesty, no feeling for the just boundaries of art (and in these respects an admirable genius may err), but he has no sense of beauty, and to want this is to want the sense of the creative power of mind. What is terror without a contrast with, and a connexion with, loveliness? How well Dante understood this secret—Dante, with whom this artist has been so presumptuously compared! What a thing his "Moses" is; how distorted from all that he is natural and majestic, only less monstrous and detestable than its historical prototype. In the picture to which T allude, God is leaning out of heaven, as it were eagerly ( ' enjoying the final scene of the infernal tragedy he set the Universe to act. The Holy Ghost, in the shape of a dove, is under him. Under the Holy Ghost stands Jesus Christ, in an attitude of haranguing the assembly. This figure, which his subject, or rather the view which it became him to take of it, ought to have modelled of a calm, severe, aweinspiring majesty, terrible yet lovely, is in the attitude of commonplace resentment. On one side of this figure are the elect; on the other, the host of heaven; they ought to have Vol. ii-13-(2285)

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been what the Christians call glorified bodies, floating onward and radiant with the everlasting light (I speak in the spirit of their faith), which had consumed their mortal veil. They are in fact very ordinary people. Below is the ideal purgatory, I imagine, in mid air, in the shapes of spirits, some of whom dæmons are dragging down, others falling as it were by their own weight, others half-suspended in that Mahomet-coffin-kind of attitude which most moderate Christians, I believe, expect to assume. Every step towards hell approximates to the region of the artist's exclusive power. There is great imagination in many of the situations of these unfortunate spirits. But hell and death are his real sphere. The bottom of the picture is divided by a lofty rock, in which there is a cavern whose entrance is thronged by devils, some coming in with spirits, some going out for prey. The blood-red light of the fiery abyss glows through their dark forms. On one side are the devils in all hideous forms, struggling with the damned, who have received their sentence at the Redeemer's throne, and chained in all forms of agony by knotted serpents, and writhing on the crags in every variety of torture. the other are the dead, coming out of their graves— Such is the famous "Day of Judgment" horrible forms. of Michael Angelo; a kind of "Titus Andronicus" in painting, but the author surely no Shakspeare. The other paintings are one or two of Raphael or his pupils, very sweet and lovely. A "Danäe" of Titian, a picture of the softest and most voluptuous form, with languid and uplifted eyes, and warm yet passive limbs. A "Maddelena," by Guido, with dark brown hair, and dark brown eyes, and an earnest, soft, melancholy look. And some excellent pictures, in point of execution, by Annibal None others worth a second look. Of the gallery of statues I cannot speak. They require a volume. not a letter. Still less what can I do at Rome?

I have just seen the Quarterly for September (not from my own box). I suppose there is no chance now of your

organizing a review! This is a great pity. The Quarterly is undoubtedly conducted with talent, great talent, and affords a dreadful preponderance against the cause of improvement. If a band of staunch reformers, resolute yet skilful infidels, were united in so close and constant a league<sup>1</sup> as that in which interest and fanaticism have bound the members of that literary coalition!

Adieu. Address your next letter to Rome, whence you shall hear from me soon again. Mary and Clara unite with me in the very kindest remembrances.—Most faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

A doctor here has been messing me, and I believe has done me an important benefit. One of his pretty schemes has been putting caustic on my side. You may guess how much quiet I have had since it was laid on.

[P.S. on outer sheet.] It is of consequence to us to know where the boxes really are which we left in London. Will you be so kind as to make the necessary enquiries; if they are not at the Hunts' they may still be found.

[Addressed outside],
THOMAS L. PEACOCK, Esq.,
New Hummums, London,
Inghilterra.

## 315. To Thomas Love Peacock

ROME,2

March 23, 1819.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

I wrote to you the day before our departure from Naples. We came by slow journeys, with our own horses, to Rome, resting one day at Mola di Gaeta, at the inn called Villa

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "This was the idea which was subsequently intended to be carried out in the *Liberal*."—Peacock's note.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Prof. Dowden says that Shelley, Mary and Clare, left Naples on the afternoon of Feb. 28, and resting for a day at Mola, they arrived at Rome on March 5, where they obtained lodgings in the Palazzo Verospi on the Corso.

di Cicerone, from being built on the ruins of his Villa, whose immense substructions overhang the sea, and are scattered among the orange groves. Nothing can be lovelier than the scene from the terraces of the inn. one side precipitous mountains, whose bases slope into an inclined plane of olive and orange copses—the latter forming, as it were, an emerald sky of leaves, starred with innumerable globes of their ripening fruit, whose rich splendour contrasted with the deep green foliage; on the other the sea—bounded on one side by the antique town of Gaeta, and the other by what appears to be an island, the promontory of Circe. From Gaeta to Terracina the whole scenery is of the most sublime character. Terracina, precipitous conical crags of immense height shoot into the sky and overhang the sea. At Albano, we arrived again in sight of Rome. Arches after arches in unending lines stretching across the uninhabited wilderness, the blue defined line of the mountains seen between them; masses of nameless ruin standing like rocks out of the plain; and the plain itself, with its billowy and unequal surface, announced the neighbourhood of Rome. what shall I say to you of Rome? If I speak of the inanimate ruins, the rude stones piled upon stones, which are the sepulchres of the fame of those who once arrayed them with the beauty which has faded, will you believe me insensible to the vital, the almost breathing creations of genius yet subsisting in their perfection? What has become, you will ask, of the Apollo, the Gladiator, the Venus of the Capitol? What of the Apollo di Belvedere, the Laocoon? What of Raffael and Guido? These things are best spoken of when the mind has drunk in the spirit of their forms; and little indeed can I, who must devote no more than a few months to the contemplation of them, hope to know or feel of their profound beauty.

I think I told you of the Coliseum, and its impressions on me on my first visit to this city. The next most considerable relic of antiquity, considered as a ruin, is the

Thermæ of Caracalla. 1 These consist of six enormous chambers, above 200 feet in height, and each enclosing a vast space like that of a field. There are, in addition, a number of towers and labyrinthine recesses, hidden and woven over by the wild growth of weeds and ivy. Never was any desolation more sublime and lovely. The perpendicular wall of ruin is cloven into steep ravines filled up with flowering shrubs, whose thick twisted roots are knotted in the rifts of the stones. At every step the aërial pinnacles of shattered stone group into new combinations of effect, and tower above the lofty yet level walls, as the distant mountains change their aspect to one travelling rapidly along the plain. The perpendicular walls resemble nothing more than that cliff of Bisham wood, that is overgrown with wood, and yet is stony and precipitous-you know the one I mean; not the chalk-pit, but the spot that has the pretty copse of fir-trees and privet-bushes at its base, and where H[ogg]? and I scrambled up, and you, to my infinite discontent, would go home. These walls surround green and level spaces of lawn, on which some elms have grown, and which are interspersed towards their skirts by masses of fallen ruin, overtwined with the broad leaves of the creeping weeds. The blue sky canopies it, and is as the everlasting roof of these enormous halls.

But the most interesting effect remains. In one of the buttresses that supports an immense and lofty arch, "which bridges the very winds of heaven," are the crumbling remains of an antique winding staircase, whose sides are open in many places to the precipice. This you ascend,

In his preface to "Prometheus Unbound," Shelley says: "This Poem was chiefly written upon the mountainous ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, among the flowery glades, and thickets of odoriferous blossoming trees, which are extended in ever-winding labyrinths upon its immense platforms and dizzy arches suspended in the air. The bright blue sky of Rome, and the effect of the vigorous awakening of spring in that divinest climate, and the new life with which it drenches the spirits even to intoxication, were the inspiration of this drama." See p. 715.

and arrive on the summit of these piles. There grow on every side thick entangled wildernesses of myrtle, and the myrletus, and bay, and the flowering laurustinus, whose white blossoms are just developed, the white fig, and a thousand nameless plants sown by the wandering winds. These woods are intersected on every side by paths, like sheep-tracks through the copse-wood of steep mountains, which wind to every part of the immense labyrinth. From the midst rise those pinnacles and masses, themselves like mountains, which have been seen from below. In one place you wind along a narrow strip of weed-grown ruin: on one side is the immensity of earth and sky, on the other a narrow chasm, which is bounded by an arch of enormous size, fringed by the many-coloured foliage and blossoms, and supporting a lofty and irregular pyramid, overgrown like itself with the all prevailing-vegetation. Around rise other crags and other peaks, all arrayed, and the deformity of their vast desolation softened down, by the undecaying investiture of nature. Come to Rome. It is a scene by which expression is overpowered; which words cannot convey. Still further, winding up one half of the shattered pyramids, by the path through the blooming copse-wood, you come to a little mossy lawn, surrounded by the wild shrubs; it is overgrown with anemonies, wall-flowers, and violets, whose stalks pierce the starry moss, and with radiant blue flowers, whose names I know not, and which scatter through the air the divinest odour, which, as you recline under the shade of the ruin, produces sensations of voluptuous faintness, like the combinations of sweet music. The paths still wind on, threading the perplexed windings, other labyrinths, other lawns, and deep dells of wood, and lofty rocks, and terrific chasms. When I tell you that these ruins cover several acres, and that the paths above penetrate at least half their extent, your imagination will fill up all that I am unable to express of this astonishing scene.

I speak of these things not in the order in which I visited

them, but in that of the impression which they made on me, or perhaps chance directs. The ruins of the ancient Forum are so far fortunate that they have not been walled up in the modern city. They stand in an open, lonesome place, bounded on one side by the modern city, and the other by the Palatine Mount, covered with shapeless masses of ruin. The tourists tell you all about these things, and I am afraid of stumbling on their language when I enumerate what is so well known. There remain eight granite columns of the Ionic order, with their entablature, of the temple of Concord, founded by Camillus. I fear that the immense expanse demanded by these columns forbids us to hope that they are the remains of any edifice dedicated by that most perfect and virtuous of men. It is supposed to have been repaired under the Eastern Emperors; alas, what a contrast of recollections! Near them stand those Corinthian fluted columns, which supported the angle of a temple; the architrave and entablature are worked with delicate sculpture. Beyond, to the south, is another solitary column; and still more distant, three more, supporting the wreck of an entablature. Descending from the Capitol to the Forum, is the triumphal arch of Septimius Severus, less perfect than that of Constantine, though from its proportions and magnitude, a most impressive monument. That of Constantine, or rather of Titus (for the relief and sculpture, and even the colossal images of Dacian captives, were torn by a decree of the senate from an arch dedicated to the latter, to adorn that of this stupid and wicked monster, Constantine, one of whose chief merits consists in establishing a religion, the destroyer of those arts which would have rendered so base a spoliation unnecessary), is the most It is an admirable work of art. It is built of the finest marble, and the outline of the reliefs is in many parts as perfect as if just finished. Four Corinthian fluted columns support, on each side, a bold entablature, whose bases are loaded with reliefs of captives in every attitude

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of humiliation and slavery. The compartments above express, in bolder relief, the enjoyment of success; the conqueror on his throne, or in his chariot, or nodding over the crushed multitudes, who writhe under his horses' hoofs, as those below express the torture and abjectness There are three arches, whose roofs are of defeat. panelled with fretwork, and their sides adorned with similar The keystone of these arches is supported each by two winged figures of Victory, whose hair floats on the wind of their own speed, and whose arms are outstretched, bearing trophies, as if impatient to meet. They look, as it were, borne from the subject extremities of the earth, on the breath which is the exhalation of that battle and desolation, which it is their mission to commemorate. Never were monuments so completely fitted to the purpose for which they were designed, of expressing that mixture of energy and error which is called a triumph.

I walk forth in the purple and golden light of an Italian evening, and return by star or moonlight, through this scene. The elms are just budding, and the warm spring winds bring unknown odours, all sweet from the country. I see the radiant Orion through the mighty columns of the temple of Concord, and the mellow fading light softens down the modern buildings of the Capitol, the only ones that interfere with the sublime desolation of the scene. On the steps of the Capitol itself, stand two colossal statues of Castor and Pollux, each with his horse, finely executed, though far inferior to those of Monte Cavallo, the cast of one of which you know we saw together in London. This walk is close to our lodging, and this is my evening walk.

What shall I say of the modern city? Rome is yet the capital of the world. It is a city of palaces and temples, more glorious than those which any other city contains, and of ruins more glorious than they. Seen from any of the eminences that surround it, it exhibits domes beyond domes, and palaces, and colonnades interminably, even

to the horizon; interspersed with patches of desert, and mighty ruins which stand girt by their own desolation, in the midst of the fanes of living religions and the habitations of living men, in sublime loneliness. St. Peter's is, as you have heard, the loftiest building in Europe. Externally it is inferior in architectural beauty to St. Paul's, though not wholly devoid of it; internally it exhibits littleness on a large scale, and is in every respect opposed to antique taste. You know my propensity to admire; and I tried to persuade myself out of this opinion—in vain; the more I see of the interior of St. Peter's, the less impression as a whole does it produce on me. I cannot even think it lofty, though its dome is considerably higher than any hill within fifty miles of London; and when one reflects, it is an astonishing monument of the daring energy of man. Its colonnade is wonderfully fine, and there are two fountains, which rise in spire-like columns of water to an immense height in the sky, and falling on the porphyry vases from which they spring, fill the air with a radiant mist, which at noon is thronged with innumerable rain-In the midst stands an obelisk. In front is the palace-like façade of St. Peter's, certainly magnificent; and there is produced, on the whole, an architectural combination unequalled in the world. But the dome of the temple is concealed, except at a very great distance, by the façade and the inferior part of the building, and that diabolical contrivance they call an attic.

The effect of the Pantheon is totally the reverse of that of St. Peter's. Though not a fourth part of the size, it is, as it were, the visible image of the universe; in the perfection of its proportions, as when you regard the unmeasured dome of heaven, the idea of magnitude is swallowed up and lost. It is open to the sky, and its wide dome is lighted by the ever-changing illumination of the air. The clouds of noon fly over it, and at night the keen stars are seen through the azure darkness, hanging immoveably, or driving after the driving moon among the clouds. We

visited it by moonlight; it is supported by sixteen columns, fluted and Corinthian, of a certain rare and beautiful yellow marble, exquisitely polished, called here giallo antico. Above these are the niches for the statues of the twelve gods. This is the only defect of this sublime temple; there ought to have been no interval between the commencement of the dome and the cornice, supported by the columns. Thus there would have been no diversion from the magnificent simplicity of its form. This improvement is alone wanting to have completed the unity of the idea.

The fountains of Rome are, in themselves, magnificent combinations of art, such as alone it were worth coming to That in the Piazza Navona, a large square, is composed of enormous fragments of rock, piled on each other, and penetrated as by caverns. This mass supports an Egyptian obelisk of immense height. On the four corners of the rock recline, in different attitudes, colossal figures representing the four divisions of the globe. The water bursts from the crevices beneath them. They are sculptured with great spirit; one impatiently tearing a veil from his eyes; another with his hands stretched upwards. The Fontana di Trevi is the most celebrated, and is rather a waterfall than a fountain; gushing out from masses of rock, with a gigantic figure of Neptune; and below are two river gods, checking two winged horses, struggling up from among the rocks and waters. The whole is not ill conceived nor executed; but you know not how delicate the imagination becomes by dieting with antiquity day after day! The only things that sustain the comparison are Raffael, Guido, and Salvator Rosa.

The fountain on the Quirinal, or rather the group formed by the statues, obelisk, and the fountain, is, however, the most admirable of all. From the Piazza Quirinale, or rather Monte Cavallo, you see the boundless ocean of domes, spires, and columns, which is the City, Rome. On a pedestal of white marble rises an obelisk of red granite, piercing the blue sky. Before it is a vast basin of porphyry, in the midst of which rises a column of the purest water, which collects into itself all the overhanging colours of the sky, and breaks them into a thousand prismatic hues and graduated shadows—they fall together with its dashing water-drops into the outer basin. The elevated situation of this fountain produces, I imagine, this effect of colour. On each side, on an elevated pedestal, stand the statues of Castor and Pollux, each in the act of taming his horse; which are said, but I believe wholly without authority, to be the work of Phidias and Praxiteles. These figures combine the irresistible energy with the sublime and perfect loveliness supposed to have belonged to their divine The reins no longer exist, and the position of their hands and the sustained and calm command of their regard, seem to require no mechanical aid to enforce The countenances at so great a height are obedience. scarcely visible, and I have a better idea of that of which we saw a cast together in London, than of the other. But the sublime and living majesty of their limbs and mien, the nervous and fiery animation of the horses they restrain, seen in the blue sky of Italy, and overlooking the city of Rome, surrounded by the light and the music of that crystalline fountain, no cast can communicate.

These figures were found at the Baths of Constantine; but, of course, are of remote antiquity. I do not acquiesce, however, in the practice of attributing to Phidias, or Praxiteles, or Scopas, or some great master, any admirable work that may be found. We find little of what remained, and perhaps the works of these were such as greatly surpassed all that we conceive of most perfect and admirable in what little has escaped the *deluge*. If I am too jealous of the honour of the Greeks, our masters and creators, the gods whom we should worship,—pardon me.

I have said what I feel without entering into any critical discussions of the *ruins* of Rome, and the mere outside of this inexhaustible mine of thought and feeling. Hobhouse, Eustace, and Forsyth, will tell all the show-knowledge

about it,—"the common stuff of the earth." By-the-bye, a Forsyth is worth reading, as I judge from a chapter or two I have seen. I cannot get the book here.

I ought to have observed that the central arch of the triumphal Arch of Titus yet subsists, more perfect in its proportions, they say, than any of a later date. did not remark. The figures of Victory, with unfolded wings, and each spurning back a globe with outstretched feet, are, perhaps, more beautiful than those on either of the others. Their lips are parted: a delicate mode of indicating the fervour of their desire to arrive at the destined resting-place, and to express the eager respiration of their speed. Indeed, so essential to beauty were the forms expressive of the exercise of the imagination and the affections considered by Greek artists, that no ideal figure of antiquity, not destined to some representation directly exclusive of such a character, is to be found with closed Within this arch are two panelled alto relievos, one representing a train of people bearing in procession the instruments of Jewish worship, among which is the holy candlestick with seven branches; on the other, Titus standing on a quadriga, with a winged Victory. The grouping of the horses, and the beauty, correctness, and energy of their delineation, is remarkable, though they are much destroyed.

## 316. To Thomas Love Peacock

Rome,

April 6, 1819.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

I sent you yesterday a long letter, all about antique

¹ John Cam Hobhouse, Lord Broughton (1786-1869), Byron's friend and executor, who contributed the notes printed at the end of the fourth canto of "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage." John Chetwode Eustace (1762?-1815), a Roman Catholic priest whose "Classical Tour Through Italy" was published in 1813. Joseph Forsyth (1763-1815), author of "Remarks on Antiquities, Arts and Letters, during an Excursion in Italy in the years 1802 and 1803," 1813.

Rome, which you had better keep for some leisure day. I received yours, and one of Hunt's, yesterday.—So, you know the Boinvilles? I could not help considering Mrs. Boinville, when I knew her, as the most admirable specimen of a human being I had ever seen. Nothing earthly ever appeared to be more perfect than her character and manners. It is improbable that I shall ever meet again the person whom I so much esteemed, and still admire. I wish, however, that when you see her, you would tell her that I have not forgotten her, nor any of the amiable circle once assembled round her; and that I desire such remembrances to her as an exile and a Pariah may be permitted to address to an acknowledged member of the community of mankind. I hear they dined at your lodgings. But no mention of A-1 and his wifewhere were they? Cornelia, though so young when I saw her, gave indications of her mother's excellences; and, certainly less fascinating, is, I doubt not, equally amiable, and more sincere. It was hardly possible for a person of the extreme subtlety and delicacy of Mrs. Boinville's understanding and affections, to be quite sincere and constant.

I am all anxiety about your I. H. affair.<sup>2</sup> There are few

<sup>2</sup> Peacock was a candidate for a position, to which he was afterwards appointed, in the East India House.

¹ Professor Dowden says that "'A—— and his wife' (if not Mr. and Mrs. Turner) probably were Mrs. Boinville's son Alfred and his wife. He married, in 1818, Harriet, daughter of the Vegetarian Dr. Lambe," whose book on cancer is quoted in the notes to "Queen Mab." Towards the close of his life "Shelley wrote to Mrs. Boinville, then living at Sidmouth with her daughter, Cornelia Turner, and expressed a wish to come within sight of the smoke of her cottage chimney. Mrs. Boinville, who had been pained by the opinions set forth in some of Shelley's published writings, declined to receive him as a visitor at that time, and afterwards deeply regretted her decision, by which she had thrown away this last opportunity of seeing a friend to whom she had been so dear, and who had remembered so gratefully her former affection."—"Life of Shelley," Vol. I, 379.

who will feel more hearty satisfaction at your success, in this or any other enterprise, than I shall. Pray let me have the earliest intelligence.

When shall I return to England? The Pythia has ascended the tripod, but she replies not. Our present plans—and I know not what can induce us to alter them lead us back to Naples in a month or six weeks, where it is almost decided that we should remain until the commencement of 1820. You may imagine, when we receive such letters as yours and Hunt's, what this resolution costs us—but these are not our only communications from Eng-My health is materially better. My spirits, not the most brilliant in the world; but that we attribute to our solitary situation, and, though happy, how should I be We see something of Italian society indeed. The Romans please me much, especially the women, who, though totally devoid of every kind of information, or culture of the imagination, or affections, or understanding and, in this respect, a kind of gentle savage—yet contrive to be interesting. Their extreme innocence and naïveté, the freedom and gentleness of their manners; the total absence of affectation, makes an intercourse with them very like an intercourse with uncorrupted children, whom they resemble in loveliness as well as simplicity. I have seen two women in society here of the highest beauty; their brows and lips, and the moulding of the face modelled with sculptural exactness, and the dark luxuriance of their hair floating over their fine complexions; and the lips-you must hear the commonplaces which escape from them, before they cease to be dangerous. The only inferior part are the eyes, which, though good and gentle, want the mazy depth of colour behind colour, with which the intellectual women of England and Germany entangle the heart in soul-inwoven labyrinths.

This is holy-week, and Rome is quite full. The Emperor of Austria is here, and Maria Louisa is coming. On their journey through the other cities of Italy, she was greeted

with loud acclamations, and vivas of Napoleon. Idiots and slaves! Like the frogs in the fable, because they are discontented with the log, they call upon the stork, who devours them. Great festas, and magnificent funzioni here—we cannot get tickets to all. There are five thousand strangers in Rome, and only room for five hundred, at the celebration of the famous Miserere, in the Sixtine chapel, the only thing I regret we shall not be present at. After all, Rome is eternal; and were all that is extinguished, that which has been, the ruins and the sculptures, would remain, and Raffael and Guido be alone regretted.

In the Square of St. Peter's there are about three hundred fettered criminals at work, hoeing out the weeds that grow between the stones of the pavement. Their legs are heavily ironed, and some are chained two by two. They sit in long rows, hoeing out the weeds, dressed in particoloured clothes. Near them sit or saunter groups of soldiers, armed with loaded muskets. The iron discord of those innumerable chains clanks up into the sonorous air, and produces, contrasted with the musical dashing of the fountains, and the deep azure beauty of the sky, and the magnificence of the architecture around, a conflict of sensations allied to madness. It is the emblem of Italy—moral degradation contrasted with the glory of nature and the arts.

We see no English society here; it is not probable that we would if we desired it, and I am certain that we should find it unsupportable. The manners of the rich English are wholly unsupportable, and they assume pretensions which they would not venture upon in their own country. I am yet ignorant of the event of Hobhouse's election. I saw the last numbers were—Lamb, 4200; and Hobhouse, 3900—14th day. There is little hope. That mischievous Cobbett has divided and weakened the interests of the popular party, so that the factions that prey upon our country have been able to coalesce to its exclusion. The Newtons you have not seen. I am curious to know

what kind of a girl Octavia becomes; she promised well. Tell H—— his Melpomene is in the Vatican, and that her attitude and drapery surpass, if possible, the graces of her countenance.

My "Prometheus Unbound" is just finished, and in a month or two I shall send it. It is a drama, with characters and mechanism of a kind yet unattempted; and I think the execution is better than any of my former attempts. By-the-bye, have you seen Ollier? I never hear from him, and am ignorant whether some verses I sent him from Naples, entitled, I think, "Lines on the Euganean hills," have reached him in safety or not. As to the Reviews, I suppose there is nothing but abuse; and this is not hearty or sincere enough to amuse me. As to the poem now printing, I lay no stress on it one way or the other. The concluding lines are natural.

I believe, my dear Peacock, that you wish us to come back to England. How is it possible? Health, competence, tranquillity—all these Italy permits, and England takes away. I am regarded by all who know or hear of me, except, I think, on the whole, five individuals, as a rare prodigy of crime and pollution, whose look even might infect. This is a large computation, and I don't think I could mention more than three. Such is the spirit of the English abroad as well as at home.

Few compensate, indeed, for all the rest, and if I were alone I should laugh; or if I were rich enough to do all things, which I shall never be. Pity me for my absence from those social enjoyments which England might afford me, and which I know so well how to appreciate. Still I shall return some fine morning, out of pure weakness of heart.

My dear Peacock, most faithfully yours,
P. B. Shelley.

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Rosalind and Helen," published in the spring of 1819.

# 317. To John and Maria Gisbornic (Leghorn)

ROME,

April 6, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

A combination of circumstances, which Mary will explain to you, leads us back to Naples in June, or rather the end of May, where we shall remain until the ensuing winter. 1 We shall take a house at Portici or Castel a Mare, until late in the autumn.

The object of this letter is to ask you to spend this period with us. There is no society which we have regretted or desired so much as yours, and in our solitude the benefit of your concession would be greater than I can express. What is a sail to Naples? It is the season of tranquil weather and prosperous winds. If I knew the magic that lay in any given form of words, I would employ them to persuade; but I fear that all I can say is, as you know with truth, we desire that you would come—we wish to see you. You came to see Mary at Lucca, directly I had departed to Venice. It is not our custom, when we can help it, any more than it is yours, to divide our pleasures.

What shall I say to entice you? We shall have a piano, and some books, and—little else, besides ourselves. But

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In Mary Shelley's letter from Rome, April 26, 1819, to Mrs. Gisborne, she speaks of their intention of leaving for Naples on May 7, as Shelley's health was being affected by the Roman air, and the physicians had "prognosticated" beneficial results for him from a Neapolitan summer. On May 7 we read that Shelley's old acquaintance, Miss Curran, then at Rome, had begun to paint that familiar portrait of him, which is now in the National Portrait Gallery. Their departure was therefore postponed until June 7, but on that day their little boy Willy died of a fever. Mrs. Shelley's grief and melancholy at the loss of her only surviving child no doubt made them think of their friends the Gisbornes at Leghorn, for which place they departed on June 10.

what will be most inviting to you, you will give much, though you may receive but little, pleasure.

But whilst I write this with more desire than hope, yet some of that, perhaps the project may fall into your designs. It is intolerable to think of your being buried at Livorno. The success assured by Mr. Reveley's talents requires another scene. You may have decided to take this summer to consider—and why not with us at Naples, rather than at Livorno?

I could address with respect to Naples, the words of Polypheme in Theocritus, to all the friends I wish to see, and you especially:

Έξενθοις, Γαλάτεια, καὶ ἐξενθοῖσα λάθοιο, "Ωσπερ ἐγὼ νῦν ῷδε καθήμενος, οἰκάδ' ἀπενθεῖν. <sup>1</sup>

Most sincerely yours,

P. B. Shelley.

#### 318. To Leigh Hunt<sup>2</sup>

Rome, May 29, 1819.

My DEAR FRIEND,

I inscribe with your name, from a distant country, and after an absence whose months have seemed years, this the latest of my literary efforts.

Those writings which I have hitherto published, have been little else than visions which impersonate my own apprehensions of the beautiful and the just. I can also perceive in them the literary defects incidental to youth and impatience; they are dreams of what ought to be, or may be. The drama which I now present to you is a sad reality. I lay aside the presumptuous attitude of an instructor,

<sup>2</sup> Shelley's dedication to "The Cenci," which he had begun after completing the first three acts of "Prometheus Unbound."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Come, O Galatea; and having come, forget, as do I, now sitting here, to return home."—Mrs. Shelley's translation.

and am content to paint, with such colours as my own heart furnishes, that which has been.

Had I known a person more highly endowed than yourself with all that it becomes a man to possess, I had solicited for this work the ornament of his name. One more gentle, honourable, innocent and brave; one of more exalted toleration for all who do and think evil, and yet himself more free from evil; one who knows better how to receive, and how to confer a benefit, though he must ever confer far more than he can receive; one of simpler, and, in the highest sense of the word, of purer life and manners I never knew: and I had already been fortunate in friendships when your name was added to the list.

In that patient and irreconcileable enmity with domestic and political tyranny and imposture, which the tenor of your life has illustrated, and which, had I the health and talents, should illustrate mine, let us, comforting each other in our task, live and die.

All happiness attend you!

Your affectionate friend,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

## 319. To Thomas Love Peacock

Rome,

June 8, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Yesterday, after an illness of only a few days, my little William died. <sup>1</sup> There was no hope from the moment of the attack. You will be kind enough to tell all my friends, so that I need not write to them. It is a great exertion

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The entry in Clare Clairmont's diary, "Monday, June 7, at noonday," probably denotes the hour of William Shelley's death. He was interred in the English burial-ground at Rome, near the Porta San Paolo. On Thursday, June 10, Shelley, Mary and Clare left Rome for Leghorn.—Dowden's "Shelley," II, 268-9.

to me to write this, and it seems to me as if, hunted by calamity as I have been, that I should never recover any cheerfulness again.

If the things Mary desired to be sent to Naples have not been shipped, send them to Livorno.

We leave this city for Livorno to-morrow morning, where we have written to take lodgings for a month. I will then write again.

Yours ever affectionately, P. B. Shelley. 1

#### XV. VILLA VALSOVANO. "THE CENCI"

# June 20—September 27, 1819

AT Leghorn—" Nightmare Abbey"—Scythrop's Tower—Mr. Furnivall—" The Cenci"—Calderon—William Shelley's Monument—" Prometheus Unbound"—" Julian and Maddalo"—Mr. Gisborne—Leigh Hunt's Portrait—Charles Lamb—Raphael and Michael Angelo—Ollier's Novel—The Peterloo Affair—Henry Reveley—Italian Literature.

#### 320. To Thomas Love Peacock

LIVORNO,

June [20 or 21 1?], 1819.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

Our melancholy journey finishes at this town, 2 but we retrace our steps to Florence, where, as I imagine, we shall remain some months. O that I could return to England! How heavy a weight when misfortune is added to exile,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The London postmark was July 6, and Peacock suggests that the above is a likely date of the letter.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Mrs. Shelley says that they left Rome anxious to escape a spot associated too intimately with the presence and loss of their only "Some friends of ours [the Gisbornes] were residing in the neighbourhood of Leghorn, and we took a small house, Villa Valsovano [for three months], about half-way between the town and Monte Nero, where we remained during the summer. Our villa was situated in the middle of a podere; the peasants sang as they worked beneath our windows, during the heats of a very hot season, and in the evening the water-wheel creaked as the process of irrigation went on, and the fire-flies flashed from among the myrtle hedges: nature was bright, sunshiny, and cheerful, or diversified by storms of a majestic terror, such as we had never before witnessed. At the top of the house, there was a sort of terrace. There is often such in Italy, generally roofed. This one was very small, yet not only roofed but glazed; this Shelley made his study; it looked out on a wide prospect of fertile country, and commanded a view of the near sea. The storms that sometimes varied our day showed themselves most picturesquely as they were driven across the ocean;

and solitude, as if the measure were not full, heaped high O that I could return to England! I hear you say, "Desire never fails to generate capacity." Ah! but that ever-present Malthus, Necessity, has convinced Desire that even though it generated capacity, its offspring must starve. Enough of melancholy! "Nightmare Abbey," though no cure, is a palliative. I have just received the parcel which contained it, and at the same time the Examiners, by the way of Malta. I am delighted with "Nightmare Abbey." I think Scythrop a character admirably conceived and executed; and I know not how to praise sufficiently the lightness, chastity, and strength of the language of the whole. It perhaps exceeds all your works in this. The catastrophe is excellent. I suppose the moral is contained in what Falstaff says—"For God's sake, talk like a man of this world;" and yet, looking deeper into it, is not the misdirected enthusiasm of Scythrop what J. C. calls the "salt of the earth?" My friends the Gisbornes here admire and delight in it exceedingly.

I think I told you that they (especially the lady) are people of high cultivation. She is a woman of profound accomplishments and the most refined taste.

Cobbett still more and more delights me, with all my horror of the sanguinary commonplaces of his creed. His design to overthrow banknotes by forgery is very comic. One of the volumes of Birkbeck interested me exceedingly.

sometimes the dark lurid clouds dipped towards the waves, and became water-spouts, that churned up the water beneath, as they were chased onward, and scattered by the tempest. At other times the dazzling sunlight and heat made it almost intolerable to every other; but Shelley basked in both, and his health and spirits revived under their influence. In this airy cell he wrote the principal part of 'The Cenci.'" Shelley refers to it in the following letters as "Scythrop's Tower." Clare notes in her journal that they arrived at Livorno on June 17, stayed there a week, saw the Gisbornes, and removed to Villetta Valsovano.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Peacock states that Shelley took to himself the character of Scythrop in "Nightmare Abbey," but he does not say whether he intended in any respect to portray Shelley in the character.

The letters I think stupid, but suppose that they are useful.

I do not, as usual, give you an account of my journey, for I had neither the health nor the spirit to take notes. My health was greatly improving, when watching and anxiety cast me into a relapse. The Doctor (I put little faith in the best) tells me I must spend the winter in Africa or Spain. I shall of course prefer the latter, if I choose either.

Are you married, or why do I not hear from you? That were a good reason.

Mary and Clare unite with me in kindest remembrances to you, and in congratulations, if she exist, to the new married lady.

When shall I see you again?—Ever most faithfully, yours, P. B. S.

Pray do not forget Mary's things.

I have not heard from you since the middle of April.

#### 321. To Thomas Love Peacock

Livorno,

July 6, 1819.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

I have lost some letters, and, in all probability, at least one from you, as I can account in no other manner for not having heard from you since your letter dated March 26th, especially as you must know my anxiety to be informed that the mistake which it announced to me had been rectified. We have changed our design of going to Florence immediately, and are now established for three months in a little country house in a pretty verdant scene near Livorno.

I have a study here in a tower, something like Scythrop's, where I am just beginning to recover the faculties of reading and writing. My health, whenever no Libecchio blows, improves. From my tower I see the sea, with its islands, Gorgona, Capraja, Elba and Corsica, on one side,

and the Apennines on the other. Milly surprised us the other day by first discovering a comet, on which we have been speculating. She may "make a stir, like a great astronomer."

The direct purpose of this letter, however, is to ask you about the box which I requested you to send to me at Naples. If it has been sent, let me entreat you (for really it is of the most serious consequence to us) to write to me by return of post, stating the name of the ship, the bill of lading, etc., so that I may get it without difficulty. If it has not been sent, do me the favour to send it instantly, direct to Livorno. If you have not the time, you can ask Hogg. If you cannot get the things from Mrs. Hunt (a possible case), send those you were to buy, and the things from Furnival alone. You can add what books you think

Eyes of some men travel far
For the finding of a star:
Up and down the heavens they go,
Men that make a mighty rout:
I'm as great as they, I trow,
Since the day I found thee out,
Little flower! I'll make a stir,
Like a great astronomer.

- \* There are several references in Shelley's correspondence to this missing box, which appears to have contained Mrs. Shelley's desk. In a note to Ollier from Naples, Feb. 27, 1819 (misdated, 1818), Shelley says: "Pray let me hear from you (addressed to Rome) on the several subjects of my last letter, and especially to inform me of the name of the Ship and the mode of address by which my box was sent. . . ." In another letter to Ollier, undated, but apparently written about July, 1821, he speaks of the loss as a serious one.
- <sup>8</sup> Mr. George Frederick Furnivall was a surgeon at Egham who attended Mary (in the absence of Dr. Pope, of Staines,) at the birth of her second child. Shelley had great confidence in Furnivall, who would sometimes ride from Egham to Marlow, a distance of seventeen miles, to visit the poet. His son, Dr. Frederick James Furnivall, tells me that it was the habit of his father to destroy all correspondence, and that he found none of Shelley's letters among his papers. One of the last notes that Mr. Furnivall received from Shelley was from Italy respecting Mary Shelley's health. On

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A servant that Mrs. Shelley had brought from Marlow, who remained in her service until December, 1819. Shelley is quoting from Wordsworth's poem, "To the Little Celandine."

fit. The last parcel I have received from you is that of last September.

All good wishes, and many hopes that you have already that success on which there will be no congratulations more disinterested than those you will receive from me.

Ever most sincerely yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

I shall receive your letter, if written by return of post, in thirty days: a distance less formidable than Rome or Naples.

#### 322. To Thomas Love Peacock

LIVORNO,

July, 1819.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

We still remain and shall remain nearly two months longer at Livorno. Our house is a melancholy one 1 and only cheered by letters from England. I got your note, in which you speak of three letters having been sent to Naples, which I have written for. I have heard also from H——, 2 who confirms the news of your success, an intelligence most grateful to me.

The object of the present letter is to ask a favour of you. I have written a tragedy, on the subject of a story well

examining his father's consultation books Dr. Furnivall discovered Shelley's name, not in the book devoted to the richer folk, but in a small book recording visits to his poorer patients, and against the poet's account of some seven guineas, the doctor had noted the receipt of one guinea. It is quite likely that he may have refused to accept any further fee from Shelley, for whom he had a great liking.

On account of little William Shelley's death and Mary's

melancholy state of mind at her loss.

<sup>2</sup> This initial may stand for either Hunt or Hogg: they both appear to have acquainted Shelley of Peacock's appointment in the India House. In a letter to Mary Shelley, March 9, 1819, Hunt says of Peacock, "We joke him upon his new oriental grandeur, his Brahimical learning, and his inevitable tendencies to be one of the corrupt, upon which he seems to apprehend Shelleian objurgation. It is an honour to him that 'prosperity' sits on him well."

known in Italy, and, in my conception, eminently dramatic. 1 I have taken some pains to make my play fit for representation, and those who have already seen it judge favourably. It is written without any of the peculiar feelings and opinions which characterise my other compositions; I having attended simply to the impartial development of such characters as it is probable the persons represented really were, together with the greatest degree of popular effect to be produced by such a development. I send you a translation of the Italian manuscript on which my play is founded, the chief subject of which I have touched very delicately; for my principal doubt, as to whether it would succeed as an acting play, hangs entirely on the question as to whether such a thing as incest in this shape, however treated, would be admitted on the stage. I think, however, it will form no objection: considering, first, that the facts are matter of history; and, secondly, the peculiar delicacy with which I have treated it.

I am exceedingly interested in the question of whether this attempt of mine will succeed or no. I am strongly inclined to the affirmative at present, founding my hopes on this, that, as a composition, it is certainly not inferior to any of the modern plays that have been acted, with the exception of "Remorse;" 2 that the interests of its plot is incredibly greater and more real; and that there is nothing beyond what the multitude are contented to believe

<sup>2</sup> Coleridge's tragedy, "Remorse," was produced at Drury Lane Theatre on Jan. 23rd, 1813, and ran for twenty nights.

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The Cenci, / A Tragedy, / in five acts. / By Percy B. Shelley. / Italy. / Printed for C. and J. Ollier, / Vere Street, Bond Street, London. / 1819." Shelley had read the MS. on which the tragedy is founded at Leghorn in May, 1818, and he tells Peacock in his letter of August 22, 1819, that his work on it "was done in two months." His dedication to Leigh Hunt is dated Rome, May 29 (see p. 690), and the first rough draft was finished on August 8, 1819. He had 250 copies of "The Cenci" struck off, probably, as Prof. Dowden suggests, at the printing office of Masi, a Leghorn printer who had issued, among other English books, Eustace's "Classical Tour Through Italy," 1817.

that they can understand, either in imagery, opinion, or sentiment. I wish to preserve a complete incognito, and can trust to you, that whatever else you do, you will at least favour me on this point. Indeed this is essential, deeply essential to its success. After it had been acted, and successfully (could I hope such a thing), I would own it if I pleased, and use the celebrity it might acquire to my own purposes.

What I want you to do is, to procure for me its presentation at Covent Garden. The principal character, Beatrice, is precisely fitted for Miss O'Neil, and it might even seem written for her (God forbid that I should ever see her play it—it would tear my nerves to pieces,) and, in all respects, it is fitted only for Covent Garden. The chief male character, I confess, I should be very unwilling that anyone but Kean should play—that is impossible, and I must be contented with an inferior actor. I think you know some of the people of that theatre, or, at least, some one who knows them; and when you have read the play, you may say enough, perhaps, to induce them not to reject it without consideration—but of this, perhaps, I may judge from the tragedies which they have accepted, there is no danger at any rate.

Write to me as soon as you can on this subject, because it is necessary that I should present it, or, if rejected by the theatre, print it this coming season; lest somebody

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The Cenci" was offered to Covent Garden and refused. Mrs. Shelley says that Mr. Harris of Covent Garden pronounced the subject of the play "to be so objectionable, that he could not even submit the part to Miss O'Neil for perusal, but expressed his desire that the author would write a tragedy on some other subject, which he would gladly accept." In a letter to Miss Curran from Leghorn, Sep. 18, 1819, she says with reference to the improbability of the play being a success if produced, that "his sister-in-law [Eliza Westbrook] alone would hire enough people to damn it." (Dowden's "Shelley," II, 280). A performance of Shelley's tragedy was given by the Shelley Society at the Grand Theatre, Islington, on May 7, 1886; Miss Alma Murray (Mrs. Alfred Forman) playing the title rôle.

else should get hold of it, as the story, which now only exists in manuscript, begins to be generally known among the English. The translation which I send you is to be prefixed to the play, together with a print of Beatrice. I have a copy of her picture by Guido, now in the Colonna palace at Rome—the most beautiful creature you can conceive. 1

Of course, you will not show the manuscript to anyone—and write to me by return of post, at which time the play will be ready to be sent.

I expect soon to write again, and it shall be a less selfish letter. As to Ollier, I don't know what has been published, or what has arrived at his hands.—My "Prometheus," though ready, I do not send till I know more.

Ever yours, most faithfully,

P. B. S.

# 323. To Charles and James Ollier (London)

[Postmark], LIVORNO, [English postmark, August 3, 1819.]

DEAR SIR,

Have you received an MS. sent from Naples?

Yours obed.,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[This letter is addressed by Mrs. Shelley to]
Messrs. Ollier to the care of
Thomas Peacock, Esq.,
India House, London.
Inghilterra.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mary Shelley states in her journal that she and Shelley saw the portrait of Beatrice Cenci at the Colonna Palace on April 22, 1819. It is now in the Barberini Palace. The picture is wrongly described as a portrait of Beatrice Cenci by Guido, as he did not paint in Rome until nine years after her death. Shelley did not include the portrait in his book, as he found the cost of engraving it too expensive.

### 324. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

Livorno, July 25, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIEND.

Your letter was very welcome to me, and the idea of meeting you on my return to England takes a chief place in the many motives which urge me to retrace my steps.— Our misfortune is, indeed, a heavy one.—Your little favourite<sup>1</sup> had improved greatly both in mind and body before that fatal fever seized him. He had lost all shade of ill-temper, and had become affectionate and sensible to an extraordinary degree, his spirits had a very unusual vivacity—it was impossible to find a creature more gentle and intelligent.—His health and strength appeared to be perfect; and his beauty, the silken fineness of his hair, the transparence of his complexion, the animation and deep blue colour of his eyes were the astonishment of everyone. The Italian women used to bring each other to look at him when he was asleep. On my return from an excursion to Albano I found him only a little indisposed, and in less than a fortnight he died. By the skill of the physician he was once reanimated after the process of death had actually commenced, and he lived four days after that This was, as you may think, a terrible reprieve. had been slowly recovering a certain degree of health until this event, which has left me in a very weak state,—and Mary bears it, as you may naturally imagine, worse than I do.

Peacock's success gives me the highest gratification, though I am yet unacquainted with the particulars of it. I shall find them in some letters which have been misdirected to Naples. You may believe how much I should be interested in any details in your own progress in a profession "where the race, indeed, is not to the swift"—

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> William Shelley.

though "the battle be to the strong," lamenting as I do that I cannot be present to contemplate and cheer your endeavours. Though I am afraid that altered as I am by suffering and illness, I should only be fit to sleep the winter evenings. I am afraid, too, your long walks I could not support, and ought not to attempt, and that in a water-party I should be unfit for anything but ballast. I am glad you continue to like Hunt, he has a most friendly heart; as I hear nothing from him of money difficulties I hope that your conjecture in that respect is groundless. Your judgment of Coulson makes me wish to know him better.

I have of late read little Greek. I have read Homer again and some plays of Æschylus and Sophocles, and some lives of Plutarch this spring—that is all. recommend you who know Spanish to read some plays of their great dramatic genius Calderon. I have been reading "La Devocion della Cruz" and the "Purgatorio di San Patricio," 2 in both of which you will find specimens of the very highest dramatic power-approaching Shakspeare, and in his character. The "Principe Constante" they say is also very fine. We have a house very near the Gisbornes, and it is from Mrs. Gisborne that I learnt Spanish enough to read these plays. She is a very amiable and accomplished woman about forty-five and resembles Mrs. Boinville in her acquirements, her freedom from certain prejudices and the gentleness of her manners,

A slip of Shelley's pen for "La Devocion de la Cruz," and "El Purgatorio de San Patricio."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Walter Coulson (1794?-1860), a Cornish lawyer and journalist; a friend of Leigh Hunt, Charles Lamb, and T. L. Peacock, who introduced him to Shelley at Marlow. In Hunt's letter to Mary Shelley of March 9, 1819, from York Buildings, New Road, quoted above, he says: "Coulson is a good deal here. . . . Hogg and Peacock generally live here every Sunday, when the former is not on circuit; and we pass very pleasant afternoons talking of mythology and the Greeks, and our old friends. Hogg, I think, has a good heart as well as wit."

though she does not approach our lost friend in the elegance and delicate sensibility of her mind. We see her every evening; the husband is of the Erymanthian breed, and the son (of whom we see little) a very excellent person, I believe, and a good engineer.—I have a little room here like Scythrop's tower, at the top of the house, commanding a view of the sea and the Apennines, and the plains between them. The vine-dressers are singing all day mi rivedrai, ti revedrò, 1 but by no means in an operatic style. Here I write and read.

With the most earnest wish for your success and happiness, and that your lot may be, in all respects but one, most unlike mine, believe me, my dear friend,

Most affectionately yours,
P. B. Shelley.

# 325. TO AMELIA CURRAN (Rome)

LIVORNO,

August 5, 1819.

My DEAR MISS CURRAN,

I ought to have written to you some time ago, but my ill spirits and ill health has for ever furnished me with an excuse for delaying till to-morrow. I fear that you still continue too capable of justly estimating my apology.

A thousand thanks for your kind attention to my request. I have considered the drawings, and neither of them, nor indeed, perhaps any attempt at sculpture, seems to me fit for the purpose. I strongly incline to prefer an unornamented pyramid of white marble, as of the most durable

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mrs. Shelley also refers to the songs of the vine-dressers in her letter to Mrs. Leigh Hunt of August 28, 1819. "They sing, not very melodiously, but very loud, Rossini's music, 'Mi rivedrai ti revedrò,' and they are accompanied by the *cicala*, a kind of little beetle, that makes a noise with its tail as loud as Johnny can sing."

form and the simplest appearance, but, if you will permit, I will send you my decision soon. You have too much goodness not to excuse on such a subject the trouble which I give you. I will send at the same time the inscription. <sup>1</sup>

Mary's spirits still continue wretchedly depressed, more so than a stranger (tho' perhaps I ought not to call you so) could imagine. We live, seeing no one but one lady who is agreeable. We think, but as yet only think, of Rome for the winter.

I have nearly finished my "Cenci," which Mary likes. I wish very much to get a good engraving made of the picture in the Colonna Palace, and to have the plate by this Autumn. How much time and money would a first-rate Roman artist demand for such a work? Dare I ask you to add to the amount of so many favours which must be so long unrepaid that of charging yourself with such a kindness?

What we owe to you in possessing the Picture is more than I can express. May I hope that some day will arrive on which it will be possible to find other expressions for it than words!

Let us hear of your health and spirits, and be they better.

Most sincerely yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Could you be kind enough—Mary says—as to send any drawings of simple monumental forms, such as you

¹ Shelley, who thanks Miss Curran in this letter for the picture of his little boy, William, had asked her to design a monument for his grave in the English burial-ground at Rome. The actual position of his grave is now unknown. Prof. Dowden says that "Shelley and Mary were unable to superintend the erection of the tombstone, which was wrongly placed over the body of an adult. This was discovered when it was desired to move the child's body and bring it beside his father's ashes in the new cemetery."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Mrs. Gisborne.

<sup>\*</sup> The portrait of Beatrice Cenci.

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000659054 http://www.hathitrust.org/access use#pd-google 2022-06-29 18:45 Generated at University of Pennsylvania on Public Domain, Google-digitized / http:// consider beautiful as well as durable? I incline to a mere pyramid.

## 326. To Leigh Hunt (London)

LIVORNO,

August 15, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

How good of you to write to us so often, and such kind letters! But it is like lending to a beggar. What can I offer in return?

Though surrounded by suffering and disquietude, and, latterly, almost overcome by our strange misfortune, <sup>1</sup> I have not been idle. My "Prometheus" is finished, and I am also on the eve of completing another work, <sup>2</sup> totally different from anything you might conjecture that I should write; of a more popular kind; and, if anything of mine could deserve attention, of higher claims. "Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck, till thou approve the performance."

I send you a little poem <sup>8</sup> to give to Ollier for publication, but without my name. Peacock will correct the proofs. I wrote it with the idea of offering it to the Examiner, but I find that it is too long. It was composed last year at Este; two of the characters you will recognise; the third is also in some degree a painting from nature, but, with respect to time and place, ideal. You will find the little piece, I think, in some degree consistent with your

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This letter is apparently a reply to Leigh Hunt's of July, 1819 (Leigh Hunt's correspondence, Vol. I, p. 130), in which he condoles with Shelley on the death of his little boy, William Shelley.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "The Cenci."

<sup>3</sup> "Julian and Maddalo: a Conversation," which remained unpublished until 1824, when it was inserted by Mary Shelley in her husband's "Posthumous Poems." It is hardly necessary to say that the two characters, Julian and Maddalo, represented Shelley and Byron. (See p. 622.)

Vel. ii—15—(2285).

own ideas of the manner in which poetry ought to be written. I have employed a certain familiar style of language to express the actual way in which people talk with each other, whom education and a certain refinement of sentiment have placed above the use of the vulgar I use the word vulgar in its most extensive sense. The vulgarity of rank and fashion is as gross in its way as that of Poverty, and its cant terms equally expressive of bare conceptions, and therefore equally unfit for Poetry. Not that the familiar style is to be admitted in the treatment of a subject wholly ideal, or in that part of any subject which relates to common life, where the passion, exceeding a certain limit, touches the boundaries of that which is ideal. Strong passion expresses itself in metaphor, borrowed from objects alike remote or near, and casts over all the shadow of its own greatness. But what am I about? If my grandmother sucks eggs, was it I who taught her?

If you would really correct the proof, I need not trouble Peacock, who, I suppose, has enough. Can you take it as a compliment that I prefer to trouble you?

I don't particularly wish this poem to be known as mine: but, at all events, I would not put my name to it. I leave you to judge whether it is best to throw it into the fire, or to publish it. So much for self—self, that burr that will stick to one. I can't get it off, yet. Your kind expressions about my Eclogue gave me great pleasure; indeed, my great stimulus in writing, is to have the approbation of those who feel kindly towards me. The rest is mere duty. I am also delighted to hear that you think of us and form fancies about us. We cannot yet come home.

Mary's spirits continue dreadfully depressed, and I cannot expose her to Godwin in this state. I wrote to this hard-hearted person (the first letter I had written for a year), on account of the terrible state of her mind, and entreated

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Rosalind and Helen: a Modern Eclogue," 1818, which Leigh Hunt had praised warmly in the *Examiner*.

him to try to soothe her in his next letter. The very next letter, received yesterday, and addressed to her, called her husband (me) "a disgraceful and flagrant person" tried to persuade her that I was under great engagements to give him more money (after having given him £4,700), and urged her if she ever wished a connection to continue between him and her to force me to get money for him. He cannot persuade her that I am what I am not, nor place a shade of enmity between her and me—but he heaps on her misery, stiff misery. I have not yet shewn her the letter—but I must. I doubt whether I ought not to expose this solemn lie; for such and not a man is Godwin. But I shall as is our custom (I mean yours and mine), err on the side of patience and endurance. I suspect my character, if measured with his, would sustain no diminution among those who know us both.—I have bought bitter knowledge with £4,700. I wish it were all yours now!

The title of your Tragedy<sup>1</sup>, and the subject of it? and what dunces to accept such things and refuse yours! No parcel, no pocket books, no pictures are yet arrived. Just cross-examine Ollier about it—I know nothing from Ollier—is he yet friendly with you?<sup>2</sup> You know the mind of most of the inhabitants of this earth is like the moon, or rather the wind, and if you know it is thus to-day it is no sign that it will be thus to-morrow. If reasons which you think good make you wish me to employ another bookseller, or not employ him—say so and do so. Otherwise I have no wish to change even a lazy bookseller.

<sup>1</sup> Leigh Hunt's tragedy was rejected both by Kean at Drury Lane and the manager of Covent Garden Theatre.

In an unpublished letter to Ollier, written in 1820, Shelley asked him if he has had any difference with Leigh Hunt, and if so whether the advance that he proposed (before he left England) that Ollier should make to Hunt, was the cause of it. Hunt speaks in a letter to Mrs. Shelley (12 Sept., 1819) of an advance of £200 from Ollier, which was liquidated by the sale of the copyright of the "Literary Pocket Book."

No letter from Bessie or Marianne.

No news either of things Mary wants. Now that's not kind, Marianne. However, I send you my love and all of you

[The signature has been cut off.]

You see by what I say about Godwin that I don't [shew?] this letter to Mary.

#### 327. To Thomas Love Peacock

LIVORNO.

August (probably 22), 1819.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

I ought first to say that I have not yet received one of your letters from Naples; in Italy such things are difficult, but your present letter tells me all that I could desire to hear of your situation.

My employments are these: I awaken usually at seven; read half-an-hour; then get up; breakfast; after breakfast ascend my tower, and read or write until two. Then we dine. After dinner I read Dante with Mary, gossip a little, eat grapes and figs, sometimes walk, though seldom, and at half-past five pay a visit to Mrs. Gisborne, who reads Spanish with me until near seven. We then come for Mary, and stroll about till supper time. Mrs. Gisborne is a sufficiently amiable and very accomplished woman; she is  $\delta\eta\mu\nu\kappa\rho\alpha\tau\iota\kappa\eta$  and  $\alpha\theta\epsilon\eta$ —how far she may be  $\phi\iota\lambda\alpha\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\eta^{1}$ I don't know, for she is the antipodes of enthusiasm. Her husband, a man with little thin lips, receding forehead, and a prodigious nose, is an excessive bore. is something quite Slawkenbergian 2—it weighs on the imagination to look at it,—it is that sort of nose which transforms all the g's its wearer utters into k's.

<sup>2</sup> See "Tristram Shandy," Book IV.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> An echo of Shelley's inscription in the travellers' album at Montanvert. See p. 514.

nose once seen never to be forgotten, and which requires the utmost stretch of Christian charity to forgive. I, you know, have a little turn-up nose; Hogg has a large hook one; but add them both together, square them, cube them, you would have but a faint idea of the nose to which I refer.

I most devoutly wish that I were living near London.—I don't think I shall settle so far off as Richmond; and to inhabit any intermediate spot on the Thames would be to expose myself to the river damps; not to mention that it is not much to my taste.—My inclinations point to Hampstead; but I don't know whether I should not make up my mind to something more completely suburban. What are mountains trees, heaths, or even the glorious and ever-beautiful sky, with such sunsets as I have seen at Hampstead, to friends? Social enjoyment, in some form or other, is the alpha and the omega of existence. All that I see in Italy—and from my tower window I now see the magnificent peaks of the Apennine half enclosing the plain—is nothing; it dwindles to smoke in the mind, when I think of some familiar forms of scenery, little perhaps in themselves, over which old remembrances have How we prize what we thrown a delightful colour. despised when present! So the ghosts of our dead associations rise and haunt us, in revenge for our having let them starve, and abandoned them to perish.

You don't tell me if you see the Boinvilles, nor are they included in the list of the *conviti* at the monthly symposium. I will attend it in imagination.

One thing, I own, I am curious about; and in the chance of the letters not coming from Naples, pray tell me. What is it you do at the India House? Hunt writes, and says you have got a situation in the India House. Hogg that you have an honourable employment. Godwin writes to Mary that you have got so much or so much: but nothing of what you do. The Devil take these general terms. Not content with having driven all poetry out of the world, at length they make war upon their own allies—nay,

none of the other books yet.—What a lovely thing is his "Rosamund Gray," how much knowledge of the sweetest and deepest parts of our nature is in it! When I think of such a mind as Lamb's—when I see how unnoticed remain things of such exquisite and complete perfection, what should I hope for myself, if I had not higher objects in view than fame?—

I have seen too little of Italy, and of Pictures. Perhaps Peacock has shown you some of my letters to him. at Rome I was very ill, seldom able to go out without a carriage: and though I kept horses for two months there, yet there is so much to see. Perhaps I attended more to Sculpture than Painting, its form being more easily intelligible than those of the latter. Yet, I saw the famous works of Raphael, whom I agree with the whole world in thinking the finest painter, why, I can tell you another time. With respect to Michael Angelo I dissent, and think with astonishment and indignation of the common notion that he equals, and in some respects, exceeds Raphael. He seems to me to have no sense of moral dignity and loveliness; and the energy for which he has been so much praised, appears to me to be a certain rude, external, mechanical quality, in comparison with anything possessed by Raphael—or even much inferior artists. His famous painting in the Sixtine Chapel seems to me deficient in beauty and majesty, both in the conception and the execution. It might have contained all the forms of terror and delight—and it is a dull and wicked emblem of a dull and wicked thing. Jesus Christ is like an angry pot-boy, and God like an old alehouse-keeper looking out of window. He has been called the Dante of painting; but if we find some of the gross and strong outlines which are employed in the few most distasteful passages of the "Inferno," where shall we find your Francesca<sup>1</sup>, where the Spirit coming over the sea in a boat, like Mars rising from the

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Your Francesca": a graceful compliment to Leigh Hunt's poem, "The Story of Rimini," 1816.

vapours of the horizon, where Matilda gathering flowers, and all the exquisite tenderness, and sensibility, and ideal beauty, in which *Dante* excelled all poets except *Shakspeare?* 

As to Michael Angelo's Moses—but you have a cast of that in England.—I write these things, heaven knows why.

I have written something, and finished it, different from anything else, and a new attempt for me; and I mean to dedicate it to you. I should not have done so without your approbation, but I asked your picture last night, and it smiled assent. If I did not think it in some degree worthy of you, I would not make you a public offering of it. I expect to have to write to you soon about it. If Ollier is not turned Jew, Christian, or become infected with the Murrain, he will publish it. Don't let him be frightened, for it is nothing which, by any courtesy of language, can be termed either moral or immoral.

Mary has written to Marianne for a parcel, in which I beg you make Ollier enclose what you know must interest me—your "Calendar," (a sweet extract from which I saw in the *Examiner*,) and the other poems belonging to you; and, for some friends of mine, my "Eclogue." This parcel, which must be sent instantly, will reach me by October, but don't trust letters to it, except just a line or so. When you write, write by the post.

Your ever affectionate,

P. B. S.

My love to Marianne and Bessy, and Thornton 1 too, and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "The Cenci," see p. 690.

The "Calendar" was evidently the first volume of "The Literary Pocket Book," edited by Leigh Hunt, and published by Ollier from 1819 to 1822. The poems by Leigh Hunt would be "Hero and Leander," and "Bacchus and Ariadne," also published by Ollier in 1819.

Shelley's "Rosalind and Helen: a Modern Eclogue," Ollier, 1818. Leigh Hunt writes to Shelley, July, 1819, that he rejoiced to find that Lamb was full of this poem.

Thornton Leigh Hunt (1810-1873), Leigh Hunt's eldest son, author and journal st, whose article, "Shelley, by One who Knew Him," appeared in the Atlantic Monthly for Feb., 1863.

Percy, etc., and if you could imagine any way in which I could be useful to them here, tell me. I will enquire about the Italian Chalk. You have no idea of the pleasure this portrait gives us.

[Addressed outside],
Leigh Hunt, Esq.,
Examiner Office,
19 Catherine Street,
London.
Angleterre.

### 329. To Charles and James Ollier (London)

LEGHORN.

September 6, 1819.

DEAR SIR,

I received your packet with Hunt's picture about a fortnight ago; and your letter with Nos. 1, 2, and 3 yesterday, but not No. 4, which is probably lost or mislaid, through the extreme irregularity of the Italian post.

The ill account you give of the success of my poetical attempts, sufficiently accounts for your silence; but I believe that the truth is, I write less for the public than for myself. Considering that perhaps the parcel will be another year on its voyage, I rather wish, if this letter arrives in time, that you would send the *Quarterly's* article<sup>1</sup> by the post, and the rest of the *Review* in the parcel. Of course, it gives me a certain degree of pleasure to know that

Ollier had told Shelley that the Quarterly intended reviewing him, and the review (of the "Revolt of Islam") duly appeared in the number for April, 1819. Medwin in his "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, 358, states that his friend, Lord Dillon, saw a young man in Delesert's reading-room at Florence, one day early in October, bent very earnestly over the Review; it was Shelley. When he came to the final page which contains the parallel between himself and the Egyptian king, he "burst into convulsive laughter, closed the book with an hysteric laugh, and hastily left the room, his Ha! Ha's! ringing down the stairs."—See Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 300.

anyone likes my writings; but it is objection and enmity alone that rouses my curiosity. My "Prometheus," which has been long finished, is now being transcribed, and will soon be forwarded to you for publication. It is, in my judgment, of a higher character than anything I have yet attempted, and is perhaps less an imitation of anything that has gone before it. I shall also send you another work, calculated to produce a very popular effect, and totally in a different style from anything I have yet composed. This will be sent already printed. 1 The "Prometheus" you will be so good as to print as usual.

Mrs. Shelley desires me to say, in answer to your kindly suggestions, that she does not mean to permit Lackingtons to make such terms<sup>2</sup> with her as before, but that if he [? they agree] agrees to her terms she does not feel herself justified in leaving them, as if she had published with you she would have used the same delicacy. I need not say that in case the Lackingtons are unreasonable, she would be influenced by my recommendation in giving you the refusal of her works.

In the "Rosalind and Helen," I see there are some few errors, which are so much the worse because they are errors in the sense. If there should be any danger of a second edition, I will correct them.

I have read your "Altham," and Keats's poem, 4 and Lamb's works. For the second in this list, much praise

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The work alluded to here, as being printed in Italy, was "The Cenci." In 1821 a second edition was printed in London and published by Ollier. With the exception of the unauthorised reprints of "Queen Mab," "The Cenci" was the only book of Shelley's that attained a second edition during his life-time.

<sup>\*</sup> For the publication of her novel, "Castruccio, Prince of Lucca," published in 1823 under the title "Valperga."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Charles Ollier's stories, "Altham and his Wife; a domestic

tale," and "Inesilla."

4 "Endymion: / a Poetic Romance. / By John Keats. / 'The Stretched metre of an antique song ' / London: / Printed for Taylor and Hessey, / 93 Fleet Street. / 1818." Shelley acknowledges the receipt of "Altham" and Keats's poem in an undated letter to Ollier apparently written about August 20, 1819.

is due to me for having read it, the author's intention appearing to be that no person should possibly get to the end of it. Yet it is full of some of the highest and the finest gleams of poetry; indeed, everything seems to be viewed by the mind of a poet which is described in it. I think if he had printed about fifty pages of fragments from it, I should have been led to admire Keats as a poet more than I ought, of which there is now no danger. In "Altham" you have surprised and delighted me. It is a natural story, most unaffectedly told, and, what is more, told in a strain of very pure and powerful English, which is a very rare merit. You seem to have studied our language to some purpose; but I suppose I ought to have waited for "Inesilla."

The same day that your letter came, came the news of the Manchester work, and the torrent of my indignation has not yet done boiling in my veins. I wait anxiously to hear how the country will express its sense of this bloody, murderous opposition of its destroyers. "Something must be done. What, yet I know not."

In your parcel (which I pray you to send in some safe manner, forwarding to me the bill of lading, etc., in a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> On August 16, 1819, a reform meeting was held in St. Peter's Field, Manchester, presided over by Orator Hunt (no relation of Leigh Hunt), and attended by thousands of people. The meeting was pronounced to be illegal, and preparations were made to deal with it by providing a large body of constables, yeomanry, and hussars. No attempt, however, was made to seize Hunt until he was surrounded by a densely-packed crowd. And then, in endeavouring to disperse the meeting, some six people were killed, twenty or thirty were wounded by the sabres of the cavalry, and fifty or more received injuries in the charge of the hussars. Mrs. Shelley says that the news of the Manchester Massacre "roused in him violent emotions of indignation and compassion. The great truth that the many, if accordant and resolute, could control the few, as was shown some years after, made him long to teach his injured countrymen how to resist. Inspired by these feelings he wrote "The Masque of Anarchy." To a facsimile of the manuscript of this poem (now in Mr. T. J. Wise's collection), issued by the Shelley Society in 1887, Mr. H. Buxton Forman contributed an introduction in which the "Peterloo affair," as it was called, is fully described.

regular mechanical way, so that my parcel may come in six weeks, not twelve months) send me Jones's Greek Grammar and some sealing-wax.

Whenever I publish, send copies of my books to the following people from me:—Mr. Hunt, Mr. Peacock, Mr. Horace Smith, Mr. Godwin, Mr. Keats, Lord Byron (at Murray's), Mr. Hogg, Mr. Thomas Moore.

Your obliged and faithful, PERCY B. SHELLEY.

P.S.—The parcel must be taken to the wharf, the vessel that sails soonest for Leghorn be particularly enquired for, the parcel delivered to the Captain, a bill of lading taken, and despatched to us by next post.

[Addressed outside],
Messrs. Ollier,
Booksellers,
Vere Street, Bond Street,
London, Inghilterra.
Angleterre.
[London postmark],
Sep. 21, 1819.

## 330. To Thomas Love Peacock (London)

LIVORNO,

September 9, 1819.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

I send you the tragedy. 1 addressed to Stamford Street, fearing lest it might be inconvenient to receive such bulky packets at the India House. You will see that the subject has not been treated as you suggested, and why it was not susceptible of such treatment. In fact, it was then already printing when I received your letter, and it has been treated in such a manner that I do not see how the subject forms an objection. You know "Œdipus" is performed on the fastidious French stage, a play much

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The Cenci."

more broad than this. 1 I confess I have some hopes, and some friends here persuade me that they are not unfounded.

Many thanks for your attention in sending the papers which contain the terrible and important news of Manchester. These are, as it were, the distant thunders of the terrible storm which is approaching. The tyrants here, as in the French Revolution, have first shed blood. May their execrable lessons not be learnt with equal docility! I still think there will be no coming to close quarters until financial affairs decidedly bring the oppressors and the oppressed together. Pray let me have the earliest political news which you consider of importance at this crisis.

Yours ever most faithfully,

P. B. S.

I send this to the India House the tragedy to Stamford Street.

#### 331. To Thomas Love Peacock

LEGHORN,

September 21, 1819.

My DEAR PEACOCK,

You will have received a short letter sent with the tragedy, and the tragedy itself by this time. I am, you may believe, anxious to hear what you think of it, and how

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The 'Œdipus' of Dryden and Lee was often performed in the last [the eighteenth] century; but never in my time. There is no subject of this class treated with such infinite skill and delicacy as in Alfieri's beautiful tragedy, 'Myrrha.' It was the character in which Madame Ristori achieved her great success in Paris; but she was prohibited from performing it in London. If the Covent Garden managers had accepted 'The Cenci' I doubt if the licenser would have permitted the performance." (Peacock's note.) It will be remembered that Shelley refers to a translation of "Myrrha," in which Mary was engaged, in his letter to her of Sept. 22, 1818.

the manager talks about it. I have printed in Italy 250 copies. because it costs, with all duties and freightage, about half what it would cost in London, and these copies will be sent by sea. My other reason was a belief that the seeing it in print would enable the people at the theatre to judge more easily. Since I last wrote to you, Mr. Gisborne is gone to England for the purpose of obtaining a situation for Henry Reveley. I have given him a letter to you, and you would oblige me by showing what civilities you can, and by forwarding his views, either by advice or recommendation, as you may find opportunity, not for his sake, who is a great bore, but for the sake of Mrs. Gisborne and Henry Reveley, people for whom we have a great esteem. Henry is a most amiable person, and has great talents as a mechanic and engineer. I have given him also a letter to Hunt, so that you will meet him there. This Mr. Gisborne is a man who knows I cannot tell how many languages, and has read almost all the books you can think of; but all that they contain seems to be to his mind what water is to a sieve. His liberal opinions are all the reflections of Mrs. Gisborne's, a very amiable, accomplished, and completely unprejudiced woman.

Charles Clairmont is now with us on his way to Vienna. He has spent a year or more in Spain, where he has learnt Spanish, and I make him read Spanish all day long. It is a most powerful and expressive language, and I have already learnt sufficient to read with great ease their poet Calderon. I have read about 12 of his plays. Some of them certainly deserve to be ranked among the grandest and most perfect productions of the human mind. He exceeds all modern dramatists, with the exception of Shakespeare, whom he resembles, however, in the depth of thought and subtlety of imagination of his writings, and in the rare power of interweaving delicate and powerful comic traits with the most tragical situations, without diminishing their interest. I rate him far above Beaumont and Fletcher.

I have received all the papers you sent me, and the Examiners regularly, perfumed with muriatic acid. What an infernal business this of Manchester! What is to be done? Something assuredly. H. Hunt has behaved, I think, with great spirit and coolness in the whole affair.

I have sent you my "Prometheus," which I do not wish to be sent to Ollier for publication until I write to that effect. Mr. Gisborne will bring it, as also some volumes of Spenser, and the two last of Herodotus and "Paradise Lost," which may be put with the others.

If my play should be accepted, don't you think it would excite some interest, and take off the unexpected horror of the story, by showing that the events are real, if it could be made to appear in some paper in some form?

You will hear from me again shortly, as I send you by sea "The Cencis" printed, which you will be good enough to keep. Adieu.

Yours most faithfully, P. B. Shelley.

### 332. To Leigh Hunt

Livorno, Monday, Sept[ember] 27, 1819.

My DEAR FRIEND.

We are now on the point of leaving this place for Florence, where we have taken pleasant apartments for six months, which brings us to the 1st of April, the season at which new flowers and new thoughts spring forth upon the earth and in the mind. What is then our destination is yet undecided. I have not seen Florence, except as one sees the outside of the streets; but its physiognomy indicates it to be a city which, though the ghost of a republic, yet possesses most amiable qualities. I wish you could meet us there in the spring, and we would try to muster up a "lièta brigata," which, leaving behind them the pestilence of remembered misfortunes, might act over

i

again the pleasures of the Interlocutors in Boccaccio. I have been lately reading this most divine writer. He is, in a high sense of the word, a poet, and his language has the rhythm and harmony of verse. I think him not equal certainly to Dante or Petrarch, but far superior to Tasso and Ariosto, the children of a later and of a colder day. I consider the three first as the productions of the vigour of the infancy of a new nation—as rivulets from the same spring as that which fed the greatness of the republics of Florence and Pisa, and which checked the influence of the German emperors; and from which, through obscurer channels, Raffael and Michael Angelo drew the light and the harmony of their inspiration. When the second-rate poets of Italy wrote, the corrupting blight of tyranny was already hanging on every bud of genius. and simplicity, and unity of idea, were no more. In vain do we seek in the finest passages of Ariosto and Tasso, any expression which at all approaches in this respect to those of Petrarch and Dante. How much do I admire Boccaccio! What descriptions of nature are those in his little introductions to every new day! It is the morning of life stripped of that mist of familiarity which makes it obscure to us. Boccaccio seems to me to have possessed a deep sense of the fair ideal of human life, considered in its social relations. His more serious theories of love agree especially with mine. He often expresses things lightly too, which have serious meanings of a very beautiful kind. He is a moral casuist, the opposite of the Christian, stoical, ready-made, and worldly system of morals. Do you remember one little remark, or rather maxim of his, the application of which might do some good to the common narrow-minded conceptions of love,— "Bocca bacciata non perde ventura; anzi rinnuova, come fa la luna?" If you show this to Marianne give my love to her and tell her that I don't mean xxxxx.....

We expect Mary to be confined towards the end of October, and one of our motives in going to Florence is to

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have the attendance of Mr. Bell, a famous Scotch surgeon, who will be there. . . . I should feel some disquietude in entrusting her to the best of the Italian practitioners. The birth of a child will probably relieve her from some part of her present melancholy depression.

It would give me much pleasure to know Mr. Lloyd. Do you know, when I was in Cumberland, I got Southey to borrow a copy of Berkeley from him, and I remember observing some pencil notes in it, probably written by Lloyd, which I thought particularly acute. One, especially, struck me as being the assertion of a doctrine, of which even then I had long been persuaded, and on which I had founded much of my persuasions, regarding the imagined cause of the Universe—"Mind cannot create. it can only perceive." Ask him if he remembers having written it. 1 Of Lamb you know my opinion, and you can bear witness to the regret which I felt, when I learned that the calumny of an enemy had deprived me of his society whilst in England.—Ollier tells me that the Quarterly are going to review me; I suppose it will be a pretty morsel, and as I am acquiring a taste for humour and drollery, I confess I am curious to see it. I have sent my "Prometheus Unbound" to Peacock—if you ask him for it he will show it you—I think it will please you.

Whilst I went to Florence, Mary wrote to you, but I did not see her letter.—I omitted in the transcription of my poem<sup>2</sup> which you will have received, the following verse which comes after the line. Well, good bye. Next Monday I shall write to you from Florence. Love to all.

Most affectionately your friend, P. B. S.

You will probably soon see Mr. Gisborne. I think I told you about him before. [By Mary Shelley]. Direct your letters ferma in Posta Firenza.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See p. 345. <sup>2</sup> Mr. Buxton Forman, who printed some unpublished extracts from this letter in *The Athenæum*, April 10, 1909, and to whom I am indebted for their use, assumes that the poem here referred to is "The Masque of Anarchy."

#### XVI. FLORENCE

October 13, 1819—January 25, 1820

Shelley's Steamboat Project—The Quarterly Review—" Prometheus Unbound"—Shelley and Reveley—Leigh Hunt's Defence of Shelley—"Peter Bell the Third"—Shelley's Letter on Richard Carlile—The National Debt—Birth of Percy Florence Shelley—Greek Literature—Spanish Studies—"The Masque of Anarchy"—The Blackwood Article—English Politics.

#### 333. To Maria Gisborne

FLORENCE,<sup>1</sup>
October 13 or 14, 1819.

#### MY DEAR FRIEND,

The state of the state of the state of the state of

The regret we feel at our absence from you persuades me that it is a state which cannot last, and which, so long as it must last, will be interrupted by some intervals, one of which is destined to be your all coming to visit us here! Poor Oscar! I feel a kind of remorse to think of the unequal love with which two animated beings regard each other, when I experience no such sensations for him, as those which he manifested for us. His importunate regret is, however, a type of ours, as regards you. Our memory

¹ Prof. Dowden says that Shelley went to Florence with Charles Clairmont, about September 20, to look for lodgings. He returned on the 29th and on the following day left the Villa Valsovano with Mary and Clare, and arrived at Florence on October 2, where they put up at the boarding house of Madame Merveilleux du Plantis, in the Via Val Fonda. While at Florence Mrs. Shelley tells us that "Shelley passed several days in the Gallery, and made various notes on its ancient works of art." These notes, with others made at Rome, were first published in their complete form by Mr. H. Buxton Forman as a separate volume in 1879; he afterwards included them in his edition of Shelley's Prose Works, 1880, Vol. III, p. 43 et seqq. Eight of them had been printed previously with his usual inaccuracy by Medwin in his "Shelley Papers," 1833, and these Mrs. Shelley reprinted in Shelley's "Essays and Letters," 1840.

—if you will accept so humble a metaphor—is for ever scratching at the door of your absence.

About Henry and the steam-engine. I am in torture until this money comes from London, though I am sure that it will and must come; unless, indeed, my banker has broke, and then it will be my loss, not Henry's—a little delay will mend the matter. I would then write instantly

¹ Mrs. Shelley says that "Shelley set on foot the building of a steamboat, to ply between Marseilles, Genoa, and Leghorn. Such an enterprise promised fortune to his friend who undertook to build it, and the anticipation filled him with delight. Unfortunately an unforeseen complication of circumstances caused the design to be abandoned, when already far advanced towards completion."—Mary Shelley printed the following from Mrs. Gisborne in explanation of a portion of Shelley's letter—

<sup>&</sup>quot;MY DEAREST MRS. SHELLEY,

<sup>&</sup>quot;I began to feel a little uneasy at not hearing from you by Wednesday's post; you may judge, therefore, with how much pleasure I received your friendly lines, informing me of your safe arrival, and good state of health, and that of Mr. Shelley. A little agitation of the nerves is a trifling evil, and was to be expected after such a tremendous journey for you at such a time; yet you could not refrain from two little innocent quizzes, notwithstanding your hand trembling. I confess I dreaded the consequences when I saw the carriage drive off on the rough road. Did you observe that foolish dog Oscar, running by your side, waving his long slender tail? Giuseppe was obliged to catch him up in his arms to stop his course; he continued for several days at dinner-time to howl piteously, and to scratch with all his might at the door of your abandoned house. What a forlorn house! I cannot bear to look at My last letter from Mr. Gisborne is dated the 4th; he has been seriously indisposed ever since his first attack; he suffers now a return of his cough, which he can only mitigate by taking quantities of opium. I do not expect to see him till the end of the week. You say that he was not the person to undertake a land journey to England by abominable French diligences. (What says C. to the words abominable and French?) I think he might have suffered less in a foot journey, pursued leisurely e a suo comodo. All's well that ends well! Mr. G. gave a shocking account of Marseilles; he seems to think Tuscany a delightful country compared to what he has seen of France. I remarked, in one of your letters, the account you give of your travelling with a French voiturier, so unlike the obligingness we have always experienced from our Italian vetturini; we have found them ever ready to sacrifice themselves and their horses, sooner than do an uncivil thing, and distressed beyond measure at our determination of going sometimes for miles on foot, though, at the same time, their beasts might scarcely have been

to London an effectual letter, and by return of post all would be set right—it would then be a thing easily set straight—but if it were not, you know me too well not to know that there is no personal suffering, or degradation, or toil, or anything that can be named, with which I do not feel myself bound to support this enterprise of Henry. But all this rhodomontade only shows how correct Mr. Bielby's advice was, about the discipline necessary for my imagination. No doubt that all will go on with mercantile and commonplace exactness, and that you will be spared the suffering, and I the virtue, incident to some untoward event.

I am anxious to hear of Mr. Gisborne's return, and I anticipate the surprise and pleasure with which he will learn that a resolution has been taken which leaves you nothing to regret in that event. It is with unspeakable satisfaction that I reflect that my entreaties and persuasions overcame your scruples on this point, and that

able to drag the vehicle without us. This is in favour of the Italians; God knows there is enough to be said against them.

"Now, I will tell you the news of the steamboat. The contract was drawn and signed the day after your departure; the vessel to be complete, and launched, fit in every respect for the sea, excepting the finishing of the cabin, for 260 sequins. We have every reason to believe that the work will be well executed, and that it is an excellent bargain. Henry and Frankfort go on not only with vigour, but with fury; the lower part of the house is filled with models prepared for casting, forging, etc. We have procured the wood for the frame from the ship-builder on credit, so that Frankfort can go on with his work; but I am sorry to say that from this time the general progress of the work will be retarded for want of cash. The boilers might now be going on contemporaneously with the casting, but I know that at present there is no remedy for this evil. Every person concerned is making exertions, and is in a state of anxiety to see the quick result of this undertaking. advanced about 140 crowns, but prudence prohibits me from going any farther.

"Henry will write to Mr. Shelley when the works are in a greater state of forwardness: in the meantime, he sends his best love to his good friends, patron and patroness, and begs his kind

remembrance to Miss Clairmont.

"I remain, with sincere affection for you all,
"Eyer yours,

" M. G."

whatever advantage shall accrue from it will belong to you, whilst any reproach due to the imprudence of such an enterprise must rest on me. I shall thus share the pleasure of success, and bear the blame and loss (if such a thing were possible), of a reverse; and what more can a man, who is a friend to another, desire for himself? Let us believe in a kind of optimism, in which we are our own gods. It is best that Mr. Gisborne should have returned; it is best that I should have over-persuaded you and Henry; it is best that you should all live together, without any more solitary attempts; it is best that this one attempt should have been made, otherwise, perhaps, one thing which is best might not have occurred; and it is best that we should think all this for the best; even though it is not; because Hope, as Coleridge says, is a solemn duty, which we owe alike to ourselves and to the world—a worship to the spirit of good within, which requires, before it sends that inspiration forth, which impresses its likeness upon all that it creates, devoted and disinterested homage.

A different scene is this from that in which you made the chief character of our changing drama. We see no one, as usual. Madame M——1 is quiet, and we only meet her now and then, by chance. Her daughter, not so fair, but I fear as cold, as the snowy Florimel in Spenser, is in and out of love with Charles [Clairmont] as the winds happen to blow; and Charles, who, at the moment I happen to write, is in a high state of transitory contentment, is setting off to Vienna in a day or two.

My £100, from what mistake remains to be explained, has not yet arrived, and the banker here is going to advance me £50, on my bill at three months—all additional facilitation, should any such be needed, for the steamboat. I have yet seen little of Florence. The gallery I have a design of studying piecemeal; one of my chief objects

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Is this the Madame Merveilleux mentioned in the above footnote?

in Italy being the observing in statuary and painting the degree in which, and the rules according to which, that ideal beauty, of which we have so intense yet so obscure an apprehension, is realised in external forms.

Adieu.—I am anxious for Henry's first letter. Give to him and take to yourself those sentiments, whatever they may be, with which you know that I cannot cease to regard you.

Most faithfully and affectionately yours, P. B. S.

I had forgotten to say that I should be very much obliged to you, if you would contrive to send "The Cenci," which are at the printer's, to England, by the next ship. I forgot it in the hurry of departure.—I have just heard from P[eacock], saying, that he don't think that my tragedy will do, and that he don't much like it. But I ought to say, to blunt the edge of his criticism, that he is a nursling of the exact and superficial school in poetry.

If Mr. G. is returned, send the "Prometheus" with them.

## 334. To Charles and James Ollier (London)

FLORENCE, Oct. 15, 1819.

DEAR SIR,

The droll remarks of the *Quarterly*, and Hunt's kind defence, arrived as safe as such poison, and safer than such an antidote, usually do.

I am on the point of sending to you 250 copies of a work which I have printed in Italy; which you will have to pay four or five pounds duty upon, on my account. Hunt will tell you the kind of thing it is, and in the course of the winter I shall send directions for its publication, until the arrival of which directions, I request that you would have the kindness not to open the box, or, if by necessity it is

opened, to abstain from observing yourself, or permitting others to observe, what it contains. I trust this confidently to you, it being of consequence. Meanwhile, assure yourself that this work has no reference, direct or indirect, to politics, or religion, or personal satire, and that this precaution is merely literary.

The "Prometheus," a poem in my best style, whatever that may amount to, will arrive with it, but in MS., which you can print and publish in the season. It is the most perfect of my productions.

Southey wrote the article in question, I am well aware. <sup>2</sup> Observe the impudence of the man in speaking of himself. The only remark worth notice in this piece is the assertion that I imitate Wordsworth. It may as well be said that Lord Byron imitates Wordsworth, or that Wordsworth imitates Lord Byron, both being great poets, and deriving from the new springs of thought and feeling, which the great events of our age have exposed to view, a similar tone of sentiment, imagery, and expression. A certain

<sup>1</sup> The work referred to here was "The Cenci." Lady Shelley says that the italics are Shelley's own.

<sup>2</sup> The Quarterly Review for April, 1819, in reviewing "The Revolt of Islam," made an attack on Shelley's character and private life. The following is the passage in the review to which Shelley alludes: "In the enthusiasm of youth, indeed, a man like Mr. Shelley may cheat himself with the imagined loftiness and independence of his theory, and it is easy to invent a thousand sophisms to reconcile his conscience to the impurity of his practice: but this lasts only long enough to lead him on beyond the power of return; he ceases to be the dupe, but with desperate malignity he becomes the deceiver of others. Like the Egyptians of old, the wheels of his chariot are broken, the path of 'mighty waters' close in upon him behind, and a still deepening ocean is before him:—for a short time are seen his impotent struggles against a resistless power, his blasphemous execrations are heard, his dispair but poorly assumes the tone of triumph and defiance, and he calls ineffectually on others to follow him to the same ruin—finally he sinks 'like lead' to the bottom and is forgotten. So it is now in part, so shortly will it be entirely with Mr. Shelley." At first he believed Southey to have been the author of the article, but afterwards credited it to Milman; it is now known that the reviewer was Sir John Taylor Coleridge (1790-1876), who had been a schoolfellow of Shelley's at Eton.

similarity all the best writers of any particular age inevitably are marked with, from the spirit of that age acting on all. This I had explained in my preface, which the writer was too disingenuous to advert to. As to the other trash, and particularly that lame attack on my personal character, which was meant so ill, and which I am not the man to feel, 'tis all nothing. I am glad, with respect to that part of it which alludes to Hunt, that it should so have happened that I dedicate, as you will see, a work which has all the capacities for being popular to that excellent person. I was amused, too, with the finale; it is like the end of the first act of an opera, when that tremendous concordant discord sets up from the orchestra, and everybody talks and sings at once. It describes the result of my battle with their Omnipotent God; his pulling me under the sea by the hair of my head, like Pharaoh; my calling out like the devil who was game to the last; swearing and cursing in all comic and horrid oaths, like a French postillion on Mount Cenis; entreating everybody to drown themselves; pretending not to be drowned myself when I am drowned; and, lastly, being drowned. 1 You would do me a particular kindness if you would call on Hunt, and ask him when my parcel went, the name of the ship, and the name of the captain, and whether he has any bill of lading, which, if he has, you would oblige me by sending, together with the rest of the information, by return of post, addressed to the Post Office, Florence.

Yours very sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
Messrs. Ollier & Co.,
Booksellers,
Vere Street, Broad Street,
London, Angleterre.
[English postmark], Oct. 30, 1819.

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<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Shelley's frequent allusions to his being drowned are very singular."—Lady Shelley's note.

#### 335. To Mr. Dorville 1

FLORENCE, October 18, 1819.

SIR,

Hearing from Mr Hoppner that you were kind enough to interest yourself in the fate of little Allegra, I took the liberty to ask the favour from you of informing me where she is at present; and where Lord Byron is, or where he is next expected to be; and of communicating to me any intelligence which you may think interesting as regards her. You will have probably been informed of the manner in which I am circumstanced relatively to the subject of this letter.

Yours, P. B. SHELLEY.

336. To the Editor of the "Quarterly Review." 2
1819.

SIR.

I observe in the Sept. No. of the *Review*, which . . . . . . the author of that article, after depreciating the merits of a poem written by me, asserts that what "he now knows to the disadvantage of my personal character affords an unanswerable comment on the text either of his review or my poem." I hereby call upon the author of that article, or you as the responsible agent, publicly to produce your proofs, or, as you have thrust yourself forward to deserve the character of a slanderer, to acquiesce also in. . . . .

printed in Dr. Richard Garnett's "Relics of Shelley," p. 83.

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<sup>71</sup> Dorville was Vice-Consul at Venice. Byron, in a letter to R. B. Hoppner, Oct. 29, 1819, says: "If you go to Milan, pray leave a Vice-Consul at Venice—the only *vice* that will ever be wanting in Venice. Dorville is a good fellow."—Prothero's "Byron," IV, 372.

2 This fragment of a draft of a letter, probably never sent, is

#### 337. TO MARIA GISBORNE

FLORENCE,

Oct. 21, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I send you a cheque for 111 sequins, 5 pauls, the produce of fifty pounds, to go on with. It must be presented and indorsed by Henry, to get the money. The £200 will arrive in a few days.

My sincerest congratulations to Mr. Gisborne on his arrival.

I write these lines in a stationer's close to the Post Office in great haste, not to miss the post.

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

#### 338. To Henry Reveley

FLORENCE,

Oct[ober] 28, 1819.

MY DEAR HENRY,

So it seems I am to begin the correspondence, though I have more to ask than to tell.

You know our bargain; you are to write me uncorrected letters, just as the words come, so let me have them—I like coin from the mint—though it may be a little rough at the edges; — clipping is penal according to our statute. <sup>1</sup>

In the first place, listen to a reproach; you ought to have sent me an acknowledgment of my last billet. I am

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Henry Reveley's education had been chiefly scientific, and although sufficiently skilled in the Italian language, he expressed himself imperfectly and with difficulty when he attempted to write an English letter. He afterwards said, 'Whenever a letter had to be sent from me, which seldom happened, more than once it was written out by Mr. Gisborne, and was copied out by me as best I could.' Shelley believed that a mastery of the English tongue was essential to Henry's success in life, and he undertook in an informal way to be tutor by correspondence of this backward scholar."—Dowden, II, pp. 306-7.

very happy to hear from Mr. Gisborne, and he knows well enough how to interest me himself, not to need to rob me of an occasion of hearing from you. Let you and I try if we cannot be as punctual and business-like as the best of them. But no clipping and coining, if you please.

Now take this that I say in a light just so serious as not to give you pain. In fact, my dear fellow, my motive for soliciting your correspondence, and that flowing from your own mind, and clothed in your own words, is, that you may begin to accustom to discipline yourself in the only practice of life in which you appear deficient. know that you are writing to a person persuaded of all the confidence and respect due to your powers in those branches of science to which you have addicted yourself; and you will not permit a false shame with regard to the mere mechanical arrangement of words to overbalance the advantage arising from the free communication of Thus you will become day by day more skilful in the management of that instrument of their communication, on which the attainment of a person's just rank in society depends. Do not think me arrogant. There are subjects of the highest importance in which you are far better qualified to instruct me, than I am qualified to instruct you on this subject.

Well, how goes on all? The boilers, the keel of the boat, and the cylinder and all the other elements of that soul which is to guide our "monstruo de fuego y agua" over the sea? Let me hear news of their birth, and how they thrive after they are born. And is the money arrived at Mr. Webb's? Send me an account of the number of crowns you realise; as I think we had better, since it is a transaction in this country, keep our accounts in money of this country.

We have rains enough to set the mills going, which are essential to your great iron bar. I suppose it is at present either made or making.

My health is better so long as the scirocco blows, and,

but for my daily expectation of Mary's confinement, I should have been half tempted to have come to see you. As it is, I shall wait till the boat is finished. On the subject of your actual and your expected progress, you will certainly allow me to hear from you.

Give my kindest regards to your Mother and Mr. Gisborne—tell the latter, whose billet I have neglected to answer, that I did so under the idea of addressing him in a post or two on a subject which gives me considerable anxiety about you all. I mean the continuance of your property in the British funds at this crisis of approaching revolution. It is the business of a friend to say what he thinks without fear of giving offence; and, if I were not a friend, argument is worth its market-price anywhere.

Believe me, my dear Henry,

Your very faithful friend,

P. B. S.

# 339. To John and Maria Gisborne

FLORENCE,

Oct. 28, 1819.

# My DEAR FRIENDS,

I receive this morning the strange and unexpected news that my bill of £200 has been returned to Mr. Webb protested. Ultimately this can be nothing but delay, as I have only drawn from my banker's hands so much as to leave them still in possession of £80, and this I positively know, and can prove by documents. By return of post, for I have not only written to my banker, but to private friends, no doubt Henry will be enabled to proceed. Let him meanwhile do all that can be done.

Meanwhile, to save time, could not money be obtained temporarily, at Livorno, from Mr. W[ebb?], or Mr. G——, or any of your acquaintance, on my bills at three or six months, indorsed by Mr. Gisborne and Henry, so that he

may go on with his work? If a month is of consequence, think of this.

Be of good cheer, Madonna mia, all will go well. The inclosed is for Henry, and was written before this news. as he will see; but it does not, strange as it is, abate one atom of my cheer.

Accept, dear Mr. G., my best regards.

Yours faithfully,

P. B. S.

### 340. To Leigh Hunt

FLORENCE. Nov[ember] 2, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You cannot but know how sensibly I feel your kind expressions concerning me in the third part of your observations on the Quarterly: I feel that it is from a friend. As to the perverse-hearted writer of these calumnies, I

<sup>1</sup> The "kind expressions concerning me in the third part of your

observations on the Quarterly," were these—
"To return to Mr. Shelley. The reviewer asserts that he 'is shamefully dissolute in his conduct.' We heard of similar assertions when we resided in the same house with Mr. Shelley for nearly three months: and how was he living all that time? As much like Plato himself, as all his theories resemble Plato-or rather still more like a Pythagorean. This was the round of his daily life—he was up early: breakfasted sparingly: wrote this "Revolt of Islam" all the morning: went out in his boat, or into the woods with some Greek author or the Bible in his hands: came home to a dinner of vegetables (for he took neither meat nor wine): visited, if necessary, the sick and fatherless, whom others gave Bibles to and no help: wrote or studied again, or read to his wife and friends the whole evening: took a crust of bread, or a glass of whey for his supper: and went early to bed. This is literally the whole of the life he led, or what we believe he now leads in Italy: nor have we ever known him in spite of the malignant and ludicrous exaggerations on this point, deviate, notwithstanding his theories, even into a single action which those who differ with him might think blameable. We do not say that he would always square his conduct by their opinions as a matter of principle: we only say that he acted just as if he could so square it. We forbear, out of regard for the very bloom of their beauty, to touch upon numberless other charities and

feel assured that it is Southey, and the only notice which it becomes me to take of it, is to seek an occasion of personal expostulation with him on my return to England—not on the ground, however, of what he has written in the *Review*, but on another ground. As to anonymous criticism, it is a much fitter subject for merriment than serious comment; except, indeed, when the latter can be made a vehicle, as you have done, of the kindest friendship.

Now, I only send you a very heroic poem 1, which I wish you to give to Ollier, and desire him to print and publish immediately, you being kind enough to take upon yourself the corrections of the press—not, however, with my name and you must tell Ollier that the author is to be kept a secret, and that I confide in him for this object as I would confide in a physician or lawyer, or any other man whose professional situation renders the betraying of what is entrusted a dishonour. My motive in this is solely not to prejudice myself in the present moment, as I have only expended a few days in this party squib, and, of course, taken little pains. The verses and language I have let come as they would, and I am about to publish more serious things this winter; afterwards, that is next year, if the thing should be remembered so long, I have no

generosities which we have known him to exercise, but this we must say in general, that we never lived with a man who gave so complete an idea of an ardent and principled aspirant in philosophy as Percy Shelley, and that we believe him from the bottom of our hearts to be one of the noblest hearts as well as heads which the world has seen for a long time. We never met, in short, with a being who came nearer, perhaps so near, to that height of humanity mentioned in the conclusion of an essay of Lord Bacon's, where he speaks of excess of charity and of its not being in the power of "man or angel to come in danger by it."—Examiner, Oct. 10, 1819.

<sup>1</sup> The poem that Shelley refers to here is his "Peter Bell the Third," which remained unpublished until 1840, when Mary Shelley included it in the demy 8vo edition of her husband's poems of that date. Wordsworth's "Peter Bell," written some twenty years earlier, was published in 1819, and excited the ridicule of Leigh Hunt and others of his school. Shelley, who regarded Wordsworth as disloyal to his ideals of justice and truth, satirized him on that account, although he was an ardent admirer of his poetry.

objection to the author being known, but not now. I should like well enough that it should both go to press and be printed very quickly; as more serious things are on the eve of engaging both the public attention and mine.

Next post day you will hear from me again, as I have many things to say, and expect to have to announce Mary's new work, now in the press. She has written out, as you will observe, my "Peter," and this is, I suspect, the last thing she will do before the new birth.

Affectionately yours,
My dear friend,

P. B. S.

### 341. To Leigh Hunt

FLORENCE,

November 3, 1819. [Wednesday.]

My DEAR FRIEND.

The event of Carlile's trial has filled me with an indignation that will not, and ought not to be suppressed.

In the name of all we hope for in human nature what are the people of England about? or rather how long will they and those whose hereditary duty it is to lead them endure the enormous outrages of which they are one day made the victim, and the next the instrument? Post succeeds post and fresh horrors are ever detailed. First we hear that a troop of the enraged master-manufacturers are let loose with sharpened swords upon their starving dependents; and in spite of the remonstrances of the regular

Richard Carlile (1790-1843), a publisher of free-thought books, was tried in October, 1819, for a blasphemous libel in "Paine's Age of Reason," and Palmer's "Principles of Nature," and was sentenced in a fine of £1,500, and three years' imprisonment in Dorchester jail. When Shelley heard of the conviction (but not the sentence), he addressed the above letter of five sheets to Leigh Hunt, who does not appear to have printed it. Mr. H. Buxton Forman was the first to publish it in his Library edition of Shelley's Prose Works, from the original letter in the collection of Sir Percy Shelley.

troops that they ride over them and massacre without distinction of sex or age, and cut off women's breasts and dash the heads of infants against the stones. Then comes information that a man has been found guilty of some inexplicable crime, which his prosecutors call blasphemy, one of the features of which, they inform us, is the denying that the massacring of children was done by the immediate command of the author and preserver of all things.

And thus at the same time, we see on one hand men professing to act by the public authority who put in practice the trampling down and murdering an unarmed multitude without distinction of sex or age, and on the other, a tribunal which punishes men for asserting that deeds of the same character, transacted in a distant age and country, were not done by the command of God. If not for this, for what was Mr. Carlile prosecuted? For impugning the Divinity of Jesus Christ? I impugn it.— For denying that the whole mass of ancient Hebrew literature is of divine authority? I deny it.—I hope this is no blasphemy, and that I am not to be dragged home by the enmity of our political adversaries to be made a sacrifice to the superstitious fury of the ruling sect. But I am prepared both to do my duty and abide by whatever consequences may be attached to its fulfilment.

It is said that Mr. Carlile has been found guilty by a jury. Juries are frequently in cases of libel illegally and partially constituted, and whenever this can be proved the party accused has a title to a new trial. A view of the question, so simple that it is in danger of being overlooked from its very obviousness has presented itself to me, by which, I think, it will clearly appear that this [il]legal and partial character belonged to the jury which pronounced a verdict of guilty against Mr. Carlile, and that he is entitled to a new trial.

It is the privilege of an Englishman to be tried, not only by a jury, but by a jury of his peers. Who are the peers Vol. ii—17—(2285)

of any man, and what is the legal import of this word? Let us illustrate the letter by the spirit of the law.

A nobleman has a right to be tried by his peers—a gentleman, a tradesman, a farmer—the like—. The peers of a man are men of the same station, class denomination with himself. The reason on which this provision is founded is that the persons called upon to determine the guilt or innocence of the accused might be so alive to a tender sympathy towards him, through common interest, habits and opinions, as to render it improbable, either that thro' neglect or aversion they would commit injustice towards him, or that they might be incapable of knowing and weighing the merits of the case. Butchers and surgeons are excluded on this ground from juries; it being supposed by the law that they are engaged in occupations foreign to that delicate sensibility respecting human life and suffering exacted in those selected as arbiters for inflicting it. From the dictation of this spirit, in all cases where foreigners are criminally accused, the jury impanelled are half Englishmen and half foreigners, and the reason why they are not all foreigners is manifest—not that it is theoretically just that any men not strictly his peers should determine between the accuser and the country, but because the practical disadvantage arising from the inexperience of foreigners in this admirable form peculiar to English law, would overbalance the advantage of adhering to the shadow, by letting the substance of This, therefore, is the law and the spirit justice escape. of the law, of juries, and thus plainly and clearly is it illustrated by the ancient and perpetual practice of the English courts of justice.

Who were Mr. Carlile's peers? Mr. Carlile was a Deist, accused of blaspheming the religion of men professing themselves Christians. Who are his peers? Christians? Surely not. Such a proposition is refuted by the very terms of which it is composed. It were to constitute a jury out of the men who are parties to the prosecution;

it were to make those who are offended, judges of the cause of him, by whom they profess themselves to have been offended; it were less absurd to impanel the nearest relations of a murdered man to try the guilt or innocence of a person on whom circumstances attach a strong suspicion of the deed. No honest Christian would sit on such a jury except he felt himself thoroughly embued with the universal toleration preached by the alleged founder of his religion—a state of feeling which we are not warranted by experience to presume to belong except to extraordinary men. He must know he could not be impartial. He sees before him the enemy of his God, one already predestined to the tortures of Hell, and who by the most specious arguments is seducing everyone around him into the same peril. He probably feels that his own faith is tottering, whilst he listens to the prisoner's defence, and that naturally redoubles his indignation.—How is such a person to be considered as the peer of the other, if by peer be meant, one who from common habits and interests would be likely to weigh the merits of the cause dispassionately? He is a person of the same sect with him who framed the indictment on which the culprit is accused as a malicious blasphemer. He is evidently less his peer with reference to the circumstance of the case than a ploughman would be the peer of a nobleman; and it is less probable that the one would give an unconscientious verdict from envy towards rank than the other from abhorrence for the speculative opinions of the prisoner.

The Christian may be the peer of the Deist, with reference to any matter not involving a question of his guilt in expressing contumelious sentiments concerning the Christian's own belief (for this, if anything, is meant by blasphemy), because he may have those common interests and feelings which make one man alive to render justice to another; but with regard to the matter in question he cannot be his peer, because he is one of the persons whom he is charged as having injured, because what he boasts to consider as his most important interests compel him to judge harshly of the accused and impersonate the [accuser?] A Quaker's testimony is not indeed admitted in criminal cases, and this disqualification bears with it a sort of appearance of reason. He protests as it were against the jurisdiction of the court, by refusing to comply with the formality in which it has been the established practice of every British citizen to acquiesce. Besides, he not only refuses, but refusing, acknowledges the divine authority of that code on which he is nevertheless unwilling to pledge the truth of his statement. This might be interpreted into the leaving himself a loop-hole thro' which to escape. The pretence might be assumed by those who wish to do evil by a false assertion, and yet to escape what they might fear from the vengeance of their God on invocating him as the witness of a deliberate untruth. At least, all this But the truth is that Jesus Christ forbade in the most express terms the attaching to any one asseveration rather than to any other, a sanction to insure its credibility.—This the Quaker knows. The grounds on which the Quaker's testimony is rejected might be shown to be futile, at present it seems sufficient to have proved that the same arguments which have been used to exclude the Quaker from his rights (for all civil powers are rights) as a witness and juryman do not apply to the Deist.

On these grounds, I think Mr. Carlile is entitled to make application for a new trial, and I am at a loss to conceive how the judges of the King's Bench can refuse to comply with his demands, unless a few modern precedents, founded on an oversight now corrected, are to overturn the very foundations of the law of which they have been perversions. One point of consideration which was pleaded by Mr. Carlile on his defence, cannot be too distinctly understood. The same justice ought to be dispensed to all. Of two murderers, one ought not to be hung, whilst the other having committed the same crime with the same evidence notoriously existing against him, is allowed to walk about at

liberty,—of two perjurors, one ought not to be pilloried and the other sent on embassies. Nor are they for these real and not conventional crimes. But is Mr. Carlile the only Deist? and Mr. Paine the only deistical writer that these heavy penalties are called down on the person of the one, and these furious execrations darted from an indictment upon the works of the other? What! Was Hume not a Has not Gibbon, without whose work no library is complete, assailed Christianity with most subtle reasoning, turned it into a by-word and a joke? Has not Sir William Drummond, the most acute metaphysical critic of the age, a man of profound learning, high employment in the State, and unblemished integrity of character, controverted Christianity in a manner no less undisguised and bold than Mr. Paine? If Mr. Godwin in his Political Justice and his Enquirer has abstained from entering into a detailed argument against it, has he not treated it as an exploded superstition to which, in the present state of knowledge, it was unworthy of his high character as a moral philosopher, to advert? Has not Mr. Burdon, a gentleman of great fortune, published a book called "Materials for Thinking" in which he plainly avows his disbelief in the divine authority of the Bible? Is not Mr. Bentham a Deist? What men of any rank in society from their talents are not Deists whose understandings have been unbiassed by any allurements of worldly interest? Which of our great literary characters not receiving emoluments from the advocating a system of religion inseparably connected with the source of that emolument is not a Deist? Even some of those very men who are the loudest to condemn and malign others for rejecting Christianity, I know to be Deists. But that I disdain to violate the sanctity of private intercourse for good, as others have done for evil, I would state names.—Those already cited, who have publicly professed themselves Deists, are the names of persons of splendid genius, wealth and rank, and exercising a great influence thro' their example and their reasoning

faculties upon the conduct and opinions of their contemporaries. But who is Mr. Carlile? A bookseller, I imagine, of small means, who, with the innocent design of maintaining his wife and children, took advantage of the repeal of the Acts against impugning the Divinity of Jesus Christ to publish some books the main object of which was to impugn that notion and destroy the authorities on which it is founded. The chief of these works is the "Age of Reason," a production of the celebrated Paine, which the prosecutors were so far unfortunate in selecting. whatever may be its defects as a piece of argument, inasmuch as it was written by that great and good man under circumstances in which only great and good men are ever found; at the bottom of a dungeon, under momentary expectation of death for having opposed a tyrant. It has the solemn sincerity, and that is something in an age of hypocrites, of a voice from the bed of death.

Why not brand other works which are more learned and systematically complete than this work of Paine's; why not brand works which have been written not in a solitary dungeon, with no access to any book of reference, but in convenient and well-selected libraries, by a judicial process? Why not indict Mr. Bentham¹ or Sir William Drummond?² Why crush a starving bookseller, and anathematize a work, which though perhaps perfect enough for its purpose must from the very circumstances of its composition be imperfect? Surely, if the tyrants could find any individual of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), a voluminous writer on jurisprudence and ethics, and "one of the ablest champions of utilitarianism." His "Rationale of Punishments and Rewards," written in 1775, first saw light in a French translation by Dumont in 1811, and was read by Shelley while at Bracknell. (See p. 420.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Sir William Drummond (1770?-1828), scholar and diplomatist, sometime M.P. for St. Mawes and Lostwithiel, Minister at Naples, and Ambassador at the Porte. In his "Œdipus Judaicus," printed for private circulation, he attempted to explain the histories and other parts of the Old Testament as astronomical allegories. Shelley quoted from his "Academical Questions" in the notes to "Queen Mab."

the higher classes of talent and rank, devoted to the cause of liberty against whom from any peculiar combination of accidents they could excite the superstitions of the people. no doubt they would trample upon him to their heart's content, especially if circumstances permitted them to trample and to outrage in secret. Tyrants, after all, are only a kind of demagogues. They must flatter the Great Beast. But in the case of attacking any of the aristocratical<sup>1</sup> Deists the risk of defeat would be great, and the chances of success small. And the prosecutors care little for religion, or care for it only as the mask and the garment by which they are invested with the symbols of worldly power. In prosecuting Carlile, they have used the superstition of the jury as their instrument in crushing a political enemy, or rather they strike in his person at all their political enemies. They know that the Established Church is based upon the belief in certain events of a supernatural character having occurred in Judea eighteen centuries ago; that but for this belief the farmer would refuse to pay the tenth of the produce of his labours to maintain its members in idleness; that this class of persons if not maintained in idleness, would have something else to do than to divert the attention of the people from obtaining a Reform in their oppressive Government, and that consequently the Government would be reformed, and that the people would receive a just price for their labour, a consummation incompatible with the luxurious idleness in which their rulers esteem it their interest to live. -Economy, retrenchment, the disbanding of the standing army, the gradual abolition of the National Debt by some just yet speedy and effectual system, and such a reform in the representative system, and such a reform in the representation as by admitting the constitutional presence of the people in the State may prevent the recurrence of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "The word is not used in a bad sense; nor is the word Aristocracy susceptible of an ill signification. Oligarchy is the term for the tyrannical monopoly of the few."—Shelley's note.

evils which now present us with the alternative of despotism or revolution, are the objects at which the jury unceremoniously struck when from a sentiment of religious intolerance they delivered a verdict of guilty against Mr. Carlile.

# 342. To John and Maria Gisborne

FLORENCE, Nov[ember] 6, 1819

MY DEAR FRIENDS.

I have just finished a letter of five sheets on Carlile's affair, and am in hourly expectation of Mary's confinement: you will imagine an excuse for my silence.

I forbear to address you, as I had designed, on the subject of your income as a public creditor of the English Government, as it seems you have not the exclusive management of your funds; and the peculiar circumstances of the delusion are such that none but a very few persons will ever be brought to see its instability but by the experience of loss. If I were to convince you, Henry would probably be unable to convince his uncle. In vindication, however, of what I have already said, allow me to turn your attention to England at this hour.

In order to meet the national expenses, or rather that some approach towards meeting them might seem to be made, a tax of £3,000,000 was imposed. The first consequence of this has been a defalcation in the revenue at the rate of £3,600,000 a-year. Were the country in the most tranquil and prosperous state, the minister, in such a condition of affairs, must reduce the interest of the national debt, or add to it; a process which would only insure the greater ultimate reduction of the interest. But the people are nearly in a state of insurrection, and the least unpopular noblemen perceive the necessity of conducting a spirit, which it is no longer possible to oppose. For submitting to this necessity—which, be assured, the haughty aristocrats

unwillingly did—Lord Fitzwilliam has been degraded from his situation of Lord-Lieutenant. An additional army of 11,500 men has received orders to be organised. Everything is preparing for a bloody struggle, in which, if the ministers succeed, they will assuredly diminish the interest of the national debt, for no combination of the heaviest tyranny can raise the taxes for its payment. If the people conquer, the public creditor will equally suffer; for it is monstrous to imagine that they will submit to the perpetual inheritance of a double aristocracy. They will perhaps find some crown and church lands, and appropriate the tithes to make a kind of compensation to the They will confiscate the estates of their public creditor. political enemies. But all this will not pay a tenth part of their debt. The existing Government, atrocious as it is, is the surest party to which a public creditor may attach himself. He may reason that it may last my time, though in the event the ruin is more complete than in the case of a popular revolution. I know you too well to believe you capable of arguing in this manner; I only reason on how things stand.

Your income may be reduced from £210 to £150, and then £100, and then, by the issue of immense quantities of paper to save the immediate cause of one of the conflicting parties, to any value however small; or the source of it may be cut off at once. The ministers had, I doubt not, long since determined to establish an arbitrary government; and if they had not determined so, they have now entangled themselves in that consequence of their instinct as rulers, and if they recede they must perish. They are, however, not receding, and we are on the eve of great actions.

Kindest regards to Henry. I hope he is not stopped for want of money, as I shall assuredly send him what he wants in a month from the date of my last letter. I received his letter from Pistoia, and have no other criticism to make on it, except the severest—that it is too short.

Mow goes on Portuguese—and Theocritus? I have deserted the odorous gardens of literature, to journey across the great sandy desert of politics; not, as you may imagine, without the hope of finding some enchanted paradise. In all probability, I shall be overwhelmed by one of the tempestuous columns which are forever traversing, with the speed of a storm, and the confusion of a chaos, the pathless wilderness. You meanwhile will be lamenting in some happy oasis that I do not return. This is out-Calderonizing Muley. We have had lightning and rain here in plenty. I like the Cascine very much, where I often walk alone, watching the leaves, and the rising and falling of the Arno. I am full of all kinds of literary plans.

Meanwhile, all yours most faithfully, P. B. S.

#### 343. To Leigh Hunt

Firenze, Nov[ember] 13, 1819.

### My DEAR FRIEND.

Yesterday morning Mary brought me a little boy. <sup>8</sup> She suffered but two hours' pain, and is now so well that it seems a wonder that she stays in bed. The babe is also quite well, and has begun to suck. You may imagine that this is a great relief and a great comfort to me amongst all my misfortunes, past, present, and to come.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley probably here refers to his "Philosophical View of Reform." For a description of this unpublished work see Professor Dowden's article in the Fortnightly Review, Nov. 1st, 1886.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> In his note to the "Ode to the West Wind" Shelley says "This poem was conceived and chiefly written [in 1819] in a wood [the Cascine] that skirts the Arno near Florence, and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapours that pour down the autumnal rains."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Afterwards Sir Percy Florence Shelley. He succeeded his grandfather, Sir Timothy, in April, 1844, as third baronet, and died without issue on December 5, 1889.

Since I last wrote to you, some circumstances have occurred not necessary to explain by letter, which makes my pecuniary condition a very painful one. The physicians absolutely forbid my travelling to England in the winter, but I shall probably pay you a visit in the spring. With what pleasure, among all the other sources of regret and discomfort with which England abounds for me, do I think of looking on the original of that kind and earnest face, which is now opposite Mary's bed. It will be the only thing which Mary will envy me, or will need to envy me, in that journey, for I shall come alone. Shaking hands with you is worth all the trouble; the rest is clear loss.

I will tell you more about myself and my pursuits in my next letter.

Kind love to Marianne, Bessy, and all the children. Poor Mary begins (for the first time) to look a little consoled; for we have spent, as you may imagine, a miserable five months.

Good-bye, my dear Hunt.

Your affectionate friend,
I have had no letter from you for a month. P. B. S.
To Leigh Hunt, Esq.

# 344. To John Gisborne

FLORENCE,

Nov[ember] 16, 1819.

My DEAR SIR,

I envy you the first reading of "Theocritus." Were not the Greeks a glorious people? What is there, as Job says of the Leviathan, like unto them? If the army of Nicias had not been defeated under the walls of Syracuse; if the Athenians had, acquiring Sicily, held the balance between Rome and Carthage, sent garrisons to the Greek colonies in the south of Italy, Rome might have been all that its intellectual condition entitled it to be, a tributary, not the conqueror of Greece; the Macedonian power would never have attained to the dictatorship of the

civilised states of the world. Who knows whether, under the steady progress which philosophy and social institutions would have made (for, in the age to which I refer, their progress was both rapid and secure) among a people of the most perfect physical organization, whether the Christian religion would have arisen, or the barbarians have overwhelmed the wrecks of civilisation which had survived the conquest and tyranny of the Romans? What then should we have been? As it is, all of us who are worth anything, spend our manhood in unlearning the follies, or expiating the mistakes, of our youth. We are stuffed full of prejudices; and our natural passions are so managed, that if we restrain them we grow intolerant and precise, because we restrain them not according to reason, but according to error; and if we do not restrain them, we do all sorts of mischief to ourselves and others. Our imagination and understanding are alike subjected to rules the most absurd; -so much for Theocritus and the Greeks.

In spite of all your arguments, I wish your money were out of the funds. This middle course which you speak of, and which may probably have place, will amount to your losing not all your income, nor retaining all, but have the half taken away. I feel intimately persuaded, whatever political forms may have place in England, that no party can continue many years, perhaps not many months, in the administration, without diminishing the interest of the national debt.—And once having commenced—and having done so safely—where will it end?

Give Henry<sup>1</sup> my kindest thanks for his most interesting letter, and bid him expect one from me by the next post.

Mary and the babe continue well.—Last night we had a magnificent thunderstorm, with claps that shook the house like an earthquake. Both Mary and Clare unite with me in kindest remembrances to all.

Most faithfully yours obliged,

P. B. S.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Henry Reveley.

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345. TO MAR. TLORENCE,

Nov[ember] 17, 1819.

etter, and I can-

MADONNA.

Stude of a long I have been lately voyaging in a sea with great thing and although my sail has often been torn, my it be a leaky, and the log lost, I have yet sailed in a kind few from island to island; some of craggy and mountabin magnificence, some clothed with moss and flowers, and radiant with fountains, some barren deserts. I have been reading Calderon without you. I have read the "Cisma de Ingalaterra," the "Cabellos de Absolom," and three or four others. These pieces, inferior to those we read, at least to the "Principe Constante," in the splendour of particular passages, are perhaps superior in their satisfying completeness. The "Cabellos de Absolom" is full of the deepest and tenderest touches of nature. Nothing can be more pathetically conceived than the character of old David, and the tender and impartial love, overcoming all insults and all crimes, with which he regards his conflicting and disobedient sons. The incest scene of Amnon and Tamar is perfectly tremendous. Well may Calderon say in the person of the former:—

Si sangre sin fuego hiere, que fara sangre con fuego?

Incest is, like many other incorrect things, a very poetical circumstance. It may be the excess of love or hate. It may be the defiance of everything for the sake of another, which clothes itself in the glory of the highest heroism; or it may be that cynical rage which, confounding the good and the bad in existing opinions, breaks through them for the purpose of rioting in selfishness and antipathy. Calderon, following the Jewish historians, has represented Amnon's action in the basest point of view—he is a

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riora do

civilised states of the world. Who we abhors, and abhorring steady progress which philose ty to his crime. would have made (for, in , Madonna, yours truly, P. B. S. progress was both rapid ? most perfect physical passage from the "Cisma de Ingala-As Deintication of Petraling of Deintication of the Principal and the Petral of the Pe religion would hay "Carlos, Embaxador de Francia, en whelmed the wa Bolena." Is there anything in Petra the conquest he second stanza?1 anythir

or evi fır

<sup>1</sup> Porque apenas el Sol se coronaba de nueva luz en la estacion primera, quando yo en sus umbrales adoraba segundo Sol en abreviada esfera; la noche apenas trémula baxaba, à solos mis deseos lisonjera, quando un jardin, republica de flor era tercero fiel de mis amores.

Alli, el silencio de la noche fria, el jazmin, que en las redes se ex el cristal de la fuente que corrià el arroyo que á solas murmurava El viento que en las hojas se ma el Aura que en las flores respirava todo era amor'; què mucho, si en t. aves, fuentes, y flores tienen alma!

No has visto providente y officiosa, mover el ayre iluminada aveya, que hasta beber la purpura á la rosa ya se acerca cobarde, y ya se alexa? No has visto enamorada mariposa, dar cercos á la luz, hasta que dexa, en monumento facil abrasadas las alas de color tornasoladas?

Assi mi amor, cobarde muchos dias, tornos hizo á la rosa y á la llama; temor che ha sido entre cenizas frias, tantas vezes llorado de quien ama; pero el amor, que vence con porfias, y la ocasion, que con disculpas llama, me animaron, y aveja y mariposa quemè las alas, y llegué à la rosa.

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#### 346. To Henry Reveley

FLORENCE,

Nov[ember] 17, 1819.

MY DEAR HENRY,

I was exceedingly interested by your letter, and I cannot but thank you for overcoming the inaptitude of a long lisuse at my request, for my pleasure. It is a great thing one, the successful casting of the cylinder—may it be a appy auspice for what is to follow! I hope, in a few sts, to remit the necessary money for the completion. anwhile, are not those portions of the work which can done without expense, saving time in their progress? you think you lose much money or time by this delay? It that you say of the alteration in the form of the strikes me, though one of the multitude in this respect, approvement. I long to get aboard her, and be an trity partaker in the glory of the astonishment of the nese, when she returns from her cruise round Melloria. I do you think she will be fit for sea?

our volcanic description of the birth of the cylinder very characteristic of you, and of it. One might

"Friday, Nov. 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The following is the passage in Henry Reveley's letter to which relley alludes—

<sup>&</sup>quot;The event is now past—both the steam cylinder and air-pump were cast at three o'clock this afternoon. At two o'clock this morning I repaired to the mill to see that the preliminary operations, upon which the ultimate success of a fount greatly depends, were conducted with proper attention. The moulds are buried in a pit, made close, before the mouth of the furnace, so that the melted metal, when the plug is driven in, may run easily into them, and fill up the vacant space left between the core and the shell, in order to form the desired cylinders. The fire was lighted in the furnace at nine, and in three hours the metal was fused. At three o'clock it was ready to cast, the fusion being remarkably rapid, owing to the perfection of the furnace. The metal was also heated to an extreme degree, boiling with fury, and seeming to dance with the pleasure of running into its proper form. The plug was struck, and a massy stream of a bluish dazzling whiteness filled the moulds in the twinkling of a shooting star. The castings will not be cool

imagine God, when he made the earth, and saw the granite mountains and flinty promontories flow into their craggy forms, and the splendour of their fusion filling millions of miles of the void space, like the tail of a comet, so looking, so delighting in his work. God sees his machine spinning round the sun, and delights in its success, and has taken out patents to supply all the suns in space with the same manufacture. Your boat will be to the ocean of water, what the earth is to the ocean of ether—a prosperous and swift voyager.

When shall we see you all? You not, I suppose, till your boat is ready to sail—and then, if not before, I must, of course, come to Livorno. Our plans for the winter are yet scarcely defined; they tend towards our spending February and March at Pisa, where our communications will not be so distant, nor so epistolary. Charles [Clairmont] left us a week ago, not without many lamentations, as all true lovers pay on such occasions. He is to write me an account of the *Trieste* steamboat, which I will transmit to you.

Mrs. Shelley and Miss Clairmont return you their kindest salutations, with interest.

Most affectionately yours,

P. B. S.

enough to be drawn up till to-morrow afternoon; but, to judge from all appearances, I expect them to be perfect."

"Saturday, Nov. 13.

"They have been excavated and drawn up. I have examined them and found them really perfect; they are massive and strong to bear any usage and sea-water, in sacula saculorum. I am now going on gently with the brass-work, which does not require any immediate expenses, and which I attend to entirely myself. I have no workmen about me at present.

"With kindest salutations to Mrs. Shelley and Miss Clairmont.

"I remain, most truly,

"Your obliged friend and devoted servant,

"HENRY W. REVELEY."

# 347. To AMELIA CURRAN (Rome

FLORENCE, Nov[ember] 18, 1819.

Your letter, my dear Miss Curran, arrived on the eve of Mary's confinement, and from the fear of agitating her on a subject which has never, until now, ceased to be a source of perpetual grief to her, I refrained from showing it to her, and consequently from answering it until the expected crisis had passed. She has now, a few days ago, brought me a fine little boy, after a labour of the very, very mildest character. She is exceedingly well at this moment.

We hear with great concern that you have had the malarial fever. Did you venture too soon to Rome? It is more like a sepulchre than a city; beautiful, but the abode of death. I hope we shall find you recovered as well from this attack as improved in your habitual health. I have suffered very much from a disease of the climate this summer, and the winter which awakens my old pains in my side is, contrary to custom, a relief to my sensation.

I do not think we shall bend our course towards the South until the spring, if indeed we can then do so.

Godwin has lost his law-suit about the rent of his house, and we are suddenly called upon for a large sum of money. This may necessitate my return to England for a few months. My family will, of course, remain in Italy. Do we not seem like a knot of persons destined to ill?

With respect to the subject in which you are so kind as to interest yourself for us, the larger pyramid has our approbation and, perhaps if we decided upon it, they would case entirely with white marble for the sum destined to this purpose. Their profit is probably absurdly great upon things of this kind, as they calculate that the regret of the survivors will induce them to comply

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with whatever demand. Would it be necessary to decide upon the inscription before it is begun?

A thousand thanks to you about "The Cenci," but although my pleasure in possessing it will be very great, do not let me be the cause of fatigue or tiring to you. At the earliest we cannot be at Rome before March.

Believe me, my dear Miss Curran, with earnest wishes that we may find you in better health and happier than when we left you.

Yours most sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Mary desires her best love. We have heard from Venice, and all is going on well.

Miss Curran, 64 Al. della Regina, via Sistina, Rome.

#### 348. To Leigh Hunt

FLORENCE,

November, 1819.

My DEAR FRIEND,

Two letters, both bearing date Oct. 20, arrive on the same day; one is always glad of twins.

We hear of a box arrived at Genoa with books and clothes; it must be yours. Meanwhile the babe is wrapped in flannel petticoats, and we get on with him as we can. He is small, healthy, and pretty. Mary is recovering rapidly. Marianne, I hope, is quite well.

You do not tell me whether you have received my lines on the Manchester affair. 2 They are of the exoteric species,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Shelley's enquiry about Beatrice Cenci's portrait in his letter to Miss Curran of Aug. 5, 1819.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "The Masque of Anarchy" was written at the Villa Valsovano, near Leghorn, on hearing the news of the Manchester massacre (see p. 714). Leigh Hunt did not print it in the *Examiner*, "because," as he says, "I thought that the public at large had not become sufficiently discerning to do justice to the sincerity and kind-heartedness of the spirit that walked in this flaming robe of verse." Ten

and are meant, not for the *Indicator*, but the *Examiner*. I would send for the former, if you like, some letters on such subjects of art as suggest themselves in italy. Perhaps I will, at a venture, send you a specimen of what I mean next post. I enclose you in this a piece for the *Examiner*, or let it share the fate, whatever that fate may be, of the "Masque of Anarchy."

I am sorry to hear that you have employed yourself in translating the "Aminta," though I doubt not it will be a just and beautiful translation. You ought to write Amintas. You ought to exercise your fancy in the perpetual creation of new forms of gentleness and beauty.

With respect to translation, even I will not be seduced by it; although the Greek plays, and some of the ideal dramas of Calderon (with which I have lately, and with inexpressible wonder and delight, become acquainted) are perpetually tempting me to throw over their perfect and glowing forms the grey veil of my own words. And you know me too well to suspect that I refrain from a belief that what I could substitute for them would deserve the regret which yours would, if suppressed. I have confidence in my moral sense alone; but that is a kind of originality. I have only translated the "Cyclops" of Euripides, when I could absolutely do nothing else; and the "Symposium" of Plato, which is the delight and astonishment of all who read it; I mean the original, or so much

<sup>1</sup> Leigh Hunt's translation was afterwards published as "Amyntas; a Tale of the Woods. From the Italian of Torquato Tasso. 1820," and dedicated to John Keats.

years after Shelley's death, Hunt published the poem with a preface, one of the best things he ever did, and with the following title: "The/Masque of Anarchy. / A Poem. / By Percy Bysshe Shelley. / Now first published, with a Preface / By Leigh Hunt. / Hope is strong; / Justice and Truth their winged child have found. / Revolt of Islam. / London: / Edward Moxon, 64 New Bond Street. / 1832."

of the original as is seen in my translation, not the translation itself.

I think I have had an accession of strength since my residence in Italy, though the disease itself in the side, whatever it may be, is not subdued. Some day we shall all return from Italy. I fear that in England things will be carried violently by the rulers, and they will not have learned to yield in time to the spirit of the age. The great thing to do is to hold the balance between popular impatience and tyrannical obstinacy; to inculcate with fervour both the right of resistance and the duty of forbearance. You know my principles incite me to take all the good I can get in politics, for ever aspiring to something more. I am one of those whom nothing will fully satisfy, but who are ready to be partially satisfied in all that is practicable. We shall see.

Give Bessy a thousand thanks from me for writing out in that pretty neat hand your kind and powerful defence. Ask what she would like best from Italian land. We mean to bring you all something; and Mary and I have been wondering what it shall be. Do you, each of you, choose.

Adieu, my dear friend,

Yours affectionately ever,

P. B. S.

To LEIGH HUNT, Esq.

# 349. To Henry Reveley

FLORENCE,

Dec. 18, 1819.

MY DEAR HENRY,

You see, as I said, it only amounts to delay, all this abominable entanglement. I send you 484 dollars, or

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley's translation of the "Cyclops" appeared in his "Posthumous Poems," 1824, and the "Symposium" as "The Banquet" from Plato, in Mrs. Shelley's edition of his "Essays and Letters," 1840.

ordinary francesconi, I suppose, but you will tell me what you receive in Tuscan money, if they are not—the produce of £100. So my heart is a little lightened, which, I assure you, was heavy enough until this moment, on your I write to Messrs. Ward to pay you. account.

I have received no satisfactory letter from my bankers, but I must expect it every week—or, at least, in a month from this date, when I will not fail to transmit you the remainder of what may be necessary.

Everybody here is talking of a steamship which is building at Leghorn; one person said, as if he knew the whole affair, that he was waiting in Tuscany to take his departure to Naples in it. Your name has not, to my knowledge, been mentioned. I think you would do well to encourage this publicity.

I have better health than I have known for a long time ready for any stormy cruise. When will the ship be ready to sail? We have been feeding ourselves with the hope that Mr. Gisborne and your mother would have paid us their promised visit. I did not even hope, perhaps not even wish, that you should, until the engine is finished. My regret at this failure has several times impelled me to go to Leghorn—but I have always resisted the temptation. Ask them, entreat them, from me, to appoint some early day. We have a bed and room, and everything prepared.

I write in great haste, as you may see. Ever believe me, my dear Henry, your attached friend,

P. B. S.

# 350. To John and Maria Gisborne

FLORENCE,

Dec[ember] 23, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I suffered more pain than it would be manly to confess, or than you can easily conceive, from that wretched uncertainty about the money. At last, however, it is certain that you will encounter no further check in the receiving supplies, and a weight is taken from my spirits, which, in spite of many other causes of discomfort, makes itself known to have been a heavy load, by the lightness which I now feel in writing to you.

So the steam-boat will take three months to finish? The vernal equinox will be over by that time, and the early wakening of the year have paved the Mediterranean with calm. Among other circumstances to regret in this delay, it is so far well that our first cruise will be made in serene weather.

I send you enclosed a mandate for 396 francesconi, which is what M. Torlonia incorrectly designates a hundred pounds—but as we count in the money of the country, that need make no difference to us.

I have just finished an additional act to "Prometheus," which Mary is now transcribing, and which will be enclosed for your inspection before it is transmitted to the bookseller. I am engaged in a political work—I am busy enough, and if the faculties of my mind were not imprisoned within a frame, whose bars are daily cares and vulgar difficulties, I might yet do something—but as it is—

Mary is well—but for this affair in London I think her spirits would be good. What shall I—what can I—what ought I to do? You cannot picture to yourself my perplexity.

Adieu, my dear friends.

Ever yours, faithfully attached,

P. B. S.

### 351. To Charles Ollier

FLORENCE,

December 15, 1819.

DEAR SIR,

Pray, give Mr. Procter 1 my best thanks for his polite

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bryan Waller Procter (1787-1874), who published several volumes of verse, "Dramatic Scenes," etc., under his pseudonym "Barry Cornwall." He admired the poetry of Shelley, who did not,

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attention. I read the article you enclosed with the pleasure which every one feels, of course, when they are praised or defended; though the praise would have given me more pleasure if it had been less excessive. I am glad however, to see the *Quarterly* cut up, and that by one of their own people. Poor Southey has enough to endure. Do you know, I think the article in *Blackwood* could not have been written by a favourer of Government and a religionist. I don't believe any such one could sincerely like my writings. After all, is it not some friend in disguise, and don't you know who wrote it?

There is one very droll thing in the Quarterly. They say that "My chariot-wheels are broken." Heaven forbid! My chariot, you may tell them, was built by one of the best makers in Bond Street, and it has gone several thousand miles in perfect security. What a comical thing it would be to make the following advertisement:—"A report having prevailed, in consequence of some insinua tions in the Quarterly Review, that Mr. Shelley's chariot wheels are broken, Mr. Charters, of Bond Street, begs to assure the public that they, after having carried him through Italy, France, and Switzerland, still continue in excellent repair."

When the box comes, you may write a note to Mr. Peacock; or it would be better to call on him, and ask if my tragedy is accepted? If not, publish what you find in the box. I think it will succeed as a publication. Let "Prometheus" be printed without delay. You will receive the additions, which Mrs. S. is now transcribing,

This article in the January number of Blackwood's Magazine on "The Revolt of Islam," was a generous tribute to Shelley's genius from the pen of John Wilson,

however, return the compliment by liking Procter's. It is true that he does not speak ill of the "Dramatic Scenes" in this letter, and in No. 392A, but then these remarks were addressed to Ollier, who was Procter's publisher. See Shelley's letter to Mrs. Leigh Hunt, p. 839, on this subject.

in a few days. It has already been read to many persons. My "Prometheus" is the best thing I ever wrote.

Pray, what have you done with "Peter Bell?" Ask Mr. Hunt for it, and for some other poems of a similar character I sent him to give you to publish. I think "Peter" not bad in his way; but perhaps no one will believe in anything in the shape of a joke from me.

Of course with my next box you will send me the "Dramatic Sketches." I have only seen the extracts in the Examiner. They have some passages painfully beautiful. When I consider the vivid energy to which the minds of men are awakened in this age of ours, ought I not to congratulate myself that I am a contemporary with names which are great, or will be great, or ought to be great?

Have you seen my poem, "Julian and Maddalo"? Suppose you print that in the manner of Hunt's "Hero and Leander"? for I mean to write three other poems, the scenes of which will be laid at Rome, Florence, and Naples, but the subjects of which will be all drawn from dreadful or beautiful realities, as that of this was.

If I have health—but I will neither boast nor promise. I am preparing an octavo on reform 1—a commonplace kind of book— which, now that I see the passion of party will postpone the great struggle till another year, I shall not trouble myself to finish for this season. I intend it to be an instructive and readable book, appealing from the passions to the reason of men.

Yours very sincerely, P. B. S.

352. To Leigh Hunt (London).

FLORENCE,

Dec[ember] 23, 1819.

MY DEAR HUNT,

Why don't you write to us? I was preparing to send

<sup>1</sup> Probably "A Philosophical View of Reform." See note on p. 746.

you something for your "Indicator," but I have been a drone instead of a bee in this business, thinking that perhaps, as you did not acknowledge any of my late inclosures, it would not be welcome to you, whatever I might send. We have just received all your Examiners up to October 27th. I admire and approve most highly of those on religion; there is one very long one that especially pleases me.... Added days and years and hours add to my disapprobation of this odious superstition, and to my gratitude to anyone who like you break for ever its ever-gathering bubble.

What a state England is in! But you will never write politics. I don't wonder; but I wish that you would write a paper in the Examiner on the actual state of the country, and what, under all circumstances of the conflicting passions and interests of men, we are to expect,—not what we ought to expect or what if so and so were to happen we might expect—but what, as things are, there is reason to believe will come—and send it to me for my information. Every word a man has to say is valuable to the public now, and thus you will at once gratify your friend, nay instruct, and either exhilarate him, or force him to be resign'd, and awaken the minds of the people.

I have no spirits to write what I do not know whether you will care much about. I know well that, if I were in great misery, poverty, etc., you would think of nothing else but how to amuse and relieve me.—You omit me if I am prosperous. You are like Jesus who said he only came to heal the sick, when they reproached him for feasting with publicans and sinners.

I could laugh, if I found a joke, in order to put you in good-humour with me after my scolding; in good-humour enough to write to us. I suppose we shall soon have to fight in England. Affectionate love to and from all.

This ought not only to be the vale of a letter, but a superscription over the gate of life.

Your sincere friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

I send you a Sonnet. I do not expect you to publish it, but you may show it to whom you please.

[Addressed outside], Private,

Leigh Hunt, Esq.,

Examiner Office,

19 Catherine Street,

London,

Angleterre.

353. To Thomas Medwin (Geneva)

FLORENCE,

Jan. 17, 1820.

My DEAR MEDWIN,

The winter in Florence has been, for the climate, unusually severe, and yet I imagine you must have suffered enough in Switzerland to make you regret that you did not come farther South. At least I confidently expect that we shall see you in the Spring. We are fixed for the ensuing year in Tuscany, and you will always find me by addressing me at Leghorn.

Perhaps you belong to the tribe of the hopeless, and nothing shocks or surprises you in politics.

I have enough of unrebuked hope remaining to be struck with horror at the proceedings in England; yet I reflect, as a last consolation, that oppression which authorizes often produces resistance. These are not times in which one has much spirit for writing poetry, although there is a keen air in them that sharpens the wits of men, and makes them imagine vividly even in the midst of despondence.

I daresay the lake before you is a plain of solid ice, bounded by the snowy hills, whose white mantles contrast with the aërial rose-colour of the eternal glaciers—a scene more grand, yet like the recesses of the Antarctic circle.

If your health allows you to skate, this plain is the floor of your Paradise, and the white world seems spinning backwards as you fly. The thaw may have arrived, or you may have departed, and this letter reach you in a very different scene.

This Italy, believe me, is a pleasant place, especially Rome and Naples. Tuscany is delightful eight months of the year; but nothing reconciles me to the slightest indication of winter, much less such infernal cold as my nerves have been racked upon for the last ten days. At Naples all the worst is over in three weeks. When you come hither, you must take up your abode with me, and I will give you all the experience which I have bought, at the usual market price, during the last year and a half residence in Italy.

You used, I remember, to paint very well, and you were remarkable, if I do not mistake, for a peculiar taste in and knowledge of the *belle arti*. Italy is the place for you, the very place—the Paradise of exiles, the retreat of Pariahs. But I am thinking of myself rather than of you. If you will be glad to see an old friend, who will be very glad to see you—if this is any inducement—come to Italy.

# 354. To John Gisborne

FLORENCE, Jan[uary] 25, 1820.

MY DEAR SIR,

We have suddenly taken the determination to avail ourselves of this lovely weather to approach you as far as Pisa. 1—I need not assure you that within a few days—unless

<sup>&</sup>quot;Shelley left Florence with Mary and Clare for Pisa, on the morning of January 26, 1820, and travelled by boat on the Arno as far as Empoli, when they left the boat and took a carriage for Pisa, which city they reached at about six in the evening. They lodged at the Tre Donzelle."—From Clare Clairmont's journal, quoted by Prof. Dowden.

my malady should violently return—you will see me at Leghorn.

We embark; and I promise myself delight from the sky, and the water, and the mountains. I must suffer at any rate, but I expect to suffer less in a boat than in a carriage.

—I have many things to say, which let me reserve until we meet.

I sympathise in all your good news, as I have done in your ill. Let Henry take care of himself, and not, desiring to combine too many advantages, check the progress of his recovery, the greatest of all.

Remember me affectionately to him and to Mrs. Gisborne, and accept for yourself my unalterable sentiments of regard. Meanwhile, consider well your plans, which I only half understand.

Ever most faithfully yours, P. B. Shelley.

#### XVII. PISA AND LEGHORN

# February 9—July 12, 1820

"The Cenci" Refused—Lady Mountcashel—Medwin's Poems—Ollier's Shortcomings—"Julian and Maddalo"—Sant' Elmo—Correspondence with Southey—Shelley's Neapolitan—Trouble with Paolo—Godwin's Money Difficulties—A Poetical Letter to Maria Gisborne.

### 355. To John and Maria Gisborne

Pisa, Feb[ruary] 9, 1820.

Pray let us see you soon, or our threat may cost both us and you something—a visit to Livorno. The stage direction on the present occasion is (exit Moonshine) and enter Wall; or rather four walls, who surround and take prisoners the Galan and Dama.

Seriously, pray do not disappoint us. We shall watch the sky, and the death of the scirocco must be the birth of your arrival.

Mary and I are going to study mathematics. We design to take the most compendious, yet certain methods of arriving at the great results. We believe that your rightangled Triangle will contain the solution of the problem of how to proceed.

Do not write, but come. Mary is too idle to write, but all that she has to say is come. She joins with me in condemning the moonlight plan. Indeed we ought not to be so selfish as to allow you to come at all, if it is to cost you all the fatigue and annoyance of returning the same night. But it will not be—so adieu.

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# 356. To Charles and James Ollier (London)

PISA,

March 6, 1820.

DEAR SIR.

I do not hear that you have received "Prometheus" and "The Cenci"; I therefore think it safest to tell you how and when to get them if you have not yet done so.

Give the bill of lading Mr. Gisborne sent you to a broker in the city, whom you employ to get the packages, and to pay the duty on the unbound books. The ship sailed in the middle of December, and will assuredly have arrived long before now.

"Prometheus Unbound," I must tell you, is my favourite poem; I charge you, therefore, specially to pet him and feed him with fine ink and good paper. "Cenci" is written for the multitude, and ought to sell well. I think, if I may judge by its merits, the "Prometheus" cannot sell beyond twenty copies. I hear nothing either from Hunt, or you, or any one. If you condescend to write to me, mention something about Keats.

Allow me particularly to request you to send copies of whatever I publish to Horace Smith.

Maybe you will see me in the summer; but in that case I shall certainly return to this "Paradise of Exiles" by the ensuing winter.

If any of the Reviews abuse me, cut them out and send them. If they praise, you need not trouble yourself. I feel ashamed, if I could believe that I should deserve the latter; the former, I flatter myself, is no more than a just tribute.

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Thou Paradise of Exiles, Italy!"—" Julian and Maddalo."

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If Hunt praises me, send it, because that is of another character of things.

Dear Sir, yours very truly,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Address to Mr. Gisborne, at Livorno.

Messrs. Ollier,
Booksellers,
Vere Street, Bond Street,
London, Angleterre, via Francia.

# 357. TO JOHN AND MARIA GISBORNE (Leghorn)

PISA,

March 8, 1820.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I have written at a venture the letters which it seems to me are requisite. I have ordered my Florence banker to send you all that remains in his hands; you will receive it in a day or two, and tell me the amount. I will make up the deficiency from Pisa.

I inclose an outside calculation of the expenses at Naples calculated in ducats. I think it is as well to put into the hands of Del Rosso, <sup>1</sup> or whoever engages to do the business, 150 ducats—or more, as you see occasion—but on this you will favour me so far [as to] <sup>2</sup> allow your judgment to regulate mine.

A thousand thanks for your kindness and interest in me. Rivers flow to the sea, which is rich in fatness; whoever heard before of them hastening to the barren wilderness?

Adieu. Faithfully yours,

1. 1. 1. 1.

P. B. S.

[Addressed], GIO. GISBORNE, Esq., Livorno. [Postmark], Pisa, M. 8. 1820.

<sup>2</sup> Letter worn.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> An attorney at Leghorn.

# 358. To CHARLES OLLIER (London)

PISA,

March 13, 1820.

DEAR SIR.

I am anxious to hear that you have received the parcel from Leghorn, and to learn what you are doing with the "Prometheus." If it can be done without great difficulty, I should be very glad that the *revised* sheets might be sent by the post to me at Leghorn. It might be divided into four partitions, sending me four or five sheets at once.

My friends here have great hopes that "The Cenci" will succeed as a publication. It was refused at Drury Lane, although expressly written for theatrical exhibition, on a plea of the story being too horrible. I believe it singularly fitted for the stage.

Let me request you to give me frequent notice of my literary interests also.

I am, dear Sir,
Your very obliged servant,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

I hope you are not implicated in the late plot.<sup>2</sup> Not having heard from Hunt, I am afraid that he, at least, has something to do with it. It is well known, since the time of Jaffier, that a conspirator has no time to think about his friend

### 359. To Thomas Love Peacock

[Postmark: PISA,

March 25, 1820.]

My DEAR PEACOCK,

I have received your letter, and in a few days afterwards

<sup>a</sup> "The Cato Street Conspiracy."—Lady Shelley's note.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> From this it would appear that "The Cenci" was refused both at Drury Lane and Covent Garden, but it has been suggested that Shelley intended to write "Covent Garden" in this letter. (See p. 772.)

that of Beck and English, and I inclose you theirs 1 and my answer.

You know how incapable I am of paying this sum or any portion of it—I have written to them a plain statement of the [case] and a plain account of my situation.—They are aware [that] they must ultimately have the money, and I think by [the] interposition of your kind offices the affair may be arranged.—

I see with deep regret in to-day's Papers the attempt to to (sic) assassinate the Ministry. Every thing seems to conspire against Reform.—How Cobbett must laugh at the "resumption of gold payments." I long to see him.

I have a motto on a ring in Italian—"Il buon tempo verrà." There is a tide both in public and private affairs, which awaits both men and nations.

I have no news from Italy. We live here under a nominal tyranny administered according to the philosophic laws of Leopold, and the mild opinions which are the fashion here. . . . Tuscany is unlike all the other Italian States in this respect.

That Longdill is a most insolent rascal; and I shall take the first occasion of ridding myself of him.—

If Madocks applies to you, I wish you would tell him that I shall take care to pay him with full interest on the first opportunity, and that if he wishes security I will give him it, in any shape he wishes.

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¹ The letter from Beck and English above referred to is dated "Bath, 18th Feby., 1820. It expresses disappointment that Shelley had not agreeably to promise paid one moiety of a debt contracted in 1817.—Expecting that as a gentleman and man of honour he will give a reference for payment of £500 in part of the debt.—Expressing surprise that on going to his late house at Marlow, they learnt that the furniture he purchased of them was sold almost as soon as bought; and at the circumstance that he should leave England without any arrangement for the payment of their demand, or even favouring them with his address.—Unless he complies with their request, they shall feel perfectly justified in taking the only step, which their legal advisers tell them, can be taken against a debtor out of the kingdom."—Peacock's note.

# 360. To Leigh Hunt (London)

PISA,

April 5, 1820.

MY DEAREST FRIEND.

You may conceive the surprise and sorrow with which I hear both from you and Bessy, whom I wrote to for the purpose of having some information about your money affairs, that you have undergone all the torments which your letter describes. When I reflect too that I begun for you what I was unable to finish, and that having intended to set you free, I left you in the midst of those accumulating perplexities from which you must have suffered so dreadfully, these regrets touch me personally. But your letter persuades me that things will go on better, and meanwhile I may see you.

There is one subject connected with the actual state of my financial imbecility about which I wish your assistance. I believe the bills for my piano and yours came due this Of course you know that in the question of a just debt I am totally incapable of taking advantage of my residence abroad, and especially in a debt so contracted. But I have not the money to pay it instantly. Could you solicit for me a renewal of it? Of course the Pianoforte maker is afraid of the ultimate payment, or I would do anything he requires to assure him of it further. would consent to make him any compensation he chose for the delay; and if he will accept nothing of that kind, will do my best when it is in my power to make him no loser by his forbearance. I forget how this affair was arranged, but if I rightly recollect it was through Novello's mediation. I cannot but be anxious to stand well in the estimation of so excellent and friendly a person as Novello, and I should therefore consider it as a special act of friendship in you to explain this business, and arrange it for me without loss of time.

.

We are living here very considerably within our income, on which we have unfortunately heavy claims which I will take another occasion of explaining. But if we go on as now we shall soon get up. We have pleasant apartments on the Arno, at the top of a house, where we just begin to \ feel our strength, for we have been cooped up in narrow rooms all this severe winter, and I have been irritated to death for the want of a study. I have done nothing, therefore, until this month, and now we begin our accusmed literary occupations. We see no one but an Irish dy and her husband, who are settled here. everything that is amiable and wise, and he is very agree-You will think it my fate either to find or to imagine some lady of 45, very unprejudiced and philosophical, who has entered deeply into the best and selectest spirit of the age, with enchanting manners, and a disposition rather to like me, in every town that I inhabit. But certainly such this lady is.

We shall remain in Pisa until June, when we migrate to the Baths of Lucca; and after that our destination is uncertain. Much stress is laid upon a still more southern climate for my health, which has suffered dreadfully this winter, and if I could believe that Spain would be effectual, I might possibly be tempted to make a voyage thither, on account of the glorious events of which it is at this moment the theatre. You know my passion for a republic, or anything which approaches it.

I am extremely curious to see your tragedy. It appears to me that you excel in the power of delineating passion, and, what is more necessary, of connecting and developing it. This latter part of a dramatic writer's business is to me an incredible effort; if I have in any degree succeeded, I shall have at least earned the applause. But to you this is easy. As to your being out of conceit with your tragedy, I assure myself that it is only the effect of criticism upon

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mrs, Mason (Lady Mountcashel) and Mr. Tighe (see p. 806).

the nerves. At all events the moment it is printed send it to me. Meanwhile I am curious to hear what you think of mine. I am afraid the subject will not please you, but at least you will read my justification of it in the preface. I lay much stress upon that argument against a diversity of opinion to be produced by works of imagination. The very Theatre rejected it with expressions of the greatest insolence. I feel persuaded that they must have guessed at the author. But about all this I don't much care. But of all that I have lately sent, "Prometheus" is my favourite.

We hear that there is no chance of seeing you in Italy—and yet how much you would enjoy it—and how much we should enjoy your society! For you should come to Rome, which is the metropolis of taste and memory still,—and we would see the fine pictures and statues together, and the ruins, things greater than I can give you a conception of.

For the present adieu. Write to me especially about your affairs, and whether they proceed in the same good train.

Adieu.—Mary desires her love to you all.

Your affectionate

P. B. S.

I don't remember if I acknowledged the receipt of "Robin Hood"—no more did you of "Peter Bell." There's tit for tat! I thought the introductory verses very pretty, but I think you diluted yourself by the measure you chose. Then Thornton's esquisse de la legislation, from which no doubt both Bentham and Beccaria have plagiarised all their discourses, accommodating them to the notions of the vulgar. Then on my side is the letter to Carlile, in which I must tell you I was considerably interested.

[Addressed outside],
LEIGH HUNT, Esq.,
13 Mortimer Terrace,
Kentish Town, near London,
Inghilterra.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "The Cenci." See p. 768.

# 361. To THOMAS MEDWIN (Geneva)

PISA.

April 16, 1820.

MY DEAR MEDWIN,

I have delayed answering your letter and sending you my ideas on its valuable accompaniment in consequence of an inexplicable impiccio of the Genoese post, which got hold of your last communication, and which yet rests to be cleared up. I determined, so soon as I found that the measures for obtaining it from them were drawn out to a hopeless length, to write immediately and intreat you to send me a duplicate by Dejean's Diligence, which goes to Florence, and addressed to me at Mr. Klieber's the banker there, who will immediately forward it to me. I conjecture that it must be the *printed* book which you mention in your letter; I am consoled by reflecting that the loss and annoyance is less than if it had been a MS.

The volume of which you speak, if it resemble the "Pindarees," I cannot doubt is calculated to produce a considerable sensation. That Poem is highly fit for popularity, considered in its subject; there being a strong demand in the imagination of our contemporaries for the scenery and situations which you have studied. I admire equally the richness and variety of the imagery with the ease and profusion of language in which it is expressed.

Perhaps the severe criticism of a friend, jealous of every error, might discern some single lines and expressions which may be conceived to be changed for the better. But these are few, and I by no means conceive myself qualified to do more than point them out; and if I should

"The Pindarees" is the title of a poem in Thomas Medwin's "Sketches in Hindoostan with other Poems." (London, Ollier, 1821.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Perhaps the printed book to which Shelley refers was Medwin's "Oswald and Edwin: an Oriental Sketch," printed at Geneva in Feb., 1820, by J. J. Paschoud.

incur, as is probable, the charge of hypercriticism, you will know to what motives and feelings to impute it. I will enclose your "Pindarees" by the next post, with a list of these, and such corrections, since you ask me for them, as I can best make. But remember, I will not vouch for their not being much inferior to the passages they supplant. —The only general error, if it be such, in your poem, seems to me to be the employment of Indian words, in the body of the piece, and the relegation of their meaning to the notes. Strictly, I imagine, every expression in a poem ought to be in itself an intelligible picture. But this practice, though foreign to that of the great poets of former times, is so highly admired by our contemporaries that I can hardly counsel you to dissent. And then you have Moore and Lord Byron on your side, who, being much better and more successful poets than I am, may be supposed to know better the road to success than one who has sought and missed it.

I am printing some things which I am vain enough to wish you to see. 1 Not that they will sell; they are the reverse, in this respect, of the razors in "Peter Pindar." A man like me can in fact only be a poet by dint of stinting himself of meat and drink to pay his printer's bill—that is, he can only print poems on this condition.—But there is every reason to hope better things for you.

You will find me at Pisa in the autumn. Pisa until December will be an excellent climate for you, nor am I aware that Naples or Sicily would be more favourable, all things considered. The sun is certainly warmer, but unless you fit up a house expressly for the purpose of warmth, the Tramontana will enter by a thousand crevices, charged with frozen and freezing atoms. I suffered dreadfully at Naples from the cold, far more than at Florence, where I had a warm room, spending two successive winters in those cities. We shall at all events be at Pisa in the autumn,

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Prometheus Unbound; and other Poems."

and I am almost certain we shall remain during the whole winter in a pleasant villa outside the gates. We will make you as comfortable as we can, but our *ménage* is too philosophic to abound in much external luxury. The rest must be made up in good-will—Mrs. Shelley desires me to say how acceptable your visit will be to her. If you should come before the autumn, we shall be at the Baths of Lucca, a delightful place, about thirty miles from this town. You will find me a wretched invalid unless a great change should take place.

As to the expense of Italy—why it is a very cheap place. A crown here goes as far as a pound note in England in all affairs of eating and drinking. The single article of clothes is the same. Geneva seems to me to be about as dear as England; but I may have been horribly cheated.

I ought to tell you that we do not enter into society. The few people we see are those who suit us,—and I believe nobody but us. I find saloons and compliments too great bores; though I am of an extremely social disposition. I hope if they come to Italy I may see the lady and your friend. ¹ Though I have never had the ague, I have found these sort of beings, especially the former, of infinite service in the maladies to which I am subject; and I have no doubt, if it could be supposed that anyone would neglect to employ such a medicine, that the best physicians would prescribe them, although they have been entered in no pharmacopæia.

Forgive my joking on what all poets ought to consider a sacred subject.—Courage! when we meet we will sit upon our melancholy and disorders, bind them like an evil genius and bury them in the Tyrrhene sea, nine fathoms deep.—Adieu.

Affectionately yours,

P. B. S.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> As Mr. Buxton Forman says, this probably refers to Edward and Jane Williams. See Shelley's poem, "The Magnetic Lady."

### 362. To John and Maria Gisborne

PISA,

April 23, 1820.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

We are much pained to hear of the illness you all seem to have been suffering, and still more at the apparent dejection of your last letter. We are in daily expectation this lovely weather of seeing you, and I think the change of air and scene might be good for your health and spirits, even if we cannot enliven you. I shall have some business at Livorno soon; and I thought of coming to fetch you, but I have changed my plan, and mean to return with you, that I may save myself two journeys.

I have been thinking, and talking, and reading Agriculture this last week. But I am very anxious to see you, especially now as instead of six hours, you give us thirty-six, or perhaps more. I shall hear of the steam-engine, and you will hear of our plans when we meet, which will be in so short a time, that I neither inquire nor communicate.

Ever affectionately yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

### 363. To Leigh Hunt

PISA,

May 1, 1820.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In a few days after the arrival of this letter you may expect a visit from the Gisbornes, who are now on the point of setting out to England. The lady you will think delightful, if you take the trouble to make her talk to you. I received your welcome letter, and the most welcome praises of my book which it contained. I confess I did not expect it to be so successful with you, or with anyone,

Apparently Leigh Hunt's letter to Shelley of March 1, 1821, in which he praises "Prometheus Unbound."

although it was written with a certain view to popularity. a view to which I sacrificed my own peculiar notions in a certain sort by treating of any subject, the basis of which is moral error. That you and that a few chosen judges should approve of it, however the chief aim of my ambition, outweighs the censure of "a whole theatre of others." I shall be anxious to see the passage in the Examiner about my book, but I confess that I desire a more sincere satisfaction from your private opinion, when I know that no friendship could induce you to soften any disapprobation you might feel.—As to Ollier, I am afraid his demerits are very heavy: they must have been so before you could have perceived them. I should like to know how he has behaved, though I strongly suspect what the affair is (Paper torn.) I am afraid that I to a certain degree am in his power; there being no other bookseller upon whom I can depend for publishing any of my works; though if by any chance they should become popular, he would be as tame as a lamb. And in fact they are all rogues. less the character of the individual than the situation in which he is placed which determines him to be honest or dishonest, perhaps we ought to regard an honest bookseller, or an honest seller of anything else in the present state of human affairs as a kind of Jesus Christ. The system of society as it exists at present must be overthrown from the foundations with all its superstructure of maxims and of forms before we shall find anything but disappointment in our intercourse with any but a few select spirits. remedy does not seem to be one of the easiest. But the generous few are not the less held to tend with all their efforts towards it. If faith is a virtue in any case it is so in politics rather than religion; as having a power of producing a belief in that which is at once a prophecy, and a cause. So far the Preacher.—The Gisbornes stay in London about six weeks, and I have asked Hogg to come and see me in Italy; so possibly he will return with them. I dare not hope that you will add yourself to the party.

I tried to get your "Decameron," etc., at Leghorn, and Pisa, to send with them, but was unsuccessful. It is to be had at Florence, and will be sent with some vases destined for Horace Smith; these vases are copies from the antique in alabaster, and I think will please you. I wish to ask you if you know of any bookseller who would like to publish a little volume of popular songs wholly political, and destined to awaken and direct the imagination of the reformers. I see you smile, but answer my question. Of the politics of the day you never speak—I only see a Paris paper in English filled with extracts from the Courier.

—I suppose you know that my tragedy has been republished in Paris in English.<sup>2</sup>

(Written by Mary Shelley)

Do you know that you might write much longer letters if [you] wrote closer—besides at the top of each page you leave a full inch. As you are so much accustomed to this way of writing that you could not easily break yourself of it, suppose when you came to the end of your paper you turned it topsy-turvy and interlined it all the way.—I wish Marianne could write, but how can she? Bessy might; her last letter was 6th of January.

Ever yours,

M. W. S[HELLEY].

The Gisbornes will bring a little present for Mariar ne. I wish it had been more valuable or useful, [but did] not letting you see friends from us without anything from .

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> These vases are now in the possession of Mr. Round, of Brigh who married a daughter of Horace Smith.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> This was probably an error; no Paris reprint of "The Cenin Paris has been traced. It is possible that Shelley had an advertisement of the Italian edition in Galignani's list.

364. To THOMAS MEDa sinking one, of the (Geneva)

(Fragment) 1

Pis "be it as you in your care w in the

no antidote could know.

Suppose you eraze line 24 which seems superfluo much one does not see why Oswald shunned the chase in particula it

So you will put in what you think are amendments, and which I have proposed because they appeared such to me. The poem is certainly very beautiful. I think the conclusion rather morbid; that a man should kill himself is one thing, but that he should live on in the dismal way that poor Oswald does is too much. But it is the spirit of the age, and we are all infected with it. Send me as soon as you can copies of your printed poems.

I have just published a tragedy called "The Cenci," and I see they have reprinted it at Paris at Galignani's. I dare say you will see the French edition, full of errors, of course, at Geneva. The people from England tell me it is liked. It is dismal enough. My chief endeavour was to produce a delineation of passions which I had never participated in, in chaste language, and according to the rules of enlightened art. I don't think very much of it, but it is for you to judge.

Particularly, my dear friend, write to me an account of your motions, and when and where we may expect to see you. Are you not tempted by the Baths of Lucca?

I have been seriously ill since I last wrote to you, but I am r w recovering.

Affectionately yours,

P. B. S.

Buxton Forman says: "this is the outside leaf of a letter, addressed to 'To Medwin, Esq., Gentilhomme Anglais," He also says that Oswald, mentioned below, is the h of "The Lion Hunt" and of "The Pindarees." See page 773. The line which Shelley calls line 24 is one of; and metre and sense would both have been complete t, but Medwin retained it. It is on page 81 of the volume. And all employment shunned, but most the chase."





I tried to get your "To MARIA GISBORNE Pisa, to send with the had at Florence"

May 8, 1820.

for Horace S what makes Mary think her letter worth the in alabast of opening—except, indeed, she conceives it to be you if hot decipher a difficult scrawl. She might as well a ve put, as I will—

"MY DEAR SIR,

? ? ? ! ! !

Yours, etc.

Take care of yourselves, and do you not forget your nightly journal. The silent dews renew the grass without effort in the night. I mean to write to you, but not to day. All happiness attend you, my dear friend! As an excuse for mine and Mary's incurable stupidity, I send a little thing about poets, which is itself a kind of excuse for Wordsworth.

# 366. To CHARLES OLLIER (London)

PISA,

May 14, 1820.

DEAR SIR,

I reply to your letter by return of post, to confirm what I said in a former letter respecting a new edition of "The Cenci," which ought by all means to be instantly urged forward.

I see by your account that I have been greatly mistaken in my calculations of the *profit* of my writings. As to the trifle due to me, it may as well remain in your hands; and indeed my only object in writing to draw on you was that I might pay the printers, especially Reynell, who has written to me twice, and [to] which purpose, as is just I

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> C. H. Reynell was the printer of several of Shelley's books including "History of a Six Weeks' Tour," 1817. In an unpublished letter, dated Pisa, April 30, 1820, to Ollier, Shelley tells him that Reynell the printer has sent in his account for that work.

destined the fund, which seems to be a sinking one, of the proceeds of my verses.

As to the printing of the "Prometheus," be it as you will. But, in this case, I shall repose or trust in your care respecting the correction of the press; especially in the lyrical parts, where a minute error would be of much consequence. Mr. Gisborne will revise it; he heard it recited, and will therefore more readily seize any error.

If I had even intended to publish "Julian and Maddalo" with my name, yet I would not print it with "Prometheus." It would not harmonize. It is an attempt in a different style, in which I am not yet sure of myself, a sermo pedestris way of treating human nature, quite opposed to the idealism of that drama. If you print "Julian and Maddalo," I wish it to be printed in some unostentatious form, accompanied with the fragment of "Athanase," and exactly in the manner in which I sent it, and I particularly desire that my name be not annexed to the first edition of it, in any case.

If "Peter Bell" be printed (you can best judge if it will sell or no, and there would be no other reason for printing such a trifle), attend, I pray you, particularly to completely concealing the author; and for Emma read Betty, as the name of Peter's sister. Emma, I recollect, is the real name of the sister of a great poet who might be mistaken for Peter. I ought to say that I send you poems in a few posts, to print at the end of "Prometheus," better fitted for that purpose than any in your possession.

Keats, I hope, is going to show himself a great poet; like the sun, to burst through the clouds, which, though dyed in the finest colours of the air, obscured his rising. The Gisbornes will bring me from you copies of whatever may be published when they leave England. My best regards to your brother.

Dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
P. B. Shelley.

367. To Thomas Love Peacock

PISA,

May 16, 1820.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

I congratulate you most sincerely on your choice and on your marriage. If you had married Marianne I should never have seen much of you, and now I have at least a chance. I was very much amused by your laconic account of the affair. It is altogether extremely like the *dénoucment* of one of your own novels, and as such serves to a theory I once imagined, that in everything any man ever wrote, spoke, acted, or imagined, is contained, as it were, an allegorical idea of his own future life, as the acorn contains the oak.

But not to ascend in my balloon. I have written to Hogg to ask him to pay me a visit, and though I had no hope of success, I commissioned him to endeavour to bring you. This becomes still more improbable from your news; but I need not say that your amiable mountaineer would make you still more welcome. My friends, the Gisbornes, are now really on their way to London, where they propose to stay only six weeks. I think you will like Mrs. Gisborne. Henry is an excellent fellow, but not very communicative. If you find anything in the shape of dulness or otherwise to endure in Mr. Gisborne, endure it for the lady's sake and mine; but for Heaven's sake! do not let him know that I think him stupid. Indeed, perhaps I do him an injustice, though certainly he proses. Hogg will find it very agreeable

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Peacock married in 1820 Jane Gryffydh, daughter of the vicar of Elwys, the "Beauty of Carnarvonshire," to whom Shelley refers in his poetical letter to Maria Gisborne as "the milk-white Snowdonian antelope."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "I think he did. I found Mr. Gisborne an agreeable and well-informed man. He and his amiable and accomplished wife have long been dead. I should not have printed what Shelley says of him if any person were living whom the remembrance could annoy."—Peacock's note.

(if he postpones his visit so long, or if he visits me at all) to join them on their return. I wish you, and Hogg, and Hunt, and—I know not who besides—would come and spend some months with me together in this wonderful land.

We know little of England here. I take in Galignani's paper, which is filled with extracts from the *Courier*, and from those accounts it appears probable that there is but little unanimity in the mass of the people; and that a civil war impends from the success of ministers and the exasperation of the poor. I wait anxiously for your Cobbetts—but I learn that the Lyminstry is yet in the Shaines. [?]

I see my tragedy has been republished in Paris; if that is the case, it ought to sell in London; but I hear nothing from Ollier.

I have suffered extremely this winter; but I feel myself most materially better at the return of spring. I am on the whole greatly benefited by my residence in Italy, and, but for certain moral causes, should probably have been enabled to reinstate my system completely. Believe me, my dear Peacock, yours very sincerely,

P. B. S.

Pray make my best regards acceptable to your new companion.

# 368. TO JOHN AND MARIA GISBORNE (London)

PISA,

May 26, 1820.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I write to you thus early, because I have determined to accept of your kind offer about the correction of "Prometheus." The bookseller makes difficulties about sending the proofs to me, and to whom else can I so well entrust what I am so much interested in having done well; and to whom would I prefer to owe the recollection of an additional

kindness done to me? I enclose you two little papers of corrections and additions;—I do not think you will find any difficulty in interpolating them into their proper places.

Well, how do you like London, and your journey; the Alps in their beauty and their eternity; Paris in its slight and transitory colours; and the wearisome plains of France—and the *moral* people with whom you drank tea last night? Above all, *how* are you? And of the last question, believe me, we are anxiously waiting for a reply—until which I will say nothing, nor ask anything. I rely on the journal with as much security as if it were already written.

I am just returned from a visit to Leghorn, Casciano, and our old fortress at Sant' Elmo. I bought the vases you saw for about twenty sequins less than Micale asked, and had them packed up, and, by the polite assistance of your friend, Mr. Guebhard, sent them on board. I found your Giuseppe very useful in all this business. He got me tea and breakfast, and I slept in your house, and departed early the next morning for Casciano. Everything seems in excellent order at Casa Ricci—garden, pigeons, tables, chairs, and beds. As I did not find my bed sealed up, I left it as I found it. What a glorious prospect you had from the windows of Sant' Elmo! The enormous chain of the Apennines, with its many-folded ridges, islanded in the misty distance of the air; the sea, so immensely distant, appearing as at your feet; and the prodigious expanse of the plain of Pisa, and the dark green marshes lessened almost to a strip by the height of the blue mountains overhanging them. Then the wild and unreclaimed fertility of the foreground, and the chestnut trees, whose vivid foliage made a sort of resting-place to the sense before it darted itself to the jagged horizon of this prospect. I was altogether delighted. I had a respite from my nervous symptoms, which was compensated to me by a violent cold

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mrs. Gisborne's journal now in the collection of Mr. H. Buxton's Forman. See p. 780.

in the head. There was a tradition about you at Sant' Elmo—An English family that had lived here in the time of the French. The doctor, too, at the Bagni, knew you. The house is in a most dilapidated condition, but I suppose all that is curable.

We go to the Bagni 1 next month—but still direct to Pisa as safest. I shall write to you the ultimates of my commission in my next letter. I am undergoing a course of the Pisan baths, on which I lay no singular stress—but they soothe. I ought to have peace of mind, leisure, tranquillity; this I expect soon. Our anxiety about Godwin is very great, and any information that you could give a day or two earlier than he might, respecting any decisive event in his law-suit, would be a great relief. Your impressions about Godwin (I speak especially to Madonna mia, who had known him before), will especially interest me. You know that added years only add to my admiration of his intellectual powers, and even the moral resources of his character. Of my other friends I say nothing. To see Hunt is to like him; and there is one other recommendation which he has to you, he is my friend. To know H[ogg?], if anyone can know him, is to know something very unlike, and inexpressibly superior, to the great mass of men.

Will Henry write me an adamantine letter, flowing not like the words of Sophocles, with honey, but molten brass and iron, and bristling with wheels and teeth? I saw his steamboat asleep under the walls. I was afraid to waken it, and ask it whether it was dreaming of him, for the same reason that I would have refrained from awakening Ariadne, after Theseus had left her—unless I had been Bacchus.

Affectionately and anxiously yours,

P. B. S.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Baths of natural warm spring, distant four miles from Pisa, and called indifferently Bagni di Pisa, and Bagni di San Giuliano."—Mrs. Shelley's note.

### 369. To John and Maria Gissorne (London)

[Summer, 1820.]

My DEAR FRIENDS,

I am to a certain degree indifferent as to the reply to our last proposal, and, therefore, will not allude to it. Permit me only on subjects of this nature to express one sentiment, which you would have given me credit for, even if not expressed. Let no consideration of my interest, or any retrospect to the source from which the funds were supplied, modify your decision as to returning and pursuing or abandoning the adventure of the steam-engine. My object was solely your true advantage, and it is when I am baffled of this, by any attention to a mere form, that I shall be ill-requited. Nay, more, I think it for your interest, should you obtain almost whatever situation for Henry, to accept Clementi's proposal, and remain in England;—not without accepting it, for it does no more than balance the difference of experiast, and a Italy and London; and if you have on the next morninge of my moral sense, and believe that in excellent order at Casonour and virtuous conduct in life, chairs, and beds. As I did insellor, you will not hesitate it as I found it. What a gle-to accept this proposal. the windows of Sant' Elmo! were in Italy, to the abandon-Apennines, with its many-folderct, was founded, you well misty distance of the air; the seave influenced everything ring as at your feet; and thousde anything that I can in of Pisa, and the dark gught it against Henry's a strip by the height of theirs interest that he and Then the wild and in England. As to us from the chestnut hased by the spirits of sort of resting-place to t. like clouds by the the sort of resting place to a sort of resting p of him published, of ever will journal now in the collection of Mr. ffered to give my respecting you. I this I think it now against h uld dendon vour prospects ople, who are A

Your journey would cost you between £100 and £200, a sum far greater than you could expect to save by the increased price by which you would sell your things. Remit the matter to me, and I will cast off my habitual character, and attend to the minutest points. With Mr. G---'s, 1 devil take his name, I can't write it,—you know who's, assistance, all this might be accomplished in such a manner as to save a very considerable sum. Though I shall suffer from your decision in the proportion as your society is delightful to me, I cannot forbear expressing my persuasion, that the time, the expense, and the trouble of returning to Italy, if your ultimate decision be to settle in London, ought all to be spared. A year, a month, a week, at Henry's age, and with his purposes, ought not to be unemployed. was the depth with which I felt this truth, which impelled me to incite him to this adventure of the steamboat.

### 370. To Robert Southey

PISA.

June 26, 1820.

DEAR SIR,

Some friends of mine persist in affirming that you are the author of a criticism which appeared some time since in the *Quarterly Review* on the "Revolt of Islam."<sup>2</sup>

I know nothing that would give me more sincere pleasure than to be able to affirm from your own assurance that you were not guilty of that writing. I confess I see such strong internal evidence against the charge, without reference to what I think I know of the generous sensibility of your character, that had my own conviction only been concerned, I should never have troubled you to deny what I firmly believe you would have spurned to do.

\* See note to Shelley's letter to Ollier, Oct. 15, 1819.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Probably Guebhard, the Leghorn merchant and banker.

Our short personal intercourse has always been remembered by me with pleasure, and (when I recalled the enthusiasm with which I then considered your writings,) with gratitude for your notice. We parted, I think, with feelings of mutual kindness. The article in question, except in reference to the possibility of its having been written by you, is not worth a moment's attention.

That an unprincipled hireling, in default of what to answer in a published composition, should, without provocation, insult the domestic calamities of a writer of the adverse party-to which perhaps their victim dares scarcely advert in thought—that he should make those calamities the theme of the foulest and the falsest slander that all this should be done by a calumniator without a name—with the cowardice, no less than the malignity, of an assassin—is too common a piece of charity among Christians (Christ would have taught them better), too common a violation of what is due from man to man among the pretended friends of social order, to have drawn one remark from me, but that I would have you observe the arts practised by that party for which you have abandoned the cause to which your early writings were devoted." I had intended to have called on you, for the purpose of saying what I now write, on my return to England; but the wretched state of my health detains me here, and I fear leaves my enemy, were he such as I could deign to contend with, an easy, but a base victory, for I do not profess paper warfare. But there is a time for all things.

I regret to say that I shall consider your neglecting to answer this letter a substantiation of the fact which it is intended to settle—and therefore I shall assuredly hear from you.

Dear Sir, accept the best wishes of

Yours truly,

P. B. SHELLEY.

# 371. To John and Maria Gisborne (London)

[Leghorn,]

June 30, 1820.

(Fragments)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In Oct., 1819, Godwin had lost an action that had been brought against him for the payment of the rent of his house in Skinner Street, which he had long occupied rent-free. Godwin had understood that Shelley was willing to pay him a sum of £500 in quarterly instalments of £50, "the payment," says Prof. Dowden, "was delayed and Godwin's anxieties became intolerable. By some accident of the post, a letter of complaint and remonstrance, addressed to Mary, did not reach her until some seven weeks had 'Do not let me be led into a fool's paradise,' Godwin 'It is better to look my ruin full in the face at once, than to be amused for ever with promises, at the same time that nothing is done. . . . If Shelley will not immediately send me such bills as I propose or as you offer, my next request is, that he will let me alone, or not disturb the sadness of my shipwreck by holding out false lights, and deluding me with appearances of relief, when no relief is at hand.' By midsummer £100, advanced by Horace Smith, had been paid to Godwin; but he was urgent to get speedily into his hands the entire sum which, as he asserted, had been promised. Shelley, he assured Mrs. Gisborne, who was now a visitor at Skinner Street, had treated him cruelly and unjustly, and would

My poor Neapolitan, I hear has a severe fever of dentition. I suppose she will die and leave another memory to these which already torture me. I am waiting the next post with anxiety but without much hope. What remains to me? Domestic peace and fame? You will laugh when you hear me talk of the latter; indeed it is only a shadow. The seeking of a sympathy with the unborn and the unknown is a feeble mood of allaying the love within us; and even that is beyond the grasp of so weak an aspirant as I. Domestic peace I might have—I may have—if I see you I shall have—but have not, for Mary suffers dreadfully about the state of Godwin's circumstances. I am very nervous, but better in general health. We have had a most infernal business with Paolo 2 whom, however we have succeeded in crushing. . . .

certainly be the death of him. The proposal in Mary's letter was for Mr. Gisborne to lend Godwin £400, for which Shelley would make himself responsible. He was, however, unable or unwilling to advance this sum, and it remained for Shelley to inform Godwin that he could not be his perpetual preserver and deliverer."—" Life of Shelley," II, 321-3. (See Letters Nos. 377 and 379.)

in whom Shelley was deeply interested, and who was to some extent placed in his charge or wardship. Shelley's reason for informing Mr. and Mrs. Gisborne of the child's illness was that they were acquainted with the facts. Medwin states that while Shelley was at Naples he became the innocent actor in a tragedy more extraordinary than any to be found in the pages of romance." The unhappy lady [here referred to] had arrived at Naples on the very day of Shelley's arrival. There they met, and there, as Shelley declared to Medwin, she died. From Mr. Rossetti we learn that Miss Clairmont asserted that she was acquainted with the lady's name, and had even seen her at Naples. Can it be that she requested Shelley on her death-bed to act as guardian of her infant child, and that this child was his poor Neapolitan who died of teething-fever in the summer of 1820?"—Dowden's "Shelley," II, 252.

The Paolo mentioned here had been Shelley's servant and had been dismissed at Naples for robbery of his master and shameful conduct towards Elise. As soon as Shelley became aware of Paolo's designs, he visited Leghorn and put the matter in the hands of Del Rosso, the attorney of that place. The Shelleys thought that they had succeeded in crushing Paolo, but unfortunately they were mistaken. The rascal took the first opportunity of revenging himself on Shelley. (See p. 889.)

July 2, 1820.

I have later news of my Neapolitan. I have taken every possible precaution for her, and hope that they will succeed. She is to come to us as soon as she recovers.

[Undated.]

My Neapolitan charge is dead. It seems as if the destruction that is consuming me were as an atmosphere which wrapt and injected everything connected with me. The rascal Paolo has been taking advantage of my situation at Naples in December, 1818, to attempt to extort money by threatening to charge me with the most horrible crimes. He is connected with some English here, who hate me with a fervour that almost does credit to their phlegmatic brains, and listen to and vent the most prodigious falsehoods. "An ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten this dunghill of a world." 1

### 372. To Maria Gisborne (London)

[Casa Ricci], Leghorn, 2

July 1, 1820.

The spider spreads her webs, whether she be In poet's tower, cellar, or barn, or tree; The silkworm in the dark green mulberry leaves His winding sheet and cradle ever weaves; So I, a thing whom moralists call worm, Sit spinning still round this decaying form, From the fine threads of rare and subtle thought— No net of words in garish colours wrought To catch the idle buzzers of the day—

1 "Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination."—" Lear," Act IV, Šc. vi.

The Shelleys went to Leghorn towards the end of June, 1820 (partly in order to be near the attorney Del Rosso), and took possession of Casa Ricci, the house of the Gisbornes, who were absent in England. This letter was written in Henry Reveley's workshop, which Shelley used as a study.

But a soft cell, where when that fades away, Memory may clothe in wings my living name And feed it with the asphodels of fame, Which in those hearts which most remember me Grow, making love an immortality.

Whoever should behold me now, I wist, Would think I were a mighty mechanist, Bent with sublime Archimedean art To breathe a soul into the iron heart Of some machine portentous, or strange gin, Which by the force of figured spells might win Its way over the sea, and sport therein; For round the walls are hung dread engines, such As Vulcan never wrought for Jove to clutch Ixion or the Titan:—or the quick Wit of that man of God, St. Dominic, To convince Atheist, Turk, or Heretic, Or those in philanthropic councils met, Who thought to pay some interest for the debt They owed to Jesus Christ for their salvation, By giving a faint foretaste of damnation To Shakespeare, Sidney, Spenser and the rest Who made our land an island of the blest, When lamp-like Spain, who now relumes her fire On Freedom's hearth, grew dim with Empire:— With thumbscrews, wheels, with tooth and spike and jag Which fishers found under the utmost crag Of Cornwall and the storm-encompass'd isles, Where to the sky the rude sea rarely smiles Unless in treacherous wrath, as on the morn When the exulting elements in scorn, Satiated with destroy'd destruction, lay Sleeping in beauty on their mangled prey, As panthers sleep;—and other strange and dread Magical forms the brick floor overspread,— Proteus transform'd to metal did not make

More figures, or more strange; nor did he take Such shapes of unintelligible brass, Or heap himself in such a horrid mass Of tin and iron not to be understood; And forms of unimaginable wood, To puzzle Tubal Cain and all his brood: Great screws, and cones, and wheels, and grooved blocks, The elements of what will stand the shocks Of wave and wind and time.—Upon the table More knacks and quips there be than I am able To catalogize in this verse of mine:— A pretty bowl of wood—not full of wine, But quicksilver; that dew which the gnomes drink When at their subterranean toil they swink, Pledging the demons of the earthquake, who Reply to them in lava—cry, halloo! And call out to the cities o'er their head.— Roofs, towers, and shrines, the dying and the dead, Crash through the chinks of earth—and then all quaff Another rouse, and hold their sides and laugh. This quicksilver no gnome has drunk—within The walnut bowl it lies, veined and thin, In colour like the wake of light that stains The Tuscan deep, when from the moist moon rains The inmost shower of its white fire—the breeze Is still—blue heaven smiles over the pale seas. And in this bowl of quicksilver—for I Yield to the impulse of an infancy Outlasting manhood—I have made to float A rude idealism of a paper boat:—1 A hollow screw with cogs—Henry will know<sup>2</sup> The thing I mean and laugh at me,—if so He fears not I should do more mischief.—Next Lie bills and calculations much perplext,

<sup>2</sup> Henry Reveley.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> An allusion to Shelley's early passion for sailing paper-boats.

With steamboats, frigates, and machinery quaint Traced over them in blue and yellow paint, Then comes a range of mathematical Instruments, for plans nautical and statical, A heap of rosin, a queer broken glass With ink in it;—a china cup that was What it will never be again, I think, A thing from which sweet lips were wont to drink The liquor doctors rail at—and which I Will quaff in spite of them—and when we die We'll toss up who died first of drinking tea, And cry out,—heads or tails? where'er we be. Near that a dusty paint box, some odd hooks, A half-burnt match, an ivory block, three books, Where conic sections, spherics, logarithms, To great Laplace, from Saunderson and Sims, Lie heap'd in their harmonious disarray Of figures,—disentangle them who may. Baron de Tott's Memoirs beside them lie, And some odd volumes of old chemistry. Near these a most inexplicable thing, With lead in the middle—I'm conjecturing How to make Henry understand; but no,— I'll leave, as Spenser says, with many mo, This secret in the pregnant womb of time, Too vast a matter for so weak a rhyme.

And here like some weird Archimage sit I, Plotting dark spells, and devilish enginery, The self-impelling steam-wheels of the mind Which pump up oaths from clergymen, and grind The gentle spirit of our meek reviews Into a powdery foam of salt abuse, Ruffling the ocean of their self-content;—

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Baron François De Tott (1733-1793), a French soldier of Hungarian extraction, whose "Mémoires sur les Turcs et les Tartares," 4 vols., were published in 1784.

I sit—and smile or sigh as is my bent, But not for thems-Libeccio rushes round With an inconstant and an idle sound, I heed him more than them—the thunder-smoke Is gathering on the mountains, like a cloak Folded athwart their shoulders broad and bare; The ripe corn under the undulating air Undulates like an ocean;—and the vines Are trembling wide in all their trellised lines— The murmur of the awakening sea doth fill The empty pauses of the blast;—the hill Looks hoary through the white electric rain, And from the glens beyond, in sullen strain, The interrupted thunder howls; above One chasm of heaven smiles, like the eye of Love On the unquiet world;—while such things are, How could one worth your friendship heed the war Of worms? the shriek of the world's carrion jays, Their censure, or their wonder, or their praise?

You are not here! the quaint witch Memory sees In vacant chairs, your absent images, And points where once you sat, and now should be But are not.—I demand if ever we Shall meet as then we met;—and she replies, Veiling in awe her second-sighted eyes: "I know the past alone—but summon home "My sister Hope,—she speaks of all to come." But I, an old diviner, who knew well Every false verse of that sweet oracle, Turn'd to the sad enchantress once again, And sought a respite from my gentle pain, In citing every passage o'er and o'er Of our communion—how on the sea shore We watched the ocean and the sky together, Under the roof of blue Italian weather; How I ran home through last year's thunder-storm,

And felt the transverse lightning linger warm Upon my cheek—and how we often made Feasts for each other, where goodwill outweigh'd The frugal luxury of our country cheer, As it well might, were it less firm and clear Than ours must ever be;—and how we spun A shroud of talk to hide us from the sun Of this familiar life, which seems to be But is not,—or is but quaint mockery Of all we would believe, and sadly blame The jarring and inexplicable frame Of this wrong world;—and then anatomize The purposes and thoughts of men whose eyes Were closed in distant years;—or widely guess The issue of the earth's great business, When we shall be as we no longer are— Like babbling gossips safe, who hear the war Of winds, and sigh, but tremble not;—or how You listen'd to some interrupted flow Of visionary rhyme,—in joy and pain Struck from the inmost fountains of my brain, With little skill perhaps;—or how we sought Those deepest wells of passion or of thought Wrought by wise poets in the waste of years, Staining their sacred waters with our tears; Quenching a thirst ever to be renew'd! Or how I, wisest lady! then indued The language of a land which now is free, And wing'd with thoughts of truth and majesty, Flits round the tyrant's sceptre like a cloud, And bursts the peopled prisons, and cries aloud, "My name is Legion!"—that majestic tongue Which Calderon over the desart flung Of ages and of nations; and which found An echo in our hearts, and with the sound Startled oblivion;—thou wert then to me As is a nurse—when inarticulately

A child would talk as its grown parents do.

If living winds the rapid clouds pursue,

If hawks chase doves through the ætherial way,

Huntsmen the innocent deer, and beasts their prey,

Why should not we rouse with the spirit's blast

Out of the forest of the pathless past

These recollected pleasures?

You are now In London, that great sea, whose ebb and flow At once is deaf and loud, and on the shore Vomits its wrecks, and still howls on for more. Yet in its depth what treasures! You will see That which was Godwin,—greater none than he; Though fallen—and fallen on evil times—to stand, Among the spirits of our age and land, Before the dread tribunal of to come The foremost—while Rebuke cowers pale and dumb. You will see Coleridge—he who sits obscure In the exceeding lustre, and the pure, Intense irradiation of a mind, Which, with its own internal lightning blind, Flags wearily through darkness and despair— A cloud-encircled meteor of the air, A hooded eagle among blinking owls.— You will see Hunt—one of those happy souls Which are the salt of the earth, and without whom This world would smell like what it is—a tomb; Who is what others seem; his room no doubt Is still adorn'd by many a cast from Shout, With graceful flowers tastefully placed about; And coronals of bay from ribbons hung, And brighter wreaths in neat disorder flung; The gifts of the most learn'd among some dozens Of female friends, sisters-in-law and cousins. And there is he with his eternal puns, Which beat the dullest brain for smiles, like duns

Thundering for money at a poet's door; Alas! it is no use to say, "I'm poor!" Or oft in graver mood, when he will look Things wiser than were ever read in book, Except in Shakespeare's wisest tenderness.— You will see Hogg,—and I cannot express His virtues,—though I know that they are great, Because he locks, then barricades, the gate Within which they inhabit;—of his wit And wisdom, you'll cry out when you are bit. He is a pearl within an oyster shell, One of the richest of the deep;—and there Is English Peacock with his mountain fair Turned into a Flamingo;—that shy bird That gleams i' the Indian air—have you not heard When a man marries, dies, or turns Hindoo, His best friends hear no more of him?—but you Will see him, and will like him too, I hope, With the milk-white Snowdonian Antelope<sup>1</sup> Match'd with this cameleopard—his fine wit Makes such a wound, the knife is lost in it; A strain too learned for a shallow age, Too wise for selfish bigots; let his page Which charms the chosen spirits of the time, Fold itself up for the serener clime Of years to come, and find its recompense In that just expectation.—Wit and sense, Virtue and human knowledge; all that might Make this dull world a business of delight, Are all combined in Horace Smith.—And these With some exceptions, which I need not tease Your patience by descanting on, are all You and I know in London.

I recall My thoughts, and bid you look upon the night.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The wife of Thomas Love Peacock, a lady of Welsh birth.

As water does a sponge, so the moonlight Fills the void, hollow, universal air— What see you?—unpavilion'd heaven is fair Whether the moon, into her chamber gone, Leaves midnight to the golden stars, or wan Climbs with diminish'd beams the azure steep; Or whether clouds sail o'er the inverse deep, Piloted by the many wandering blast, And the rare stars rush through them, dim and fast :---All this is beautiful in every land.— But what see you beside?—a shabby stand Of Hackney coaches—a brick house or wall Fencing some lonely court, white with the scrawl Of our unhappy politics;—or worse— A wretched woman reeling by, whose curse Mix'd with the watchman's, partner of her trade, You must accept in place of serenade— Or yellow-haired Pollonia murmuring To Henry, some unutterable thing. I see a chaos of green leaves and fruit Built round dark caverns, even to the root Of the living stems who feed them—in whose bowers There sleep in their dark dew the folded flowers; Beyond, the surface of the unsickled corn Trembles not in the slumbering air, and borne In circles quaint, and ever changing dance, Like wingèd stars the fire-flies flash and glance, Pale in the open moonshine, but each one Under the dark trees seems a little sun. A meteor tamed; a fix'd star gone astray From the silver regions of the milky way;— Afar the Contadino's song is heard, Rude, but made sweet by distance—and a bird Which cannot be a Nightingale, and yet I know none else that sings so sweet as it At this late hour;—and then all is still— Now Italy or London, which you will!

Next winter you must pass with me; I'll have
My house by that time turned into a grave
Of dead despondence and low-thoughted care,
And all the dreams which our tormentors are.
Oh that Hunt, Hogg, Peacock, and Smith were
there,

We will have books, Spanish, Italian, Greek,
And ask one week to make another week
As like his father, as I'm unlike mine.
Which is not his fault, as you may divine.
Though we eat little flesh and drink no wine,
Yet let's be merry: we'll have tea and toast;
Custards for supper, and an endless host
Of syllabubs and jellies and mince-pies,
And other such lady-like luxuries,—
Feasting on which we will philosophize!
And we'll have fires out of the Grand Duke's wood,

To thaw the six weeks' winter in our blood.

And then we'll talk;—what shall we talk about?

Oh! there are themes enough for many a bout

Of thought-entangled descant;—as to nerves—

With cones and parallelograms and curves

I've sworn to strangle them if once they dare

To bother me—when you are with me there.

And they shall never more sip laudanum

From Helicon or Himeros; 1—well, come,

And in despite of God and of the devil,

We'll make our friendly philosophic revel

Outlast the leafless time; till buds and flowers

Warn the obscure inevitable hours,

Sweet meeting by sad parting to renew;—

"To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new.")

<sup>1 &#</sup>x27;Imepos, from which the river Himera was named, is, with some slight shade of difference, a synonym of Love.

#### LEGHORN,

July 12, 1820.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

I remember you said that when Auber married you were afraid you would see or hear but little of him. "There are two voices," says Wordsworth, "one of the mountains and one of the sea, both a mighty voice." So you have two wives—one of the mountains, all of whose claims I perfectly admit, whose displeasure I deprecate, and from whom I feel assured that I have nothing to fear: the other of the sea, the India House, who perhaps, makes you write so much, that I suppose you have not a scrawl to spare. I make bold to write to you on the news that you are correcting my "Prometheus," for which I return thanks, and I send some things which may be added. I hear of you from Mr. Gisborne, but from you I do not hear. Well, how go the funds and the romance? Cobbet[t]'s euthanasia seems approaching, and I suppose you will have some rough festivals at the apotheosis of the Debt.

Nothing, I think, shows the generous gullibility of the English nation more than their having adopted her Sacred Majesty as the heroine of the day, in spite of all their prejudices and bigotry. I, for my part, of course wish no harm to happen to her, even if she has, as I firmly believe, amused herself in a manner rather indecorous with any courier or baron. But I cannot help adverting to it as one of the absurdities of royalty, that a vulgar woman, with all those low tastes which prejudice considers as vices, and a person whose habits and manners everyone would shun in private life, without any redeeming virtues should be turned into a heroine, because she is a queen, or, as a collateral reason, because her husband is a king; and he, no less than his ministers, are so odious that everything,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Evidently "Maid Marian," which Peacock had completed, with the exception of the last chapter, by the beginning of 1819. The story was published in 1822.

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# XVIII. PISA. THE BATHS OF SAN GIULIANO "EPIPSYCHIDION," "ADONAIS"

July 20, 1820—July 19, 1821

"CHARLES the First"—Mrs. Mason—The Neapolitan Rising—A Letter to John Keats—Godwin's Affairs—Robert Southey and the Quarterly Article—Allegra and Byron—Clare Clairmont at Florence—Letter to the Quarterly Review—Pacchiani—Keats's Poetry—Barry Cornwall's Verses—The Flood at the Baths—Emilia Viviani—The "Epipsychidion"—Sgricci the Improvisatore—"A Defence of Poetry"—Prince Mavrocordato—Dr. Hume—A Boat Accident—"Adonais"—"Queen Mab" Pirated.

374. To THOMAS MEDWIN (Milan (re-addressed to Geneva))

PISA,

July 20, 1820.

MY DEAR MEDWIN,

I wrote to you a day or two ago at Geneva. I have since received your letter from the mountains. How much I envy you, or rather how much I sympathise in the delights of your wandering. I have a passion for such expeditions, although partly the capriciousness of my health, and partly the want of the incitement of a companion, keep me at home. I see the mountains, the sky, and the trees from my windows, and recollect, as an old man does the mistress of his youth, the raptures of a more familiar intercourse; but without his regrets, for their forms are yet living in my mind.

I hope you will not pass Tuscany, leaving your promised visit unpaid. I leave it to you to make the project of taking up your abode with such an animal of the other world as I am, agreeable to your friend; but Mrs. Shelley unites with me in assuring both yourself and him, that whatever else may be found deficient, a sincere welcome is at least in waiting for you.

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I am delighted with your approbation of my "Cenci," and am encouraged to wish to present you with "Prometheus Unbound," a drama also, but a composition of a totally different character. I do not know if it be wise to affect variety in compositions, or whether the attempt to excel in many ways does not debar from excellence in one particular kind. "Prometheus Unbound," is in the merest spirit of ideal Poetry, and not, as the name would indicate, a mere imitation of the Greek drama, or indeed if I have been successful, is it an imitation of anything. But you will judge—I hear it is just printed, and I probably shall receive copies from England before I see you. Your objections to "The Cenci" as to the introduction of the name of God is good, inasmuch as the play is addressed to a Protestant people; but we Catholics speak eternally and familiarly of the first person of the Trinity; and amongst us religion is more interwoven with, and is less extraneous to, the system of ordinary life. As to Cenci's curse\_I know not whether I can defend it or no. I wish I may be able, since, as it often happens respecting the worst part of an author's work, it is a particular favourite with me. I prided myself as since your approbation I hope that I had just cause to do, upon the two concluding lines of the play. I confess I cannot approve of the squeamishness which excludes the exhibition of such subjects from the scene (a squeamishness the produce, as I firmly believe, of a lower tone of the public mind, and foreign to the majestic and confident wisdom of the golden age of our country). What think you of my boldness? I mean to write a play, in the spirit of human nature, without prejudice or passion, entitled "Charles the First." 2 So vanity intoxicates people; but let those few who praise my verses,

Shelley only wrote a few scenes of this play.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This sentence in brackets, was printed by Trelawny without comment. Mr. William Brown of Edinburgh, who has kindly compared Trelawny's copy with the original in his possession, states that it was scored out, presumably, by Shelley, and that the words in italics are indecipherable to him.

and in whose approbation I take so much delight, answer for the sin.

I wonder what in the world the Queen has done. I should not wonder, after the whispers I have heard, to find that the Green Bag contained evidence that she had imitated Pasiphäe, and that the Committee should recommend to Parliament a bill to exclude all Minotaurs from the succession. What silly stuff is this to employ a great nation about. I wish the King and the Queen, like Punch and his wife, would fight out their disputes in person.

What is very strange I can in no manner discover your parcels—I never knew anything more unfortunate. Klieber sends me your letters regularly (which, by-the-bye, I wish in future you would direct to Pisa, as I have no money business now in Florence), but he has heard of no parcel or book.

This warm weather agrees excellently with me; I only wish it would last all the year. Many things both to say and to hear be referred until we meet.

Your affectionate friend, P. B. S.

375. To Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (Leghorn)

CASA SILVA [PISA], SUNDAY MORN[ING], July 23, 1820. 1

MY DEAR LOVE,

I believe I shall have taken a very pleasant and spacious

<sup>1</sup> The date of this letter was originally given as July 20, 1821, but Mr. Forman has shown that there is every reason for supposin; it was written on the above date. Casa Silva, at Pisa, was the residence of Lady Mountcashell, a daughter of Lord Kingston and a former pupil of Mary Wollstonecraft. She had been for some years separated from the Earl Mountcashell, and was living as the wife of Mr. George William Tighe, a cousin of the authoress of "Psyche." Lady Mountcashell and Mr. Tighe were known as Mr. and Mrs. Mason. Her liking for the Shelleys may have been prompted by a desire to be of service to the daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft.

apartment at the Bagni for three months. It is as all the others are—dear. I shall give forty or forty-five sequins for the three months, but as yet I do not know which. I could get others something cheaper, and a great deal worse; but if we would write, it is requisite to have space.

To-morrow evening, or the following morning, you will probably see me. Mr. T[ighe] is planning a journey to England to secure his property in the event of a revolution. which, he is persuaded, is on the eve of exploding. neither believe that, nor do I fear that the consequences will be so immediately destructive to the existing forms of Money will be delayed, and the exchange social order. reduced very low, and my annuity and Mrs. M[ason]'s, on account of these being money, will be in some danger: but land is quite safe. Besides, it will not be so rapid. Let us hope we shall have a reform. Mr. T[ighe] will be lulled into security, while the slow progress of things is still flowing on, after this affair of the Queen 1 may appear to be blown over. There is bad news from Palermo: the soldiers resisted the people, and a terrible slaughter, amounting, it is said, to four thousand men, ensued. The event, however, was as it should be. Sicily, like Naples, is By the brief and partial accounts of the Florence paper, it appears that the enthusiasm of the people was prodigious, and that the women fought from the houses, raining down boiling oil on the assailants.

I am promised a bill on Vienna on the 5th, the day on which my note will be paid, and the day on which I propose to leave Leghorn. Mrs. M[ason] is very unhappy at the idea of T[ighe]'s going to England, though she seems to feel the necessity of it. Some time or other he must go to settle his affairs, and they seem to agree that this is the best opportunity. I have no thought of leaving Italy. The best thing we can do is to save money, and, if things take a decided turn (which I am convinced they will at

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The trial of Queen Caroline,

last, but not perhaps for two or three years,) it will be time for me to assert my rights, and preserve my annuity. Meanwhile, another event may decide us. Kiss sweet babe, and kiss yourself for me—I love you affectionately.

P. B. S.

Sunday Evening.

I have taken the house 1 for forty sequins for three months—a good bargain, and a very good house as things go—this is about thirteen sequins a-month. To-morrow I go to look over the inventory; expect me therefore on Tuesday morning.

# 376. To John Keats (Hampstead)

PISA,

27 July, 1820.

### My DEAR KEATS,

I hear with great pain the dangerous accident that you have undergone, and Mr. Gisborne who gives me the account of it, adds that you continue to wear a consumptive appearance. This consumption is a disease particularly fond of people who write such good verses as you have done, and with the assistance of an English winter it can often

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Shelley says that they "spent the summer [of 1820] at the Baths of San Giuliano, four miles from Pisa. These Baths were of great use to Shelley in soothing his nervous irritability. During some of the hottest days of August, Shelley made a solitary journey on foot to the summit of Monte San Pelegrino—a mountain of some height, on the top of which there is a chapel, the object, during certain days of the year of many pilgrimages. The excursion delighted him while it lasted, though he exerted himself too much, and the effect was considerable lassitude and weakness on his return. During the expedition he conceived the idea and wrote in the three days immediately succeeding to his return, "The Witch of Atlas." The Shelleys arrived at the house Casa Prinni, which they had taken at the Baths for three months, on August 5, 1820.

indulge its selection;—I do not think that young and amiable poets are at all bound to gratify its taste; they have entered into no bond with the Muses to that effect. But seriously (for I am joking on what I am very anxious about) I think you would do well to pass the winter after so tremendous an accident, in Italy, and if you think it as necessary as I do so long as you could [find] Pisa or its neighbourhood agreeable to you, Mrs. Shelley unites with myself in urging the request, that you would take up your residence with us. You might come by sea to Leghorn (France is not worth seeing, and the sea is particularly good for weak lungs), which is within a few miles of us. You ought at at all events, to see Italy, and your health, which I suggest as a motive, might be an excuse to you. I spare declamation about the statues, and the paintings, and the ruins—and what is a greater piece of forbearance—about the mountains streams and the fields, the colours of the sky, and the sky itself.

I have lately read your "Endymion" again and ever with a new sense of the treasures of poetry it contains, though treasures poured forth with indistinct profusion. This, people in general will not endure, and that is the cause of the comparatively few copies which have been sold. I feel persuaded that you are capable of the greatest things, so you but will.

I always tell Ollier to send you copies of my books.—
"Prometheus Unbound" I imagine you will receive nearly at the same time with this letter. "The Cenci" I hope you have already received—it was studiously composed in a different style

"Below the good how far? but far above the great."

In poetry I have sought to avoid system and mannerism; I wish those who excel me in genius would pursue the same plan.

Whether you remain in England, or journey to Italy,—believe that you carry with you my anxious wishes for your

health, happiness and success wherever you are, or whatever you undertake, and that I am, yours sincerely,

[Addressed outside],

P. B. SHELLEY. 1

JOHN KEATS, Esq.,

(to the care of Leigh Hunt, Esq.),

Examiner Office, Catharine Street, Strand, London. Angleterre.

MY DEAR SHELLEY,

I am very much gratified that you, in a foreign country, and with a mind almost over-occupied, should write to me in the strain of the letter beside me. If I do not take advantage of your invitation, it will be prevented by a circumstance I have very much to heart to prophesy. There is no doubt that an English winter would put an end to me, and do so in a lingering hateful manner. Therefore, I must either voyage or journey to Italy, as a soldier marches up to a battery. My nerves at present are the worst part of me, yet they feel soothed that, come what extreme may, I shall not be destined to remain in one spot long enough to take a hatred of any four particular bedposts. I am glad you take any pleasure in my poor poem, which I would willingly take the trouble to unwrite, if possible, did I care so much as I have done about reputation. I received a copy of "The Cenci," as from yourself, from Hunt. There is only one part of it I am judge of—the poetry and dramatic effect, which by many spirits nowadays is considered the Mammon. A modern work, it is said, must have a purpose, which may be the God. artist must serve Mammon; he must have "self-concentration" selfishness, perhaps. You, I am sure, will forgive me for sincerely remarking that you might curb your magnanimity, and be more of an artist, and load every rift of your subject with ore. thought of such discipline must fall like cold chains upon you, who perhaps never sat with your wings furled for six months together. And is this not extraordinary talk for the writer of "Endymion," whose mind was like a pack of scattered cards? I am picked up and sorted to a pip. My imagination is a monastery, and I am its monk. I am in expectation of "Prometheus" every day. Could I have my own wish effected, you would have it still in manuscript, or be now putting an end to the second act. I remember you advising me not to publish my first blights on Hampstead Heath. I am returning advice upon your hands. Most of the poems in the volume I send you, (1) have been written above two years, and would never have been published but for hope of gain; so you see I am inclined enough to take your advice now. I must express once more my deep sense of your kindness, adding my sincere thanks and respects for Mrs. Shelley. In the hope of soon seeing you,

I remain most sincerely yours, John Keats.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Keats sent the following reply to this letter— HAMPSTEAD, August, 1820.

<sup>(1) &</sup>quot;Lamia," "Isabella," etc., 1820.

#### 377. To WILLIAM GODWIN

PISA.

August 7, 1820.

SIR.

The purport of this letter is to inform you that I cannot comply with the request contained in yours dated July 21st, and that you ought not to depend on me for any further pecuniary assistance at the present moment.—My affairs are in a state of the most complicated embarrassment: added to which I am surrounded by circumstances in which any diminution of my very limited resources might involve me in personal peril. I fear that you and I are not on such terms as to justify me in exposing to you the actual state of my delicate and emergent situation which the most sacred considerations imperiously require me to conceal from Mary; be it sufficient, without entering into the subject now present to my mind, to state the question in such a manner that any entire stranger who should chance to peruse this letter might without reference to these circumstances perceive that I am justified in withholding my assent to your request. I cannot comply, but it will be an additional consolation to me to have shown that I ought not.

I have given you within a few years the amount of a considerable fortune, and have destituted myself for the purpose of realising it of nearly four times the amount. Except for the goodwill which this transaction seems to have produced between you and me, this money, for any advantage it ever conferred on you, might as well have been thrown into the seas. Had I kept in my own hands this £4,000 or £5,000 and administered it in trust for your permanent advantage, I should have been indeed your benefactor. The error, however, was greater in the man of mature age, extensive experience, and penetrating intellect than in the crude and impetuous boy. Such an error is seldom committed twice.

You tell me that I promised to give you £500 out of my

income of the present year. Never, certainly. How is it possible that you should assert such a mistake? have said I could, or that I would if I thought it necessary. I might have been so foolish as to say this; but I must have been mad to have promised what you allege. Thus much at once on the subject of promises. I never but in one instance promised anything unconditionally. And the conditions were, first, that I should be able to perform my engagement; and, secondly, that the great sacrifices at which alone it could ever be performed by me should be made available to some adequate and decisive advantage to result to you; such for instance as the compromise of the suit now pending. Had Mr. Gisborne advanced the money, according to the terms proposed by me, its application to this purpose alone would have been secured.

In October, 1819, you wrote to say that the verdict of a jury had been obtained against you for something between £600 and £2,000; and that if you had £500 you believed that you could compromise the claim founded upon that My first impulse was—that I would do everything verdict. I could to serve you; as much as that I certainly expressed under a belief of the emergency of your situation. But in fact I could do nothing. A year passes over, and after the decision in a court of common law, the affair remains stationary. Nothing is more unlikely than that, if your opponents can show a legal claim to this ever-increasing sum, they will compromise that claim for a fourth of the whole amount which has accrued. Nothing is more absurd than to pay the sum in question, if they cannot show this legal claim, with a reserve of a liability for the entire sum to those claimants in whose favour the property may be finally adjudged. The affair seems to me a mass of improbabilities and absurdities. You still urge the request of £500. You would take anything in the shape of it that would compel me to make the great sacrifices (if indeed now it be not impossible) of paying it from my income, without—you must allow me to say—a due regard to the proportion borne by your accommodation to my immediate loss or even your own ultimate advantage. If you had bills on my income for the sum how would you procure money on them? My credit, except among those friends from whom I never will ask a pecuniary favour. certainly would not suffice to raise it, and your own name is worth as little or less in the money market. That my bills would tell for something, I do not doubt. And when you had procured this money—this £400—what would be done with it? What is become of the £100 already advanced by Horace Smith? Put your hand upon your heart and tell me where it is. In a letter written after your receipt of this sum you state with the most circumlocutory force of expression, and as if you were anxious to leave yourself no outlet for escape, that you have never received a single farthing. This, of course, was only meant for immediate effect, and not for the purpose of ultimately leading into error, and is only a part of that system you pursue of sacrificing all interests to the present one. Suppose after this I were to involve myself in the chance of destruction, to defraud my creditors of what is justly theirs, to withhold their due from those to whom I am the only source of happiness and misery, and send you those The weakness and wickedness of my conduct would admit of some palliation if the money they produced were reserved for the attempt at compromise and re-transmitted to me the moment that attempt, as it must, should fail. Sir Philip Sidney, when dying, and consumed with thirst, gave the helmet of water which was brought to him to the wounded soldier who stood beside him. It would not have been generosity but folly had he poured it on the ground, as you would that I should the wrecks of my once prosperous fortune.

So much for the benefit which you would derive from my concession of your request. The evils—exclusive of that circumstance which makes concession absolutely impossible—were to me immense. I have creditors whose claims

amount nearly to £2,000: some of whom are exceedingly importunate; others suffering perhaps more than you suffer, from the delays which my impoverished condition and limited income have compelled me to assign, others threatening to institute a legal process against me, which, not to speak of the ruinous expense connected with it, would expose my name to an obloquy from which you must excuse me if I endeavour to preserve it. Amongst these creditors is the annuitant from whom I procured money to meet Hogan's claim on you, at 25 per cent., and the interest on which you pledged yourself, but have neglected, to pay. To all, or any one of these objects the excess of my income over my expenditure is most justly due.

In case any such reverse as bankruptcy happening to yourself, a circumstance which sometimes surprises the most prosperous concern, and infinitely probable in an embarrassed business conducted by a person wholly ignorant of trade, how would you regret my folly in not having been now severely just?

If you are sincere with me on this subject, why instead of seeking to plunge one person already half ruined for your sake into deeper ruin, do you not procure the £400 by your own active powers? A person of your extraordinary accomplishments might easily obtain from the booksellers for the promise of a novel, a sum exceeding this amount. Your answer to Malthus would sell at least for £400. Half the care and thought bestowed upon this honourable exertion of the highest faculties of our nature would have rewarded you more largely than dependence on a person whose precarious situation and ruined fortunes make dependence a curse to both.

Mary is now giving suck to her infant, in whose life, after the frightful events of the last two years, her own seems wholly to be bound up. Your letters from their style and spirit (such is your erroneous notion of taste) never fail to produce an appalling effect on her frame. On one occasion agitation of mind produced through her a disorder

in the child, similar to that which destroyed our little girl two years ago. The disorder was prolonged by the alarm which it occasioned, until by the utmost efforts of medical skill and care it was restored to health. On that occasion Mary at my request authorised me to intercept such letters or information as I might judge likely to disturb her mind. That discretion I have exercised with the letter to which this is a reply. The correspondence, therefore, rests between you and me, if you should consider any further discussion of a similar nature with that in which you have lately been engaged with Mary necessary after the full explanation which I have given of my views, and the unalterable decision which I have pronounced. Nor must the correspondence with your daughter on a similar subject be renewed. It was even wholly improper and might lead to serious imputations against both herself and you, which it is important for her honour as well as for yours that I should not only repel but prevent. She has not, nor ought she to have, the disposal of money; if she had, poor thing, she would give it all to you.

Such a father (I mean a man of such high genius) can be at no loss to find subjects on which to address such a daughter. Do not let me be thought to dictate, but I can only convey to her such letters as are consistent with her peace to read, such as you once proposed to write, containing—

[The remainder of this letter is missing.] 1

378. To Robert Southey

PISA.

August 17, 1820.

DEAR SIR,

Allow me to acknowledge the sincere pleasure which ]

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;This scurrilous letter," as Godwin described it to Mrs. Gisborne, did not close the correspondence, as the extract from a letter written a month later will show. (See No. 379.)

received from the first paragraph of your letter. The disavowal it contained was just such as I firmly anticipated. 1

Allow me also to assure you that no menace employed in my letter could have the remotest application to yourself. I am not indeed aware that it contained any menace. I recollect expressing what contempt I felt, in the hope that you might meet the wretched hireling, who has so closely imitated your style as to deceive all but those who knew you into a belief that he was you, at Murray's or somewhere, and that you would inflict my letter on him as a recompense for sowing ill-will between those who wish each other all good, as you and I do.

I confess your recommendation to adopt the system of ideas you call Christianity has little weight with me, whether you mean the popular superstition in all its articles, or some other more refined theory with respect to those events and opinions which put an end to the graceful religion of the Greeks. To judge of the doctrines by their effects, one would think that this religion were called the religion of Christ and Charity ut lucus a non lucendo, when I consider the manner in which they seem to have transformed the disposition and understanding of you and men of the most amiable manners and the highest accomplishments, so that even when recommending Christianity you cannot forbear breathing out defiance, against the express words of Christ. What would you have me think? You accuse me, on what evidence I cannot guess, of guilt—a bold word, sir, this, and one which would have required me to write to you in another tone had you addressed it to anyone except myself. Instead, therefore, of refraining from "judging that you

¹ Southey had replied to Shelley's previous letter (p. 787), "I have never in any of my writings mentioned your name, or alluded to you even in the remotest hint, either as a man or an author. Except the 'Alastor,' which you sent me, I have never read or seen any of your publications since you were at Keswick." [From the correspondence of Southey and Shelley in the appendix to "Southey's Correspondence with Caroline Bowles," edited by Professor Dowden, who has kindly allowed me to reprint Shelley's letters to Southey.]

be not judged," you not only judge but condemn, and that to a punishment which its victim must be either among the meanest or the loftiest not to regard as bitterer than death. But you are such a pure one as Jesus Christ found not in all Judea to throw the first stone against the woman taken in adultery!

With what care do the most tyrannical Courts of Judicature weigh evidence, and surround the accused with protecting forms; with what reluctance do they pronounce their cruel and presumptuous decisions compared with you! you select a single passage out of a life otherwise not only spotless, but spent in an impassioned pursuit of virtue, which looks like a blot, merely because I regulated my domestic arrangements without deferring to the notions of the vulgar, although I might have done so quite as conveniently had I descended to their base thoughts—this you call guilt. I might answer you in another manner, but I take God to witness, if such a Being is now regarding both you and me, and I pledge myself if we meet, as perhaps you expect, before Him after death, to repeat the same in His presence—that you accuse me wrongfully. innocent of ill, either done or intended; the consequences you allude to flowed in no respect from me. If you were my friend I could tell you a history that would make you open your eyes; but I shall certainly never make the public my familiar confidant.

You say you judge of opinions by the fruits; so do I, but by their remote and permanent fruits—such fruits of rash judgment as Christianity seems to have produced in you. The immediate fruits of all new opinions are indeed calamity to the promulgators and professors; but we are the end of nothing, and it is in acting well, in contempt of present advantage, that virtue consists.

I need not to be instructed that the opinion of the ruling

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mr. Rossetti thinks Shelley's meaning was, that while still retaining his wife, he could have set up a mistress as well.

party, to which you have attached yourself, always exacts, contumeliously receives, and never reciprocates toleration. But "there is a tide in the affairs of men"—it is rising while we speak.

Another specimen of your Christianity is the judgment you form of the spirit of my verses from the abuse of the Reviews. <sup>1</sup> I have desired Mr. Ollier to send you those last published; they may amuse you, for one of them—indeed neither of them have anything to do with those speculations on which we differ.

I cannot hope that you will be candid enough to feel, or, if you feel, to own that you have done ill in accusing, even in your mind, an innocent and a persecuted man, whose only real offence is the holding opinions something similar to those which you once held respecting the existing state of society. Without this, further correspondence, the object for which I renewed it being once obtained, must, from the differences in our judgment, be irksome and useless. I hope some day to meet you in London, and ten minutes' conversation is worth ten folios of writing. Meanwhile assure yourself that among all your good wishers, you have none who wish you better than, dear Sir,

Your very faithful and obedient servant,

P. B. SHELLEY.

P.S.—I ought not to omit that I have had sickness enough, and that at this moment I have so severe a pain in my side that I can hardly write. All this is of no account in the favour of what you or anyone else calls Christianity; surely it would be better to wish me health and healthful

¹ Southey had written, "The specimens which I have happened to see in reviews and newspapers have confirmed my opinion that your powers for poetry are of a high order; but the manner in which those powers have been employed is such as to prevent me from feeling any desire to see more of productions so monstrous in their kind, and pernicious in their tendency."

sensations. I hope the chickens will not come home to roost. 1

#### 379. To WILLIAM GODWIN

September, 1820.

(Fragment)

I should be sorry to have said anything that wears the appearance of a threat; but imperious events compel one to foretell the consequences of your attempting to agitate her [Mary's] mind. I need not tell you that the neglecting entirely to write to your daughter from the moment that nothing could be gained by it would admit of but one interpretation. You may address me as usual; . . . allow me to express the hope that you will write to me from time to time a frank account of the state of your affairs, and that you will consider my will to assist as only limited by my power.

## 380. To Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (Bagni di San Giuliano)

[LEGHORN], CASA RICCI, Sep[tember] 1, 1820.

I am afraid, my dearest, that I shall not be able to be with you so soon as to-morrow evening, though I shall use every exertion. Del Rosso I have not seen, nor shall until this evening. Jackson, I have, and he is to drink tea with us this evening, and bring the *Constitutionnel*.

You will have seen the papers, but I doubt that they will not contain the latest and most important news. It is certain, by private letters from merchants, that a serious insurrection has broken out at Paris, and the *reports* last night are, that an attack made by the populace on the Tuileries still continued when the last accounts came away. At Naples the constitutional party have declared to the Austrian minister, that if the Emperor should make war

<sup>1</sup> In reference to the motto on the title-page of "The Curse of Kehama,"—"Curses are like young chickens, they always come home to roost."

on them, their first action would be to put to death all the members of the royal family—a necessary and most just measure, when the forces of the combatants, as well as the merits of their respective causes, are so unequal. That kings should be everywhere the hostages for liberty were admirable.

What will become of the Gisbornes, or of the English at Paris? How soon will England itself, and perhaps Italy, be caught by the sacred fire? And what, to come from the solar system to a grain of sand, shall we do?

Kiss babe for me, and your own self. I am somewhat better, but my side still vexes me—a little.

Your affectionate S

# 381. To LORD BYRON 1 (Ravenna)

PISA,

Sep[tember] 17, 1820.

MY DEAR LORD BYRON,

I have no conception of what Clare's letter to you contains, and but an imperfect one of the subject of her correspondence with you at all. One or two of her letters, but not

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Clare had not seen Allegra since she parted from her at Este in Oct., 1818. In Jan., 1819, Mary heard from Mrs. Hoppner that the child had been entrusted by her, with Byron's consent, to a maid of her choice, and that she suffered constantly from the cold. Four months later, Clare was informed of Mrs. Vavassour's proposal to adopt and provide for Allegra—a proposal to which, involving as it did the entire surrender of his paternal authority, Byron refused to accede." (Dowden's "Shelley," II, p. 328.) Byron left Venice towards the end of the year 1819, and postponed his visit to England on account of Allegra's health. (Prothero, "Byron's Letters," IV, 389.) By Dec. 31st he had taken the child with him to the Palazzo Guiceioli at Ravenna. Not having heard any tidings of Allegra for some time, Clare sent an appeal to Byron through the Hoppners to be allowed to see her. To this appeal Byron said in a letter to Hoppner, for Clare's benefit, that he so totally disapproved of the mode of children's treatment in the Shelleys' family, that he should look upon the child as going into a hospital if he allowed them to take charge of her; and he asks "Have they reared one?" He speaks of her health as being excellent, her temper

lately, I have indeed seen; but as I thought them extremely childish and absurd, and requested her not to send them, and she afterwards told me that she had written and sent others in place of them, I cannot tell if those which I saw on that occasion were sent to you or not. I wonder, however, at your being provoked at what Clare writes; though that she should write what is provoking is very probable. You are conscious of performing your duty to Allegra, and your refusal to allow her to visit Clare at this distance you conceive to be part of that duty. That Clare should have wished to see her is natural. That her disappointment should vex her, and her vexation make her write absurdly, is

as not bad, and that though sometimes vain and obstinate he hoped to remedy these defects by education in England or in a convent. He adds that the child shall not quit him again "to perish of starvation, and green fruit, or be taught to believe that there is no Deity," and that Clare can always have her with her "whenever there is convenience of vicinity and access . . . otherwise no. It was so stipulated from the beginning." (Prothero's "Byron," V, 15.) The substance of these remarks was conveyed in a letter by Mrs. Hoppner which Clare describes in her journal on April 30 as "concerning green fruit and God." On May 1st she notes: "Send a letter to Madame Hoppner with a letter for Ravenna." Professor Dowden prints the following from a rough draft in Clare's handwriting which probably formed a part of this enclosure for Byron. "I beg from you the indulgence of a visit from my child, because that I am weaker every day and more miserable. I have already proved in ten thousand ways that I have so loved her as to have commanded, nay, to have destroyed, such of my feelings as would have been injurious to her welfare. You answer my request by menacing, if I do not continue to suffer in silence, that you will inflict the greatest of all evils on my child—you threaten to put her in a convent where she will be equally divided from us both. . . . This calls to my remembrance the story in the Bible, where Solomon judges between the two women; the false parent was willing the child should be divided, but the feelings of the real one made her consent to any deprivation rather than her child should be destroyed; so I am willing to undergo any infliction rather than her whole life should (Dowden's "Shelley," II, 329.) Byron's answer was addressed to Shelley, who replied on May 26, 1820, condemning its harsh tone, but admitting the wisdom of separating the mother and (Prothero's "Byron," V, 14.) On Aug. 25, 1820, Byron wrote declining all correspondence with Clare, consequently the office of seeking for intelligence about Allegra, and receiving it, fell upon Shelley.

all in the usual order of things. But, poor thing, she is very unhappy and in bad health, and she ought to be treated with as much indulgence as possible. The weak and the foolish are in this respect like kings; they can do no wrong.

I think I have said enough to excuse myself for declining to be the instrument of the communication of her wishes or sentiments to you; of course I should be always happy to convey yours to her. But at present I do not see that you need trouble yourself further than to take care that she should receive regular intelligence of Allegra's health, etc. You can write to me, or make your secretary write to her (as you do not like writing yourself), or arrange it in any manner most convenient to yourself. Of course I should be happy to hear from you on any subject.

Galignani tells us that on the 17th of August you arrived in London, and immediately drove to the Queen's house with dispatches from Italy. If your wraith indited the note which I received, he will also receive this answer. Do you take no part in the important nothings which the most powerful assembly in the world is now engaged in weighing with such ridiculous deliberation? At least, if ministers fail in their object, shall you or not return as candidate for any part of the power they will lose? Their successors, I hope, and you, if you will be one of them, will exert that power to other purposes than their's. As to me, I remain in Italy for the present. If you really go to England, and leave Allegra in Italy, I think you had better arrange so that Clare might see Allegra in your absence if she please. The objections now existing against a visit either to or from her, would be then suspended, and such a concession would prevent all future contention on the subject. People only desire with great eagerness that which is forbidden or withheld. Besides that, you should shew yourself above taking offence at anything she has written, which of course you are.

It would give me great pleasure to hear from you, and

to receive news of more cantos of "Don Juan," or something else. You have starved us lately.

Mrs. S. unites with me in best regards, and I remain, my dear Lord Byron,

Your very sincere, etc.

Percy B. Shelley.

P.S.—If I were to go to the Levant or Greece, could you be of any service to me? If so, I should be very much obliged to you.

#### 382. To Amelia Curran

Pisa,

Sep[tember] 17, 1820.

### Fragment

of a letter in which Shelley excuses himself for probably not having answered a letter; has just got into a habit of entrusting Mrs. Shelley with his correspondence.

"believing that my friends would be quite as well pleased to hear from her as from me. . . Do you know of the absurd proceeding in England and the minute lever which has moved our moral countrymen? My only hope is that the mistake into which the ministers have fallen will precipitate them into ruin; whoever may be their successors in power, it is impossible that they should exercise it worse." . . .

# 383. To Clara Mary Jane Clairmont<sup>2</sup> (Florence)

PISA,

October 29, 1820.

MY DEAREST CLARE,

I wrote to you a kind of a scrawl the other day merely

<sup>1</sup> The impeachment of Queen Caroline.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Clare Clairmont, acting on the advice of Mrs. Mason, had accepted the situation of governess in the family of Professor

to show that I had not forgotten you, and as it was taxed with a postscript by Mary, it contained nothing that I wished it to contain. Mrs. Mason has just given me your letter brought by the Tantinis. 1 I called on the Tantinis last night, and am pained to find that they confirm the intelligence of your letter. They tell me that you looked very melancholy and disconsolate, which they imputed to the weather. You must indeed be very uncomfortable for it to become visible to them. Keep up your spirit, my best But for Mrs. Mason, I should girl, until we meet at Pisa. say, come back immediately and give up a place so inconsistent with your feelings—as it is, I fear you had better endure—at least until you come here. You know, however, whatever you shall determine on, where to find one ever affectionate Friend, to whom your absence is too painful for your return ever to be unwelcome. I think it moreover for your own interest to observe certain ——. introductions, believe me I will try my best. I have seen little lately of Mrs. M[ason], nor when one sees her is it easy to nail her attention to what you wish to say, unless you make a direct demand, which in the present case I can hardly do. Medwin's friends<sup>2</sup> are yet to come. I feel almost certain on their arrival of being able to get introductions of some sort or other for you from him. I have

Bojti at Florence, to which place Shelley had accompanied her on October 20. He returned two days later to the Baths, and found that Thomas Medwin, his cousin and former schoolfellow, had arrived. "It was nearly seven years since we parted," says Medwin, "but I should immediately have recognized him in a crowd. His figure was emaciated and somewhat bent, owing to near-sightedness and his being forced to lean over his books with his eyes almost touching them; his hair, still profuse and curling naturally, was partially interspersed with grey; but his appearance was youthful, and his countenance, whether grave or animated, strikingly intellectual. There was also a freshness and purity in his complexion that he never lost."—Medwin's "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 2.

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Dowden says that on Oct. 28 Shelley had come to Pisa to engage lodgings.

<sup>8</sup> Captain and Mrs. Williams.

not yet spoken to him of it, but I know that he would do all in his power.

I have suffered within this last week a violent access of my disease, with a return of those spasms that I used to have. I am consoled by the persuasion that the seat of the disease is in the kidneys, and consequently not mortal. As to the pain, I care little for it; but the nervous irritability which it leaves is a great and serious evil to me, and which, if not incessantly combated by myself and soothed by others, would leave me nothing but torment in life.— I am now much better. Medwin's cheerful conversation is of some use to me, but what would it be to your sweet consolation, my own Clare?

We are now removed to a lodging on the Lung Arno, which is sufficiently commodious, and for which we pay thirteen sequins a month. It is next door to that marble palace, and is called Palazzo Galetti, consisting of an excellent mezzanino, and of two rooms on the fourth story, all to the south, and with two fireplaces. The rooms above, one of which is Medwin's room and the other my study (congratulate me on my seclusion) are delightfully pleasant, and to-day I shall be employed in arranging my books and gathering my papers about me. Mary has a very good room below, and there is plenty of space for the babe. I expect the water of Pisa to relieve me, if indeed the disease be what is conjectured.

I have read or written nothing lately, having been much occupied by my sufferings, and by Medwin, who relates wonderful and interesting things of the interior of India. We have also been talking of a plan to be accomplished with a friend of his, a man of large fortune, who will be at Leghorn next Spring, and who designs to visit Greece, Syria, and Egypt in his own ship. This man has conceived a great admiration for my verses, and wishes above all

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> They left the Baths of San Giuliano on the date of this letter owing to a flood. See p. 840.

things that I could be induced to join his expedition. How far all this is practicable, considering the state of my finances I know not yet. I know that if it were it would give me the greatest pleasure, and the pleasure might be either doubled or divided by your presence or absence.

All this will be explained and determined in time; meanwhile lay to your heart what I say, and do not mention it in your letter to Mary.

The Gisbornes are acting as ill as possible about the Mr. G[isborne] wants to apply the engine to their own use, in working a bellows to cast iron, a mere scheme to defraud us. Henry came to the Bagni the other day, and I had a long and very explicit conversation with him, the result of which was that if the affairs which remained of the Steamboat were to be carried on through Mr. G[isborne], I absolutely refused to take any further part in the concern, except to receive whatever money they choose to give me as proceeding from the sale of the materials. At the same time should he decide on taking that side of the alternative, I assured him that I should take some pains to acquaint my friends with the vile treatment which I had received from him and his family. The result of the conversation was, that four hundred crowns were necessary to complete the boat, and that this sum should be raised upon the materials of the engine, and instantly applied to that purpose. I am in hopes thus, by enlisting their own interest in the concern, and showing my resolution to advance no more money to get it finished; though it is true that I risk my interest in the sale of the materials, which, if Mr. Gisborne should find some fresh scheme for preventing, the success of the enterprise would be all swallowed up in the debt then created. But at all events I should receive very little from the sale, and in this manner I may be repaid the whole.—The Gisbornes are people totally without faith.—I think they are altogether the most filthy and odious animals with which I ever came in contact.—They do not visit Mary as they promised, and

indeed if they did, I certainly should not stay in the house to receive them. I have already planned a retreat to Mrs. Mason's.

I am going to study Arabic—for a purpose and a motive as you may conceive.—I wish you would enquire for me at Florence whether there are an Arabic Grammar and Dictionary, and any other Arabic books, either printed or Manuscript, to be bought. You can first ask Dr. Bojti, and if he knows nothing, go to Molini's library and inquire of him. At all events go to Molini's and send me all the information you can pick up. I trust this to your kind love.

If I buy and pay for any I can send you scudi at the same time which I have made some ineffectual efforts to convey to Florence. Pardon me, my dearest, for mentioning scudi, and do not love me less because they are a portion of the inevitable dross of life which clings to our friendship.

Your most affectionate

SHELLEY.

384. To John Gisborne

PISA,

Oct[ober] 29, 1820.

DEAR FRIEND.

Can you tell me anything about Arabic grammars, dictionaries, and manuscripts, and whether there are any native Arabs capable of teaching the language? Do not give yourself any trouble about the subject; but if you could answer or discover an answer to these questions without any pains, I should be very much obliged to you.

My kindest regards to Mrs. G[isborne] and Henry.

Yours very truly,

P. B. SHELLEY.

385. To the Editor of the "Quarterly Review" [Pisa, 1820?]

SIR,

Should you cast your eye on the signature of this letter before you read the contents, you might imagine that they related to a slanderous paper which appeared in your Review some time since. I never notice anonymous The wretch who wrote it has doubtless the attacks. additional reward of a consciousness of his motives, besides the thirty guineas a sheet, or whatever it is that you pay Of course you cannot be answerable for all the writings which you edit, and I certainly bear you no ill-will for having edited the abuse to which I allude-indeed, I was too much amused by being compared to Pharaoh, not readily to forgive editor, printer, publisher, stitcher, or anyone, except the despicable writer, connected with something so exquisitely entertaining. Seriously speaking, I am not in the habit of permitting myself to be disturbed by what is said or written of me, though, I dare say, I may be condemned sometimes justly enough. But I feel, in respect to the writer in question, that "I am there sitting, where he durst not soar."

The case is different with the unfortunate subject of this letter, the author of "Endymion," to whose feelings and situation I entreat you to allow me to call your attention. I write considerably in the dark; but if it is Mr. Gifford that I am addressing, I am persuaded that in an appeal to his humanity and justice, he will acknowledge the fas ab hoste doceri. I am aware that the first duty of a Reviewer is towards the public, and I am willing to confess that the "Endymion" is a poem considerably defective, and that, perhaps, it deserved as much censure as the pages of your Review record against it; but, not to mention that there is certain contemptuousness of phraseology from which it is difficult for a critic to abstain, in the review of "Endymion,"

I do not think that the writer has given it its due praise. Surely the poem, with all its faults, is a very remarkable production for a man of Keats's age, and the promise of ultimate excellence is such as has rarely been afforded even by such as has afterwards attained high literary eminence. Look at book ii, line 833, etc., and book iii, line 113 to 120—read down that page, and then again from line 193. I could cite many other passages, to convince you that it deserved milder usage. Why it should have been reviewed at all, excepting for the purpose of bringing its excellences into notice, I cannot conceive, for it was very little read, and there was no danger that it should become a model to the age of that false taste, with which I confess that it is replenished.

Poor Keats was thrown into a dreadful state of mind by this review, which, I am persuaded, was not written with any intention of producing the effect, to which it has, at least, greatly contributed, of embittering his existence, and inducing a disease from which there are now but faint hopes of his recovery. The first effects are described to me to have resembled insanity, and it was by assiduous watching that he was restrained from effecting purposes of suicide. The agony of his sufferings at length produced the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs, and the usual process of consumption appears to have begun. He is coming to pay me a visit in Italy; but I fear that unless his mind can be kept tranquil, little is to be hoped from the mere influence of climate.

But let me not extort anything from your pity. I have just seen a second volume, published by him evidently in careless despair. I have desired my bookseller to send you a copy, and allow me to solicit your special attention to the fragment of a poem entitled "Hyperion," the composition of which was checked by the Review in question. The great proportion of this piece is surely in the very highest style of poetry. I speak impartially, for the canons of taste to which Keats has conformed in his other

compositions are the very reverse of my own. I leave you to judge for yourself: it would be an insult to you to suppose that from motives, however honourable, you would lend, yourself to a deception of the public.

(This letter was never sent)

#### 386. To Thomas Love Peacock

PISA,

November (probably 8), 1820.

MY DEAR PEACOCK.

I also delayed to answer your last letter, because I was waiting for something to say: or at least something that should be likely to be interesting to you. The box containing my books, and consequently your Essay against the cultivation of poetry, 1 has not arrived; my wonder, meanwhile, in what manner you support such a heresy in this matter-of-fact and money-loving age, holds me in suspense. Thank you for your kindness in correcting "Prometheus," which I am afraid gave you a great deal of trouble. Among the modern things which have reached me is a volume of poems by Keats; 2 in other respects insignificant enough, but containing the fragment of a poem called "Hyperion." I dare say you have not time to read it; but it is certainly an astonishing piece of writing, and gives me a conception of Keats which I confess I had not before.

I hear from Mr. Gisborne that you are surrounded with statements and accounts—a chaos of which you are the God; a sepulchre which encloses in a dormant state the chrysalis of the Pavonian Psyche. May you start into life some day and give us another "Melincourt." Your

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See p. 846.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and other Poems by John Keats, author of Endymion. London. Printed for Taylor & Hessey. Fleet Street. 1820." Keats's last volume, containing, besides the poems stated on the title, "Hyperion."

"Melincourt" is exceedingly admired, and I think much more so than any of your other writings. In this respect the world judges rightly. There is more of the true spirit, and an object less indefinite, than in either "Headlong Hall" or Scythrop. 1

I am, speaking literarily, infirm of purpose. I have great designs, and feeble hopes of ever accomplishing them. I read books, and, though I am ignorant enough, they seem to teach me nothing. To be sure, the reception the public have given me might [go] far enough to damp any man's enthusiasm. They teach you, it may be said, only what is Very true, I doubt not, and the more true the less agreeable. I can compare my experience in this respect to nothing but a series of wet blankets. I have been reading nothing but Greek and Spanish. Plato and Calderon have been my gods. We are in the Town of Pisa. A schoolfellow of mine from India<sup>2</sup> is staying with me, and we are beginning Arabic together. Mary is writing a novel, 3 illustrative of the manners of the Middle Ages in Italy, which she has raked out of fifty old books. I promise myself success from it; and certainly, if what is wholly original will succeed, I shall not be disappointed. A person will call on you with an order from me to deliver him the piano.—If it is at Marlow you can put him in the requisite train for getting it.

Adieu. In publica commoda peccem, si longo sermone.

Ever faithfully yours,
P. B. Shelley.

387. To James Ollier (London)

PISA,

November 10, 1820.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Gisborne has sent me a copy of the "Prometheus,"

3 "Valperga."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Peacock's "Nightmare Abbey."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> His cousin Thomas Medwin.

which is certainly most beautifully printed. It is to be regretted that the errors of the press are so numerous, and in many respects so destructive of the sense of a species of poetry which, I fear, even without this disadvantage, very few will understand or like. I shall send you the list of *errata* in a day or two.

I send some poems to be added to the pamphlet of "Julian and Maddalo." I think you have some other smaller poems belonging to that collection, and I believe you know that I do not wish my name to be printed on the title-page, though I have no objection to my being known as the author.

I enclose also another poem, which I do not wish to be printed with "Julian and Maddalo," but at the end of the second edition of "The Cenci," or of any other of my writings to which my name is affixed, if any other should at present have arrived at a second edition, which I do not expect. I have a purpose in this arrangement, and have marked the poem I mean by a cross.

I can sympathise too feelingly in your brother's misfortune. It has been my hard fate also to watch the gradual death of a beloved child, and to survive him. Present my respects to your brother.

My friend Captain Medwin is with me, and has shown me a poem on Indian hunting, which he has sent you to publish. It is certainly a very elegant and classical composition, and, even if it does not belong to the highest style of poetry, I should be surprised if it did not succeed. May I challenge your kindness to do what you can for it?

You will hear from me again in a post or two. The "Julian and Maddalo," and the accompanying poems, are

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Charles Ollier had just lost a daughter."—Lady Shelley's note.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Apparently Medwin's book entitled "Sketches in Hindoostan with other Poems," which Ollier published in 1821. The two longest poems in the volume are "The Lion Hunt" and "The Pindarees."

all my saddest verses raked up into one heap. I mean to mingle more smiles with my tears in future.

Your obedient servant,

P. B. SHELLEY.

# 388. To John Gisborne (Leghorn)

PISA,

Oggi (November, 1820).

MY DEAR SIR.

I send you the Phædon and Tacitus. I congratulate you on your conquest of the "Iliad." You must have been astonished at the perpetually increasing magnificence of the last seven books. Homer there truly begins to be himself. The battle of the Scamander, the funeral of Patroclus, and the high and solemn close of the whole bloody tale in tenderness and inexpiable sorrow, are wrought in a manner incomparable with anything of the same kind. The "Odyssey" is sweet, but there is nothing like this.

I am bathing myself in the light and odour of the flowery and starry "Autos." I have read them all more than once. Henry will tell you how much I am in love with Pacchiani. I suffer from my disease considerably.

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¹ "Calderon, in his religious 'Autos,' has attempted to fulfil some of the higher conditions of dramatic representation neglected by Shakespeare; such as the establishing a relation between the drama and religion, and the accommodating them to music and dancing; but he omits the observation of conditions still more important, and more is lost than gained by the substitution of the rigidly-defined and ever-repeated idealisms of a distorted superstition for the living impersonations of the truth of human passion."—Shelley's "Defence of Poetry."

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;Francesco Pacchiani, known in Pisa as "il diavolo Pacchiani," a man of forty-eight years old, distinguished as a chemist, was, or had lately been, a professor of physics at the University. As a young man, his experiments with the galvanic pile had filled him with hope that he had discovered a new method of producing muriatic acid; but the event did not confirm his expectations. Although still received in good society, Pacchiani had fallen in fortune and in repute. He was in orders, but his religion was that

Henry will also tell you how much, and how whimsically, he alarmed me last night.

My kindest remembrances to Mrs. Gisborne, and best wishes for your health and happiness.

Faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

I have a new Calderon coming from Paris.

# 389. To Clara Mary Jane Clairmont (Florence)

CASA GALETTI, PISA, November, Wednesday (1820).

My DEAR CLARE,

Something indeed must be instantly decided respecting your present situation—unfit in every respect for you, and fraught with consequences to your health and spirits which I cannot endure to think of. I had spoken to Mrs. Mason of it, and her reply was that when you return from Pisa to Florence, she will give you a letter to the Princess, charging me at the same time to keep this promise a secret from you: for what motive I cannot divine. I have not done so, you see—and indeed I could not, without urging your immediate return. The great thing now is, if possible, to come to Pisa before you shall stand engaged for another month, or perhaps another three months—for such was the arrangement decided upon at Florence. ¹ Could

—Dowden's "Shelley," Vol. II, pp. 361-2.

1 Professor Dowden says that "Clare's trial-month as governess to Professor Bojti's children passed unhappily." On November 21st she took Shelley's advice and returned to Pisa.—"Life of Shelley," Vol. II, pp. 357-8.

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of 'Epicurus owne sone;' the priest's cap which he wore he named his 'Tartuffesmetro,' or measure for hypocrisy. Medwin says that 'Shelley at first listened with rapt attention to his eloquence, which he compared to that of Coleridge.' But if 'il diavolo' was ever welcome to Casa Galetti, it can have been only for a very brief period. Even the devil, however, writes Mary, has his use, for it was Pacchiani who led her to the acquaintance of Prince Mavrocordato, and, what is of more importance, he had also introduced Shelley to Emilia Viviani, to whose family he was Confessor.—Dowden's "Shelley," Vol. II, pp. 361-2.

you not make some excuse for preceding them to Pisa? Or still better, could you not do it without assigning any reason, and then determine with me and Mrs. Mason what should be done on their arrival? This must be done, or you stand pledged for some indefinite time.

The only consideration to make you hesitate, is how far such a step would offend Mrs. Mason—that is, how far it would affect any future aid you might derive from her. Poor Mrs. M. is now very ill, slowly convalescing from a dangerous colic; she cannot bear the light, or the air, or the least motion. You may judge, she is (in) no state to permit me to agitate this question. Before her illness, when I called on her, she seemed to think it weak and unreasonable in you, not to bear all this solitude and inconvenience in the hope of some change, or something that she could or would do.—She opposed strongly the idea of your return; and it was on that occasion that she spoke of the Princess Montemilitto; which introduction, if it could be carried into effect, would certainly place you in a situation to require no other. But as she has not seen or heard from the Princess for sixteen years, we cannot be sure of the reception her recommendation would meet. Everything, however, consists in the manner—and I by no means recommend you to freeze or mope yourself to death on the chance of this Princess.—I would advise, contriving by some form of words, to part from your hosts on the best possible terms, and with a mutual understanding that the connexion was to be renewed again, so soon as you had fulfilled the object of your leaving them.—Leave some sort of opening, but just so small as that they should not be able without further communication to hold you liable on the 20th for three additional months.

It is a great pity that the day of their arrival at Pisa exceeds the month, or it might all have admitted of a far simpler mode of arrangement. I don't think Mrs. Mason could be seriously angry—I am sure she would have no reason—nor do I think that it would make any difference

in her giving you an introduction to the Princess. only care need be, that it should be so managed as not, at least for the present, to offend or alarm the Bojtis, and that you tell Mrs. Mason that you determined to employ the interval of the few days that remained of the month in taking her advice respecting how far a further residence with them could be made available to your purposes. And that you were determined (as I think you right to determine) not to make a three months' additional engagement to spend the winter in the frore climate of Florence, merely to suffer. My advice therefore is, that you take a place in the Diligence and return here instantly, without offending or alarming the Boitis. You cannot hesitate without making yourself liable for an engagement of three additional months, and I am persuaded that Mrs. Mason is too reasonable and too good not to feel that this step is completely justifiable by the alternative in which you stand, either of taking it, or engaging in a longer term—in which unless some alteration takes place you expend health and spirits for no imaginable purpose.—This step pledges you to nothing,—and after painful and serious consideration of the circumstances of your situation it is my deliberate advice. Read this letter over twice or three times, before you decide to act, and completely understand what you are about.

We are at Casa Galetti, next door to that marble palace with Alla Giornata written on it.

There is yet no letter from Ravenna—a delay which you cannot from experience think extraordinary.

I do not send you the Papers; because I do not see how you can do otherwise than come.—Let me repeat it again—do not part on bad or even on indifferent terms with the Bojtis. All depends on that—and it is so easy to say that someone is ill, if you think it necessary to make any express explanation.

It rains incessantly, but the climate is exceedingly mild and we have no fires. How sorry I am, my poor girl, to hear that your glands are bad.—You must take care of yourself this winter, and eat nourishing food, and try and deceive care. How I long to see you again, and take what care I can of you—but do not imagine that if I did not most seriously think it best for you that I would advise you to return. I have suffered horribly from my side, but my general health decidedly improves, and there is now no doubt but that it is a disease of the kidneys which, however it sometimes makes life intolerable, has, Vaccá assures me, no tendency to endanger it. May it be prolonged that I may be the source of whatever consolation or happiness you are capable of receiving!

Mary is well, and the babe brilliantly well, and very good—he scarcely suffers at all from his teeth.

Medwin is very agreeable—I do not know him well enough to say that he is amiable. He plays at chess, and falls into our habits of reading in the evening, and Mary likes him well enough.—Henry Reveley has been frequently at Pisa, and always dines with us, in spite of a conversation which I had with him, and which was intended to put an end to all intercourse between me and that base family.— I have not the heart to put my interdict in effect upon Henry, he is so very miserable, and such a whipped and trembling dog. You have no conception of the stories that he tells about the Riccis. There is no decisive news yet from London about the Queen—it is expected this day, and all the papers of the trial have been kept from you. Adieu, dearest—be careful to tear this letter to pieces as I have written [confidently?].

Yours faithfully,

S.

This only bit of paper I have is the beginning of a letter addressed to Henry 1—never mind it.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The leaf in which the conclusion of this letter was written has been the rejected commencement of a letter to Henry Reveley. The six lines of which the cancelled fragment consists are quite legible.

I am happy that the "Hyperion" and "Prometheus" please you. My verses please so few persons that I make much of the encouragement of the few, whose judgment (if I were to listen to Vanity, the familiar spirit of our race) I should say with Shakspeare and Plato "outweighed a whole theatre of others."

[Addressed outside],
Miss Clairmont,
Presse al Prof. Bojti,
dirimpetto Palazzo Pitti,
Florence.

### 390. To Marianne Hunt

[PISA.]

November 11, 1820.

MY BEST MARIANNE,

I am delighted to hear that you complain of me for not writing to you, although I have much more reason to complain of you for not writing to me. At least it promises me a letter from you, and you know with what pleasure we receive, and with what anxiety we expect intelligence from you—almost the only friends who now remain to us.

I am afraid that the strict system of expense to which you are limited annoys you all very much, and that Hunt's health suffers both from that and from the incredible exertions which I see by the *Indicators* and *Examiners* that he is making. Would to Heaven that I had the power of doing you some good! but when you are sure that the wish is sincere, the bare expression of it may help to cheer you.

The Gisbornes are arrived, and have brought news of you, and some books, the principal part of which, however, are yet to arrive by sea. Keats's new volume has arrived to us, and the fragment called "Hyperion" promises for him that he is destined to become one of the first writers of the age. His other things are imperfect enough, and, what is worse, written in the bad sort of style which is

becoming fashionable among those who fancy they are imitating Hunt and Wordsworth. But of all these things nothing is worse than a volume by Barry Cornwall with "The Sicilian Story." "The Sicilian Story" itself is pretty enough, but the other things in the volume, I hope that Hunt thinks are abominable, in spite of his extracting the only three good stanzas from "Gyges" with his usual good nature in the Examiner. Indeed, I ought not to complain of Hunt's good nature, for no one owes so much to it. Is not the vulgarity of these wretched imitations of Lord Byron carried to a pitch of the sublime? indecencies, too, both against sexual nature, and against human nature in general, sit very awkwardly upon him. He only affects the libertine: he is really a very amiable, friendly, and agreeable man, I hear. But is not this monstrous? In Lord Byron all this has an analogy with the general system of his character, and the wit and poetry which surround hide with their light the darkness of the thing itself. They contradict it even; they prove that the strength and beauty of human nature can survive and conquer all that appears most inconsistent with it. But for a writer to be at once filthy and dull is a crime against gods, men and columns. For heaven's sake do not show this to anyone but Hunt, for it would irritate the wasp's nest of the irritable race of poets.

Where is Keats now? I am anxiously expecting him in Italy, when I shall take care to bestow every possible attention on him. I consider his a most valuable life, and I am deeply interested in his safety. I intend to be the physician both of his body and his soul, to keep the one warm, and to teach the other Greek and Spanish. I am aware, indeed, in part, that I am nourishing a rival who will far surpass me; and this is an additional motive, and will be an added pleasure.

We are at this moment removing from the Bagni to Pisa,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Keats left England in September, 1820, for Italy, accompanied by his friend, Joseph Severn, the artist.

for the Serchio has broken its banks, and all the country about is under water. An old friend and fellow-townsman of mine, Captain Medwin, is on a visit to us at present, and we anxiously expect Keats, to whom I would write if I knew where to address.

Adieu, my dear Marianne. Write soon; kiss all the babes for me, and tell me news of them, and give my love to Bessy and Hunt.

Yours ever affectionately, P. B. Shelley.

# 391. To CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (Florence)

[Postmark, Pisa, January 2, 1821.] \*

#### MY DEAR CLARE,

I am seriously distressed to perceive by your letters the vacillating state of your health and spirits: and can only offer you the consolation of unavailing wishes. If they were as effectual as they are sincere, your ills would have a very short duration. You do me injustice in imagining

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The season had been very wet, and rain had fallen for several days, when, on October 25, the Shelleys' house was flooded, and they moved on October 29 to Pisa. See p. 825. "At the foot of our garden," writes Mrs. Shelley, "ran the canal that communicated between the Serchio and the Arno. The Serchio overflowed its banks, and, breaking its bounds, this canal also overflowed. All this part of the country is below the level of its rivers, and the consequence was that it was speedily flooded. The rising waters filled the square of the baths, in the lower part of which our house was situated. The canal overflowed in the garden behind; the rising waters on either side at last burst open the doors, and, meeting in the house, rose to the height of six feet. It was a picturesque sight at night to see the peasants driving the cattle from the plains below to the hills above the baths. A fire was kept up to guide these across the ford; and the forms of the men and animals showed in dark relief against the glare of the flames, which was reflected again in the waters that filled the square."

<sup>\*</sup> Clare had returned to Florence after spending Christmas with the Shelleys at Pisa.

that I am in any degree insensible to your pleasure or pain. I wish, since I am so incapable of communicating the one or relieving the other, that I could be so.

I see Emilia<sup>1</sup> sometimes, who always talks of you and laments your absence. She continues to enchant me infinitely; and I soothe myself with the idea that I make the discomfort of her captivity lighter to her by demonstration of the interest which she has awakened in me.

I have not been able to see until the last day or two,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Teresa Emilia Viviani, to whom Shelley addressed his poem, the "Epipsychidion." She had been confined in the convent of St. Anna, Pisa, for two years when Shelley made her acquaintance through Pacchiani, confessor to the Viviani family. Her father, Count Viviani, had married a second time a lady, not much older than his two daughters, who had been sent from home into separate convents through the influence of their stepmother, under the pretence of completing their education. Medwin, who accompanied Shelley on one of the many visits that he paid Emilia in her convent, described her as "indeed lovely and interesting. Her profuse black hair, tied in the most simple knot, after the manner of a Greek muse in the Florence gallery, displayed to its full height, her fair brow, fair as that of the marble of which I speak. She was also of about the same height as the antique. Her features possessed a rare faultlessness, and almost Grecian contour, the nose and forehead making a straight line. . . . Her eyes had the sleepy voluptuousness, if not the colour, of Beatrice Cenci's. They had indeed no definite colour, changing with the changing feeling, to dark to light, as the soul animated them. Her cheek was pale, too, as marble, owing to her confinement and want of air, or perhaps to 'thought.' There was a lark in the parlour that had lately been caught. 'Poor prisoner,' she said, looking at it compassionately, 'you will die of grief! How I pity thee! What must thou suffer, when thou hearest in the clouds the songs of thy parent birds, or some flocks of thy kind on the wing, in search of other skies—of new fields—of new delights! But like me, thou wilt be forced to remain here always—to wear out thy miserable existence here always—to wear out thy miserable existence here. Why can I not release thee?"" Mrs. Shelley introduced Emilia into her novel "Lodore," 1835. Lady Shelley says that Emilia "was subsequently married to a gentleman chosen for her by her father; and, after pining in his society, and in the marshy solitudes of the Maremma, for six years, she left him, with the consent of her parent, and died of consumption in a dilapidated old mansion at Florence."—" Shelley Memorials," p. 149.

or I should have written to you. My eyes are still weak. I have suffered also considerably from my disease; and am already in imagination preparing to be cut for the stone, in spite of Vaccà's consolatory assurance.

We send you the papers; and a parcel containing your Habit and "Sintram," etc., has been prepared some days for the Procaccino, who does not pass until to-morrow. You will probably receive that and this letter at once.

All your wishes have been attended to respecting "Julian and Maddalo," which never was intended for publication. 1

So it seems that it would have been better for you to have remained at Pisa. Yet being now at Florence make the best profit of your situation: and do not on any account neglect, if possible, to present the letters to Princess Montemilitto, taking especial care to specify who is the writer. You ought to be aware that if this gland should be scrofulous, no small portion of the disease consists in the dejection of spirits and inactivity of mind attached to it; it is at once a cause and an effect of it; for which the best remedy is society and amusement, and for which even bustle and occupation would be a palliation. Pacchiani is not yet returned.

Farewell, my dear girl. Confide in the sincere friendship and unceasing interest of yours affectionately,

S.

[Addressed outside],
Miss CLAIRMONT,
Presso Professore Bojti,
dirimpetto Palazzo Pitti,
Ferinze.

¹ Professor Dowden points out that this "statement contradicts Shelley's words to Hunt, August 15, 1819, begging him to give 'Julian and Maddalo' to Ollier for publication. In May and November, 1820, and February, 22, 1821, Shelley wrote to Ollier in respect to the publication of the poem. It was not, however, published till after his death. Miss Clairmont probably objected to the appearance of the passage which describes 'Allegra.'"—" Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 385. See p. 622.

# 392. To CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (Florence)

PISA, TUESDAY EVENING,
[January 16], 1821.

My DEAR CLARE,

Many thanks for your kind and tender letter which Mrs. M[ason] gave me to-day, several days I believe after it had arrived.—I had been very ill, 2 and had not seen her for a fortnight. I had several times been going to write to you, to request you to love me better than you do—when meanwhile your letter arrives. 3 I shall punctually follow all such portions of the advice it contains which are practicable.

I write to-night that I may not seem to neglect you, though I have little time: I am delighted to hear of your recovered health—may I entreat you to be cautious in keeping it? Mine is far better than it has been; and the relapse which I now suffer into a state of ease from one of pain, is attended with such an excessive susceptibility of nature, that I suffer equally from pleasure and from pain. You will ask me naturally enough where I find any pleasure? The wind, the light, the air, the smell of a flower affects me with violent emotions. There needs no catalogue of the causes of pain.

I see Emily sometimes; and whether her presence is the source of pain or pleasure to me, I am equally ill-fated

\* "Clare had complained that Shelley did not take an interest in her pleasure or her pain."—Prof. Dowden's note.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This date is given by Professor Dowden.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Shelley addressed a letter from Pisa on Feb. 20, 1821, to Vincent Novello, in which he speaks of recovering from a severe attack of ophthalmia, and adds that his eyes are yet very inadequate to the fatigue of writing. He also expresses his indebtedness to Mr. kickman for his forbearance, and would regard it as a great additional favour to be allowed a year from the date of writing for the payment of the remainder. Perhaps this relates to Clio Rickman, from whom, in Dec., 1812, Shelley had ordered a large number of books (see p. 371).

in both. I am deeply interested in her destiny, and that interest can in no manner influence it. She is not, however, insensible to my sympathy, and she counts it among her alleviations. As much comfort as she receives from my attachment to her, *I lose*.

There is no reason that you should fear any mixture of that which you call *love*. My conception of Emilia's talents augments every day. Her moral nature is fine—but not above circumstances; yet I think her tender and true—which is always something. How many are only one of these things at a time!

So much for sentiment and ethics. The Williamses are come, and Mrs. W. dined here to-day, an extremely pretty and gentle woman, apparently not very clever. I like her very much. I have only seen her for an hour, but I will tell you more another time. Mary will write you sheets of gossip. I have not seen Mr. W. The Greek expedition appears to be broken up. No news of any kind that I know of.

You delight me with your progress in German, in spite of the reproach which accompanies the account of it. Occupy, amuse, instruct, multiply yourself and your faculties—and defy the foul fiend. I wish to Heaven, my dear girl, that I could be of any avail to add to your pleasures or diminish your pain—how ardently you cannot know; you only know, as you frequently take care to tell me, how vainly. I can do you no other good than in keeping up the unnatural connection between this feeble mass of diseases and infirmities and the vapid and weary spirit doomed to drag it through the world [here some words are blotted out by Miss Clairmont]. I took up the pen for an instant only to thank you,—and, if you will, to kiss you for your kind attention to me, and I find I have written in ill spirits, which may infect you. Let them not do so!

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Williamses landed at Leghorn on Jan. 13, 1821, and were introduced by Medwin a few days later to Shelley and Mary.

/ https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.32000000659054 http://www.hathitrust.org/access\_use#pd-google GMT Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 18:45 Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.or I will write again to-morrow. Meanwhile, yours most tenderly,

S.

[Addressed outside],
La Siga. CLAIRMONT,
presso al Professore Bojti,
dirempetto Palazzo Pitti,
Firenze.

# 392A. To CHARLES AND JAMES OLLIER (London)

PISA,

Jan[uary] 20, 1820 [misdated for 1821].

DEAR SIR.

I send you the "Witch of Atlas," a fanciful poem, which, if its merit be measured by the labour which it cost, is worth nothing; and the Errata of "Prometheus," which I ought to have sent long since—a formidable list, as you will see.

I have lately, and but lately, received Mr. Gisborne's parcel, with reviews, etc. I request you to convey to Mr. Procter my thanks for the present of his works, as well as for the pleasure which I received from the perusal, especially of the "Dramatic Sketches."

The reviews of my "Cenci" (though some of them, and especially that marked "John Scott," are written with great malignity) on the whole give me as much encouragement as a person of my habits of thinking is capable of receiving from such a source, which is, inasmuch as they coincide with, and confirm, my own decisions. My next attempt (if I should write more) will be a drama, in the composition of which I shall attend to the advice of my critics, to a certain degree, but I doubt whether I shall write more. I could be content either with the Hell or the Paradise of poetry; but the torments of its purgatory vex me, without exciting my power sufficiently to put an end to the vexation.

I have also to thank you for the present of one or two of your publications. I am enchanted with your Literary

Miscellany, although the last article it contains has excited my polemical faculties so violently, that the moment I get rid of my ophthalmia I mean to set about an answer to it, which I will send to you, if you please. It is very clever, but, I think, very false. Who is your commentator on the German Drama? He is a powerful thinker, though I differ from him toto calo about the Devils of Dante and Milton. If you know him personally, pray ask him from me what he means by receiving the spirit into me, and (if really it is any good) how one is to get at it. I was immeasurably amused by the quotation from Schlegel about the way in which the popular faith is destroyed—first the Devil, then the Holy Ghost, then God the Father. I had written a Lucianic essay to prove the same thing.<sup>2</sup> There are two beautiful stories, too, in this Miscellany. It pleased me altogether infinitely. I was also much pleased with the Retrospective Review—that is, with all the quotations from old books in it; but it is very ill executed.

When the spirit moves you, write and give me an account of the ill success of my verses.

Who wrote the review in your publication of my "Cenci"? It was written in a friendly spirit, and, if you know the author, I wish you would tell him from me how much obliged I am to him for this spirit, more gratifying to me than any literary laud.

Dear Sir.

Messrs. Ollier, Yours very truly, Vere Street, Bond Street, London. P. B. S.

The article, entitled "The Four Ages of Poetry," was contributed by T. L. Peacock to the first and apparently the only number of Ollier's "Literary Miscellany, in Prose and Verse, by Several hands." 1820. Shelley replied with his "Defence of Poetry," which was intended for the "Miscellany;" it remained unpublished, however, until 1840, when it was included in the "Essays and Letters."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "The writer was the late Archdeacon Hare, who, despite his orthodoxy, was a great admirer of Shelley's genius. He contended that Milton erred in making the Devil a majestical being, and hoped that Shelley would in time humble his soul, and 'receive the spirit into him.'"—Lady Shelley's note.

### 394. To Charles Ollier (London)

PISA.

My DEAR PEACO.

Feb[ruary] 16, 1821.

The last letter from the date there poems—"Ode to Naples," a sonnet, Gisbornes sent by entitled "Epipsychidion." The two continue in good and you will be so obliging as to take I received at the same publishing according to your own against general, and you poetry; and I agree withre, should not be considered as

as I differ in the former. ain sense, it is a production of not stirred up by such ottavad; and in this sense the may safely be conjectured to pois to be published simply world is pale with the sickness of such suthor a secret, to time, your anathemas against poetry itself excited into a sacred rage, or caloëthes 3 scribendi of vindicating the insulted Muses. I had the greatest possible desire to break a lance with you, within the lists of a magazine, in honour of my mistress Urania; but God willed that I should be too lazy, and wrested the victory from your hope; since first having unhorsed poetry, and the universal sense of the wisest in all ages, an easy conquest would have remained to you in me, the knight of the shield of shadow and the lance of gossamere. Besides, I was at that moment reading Plato's "Ion," which I recommend you to reconsider. Perhaps in the comparison of Platonic and Malthusian doctrines, the mavis errare of Cicero is a justifiable argument; but I have a whole quiver of arguments on such a subject.

Have you seen Godwin's answer to the apostle of the

<sup>3</sup> Caloethës, the opposite of Cacöethes.

<sup>Shelley has written 1820 apparently in error.
Peacock's article on the "Four Ages of Poetry."</sup> 

Miscellany, although the last article it contains has not yet my polemical faculties so violently, that the mam in daily rid of my ophthalmia I mean to set about an

which I will send to you, if you please. It expectation in but, I think, very false. Who is your cormies are rapidly German Drama? He is a powerful thinkle news of a battle from him toto cælo about the Devils of Idvanced into the If you know him personally, pray ask ges from Rome, to he means by receiving the spirit into of that power, and is any good) how one is to get at it. Ingth in open battle, amused by the quotation from Schoe there is that the new which the popular faith is destroples should stand against the Holy Ghost, then God there. But the birth of liberty Lucianic essay to prove the es of a reversal of the ordinary beautiful stories, too, in the feat of the Austrians would be altogether infinitely.

Retrosperies in literary plans of some magnitude. But morning is so difficult and unwelcome as to write without a confidence of finding readers; and if my play of "The Cenci" found none or few, I despair of ever producing anything that shall merit them.

Among your anathemas of the modern attempts in poetry, do you include Keats's "Hyperion"? I think it very fine. His other poems are worth little; but if the "Hyperion" be not grand poetry, none has been produced by our contemporaries.

I suppose you are writing nothing but Indian laws, etc. I have but a faint idea of your occupation; but I suppose it has much to do with pen and ink.

Mary desires to be kindly remembered to you; and I remain, my dear Peacock, yours very faithfully,

P. B. SHELLEY.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The book referred to is "Of Population. An Enquiry concerning the power of Increase in the numbers of Mankind, being an Answer to Mr. Malthus's Essay on that subject" (London, Longmans, 1820).

## 394. To Charles Ollier (London)

PISA,

Feb[ruary] 16, 1821.

DEAR SIR,

I send you three poems—"Ode to Naples," a sonnet, and a longer piece, entitled "Epipsychidion." The two former are my own; and you will be so obliging as to take the first opportunity of publishing according to your own discretion.

The longer poem, I desire, should not be considered as my own; indeed, in a certain sense, it is a production of a portion of me already dead; and in this sense the advertisement is no fiction. It is to be published simply for the esoteric few; and I make its author a secret, to avoid the malignity of those who turn sweet food into poison; transforming all they touch into the corruption of their own natures. My wish with respect to it is, that it should be printed immediately in the simplest form, and merely one hundred copies: those who are capable of judging and feeling rightly with respect to a composition of so abstruse a nature, certainly do not arrive at that number—among those, at least, who would ever be excited to read an obscure and anonymous production; and it would give me no pleasure that the vulgar should read it. If you have any bookselling reason against publishing so small a number as a hundred, merely, distribute copies among those to whom you think the poetry would afford any pleasure, and send me, as soon as you can, a copy by the post. I have written it so as to give very little trouble, I hope, to the printer, or to the person who revises. I would

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Epipsychidion. / Verses addressed to the Noble / and unfortunate Lady / Emilia V[iviani] / Now imprisoned in the Convent of —— / quotation / London / C. and J. Ollier, Vere Street, Bond Street / MDCCCXXI." Shelley had completed the poem before the end of the preceding year, for Mary Shelley in writing to Leigh Vol. ii—24—(2285)

be much obliged to you if you would take this office on yourself.

Is there any expectation of a second edition of the "Revolt of Islam?" I have many corrections to make in it, and one part will be wholly remodelled. I am employed in high and new designs in verse; but they are the labours of years, perhaps.

We expect here every day the news of a battle between the armies of Austria and Naples. The latter have advanced upon Rome; and the first affair will probably take place in the Ecclesiastical States. You may imagine the expectation of all here.

Pray send me news of my intellectual children. For "Prometheus" I expect and desire no great sale. "The Cenci" ought to have been popular.

I remain, dear Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

Percy B. Shelley.

395. To CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (Florence)

PISA,

FRIDAY, [February 16, 1821.]

My dearest Friend,

I write in great haste at the Banker's not to lose the Post,

Hunt on December 29, 1820, says: "He [Shelley] has written a long poem ['Epipsychidion'] which no one has ever read, and like the illustrious Sotheby, gives the law to a few distinguished Blues of Pisa." In the "Advertisement" Shelley speaks of the poem as having been written by a person who "died at Florence, as he was preparing for a voyage to one of the wildest of the Sporades, which he had bought, and where it was his hope to have realized a scheme of life suited, perhaps, to that happier and better world of which he is now an inhabitant, but hardly practicable in this." The advertisement is signed "S."

S.

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and send you a check for two months.—A thousand thanks for your affectionate letter, which to me is as water in the desert. I hope to tell you of Del Rosso by next post; he has just sent for his money, which is paid him.

Adieu, best Clare,

Yours ever,

[Addressed outside],
Miss CLAIRMONT,
Presso al Prof. Bojti dirimpetto,
Palazzo Pitti, Firenza.

396. To Dr. Hume

Pisa,

February 17, 1820 [? in error for 1821].

SIR.

I regret exceedingly that a mistake occasioned by a temporary pressure of affairs should have caused the annuity awarded to my children to have remained a quarter in arrear. If you will take the trouble to present the enclosed note to my friend Mr. Smith of the Stock Exchange any day after the 25th of March, that quarter together with the quarter in arrear will be paid; and such measures are taken as will prevent any possible future misunderstanding on the subject. <sup>1</sup>

Allow me to take this opportunity of enquiring into the present state of the health and intellectual improvement of my children. I feel assured, although I have not the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with you, that you will excuse and comply with this request of a father who is the victim of the unexampled oppression of being forbidden the exercise of his parental duties; suffering in his own person the violation of those rights and those ties which until this instance the fiercest religious persecutions had ever considered sacred. I only advert to my own wrongs—

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See p. 864.

for the hour of redress is yet to arrive—that I may anticipate the gratitude which I shall owe to yourself and Mrs. Hume for the kindness and attention with which you doubtless perform all those (duties I can hardly call them) to my unfortunate children, except those which none but a parent can perform. I doubt not when they shall be restored to me, but that the period which they have spent under your care will be remembered both by them and by me as having in some degree softened the inevitable ill of this unnatural separation.

Pray render acceptable to Mrs. Hume my best compts.

I remain, Sir,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

# 397. To Clara Mary Jane Clairmont (Florence)

SUNDAY [February 18, 1821.]1

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I wrote a line only with the check, which I hope you have received. I had not time on that day to answer your letters.

Your predilection for Germany, German literature and manners, and for an attempt at forming some connections there, still continues. There can be no harm in making the attempt, should you succeed in finding a fit occasion for it, because you can always recede in case it should not answer your expectations. The situation of Dame de compagnie is one indeed in which there is little to be hoped compared with what is to be feared; calculating on common

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Professor Dowden suggests the date of this letter.

cases, but I am willing to believe that yours is an exception to these, and that every one who knows you intimately must find a necessity of interesting themselves deeply in you.—But what are your opportunities, that you so confidently discuss the merits of the question, as if the determination of it were within your power? Has the Princess engaged to interest herself in your affairs,—or any other of your acquaintances at Florence? If, indeed, it be in your power to accompany some German Lady of rank to her own country, I think, under the impressions you seem to have conceived, you ought not to delay putting it into effect. It is not as if you had no scheme for life in reserve to which you can retreat.

But you can always reassume your present situation (i.e., of a governess).

You are indeed Germanising very fast, and the remark you made of the distinction between the manner in which mind is expressed upon the physiognomy or the entire figure of the Italian or the Austrian is in the choicest style of the criticism of pure reason. . . . There is a great deal of truth in it: of truth surrounded and limited by so many exceptions, as entirely to destroy its being, as a practical law of pathognomy. I hope you will find Germany and the Germans answer your expectations. I have had no opportunity of forming an idea of them—their Philosophy, as far as I can understand it, contemplates only the silver side of the shield of truth; better in this respect than the French, who only saw the narrow edge of it.

You send no news of Naples and Neapolitan affairs; we know nothing of them except what we hear from Florence. Every post may be expected to bring decisive news, for even the news that they defend themselves against so immense and well-appointed a force is decisive—I hate the cowardly way which prompts such base stories as Sgricci's <sup>1</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Sgricci (1793?-1836), the improvvisatore, who was introduced to the Shelleys by Pacchiani, and who became a visitor at the Casa Galetti. On December 21, 1820, Shelley attended Sgricci's

about the Neapolitans: a set of slaves who dare not to imitate the high example of clasping even the shadow of Freedom, allege the ignorance and excesses of a populace, which oppression has made savage in sentiment and understanding.

That the populace of the city of Naples are brutal, who denies to be taught? they cannot improvise Tragedies as Sgricci can, but is it certain that under no excitement they would be incapable of more enthusiasm for their country? Besides it is not of them we speak, but of the people of the Kingdom of Naples, the cultivators of the soil; whom a sudden and great impulse might awaken into citizens and men, as the French and Spaniards have been awakened, and may render instruments of a system of future social life before which the existing anarchies of Europe will be dissolved and absorbed.—This feeling is base among the Tuscans about Naples. As to the Austrians I doubt not that they are strong men, well disciplined, obeying the master motion like the wheels of a perfect engine: they may even have, as men, more individual excellence and perfection (not that I believe it) than the Neapolitans,—but all these things, if the Spirit of Regeneration is abroad, are chaff before the storm, the very elements and events will fight against them, indignation and shameful repulse will burn after them to the valleys of the Alps—Lombardy will renew the league against the Imperial power which once was so successful, and as the last and greatest consummation, Germany itself will wrest from its oppressors a power confided to them under stipulations which, after having

performance in the theatre at Pisa with Mary and Clare. Mary, who had heard him several times, writes in her journal on the preceding day, 'Go to the theatre and hear the Improvise of Sgricci—a most wonderful and delightful exhibition. He poured forth a torrent of poetry clothed in the most beautiful language,' Clare shared Mary's enthusiasm, but Shelley, who was at first an admirer of Sgricci's gifts, afterwards modified his opinion of the improvvisatore.—Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, pp. 359, 366.

assumed, they refused to carry into effect. . . . You have seen or heard, I suppose, of the note sent by the British Ministry to the Allied sovereigns. Even the unprincipled Castlereagh dared not join them against Naples, and ventured to condemn the principles of their alliance; saying as much as to forbid them to touch Spain or Portugal. . . . If the Austrians meet with any serious check—they may as well at once retire, for the good spirit of the World is out against them.—If they march to Naples at once, let us hide our heads in sorrow, for our hopes of political good are vain.

My dearest girl, I wish you would contrive some means of causing the Petition of Emilia to be presented to the Grand-Duchess. I have engaged that I will procure its presentation, and although perhaps we may conceive little hope from the application, there is yet the possibility of success.—She made me write the Petition for her, though she could have done it a thousand times better herself; for she has written to the Princess Rospigliosi to entreat her to second the prayer of the petition in a manner that I am persuaded must produce some effect—it is so impressive and pathetic.—The Petition is the very reverse—but these affairs are less determined by words than by facts-would Bojti present it? No, that is not good. Could you ask Madame Martini to do so, or Madame Orlandini? do something for me about this, otherwise I must come to Florence, which does not suit me in any manner.

Del Rosso I have not yet seen. I was to have gone to Leghorn yesterday, but Williams, who is to accompany me, was obliged to stay till to-day.—I will write of it from that place.

What pleasure it gives me to hear that you are well! health is the greatest possession, health of body and mind—as the writer, weak enough in both, too well knows.—Tell me particularly how you get on with your Italian friends—study German—I will give you a dictionary if I can find one at Leghorn. "Be strong, live happy, and love," says Milton. Adieu, dear girl—confide, and persuade yourself

of my eternal and tender regard. Yours with deepest affection,

S.

Keats is very ill at Naples 1—I have written to him to ask him to come to Pisa, without however inviting him into our own house. We are not rich enough for that sort of thing. Poor fellow !—I am provoked at Sgricci's assumption, and shall certainly never allow him to make the use you allude to of me.

(On the same paper of this letter may be read the cancelled words in Shelley's handwriting—
My DEAR KEATS.

I learn this moment that you are at Naples, and that . . .).

[Addressed outside],
Miss Clairmont,
Presso al Sigr. Profe. Bojti,
Dirimpetto Palazzo Pitti,
Firenze.

## 398. To Charles Ollier (London)

Pisa,

Feb[ruary] 22, 1821.

DEAR SIR,

Peacock's essay is at Florence at present. I have sent for it, and will transmit to you my paper [on Poetry] as soon as it is written, which will be in a very few days. Nevertheless, I should be sorry that you delayed your magazine through any dependence on me. I will not accept anything for this paper, as I had determined to write it, and promised it you, before I heard of your liberal arrangements; but perhaps in future, if I think I have any thoughts worth publishing, I shall be glad to contribute

<sup>2</sup> Shelley's "Defence of Poetry" (see next letter and pp. 846, 859).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> John Keats died at Rome on the night of February 23, 1821, five days after the date of this letter, in a house now constituting a Keats-Shelley Memorial, in the Piazza di Spagna.

to your magazine on those terms. Meanwhile, you are perfectly at liberty to publish the "Ode to Naples," the sonnet, or any short piece you may have of mine.

I suppose "Julian and Maddalo" is published. If not, do not add the "Witch of Atlas" to that peculiar piece of writing; you may put my name to the "Witch of Atlas," as usual. The piece I last sent you, I wish, as I think I told you, to be printed immediately, and that anonymously. I should be very glad to receive a few copies of it by the box, but I am unwilling that it should be any longer delayed.

I doubt about "Charles the First;" but, if I do write it, it shall be the birth of severe and high feelings. You are very welcome to it, on the terms you mention, and, when once I see and feel that I can write it, it is already written. My thoughts aspire to a production of a far higher character; but the execution of it will require some years. I write what I write chiefly to inquire, by the reception which my writings meet with, how far I am fit for so great a task, or not. And I am afraid that your account will not present me with a very flattering result in this particular.

You may expect to hear from me within a week, with the answer to Peacock. I shall endeavour to treat the subject in its elements, and unveil the inmost idol of the error.

If any Review of note abuses me excessively, or the contrary, be so kind as to send it me by post.

If not too late, pray send me by the box the following books: The most copious and correct history of the discoveries of Geology. If one publication does not appear to contain what I require, send me two or three. A history of the late war in Spain; I think one has been written by Southey. Major Somebody's account of the siege of

A fragment of this play was published in Shelley's "Posthumous Poems," 1824; it was never completed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Southey's "History of the Peninsular War" was not published until 1823-32.

Zaragosa; it is a little pamphlet. Burnet's "History of his Own Times," and the "Old English Drama," 3 vols.

Excuse my horrible pens, ink, and paper. I can get no pen that will mark; or, if you will not excuse them, send me out some English ones.

I am delighted to hear of Procter's success, and hope that he will proceed gathering laurels. Pray tell me how the "Prometheus Unbound" was received.

Dear Sir,

Your very obliged servant,

Percy B. Shelley.

# 399. To CHARLES OLLIER (London)

PISA,

March 20, 1821.

DEAR SIR,

I send you the "Defence of Poetry," Part I. It is transcribed, I hope, legibly.

I have written nothing which I do not think necessary to the subject. Of course, if any expressions should strike you as too unpopular, I give you the power of omitting them; but I trust you will, if possible, refrain from exercising it. In fact, I hope that I have treated the question with that temper and spirit as to silence cavil. I propose to add two other parts in two succeeding Miscellanies. It is to be understood that, although you may omit, you do not alter or add.

Pray let me hear from you soon.

Dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

P. B. S.

#### 400. To Thomas Love Peacock

PISA,

March 21, 1821.

MY DEAR PEACOCK,

I dispatch by this post the first part of an essay, intended to consist of three parts, which I design for an antidote to your "Four Ages of Poetry." You will see that I have taken a more general view of what is poetry than you have, and will perhaps agree with several of my positions, without considering your own touched. But read and judge; and do not let us imitate the great founders of the picturesque, Price and Payne Knight, who, like two ill-trained beagles, began snarling at each other when they could not catch the hare. <sup>2</sup>

I hear the welcome news of a box from England announced by Mr. Gisborne. How much new poetry does it contain? The Bavii and Mævii of the day are fertile; and I wish those who honour me with boxes would read and inwardly digest your "Four Ages of Poetry;"

<sup>2</sup> Sir Uvedale Price (1747-1829), who was the author of several books on landscape-gardening, among which was "An Essay on the Picturesque," 1774, engaged in a controversy with Repton on the subject of taste in landscape. Richard Payne Knight (1750-1824) numismatist and author, wrote a didactic poem entitled "The Landscape," 1794, also a "Review of the Landscape," and an "Essay on the Picturesque with practical remarks on Rural Ornament," 1795.

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<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The 'Four Ages of Poetry' here alluded to was published in Ollier's Literary Miscellany. Shelley wrote the 'Defence of Poetry' as an answer to it; and as he wrote it, it contained many allusions to the article and its author, such as 'If I know the knight by the device of his shield, I have only to inscribe Cassandra, Antigone, or Alcestis on mine to blunt the point of his spear;' taking one instance of a favourite character from each of the three great Greek tragedians. All these allusions were struck out by Mr. John Hunt when he prepared the paper for publication in the Liberal. The demise of that periodical prevented the publication, and Mrs. Shelley subsequently printed it from Mr. Hunt's rifacciamento, as she received it. The paper as it now stands is a defence without an attack. Shelley intended this paper to be in three parts, but the other two were not written."—T. L. Peacock's note.

for I had much rather, for my own private reading, receive political, geological, and moral treatises, than this stuff in terza, ottava, and tremilesima rima, whose earthly baseness has attracted the lightning of your undiscriminating censure upon the temple of immortal song. Procter's verses enrage me far more than those of Codrus did Juvenal, and with better reason. Juvenal need not have been stunned, unless he had liked it; but my boxes are packed with this trash, to the exclusion of what I want to see. But your box will make amends.

We are surrounded here in Pisa by revolutionary volcanos which as yet give more light than heat: the lava has not yet reached Tuscany. But the news in the papers will tell you far more than it is prudent for me to say; and for this once I will observe your rule of political silence. The Austrians wish that the Neapolitans and Piedmontese would do the same.

Do you see much of Hogg now? and the Boinvilles (?) and Co[u]lson? Hunt I suppose not. And are you occupied as much as ever? We have seen a few more people than usual this winter, and have made a very interesting acquaintance with a Greek Prince, perfectly acquainted with ancient literature, and full of enthusiasm for the liberties and improvement of his country. Mary

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Prince Alexander Mavrocordato was afterwards one of the most prominent patriots in the Greek struggle for independence. Mrs. Shelley says of him in her note to "Hellas": "We had formed the acquaintance at Pisa of several Constantinopolitan Greeks, of the family of Prince Caradji, formerly Hospodar of Wallachia, who, hearing that the bowstring, the accustomed finale of his viceroyalty, was on the road to him, escaped with his treasures, and took up his abode in Tuscany. Among these was the gentleman [Mavrocordato] to whom the drama of 'Hellas' was dedicated. Prince Mavrocordato was warmed by those aspirations for the independence of his country, which filled the hearts of many of his countrymen. He often intimated the possibility of an insurrection in Greece; but we had no idea of its being so near at hand, when, on the 1st of April, 1821, he called on Shelley, bringing the proclamation of his cousin, Prince Ipsilanti, and, radiant with exultation and delight, declared that henceforth Greece would be free."

has been a Greek student several months, and is reading "Antigone" with our turbaned friend, who in return is taught English. Clare has passed the carnival at Florence, and has been preternaturally gay. I have had a severe ophthalmia, and have read or written little this winter; and have made acquaintance in an obscure convent with the only Italian for whom I ever felt any interest. <sup>1</sup>

I want you to do something for me: that is, to get me £2's worth of Tassi[e]'s gems, in Leicester Square, the prettiest according to your taste; among them, the head of Alexander; and to get me two seals engraved and set, one smaller, and the other handsomer: the device a dove with outspread wings, and this motto round it—

Μάντις εἰμ' ἐσθλῶν ἀγώνων.

Mary desires her best regards, and I remain, my dear Peacock, ever most sincerely yours,

P. B. S.

[Peacock says "there is a postscript from Mrs. Shelley, asking me to execute one or two small commissions:] "Also, if you will be so kind, 4 skeins of white netting silk—2 green and 2 crimson—all of a size fit for purses. You will send them to Ollier with the seals, etc., if his parcel is not yet dispatched—if it is have the goodness to send them as soon as you can by some other opportunity," [and adding]—

Am I not lucky to have got so good a master? I have finished the two of "Œdipi," and very soon the "Antigone," the name of the Prince is Αλέξανδρος Μαυροκόρδατος. He can read English perfectly well.

401. To Clara Mary Jane Clairmont
(Florence)
(Written by Mary Shelley)

υψυλὰντι Υψιλὰντι

[Pisa, April 2, 1821.]

MY DEAR CLARE,

Greece has declared its freedom! Prince Mavrocordato

<sup>1</sup> Emilia Viviani, the subject of his "Epipsychidion."

has made us expect this event for some weeks past. Yesterday, he came rayonnant de joie—he had been ill for some days, but he forgot all his pains. Ipselanti, a Greek general in the service of Russia, has collected together 10,000 Greeks and entered Wallachia, declaring the liberty of his country. The Morea—Epirus—Servia are in revolt. Greece will most certainly be free. The worst part of this news to us is that our amiable prince will leave us—he will of course join his countrymen as soon as possible-never did man appear so happy—yet he sacrifices family—fortune everything to the hope of freeing his country. Such men are repaid—such succeed. You may conceive the deep sympathy that we feel with his joy on this occasion: tinged as it must be with anxiety for success—made serious by the knowledge of the blood that must be shed on this occasion. What a delight it will be to visit Greece free.

April has opened with weather truly heavenly—after a whole week of libeccio—rain and wind, it is delightful to enjoy one of these days peculiar to Italy in this early season—the clear sky, animating sun and fresh yet not cold breeze—just that delicious season when pleasant thoughts bring sad ones to the mind; when every sensation seems to make a double effect, and every moment of the day is divided, felt and counted. One is not gay—at least I am not—but peaceful and at peace with all the world.

I write you a short letter to-day but I could not resist the temptation of acquainting you with the changes in Greece, the moment Prince Mavrocordato gave us leave to mention it.

I hope that your spirits will get better with this favourable change of weather—Florence must be perfectly delightful. Send the white paint as soon as you can, and

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind."
—Wordsworth's "Lines written in Early Spring."

two striscie's for me. Shelley says that he will finish this letter. We hear from no one in England.

Ever yours, ... M. W. S.

[Shelley continues the same letter]

MY DEAR FRIEND.

I hope you have somewhat recovered your spirits since you last wrote to me; if so, pray tell me, as it makes me very melancholy to hear that you are so much depressed. The weather is a medicine for almost any dejection which does not spring from a naturally imperfect or deranged frame. My health is very fluctuating and uncertain, and change of season brings a change rather than a relief of ills. I live, however, for certain intoxicating moments, which are the "ounces of sweets that outweigh a pound of sour," and which no person deprived of memory need despair of possessing.

Tell me what you mean to do on the 20th and how are your prospects with the Princess? Naples will be no place to visit at present, and you are much deceived by those who surround you if you imagine that the success of the Austrians in that country has terminated the war in Italy. We are yet undecided for the summer—say something to fix our determination. The Catholic Emancipation has passed the second reading by a majority of 11 in 497. This will give the Government a momentary strength. Pray order Calderon for me without delay and try if you can urge the bookseller to some sort of speed.

Pray don't imagine that the trees upon the letter you sent to Mary are my manufacture—I disclaim such daubs, and I had hoped that you knew my style too well to impute them to me. The love-letters themselves do not seem to have been meant for you. <sup>1</sup> Is there no other Clara

<sup>&</sup>quot;Clare notes in her journal: 'February 17.—A ridiculous anonymous love-letter from Pisa.' 'March 17.—A second anonymous love-letter from Pisa.' In one of her note-books she writes

Clairmont but the one to whom I declare myself the constant and affectionate friend, S.?

[The drawing of a tree follows with the words] "That is my style."

[Addressed outside],
Miss CLAIRMONT,
Presso al Prof. Bojti,
Dirimpetto Palazzo Pitti,
Firenze.

# 402. TO CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (Florence)

April 13, 1821, FRIDAY MOR[NING].

MY BEST AND DEAREST GIRL,

How excessively grieved I am that I have made you share our false alarm! The whole business merely consists in the omission of the payment of £30 to Hume, and that rascal Longdill having taken out an order against my whole income—a mistake remedied as quickly as known. I shall send you the money for the ensuing month directly. 1

of herself, 'In 1818, she refused an offer of marriage from P——; he knew her whole history. In 1820, she tried to like Mr. Reveley, who made her an offer of marriage, but she found that she could not, and refused him.'"—Prof. Dowden's note.

<sup>1</sup> On March 28, 1821, Horace Smith, who had undertaken the management of Shelley's money matters in London, wrote to say that his bankers "had received notice not to advance anything more on your account, as the payments to them would in future be discontinued; but they could give me no information why this alteration had occurred, or whether you were apprised of it." Shelley received this letter on April 11, and two days later learnt the reason for his banker's statement. It was his custom to leave thirty pounds every quarter at his bankers for the maintenance of his children who were in the charge of Dr. Hume. This sum had not been paid, either owing to the absence of Shelley's order or from some other circumstance, and probably Dr. Hume applied to Shelley's attorney, who, with Sir Timothy's attorney, contrived to put the case into Chancery and a suit was commenced. Horace Smith, however, with his friendly interest in Shelley's affairs, set the matter right. Shelley's letter to Dr. Hume of Feb. 17, 1820, if

Our fright was not small; for we could not conjecture the truth. Whatever I have or have not, however, is dear to me in possession chiefly as an instrument of your peace and independence.

Good-bye, dear, yours ever affectionately,

S.

[Addressed outside],
Presso al Prof. Bojti,
Piazza Pitti,
Firenze.

#### 403. To HENRY REVELEY

PISA, Tuesday, 1 o'clock, 17 April, 1821.

#### MY DEAR HENRY,

Our ducking last night has added fire, instead of quenching the nautical ardour which produced it; and I consider it a good omen in any enterprise, that it begins in evil; as being more probable that it will end in good. I hope you have not suffered from it. I am rather feverish, but very well as to the side, whence I expected the worst consequences. I send you directions for the complete equipment of our boat, since you have kindly promised to undertake it. In putting into execution, a little more or less expense in so trifling an affair is to be disregarded. I need not say that the approaching season invites expedition. You can put her in hand immediately, and write the day on which we may come for her.

We expect with impatience the arrival of our false friends, who have so long cheated us with delay; and Mary unites

<sup>1</sup> See Shelley's account of this accident in his letter to Clare of April 29, 1821, p. 869.

The Gisbornes arrived at Pisa on Thursday, April 26. Vol. ii—25—(2285)

misdated, as it appears to be for 1821, evidently relates to this affair. From this letter it would seem that Shelley, having forgotten to pay the previous quarterly allowance when it became due, wrote to acknowledge the omission; and had Dr. Hume applied to Horace Smith, the difficulty would never have arisen.

with me in desiring, that, as you participated equally in the crime, you should not be omitted in the expiation.

All good be with you.—Adieu.

Yours faithfully,

S.

Williams desires to be kindly remembered to you, and begs to present his compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Gisborne, and—heaven knows what.

#### 404. To HENRY REVELEY

Pisa, April 19, [1821].

MY DEAR HENRY,

The rullock, or place for the oar, ought not to be placed where the oar-pins are now, but ought to be nearer to the mast; as near as possible, indeed, so that the rower has room to sit. In addition let a false keel be made in this shape, so as to be four inches deep at the stern, and to decrease towards the prow. It may be as thin as you please.

Tell Mr. and Mrs. Gisborne that I have read the "Numancia," and after wading through the singular stupidity of the first act, began to be greatly delighted, and, at length, interested in a very high degree, by the power of the writer in awakening pity and admiration, in which I hardly know by whom he is excelled. There is little, I allow, in a strict sense, to be called *poetry* in this play; but the command of language, and the harmony of versification, is so great as to deceive one into an idea that it is poetry.

Adieu.—We shall see you soon, Yours very truly,

S.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> By Cervantes.

### 405. To CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (Florence)

Sunday [April 29, 1821.] 1

MY DEAREST CLARE,

It is not for want of interest in your plans and feelings, that I have not written to you; but imagining that Mary managed the *rude stuff*, the mass of the correspondence; and not knowing that I had anything peculiar to say to you,

#### BYRON TO SHELLEY

RAVENNA,

April 26, 1821.

The child continues doing well, and the accounts are regular and favourable. It is gratifying to me that you and Mrs. Shelley do not disapprove of the step which I have taken, which is merely

I am very sorry to hear what you say of Keats—is it actually true? I did not think criticism had been so killing. Though I differ from you essentially in your estimate of his performances, I so much abhor all unnecessary pain, that I would rather he had been seated on the highest peak of Parnassus than have perished in such a manner. Poor fellow! though with such inordinate self-love he would probably have not been very happy. I read the review of "Endymion" in the Quarterly. It was severe,—but surely not so severe as many reviews in that and other journals upon others.

I recollect the effect upon me of the *Edinburgh* on my first poem; it was rage, and resistance, and redress—but not despondency nor despair. I grant that those are not amiable feelings; but, in this world of bustle and broil, and especially in the career of writing, a man should calculate upon his powers of resistance before he goes into the arena.

"Expect not life from pain nor danger free, Nor deem the doom of man reversed for thee."

You know my opinion of that second-hand school of poetry,—because it is of no school. I read "Cenci"—but, besides that I think the subject essentially undramatic, I am not an admirer of our old dramatists as models. I deny that the English have hitherto

¹ On March 15, 1821, Clare had written in her diary that Allegra had been sent to a convent at Bagnacavallo. She strongly disapproved of this convent education for her child, and pleaded in vain against Byron's decision. "Although," as Prof. Dowden says, "Shelley deplored any circumstance that should contribute to Clare's unhappiness, after consulting with Mary he did not hesitate, when writing to Byron, to uphold his decision." This letter of Shelley's is not available, but the subjects discussed by him are alluded to by Byron in his reply—

I had kept the silence of one to whom letters and indeed communications of any kind, are either a great pain or a great pleasure. So far have I been from neglecting you in my thoughts, that I have lately had with Mrs. Mason long and serious conversations respecting your situation and prospects; conversations too long, too important, and embracing too various a complication of views to detail in a letter.—You can perhaps guess at some of them. I am most anxious to know your expectations and determinations at Florence. Whatever these may be, either there or elsewhere, believe that no view which I can take of any plan you may determine on will be influenced by anything else than a consideration of your own ultimate advantage. I feel, my dear girl, that in case the failure of your expectations at Florence should induce you to adopt other plans, we, that is you and I, ought to have a conversation together.

My health is in general much the same; somewhat amended by the divine weather that has fallen upon us, but still characterized by irritability and depression; or moments of almost supernatural elevation of spirits. My side begins, however, to feel the influence of the relaxing year. I think I have been better altogether this winter;

had a drama at all. Your "Cenci," however, was a work of power, and poetry. As to my drama, pray revenge yourself upon it, by being as free as I have been with yours.

I have not yet got your "Prometheus," which I long to see. I have heard nothing of mine, and do not know that it is yet published. I have published a pamphlet on the Pope controversy, which you will not like. Had I known that Keats was dead—or that he was alive and so sensitive—I should have omitted some remarks upon his poetry, to which I was provoked by his attack upon Pope, and my disapprobation of his own style of writing.

You want me to undertake a great poem—I have not the inclination nor the power. As I grow older, the indifference—not to life, for we love it by instinct—but to the stimuli of life, increases. Besides, this late failure of the Italians has latterly disappointed me for many reasons, —some public, some personal. My respects to Mrs. S.

Yours ever, B.

P.S.—Could not you and I contrive to meet this summer? Could not you take a run here alone?

I wish to think so, in spite of the strong motives which should impel me to desire to exist under another form. I have bought a boat, which Williams overturned the first evening by taking hold of the top of the mast;—as you might any boat under a sloop of war. I expect that the exercise of sailing, etc., will do good to my health; I have bought it instead of a horse, which Vaccà 1 recommended, but which would cost more money, spirits, time, trouble, and care than I have to expend conveniently. Henry Reveley has got her now at Leghorn to paint and refit; and she will be a very nice little shell for the Nautilus, your friend . . . who has enough to do in taming his own will, without the additional burthen of regulating that of a horse, and still worse of a groom. The Gisbornes are going to They have been here for two days on a visit England. proposed by themselves, and return to-morrow. manners to them have been gentle, but cold.

Not a word of the Steamboat, in fact my money seems to be as irretrievable as Henry's character, and it is fortunate that I value it as little. I do not write anything at present. I feel incapable of composition.

I believe it is now certain that Emilia will marry, although it is undecided whom.—A great and a painful weight will be taken off my mind by the event. Poor thing! she suffers dreadfully in her prison.

Adieu. Your affectionate friend,

S

I Mantuan, capering, squalid, squalling—a verse of Mr. T[aaffe]'s translation of Dante.

[Addressed outside], Miss CLAIRMONT,

Presso al Profe. Bojti,

Dirimpetto Palazzo Pitti, Florence.

\* John Taaffe ("Count" Taaffe, as he was sometimes called) was an Irishman and a Knight Commander of the Order of St. John

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> André Vaccà Berlinghiera (1772-1826), the physician at Pisa who had an European reputation, and whom Shelley had consulted with regard to his health, had received a part of his medical education in England.

#### 406. To a Lady<sup>1</sup>

[Exact date unknown.]? Spring, 1821.

"It is probable that you will be earnest to employ the sacred talisman of language. To acquire these you are now necessitated to sacrifice many hours of the time, when, instead of being conversant with particles and verbs, your nature incites you to contemplation and inquiry concerning the objects which they conceal. You desire to enjoy the beauties of eloquence and poetry—to sympathise in the original language with the institutors and martyrs of ancient freedom. The generous and inspiriting examples of philosophy and virtue, you desire intimately to know and feel; not as mere facts detailing names, and dates, and motions of the human body, but clothed in the very language of the actors,—that language dictated by and expressive of the passions and principles that governed their conduct. Facts are not what we want to know in poetry, in history, in the lives of individual men, in satire,

<sup>1</sup> This fragment was printed by Mrs. Shelley as a note to the letter

to John Gisborne of Nov. 16, 1819, with the following note—

Mr. H. Buxton Forman suggests that the recipient, or intended recipient, may have been Miss Clairmont.

of Jerusalem, who contributed the comic element to Shelley's Pisan He was self-constituted poet-laureate of Pisa, and was sometimes the butt of Byron's wit, who however called him "really a good fellow," and introduced him to John Murray, who published in 1822 "A Comment on the Divine Comedy of Dante," the first volume of which Taaffe had caused to be printed (anonymously) at Pisa, like Shelley's "Adonais," "with the types of Didot." See Shelley's letter to Ollier, June 16, 1821. Taaffe was also the author of "Aclais," a poem in 2 vols., privately printed in 1852, and "The History of the Holy, Military Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem," 4 vols., 1852. It was he who was the cause of the affair with the dragoon in March, 1822. See p. 948.

I subjoin here a fragment of a letter, I know not to whom addressed; it is to a woman—which shows how, worshipping as Shelley did the spirit of the literature of ancient Greece, he considered that this could be found only in its original language, and did not consider that time wasted which a person who had pretensions, intellectual culture, and enthusiasm, spent in acquiring them."

or panegyric. They are the mere divisions, the arbitrary points on which we hang, and to which we refer those delicate and evanescent hues of mind, which language delights and instructs us in precise proportion as it expresses. What is a translation of Homer into English? A person who is ignorant of Greek need only look at "Paradise Lost," or the tragedy of "Lear" translated into French, to obtain an analogical conception of its worthless and Tacitus, or Livius, or Herodotus, miserable inadequacy. are equally undelightful and uninstructive in translation. You require to know and to be intimate with those persons who have acted a distinguished part to benefit, to enlighten, or even to pervert and injure humankind. Before you can do this, four years are yet to be consumed in the discipline of the ancient languages, and those of modern Europe, which you only imperfectly know, and which conceal from your intimacy such names as Ariosto, Tasso, Petrarch, and Macchiavelli; or Goëthe, Schiller, Wieland, etc. French language you, like every other respectable woman, already know; and if the great name of Rousseau did not redeem it, it would have been perhaps as well that you had remained entirely ignorant of it."

### 407. To John and Maria Gisborne

BAGNI, TUESDAY EVENING, (June 5, 1821).

#### MY DEAR FRIENDS,

We anxiously expect your arrival at the Baths; but as I am persuaded that you will spend as much time with us as you can save from your necessary occupations before your departure, I will forbear to vex you with importunity. My health does not permit me to spend many hours from home. I have been engaged these last days in composing



a poem on the death of Keats, which will shortly be finished; and I anticipate the pleasure of reading it to you, as some of the very few persons who will be interested in it and understand it. It is a highly-wrought piece of art, and perhaps better, in point of composition, than anything I have written.

I have obtained a purchaser for some of the articles of your three lists, a catalogue of which I subjoin. I shall do my utmost to get more; could you not send me a complete list of your *furniture*, as I have had inquiries made about chests of drawers, etc.

My unfortunate box! it contained a chaos of the elements of "Charles I." If the idea of the *creator*<sup>2</sup> had been packed up with them, it would have shared the same fate; and that, I am afraid, has undergone another sort of shipwreck.

Very faithfully and affectionately yours,

S.

## 408. TO CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (Florence)

PISA,

June 8, 1821.

### My DEAR CLARE,

I have just seen Mrs. Mason, who desires me on your part not to take further steps about your lodgings at Livorno:

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Adonais / An elegy on the death of John Keats, / Author of Endymion, Hyperion, etc. / By / Percy B. Shelley / Quotation from Plato / Pisa / with the Types of Didot / MDCCCXXI." In an undated and unpublished letter to Ollier, probably written at the end of June or the beginning of July, 1821, Shelley states the copies of "Adonais" are already on their way to Ollier, and that he is sending a sketch for a frontispiece to the poem, which he desires shall be engraved at once as he wishes it to be ready when the poem arrives.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Professor Dowden has suggested as probable that this reference alludes to an ambitious poetical work in contemplation by Shelley entitled "The Creator." Mary also mentions to Mr. and Mrs. Gisborne on June 30, that "The 'Creator' has not yet made himself heard."

I accordingly stay all further proceedings until further orders.—Indeed you would be very uncomfortable there alone, or in the society of those odious people, the dregs of the Livornese merchants, who sell board and lodging on such terms as are by no means large enough to include the increased appetite that sea-bathing would give you. If you can go with Madame Orlandini pray do. The Gisbornes I told you are going to England and are selling all their goods, and mine too. I wonder how much they will have the face to offer me as the produce of the wreck of the We shall see. I shall pounce upon their steamboat. German dictionary for you; as the order I transmitted to Peacock for one, has been like all my other orders totally My health is better since I last wrote. I always neglected. tell you it is better, and yet I am never well. I have a great desire and interest to live, and I would submit to any inconvenience to attain that object. I take all sorts of care of myself, but it appears to make no difference. Anything that prevents me from thinking does me good. Reading does not occupy me enough: the only relief I find springs from the composition of poetry, which necessitates contemplations that lift me above the stormy mist of sensations which are my habitual place of abode. lately been composing a poem on Keats; it is better than anything that I have yet written, and worthy both of him and of me.

We never hear from England now. Godwin writes no more.

Peacock writes no more. Hunt wrote about three months ago, in a strain, however, which gave me pain, because I see he is struggling. Miss Curran wrote the other day inviting herself to spend the summer with us, but Mary sent an excuse. We see a good deal of the Williamses, who are very good people, and I like her much better than I did. Mr. Taaffe comes sometimes, and on an occasion of sending two guinea pigs to Mary wrote this at the end of his letter—

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"O, that I were one of those guinea pigs, that I might see you this morning!"

A vessel has arrived to take the Greek Prince and his suite to join the army in Morea. He is a great loss to Mary and therefore to me . . . but not otherwise.

Adieu. I will send you the rest of your money in a day or two.

Ever truly and affectionately yours,

S.

P.S.—Untreue trifit seinen eigenen Herrn.

[Addressed outside],
Miss Clairmont,
Presso al Prof. Bojti,
Dirimpetto Palazzo Pitti,
Firenze.

## 409. To Charles Ollier (London)

PISA,

June 8, 1821.

DEAR SIR.

You may announce for publication a poem entitled "Adonais." It is a lament on the death of poor Keats, with some interposed stabs on the assassins of his peace and of his fame; and will be preceded by a criticism on "Hyperion," asserting the due claims which that fragment gives him to the rank which I have assigned him. My poem is finished, and consists of about forty Spenser stanzas. I shall send it you, either printed at Pisa, or transcribed in such a manner as it shall be difficult for the reviser to leave such errors as assist the obscurity of the "Prometheus." But, in case I send it printed, it will be merely that mistakes may be avoided; [so] that I shall only have a few copies struck off in the cheapest manner.

If you have interest enough in the subject, I could wish that you inquired of some of the friends and relations of Keats respecting the circumstances of his death, and could https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000659054 Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 18:45 GMT / https://hdl.har.ized / http://www.hathitrust.org/access use#pd-google Generated at University of Penns Public Domain, Google-digitized transmit me any information you may be able to collect, and especially as to the degree in which, as I am assured, the brutal attack in the *Quarterly Review* excited the disease by which he perished.

I have received no answer to my last letter to you. Have you received my contribution to your magazine?

Dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely, P. B. Shelley.

### 410. To Charles Ollier (London)

June 11, 1821.

DEAR SIR,

I hear that a bookseller of the name of Clark has published a poem which I wrote in early youth, called "Queen Mab." I have not seen it for some years, but inasmuch as I recollect

<sup>1</sup> This reprint of "Queen Mab," which was published by W. Clark, 201 Strand, bears the date of 1821. The notes in Greek, Latin, and French are printed with translations, and in many copies the dedication to Harriet is to be found. Shelley's application for an injunction was refused on the ground that "the work being calculated to do injury to society had ceased to be the property of its author." In the first collected edition of Shelley's poetical works, published in 1839, Mary Shelley included "Queen Mab," with certain omissions from the poem and notes. These omissions were made at the request of Moxon, the publisher, but while the book was going through the press Mary Shelley sought the advice of Leigh Hunt in the following letter, which is now published for the first time: "41 Park Street, December 12, 1838. My dear Hunt,—I am about to publish an edition of our Shelley's Poems, Sir Tim giving leave if there is no biography. I want a copy of the original edition of Queen Mab' to correct the press from—it must be the original it would not go to the Printers but only [be] used to correct from. Have you one—or do you know who has—Has Miss Kent? I should be so grateful for the loan. Moxon wants me to leave out the sixth part as too atheistical. I don't like Atheism—nor does he now. Yet I hate mutilation—what do you say? How have you been, and when does your Play come out? With love to Marianne. Yours ever. M. W. Shelley. Let me have the book quickly—if you have it—as the press is waiting." In the one volume royal octavo

it is villainous trash; and I dare say much better fitted to injure than to serve the cause which it advocates. the name of poetry, and as you are a bookseller (you observe the strength of these conjurations) pray give all manner of publicity to my disapprobation of this publication; in fact protest for me in an advertisement in the strongest terms—I ought to say, however, that I am obliged to this piratical fellow in one respect: that he has omitted, with a delicacy for which I thank him heartily, a foolish dedication to my late wife, the publication of which would have annoyed me; and indeed is the only part of the business that could seriously have annoyed me-although it is my duty to protest against the whole. I have written to my attorney to do what he can to suppress it, although I fear that, after the precedent of Southey, there is little probability of an injunction being granted.

I hear that the abuse against me exceeds all bounds. Pray, if you see any one article particularly outrageous, send it me. As yet I have laughed; but woe to these scoundrels if they should once make me lose my temper. I have discovered that my calumniator in the *Quarterly Review* was the Rev. Mr. Milman. Priests and eunuchs have their privilege.<sup>2</sup>

"Adonais" is finished and you will soon receive it. It is little adapted for popularity, but is perhaps the least imperfect of my compositions.

Dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully, P. B. Shelley.

edition of Shelley's Poems, apparently published the year following (1840)—although the engraved title-page bears the date 1839—"Queen Mab," with the notes, is published exactly as Shelley printed it in 1813.

<sup>1</sup> Southey's revolutionary drama, "Wat Tyler," written, but 'not published in 1794, had been issued surreptitiously in 1817. The author's attempt to suppress this publication by an injunction was unsuccessful.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Milman was not the author of the article. See p. 728.

#### 410a. To Charles Ollier

[PISA],

June 16, 1821.

(Fragment)

[With this letter Shelley sent a specimen of Taasse's "Comment" on, and translation of, Dante's "Divine Comedy," which had been printed at Pisa "with the types of Didot," inviting Ollier to arrange with its author for its publication in England. In another letter to Ollier, written about this time, Shelley refers to the "Comment"; he is a little more outspoken about the translated portion of the work. See note on p. 869.]

"... The more considerable portion of this work will consist of the "Comment." I have read with much attention this portion, as well as the verses up to the end of the eighth canto; and I do not hesitate to assure you that the lights which the annotator's labours have thrown on the obscurer parts of the text are such as all foreigners and most Italians would derive an immense additional knowledge of Dante from. They elucidate a great number of the most interesting facts connected with Dante's history and the history of his times, and everywhere bear the mark of a most elegant and accomplished mind. I know that you will not take my opinion on poetry, because I thought my own verses very good, and you find that the public declare them to be unreadable. Show them to Mr. Procter, who is far better qualified to judge than I am; there are certainly passages of great strength and conciseness; indeed, the author has sacrificed everything to represent his original truly in this latter point. Pray observe the beauty of the typography; they are the same types that my "Elegy on Keats" is printed from.

#### 411. To John Gisborne

PISA,

Saturday, June 16, 1821.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have received the heart-rending account of the closing

scene of the great genius whom envy and ingratitude scourged out of the world. I do not think that if I had seen it before, I could have composed my poem. The enthusiasm of the imagination would have overpowered the sentiment.

As it is, I have finished my Elegy; and this day I send it to the press at Pisa. You shall have a copy the moment it is completed. I think it will please you. I have dipped my pen in consuming fire for his destroyers; otherwise the style is calm and solemn.

Pray, when shall we see you? Or are the streams of Helicon less salutary than sea-bathing for the nerves? Give us as much as you can before you go to England, and rather divide the term than not come soon.

Mrs. — wishes that none of the books, desk, etc., should be packed up with the piano; but that they should be sent, one by one, by Pepi. Address them to me at her house. She desired me to have them addressed to me, why I know not.

A droll circumstance has occurred. "Queen Mab," a poem written by me when very young, in the most furious style, with long notes against Jesus Christ, and God the Father, and the King, and bishops, and marriage, and the devil knows what, is just published by one of the low booksellers in the Strand, against my wish and consent, and all the people are at loggerheads about it. Horace Smith gives me this account. You may imagine how much I am amused. For the sake of a dignified appearance, however, and really because I wish to protest against all the bad poetry in it, I have given orders to say that it is all done against my desire, and have directed my attorney to apply to Chancery for an injunction, which he will not get.

I am pretty ill, I thank you; just now; but I hope you are better.

Most affectionately yours,

P. B. S.

### 412. TO CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (Florence)

PISA.

Saturday [Postmark: June 19, 1821].

MY DEAREST CLARE,

Have you made your mind up where you would live this summer? or is there anything new in your plans? I hear from you but seldom now you cease to correspond with Mary.

Horace Smith is coming out to Italy immediately. He requests me to discover for him in or near Florence a house fit for a very small establishment, with a garden; large enough for a family in all of seven or eight persons. He wishes also to get an *Italian woman*, good cook, who speaks French; this last I apprehend to be impossible. You know how much I wish to do my utmost in executing all Horace Smith's commissions; and I thought of coming to Florence, though it would be a great waste both of money and of health to me, for that purpose. But perhaps you could manage these affairs; of course the house will not be taken until he comes, and will be subject to his approbation. I imagine he wishes it to be unfurnished, and he is the sort of man to like a pretty, elegant, neat, well-kept little house.

Let me see if I have any news for you. I have received a most melancholy account of the last illness of poor Keats, which I will neither tell you nor send you, for it would make you too low-spirited.—My Elegy on him is finished: I have dipped my pen in consuming fire to chastise his destroyers; otherwise the tone of the poem is solemn and exalted. I send it to the press here, and you will soon have a copy.

Horace Smith tells me of a curious circumstance, which if I were in England would work me much annoyance. A low bookseller has got hold of "Queen Mab" and

published it, and says he will defy all prosecutions, and is selling them by thousands.

Horace Smith applied for an injunction on my part, but, like Southey, in "Wat Tyler," was refused. The abuse which all the Government prints are pouring forth on me, and, as Horace Smith says, the "diabolical calumnies which they vent, and which religion alone could inspire," is boundless.—I enjoy and am amused with the turmoil of these poor people; but perhaps it is well for me that the Alps and the ocean are between us.—Medwin is going to be married to a daughter of Sir E. Dalbyn, only fifteen years old. He is in full chase to Venice.—I am trying to persuade Mary to ask your pardon; I hope that I shall succeed.—In the meantime, as you were in the wrong you had better not ask hers, for that is unnecessary; but write to her—if you had been in the right you would have done so.

Emelia's marriage is put off to September. I think of spending next winter in Florence. Mary talks of Rome.—We see the Williams's constantly—nice, good-natured people, very soft society after authors and pretenders to philosophy.

Godwin's "Malthus" is come: a dry but clever book, with decent interspersions of cant and sophistry.

Dearest girl, your most affectionate friend,

P. B. S.

I don't send your money till I hear do you come or no. Write next post.

[Addressed outside],
Miss CLAIRMONT,
Presso al Profe. BOJTI,
Palazzo Pitti,
Firenze.

413. TO THE EDITOR OF "THE EXAMINER"

PISA,

June 22, 1821.

SIR,

Having heard that a poem, entitled "Queen Mab," has

been surreptitiously published in London, and that legal proceedings have been instituted against the publisher, I request the favour of your insertion of the following explanation of the affair as it relates to me.

A poem, entitled "Queen Mab," was written by me at the age of eighteen, I dare say in a sufficiently intemperate spirit—but even then was not intended for publication, and a few copies only were struck off, to be distributed among my personal friends. I have not seen this production for several years; I doubt not but that it is perfectly worthless in point of literary composition; and that in all that concerns moral and political speculation, as well as in the subtler discriminations of metaphysical and religious doctrine, it is still more crude and immature. I am a devoted enemy to religious, political, and domestic oppression; and I regret this publication, not so much from literary vanity, as because I fear it is better fitted to injure than to serve the cause of freedom. I have directed my solicitor to apply to Chancery for an injunction to restrain the sale; but after the precedent of Mr. Southey's "Wat Tyler" (a poem, written, I believe, at the same age, and with the same unreflecting enthusiasm), with little hopes of success.

Whilst I exonerate myself from all share in having divulged opinions hostile to existing sanctions, under the form, whatever it may be, which they assume in this poem, it is scarcely necessary for me to protest against the system of inculcating the truth of Christianity and the excellence of Monarchy, however true or however excellent they may be, by such equivocal arguments as confiscation, and imprisonment, and invective, and slander, and the insolent violation of the most sacred ties of nature and society.

Sir, I am,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

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### 414. TO JOHN AND MARIA GISBORNE BAGNI DI PISA.

FRIDAY NIGHT (July 13, 1821).

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I have been expecting every day a writ to attend at your court at Guebhard's, whence you know it is settled that I should conduct you hither to spend your last days in Italy. A thousand thanks for your maps; in return for which I send you the only copy of "Adonais" the printer has yet delivered. I wish I could say, as Glaucus could, in the exchange for the arms of Diomed,—ἐκατόμβοι ἐννεαβοίων.

I will only remind you of "Faust;" my desire for the conclusion of which is only exceeded by my desire to welcome you. Do you observe any traces of him in the poem I send you? Poets—the best of them, are a very cameleonic race; they take the colour not only of what they feed on, but of the very leaves under which they pass.

Mary is just on the verge of finishing her novel; but it cannot be in time for you to take to England.—Farewell.

Most faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

# 415. To CHARLES & JAMES OLLIER (London)

July 17, 1821.

DEAR SIRS,

I send you the bill of lading of the box containing "Adonais:" and I send also a copy to yourself by Mr. Gisborne who probably will arrive before the ship.—Pray put the enclosed in the post.

I add a few words on the subject of my last letter.—I think it of consequence that the circumstances of Mrs. S.'s having written the work I propose to you should be kept

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Faust" was originally described as "a fragment:" the second part did not appear until 1831.

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000659054 GMT of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 iditized / http://www.hathitr Generated at University of Penns Public Domain, Google-digitized a profound secret, and I repose upon my confidence in you to that effect. On consideration, I think that it ought not to be announced as written by the author of "Frankenstein": it bears every indication of the greatest popularity and many people might have been prejudiced by "Frankenstein" against a second attempt of the same author. The work I send you has been seen in part by Mr. Gisborne, and has excited, as it must in every one, the deepest interest.

Dear Sirs, yours very truly, P. B. Shelley.

Messrs. Ollier & Co., Booksellers, Vere Street, Bond St., London.

### 416. To John and Maria Gisborne

BAGNI [DI PISA], July 19 [1821].

MY DEAREST FRIENDS,

I am fully repaid for the painful emotions from which some verses of my poem sprang, by your sympathy and approbation—which is all the reward I expect—and as much as I desire. It is not for me to judge whether, in the high praise your feelings assign me, you are right or wrong. The poet and the man are two different natures; though they exist together, they may be unconscious of each other, and incapable of deciding on each other's powers and efforts by any reflex act. The decision of the cause, whether or no I am a poet, is removed from the present time to the hour when our posterity shall assemble; but the court is a very severe one, and I fear that the verdict will be "Guilty—death!"

I shall be with you on the first summons. I hope that the time you have reserved for us, "this bank and shoal of time," is not so short as you once talked of.

In haste, most affectionately yours, P. B. S.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mary Shelley's novel "Valperga."

# XIX. THE PISAN CIRCLE—"HELLAS" August 1, 1821—April 11, 1822

SHELLEY at Florence—Visits Byron at Ravenna—The Guiccioli—
—The Hoppners' Malicious Scandal—Churches at Ravenna—
Byron's Habits—Gives his Memoirs to Moore—Tita "the Venetian"—Byron's Menagerie—Allegra at the Convent—
Dante's Tomb—Byron's Intention to Visit Pisa—Williams's Play
—The Liberal—Mary Shelley's Novel—"Hellas"—Leigh Hunt Invited to Italy—Byron at Pisa—"The Exotic"—Saving a Heretic—"Charles the First"—Retzsch's Etchings for "Faust"—Leigh Hunt's Wanderings—Clare and Allegra—The Dragoon Affair.

### 417. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT SHELLEY (Bagni di Pisa)

LIONE BIANCO, FLORENCE, TUESDAY [August 1, 1821].

MY DEAREST LOVE.

I shall not return this evening; nor, unless I have better success, to-morrow. I have seen many houses, but very few within the compass of our powers; and, even in those which seem to suit, nothing is more difficult than to bring the proprietors to terms. I congratulate myself on having taken the season in time, as there is great expectation of Florence being full next winter. I shall do my utmost to return to-morrow evening. You may expect me about ten or eleven o'clock, as I shall purposely be late, to spare myself the excessive heat.

The Gisbornes (four o'clock, Tuesday,) are just set out in a diligence-and-four, for Bologna. They have promised to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley left Mary at the Baths of Pisa on July 29, and went to Florence in search of a house for Horace Smith, in the company of the Gisbornes, who had been staying with the Shelleys, and were now on their way to England.

write from Paris. I spent three hours this morning principally in the contemplation of the Niobe, and of a favourite Apollo; all worldly thoughts and cares seem to vanish from before the sublime emotions such spectacles create; and I am deeply impressed with the great difference of happiness enjoyed by those who live at a distance from these incarnations of all that the finest minds have conceived of beauty, and those who can resort to their company at pleasure. What should we think if we were forbidden to read the great writers who have left us their works? And yet to be forbidden to live at Florence or Rome, is an evil of the same kind of scarcely less magnitude.

I am delighted to hear that the W[illiamses] are with you. I am convinced that Williams must persevere in the use of the doccia. Give my most affectionate |remembrances to them. I shall know all the houses in Florence, and can give W[illiams] a good account of them all. You have not sent my passport, and I must get home as I can. I suppose you did not receive my note.

I grudge my sequins for a carriage; but I have suffered from the sun and the fatigue, and dare not expose myself to that which is necessary for house-hunting.

Kiss little babe, and how is he? but I hope to see him fast asleep to-morrow night. And pray, dearest Mary, have some of your novel<sup>1</sup> prepared for my return.

Your ever affectionate

SHELLEY.

# 418. To Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (Bagni di Pisa)

BOLOGNA,

Agosto 6, [1821].

DEAREST MINE,

I am at Bologna, and the caravella is ordered for Ravenna. 3

<sup>1 &</sup>quot; Valperga."

<sup>\*</sup> Shelley returned to the Baths on August 2, but on the same day he received a letter from Byron, requesting him to come to Ravenna. The Countess Guiccioli's father and brother had been expelled from

I have been detained, by having made an embarrassing and inexplicable arrangement, more than twelve hours; or I should have arrived at Bologna last night instead of this morning.

Though I have travelled all night at the rate of two miles and a-half an hour, in a little open calesso, I am perfectly well in health. One would think that I were the spaniel of Destiny, for the more she knocks about me, the more I fawn on her. I had an overturn about daybreak; the old horse stumbled, and threw me and the fat vetturino into a slope of meadow, over the hedge. My angular figure stuck where it was pitched; but my vetturino's spherical form rolled fairly to the bottom of the hill, and that with so few symptoms of reluctance in the life that animated it, that my ridicule (for it was the drollest sight in the world) was suppressed by my fear that the poor devil had been hurt. But he was very well, and we continued our journey with great success. . . .

My love to the Williamses. Kiss my pretty one, and accept an affectionate one for yourself from me. The chaise waits. I will write the first night from Ravenna at length.

Yours ever,

S.

### 419. To Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

RAVENNA,

August 7, 1821.

My DEAREST MARY,

I arrived last night at ten o'clock, and sate up talking with Lord Byron until five this morning. I then went to

Romagna, and she herself had fled to Florence. Byron doubtless informed Shelley of his intention to leave Ravenna, and Shelley would naturally think of Allegra, who was in a convent at Bagnacavallo, where her father could visit her. But when he departed there would be no one to look after the child.



sleep, and now awake at eleven, and having despatched my breakfast as quick as possible, mean to devote the interval until twelve, when the post departs, to you.

Lord Byron is very well, and was delighted to see me. He has in fact completely recovered his health, and lives a life totally the reverse of that which he led at Venice. He has a permanent sort of liaison with Contessa Guiccioli, who is now at Florence, and seems from her letters to be a very amiable woman. She is waiting there until something shall be decided as to their emigration to Switzerland or stay in Italy; which is yet undetermined on either side. She was compelled to escape from the Papal territory in great haste, as measures had already been taken to place her in a convent, where she would have been unrelentingly confined for life. The oppression of the marriage contract, as existing in the laws and opinions of Italy, though less frequently exercised, is far severer than that of England. I tremble to think of what poor Emilia is destined to.

Lord Byron had almost destroyed himself in Venice: his state of debility was such that he was unable to digest any food, he was consumed by hectic fever, and would speedily have perished, but for this attachment, which has reclaimed him from the excesses into which he threw himself from carelessness and pride, rather than taste. Poor fellow! he is now quite well, and immersed in politics and literature. He has given me a number of the most interesting details on the former subject, but we will not speak of them in a letter. Fletcher<sup>2</sup> is here; and (as if, like a shadow, he waxed and waned with the substance of his master) Fletcher also has recovered his good looks, and from amidst the unseasonable grey hairs, a fresh harvest of flaxen locks put forth.

Byron's servant.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Teresa Gamba Guiccioli (1801-1873) was the daughter of a Ravenna nobleman. She married in 1817 Count Guiccioli, who was sixty. Her connection with Byron lasted from 1819 to 1823. In 1851 she married a French Marquis de Boissy. Her book, "Lord Byron jugé par les témoins de sa vie," was published in 1868,

We talked a great deal of poetry, and such matters last night; and as usual differed, and I think more than ever. He affects to patronise a system of criticism fit for the production of mediocrity, and although all his fine poems and passages have been produced in defiance of this system, yet I recognise the pernicious effects of it in the "Doge of Venice;" and it will cramp and limit his future efforts, however great they may be, unless he gets rid of it. I have read only parts of it, or rather he himself read them to me, and gave me the plan of the whole.

Lord Byron has also told me of a circumstance that shocks me exceedingly; because it exhibits a degree of desperate and wicked malice for which I am at a loss to account. When I hear such things my patience and my philosophy are put to a severe proof, whilst I refrain from seeking out some obscure hiding-place, where the counte nance of man may never meet me more. It seems that Elise, actuated either by some inconceivable malice for our dismissing her, or bribed by my enemies, or making common cause with her infamous husband, has persuaded the Hoppners of a story so monstrous and incredible that they must have been prone to believe any evil to have believed such assertions upon such evidence. Mr. Hoppner wrote to Lord Byron to state this story as the reason why he declined any further communications with us, and why he advised him to do the same. Elise says that Claire was my mistress; that is very well, and so far there is nothing new; all the world has heard so much, and people may believe or not believe as they think good. She then proceeds to say that Claire is with child by me; that I gave her the most violent medicine to produce abortion; that this not succeeding she was brought to bed, and that I immediately tore the child from her and sent it to the Foundling Hospital. I quote Mr. Hoppner's words—and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Byron's "Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice, an Historical Tragedy in five acts," and "The Prophecy of Dante" were published in 1821 together in one volume.

this is stated to have taken place in the winter after we left Este. In addition, she says that both I and Claire treated you in the most shameful manner, that I neglected and beat you, and that Claire never let a day pass without offering you insults of the most violent kind, in which she was abetted by me.

As to what Reviews and the world says, I do not care a jot, but when persons who have known me are capable of conceiving me—not that I have fallen into a great error, as would have been the living with Claire as my mistress but that I have committed such unutterable crimes as destroying or abandoning a child, and that my own! Imagine my despair of good, imagine how it is possible that one of so weak and sensitive a nature as mine can run further the gauntlet through this hellish society of men. You should write to the Hoppners a letter refuting the charge, in case you believe, and know, and can prove that it is false; stating the grounds and proofs of your belief. I need not dictate what you should say; nor, I hope, inspire you with warmth to rebut a charge, which you only can effectually rebut. If you will send the letter to me here, I will forward it to the Hoppners. Lord Byron is not up, I do not know the Hoppners' address, and I am anxious not to lose a post. 1

<sup>71</sup> Immediately on the receipt of Shelley's letter, Mary addressed a long and pathetic letter to Mrs. Hoppner repudiating the shameful slanders that had been made against her husband. In this letter she told how Elise, her former maid, had formed an attachment with Paolo, who, having been in the Shelleys' employment, had been discharged for dishonesty and had revenged himself by attempting to extort money from his former master. When Mary Shelley discovered that Elise was in trouble through her lover, she had had her married to Paolo. The whole story was a plot of the wretched couple against Shelley and his wife. "You ought to have paused," Mary said, "before you tried to convince the father of her child [i.e., Byron, the father of Miss Clairmont's child], of such unheard atrocities on her part. If his generosity and knowledge of the world had not made him reject the slander with the ridicule it deserved, what irretrievable mischief [it] would have occasioned her!" This letter was sent to Shelley to be forwarded to Mrs. Hoppner, and we see (p. 904) that he put it into Byron's hands, who volunteered to

# 420. To Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (Bagni di Pisa)

RAVENNA,

THURSDAY, 9th August [1821].

MY DEAREST MARY.

I wrote to you yesterday, and I begin another letter to-day, without knowing exactly when I can send it, as I am told the post only goes once a week. I dare say the subject of the latter half of my letter gave you pain, but it was necessary to look the affair in the face, and the only satisfactory answer to the calumny must be given by you, and could be given by you, alone. This is evidently the source of the violent denunciations of the *Literary Gazette*, in themselves contemptible enough, and only to be regarded as effects, which show us their cause, which, until we put off our mortal nature, we never despise—that is, the belief of persons who have known and seen you, that you are guilty of crimes.

A certain degree and a certain kind of infamy is to be borne, and, in fact, is the best compliment which an exalted nature can receive from the filthy world, of which it is its hell to be a part; but this sort of thing exceeds the measure; and even if it were only for the sake of our dear Percy, I would take some pains to suppress it. In fact, it shall be suppressed, even if I am driven to the

convey it to her. The letter was found among Byron's papers after his death. He may have sent it to Hoppner telling him to return it, Hoppner may have complied. Or he may not have sent the letter. Byron assumed in the affair an attitude of sympathy towards Shelley; yet less than five months before he had used a portion of Paolo's hideous story as a reason to justify him to Mr. Hoppner for disregarding Clare's petition against sending Allegra to a convent. She had spoken of the Italian convent-educated women as making bad wives and unnatural mothers. In forwarding Clare's letter containing these words to Mr. Hoppner, Byron had written: "The moral part of this letter upon Italians, etc., comes with excellent grace from the writer, now living with a man and his wife [meaning Shelley and Mary], and having planted a child in the Fl. Foundling, etc." Professor Dowden, whose words I have made use of in this note, has printed Mary Shelley's letters in full.

disagreeable necessity of prosecuting Elise before the Tuscan tribunals.

After having sent my letter to the post yesterday, I went to see some of the antiquities of this place; which appear to be remarkable. This city was once of vast extent, and the traces of its remains are to be found more than four miles from the gate of the modern town. sea, which once came close to it, has now retired to the distance of four miles, leaving a melancholy extent of marshes, interspersed with patches of cultivation, and towards the seashore with pine forests, which have followed the retrocession of the Adriatic, and the roots of which are actually washed by its waves. The level of the sea and of this tract of country correspond so nearly, that a ditch dug to a few feet in depth, is immediately filled up with sea water. All the ancient buildings have been choked up to the height of from five to twenty feet by the deposit of the sea, and of the inundations, which are frequent in the winter. I went in L. B.'s carriage, first to the Chiesa San Vitale, which is certainly one of the most ancient churches in Italy. It is a rotunda, supported upon buttresses and pilasters of white marble; the ill effect of which is somewhat relieved by an interior row of columns. The dome is very high and narrow. The whole church, in spite of the elevation of the soil, is very high for its breadth, and is of a very peculiar and striking construction. In the section of one of the large tables of marble with which the church is lined, they showed me the perfect figure, as perfect as if it had been painted, of a Capuchin friar, which resulted merely from the shadings and the position of the stains in the marble. This is what may be called a pure anticipated cognition of a Capuchin.

I then went to the tomb of Theodosius, which has now been dedicated to the Virgin, without, however, any change in its original appearance. It is about a mile from the present city. This building is more than half overwhelmed by the elevated soil, although a portion of the lower storey has been excavated, and is filled with brackish and stinking waters, and a sort of vaporous darkness, and troops of prodigious frogs. It is a remarkable piece of architecture, and without belonging to a period when the ancient taste yet survived, bears, nevertheless, a certain impression of that taste. It consists of two stories; the lower supported on Doric arches and pilasters, and a simple entablature. The other circular within, and polygonal outside, and roofed with one single mass of ponderous stone, for it is evidently one, and Heaven alone knows how they contrived to lift it to that height. It is a sort of flattish dome, rough-wrought within by the chisel, from which the Northern Conquerors tore the plates of silver that adorned it, and polished without, with things like handles appended to it, which were also wrought out of the solid stone, and to which I suppose the ropes were applied to draw it up. You ascend externally into the second storey by a flight of stone steps, which are modern.

The next place I went to was a church called la chiesa di Sant' Appollinare, which is a Basilica, and built by one, I forget whom, of the Christian Emperors; it is a long church, with a roof like a barn, and supported by twentyfour columns of the finest marble, with an altar of jasper, and four columns of jasper, and giallo antico, supporting the roof of the tabernacle which are said to be of immense value. It is something like that church (I forget the name of it) we saw at Rome, fuore delle mura. I suppose the Emperor stole these columns, which seem not at all to belong to the place they occupy. Within the city, near the church of San Vitale, there is to be seen the tomb of the Empress Galla Placidia, daughter of Theodosius the Great, together with those of her husband Constantius, her brother Honorius, and her son Valentinian—all Emperors. The tombs are massy cases of marble, adorned

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "San Paolo fuore delle mura—burnt down, and its beautiful columns calcined by the fire, in 1823—now rebuilt."—Mrs. Shelley's note.

with rude and tasteless sculpture of lambs, and other Christian emblems, with scarcely a trace of the antique. It seems to have been one of the first effects of the Christian religion to destroy the power of producing beauty in art. These tombs are placed in a sort of vaulted chamber, wrought over with rude mosaic, which is said to have been built in 1300. I have yet seen no more of Ravenna.

FRIDAY

We ride out in the evening, through the pine forests which divide this city from the sea. Our way of life is this, and I have accommodated myself to it without much difficulty:—L. B. gets up at two, breakfasts; we talk, read, etc., until six; then we ride, and dine at eight; and after dinner sit talking till four or five in the morning. I get up at twelve, and am now devoting the interval between my rising and his, to you.

L. B. is greatly improved in every respect. In genius, in temper, in moral views, in health, in happiness. connexion with la Guiccioli has been an inestimable benefit to him. He lives in considerable splendour, but within his income, which is now about £4,000 a-year<sup>1</sup>; £100 of which he devotes to purposes of charity. He has had mischievous passions, but these he seems to have subdued, and he is becoming what he should be, a virtuous man. The interest which he took in the politics of Italy, and the actions he performed in consequence of it, are subjects not fit to be written, but are such as will delight and surprise you. He is not yet decided to go to Switzerlanda place, indeed, little fitted for him: the gossip and the cabals of those anglicised coteries would torment him, as they did before, and might exasperate him into a relapse of libertinism, which he says he plunged into not from taste, but despair. La Guiccioli and her brother (who is L. B.'s friend and confidant, and acquiesces perfectly in her connexion with him), wish to go to Switzerland; as L. B. says, merely from the novelty of the pleasure of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See page 938 where Shelley speaks of Byron's income as from £12,000 to £15,000.

travelling. L. B. prefers Tuscany or Lucca, and is trying to persuade them to adopt his views. He has made me write a long letter to her to engage her to remain—an odd thing enough for an utter stranger to write on subjects of the utmost delicacy to his friend's mistress. seems destined that I am always to have some active part in everybody's affairs whom I approach. I have set down, in lame Italian, the strongest reasons I can think of against the Swiss emigration—to tell you truth, I should be very glad to accept, as my fee, his establishment in Tuscany. Ravenna is a miserable place; the people are barbarous and wild, and their language the most infernal patois that you can imagine. He would be, in every respect, better among the Tuscans. I am afraid he would not like Florence, on account of the English there. There is Lucca, Florence, Pisa, Siena, and I think nothing more. What think you of Prato, or Pistoia, for him?—no Englishman approaches those towns; but I am afraid no house could be found good enough for him in that region.

He has read to me one of the unpublished cantos of Don Juan, which is astonishingly fine. It sets him not only above, but far above, all the poets of the day—every word is stamped with immortality. I despair of rivalling Lord Byron, as well as I may, and there is no other with whom it is worth contending. This canto is in the style, but totally, and sustained with incredible ease and power, like the end of the second canto. There is not a word which the most rigid asserter of the dignity of human nature would desire to be cancelled. It fulfils, in a certain degree, what I have long preached of producing-something wholly new and relative to the age, and yet surpassingly beautiful. It may be vanity, but I think I see the trace of my earnest exhortations to him to create something wholly new. He has finished his life up to the present time, and given it to Moore, with liberty for Moore to sell it for the best price he can get, with condition that the bookseller should publish it after his death.

has sold it to Murray for two thousand pounds. I have spoken to him of Hunt, but not with a direct view of demanding a contribution; and, though I am sure that if asked it would not be refused—yet there is something in me that makes it impossible. Lord Byron and I are excellent friends, and were I reduced to poverty, or were I a writer who had no claims to a higher station than I possess —or did I possess a higher than I deserve, we should appear in all things as such, and I would freely ask him any favour. Such is not the case. The demon of mistrust and pride lurks between two persons in our situation, poisoning the freedom of our intercourse. This is a tax, and a heavy one, which we must pay for being human. I think the fault is not on my side, nor is it likely, I being the weaker. hope that in the next world these things will be better managed. What is passing in the heart of another, rarely escapes the observation of one who is a strict anatomist of his own.

Write to me at Florence, where I shall remain a day at least, and send me letters, or news of letters. my little darling? And how are you, and how do you get on with your book? Be severe in your corrections, and expect severity from me, your sincere admirer. flatter myself you have composed something unequalled in its kind, and that, not content with the honours of your birth and your hereditary aristocracy, you will add still higher renown to your name. Expect me at the end of my appointed time. I do not think I shall be detained. Is Claire with you, or is she coming? Have you heard anything of my poor Emilia, from whom I got a letter the day of my departure, saying, that her marriage was deferred for a very short time, on account of the illness of her spouse? How are the Williams's, and Williams especially? Give my very kindest love to them.

Lord B. has here splendid apartments in the house of his mistress's husband, who is one of the richest men in Italy. She is divorced, with an allowance of 1,200 crowns a year,

a miserable pittance from a man who has 120,000 a-year.—
Here are two monkeys, five cats, eight dogs, and ten horses, all of whom (except the horses), walk about the house like the masters of it. *Tita* the Venetian is here, and operates as my valet; a fine fellow, with a prodigious black beard, and who has stabbed two or three people, and is one of the most good-natured looking fellows I ever saw.

We have good rumours of the Greeks here, and a Russian war. I hardly wish the Russians to take any part in it. My maxim is with Æschylus:—τὸ δυσσεβὲς—μετὰ μὲν πλείονα τίκτει, σφετέρα δ' είκότα γεννậ. There is a Greek exercise for you. How should slaves produce anything but tyranny—even as the seed produces the plant?

Adieu, dear Mary.

Yours affectionately,

S.

### 421. To Thomas Love Peacock

RAVENNA, August (probably 10th), 1821.

MY DEAR PEACOCK.

I received your last letter just as I was setting off from the Bagni on a visit to Lord Byron at this place. Many thanks for all your kind attention to my accursed affairs. I am happy to tell you that my income is satisfactorily arranged, although Horace Smith having received it, and being still on his slow journey through France, I cannot send you, as I wished to have done, the amount of my debt immediately, but must defer it till I see him or till my September quarter, which is now very near.—I am very much obliged to you for your way of talking about it—but of course, if I cannot do you any good, I will not permit you to be a sufferer by me.—

I have sent you by the Gisbornes a copy of the *Elegy* on *Keats*. The subject, I know, will not please you; but the composition of the poetry, and the taste in which it is written, I do not think bad. You and the enlightened

public will judge. Lord Byron is in excellent cue both of health and spirits. He has got rid of all those melancholy and degrading habits which he indulged [in] at Venice. He lives with one woman, a lady of rank here, to whom he is attached, and who is attached to him, and is in every respect an altered man. He has written three more cantos of "Don Juan." I have yet only heard the fifth, and I think that every word of it is pregnant with immortality. I have not seen his late plays, except "Marino Faliero," which is very well, but not so transcendently fine as the "Don Juan." Lord Byron gets up at two. up, quite contrary to my usual custom, but one must sleep or die, like Southey's sea-snake in "Kehama," at 12. After breakfast we sit talking till six. From six till eight we gallop through the pine forests which divide Ravenna from the sea; we then come home and dine, and sit up gossiping till six in the morning. I don't suppose this will kill me in a week or fortnight, but I shall not try it longer. Lord B.'s establishment consists, besides servants, of ten horses, eight enormous dogs, three monkeys, five cats, an eagle, a crow, and a falcon; and all these, except the horses, walk about the house, which every now and then resounds with their unarbitrated quarrels, as if they were the masters of it. Lord B. thinks you wrote a pamphlet signed " John Bull; " he says he knew it by the style resembling " Melincourt," of which he is a great admirer. I read it, and assured him that it could not possibly be yours. 1 I write

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<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Most probably Shelley's partiality for me and my book put too favourable a construction on what Lord Byron may have said. Lord Byron told Captain Medwin that a friend of Shelley's had written a novel of which he had forgotten the name founded on his bear. He described it sufficiently to identify it, and Captain Medwin supplied the title in a note; but assuredly when I condensed Lord Monboddo's views of the humanity of the Oran Outang into the character of Sir Oran Haut-ton, I thought neither of Lord Byron's bear nor of Caligula's horse. But Lord Byron was much in the habit of fancying that all the world was spinning on his pivot. As to the pamphlet signed John Bull, I certainly did not write it. I never even saw it, and do not know what it was about."—Peacock's note.

nothing, and probably shall write no more. It offends me to see my name classed among those who have no name. If I cannot be something better, I had rather be nothing, and the accursed cause to the downfall of which I dedicate what powers I may have had—flourishes like a cedar and covers England with its boughs. My motive was never the infirm desire of fame; and if I should continue an author, I feel that I should desire it. This cup is justly given to one only of an age; indeed, participation would make it worthless: and unfortunate they who seek it and find it not.

I congratulate you—I hope I ought to do so—on your expected stranger. He is introduced into a rough world. My regards to Hogg, and Co[u]lson if you see him.

Ever most faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

After I have sealed my letter, I find that my enumeration of the animals in this Circean Palace was defective, and that in a material point. I have just met on the grand staircase five peacocks, two guinea hens, and an Egyptian crane. I wonder who all these animals were before they were changed into these shapes.

### 422. To Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

RAVENNA,

SATURDAY [August 11, 1821].

My DEAR MARY,

You will be surprised to hear that L[ord] B[yron] has decided upon coming to Pisa, in case he shall be able, with my assistance, to prevail upon his mistress to remain in Italy, of which I think there is little doubt. He wishes for a large and magnificent house, but he has furniture of his own, which he would send from Ravenna. Inquire if any of the large palaces are to be let. We discussed Prato, Pistoia, Lucca, etc., but they would not suit him so well as Pisa, to which, indeed, he shows a decided

preference. So let it be! Florence he objects to, on account of the prodigious influx of English.

I don't think this circumstance ought to make any difference in our own plans with respect to this winter in Florence, because we could easily reassume our station with the spring, at Pugnano or the baths, in order to enjoy the society of the noble lord. But do you consider this point, and write to me your full opinion, at the Florence post office.

I suffer much to-day from the pain in my side, brought on, I believe, by this accursed water. In other respects, I am pretty well, and my spirits are much improved; they had been improving, indeed, before I left the baths, after the deep dejection of the early part of the year.

I am reading "Anastasius." One would think that L[ord] B[yron] had taken his idea of the three last cantos of "Don Juan" from this book. That, of course, has nothing to do with the merit of this latter, poetry having nothing to do with the invention of facts. It is a very powerful, and very entertaining novel, and a faithful picture, they say, of modern Greek manners. I have read L[ord] B[yron]'s Letter to Bowles: some good things—but he ought not to write prose criticism.

You will receive a long letter, sent with some of L[ord] B[yron]'s, express to Florence. I write this in haste.

Yours most affectionately,

S.

# 423. To Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley Ravenna,

TUESDAY, August 14,2 1821.

MY DEAREST LOVE,

I accept your kind present of your picture, 3 and wish

<sup>1</sup> By Thomas Hope.

\* Probably a present for Shelley's birthday—August 4th.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> This letter is dated the 15th in the copy printed by Mrs. Shelley, but the 15th was on Wednesday.

you would get it prettily framed for me. I will wear, for your sake, upon my heart this image which is ever present to my mind.

I have only two minutes to write, the post is just setting off. I shall leave this place on Thursday or Friday morning. You would forgive me for my longer stay, if you knew the fighting I have had to make it so short. I need not say where my own feelings impel me.

It still remains fixed that L. B. should come to Tuscany, and, if possible, Pisa; but more of that to-morrow.

Your faithful and affectionate

S.

# 424. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT SHELLEY RAVENNA, 15 Aug[ust], 1821.

I went the other day to see Allegra at her convent, 1 and stayed with her about three hours. She is grown tall and slight for her age, and her face is somewhat altered. The traits have become more delicate, and she is much paler, probably from the effect of improper food. yet retains the beauty of her deep blue eyes and of her mouth, but she has a contemplative seriousness which, mixed with her excessive vivacity, which has not yet deserted her, has a very peculiar effect in a child. is under very strict discipline as may be observed from the immediate obedience she accords to the will of her attend-This seems contrary to her nature, but I do not think it has been obtained at the expense of much severity. Her hair, scarcely darker than it was, is beautifully profuse, and hangs in large curls on her neck. She was prettily dressed in white muslin, and an apron of black silk, with Her light and airy figure and her graceful motions were a striking contrast to the other children there.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> At Bagnacavallo, see p. 867.

She seemed a thing of a finer and a higher order. At first she was very shy, but after a little caressing, and especially after I had given her a gold chain which I had bought at Ravenna for her, she grew more familiar, and led me all over the garden, and all over the convent, running and skipping so fast that I could hardly keep up with her. She showed me her little bed, and the chair where she sat at dinner, and the carozzina in which she and her favourite companions drew each other along a walk in the garden. I had brought her a basket of sweetmeats, and before eating any of them she gave her companions and each of the nuns a portion. This is not much like the old Allegra. I asked her what I should say from her to her mama, and she said:—

- "Che mi manda un bacio e un bel vestituro."
- "E come vuoi il vestituro sia fatto?"
- "Tutto di seta e d'oro," was her reply.

Her predominant foible seems the love of distinction and vanity, and this is a plant which produces good or evil according to the gardener's skill. I then asked what I should say to papa? "Che venga farmi un visitino e che porta seco la mammina," a message which you may conjecture that I was too discreet to deliver. Before I went away she made me run all over the convent, like a mad thing. The nuns, who were half in bed, were ordered to hide themselves, and on returning Allegra began ringing the bell which calls the nuns to assemble. The tocsin of the convent sounded, and it required all the efforts of the prioress to prevent the spouses of God from rendering themselves, dressed or undressed, to the accustomed signal. Nobody scolded her for these scappature, so I suppose she is well treated, so far as temper is concerned. Her intellect is not much cultivated. She knows certain orazioni by heart, and talks and dreams of Paradiso and all sorts of things, and has a prodigious list of saints, and is always talking of the Bambino. This will do her no harm, but the idea of bringing up so sweet a creature in the midst of such trash till sixteen!

#### 425. To Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

RAVENNA,

WEDNESDAY [August 15, 1821].

MY DEAREST LOVE,

I write, though I doubt whether I shall not arrive before this letter; as the post only leaves Ravenna once a week, on Saturdays, and as I hope to set out to-morrow evening by the courier. But as I must necessarily stay a day at Florence, and as the natural incidents of travelling may prevent me from taking my intended advantage of the couriers, it is probable that this letter will arrive first. Besides, as I will explain, I am not yet quite my own master. But that by-and-bye. I do not think it necessary to tell you of my impatience to return to you and my little darling, or the disappointment with which I have prolonged my absence from you. I am happy to think that you are not quite alone.

Lord Byron is still decided upon Tuscany: and such is his impatience, that he has desired me—as if I should not arrive in time—to write to you to inquire for the best unfurnished palace in Pisa, and to enter upon a treaty for it. It is better not to be on the Lung' Arno; but, in fact, there is no such hurry, and as I shall see you so soon it is not worth while to trouble yourself about it.

I told you I had written by L[ord] B[yron]'s desire to la Guiccioli, to dissuade her and her family from Switzerland. Her answer is this moment arrived, and my representation seems to have reconciled them to the unfitness of that step. At the conclusion of a letter, full of all the fine things she says she has heard of me, is this request, which I transcribe:—"Signore—la vostra bontà mi fa ardita di chiedervi un favore—me lo accorderete voi? Non partite da Ravenna senza Milord." Of course, being now, by all the laws of knighthood, captive to a lady's request, I shall only be at liberty on my parole, until Lord Byron

is settled at Pisa. I shall reply, of course, that the boon is granted, and that if her lover is reluctant to quit Ravenna after I have made arrangements for receiving him at Pisa, I am bound to place myself in the same situation as now, to assail him with importunities to rejoin her. Of this there is, fortunately, no need; and I need not tell you there is no fear that this chivalric submission of mine to the great general laws of antique courtesy, against which I never rebel, and which is my religion, should interfere with my quick returning, and long remaining with you, dear girl.

I have seen Dante's tomb, and worshipped the sacred spot. The building and its accessories are comparatively modern, but the urn itself, and the tablet of marble, with his portrait in relief, are evidently of equal antiquity with his death. The countenance has all the marks of being taken from his own; the lines are strongly marked, far more than the portraits, which, however, it resembles; except, indeed, the eye, which is half closed, and reminded me of Pacchiani. It was probably taken after death. I saw the library, and some specimens of the earliest illuminated printing from the press of Faust. They are on vellum, and of an execution little inferior to that of the present day.

We ride out every evening as usual, and practise pistol-shooting at pumpkin; and I am not sorry to observe, that I approach towards my noble friend's exactness of aim. The water here is villainous, and I have suffered tortures; but I now drink nothing but alcalescent water, and am much relieved. I have the greatest trouble to get away; and L[ord] B[yron], as a reason for my stay, has urged that, without either me or the Guiccioli, he will certainly fall into his old habits. I then talk, and he listens to reason; and I earnestly hope that he is too well aware of the terrible and degrading consequences of his former mode of life, to be in danger from the short interval of temptation that will be left him. L[ord] B[yron]

speaks with great kindness and interest of you, and seems to wish to see you.

RAVENNA,
THURSDAY [August 16, 1821].

I have received your letter with that of Mrs. Hoppner. I do not wonder, my dearest friend, that you should have been moved. I was at first, but speedily regained the indifference which the opinion of anything, or anybody, except our own consciousness, amply merits; and day by day shall more receive from me. I have not recopied your letter; such a measure would destroy its authenticity, but have given it to Lord Byron, who has engaged to send it with his own comments to the Hoppners. People do not hesitate, it seems, to make themselves panderers and accomplices to slander, for the Hoppners had exacted from Lord Byron that these accusations should be concealed from Lord Byron is not a man to keep a secret, good or bad; but in openly confessing that he has not done so, he must observe a certain delicacy, and therefore wished to send the letter himself, and indeed this adds weight to your representations. Have you seen the article in the Literary Gazette on me? They evidently allude to some story of this kind—however cautious the Hoppners have been in preventing the calumniated person from asserting his justification, you know too much of the world not to be certain that this was the utmost limit of their caution. So much for nothing.

Lord Byron is immediately coming to Pisa. He will set off the moment I can get him a house. Who would have imagined this? Our first thought ought to be—, our second our own plans. The hesitation in your letter about Florence has communicated itself to me; although I hardly see what we can do about Horace Smith, to whom our attentions are so due, and would be so useful. If I do not arrive before this long scrawl, write something to Florence to decide me. I shall certainly, not without

strong reasons, at present sign the agreement for the old codger's house; although the extreme beauty and fitness of the place, should we decide on Florence, might well overbalance the objection of your deaf visitor. thing—with Lord Byron and the people we know at Pisa, we should have a security and protection, which seems to be more questionable at Florence. But I do not think that this consideration ought to weigh. What think you of remaining at Pisa? The Williams's would probably be induced to stay there if we did; Hunt would certainly stay, at least this winter, near us, should he emigrate at all; Lord Byron and his Italian friends would remain quietly there; and Lord Byron has certainly a great regard for us—the regard of such a man is worth—some of the tribute we must pay to the base passions of humanity in any intercourse with those within their circle; he is better worth it than those on whom we bestow it from mere The Masons are there, and as far as solid affairs are concerned, are my friends. I allow this is an argument Mrs. Mason's perversity is very annoying to for Florence. me, especially as Mr. Tighe is seriously my friend. This circumstance makes me averse from that intimate continuation of intercourse which, once having begun, I can no longer avoid. At Pisa I need not distil my water if I can distil it anywhere. Last winter I suffered less from my painful disorder than the winter I spent at Florence. The arguments for Florence you know, and they are very weighty; judge (I know you like the job,) which scale is overbalanced. My greatest content would be utterly to desert all human society. I would retire with you and our child to a solitary island in the sea, would build a boat, and shut upon my retreat the floodgates of the world. I would read no reviews, and talk with no authors. I dared trust my imagination, it would tell me that there are one or two chosen companions besides yourself whom I should desire. But to this I would not listen—where two or three are gathered together, the devil is a rong them.

And good, far more than evil impulses, love, far more than hatred, has been to me, except as you have been its object, the source of all sorts of mischief. So on this plan, I would be alone, and would devote, either to oblivion or to future generations, the overflowings of a mind which, timely withdrawn from the contagion, should be kept fit for no baser object. But this it does not appear that we shall do.

The other side of the alternative (for a medium ought not to be adopted) is to form for ourselves a society of our own class, as much as possible in intellect, or in feelings; and to connect ourselves with the interests of that society. Our roots never struck so deeply as at Pisa, and the transplanted tree flourishes not. People who lead the lives which we led until last winter, are like a family of Wahabee Arabs, pitching their tent in the midst of London. We must do one thing or the other—for yourself, for our child, for our existence. The calumnies, the source of which are probably deeper than we perceive, have ultimately, for object, the depriving us of the means of security and subsistence. You will easily perceive the gradations by which calumny proceeds to pretext, pretext to persecution, and persecution to the ban of fire and water. It is for this, and not because this or that fool, or the whole court of fools, curse and rail, that calumny is worth refuting or chastising.

### 426. To Thomas Medwin

Pisa, August 22, 1821.

MY DEAR MEDWIN.

How do you know that there are not seven distinct letters, patiently waiting with the Williams's, seven lost letters, in the seven distinct post offices of Italy, whose contents you have never unveiled?—To write to you hitherto would have been such an enterprise as if the oyster might undertake a correspondence with the eagle, with orders that the billets should be left until called for on every promontory, thunder cloud, or mountain, where the imperial bird chance to pass.

I have read with pleasure your elegant stanzas on

Tivoli. What have you done with the compositions you have sent to England? I am particularly interested in the fate of the stanzas on the lake of Geneva, which seemed to me the best you ever wrote. Have you any idea, according to my counsel, of disciplining your powers to any more serious undertaking? It might at once contribute to your happiness and your success; but consider that Poetry, although its source is native and involuntary, requires in its development severe attention.

I am happy to hear that "Adonais" pleased you; I was considering how I could send you a copy;—nor am I less flattered by your friend Sir John's approbation.—I think I shall write again.—Whilst you were with me, that is during the latter period, and after you went away, I was harassed by some severe disquietudes, the causes of which are now I hope almost at an end. What were the speculations which you say disturbed you? My mind is at peace respecting nothing so much as the constitution and mysteries of the great system of things;—my curiosity on the point never amounts to solicitude.

Williams's play, 1 if not a dramatic effort of the highest order, is one of the most manly, spirited, and natural pieces of writing I ever met with.—It is full of observation, both of nature and of human nature; the theatrical effect and interest seems to be strong and well kept up. I confess that I was surprised at his success, and shall be still more so if it is not universally acknowledged on the stage. It is worth fifty such things as Cornwall's "Mirandola." 2

and he adds: "his hopes always enliven mine."

Procter's tragedy, "Mirandola," was produced successfully at Covent Garden Theatre in 1821, under his pseudonym "Barry Cornwall."

Day," in the composition of which (he tells us in his journal,) he passed the first three months of his retirement at Pisa. The play was sent home on July 30 for a friend to present for representation at one of the principal theatres. Shelley told Williams, "if they accepted it, he has great hopes of its success before an audience," and he adds: "his hopes always enliven mine."

I am just returned from a visit to Lord Byron at Ravenna, whom I have succeeded in rousing to attack the *Quarterly*. I believe he is about to migrate to this part of the world.

We see the Williams's every day, and my regard for them is every day increased; I hardly know which I like best, but I know that Jane is your favourite.

We are undecided for Florence or Pisa this winter, but in either of these places I confidently expect that we shall see you. Mary unites with me in best regards, and I remain, my dear Medwin,

> Faithfully and affectionately yours, P. B. Shelley.

I am delighted to hear that you have so entirely recovered your health—I hardly dared to hope so last winter.

P.S.—I think you must have put up by mistake a MS. translation of the "Symposium" of Plato; if so, pray contrive to send it me. I have one or two of your books which I keep till I give you instructions.

# 427. To LEIGH HUNT (Hampstead)

PISA,

August 26, 1821.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Since I last wrote to you, I have been on a visit to Lord Byron at Ravenna. The result of this visit was a determination, on his part, to come and live at Pisa; and I have taken the finest palace on the Lung' Arno for him. But the material part of my visit consists in a message which he desires me to give to you, and which I think, ought to add to your determination—for such a one I hope you have formed—of restoring your shattered health and spirits by a migration to these "regions mild of calm and serene air."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Lanfranchi Palace. Byron did not arrive at Pisa until Thursday, November 1, 1821.

He (Lord Byron) proposes that you should come and go shares with him and me in a periodical work, 1 to be conducted here; in which each of the contracting parties should publish all their original compositions, and share the profits. He proposed it to Moore, but for some reason or other it was never brought to bear. There can be no doubt that the profits of any scheme in which you and Lord Byron engage, must from various, yet co-operating reasons, be very great. As for myself, I am, for the present, only a sort of link between you and him, until you can know each other, and effectuate the arrangements; since (to entrust you with a secret which, for your sake, I withhold from Lord Byron) nothing would induce me to share in the profits, and still less, in the borrowed splendour of such a partnership. You and he, in different manners, would be equal, and would bring, in a different manner, but in the same proportion, equal stock of reputation and success. let my frankness with you, nor my belief that you deserve it more than Lord Byron, have the effect of deterring you from assuming a station in modern literature, which the universal voice of my contemporaries forbids me either to stoop or to aspire to. I am, and I desire to be, nothing.

I did not ask Lord Byron to assist me in sending a remittance for your journey; because there are men, however excellent, from whom we would never receive an obligation, in the worldly sense of the word; and I am as jealous for my friend as for myself. I, as you know, have not it; but I suppose that I shall at last make up an impudent face, and ask Horace Smith to add to the many obligations he has conferred on me—I know I need only ask.

I think I have never told you how very much I like your "Amyntas;" it almost reconciles me to translations. In another sense I still demur. You might have written another such poem as the "Nymphs," with no great access

<sup>1</sup> The Liberal.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See p. 755.

of efforts. I am full of thoughts and plans, and should do something, if the feeble and irritable frame which incloses it was willing to obey the spirit. I fancy that then I should do great things.

B. fore this you will have seen "Adonais." Lord Byron—I suppose from modesty, on account of his being mentioned in it—did not say a word of "Adonais," though he was loud in his praise of "Prometheus Unbound," and, what you will not agree with him in, censures of "The Cenci." Certainly, if "Marino Faliero" is a drama, "Cenci" is not—but that between ourselves.

Lord Byron is reformed, as far as gallantry goes, and lives with a beautiful and sentimental Italian Lady (the Countess Giuccioli), who is as much attached to him as may be. I trust greatly to his intercourse with you for his creed to become as pure as he thinks his conduct is. He has many generous and exalted qualities, but the canker of aristocracy wants to be cut out, and something, God knows, wants to be cut out of us all—except perhaps you!

An Italian impromptu of mine.—Correct the language, if there should be errors, and do what you will with it.

#### BUONA NOTTE.

'Buona notte, Buona notte!'—Come mai La Notte sarà buona senza te? Non dirmi buona notte; chè tu sai La notte sà star buona da per sè.

Solinga, scura, cupa, senza speme, La notte, quando Lilla m'abbandona: Pei cuori che si batton insiëme Ogni notte, senza dirla, sarà buona.

Come male buona notte si suona Con sospiri e parole interrotte!— Il modo di aver la notte buona È mai non di dir la buona notte.

[Addressed outside],
LEIGH HUNT, Esq.,
Vale of Health,
Hampstead,
London,
Angleterre.

### 428. To Horace Smith

PISA,

Sept. 14, 1821.

MY DEAR SMITH,

I cannot express the pain and disappointment with which I learn the change in your plans, no less than the afflicting cause of it. Florence will no longer have any attractions for me this winter, and I shall contentedly sit down in this humdrum Pisa, and refer to hope and to chance the pleasure I had expected from your society this winter. What shall I do with your packages, which have now, I believe, all arrived at Guebhard's at Leghorn? Is it not possible that a favourable change in Mrs. Smith's health might produce a corresponding change in your determinations, and would it, or would it not, be premature to forward the packages to your present residence, or to London? I will pay every possible attention to your instructions in this regard.

I had marked down several houses in Florence, and one especially on the Arno, a most lovely place, though they asked rather more than perhaps you would have chosen to pay—yet nothing approaching to an English price.—I do not yet entirely give you up.—Indeed, I should be sorry not to hope that Mrs. Smith's state of health would not [sic] soon become such as to remove your principal objection to this delightful climate. I have not, with the exception of three or four days, suffered in the least from the heat this year. Though it is but fair to confess that my temperament approaches to that of the salamander.

We expect Lord Byron here in about a fortnight. I have just taken the finest palace in Pisa for him, and his luggage, and his horses, and all his train, are, I believe, already on their way hither. I dare say you have heard

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Horace Smith had written to Shelley saying that owing to the illness of his wife, he had decided not to visit Italy, but had taken a house at Versailles.

of the life he led at Venice, rivalling the wise Solomon almost, in the number of his concubines. Well, he is now quite reformed, and is leading a most sober and decent life, as cavaliere servente to a very pretty Italian woman, who has already arrived at Pisa, with her father and her brother (such are the manners of Italy), as the jackals of the lion. He is occupied in forming a new drama, and, with views which I doubt not will expand as he proceeds, is determined to write a series of plays, in which he will follow the French tragedians and Alfieri, rather than those of England and Spain, and produce something new, at least, to England. This seems to me the wrong road; but genius like his is destined to lead and not to follow. He will shake off his shackles as he finds they cramp him. I believe he will produce something very great; and that familiarity with the dramatic power of human nature will soon enable him to soften down the severe and unharmonising traits of his "Marino Faliero." I think you know Lord Byron personally, or is it your brother? If the latter, I know that he wished particularly to be introduced to you, and that he will sympathise, in some degree, in this great disappointment which I feel in the change, or, as I yet hope, in the prorogation of your plans.

I am glad you like "Adonais," and, particularly, that you do not think it metaphysical, which I was afraid it was. I was resolved to pay some tribute of sympathy to the unhonoured dead, but I wrote, as usual with a total ignorance of the effect that I should produce.—I have not yet seen your pastoral drama; if you have a copy, could you favour me with it? It will be six months before I shall receive it from England. I have heard it spoken of with high praise, and I have the greatest curiosity to see it.

The Gisbornes promised to buy me some books in Paris, and I had asked you to be kind enough to advance them what they might want to pay for them. I cannot conceive why they did not execute this little commission for me,

as they knew how very much I wished to receive these books by the same conveyance as the filtering-stone. Dare I ask you to do me the favour to buy them? A complete edition of the works of Calderon, and the French translation of Kant, a German Faust, and to add the "Nympholept"? —I am indifferent as to a little more or less expense, so that I may have them immediately. I will send you an order on Paris for the amount, together with the thirty-two francs you were kind enough to pay for me.

All public attention is now centred on the wonderful revolution in Greece. I dare not, after the events of last winter, hope that slaves can become freemen so cheaply; yet I know one Greek of the highest qualities, both of courage and conduct, the Prince Mavrocordato, and if the rest be like him, all will go well.—The news of this moment is, that the Russian army has orders to advance.

Mrs. S. unites with me in the most heartfelt regret. And I remain, my dear Smith,

Most faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

If you happen to have brought a copy of Clarke's edition of "Queen Mab" for me, I should like very well to see it.—I really hardly know what this poem is about. I am afraid it is rather rough.

### 429. To Charles Ollier

PISA,

September 25, 1821.

DEAR SIR,

It will give me great pleasure if I can arrange the affair of Mrs. Shelley's novel with you to her and your

Vol. ii—28—(2285)

A volume of poems by Horace Smith with the following title:—
"Amarynthus, the Nympholept: a pastoral drama, in three acts.
With other poems. 1821." On p. 214 there is a poem "To Percy Bysshe Shelley, Esq., on his poems."

satisfaction. She has a specific purpose in the sum which she instructed me to require; and although this purpose could not be answered without ready money, yet I should find means to answer her wishes in that point, if you could make it convenient to pay one-third at Christmas, and give bills for the other two-thirds at twelve and eighteen months. It would give me peculiar satisfaction that you, rather than any other person, should be the publisher of this work; it is the product of no slight labour, and, I flatter myself, of no common talent. I doubt it will give no less credit than it will receive from your names. I trust you know me too well to believe that my judgment deliberately given in testimony of the value of any production is influenced by motives of interest or partiality.

The romance is called "Castruccio, Prince of Lucca," and is founded (not upon the novel of Macchiavelli under that name, which substitutes a childish fiction for the far more romantic truth of history, but) upon the actual story of his life. He was a person who, from an exile and an adventurer, after having served in the wars of England and Flanders in the reign of our Edward the Second, returned to his native city, and, liberating it from its tyrants, became himself its tyrant, and died in the full splendour of his dominion, which he had extended over the half of Tuscany. He was a little Napoleon, and, with a dukedom instead of an empire for his theatre, brought upon the same all the passions and the errors of his antitype. The chief interest of his romance rests upon Euthanasia, his betrothed bride, whose love for him is only equalled by her enthusiasm for the liberty of the republic of Florence. which is in some sort her country, and for that of Italy, to which Castruccio is a devoted enemy, being an ally of the party of the Emperor. This character is a masterpiece; and the keystone of the drama, which is built up with admirable art, is the conflict between these passions and these principles. Euthanasia, the last survivor of a noble house, is a feudal countess, and her castle is the

scene of the exhibition of the knightly manners of the time. The character of Beatrice, the prophetess, can only be done justice to in the very language of the author. I know nothing in Walter Scott's novels which at all approaches to the beauty and sublimity of this—creation, I may almost say, for it is perfectly original; and, although founded upon the ideas and manners of the age which is represented, is wholly without a similitude in any fiction I ever read. Beatrice is in love with Castruccio, and dies; for the romance although interspersed with much lighter matter, is deeply tragic, and the shades darken and gather as the catastrophe approaches. All the manners, customs, opinions, of the age are introduced; the superstitions, the heresies, and the religious persecutions are displayed; the minutest circumstance of Italian manners in that age is not omitted: and the whole seems to me to constitute a living and a moving picture of an age almost forgotten. The author visited the scenery which she describes in person; and one or two of the inferior characters are drawn from her own observation of the Italians, for the national character shows itself still in certain instances under the same forms as it wore in the time of Dante. The novel consists, as I told you before, of three volumes, each at least equal to one of the "Tales of my Landlord," and they will be very soon ready to be sent. In case you should accept the present offer, I will make one observation which I consider of essential importance. It ought to be printed in half volumes at a time, and sent to the author for her last corrections by the post. It may be printed

<sup>&</sup>quot;The book here alluded to was ultimately published under the title of 'Valperga.' Mrs. Shelley received £400 for the copyright; and this sum was generously devoted to the relief of Godwin's pecuniary difficulties. In a letter to Mrs. Gisborne, dated June 30th, 1821, Mrs. Shelley says that she first formed the conception at Marlow; that this took a more definite shape at Naples; that the work was delayed several times; and that it was 'a child of a mighty slow growth.' It was also, she says, a work of labour, as she had read and consulted a great many books."—Lady Shelley's note.

on thin paper like that of this letter, and the expense shall fall upon me. Lord Byron has his works sent in this manner; and no person, who has either fame to lose or money to win, ought to publish in any other manner.

By-the-bye, how do I stand with regard to these two great objects of human pursuit? I once sought something nobler and better than either; but I might as well have reached at the moon, and now, finding that I have grasped the air, I should not be sorry to know what substantial sum, especially of the former, is in your hands on my account. The gods have made the reviewers the almoners of this worldly dross, and I think I must write an ode to flatter them to give me some; if I would not that they put me off with a bill on posterity, which, when my ghost shall present, the answer will be—" no effects."

"Charles the First" is conceived, but not born. Unless I am sure of making something good, the play will not be written. Pride, that ruined Satan, will kill "Charles the First," for his midwife would be only less than him whom thunder has made greater. I am full of great plans; and, if I should tell you them, I should add to the list of these riddles.

I have not seen Mr. Procter's "Mirandola." Send it me in the box, and pray send me the box immediately. It is of the utmost consequence; and, as you are so obliging as to say you will not neglect my commissions, pray send this without delay. I hope it is sent, indeed, and that you have recollected to send me several copies of "Prometheus," the "Revolt of Islam," and "The Cenci," etc., as I requested you. Is there any chance of a second edition of the "Revolt of Islam"? I could materially improve that poem on revision. The "Adonais," in spite of its mysticism, is the least imperfect of my compositions, and, as the image of my regret and honour for poor Keats, I wish it to be so. I shall write to you, probably, by next post on the subject of that poem, and should have sent the promised criticism for the second edition, had I not

mislaid, and in vain sought for, the volume that contains "Hyperion." Pray give me notice against what time you want the second part of my "Defence of Poetry." I give you this Defence, and you may do what you will with it.

Pray give me an immediate answer about the novel.

I am, my dear Sir,

Your very obliged servant, PERCY B. SHELLEY.

I ought to tell you that the novel has not the smallest tincture of any peculiar theories in politics or religion.

#### 430. To Leigh Hunt

PISA,

October 6, 1821.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I wrote yesterday evening in haste to your brother, imagining that you must have set off, and wishing to reassure him on the subject of money.—I write again to-day, because I find that yesterday was not post-day, and I am in hopes that this letter may arrive in time enough. First of all then,—welcome, and thanks, and take our love and anxious wishes for the companions of your journey,—Secondly, let me advise you upon one or two things.

You would do well to come by sea instead of crossing France at this season of the year,—and if you do cross France by no means venture to pass the Alps so late, but

¹ Peacock states in a footnote to Shelley's letter to him of Jan. 11, 1822, that Leigh "Hunt and his family were to have embarked for Italy in September, 1821, but the vessel was delayed till the 16th of November. [She set sail at Blackwall on November 15.] They were detained three weeks by bad weather at Ramsgate, and were beaten up and down channel till the 22nd of December, when they put in at Dartmouth. Mrs. Hunt being too ill to proceed, they went to Plymouth, resumed their voyage in another vessel on the 13th of May, 1822, and arrived at Leghorn about the end of June, having been nine months from the time of their engagement with the first vessel in finding their way to Italy. In the present days of railways and steam navigation, this reads like a modern version of the return of Ulysses."

go directly from Paris to Marseilles, and embark at that town for Leghorn, which is within two hours drive of Pisa. But it would be far better to embark at London for Leghorn direct. At this season, westerly and north-westerly winds may be expected to prevail, and although the usual average passage is three weeks, I know a person who made it in twelve days.—It were of use if you could bring your beds, and by no means neglect to put up your linen, knives and forks, spoons, or any other matter of that kind, as it will make a material difference in your expenses here. In case you come by sea bring all the furniture you can,—and if you come by France send your beds, your piano, etc., but not tables, chairs, etc.—because freightage is not paid by weight but by room.—Address your packages to the care of Mr. Guebhard, Merchant, Leghorn. In addition write exactly when we are to expect you. This is of the last consequence as to cheapness, because it is necessary we should make some arrangement about your lodgings; and tell us what furniture you have, and whether any.

Lord Byron is expected every day, and I know will be delighted to hear of your coming.—He has a fine palace, and will have a splendid establishment here: that's the sort of thing he likes. Hogg will be inconsolable at your departure. I wish you could bring him with you—he will say that I am like Lucifer who has seduced the third part of the starry flock.

If the letter arrives in time pray bring me a perfect copy of the *Indicator* and a copy of Clarke's "Queen Mab."—I have little hope that this letter will reach you. All good spirits be your guide.

Your most affectionate

S.

### 431. To John Gisborne

PISA,1

October 22, 1821.

MY DEAR GISBORNE.

At length the post brings a welcome letter from you, and I am pleased to be assured of your health and safe arrival. I expect with interest and anxiety the intelligence of your progress in England, and how far the advantages there compensate the loss of Italy. I hear from Hunt that he is determined on emigration, and if I thought the letter would arrive in time, I should beg you to suggest some advice to him. But you ought to be incapable of forgiving me in the fact of depriving England of what it must lose when Hunt departs.

Did I tell you that Lord Byron comes to settle at Pisa, and that he has a plan of writing a periodical work in connection with Hunt? His house, Madame Felichi's, is already taken and fitted up for him, and he has been expected every day these six weeks. La Guiccioli, who awaits him impatiently, is a very pretty, sentimental, innocent Italian, who has sacrificed an immense fortune for the sake of Lord Byron, and who, if I know anything of my friend, of her and of human nature, will hereafter have plenty of leisure and opportunity to repent her rashness. Lord Byron is, however, quite cured of his gross habits, as far as habits; the perverse ideas on which they were formed are not yet eradicated.

We have furnished a house at Pisa, and mean to make it our head-quarters. I shall get all my books out, and entrench myself like a spider in a web. If you can assist P[eacock] in sending them to Leghorn, you would do me

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Prof. Dowden says that the Shelleys "had left the Baths and had entered (on October 25) the new apartment that they had furnished for themselves at the top of the Tre Palazzi di Chiesa, on the Lung' Arno, just opposite Byron's prouder dwelling-place."—"Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 445.

an especial favour; but do not buy me Calderon, Faust, or Kant, as H[orace] S[mith] promises to send them me from Paris, where I suppose you had not time to procure them. Any other books you or Henry 1 think would accord with my design, Ollier will furnish you with.

I should like very much to hear what is said of my "Adonais," and you would oblige me by cutting out, or making Ollier cut out, any respectable criticism on it and sending it me; you know I do not mind a crown or two in postage. The Epipsychidion is a mystery; as to real fresh and blood, you know that I do not deal in those articles; you might as well go to a gin-shop for a leg of mutton, as expect anything human or earthly from me. I desired Ollier not to circulate this piece except to the συνετοί, and even they, it seems, are inclined to approximate me to the circle of a servant girl and her sweetheart. but I intend to write a Symposium of my own to set all this right.

I am just finishing a dramatic poem, called "Hellas," upon the contest now raging in Greece—a sort of imitation of the "Persæ of Æschylus, full of lyrical poetry. I try to be what I might have been, but am not successful. I find that (I dare say I shall quote wrong)

"Den herrlichsten, den sich der Geist emprängt Drängt immer fremd und fremder Stoff sich an."

The Edinburgh Review lies. Godwin's answer to Malthus is victorious and decisive; and that it should not be generally acknowledged as such, is full of evidence of the influence of successful evil and tyranny. What Godwin is, compared to Plato and Lord Bacon, we well know;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Henry Reveley.

The title of the last book of Shelley's published during his lifetime is as follows: "Hellas / A Lyrical Drama / By / Percy B. Shelley / MANTIZ EIM' EZGAON AFONON / Oedip. Colon. / London / Charles and James Ollier, Vere Street / Bond Street / MDCCCXXII." The volume also contains the poem "Written on hearing the News of the Death of Napoleon."

but compared with these miserable sciolists, he is a vulture to a worm.

I read the Greek dramatists and Plato for ever. are right about Antigone; how sublime a picture of a woman! and what think you of the choruses, and especially the lyrical complaints of the godlike victim? and the menaces of Tiresias, and their rapid fulfilment? Some of us have, in a prior existence, been in love with an Antigone, and that makes us find no full content in any mortal tie. As to books, I advise you to live near the British Museum, I have read, since I saw you, the "Jungand read there. frau von Orleans" of Schiller,—a fine play, if the fifth act did not fall off. Some Greeks, escaped from the defeat in Wallachia, have passed through Pisa to re-embark at Leghorn for the Morea; and the Tuscan Government allowed them, during their stay and passage, three lire each per day and their lodging; that is good. Remember me and Mary most kindly to Mrs. Gisborne and Henry, and believe me,

> Yours most affectionately, P. B. S.

# 432. To CHARLES OLLIER (London)

Pisa,

Nov[ember] 11, 1821.

DEAR SIR,

I send you the drama of "Hellas," relying on your assurance that you will be good enough to pay immediate attention to my literary requests. What little interest this poem may ever excite, depends upon its immediate publication; I entreat you, therefore, to have the goodness to send the MS. instantly to a printer, and the moment you get a proof despatch it to me by the post. The whole might be sent at once. Lord Byron has his poem sent to him in this manner, and I cannot see that the inferiority

in the composition of a poem can affect the powers of a printer in the matter of despatch, etc. If any passages should alarm you in the notes, you are at liberty to suppress them; the poem contains nothing of a tendency to danger.

Do not forget my other questions. I am especially curious to hear the fate of "Adonais." I confess I should be surprised if *that* poem were born to an immortality of oblivion.

Within a few days I may have to write to you on a subject of greater interest. Meanwhile, I rely on your kindness for carrying my present request into immediate effect.

Dear Sir,

Your very faithful servant,
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

I need not impress on you the propriety of giving a speedy answer to Mrs. S[helley]'s proposal. Her volumes are now ready for the press. The "Ode to Napoleon" to print at the end.

### 433. To Joseph Severn

PISA,

November 29, 1821.

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DEAR SIR,

I send you the Elegy on poor Keats—and I wish it were better worth your acceptance. You will see, by the preface, that it was written before I could obtain any particular account of his last moments; all that I still know was communicated to me by a friend who had derived his information from Colonel Finch; I have ventured to express as I felt the respect and admiration which your conduct towards him demands.

In spite of his transcendent genius, Keats never was, or ever will be, a popular poet and the total neglect and obscurity in which the astonishing remnants of his mind still lie, was hardly to be dissipated by a writer,

who, however he may differ from Keats in more important qualities, at least resembles him in that accidental one, a want of popularity.

I have little hope, therefore, that the poem I send you will excite any attention, nor do I feel assured that a critical notice of his writings would find a single reader. But for these considerations, it had been my intention to have collected the remnants of his compositions, and to have published them with a life and criticism.—Has he left any poems or writings of whatsoever kind, and in whose possession are they? Perhaps you would oblige me by information on this point.

Many thanks for the picture you promise me: I shall consider it amongst the most sacred relics of the past.

For my part, I little expected, when I last saw Keats at my friend Leigh Hunt's, that I should survive him.

Should you ever pass through Pisa, I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you, and of cultivating an acquaintance into something pleasant, begun under such melancholy auspices.

Accept, my dear sir, the assurances of my sincere esteem, and believe me,

Your most sincere and faithful servant, PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Do you know Leigh Hunt? I expect him and his family here every day.

# 434. TO CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (Florence)

PISA,

Dec[ember] 11, 1821.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I should be very glad to receive a confidential letter from you—one totally the reverse of those I write you; detailing all your present occupation and intimacies, and giving me some insight into your future plans. Do not think that my affection and anxiety for you ever cease, or that I ever love you less although that love has been and still must be a source of disquietude to me.

The Exotic as you please to call me droops in this frost—a frost both moral and physical—a solitude of the heart. These last days I have been unable to ride, the cold towards sunset is so excessive and my side reminding me that I am mortal. Medwin rides almost constantly with Lord B[yron], and the party sometimes consists of Gamba, Taafe, Medwin and the Exotic who unfortunately belonging to the order of mimosa, thrives ill in so large a society. I cannot endure the company of many persons, and the society of one is either great pleasure or great pain.

We expect the Hunts every day, but I suppose the tramontana is a fresh wind at Sea and detains them. I think I told you they were to live at Lord B[yron]'s.

The news of the Greeks continues to be more and more glorious. It may be said that the Peloponnesus is entirely free, and that Mavrocordato has been acting a distinguished part, and will probably fill a high rank in the magistracy of the infant republic.

What are you doing in German? I have read none since we met, nor probably until we meet again—should that ever be—shall I read it.

I am employed in nothing—I read—but I have no spirits for serious composition—I have no confidence, and to write in solitude or put forth thoughts without sympathy is unprofitable vanity.

Tell me dearest what you mean to do, and if it should give you pleasure come and live with us. The Williams's always speak of you with praise and affection, and regret very much that you did not spend this winter with them, but neither their regret nor their affection equal mine.

Yours ever,

S.

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[Addressed outside],
Miss CLAIRMONT,
Presso al Prof. Bojti,
Dirempetto Palazzo Pitti, Firenza.

#### 435. To LORD BYRON

THURSDAY MORNING (12 Dec., 1821).

MY DEAR LORD BYRON,

I hear this morning that the design which certainly had been in contemplation of burning my fellow-serpent has been abandoned, and that he has been condemned to the galleys. Lord Guilford is at Leghorn; and as your courier applied to me to know whether he ought to leave your letter for him or not, I have thought it best, since this information, to tell him to take it back. <sup>1</sup>

Ever faithfully yours, P. B. Shelley.

## 436. TO CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (Florence)

PISA,

December 31 (1821).
[Postmark, 1 January (1822).]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I returned from Leghorn on Friday evening, but too late for the Post, or you should have heard from me. The

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> On the back of this letter Byron wrote the following: "Dear M[oore], I send you the two notes which will tell you the story I allude to of the auto-da-fé. Shelley's allusion to his 'fellow-serpent' is a buffoonery of mine. Goethe's 'Mephistofeles' calls the Serpent who tempted Eve 'my Aunt the renowned Snake,' and I always insist that Shelley is nothing but one of her Nephews walking about on the tip of his tail. Byron." A rumour had reached Shelley that to use Byron's own words, the Infanta of Lucca, "had actually condemned a poor devil to the stake, for stealing the wafer-box out of a church. Shelley and I of course were up in arms against this piece of piety, and have been disturbing everybody to get the sentence changed. Taafe has gone to see what can be done." When he returned the true facts of the story appeared to be that the criminal, a priest, had given himself up at Florence, where it was decided that he should only be handed over to the authorities at Lucca on condition that he was dealt with according to the Tuscan law.

expected person had not arrived, having been detained by the tremendous weather. I hope soon to have more satisfactory intelligence. Your desires on this subject are the object of my anxious thought.

Mary desires me to say (not that she sees this letter or any of yours addressed to me) that she would have written to you—but she has been very unwell. She has suffered dreadfully from rheumatism in her head, to such a degree as for some successive nights entirely to deprive her of sleep. She is now, by dint of blisters and laudanum, somewhat better. I have suffered considerably from pain and depression of spirits. The weather has been frightful here. Torrents of rain have swollen the Arno to a greater degree than has been known for many years; the fury of the torrent is inconceivably great. The wind was beyond anything I ever remember, and all the shores of the Mediterranean are strewn with wrecks. The damage sustained at Genoa and the number of lives lost, has been immense; the ships suspected of pestilence have been driven from their moorings into the town, and everything coming from Genoa has been subjected to a strict quarantine. Three mails from France are due, and a thousand contradictory rumours are affoat as to the cause. You may imagine, and I am sure you will share, our anxiety about poor Hunt. I wonder, and am shocked at my insensibility, that I can sleep or enjoy one moment of peace until I hear of his safety. I shall, of course, write to tell you the moment of his arrival—I know you will be anxious about these poor people. The ship in which they sailed was spoken with in the Bay of Biscay, and was then quite safe.—We have little new in politics. You will have heard of the amphibious state of things in France, and the establishment of the Ultra-Ministry by the preponderance afforded to that party by the coalition of the Liberals The Greeks are going on excellently, and those massacres at Smyrna and Constantinople import nothing to the stability of the cause. There is no such thing as

a rebellion in Ireland, or anything that looks like it. The people are indeed stung to madness by the oppression of the Irish system, and there is no such thing as getting rents or taxes even at the point of the bayonet throughout the southern provinces. But there are no regular bodies of men in opposition to the government, nor have the people any leaders. In England all bears for the moment the aspect of a sleeping volcano.

You do not tell me, my dearest Clare, anything of your plans, although you bid me be secret with respect to them. Assure yourself, my best friend, that anything you seriously enjoin me, that may be necessary for your happiness will be strictly observed by me. Write to me explicitly your projects and expectations. You know in some respects my sentiments both with regard to them and you. I have been once, after enduring much solicitation, to Mrs. Beauclerc's, who did me the favour to caress me exceedingly. Unless she calls on Mary, I shall not repeat my visit. Do you know her?

Should you take it into your lead to call on Molini for me, let not Calderon having been sent or be an objection—I want a Calderon. Adieu.

Ever most faithfully yours,

S.

Mrs. Mason told me to say she does not write because I do.

[Addressed outside],
Miss CLAIRMONT,
Presso al Prof. Bojti,
Dirimpetto al Palazzo Pitti,
Firenza.

#### 437. To Thomas Love Peacock

PISA,

January (probably 11), 1822.

My DEAR PEACOCK,

Circumstances have prevented my procuring the certificate and signature which I inclose, so soon as I expected,

and other circumstances made me even then delay. I inclose them, and should be much obliged by your sending them to their destination.—I am still at Pisa, where I have at length fitted up some rooms at the top of a lofty palace that overlooks the city and the surrounding region, and have collected books and plants about me, and established myself for some indefinite time, which, if I read the future, will not be short. I wish you to send my books by the very first opportunity, and I expect in them a great augmentation of comfort. Lord Byron is established here, and we are constant companions. No small relief this, after the dreary solitude of the understanding and the imagination in which we past (sic) the first years of our expatriation, yoked to all sorts of miseries and discomforts.

Of course you have seen his last volume, and if you before thought him a great poet, what is your opinion now that you have read "Cain?" The "Foscari" and "Sardanapalus" I have not seen; but as they are in the style of his later writings, I doubt not they are very fine. We expect Hunt here every day, and remain in great anxiety on account of the heavy gales which he must have encountered at Christmas. Lord Byron has fitted up the lower apartments of his palace for him, and Hunt will be agreeably surprised to find a commodious lodging prepared for him after the fatigues and dangers of his passage. I have been long idle, and, as far as writing goes, despondent; but I am now engaged in "Charles the First," and a devil of a nut it is to crack.

Mary and Clara, (who is not with us just at present,) are well, and so is our little boy, the image of poor William. We live, as usual, tranquilly. I get up, or at least wake, early; read and write till two; dine; go to Lord B.'s, and ride, or play at billiards, as the weather permits; and sacrifice the evening either to light books or whoever happens to drop in. Our furniture, which is very neat, cost fewer shillings than that at Marlow did pounds sterling;

1

and our windows are full of plants, which turn the sunny winter into spring. My health is better—my cares are lighter; and although nothing will cure the consumption of my purse, yet it drags on a sort of life in death, very like its master, and seems, like Fortunatus's, always empty yet never quite exhausted. You will have seen my "Adonais," and perhaps my "Hellas," and I think, whatever you may judge of the subject, the composition of the first poem will not wholly displease you. I wish I had something better to do than furnish this jingling food for the hunger of oblivion, called verse, but I have not; and since you give me no encouragement about India, I cannot hope to have.

How is your little star, and the heaven which contains the milky way in which it glimmers?

Adieu-Yours ever, most truly,

S.

# 438. To Charles and James Ollier (London)

PISA,

Jan[uary] 11, 1821 [1822].

Dear Sirs,

I cannot but express my surprise at the silence you have thought proper to observe respecting the various subjects on which I have written to you in the course of the last six months.—My only motive in breaking it on the present occasion is to inform you that, considering

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<sup>&</sup>quot;He had expressed a desire to be employed politically at the court of a native prince, and I had told him that such employment was restricted to the regular service of the East India Company."—Peacock's note.

your total neglect as a [negative?] upon my last [modification] of the proposal for Mrs. Shelley's novel—I have sent it to Mr. Godwin with liberty to dispose of it to the best advantage, and should you be still desirous of publishing it, you may treat with him for the copyright.—You will at once see how little reason you have to complain of this conduct on my part when I tell you that two months elapsed between the completion of the novel and its being sent to England in expectation of your answer.

With respect to my own publications.—I had exceedingly desired the immediate publication of "Hellas" from public no less than private reasons; but as post-day after post-day passes and I receive no proof-sheets of it as I had requested, I suppose I might as well not have relied upon your spontaneous offers to execute my commissions.—

I was also more than commonly interested in the [success] of "Adonais";—I do not mean the sale, but the effect produced—and I should have [been] glad to have received some communication from you respecting it.—I do not know even, whether it has been published, and still less whether it has been republished with the alterations I sent.

The Historical Tragedy of "Charles the First" will be ready by the Spring. It is my intention to sell the copyright of this poem. As you have always been my publisher, I give you the refusal of it.—My reason for selling it, to speak frankly, is, that the Bookseller should have sufficient interest in its success to give it a fair chance. Should you not think it worth while to make any offer for it; of course you will absolve me from levity in applying to another publisher. I ought to say that the Tragedy promises to be good, as Tragedies go; and that it is not coloured by the party spirit of the author: How far it may be popular I cannot judge.

Should you pay the same attention to my present letter as its late predecessors have received from you, you will

/ https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.32000000659054 GMT Generated at University of Pennsylvania on 2022-06-29 18:45 scarcely think it extraordinary that this should be the last time I intend to trouble you.

Dear Sirs, I have the honour to be, Your obedient humble sert., PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Messrs. Ollier & Co., Booksellers, Vere Street, Bond Street, London, Angleterre. [The postmark on the letter bears the date " Ja-26, 1822."]

### 439. To John Gisborne

Pisa, January, 1822.

One thing I rejoice to hear, that your health is better. So is mine; but my mind is like an overworked racehorse put into a hackney coach.—What think you of Lord Byron now? Space wondered less at the swift and fair creations of God, when he grew weary of vacancy, than I at this spirit of an angel in the mortal paradise of a decaying body. So I think, let the world envy while it admires, as it may.

We have just got the etchings of "Faust," the painter is worthy of Goëthe. The meeting of him and Margaret is wonderful. It makes all the pulses of my head beat—those of my heart have been quiet long ago. The translations, both these and in Blackwood are miserable. Ask Coleridge if their stupid misintelligence of the deep wisdom and harmony of the author does not spur him to action. You will have heard of the Hunts, and of all my perplexities about them. The Williams's are well. Mrs. W[illiams], more amiable and beautiful than ever, and a sort of spirit of embodied peace in the midst of our circle of tempests. So much for first impressions!

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Friedrich August Moritz Retzsch (1779-1857), whose outline etchings illustrating the first part of "Faust" were published in 1820; he produced other designs of a similar character to illustrate the works of Schiller, Fouqué and Shakespeare. See p. 954.

#### 440. To Horace Smith

PISA,

25 January, 1822.

MY DEAR SMITH,

I have delayed this fortnight answering your kind letter because I was in treaty for a Calderon, which at last I have succeeded in procuring at a tolerably moderate price. All the other books you mention I should be glad to have; together with whatever others might fall in your way that you might think interesting.

Will you not think my exactions upon your kindness interminable if I ask you to execute another commission It is to buy a good pedal harp, without great ornament or any appendage that would unnecessarily increase the expense—but good; nor should I object to its being second-hand, if that were equally compatible with its being despatched immediately. Together with the harp I should wish for five or six napoleons' worth of harp music, at your discretion. I do not know the price of harps at Paris, but I suppose that from seventy to eighty guineas would cover it, and I must trust to your accustomed kindness, as I want it for a present, to make the immediate advance, as if I were to delay, the grace of my compliment would be lost. Do not take much trouble about it, but simply take what you find, if you are so exceedingly kind as to oblige me. It had better be sent by Marseilles, through some merchant or in any other manner you think best, addressed to me at Messrs. Guebhard & Co., merchants, Leghorn; the books may be sent together with it.

Our party at Pisa is the same as when I wrote last. Lord Byron unites us at a weekly dinner, when my nerves are generally shaken to pieces by sitting up contemplating the rest making themselves vats of claret, etc., till three o'clock in the morning. We regret your absence exceedingly, and Lord Byron has desired me to convey his best

remembrances to you. I imagine it is you, and not your brother, for whom they are intended. Hunt was expected, and Lord Byron had fitted up a part of his palace for his accommodation, when we heard that the late violent storms had forced him to put back; and that nothing could induce Marianne to put to sea again. This, for many reasons that I cannot now explain, has produced a chaos of perplexities. . . . The reviews and journals, they say, continue to attack me, but I value neither the fame they can give nor the fame they can take away, therefore blessed be the name of the reviewers.

Pray, if possible, let the "Nympholept" be included in the package.

Believe me, my dear Smith,
Your most obliged and affectionate friend,
P. B. Shelley.

#### 441. To Leigh Hunt

PISA,

Jan[uary] 25, 1822.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I send you by return of post £150,—within 30 or 40 of what I had contrived to scrape together. How I am to assemble the constituents of such a sum again I do not at present see; but do not be disheartened,—we will all put our shoulders to the wheel. Let me not speak of my own disappointment, which, great as it is in not seeing you here, is all swallowed up in sympathy with your present situation. Our anxiety during the continuance of the succession of tempests which one morning seemed to rain lightnings into Pisa, and amongst others struck the palace adjoining Lord Byron's, and turned the Arno into a raging sea, was, as you may conceive, excessive, and our first relief was your letter from Ramsgate. Between the interval of that and your letter of December

28, we were in daily expectation of your arrival. Yesterday arrived that dated January 6.

Lord Byron has assigned you a portion of his palace, and Mary and I had occupied ourselves in furnishing it. Everything was already provided, except bedding, which could have been got in a moment, and which we thought it possible you might bring with you. We had hired a woman cook of the country for you, who is still with us. Lord B[yron] had kindly insisted upon paying the upholsterer's bill, with that sort of unsuspecting goodness which makes it infinitely difficult to ask him for more. Past circumstances between Lord B[yron] and me render it *impossible* that I should accept any supply from him for my own use, or that I should ask it for yours if the contribution could be supposed in any manner to relieve me, or to do what I could otherwise have done. It is true that I cannot, but how is he to be assured of this?

One thing strikes me as possible. I am at present writing the drama of "Charles the First," a play which, if completed according to my present idea, will hold a higher rank than "The Cenci" as a work of art. Would no bookseller give me £150 or £200 for the copyright of this play? You know best how my writings sell, whether at all or not: after they failed of making the sort of impression on men that I expected, I have never until now thought it worth while to inquire. The question is now interesting to me, inasmuch as the reputation depending on their sale might induce a bookseller to give me such a sum for this play. Write to Allman, 1 your bookseller, tell him what I tell you of "Charles the First," and do not delay a post. I have a parcel of little poems also, the "Witch of Atlas," and some translations of Homer's Hymns, the copyright of which I must sell. I offered the "Charles the First" to Ollier, and you had better write at the same

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Leigh Hunt's book, "Amyntas," was published by T. & J. Allman, in 1820,

time to learn his terms. Of course you will not delay a post in this.

The evils of your remaining in England are inconceivably great if you ultimately determine upon Italy; and in the latter case, the best thing you can do is, without waiting for the spring, to set sail with the very first ship you can. Debts, responsibilities, and expenses will enmesh you round about if you delay, and force you back into that circle from which I made a push to draw you. The winter generally, is not a bad time for sailing, but only that period which you selected, and another when the year approaches to the vernal equinox. You avoided—and if you must still delay, will still avoid—the halcyon days of the Mediterranean. There is no serious danger in a cargo of gunpowder, hundreds of ships navigate these electrical seas with that freight without risk. Marianne would have been benefited, and would still benefit exceedingly, by the Elysian temperature of the Mediterranean.

Poor Marianne! how much I feel for her, and with what anxiety I expect your news of her health! Were it not for the cursed necessity of finding money, all considerations would be swallowed up in the thought of her; and I should be delighted to think that she had obtained this interval of repose which now perplexes and annoys me. . . . .

Pray tell me in answer to this letter, unless you answer it in person, what arrangement you have made about the receipt of a regular income from the profits of the Examiner. You ought not to leave England without having the assurance of an independence in this particular; as many difficulties have presented themselves to the plan imagined by Lord Byron, which I depend upon you for getting rid of. And if there is time to write before you set off, pray

<sup>&</sup>quot;When he [Byron] consented to join Leigh Hunt and others in writing for the *Liberal*, I think his principal inducement was the belief that John and Leigh Hunt were proprietors of the *Examiner*; so when Leigh Hunt, at Pisa, told him he was no longer connected with that paper, Byron was taken aback, finding Hunt would be entirely dependent upon the hazardous project, while he woul

tell me if Ollier has published "Hellas," and what effect was produced by "Adonais." My faculties are shaken to atoms, and torpid. I can write nothing; and if "Adonais" had no success, and excited no interest, what incentive can I have to write? As to reviews, don't give Gifford, or his associate Hazlitt, a stripe the more for The man must be enviably happy whom reviews can make miserable. I have neither curiosity, interest, pain nor pleasure in anything, good or evil, they can say of me. I feel only a slight disgust, and a sort of wonder that they presume to write my name. me your satire when it is printed. I began once a "Satire upon Satire," which I meant to be very severe; it was full of small knives, in the use of which practice would soon have made me very expert. 2

(Postscript by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley)

#### DEAREST CHILDREN.

I fill up a little empty space of blank paper with many wishes, regrets, and etcs. Stay no longer, I beseech you, in your cloud-environed isle, as cloudy for the soul as for the rest of it. Even friends there are only to be seen through a murky mist, which will not be under the bright sky of dear Italy. My poor Marianne will get well, and you all be lighthearted and happy. Come quickly.

Affectionately yours,

MARY S.

himself be deprived of that on which he had set his heart—the use of a weekly paper in great circulation." (Trelawny, "Recollections." p. 155.) Dr. Richard Garnett, who prints this extract as a footnote to this letter in his "Relics of Shelley," adds: "It must be remembered, however, that the Liberal was a project of Byron's own—see Shelley's letter of August 26, 1821."

1 Leigh Hunt's "Ultra-Crepidarius: a satire on

William

Gifford," was not published until 1823.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A fragment of manuscript by Shelley, which appears to be a portion of the "Satire" in question, was published in 1881 by Prof. Dowden in "The Correspondence of Robert Southey and Caroline Bowles."

### 405A. TO CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (Florence)

[BAGNI DI PISA, Spring, 1821.]<sup>1</sup> (Written by Mary Shelley)

MY DEAR CLARE,

Shelley and I have been consulting seriously about your letter received this morning, and I wish in as orderly a manner as possible to give you the result of our reflections. First, as to my coming to Florence: I mentioned it to you first, it is true, but we have so little money, and our calls this quarter for removing, etc., will be so great, that we had entirely given up the idea. If it would be of great utility to you, as a single expense we might do it; but if it be necessary that others should follow, the crowns would be But before I proceed further in this part of the subject, let me examine what your plans appear to be. Your anxiety for A[llegra]'s health is to a great degree unfounded; Venice, its stinking canals and dirty streets, is enough to kill any child; but you ought to know, and any one will tell you so, that the towns of Romagna, situated where Bagnacavallo is, enjoy the best air in Italy -Imola and the neighbouring paese are famous; Bagnacavallo especially, being fifteen miles from the sea and situated on an eminence, is peculiarly salutary. Considering the affair reasonably, A[llegra] is well taken care of there; she is in good health, and in all probability she will continue so.

No one can more entirely agree with you in thinking that as soon as possible A[llegra] ought to be taken out of the hands of one as remorseless as he is unprincipled. But at the same time it appears to me that the present moment is exactly the one in which this is the most difficult—time cannot add to these difficulties, for they can never be greater. Allow me to enumerate some of those which are peculiar to the present instant. A[llegra] is in a convent,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This undated letter unfortunately has been misplaced. Its correct position would seem to be after No. 405.

where it is next to impossible to get out; high walls and bolted doors enclose her; and more than all, the regular habits of a convent, which never permit her to get outside its gates, and would cause her to be missed directly. you may have a plan for this, and I pass to other objections. At your desire Shelley urged her removal to L[ord] B[yron], and this appears in the highest degree to have exasperated him—he vowed that if you annoyed him he would place Asllegra] in some secret convent; he declared that you should have nothing to do with her, and that he would move heaven and earth to prevent your interference. L[ord] B[yron] is at present a man of twelve or fifteen thousand a year, he is on the spot, a man reckless of the ill he does others, obstinate to desperation in the pursuance of his plans or his revenge. What then would you do, having A[llegra] on the outside of the convent walls? Would you go to America? the money we have not, nor does this seem to be your idea. You probably wish to secrete yourself. But L[ord] B[yron] would use any means to find you out; and the story he might make upa man stared at by the Grand-Duke with money at command—and above all on the spot to put energy into every pursuit, would he not find you? If he did not, he comes upon Shelley—he taxes him; Shelley must either own it or tell a lie; in either case he is open to be called upon by L[ord] B[yron] to answer for his conduct—and a duel— I need not enter upon that topic, your imagination may fill up the picture.

On the contrary, a little time, a very little time, may alter much of this. It is more than probable that he will be obliged to go to England within a year 1—then at a distance he is no longer so formidable. What is certain is that we shall not be so near him another year—he may be reconciled with his wife, and though he may bluster, he may not be sorry to get A[llegra] off his hands; at any rate

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> On business connected with property occasioned by Lady Noel's death.

if we leave him perfectly quiet, he will not be so exasperated, so much on the qui vive as he is at present. Nothing remains constant, something may happen—things cannot be Another thing I mention which though sufficiently ridiculous may have some weight with you. Spring is our unlucky season. No spring has passed for us without some piece of ill luck. Remember the first spring at Harbottle's. 1 The second, when Mrs. you became acquainted with L[ord] B[yron]; the third we went to Marlow-no wise thing at least-the fourth, our uncomfortable residence in London—the fifth, our Roman misery —the sixth, Paolo at Pisa—the seventh, a mixture of Emilia and a Chancery suit—now the aspect of the Autumnal Heavens has on the contrary been with few exceptions, favourable to us. What think you of this? It is in your own style, but it has often struck me. it not be better therefore, to wait, and to undertake no plan until circumstances bend a little more to us?

Then we are drearily behindhand with money at present—Hunt and our furniture has swallowed up more than our savings. You say great sacrifices will be required of us, I could make many to extricate all belonging to me from the hands of L[ord] B[yron], whose hypocrisy and cruelty rouse one's soul from its depths. We are, of course, still in great uncertainty as to our summer residence—we have calculated the great expense of removing our furniture for a few months as far as Spezzia, and it appears to us a bad plan—to get a furnished house we must go nearer Genoa, probably nearer Lord Byron, which is contrary to our most earnest wishes. We have thought of Naples

(Mary Shelley's part of the letter ends, the rest is in Shelley's handwriting)

in such an event. Your setting up a school precisely on Miss Field's plan I certainly never approved, because I thought even in Miss Field's case the prices and the whole plan

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The death of Mary's first babe in 1815.

ridiculously narrow: and the whole affair seemed planned on that plausible scheme of moderation which never succeeds. It was this that I wanted to say to you. the idea of a school, especially under Mrs. Mason's protection, I confess appeared very plausible to me. I should be glad, in case of transmigration, to leave you under such powerful and such secure protection as her's: it would be one subject less for regret, to me, if I could consider—my death—as no immediate misfortune to you; as in this case it would not.—The incumbent of my reversion still flourishes; and you must be aware that the sensations with which it has pleased the Devil to endow the frame of his successor are not the strongest pledges of longevity. say that I may not have a conversation with you because you may depart in a hurry Heaven knows where—except it be to the other world (and I know the coachman of that road will not let the passengers wait a minute) I know of no mortal business that requires such post haste.

We are now at the Baths in a very nice house looking to the mountains. Mary will tell you all about it. Little Babe is quite well, smiling and good. I am better to-day. I have been very ill, body and soul, but principally the latter.—I took some exercise in the boat to dissipate thought: but it over-fatigued me and made me worse. The Baths, I think, do me good, but especially solitude, and not seeing polite human faces, and hearing voices. I go over about twice a week to see Emilia, who is in better spirits and health than she has been for some time.— Danielli almost frightens her to death, and she handed him over to me to quiet and console.—It seems that I am worthy to take my degree of M.A. in the art of Love, for I have contrived to calm the despairing swain, much to the satisfaction of poor Emilia, who in that convent of hers sees everything as through a mist, ten times its natural size. —The Williams's come sometimes: they have taken Pugnano. W[illiams] I like, and I have got reconciled to Jane.—Mr. Taaffe rides, writes, invites, complains, bows https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.32000000659054 GMT 18:45 0.0 of Pennsylvania Generated at University of Penns Public Domain, Google-digitized and apologizes: he would be a mortal bore if he came often. The Greek Prince comes sometimes, and I reproach my own savage disposition that so agreeable, accomplished and amiable a person is not more agreeable to me.

Adieu, my dear Clare, Ever most affectionately,

S.

[Addressed outside],
A Mademoiselle.
Madlle. DE CLAIRMONT,
Chez M. le Professeur Bojti,
Florence.

### 443. To Clara Mary Jane Clairmont

[PISA, 1822.]

I have little to add to Mary's letter, my poor dear friend,—and all that I shall do is suspend my journey to take a house until your answer:—Of course, if you do not spend the summer with us I shall come to Florence and see and talk with you. But it seems to me far better on every account that you should resolve on this, and tranquillize yourself among your friends. I shall certainly take our house far from Lord Byron's, although it may be impossible suddenly to put an end to his detested intimacy. My coming to Florence would cost from fifteen to twenty crowns; Mary's much more; and if, therefore, we are to see you soon, this money in our present situation were better spared.

Mary tells you that Lord Byron is obstinate and awake about Allegra. My great object has been to lull him into security until circumstances might call him to England. But the idea of contending with him in Italy, and defended by his enormous fortune, is vain. I was endeavouring to induce him to place Allegra in the institute at Lucca, but his jealousy of my regard for your interests will, since a conversation that I had with him the other day, render

him inaccessible to my suggestions. It seems to me that you have no other resource but time and chance and change. Heaven knows, whatever sacrifices I could make, how gladly I should make (them) if they could promote your desires about her: it tears my heart to think that all sacrifices are now vain. Mary participates in my feelings, but I cannot write. My spirits completely overcome me.

Your ever faithful and affectionate

S.

Come and stay among us—If you like, come and look for houses with me in our boat—it might distract your mind.

#### 444. To LORD BYRON

February 15, 1822.

My DEAR LORD BYRON,

I enclose you a letter from Hunt which annoys me on more than one account. You will observe the postscript, and you know me well enough to feel how painful a task is set me in commenting upon it. Hunt had urged me more than once to ask you to lend him this money. My answer consisted in sending him all I could spare, which I have now literally done. Your kindness in fitting up a part of your own house for his accommodation I sensibly felt, and willingly accepted from you on his part, but, believe me, without the slightest intention of imposing, or, if I could help it, allowing to be imposed, any heavier task on your purse. As it has come to this in spite of my exertions, I will not conceal from you the low ebb of my own money affairs in the present moment,—that is, my absolute incapacity of assisting Hunt farther.

I do not think poor Hunt's promise to pay in a given time is worth very much; but mine is less subject to uncertainty, and I should be happy to be responsible for any engagement he may have proposed to you. <sup>1</sup> I am so much annoyed by this subject that I hardly know what to write, and much less what to say; and I have need of all your indulgence in judging both my feelings and expressions.

I shall see you by and by. Believe me,
Yours most faithfully and sincerely,
P. B. Shelley.

# 445. To Brookes & Co. (London)

PISA,

Feb[ruary] 20, 1822.

GENTLEMEN,

Since I last wrote to you, a friend of mine who had occasion to transmit £220 to Mr. Leigh Hunt has accommodated me with that sum on the arrangement that I should send him an order on you for the same amount, payable in March: the amount, that is to say, of the ensuing quarter. I have thus in part obtained what I desired, although I should still feel particularly obliged to you if you could put me in the way of rendering my June quarter available at present.

You will be so obliging as to pay Mr. Leigh Hunt on his order the amount of my quarter's income due in March. Gentlemen, I have the honour to be

Your obliged servant,
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

# 446. To LEIGH HUNT (Plymouth)

LEGHORN,

Feb. 23, 1822.

My DEAR FRIEND,

I have only a single instant to tell you that I cannot

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Byron lent Leigh Hunt £200, and took Shelley's bond for that um. See the following letter.

cash Lord Byron's bills for you here under a loss of fifty to sixty pounds discount, but I will send you an order on Brookes for the rest of the 250, who will pay you on Ladyday.—It was better to wait a week or so, than lose so enormous a percentage.—I have written to Brookes to pay you this, while I keep Lord B.'s bills to answer my engagements and send you this. The additional thirty-six [?] pounds which shall be sent in a few posts you must lose upon, but that is of less moment.—

Remember it is Brookes & Co., Chancery Lane.—Do

not apply for payment before the 25th.—

I'll write next post. Kindest love to Marianne,—and pray don't delay in letting me hear how you all are getting on.

Yours very truly,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],
LEIGH HUNT, Esq.,
Plymouth,
Devonshire.
Angleterre.

### 447. To Leigh Hunt

PISA,

March 2, 1822.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

My last two or three letters have, I fear, given you some uneasiness, or at least inflicted that portion of it which I felt in writing them. The aspect of affairs has somewhat changed since the date of that in which I expressed a repugnance to a continuance of intimacy with Lord Byron, so close as that which now exists; at least, it has changed so far as regards you and the intended journal. He expresses again the greatest eagerness to undertake it, and proceed with it, as well as the greatest confidence in you as his associate. He is for ever dilating upon his impatience of your delay, and his disappointment at your

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not having already arrived. He renews his expressions of disregard for the opinion of those who advised him against this alliance with you, and I imagine it will be no very difficult task to execute that which you have assigned me—to keep him in heart with the project until your arrival. Meanwhile, let my last letters, as far as they regard Lord Byron, be as if they had not been written. Particular circumstances, or rather, I should say, particular dispositions in Lord Byron's character, render the close and exclusive intimacy with him in which I find myself intolerable to me; thus much, my best friend, I will confess and confide to you. No feelings of my own shall injure or interfere with what is now nearest to them—your interest, and I will take care to preserve the little influence I may have over this Proteus in whom such strange extremes are reconciled, until we meet-which we now must, at all events, soon do.

Lord Byron showed me your letter to him, which arrived with mine yesterday. How shall I thank you for your generous and delicate defence and explanation of my motives? I fear no misinterpretation from you, and from anyone else I despise and defy it.

So you think I can make nothing of "Charles the First."

Tanto peggio. Indeed, I have written nothing for this last two months: a slight circumstance gave a new train to my ideas, and shattered the fragile edifice when half built. What motives have I to write? I had motives, and I thank the God of my own heart that they were totally different from those of the other ages of humanity who make mouths in the glass of time. But what are those motives now? The only inspiration of an ordinary kind I could descend to acknowledge would be the earning £100 for you; and that it seems I cannot.

Poor Marianne, how ill she seems to have been! Give my best love to her, and tell her I hope she is better, and that I know as soon as she can resolve to set sail, that she Vol. ii—30—(2285)

will be better. Your rooms are still ready for you at Lord Byron's. I am afraid they will be rather hot in the summer; they were delightful winter rooms. My post [MS. illegible] must be transformed by your delay into a paulo post futurum.

Lord Byron begs me to ask you to send the enclosed letter to London in an enclosure, stating when you mean to sail, and in what ship. It is addressed to the wife of his valet Fletcher, who wishes to come out to join him under your protection, and, I need not tell you to promise her safety and comfort.

All happiness attend you, my best friend, and I believe that I am watching over your interests with the vigilance of painful affection. Mary will write next post. Adieu.

Yours,

S

# 448. To CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (Florence)

PISA,

SUNDAY MORN[ING. Postmark, March 20, 1822].

My DEAR CLARE,

I know not what to think of the state of your mind, or what to fear for you. Your late plan about Allegra seems to me in its present form, pregnant with irremediable infamy to all the actors in it except yourself;—in any form wherein I must actively co-operate, with inevitable destruction. I would not in any case make myself the party to a forged letter. I could not refuse Lord Byron's challenge; though that, however to be deprecated, would be the least in the series of mischiefs consequent upon my pestilent intervention in such a plan. I say this because I am shocked at the thoughtless violence of your designs, and I wish to put my sense of this madness in the strongest light. I may console myself, however, with the reflection

that the attempt even is impossible; as I have no money. So far from being ready to lend me three or four hundred pounds, Horace Smith has lately declined to advance me six or seven napoleons for a musical instrument which I wished to buy for Jane at Paris: nor have I any other Friend to whom I could apply.

You think of going to Vienna. The change might have a favourable effect upon your mind, and the occupation and exertion of a new state of life wean you from counsels so desperate as those to which you have been lately led. I must try to manage the money for your journey, if so you have decided. You know how different my own ideas are of life. I also have been struck by the heaviest inflictions almost, which a high spirit and a feeling heart. ever endured.—Some of yours and of my evils are in common, and I am therefore in a certain degree a judge. you would take my advice, you would give up this idle pursuit after shadows, and temper yourself to the season, seek in the daily and affectionate intercourse of friends a respite from these perpetual and irritating projects. Live from day to day, attend to your health, cultivate literature and liberal ideas to a certain extent, and expect that from time and change which no exertion of your own can give you. Serious and calm reflection has convinced me that you can never obtain Allegra by such means as you have lately devised, or by any means to be devised. Lord Byron is inflexible, and he has her in his power. Remember Clare when you rejected my earnest advice and checked me with that contempt which I have never merited from you, at Milan, and how vain is now your regret !—This is the second of my Sybilline volumes; if you wait for the third, it may be sold at a still higher price. If you think well, this summer go to Vienna; but wherever you go or stay, let the past be the past.

I expect soon to write to you on another subject, respecting which, however, all is as you already know. Farewell.

Your affectionate S.



I am much pleased with your translation of "Goethe," which cannot fail to succeed if finished as begun. Lord B[yron] thinks I have sent it to Paris to be translated, and therefore does not yet expect a copy. I shall, of course, have it copied out for him, and preserve your's to be sent to England.

I send you fifty Francesconi—six more than your income—as you have made some expenses for me and Mary, I know not what. Pray acknowledge the receipt of it.

[Postscript, March 25, 1822.]

Mary has written, she tells me, an account of yesterday's affray. The man, I am sorry to say, is much worse; but never did anyone provoke his fate so wantonly. I was struck from my horse, and, had not Captain Hay warded off the sabre with his big stick, I must inevitably have been killed. Captain Hay has a severe sabre-wound across his face.

[Addressed outside],
Miss Clairmont,
Presso al Prof. Bojti,
Piazza Pitti, Firenze.

### 449. To Edward John Trelawny<sup>1</sup>

[March 24 or 25, 1822.]

MY DEAR T.,

Gamba is with me, and we are drawing up a paper demanded of us by the police. Mary tells me that you have an account from Lord Byron of the affair, 2 and we

<sup>1</sup> Trelawny arrived at Pisa on Jan. 14, 1822, and after putting up his horse at his inn and dining, he hastened to the Tre Palazzi in the Lung'Arno, where the Shelleys and the Williams's lived on different flats under the same roof.—Trelawny's "Recollections," p. 19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Williams gives in his diary an account of this "affair with the dragoon." On Sunday, March 24th, he relates that as Byron's party, consisting of himself, Shelley, Captain Hay, Count Gamba (the son), and Taaffe were riding, in the outskirts of Pisa, and the Countess and Mrs. Shelley were behind in the carriage, a mounted dragoon dashed through their party and touched Taaffe's horse as he passed, in an insolent, defying manner. Lord B. put spurs to

wish to see it before ours is concluded. The man is severely wounded in the side, and his life is supposed to be in danger from the weapon having grazed the liver. It were as well if you could come here, as we shall decide on no statement without you.

Ever truly yours,
SHELLEY.

### 450. TO CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT

PISA, 1822.

It is of vital importance both to me and to yourself, to Allegra even, that I should put a period to my intimacy with L[ord] B[yron], and that without éclat. No sentiments of honour or justice restrain him (as I strongly suspect) from the basest insinuations, and the only mode in which I could effectually silence him I am reluctant (even if I had proof) to employ during my father's life. But for your immediate feelings I would suddenly and irrevocably leave this country which he inhabits, nor ever enter it but as an enemy to determine our differences without words. But at all events I shall soon see you, and then we will weigh both your plans and mine. Write by next post.

his horse, saying that he should give some account of such insolence. Shelley's horse, however, was the fleetest, and coming up to the dragoon (named Masi) he stopped him until the party arrived, but they had now reached the gate where a guard was stationed. Finding that the party intended to force their way, the dragoon drew his sword and made a cut at Shelley, which took off his cap, and warding the blow from the sharp part of the sabre, the hilt struck his head and knocked him from his horse. The fellow was repeating a cut at S. when Captain Hay parried with a cane he had in his hand, but the sword cut it in two, and struck Captain H's face across the nose. In the scene which followed a servant of Byron's wounded the dragoon in the abdomen. I have used Williams's words in this note, but have been obliged slightly to shorten his account. Mr. Rossetti tells me that Trelawny informed him on one occasion, that the dragoon was (in essentials) clearly in the right, he being on duty, and finding the road blocked by the English party.

# 451. To CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (Florence)

PISA,

SUNDAY EVENING, [Postmark], 2 April, 1822.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I wish you could in some degree tranquillize yourself, and fix upon some quiet plan of thought and action. The best would probably be to think and act without a plan, and let the world pass. . . No exertions of yours can obtain Allegra, and believe me that the plans you have lately dreamed, would, were they attempted, only plunge you and all that is connected with you in irremediable ruin.—But I dare say you are by this time convinced of it.

One thing I beg you to answer me. How is your Health? If you have any returns of that affection of the glands of the breasts, you must promise to see Vaccà—I am positive and most anxious on this subject,—for ill-health is one of the evils that is not a dream, and the reality of which every year, if you neglect it, will make more impressive.

This late affair about the Soldier will probably have no The man is getting better. My part in consequences. the affair, if not cautious or prudent, was justifiable: nor can I take to myself any imputation of rashness or want of temper. My words and my actions were calm and peaceable though firm. The fault of the affair, if there be any, began with Taaffe, who loudly and impetuously asked Lord Byron if he would submit to the insult offered by the Dragoon. Lord B. might, indeed, have told Taaffe to redress his own wrongs; but I, who had the swiftest horse, could not have allowed the man to escape, when once the pursuit was begun:—the man was probably drunk. . . Don't be so ready to blame. I imagine that there may be some more temper and prudence in the world, beside what that little person of yours contains.

Your translation of "Goëthe" is excellent.—I did not understand from you that your name was to be told to

Lord B., and I must now adhere to the story already told. I am sure you will gain a great deal by it—if you go on as you have begun. How many papers of the original are done?

Mary will talk gossip, and send you the Indian air, either by this post or the next.—After a long truce, my side has declared war against me; and I suppose I must wait for the general pacification between me and my rebel faculties before it will be quiet for good.

Ever your affectionate

S.

[Addressed outside],
Miss Clairmont,
Presso al Sige. Prof. Bojti,
Piazza Pitti,
Firenze.

## 452. To LEIGH HUNT (Plymouth)

PISA,

April 10, 1822.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I write in the firm hope and persuasion that you have already set sail, and that this letter will undergo the lingering and obscure revolutions of those which are directed by people who return from a voyage round the world by Cape Horn, to those who set off on a voyage round the world by the Cape of Good Hope.

You will, I hope, have received the £220 from Brookes before this; as well as my order upon them, which I think I sent to you. It is of no consequence whether I did or not, as Brookes's have orders to pay this sum to you and would have done so even without your application,—though it was quite right to take this precaution.

Lord Byron has the greatest anxiety for your arrival, and is now always urging me to press you to depart. I know that you need no spur. I said what I thought with regard to Lord Byron, nor would I have breathed a syllable

of my feelings in any ear but yours, but with you, I would, and I may think aloud. Perhaps time has corrected me, and I am become, like those whom I formerly condemned, misanthropical and suspicious. If so do you cure me; nor should I wonder, for if friendship is the medicine of such diseases I may well say that mine have been long neglected—and how deep the wounds have been, you partly know and partly can conjecture. Certain it is, that Lord Byron has made me bitterly feel the inferiority which the world has presumed to place between us and which subsists nowhere in reality but in our own talents, which are not our own but Nature's—or in our rank, which is not our own but Fortune's.

I will tell you more of this when we meet. I did wrong in carrying this jealousy of my Lord Byron into his loan to you, or rather to me; and you in the superiority of wise and tranquil nature have well corrected and justly reproved me. And plan your account with finding much in me to correct and to reprove. Alas, how am I fallen from the boasted purity in which you knew me once exulting!

How is poor Marianne? My anxiety for her is greater than for any of you, and I dread the consequences of the English winter from which she could not escape. Give my most affectionate love to her, and tell her we will soon get her well here. Write before you set off. Your house is still ready for you. We are obliged to go into the country both for mine and Mary's health, to whom the sea air is necessary; but the moment I hear of your arrival, I shall set off, if already in the country, and join you.

Yours affectionately and ever,

P. B. S.

[Addressed outside],
LEIGH HUNT, Esq.,
Stonehouse,
Plymouth,
Devon,
Angleterre.

### 453. To John Gisborne

PISA,

April 10, 1822.

MY DEAR GISBORNE,

I have received "Hellas," which is prettily printed, and with fewer mistakes than any poem I ever published. Am I to thank you for the revision of the press? or who acted as midwife to this last of my orphans, introducing it to oblivion, and me to my accustomed failure? May the cause it celebrates be more fortunate than either! Tell me how you like "Hellas," and give me your opinion freely. It was written without much care, and in one of those few moments of enthusiasm which now seldom visit me, and which make me pay dear for their visits. I know what to think of "Adonais," but what to think of those who confound it with the many bad poems of the day, I know not.

I have been reading over and over again "Faust," and always with sensations which no other composition excites. It deepens the gloom and augments the rapidity of ideas, and would therefore seem to me an unfit study for any person who is a prey to the reproaches of memory, and the delusions of an imagination not to be restrained. And yet the pleasure of sympathising with emotions known only to few, although they derive their sole charm from despair, and the scorn of the narrow good we can attain in our present state, seems more than to ease the pain which belongs to them. Perhaps all discontent with the less (to use a Platonic sophism) supposes the sense of a just claim to the greater, and that we admirers of "Faust" are on the right road to Paradise. Such a supposition is not more absurd, and is certainly less demoniacal, than that of Wordsworth, where he says—

"This earth, Which is the world of all of us, and where We find our happiness, or not at all."

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As if, after sixty years' suffering here, we were to be roasted alive for sixty million more in hell, or charitably annihilated by a *coup de grâce* of the bungler who brought us into existence at first!

Have you read Calderon's "Magico Prodigioso?" I find a striking similarity between "Faust" and this drama, and if I were to acknowledge Coleridge's distinction, should say Goëthe was the greatest philosopher, and Calderon the greatest poet. "Cyprian" evidently furnished the germ of "Faust," as "Faust" may furnish the germ of other poems; although it is as different from it in structure and plan as the acorn from the oak. I have—imagine my presumption—translated several scenes from both, as the basis of a paper for your journal. I am well content with those from Calderon, which in fact gave me very little trouble; but those from "Faust"—I feel how imperfect a representation, even with all the licence I assume to figure to myself how Goëthe would have written in English, my words convey. No one but Coleridge is capable of this work.

We have seen here a translation of some scenes, and indeed the most remarkable ones, accompanying those astonishing etchings which have been published in England from a German master. It is not bad—and faithful enough —but how weak! how incompetent to represent Faust! I have only attempted the scenes omitted in this translation, and would send you that of the "Walpurgisnacht," if I thought Ollier would place the postage to my account. What etchings those are! I am never satiated with looking at them; and, I fear, it is the only sort of translation of which "Faust" is susceptible. I never perfectly understood the Hartz Mountain scene, until I saw the etching; and then, Margaret in the summer-house with Faust! The artist makes one envy his happiness that he can sketch such things with calmness, which I only dared look upon once, and which made my brain swim round only to touch the leaf on the opposite side of which I knew that it was figured. Whether it is that the artist has surpassed "Faust,"

or that the pencil surpasses language in some subjects, I know not, or that I am more affected by a visible image, but the etching certainly excited me far more than the poem it illustrated. Do you remember the fifty-fourth letter of the first part of the "Nouvelle Héloise"? Goëthe, in a subsequent scene, evidently had that letter in his mind, and this etching is an idealism of it. So much for the world of shadows!

What think you of Lord Byron's last volume? In my opinion it contains finer poetry than has appeared in England since the publication of "Paradise Regained." "Cain" is apocalyptic—it is a revelation not before communicated to man. I write nothing but by fits. I have done some of "Charles I;" but although the poetry succeeded very well, I cannot seize on the conception of the subject as a whole, and seldom now touch the canvas. You know I don't think much about Reviews, nor of the fame they give, nor that they take away. It is absurd in any Review to criticise "Adonais," and still more to pretend that the verses are bad. "Prometheus" was never intended for more than five or six persons.

And how are you getting on? Do your plans still want success? Do you regret Italy? or anything that Italy contains? And in case of an entire failure in your expectations, do you think of returning here? You see the first blow has been made at funded property:—do you intend to confide and invite a second? You would already have saved something per cent., if you had invested your property in Tuscan land. The next best thing would be to invest it in English, and reside upon it. I tremble for the consequences, to you personally, from a prolonged confidence in the funds. Justice, policy, the hopes of the nation and renewed institutions, demand your ruin, and I, for one, cannot bring myself to desire what is in itself

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This volume of Byron's, published by Murray in 1821, contained beside "Cain, a Mystery," his two tragedies, "Sardanapalus," and "The two Foscari."

desirable, till you are free. You see how liberal I am of advice; but you know the motives that suggest it. What is Henry¹ about, and how are his prospects? Tell him that some adventurers are engaged upon a steamboat at Leghorn, to make the *trajet* we projected. I hope he is charitable enough to pray that they may succeed better than we did.

Remember me most affectionately to Mrs. Gisborne, to whom, as well as to yourself, I consider that this letter is written. How is she, and how are you all in health? And pray tell me, what are your plans of life, and how Henry succeeds, and whether he is married or not? How can I send you such small sums as you may want for postage, etc., for I do not mean to tax with my unreasonable letters both your purse and your patience? We go this summer to Spezzia; but direct as ever to Pisa,—Mrs. M[ason] will forward our letters. If you see anything which you think would particularly interest me, pray make Ollier pay for sending it out by post. Give my best and affectionate regards to H[ogg?], to whom I do not write at present, imagining that you will give him a piece of this letter.

Ever most faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

# 454. TO CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (Florence)

[Postmark, Pisa, April 11, 1822.]

Mary has not shown me her letter to you, and I therefore snatch an instant to write these few lines.

Come, my best girl, if you think fit, and assure yourself that everyone—I need not speak of myself—will be most happy to see you:—But I think you had better wait a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Henry Reveley.

post or two, and not make two journeys of it, as that would be an expense to no purpose, and we have not an overplus of money. In fact, you had better resolve to be of our party in the country, where we shall go the moment the weather permits; and arrange all your plans for that purpose.—The Williams's and we shall be quite alone, Lord Byron and his party having chosen Leghorn, where their house is already taken.

Do not lose yourself in distant and uncertain plans; but systematise and simplify your motions, at least for the present.

I am not well. My side torments me. My mind agitates the prison which it inhabits, and things go ill with me—that is within—for all external circumstances are auspicious.

Resolve to stay with us this summer, and remain where you are till we are ready to set off:—no one need know of where you are. The Williams's are serene people, and are alone.

Before you come, look at Molini's what German books they have. I have got a "Faust" of my own, and just now my drama on the Greeks is come. I will keep it for you.

Affectionately and ever yours,

S.

[Addressed outside],
Miss CLAIRMONT,
Presso al Prof. Bojti,
Piazza Pitti, Firenze.

# 455. To Ollier & Co. (London)

PISA,

April 11, 1822.

GENTLEMEN,

I should be obliged to you to furnish Mr. Gisborne with

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Hellas," published by the Olliers.

my account with as little delay as is consistent with your convenience. I understand from him that the balance is against me. I have reason to be surprised at this, but I complain of nothing except your silence, which has produced a want of intelligence between us, without which the accounts need never have been in their present state.

Pray let my accounts be sent in to Mr. Gisborne, and I wish you to consider that any arrangements you may feel inclined to enter into with that gentleman respecting my works, etc., are sanctioned by my authority. On the opposite page 1 you will find a list of errata for "Hellas," which in general is more correct than my other books.

Gentlemen, I am your obt. servt.,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Messrs. Ollier & Co., Vere Street, Bond St., London, Angleterre.

456. To Horace Smith

PISA,

April 11, 1822.

My DEAR SMITH,

I have, as yet, received neither the "Nympholept" nor his metaphysical companions—Time, my Lord, has a wallet on his back, and I suppose he has bagged them by the way. As he has had a good deal of alms for oblivion out of me, I think he might as well have favoured me this once; I have, indeed, just dropped another mite into his treasury, called "Hellas," which I know not how to send to you; but I dare say, some fury of the Hades of authors will bring one to Paris. It is a poem written on the Greek cause last summer—a sort of lyrical, dramatic nondescript piece of business.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Printed in Vol. IV of Mr. H. Buxton Forman's edition of Shelley's Poems.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See note on p. 913.

You will have heard of a row we have had here, which, I dare say, will grow to a serious size before it arrives at Paris. It was, in fact, a trifling piece of business enough, arising from an insult of a drunken dragoon, offered to one of our party, and only serious, because one of Lord B.'s servants wounded the fellow dangerously with a pitchfork. He is now, however, recovering, and the echo of the affair will be heard long after the original report has ceased.

Lord Byron has read me one or two letters of Moore to him, in which Moore speaks with great kindness of me; and of course I cannot but feel flattered by the approbation of a man, my inferiority to whom I am proud to acknowledge.—Amongst other things, however, Moore, after giving Lord B. much good advice about public opinion, etc., seems to deprecate MY influence on his mind, on the subject of religion, and to attribute the tone assumed in "Cain" to my suggestions. Moore cautions him against my influence on this particular, with the most friendly zeal; and it is plain that his motive springs from a desire of benefiting Lord B., without degrading me. you know Moore. Pray assure him that I have not the smallest influence over Lord Byron, in this particular, and if I had, I certainly should employ it to eradicate from his great mind the delusions of Christianity, which, in spite of his reason, seem perpetually to recur, and to lay in ambush for the hours of sickness and distress. "Cain" was conceived many years ago, and begun before I saw him last year at Ravenna. How happy should I not be to attribute to myself, however indirectly, any participation in that immortal work !—I differ with Moore in thinking Christianity useful to the world; no man of sense can think it true; and the alliance of the monstrous superstitions of the popular worship with the pure doctrines of the Theism of such a man as Moore, turns to the profit of the former, and makes the latter the fountain of its own pollution. I agree with him, that the doctrines of the French, and Material Philosophy, are as false as they are

pernicious; but still they are better than Christianity, inasmuch as anarchy is better than despotism; for this reason, that the former is for a season, and the latter is eternal. My admiration of the character, no less than of the genius of Moore, makes me rather wish that he should not have an ill opinion of me.

Where are you this summer?—Forever in Paris? Forever in France? We settle this summer near Spezzia; Lord Byron at Leghorn. May not I hope to see you, even for a trip in Italy? I hope your wife and little ones are well. Mine grows a fine boy, and is quite well.

I have contrived to get my musical coals at Newcastle itself.—My dear Smith, believe me,

Faithfully yours,
P. B. S.

#### XX. LAST DAYS

### April 28—July 4, 1822

Shelley's Arrival at Lerici—Casa Magni—A Last Attempt to Assist Godwin—Death of Allegra—Clare's Grief—Shelley's Boat, the Don Juan—Trelawny—A Letter to Mrs. Godwin—Captain and Mrs. Williams—Thoughts on Suicide—Leigh Hunt's Arrival—At Leghorn—Last Letters—The End.

# 457. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT SHELLEY (Spezzia)

LERICI, 1

SUNDAY, April 28, 1822.

DEAREST MARY,

I am this moment arrived at Lerici, where I am necessarily detained, waiting the furniture, which left Pisa last night at midnight; and as the sea has been calm, and the wind fair, I may expect them every moment. It would not do to leave affairs here in an *impiccio*, great as is my

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<sup>1 &</sup>quot;In the month of February," says Mrs. Shelley in the note to Shelley's poems for 1822, "Shelley and his friend [Captain] Williams went to Spezzia to seek for houses for us. Only one was to be found at all suitable; however, a trifle such as not finding a house could not stop Shelley; the one found was to serve for all. It was unfurnished; we sent our furniture by sea, and with a good deal of precipitation, arising from his impatience, made our removal. left Pisa on 26th of April. The bay of Spezzia is of considerable extent, and divided by a rocky promontory into a larger and smaller The town of Lerici is situated on the eastern point, and in the depth of the smaller bay, which bears the name of this town, is the village of Sant' Arenzo. Our house, Casa Magni, was close to this village; the sea came up to the door, a steep hill sheltered it behind. The proprietor of the estate on which it was situated was insane; he had begun to erect a large house at the summit of the hill behind, but his malady prevented its being finished, and it was falling into ruin. He had, and this to the Italians had seemed a glaring symptom of very decided madness, rooted up the olives on the hill side,

anxiety to see you.—How are you, my best love, and how have you sustained the trials of your journey? Answer me this question, and how my little babe and Clare are.

Now to business.—Is the Magni House taken? if not, pray occupy yourself instantly in finishing the affair, even if you are obliged to go to Sarzana, and send a messenger to me to tell me of your success. I, of course, cannot leave Lerici, to which port the boats (for we were obliged to take two), are directed. But you can come over in the same boat that brings this letter, and return in the evening. I hear that Trelawny is still with you.

Tell Clare that as in a few days I must probably return

and planted forest trees; they were mostly young, but the plantation was more in English taste than I ever elsewhere saw in Italy; some fine walnut and ilex trees intermingled their dark massy foliage, and formed groups which still haunt my memory, as they then satiated the eye, with a sense of loveliness. The scene was indeed of unimaginable beauty; the blue extent of the waters, the almost land-locked bay, the near castle of Lerici, shutting it in to the east, and distant Porto Venere to the west; the varied forms of the precipitous rocks that bound in the beach, over which there was only a winding rugged footpath towards Lerici, and none on the other side; the tideless sea leaving no sand nor shingle,—formed a picture such as one sees in Salvator Rosa's landscapes only: sometimes the sunshine vanished when the sirocco raged—the "ponente," the wind was called on that shore. The gales and squalls that hailed our first arrival, surrounded the bay with foam: the howling wind swept our exposed house, and the sea roared unremittingly, so that we almost fancied ourselves on board ship. At other times sunshine and calm invested sea and sky, and the rich tints of Italian heaven bathed the scene in bright and ever-varying The natives were wilder than the place. Our near neighbours of Sant' Arenzo, were more like savages than any people I ever before lived among. Many a night they passed on the beach, singing or rather howling, the women dancing about among the waves that broke at their feet, the men leaning against the rocks and joining in their loud wild chorus. We could get no provisions nearer than Sanzana, at a distance of about three miles and a half off, with the torrent of Magra between, and even there the supply was very deficient. Had we been wrecked on an island of the South Seas, we could scarcely have left ourselves further from civilization and comfort; but where the sun shines the latter becomes an unnecessary luxury, and we had enough society among ourselves. I confess housekeeping became rather a toilsome task, especially as I was suffering in my health, and could not exert myself actively."

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to Pisa, for the affairs of the lawsuit, I have brought her box with me thinking that she might be in want of some of its contents. I ought to say that I do not think that there is accommodation for you all at this inn; and that, even if there were, you would be better off at Spezzia; but if the Magni House is taken, then there is no possible reason why you should not take a row over in the boat that will bring this—but don't keep the men long. I am anxious to hear from you on every account and

Ever yours,

S.

# 458. To Horace Smith (Versailles)

LERICI,

May, 1822.

My DEAR SMITH,

It is some time since I have heard from you; are you still at Versailles? Do you still cling to France, and prefer the arts and conveniences of that over-civilised country to the beautiful nature and mighty remains of Italy? As to me, like Anacreon's swallow, I have left my Nile, and have taken up my summer quarters here, in a lonely house, close by the sea-side, surrounded by the soft and sublime scenery of the gulf of Spezzia. I do not write; I have lived too long near Lord Byron, and the sun has extinguished the glow-worm; for I cannot hope, with St. John, that "the light came into the world, and the world knew it not."

The object of my present letter is, however, a request, and as it concerns that most odious of all subjects, money, I will put it in the shortest shape—Godwin's law-suit, he tells us, is decided against him; and he is adjudged to pay £900. He writes, of course, to his daughter in the greatest distress: but we have no money except our income, nor any means of procuring it. My wife has sent him her novel, which is now finished, the copyright of

which will probably bring him £300 or £400—as Ollier offered the former sum for it, but as he required a considerable delay for the payment, she rejected his offer. Now, what I wish to know is, whether you could with convenience lend me the £400 which you once dedicated to this service, and allow Godwin to have it, under the precautions and stipulations which I formerly annexed to its employment. You could not obviously allow this money to lie idle waiting for this event, without interest. I forgot this part of the business till this instant, and now I reflect that I ought to have assured you of the regular payment of interest, which I omitted to mention, considering it a matter of course.

I can easily imagine that circumstances may have arisen to make this loan inconvenient or impossible.—In any case, believe me,

My dear Smith,
Yours very gratefully and faithfully,
P. B. Shelley.

#### 459. To Lord Byron

Lerici, May 8, 1822.

MY DEAR LORD BYRON,

I have succeeded in dissuading Clare from the melancholy design of visiting the coffin at Leghorn, much to the profit of my own shattered health and spirits, which would have suffered much in accompanying her on such a journey.<sup>1</sup>

"In Memory of
ALLEGRA,
Daughter of G. G. Lord Byron,
who died at Bagna Cavallo,
in Italy, April 20th, 1822,
aged five years and three months.

'I shall go to her, but she shall not return to me.'
2nd Samuel xii, 23."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Allegra died on April 19; the body was embalmed, sent to England, and buried at Harrow, but Byron's desire that a tablet with the following inscription should be placed in the church was not complied with. The date of the child's death was incorrect

She is much better: she has, indeed, altogether suffered in a manner less terrible than I expected, after the first shock, during which of course she wrote the letter you enclose. I had no idea that her letter was written in that temper, and I think I need not assure you that, whatever mine or Mary's ideas might have been respecting the system of education you intended to adopt, we sympathise too much in your loss, and appreciate too well your feelings, to have allowed such a letter to be sent to you had we suspected its contents.

The portrait and the hair arrived safe: I gave them to Clare, and made her acquainted with your concession to her requests. She now seems bewildered; and whether she designs to avail herself further of your permission to regulate the funeral, I know not. In fact, I am so exhausted with the scenes through which I have passed, that I do not dare to ask. I think she will be persuaded not to interfere, as I am convinced that her putting herself forward in any manner would be injurious to herself as it would be painful to me, and probably to you. She has no objection (thus much she has said) to the interment taking place in England.

Byron wrote the following letter to Shelley on receiving the tidings of Allegra's death—

"April 23, 1822.

"Yours ever,
"N. B."

<sup>&</sup>quot;The blow was stunning and unexpected; for I thought the danger over, by the long interval between her stated amelioration and the arrival of the express. But I have borne up against it as best I can, and so far successfully, that I can go about the usual business of life with the same appearance of composure, and even greater. There is nothing to prevent your coming to-morrow; but perhaps, to-day, and yester-evening, it was better not to have met. I do not know that I have anything to reproach in my conduct, and certainly nothing in my feelings and intentions towards the dead. But it is a moment when we are apt to think that, if this or that had been done, such event might have been prevented,—though every day and hour shows us that they are the most natural and inevitable. I suppose that Time will do his usual work—Death has done his.

Tita, I think I told you, is with me. Williams heard this morning from Trelawny, who says that a good deal yet remains to be done with the *Bolivar*. My boat is not yet arrived.

Believe me ever, My dear Lord B., Yours very faithfully, P. B. Shelley.

460. To Captain Daniel Roberts (Genoa)

Lerici, May 13, 1821 [1822].

DEAR SIR,

The Don Juan<sup>1</sup> arrived safe on the evening of Sunday after a long and stormy passage and I have been waiting the clearing up of the weather and the return of the man to write to you. She is a most beautiful boat and so far surpasses both mine and Williams's expectations that it

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley's boat, so called. In her notes on Shelley's poems for 1822 Mrs. Shelley says: "His passion for boating was fostered at this time by having among our friends several sailors; his favourite companion, Edward Ellerker Williams, of the 8th Light Dragoons, had begun his life in the Navy, and had afterwards entered the Army: he had spent several years in India, and his love for adventure and manly exercise accorded with Shelley's taste. It was their favourite plan to build a boat such as they could manage themselves, and, living on the sea-coast, to enjoy at every hour and season the pleasure they loved best. Captain Roberts, R.N., undertook to build the boat at Genoa, where he was also occupied in building the Bolivar for Lord Byron. Ours was to be an open boat, on a model taken from one of the royal dockyards. I have since heard that there was a defect in this model, and that it was never seaworthy. At first the fatal boat had not arrived, and was expected with great impatience. On Monday, 12th May, it came. Williams records the long-wished-for fact in his journal: 'Cloudy and threatening weather. Mr. Maglian called; and after dinner, and while walking with him on the terrace, we discovered a strange sail coming round the point of Porto Venere, which proved at length to be Shelley's boat. She had left Genoa on Thursday last, but had been driven back by the prevailing bad winds. A Mr. Heslop and two English seamen brought her round, and they speak most highly of her performances. She does indeed excite my surprise and admiration. Shelley and I walked to Lerici, and made a stretch off the land to

was with some difficulty that we could persuade ourselves that you had not sent us the *Bolivar* by mistake. I do not know how I can express, much less repay, my obligation to you for having sacrificed so much of your time and attention as must have been requisite to produce anything so complete. We were out this morning and for a short time on Sunday evening though the weather was very squally. Yesterday it blew a gale from the South West and she required more reefs than we found in her sails. Today we went from Lerici to Spezzia and back again on a wind in a little more than an hour and a half. I hope, however, soon to see you here, and although I cannot boast very capital accommodation, that you will put up with such quarters as we can afford which after all will be better than the Inn.

Tell Trelawny I write to him by the post; he will arrange with you in what manner I am to remit the rest of the expenses of the boat; I think he told me he wished me to procure him Tuscan crowns to that amount.

Believe me, Dear Sir,
Your very obliged and faithful
P. B. Shelley.

I have kept one of the Boys you sent for the boat.

try her; and I find she fetches whatever she looks at. In short, we have now a perfect plaything for the summer.'... The time of the friends was now spent on the sea; the weather became fine, and our whole party often passed the evenings on the water when the wind promised pleasant sailing. Shelley and Williams made longer excursions; they sailed several times to Massa; they had engaged one of the seamen, who brought her round, a boy, by name Charles Vivian; and they had not the slightest apprehension of danger. When the weather was unfavourable, they employed themselves with alterations in the rigging, and by building a boat of canvas and reeds, as light as possible, to have on board the other for the convenience of landing in waters too shallow for the larger vessel. When Shelley was on board, he had his papers with him; and much of the "Triumph of Life" was written as he sailed or weltered on the sea which was soon to engulf him."

Trelawny might well laugh at me for the idea of employing my dolt Domenico<sup>1</sup> in such a craft.

[Addressed outside], Capt. ROBERTS, R.N., Genoa.

461. To Edward John Trelawny

LERICI,

May 16, 1822.

MY DEAR TRELAWNY,

The Don Juan is arrived, and nothing can exceed the admiration she has excited; for we must suppose the name to have been given her during the equivocation of sex which her godfather suffered in the harem. Williams declares her to be perfect, and I participate in his enthusiasm, in as much as would be decent in a landsman. have been out now several days, although we have sought in vain for an opportunity of trying her against the feluccas or other large craft in the bay; she passes the small ones as a comet might pass the dullest planet of the heavens. When do you expect to be here in the Bolivar? If Roberts's £50 grow into £500, and his ten days into months, I suppose I may expect that I am considerably in your debt, and that you will not be round here until the middle of the summer. I hope that I shall be mistaken in the last of these conclusions; as to the former, whatever may be the result, I have little reason and less inclination to

Professor Dowden says ("Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 407), "A Domenico Beni, who I find was sent early in 1822 to attend Miss Clairmont to Pisa, may be the Domenic of the poem."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley's servant, who is mentioned in the opening stanza of "The Boat on the Serchio"—

<sup>&</sup>quot;Our boat is asleep on Serchio's stream,
Its sails are folded like thoughts in a dream,
The helm sways idly, hither and thither;
Domenic, the boatman, has brought the mast
And the oars and the sails; but 'tis sleeping fast
Like a beast, unconscious of its tether."

complain of my bargain. I wish you could express from me to Roberts, how excessively I am obliged to him for the time and trouble he has expended for my advantage, and which I wish could be as easily repaid as the money which I owe him, and which I wait your orders for remitting.

I have only heard from Lord Byron once, and solely upon that subject. Tita is with me, and I suppose will go with you in the schooner to Leghorn.

We are very impatient to see you, and although we cannot hope that you will stay long on your *first* visit, we count upon you for the latter part of the summer, as soon as the novelty of Leghorn is blunted. Mary desires her best regards to you, and unites with me in a sincere wish to renew an intimacy from which we have already experienced so much pleasure.

Believe me, my dear Trelawny,
Your very sincere friend,
P. B. Shelley.

## 462. To Lord Byron (Pisa)

LERICI,

May 16, 1822.

MY DEAR LORD B.,

I received this morning a letter from Lega, with one enclosed of Collini's, relating, if I rightly understand them, to the prosecution of Masi. I wish it to be understood that I personally have not the least desire to proceed against the poor devil; but if you think it might conduce to Antonio's enlargement, or be in any other respect advantageous to you, I am willing to act as you think best. Pray write to me precisely what you wish me to do on this

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See p. 896.

subject, and how to proceed; as for Lega's compositions, and that enclosed, as they seem written under the supposition of my having a secretary at my elbow as learned in the law as himself, they are, and probably will continue to be, totally unintelligible to me.

Clare is much better: after the first shock, she has sustained her loss with more fortitude than I had dared to hope, I have not, however, renewed any conversation on the subject of my last letter: I think you ought to consider yourself free from any interference of her's in the disposal of the remains.

My boat is arrived, and the *Bolivar* is expected, I hear, in about a fortnight. Williams (who by the way desires his best remembrances) is delighted with her, and she serves me at once for a study and a carriage—I dare say I shall soon see you at Leghorn, when or before I hope to hear all the news, literary and domestic, which you have received, and which, if there be any faith in augury, cannot be otherwise than good.

Believe me, my dear Lord B.,

Yours very truly,

P. B. SHELLEY.

P.S.—I can only suggest, on the subject of Clare, the propriety of her being made acquainted, through me, of the destination of the remains.

I hear nothing of Hunt—do you?

463. To Mary Jane Godwin

LERICI,

May 29, 1822.

DEAR MADAM,

Mrs. Mason (Lady Mountcashell) has sent me an extract

from your last letter to show to Mary, and I have received that of Mr. Godwin, in which he mentions your having left Skinner Street. In Mary's present state of health and spirits, much caution is requisite with regard to communications which must agitate her in the highest degree, and the object of my present letter is simply to inform you that I have thought right to exercise this caution on the present occasion.

Mary is at present about three months advanced in pregnancy, and the irritability and languor which accompany this state are always distressing and sometimes alarming: I do not know how soon I can permit her to receive such communications, or how soon you and Mr. Godwin would wish they should be conveyed to her, if you could have any idea of the effect. Do not, however, let me be misunderstood. It is not my intention or my wish that the circumstances in which your family is involved should be concealed from her, but that the details should be suspended until they assume a more prosperous character, or at least the letters addressed to her or intended for her perusal on that subject, should not convey a supposition that she could do more than she does, thus exasperating the sympathy which she already feels too intensely, for her father's distress, which she would sacrifice all she possesses to remedy, but the remedy of which is beyond her power. She imagined that her novel might be turned to immediate advantage for him; I am greatly interested in the fate of this production, which appears to me to possess a high degree of merit, and I regret that it is not Mr. Godwin's intention to publish it immediately. I am sure that Mary would be delighted to amend anything that her father thought imperfect in it, though I confess that if his objections relate to the character of Beatrice, I shall lament the deference which would be shown by the sacrifice of any portion of it to feelings and ideas which are but for a day. I wish Mr. Godwin would write to her on that subject, and he might advert to

the letter, for it is only the last one which I suppressed, or not, as he thought proper.

I have written to Mr. Smith¹ to solicit the loan of £400, which, if I can obtain it in that manner, is very much at Mr. Godwin's service. The views which I now entertain of my affairs forbid me to enter into any further reversionary transactions, nor do I think, Mr. Godwin would be a gainer by the contrary determination, as it would be next to impossible to effect any such bargain at this distance. Nor could I burthen my income, which is barely sufficient to meet its various claims, and the system of life in which it seems necessary that I should live.

We hear you have Jane's 2 news from Mrs. Mason. Since the late melancholy event (the death of Allegra) she has become far more tranquil nor should I have anything to desire with regard to her, did not the uncertainty of my own life and prospects render it prudent for her to attempt to establish some sort of independence as a security against an event which would deprive her of that which she at present enjoys. She is well in health, and usually resides in Florence, where she has formed a little society for herself among the Italians, with whom she is a great She was here for a week or two, and though favourite. she has now returned to Florence, we expect her soon to visit us for the summer months. In the winter, unless some of her various plans succeed, for she may be called la fille aux mille projets, she will return to Florence.

Mr. Godwin may depend on receiving immediate notice of the result of my application to Mr. Smith. I hope to hear soon an account of your situation and prospects, and remain, dear Madam,

Yours very sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Horace Smith.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Miss Clairmont.

# 464. To CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (Florence)

[SARZANO GUIGNO], LERICI, TUESDAY EVENING, May 29, 1822.

MY DEAR CLARE,

Tell me when we are to expect you, and the precise hour and day at which you arrive at Viareggio.—I do not expect that you will have found any motives at Florence for altering your intentions with respect to this summer, and I think that, at least for the present, you would be happier here than anywhere else. I have heard from Mary still continues to suffer terribly from Mrs. Mason. languor and hysterical affections; and things in every respect remain as they were when you left us. . . . . The letters on the sail, after having undergone a thousand processes remain still distinct, and the only difference is that the sail is in a dismal condition.—We cannot match the stuff.—I sailed to Massa the other day, and returned late at night against a high sea and heavy wind in which the boat behaved excellently. I sit within the whole morning and in the evening we sail about.—I write a little —I read and enjoy for the first time these ten years something like health—I find, however, that I must neither think nor feel, or the pain returns to its old nest.

Williams seems happy and content, and we enjoy each other's society. Jane is by no means acquiescent in the system of things, and she pines after her own house and saucepans to which no one can have a claim except herself. It is a pity that any one so pretty should be so selfish.—But don't tell her this—and come soon yourself, I hope my best Clare, with tranquillized spirits and a settled mind to your ever constant and affectionate

Friend, P. B. S.

Mrs. M[ason] will tell you all Sk[inner] St[reet] news. Mary is not in a state to hear it.



### 465. TO CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT

LERICI,

THURSDAY [Postmark: Sarzana, 31 May, 1822].

My DEAR CLARE,

I am vexed to hear you are so ill, although the state of your spirits does not surprise me. I do not think there is any chance of your experiencing annoyance of whatever kind at Lerici, as I suspect between me and the only object from which it could spring [i.e. Byron] there is a great gulph fixed, which by the nature of things must daily become wider.—I hear nothing of Hunt, nor have we any letter from England except those you are acquainted with, and one from Mr. Gisborne.—I think you would be happier here; and indeed always either with or near me, —but on this subject your own feelings and judgment must guide you. My health is much better this summer than it has been for many years; but the occupation of a few mornings in composition has somewhat shaken my nerves.—I have turned Maria's room into a study, and am in this respect very comfortable.—What do you think about the situation of the G[odwin]s, and their pretensions upon our resources? This question you cannot answer in a letter, but I should be very glad to hear your opinion on it; meanwhile I do nothing. Mary has been very unwell; she is now better, and I suppose it will be necessary to make the Godwins a subject of conversation with her—at present I put off the evil day. The superscription of my poor boat's infamy is erased. We have had the piece taken out, and new reef-bands put in, and in such a manner that it will be impossible to distinguish that it has been mended, it merely appears as if two additional reefs had been inserted, of which, indeed, we were greatly in want.—Jane the other day was very much discontented with her situation here, on account of some of our servants having taken something of hers. but now,

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000659054 http://www.hathitrust.org/access use#pd-google GMT 2022-06-29 18:45 of Pennsylvania on Generated at University of Penns Public Domain, Google-digitized as is the custom, calm has succeeded to storm, to yield to the latter in accustomed vicissitude.—Mary, though ill, is good. And how are you?

I wish you could mark down some good cook for us—a man, of course.—If you could find another Betta without the disagreeable qualities of the last, it would do.

Your ever affectionate.

S.

Say when we are to come to meet you.

[Addressed outside],
Miss CLAIRMONT,
presso al Sigr. Prof. Bojti,
Piazza Pitti.
Firenza.

466. To JOHN GISBORNE

LERICI, June 18, 1822.

In my doubt as to which of your most interesting letters I shall answer, I quash the business one for the present, as the only part of it that requires an answer requires also maturer consideration. In the first place I send you money for postage, as I intend to indulge myself in plenty of paper and no crossings. Mary will write soon; at present she suffers greatly from excess of weakness, produced by a severe miscarriage, from which she is now slowly recovering. Her situation for some hours was alarming, and as she was totally destitute of medical assistance, I took the most decisive resolutions, by dint of making her sit in ice, I succeeded in checking the hemorrhage and the fainting fits, so that when the physician arrived all danger was over, and he had nothing to do but to applaud me for my boldness. She is now doing well, and the sea-baths will soon restore her. I have written to Ollier to send his The "Adonais" I wished to have had account to you. a fair chance, both because it is a favourite with me and on account of the memory of Keats, who was a poet of

great genius, let the classic party say what it will. "Hellas" too I liked on account of the subject—one always finds some reason or other for liking one's own composition. The "Epipsychidion" I cannot look at, the person whom it celebrates was a cloud instead of a Juno; and poor Ixion starts from the centaur that was the offspring of his own embrace. If you are curious, however, to hear what I am and have been, it will tell you something thereof. It is an idealized history of my life and feelings. I think one is always in love with something or other; the error, and I confess it is not easy for spirits cased in flesh and blood to avoid it, consists in seeking in a mortal image the likeness of what is perhaps eternal.

Hunt is not yet arrived, but I expect him every day. I shall see little of Lord Byron, nor shall I permit Hunt. to form the intermediate link between him and me. detest all society—almost all, at least—and Lord Byron is the nucleus of all that is hateful and tiresome in it. will be half mad to hear of these memoirs. 1 As to me, you know my supreme indifference to such affairs, except that I must confess that I am sometimes amused by the ridiculous mistakes of these writers. Tell me a little of what they say of me besides my being an atheist. One thing I regret in it, I dread lest it should injure Hunt's prospects in the establishment of the journal, for Lord Byron is so mentally capricious that the least impulse drives him from his anchorage. . . . . . The Williams's are now on a visit to us, and they are people who are very pleasing to me. But words are not the instruments of our intercourse. like Jane more and more, and I find Williams the most amiable of companions. She has a taste for music, and an elegance of form and motions that compensate in some degree for the lack of literary refinement. You know my gross ideas of music, and will forgive me when I say that

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Lord Byron, with some of his contemporaries," 1822. This book, which contains some objectionable references to Shelley, was written by John Watkins.

I listen the whole evening on our terrace to the simple melodies with excessive delight. I have a boat here. It cost me £80, and reduced me to some difficulty in point of money. However, it is swift and beautiful, and appears quite a vessel. Williams is captain, and, we drive along this delightful bay in the evening wind under the summer moon until earth appears another world. Jane brings her guitar, and if the past and future could be obliterated, the present would content me so well that I could say with Faust to the passing moment "Remain thou, thou art so beautiful." Clare is with us, and the death of her child seems to have restored her to tranquillity. Her character is somewhat altered. She is vivacious and talkative; and though she teases me sometimes, I like her. . . . Lord Byron, who is at Leghorn, has fitted up a splendid vessel, a small schooner on the American model, and Trelawny is to be captain. How long the fiery spirit of our pirate will accommodate itself to the caprice of the poet remains to be seen.

I write little now. It is impossible to compose except under the strong excitement of an assurance of finding sympathy in what you write. Imagine Demosthenes reciting a Philippic to the waves of the Atlantic. Lord Byron is in this respect fortunate. He touched a chord to which a million hearts responded, and the coarse music which he produced to please them, disciplined him to the perfection to which he now approaches. I do not go on with "Charles the First." I feel too little certainty of the future, and too little satisfaction with regard to the past to undertake any subject seriously and deeply. I stand, as it were, upon a precipice, which I have ascended with great, and cannot descend without greater peril, and I am content if the heaven above me is calm for the passing moment.

You don't tell me what you think of "Cain." You send me the opinion of the populace, which you know I do not esteem. I have read several more of the plays of Vol. ii—32—(2285)

Calderon. "Los Dos Amantes del Cielo," is the finest, if I except one scene in the "Devocion de la Cruz." I read Greek and think about writing.

I do not think much of — not admiring Metastasio; the *nil admirari*, however justly applied, seems to me a bad sign in a young person. I had rather a pupil of mine had conceived a frantic passion for Marini himself, than that she had found out the critical defects of the most deficient author. When she becomes of her own accord full of genuine admiration for the finest scene in the "Purgatorio," or the opening of the "Paradiso," or some other neglected piece of excellence, hope great things. Adieu, I must not exceed the limits of my paper however little scrupulous I seem about those of your patience.

P. B. S.

I waited three days to get this pen mended, and at last was obliged to write.

#### 467. To LORD BYRON

LERICI.

SUNDAY [? June, 1822].

MY DEAR LORD BYRON,

I have just heard from Hunt, and, what is still more decisive, from a friend of his, announcing his third embarkation on the 13th of May. We may therefore expect him every day at Leghorn, and although he omits to mention the name of the ship, you are on the spot, and will easily be able, by the intervention of Dunn or some other omniscient of that sort, to intercept him before he proceeds to Pisa, and give him my direction, and contrive that the poor fellow's first impression on his arrival in Italy should be such as they could not fail to be from an unexpected meeting with you. I shall sail over to pay both him and you a visit as soon as I hear of his arrival. But perhaps he has written to you more explicitly.

I hear that the Americans are tempting you to migrate,

in hopes, perhaps, that when Time, who blots out scutcheons and patents of nobility, shall have made the title-page of "Cain" and "Childe Harold" still brighter, the Homeric doubt shall be renewed about your birthplace throughout all the regions in which English will be spoken. It will be curious enough to hear the academies of New Holland and Labrador disputing on such a subject.

What news of our process? I hear that Antonio is treated with more mildness, and likely to be released. They say, too, that Masi is to be degraded and severely punished. This would be a pity, and I think you would do well, so soon as our own points are gained, to intercede for the poor devil, whom it would not be right to confound with his government, or rather with the popular prejudice of the Pisans, to the suggestions of which the government conformed itself.

Clare desires me to send you the enclosed packet, and to request that her letters may be returned to her.

I hear nothing of your Schooner: Williams is on the look out for her all day, and has hoisted his flags at least ten times in honour of the approach of her phantom.

The filthy people have covered my letter with oil, but it is too late to do anything else than beg you to excuse it.

Ever faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

### 468. To Edward John Trelawny

LERICI,

June 18, 1822.

MY DEAR TRELAWNY,

I have written to Guebhard 1 to pay you 154 Tuscan crowns the amount of the balance against me according to Roberts's

¹ Guebhard & Co. were Shelley's bankers at Leghorn. I find the following note addressed to Brookes & Co., Bankers, Chancery Lane, London: "Lerici, June 15, 1822. Gentlemen, Be so good as to send a credit for my quarter's income, due the 25th of this month, to Messrs. Guebhard & Co., merchants, Leghorn, for my use. I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, your humble servant, Percy Bysshe Shelley."

calculation, which I keep for your satisfaction, deducting sixty, which I paid the aubergiste at Pisa, in all 214. We saw you about eight miles in the offing this morning; but the abatement of the breeze leaves us little hope that you can have made Leghorn this evening. Pray write us a full, true, and particular account of your proceedings, etc. How Lord Byron likes the vessel; what are your arrangements and intentions for the summer; and when we may expect to see you or him in this region again; and especially whether there is any news of Hunt.

Roberts and Williams are very busy in refitting the *Don Juan*; they seem determined that she shall enter Leghorn in style. I am no great judge of these matters; but am excessively obliged to the former, and delighted that the latter should find amusement, like the sparrow, in educating the cuckoo's young.

You, of course, enter into society at Leghorn: should you meet with any scientific person, capable of preparing the Prussic Acid, or essential oil of bitter almonds, I should regard it as a great kindness if you could procure me a small quantity. It requires the greatest caution in preparation, and ought to be highly concentrated; I would give any price for this medicine; you remember we talked of it the other night, and we both expressed a wish to possess it; my wish was serious, and sprung from the desire of avoiding needless suffering. I need not tell you I have no intention of suicide at present, but I confess it would be a comfort to me to hold in my possession that golden key to the chamber of perpetual rest. The Prussic Acid is used in medicine in infinitely minute doses; but that preparation is weak, and has not the concentration necessary to medicine all ills infallibly. A single drop, even less, is a dose, and it acts by paralysis.

I am curious to hear of this publication about Lord Byron and the Pisa circle. I hope it will not annoy him,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See page 976.

as to me I am supremely indifferent. If you have not shown the letter I sent you, don't, until Hunt's arrival, when we shall certainly meet.

"The Sensitive Plant"

Your very sincere friend, P. B. Shelley.

Mary is better though still excessively weak.

# 469. To LEIGH HUNT (Genoa)

LERICI.

June 19, 1822.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I write to you on the chance that you may not have left Genoa before my letter can reach you. Your letter was sent to Pisa, and thence forwarded here, or I should probably have ventured to meet you at Genoa; but the chances are now so much diminished of finding you, that I will not run the risk of the delay of seeing you that would be caused by our missing each other on the way. I shall therefore set off for Leghorn the moment that I hear you have sailed.—We now inhabit a white house, with arches, near the town of Lerici, in the gulf of Spezzia. The Williamses are with us. Williams is one of the best fellows in the world; and Jane his wife a most delightful person, whom we all agree is the exact antitype of the lady 1 I described in "The Sensitive Plant," though this must have been a pure anticipated cognition, as it was written a year before I knew her. I wish you need not pass Lerici, which I fear you will do; cast your eye on the white house, and think of us.

A thousand welcomes, my best friend, to this divine country; high mountains and seas no longer divide those whose affections are united. We have much to think of and talk of when we meet at Leghorn; but the final

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mrs. Mason (Lady Mountcashell) was the lady originally portrayed in this poem.

cannot now consent to be even that; and how long the alliance may continue, I will not prophesy. Pray do not hint my doubts on the subject to any one, or they might do harm to Hunt; and they may be groundless.

I still inhabit this divine bay, reading Spanish dramas, and sailing, and listening to the most enchanting music. We have some friends on a visit to us, and my only regret is that the summer must ever pass, or that Mary has not the same predilection for this place that I have, which would induce me never to shift my quarters.

Farewell.—Believe me ever your obliged and affectionate friend,

P. B. Shelley.

## 471. TO JANE WILLIAMS (Casa Magni)

PISA.

July 4, 1822.

You will probably see Williams before I can disentangle myself from the affairs with which I am now surrounded. I return to Leghorn to-night, and shall urge him to sail with the first fair wind, without expecting me. I have thus the pleasure of contributing to your happiness when deprived of every other, and of leaving you no other subject of regret, but the absence of one scarcely worth regretting. I fear you are solitary and melancholy at Villa Magni, and, in the intervals of the greater and more serious distress in which I am compelled to sympathise here, I figure to myself the countenance which had been the source of such consolation to me, shadowed by a veil of sorrow.

How soon those hours passed, and how slowly they return to pass so soon again, perhaps for ever, in which we have lived together so intimately, so happily! Adieu, my dearest friend! I only write these lines for the pleasure of tracing what will meet your eyes. Mary will tell you all the news.

S.

# 472. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT SHELLEY (Casa Magni)

PISA,

July 4, 1822.

### MY DEAREST MARY,

I have received both your letters, and shall attend to the instructions they convey. I did not think of buying the Bolivar; Lord B. wishes to sell her, but I imagine would prefer ready money. I have as yet made no inquiries about houses near Pugnano—I have no moment of time to spare from Hunt's affairs; I am detained unwillingly here, and you will probably see Williams in the boat before me,—but that will be decided to-morrow.

Things are in the worst possible situation with respect to poor Hunt. I find Marianne in a desperate state of health, and on our arrival at Pisa sent for Vaccà. He decides that her case is hopeless, and that although it will be lingering, must inevitably end fatally. This decision he thought proper to communicate to Hunt, indicating at the same time, with great judgment and precision, the treatment necessary to be observed for availing himself of the chance of his being deceived. This intelligence has extinguished the last spark of poor Hunt's spirits, low enough before. The children are all well and much improved.

Lord Byron is at this moment on the point of leaving Tuscany. The Gambas have been exiled, and he declares his intention of following their fortunes. His first idea was to sail to America, which has been changed for Switzerland, then to Genoa, and last to Lucca.—Everybody is in despair and everything in confusion. Trelawny was on the point of sailing to Genoa for the purpose of transporting the Bolivar overland to the lake of Geneva, and had already whispered in my ear his desire that I should not influence Lord Byron against this terrestrial navigation. He next received orders to weigh anchor and set sail for

Lerici. He is now without instructions, moody and disappointed. But it is the worst for poor Hunt, unless the present storm should blow over. He places his whole dependence upon this scheme of a journal, for which every arrangement has been made and arrived with no other remnant of his £400 than a debt of 60 crowns. Lord Byron must of course furnish the requisite funds at present, as I cannot; but he seems inclined to depart without the necessary explanations and arrangements due to such a situation as Hunt's. These, in spite of delicacy, I must procure; he offers him the copyright of the "Vision of Judgment" for the first number. This offer, if sincere, is more than enough to set up the journal, and, if sincere, will set everything right.

How are you, my best Mary? Write especially how is your health and how your spirits are, and whether you are not more reconciled to staying at Lerici, at least during the summer.

You have no idea how I am hurried and occupied; I have not a moment's leisure, but will write by next post. Ever, dearest Mary, Yours affectionately,

S.

I have found the translation of the "Symposium."

The following is Mrs. Shelley's account of Shelley's last voyage: "The heats set in, in the middle of June; the days became excessively hot, but the sea breeze cooled the air at noon, and extreme heat always put Shelley in spirits: a long drought had preceded the heat, and prayers for rain were being put up in the churches, and processions of relics for the same effect took place in every town. At this time we received letters announcing the arrival of Leigh Hunt at Pisa. Shelley was very eager to see him. I was confined to my room by severe illness, and could not move; it was agreed that Shelley and Williams should go to Leghorn in the boat. Strange that no fear of danger crossed our minds! Living on the sea-shore. the ocean became as a plaything: as a child may sport with a lighted stick, till a spark inflames a forest and spreads destruction over all. so did we fearlessly and blindly tamper with danger, and make a game of the terrors of the ocean. Our Italian neighbours even trusted themselves as far as Massa in the skiff; and the running down the line of coast to Leghorn, gave no more notion of peril than

a fair-weather island navigation would have done to those who had never seen the sea. Once, some months before, Trelawny had raised a warning voice as to the difference of our calm bay, and the open sea beyond; but Shelley and his friend, with their one sailor boy, thought themselves a match for the storms of the Mediterranean, in a boat which they looked upon as equal to all it was put to do.

On the 1st of July they left us. If ever shadow of future ill darkened the present hour, such was over my mind when they went. (1) During the whole of our stay at Lerici, an intense presentiment of coming evil brooded over my mind, and covered this beautiful place, and genial summer, with the shadow of coming misery—I had vainly struggled with these emotions—they seemed accounted for by my illness, but at this hour of separation they recurred with renewed violence. I did not anticipate danger for them, but a vague expectation of evil shook me to agony, and I could scarcely bring myself to let them go. The day was calm and clear, and a fine breeze rising at twelve they weighed for Leghorn; they made the run of about fifty miles in seven hours and a half: the Bolivar was in port, and the regulations of the health-office not permitting them to go on shore after sunset, they borrowed cushions from the larger vessel, and slept on board their boat.

"They spent a week at Pisa and Leghorn. The want of rain was severely felt in the country. The weather continued sultry and fine. I have heard that Shelley all this time was in brilliant spirits. Not long before, talking of presentiment, he had said the only one that he ever found infallible, was the certain advent of some evil fortune when he felt peculiarly joyous. Yet if ever fate whispered of coming disaster, such inaudible, but not unfelt, prognostics hovered around us. The beauty of the place seemed unearthly in its excess: the distance we were at from all signs of civilisation, the sea at our feet, its murmurs or its roaring for ever in our ears,—all these things led

<sup>(1)</sup> Captain Roberts watched the vessel with his glass from the top of the lighthouse of Leghorn, on its homeward track. They were off Via Reggio, at some distance from shore, when a storm was driven over the sea. It enveloped them and several larger vessels in darkness. When the cloud passed onward, Roberts looked again, and saw every other vessel sailing on the ocean except their little schooner, which had vanished. From that time he could scarcely doubt the fatal truth; yet we fancied that they might have been driven towards Elba, or Corsica, and so be saved. The observation made as to the spot where the boat disappeared, caused it to be found, through the exertions of Trelawny for that effect. It had gone down in ten fathom water; it had not capsized, and, except such things as had floated from her, everything was found on board exactly as it had been placed when they sailed. The boat itself was uninjured. Roberts possessed himself of her, and decked her, but she proved not sea-worthy, and her shattered planks now lie rotting on the shore of one of the Ionian islands, on which she was wrecked.

the mind to brood over strange thoughts, and, lifting it from everyday life, caused it to be familiar with the unreal. A sort of spell surrounded us, and each day, as the voyagers did not return, we grew restless and disquieted, and yet, strange to say, we were not fearful of the most apparent danger.

The spell snapped, it was all over; an interval of agonising doubt—of days passed in miserable journeys to gain tidings, of hopes that took firmer root, even as they were more baseless—were changed to the certainty of the death that eclipsed all happiness for the survivors for evermore.

There was something in our fate peculiarly harrowing. remains of those we lost were cast on shore; but by the quarantine laws of the coast, we were not permitted to have possession of themthe laws, with respect to everything cast on land by the sea, being, that such should be burned, to prevent the possibility of any remnant bringing the plague into Italy; and no representation could alter the law. At length, through the kind and unwearied exertions of Mr. Dawkins, our Chargé d'Affaires at Florence, we gained permission to receive the ashes after the bodies were consumed. Nothing could equal the zeal of Trelawny in carrying our wishes into effect. indefatigable in his exertions, and full of forethought and sagacity in his arrangements. It was a fearful task: he stood before us at last, his hands scorched and blistered by the flames of the funeral pyre, and by touching the burnt relics as he placed them in the receptacles prepared for the purpose. And there, in compass of that small case, was gathered all that remained on earth of him whose genius and virtue were a crown of glory to the world—whose love had been the source of happiness, peace, and good,—to be buried with him!

The concluding stanzas of the Adonais pointed out where the remains ought to be deposited; in addition to which our beloved child lay buried in the cemetery at Rome. Thither Shelley's ashes were conveyed, and they rest beneath one of the antique weed-grown towers that recur at intervals in the circuit of the massy ancient wall of Rome. . . . He selected the hallowed place himself; there is the "'Sepulchre,"

O, not of him, but of our joy!—

And grey walls moulder round, on which dull Time Feeds like slow fire upon a hoary brand; And one keen pyramid, with wedge sublime, Pavilioning the dust of him who planned This refuge for his memory, doth stand Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath A field is spread, on which a newer band Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of death, Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath."

Trelawny, who is our chief authority for the particulars of Shelley's last days, tells us in his "Recollections" that when two bodies were found on the shore, one of them, cast up near Via Reggio on July 18, was identified as that of Shelley by the "tall, slight figure, the

volume of Sophocles in one pocket, and Keats's poems ['Lamia,' etc.] in the other, doubled back as if the reader, in the act of reading, had hastily thrust it away." The other body, found on July 17, three miles from Shelley's, and in a much more mutilated condition, was recognised from the clothes to be that of Shelley's comrade, Williams. Three weeks later, a third body, a mere skeleton, was found, which, although unrecognisable, was supposed to be that of the sailor-boy, Charles Vivian. The bodies were buried in the sand, but it was decided that the remains of Shelley should be removed to Rome and interred in the Protestant Cemetery beside his child, and that Williams's should be conveyed to England. "To do this," says Trelawny, "in their then far-advanced state of decomposition, and to obviate the difficulties offered by the quarantine laws, the ancient custom of burning and reducing the bodies to ashes was suggested." Permission was therefore obtained for the removal of the bodies, from the Lucchese and Florentine governments by Mr. Dawkins, the English chargé d'affaires at Florence; Trelawny had an iron furnace made at Leghorn, and on August 15, at noon, in the presence of Byron, Leigh Hunt, and Captain Shenley, and attended by some soldiers and the Health Officer, Williams's body was disinterred from the sand and placed in the furnace. "The funereal pyre was now ready," he adds. "I applied the fire, and the material being dry and resinous, the pine-wood burnt furiously, and drove us back. It was hot enough before, there was no breath of air, and the loose sand scorched our feet. As soon as the flames became clear, and allowed us to approach, we threw frankincense and salt into the furnace, and poured a flask of wine and oil over the body. The Greek oration was omitted, for we had lost our Hellenic bard." When the body was reduced to ashes, these were collected and placed in a small oak box, bearing a brass inscription in Latin.

On the following day, August 15, Trelawny, Byron, Leigh Hunt, and the soldiers and Health Officer as before, repeated the ceremony for Shelley's body at Viareggio, some distance along the coast towards Massa. "Three white wands had been stuck in the sand to mark the poet's grave," says Trelawny. "The lonely and grand scenery that surrounded us so exactly harmonized with Shelley's genius, that I could imagine his spirit soaring above us. The sea, with the islands of Gorgona, Capraji, and Elba, was before us; old battlemented watch-towers stretched along the coast, backed by the marble-crested Apennines glistening in the sun, picturesque from their diversified outlines, and not a human dwelling was in sight." Nearly an hour was spent in digging before they came upon his body. "Even Byron was silent and thoughtful. We were startled and drawn together by a dull hollow sound that followed the blow of a mattock; the iron had struck a skull, and the body was soon uncovered. . . . Byron asked me to preserve the skull, but remembering that he had formerly used one as a drinking cup, I was determined Shelley's should not be so profaned." The body was removed into the furnace. "After the fire was well kindled . . . more wine was poured on Shelley's

dead body than he had consumed during his life. This with the oil and salt made the yellow flames glisten and quiver. The heat from the sun and fire was so intense that the atmosphere was tremulous and wavy." Notwithstanding the great heat, Shelley's heart was not consumed, and Trelawny in snatching it from the fiery furnace burnt his hand severely. He gave this relic afterwards to Leigh Hunt, who later, but not without earnest entreaty, resigned it to Mary Shelley. "After her death," says Prof. Dowden, "in a copy of the Pisa edition of 'Adonais,' at the page which tells how death is swallowed up in immortality, were found under a silken covering the embrowned ashes, now shrunk and withered, which she had secretly treasured." The furnace having been cooled in the sea, Trelawny collected the ashes and placed them in a box, which he took on board Byron's boat, the Bolivar, and conveyed them to Leghorn. Not being able to go immediately to Rome, he consigned Shelley's ashes to the care of Mr. Freeborn, the English Consul at Rome, who, in order to quiet the authorities, enclosed the casket in a coffin, and interred it with the usual ceremonies in January, 1823, in the new cemetery, the old burial-ground adjoining it where William Shelley and Keats were buried, being closed. Among those present at the interment were General Cockburn, Sir C. Sykes, Joseph Severn, Seymour Kirkup, Westmacott, Scoles, Freeborn, and the Revs. W. Cook and Burgess. When Trelawny visited Rome in the spring of 1823, he found Shelley's grave among a cluster of others. "The old Roman wall," writes Trelawny, "partly enclosed the place, and there is a niche in the wall formed by two buttresses—immediately under a pyramid, said to be the tomb of Caius Cestius. There were no graves near it at that time. This suited my taste, so I purchased the recess, and sufficient space for planting a row of the Italian upright cypresses." Here he had two graves built in the recess, and in one of which he deposited, in April, 1823, the ashes of Shelley. The grave was covered with a stone bearing the well-known Latin inscription by Leigh Hunt, the verses from "The Tempest" being added by Trelawny—

> Percy Bysshe Shelley, Cor Cordium. Natus iv. Aug. MDCCXCII. Obiit viii. Jul. MDCCCXXII.

"Nothing of him that doth fade, But doth suffer a sea-change Into something rich and strange."

### Appendix I

# HARRIET SHELLEY'S CORRESPONDENCE AFTER HER SEPARATION FROM SHELLEY

To Mrs. Newton (Dublin)

23 Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square [London],
August 8 [1814].

MADAM,

It is so long since I have heard from my amiable friend, Mrs. Nugent, that I begin to fear she has quitted this world of sorrow and pain. If she has, no human being will regret her loss more than myself. I must beg you to write by return of post and tell me all the particulars. If I am wrong in my conjectures, tell her to write, if only one line, to her most attached and faithful friend,

H. SHELLEY.

To Catherine Nugent (Dublin)

23 CHAPEL STREET [LONDON], August 25 [1814].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT.

I am afraid you will think I am not sincere, when I tell you what pleasure the sight of your handwriting caused me. I think as you do with the greatest horror on the present state of things—giving the slave trade to France for seven years. Can anything be more horrible? Peace has been dearly purchased at this price. I am dreadfully afraid America will never hold out against the numbers sent to invade her. How senseless all these rejoicings are! Deluded beings, they little know the many injuries that are to ensue. I expect France will soon have another revolution. The present king is not at all fitted to govern such a nation. Mr. Shelley is in France. You will be surprised to find I am not with him; but times are altered, my dear friend, and tho' I will not tell you what has passed, still do not think that you cloud my mind with your sorrows. Every age has its cares. God knows, I have mine. Dear Ianthe is quite well. She is fourteen months old, and has six teeth. What I should have done without this dear babe and my sister I know not. This world is a scene of heavy trials to us all. I little expected ever to go thro' what I have. But time heals the deepest wounds, and for the sake of that sweet infant, I hope to live many years. Write to me often. My dear friend, you know what pleasure your letters give me. I wish you lived in England that I might be Tell me how you are in health. Do not despond, near you. tho' I see nothing to hope for when all that was virtuous becomes vicious and depraved. So it is—nothing is certain in this world.

I suppose there is another where those that have suffered keenly here will be happy. Tell me what you think of this. My sister is with me. I wish you knew her as well as I do. She is worthy of your love. Adieu, dear friend, may you still be happy is the first wish of your ever faithful friend,

H. SHELLEY.

Ianthe is well and very engaging.

### To Catherine Nugent (Dublin):

23 Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square [London], November 20 [1814].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

Your fears are verified. Mr. Shelley has become profligate and sensual, owing entirely to Godwin's "Political Justice." The very great evil that book has done is not to be told. The false doctrines there contained have poisoned many a young and virtuous mind. Mr. Shelley is living with Godwin's two daughters—one by Mary Wollstonecraft, the other the daughter of his present wife, called Clairmont. I told you some time back Mr. S. was to give Godwin three thousand pounds. It was in effecting the accomplishment of this scheme that he was obliged to be at Godwin's house, and Mary was determined to seduce him. She is to blame. She heated his imagination by talking of her mother, and going to her grave with him every day, till at last she told him she was dying in love for him, accompanied with the most violent gestures and vehement expostulations. He thought of me and my sufferings, and begged her to get the better of a passion as degrading to him as herself. She then told him she would die—he had rejected her, and what appeared to her as the sublimest virtue was to him a crime. Why could we not all live together? I as his sister, she as his wife? He had the folly to believe this possible, and sent for me, then residing at Bath. You may suppose how I felt at the disclosure. I was laid up for a fortnight after. I could do nothing for myself. He begged me to live. The doctors gave me over. They said 'twas impossible. I saw his despair, the agony of my beloved sister; and owing to the great strength of my constitution I lived; and here I am, my dear friend, waiting to bring another infant into this woful world. month I shall be confined. He will not be near me. No, he cares not for me now. He never asks after me or sends me word how he In short, the man I once loved is dead. This is a vampire. His character is blasted for ever. Nothing can save him now. Oh! if you knew what I have suffered, your heart would drop blood for my miseries. When may I expect to see you? Do tell me, my dear friend, and write soon. Eliza is at Southampton with my darling babe. London does not agree with her. enquire for a family of the name of Colthurst in Dublin? one son and daughter growing up living with the mother. I want

https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.3200000659054 GMT Generated at University of Pennsylvania the direction, as I know them very well. Adieu, my dear friend, may you be happy is the best wish of her who sincerely loves you.

H. Shelley.

### To Catherine Nugent (Dublin)

23 Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square [London],
Decr. 11 [1814].

MY DEAREST MRS. NUGENT,

I have been confined a fortnight on Wednesday. Ianthe has a brother. 1 He is an eight months' child, and very like his unfortunate father, who is more depraved than ever. Oh, my dear friend, what a dreadful trial it is to bring children into the world so utterly helpless as he is, with no kind father's care to heal the wounded frame. After so much suffering my labour was a very good one, from nine in the morning till nine at night. He is a very fine healthy child for the time. I have seen his father; he came to see me as soon as he knew of the event; but as to his tenderness to me, none remains. He said he was glad it was a boy, because he would You see how that noble soul is debased. make money cheaper. Money now, not philosophy, is the grand spring of his actions. Indeed, the pure and enlightened philosophy he once delighted in has flown. He is no longer that pure and good being he once was, nor can he ever retrieve himself. You will see us all in the Spring; I mean to come to Ireland, to get my boxes which are detained there. You shall then return with me to England, my dear friend, which you have often promised, and I will promise Mrs. Newman not to keep you any longer than you like to stay. God bless you, my dearest friend, till we meet. Let me hear from you soon. Eliza sends her love to you, and Ianthe too. May you be happy is the first wish of her who loves you sincerely.

H. SHELLEY.

Write very soon and tell me if you have received my last letter.

### To CATHERINE NUGENT (Dublin)

[23] CHAPEL STREET [LONDON],

January 24 [1815].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

I am sorry to tell you my poor little boy has been very ill. He is better now, and the first spare time I devote to you. Why will you not come to England, my dear friend, and stay with me? I should be so happy to have you with me. I am truly miserable, my dear friend. I really see no termination to my sorrows. As to Mr. Shelley I know nothing of him. He neither sends nor comes to see me. I am still at my father's, which is very wretched. When

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley's eldest son, Charles Bysshe Shelley, who died in 1826. Vol. ii—33—(2285)

I shall quit this house I know not. Everything goes against me. I am weary of my life. I am so restrained here that life is scarcely worth having. How I wish you were here. What will you do, my dear Catherine? Now these Newmans retire you will not like to go to another house of business. The few years you have to live may surely be passed more pleasantly. Do now make up your mind at once to come and stay with me. I will do everything to make you happy. For myself happiness is fled. I live for others. nineteen I could descend a willing victim to the tomb. How I wish those dear children had never been born. They stay my fleeting spirit, when it would be in anothe state. How many there are who shudder at death. I have been so near it that I feel no terrors. Mr. Shelley has much to answer for. He has been the cause of great misery to me and mine. I shall never live with him again. impossible. I have been so deceived, so cruelly treated, that I can never forget it. Oh no, with all the affections warm, a heart devoted to him, and then to be so cruelly blighted. Oh! Catherine, you do not know what it is to be left as I am, a prey to anguish, corroding sorrow, with a mind too sensitive to others' pain. But I will think no more. There is madness in thought. Could I look into futurity for a short time how gladly would I pierce the veil of mystery that wraps my fate. Is it wrong, do you think, to put an end to one's sorrow? I often think of it—all is so gloomy and desolate. Shall I find repose in another world? Oh, grave, why do you not tell us what is beyond thee? Let me hear from you soon, my dear friend. Your letters make me more happy. Tell me about Ireland. know I love the green Isle and all its natives. Eliza joins in kind love to you. I remain your sincere but unhappy friend,

H. SHELLEY.

To John Frank Newton (near Fordingbridge).

23 Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square,
June 5 [1816].

My DEAR MR. NEWTON,

It is with the deepest emotions of sorrow that I heard of Mrs. Newton's illness, which however I trust she may recover. I met Mr. Lawrence very lately, and he told me he thought she might in time conquer the disease. That she may still live to enjoy many years of happiness with you and your sweet children is my very fervent wish. If there is anything which I can do for you pray let me know. To the unhappy there is nothing so delightful, as being of use to others. If my presence would add in the least degree to yours or your children's comfort I am very ready to leave Town and fly to give comfort to the distressed—which I am sure you would do for those you highly esteem. I sincerely hope your usual illness will pass off slightly; if there is any kind of Fruit I can send you do tell me; at present there is but little variety owing to our cold spring. If it will fatigue you too much to write an answer let my favorite Augustus give me a line just to say how you all are, or Mary. Pray don't take any trouble yourself; my sister unites with me in kindest regards and best wishes to you all, and I remain, Your sincere friend, H. SHELLEY.

### Appendix II

#### ADDITIONAL SHELLEY LETTERS

The following letters have reached my hands too late for insertion in their proper places.

288a. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg.

[? MARLOW,

Winter, 1817-8.]

MY DEAR HOGG,

Mary desires me to say that she has received your letter, and that she unites with me in saying that she shall be happy to see you as soon as you can get free from the numberless briefs which no doubt are pouring into your vestibule.

The weather is delightful. So unseasonably fine that yellow and blue flowers are blooming in the hedges, and the primroses are flowering in the garden as if it were spring: a few days may cover them with another.

them with snow.

Peacock has finished his poem, (1) which is a story of classical mystery and magic—the transfused essence of Lucian, Petronius, and Apuleius. I have not yet heard it all, but in a few days he will send it to the press.

I am at this moment not very classically employed, nor have I summoned courage to accept Scapula as my mentor and guide

through the bowers of Greek delight.

Might I not, by a confidence in Scapula, lose the end while busied about the means; and exchange the embraces of a living and tangible Calypso for the image of a Penelope, who, though wise, can never again be young.

## 331a. To Clara Mary Jane Clairmont (Leghorn)

[?FLORENCE,

September 25, 1819.]

MY DEAREST GIRL,

I slept at Empoli last night according to your desire, and slept as one might naturally sleep after taking a double dose of opium. I am here in doubt about my hours, and fear that I shall not be able to see you again so soon as Thursday. To-day I am tolerably

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<sup>(1) &</sup>quot;Rhododaphne," published in 1818.

fatigued: and have a pain in my other side: but all this bustle and weariness does not hurt my health as it ought to do, if the prophecy of your last letter were to turn out true.

Yours ever most affectionately,

S.

#### [Second page of folded sheet.]

Take care of yourself and pray do as I desired you—especially abstaining from all sorts of fruit; and if you take any wine let it be Aleatico. Adieu.

#### [Pencil note.]

If I were you I would consult Palloni about the pain in your stomach. Vaccà does not always attend when he thinks the illness slight.

Give my compts. to the Siga. Tolonei, and pay her at the interval you think fit eleven crowns, and say that I have given a receipt for it. Say that I am going to see her house, etc., etc.

S.

[Addressed to]—
Miss Clairmont,
1188 Via St. Francesco,
Livorno.

361a. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg.

PISA,

April 20, 1820.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It is some time since I heard from or of you. [?Peacock] is metamorphosed by his Indian preferment into a very laconic correspondent; he seems persuaded of the truth of the Christian maxim, "let your communications be yea, yea, nay, nay, for whatever is more than this cometh of evil." Hunt writes to me sometimes, and tells me that, when in town, you spend the Sundays with him frequently; more he says not. Wherefore I resolved to write to you, so that even if you are one of the atoms of the fame-getting, money-getting whirlwind, you might know that I at least wished to hear of you.

I think it is since I last wrote that Mary has given me a little boy, whom I call Percy. He is now five months old, a lovely child, and very healthy; but you may conceive after the dreadful events of

last year how great our anxiety is about him.

We spent the severity of the winter at Florence, and are now at Pisa, where we are on the point of taking a very pleasant house just outside the walls. I have been fortunate enough to make acquaintance here with a most interesting woman, in whose society we spend a great part of our time. She is married, and has two

children; her husband is, what husbands too commonly are, far inferior to her, but not in the proportion of Mrs. Gisborne's. You will have some idea of the sort of person, when I tell you that I am now reading with her the "Agamemnon" of Æschylus.

A Letter to Hogg

I hope you have received a copy of the "Cenci" from Ollier. I told him to send you one, but as he is very negligent, I think it possible that he may not have adverted to it. In that case, whenever you pass his shop ask him for it from me. You will see that it is studiously written in a style very different from any other compositions; how far it may be better or worse will be decided according to the various judgments of those who read it. I have dedicated it to Hunt. Hunt, perhaps, is the only man among my friends whom a dedication from so unpopular a person as myself would not injure.

This winter, even in Italy, has been extremely severe, and I have suffered in proportion; but I revive with the return of spring. I spent the winter at Florence, and dedicated every sunny day to the study of the gallery there; the famous Venus, the Minerva, the Apollino—and more than all, the Niobe and her children, are there. No production of sculpture, not even the Apollo, ever produced on me so strong an effect as this Niobe. Doubtless you have seen casts of it. We are now at Pisa, where (with the exception of a few weeks, in the midst of summer, which we propose to spend at the Bagni di Lucca) we shall remain some indefinite time.

You know that some time since we talked of visiting Italy together. At that time, as at many others, an unfortunate combination of circumstances which have now ceased to exist prevented me from enjoying your society. There is no person for whom I feel so high an esteem and value as for you, or from whom I expected to receive so great a portion of the happiness of my life; and there is none of whose society I have been so frequently deprived by the unfortunate and almost inexplicable complexity of my situation. At this very moment perhaps when it is practicable, on my part, to put into execution the plan to which I allude, perhaps it is impossible on yours.

But let me dwell for a moment on the other side of the question. What say you to making us a visit in Italy? How would it consist

with your professional engagements?

You could see but little of Italy in June and July on account of the heat, and we must then be at the Bagni di Lucca, which though a spot of enchanting beauty, contains none of those objects of art for which Italy is principally worth visiting. But if you are inclined seriously to think of this proposal, I would impose no other law on you than to come as soon, and return as late, as you can. Term begins, I know, in the middle of November, but how far does your business require you to be present on the first day of term? The mode of coming would be to cross France to Marseilles, from whence to Livorno there is a passage sometimes of 36 hours, but the average 3 days. Or you might engage in London for the whole journey over the Alps, but this is a very tedious and much more expensive method.

I ought to add that Mary unites with me in wishing that we may have the pleasure of seeing you. Of course, none of my other friends will join you, but I need not say that Peacock will be welcome.

Do you ever see the Boinvilles now? Or Newton? If so, tell them, especially Mrs. Boinville, that I have not forgotten them. I wonder none of them stray to this Elysian climate, and, like the sailors of Ulysses, eat the lotus and remain as I have done.

[The signature has been cut away.]

66a. To Edward Fergus Graham<sup>1</sup>

[CWM ELAN, RADNORSHIRE, SOUTH WALES,] July 15, 1811.

MY DEAR GRAHAM.

I hope that you will quickly set to Music that heavenly ode, which certainly deserves to be ranked with the most exquisite productions of Pindar. This is a most delightful place, but more adapted for the Rosa-Matildan than the Petrio-Pindaric style of rhapsodizing. Here are rocks, cataracts, woods and Groves. I shall perhaps send you some songs: by the bye, will those I have sent do? Let me hear from you.

I remain yours very aff.,

P. B. SHELLEY.

To Signora Dionighi (Rome)

FIRENZE, Xcembre, 1819.

STIMATISSIMA SIGNORA,

Appena lusingarmi [lusingomi?] che Lei si rammenta di me; ma la bontà che ha ricevuta tutta la mia famiglia dalle sue mani, mentre che stava in Roma, mi fa sperar che non siamo intieramente dementicati da lei. La prego di accettare i saluti della mia Signora Moglie, e della Signorina Clara. Speriamo che la sua salute sta sempre meglio quanto quella delle sue amabili figli. Con questo prendo la libertà di presentarla la Signora Jones, et la Signorina Sofia Stacey, amiche mie, e signore Inglesi—ammiratore di tutte

¹ This letter, which was written by Shelley while on a visit to his cousin, Thomas Grove, is derived from the Ferdinand J. Dreer collection of manuscripts, in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. The librarian of that institution, Mr John W. Jordan, has courteously furnished me with a copy of the letter. The same Society also possess the original of Shelley's letter to T. C. Medwin of November 26, 1811, printed as No. 100, p. 179, in the present collection. Medwin made a few slight alterations in his printed copy and omitted a part of the postscript.

le belle arti, e che sapranno valere i suoi gran prezi [pregi?] Queste Signore viaggione per l'Italia, et m'assicuro che il suo coltissimo genio le sarà del più gran vantaggio nel istruirsi sopra le antichità di Roma. Per me mi trovo in questo momento à Firenze, ma ancora fra poco visiterò Roma. Quando allora mi farò il piacere di salutaria. Potendo servirla qui che mi comanda. Sarà servita dal mio meglio. In questa speranza, le bacio le mani.—La prezo de credermi con tutta sincerità suo servo umilissimo.—P. B. S.

All' Illustrissima Signora, La Signora Dionigi,

310 Corso, Roma.

To Signora Dionigi (Rome)

[Mrs. Angeli's translation of the preceding letter.]

FLORENCE,

December, 1819.

DEAR MADAM,

I hardly dare flatter myself that you remember me, but the kindness shown by you to all my family while we were in Rome makes me hope that we are not entirely forgotten by you. I beg you to accept my wife's kind greetings and those of Miss Clara. trust your health continues better, as also that of your amiable children [daughters?]. I hereby take the liberty to present to your Miss Jones and Miss Sophia Stacey, two English ladies, my friends—admirers of all the fine arts, and who will be able to value your great talents. These ladies are travelling in Italy, and I feel certain that your great culture will be of the utmost value to them in studying the antiquities of Rome. As for me, I am at this moment in Florence, but I intend shortly to visit Rome again, when I shall have the pleasure of paying my respects to you. If I can be of any service to you here, command me. I will serve you to the best of my ability. In this hope I kiss your hands. I beg you to believe me very sincerely your humble servant.

P. B. S.

### A Proposed Letter to Ollier, the Editor of the Literary Miscellany. 1

N.B.—Passages cancelled by Shelley are here marked | |; brackets being reserved for doubtful readings or editorial additions.

[1st draft]

[? Pisa, March, 1821].

MR. EDITOR,

The ingenious author of a paper which lately appeared in your Miscellany, entitled the four ages of Poetry, has directed the light of a mind replete with taste and learning to the illustration of a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> These draft letters should be read in connection with Shelley's correspondence on his essay "A Defence of Poetry," pp. 846-856, 859.

paradox so dark as of itself to absorb whatever rays of truth might fall upon it.

I will endeavour to place the two positions which compose his

opinion.

There are four ages of Poetry, corresponding to the four ages of the world | in which this art or faculty has progressively deteriorated |. Poetry |at first| was no more than the rude efforts of expression... before language had assumed any degree of philosophical perfection; and instead of softening the manners and refining the feelings of the semi-barbarians whose intervals of repose it soothed, it flattered their vices and hardened them to fresh acts of carnage and destruction. The character and personal conduct of the poets themselves (and this is the most [lamentable?] for poetry) was then deserving of contempt.

Thirdly, with the progress of civil society and the development of the arts of life poetry has deteriorated in exact proportion of the universal amelioration; and the examples [afforded by it] in ages of high [refinement and civilization] and especially in the age in which we live, are below derision and the instruments of the utmost

passiveness and depravity of moral sentiment.

Fourthly, every person conscious of intellectual power ought studiously to wean himself from the study and the practise of poetry, and ought to apply that power to general finance, political economy, to the study in short [of] the laws according to which the forms of the social order might be most wisely regulated for the happiness of those whom it binds together.

These are indeed high objects, and I pledge myself to worship

Themis rather than Apollo . . . |

Before we subject these propositions to |analysis| it were well to discover what poetry is.

#### [Addition]

So dark a paradox may absorb the brightest rays of mind which fall upon it; it is an impious daring |attempt| to extinguish Imagination, which is the Sun of Life, Impious attempt! parricidal and self-murdering |attempt| and would leave to its opponent a secure but an inglorious Conquest.

He would extinguish Imagination which is the Sun of life, and grope his way by the cold and uncertain and borrowed light of that moon which he calls Reason, stumbling over the interlunar chasm of time where she deserts us, and an owl, rather than an eagle, stare with dazzled eyes on the watery orb which is the Queen of his pale Heaven.—But let us in true sense place within the scan of reason an opinion so light that there is less danger that it should preponderate than that the winged words of which it is composed should fly out

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Continued three pages further on, an addition and a second draft intervening.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Alternative reading: with which this writer attempts to prove that Poetry is a bad thing. |I hope soon to see a treatise against the light of the sun adorn your columns.|

of the balance like those with which Spenser's giant thought to counterpoise the golden weight of justice.

#### 2nd draft.

MR. EDITOR.

The following remarks were suggested by an essay entitled the "Four Ages of Poetry" which appeared some months since in your valuable Miscellany. |The wit, the spirit, the learning of this essay delighted me: but the paradox it attempts to support . . . | I suspect it to be written by a friend of mine who is a desperate rider of a hobby. . .

The wit, the learning and the spirit of this essay are the spurs of a hobby of a construction. . . but these qualities |in the present instance| deserve to [be] buried, where four roads meet, with a stake through their body, for they are caught in the very fact of suicide. The writer is in this respect like a pig swimming, he cuts his own throat.

### To Lord Byron (Ravenna)

Pisa, Oct. 21, 1821.

MY DEAR LORD BYRON,

I should have written to you long since but that I have been led to expect you almost daily in Pisa, and that I imagined you would cross my letter on your road. Many thanks for "Don Juan." It is a poem totally of its own species, and my wonder and delight at the grace of the composition no less than the free and grand vigour of the conception of it perpetually increase. The few passages which any one might desire to be cancelled in the first and second Cantos are here reduced almost to nothing. This poem carries with it at once the stamp of originality and a defiance of imitation. Nothing has ever been written like it in English, nor, if I may venture to prophesy, will there be, without carrying upon it the mark of a secondary and borrowed light. You unveil and present in its true deformity what is worst in human nature, and this is what the witlings of the age murmur at, conscious of their want of power to endure the scrutiny of such a light. We are damned to the knowledge of good and evil, and it is well for us to know what we should avoid no less than what we should seek.

The character of Lambro, his return, the merriment of his daughter's guests, made, as it were, in celebration of his funeral, the meeting with the lovers, and the death of Haidée, are circumstances combined and developed in a manner that I seek elsewhere in vain. The fifth Canto, which some of your pet Zoili in Albemarle Street said was dull, gathers instead of loses, splendour and energy; the language in which the whole is clothed—a sort of chameleon under the changing sky of the spirit that kindles it—is such as these lisping days could not have expected, and are, believe me, in spite of the approbation which you wrest from them, little pleased to hear.

One can hardly judge from recitation, and it was not until I read it in print that I have been able to do it justice. This sort of writing only on a great plan, and perhaps in a more compact form, is what I wished you to do when I made my vows for an epic.

But I am content. You are building up a drama, such as England has not yet seen, and the task is sufficiently noble and worthy of

you.

When may we expect you? The Countess G. is very patient, though sometimes she seems apprehensive that you will never leave Ravenna.

I have suffered from my habitual disorder and from a tertian fever since I have returned, and my ill health has prevented me from showing her the attentions I could have desired in Pisa.

I have heard from Hunt, who tells me that he is coming out in

November, by sea I believe.

Your house is ready and all the furniture arranged. Lega,

they say, is to have set off yesterday.

The Countess tells me that you think of leaving Allegra for the present at the convent. Do as you think best; but I can pledge myself to find a situation for her here such as you would approve in

case you change your mind.

I hear no political news but such as announces the slow victory of the spirit of the past over that of the present. The other day, a number of Heteristi, escaped from the defeat in Wallachia, past through Pisa, to embark at Leghorn and join Ipsilanti in Livadia. It is highly to the credit of the actual government of Tuscany, that it allowed these poor fugitives three livres a day each, and free quarters during their passage through these states.

Mrs. S. desires her best regards.

My dear Lord Byron,

Yours most faithfully,

P. B SHELLEY.

#### To JANE WILLIAMS

1822.

DEAR JANE,

If this melancholy old song<sup>1</sup> suits any of your tunes, or any that humour of the moment may dictate, you are welcome to it. Do not say it is mine to any one, even if you think so; indeed, it is from the torn leaf of a book out of date. How are you to-day, and how is Williams? Tell him that I dreamed of nothing but sailing, and fishing up coral.

Yours ever affectionate,

P. B. S.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Shelley's lines: Remembrance—" Swifter far than Summer's flight."

Generated

#### To EDWARD WILLIAMS

1822.

MY DEAR WILLIAMS,

Looking over the portfolio in which my friend used to keep his verses, and in which those I sent you the other day were found, I have lit upon these; which, as they are too dismal for me to keep, I send you. If any of the stanzas should please you, you may read them to Jane, but to no one else. And yet, on second thoughts, I had rather you would not.

Yours ever affectionately, P. B. S.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> That is, of course, Shelley himself. The verses are those beginning "The Serpent is shut out of Paradise," which was first entitled by Mr. W. M. Rossetti—"To Edward Williams."

### Appendix III

#### HOGG AND SHELLEY'S LETTERS

As stated elsewhere (pp. 153, 184) the text of Shelley's letters, as printed by Hogg in his "Life of Shelley," has for many years been regarded as untrustworthy. Probably one of the reasons that prompted the Shelley family to withdraw from Hogg's hands the material entrusted to him for the preparation of his "Life" of the poet (see p. xxvi), was the knowledge that he had taken unwarrantable liberties with Shelley's correspondence. Mr. W. M. Rossetti was the first to state (1870) that letters "given in Hogg's 'Life' are garbled and misdated. Even apart from special information one can discern that they are jumbled together without any care or guidance to the reader." He further expressed a conviction that the fragment published by Hogg as "part of a variation of Goethe's 'Werther'" was "a portion of the severe remonstrance which the poet addressed to Hogg" in connection with the reasons that compelled the Shelleys to leave York in Dec., 1811 (see p. 184). Professor Dowden, in writing his life of Shelley, accepted Mr. Rossetti's conclusions, and was able to give the correct text of some letters in the possession of the Shelley family which had appeared in a garbled form in Hogg's "Life," and he very kindly furnished me with corrected copies of letters to Godwin and Hookham which will be found in the present book. In correcting Shelley's letters, Hogg's intentions appear to have been dictated often with a desire to tone down his friend's scepticism, sometimes to make his meaning clearer, but it is evident that he also in many cases changed the sense of the poet's text to suit his own ends. The following letters were first printed by M. A. Koszul in his recently published work, "La Jeunesse de Shelley," and are here reprinted with his permission and that of Lord Abinger. M. Koszul states that the corrections were made on the margin of Hogg's text by Lady Shelley, doubtless towards the end of her life, from the original autograph letters of the poet which had been lent to her. In connection with the subject of Hogg's corrections, M. Koszul quotes appropriately from an unpublished letter of Hogg to Lady Shelley (April 20, 1857), in which he wrote, with a characteristic touch of irony, just before the publication of his "Life," "To falsify documents would be to injure the faith of history and to destroy the credit of our book."

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1

FIELD PLACE, Dec. 20, 1810.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The moment which announces your residence, I write. There is now need of all my art; I

must resort to deception.

My father called on S. in London, who has converted him to sanctity. He mentioned my name, as a supporter of sceptical principles. My father wrote to me, and I am now surrounded, environed by dangers, to which compared the devils, who besieged St. Anthony, were all inefficient. They attack me for my detestable principles; I am reckoned an outcast; yet I defy them, and laugh at their ineffectual efforts.

S. will no longer do for me; I am at a loss whom to select. S.'s skull is very thick, but I am afraid that he will not believe my assertion; indeed should it gain credit with him, should he accept the offer of publication, there exist numbers who will find out, or imagine, a real tendency; and booksellers possess more power than we are aware of impeding the sale of any book, containing opinions displeasing to them. I am disposed to offer it to Wilkie and Robinson, Paternoster Row, and to take it there myself; they published Godwin's works, and it is scarcely possible to suppose that any one, layman or clergyman, will assert that these support gospel doctrines. If that will not do, I must print it myself. Oxford, of course, would be most convenient for the correction of the press.

Mr. L's principles are not very severe; he is more a votary to Mammon than God.

O! I burn with impatience for the moment of the dissolution of intolerance; it has injured me. I swear on the altar of perjured Love to revenge myself on the hated cause of the effect, which even now I can scarcely help deploring. Indeed I think it is to the benefit of society to destroy the opinion which can annihilate the dearest of its ties. Inconveniences would now result from my owning the novel, which I have in preparation for the press. I give out, therefore, that I will publish no more; every

There is need for. . .

- .. to Christianity.
- .. deistical principles.
- .. all were...
- .. Yet defy them
- .. whom to recommend.
- .. your assertion;
- .. find out its real tendency;
- .. any book whose opinions are displeasing to them. I would recommend to offer it... yourself; he publishes win's works, it is...any one but [a] clergyman... the doctrines of the Gospel. If that will not do. I would recommend you print it yourself.

Mr. Munday's principles. . .

.. the moment of Christianity's dissolution.

one here, but the select few who enter into its schemes, believe my assertion. I will stab the wretch in secret. Let us hope that the wound the wound which which I inflict, though the dagger be concealed, will rankle in the heart of the adversary.

we inflict... .. our adversary.

#### [The following page reads]

"I am composing a satirical poem; I shall print it at Munday's, unless I find that Robinson is ripe for printing whatever will sell."—in place of "I shall print it at Oxford, unless I find, on visiting him, that R. is ripe. .")

FIELD PLACE, Jany. 2, 1811.

[No change appears to have been made in the first part of this letter.]

I have wandered in the snow, for I am cold, wet, and mad. Pardon me, pardon my delirious egotism; this really shall be the last. My sister is well; I fear she is not quite happy on my account, but is much more cheerful than she was some days ago. I hope you will publish a tale; I shall then give a copy to Elizabeth, unless you forbid it. I would do it not only to show her what your ideas are on the subject of works of imagination, and to interest her, but that she should see her brother's friend in a new point of view. When you examine her character, you will find humanity, not divinity, amiable as the former may sometimes be: however, I, a brother, must not write treason against my sister; so I will check my volubility. Do not direct your next letter to Field Place, only to Horsham. To-morrow I will write more connectedly.

happy,

ful...

subject of religion, and to interest her, but that she should see you in a new

.. she is not quite

much more cheer-

.. publish Leonora

.. not only to tell

her what your

ideas are on the

but is

point of view.

Yours sincerely,

FIELD PLACE, January 17, 1811.

#### MY DEAR FRIEND,

I shall be with you as soon as possible next week. You really were at Hungerford, whether you knew it or not. You tell me nothing about the tale which you promised me. I hope it gets on in the press, I am anxious for its appearance. S — certainly behaved in a vile manner to me; no other bookseller would have violated the confidence reposed in him. I will talk to him in London, where I shall be on Tuesday. Can I do anything for you there?

- .. nothing about Leonora. I hope she gets on... her appearance.
- .. Stockdale.
- .. to you.

You notice the peculiarity of the expression | .. You notice the "My Sister" in my letters. It certainly arose independent of consideration, and I am happy to hear that it is so.

Your systematic cudgel for blockheads is excellent. I tried it on with my father, who told me that thirty years ago he had read Locke, but this made no impression.

The "equus et res" are all that I can boast of; the "pater" is swallowed up in the first article of the catalogue. You tell me nothing of the tale; I am all anxiety about it. I am forced hastily to bid you adieu.

- peculiarity "My Sister." It certainly arose independent of consideration. Ι  $\mathbf{am}$ happy to hear.
- .. cudgel for Christianity.
- .. the "equus et res" is...
- .. of Leonora; I am anxious about her.

15, Poland Street, April 26, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I indulge despair. Why do I so? I will You indulge desnot philosophize; it is perhaps, a poor way of administering comfort to myself to say that I ought not to be in need of it. I fear the despair which springs from disappointed love is a passion -a passion, too, which is least of all reducible to reason. But it is a passion, it is independent of volition; it is the necessary effect of a cause, which must, I feel, continue to operate. Wherefore, then, do you ask, Why I indulge despair? And what shall I tell you, which can make you happier, which can alleviate solitude and regret. Shall I tell you the truth? Oh, you are too well aware of that, or you would not talk of despair. Shall I say that the time may come when happiness shall dawn upon a night of wretchedness? Why should I be a false prophet, if I said this? I do not know, except on the general principle that the evils in this world powerfully overbalance its pleasures; how, then, could I be justified in saying this? You will tell me to cease to think, to cease to feel, you will tell me to be anything but what I am; and I fear I must obey the command before I can talk of hope.

- pair. you so?
- .. comfort to you to say that you ought not...
- Wherefore, then, do I ask, why you indulge despair?

I will tell you to cease to think, to feel; I will tell you to be anything but what you are; and I fear you must obey. . . before you can talk...

I find there can be bigots in philosophy as | .. bigots in athewell as in religion; I, perhaps, may be classed with the former. I have read your letter attentively. Yet all religionists do judge of Yet all Christians... philosophers in the way which you reprehend; faith is one of the highest moral virtues—the foundation, indeed, upon which all others must rest; and religionists think, that he who has neglected to cultivate this, has not performed one-third of the moral duties, as Bishop Warburton dogmatically asserts. The religionists, then, by this very Faith, without which they could not be religionists, think the most virtuous philosopher must have neglected one-third of the moral duties.

If, then, a religionist, the most amiable of them, regards the best philosopher as far from being virtuous, has not a philosopher reason to suspect the amiability of a system which inculcates so glaringly uncharitable opinions? Can a being, amiable to a high degree, possessed, of course, of judgment, without which amiability would be in a poor way, hold such opinions as these? Supposing even, they were supported by reason, they ought to be suspected as leading to a conclusion ad absurdum; since, however, they combine irrationality and absurdity with effects on the mind most opposite to retiring amiability, are they not to be more than suspected? Take any system of religion, lop off all the disgusting excrescences, or rather adjuncts, retain virtuous precepts, qualify selfish dogmas, (I would even allow as much irrationality as amiability could swallow; but uncombined with immorality and self-conceitedness); do all this, and I will say, it is a system which can do no harm, and, indeed, is highly requisite for the vulgar. But perhaps it is best for the latter that they should have it as their fathers gave it them; that the amiable, the inquiring should reject it altogether.

Yet, I will allow that it may be consistent with amiability, when amiability does not know the deformity of the wretched errors, and that they really are as we behold them. I cannot judge of a system by the flowers which are scattered here and there; you omit the mention of the weeds, which grow so high that few botanists can see the flowers; and those who do gather the latter are frequently, I fear, tainted with the pestilential vapour of the former.

.. and Christians think.

The Christians, then...

- they could not be Christians....
- If, then, a Christian... the best Atheist...
- .. has not an Atheist...

Take Christianity, lop off all the disgusting excrescences, or rather adjuncts, retain virtuous precepts, qualify dogmas, selfish yet I will allow that it would be consistent, when amiability does not know the deformity of the metal which it really is as we behold it.

[There is no alteration in the paragraph which follows.]

A religionist, I will allow, may be more | A Deist... than an amiable than a philosopher, although in one instance reason is allowed to sleep, that amiability may watch. Yet, my dear friend, this is not Intolerance, nor can that odious system stand excused on this ground, as its very principle revolts against the dear modesty which suggests a dereliction of reason in the other instance. I again assert—nor, perhaps, are you prepared to deny, much as your amiable motive might prompt you to wish it—that religion is too often the child of cold prejudice and selfish fear. Love of a Deity, of Allah, Bramah (it is all the same), certainly springs Love of God, of from the latter motive; is this love? You know too well, it is not. Here I appeal to your own heart, your own feelings. At that tribunal I feel that I am secure. I once could almost tolerate intolerance—it then merely injured me once; it merely deprived me of all that I cared for, touching myself, on earth; but now it has done more, and I cannot forgive.

Eloisa said, "I have hated myself, that I might love thee, Abelard." When I hear a religionist prepared to say so, as her sincere sentiments, I then will allow that in a few instances the virtue of religion is separable from

She is not lost for ever. Now I hope that may be true; but I fear I can never ascertain, I can never influence an amelioration, as she does not any longer permit a "philosopher" to correspond with her. She talks of duty to her Father. And this is your amiable religion!

You will excuse my raving, my dear friend; you will not be severe upon my hatred of a cause which can produce such an effect as this. You talk of the dead; do we not exist after the tomb? It is a natural question, my friend, when there is nothing in ife: yet it is one on which you have never told me any solid grounds for your opinions.

You shall hear from me again soon. I send some verses. I heard from F. yesterday. that he said was; My letters are arrived.— G. S. F.

My dear friend, your affectionate

P. B. SHELLEY.

atheist...

.. this is not Christianity...

.. religion is the child..

Christ, and the H[oly] G[host.] (it is all the same)...

I once could tolerate Christ; he then merely... (etc. he for it.)

a Christian...

an atheist... And this is your religion!

I know you will not be severe.

you have never told me your opinions

Faber.

G. S. Faber.

Vol. ii—34—(2285)

Cuckfield, 2 June, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have nothing to tell you, which you will like to hear: The affected contempt of narrowed intellects for the exertion of mental powers, which they either will not, or cannot comprehend, is always a tale of disgust. What must it be, when involving a keen disappointment? I have hesitated for three days on what I should do, what I should say. I am your friend, You have chosen me, you acknowledge it. and we are inseparable; not the little tyranny of idiots can affect it; not the misrepresentations of the interested. You are then my friend. I am sensible, and you must be sensible, that it is in conformity to the most rigid duty that I would advise you, how I have combated with

myself.

What is Passion? The very word implies an incapacity for action, otherwise than in unison with its dictates. What is reason? It is a thing independent, inflexible; it adapts thoughts and actions to the varying circumstances, which for ever change—adapts them so as to produce the greatest overbalance, of happiness. And to whom do you now give happiness? Not to others, for you associate for you know but with but few: those few regard you with the highest feelings of admiration and friendship; but perhaps there is but one;—and here is self again—not to yourself; for the truth of this I choose yourself, as a testimony against you. I think; reason; listen; cast off prejudice; hear the dictates of plain common sensesurely is it not evident? I loved a being, an idea in my own mind, which had no real existence. I concreted this abstract of perfection, I annexed this fictitious quality to the idea presented by a name; the being, whom that name signified, was by no means worthy of this. -This is the truth: unless I am determinedly blind—unless I am resolved causelessly and selfishly to seek destruction, I must see it. Plain! is it not plain? I loved a being; the being whom I loved, is not what she was; consequently, as love appertains to mind and not body, she exists no longer. I regret when I find that she never existed, but in my mind; yet does it not border on wilful deception, deliberate, intentional self-deceit, to continue

.. that I would advise you.

.. independent and inflexible.

You loved a being, an idea in your You own mind. concreted this abstract of perfection, you annexed...

This is truth: unless you are determinedly blind unless you are resolved causelessly and selfishly to seek destruction, you must see it...

to love the body, when the soul is no more? You loved a being. As well might I court the worms which the soulless body of a beloved being generatesbe lost to myself, and to those who love me for what is really amiable in me—in the damp, unintelligent vaults of a charnel-house.

Surely, when it is carried to the dung-heap as a mass of putrefaction, the loveliness of the flower ceases to charm. Surely it would be irrational to annex to this inertness the inert mass. properties which the flower in its state of beauty possessed, which now cease to exist, and then did merely exist, because adjoined to it. you will call this cold reasoning? No; you will not! this would be the exclamation of the uninformed Werter, not of my noble friend. But, indeed, it is not cold reasoning, if you saw me at this moment. I wish I could reason coldly, I should then stand more chance of success. But let me reconsider it myselfexert my own reasoning powers; let me entreat myself to awake. This—I do not know what I say.

I go to Field-place; to-morrow you shall hear again. I go to Field-place now: this moment, I have rung the bell for the horse.

Your eternal Friend.

I wrote to her to entreat that she would receive my letter kindly; I wrote very long. This is the answer. Are you deaf, are you dead? I am cold and icy, but I cannot refrain. Stay, I will come soon.—Adieu!

the being whom you loved...

You regret when you find that she never existed. but in your mind;

As well might you court the worms which the soulless body of a beloved being generates -- be lost to yourself, and to those who admire you for what is really amiable in you.

this was the exclamation.

exert your own reasoning powers; let me entreat yourself to awake.

your letter

Stay, do not come soon.

London, August 15, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

1: .

The late perplexing occurrence which called ne to town, occupies my time, engrosses my thoughts. I shall tell you more of it when we meet, which I hope will be soon. It does not, however, so wholly occupy my thoughts but that you and your interests still

predominant.

I have a rival in my sister's affections; do You have a rival... not tremble for it is not one whom I have occasion to dread, if I fear merely those who are likely to be successful. His chances of success are equal to my own. He has the opportunity of frequently being and conversing with Elizabeth; yet his conversation is not such as is likely to produce any alteration in the resolve which she has taken, not to encourage his addresses. It is J. G. she knows him well, It is John Grove. and has known him long. Charles informed me of it, and I left London yesterday, though now returned purposely to converse with my sister on the subject. J. G. is certainly not a John Grove. favoured lover, nor ever will be. I thought she appeared rather chagrined at the intelligence: she fears that she will lose an entertaining acquaintance, who sometimes enlivens her solitude, by his conversion into the more serious character of a lover. I do not think she will, as his attachment is that of a cool unimpassionned selector of a companion for life. I do not think the better of my cousin for this unexpected affair.

I could tell you something, and will; you will then coincide with me. This, however, is an object of secondary importance. I know, from what I tell you, that others might be elevated by hope; but I would say to them—Beware; for although her rejection of the bare idea of G. was full and unequivocal, I have no reason to suppose that it proceeded from any augmented leniency for another. I know how deep is the gulf of despair, and I will not therefore increase any one's height; but must still think how unfortunate it is for any wooer that he ever heard her very name; he must long for the time when he will forget her, but which he now will

say can never come.

The rest of the letter is unchanged.

it is not one whom you have occasion to dread, if you fear... to your own.

that you might be elevated hope; yet Beware:

will not then increase your height; but must still think how unfortunate it is you ever mentioned her very name; still must I long for the time when you will forget her, but which now you say can never come!

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LONDON: PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED, DUKE STREET, STAMFORD STREET, S.E., AND GREAT WINDMILL STREET, W