PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY,
The Prose Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley
(1906)
Two Volumes in One

THE PROSE WORKS

OF

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

FROM THE ORIGINAL EDITIONS

EDITED, PREFACED, AND ANNOTATED

BY

RICHARD HERNE SHEPHERD

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

LONDON
CHATTO & WINDUS
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[Created: 22 May, 2024]
[Updated: 22 May, 2024]

Source

MLA Style

Percy Bysshe Shelley, The Prose Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley from the original Editions. Edited, Prefaced, and Annotated by Richard Hearne Shepherd, in Two Volumes (London: Chatto & Windus, 1906). 5/22/2024. <http://davidmhart.com/liberty/Books/1822-Shelley_ProseWorks/Shelley_ProseWorks-1906-ebook-2volsin1.html>

Percy Bysshe Shelley, *The Prose Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley from the original Editions*. Edited, Prefaced, and Annotated by Richard Hearne Shepherd, in Two Volumes (London: Chatto & Windus, 1906).

Editor's Introduction

To make this edition useful to scholars and to make it more readable, I have done the following:

1. inserted and highlighted the page numbers of the original edition
2. not split a word if it has been hyphenated across a new line or page (this will assist in making word searches)
3. added unique paragraph IDs (which are used in the "citation tool" which is part of the "enhanced HTML" version of this text)
4. retained the spaces which separate sections of the text
5. created a "blocktext" for large quotations
6. moved the Table of Contents to the beginning of the text
7. placed the footnotes at the end of the book
8. reformatted margin notes to float within the paragraph
9. inserted Greek and Hebrew words as images

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THE PROSE WORKS OF PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY VOLUME I

THE PROSE WORKS

OF

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VOL. I

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[**I-i**]

EDITOR'S PREFACE.↩

THESE two volumes contain a complete collection of Shelley's Prose Writings; the two youthful prose romances of *Zastrozzi* and *St. Irvyne;* the Dublin and Marlow pamphlets; the long-lost and lately-found *Refutation of Deism;* the Letter to Lord Ellenborough; the curious review of Hogg's romance of Alexy Haimatoff, recently unearthed by Professor Dowden; a number of minor papers originally published by Medwin; and the entire collection of "Essays and Letters from Abroad," first issued by Mrs. Shelley in 1840, and which throw so much light on Shelley's character and genius. The Bibliography appended to the second volume will, it is hoped, be of real service to all lovers and students of Shelley.

Shelley is another instance of the fact that a great master of verse is always a good writer of prose. Whatever may be thought of the crudity of his juvenile romances—and the greatest Shelleyan enthusiasts, Browning, Swinburne, and Rossetti, have successively [**I-vi**] laughed at them—they contain at least vivid descriptions of natural appearances; while his political pamphlets, as a recent writer has pointed out, are weighty and sententious to a wonderful degree, considering the age at which they were written. That he was a delightful letter-writer, full of grace and easy fluency, the letters to Peacock and to Leigh Hunt abundantly prove;

while of his critical powers, especially in regard to sculpture and painting, both these and the posthumous papers published by Medwin give us no mean idea, though we may not be prepared to go quite so far as Mr. Matthew Arnold does when he says that he doubts whether Shelley's "delightful Essays and Letters, which deserve to be far more read than they are now, will not resist the wear and tear of time better, and finally come to stand higher, than his poetry."

RICHARD HERNE SHEPHERD.

Kingston Vale,
Lent, 1888.

ZASTROZZI,

A ROMANCE.

by

P. B. S.

——— That their God
May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works.—This would surpass
Common revenge.

Paradise Lost.

LONDON,

Printed for G. Wilkie and J. Robinson:

57, paternoster row.

1810.

[**I-3**]

ZASTROZZI.
A Romance.↩

CHAPTER I.

TORN from the society of all he held dear on earth, the victim of secret enemies, and exiled from happiness, was the wretched Verezzi!

All was quiet; a pitchy darkness involved the face of things, when, urged by fiercest revenge, Zastrozzi placed himself at the door of the inn where, undisturbed, Verezzi slept.

Loudly he called the landlord. The landlord, to whom the bare name of Zastrozzi was terrible, trembling obeyed the summons.

"Thou knowest Verezzi the Italian? He lodges here."

"He does," answered the landlord.

"Him, then, have I devoted to destruction," exclaimed Zastrozzi. "Let Ugo and Bernardo follow you to his apartment; I will be with you to prevent mischief."

Cautiously they ascended—successfully they executed their revengeful purpose, and bore the sleeping Verezzi to the place, where a chariot waited to convey the vindictive Zastrozzi's prey to the place of its destination.

Ugo and Bernardo lifted the still sleeping Verezzi into the chariot. Rapidly they travelled onwards for [**I-4**] several hours. Verezzi was still wrapped in deep sleep, from which all the movements he had undergone had been insufficient to rouse him.

Zastrozzi and Ugo were masked, as was Bernardo, who acted as postilion.

It was still dark, when they stopped at a small inn, on a remote and desolate heath; and waiting but to change horses, again advanced. At last day appeared—still the slumbers of Verezzi remained unbroken.

Ugo fearfully questioned Zastrozzi as to the cause of his extraordinary sleep. Zastrozzi, who, however, was well acquainted with it, gloomily answered, “I know not.”

Swiftly they travelled during the whole of the day, over which Nature seemed to have drawn her most gloomy curtain. They stopped occasionally at inns, to change horses and obtain refreshments.

Night came on—they forsook the beaten track, and, entering an immense forest, made their way slowly through the rugged underwood.

At last they stopped—they lifted their victim from the chariot, and bore him to a cavern, which yawned in a dell close by.

Not long did the hapless victim of unmerited persecution enjoy an oblivion which deprived him of a knowledge of his horrible situation. He awoke—and overcome by excess of terror, started violently from the ruffians’ arms.

They had now entered the cavern; Verezzi supported himself against a fragment of rock which jutted out.

“Resistance is useless,” exclaimed Zastrozzi. “Following us in submissive silence can alone procure the slightest mitigation of your punishment.”

Verezzi followed as fast as his frame, weakened by unnatural sleep, and enfeebled by recent illness, would permit; yet, scarcely believing that he was awake, and [**I-5**] not thoroughly convinced of the reality of the scene before him, he viewed everything with that kind of inexplicable horror which a terrible dream is wont to excite.

After winding down the rugged descent for some time, they arrived at an iron door, which at first sight appeared to be part of the rock itself. Everything had till now been obscured by total darkness; and Verezzi, for the first time, saw the masked faces of his persecutors, which a torch brought by Bernardo rendered visible.

The massy door flew open.

The torches from without rendered the darkness which reigned within still more horrible; and Verezzi beheld the interior of this cavern as a place whence he was never again about to emerge—as his grave. Again he struggled with his persecutors, but his enfeebled frame was insufficient to support a conflict with the strong-nerved Ugo, and, subdued, he sank fainting into his arms.

His triumphant persecutor bore him into the damp cell, and chained him to the wall. An iron chain encircled his waist; his limbs, which not even a little straw kept from the rock, were fixed by immense staples to the flinty floor; and but one of his hands was left at liberty, to take the scanty pittance of bread and water which was daily allowed him.

Everything was denied him but thought, which, by comparing the present with the past, was his greatest torment.

Ugo entered the cell every morning and evening, to bring coarse bread and a pitcher of water, seldom, yet sometimes, accompanied by Zastrozzi.

In vain did he implore mercy, pity, and even death: useless were all his inquiries concerning the cause of his barbarous imprisonment—a stern silence was maintained by his relentless gaoler.

Languishing in painful captivity, Verezzi passed days [**I-6**] and nights seemingly countless, in the same monotonous uniformity of horror and despair. He scarcely now shuddered when the slimy lizard crossed his naked and motionless limbs. The large earth-worms, which turned themselves in his long and matted hair, almost ceased to excite sensations of horror.

Days and nights were undistinguishable from each other; and the period which he had passed there, though in reality but a few weeks, was lengthened by his perturbed imagination into many years. Sometimes he scarcely supposed that his torments were earthly, but that Ugo, whose countenance bespoke him a demon, was the fury who blasted his reviving hopes. His mysterious removal from the inn near Munich also confused his ideas, and he never could bring his thoughts to any conclusion on the subject which occupied them.

One evening, overcome by long watching, he sank to sleep, for almost the first time since his confinement, when he was aroused by a loud crash, which seemed to burst over the cavern. Attentively he listened—he even hoped, though hope was almost dead within his breast. Again he listened—again the same noise was repeated: it was but a violent thunderstorm which shook the elements above.

Convinced of the folly of hope, he addressed a prayer to his Creator—to Him who hears a suppliant from the bowels of the earth. His thoughts were elevated above terrestrial enjoyments—his sufferings sank into nothing on the comparison.

Whilst his thoughts were thus employed, a more violent crash shook the cavern. A scintillating flame darted from the ceiling to the floor. Almost at the same instant the roof fell in.

A large fragment of the rock was laid athwart the cavern; one end being grooved into the solid wall, the other having almost forced open the massy iron door.

[**I-7**]

Verezzi was chained to a piece of rock which remained immovable. The violence of the storm was past, but the hail descended rapidly, each stone of which wounded his naked limbs. Every flash of lightning, although now distant, dazzled his eyes, unaccustomed as they had been to the least ray of light.

The storm at last ceased, the pealing thunders died sway in indistinct murmurs, and the lightning was too faint to be visible. Day appeared—no one had yet been to the cavern. Verezzi concluded that they either intended him to perish with hunger, or that some misfortune, by which themselves had suffered, had occurred. In the most solemn manner, therefore, he now prepared himself for death, which he was fully convinced within himself was rapidly approaching.

His pitcher of water was broken by the falling fragments, and a small crust of bread was all that now remained of his scanty allowance of provisions.

A burning fever raged through his veins; and, delirious with despairing illness, he cast from him the crust which alone could now retard the rapid advances of death.

Oh! what ravages did the united efforts of disease and suffering make on the manly and handsome figure of Verezzi! His bones had almost started through his skin; his eyes were sunken and hollow; and his hair, matted with the damps, hung in strings upon his faded cheek. The day passed as had the morning—death was every instant before his eyes—a lingering death by famine—he felt its approaches; night came, but with it brought no change. He was aroused by a noise against the iron door: it was the time when Ugo usually brought fresh provisions. The noise lessened; at last it totally ceased—with it ceased all hope of life in Verezzi's bosom. A cold tremor pervaded his limbs—his eyes but faintly presented to his imagination the ruined cavern—he sank, as far as the chains which [**I-8**] encircled his waist would permit him, upon the flinty pavement; and, in the crisis of the fever which then occurred, his youth and good constitution prevailed.

CHAPTER II.

IN the meantime, Ugo, who had received orders from Zastrozzi not to allow Verezzi to die, came at the accustomed hour to bring provisions, but finding that, in the last night's storm, the rock had been struck by lightning, concluded that Verezzi had lost his life amid the ruins, and he went with this news to Zastrozzi. Zastrozzi, who, for inexplicable reasons, wished not Verezzi's death, sent Ugo and Bernardo to search for him.

After a long scrutiny they discovered their hapless victim. He was chained to the rock where they had left him, but in that exhausted condition which want of food and a violent fever had reduced him to.

They unchained him, and lifting him into a chariot, after four hours' rapid travelling, brought the insensible Verezzi to a cottage, inhabited by an old woman alone. The cottage stood on an immense heath, lonely, desolate, and remote from other human habitation.

Zastrozzi waited their arrival with impatience. Eagerly he flew to meet them, and, with a demoniac smile, surveyed the agonised features of his prey, who lay insensible and stretched on the shoulders of Ugo.

"His life must not be lost," exclaimed Zastrozzi; "I have need of it. Tell Bianca, therefore, to prepare a bed."

Ugo obeyed, and Bernardo followed, bearing the emaciated Verezzi. A physician was sent for, who declared that the crisis of the fever which had attacked him being past, proper care might reinstate him; but [**I-9**] that the disorder having attacked his brain, a tranquillity of mind was absolutely necessary for his recovery.

Zastrozzi, to whom the life, though not the happiness of Verezzi was requisite, saw that his too eager desire for revenge had carried him beyond his point. He saw that some deception was requisite; he accordingly instructed the old woman to inform him, when he recovered, that he was placed in this situation because the physician had asserted that the air of this country was necessary for a recovery from a brain fever which attacked him.

It was long before Verezzi recovered—long did he languish in torpid insensibility, during which his soul seemed to have winged its way to happier regions.

At last, however, he recovered, and the first use he made of his senses was to inquire where he was.

The old woman told him the story which she had been instructed in by Zastrozzi.

"Who ordered me to be chained in that desolate and dark cavern?" inquired Verezzi, "where I have been for many years, and suffered most insupportable torments?"

“Lord bless me!” said the old woman; “why, baron, how strangely you talk! I begin to fear you will again lose your senses, at the very time you ought to be thanking God for suffering them to return to you. What can you mean by being chained in a cavern? I declare I am frightened at the very thought; pray do compose yourself.”

Verezzi was much perplexed by the old woman’s assertions. That Julia should send him to a mean cottage, and desert him, was impossible.

The old woman’s relation seemed so well connected, and told with such an air of characteristic simplicity, that he could not disbelieve her.

But to doubt the evidence of his own senses, and the [**I-10**] strong proofs of his imprisonment, which the deep marks of the chains had left till now, was impossible.

Had not those marks remained, he would have conceived the horrible events which had led him thither to have been but the dreams of his perturbed imagination. He, however, thought it better to yield, since, as Ugo and Bernardo attended him in the short walks he was able to take, an escape was impossible, and its attempt would but make his situation more unpleasant.

He often expressed a wish to write to Julia, but the old woman said she had orders neither to permit him to write nor receive letters—on pretence of not agitating his mind—and, to avoid the consequences of despair, knives were denied him.

As Verezzi recovered, and his mind obtained that firm tone which it was wont to possess, he perceived that it was but a device of his enemies that detained him at the cottage, and his whole thoughts were now bent upon the means for effecting his escape.

It was late one evening, when, tempted by the peculiar beauty of the weather, Verezzi wandered beyond the usual limits, attended by Ugo and Bernardo, who narrowly watched his every movement. Immersed in thought, he wandered onwards, till he came to a woody eminence, whose beauty tempted him to rest a little, in a seat carved in the side of an ancient oak. Forgetful of his unhappy and dependent situation, he sat there some time, until Ugo told him that it was time to return.

In their absence Zastrozzi had arrived at the cottage. He had impatiently inquired for Verezzi.

“It is the baron’s custom to walk every evening,” said Bianca; “I soon expect him to return.”

Verezzi at last arrived.

Not knowing Zastrozzi as he entered, he started back, overcome by the likeness he bore to one of the men he had seen in the cavern.

[**I-11**]

He was now convinced that all the sufferings he had undergone in that horrible abode of misery were not imaginary, and that he was at this instant in the power of his bitterest enemy.

Zastrozzi’s eyes were fixed on him with an expression too manifest to be misunderstood; and, with an air in which he struggled to disguise the natural malevolence of his heart, he said, that he hoped Verezzi’s health had not suffered from the evening air.

Enraged beyond measure at this hypocrisy, from a man whom he now no longer doubted to be the cause of all his misfortunes, he could not forbear inquiring for what purpose he had conveyed him hither, and told him instantly to release him.

Zastrozzi's cheeks turned pale with passion, his lips quivered, his eyes darted revengeful glances, as thus he spoke:—

"Retire to your chamber, young fool, which is the fittest place for you to reflect on, and repent of, the insolence shown to one so much your superior."

"I fear nothing," interrupted Verezzi, "from your vain threats and empty denunciations of vengeance. Justice—Heaven! is on my side, and I must eventually triumph."

What can be a greater proof of the superiority of virtue, than that the terrible, the dauntless Zastrozzi trembled? for he did tremble; and, conquered by the emotions of the moment, paced the circumscribed apartment with unequal steps. For an instant he shrunk within himself; he thought of his past life, and his awakened conscience reflected images of horror. But again revenge drowned the voice of virtue—again passion obscured the light of reason, and his steeled soul persisted in its scheme.

Whilst he still thought, Ugo entered. Zastrozzi, smothering his stinging conscience, told Ugo to follow him to the heath. Ugo obeyed.

[**I-12**]

CHAPTER III.

UGO and Zastrozzi proceeded along the heath, on the skirts of which stood the cottage. Verezzi leaned against the casement, when a low voice, which floated in indistinct murmurs on the silence of the evening, reached his ear. He listened attentively. He looked into the darkness, and saw the towering form of Zastrozzi, and Ugo, whose awkward, ruffian-like gait could never be mistaken. He could not hear their discourse, except a few detached words which reached his ears. They seemed to be denunciations of anger: a low tone afterwards succeeded, and it appeared as if a dispute, which had arisen between them, was settled: their voices at last died away in distance.

Bernardo now left the room. Bianca entered; but Verezzi plainly heard Bernardo lingering at the door.

The old woman continued sitting in silence at a remote corner of the chamber. It was Verezzi's hour for supper: he desired Bianca to bring it. She obeyed, and brought some dried raisins in a plate. He was surprised to see a knife was likewise brought; an indulgence he imputed to the inadvertency of the old woman. A thought started across his mind—it was now time to escape.

He seized the knife—he looked expressively at the old woman—she trembled. He advanced from the casement to the door: he called for Bernardo—Bernardo entered, and Verezzi, lifting his arm high, aimed a knife at the villain's heart. Bernardo started aside, and the knife was fixed firmly in the door-case. Verezzi attempted by one effort to extricate it. The effort was vain. Bianca, as fast as her tottering limbs could carry her, hastened through the opposite door, calling loudly for Zastrozzi.

[**I-13**]

Verezzi attempted to rush through the open door, but Bernardo opposed himself to it. A long and violent contest ensued, and Bernardo's superior strength was on the point of overcoming Verezzi, when the latter, by a dexterous blow, precipitated him down the steep

and narrow staircase.

Not waiting to see the event of his victory, he rushed through the opposite door, and meeting with no opposition, ran swiftly across the heath.

The moon, in tranquil majesty, hung high in air, and showed the immense extent of the plain before him. He continued rapidly advancing, and the cottage was soon out of sight. He thought that he heard Zastrozzi's voice in every gale. Turning round, he thought Zastrozzi's eye glanced over his shoulder. But even had Bianca taken the right road, and found Zastrozzi, Verezzi's speed would have mocked pursuit.

He ran several miles, still the dreary extent of the heath was before him: no cottage yet appeared, where he might take shelter. He cast himself for an instant on the bank of a rivulet, which stole slowly across the heath. The moonbeam played upon its surface—he started at his own reflected image—he thought that voices were wafted on the western gale, and, nerved anew, pursued his course across the plain.

The moon had gained the zenith before Verezzi rested again. Two pine-trees, of extraordinary size, stood on a small eminence: he climbed one, and found a convenient seat in its immense branches.

Fatigued, he sank to sleep.

Two hours he lay hushed in oblivion, when he was awakened by a noise. It is but the hooting of the night-raven, thought he.

Day had not yet appeared, but faint streaks in the east presaged the coming morn. Verezzi heard the clattering of hoofs. What was his horror to see that Zastrozzi, Bernardo, and Ugo, were the horsemen! [**I-14**] Overcome by terror, he clung to the rugged branch. His persecutors advanced to the spot—they stopped under the tree wherein he was.

"Eternal curses," exclaimed Zastrozzi, "upon Verezzi! I swear never to rest until I find him, and then I will accomplish the purpose of my soul. But come, Ugo, Bernardo, let us proceed."

"Signor," said Ugo, "let us the rather stop here to refresh ourselves and our horses. You, perhaps, will not make this pine your couch, but I will get up, for I think I spy an excellent bed above there."

"No, no," answered Zastrozzi; "did not I resolve never to rest until I had found Verezzi? Mount, villain, or die."

Ugo sullenly obeyed. They galloped off and were quickly out of sight.

Verezzi returned thanks to Heaven for his escape; for he thought that Ugo's eye, as the villain pointed to the branch where he reposed, met his.

It was now morning. Verezzi surveyed the heath, and thought he saw buildings at a distance. Could he gain a town or city, he might defy Zastrozzi's power.

He descended the pine-tree, and advanced as quickly as he could towards the distant buildings. He proceeded across the heath for half an hour, and perceived that, at last, he had arrived at its termination.

The country assumed a new aspect, and the number of cottages and villas showed him that he was in the neighbourhood of some city. A large road which he now entered confirmed his opinion. He saw two peasants, and asked them where the road led,—"To Passau," was the

answer.

It was yet very early in the morning, when he walked through the principal street of Passau. He felt very faint with his recent and unusual exertions; and, overcome by languor, sank on some lofty stone steps, which [**I-15**] led to a magnificent mansion, and, resting his head on his arm, soon fell asleep.

He had been there nearly an hour, when he was awakened by an old woman. She had a basket on her arm, in which were flowers, which it was her custom to bring to Passau every market-day. Hardly knowing where he was, he answered the old woman's inquiries in a vague and unsatisfactory manner. By degrees, however, they became better acquainted; and, as Verezzi had no money, nor any means of procuring it, he accepted of an offer which Claudine (for that was the old woman's name) made him, to work for her, and share her cottage, which, together with a little garden, was all she could call her own. Claudine quickly disposed of her flowers, and, accompanied by Verezzi, soon arrived at a little cottage near Passau. It was situated on a pleasant and cultivated spot; at the foot of a small eminence, on which it was situated, flowed the majestic Danube, and on the opposite side was a forest belonging to the Baron of Schwepper, whose vassal Claudine was.

Her little cottage was kept extremely neat; and, by the charity of the Baron, wanted none of those little comforts which old age requires.

Verezzi thought that, in so retired a spot, he might at least pass his time tranquilly, and elude Zastrozzi.

"What induced you," said he to Claudine, as in the evening they sat before the cottage door, "what induced you to make that offer this morning to me?"

"Ah!" said the old woman, "it was but last week that I lost my dear son, who was everything to me; he died by a fever which he caught by his too great exertions in obtaining a livelihood for me; and I came to the market yesterday, for the first time since my son's death, hoping to find some peasant who would fill his place, when chance threw you in my way.

"I had hoped that he would have outlived me, as I [**I-16**] am quickly hastening to the grave, to which I look forward as to the coming of a friend, who would relieve me from those cares which, alas! but increase with my years."

Verezzi's heart was touched with compassion for the forlorn situation of Claudine. He tenderly told her that he would not forsake her; but if any opportunity occurred for ameliorating her situation, she should no longer continue in poverty.

CHAPTER IV.

BUT let us return to Zastrozzi. He had walked with Ugo on the heath, and had returned late. He was surprised to see no light in the cottage. He advanced to the door, he rapped violently; no one answered. "Very strange!" exclaimed Zastrozzi, as he burst open the door with his foot. He entered the cottage—no one was there. He searched it, and at last saw Bernardo lying, seemingly lifeless, at the foot of the staircase. Zastrozzi advanced to him, and lifted him from the ground; he had been but in a trance, and immediately recovered.

As soon as his astonishment was dissipated, he told Zastrozzi what had happened.

"What!" exclaimed Zastrozzi, interrupting him, "Verezzi escaped! Hell and furies! Villain, you deserve instant death; but thy life is at present necessary to me. Arise, go instantly to Rosenheim, and bring three of my horses from the inn there—make haste!—begone!"

Bernardo trembling arose, and obeying Zastrozzi's commands, crossed the heath quickly towards Rosenheim, a village about half a league distant on the north.

Whilst he was gone, Zastrozzi, agitated by contending passions, knew scarcely what to do. With hurried [**I-17**] strides he paced the cottage. He sometimes spoke lowly to himself. The feelings of his soul flashed from his eyes—his frown was terrible.

"Would I had his heart reeking on my dagger, signor!" said Ugo. "Kill him when you catch him, which you soon will, I am sure."

"Ugo," said Zastrozzi, "you are my friend; you advise me well. But no! he must not die. Ah! by what horrible fetters am I chained—fool that I was—Ugo! he shall die—die by the most hellish torments. I give myself up to fate;—I will taste revenge, for revenge is sweeter than life; and even were I to die with him, and, as the punishment of my crime, be instantly plunged into eternal torments, I should taste superior joy in recollecting the sweet moment of his destruction. Oh! would that destruction could be eternal!"

The clattering of hoofs was heard, and Zastrozzi was now interrupted by the arrival of Bernardo—they instantly mounted, and the high-spirited steeds bore them swiftly across the heath.

Rapidly, for some time, were Zastrozzi and his companions borne across the plain. They took the same road as Verezzi had. They passed the pines where he reposed. They hurried on.

The fainting horses were scarce able to bear their guilty burthens. No one had spoken since they had left the clustered pines.

Bernardo's horse, overcome by excessive fatigue, sank on the ground; that of Zastrozzi scarce appeared in better condition. They stopped.

"What!" exclaimed Zastrozzi, "must we give up the search? Ah! I am afraid we must; our horses can proceed no further—curse on the horses! But let us proceed on foot; Verezzi shall not escape me; nothing shall now retard the completion of my just revenge."

[**I-18**]

As he thus spoke, Zastrozzi's eye gleamed with impatient revenge; and with rapid steps he advanced towards the south of the heath.

Daylight at length appeared; still were the villains' efforts to find Verezzi insufficient. Hunger, thirst, and fatigue conspired to make them relinquish the pursuit. They lay at intervals upon the stony soil.

"This is but an uncomfortable couch, signor," muttered Ugo.

Zastrozzi, whose whole thoughts were centred in revenge, heeded him not, but, nerved anew by impatient vengeance, he started from the bosom of the earth, and muttering curses upon the innocent object of his hatred, proceeded onwards. The day passed as had the morning and preceding night. Their hunger was scantily allayed by the wild berries which grew amid the heathy shrubs; and their thirst but increased by the brackish pools of water which alone they met with. They perceived a wood at some distance. "That is a likely place for Verezzi to have retired to, for the day is hot, and he must want repose as well as ourselves," said Bernardo. "True," replied Zastrozzi, as he advanced towards it. They quickly arrived at its borders: it was not a wood, but an immense forest, which stretched southward as far as Schaffhausen. They advanced into it.

The tall trees rising above their heads warded off the meridian sun; the mossy banks beneath invited repose; but Zastrozzi, little recking a scene so fair, hastily scrutinized every recess which might afford an asylum to Verezzi.

Useless were all his researches—fruitless his endeavours: still, however, though, faint with hunger and weary with exertion, he nearly sank upon the turf, his mind was superior to corporeal toil; for *that,* nerved by revenge, was indefatigable.

Ugo and Bernardo, overcome by the extreme fatigue [**I-19**] which they had undergone, and strong as the assassins were, fell fainting on the earth.

The sun began to decline; at last it sank beneath the western mountain, and the forest-tops were tinged by its departing ray. The shades of night rapidly thickened.

Zastrozzi sat awhile upon the decayed trunk of a scathed oak.

The sky was serene; the blue ether was spangled with countless myriads of stars: the tops of the lofty forest-trees waved mournfully in the evening wind; and the moonbeam penetrating at intervals, as they moved, through the matted branches, threw dubious shades upon the dark underwood beneath.

Ugo and Bernardo, conquered by irresistible torpor, sank to rest upon the dewy turf.

A scene so fair—a scene so congenial to those who can reflect upon their past lives with pleasure, and anticipate the future with the enthusiasm of innocence, ill accorded with the ferocious soul of Zastrozzi, which at one time agitated by revenge, at another by agonising remorse, or contending passions, could derive no pleasure from the past—anticipate no happiness in futurity.

Zastrozzi sat for some time immersed in heart-rending contemplations; but though conscience for awhile reflected his past life in images of horror, again was his heart steeled by fiercest vengeance; and, aroused by images of insatiate revenge, he hastily arose, and, waking Ugo and Bernardo, pursued his course.

The night was calm and serene—not a cloud obscured the azure brilliancy of the spangled concave above—not a wind ruffled the tranquillity of the atmosphere below.

Zastrozzi, Ugo, and Bernardo advanced into the forest. They had tasted no food, save the wild berries of the wood, for some time, and were anxious to arrive at some cottage, where they might procure refreshments. [**I-20**] For some time the deep silence which reigned was uninterrupted.

"What is that?" exclaimed Zastrozzi, as he beheld a large and magnificent building, whose battlements rose above the lofty trees. It was built in the Gothic style of architecture, and appeared to be inhabited.

The building reared its pointed casements loftily to the sky; their treillaged ornaments were silvered by the clear moonlight, to which the dark shades of the arches beneath formed a striking contrast. A large portico jutted out: they advanced towards it, and Zastrozzi attempted to open the door.

An open window on one side of the casement arrested Zastrozzi's attention. "Let us enter that," said he. They entered. It was a large saloon, with many windows. Everything within was arranged with princely magnificence. Four ancient and immense sofas in the apartment invited repose.

Near one of the windows stood a table, with an escrutoire on it; a paper lay on the ground near it.

Zastrozzi, as he passed, heedlessly took up the paper. He advanced nearer to the window, thinking his senses had deceived him when he read, "La Contessa di Laurentini"; but they had not done so, for La Contessa di Laurentini still continued on the paper. He hastily opened it; and the letter, though of no importance, convinced him that this must have been the place to which Matilda said that she had removed.

Ugo and Bernardo lay sleeping on the sofas. Zastrozzi, leaving them as they were, opened an opposite door—it led into a vaulted hall—a large flight of stairs rose from the opposite side—he ascended them. He advanced along a lengthened corridor—a female in white robes stood at the other end—a lamp burnt near her on the balustrade. She was in a reclining attitude, and had not observed his approach. Zastrozzi recognized her for Matilda. He approached her, and [**I-21**] beholding Zastrozzi before her, she started back with surprise. For awhile she gazed on him in silence, and at last exclaimed, "Zastrozzi! ah! are we revenged on Julia? am I happy? Answer me quickly. Well by your silence do I perceive that our plans have been put into execution. Excellent Zastrozzi! accept my most fervent thanks, my eternal gratitude."

"Matilda!" returned Zastrozzi, "would I could say that we were happy! but, alas! it is but misery and disappointment that cause this my so unexpected visit. I know nothing of the Marchesa de Strobazzo—less of Verezzi. I fear that I must wait till age has unstrung my now so fervent energies; and when time has damped your passion, perhaps you may gain Verezzi's love. Julia is returned to Italy—is even now in Naples; and, secure in the immensity of her possessions, laughs at our trifling vengeance. But it shall not be always thus," continued Zastrozzi, his eyes sparkling with inexpressible brilliancy; "I will accomplish my purpose; and, Matilda, thine shall likewise be effected. But, come, I have not tasted food for these two days."

"Oh! supper is prepared below," said Matilda. Seated at the supper-table, the conversation, enlivened by wine, took an animated turn. After some subjects, irrelevant to this history, being discussed, Matilda said, "Ha! but I forgot to tell you, that I have done some good. I have secured that diabolical Paulo, Julia's servant, who was of great service to her, and, by penetrating our schemes, might have even discomfited our grand design. I have lodged him in the lowest cavern of those dungeons which are under this building—will you go and see him?" Zastrozzi answered in the affirmative, and seizing a lamp which burnt in a recess of the apartment, followed Matilda.

The rays of the lamp but partially dissipated the darkness as they advanced through the antiquated [**I-22**] passages. They arrived at a door: Matilda opened it, and they quickly crossed a grass-grown courtyard.

The grass which grew on the lofty battlements waved mournfully in the rising blast, as Matilda and Zastrozzi entered a dark and narrow casement. Cautiously they descended the slippery and precipitous steps. The lamp, obscured by the vapours, burnt dimly as they advanced. They arrived at the foot of the staircase. "Zastrozzi!" exclaimed Matilda. Zastrozzi turned quickly, and, perceiving a door, obeyed Matilda's directions.

On some straw, chained to the wall, lay Paulo.

"O pity! stranger, pity!" exclaimed the miserable Paulo.

No answer, save a smile of most expressive scorn, was given by Zastrozzi. They again ascended the narrow staircase, and, passing the courtyard, arrived at the supper-room.

“But,” said Zastrozzi, again taking his seat, “what use is that fellow Paulo in the dungeon? Why do you keep him there?”

“Oh!” answered Matilda, “I know not; but if you wish ——”

She paused, but her eye expressively filled up the sentence.

Zastrozzi poured out an overflowing goblet of wine. He summoned Ugo and Bernardo—“Take that,” said Matilda, presenting them a key. One of the villains took it, and in a few moments returned with the hapless Paulo.

“Paulo!” exclaimed Zastrozzi, loudly, “I have prevailed on La Contessa to restore your freedom: here,” added he, “take this; I pledge to your future happiness.”

Paulo bowed low—he drank the poisoned potion to the dregs, and, overcome by sudden and irresistible faintness, fell at Zastrozzi’s feet. Sudden convulsions shook his frame, his lips trembled, his eyes rolled horribly, [**I-23**] and, uttering an agonised and lengthened groan, he expired.

“Ugo! Bernardo! take that body and bury it immediately,” cried Zastrozzi. “There, Matilda, by such means must Julia die: you see, that the poisons which I possess are quick in their effect.”

A pause ensued, during which the eyes of Zastrozzi and Matilda spoke volumes to each guilty soul.

The silence was interrupted by Matilda. Not shocked at the dreadful outrage which had been committed, she told Zastrozzi to come out into the forest, for that she had something for his private ear.

“Matilda,” said Zastrozzi, as they advanced along the forest, “I must not stay here, and waste moments in inactivity, which might be more usefully employed. I must quit you to-morrow—I must destroy Julia.”

“Zastrozzi,” returned Matilda, “I am so far from wishing you to spend your time here in ignoble listlessness, that I will myself join your search. You shall to Italy—to Naples—watch Julia’s every movement, attend her every step, and, in the guise of a friend, destroy her; but beware, whilst you assume the softness of the dove, to forget not the cunning of the serpent. On you I depend for destroying her; my own exertions shall find Verezzi; I myself will gain his love—Julia must die, and expiate the crime of daring to rival me, with her hated blood.”

Whilst thus they conversed, whilst they planned these horrid schemes of destruction, the night wore away.

The moonbeam darting her oblique rays from under volumes of lowering vapour, threatened an approaching storm. The lurid sky was tinged with a yellowish lustre—the forest-tops rustled in the rising tempest—big drops fell—a flash of lightning, and, instantly after, a peal of bursting thunder, struck with sudden terror the bosom of Matilda. She, however, immediately [**I-24**] overcame it, and, regarding the battling element with indifference, continued her discourse with Zastrozzi.

They wore out the night in many visionary plans for the future, and now and then a gleam of remorse assailed Matilda’s heart. Heedless of the storm, they had remained in the forest late. Flushed with wickedness, they at last sought their respective couches, but sleep forsook their pillow.

In all the luxuriance of extravagant fancy, Matilda portrayed the symmetrical form, the expressive countenance, of Verezzi; whilst Zastrozzi, who played a double part, anticipated, with ferocious exultation, the torments which he she loved was eventually fated to endure, and changed his plan, for a sublimer mode of vengeance was opened to his view.

Matilda passed a night of restlessness and agitation; her mind was harassed by contending passions, and her whole soul wound up to deeds of horror and wickedness. Zastrozzi's countenance, as she met him in the breakfast-parlour, wore a settled expression of determined revenge—"I almost shudder," exclaimed Matilda, "at the sea of wickedness on which I am about to embark! But still, Verezzi—ah! for him would I even lose my hopes of eternal happiness. In the sweet idea of calling him mine, no scrupulous delicacy, no mistaken superstitious fear, shall prevent me from deserving him by daring acts—No! I am resolved," continued Matilda, as, recollecting his graceful form, her soul was assailed by tenfold love.

"And I am likewise resolved," said Zastrozzi; "I am resolved on revenge—my revenge shall be gratified. Julia shall die, and Verezzi——"

Zastrozzi paused; his eye gleamed with a peculiar expression, and Matilda thought he meant more than he had said—she raised her eyes—they encountered his.

The guilt-bronzed cheek of Zastrozzi was tinged with a momentary blush, but it quickly passed away, and [**I-25**] his countenance recovered its wonted firm and determined expression.

"Zastrozzi!" exclaimed Matilda. "Should you be false—should you seek to deceive me —— But no; it is impossible. Pardon, my friend—I meant not what I said—my thoughts are crazed——"

"'Tis well," said Zastrozzi, haughtily.

"But you forgive my momentary, unmeaning doubt?" said Matilda, and fixed her unmeaning eyes on his countenance.

"It is not for us to dwell on vain, unmeaning expressions, which the soul dictates not," returned Zastrozzi; "and I sue for pardon from you, for having, by ambiguous expressions, caused the least agitation; but, believe me, Matilda, we will not forsake each other; your cause is mine; distrust between us is foolish. But, farewell for the present; I must order Bernardo to go to Passau to purchase horses."

The day passed on; each waited with impatience for the arrival of Bernardo. "Farewell, Matilda," exclaimed Zastrozzi, as he mounted the horses which Bernardo brought; and, taking the route of Italy, galloped off.

CHAPTER V.

HER whole soul wrapped up in one idea, the guilty Matilda threw herself into a chariot which waited at the door, and ordered the equipage to proceed towards Passau.

Left to indulge reflection in solitude, her mind recurred to the object nearest her heart—to Verezzi.

Her bosom was scorched by an ardent and unquenchable fire; and while she thought of him, she even shuddered at the intenseness of her own sensations.

[**I-26**]

"He shall love me—he shall be mine—mine for ever," mentally ejaculated Matilda.

The streets of Passau echoed to La Contessa di Laurentini's equipage, before, roused from her reverie, she found herself at the place of her destination; and she was seated in her hotel in that city, before she had well arranged her unsettled ideas. She summoned Ferdinand, a trusty servant, to whom she confided everything. "Ferdinand," said she, "you have many claims on my gratitude. I have never had cause to reproach you with infidelity in executing my purposes—add another debt to that which I already owe you; find Il Conte Verezzi within three days, and you are my best friend." Ferdinand bowed, and prepared to execute her commands. Two days passed, during which Matilda failed not to make every personal inquiry, even in the suburbs of Passau.

Alternately depressed by fear, and revived by hope, for three days was Matilda's mind in a state of disturbance and fluctuation. The evening of the third day, of the day on which Ferdinand was to return, arrived. Matilda's mind, wound up to the extreme of impatience, was the scene of conflicting passions. She paced the room rapidly.

A servant entered, and announced supper.

"Is Ferdinand returned?" hastily inquired Matilda.

The domestic answered in the negative. She sighed deeply, and struck her forehead.

Footsteps were heard in the ante-chamber without.

"There is Ferdinand!" exclaimed Matilda, exultingly, as he entered. "Well, well! have you found Verezzi? Ah! speak quickly! Ease me of this horrible suspense."

"Signora!" said Ferdinand, "it grieves me much to be obliged to declare that all my endeavours have been inefficient to find Il Conte Verezzi——"

"Oh, madness! madness!" exclaimed Matilda, "is [**I-27**] it for this that I have plunged into the dark abyss of crime?—is it for this that I have despised the delicacy of my sex, and, braving consequences, have offered my love to one who despises me—who shuns me, as does the barbarous Verezzi? But if he is in Passau—if he is in the environs of the city, I will find him."

Thus saying, despising the remonstrances of her domestics, casting off all sense of decorum, she rushed into the streets of Passau. A gloomy silence reigned through the streets of the city; it was past midnight, and every inhabitant seemed to be sunk in sleep—sleep which Matilda was almost a stranger to. Her white robes floated on the night air—her shadowy and dishevelled hair flew over her form, which, as she passed the bridge, seemed to strike the boatmen below with the idea of some supernatural and ethereal form.

She hastily crossed the bridge. She entered the fields on the right—the Danube, whose placid stream was scarcely agitated by the wind, reflected her symmetrical form, as, scarcely knowing what direction she pursued, Matilda hastened along its banks. Sudden horror, resistless despair, seized her brain, maddened as it was by hopeless love.

"What have I to do in this world, my fairest prospect blighted, my fondest hope rendered futile?" exclaimed the frantic Matilda, as, wound up to the highest pitch of desperation, she attempted to plunge herself into the river.

But life fled; for Matilda, caught by a stranger's arm, was prevented from the desperate act.

Overcome by horror, she fainted.

Some time did she lie in a state of torpid insensibility, till the stranger, filling his cup with water, and sprinkling her pallid countenance with it, recalled to life the miserable Matilda.

What was her surprise, what was her mingled emotion of rapture and doubt, when the moonbeam [**I-28**] disclosed to her view the countenance of Verezzi, as in anxious solicitude he bent over her elegantly-proportioned form!

"By what chance," exclaimed the surprised Verezzi, "do I see here La Contessa di Laurentini? Did not I leave you at your Italian castella? I had hoped you would have ceased to persecute me, when I told you that I was irrevocably another's."

"Oh, Verezzi!" exclaimed Matilda, casting herself at his feet, "I adore you to madness—I love you to distraction. If you have one spark of compassion, let me not sue in vain—reject not one who feels it impossible to overcome the fatal, resistless passion which consumes her."

"Rise, Signora," returned Verezzi—"rise; this discourse is improper—it is not suiting the dignity of your rank, or the delicacy of your sex: but suffer me to conduct you to yon cottage, where, perhaps, you may deign to refresh yourself, or pass the night."

The moonbeams played upon the tranquil waters of the Danube, as Verezzi silently conducted the beautiful Matilda to the humble dwelling where he resided.

Claudine waited at the door, and had begun to fear that some mischance had befallen Verezzi, as, when he arrived at the cottage-door, it was long past his usual hour of return.

It was his custom, during those hours when the twilight of evening cools the air, to wander through the adjacent rich scenery, though he seldom prolonged his walks till midnight.

He supported the fainting form of Matilda as he advanced towards Claudine. The old woman's eyes had lately failed her, from extreme age; and it was not until Verezzi called to her that she saw him, accompanied by La Contessa di Laurentini.

"Claudine," said Verezzi, "I have another claim upon your kindness; this lady, who has wandered beyond [**I-29**] her knowledge, will honour our cottage so far as to pass the night here. If you would prepare the pallet which I usually occupy for her, I will repose this evening on the turf, and will now get supper ready. Signora," continued he, addressing Matilda, "some wine would, I think, refresh your spirits; permit me to fill you a glass of wine."

Matilda silently accepted his offer—their eyes met—those of Matilda were sparkling and full of meaning.

"Verezzi!" exclaimed Matilda, "I arrived but four days since at Passau—I have eagerly inquired for you—oh! how eagerly! Will you accompany me tomorrow to Passau?"

"Yes," said Verezzi, hesitatingly.

Claudine soon joined them. Matilda exulted in the success of her schemes, and Claudine being present, the conversation took a general turn. The lateness of the hour, at last, warned them to separate.

Verezzi, left to solitude and his own reflections, threw himself on the turf, which extended to the Danube below. Ideas of the most gloomy nature took possession of his soul; and, in the event of the evening, he saw the foundation of the most bitter misfortunes.

He could not love Matilda; and though he never had seen her but in the most amiable light, he found it impossible to feel any sentiment towards her, save cold esteem. Never had he beheld those dark shades in her character, which, if developed, could excite nothing but horror and detestation; he regarded her as a woman of strong passions, who, having resisted them to the utmost of her power, was at last borne away in the current—whose brilliant virtues one fault had obscured—as such he pitied her: but still he could not help observing a comparison between her and Julia, whose feminine delicacy shrunk from the slightest suspicion, even, of indecorum. Her fragile [**I-30**] form, her mild, heavenly countenance, was contrasted with all the partiality of love, to the scintillating eye, the commanding countenance, the bold expressive gaze, of Matilda.

He must accompany her on the morrow to Passau. During their walk, he determined to observe a strict silence; or, at all events, not to hazard one equivocal expression, which might be construed into what it was not meant for.

The night passed away—morning came, and the tops of the far-seen mountains were gilded by the rising sun.

Exulting in the success of her schemes, and scarcely able to disguise the vivid feelings of her heart, the wily Matilda, as early as she descended to the narrow parlour, where Claudine had prepared a simple breakfast, affected a gloom she was far from feeling.

An unequivocal expression of innocent and mild tenderness marked her manner towards Verezzi: her eyes were cast on the ground, and her every movement spoke meekness and sensibility.

At last, breakfast being finished, the time arrived when Matilda, accompanied by Verezzi, pursued the course of the river, to retrace her footsteps to Passau. A gloomy silence for some time prevailed—at last Matilda spoke:

"Unkind Verezzi! is it thus that you will ever slight me? is it for this that I have laid aside the delicacy of my sex, and owned to you a passion which was but too violent to be concealed? Ah! at least pity me! I love you: oh! I adore you to madness!"

She paused—the peculiar expression which beamed in her dark eye, told the tumultuous wishes of her bosom.

"Distress not yourself and me, Signora," said Verezzi, "by these unavailing protestations. Is it for you—is it for Matilda," continued he, his countenance assuming a smile of bitterest scorn, "to talk of love to the lover of Julia?"

[**I-31**]

Rapid tears coursed down Matilda's cheek. She sighed—the sigh seemed to rend her inmost bosom.

So unexpected a reply conquered Verezzi. He had been prepared for reproaches, but his feelings could not withstand Matilda's tears.

"Ah! forgive me, Signora," exclaimed Verezzi, "if my brain, crazed by disappointments, dictated words which my heart intended not."

"Oh," replied Matilda, "it is I who am wrong: led on by the violence of my passion, I have uttered words, the bare recollection of which fills me with horror. Oh! forgive, forgive an unhappy woman, whose only fault is loving you too well."

As thus she spoke, they entered the crowded streets of Passau, and, proceeding rapidly onwards, soon arrived at La Contessa di Laurentini's hotel.

CHAPTER VI.

THE character of Matilda has been already so far revealed, as to render it unnecessary to expatiate upon it farther. Suffice it to say, that her syren illusions and well-timed blandishments, obtained so great a power over the imagination of Verezzi, that his resolution to return to Claudine's cottage before sunset became every instant fainter and fainter.

"And will you thus leave me?" exclaimed Matilda, in accents of the bitterest anguish, as Verezzi prepared to depart. "Will you thus leave unnoticed, her who, for your sake alone, casting aside the pride of high birth, has wandered, unknown, through foreign climes? Oh! if I have (led away by love for you) outstepped the bounds of modesty, let me not, oh! let me not be injured by others with impunity. Stay, I entreat thee. Verezzi, if yet one spark of compassion lingers in your [**I-32**] breast—stay, and defend me from those who vainly seek one who is irrevocably thine."

With words such as these did the wily Matilda work upon the generous passions of Verezzi. Emotions of pity, of compassion, for one whose only fault he supposed to be love for him, conquered Verezzi's softened soul.

"Oh! Matilda," said he, "though I cannot love thee—though my soul is irrevocably another's—yet, believe me, I esteem, I admire thee; and it grieves me that a heart, fraught with so many and so brilliant virtues, has fixed itself on one who is incapable of appreciating its value."

The time passed away, and each returning sun beheld Verezzi still at Passau—still under Matilda's roof. That softness, that melting tenderness, which she knew so well how to assume, began to convince Verezzi of the injustice of the involuntary hatred which had filled his soul towards her. Her conversation was fraught with sense and elegant ideas. She played to him in the cool of the evening; and often, after sunset, they rambled together into the rich scenery and luxuriant meadows which are washed by the Danube.

Claudine was not forgotten: indeed, Matilda first recollected her, and, by placing her in an independent situation, added a new claim to the gratitude of Verezzi.

In this manner three weeks passed away. Every day did Matilda practise new arts, employ new blandishments, to detain under her roof the fascinated Verezzi.

The most select parties in Passau, flitted in varied movements to exquisite harmony, when Matilda perceived Verezzi's spirits to be ruffled by recollection.

When he seemed to prefer solitude, a moonlight walk by the Danube was proposed by Matilda; or, with skilful fingers, she drew from her harp sounds of the most heart-touching, most enchanting melody. Her behaviour towards him was soft, tender, and quiet, and might [**I-33**] rather have characterised the mild, serene love of a friend or sister, than the ardent, unquenchable fire which burnt, though concealed, within Matilda's bosom.

It was one calm evening that Matilda and Verezzi sat in a back saloon, which overlooked the gliding Danube. Verezzi was listening, with all the enthusiasm of silent rapture, to a favourite soft air which Matilda sang, when a loud rap at the hall-door startled them. A domestic entered, and told Matilda that a stranger, on particular business, waited to speak with her.

"Oh!" exclaimed Matilda, "I cannot attend to him now; bid him wait."

The stranger was impatient, and would not be denied.

"Desire him to come in, then," said Matilda.

The domestic hastened to obey her commands.

Verezzi had arisen to leave the room. "No," cried Matilda, "sit still; I shall soon dismiss the fellow; besides, I have no secrets from you." Verezzi took his seat.

The wide folding-doors which led into the passage were open.

Verezzi observed Matilda, as she gazed fixedly through them, to grow pale.

He could not see the cause, as he was seated on a sofa at the other end of the saloon.

Suddenly she started from her seat; her whole frame seemed convulsed by agitation, as she rushed through the door.

Verezzi heard an agitated voice exclaim, "Go! go!—to-morrow morning!"

Matilda returned. She seated herself again at the harp, which she had quitted, and essayed to compose herself; but it was in vain, she was too much agitated.

Her voice, as she again attempted to sing, refused to perform its office; and her humid hands, as they swept the strings of the harp, violently trembled.

"Matilda," said Verezzi, in a sympathising tone, [**I-34**] "what has agitated you? Make me a repository of your sorrows; I would, if possible, alleviate them."

"Oh, no," said Matilda, affecting unconcern, "nothing—nothing has happened. I was even myself unconscious that I appeared agitated."

Verezzi affected to believe her, and assumed a composure which he felt not. The conversation changed, and Matilda assumed her wonted mien. The lateness of the hour at last warned them to separate.

The more Verezzi thought upon the evening's occurrence, the more did a conviction in his mind, inexplicable even to himself, strengthen, that Matilda's agitation originated in something of consequence. He knew her mind to be superior to common circumstance, and fortuitous casualty, which might have ruffled an inferior soul. Besides, the words which he had heard her utter—"Go! go!—to-morrow morning!"—and though he resolved to disguise his real sentiments, and seem to let the subject drop, he determined narrowly to scrutinise Matilda's conduct, and particularly to know what took place on the following morning. An indefinable presentiment that something horrible was about to occur, filled Verezzi's mind. A long chain of retrospection ensued—he could not forget the happy hours he had passed with Julia; her interesting softness, her ethereal form, pressed on his aching sense.

Still did he feel his soul irresistibly softened towards Matilda—her love for him flattered his vanity; and though he could not feel reciprocal affection towards her, yet her kindness in rescuing him from his former degraded situation, her altered manner towards him, and her unremitting endeavours to please, to humour him in everything, called for his warmest, his sincerest gratitude.

The morning came—Verezzi arose from a sleepless couch, and descending into the breakfast-parlour, there found Matilda.

[**I-35**]

He endeavoured to appear the same as usual, but in vain; for an expression of reserve and scrutiny was apparent on his features.

Matilda perceived it, and shrunk abashed from his keen gaze.

The meal passed away in silence.

“Excuse me for an hour or two,” at last stammered out Matilda—“my steward has accounts to settle;” and she left the apartment.

Verezzi had now no doubt but that the stranger, who had caused Matilda’s agitation the day before, was now returned to finish his business.

He moved towards the door to follow her—he stopped.

“What right have I to pry into the secrets of another?” thought Verezzi; “besides, the business which this stranger has with Matilda cannot possibly concern me.”

Still was he compelled, by an irresistible fascination, as it were, to unravel what appeared to him so mysterious an affair. He endeavoured to believe it to be as she affirmed; he endeavoured to compose himself; he took a book, but his eyes wandered insensibly.

Thrice he hesitated—thrice he shut the door of the apartment; till at last, a curiosity, unaccountable even to himself, propelled him to seek Matilda.

Mechanically he moved along the passage. He met one of the domestics—he inquired where Matilda was.

“In the grand saloon,” was the reply.

With trembling steps he advanced towards it. The folding doors were open. He saw Matilda and the stranger standing at the remote end of the apartment.

The stranger’s figure, which was towering and majestic, was rendered more peculiarly striking by the elegantly proportioned form of Matilda, who leant on a marble table near her; and her gestures, as she conversed with him, manifested the most eager impatience, the deepest interest.

[**I-36**]

At so great a distance, Verezzi could not hear their conversation; but, by the low murmurs which occasionally reached his ear, he perceived that whatever it might be, they were both equally interested in the subject.

For some time he contemplated them with mingled surprise and curiosity—he tried to arrange the confused murmurs of their voices, which floated along the immense and vaulted apartment; but no articulate sound reached his ear.

At last Matilda took the stranger’s hand: she pressed it to her lips with an eager and impassioned gesture, and led him to the opposite door of the saloon.

Suddenly the stranger turned, but as quickly regained his former position, as he retreated through the door; not quickly enough, however, but, in the stranger’s fire-darting eye, Verezzi recognised him who had declared eternal enmity at the cottage on the heath.

Scarcely knowing where he was, or what to believe, for a few moments Verezzi stood bewildered, and unable to arrange the confusion of ideas which floated in his brain and assailed his terror-struck imagination. He knew not what to believe—what phantom it could

be that, in the shape of Zastrozzi, blasted his straining eye-balls—Could it really be Zastrozzi? Could his most rancorous, his bitterest enemy, be thus beloved, thus confided in, by the perfidious Matilda?

For several moments he stood doubting what he should resolve upon. At one while he determined to reproach Matilda with treachery and baseness, and overwhelm her in the mid career of wickedness; but at last concluding it to be more politic to dissemble and subdue his emotions, he went into the breakfast-parlour which he had left, and seated himself as if nothing had happened, at a drawing which he had left incomplete.

Besides, perhaps Matilda might not be guilty—perhaps [**I-37**] she was deceived; and though some scheme of villainy and destruction to himself was preparing, she might be the dupe, and not the coadjutor, of Zastrozzi. The idea that she was innocent soothed him; for he was anxious to make up, in his own mind, for the injustice which he had been guilty of towards her: and though he could not conquer the disgusting ideas, the unaccountable detestations, which often, in spite of himself, filled his soul towards her, he was willing to overcome what he considered but as an illusion of the imagination, and to pay that just tribute of esteem to her virtues which they demanded.

Whilst these ideas, although confused and unconnected, passed in Verezzi's brain, Matilda again entered the apartment.

Her countenance exhibited the strongest marks of agitation, and full of inexpressible and confused meaning was her dark eye, as she addressed some trifling question to Verezzi, in a hurried accent, and threw herself into a chair beside him.

"Verezzi!" exclaimed Matilda, after a pause equally painful to both—"Verezzi! I am deeply grieved to be the messenger of bad news—willingly would I withhold the fatal truth from you; yet, by some other means, it may meet your unprepared ear. I have something dreadful, shocking, to relate; can you bear the recital?"

The nerveless fingers of Verezzi dropped the pencil—he seized Matilda's hand, and, in accents almost inarticulate from terror, conjured her to explain her horrid surmises.

"Oh! my friend! my sister!" exclaimed Matilda, as well-feigned tears coursed down her cheeks,—"oh! she is——"

"What! what!" interrupted Verezzi, as the idea of something having befallen his adored Julia filled his maddened brain with tenfold horror: for often had Matilda declared that since she could not become his [**I-38**] wife she would willingly be his friend, and had even called Julia her sister.

"Oh!" exclaimed Matilda, hiding her face in her hands, "Julia—Julia—whom you love, is dead."

Unable to withhold his fleeting faculties from a sudden and chilly horror which seized them, Verezzi sank forward, and, fainting, fell at Matilda's feet.

In vain, for some time, was every effort to recover him. Every restorative which was administered, for a long time, was unavailing; at last his lips unclosed—he seemed to take his breath easier—he moved—he slowly opened his eyes.

CHAPTER VII.

HIS head reposed upon Matilda's bosom; he started from it violently, as if stung by a scorpion, and fell upon the floor. His eyes rolled horribly, and seemed as if starting from their sockets.

“Is she then dead?—is Julia dead?” in accents scarcely articulate exclaimed Verezzi. “Ah, Matilda! was it you then who destroyed her? was it by thy jealous hand that she sank to an untimely grave? Ah, Matilda! Matilda! say that she yet lives! Alas! what have I to do in the world without Julia? an empty, uninteresting void!”

Every word uttered by the hapless Verezzi spoke daggers to the agitated Matilda.

Again overpowered by the acuteness of his sensations, he sank on the floor, and, in violent convulsions, he remained bereft of sense.

Matilda again raised him—again laid his throbbing head upon her bosom. Again, as, recovering, the [**I-39**] wretched Verezzi perceived his situation—overcome by agonising reflection, he relapsed into insensibility.

One fit rapidly followed another, and at last, in a state of the wildest delirium, he was conveyed to bed.

Matilda found that a too eager impatience had carried her too far. She had prepared herself for violent grief, but not for the paroxysms of madness which now seemed really to have seized the brain of the devoted Verezzi.

She sent for a physician—he arrived, and his opinion of Verezzi’s danger almost drove the wretched Matilda to desperation.

Exhausted by contending passions, she threw herself on a sofa; she thought of the deeds which she had perpetrated to gain Verezzi’s love; she considered that should her purpose be defeated at the very instant which her heated imagination had portrayed as the commencement of her triumph: should all the wickedness, all the crimes, into which she had plunged herself, be of no avail—this idea, more than remorse for her enormities, affected her.

She sat for a time absorbed in a confusion of contending thought; her mind was the scene of anarchy and horror; at last, exhausted by their own violence, a deep, a desperate calm, took possession of her faculties. She started from the sofa, and, maddened by the idea of Verezzi’s danger, sought his apartment.

On a bed lay Verezzi.

A thick film overspread his eye, and he seemed sunk in insensibility.

Matilda approached him. She pressed her burning lips to his. She took his hand—it was cold, and at intervals slightly agitated by convulsions.

A deep sigh at this instant burst from his lips—a momentary hectic flushed his cheek, as the miserable Verezzi attempted to rise.

Matilda, though almost too much agitated to command [**I-40**] her emotions, threw herself into a chair behind the curtain, and prepared to watch his movements.

“Julia! Julia!” exclaimed he, starting from the bed, as his flaming eye-balls were unconsciously fixed upon the agitated Matilda, “where art thou? Ah! thy fair form now moulders in the dark sepulchre! would I were laid beside thee! thou art now an ethereal spirit!” And then, in a seemingly triumphant accent, he added, “But, ere long, I will seek thy unspotted soul—ere long I will again clasp my lost Julia!” Overcome by resistless delirium, he was for an instant silent—his starting eyes seemed to follow some form, which imagination had portrayed in vacuity. He dashed his head against the wall, and sank, overpowered by insensibility, on the floor.

Accustomed as she was to scenes of horror, and firm and dauntless as was Matilda's soul, yet this was too much to behold with composure. She rushed towards him, and lifted him from the floor. In a delirium of terror, she wildly called for help. Unconscious of everything around her, she feared Verezzi had destroyed himself. She clasped him to her bosom, and called on his name, in an ecstasy of terror.

The domestics, alarmed by her exclamations, rushed in. Once again they lifted the insensible Verezzi into the bed. Every spark of life seemed now to have been extinguished; for the transport of horror which had torn his soul was almost too much to be sustained. A physician was again sent for—Matilda, maddened by desperation, in accents almost inarticulate from terror, demanded hope or despair from the physician.

He, who was a man of sense, declared his opinion, that Verezzi would speedily recover, though he knew not the event which might take place in the crisis of the disorder, which now rapidly approached.

The remonstrances of those around her were unavailing to draw Matilda from the bedside of Verezzi.

[**I-41**]

She sat there, a prey to disappointed passion, silent, and watching every turn of the hapless Verezzi's countenance, as, bereft of sense, he lay extended on the bed before her.

The animation which was wont to illumine his sparkling eye was fled, the roseate colour which had tinged his cheek had given way to an ashy paleness—he was insensible to all around him. Matilda sat there the whole day, and silently administered medicines to the unconscious Verezzi, as occasion required.

Towards night the physician again came. Matida's head thoughtfully leant upon her arm as he entered the apartment.

"Ah! what hope? what hope?" wildly she exclaimed.

The physician calmed her, and bid her not despair: then, observing her pallid countenance, he said, he believed she required his skill as much as his patient.

"Oh! heed me not," she exclaimed; "but how is Verezzi? will he live or die?"

The physician advanced towards the emaciated Verezzi—he took his hand.

A burning fever raged through his veins.

"Oh, how is he?" exclaimed Matilda, as, anxiously watching the humane physician's countenance, she thought a shade of sorrow spread itself over his features—"but tell me my fate quickly," continued she: "I am prepared to hear the worst—prepared to hear that he is even dead already."

As she spoke this, a sort of desperate serenity overspread her features. She seized the physician's arm, and looked steadfastly on his countenance, and then, as if overcome by unwonted exertions, she sank fainting at his feet.

The physician raised her, and soon succeeded in recalling her fleeted faculties.

Overcome by its own violence, Matilda's despair became [**I-42**] softened, and the words of the physician operated as a balm upon her soul, and bid her feel hope.

She again resumed her seat, and waited with smothered impatience for the event of the decisive crisis, which the physician could now no longer conceal.

She pressed his burning hand in hers, and waited, with apparent composure, for eleven o'clock.

Slowly the hours passed—the clock of Passau tolled each lingering quarter as they rolled away, and hastened towards the appointed time, when the chamber-door of Verezzi was slowly opened by Ferdinand.

"Ha! why do you disturb me now?" exclaimed Matilda, whom the entrance of Ferdinand had roused from a profound reverie.

"Signora!" whispered Ferdinand—"Signor Zastrozzi waits below: he wishes to see you there."

"Ah!" said Matilda, thoughtfully, "conduct him here."

Ferdinand departed to obey her; footsteps were heard in the passage, and immediately afterwards Zastrozzi stood before Matilda.

"Matilda!" exclaimed he, "why do I see you here? What accident has happened which confines you to this chamber?"

"Ah!" replied Matilda, in an undervoice, "look in that bed—behold Verezzi! emaciated and insensible—in a quarter of an hour, perhaps, all animation will be fled—fled for ever!" continued she, as a deeper expression of despair shaded her beautiful features.

Zastrozzi advanced to the foot of the bed—Verezzi lay, as if dead, before his eyes; for the ashy hue of his lips, and his sunken inexpressive eye, almost declared that his spirit was fled.

Zastrozzi gazed upon him with an indefinable expression of insatiated vengeance—indefinable to Matilda, as she gazed upon the expressive countenance of her coadjutor in crime.

[**I-43**]

"Matilda! I want you: come to the lower saloon; I have something to speak to you of," said Zastrozzi.

"Oh! if it concerned my soul's eternal happiness, I could not now attend," exclaimed Matilda, energetically; "in less than a quarter of an hour, perhaps, all I hold dear on earth will be dead; with him, every hope, every wish, every tie which binds me to earth. Oh!" exclaimed she, her voice assuming a tone of extreme horror, "see how pale he looks!"

Zastrozzi bade Matilda farewell, and went away.

The physician yet continued watching in silence the countenance of Verezzi: it still retained its unchanging expression of fixed despair.

Matilda gazed upon it, and waited with the most eager, yet subdued impatience, for the expiration of the few minutes which yet remained—she still gazed.

The features of Verezzi's countenance were slightly convulsed.

The clock struck eleven.

His lips unclosed—Matilda turned pale with terror; yet mute, and absorbed by expectation, remained rooted to her seat.

She raised her eyes, and hope again returned, as she beheld the countenance of the humane physician lighted up with a beam of pleasure.

She could no longer contain herself, but, in an ecstasy of pleasure, as excessive as her grief and horror before had been violent, in rapid and hurried accents questioned the physician. The physician, with an expressive smile, pressed his finger on his lip. She understood the movement, and though her heart was dilated with sudden and excessive delight, she smothered her joy, as she had before her grief, and gazed with rapturous emotion on the countenance of Verezzi, as, to her expectant eyes, a blush of animation tinged his before pallid countenance.

Matilda took his hand—the pulses yet beat with [**I-44**] feverish violence. She gazed upon his countenance—the film, which before had overspread his eye, disappeared; returning expression pervaded its orbit, but it was the expression of deep, of rooted grief.

The physician made a sign to Matilda to withdraw.

She drew the curtain before her, and in anxious expectation awaited the event.

A deep, a long-drawn sigh, at last burst from Verezzi's bosom. He raised himself, his eyes seemed to follow some form which imagination had portrayed in the remote obscurity of the apartment, for the shades of night were but partially dissipated by a lamp which burnt on a table behind. He raised his almost nerveless arm, and passed it across his eyes, as if to convince himself that what he saw was not an illusion of the imagination.

He looked at the physician, who sat near to, and silent by the bedside, and patiently awaited whatever event might occur.

Verezzi slowly rose, and violently exclaimed, "Julia! Julia! my long-lost Julia, come!" And then, more collected, he added, in a mournful tone, "Ah, no! you are dead; lost, lost for ever!"

He turned round and saw the physician, but Matilda was still concealed.

"Where am I?" inquired Verezzi, addressing the physician.

"Safe, safe," answered he, "compose yourself; all will be well."

"Ah, but Julia?" inquired Verezzi, with a tone so expressive of despair, as threatened returning delirium.

"Oh! compose yourself," said the humane physician; "you have been very ill; this is but an illusion of the imagination; and even now, I fear that you labour under that delirium which attends a brain-fever."

Verezzi's nerveless frame again sunk upon the bed—still [**I-45**] his eyes were open, and fixed upon vacancy; he seemed to be endeavouring to arrange the confusion of ideas which pressed upon his brain.

Matilda undrew the curtain; but, as her eye met the physician's, his glance told her to place it in its original situation.

As she thought of the events of the day, her heart was dilated by tumultuous, yet pleasurable emotions. She conjectured that were Verezzi to recover, of which she now entertained but little doubt, she might easily erase from his heart the boyish passion which before had possessed it; might convince him of the folly of supposing that a first attachment is fated to endure for ever; and, by unremitting assiduity in pleasing him—by soft, quiet

attentions, and an affected sensibility, might at last acquire the attainment of that object for which her bosom had so long and so ardently panted.

Soothed by these ideas, and willing to hear from the physician's mouth a more explicit affirmation of Verezzi's safety than his looks had given, Matilda rose, for the first time since his illness, and, unseen by Verezzi, approached the physician—"Follow me to the saloon," said Matilda.

The physician obeyed, and, by his fervent assurances of Verezzi's safety and speedy recovery, confirmed Matilda's fluctuating hopes. "But," added the physician, "though my patient will recover if his mind be unruffled, I will not answer for his re-establishment should he see you, as his disorder, being wholly on the mind, may be possibly augmented by——"

The physician paused, and left Matilda to finish the sentence; for he was a man of penetration and judgment, and conjectured that some sudden and violent emotion, of which she was the cause, occasioned his patient's illness. This conjecture became certainty, as, when he concluded, he observed Matilda's face change to an ashy paleness.

[**I-46**]

"May I not watch him—attend him?" inquired Matilda, imploringly.

"No," answered the physician; "in the weakened state in which he now is, the sight of you might cause immediate dissolution."

Matilda started, as if overcome by horror at the bare idea, and promised to obey his commands.

The morning came—Matilda arose from a sleepless couch, and with hopes yet unconfirmed, sought Verezzi's apartment.

She stood near the door listening. Her heart palpitated with tremendous violence as she listened to Verezzi's breathing—every sound from within alarmed her. At last she slowly opened the door, and, though adhering to the physician's directions in not suffering Verezzi to see her, she could not deny herself the pleasure of watching him, and busying herself in little offices about his apartment.

She could hear Verezzi question the attendant collectedly, yet as a person who was ignorant where he was, and knew not the events which had immediately preceded his present state.

At last he sank into a deep sleep. Matilda now dared to gaze on him: the hectic colour which had flushed his cheek was fled, but the ashy hue of his lips had given place to a brilliant vermilion. She gazed intently on his countenance.

A heavenly, yet faint smile diffused itself over his countenance—his hand slightly moved.

Matilda, fearing that he would awake, again concealed herself. She was mistaken, for, on looking again, he still slept.

She still gazed upon his countenance. The visions of his sleep were changed, for tears came fast from under his eyelids, and a deep sigh burst from his bosom.

Thus passed several days: Matilda still watched with [**I-47**] most affectionate assiduity by the bedside of the unconscious Verezzi.

The physician declared that his patient's mind was yet in too irritable a state to permit him to see Matilda, but that he was convalescent.

One evening she sat by his bedside, and gazing upon the features of the sleeping Verezzi, felt unusual softness take possession of her soul—an indefinable and tumultuous emotion shook her bosom—her whole frame thrilled with rapturous ecstasy, and seizing the hand which lay motionless beside her, she imprinted on it a thousand burning kisses.

"Ah, Julia! Julia! is it you?" exclaimed Verezzi, as he raised his enfeebled frame; but perceiving his mistake, as he cast his eyes on Matilda, sank back, and fainted.

Matilda hastened with restoratives, and soon succeeded in recalling to life Verezzi's fleeted faculties.

CHAPTER VIII.

Art thou afraid
To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteemest the ornament of life,
Or live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting *I dare not* wait upon *I would?*

—Macbeth.

For love is heaven, and heaven is love.

—*Lay of the Last Minstrel*.

THE soul of Verezzi was filled with irresistible disgust, as, recovering, he found himself in Matilda's arms. His whole frame trembled with chilly horror, and he could scarcely withhold himself from again fainting. He fixed his eyes upon the countenance—they met hers—an ardent fire, mingled with a touching softness, filled their orbits.

[**I-48**]

In a hurried and almost inarticulate accent, he reproached Matilda with perfidy, baseness, and even murder. The roseate colour which had tinged Matilda's cheek, gave place to an ashy hue—the animation which had sparkled in her eye, yielded to a confused expression of apprehension, as the almost delirious Verezzi uttered accusations he knew not the meaning of; for his brain, maddened by the idea of Julia's death, was whirled round in an ecstasy of terror.

Matilda seemed to have composed every passion; a forced serenity overspread her features, as, in a sympathising and tender tone, she entreated him to calm his emotions, and giving him a temporary medicine, left him.

She descended to the saloon.

"Ah! he yet despises me—he even hates me," ejaculated Matilda. "An irresistible antipathy—irresistible, I fear, as my love for him is ardent, has taken possession of his soul towards me. Ah! miserable, hapless being that I am! doomed to have my fondest hope, my brightest prospect, blighted."

Alive alike to the tortures of despair and the illusions of hope, Matilda, now in an agony of desperation, impatiently paced the saloon.

Her mind was inflamed by a more violent emotion of hate towards Julia, as she recollected Verezzi's fond expressions: she determined, however, that were Verezzi not to be hers, he should never be Julia's.

Whilst thus she thought, Zastrozzi entered.

The conversation was concerning Verezzi.

"How shall I gain his love, Zastrozzi?" exclaimed Matilda. "Oh! I will renew every tender office—I will watch by him day and night, and, by unremitting attentions, I will try to soften his flinty soul. But, alas! it was but now that he started from my arms in horror, and, in accents of desperation, accused me of perfidy—of murder. Could I be perfidious to Verezzi, [**I-49**] my heart, which burns with so fervent a fire, declares I could not, and murder——"

Matilda paused.

"Would thou could say thou wert guilty, or even accessary to *that*," exclaimed Zastrozzi, his eye gleaming with disappointed ferocity. "Would Julia of Strobazzo's heart was reeking on my dagger!"

"Fervently do I join in that wish, my best Zastrozzi," returned Matilda: "but, alas! what avail wishes—what avail useless protestations of revenge, whilst Julia yet lives?—yet lives, perhaps, again to obtain Verezzi—to clasp him constant to her bosom—and perhaps—oh, horror! perhaps to——"

Stung to madness by the picture which her fancy had portrayed, Matilda paused.

Her bosom heaved with throbbing palpitations; and, whilst describing the success of her rival, her warring soul shone apparent from her scintillating eyes.

Zastrozzi, meanwhile, stood collected in himself; and, scarcely heeding the violence of Matilda, awaited the issue of her speech.

He besought her to calm herself, nor, by those violent emotions, unfit herself for prosecuting the attainment of her fondest hope.

"Are you firm?" inquired Zastrozzi.

"Yes!"

"Are you resolved? Does fear, amid the other passions, shake your soul?"

"No, no—this heart knows not to fear—this breast knows not to shrink," exclaimed Matilda eagerly.

"Then be cool—be collected," returned Zastrozzi, "and thy purpose is effected."

Though little was in these words which might warrant hope, yet Matilda's susceptible soul, as Zastrozzi spoke, thrilled with anticipated delight.

"My maxim, therefore," said Zastrozzi, "through life has been, wherever I am, whatever passions shake [**I-50**] my inmost soul, at least to *appear* collected. I generally am; for, by suffering no common events, no fortuitous casualty to disturb me, my soul becomes steeled to more interesting trials. I have a spirit, ardent, impetuous as thine; but acquaintance with the world has induced me to veil it, though it still continues to burn within my bosom. Believe me, I am far from wishing to persuade you from your purpose. No—any purpose undertaken with ardour, and prosecuted with perseverance, must eventually be crowned with success. Love is worthy of any risk—I felt it once, but revenge has now swallowed up every

other feeling of my soul—I am alive to nothing but revenge. But even did I desire to persuade you from the purpose on which your heart is fixed, I should not say it was wrong to attempt it; for whatever procures pleasure is right, and consonant to the dignity of man, who was created for no other purpose but to obtain happiness; else, why were passions given us? why were those emotions which agitate my breast and madden my brain implanted in us by nature? As for the confused hope of a future state, why should we debar ourselves of the delights of this, even though purchased by what the misguided multitude calls immorality?"

Thus sophistically argued Zastrozzi. His soul, deadened by crime, could only entertain confused ideas of immortal happiness; for in proportion as human nature departs from virtue, so far are they also from being able clearly to contemplate the wonderful operations, the mysterious ways of Providence.

Coolly and collectedly argued Zastrozzi: he delivered his sentiments with the air of one who was wholly convinced of the truth of the doctrines he uttered,—a conviction to be dissipated by shunning proof.

Whilst Zastrozzi thus spoke, Matilda remained silent,—she paused. Zastrozzi must have strong powers of reflection; he must be convinced of the truth of his [**I-51**] own reasoning, thought Matilda, as eagerly she yet gazed on his countenance. Its unchanging expression of firmness and conviction still continued.

"Ah!" said Matilda, "Zastrozzi, thy words are a balm to my soul. I never yet knew thy real sentiments on this subject; but answer me, do you believe that the soul decays with the body, or if you do not, when this perishable form mingles with its parent earth, where goes the soul which now actuates its movements? perhaps, it wastes its fervent energies in tasteless apathy, or lingering torments."

"Matilda," returned Zastrozzi, "think not so; rather suppose that, by its own innate and energetical exertions, this soul must endure for ever, that no fortuitous occurrences, no incidental events, can affect its happiness; but by daring boldly, by striving to verge from the beaten path, whilst yet trammelled in the chains of mortality, it will gain superior advantages in a future state."

"But religion! oh, Zastrozzi!"

"I thought thy soul was daring," replied Zastrozzi; "I thought thy mind was towering; and did I then err in the different estimate I had formed of thy character? O yield not yourself, Matilda, thus to false, foolish, and vulgar prejudices—for the present, farewell."

Saying this, Zastrozzi departed.

Thus, by an artful appeal to her passions, did Zastrozzi extinguish the faint spark of religion which yet gleamed in Matilda's bosom.

In proportion as her belief of an Omnipotent power, and consequently her hopes of eternal salvation declined, her ardent and unquenchable passion for Verezzi increased, and a delirium of guilty love filled her soul.

"Shall I then call him mine for ever?" mentally inquired Matilda; "will the passion which now consumes me possess my soul to all eternity? Ah! well I know it will; and when emancipated from this [**I-52**] terrestrial form, my soul departs; still its fervent energies unrepressed, will remain; and in the union of soul to soul, it will taste celestial transports." An ecstasy of tumultuous and confused delight rushed through her veins; she stood for some time immersed in thought. Agitated by the emotions of her soul, her every limb trembled. She thought upon Zastrozzi's sentiments. She almost shuddered as she reflected; yet was

convinced by the cool and collected manner in which he had delivered them. She thought on his advice, and steeling her soul, repressing every emotion, she now acquired that coolness so necessary to the attainment of her desire.

Thinking of nothing else, alive to no idea but Verezzi, Matilda's countenance assumed a placid serenity—she even calmed her soul, she bid it restrain its emotions, and the passions which so lately had battled fiercely in her bosom were calmed.

She again went to Verezzi's apartment, but, as she approached, vague fears lest he should have penetrated her schemes confused her: but his mildly beaming eyes, as she gazed upon them, convinced her that the horrid expressions which he had before uttered were merely the effect of temporary delirium.

"Ah, Matilda!" exclaimed Verezzi, "where have you been?"

Matilda's soul, alive alike to despair and hope, was filled with momentary delight as he addressed her; but bitter hate, and disappointed love, again tortured her bosom, as he exclaimed in accents of heart-felt agony: "Oh! Julia, my long-lost Julia!"

"Matilda," said he, "my friend, farewell; I feel that I am dying, but I feel pleasure,—oh! transporting pleasure, in the idea that I shall soon meet my Julia. Matilda," added he, in a softened accent, "farewell for ever." Scarcely able to contain the emotions which the idea alone of Verezzi's death excited, Matilda, though [**I-53**] the crisis of the disorder, she knew, had been favourable, shuddered—bitter hate, even more rancorous than ever, kindled in her bosom against Julia, for to hear Verezzi talk of her with soul-subduing tenderness, but wound up her soul to the highest pitch of uncontrollable vengeance. Her breast heaved violently, her dark eye, in expressive glances, told the fierce passions of her soul; yet, sensible of the necessity of controlling her emotions, she leaned her head upon her hand, and when she answered Verezzi, a calmness, a melting expression of grief, overspread her features. She conjured him, in the most tender, the most soothing terms, to compose himself; and though Julia was gone for ever, to remember that there was yet one in the world, one tender friend who would render the burden of life less insupportable.

"Oh! Matilda," exclaimed Verezzi, "talk not to me of comfort, talk not of happiness. All that constituted my comfort, all to which I looked forward with rapturous anticipation of happiness, is fled—fled for ever."

Ceaselessly did Matilda watch by the bedside of Verezzi; the melting tenderness of his voice, the melancholy, interesting expression of his countenance, but added fuel to the flame which consumed her; her soul was engrossed by one idea; every extraneous passion was conquered, and nerved for the execution of its fondest purpose; a seeming tranquillity overspread her mind, not that tranquillity which results from conscious innocence and mild delights, but that which calms every tumultuous emotion for a time; when, firm in a settled purpose, the passions but pause, to break out with more resistless violence. In the meantime, the strength of Verezzi's constitution overcame the malignity of his disorder, returning strength again braced his nerves, and he was able to descend to the saloon.

The violent grief of Verezzi had subsided into a deep and settled melancholy; he could now talk of his Julia, [**I-54**] indeed it was his constant theme; he spoke of her virtues, her celestial form, her sensibility, and by his ardent professions of eternal fidelity to her memory, unconsciously almost drove Matilda to desperation. Once he asked Matilda how she died; for on the day when the intelligence first turned his brain, he waited not to hear the particulars; the bare fact drove him to instant madness.

Matilda was startled at the question, yet ready invention supplied the place of a premeditated story.

"Oh! my friend," said she, tenderly, "unwillingly do I tell you that for you she died; disappointed love, like a worm in the bud, destroyed the unhappy Julia; fruitless were all her endeavours to find you; till at last, concluding that you were lost to her for ever, a deep melancholy by degrees consumed her, and gently led to the grave. She sank into the arms of death without a groan."

"And there shall I soon follow her," exclaimed Verezzi, as a severer pang of anguish and regret darted through his soul. "I caused her death, whose life was far, far dearer to me than my own. But now it is all over, my hopes of happiness in this world are blasted, blasted for ever."

As he said this, a convulsive sigh heaved his breast, and the tears silently rolled down his cheeks; for some time in vain were Matilda's endeavours to calm him, till at last, mellowed by time, and overcome by reflection, his violent and fierce sorrow was softened into a fixed melancholy.

Unremittingly Matilda attended him, and gratified his every wish; she, conjecturing that solitude might be detrimental to him, often entertained parties, and endeavoured by gaiety to drive away his dejection; but if Verezzi's spirits were elevated by company and merriment, in solitude again they sank, and a deeper melancholy, a severer regret possessed his bosom, for having [**I-55**] allowed himself to be momentarily interested by any thing but the remembrance of his Julia; for he felt a soft, a tender and ecstatic emotion of regret, when retrospection portrayed the blissful time long since gone by, while, happy in the society of her whom he idolized, he thought he could never be otherwise than then, enjoying the sweet, the serene delights of association with a congenial mind; he often now amused himself in retracing with his pencil, from memory, scenes which, though in his Julia's society he had beheld unnoticed, yet were now hallowed by the remembrance of her: for he always associated the idea of Julia with the remembrance of those scenes which she had so often admired, and where, accompanied by her, he had so often wandered.

Matilda, meanwhile, firm in the purpose of her soul, unremittingly persevered; she calmed her mind, and though, at intervals, shook by almost superhuman emotions, before Verezzi a fixed serenity, a well-feigned sensibility, and a downcast tenderness, marked her manner. Grief, melancholy, a fixed, a quiet depression of spirits, seemed to have calmed every fiercer feeling when she talked with Verezzi of his lost Julia; but, though subdued for the present, revenge, hate, and the fervour of disappointed love, burned her soul.

Often, when she had retired from Verezzi, when he had talked with tenderness, as he was wont, of Julia, and sworn everlasting fidelity to her memory, would Matilda's soul be tortured by fiercest desperation.

One day, when conversing with him of Julia, she ventured to hint, though remotely, at her own faithful and ardent attachment.

"Think you," replied Verezzi, "that because my Julia's spirit is no longer enshrined in its earthly form, that I am the less devotedly, the less irrevocably hers?—No! no! I was hers, I am hers, and to all eternity shall be hers: and when my soul, divested of mortality, [**I-56**] departs into another world, even amid the universal wreck of nature, attracted by congeniality of sentiment, it will seek the unspotted spirit of my idolized Julia. Oh, Matilda! thy attention, thy kindness, calls for my warmest gratitude—thy virtue demands my sincerest esteem; but, devoted to the memory of my Julia, I can *love* none but her."

Matilda's whole frame trembled with unconquerable emotion, as thus determinedly he rejected her; but, calming the more violent passions, a flood of tears rushed from her eyes; and, as she leant over the back of a sofa on which she reclined, her sobs were audible.

Verezzi's soul was softened towards her—he raised the humbled Matilda, and bid her be comforted, for he was conscious that her tenderness towards him deserved not an unkind return.

"Oh! forgive, forgive me!" exclaimed Matilda, with well-feigned humility: "I knew not what I said." She then abruptly left the saloon.

Reaching her own apartment, Matilda threw herself on the floor, in an agony of mind too great to be described. Those infuriate passions, restrained as they had been in the presence of Verezzi, now agitated her soul with inconceivable terror. Shook by sudden and irresistible emotions, she gave vent to her despair.

"Where, then, is the boasted mercy of God," exclaimed the frantic Matilda, "if he suffer his creatures to endure such agony as this? or where his wisdom, if he implant in the heart passions furious—uncontrollable—as mine, doomed to destroy their happiness?"

Outraged pride, disappointed love, and infuriate revenge, revelled through her bosom. Revenge, which called for innocent blood—the blood of the hapless Julia.

Her passions were now wound up to the highest pitch of desperation. In indescribable agony of mind, [**I-57**] she dashed her head against the floor—she imprecated a thousand curses upon Julia, and swore eternal revenge.

At last, exhausted by their own violence, the warring passions subsided—a calm took possession of her soul—she thought again upon Zastrozzi's advice—Was she now cool? was she now collected?

She was now immersed in a chain of thought; unaccountable, even to herself, was the serenity which had succeeded.

CHAPTER X.

PERSEVERING in the prosecution of her design, the time passed away slowly to Matilda; for Verezzi's frame, becoming every day more emaciated, threatened, to her alarmed imagination, approaching dissolution—slowly to Verezzi, for he waited with impatience for the arrival of death, since nothing but misery was his in this world.

Useless would it be to enumerate the conflicts in Matilda's soul: suffice it to say that they were many, and that their violence progressively increased.

Verezzi's illness at last assumed so dangerous an appearance that Matilda, alarmed, sent for a physician.

The humane man who had attended Verezzi before was from home, but one, skilful in his profession, arrived, who declared that a warmer climate could alone restore Verezzi's health.

Matilda proposed to him to remove to a retired and picturesque spot which she possessed in the Venetian territory. Verezzi, expecting speedy dissolution, and conceiving it to be immaterial where he died, consented; and, indeed, he was unwilling to pain one so kind as Matilda by a refusal.

[**I-58**]

The following morning was fixed for the journey.

The morning arrived, and Verezzi was lifted into the chariot, being yet extremely weak and emaciated.

Matilda, during the journey, by every care, every kind and sympathising attention, tried to drive away Verezzi's melancholy; sensible that, could the weight which pressed upon his spirits be removed, he would speedily regain health. But no! it was impossible. Though he was grateful for Matilda's attention, a still deeper shade of melancholy overspread his features; a more heart-felt inanity and languor sapped his life. He was sensible of a total distaste of former objects—objects which, perhaps, had formerly forcibly interested him. The terrific grandeur of the Alps, the dashing cataract, as it foamed beneath their feet, ceased to excite those feelings of awe which formerly they were wont to inspire. The lofty pine-groves inspired no additional melancholy, nor did the blooming valleys of Piedmont, or the odoriferous orangeries which scented the air, gladden his deadened soul.

They travelled on—they soon entered the Venetian territory, where, in a gloomy and remote spot, stood the Castella di Laurentini.

It was situated in a dark forest—lofty mountains around lifted their aspiring and craggy summits to the skies.

The mountains were clothed half up by ancient pines and plane-trees, whose immense branches stretched far; and above, bare granite rocks, on which might be seen occasionally a scathed larch, lifted their gigantic and misshapen forms.

In the centre of an amphitheatre, formed by these mountains, surrounded by wood, stood the Castella di Laurentini, whose grey turrets and time-worn battlements overtopped the giants of the forest.

Into this gloomy mansion was Verezzi conducted by Matilda. The only sentiment he felt was surprise at [**I-59**] the prolongation of his existence. As he advanced, supported by Matilda and a domestic, into the castella, Matilda's soul, engrossed by one idea, confused by its own unquenchable passions, felt not that ecstatic, that calm and serene delight, only experienced by the innocent, and which is excited by a return to the place where we have spent our days of infancy.

No—she felt not this; the only pleasurable emotion which her return to this remote castella afforded was the hope that, disengaged from the tumult of, and proximity to the world, she might be the less interrupted in the prosecution of her madly-planned schemes.

Though Verezzi's melancholy seemed rather increased than diminished by the journey, yet his health was visibly improved by the progressive change of air and variation of scenery, which must, at times, momentarily alleviate the most deep-rooted grief; yet, again in a fixed spot—again left to solitude and his own torturing reflections, Verezzi's mind returned to his lost, his still adored Julia. He thought of her ever; unconsciously he spoke of her; and, by his rapturous exclamations, sometimes almost drove Matilda to desperation.

Several days thus passed away. Matilda's passion, which, mellowed by time, and diverted by the variety of objects, and the hurry of the journey, had relaxed its violence, now, like a stream pent up, burst all bounds.

But one evening, maddened by the tender protestations of eternal fidelity to Julia's memory which Verezzi uttered, her brain was almost turned.

Her tumultuous soul, agitated by contending emotions, flashed from her eyes. Unable to disguise the extreme violence of her sensations, in an ecstasy of despairing love, she rushed from the apartment where she had left Verezzi, and, unaccompanied, wandered into the

forest, to calm her emotions, and concert some [**I-60**] better plans of revenge; for, in Verezzi's presence, she scarcely dared to think.

Her infuriated soul burned with fiercest revenge: she wandered into the trackless forest, and, conscious that she was unobserved, gave vent to her feelings in wild exclamations.

"Oh, Julia! hated Julia! words are not able to express my detestation of thee. Thou hast destroyed Verezzi. Thy cursed image, revelling in his heart, has blasted my happiness for ever; but, ere I die, I will taste revenge—oh! exquisite revenge!" She paused—she thought of the passion which consumed her. "Perhaps one no less violent has induced Julia to rival me," said she. Again the idea of Verezzi's illness—perhaps his death—infuriated her soul. Pity, chased away by vengeance and disappointed passion, fled. "Did I say that I pitied thee? Detested Julia, much did my words belie the feelings of my soul. No—no—thou shalt not escape me. Pity thee!"

Again immersed in corroding thought, she heeded not the hour, till looking up, she saw the shades of night were gaining fast upon the earth. The evening was calm and serene: gently agitated by the evening zephyr, the lofty pines sighed mournfully. Far to the west appeared the evening star, which faintly glittered in the twilight. The scene was solemnly calm, but not in unison with Matilda's soul. Softest, most melancholy music, seemed to float upon the southern gale. Matilda listened—it was the nuns at a convent, chanting the requiem for the soul of a departed sister.

"Perhaps gone to heaven!" exclaimed Matilda, as, affected by the contrast, her guilty soul trembled. A chain of horrible racking thoughts pressed upon her soul; and, unable to bear the acuteness of her sensations, she hastily returned to the castella.

Thus, marked only by the varying paroxysms of the passions which consumed her, Matilda passed the time: [**I-61**] her brain was confused, her mind agitated by the ill success of her schemes, and her spirits, once so light and buoyant, were now depressed by disappointed hope.

"What shall I next concert?" was the mental inquiry of Matilda. "Ah! I know not."

She suddenly started—she thought of Zastrozzi.

"Oh! that I should have till now forgotten Zastrozzi," exclaimed Matilda, as a new ray of hope darted through her soul. "But he is now at Naples, and some time must necessarily elapse before I can see him."

"Oh, Zastrozzi, Zastrozzi! would that you were here!"

No sooner had she well arranged her resolutions, which before had been confused by eagerness, than she summoned Ferdinand, on whose fidelity she dared to depend, and bid him speed to Naples, and bear a letter, with which he was entrusted, to Zastrozzi.

Meanwhile Verezzi's health, as the physician had predicted, was so much improved by the warm climate and pure air of the Castella di Laurentini, that, though yet extremely weak and emaciated, he was able, as the weather was fine, and the summer evenings tranquil, to wander, accompanied by Matilda, through the surrounding scenery.

In this gloomy solitude, where, except the occasional and infrequent visits of a father confessor, nothing occurred to disturb the uniform tenour of their life, Verezzi was everything to Matilda—she thought of him ever: at night, in dreams, his image was present to her enraptured imagination. She was uneasy, except in his presence; and her soul, shook by contending paroxysms of the passion which consumed her, was transported by unutterable

ecstasies of delirious and maddening love.

Her taste for music was exquisite; her voice of celestial sweetness; and her skill, as she drew sounds of soul-touching melody from the harp, enraptured the mind to melancholy pleasure.

[**I-62**]

The affecting expression of her voice, mellowed as it was by the tenderness which at times stole over her soul, softened Verezzi's listening ear to ecstasy.

Yet, again recovering from the temporary delight which her seductive blandishments had excited, he thought of Julia. As he remembered her ethereal form, her retiring modesty, and unaffected sweetness, a more violent, a deeper pang of regret and sorrow assailed his bosom, for having suffered himself to be even momentarily interested by Matilda.

Hours, days passed lingering away. They walked in the evenings around the environs of the castella—woods, dark and gloomy, stretched far—cloud-capt mountains reared their gigantic summits high; and, dashing amidst the jutting rocks, foaming cataracts, with sudden and impetuous course, sought the valley below.

Amid this scenery the wily Matilda usually led her victim.

One evening when the moon, rising over the gigantic outline of the mountain, silvered the far-seen cataract, Matilda and Verezzi sought the forest.

For a time neither spoke: the silence was uninterrupted, save by Matilda's sighs, which declared that violent and repressed emotions tortured the bosom within.

They silently advanced into the forest. The azure sky was spangled with stars—not a wind agitated the unruffled air—not a cloud obscured the brilliant concavity of heaven. They ascended an eminence, clothed with towering wood; the trees around formed an amphitheatre. Beneath, by a gentle ascent, an opening showed an immense extent of forest, dimly seen by the moon, which overhung the opposite mountain. The craggy heights beyond might distinctly be seen, edged by the beams of the silver moon.

Verezzi threw himself on the turf.

[**I-63**]

"What a beautiful scene, Matilda!" he exclaimed.

"Beautiful indeed," returned Matilda. "I have admired it ever, and brought you here this evening on purpose to discover whether you thought of the works of nature as I do."

"Oh! fervently do I admire this," exclaimed Verezzi, as, engrossed by the scene before him, he gazed enraptured.

"Suffer me to retire for a few minutes," said Matilda.

Without waiting for Verezzi's answer, she hastily entered a small tuft of trees. Verezzi gazed surprised; and soon sounds of such ravishing melody stole upon the evening breeze, that Verezzi thought some spirit of the solitude had made audible to mortal ears ethereal music.

He still listened—it seemed to die away—and again a louder, a more rapturous swell, succeeded.

The music was in unison with the scene—it was in unison with Verezzi's soul: and the success of Matilda's artifice, in this respect, exceeded her most sanguine expectation.

He still listened—the music ceased—and Matilda's symmetrical form emerging from the wood, roused Verezzi from his vision.

He gazed on her—her loveliness and grace struck forcibly upon his senses; her sensibility, her admiration of objects which enchanted him, flattered him; and her judicious arrangement of the music left no doubt in his mind but that, experiencing the same sensations herself, the feelings of his soul were not unknown to her.

Thus far everything went on as Matilda desired. To touch his feelings had been her constant aim: could she find anything which interested him; anything to divert his melancholy: or could she succeed in effacing another from his mind, she had no doubt but that he would quickly and voluntarily clasp her to his bosom.

By affecting to coincide with him in everything—by [**I-64**] feigning to possess that congeniality of sentiment and union of idea which he thought so necessary to the existence of love, she doubted not soon to accomplish her purpose.

But sympathy and congeniality of sentiment, however necessary to that love which calms every fierce emotion, fills the soul with a melting tenderness, and, without disturbing it, continually possesses the soul, was by no means consonant to the ferocious emotions, the unconquerable and ardent passion which revelled through Matilda's every vein.

When enjoying the society of him she loved, calm delight, unruffled serenity, possessed not her soul. No—but, inattentive to every object but him, even her proximity to him agitated her with almost uncontrollable emotion.

Whilst watching his look, her pulse beat with unwonted violence, her breast palpitated, and, unconscious of it herself, an ardent and voluptuous fire darted from her eyes.

Her passion too, controlled as it was in the presence of Verezzi, agitated her soul with progressively increasing fervour. Nursed by solitude, and wound up, perhaps, beyond any pitch which another's soul might be capable of, it sometimes almost maddened her.

Still, surprised at her own forbearance, yet strongly perceiving the necessity of it, she spoke not again of her passion to Verezzi.

CHAPTER XI.

AT last the day arrived when Matilda expected Ferdinand's return. Punctual to his time, Ferdinand returned, and told Matilda that Zastrozzi had, for the present, taken up his abode at a cottage [**I-65**] not far from thence, and that he there awaited her arrival.

Matilda was much surprised that Zastrozzi preferred a cottage to her castella; but, dismissing that from her mind, hastily prepared to attend him.

She soon arrived at the cottage. Zastrozzi met her—he quickened his pace towards her.

"Well, Zastrozzi," exclaimed Matilda, inquiringly.

"Oh!" said Zastrozzi, "our schemes have all, as yet, been unsuccessful. Julia yet lives, and, surrounded by wealth and power, yet defies our vengeance. I was planning her destruction, when, obedient to your commands, I came here."

"Alas!" exclaimed Matilda, "I fear it must be ever thus: but, Zastrozzi, much I need your advice—your assistance. Long have I languished in hopeless love: often have I expected, and as often have my eager expectations been blighted by disappointment."

A deep sigh of impatience burst from Matilda's bosom, as, unable to utter more, she ceased.

"'Tis but the image of that accursed Julia," replied Zastrozzi, "revelling in his breast, which prevents him from becoming instantly yours. Could you but efface that!"

"I would I could efface it," said Matilda: "the friendship which now exists between us would quickly ripen into love, and I should be for ever happy. How, Zastrozzi, can that be done? But, before we think of happiness, we must have a care to our safety: we must destroy Julia, who yet endeavours, by every means, to know the event of Verezzi's destiny. But, surrounded by wealth and power as she is, how can that be done? No bravo in Naples dare attempt her life: no rewards, however great, could tempt the most abandoned of men to brave instant destruction, in destroying her; and should *we* attempt it, the most horrible tortures of the Inquisition, a disgraceful death, and that without [**I-66**] the completion of our desire, would be the consequence."

"Think not so, Matilda," answered Zastrozzi; "think not, because Julia possesses wealth, that she is less assailable by the dagger of one eager for revenge as I am; or that, because she lives in splendour at Naples, that a poisoned chalice, prepared by your hand, the hand of a disappointed rival, could not send her writhing and convulsed to the grave. No, no; she *can* die, nor shall we writhe on the rack."

"Oh!" interrupted Matilda, "I care not, if, writhing in the prisons of the Inquisition, I suffer the most excruciating torment; I care not if, exposed to public view, I suffer the most ignominious and disgraceful of deaths, if, before I die—if, before this spirit seeks another world, I gain my purposed design, I enjoy unutterable, and, as yet, inconceivable happiness."

The evening meanwhile came on, and, warned by the lateness of the hour to separate, Matilda and Zastrozzi parted.

Zastrozzi pursued his way to the cottage, and Matilda, deeply musing, retraced her steps to the castella.

The wind was fresh, and rather tempestuous: light fleeting clouds were driven rapidly across the dark-blue sky. The moon, in silver majesty, hung high in eastern ether, and rendered transparent as a celestial spirit the shadowy clouds, which at intervals crossed her orbit, and by degrees vanished like a vision in the obscurity of distant air. On this scene gazed Matilda—a train of confused thought took possession of her soul—her crimes, her past life, rose in array to her terror-struck imagination. Still burning love, unrepressed, unconquerable passion, revelled through every vein: her senses, rendered delirious by guilty desire, were whirled around in an inexpressible ecstasy of anticipated delight—delight, not unmixed by confused apprehensions.

[**I-67**]

She stood thus with her arms folded, as if contemplating the spangled concavity of heaven.

It was late—later than the usual hour of return, and Verezzi had gone out to meet Matilda.

"What! deep in thought, Matilda?" exclaimed Verezzi, playfully.

Matilda's cheek, as he thus spoke, was tinged with a momentary blush; it, however, quickly passed away, and she replied, "I was enjoying the serenity of the evening, the beauty of the setting sun, and then the congenial twilight induced me to wander farther than usual."

The unsuspicious Verezzi observed nothing peculiar in the manner of Matilda; but, observing that the night air was chill, conducted her back to the castella. No art was left untried, no blandishment omitted, on the part of Matilda, to secure her victim. Everything which he liked, she affected to admire: every sentiment uttered by Verezzi was always anticipated by the observing Matilda; but long was all in vain—long was every effort to obtain his love useless.

Often, when she touched the harp, and drew sounds of enchanting melody from its strings, whilst her almost celestial form bent over it, did Verezzi gaze enraptured, and, forgetful of everything else, yielding himself to a tumultuous oblivion of pleasure, listened entranced.

But all her art could not draw Julia from his memory; he was much softened towards Matilda; he felt esteem, tenderest esteem—but he yet loved not.

Thus passed the time. Often would desperation, and an idea that Verezzi would never love her, agitate Matilda with most violent agony. The beauties of nature which surrounded the castella had no longer power to interest; borne away on swelling thought, often in the solitude of her own apartment, her spirit was wafted on the wings of anticipating fancy. Sometimes imagination portrayed the most horrible images [**I-68**] for futurity; Verezzi's hate, perhaps his total dereliction of her, his union with Julia, pressed upon her brain, and almost drove her to distraction, for Verezzi alone filled every thought; nourished by restless reveries, the most horrible anticipations blasted the blooming Matilda. Sometimes, however, a gleam of sense shot across her soul, deceived by visions of unreal bliss, she acquired new courage, and fresh anticipations of delight, from a beam which soon withdrew its ray; for, usually sunk in gloom, her dejected eyes were fixed on the ground; though sometimes an ardent expression, kindled by the anticipation of gratified desire, flashed from their fiery orbits.

Often, whilst thus agitated by contending emotions, her soul was shook, and, unconscious of its intentions, knew not the most preferable plan to pursue: would she seek Zastrozzi: on him, unconscious why, she relied much—his words were those of calm reflection and experience; and his sophistry, whilst it convinced her that a superior being exists not, who can control our actions, brought peace to her mind—peace to be succeeded by horrible and resistless conviction of the falsehood of her coadjutor's arguments; still, however, they calmed her; and, by addressing her reason and passions at the same time, deprived her of the power of being benefited by either.

The health of Verezzi, meanwhile, slowly mended: his mind, however, shook by so violent a trial as it had undergone, recovered not its vigour, but, mellowed by time, his grief, violent and irresistible as it had been at first, now became a fixed melancholy, which spread itself over his features, was apparent in every action, and, by resistance, inflamed Matilda's passion to tenfold fury.

The touching tenderness of Verezzi's voice, the dejected softened expression of his eye, touched her soul with tumultuous yet milder emotions. In his presence [**I-69**] she felt calmed; and those passions which, in solitude, were almost too fierce for endurance, when with him were softened into a tender though confused delight.

It was one evening, when no previous appointment existed between Matilda and Zastrozzi, that, overcome by disappointed passion, Matilda sought the forest.

The sky was unusually obscured, the sun had sunk beneath the western mountain, and its departing ray tinged the heavy clouds with a red glare. The rising blast sighed through the towering pines, which rose loftily above Matilda's head: the distant thunder, hoarse as the murmurs of the grove, in indistinct echoes mingled with the hollow breeze; the scintillating lightning flashed incessantly across her path, as Matilda, heeding not the storm, advanced along the trackless forest.

The crashing thunder now rattled madly above, the lightnings flashed a larger curve, and at intervals, through the surrounding gloom, showed a scathed larch, which, blasted by frequent storms, reared its bare head on a height above.

Matilda sat upon a fragment of jutting granite, and contemplated the storm which raged around her. The portentous calm, which at intervals occurred amid the reverberating thunder, portentous of a more violent tempest, resembled the serenity which spread itself over Matilda's mind—a serenity only to be succeeded by a fiercer paroxysm of passion.

CHAPTER XII.

STILL sat Matilda upon the rock—she still contemplated the tempest which raged around her.

The battling elements paused: an uninterrupted [**I-70**] silence, deep, dreadful as the silence of the tomb, succeeded. Matilda heard a noise—footsteps were distinguishable, and, looking up, a flash of vivid lightning disclosed to her view the towering form of Zastrozzi.

His gigantic figure was again involved in pitchy darkness, as the momentary lightning receded. A peal of crashing thunder again madly rattled over the zenith, and a scintillating flash announced Zastrozzi's approach, as he stood before Matilda.

Matilda, surprised at his approach, started as he addressed her, and felt an indescribable awe, when she reflected on the wonderful casualty which, in this terrific and tempestuous hour, had led them to the same spot.

"Doubtless his feelings are violent and irresistible as mine: perhaps *these* led him to meet me here."

She shuddered as she reflected: but smothering the sensations of alarm which she had suffered herself to be surprised by, she asked him what had led him to the forest.

"The same which led you here, Matilda," returned Zastrozzi: "the same influence which actuates us both, has doubtless inspired that congeniality which, in this frightful storm, led us to the same spot."

"Oh!" exclaimed Matilda, "how shall I touch the obdurate Verezzi's soul? He still despises me—he declares himself to be devoted to the memory of his Julia; and that although she be dead, he is not the less devotedly hers. What can be done?"

Matilda paused; and, much agitated, awaited Zastrozzi's reply.

Zastrozzi, meanwhile, stood collected in himself, and firm as the rocky mountain which lifts its summit to heaven.

"Matilda," said he, "to-morrow evening will pave the way for that happiness which your soul has so long panted for; if, indeed, the event which will then occur [**I-71**] does not completely conquer Verezzi. But the violence of the tempest increases—let us seek shelter."

“Oh! heed not the tempest,” said Matilda, whose expectations were raised to the extreme of impatience by Zastrozzi’s dark hints; “heed not the tempest, but proceed, if you wish not to see me expiring at your feet.”

“You fear not the tumultuous elements—nor do I,” replied Zastrozzi. “I assert again, that if to-morrow evening you lead Verezzi to this spot—if, in the event which will here occur, you display that presence of mind which I believe you to possess, Verezzi is yours.”

“Ah! what do you say, Zastrozzi, that Verezzi will be mine?” inquired Matilda, as the anticipation of inconceivable happiness dilated her soul with sudden and excessive delight.

“I say again, Matilda,” returned Zastrozzi, “that if you dare to brave the dagger’s point—if you but make Verezzi owe his life to you ——”

Zastrozzi paused, and Matilda acknowledged her insight of his plan, which her enraptured fancy represented as the basis of her happiness.

“Could he, after she had, at the risk of her own life, saved his, unfeelingly reject her? Would those noble sentiments, which the greatest misfortunes were unable to extinguish, suffer that? No.”

Full of these ideas, her brain confused by the ecstatic anticipation of happiness which pressed upon it, Matilda retraced her footsteps towards the castella.

The violence of the storm which so lately had raged was passed—the thunder, in low and indistinct echoes, now sounded through the chain of rocky mountains, which stretched far to the north—the azure, and almost cloudless ether, was studded with countless stars, as Matilda entered the castella, and, as the hour was late, sought her own apartment.

Sleep fled not, as usual, from her pillow; but, overcome by excessive drowsiness, she soon sank to rest.

[**I-72**]

Confused dreams floated in her imagination, in which she sometimes supposed that she had gained Verezzi; at others, that, snatched from her ardent embrace, he was carried by an invisible power over rocky mountains, or immense and untravelled heaths, and that, in vainly attempting to follow him, she had lost herself in the trackless desert.

Awakened from disturbed and unconnected dreams, she arose.

The most tumultuous emotions of rapturous exultation filled her soul as she gazed upon her victim, who was sitting at a window which overlooked the waving forest.

Matilda seated herself by him, and most enchanting, most pensive music, drawn by her fingers from a harp, thrilled his soul with an ecstasy of melancholy; tears rolled rapidly down his cheeks; deep drawn, though gentle sighs heaved his bosom: his innocent eyes were mildly fixed upon Matilda, and beamed with compassion for one whose only wish was gratification of her own inordinate desires, and destruction to his opening prospects of happiness.

She, with a ferocious pleasure, contemplated her victim; yet, curbing the passions of her soul, a meekness, a well-feigned sensibility, characterised her downcast eye.

She waited, with the smothered impatience of expectation, for the evening: then had Zastrozzi affirmed that she would lay a firm foundation for her happiness.

Unappalled, she resolved to brave the dagger’s point: she resolved to bleed; and though her life-blood were to issue at the wound, to dare the event.

The evening at last arrived; the atmosphere was obscured by vapour, and the air more chill than usual; yet, yielding to the solicitations of Matilda, Verezzi accompanied her to the forest.

Matilda's bosom thrilled with inconceivable happiness, [**I-73**] as she advanced towards the spot; her limbs, trembling with ecstasy, almost refused to support her. Unwonted sensations—sensations she had never felt before, agitated her bosom; yet, steeling her soul, and persuading herself that celestial transports would be the reward of firmness, she fearlessly advanced.

The towering pine-trees waved in the squally wind—the shades of twilight gained fast on the dusky forest—the wind died away, and a deep, a gloomy silence reigned.

They now had arrived at the spot which Zastrozzi had asserted would be the scene of an event which might lay the foundation of Matilda's happiness.

She was agitated by such violent emotions that her every limb trembled, and Verezzi tenderly asked the reason of her alarm.

"Oh, nothing, nothing!" returned Matilda; but, stung by more certain anticipation of ecstasy by his tender inquiry, her whole frame trembled with tenfold agitation, and her bosom was filled with more unconquerable transport.

On the right, the thick umbrage of the forest trees rendered undistinguishable any one who might lurk *there;* on the left, a frightful precipice yawned, at whose base a deafening cataract dashed with tumultuous violence; around, misshapen and enormous masses of rock; and beyond, a gigantic and blackened mountain, reared its craggy summit to the skies.

They advanced towards the precipice. Matilda stood upon the dizzy height—her senses almost failed her, and she caught the branch of an enormous pine which impended over the abyss.

"How frightful a depth!" exclaimed Matilda.

"Frightful indeed," said Verezzi, as thoughtfully he contemplated the terrific depth beneath.

They stood for some time gazing on the scene in silence.

[**I-74**]

Footsteps were heard—Matilda's bosom thrilled with mixed sensations of delight and apprehension, as, summoning all her fortitude, she turned round. A man advanced towards them.

"What is your business?" exclaimed Verezzi.

"Revenge!" returned the villain, as, raising a dagger high, he essayed to plunge it in Verezzi's bosom, but Matilda lifted her arm, and the dagger piercing it, touched not Verezzi. Starting forward, he fell to the earth, and the ruffian instantly dashed into the thick forest.

Matilda's snowy arm was tinged with purple gore: the wound was painful, but an expression of triumph flashed from her eyes, and excessive pleasure dilated her bosom: the blood streamed fast from her arm, and tinged the rock whereon they stood with a purple stain.

Verezzi started from the ground, and seeing the blood which streamed down Matilda's garments, in accents of terror demanded where she was wounded.

“Oh! think not upon that,” she exclaimed, “but tell me—ah! tell me,” said she, in a voice of well-feigned alarm, “are you wounded mortally? Oh! what sensations of terror shook me, when I thought that the dagger’s point, after having pierced my arm, had drunk your life-blood.”

“Oh!” answered Verezzi, “I am not wounded; but let us haste to the castella.”

He then tore part of his vest, and with it bound Matilda’s arm. Slowly they proceeded towards the castella.

“What villain, Verezzi,” said Matilda, “envious of my happiness, attempted his life, for whom I would ten thousand times sacrifice my own? Oh! Verezzi, how I thank God, who averted the fatal dagger from thy heart!”

Verezzi answered not; but his heart, his feelings, were irresistibly touched by Matilda’s behaviour. Such [**I-75**] noble contempt of danger, so ardent a passion, as to risk her life to preserve his, filled his breast with a tenderness towards her; and he felt that he could now deny her nothing, not even the sacrifice of the poor remains of his happiness, should she demand it.

Matilda’s breast meanwhile swelled with sensations of unutterable delight: her soul, borne on the pinions of anticipated happiness, flashed in triumphant glances from her fiery eyes. She could scarcely forbear clasping Verezzi in her arms, and claiming him as her own; but prudence, and a fear of in what manner a premature declaration of love might be received, prevented her.

They arrived at the castella, and a surgeon from the neighbouring convent was sent for by Verezzi.

The surgeon soon arrived, examined Matilda’s arm, and declared that no unpleasant consequences could ensue. Retired to her own apartment, those transports, which before had been allayed by Verezzi’s presence, now unrestrained by reason, involved Matilda’s senses in an ecstasy of pleasure.

She threw herself on the bed, and, in all the exaggerated colours of imagination, portrayed the transports which Zastrozzi’s artifice had opened to her view.

Visions of unreal bliss floated during the whole night in her disordered fancy; her senses where whirled around in alternate ecstasies of happiness and despair, as almost palpable dreams pressed upon her disturbed brain.

At one time she imagined that Verezzi, consenting to their union, presented her his hand: that at her touch the flesh crumbled from it, and, a shrieking spectre, he fled from her view: again, silvery clouds floated across her sight, and unconnected, disturbed visions occupied her imagination till the morning.

Verezzi’s manner, as he met Matilda the following [**I-76**] morning, was unusually soft and tender; and in a voice of solicitude, he inquired concerning her health.

The roseate flush of animation which tinged her cheek, the triumphant glance of animation which danced in her scintillating eye, seemed to render the inquiry unnecessary.

A dewy moisture filled her eyes, as she gazed with an expression of tumultuous, yet repressed rapture upon the hapless Verezzi.

Still did she purpose, in order to make her triumph more certain, to protract the hour of victory; and, leaving her victim, wandered into the forest to seek Zastrozzi. When she arrived at the cottage, she learnt that he had walked forth.—She soon met him.

"Oh! Zastrozzi—my best Zastrozzi!" exclaimed Matilda, "what a source of delight have you opened to me! Verezzi is mine—oh! transporting thought! will be mine for ever. That distant manner which he usually affected towards me, is changed to a sweet, an ecstatic expression of tenderness. Oh! Zastrozzi, receive my best, my most fervent thanks."

"Julia need not die then," muttered Zastrozzi; "when once you possess Verezzi, her destruction is of little consequence."

The most horrible scheme of revenge at this instant glanced across Zastrozzi's mind.

"Oh! Julia must die," said Matilda, "or I shall never be safe; such an influence does her image possess over Verezzi's mind, that I am convinced, were he to know that she lived, an estrangement from me would be the consequence. Oh! quickly let me hear that she is dead. I can never enjoy uninterrupted happiness until her dissolution."

"What you have just pronounced is Julia's death-warrant," said Zastrozzi, as he disappeared among the thick trees.

Matilda returned to the castella.

[**I-77**]

Verezzi, at her return, expressed a tender apprehension, lest, thus wounded, she should have hurt herself by walking; but Matilda quieted his fears, and engaged him in interesting conversation, which seemed not to have for its object the seduction of his affection; though the ideas conveyed by her expressions were so artfully connected with it, and addressed themselves so forcibly to Verezzi's feelings, that he was convinced he ought to love Matilda, though he felt *that* within himself which, in spite of reason—in spite of reflection—told him that it was impossible.

CHAPTER XIII.

> The enticing smile, the modest-seeming eye,
> Beneath whose beauteous beams, belying heaven,
> Lurk searchless cunning, cruelty, and death.
>
> Thomson.

STILL did Matilda's blandishments—her unremitting attention—inspire Verezzi with a softened tenderness towards her. He regarded her as one who, at the risk of her own life, had saved his; who loved him with an ardent affection, and whose affection was likely to be lasting: and though he could not regard her with that enthusiastic tenderness with which he even yet adored the memory of his Julia, yet he might esteem her—faithfully esteem her—and felt not that horror at uniting himself with her as formerly. But a conversation which he had with Julia recurred to his mind: he remembered well, that when they had talked of their speedy marriage, she had expressed an idea, that a union in this life might endure to all eternity; and that the chosen of his heart on earth, might, by congenialty of sentiment, be united in heaven.

[**I-78**]

The idea was hallowed by the remembrance of his Julia; but chasing it, as an unreal vision, from his mind, again his high sentiments of gratitude prevailed.

Lost in these ideas, involved in a train of thought, and unconscious where his footsteps led him, he quitted the castella. His reverie was interrupted by low murmurs, which seemed to float on the silence of the forest; it was scarcely audible, yet Verezzi felt an undefinable wish to know what it was. He advanced towards it—it was Matilda's voice.

Verezzi approached nearer, and from within heard her voice in complaints. He eagerly listened. Her sobs rendered the words which in passionate exclamations burst from Matilda's lips, almost inaudible. He still listened—a pause in the tempest of grief which shook Matilda's soul seemed to have taken place.

"Oh! Verezzi—cruel, unfeeling Verezzi!" exclaimed Matilda, as a fierce paroxysm of passion seized her brain—"will you thus suffer one who adores you to linger in hopeless love, and witness the excruciating agony of one who idolizes you, as I do, to madness?"

As she spoke thus, a long-drawn sigh closed the sentence.

Verezzi's mind was agitated by various emotions as he stood; but rushing in at last, [he] raised Matilda in his arms, and tenderly attempted to comfort her.

She started as he entered—she heeded not his words; but, seemingly overcome by shame, cast herself at his feet, and hid her face in his robe.

He tenderly raised her, and his expressions convinced her that the reward of all her anxiety was now about to be reaped.

The most triumphant anticipation of transports to come filled her bosom; yet, knowing it to be necessary to dissemble—knowing that a shameless claim on his affections would but disgust Verezzi, she said:

"Oh! Verezzi, forgive me: supposing myself to be [**I-79**] alone—supposing no one overheard the avowal of the secret of my soul, with which, believe me, I never more intended to have importuned you, what shameless sentiments—shameless even in solitude—have I not given vent to. I can no longer conceal, that the passion with which I adore you is unconquerable, irresistible; but, I conjure you, think not upon what you have this moment heard to my disadvantage; nor despise a weak unhappy creature, who feels it impossible to overcome the fatal passion which consumes her.

"Never more will I give vent, even in solitude, to my love—never more shall the importunities of the hapless Matilda reach your ears. To conquer a passion fervent, tender as mine is impossible."

As she thus spoke, Matilda, seemingly overcome by shame, sank upon the turf.

A sentiment stronger than gratitude, more ardent than esteem, and more tender than admiration, softened Verezzi's heart as he raised Matilda. Her symmetrical form shone with tenfold loveliness to his heated fancy; inspired with sudden fondness, he cast himself at her feet.

A Lethean torpor crept upon his senses; and, as he lay prostrate before Matilda, a total forgetfulness of every former event of his life swam in his dizzy brain. In passionate exclamations he avowed unbounded love.

"Oh Matilda! dearest, angelic Matilda!" exclaimed Verezzi, "I am even now unconscious what blinded me—what kept me from acknowledging my adoration of thee!—adoration never to be changed by circumstances—never effaced by time."

The fire of voluptuous, of maddening love scorched his veins, as he caught the transported Matilda in his arms, and, in accents almost inarticulate with passion, swore eternal fidelity.

"And accept my oath of everlasting allegiance to [**I-80**] thee, adored Verezzi," exclaimed Matilda; "accept my vows of eternal, indissoluble love."

Verezzi's whole frame was agitated by unwonted and ardent emotions. He called Matilda his wife—in the delirium of sudden fondness, he clasped her to his bosom—"and though love like ours," exclaimed the infatuated Verezzi, "wants not the vain ties of human laws, yet, that our love may want not any sanction which could possibly be given to it, let immediate orders be given for the celebration of our union."

Matilda exultingly consented; never had she experienced sensations of delight like these: the feelings of her soul flushed in exulting glances from her fiery eyes. Fierce, transporting triumph filled her soul as she gazed on her victim, whose mildly-beaming eyes were now characterised by a voluptuous expression. Her heart beat high with transport: and as they entered the castella, the swelling emotions of her bosom were too tumultuous for utterance.

Wild with passion, she clasped Verezzi to her beating breast; and, overcome by an ecstasy of delirious passion, her senses were whirled round in confused and inexpressible delight. A new and fierce passion raged likewise in Verezzi's breast; he returned her embrace with ardour, and clasped her in fierce transports.

But the adoration with which he now regarded Matilda, was a different sentiment from that chaste and mild emotion which had characterised his love for Julia: that passion, which he had fondly supposed would end but with his existence, was effaced by the arts of another.

Now was Matilda's purpose attained—the next day would behold her his bride—the next day would behold her fondest purpose accomplished.

With the most eager impatience, the fiercest anticipation of transport, did she wait for its arrival.

Slowly passed the day, and slowly did the clock toil each lingering hour as it rolled away.

[**I-81**]

The following morning at last arrived: Matilda arose from a sleepless couch—fierce, transporting triumph flashed from her eyes as she embraced her victim. He returned it—he called her his dear and ever-beloved spouse; and, in all the transports of maddening love, declared his impatience for the arrival of the monk who was to unite them. Every blandishment—every thing which might dispel reflection, was this day put in practice by Matilda.

The monk at last arrived: the fatal ceremony—fatal to the peace of Verezzi—was performed.

A magnificent feast had been previously arranged: every luxurious viand, every expensive wine, which might contribute to heighten Matilda's triumph, was present in profusion.

Matilda's joy, her soul-felt triumph, was too great for utterance—too great for concealment. The exultation of her inmost soul flashed in expressive glances from her scintillating eyes, expressive of joy intense—unutterable.

Animated with excessive delight, she started from the table, and seizing Verezzi's hand, in a transport of inconceivable bliss, dragged him in wild sport and varied movements to the sound of swelling and soul touching melody.

"Come, my Matilda," at last exclaimed Verezzi, "come, I am weary of transport—sick with excess of unutterable pleasure: let us retire, and retrace in dreams the pleasures of the day."

Little did Verezzi think that this day was the basis of his future misery; little did he think that, amid the roses of successful and licensed voluptuousness, regret, horror, and despair would arise, to blast the prospects which, Julia being forgot, appeared so fair, so ecstatic.

The morning came. Inconceivable emotions—inconceivable to those who have never felt them—dilated Matilda's soul with an ecstasy of inexpressible bliss; every barrier to her passion was thrown down—every [**I-82**] opposition conquered; still was her bosom the scene of fierce and contending passions.

Though in possession of every thing which her fancy had portrayed with such excessive delight, she was far from feeling that innocent and calm pleasure which soothes the soul, and, calming each violent emotion, fills it with a serene happiness. No—*her* brain was whirled around in transports; fierce, confused transports of visionary and unreal bliss: though her every pulse, her every nerve, panted with the delight of gratified and expectant desire; still was she not happy: she enjoyed not that tranquillity which is necessary to the existence of happiness.

In this temper of mind, for a short period she left Verezzi, as she had appointed a meeting with her coadjutor in wickedness.

She soon met him.

"I need not ask," exclaimed Zastrozzi, "for well do I see, in those triumphant glances, that Verezzi is thine; that the plan which we concerted when last we met, has put you in possession of that which your soul panted for."

"Oh! Zastrozzi!" said Matilda,—"kind, excellent Zastrozzi; what words can express the gratitude which I feel towards you—what words can express the bliss, exquisite, celestial, which I owe to your advice? yet still, amid the roses of successful love—amid the ecstasies of transporting voluptuousness—fear, blighting chilly fear, damps my hopes of happiness. Julia, the hated, accursed Julia's image, is the phantom which scares my otherwise certain confidence of eternal delight: could she but be hurled to destruction—could some other artifice of my friend sweep her from the number of the living——"

"'Tis enough, Matilda," interrupted Zastrozzi; "'tis enough: in six days hence meet me here; meanwhile, let not any corroding anticipations destroy your present happiness; fear not; but, on the arrival of your faithful [**I-83**] Zastrozzi, expect the earnest of the happiness which you wish to enjoy for ever."

Thus saying, Zastrozzi departed, and Matilda retraced her steps to her castella.

Amid the delight, the ecstasy, for which her soul had so long panted—amid the embraces of him whom she had fondly supposed alone to constitute all terrestrial happiness, racking, corroding thoughts possessed Matilda's bosom.

Deeply musing on schemes of future delight—delight established by the gratification of most diabolical revenge, her eyes fixed upon the ground, heedless what path she pursued, Matilda advanced along the forest.

A voice aroused her from her reverie—it was Verezzi's—the well-known, the tenderly-adored tone, struck upon her senses forcibly; she started, and hastening towards him, soon allayed those fears which her absence had excited in the fond heart of her spouse, and on which account he had anxiously quitted the castella to search for her.

Joy, rapturous, ecstatic happiness, untainted by fear, unpolluted by reflection, reigned for six days in Matilda's bosom.

Five days passed away, the sixth arrived, and, when the evening came, Matilda, with eager and impatient steps, sought the forest.

The evening was gloomy, dense vapours overspread the air; the wind, low and hollow, sighed mournfully in the gigantic pine-trees, and whispered in low hissings among the withered shrubs which grew on the rocky prominences.

Matilda waited impatiently for the arrival of Zastrozzi. At last his towering form emerged from an interstice in the rocks.

He advanced towards her.

"Success! Victory! my Matilda," exclaimed Zastrozzi, in an accent of exultation—"Julia is——"

[**I-84**]

"You need add no more," interrupted Matilda: "kind, excellent Zastrozzi, I thank thee; but yet do say how you destroyed her—tell me by what racking, horrible torments you launched her soul into eternity. Did she perish by the dagger's point? or did the torments of poison send her, writhing in agony, to the tomb?"

"Yes," replied Zastrozzi; "she fell at my feet, overpowered by resistless convulsions. Who more ready than myself to restore the Marchesa's fleeted senses—who more ready than myself to account for her fainting, by observing, that the heat of the assembly had momentarily overpowered her? But Julia's senses were fled for ever; and it was not until the swiftest gondola in Venice had borne me far towards your castella, that *il consiglio di dieci* searched for, without discovering the offender.

"Here I must remain; for, were I discovered, the fatal consequences to us both are obvious. Farewell for the present," added he; "meanwhile, happiness attend you; but go not to Venice."

"Where have you been so late, my love?" tenderly inquired Verezzi as she returned. "I fear lest the night air, particularly that of so damp an evening as this, might affect your health."

"No, no, my dearest Verezzi, it has not," hesitatingly answered Matilda.

"You seem pensive, you seem melancholy, my Matilda," said Verezzi; "lay open your heart to me. I am afraid something, of which I am ignorant, presses upon your bosom. Is it the solitude of this remote castella which represses the natural gaiety of your soul? Shall we go to Venice?"

"Oh! no, no!" hastily and eagerly interrupted Matilda: "not to Venice—we must not go to Venice."

Verezzi was slightly surprised, but imputing her manner to indisposition, it passed off.

[**I-85**]

Unmarked by events of importance, a month passed away. Matilda's passion, unallayed by satiety, unconquered by time, still raged with its former fierceness—still was every earthly delight centred in Verezzi; and in the air-drawn visions of her imagination, she portrayed to herself that this happiness would last for ever.

It was one evening that Verezzi and Matilda sat, happy in the society of each other, that a servant entering, presented the latter with a sealed paper.

The contents were: "Matilda Contessa di Laurentini is summoned to appear before the Holy Inquisition—to appear before its tribunal, immediately on the receipt of this summons."

Matilda's cheek, as she read it, was blanched with terror. The summons—the fatal, irresistible summons, struck her with chilly awe. She attempted to thrust it into her bosom; but, unable to conceal her terror, she assayed to rush from the apartment—but it was in vain: her trembling limbs refused to support her, and she sank fainting on the floor.

Verezzi raised her—he restored her fleeting senses; he cast himself at her feet, and in the tenderest, most pathetic accents, demanded the reason of her alarm. "And if," said he, "it is any thing of which I have unconsciously been guilty—if it is any thing in my conduct which has offended you, oh! how soon, how truly would I repent. Dearest Matilda, I adore you to madness: tell me then quickly—confide in one who loves you as I do."

"Rise, Verezzi," exclaimed Matilda, in a tone expressive of serene horror: "and since the truth can no longer be concealed, peruse that letter."

She presented him the fatal summons. He eagerly snatched it; breathless with impatience, he opened it. But what words can express the consternation of the affrighted Verezzi, as the summons, mysterious and inexplicable to him, pressed upon his straining eyeball? [**I-86**] For an instant he stood fixed in mute and agonizing thought. At last, in the forced serenity of despair, he demanded what was to be done.

Matilda answered not: for her soul, borne on the pinions of anticipation, at that instant portrayed to itself ignominious and agonizing dissolution.

"What is to be done?" again, in a deeper tone of despair, demanded Verezzi.

"We must instantly to Venice," returned Matilda, collecting her scattered faculties; "we must to Venice; there, I believe, we may be safe. But in some remote corner of the city we must for the present fix our habitation; we must condescend to curtail our establishment; and above all, we must avoid particularity. But will my Verezzi descend from the rank of life in which his birth has placed him, and with the outcast Matilda's fortunes quit grandeur?"

"Matilda! dearest Matilda!" exclaimed Verezzi, "talk not thus; you know I am ever yours; you know I love you, and with you, could conceive a cottage elysium."

Matilda's eyes flashed with momentary triumph as Verezzi spoke thus, amid the alarming danger which impended her: under the displeasure of the inquisition, whose motives for prosecution are inscrutable, whose decrees are without appeal, her soul, in the possession of all it held dear on earth, secure of Verezzi's affection, thrilled with pleasurable emotions, yet not unmixed with alarm.

She now prepared to depart. Taking, therefore, out of all her domestics, but the faithful Ferdinand, Matilda, accompanied by Verezzi, although the evening was far advanced, threw herself into a chariot, and leaving every one at the castella unacquainted with her intentions, took the road through the forest which led to Venice.

The convent bell, almost inaudible from distance, [**I-87**] tolled ten as the carriage slowly ascended a steep which rose before it.

"But how do you suppose, my Matilda," said Verezzi, "that it will be possible for us to evade the scrutiny of the inquisition?"

"Oh!" returned Matilda, "we must not appear in our true characters—we must disguise them."

"But," inquired Verezzi, "what crime do you suppose the inquisition to allege against you?"

"Heresy, I suppose," said Matilda. "You know an enemy has nothing to do but lay an accusation of heresy against any unfortunate and innocent individual, and the victim expires in horrible tortures, or lingers the wretched remnant of his life in dark and solitary cells."

A convulsive sigh heaved Verezzi's bosom.

"And is that then to be my Matilda's destiny?" he exclaimed in horror. "No—Heaven will never permit such excellence to suffer."

Meanwhile they had arrived at the Brenta. The Brenta's stream glided silently beneath the midnight breeze towards the Adriatic.

Towering poplars, which loftily raised their spiral forms on its bank, cast a gloomier shade upon the placid wave.

Matilda and Verezzi entered a gondola, and the grey tints of approaching morn had streaked the eastern ether, before they entered the Grand Canal at Venice; and passing the Rialto, proceeded onwards to a small, though not inelegant mansion, in the eastern suburbs.

Everything here, though not grand, was commodious; and as they entered it, Verezzi expressed his approbation of living here retired.

Seemingly secure from the scrutiny of the inquisition, Matilda and Verezzi passed some days of uninterrupted happiness.

At last, one evening, Verezzi, tired even with monotony [**I-88**] of ecstasy, proposed to Matilda to take the gondola, and go to a festival which was to be celebrated at St. Mark's Place.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE evening was serene. Fleecy clouds floated on the horizon—the moon's full orb, in cloudless majesty, hung high in air, and was reflected in silver brilliancy by every wave of the Adriatic, as, gently agitated by the evening breeze, they dashed against innumerable gondolas which crowded the Laguna.

Exquisite harmony, borne on the pinions of the tranquil air, floated in varying murmurs; it sometimes died away, and then again swelling louder, in melodious undulations, softened to pleasure every listening ear.

Every eye which gazed on the fairy scene beamed with pleasure; unrepressed gaiety filled every heart but Julia's, as, with a vacant stare, unmoved by feelings of pleasure, unagitated by the gaiety which filled every other soul, she contemplated the varied scene. A magnificent gondola carried the Marchesa di Strobazzo; and the innumerable flambeaux which blazed around her rivalled the meridian sun.

It was the pensive, melancholy Julia, who, immersed in thought, sat unconscious of every external object, whom the fierce glance of Matilda measured with a haughty expression of surprise and revenge. The dark fire which flashed from her eye, more than told the feelings of her soul, as she fixed it on her rival; and had it possessed the power of the basilisk's, Julia would have expired on the spot.

It was the ethereal form of the now forgotten Julia which first caught Verezzi's eye. For an instant he [**I-89**] gazed with surprise upon her symmetrical figure, and was about to point her out to Matilda, when, in the downcast countenance of the enchanting female, he recognised his long-lost Julia.

To paint the feelings of Verezzi—as Julia raised her head from the attitude in which it was fixed, and disclosed to his view that countenance which he had formerly gazed on in ecstasy, the index of that soul to which he had sworn everlasting fidelity—is impossible.

The Lethean torpor, as it were, which before had benumbed him; the charm, which had united him to Matilda, was dissolved.

All the air-built visions of delight, which had but a moment before floated in gay variety in his enraptured imagination, faded away, and, in place of these, regret, horror, and despairing repentance, reared their heads amid the roses of momentary voluptuousness.

He still gazed entranced, but Julia's gondola, indistinct from distance, mocked his straining eyeball.

For a time neither spoke: the gondola rapidly passed onwards, but, immersed in thought, Matilda and Verezzi heeded not its rapidity.

They had arrived at St. Mark's Place, and the gondolier's voice, as he announced it, was the first interruption of the silence.

They started.—Verezzi now, for the first time, aroused from his reverie of horror, saw that the scene before him was real; and that the oaths of fidelity which he had so often and so fervently sworn to Julia were broken.

The extreme of horror seized his brain—a frigorific torpidity of despair chilled every sense, and his eyes, fixedly, gazed on vacancy.

"Oh! return—instantly return!" impatiently replied Matilda to the question of the gondolier.

The gondolier, surprised, obeyed her, and they returned.

[**I-90**]

The spacious canal was crowded with gondolas; merriment and splendour reigned around; enchanting harmony stole over the scene; but, listless of the music, heeding not the splendour, Matilda sat lost in a maze of thought.

Fiercest vengeance revelled through her bosom, and, in her own mind, she resolved a horrible purpose.

Meanwhile, the hour was late, the moon had gained the zenith, and poured her beams vertically on the unruffled Adriatic, when the gondola stopped before Matilda's mansion.

A sumptuous supper had been prepared for their return. Silently Matilda entered—silently Verezzi followed.

Without speaking, Matilda seated herself at the supper-table; Verezzi, with an air of listlessness, threw himself into a chair beside her.

For a time neither spoke.

"You are not well to-night," at last stammered out Verezzi: "what has disturbed you?"

"Disturbed me!" repeated Matilda: "why do you suppose that any thing has disturbed me?"

A more violent paroxysm of horror seemed now to seize Verezzi's brain. He pressed his hand to his burning forehead—the agony of his mind was too great to be concealed—Julia's form, as he had last seen her, floated in his fancy, and, overpowered by the resistlessly horrible ideas which pressed upon them, his senses failed him: he faintly uttered Julia's name—he sank forward, and his throbbing temples reclined on the table.

"Arise! awake! prostrate, perjured Verezzi, awake!" exclaimed the infuriate Matilda, in a tone of gloomy horror.

Verezzi started up, and gazed with surprise upon the countenance of Matilda, which, convulsed by passion, flashed desperation and revenge.

[**I-91**]

"'Tis plain," said Matilda, gloomily, "'tis plain, he loves me not."

A confusion of contending emotions battled in Verezzi's bosom: his marriage vow—his faith plighted to Matilda—convulsed his soul with indescribable agony.

Still did she possess a great empire over his soul—still was her frown terrible—and still did the hapless Verezzi tremble at the tones of her voice, as, in a frenzy of desperate passion, she bade him quit her for ever: "And," added she, "go, disclose the retreat of the outcast Matilda to her enemies; deliver me to the inquisition, that a union with her you detest may fetter you no longer."

Exhausted by breathless agitation, Matilda ceased: the passions of her soul flashed from her eyes; ten thousand conflicting emotions battled in Verezzi's bosom: he knew scarce what to do; but, yielding to the impulse of the moment, he cast himself at Matilda's feet, and groaned deeply.

At last the words, "I am ever yours, I ever shall be yours," escaped his lips.

For a time Matilda stood immovable. At last she looked on Verezzi; she gazed downwards upon his majestic and youthful figure, she looked upon his soul-illumined countenance, and tenfold love assailed her softened soul. She raised him—in an oblivious delirium of sudden fondness she clasped him to her bosom, and, in wild and hurried expressions, asserted her right to his love.

Her breast palpitated with fiercest emotions; she pressed her burning lips to his; most fervent, most voluptuous sensations of ecstasy revelled through her bosom.

Verezzi caught the infection; in an instant of oblivion, every oath of fidelity which he had sworn to another, like a baseless cloud, dissolved away; a Lethean [**I-92**] torpor crept over his senses; he forgot Julia, or remembered her only as an uncertain vision, which floated before his fancy more as an ideal being of another world, whom he might hereafter adore there, than as an enchanting and congenial female, to whom his oaths of eternal fidelity had been given.

Overcome by unutterable transports of returning bliss, she started from his embrace—she seized his hand—her face was overspread with a heightened colour as she pressed it to her lips.

"And are you then mine—mine for ever?" rapturously exclaimed Matilda.

"Oh! I am thine—thine to all eternity," returned the infatuated Verezzi: "no earthly power shall sever us; joined by congeniality of soul, united by a bond to which God himself bore witness."

He again clasped her to his bosom—again, as an earnest of fidelity, imprinted a fervent kiss on her glowing cheek; and, overcome by the violent and resistless emotions of the moment, swore, that nor heaven nor hell should cancel the union which he here solemnly and unequivocally renewed.

Verezzi filled an overflowing goblet.

"Do you love me?" inquired Matilda.

"May the lightning of heaven consume me, if I adore thee not to distraction! may I be plunged in endless torments, if my love for thee, celestial Matilda, endures not for ever!"

Matilda's eyes flashed fiercest triumph; the exultingly delightful feelings of her soul were too much for utterance—she spoke not, but gazed fixedly on Verezzi's countenance.

[**I-93**]

CHAPTER XV.

"That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
The effect and it. Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, ye murdering ministers,
Wherever, in your sightless substances,
Ye wait on nature's mischief."

—Macbeth.

VEREZZI raised the goblet which he had just filled, and exclaimed, in an impassioned tone—

"My adored Matilda! this is to thy happiness—this is to thy every wish; and if I cherish a single thought which centres not in thee, may the most horrible tortures which ever poisoned the peace of man, drive me instantly to distraction. God of heaven! witness thou my oath, and write it in letters never to be erased! Ministering spirits, who watch over the happiness of mortals, attend! for here I swear eternal fidelity, indissoluble, unalterable affection to Matilda!"

He said—he raised his eyes towards heaven—he gazed upon Matilda. Their eyes met—hers gleamed with a triumphant expression of unbounded love.

Verezzi raised the goblet to his lips—when, lo! on a sudden, he dashed it to the ground—his whole frame was shook by horrible convulsions—his glaring eyes, starting from their sockets, rolled wildly around: seized with sudden madness, he drew a dagger from his girdle, and with fellest intent raised it high——

What phantom blasted Verezzi's eyeball! what made the impassioned lover dash a goblet to the ground, which he was about to drain as a pledge of eternal love to the choice of his soul! and why did he, infuriate, who had, but an instant before, imagined Matilda's arms an earthly paradise, attempt to rush unprepared into the presence of his Creator!—It was the mildly-beaming eyes of the lovely but forgotten Julia, [**I-94**] which spoke reproaches to the soul of Verezzi—it was her celestial countenance, shaded by dishevelled ringlets, which spoke daggers to the false one; for, when he had raised the goblet to his lips—when, sublimed by the maddening fire of voluptuousness to the height of enthusiastic passion, he swore indissoluble fidelity to another—Julia stood before him!

Madness—fiercest madness—revelled through his brain. He raised the poniard high, but Julia rushed forwards, and, in accents of distinction, in a voice of alarmed tenderness, besought him to spare himself—to spare her—for all might yet be well.

"Oh! never, never!" exclaimed Verezzi, frantically; "no peace but in the grave for me. ——I am—I am—married to Matilda."

Saying this, he fell backwards upon a sofa, in strong convulsions, yet his hand still grasped the fatal poniard.

Matilda, meanwhile, fixedly contemplated the scene. Fiercest passions raged through her breast—vengeance, disappointed love—disappointed in the instant too when she had supposed happiness to be hers for ever, rendered her bosom the scene of wildest anarchy.

Yet she spoke not—she moved not—but, collected in herself, stood waiting the issue of that event, which had so unexpectedly dissolved her visions of air-built ecstasy.

Serened to firmness from despair, Julia administered everything which could restore Verezzi with the most unremitting attention. At last he recovered. He slowly raised himself, and starting from the sofa where he lay, his eyes rolling wildly, and his whole frame convulsed by fiercest agitation, he raised the dagger which he still retained, and, with a bitter smile of exultation, plunged it into his bosom! His soul fled without a groan, and his body fell to the floor, bathed in purple blood.

Maddened by this death-blow to all anticipation of [**I-95**] happiness, Matilda's faculties, as she stood, whirled in wild confusion: she scarce knew where she was.

At last, a portentous, a frightful calm, spread itself over her soul. Revenge, direst revenge, swallowed up every other feeling. Her eyes scintillated with a fiend-like expression. She advanced to the lifeless corse of Verezzi—she plucked the dagger from his bosom—it was stained with his life's blood, which trickled fast from the point to the floor. She raised it on high, and impiously called upon the God of nature to doom her to endless torments, should Julia survive her vengeance.

She advanced towards her victim, who lay bereft of sense on the floor: she shook her rudely, and grasping a handful of her dishevelled hair, raised her from the earth.

"Knowest thou me?" exclaimed Matilda, in frantic passion—"knowest thou the injured Laurentini? Behold this dagger, reeking with my husband's blood—behold that pale corse, in whose now cold breast thy accursed image revelling, impelled to commit the deed which deprives me of happiness for ever."

Julia's senses, roused by Matilda's violence, returned. She cast her eyes upwards, with a timid expression of apprehension, and beheld the infuriate Matilda convulsed by fiercest passion, and a blood-stained dagger raised aloft, threatening instant death.

“Die! detested wretch,” exclaimed Matilda, in a paroxysm of rage, as she violently attempted to bathe the stiletto in the life-blood of her rival; but Julia starting aside, the weapon slightly wounded her neck, and the ensanguined stream stained her alabaster bosom.

She fell on the floor, but suddenly starting up, attempted to escape her bloodthirsty persecutor.

Nerved anew by this futile attempt to escape her vengeance, the ferocious Matilda seized Julia’s floating hair, and holding her back with fiend-like strength, [**I-96**] stabbed her in a thousand places; and, with exulting pleasure, again and again buried the dagger to the hilt in her body, even after all remains of life were annihilated.

At last the passions of Matilda, exhausted by their own violence, sank into a deadly calm; she threw the dagger violently from her, and contemplated the terrific scene before her with a sullen gaze.

Before her, in the arms of death, lay him on whom her hopes of happiness seemed to have formed so firm a basis.

Before her lay her rival, pierced with innumerable wounds, whose head reclined on Verezzi’s bosom, and whose angelic features, even in death, a smile of affection pervaded.

There she herself stood, an isolated guilty being. A fiercer paroxysm of passion now seized her: in an agony of horror, too great to be described, she tore her hair in handfuls—she blasphemed the power who had given her being, and imprecated eternal torments upon the mother who had borne her.

“And is it for this,” added the ferocious Matilda—“is it for horror, for torments such as these, that He, whom monks call all-merciful, has created me?”

She seized the dagger which lay on the floor.

“Ah, friendly dagger,” she exclaimed, in a voice of fiend-like horror, “would that thy blow produced annihilation! with what pleasure then would I clasp thee to my heart!”

She raised it high—she gazed on it—the yet warm blood of the innocent Julia trickled from its point.

The guilty Matilda shrunk at death—she let fall the upraised dagger—her soul had caught a glimpse of the misery which awaits the wicked hereafter, and, spite of her contempt of religion—spite of her, till now, too firm dependence on the doctrines of atheism, she trembled at futurity; and a voice from within, which [**I-97**] whispers, “thou shalt never die!” spoke daggers to Matilda’s soul.

Whilst thus she stood entranced in a delirium of despair, the night wore away, and the domestic who attended her, surprised at the unusual hour to which they had prolonged the banquet, came to announce the lateness of the hour; but opening the door, and perceiving Matilda’s garments stained with blood, she started back with affright, without knowing the full extent of horror which the chamber contained, and alarmed the other domestics with an account that Matilda had been stabbed.

In a crowd they all came to the door, but started back in terror when they saw Verezzi and Julia stretched lifeless on the floor.

Summoning fortitude from despair, Matilda loudly called for them to return: but fear and horror overbalanced her commands, and, wild with affright, they all rushed from the chamber, except Ferdinand, who advanced to Matilda, and demanded an explanation.

Matilda gave it, in few and hurried words.

Ferdinand again quitted the apartment, and told the credulous domestics, that an unknown female had surprised Verezzi and Matilda; that she had stabbed Verezzi, and then committed suicide.

The crowd of servants, as in mute terror they listened to Ferdinand's account, entertained not a doubt of the truth. Again and again they demanded an explanation of the mysterious affair, and employed their wits in conjecturing what might be the cause of it; but the more they conjectured, the more were they puzzled; till at last, a clever fellow named Pietro, who, hating Ferdinand on account of the superior confidence with which his lady treated him, and supposing more to be concealed in this affair than met the ear, gave information to the police, and, before morning, Matilda's [**I-98**] dwelling was surrounded by a party of officials belonging to il Consiglio di dieci.

Loud shouts rent the air as the officials attempted the entrance. Matilda still was in the apartment where, during the night, so bloody a tragedy had been acted: still in speechless horror was she extended on the sofa, when a loud rap at the door aroused the horror-tranced wretch. She started from the sofa in wildest perturbation, and listened attentively. Again was the noise repeated, and the officials rushed in.

They searched every apartment; at last they entered that in which Matilda, motionless with despair, remained.

Even the stern officials, hardy, unfeeling as they were, started back with momentary horror as they beheld the fair countenance of the murdered Julia; fair even in death, and her body disfigured with numberless ghastly wounds.

"This cannot be suicide," muttered one, who by his superior manner, seemed to be their chief, as he raised the fragile form of Julia from the ground, and the blood, scarcely yet cold, trickled from her vestments.

"Put your orders in execution," added he.

Two officials advanced towards Matilda, who, standing apart with seeming tranquillity, awaited their approach.

"What wish you with me?" exclaimed Matilda haughtily.

The officials answered not; but their chief, drawing a paper from his vest, which contained an order for the arrest of Matilda La Contessa di Laurentini, presented it to her.

She turned pale; but, without resistance, obeyed the mandate, and followed the officials in silence to the canal, where a gondola waited, and in a short time she was in the gloomy prisons of il Consiglio di dieci.

A little straw was the bed of the haughty Laurentini; [**I-99**] a pitcher of water and bread was her sustenance; gloom, horror, and despair pervaded her soul; all the pleasures which she had but yesterday tasted; all the ecstatic blisses which her enthusiastic soul had painted for futurity, like the unreal vision of a dream, faded away; and, confined in a damp and narrow cell, Matilda saw that all her hopes of future delight would end in speedy and ignominious dissolution.

Slow passed the time—slow did the clock at St. Mark's toll the revolving hours as languidly they passed away.

Night came on, and the hour of midnight struck upon Matilda's soul as her death knell.

A noise was heard in the passage which led to the prison.

Matilda raised her head from the wall against which it was reclined, and eagerly listened, as if in expectation of an event which would seal her future fate. She still gazed, when the chains of the entrance were unlocked. The door, as it opened, grated harshly on its hinges, and two officials entered.

"Follow me," was the laconic injunction which greeted her terror-struck ear.

Trembling, Matilda arose: her limbs, stiffened by confinement, almost refused to support her; but collecting fortitude from desperation, she followed the relentless officials in silence.

One of them bore a lamp, whose rays, darting in uncertain columns, showed, by strong contrasts of light and shade, the extreme massiness of the passages.

The Gothic frieze above was worked with art; and the corbels, in various and grotesque forms, jutted from the tops of clustered pilasters.

They stopped at a door. Voices were heard from within: their hollow tones filled Matilda's soul with unconquerable tremors. But she summoned all her resolution—she resolved to be collected during the [**I-100**] trial; and even, if sentenced to death, to meet her fate with fortitude, that the populace, as they gazed, might not exclaim—"The poor Laurentini dared not to die."

These thoughts were passing in her mind during the delay which was occasioned by the officials conversing with another whom they met there.

At last they ceased—an uninterrupted silence reigned: the immense folding doors were thrown open, and disclosed to Matilda's view a vast and lofty apartment. In the centre was a table, which a lamp, suspended from the centre, overhung, and where two stern-looking men, habited in black vestments, were seated.

Scattered papers covered the table, with which the two men in black seemed busily employed.

Two officials conducted Matilda to the table where they sat, and, retiring, left her there.

CHAPTER XVI.

> "Fear, for their scourge, mean villains have;
> Thou art the torturer of the brave."
>
> Marmion.

ONE of the inquisitors raised his eyes; he put back the papers which he was examining, and in a solemn tone asked her name.

"My name is Matilda; my title La Contessa di Laurentini," haughtily she answered; "nor do I know the motive for that inquiry, except it were to exult over my miseries, which you are, I suppose, no stranger to."

"Waste not your time," exclaimed the inquisitor, sternly, "in making idle conjectures upon our conduct; but do you know for what you are summoned here?"

"No." replied Matilda.

[**I-101**]

“Swear that you know not for what crime you are here imprisoned,” said the inquisitor.

Matilda took the oath required. As she spoke, a dewy sweat burst from her brow, and her limbs were convulsed by the extreme of horror, yet the expression of her countenance was changed not.

“What crime have you committed which might subject you to the notice of this tribunal?” demanded he, in a determined tone of voice.

Matilda gave no answer, save a smile of exulting scorn. She fixed her regards upon the inquisitor: her dark eyes flashed fiercely, but she spoke not.

“Answer me,” exclaimed he, “what to confess might save both of us needless trouble.”

Matilda answered not, but gazed in silence upon the inquisitor’s countenance.

He stamped thrice—four officials rushed in, and stood at some distance from Matilda.

“I am unwilling,” said the inquisitor, “to treat a female of high birth with indignity; but, if you confess not instantly, my duty will not permit me to withhold the question.”

A deeper expression of contempt shaded Matilda’s beautiful countenance: she frowned, but answered not.

“You will persist in this foolish obstinacy?” exclaimed the inquisitor. “Officials, do your duty.”

Instantly the four, who till now had stood in the background, rushed forwards: they seized Matilda, and bore her into the obscurity of the apartment.

Her dishevelled ringlets floated in negligent luxuriance over her alabaster bosom: her eyes, the contemptuous glance of which had now given way to a confused expression of alarm, were almost closed; and her symmetrical form, as borne away by the four officials, looked interestingly lovely.

The other inquisitor, who, till now, busied by the papers which lay before him, had heeded not Matilda’s [**I-102**] examination, raised his eyes, and, beholding the form of a female, with a commanding tone of voice, called to the officials to stop.

Submissively they obeyed his order. Matilda, released from the fell hands of these relentless ministers of justice, advanced to the table.

Her extreme beauty softened the inquisitor who had spoken last. He little thought that, under a form so celestial, so interesting, lurked a heart depraved, vicious as a demon’s.

He therefore mildly addressed her; and telling her that, on some future day, her examination would be renewed, committed her to the care of the officials, with orders to conduct her to an apartment better suited to her rank.

The chamber to which she followed the officials was spacious and well furnished, but large iron bars secured the windows, which were high, and impossible to be forced.

Left again to solitude, again to her own gloomy thoughts—her retrospection but horror and despair—her hopes of futurity none—her fears many and horrible—Matilda’s situation is better conceived than described.

Floating in wild confusion, the ideas which presented themselves to her imagination were too horrible for endurance.

Deprived, as she was, of all earthly happiness, fierce as had been her passion for Verezzi, the disappointment of which sublimed her brain to the most infuriate delirium of resistless horror, the wretched Matilda still shrunk at death—she shrunk at the punishment of those crimes, in whose perpetration no remorse had touched her soul, for which, even now, she repented not, but as they had deprived her of terrestrial enjoyments.

She thought upon the future state—she thought upon [**I-103**] the arguments of Zastrozzi against the existence of a Deity: her inmost soul now acknowledged their falsehood, and she shuddered as she reflected that her condition was irretrievable.

Resistless horror revelled through her bosom: in an intensity of racking thought she rapidly paced the apartment; at last, overpowered, she sank upon a sofa.

At last the tumultuous passions, exhausted by their own violence, subsided: the storm, which so lately had agitated Matilda's soul, ceased: a serene calm succeeded, and sleep quickly overcame her faculties.

Confused visions flitted in Matilda's imagination whilst under the influence of sleep; at last they assumed a settled shape.

Strangely brilliant and silvery clouds seemed to flit before her sight: celestial music, enchanting as the harmony of the spheres, serened Matilda's soul, and, for an instant, her situation forgotten, she lay entranced.

On a sudden the music ceased; the azure concavity of heaven seemed to open at the zenith, and a being, whose countenance beamed with unutterable beneficence, descended.

It seemed to be clothed in a transparent robe of flowing silver: its eye scintillated with superhuman brilliancy, whilst her dream, imitating reality almost to exactness, caused the entranced Matilda to suppose that it addressed her in these words:—

"Poor sinning Matilda! repent, it is not yet too late.—God's mercy is unbounded. Repent! and thou mayest yet be saved."

These words yet tingled in Matilda's ears; yet were her eyes lifted to heaven, as if following the visionary phantom who had addressed her in her dream, when, much confused, she arose from the sofa.

A dream, so like reality, made a strong impression upon Matilda's soul.

[**I-104**]

The ferocious passions, which so lately had battled fiercely in her bosom, were calmed: she lifted her eyes to heaven: they beamed with an expression of sincerest penitence; for sincerest penitence at this moment, agonised whilst it calmed Matilda's soul.

"God of mercy! God of heaven!" exclaimed Matilda; "my sins are many and horrible, but I repent."

Matilda knew not how to pray; but God, who from the height of heaven penetrates the inmost thoughts of terrestrial hearts, heard the outcast sinner, as in tears of true and agonising repentance, she knelt before him.

She despaired no longer. She confided in the beneficence of her Creator; and, in the hour of adversity, when the firmest heart must tremble at his power, no longer a hardened sinner, demanded mercy. And mercy, by the All-benevolent of heaven, is never refused to those who humbly, yet trusting in his goodness, ask it.

Matilda's soul was filled with a celestial tranquillity. She remained upon her knees in mute and fervent thought: she prayed; and, with trembling, asked forgiveness of her Creator.

No longer did that agony of despair torture her bosom. True, she was ill at ease: remorse for her crimes deeply affected her; and though her hopes of salvation were great, her belief in God and a future state firm, the heavy sighs which burst from her bosom, showed that the arrows of repentance had penetrated deeply.

Several days passed away, during which the conflicting passions of Matilda's soul, conquered by penitence, were mellowed into a fixed and quiet depression.

[**I-105**]

CHAPTER XVII.

Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.

Horace.

AT last the day arrived, when, exposed to a public trial, Matilda was conducted to the tribunal of il Consiglio di Dieci.

The inquisitors were not, as before, at a table in the middle of the apartment; but a sort of throne was raised at one end, on which a stern-looking man, whom she had never seen before, sat: a great number of Venetians were assembled, and lined all sides of the apartment.

Many, in black vestments, were arranged behind the superior's throne; among whom Matilda recognised those who had before examined her.

Conducted by two officials, with a faltering step, a pallid cheek, and downcast eye, Matilda advanced to that part of the chamber where sat the superior.

The dishevelled ringlets of her hair floated unconfined over her shoulders: her symmetrical and elegant form was enveloped in a thin white robe.

The expression of her sparkling eyes was downcast and humble; yet, seemingly unmoved by the scene before her, she remained in silence at the tribunal.

The curiosity and pity of every one, as they gazed on the loveliness of the beautiful culprit, was strongly excited.

"Who is she? who is she?" ran in inquiring whispers round the apartment. No one could tell.

Again deep silence reigned—not a whisper interrupted the appalling calm.

At last the superior, in a sternly solemn voice, said—

"Matilda Contessa di Laurentini, you are here arraigned on the murder of La Marchesa di Strobazzo: [**I-106**] canst thou deny it? canst thou prove to the contrary? My ears are open to conviction. Does no one speak for the accused?"

He ceased: uninterrupted silence reigned. Again he was about—again, with a look of detestation and horror, he had fixed his penetrating eye upon the trembling Matilda, and had unclosed his mouth to utter the fatal sentence, when his attention was arrested by a man who rushed from the crowd, and exclaimed, in a hurried tone—

“La Contessa di Laurentini is innocent.”

“Who are you, who dare assert that?” exclaimed the superior, with an air of doubt.

“I am,” answered he, “Ferdinand Zeilnitz, a German, the servant of La Contessa di Laurentini, and I dare assert that she is innocent.”

“Your proof,” exclaimed the superior, with a severe frown.

“It was late,” answered Ferdinand, “when I entered the apartment, and then I beheld two bleeding bodies, and La Contessa di Laurentini, who lay bereft of sense on the sofa.”

“Stop!” exclaimed the superior.

Ferdinand obeyed.

The superior whispered to one in black vestments, and soon four officials entered, bearing on their shoulders an open coffin.

The superior pointed to the ground: the officials deposited their burden, and produced, to the terror-struck eyes of the gazing multitude, Julia, the lovely Julia, covered with innumerable and ghastly gashes.

All present uttered a cry of terror—all started, shocked and amazed, from the horrible sight; yet some, recovering themselves, gazed at the celestial loveliness of the poor victim to revenge, which, unsubdued by death, still shone from her placid features.

A deep-drawn sigh heaved Matilda’s bosom; tears, [**I-107**] spite of all her firmness, rushed into her eyes; and she had nearly fainted with dizzy horror; but, overcoming it, and collecting all her fortitude, she advanced towards the corse of her rival, and, in the numerous wounds which covered it, saw the fiat of her future destiny.

She still gazed on it—a deep silence reigned—not one of the spectators, so interested were they, uttered a single word—not a whisper was heard through the spacious apartment.

“Stand off! guilt-stained, relentless woman,” at last exclaimed the superior fiercely: “is it not enough that you have persecuted, through life, the wretched female who lies before you—murdered by you? Cease, therefore, to gaze on her with looks as if your vengeance was yet insatiated. But retire, wretch: officials, take her into your custody; meanwhile, bring the other prisoner.”

Two officials rushed forward, and led Matilda to some distance from the tribunal: four others entered, leading a man of towering height and majestic figure. The heavy chains with which his legs were bound rattled as he advanced.

Matilda raised her eyes—Zastrozzi stood before her.

She rushed forwards—the officials stood unmoved.

“Oh Zastrozzi!” she exclaimed—“dreadful, wicked has been the tenor of our lives; base, ignominious, will be its termination: unless we repent, fierce, horrible, may be the eternal torments which will rack us, ere four-and-twenty hours are elapsed. Repent then, Zastrozzi; repent! and as you have been my companion in apostasy from virtue, follow me likewise in dereliction of stubborn and determined wickedness.”

This was pronounced in a low and faltering voice.

"Matilda," replied Zastrozzi, whilst a smile of contemptuous atheism played over his features—"Matilda, fear not: fate wills us to die: and I intend to meet death, to encounter annihilation, with tranquillity. Am I not convinced of the non-existence of a Deity? am I [**I-108**] not convinced that death will but render this soul more free, more unfettered? Why need I then shudder at death? why need any one, whose mind has risen above the shackles of prejudice, the errors of a false and injurious superstition."

Here the superior interposed, and declared he could allow private conversation no longer.

Quitting Matilda, therefore, Zastrozzi, unappalled by the awful scene before him, unshaken by the near approach of agonising death, which he now fully believed he was about to suffer, advanced towards the superior's throne.

Every one gazed on the lofty stature of Zastrozzi, and admired his dignified mien and dauntless composure, even more than they had the beauty of Matilda.

Every one gazed in silence, and expected that some extraordinary charge would be brought against him.

The name of Zastrozzi, pronounced by the superior, had already broken the silence, when the culprit, gazing disdainfully on his judge, told him to be silent, for he would spare him much needless trouble.

"I am a murderer," exclaimed Zastrozzi; "I deny it not: I buried my dagger in the heart of him who injured me; but the motives which led me to be an assassin were at once excellent and meritorious: for I swore, at a loved mother's death-bed, to avenge her betrayer's falsehood.

"Think you that whilst I perpetrated the deed I feared the punishment? or whilst I revenged a parent's cause, that the futile torments which I am doomed to suffer here, had any weight in my determination? No—no. If the vile deceiver, who brought my spotless mother to a tomb of misery, fell beneath the dagger of one who swore to revenge her—if I sent him to another world, who destroyed the peace of one I loved more than myself in this, am I to be blamed?"

[**I-109**]

Zastrozzi ceased, and with an expression of scornful triumph, folded his arms.

"Go on!" exclaimed the superior.

"Go on! go on!" echoed from every part of the immense apartment.

He looked around him. His manner awed the tumultuous multitude; and, in uninterrupted silence, the spectators gazed upon the unappalled Zastrozzi, who, towering as a demi-god, stood in the midst.

"Am I then called upon," said he, "to disclose things which bring painful remembrances to my mind? Ah, how painful! But no matter; you shall know the name of him who fell beneath this arm: you shall know him, whose memory, even now, I detest more than I can express. I care not who knows my actions, convinced as I am, and convinced to all eternity as I shall be, of their rectitude. Know then, that Olivia Zastrozzi was my mother; a woman in whom every virtue, every amiable and excellent quality, I firmly believe to have been centred.

"The father of him, who, by my arts committed suicide but six days ago in La Contessa di Laurentini's mansion, took advantage of a moment of weakness, and disgraced her who bore me. He swore, with the most sacred oaths, to marry her—but he was false.

"My mother soon brought me into the world. The seducer married another; and, when the destitute Olivia begged a pittance to keep her from starving, her proud betrayer spurned her from his door, and tauntingly bade her exercise her profession. 'The crime I committed with thee, perjured one!' exclaimed my mother, as she left his door, 'shall be my last!'—and, by heavens! she acted nobly. A victim to falsehood, she sank early to the tomb; and, ere her thirtieth year, she died—her spotless soul fled to eternal happiness. Never shall I forget—though but fourteen when she died—never shall I forget her last commands. 'My [**I-110**] son,' said she, 'my Pietrino, revenge my wrongs—revenge them on the perjured Verezzi—revenge them on his progeny for ever!'

"And, by heaven! I think I have revenged them. Ere I was twenty-four, the false villain, though surrounded by seemingly impenetrable grandeur; though forgetful of the offence to punish which this arm was nerved, sank beneath my dagger. But I destroyed his *body* alone," added Zastrozzi, with a terrible look of insatiated vengeance: "time has taught me better: his son's *soul* is hell-doomed to all eternity: he destroyed himself; but my machinations, though unseen, effected his destruction.

"Matilda di Laurentini! Hah! why do you shudder? When, with repeated stabs, you destroyed her who now lies lifeless before you in her coffin, did you not reflect upon what must be your fate? You have enjoyed him whom you adored—you have even been married to him—and, for the space of more than a month, have tasted unutterable joys; and yet you are unwilling to pay the price of your happiness—by heavens, I am not!" added he, bursting into a wild laugh. "Ah, poor fool, Matilda, did you think it was from friendship I instructed you to gain Verezzi? No, no—it was revenge which induced me to enter into your schemes with zeal; which induced me to lead her whose lifeless form lies yonder, to your house, foreseeing the effect it would have upon the strong passions of your husband.

"And now," added Zastrozzi, "I have been candid with you. Judge, pass your sentence—but I know my doom; and, instead of horror, experience some degree of satisfaction at the arrival of death, since all I have to do on earth is completed."

Zastrozzi ceased; and, unappalled, fixed his expressive gaze upon the superior.

Surprised at Zastrozzi's firmness, and shocked at the [**I-111**] crimes of which he had made so unequivocal an avowal, the superior turned away in horror.

Still Zastrozzi stood unmoved, and fearlessly awaited the fiat of his destiny.

The superior whispered to one in black vestments. Four officials rushed in, and placed Zastrozzi on the rack.

Even whilst writhing under the agony of almost insupportable torture his nerves were stretched, Zastrozzi's firmness failed him not; but, upon his soul-illumined countenance, played a smile of most disdainful scorn—and, with a wild, convulsive laugh of exulting revenge, he died.

The End.

[**I-113**]

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.

[**I-115**]

ST. IRVYNE; OR, *THE ROSICRUCIAN.* ↩

CHAPTER I.

RED thunder-clouds, borne on the wings of the midnight whirlwind, floated, at fits, athwart the crimson-coloured orbit of the moon: the rising fierceness of the blast sighed through the stunted shrubs, which, bending before its violence, inclined towards the rocks whereon they grew: over the blackened expanse of heaven, at intervals, was spread the blue lightning's flash; it played upon the granite heights, and, with momentary brilliancy, disclosed the terrific scenery of the Alps, whose gigantic and misshapen summits, reddened by the transitory moonbeam, were crossed by black fleeting fragments of the tempest-cloud. The rain, in big drops, began to descend, and the thunder-peals, with louder and more deafening crash, to shake the zenith, till the long-protracted war echoing from cavern to cavern, died, in indistinct murmurs, amidst the far-extended chain of mountains. In this scene, then, at this horrible and tempestuous hour, without one existent earthly being whom he might claim as friend, without one resource to which he might fly as an asylum from the horrors of neglect and poverty, stood Wolfstein;—he gazed upon the conflicting [**I-116**] elements; his youthful figure reclined against a jutting granite rock; he cursed his wayward destiny, and implored the Almighty of Heaven to permit the thunderbolt, with crash terrific and exterminating, to descend upon his head, that a being useless to himself and to society might no longer, by his existence, mock Him who ne'er made aught in vain. "And what so horrible crimes have I committed," exclaimed Wolfstein, driven to impiety by desperation; "what crimes which merit punishment like this? What, what is death? Ah, dissolution! thy pang is blunted by the hard hand of long-protracted suffering—suffering unspeakable, indescribable!" As thus he spoke, a more terrific paroxysm of excessive despair revelled through every vein; his brain swam around in wild confusion, and, rendered delirious by excess of misery, he started from his flinty seat, and swiftly hastened towards the precipice, which yawned widely beneath his feet. "For what then should I longer drag on the galling chain of existence?" cried Wolfstein; and his impious expression was borne onwards by the hot and sulphurous thunder-blast.

The midnight meteors danced above the gulf upon which Wolfstein wistfully gazed. Palpable, impenetrable darkness seemed to hang upon it; impenetrable even by the flaming thunderbolt. “Into this then shall I plunge myself?” soliloquized the wretched outcast, “and by one rash act endanger, perhaps, eternal happiness;—deliver myself up, perhaps, to the anticipation and experience of never-ending torments? Art thou the God then, the Creator of the universe, whom canting monks call the God of mercy and forgiveness, and sufferest thou thy creatures to become the victims of tortures such as fate has inflicted on me? Oh, God! take my soul; why should I longer live?” Thus having spoken, he sank on the rocky bosom of the mountains. Yet, unheeding the exclamations of the maddened [**I-117**] Wolfstein, fiercer raged the tempest. The battling elements, in wild confusion, seemed to threaten nature’s dissolution; the ferocious thunderbolt, with impetuous violence, danced upon the mountains, and, collecting more terrific strength, severed gigantic rocks from their else eternal basements; the masses, with sound more frightful than the bursting thunder-peal, dashed towards the valley below. Horror and desolation marked their track. The mountain-rills, swoln by the waters of the sky, dashed with direr impetuosity from the Alpine summits; their foaming waters were hidden in the darkness of midnight, or only became visible when the momentary scintillations of the lightning rested on their whitened waves. Fiercer still than nature’s wildest uproar were the feelings of Wolfstein’s bosom; his frame, at last, conquered by the conflicting passions of his soul, no longer was adequate to sustain the unequal contest, but sank to the earth. His brain swam wildly, and he lay entranced in total insensibility.

What torches are those that dispel the distant darkness of midnight, and gleam, like meteors, athwart the blackness of the tempest? They throw a wavering light over the thickness of the storm: they wind along the mountains: they pass the hollow valleys. Hark! the howling of the blast has ceased,—the thunderbolts have dispersed, but yet reigns darkness. Distant sounds of song are borne on the breeze; the sounds approach. A low bier holds the remains of one whose soul is floating in the regions of eternity: a black pall covers him. Monks support the lifeless clay: others precede, bearing torches, and chanting a requiem for the salvation of the departed one. They hasten towards the convent of the valley, there to deposit the lifeless limbs of one who has explored the frightful path of eternity before them. And now they had arrived where lay Wolfstein: “Alas!” said one of the monks, “there reclines a wretched traveller. He is dead; [**I-118**] murdered, doubtlessly, by the fell bandits who infest these wild recesses.”

They raised from the earth his form: yet his bosom throbbed with the tide of life: returning animation once more illumed his eye: he started on his feet, and wildly inquired why they had awakened him from that slumber which he had hoped to have been eternal. Unconnected were his expressions, strange and impetuous the fire darting from his restless eyeballs. At length, the monks succeeded in calming the desperate tumultuousness of his bosom, calming at least in some degree; for he accepted their proffered tenders of a lodging, and essayed to lull to sleep, for awhile, the horrible idea of dereliction which pressed upon his loaded brain.

While thus they stood, loud shouts rent the air, and, before Wolfstein and the monks could well collect their scattered faculties, they found that a troop of Alpine bandits had surrounded them. Trembling, from apprehension, the monks fled every way. None, however, could escape. “What! old grey-beards,” cried one of the robbers, “do you suppose that we will permit you to evade us: you who feed upon the strength of the country, in idleness and luxury, and have compelled many of our noble fellows, who otherwise would have been ornaments to their country in peace, thunderbolts to their enemies in war, to seek precarious subsistence as Alpine bandits? If you wish for mercy, therefore, deliver unhesitatingly your joint riches.” The robbers then despoiled the monks of whatever they might adventitiously have taken with them, and, turning to Wolfstein, the apparent chieftain told him to yield his

money likewise. Unappalled, Wolfstein advanced towards them. The chief held a torch; its red beams disclosed the expression of stern severity and unyielding loftiness which sate upon the brow of Wolfstein. “Bandit,” he answered fearlessly, “I have none,—no money—no [**I-119**] hope—no friends; nor do I care for existence! Now judge if such a man be a fit victim for fear! No! I never trembled!”

A ray of pleasure gleamed in the countenance of the bandit as Wolfstein spoke. Grief, in inerasible traces, sate deeply implanted on the front of the outcast. At last, the chief, advancing to Wolfstein, who stood at some little distance, said, “My companions think that so noble a fellow as you appear to be, would be no unworthy member of our society; and, by Heaven, I am of their opinion. Are you willing to become one of us?”

Wolfstein’s dark gaze was fixed upon the ground: his contracted eyebrow evinced deep thought: he started from his reverie, and, without hesitation, consented to their proposal.

Long was it past the hour of midnight when the banditti troop, with their newly-acquired associate, advanced along the pathless Alps. The red glare of the torches which each held, tinged the rocks and pine-trees, through woods of which they occasionally passed, and alone dissipated the darkness of night. Now had they arrived at the summit of a wild and rocky precipice, but the base indeed of another which mingled its far-seen and gigantic outline with the clouds of heaven. A door, which before had appeared part of the solid rock, flew open at the chieftain’s touch, and the whole party advanced into the spacious cavern. Over the walls of the lengthened passages putrefaction had spread a bluish clamminess; damps hung around, and, at intervals, almost extinguished the torches, whose glare was scarcely sufficient to dissipate the impenetrable obscurity. After many devious windings they advanced into the body of the cavern: it was spacious and lofty. A blazing wood fire threw its dubious rays upon the misshapen and ill-carved walls. Lamps suspended from the roof, dispersed the subterranean gloom, not so completely however, but that ill-defined shades lurked in [**I-120**] the arched distances, whose hollow recesses led to different apartments.

The gang had sate down in the midst of the cavern to supper, which a female, whose former loveliness had left scarce any traces on her cheek, had prepared. The most exquisite and expensive wines apologised for the rusticity of the rest of the entertainment, and induced freedom of conversation, and wild, boisterous merriment, which reigned until the bandits, overcome by the fumes of the wine which they had drunk, sank to sleep. Wolfstein, left again to solitude and silence, reclining on his mat in a corner of the cavern, retraced, in mental, sorrowing review, the past events of his life: ah! that eventful existence whose fate had dragged the heir of a wealthy potentate in Germany from the lap of luxury and indulgence, to become a vile associate of viler bandits, in the wild and trackless deserts of the Alps. Around their dwellings, lofty inaccessible acclivities reared their barren summits; they echoed to no sound save the wild hoot of the night-raven, or the impatient yelling of the vulture, which hovered on the blast in quest of scanty sustenance. These were the scenes without: noisy revelry and tumultuous riot reigned within. The mirth of the bandits appeared to arise independently of themselves; their hearts were void and dreary. Wolfstein’s limbs pillowed on the flinty bosom of the earth: those limbs which had been wont to recline on the softest, the most luxurious sofas. Driven from his native country by an event which imposed upon him an insuperable barrier to ever again returning thither, possessing no friends, not having one single resource from which he might obtain support, where could the wretch, the exile, seek for an asylum but with those whose fortunes, expectations, and characters were desperate, and marked as darkly, by fate, as his own?

Time fled, and each succeeding day inured Wolfstein [**I-121**] more and more to the idea of depriving his fellow-creatures of their possessions. In a short space of time the high-souled and noble Wolfstein, though still high-souled and noble, became an experienced bandit. His

magnanimity and courage, even whilst surrounded by the most threatening dangers, and the unappalled expression of countenance with which he defied the dart of death, endeared him to the robbers; whilst with him they all asserted that they felt, as it were, instinctively impelled to deeds of horror and danger, which, otherwise, must have remained unattempted even by the boldest. His was every daring expedition, his the scheme which demanded depth of judgment and promptness of execution. Often, whilst at midnight the band lurked perhaps beneath the overhanging rocks, which were gloomily impended above them, in the midst, perhaps, of one of those horrible tempests whereby the air, in those Alpine regions, is so frequently convulsed, would the countenance of the bandits betray some slight shade of alarm and awe; but that of Wolfstein was fixed, unchanged, by any variation of scenery or action. One day it was when the chief communicated to the banditti notice which he had received by means of spies, that an Italian Count of immense wealth was journeying from Paris to his native country, and, at a late hour the following evening, would pass the Alps near this place; "They have but few attendants," added he, "and those few will not come this way; the postilion is in our interest, and the horses are to be overcome with fatigue when they approach the destined spot: you understand."

The evening came. "I," said Wolfstein, "will roam into the country, but will return before the arrival of our wealthy victim." Thus saying, he left the cavern, and wandered out amidst the mountains.

It was autumn. The mountain-tops, the scattered oaks which occasionally waved their lightning-blasted heads on the summits of the far-seen piles of rock, were [**I-122**] gilded by the setting glory of the sun; the trees, yellowed by the waning year, reflected a glowing teint from their thick foliage; and the dark pine-groves which were stretched half-way up the mountain sides, added a more deepened gloom to the shades of evening, which already began to gather rapidly above the scenery.

It was at this dark and silent hour, that Wolfstein, unheeding the surrounding objects,—objects which might have touched with awe, or heightened to devotion, any other breast,—wandered alone—pensively he wandered—dark images for futurity possessed his soul: he shuddered when he reflected upon what had passed; nor was his present situation calculated to satisfy a mind eagerly panting for liberty and independence. Conscience too, awakened conscience, upbraided him for the life which he had selected, and, with silent whisperings, stung his soul to madness. Oppressed by thoughts such as these, Wolfstein yet proceeded, forgetful that he was to return before the arrival of their destined victim—forgetful indeed was he of every external existence; and, absorbed in himself, with arms folded, and eyes fixed upon the earth, he yet advanced. At last he sank on a mossy bank, and, guided by the impulse of the moment, inscribed on a tablet the following lines; for the inaccuracy of which, the perturbation of him who wrote them, may account; he thought of past times while he marked the paper with—

'Twas dead of the night, when I sat in my dwelling;
One glimmering lamp was expiring and low;
Around, the dark tide of the tempest was swelling,
Along the wild mountains night-ravens were yelling,—
They bodingly presaged destruction and woe.

'Twas then that I started!—the wild storm was howling,
Nought was seen, save the lightning, which danced in the sky;
Above me, the crash of the thunder was rolling,
And low, chilling murmurs, the blast wafted by.

[**I-123**]

My heart sank within me: unheeded the war

Of the battling clouds, on the mountain-tops, broke;
Unheeded the thunder-peal crash'd in mine ear—
This heart, hard as iron, is stranger to fear;
But conscience in low, noiseless whispering spoke.

'Twas then that her form on the whirlwind upholding,
The ghost of the murder'd Victoria strode;
In her right hand a shadowy shroud she was holding,
She swiftly advanced to my lonesome abode.
I wildly then call'd on the tempest to bear me——

Overcome by the wild retrospection of ideal horror, which these swiftly-written lines excited in his soul, Wolfstein tore the paper, on which he had written them, to pieces, and scattered them about him. He arose from his recumbent posture, and again advanced through the forest. Not far had he proceeded, ere a mingled murmur broke upon the silence of night—it was the sound of human voices. An event so unusual in these solitudes, excited Wolfstein's momentary surprise; he started, and looking around him, essayed to discover whence those sounds proceeded. What was the astonishment of Wolfstein, when he found that a detached party, who had been sent in pursuit of the Count, had actually overtaken him, and, at this instant, were dragging from the carriage the almost lifeless form of a female, whose light symmetrical figure, as it leant on the muscular frame of the robber who supported it, afforded a most striking contrast. They had, before his arrival, plundered the Count of all his riches, and, enraged at the spirited defence which he had made, had inhumanly murdered him, and cast his lifeless body adown the yawning precipice. Transfixed by a jutting point of granite rock, it remained there to be devoured by the ravens. Wolfstein joined the banditti; and, although he could not recall the deed, lamented the wanton cruelty which had been practised upon the Count. As for the female, whose grace and loveliness [**I-124**] made so strong an impression upon him, he demanded that every soothing attention should be paid to her, and his desire was enforced by the commands of the chief, whose dark eye wandered wildly over the beauties of the lovely Megalena de Metastasio, as if he had secretly destined them for himself.

At last they arrived at the cavern; every resource which the cavern of a gang of lawless and desperate villains might afford, was brought forward to restore the fainted Megalena to life: she soon recovered—she slowly opened her eyes, and started with surprise to behold herself surrounded by a rough set of desperadoes, and the gloomy walls of the cavern, upon which darkness hung, awfully visible. Near her sate a female, whose darkened expression of countenance seemed perfectly to correspond with the horror prevalent throughout the cavern; her face, though bearing the marks of an undeniable expression of familiarity with wretchedness, had some slight remains of beauty.

It was long past midnight when each of the robbers withdrew to repose. But his mind was too much occupied by the events of the evening to allow the unhappy Wolfstein to find quiet;—at an early hour he rose from his sleepless couch, to inhale the morning breeze. The sun had but just risen; the scene was beautiful; everything was still, and seemed to favour that reflection, which even propinquity to his abandoned associates imposed no indefinably insuperable bar to. In spite of his attempts to think upon other subjects, the image of the fair Megalena floated in his mind. Her loveliness had made too deep an impression on it to be easily removed; and the hapless Wolfstein, ever the victim of impulsive feeling, found himself bound to her by ties, more lasting than he had now conceived the transitory tyranny of woe could have imposed. For never had Wolfstein beheld so singularly beautiful a form;—her figure cast in the mould of most exact [**I-125**] symmetry; her blue and love-beaming eyes, from which occasionally emanated a wild expression, seemingly almost superhuman; and the auburn hair which hung in unconfined tresses down her damask cheek—formed a resistless

tout ensemble.

Heedless of every external object, Wolfstein long wandered. The protracted sound of the bandits' horn struck at last upon his ear, and aroused him from his reverie. On his return to the cavern, the robbers were assembled at their meal; the chief regarded him with marked and jealous surprise as he entered, but made no remark. They then discussed their uninteresting and monotonous topics, and the meal being ended, each villain departed on his different business.

Megalena, finding herself alone with Agnes (the only woman, save herself, who was in the cavern, and who served as an attendant on the robbers), essayed, by the most humble entreaties and supplications, to excite pity in her breast: she conjured her to explain the cause for which she was thus imprisoned, and wildly inquired for her father. The guilt-bronzed brow of Agnes was contracted by a sullen and malicious frown: it was the only reply which the inhuman female deigned to return. After a pause, however, she said, "Thou thinkest thyself my superior, proud girl; but time may render us equals. Submit to that, and you may live on the same terms as I do."

There appeared to lurk a meaning in these words, which Megalena found herself incompetent to develop; she answered not, therefore, and suffered Agnes to depart unquestioned. The wretched Megalena, a prey to despair and terror, endeavoured to revolve in her mind the events which had brought her to this spot, but an unconnected stream of ideas pressed upon her brain. The sole light in her cell was that of a dismal lamp which, by its uncertain flickering, only dissipated the almost palpable obscurity, [**I-126**] in a sufficient degree more assuredly to point out the circumambient horrors. She gazed wistfully around, to see if there were any outlet; none there was, save the door whereby Agnes had entered, which was strongly barred on the outside. In despair she threw herself on the wretched pallet. "For what cause, then, am I thus entombed alive?" soliloquized the hapless Megalena; "would it not be preferable at once to annihilate the spark of life which burns but faintly within my bosom? O my father! where art thou? Thy tombless corpse, perhaps, is torn into a thousand pieces by the fury of the mountain cataract.—Little didst thou presage misfortunes such as these!—little didst thou suppose that our last journey would have caused thy immature dissolution—my infamy and misery, not to end but with my hapless existence! Here there is none to comfort me, none to participate my miseries!" Thus speaking, overcome by a paroxysm of emotion, she sank on the bed, and bedewed her fair face with tears.

Whilst, oppressed by painful retrospection, the outcast orphan was yet kneeling, Agnes entered, and, not even noticing her distress, bade her prepare to come to the banquet where the troop of bandits was assembled. In silence, along the vaulted and gloomy passages, she followed her conductress, from whose stern and forbidding gaze her nature shrunk back enhorrored, till they reached that apartment of the cavern where the revelry waited but for her arrival to commence. On her entering, Cavigni, the chief, led her to a seat on his right hand, and paid her every attention which his froward nature could stoop to exercise towards a female; she received his civilities with apparent complacency; but her eye was frequently fascinated, as it were, towards the youthful Wolfstein, who had caught her attention the evening before. His countenance, spite of the shade of woe with which the hard hand of suffering had [**I-127**] marked it, was engaging and beautiful; not that beauty which may be freely acknowledged, but inwardly confessed by every beholder with sensations penetrating and resistless; his figure majestic and lofty, and the fire which flashed from his expressive eye, indefinably to herself, penetrated the inmost soul of the isolated Megalena. Wolfstein regarded Cavigni with indignation and envy; and, though almost ignorant himself of the dreadful purpose of his soul, resolved in his own mind an horrible deed. Cavigni was enraptured with the beauty of Megalena, and secretly vowed that no pains should be spared to gain to himself the possession of an object so lovely. The anticipated delight of gratified

voluptuousness revelled in every vein as he gazed upon her; his eye flashed with a triumphant expression of lawless love, yet he determined to defer the hour of his happiness till he might enjoy more free, unrestrained delight, with his adored fair one. She gazed on the chief, however, with an ill-concealed aversion; his dark expression of countenance, the haughty severity, and contemptuous frown, which habitually sate on his brow, invited not, but rather repelled a reciprocality of affection, which the haughty chief, after his own attachment, entertained not the most distant doubt of. He was, notwithstanding, conscious of her coldness, but attributing it to virgin modesty, or to the novel situation into which she had suddenly been thrown, paid her every attention; nor did he omit to promise her every little comfort which might induce her to regard him with esteem. Still, though veiled beneath the most artful dissimulation, did the fair Megalena pant ardently for liberty—for, oh! liberty is sweet, sweeter even than all the other pleasures of life, to full satiety, without it.

Cavigni essayed, by every art, to gain her over to his desires; but Megalena, regarding him with aversion, answered with an haughtiness which she was unable to conceal, and which his proud spirit might ill brook. [**I-128**] Cavigni could not disguise the vexation which he felt, when, increased by resistance, Megalena's dislike towards him remained no longer a secret: "Megalena," said he, at last, "fair girl, thou shalt be mine—we will be wedded to-morrow, if you think the bands of love not sufficiently forcible to unite us."

"No bands shall ever unite me to you!" exclaimed Megalena. "Even though the grave were to yawn beneath my feet, I would willingly precipitate myself into its gulf, if the alternative of that, or an union with you, were proposed to me."

Rage swelled Cavigni's bosom almost to bursting—the conflicting passions of his soul were too tumultuous for utterance;—in an hurried tone, he commanded Agnes to show Megalena to her cell: she obeyed, and they both quitted the apartment.

Wolfstein's soul, sublimed by the most infuriate paroxysms of contending emotions, battled wildly. His countenance retained, however, but one expression,—it was of dark and deliberate revenge. His stern eye was fixed upon Cavigni;—he decided at this instant to perpetrate the deed he had resolved on. Leaving his seat, he intimated his intention of quitting the cavern for an instant.

Cavigni had just filled his goblet. Wolfstein, as he passed, dexterously threw a little white powder into the wine of the chief.

When Wolfstein returned, Cavigni had not yet quaffed the deadly draught: rising, therefore, he exclaimed aloud, "Fill your goblets, all." Every one obeyed, and sat in expectation of the toast which he was about to propose.

"Let us drink," he exclaimed, "to the health of the chieftain's bride—let us drink to their mutual happiness." A smile of pleasure irradiated the countenance of the chief:—that he whom he had supposed to be a dangerous rival, should thus publicly forego any [**I-129**] claim to the affections of Megalena, was indeed pleasure.

"Health and mutual happiness to the chieftain and his bride!" re-echoed from every part of the table.

Cavigni raised the goblet to his lips: he was about to quaff the tide of death, when Ginotti, one of the robbers, who sat next to him, upreared his arm, and dashed the cup of destruction to the earth. A silence, as if in expectation of some terrible event, reigned throughout the cavern.

Wolfstein turned his eyes towards the chief;—the dark and mysterious gaze of Ginotti arrested his wandering eyeball; its expression was too marked to be misunderstood:—he trembled in his inmost soul, but his countenance yet retained its unchangeable expression. Ginotti spoke not, nor willed he to assign any reason for his extraordinary conduct; the circumstance was shortly forgotten, and the revelry went on undisturbed by any other event.

Ginotti was one of the boldest of the robbers; he was the distinguished favourite of the chief, and, although mysterious and reserved, his society was courted with more eagerness, than such qualities might, abstractedly considered, appear to deserve. None knew his history —*that* he concealed within the deepest recesses of his own bosom; nor could the most suppliant entreaties, or threats of the most horrible punishments, have wrested from him one particular concerning it. Never had he once thrown off the mysterious mask, beneath which his character was veiled, since he had become an associate of the band. In vain the chief required him to assign some reason for his late extravagant conduct; he said it was mere accident, but with an air, which more than convinced every one that something lurked behind which yet remained unknown. Such, however, was their respect for Ginotti, that the occurrence passed almost without a comment.

[**I-130**]

Long now had the hour of midnight gone by, and the bandits had retired to repose. Wolfstein retired too to his couch, but sleep closed not his eyelids; his bosom was a scene of the wildest anarchy; the conflicting passions revelled dreadfully in his burning brain:—love, maddening, excessive, unaccountable idolatry, as it were, which possessed him for Megalena, urged him on to the commission of deeds which conscience represented as beyond measure wicked, and which Ginotti's glance convinced him were by no means unsuspected. Still so unbounded was his love for Megalena (madness rather than love), that it overbalanced every other consideration, and his unappalled soul resolved to persevere in its determination even to destruction!

Cavigni's commands respecting Megalena had been obeyed:—the door of her cell was fastened, and the ferocious chief resolved to let her lie there till the suffering and confinement might subdue her to his will. Megalena endeavoured, by every means, to soften the obdurate heart of her attendant; at length, her mildness of manner induced Agnes to regard her with pity; and before she quitted her cell, they were so far reconciled to each other that they entered into a comparison of their mutual situations; and Agnes was about to relate to Megalena the circumstances which had brought her to the cavern, when the fierce Cavigni entered, and, commanding Agnes to withdraw, said, "Well, proud girl, are you now in a better humour to return the favour with which your superior regards you?"

"No!" heroically answered Megalena.

"Then," rejoined the chief, "if within four-and-twenty hours you hold yourself not in readiness to return my love, force shall wrest the jewel from its casket." Thus having said, he abruptly quitted the cell.

So far had Wolfstein's proposed toast, at the banquet, [**I-131**] gained on the unsuspecting ferociousness of Cavigni, that he accepted the former's artful tender of service, in the way of persuasion with Megalena, supposing, by Wolfstein's manner, that they had been cursorily acquainted before. Wolfstein, therefore, entered the apartment of Megalena.

At the sight of him Megalena arose from her recumbent posture, and hastened joyfully to meet him; for she remembered that Wolfstein had rescued her from the insults of the banditti, on the eventful evening which had subjected her to their control.

“Lovely, adored girl,” he exclaimed, “short is my time: pardon, therefore, the abruptness of my address. The chief has sent me to persuade you to become united to him; but I love you, I adore you to madness. I am not what I seem. Answer me!—time is short.”

An indefinable sensation, unfelt before, swelled through the passion-quivering frame of Megalena. “Yes, yes,” she cried, “I will—I love you——” At this instant the voice of Cavigni was heard in the passage. Wolfstein started from his knees, and pressing the fair hand presented to his lips with exulting ardour, departed hastily to give an account of his mission to the anxious Cavigni, who restrained himself in the passage without, and, slightly mistrusting Wolfstein, was about to advance to the door of the cell to listen to their conversation, when Wolfstein quitted Megalena.

Megalena, again in solitude, began to reflect upon the scenes which had been lately acted. She thought upon the words of Wolfstein, unconscious wherefore they were a balm to her mind: she reclined upon her wretched pallet. It was now night: her thoughts took a different turn; the melancholy wind sighing along the crevices of the cavern, and the dismal sound of rain, which pattered fast, inspired mournful reflection. She thought of her father,—her beloved father;—a solitary wanderer on the face of the earth; or, most [**I-132**] probably, thought she, his soul rests in death. Horrible idea! If the latter, she envied his fate; if the former, she even supposed it preferable to her present abode. She again thought of Wolfstein; she pondered on his last words:—an escape from the cavern: oh, delightful idea! Again her thoughts recurred to her father: tears bedewed her cheeks; she took a pencil, and, actuated by the feelings of the moment, inscribed on the wall of her prison these lines:—

Ghosts of the dead! have I not heard your yelling
    Rise on the night-rolling breath of the blast, [2]
When o’er the dark ether the tempest is swelling,
    And on eddying whirlwind the thunder-peal past?

For oft have I stood on the dark height of Jura,
    Which frowns on the valley that opens beneath;
Oft have I braved the chill night-tempest’s fury,
    Whilst around me, I thought, echo’d murmurs of death.

And now, whilst the winds of the mountain are howling,
    O father! thy voice seems to strike on mine ear;
In air whilst the tide of the night-storm is rolling,
    It breaks on the pause of the elements’ jar.

On the wing of the whirlwind which roars o’er the mountain
    Perhaps rides the ghost of my sire who is dead;
On the mist of the tempest which hangs o’er the fountain,
    Whilst a wreath of dark vapour encircles his head.

Here she paused, and, ashamed of the exuberance of her imagination, obliterated from the wall the characters which she had traced: the wind still howled dreadfully; in fearful anticipation of the morrow, she threw herself on the bed, and, in sleep, forgot the misfortunes which impended over her.

Meantime, the soul of Wolfstein was disturbed by ten thousand conflicting passions; revenge and disappointed love agonized his soul to madness; and he resolved to quench the rude feelings of his bosom in the blood of his rival. But, again he thought of Ginotti; [**I-133**] he thought of the mysterious intervention which his dark glances proved not to be accidental. To him it was an inexplicable mystery; which the more he reflected upon, the less able was he to unravel. He had mixed the poison, unseen, as he thought, by any one; certainly unseen by Ginotti, whose back was unconcernedly turned at the time. He planned, therefore, a

second attempt, unawed by what had happened before, for the destruction of Cavigni, which he resolved to put into execution this night.

Before he had become an associate with the band of robbers, the conscience of Wolfstein was clear; clear, at least, from the commission of any wilful and deliberate crime; for, alas! an event almost too dreadful for narration, had compelled him to quit his native country, in indigence and disgrace. His courage was equal to his wickedness; his mind was unalienable from its purpose; and whatever his will might determine, his boldness would fearlessly execute, even though hell and destruction were to yawn beneath his feet, and essay to turn his unappalled soul from the accomplishment of his design. Such was the guilty Wolfstein; a disgraceful fugitive from his country, a vile associate of a band of robbers, and a murderer, at least in intent, if not in deed. He shrunk not at the commission of crimes; he was now the hardened villain; eternal damnation, tortures inconceivable on earth, awaited him. "Foolish, degrading idea!" he exclaimed, as it momentarily glanced through his mind; "am I worthy of the celestial Megalena, if I shrink at the price which it is necessary I should pay for her possession?" This idea banished every other feeling from his heart; and, smothering the stings of conscience, a decided resolve of murder took possession of him—the determining, within himself, to destroy the very man who had given him an asylum, when driven to madness by the horrors of neglect and poverty. He stood in the night-storm on [**I-134**] the mountains; he cursed the intervention of Ginotti, and secretly swore that nor heaven nor hell again should dash the goblet of destruction from the mouth of the detested Cavigni. The soul of Wolfstein too, insatiable in its desires, and panting for liberty, ill could brook the confinement of idea, which the cavern of the bandits must necessarily induce. He longed again to try his fortune; he longed to re-enter that world which he had never tried but once, and that indeed for a short time; sufficiently long, however, to blast his blooming hopes, and to graft on the stock, which otherwise might have produced virtue, the fatal seeds of vice.

CHAPTER II.

The fiends of fate are heard to rave,
And the death-angel flaps his broad wing o'er the wave.

IT was midnight; and all the robbers were assembled in the banquet-hall, amongst whom, bearing in his bosom a weight of premeditated crime, was Wolfstein; he sat by the chief. They discoursed on indifferent subjects; the sparkling goblet went round; loud laughter succeeded. The ruffians were rejoicing over some plunder which they had taken from a traveller, whom they had robbed of immense wealth; they had left his body a prey to the vultures of the mountains. The table groaned with the pressure of the feast. Hilarity reigned around: reiterated were the shouts of merriment and joy; if such could exist in a cavern of robbers.

It was long past midnight: another hour, and Megalena must be Cavigni's. This idea rendered Wolfstein callous to every sting of conscience; and he eagerly awaited an opportunity when he might, unperceived, infuse poison into the goblet of one who confided in him. Ginotti sat opposite to Wolfstein: his arms [**I-135**] were folded, and his gaze rested fixedly upon the fearless countenance of the murderer. Wolfstein shuddered when he beheld the brow of the mysterious Ginotti contracted, his marked features wrapped in inexplicable mystery.

All were now heated by wine, save the wily villain who destined murder; and the awe-inspiring Ginotti, whose reservedness and mystery, not even the hilarity of the present hour could dispel.

Conversation appearing to flag, Cavigni exclaimed, "Steindolph, you know some old German stories; cannot you tell one, to deceive the lagging hours?"

Steindolph was famed for his knowledge of metrical spectre tales, and the gang were frequently wont to hang delighted on the ghostly wonders which he related.

"Excuse, then, the mode of my telling it," said Steindolph, "and I will with pleasure. I learnt it whilst in Germany; my old grandmother taught it me, and I can repeat it as a ballad." —"Do, do," re-echoed from every part of the cavern.—Steindolph thus began:

Ballad.

I.

The death-bell beats!
The mountain repeats
The echoing sound of the knell;
And the dark monk now
Wraps the cowl round his brow.
As he sits in his lonely cell.

II.

And the cold hand of death
Chills his shuddering breatn,
As he lists to the fearful lay
Which the ghosts of the sky.
As they sweep wildly by,
Sing to departed day.
And they sing of the hour
When the stern fates had power
To resolve Rosa's form to its clay.

[**I-136**]

III.

But that hour is past;
And that hour was the last
Of peace to the dark monk's brain.
Bitter tears, from his eyes, gush'd silent and fast;
And he strove to suppress them in vain.

IV.

Then his fair cross of gold he dash'd on the floor
When the death-knell struck on his ear,
Delight is in store
For her evermore;
But for me is fate, horror, and fear.

V.

Then his eyes wildly roll'd,
When the death-bell toll'd,
And he raged in terrific woe.
And he stamp'd on the ground,
But when ceased the sound
Tears again began to flow.

VI.

And the ice of despair
Chill'd the wide throb of care,
And he sat in mute agony still;
Till the night-stars shone through the cloudless air.
And the pale moonbeam slept on the hill.

VII.

Then he knelt in his cell:—
And the horrors of hell
Were delights to his agonized pain.
And he pray'd to God to dissolve the spell,
Which else must for ever remain.

VIII.

And in fervent prayer he knelt on the ground,
Till the abbey bell struck One:
His feverish blood ran chill at the sound:
A voice hollow and horrible murmur'd around,
"The term of thy penance is done!"

[**I-137**]

IX.

Grew dark the night;
The moonbeam bright
Wax'd faint on the mountain high;
And, from the black hill,
Went a voice cold and still,—
"Monk! thou art free to die."

X.

Then he rose on his feet,
And his heart loud did beat,
And his limbs they were palsied with dread;
Whilst the grave's clammy dew
O'er his pale forehead grew;
And he shudder'd to sleep with the dead.

XI.

And the wild midnight storm
Raved around his tall form,
As he sought the chapel's gloom:
And the sunk grass did sigh
To the wind, bleak and high,
As he searched for the new-made tomb.

XII.

And forms, dark and high,
Seem'd around him to fly.
And mingle their yells with the blast
And on the dark wall
Half-seen shadows did fall,
As enhorror'd he onward pass'd.

XIII.

And the storm-fiend's wild rave
O'er the new-made grave,
And dread shadows, linger around.
The Monk call'd on God his soul to save,
And, in horror, sank on the ground.

XIV.

Then despair nerved his arm
To dispel the charm,
And he burst Rosa's coffin asunder.
[**I-138**]
And the fierce storm did swell
More terrific and fell,
And louder peal'd the thunder.

XV.

And laugh'd, in joy, the fiendish throng,
Mix'd with ghosts of the mouldering dead:
And their grisly wings, as they floated along,
Whistled in murmurs dread.

XVI.

And her skeleton form the dead Nun rear'd,
Which dripp'd with the chill dew of hell.
In her half-eaten eyeballs two pale flames appear'd,
And triumphant their gleam on the dark Monk glared,
As he stood within the cell.

XVII.

And her lank hand lay on his shuddering brain;
But each power was nerved by fear.—
"I never, henceforth, may breathe again;
Death now ends mine anguish'd pain.—
The grave yawns,—we meet there."

XVIII.

And her skeleton lungs did utter the sound,
So deadly, so lone, and so fell,
That in long vibrations shudder'd the ground;
And as the stern notes floated around,
A deep groan was answer'd from hell.

As Steindolph concluded, an universal shout of applause echoed through the cavern. Every one had been so attentive to the recitation of the robber, that no opportunity of perpetrating his resolve had appeared to Wolfstein. Now all again was revelry and riot, and the wily designer eagerly watched for the instant when universal confusion might favour his attempt to drop, unobserved, the powder into the goblet of the chief. With a gaze of insidious and malignant revenge was the eye of Wolfstein fixed upon the chieftain's countenance. Cavigni perceived it not; for he was heated [**I-139**] with wine, or the unusual expression of his associate's face must have awakened suspicion, or excited remark. Yet was Ginotti's gaze fixed upon Wolfstein, who, like a sanguinary and remorseless ruffian, sat expectantly waiting

the instant of death. The goblet passed round:—at the moment when Wolfstein mingled the poison with Cavigni's wine, the eyes of Ginotti, which before had regarded him with the most dazzling scrutiny, were intentionally turned away. He then arose from the table, and, complaining of sudden indisposition, retired. Cavigni raised the goblet to his lips—

"Now, my brave fellows," he exclaimed, "the hour is late; but before we retire, I here drink success and health to every one of you."

Wolfstein involuntarily shuddered.—Cavigni quaffed the liquor to the dregs!—the cup fell from his trembling hand. The chill dew of death sat upon his forehead: in terrific convulsions he fell headlong; and, inarticulately uttering, "I am poisoned," sank seemingly lifeless on the earth. Sixty robbers at once rushed forward to raise him; and, reclining in their arms, with an horrible and harrowing shriek, the spark of life fled from his body for ever. A robber, skilled in surgery, opened a vein; but no blood followed the touch of the lancet.—Wolfstein advanced to the body, unappalled by the crime which he had committed; and tore aside the vest from its bosom; that bosom was discoloured by large spots of livid purple, which, by their premature appearance, declared the poison which had been used to destroy him, to be excessively powerful.

Every one regretted the death of the brave Cavigni; every one was surprised at the mode of his death; and, by his abruptly quitting the apartment, the suspicion fell upon Ginotti, who was consequently sent for by Ardolph, a robber whom they had chosen chieftain, Wolfstein having declined the proffered distinction.

Ginotti arrived. His stern countenance was changed [**I-140**] not by the execrations showered on him by everyone. He yet remained unmoved, and apparently careless what sentiments others might entertain of him; he deigned not even to deny the charge. This coolness seemed to have convinced everyone, the new chief in particular, of his innocence.

"Let every one," said Ardolph, "be searched; and if his pockets contain poison which could have effected this, let him die." This method was universally applauded. As soon as the acclamations were stilled, Wolfstein advanced forwards and spoke thus:

"Any longer to conceal that it was I who perpetrated the deed, were useless. Megalena's loveliness inflamed me:—I envied one who was about to possess it.—I have murdered him!"

Here he was interrupted by the shouts of the bandits; and he was about to be delivered to death, when Ginotti advanced. His superior and towering figure inspired awe even in the hearts of the bandits. They were silent.

"Suffer Wolfstein," he exclaimed, "to depart unhurt. *I* will answer for his never publishing our retreat: *I* will promise that never more shall you behold him."

Every one submitted to Ginotti: for who could resist the superior Ginotti? From the gaze of Ginotti Wolfstein's soul shrank, enhorrored, in confessed inferiority: he who had shrunk not at death, had shrunk not to avow himself guilty of murder, and had prepared to meet its reward, started from Ginotti's eye-beam as from the emanation of some superior and preter-human being.

"Quit the cavern!" said Ginotti.—"May I not remain here until the morrow?" inquired Wolfstein.—"If to-morrow's rising sun finds you in this cavern," returned Ginotti, "I must deliver you up to the vengeance of those whom you have injured."

[**I-141**]

Wolfstein retired to his solitary cell, to retrace, in his mind, the occurrences of this eventful night. What was he now? an isolated wicked wanderer; not a being on earth whom he could call a friend, and carrying with him that never-dying tormentor—conscience. In half-waking dreams passed the night; the ghost of him whom he had so inhumanly destroyed, seemed to cry for justice at the throne of God; bleeding, pale, and ghastly, it pressed on his agonized brain; and confused, inexplicable visions flitted in his imagination, until the freshness of the morning breeze warned him to depart. He collected together all those valuables which had fallen to his share as plunder, during his stay in the cavern: they amounted to a large sum. He rushed from the cavern; he hesitated;—he knew not whither to fly. He walked fast, and essayed, by exercise, to smother the feelings of his soul; but the attempt was fruitless. Not far had he proceeded, ere, stretched on the earth apparently lifeless, he beheld a female form. He advanced towards it—it was Megalena!

A tumult of exulting and inconceivable transport rushed through his veins as he beheld her—her for whom he had plunged into the abyss of crime. She slept, and, apparently overcome by the fatigues which she had sustained, her slumber was profound. Her head reclined upon the jutting root of a tree; the tint of health and loveliness sat upon her cheek.

When the fair Megalena awakened, and found herself in the arms of Wolfstein, she started: yet, turning her eyes, she beheld it was no enemy, and the expression of terror gave way to pleasure. In the general confusion had Megalena escaped from the abode of the bandits. The destinies of Wolfstein and Megalena were assimilated by similarity of situations; and, before they quitted the spot, so far had this reciprocal feeling prevailed, that they swore mutual affection. Megalena then related her escape from the [**I-142**] cavern, and showed Wolfstein jewels, to an immense amount, which she had secreted.

"At all events, then," said Wolfstein, "we may defy poverty; for I have about me jewels to the value of ten thousand zechins."

"We will go to Genoa," said Megalena.

"We will, my fair one. There, entirely devoted to each other, we will defy the darts of misery."

Megalena returned no answer, save a look of else inexpressible love.

It was now the middle of the day; neither Wolfstein nor Megalena had tasted food since the preceding night; and faint from fatigue, Megalena scarce could move onwards. "Courage, my love," said Wolfstein; "yet a little way, and we shall arrive at a cottage, a sort of inn, where we may wait until the morrow, and hire mules to carry us to Placenza, whence we can easily proceed to the goal of our destination."

Megalena collected her strength: in a short time they arrived at the cottage, and passed the remainder of the day in plans respecting the future. Wearied with unusual exertions, Megalena early retired to an inconvenient bed, which, however, was the best the cottage could afford; and Wolfstein, lying along the bench by the fireplace, resigned himself to meditation; for his mind was too much disturbed to let him sleep.

Although Wolfstein had every reason to rejoice at the success which had crowned his schemes; although the very event had occurred which his soul had so much and so eagerly panted for; yet, even now, in possession of all he held valuable on earth, was he ill at ease. Remorse for his crimes tortured him: yet, steeling his conscience, he essayed to smother the fire which burned in his bosom; to change the tenour of his thoughts—in vain! he could not. Restless passed the night, and the middle of the day beheld Wolfstein and Megalena far from the habitation of the bandits.

They intended, if possible, to reach Breno that night, and thence, on the following day, to journey towards Genoa. They had descended the southern acclivity of the Alps. It was now hastening towards spring, and the whole country began to gleam with the renewed loveliness of nature. Odoriferous orange-groves scented the air. Myrtles bloomed on the sides of the gentle eminences which they occasionally ascended. The face of nature was smiling and gay; so was Megalena's heart: with exulting and speechless transport it bounded within her bosom. She gazed on him who possessed her soul; although she felt no inclination in her bosom to retrace the events, by means of which an obscure bandit, undefinable to herself, had gained the eternal love of the former haughty Megalena de Metastasio.

They soon arrived at Breno. Wolfstein dismissed the muleteer, and conducted Megalena into the interior of the inn, ordering at the same time a supper. Again were repeated protestations of eternal affection, avowals of indissoluble love; but it is sufficient to conceive what cannot be so well described.

It was near midnight; Wolfstein and Megalena sat at supper, and conversed with that unrestrainedness and gaiety which mutual confidence inspired, when the door was opened, and the innkeeper announced the arrival of a man who wished to speak with Wolfstein.

"Tell him," exclaimed Wolfstein, rather surprised, and wishing to guard against the possibility of danger, "that I will not see him."

The landlord left the room, and in a short time returned. A man accompanied him: he was of gigantic stature, and masked. "He would take no denial, signor," said the landlord, in exculpation, as he left the room.

The stranger advanced to the table at which Wolfstein and Megalena sat: he threw aside his mask, and [**I-144**] disclosed the features of—Ginotti! Wolfstein's frame became convulsed with involuntary horror: he started. Megalena was surprised.

Ginotti, at length, broke the terrible silence.

"Wolfstein," he said, "I saved you from, otherwise, inevitable death; by *my* means alone have you gained Megalena:—what do I then deserve in return?" Wolfstein looked on the countenance: it was stern and severe, yet divested of the terrible expression which had before caused his frame to shudder with excess of alarm.

"My eternal gratitude," returned Wolfstein, hesitatingly.

"Will you promise, that when, destitute and a wanderer, I demand your protection, when I beseech you to listen to the tale which I shall relate, you *will* listen to me; that, when I am dead, you will bury me, and suffer my soul to rest in the endless slumber of annihilation? Then will you repay me for the benefits which I have conferred upon you."

"I will," replied Wolfstein; "I will perform all that you require."

"Swear it!" exclaimed Ginotti.

"I swear."

Ginotti then abruptly quitted the apartment; the sound of his footsteps was heard descending the stairs; and, when they were no longer audible, a weight seemed to have been taken from the breast of Wolfstein.

"How did that man save your life?" inquired Megalena.

"He was one of our band," replied Wolfstein, evasively;" and, on a plundering excursion, his pistol-ball entered the heart of the man, whose sabre, lifted aloft, would else have severed my head from my body."

"Dear Wolfstein, who are you?—whence came you?—for you were not always an Alpine bandit?"

"That is true, my adored one; but fate presents an [**I-145**] insuperable barrier to my ever relating the events which occurred previously to my connexion with the banditti. Dearest Megalena, if you love me, never question me concerning my *past* life, but rest satisfied with the conviction, that my future existence shall be devoted to you, and to you alone." Megalena felt surprise; but, although eagerly desiring to unravel the mystery in which Wolfstein shrouded himself, desisted from inquiry.

Ginotti's mysterious visit had made too serious an impression on the mind of Wolfstein to be lightly erased. In vain he essayed to appear easy and unembarrassed, while he conversed with Megalena. He attempted to drown thought in wine—but in vain:—Ginotti's strange injunction pressed, like a load of ice, upon his breast. At last, the hour being late, they both retired to their respective rooms.

Early on the following morning, Wolfstein arose, to arrange the necessary preparations for their journey to Genoa; whither he had sent a servant whom he hired at Breno, to prepare accommodations for their arrival: Needless were it minutely to describe each trivial event which occurred during their journey to Genoa.

On the morning of the fourth day, they found themselves within a short distance of the city. They determined on the plan they should adopt, and, in a short space of time, arriving at Genoa, took up their residence in a mansion on the outermost extremity of the city.

[**I-146**]

CHAPTER III.

> Whence, and what art thou, execrable shape,
> That darest, though grim and terrible, advance
> Thy miscreated front athwart my way?—
>
> Paradise Lost.

TIME passed; and, settled in their new habitation, Megalena and Wolfstein appeared to defy the arrows of vengeful destiny.

Wolfstein resolved to allow some time to elapse before he spoke of the subject nearest to his heart, of herself, to Megalena. One evening, however, overcome by the passion which, by mutual indulgence, had become resistless, he cast himself at her feet, and, avowing most unbounded love, demanded the promised return. A slight spark of virtue yet burned in the bosom of the wretched girl; she essayed to fly from temptation; but Wolfstein, seizing her hand, said, "And is my adored Megalena a victim then to prejudice? Does she believe, that the Being who created us gave us passions which never were to be satiated? Does she suppose that Nature created us to become the tormentors of each other?"

"Ah! Wolfstein," Megalena said tenderly, "rise!—You know too well the chain which unites me to you is indissoluble; you know that I must be thine; where, therefore, is there an appeal?"

"To thine own heart, Megalena; for, if my image implanted there is not sufficiently eloquent to confirm your hesitating soul, I would wish not for a casket that contains a jewel unworthy of my possession."

Megalena involuntarily started at the strength of his expression; she felt how completely she was his, and turned her eyes upon his countenance, to read in it the meaning of his words. —His eyes gleamed with excessive and confiding love.

"Yes," exclaimed Megalena, "yes, prejudice avaunt! [**I-147**] once more reason takes her seat, and convinces me that to be Wolfstein's is not criminal. O Wolfstein! if for a moment Megalena has yielded to the imbecility of nature, believe that she yet knows how to recover herself, to reappear in her proper character. Ere I knew you, a void in my heart, and a tasteless carelessness of those objects which now interest me, confessed your unseen empire; my heart longed for something which now it has attained. I scruple not, Wolfstein, to aver that it is you:—Be mine, then, and let our affection end not but with our existence!"

"Never, never shall it end!" enthusiastically exclaimed Wolfstein. "Never!—What can break the bond joined by congeniality of sentiment, cemented by an union of soul which must endure till the intellectual particles which compose it become annihilated? Oh! never shall it end; for when, convulsed by nature's latest ruin, sinks the fabric of this perishable globe; when the earth is dissolved away, and the face of heaven is rolled from before our eyes like a scroll; then will we seek each other, and, in eternal, indivisible, although immaterial union, shall we exist to all eternity."

Yet the love with which Wolfstein regarded Megalena, notwithstanding the strength of his expressions, though fervent and excessive, at first, was not of that nature which was likely to remain throughout existence; it was like the blaze of the meteor at midnight, which glares amid the darkness for awhile, and then expires; yet did he love her now; at least if heated admiration of her person and accomplishments, independently of mind, be love.

* * * * *

Blessed in mutual affection, if so it may be called, the time passed swift to Wolfstein and Megalena. No incident worthy of narration occurred to disturb the uninterrupted tenour of their existence. Tired, at last, [**I-148**] even with delight, which had become monotonous from long continuance, they began to frequent the public places. It was one evening, nearly a month subsequent to their first residence at Genoa, that they went to a party at the Duca di Thice. It was there that he beheld the gaze of one of the crowd fixed upon him. Indefinable to himself were the emotions which shook him; in vain he turned to every part of the saloon to avoid the scrutiny of the stranger's gaze; he was not able to give formation, in his own mind, to the ideas which struck him; they were acknowledged, however, in his heart, by sensations awful, and not to be described. He knew that he had before seen the features of the stranger; but he had forgotten Ginotti; for it was Ginotti—from whose scrutinizing glance Wolfstein turned appalled;—it was Ginotti, of whose strangely and fearfully gleaming eyeball Wolfstein endeavoured to evade the fascination in vain. His eyes, resistlessly attracted to the sphere of chill horror that played around Ginotti's glance, in vain were fixed on vacuity; in vain attempted to notice other objects. Complaining to Megalena of sudden and violent indisposition, Wolfstein with her retired, and they quickly reached the steps of their mansion. Arrived there, Megalena tenderly inquired the cause of Wolfstein's illness, but his vague answers and unconnected exclamations, soon led her to suppose it was not corporeal. She entreated him to acquaint her with the reason of his indisposition; Wolfstein, however, wishing to conceal from Megalena the true cause of his emotions, evasively told her that he had felt excessively faint from the heat of the assembly; she well knew, by his manner, that he had not told her truth, but affected to be satisfied, resolving, at some future period, to

develop the mystery with which he evidently was environed. Retired to rest, Wolfstein's mind, torn by contending paroxysms of passion, admitted not of sleep; he ruminated on the [**I-149**] mysterious reappearance of Ginotti; and the more he reflected, the more did the result of his reflections lead him astray. The strange gaze of Ginotti, and the consciousness that he was completely in the power of so indefinable a being; the consciousness that, wheresoever he might go, Ginotti would still follow him, pressed upon Wolfstein's heart. Ignorant of what connexion they could have with this mysterious observer of his actions, his crimes recurred in hideous and disgustful array to the bewildered mind of Wolfstein; he reflected, that, although now exulting in youthful health and vigour, the time would come, the dreadful day of retribution, when endless damnation would yawn beneath his feet, and he would shrink from eternal punishment before the tribunal of that God whom he had insulted. To evade death, unconscious why, became an idea on which he dwelt with earnestness; he thought on it for a time, and being mournfully convinced of its impossibility, strove to change the tenour of his reflections.

While these thoughts dwelt in his mind, sleep crept imperceptibly over his senses; yet, in his visions, was Ginotti present. He dreamed that he stood on the brink of a frightful precipice, at whose base, with deafening and terrific roar, the waves of the ocean dashed; that, above his head, the blue glare of the lightning dispelled the obscurity of midnight, and the loud crashing of the thunder was rolled franticly from rock to rock; that, along the cliff on which he stood, a figure, more frightful than the imagination of man is capable of portraying, advanced towards him, and was about to precipitate him headlong from the summit of the rock whereon he stood, when Ginotti advanced, and rescued him from the grasp of the monster; that no sooner had he done this, than the figure dashed Ginotti from the precipice—his last groans were borne on the blast which swept the bosom of the ocean. [**I-150**] Confused visions then obliterated the impressions of the former, and he rose in the morning restless and unrefreshed.

A weight which his utmost efforts could not remove, pressed upon the bosom of Wolfstein; his mind, superior and towering as it was, found all its energies inefficient to conquer it. As a last resource, therefore, this wretched victim of vice and folly sought the gaming-table; a scene which alone could raise the spirits of one who required something important, even in his pastimes, to interest him. He staked large sums; and, although he concealed his haunts from Megalena, she soon discovered them. For a time, fortune smiled; till one evening he entered his mansion, desperate from ill luck, and, accusing his own hapless destiny, could no longer conceal the truth from Megalena. She reproved him mildly, and her tenderness had such an effect on Wolfstein that he burst into tears, and promised her that never again would he yield to the vicious influence of folly.

The rapid days rolled on, and each one brought the conviction to Wolfstein more strongly, that Megalena was not the celestial model of perfection which his warm imagination had portrayed; he began to find in her, not the exhaustless mine of interesting converse which he had once supposed. Possession, which, when unassisted by real, intellectual love, clogs man, increases the ardent, uncontrollable passions of woman even to madness. Megalena yet adored Wolfstein with most fervent love:—although yet greatly attached to Megalena, although he would have been uneasy were she another's, Wolfstein no longer regarded her with that idolatrous affection which had filled his bosom towards her. Feelings of this nature naturally drove Wolfstein occasionally from home to seek for employment—and what employment, save gaming, could Genoa afford to Wolfstein? In what other occupation was it possible [**I-151**] that he could engage? It was done: he broke his promise to Megalena, and became even a more devoted votary to gambling than before.

How powerful are the attractions of delusive vice! Wolfstein soon staked large sums—larger even than ever. With what anxiety did he watch the dice! How were his eyeballs strained with mingled anticipation of wealth and poverty! Now fortune smiled; yet he concealed even his good luck from Megalena. At length the tide changed again: he lost immense sums; and desperate from a series of ill success, cursed his hapless destiny, and with wildest emotions rushed into the street. Again he solemnly swore to Megalena, that never more would he risk their mutual happiness by his folly.

Still, hurried away by the impulse of a burning desire of interesting his deadened feelings, did Wolfstein, false to his promise, seek the gaming-table; he had staked an enormous amount; and the fatal throw was at this instant about to decide the fate of the unhappy Wolfstein.

A pause, as if some dreadful event were about to occur, ensued; each gazed upon the countenance of Wolfstein, which, desperate from danger, retained, however, an expressive firmness.

A stranger stood before Wolfstein on the opposite side of the table. He appeared to have no interest in what was going forward, but, with unmoved gaze, fixed his eyes upon his countenance.

Wolfstein felt an instinctive shuddering thrill through his frame, when, oh horrible confirmation of his wildest apprehensions! it was—Ginotti!—the terrible, the mysterious Ginotti, whose dire scrutiny, resting upon Wolfstein, chilled his soul with excessive affright.

A sensation of extreme and conflicting emotions shook the inmost recesses of Wolfstein's heart; for an instant his brain swam around in wildest commotion, yet he steeled his resolution, even to the horrors of [**I-152**] hell and destruction; he gazed on the mysterious scrutineer who stood before him, and, regardless of the sum he had staked, and which before had engaged his whole attention, and excited his liveliest interest, dashed the box convulsively upon the table, and followed Ginotti, who was about to quit the apartment, resolving to clear up a fatality which hung around him, and appeared to blast his prospects; for of the misfortunes which had succeeded his association with the bandits, he had not the slightest doubt in his own mind, that Ginotti was the cause.

With reflections a scene of the wildest anarchy, Wolfstein resolved to unravel the mystery in which he saw Ginotti was shrouded; and resolved, therefore, to devote that night towards finding out his abode. With feelings such as these, he rushed into the street, and followed the gigantic form of Ginotti, who stalked onwards majestically, as if conscious of safety, and wholly ignorant of the eager scrutiny with which Wolfstein watched his every movement.

It was midnight—yet they continued to advance; a feeling of desperation urged Wolfstein onwards; he resolved to follow Ginotti, even to the extremity of the universe. They passed through many bye and narrow streets; the darkness was complete; but the rays of the lamps, as they fell upon the lofty form of Ginotti, guided the footsteps of Wolfstein.

They had reached the end of the Strada Nuova; the lengthened sound of Ginotti's footsteps was all that struck upon Wolfstein's ear. On a sudden, Ginotti's figure disappeared from Wolfstein's gaze; in vain he looked around him, in vain he searched every recess, wherein he might have secreted himself—Ginotti was gone!

To describe the surprise mingled with awe, which possessed Wolfstein's bosom, is impossible. In vain he searched every part. He proceeded to the bridge; a [**I-153**] party of fishermen were waiting there; he inquired of them, had they seen a man of superior stature pass? they appeared surprised at his question, and unanimously answered in the negative.

While varying emotions tumultuously contended within his bosom, Wolfstein, ever the victim of extraordinary events, paused awhile, revolving the mystery both of Ginotti's appearance and disappearance. That business of an important nature led him to Genoa, he doubted not; his indifference at the gaming-table, his particular regard of Wolfstein, left, in the mind of the latter, no doubt, but that he took a terrible and mysterious interest in whatever related to him.

All now was silent. The inhabitants of Genoa lay wrapped in sleep, and, save the occasional conversation of the fishermen who had just returned, no sound broke on the uninterrupted stillness, and thick clouds obscured the star-beams of heaven.

Again Wolfstein searched that part of the city which lay near Strada Nuova; but no one had seen Ginotti; although all wondered at the wild expressions and disordered mien of Wolfstein. The bell tolled the hour of three ere Wolfstein relinquished his pursuit; finding, however, further inquiry fruitless, he engaged a chair to take him to his habitation, where he doubted not that Megalena anxiously awaited his return.

Proceeding along the streets, the obscurity of the night was not so great but that he observed the figure of one of the chairmen to be above that of common men, and that he had drawn his hat forwards to conceal his countenance. His appearance, however, excited no remark; for Wolfstein was too much absorbed in the idea which related individually to himself, to notice what, perhaps, at another time, might have excited wonder. The wind sighed moaningly along the stilly colonnades, and the grey light of morning began to appear above the eastern eminences.

[**I-154**]

They entered the street which soon led to the abode of Wolfstein, who fixed his eyes upon the chairman. His gigantic proportions struck him with involuntary awe: such is the unaccountable connexion of idea in the mind of man. He shuddered. Such a man, thought he, is Ginotti: such a man is he who watches my every action, whose power I feel within myself is resistless, and not to be evaded. He sighed deeply when he reflected on the terrible connexion, dreadful although mysterious, which subsisted between himself and Ginotti. His soul sank within him at the idea of his own littleness, when a fellow-mortal might be able to gain so strong, though sightless, an empire over him. He felt that he was no longer independent. Whilst these thoughts agitated his mind, the chair had stopped at his habitation. He turned round to discharge the chairman's fare, when, casting his eyes on his countenance, which hitherto had remained concealed—oh, horrible and chilling conviction! he recognized in his dark features those of the terrific Ginotti. As if hell had yawned at the feet of the hapless Wolfstein, as if some spectre of the night had blasted his straining eyeball, so did he stand transfixed. His soul shrank with mingled awe and abhorrence from a being who, even to himself, was confessedly superior to the proud and haughty Wolfstein. Ere well he could calm his faculties, agitated by so unexpected an interview, Ginotti said,

"Wolfstein! long have I known you; long have I marked you as the only man who now exists, worthy, and appreciating the value of what I have in store for you. Inscrutable are my intentions; seek not, therefore, to develop them: time will do it in a far more complete manner. You shall not now know the motive for my, to you, unaccountable actions: strive not, therefore, to unravel them: You may frequently see me: never attempt to speak or follow; for, if you do——" Here the eyes of Ginotti flashed with coruscations of [**I-155**] inexpressible fire, and his every feature became animated by the tortures which he was about to describe; but he suddenly checked himself, and only added: "Attend to these my directions, but try, if possible, to forget me. I am not what I seem. The time may come, *will* most probably arrive, when I shall appear in my real character to you. You, Wolfstein, have I singled out from the

whole world to make the depositary——" He ceased, and abruptly quitted the spot.

CHAPTER IV.

—Nature shrinks back
Enhorror'd from the lurid gaze of vengeance,
E'en in the deepest caverns, and the voice
Of all her works lies hush'd.

Olympia.

ON Wolfstein's return to his habitation, he found Megalena in anxious expectation of his arrival. She feared that some misfortune had befallen him. Wolfstein related to her the events of the preceding night; they appeared to her mysterious and inexplicable: nor could she offer any consolation to the wretched Wolfstein.

The occurrences of the preceding evening left a load upon his breast, which all the gaieties of Genoa were insufficient to dispel: eagerly he longed for the visit of Ginotti. Slow dragged the hours: each day did he expect it, and each succeeding day brought but disappointment to his expectations.

Megalena too, the beautiful, the adored Megalena, was no longer what formerly she was, the innocent girl hanging on his support, and depending wholly upon him for defence and protection; no longer, with mild and love-beaming eyes, she regarded the haughty Wolfstein as a superior being, whose look or slightest [**I-156**] word was sufficient to decide her on any disputed point. No; dissipated pleasures had changed the former mild and innocent Megalena. Far, far different was she than when she threw herself into his arms on their escape from the cavern, and, with a blush, smiled upon the first declaration of Wolfstein's affection.

Now, immersed in a succession of gay pleasures, Megalena was no longer the gentle interesting she, whose soul of sensibility would tremble if a worm beneath her feet expired; whose heart would sink within her at the tale of others' woe. She had become a fashionable belle, and forgot, in her new character, the fascinations of her old one. Still, however, was she ardently, solely, and resistlessly attached to Wolfstein: his image was implanted in her soul, never to be effaced by casualty, never erased by time. No coolness apparently took place between them; but, although unperceived and unacknowledged by each, an indifference evidently did exist between them. Among the various families whom their residence in Genoa had rendered familiar to Wolfstein and Megalena, none were more so than that of il Conte della Anzasca; it consisted of himself, la Contessa, and a daughter of exquisite loveliness, named Olympia.

This girl, mistress of every fascinating accomplishment, uniting in herself to great brilliancy and playfulness of wit, a person alluring beyond description, was in her eighteenth year. From habitual indulgence, her passions, naturally violent and excessive, had become irresistible; and when once she had fixed a determination in her mind, that determination must either be effected, or she must cease to exist. Such, then, was the beautiful Olympia, and as such she conceived a violent and unconquerable passion for Wolfstein. His towering and majestic form, his expressive and regular features, beaming with somewhat of softness; [**I-157**] yet pregnant with a look as if woe had beat to the earth a mind whose native and unconfined energies aspired to heaven—all, all told her, that, without him, she must either cease to be, or drag on a life of endless and irremediable woe. Nourished by restless imagination, her passion soon attained a most unbridled height: instead of conquering a feeling which honour, generosity, virtue, all forbade ever to be gratified, she gloried within herself at having found one on whom she might with justice fix her burning attachment; for

although the object of them had never before been present to her mind, the desires for that object, although unseen, had taken root long, long ago. A false system of education, and a wrong expansion of ideas, as they became formed, had been put in practice with respect to her youthful mind; and indulgence strengthened the passions which it behoved restraint to keep within proper bounds, and which have unfolded themselves as coadjutors of virtue, and not as promoters of vicious and illicit love. Fiercer, nevertheless, in proportion as greater obstacles appeared in the prosecution of her resolve, flamed the passion of the devoted Olympia. Her brain was whirled round in the fiercest convulsions of expectant happiness; the anticipation of gratified voluptuousness swelled her bosom even to bursting, yet did she rein-in the boiling emotions of her soul, and resolved to be sufficiently cool, more certainly to accomplish her purpose.

It was one night when Wolfstein's mansion was the scene of gaiety, that this idea first suggested itself to the mind of Olympia, and unfolded itself to her, as it really was, love for Wolfstein. In vain the suggestions of generosity, the voice of conscience, which told her how doubly wicked would be the attempt of alienating from her the lover of her friend Megalena, in audible, though noiseless, accents spoke; in vain the native modesty of her sex represented in its real and hideous [**I-158**] colours what she was about to do: still Olympia was resolved.

That night, in the solitude of her own chamber, in the palazzo of her father, she retraced in her mind the various events which had led to her present uncontrollable passion, which had employed her whole thoughts, and rendered her, as it were, dead to every other outward existence. The wild transports of maddening desire raved terrific within her breast: she endeavoured to smother the ideas which presented themselves; but the more she strove to erase them from her mind, the more vividly were they represented in her heated and enthusiastic imagination. "And will he not return my love?" she exclaimed: "will he not?—ah! a bravo's dagger shall pierce his heart, and thus will I reward him for his contempt of Olympia della Anzasca. But no! it is impossible. I will cast myself at his feet; I will avow to him the passion which consumes me,—will swear to be ever, ever his! Can he then cast me from him? Can he despise a woman whose only fault is love, nay, idolatry, adoration for him?"

She paused.—The tumultuous passions of her soul were now too fierce for utterance—too fierce for concealment or restraint. The hour was late; the moon poured its mildly-lustrous beams upon the lengthened colonnades of Genoa, when Olympia, overcome by emotions such as these, quitted her father's palazzo, and hastened, with rapid and unequal footsteps, towards the mansion of Wolfstein. The streets were by no means crowded; but those who yet lingered in them gazed with slight surprise on the figure of Olympia, which, light and symmetrical as a celestial sylphid, passed swiftly onwards.

She soon arrived at the habitation of Wolfstein, and sent the domestic to announce that one wished to speak with him, whose business was pressing and secret. [**I-159**] She was conducted into an apartment, and there awaited the arrival of Wolfstein. A confused expression of awe played upon his features as he entered; but it suddenly gave place to that of surprise. He started upon perceiving Olympia, and said,

"To what, Lady Olympia, do I owe the unforeseen pleasure of your visit? What so mysterious business have you with me?" continued he playfully. "But come, we had just sat down to supper; Megalena is within."—— "Oh! if you wish to see me expire in horrible torments at your feet, inhuman Wolfstein, call for Megalena! and then will your purpose be accomplished."—"Dearest Lady Olympia, compose yourself, I beseech you," said Wolfstein: "what, what agitates you?"—"Oh! pardon, pardon me," she exclaimed, with maniac wildness, "pardon a wretched female who knows not what she does! Oh! resistlessly am I impelled to this avowal: resistlessly am I impelled to declare to you, that I love you! adore

you to distraction!—Will you return my affection? But ah! I rave! Megalena, the beloved Megalena, claims you as her own; and the wretched Olympia must moan the blighted prospects which were about to open fair before her eyes."

"For Heaven's sake, dear lady, compose yourself; recollect who you are; recollect the loftiness of birth and loveliness of form which are so eminently yours. This, this is far beneath Olympia."

"Oh!" she exclaimed, franticly casting herself at his feet, and bursting into a passion of tears, "what are birth, fame, fortune, and all the advantages which are casually given to me! I swear to thee, Wolfstein, that I would sacrifice not only these, but even all my hopes of future salvation, even the forgiveness of my Creator, were it required from me. O Wolfstein, kind, pitying Wolfstein, look down with an eye of indulgence on a female whose only crime is resistless, unquenchable adoration of you."

[**I-160**]

She panted for breath, her pulses beat with violence, her eyes swam, and overcome by the conflicting passions of her soul, the frame of Olympia fell, sickening with faintness, on the ground. Wolfstein raised her, and tenderly essayed to recall the senses of the hapless girl. Recovering, and perceiving her situation, Olympia started, seemingly, horrified, from the arms of Wolfstein. The energies of her high mind instantly resumed their functions, and she exclaimed, "Then, base and ungrateful Wolfstein, you refuse to unite your fate with mine? My love is ardent and excessive, but the revenge which may follow the despiser of it is far more impetuous; reflect well then ere you drive Olympia della Anzasca to despair."—"No reflection, in the present instance, is needed, lady," replied Wolfstein, coolly, yet determinedly. "What man of honour needs a moment's rumination to discover what nature has so inerasibly implanted in his bosom—the sense of right and wrong? I am connected with a female whom I love, who confides in me; in what manner should I merit her confidence, if I join myself to another? nor can the loveliness, the exquisite, the unequalled loveliness of the beautiful Olympia della Anzasca compensate me for breaking an oath sworn to another."

He paused.—Olympia spake not, but appeared to be awaiting the dreadful fiat of her destiny.

"Olympia," Wolfstein continued, "pardon me! Were I not irrevocably Megalena's, I must be thine: I esteem you, I admire you, but my love is another's."

The passion which before had choked Olympia's utterance, appeared to give way to the impetuousness of her emotions.

"Then," she said, as a solemnity of despair toned her voice to firmness, "then you are irrevocably another's?"

"I am compelled to be explicit; I am compelled to say, I am another's for ever!" fervently returned Wolfstein.

[**I-161**]

Again fainting from the excess of painful feeling which vibrated through her frame, Olympia fell at Wolfstein's feet: again he raised her, and, in anxious solicitude, watched her varying countenance. At the critical instant when Olympia had just recovered from the faintness which had oppressed her, the door burst open, and disclosed to the view of the passion-grieving Olympia, the detested form of Megalena. A silence, resembling that when a solemn pause in the midnight-tempest announces that the elements only hesitate to collect more terrific force for the ensuing explosion, took place, while Megalena surveyed Olympia

and Wolfstein. Still she spoke not; yet the silence, even more terrible than the commotion which followed, continued to prevail. Olympia dashed by Megalena, and faintly articulating "Vengeance!" rushed into the street, and bent her rapid flight to the Palazzo di Anzasca.

"Wolfstein," said Megalena, her voice quivering with excessive emotion, "Wolfstein, how have I deserved this? How have I deserved a dereliction so barbarous and unprovoked? But no!" she added in a firmer tone, "no, I will leave you! I will show that I can bear the tortures of disappointed love, better than you can evade the scrutiny of one who did adore thee."

In vain Wolfstein put in practice every soothing art to tranquillize the agitation of Megalena. Her frame trembled with violent shuddering; yet her soul, as it were, superior to the form which enshrined it, loftily towered, and retained its firmness amidst the frightful chaos which battled within.

"Now," said she to Wolfstein, "I will leave you."

"O God! Megalena, dearest, adored Megalena!" exclaimed Wolfstein, passionately, "stop —I love you, must ever love you: deign, at least, to hear me."

"What good would accrue from that?" gloomily inquired Megalena.

[**I-162**]

Wolfstein rushed towards her; he threw himself at her feet and exclaimed, "If ever, for one instant, my soul was alienated from thee—if ever it swerved from the affection which I have sworn to thee—may the red right hand of God instantaneously dash me beneath the lowest abyss of hell! O Megalena! is it as a victim of groundless jealousy that I have immolated myself at the altar of thy perfections? Have I only raised myself to this summit of happiness to feel more deeply the fall of which thou art the cause? O Megalena! if yet one spark of thy former love lingers in thy breast, oh! believe one who swears that he must be thine even till the particles which compose the soul devoted to thee, become annihilated."—He paused.

Megalena heard his wildly enthusiastic expressions in sullen silence. She looked upon him with a stern and severe gaze:—he yet lay at her feet, and, hiding his face upon the earth, groaned deeply. "What proof," exclaimed Megalena, impatiently, "what proof will Wolfstein, the deceiver, bring to satisfy me that his love is still mine?"

"Seek for proof in my heart," returned Wolfstein, "that heart which yet is bleeding from the thorns which thou, cruel girl, hast implanted in it: seek it in my every action, and then will the convinced Megalena know that Wolfstein is hers irrevocably—body and soul, for ever!"

"Yet, I believe thee not!" said Megalena: "for the haughty Olympia della Anzasca would scarcely recline in the arms of a man who was not entirely devoted to her."

Yet were the charms of Megalena unfaded; yet their empire over Wolfstein excessive and complete.

"Still I believe thee not," continued she, as a smile of expectant malice sat upon her cheek. "I require some proof which will assuredly convince me that I am yet beloved: give me proof, and Megalena will again be Wolfstein's."—"Oh!" said Wolfstein, mournfully, [**I-163**] "what farther proof can I give, but my oath, that never in soul or body have I broken the allegiance that I formerly swore to thee?"

"The death of Olympia!" gloomily returned Megalena.

"What mean you?" said Wolfstein, starting.

"I mean," continued Megalena, collectedly, as if what she was about to utter had been the result of serious cogitation: "I mean that, if ever you wish again to possess my affections, ere to-morrow morning, Olympia must expire!"

"Murder the innocent Olympia?"

"Yes!"

A pause ensued, during which the mind of Wolfstein, torn by ten thousand warring emotions, knew not on what to resolve. He gazed upon Megalena: her symmetrical form shone with tenfold loveliness to his enraptured imagination: again he resolved to behold those eyes beam with affection for him, which were now gloomily fixed upon the ground. "Will nothing else convince Megalena that Wolfstein is eternally hers?"

"Nothing."

"'Tis done, then," exclaimed Wolfstein, "'tis done. Yet," he muttered, "I may suffer for this premeditated act tortures now inconceivable; I may writhe, convulsed, in immaterial agony, for ever and for ever—ah! I cannot. No!" he continued, "Megalena, I am again yours; I will immolate the victim which thou requirest as a sacrifice to our love. Give me a dagger, which may sweep off from the face of the earth one who is hateful to thee! Adored creature, give me the dagger, and I will restore it to thee dripping with Olympia's hated blood; it shall have first been buried in her heart."

"Then, then again art thou mine own! again art thou the idolized Wolfstein, whom I was wont to love!" said Megalena, enfolding him in her embrace. Perceiving [**I-164**] her returning softness, Wolfstein essayed to induce her to spare him the frightful proof of the ardour of his attachment; but she started from his arms as he spoke, and exclaimed:

"Ah! base deceiver, do you hesitate?"

"Oh, no! I do not hesitate, dearest Megalena;—give me a dagger, and I go."

"Here, follow me then," returned Megalena. He followed her to the supper-room.

"It is useless to go yet, it has but yet struck one; the inhabitants of il Palazzo della Anzasca will, about two, be nearly all retired to rest; till then, let us converse on what we were about to do." So far did Megalena's seductive blandishment, her artful selection of converse, win upon Wolfstein, that, when the destined hour approached, his sanguinary soul thirsted for the blood of the comparatively innocent Olympia.

"Well!" he cried, swallowing down an overflowing goblet of wine, "now the time is come; now suffer me to go, and tear the soul of Olympia from her hated body." His fury amounted almost to delirium, as, masked, and having a dagger, which Megalena had given him, concealed beneath his garments, he proceeded rapidly along the streets towards the Palazzo della Anzasca. So eager was he to shed the life-blood of Olympia, that he flew, rather than ran, along the silent streets of Genoa. The colonnades of the lofty Palazzo della Anzasca resounded to his rapid footsteps; he stopped at its lofty portal:—it was open; unperceived he entered, and, hiding himself behind a column, according to the directions of Megalena, waited there. Soon advancing through the hall, he saw the sylph-like figure of the lovely Olympia; with silent tread he followed it, experiencing not the slightest sentiment of remorse within his bosom for the deed which he was about to perpetrate. He followed her to her apartment, and secreting himself until Olympia might have sunk [**I-165**] into sleep, with sanguinary and remorseless patience, when her loud breathing convinced him that her

slumber was profound, he arose from his place of concealment, and advanced to the bed, wherein Olympia lay. Her light tresses, disengaged from the band which had confined them, floated around a countenance, superhumanly beautiful, and whose expression, even in slumber, appeared to be tinted by Wolfstein's refusal; convulsive sighs heaved her fair bosom, and tears, starting from under her eyelids, fell profusely down her damask cheek. Wolfstein gazed upon her in silence. "Cruel, inhuman Megalena!" he mentally soliloquized, "could nothing but immolation of this innocence appease thee?" Again he stifled the stings of rebelling conscience; again the unquenchable ardour of his love for Megalena stimulated him to the wildest pitch of fury: he raised high the dagger, and, drawing aside the covering which veiled her alabaster bosom, paused an instant, to decide in what place it were most instantaneously destructive to strike. Again a mournful smile irradiated her lovely features; it played with a sweet softness on her countenance: it seemed as though she smiled in defiance of the arrows of destiny, but that her soul, nevertheless, lingered with the wretch who sought her life. Maddened by the sight of so much beauteous innocence, even the desperate Wolfstein, forgetful of the danger which he must thereby incur, hurled the dagger from him. The sound awakened Olympia: she started up in surprise; but her alarm was changed into ecstasy, when she beheld the idolized possessor of her soul standing before her.

"I was dreaming of you," said Olympia, scarcely knowing whether this were not a dream; but, impulsively following the first emotions of her soul. "I dreamed that you were about to murder me. It is not so, Wolfstein, no! you would not murder one who adores you?"

[**I-166**]

"Murder Olympia! O God! no!—I take Heaven to witness, that I never *now* could do it!"

"Nor could you ever, I hope, dear Wolfstein; but drive away thoughts like these, and remember that Olympia lives but for thee; and the moment which takes from her your affections seals the death-like fiat of her destiny." These asseverations, strengthened by the most solemn and deadly vows that he would return to Megalena the destroyer of Olympia, flashed across Wolfstein's mind. Perpetrate the deed, now, he could not; his soul became a scene of most terrific agony. "Wilt thou be mine?" exclaimed the enraptured Olympia, as a ray of hope arose in her mind. "Never! never can I," groaned the agitated Wolfstein; "I am irrevocably, indissolubly another's." Maddened by this death-blow to all expectations of happiness, which the deluded Olympia had so fondly anticipated, she leaped wildly from the bed. A light and flowing night-dress alone veiled her form, her alabaster bosom was shaded by the light ringlets of her hair which rested unconfined upon it. She threw herself at the feet of Wolfstein. On a sudden, as if struck by some thought, she started convulsively from the earth: for an instant she paused.

The rays of a lamp, which stood in a recess of the apartment, fell full upon the dagger of Wolfstein. Eagerly Olympia sprung towards it; and, ere Wolfstein was aware of her dreadful intent, plunged it into her bosom. Weltering in purple gore, she fell; no groan, no sigh escaped her lips. A smile, which the pangs of dissolution could not dispel, played on her convulsed countenance; it irradiated her features with celestially awful, although terrific expression. "Ineffectually have I endeavoured to conquer the ardent feelings of my soul; now I overcome them," were her last words. She uttered them in a tone of firmness, and, falling back, expired in torments, which her fine, her expressive features declared that she gloried in.

[**I-167**]

All was silent in the chamber of death: the stillness was frightful. The agonies which Wolfstein endured were past description: for a time he neither moved nor spoke. The pale glare of the lamp fell upon the features of Olympia, from which the tinge of life had fled for ever. Suddenly, and in despite of himself, were the affections of Wolfstein turned from

Megalena: he could not but now regard her as a fiend, who had been the cause of Olympia's destruction; who had urged him to a deed from which his nature now shrunk as from annihilation. A wild paroxysm of awful alarm seized upon him: he knelt by the side of Olympia's corpse; he kissed it, bathed it with his tears, and imprecated a thousand curses on himself. Her features, although convulsed by the agonies of violent disolution, retained an unchanging image of loveliness, which never might fade away. Her beautiful bosom, in which her hand yet held the fatal dagger, was discoloured with blood, and those affection-beaming orbs were now closed in the never-ending slumber of the grave. Unable longer to endure a sight of so much horror, Wolfstein started up, and forgetful of everything save the frightful deed which he had witnessed, rushed from the Palazzo della Anzasca, and mechanically retraced his way towards his own habitation.

Not once that night had Megalena closed her eyes. Her infuriate passions had wound her soul up to a deadly calmness of expectation. She had not, during the whole of the night, retired to rest, but sat, with sanguinary patience, cursing the lagging hours that they passed so slowly, and waiting to hear tidings of death. Morning had begun to streak the eastern sky with gray, when Wolfstein hurried into the supper-room, where Megalena still sat, wildly exclaming, "The deed is done!" Megalena entreated him to be calm, and more collectedly, to communicate the events which had occurred during the night.

[**I-168**]

"In the first place," he said in an accent of feigned horror, "the officers of justice are alarmed!"

Deadly affright chilled the soul of Megalena: she turned pale, and, gasping for breath, inquired eagerly respecting the success of his attempt.

"O God!" exclaimed Wolfstein, "that has succeeded but too well! the hapless Olympia welters in her life-blood!"

"Joy! joy!" franticly exclaimed Megalena, her eagerness for revenge overcoming, for the moment, every other feeling.

"But, Megalena," continued Wolfstein, "she fell not by my hand: no, she smiled on me in her sleep, and when she awoke, finding me deaf to her solicitations, snatched my dagger, and buried it in her bosom."

"Did you *wish* to prevent the deed?" inquired Megalena.

"Oh, good God of Heaven! thou knowest my heart: I would sacrifice every remaining earthly good were Olympia again alive!"

Megalena spoke not, but a smile of exquisitely gratified malice illumined her features with terrific flame.

"We must instantly quit Genoa," said Wolfstein: "the name on the mask which I left in the Palazzo della Anzasca, will remove all doubt that I was the murderer of Olympia. Yet indeed I care not much for death; if you will it so, Megalena, we will even, as it is, remain in Genoa."

"Oh! no, no!" eagerly cried Megalena: "Wolfstein, I love you beyond expression, and Genoa is destruction: let us seek, therefore, some retired spot, where we may for awhile at least secrete ourselves. But, Wolfstein, are you persuaded that I love you? need there more proof be required than that I wished the death of another for thee? it was on *that* account alone that I desired the destruction of Olympia, that thou mightest be more completely and

irresistibly mine."

[**I-169**]

Wolfstein answered not: the feelings of his soul were far different; the expression of his countenance plainly evinced them: and Megalena regretted that her effervescent passions should have led her to so rash an avowal of her contempt of virtue. They then separated to arrange their affairs, prior to their departure, which, on account of the pressing necessity of the case, must take place immediately. They took with them but two domestics, and collecting all their stock of money, they were soon far from pursuit and Genoa.

CHAPTER VII.

Yes! 'tis the influence of that sightless fiend,
Who guides my every footstep, that I feel:
An iron grasp arrests each fluttering sense,
And a fell voice howls in mine anguish'd ear,
"Wretch, thou mayest rest no more."

Olympia.

HOW sweet are the scenes endeared to us by ideas which we have cherished in the society of one we have loved! How melancholy to wander amongst them again after an absence, perhaps of years; years, which have changed the tenour of our existence,—have changed even the friend, the dear friend, for whose sake alone the landscape lives in the memory, for whose sake tears flow at the each varying feature of the scenery, which catches the eye of one who has never seen them since he saw them with the being who was dear to him!

Dark, autumnal, and gloomy was the hour; the winds whistled hollow, and over the expanse of heaven was spread an unvarying sombreness of vapour: nothing was heard save the melancholy shriekings of the night-bird, which, soaring on the evening blast, broke the stillness of the scene, interrupting the meditations of [**I-170**] frenzied enthusiasm; mingled with the sighing of the wind, which swept in languid and varying cadence amidst the leafless boughs.

Ah! of whom shall the poor outcast wanderer demand protection? Far, far, has she wandered. The vice and unkindness of the world hath torn her tender heart. In whose bosom shall she repose the secret of her sufferings? Who will listen with pity to the narrative of her woe, and heal the wounds which the selfish unkindness of man hath made, and then sent her with them, unbound, on the wide and pitiless world? Lives there one whose confidence the sufferer might seek?

Cold and dreary was the night: November's blast had chilled the air. Is the blast so pitiless as ingratitude and selfishness? Ah, no! thought the wanderer; it is unkind indeed, but not *so* unkind as that. Poor Eloise de St. Irvyne! many, many are in thy situation; but few have a heart so full of sensibility and excellence for the demoniac malice of man to deform, and then glut itself with hellish pleasure in the conviction of having ravaged the most lovely of the works of their Creator. She gazed upon the sky: the moon had just risen; its full orb was occasionally shaded by a passing cloud: it rose from behind the turrets of le Château de St. Irvyne. The poor girl raised her eyes towards it, streaming with tears: she scarce could recognize the once-loved building. She thanked God for permitting her again to behold it; and hastened on with steps tottering from fatigue, yet nerved with the sanguineness of anticipation.

Yes, St. Irvyne was the same as when she had left it five years ago. The same ivy mantled the western tower; the same jasmine, which bloomed so luxuriantly when she left it, was still there, though leafless from the season. Thus was it with poor Eloise: she had left St. Irvyne, blooming, and caressed by every one; she returned to it, pale, downcast, and friendless. The [**I-171**] jasmine encircled the twisted pillars which supported the portal. Alas! whose assistance had prevented Eloise from sinking to the earth?—no one's. She knocked at the door—it was opened, and an instant's space beheld her in the arms of a beloved sister. Needless were it to describe the mutual pleasure, needless to describe the delight, of recognition; suffice it to say, that Eloise once more enjoyed the society of her dearest friend; and, in the happiness of her society, forgot the horrors which had preceded her return to St. Irvyne.

Now were it well to leave Eloise at St. Irvyne, and retrace the events which, since five years, had so darkly tinged the fate of the unsuspecting female, who trusted to the promises of man. It was a beautiful morning in May, and the loveliness of the season had spread a deeper shade of gloom over the features of Eloise, for she knew that not long would her mother live. They journeyed on towards Geneva, whither the physicians had ordered Madame de St. Irvyne to repair, as the last resort of a hope that she might, thereby, escape a rapid decline. On account of the illness of her mother, they proceeded slowly; and ere long they had entered the region of the Alps, the shades of evening, which rapidly began to increase, announced approaching night. They had expected, before this time, to have reached a town; but, either owing to a miscalculation of their route, or the remissness of the postilion, they had not yet done so. The majestic moon which hung above their heads, tinged with silver the fleecy clouds which skirted the far-seen horizon; and, borne on the soft wing of the evening zephyr, shadowy lines of vapour, at intervals, crossed her orbit; then vanishing into the dark blue expansiveness of ether, their fantastic forms, like the phantoms of midnight, became invisible. Now might we almost suppose, that the sightless spirits of the departed good, enthroned on the genial breeze of night, watched over [**I-172**] those whom they had loved on earth, and poured into the bosom, to the dictates of which, in this world, they had listened with idolatrous attention, that tranquillity and confidence in the goodness of the Creator, which is necessary for us to experience ere we go to the next. Such tranquillity felt Madame de St. Irvyne: she tried to stifle the ideas which arose within her mind; but the more she strove to repress them, in the more vivid characters were they imprinted on the imagination.

Now had they gained the summit of the mountain, when, suddenly, a crash announced that the carriage had given way.

"What is to be done?" inquired Eloise. The postilion appeared to take no notice of her question. "What is to be done?" again she inquired.

"Why, I scarcely know," answered the postilion; "but 'tis impossible to proceed."

"Is there no house nearer than——"

"Oh yes," replied he; "here is a house quite near, but a little out of the way; and, perhaps, Ma'am'selle will not——"

"Oh, lead on, lead on to it," quickly rejoined Eloise.

They followed the postilion, and soon arrived at the house. It was large and plain; and although there were lights in some of the windows, it bore an indefinable appearance of desolation.

In a large hall sat three or four men, whose marked countenances almost announced their profession to be bandits. *One* of superior and commanding figure, whispering to the rest, and himself advancing with the utmost and most unexpected politeness, accosted the travellers. For the ideas with which the countenance of this man inspired Eloise she in vain endeavoured to account. It appeared to her that she had seen him before; that the deep tone of his voice was known to her; and that eye, scintillating with a coruscation of mingled sternness and surprise, found some counterpart [**I-173**] in herself. Of gigantic stature, yet formed in the mould of exactest symmetry, was the figure of the stranger who sate before Eloise. His countenance of excessive beauty even, but dark, emanated with an expression of superhuman loveliness; not that grace which may freely be admired, but acknowledged in the inmost soul by sensations mysterious, and before unexperienced. He tenderly inquired, whether the night air had injured the ladies, and pressed them to partake of a repast which the other three men had prepared; he appeared to unbend a severity, which evidently was habitual, and by extreme brilliancy and playfulness of wit, joined to talents for conversation possessed by few, made Madame de St. Irvyne forget that she was dying; and her daughter, as in rapturous attention she listened to each accent of the stranger, remembered no more that she was about to lose her mother.

In the stranger's society, they almost forgot the lapse of time: a pause in the conversation at last occurred.

"Can Ma'am'selle sing?" inquired the stranger.

"I can," replied Eloise; "and with pleasure."

Song.

How swiftly through heaven's wide expanse
Bright day's resplendent colours fade!
How sweetly does the moonbeam's glance
With silver tint St. Irvyne's glade!

No cloud along the spangled air,
Is borne upon the evening breeze;
How solemn is the scene! how fair
The moonbeams rest upon the trees!

Yon dark gray turret glimmers white,
Upon it sits the mournful owl;
Along the stillness of the night,
Her melancholy shriekings roll.

But not alone on Irvyne's tower,
The silver moonbeam pours her ray;
It gleams upon the ivied bower,
It dances in the cascade's spray.

[**I-174**]

"Ah! why do darkening shades conceal
The hour, when man must cease to be? [3]
Why may not human minds unveil
The dim mists of futurity?

"The keenness of the world hath torn
The heart which opens to its blast;
Despised, neglected, and forlorn,
Sinks the wretch in death at last."

She ceased;—the thrilling accents of her interestingly sweet voice died away in the vacancy of stillness;—yet listened the charmed auditors; their imaginations prolonged the tender strain; the uncouth attendants of the stranger were chained in silence, and the enthusiastic gaze of their host was fixed upon the timid countenance of Eloise with wild and mysterious expression. It seemed to say to Eloise, "We meet again;"—and, as the idea struck her imagination, convulsed by a feeling of indescribable and excessive awe, she started.

At last, the hour being late, they all retired. Eloise sought the couch prepared for her; her mind, perturbed by emotions, the cause of which she in vain essayed to develop, could bring its intellectual energies to act on no one particular point; her imagination was fertile, and, under its fantastic guidance, she felt her judgment and reason irresistibly fettered. The image of the fascinating, yet awful stranger, dwelt on her mind. She sank on her knees to return thanks to her Creator for his mercies; yet even then, faithless to the task on which it was employed, her mind returned to the stranger. She felt no particular affection or esteem for him;—no, she rather feared him; and, when she endeavoured to connect the chain of ideas which pressed upon her mind, tears started into her eyes, and she looked around the apartment with the timid terror of a person who converses at midnight on a subject at once awful and interesting: but poor Eloise was no philosopher; and to explain sensations like these, were [**I-175**] even beyond the power of the wisest of them. She felt alarmed, herself, at the violence of the feelings which shook her bosom, and attempted to compose herself to sleep. Yet even in her dream was the stranger present. She thought that she met him on a flowery plain; that the feelings of her bosom, whether she would or not, impelled her towards him; that, before she had been enfolded in his arms, a torrent of scintillating flame, accompanied by a terrific crash of thunder, made the earth yawn beneath her feet;—the gay vision vanished from her fancy, and, in place of the flowery plain, a rugged and desolate heath extended far before her; its monotonous solitude unbroken, save by the low and barren rocks which rose occasionally from its surface. From dreams such as these, dreams which left on her mind painful presentiments of her future life, Eloise arose, restless and unrefreshed from slumber.

Why gleams that dark eyeball upon the countenance of Eloise, as she tenderly inquired for the health of her mother? Why did a hidden expression of exulting joy light up that demoniac gaze, when Madame de St. Irvyne said to her daughter, "I feel rather faint to-day, my child;—would we were at Geneva!" It beams with hell and destruction!—Let me look again: that, when I see another eye which gleams so fiendishly, I may know that it is a villain's.—Thus might have thought the sightless minister of the beneficence of God, as it hovered round the spotless Eloise. But, hush! what was that scream which was heard by the ear of listening enthusiasm? It was the shriek of the fair Eloise's better genius; it screamed to see the foe of the innocent girl so near—it is fled fast to Geneva. "There, Eloise, will we meet again," methought it whispered; whilst a low hollow tone, hoarse from the dank vapours of the grave, seemed lowly to howl in the ear of rapt Fancy, "We meet again likewise."

[**I-176**]

Their courteous host conducted Madame de St. Irvyne and Eloise to their chaise, which was now repaired, and ready for the journey; the stranger bowed respectfully as they went away. The expression of his dark eye, as he beheld them for the last time, was even stronger than ever; it seemed not to affect her mother; but the mystic feelings which it excited in the bosom of Eloise were beyond description powerful. The paleness of Madame de St. Irvyne's cheek, on which the only teint was an occasional and hectic flush, announced that the illness which consumed her, rapidly increased, and would soon lead her gently to the gates of death. She talked calmly of her approaching dissolution, and only regretted, that to no one protector could she entrust the care of her orphaned daughters. Marianne, her eldest daughter, had, by her mother's particular desire, remained at the château; and though much wishing to

accompany her mother, she urged it no longer, when she knew Madame de St. Irvyne to be resolved against it. Now had the illness which had attacked her assumed so serious and so decided an appearance, that she could no longer doubt the event; could no longer doubt that she was quickly about to enter a better world.

"My daughter," said she, "there is a banker at Geneva, a worthy man, to whom I shall bequeath the guardianship of my child; on that head are all my doubts quieted. But, Eloise, my child, you are yet young; you know not the world; but bear in mind these words of your dying mother, so long as you remember herself:—When you see a man enveloped in deceit and mystery; when you see him dark, reserved, and suspicious, carefully avoid him. Should such a man seek your friendship or affection, should he seek, by any means, to confer an obligation upon you, or make you confer one on him, spurn him from you as you would a serpent; as one who aimed to lure your unsuspecting innocence to the paths of destruction."

[**I-177**]

The affecting solemnity of her voice, as thus she spoke, touched Eloise deeply; she wept. "I must remember my mother for ever," was her almost inarticulate reply; deep sobs burst from her agitated bosom; and the varying crowds of imagery which followed each other in her mind, were too complicated to be defined. Still, though deeply grieved at the approaching death of her mother, was the mysterious stranger uppermost in her thoughts; his image excited ideas painful and unpleasant. She wished to turn the tide of them; but the more she attempted it, with the more painful recurrence of almost *mechanical* force, did his recollection press upon her disturbed intellect.

Eloise de St. Irvyne was a girl, whose temper and disposition was most excellent; she was, indeed, too, possessed of uncommon sensibility; yet was her mind moulded in an inferior degree of perfection. She was susceptible of prejudice, to a great degree; and resigned herself, careless of the consequences which might follow, to the feelings of the moment. Every accomplishment, it is true, she enjoyed in the highest excellence; and the very convent at which she was educated, which afforded the adventitious advantages so highly esteemed by the world, prevented her mind from obtaining that degree of expansiveness and excellence which, otherwise, might have rendered Eloise nearer approaching to perfection; the very routine of a convent education gave a false and pernicious bias to the ideas, as, luxuriant in youth, they unfolded themselves; and those sentiments which, had they been allowed to take the turn which nature intended, would have become coadjutors of virtue, and strengtheners of that mind, which now they had rendered *comparatively* imbecile. Such was Eloise, and as such she required unexampled care to prevent those feelings which agitate every mind of sensibility, to get the better of the judgment which had, by an erroneous [**I-178**] system of education, become relaxed. Her mother was about to die—who now would care for Eloise?

They entered Geneva at the close of a fine, yet sultry day. The illness of Madame de St. Irvyne had increased so as now to threaten instant danger: she was conveyed to bed. A deadly paleness sat on her cheek: it was flushed, however, as she spoke, with momentary hectics; and, as she conversed with her daughter, a fire, which almost partook of ethereality, shone in her sunken eye. It was evening; the yellow beams of the sun, as his orb shed the parting glory on the verge of the horizon, penetrated the bed-curtains; and by their effulgence contrasted the deadliness of her countenance. The poor Eloise sat, watching, with eyes dimmed by tears, each variation in the countenance of her mother. Silent, from an ecstasy of grief, she gazed fixedly upon her, and felt every earthly hope die within her, when the conviction of a fast-approaching dissolution pressed upon her disturbed brain. Madame de St. Irvyne, at length exhausted, fell into a quiet slumber; Eloise feared to disturb her, but, motionless with grief, sate behind the curtain. Now had sunk the orb of day, and the shades of twilight began to

scatter duskiness through the chamber of death. All was silent; and, save by the catchings of breath in her mother's slumber, the stillness was uninterrupted. Yet even in this awful, this terrific crisis of her existence, the mind of Eloise seemed compelled to exert its intellectual energies but on one subject;—in vain she essayed to pray;—in vain she attempted to avert the horror of her meditations, by contemplating the pallid features of her dying mother; her thoughts were not within her own control, and she trembled as she reflected on the appalling and mysterious influence which the image of a man, whom she had seen but once, and whom she neither loved nor cared for, had gained over her mind. With the indefinable terror of one who dreads to behold some phantom, [**I-179**] Eloise fearfully cast her eyes around the gloomy apartment; occasionally she shrank from the ideal form which an unconnected imagination had conjured up, and could scarcely but suppose that the *stranger's* gaze, as last he had looked upon her, met her own with an horrible and mixed scintillation of mysterious cunning and interest. She felt no prepossession in his favour; she rather detested him, and gladly would never have again beheld him. Yet, were the circumstances which introduced him to their notice alluded to, she would turn pale, and blush, by turns; and Jeanette, their maid, was fully persuaded in her own mind, and prided herself on her penetration in the discovery, that Ma'am'selle was violently in love with the hospitable Alpine hunter.

Madame de St. Irvyne had now awakened; she beckoned her daughter to approach. Eloise obeyed; and, kneeling, kissed the chill hand of her mother, in a transport of sorrow, and bathed it with her tears.

"Eloise," said her mother, her voice trembling from excessive weakness, "Eloise, my child, farewell—farewell for ever. I feel I am about to die; but, before I die, willingly would I say much to my dearest daughter. You are now left on the hard-hearted, pitiless world; and perhaps, oh! perhaps, about to become an immolated victim of its treachery. Oh!——" Here, overcome by extreme pain, she fell backwards; a transient gleam of animation lighted up her expressive countenance; she smiled, and—expired. All was still; and over the gloomy chamber reigned silence and horror. The yellow moonbeam, with sepulchral effulgence, gleamed on the countenance of her who had expired, and lighted her features, sweet even in death, with a dire and horrible contrast to the dimness which prevailed around! Ah! such was the contrast of the peace enjoyed by the spirit of the departed one, with the misery which awaited the wretched Eloise. Poor Eloise! she had now lost almost her only friend!

[**I-180**]

In excessive and silent grief, knelt the mourning girl; she spoke not, she wept not; her sorrow was too violent for tears, but, oh! her heart was torn by pangs of unspeakable acuteness. But even amid the alarm which so melancholy an event must have excited, the idea of the *stranger in the Alps* sublimed the soul of Eloise to the highest degree of horror, and despair the most infuriate. For the ideas which crowded into her mind at this crisis, so eventful, so terrific, she endeavoured to account; but, alas! her attempt was fruitless! Still knelt she; still did she press to her burning lips the lifeless hand of departed excellence, when the morning's ray announced to her that longer continuing there might excite suspicion of intellectual derangement. She arose, therefore, and, quitting the apartment, announced the melancholy event which had taken place. She gave orders for the funeral; it was to be solemnized as soon as decency would permit, as the poor friendless Eloise wished speedily to quit Geneva. She wrote to announce the fatal event to her sister. Slowly dragged the time. Eloise followed to its latest bed the corpse of her mother, and was returning from the convent, when a stranger put into her hand a note, and quickly disappeared:—

"Will Eloise de St. Irvyne meet her friend at —— Abbey, to-morrow night, at ten o'clock?"

CHAPTER VIII.

—— Why then unbidden gush'd the tear?

* * * * *

Then would cold shudderings seize his brain,
As gasping he labour'd for breath;
The strange gaze of his meteor eye,
Which, frenzied, and rolling dreadfully,
Glared with hideous gleam,
Would chill like the spectre gaze of Death,
As, conjured by feverish dream,
He seems o'er the sick man's couch to stand,
And shakes the fell lance in his skeleton hand.

Wandering Jew. [4]

YES;—they fled from Genoa; they had eluded pursuit and justice, but could not escape the torments of an outraged and avenging conscience, which, with stings the most acute, pursued them whithersoever they might go. Fortune even seemed to favour them: for fortune will, sometimes, in this world, appear to side with the wicked. Wolfstein had received notice that an uncle, possessed of immense wealth, had died in Bohemia, and bequeathed to him the whole of his estate. Thither, then, with Megalena, went Wolfstein. Their journey produced no event of consequence; suffice it to say, that they arrived at the spot where Wolfstein's possessions were situated.

Dark and desolate were the scenes which surrounded the no less desolate castle. Gloomy heaths, in unvarying sadness of immensity, stretched far and wide. A scathed pine or oak, blasted by the thunderbolts of heaven, alone broke the monotonous sameness of the imagery. Needless were it to describe the castle, built like all those of the Bohemian barons, in mingled Gothic and barbarian architecture. Over the dark expanse the dim moon beaming, and faintly, with its sepulchral [**I-182**] radiance, dispersing the thickness of the vapours which lowered around (for her waning horn, which hung low above the horizon, added but tenfold horror to the terrific desolation of the scene); the night-raven pouring on the dull ear of evening her frightful screams, and breaking on the otherwise uninterrupted stillness,—were the melancholy greetings to their new habitation.

They alighted at the antique entrance, and passing through a vast and comfortless hall, were conducted into a saloon not much less so. The coolness of the evening, for it was late in the autumn, made the wood fire, which had been lighted, disperse a degree of comfort; and Wolfstein, having arranged his domestic concerns, continued talking with Megalena until midnight.

"But you have never yet correctly explained to me," said Megalena, "the mystery which encircled that strange man whom we met at the inn at Breno. I think I have seen him once since, or I should not now have thought of the circumstance."

"Indeed, Megalena, I know of no mystery. I suppose the man was mad, or wished to make us think so; for my part, I have never thought of him since; nor intend to think of him."

"Do you not?" exclaimed a voice, which enchained motionless to his seat the horror-struck Wolfstein—when turning round, and starting in agonized frenzy from his chair, Ginotti himself—*Ginotti*—from whose terrific gaze never had he turned unappalled, stood in cool and fearless contempt before him!

"Do you not?" continued the mysterious stranger. "Never again intendest thou to think of me?—me! who have watched each expanding idea, conscious to what I was about to apply them, conscious of the great purpose for which each was formed. Ah! Wolfstein, by my agency shalt thou——" He paused, assuming a smile expressive of exultation and superiority.

[**I-183**]

"Oh! do with me what thou wilt, strange, inexplicable being!—Do with me what thou wilt!" exclaimed Wolfstein, as an ecstasy of frenzied terror overpowered his astonished senses. Megalena still sat unmoved: she was surprised, it is true; but most was she surprised, that an event like this should have power so to shake Wolfstein; for even then he stood gazing in enhorrored silence on the majestic figure of Ginotti.

"Fool, then, that thou art, to deny me!" continued Ginotti, in a tone less solemn, but more severe. "Wilt thou promise me that, when I come to demand what thou covenantedst with me at Breno, I meet no fears, no scruples, but that, then, thou wilt perform what there thou didst swear, and that *this* oath shall be inviolable?"

"It shall," replied Wolfstein.

"Swear it."

"As I keep my vows with you, may God reward me hereafter!"

"'Tis done, then," returned Ginotti. "Ere long shall I claim the performance of this covenant—now farewell." Speaking thus, Ginotti dashed away; and, mounting a horse which stood at the gate, sped swiftly across the heath. His form lessened in the clear moonlight; and when it was no longer visible to the straining eyeballs of Wolfstein, he felt, as it were, a spell which had enthralled him, to be dissolved.

Reckless of Megalena's earnest entreaties, he threw himself into a chair, in deep and gloomy melancholy; he answered them not, but, immersed in a train of corroding ideas, remained silent. Even when retired to repose, and he could, occasionally, sink into a transitory slumber, would he again start from it, as he thought that Ginotti's majestic form leaned over him, and that the glance which, last, his fearful eye had thrown, chilled his breast with indescribable agony. Slowly lagged the time to Wolfstein: Ginotti, though now [**I-184**] gone, and far away perhaps, dwelt in his disturbed mind; his image was there imprinted in characters terrific and indelible. Oft would he wander along the desolate heath; on every blast of wind which sighed over the scattered remnants of what was once a forest, Ginotti's, the terrific Ginotti's voice seemed to float; and in every dusky recess, favoured by the descending shades of gloomy night, his form appeared to lurk, and, with frightful glare, his eye to penetrate the conscience-stricken Wolfstein as he walked. A falling leaf, or a hare starting from her heathy seat, caused him to shrink with affright; yet, though dreading loneliness, he was irresistibly compelled to seek for solitude. Megalena's charms had now no longer power to speak comfort to his soul: ephemeral are the friendships of the wicked, and involuntary disgust follows the attachment founded on the visionary fabric of passion or interest. It sinks in the merited abyss of ennui, or is followed by apathy and carelessness, which amply its origin deserved.

The once ardent and excessive passion of Wolfstein for Megalena, was now changed into disgust and almost detestation; he sought to conceal it from her, but it was evident, in spite of his resolution. He regarded her as a woman capable of the most shocking enormities; since, without any adequate temptation to vice, she had become sufficiently depraved to consider an inconsequent crime the wilful and premeditated destruction of a fellow-creature; still,

whether it were from the indolence which he had contracted, or an indefinably sympathetic connexion of soul, which forbade them to part during their mortal existence, was Wolfstein irremediably linked to his mistress, who was as depraved as himself, though originally of a better disposition. He likewise had, at first, resisted the allurements of vice; but, overpowered by its incitements, had resigned himself, indeed reluctantly, to its influence. But [**I-185**] Megalena had courted its advances, and endeavoured to conquer neither the suggestions of crime, nor the dictates of a nature prone to the attacks of *appetite*—let me not call it passion.

Fast advanced winter; cheerless and solitary were the days. Wolfstein, occasionally, followed the chase; but even *that* was wearisome: and the bleeding image of the murdered Olympia, or the still more dreaded idea of the terrific Ginotti, haunted him in the midst of its tumultuous pleasures, and embittered every moment of his existence. The pale corpse too of Cavigni, blackened by poison, reigned in his chaotic imagination and stung his soul with tenfold remorse, when he reflected that he had murdered one who never had injured him, for the sake of a being whose depraved society every succeeding day rendered more monotonous and insipid.

It was one evening when, according to his custom, Wolfstein wandered late: it was in the beginning of December, and the weather was peculiarly mild for the season and latitude. Over the cerulean expanse of ether the dim moon, shrouded in the fleeting fragments of vapour, which, borne on the pinions of the northern blast, crossed her pale orb; at intervals, the dismal hooting of the owl, which, searching for prey, flitted her white wings over the dusky heath; the silver beams which slept on the outline of the far-seen forests, and the melancholy stillness, uninterrupted save by these concomitants of gloom, conduced to sombre reflection. Wolfstein reclined upon the heath; he retraced, in mental review, the past events of his life, and shuddered at the darkness of his future destiny. He strove to repent of his crimes; but, though conscious of the connexion which existed between the ideas, as often as repentance presented itself to his mind, Ginotti rushed upon his troubled imagination, and a dark veil seemed to separate him for ever from contrition, notwithstanding [**I-186**] he was constantly subjected to the tortures inflicted by it. At last, wearied with the corroding recollections, the acme of which progressively increased, he bent his steps again towards his habitation.

As he was entering the portal, a grasp of iron arrested his arm, and, turning round, he recognized the tall figure of Ginotti, which, enveloped in a mantle, had leaned against a jutting buttress. Amazement, for a time, chained the faculties of Wolfstein in motionless surprise: at last he recollected himself, and, in a voice trembling from agitation, inquired, did he now demand the performance of the promise?

"I come," he said, "I come to demand it, Wolfstein! Art thou willing to perform what thou hast promised?—but come——"

A degree of solemnity, mixed with concealed fierceness, toned his voice as he spoke; yet was he fixed in the attitude in which first he had addressed Wolfstein. The pale ray of the moon fell upon his dark features, and his coruscating eye fixed on his trembling victim's countenance, flashed with almost intolerable brilliancy. A chill horror darted through Wolfstein's sickening frame; his brain swam around wildly, and most appalling presentiments of what was about to happen, pressed upon his agonized intellect. "Yes, yes, I have promised, and I will perform the covenant I have entered into," said Wolfstein; "I swear to you that I will!" and as he spoke, a kind of mechanical and inspired feeling steeled his soul to fortitude; it seemed to arise independently of himself; nor could he, though he eagerly desired to do so, control in the least his *own* resolves. Such an impulse as this had first induced him to promise at all. Ah! how often in Ginotti's absence had he resisted it! but when the mysterious disposer of the events of his existence was before him, a consciousness of the inutility of his refusal

compelled him to submit to the mandates of a being, whom his [**I-187**] heart sickening to acknowledge, it unwillingly confessed as a superior.

"Come," continued Ginotti; "the hour is late, I must dispatch."

Unresisting, yet speaking not, Wolfstein conducted Ginotti to an apartment.

"Bring wine, and light a fire," said he to his servant, who quickly obeyed him. Wolfstein swallowed an overflowing goblet, hoping thereby to acquire courage; for he found that, with every moment of Ginotti's stay, the visionary and awful terrors of his mind augmented.

"Do you not drink?"

"No," replied Ginotti, sullenly.

A pause ensued; during which the eyes of Ginotti, glaring with demoniacal scintillations, spoke tenfold terrors to the soul of Wolfstein. He knitted his brows, and bit his lips, in vain attempting to appear unembarrassed. "Wolfstein!" at last said Ginotti, breaking the fearful silence; "Wolfstein!"

The colour fled from the cheek of his victim, as thus Ginotti spoke: he moved his posture, and awaited, in anxious and horrible solicitude, the declaration which was, as he supposed, to ensue. "My name, my family, and the circumstances which have attended my career through existence, it neither boots you to know, nor me to declare."

"Does it not?" said Wolfstein, scarcely knowing what to say; yet convinced, from the pause, that something was expected.

"No! nor canst thou, nor any other existent being, even attempt to dive into the mysteries which envelope me. Let it be sufficient for you to know, that every event in your life has not only been known to me, but has occurred under my particular machinations."

Wolfstein started. The terror which had blanched his cheek now gave way to an expression of fierceness [**I-188**] and surprise; he was about to speak, but Ginotti, noticing not his motion, thus continued:

"Every opening idea which has marked, in so decided and so eccentric an outline, the fiat of your future destiny, has not been unknown to or unnoticed by me. I rejoiced to see in you, whilst young, the progress of that genius which in mature time would entitle you to the reward which I destine for you, and for you alone. Even when far, far away, when the ocean perhaps has roared between us, have I known your thoughts, Wolfstein; yet have I known them neither by conjecture nor inspiration. Never would your mind have attained that degree of expansion or excellence, had not I watched over its every movement, and taught the sentiment, as it unfolded itself, to despise contented vulgarity. For this, and for an event far more important than any your existence yet has been subjected to, have I watched over you: say, Wolfstein, have I watched in vain?"

Each feeling of resentment vanished from Wolfstein's bosom, as the mysterious intruder spoke: his voice at last died, in a clear and melancholy cadence, away; and his expressive eye, divested of its fierceness and mystery, rested on Wolfstein's countenance with a mild benignity.

"No, no; thou hast not watched in vain, mysterious disposer of my existence. Speak! I burn with curiosity and solicitude to learn for what thou hast thus superintended me:" and, as thus he spoke, a feeling of resistless anxiety to know what would be the conclusion of the night's adventure, took place of horror. Inquiringly he gazed on the countenance of Ginotti, the features of whom were brightened with unwonted animation. "Wolfstein," said Ginotti,

"often hast thou sworn that I should rest in the grave in peace:—now listen."

[**I-189**]

CHAPTER IX.

If Satan had never fallen,
Hell had been made for thee.

The Revenge.

AH! poor, unsuspecting innocence! and is that fair flower about to perish in the blasts of dereliction and unkindness? Demon indeed must be he who could gaze on those mildly-beaming eyes, on that perfect form, the emblem of sensibility, and yet plunge the spotless mind of which it was an index, into a sea of repentance and unavailing sorrow. I should scarce suppose even a demon would act so, were there not many with hearts more depraved even than those of fiends, who first have torn some unsophisticated soul from the pinnacle of excellence, on which it sat smiling, and then triumphed in their hellish victory when it writhed in agonized remorse, and strove to hide its unavailing regret in the dust from which the fabric of her virtues had arisen. "*Ah! I fear me, the unsuspecting girl will go;*" she knows not the malice and the wiles of perjured man—and she is gone!

It was late in the evening, and Eloise had returned from her mother's funeral, sad and melancholy; yet, even amidst the oppression of grief, surprise, and astonishment, pleasure and thankfulness, that any one should notice her, possessed her mind as she read over and over the characters traced on the note which she still held in her hand. The hour was late, the moon was down, yet countless stars bedecked the almost boundless hemisphere. The mild beams of Hesper slept on the glassy surface of the lake, as, scarcely agitated by the zephyr of evening, its waves rolled in slow succession; the solemn umbrage of the pine-trees, mingled with the poplar, threw their undefined shadows on the water; and the nightingale, sitting solitary in the hawthorn, [**I-190**] poured on the listening stillness of evening, her grateful lay of melancholy. Hark! her full strains swell on the silence of night; and now they die away, with lengthened and solemn cadence, insensibly into the breeze, which lingers, with protracted sweep, along the valley. Ah! with what enthusiastic ecstasy of melancholy does he whose friend, whose dear friend, is far, far away, listen to such strains as these! perhaps he has heard them with that friend,—with one he loves: never again may they meet his ear. Alas! 'tis melancholy; I even now see him sitting on the rock which looks over the lake, in frenzied listlessness; and counting in mournful review, the days which are past since they fled so quickly with one who was dear to him.

It was to the ruined abbey which stood on the southern side of the lake that, so swiftly, Eloise is hastening. A presentiment of awe filled her mind; she gazed, in inquiring terror, around her, and scarce could persuade herself that shapeless forms lurked not in the gloomy recesses of the scenery.

She gained the abbey; in melancholy fallen grandeur its vast ruins reared their pointed casements to the sky. Masses of disjointed stone were scattered around; and, save by the whirrings of the bats, the stillness which reigned, was uninterrupted. Here then was Eloise to meet the strange one who professed himself to be her friend. Alas! poor Eloise believed him. It yet wanted an hour to the time of appointment; the expiration of that hour Eloise awaited. The abbey brought to her recollection a similar ruin which stood near St. Irvyne; it brought with it the remembrance of a song which Marianne had composed soon after her brother's death. She sang, though in a low voice:—

Song.

How stern are the woes of the desolate mourner,
As he bends in still grief o'er the hallowed bier.
[**I-191**]
As enanguish'd he turns from the laugh of the scorner,
And drops, to perfection's remembrance, a tear;
When floods of despair down his pale cheek are streaming,
When no blissful hope on his bosom is beaming,
Or, if lull'd for awhile, soon he starts from his dreaming,
And finds torn the soft ties to affection so dear.

Ah! 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 in its amaranth bower,
Where no clouds of fate o'er the sweet prospect lower,
Unspeakable pleasure, of goodness the dower,
When woe fades away like the mist of the heath.

She ceased: the melancholy cadence of her angelic voice died in faint reverberations of echo away, and once again reigned stillness.

Now fast approached the hour; and, ere ten had struck, a stranger of towering and gigantic proportions walked along the ruined refectory: without stopping to notice other objects, he advanced swiftly to Eloise, who sat on a misshapen piece of ruin, and throwing aside the mantle which enveloped his figure, discovered to her astonished sight the stranger of the Alps, who of late had been incessantly present to her mind. Amazement, for a time, chained each faculty in stupefaction; she would have started from her seat, but the stranger, with gentle violence grasping her hand, compelled her to remain where she was.

"Eloise," said the stranger, in a voice of the most fascinating tenderness—"Eloise!"

The softness of his accents changed, in an instant, what was passing in the bosom of Eloise. She felt no surprise that he knew her name: she experienced no dread at this mysterious meeting with a person, at the bare mention of whose name she was wont to tremble: no, the ideas which filled her mind were indefinable. [**I-192**] She gazed upon his countenance for a moment, then, hiding her face in her hands, sobbed loudly.

"What afflicts you, Eloise?" said the stranger: "how cruel, that such a breast as thine should be tortured by pain!"

"Ah!" cried Eloise, forgetting that she spoke to a stranger; "how can one avoid sorrow, when there, perhaps, is scarce a being in the world whom I can call my friend; when there is no one on whom I lay claim for protection?"

"Say not, Eloise," cried the stranger, reproachfully, yet benignly; "say not that you can claim none as a friend—you may claim me. Ah! that I had ten thousand existences, that each might be devoted to the service of one whom I love more than myself! Make me then the repository of your every sorrow and secret. I love you, indeed I do, Eloise, and why will you doubt me?"

"I do not doubt you, stranger," replied the unsuspecting girl; "why should I doubt you? for you could have no interest in saying so, if you did not.—I thank you for loving one who is quite, quite friendless; and, if you will allow me to be your friend, I will love you too. I never loved any one, before, but my poor mother and Marianne. Will you then, if you are a friend to me, come and live with me and Marianne, at St. Irvyne's?"

"St. Irvyne's!" exclaimed the stranger, almost convulsively, as he interrupted her; then, as fearing to betray his emotions, he paused, yet quitted not the grasp of Eloise's hand, which trembled within his with feelings which her mind distrusted not.

"Yes, sweet Eloise, I love you indeed," at last he said, affectionately. "And I thank you much for believing me; but I cannot live with you at St. Irvyne's. Farewell, for to-night, however; for my poor Eloise has need of sleep." He then was quitting the abbey, when Eloise stopped him to inquire his name.

[**I-193**]

"Frederic de Nempere."

"Ah! then I shall recollect Frederic de Nempere, as the name of a friend, even if I never again behold him."

"Indeed I am not faithless; soon shall I see you again. Farewell, beloved Eloise." Thus saying, with rapid step he quitted the ruin.

Though he was now gone, the sound of his tender farewell yet seemed to linger on the ear of Eloise; but with each moment of his absence, became lessened the conviction of his friendship, and heightened the suspicions which, though unaccountable to herself, possessed her bosom. She could not conceive what motive could have led her to own her love for one whom she feared, and felt a secret terror, from the conviction of the resistless empire which he possessed within her: yet though she shrank from the bare idea of ever becoming his, did she ardently, though scarcely would she own it to herself, desire again to see him.

Eloise now returned to Geneva: she resigned herself to sleep, but even in her dreams was the image of Nempere present to her imagination. Ah! poor deluded Eloise, didst thou think a *man* would merit thy love through disinterestedness? didst thou think that one who supposed himself superior, yet inferior in reality, to you, in the scale of existent beings, would desire thy society from *love?* yet superior as the fool here supposes himself to be to the creature whom he injures, superior as he boasts himself, he may howl with the fiends of darkness, in never-ending misery, whilst thou shalt receive, at the throne of the God whom thou hast loved, the rewards of that unsuspecting excellence, which he who boasts his superiority, shall *suffer* for trampling upon. Reflect on *this,* ye libertines, and, in the full career of the lasciviousness which has unfitted your souls for enjoying the *slightest* real happiness here or hereafter, tremble! Tremble! I say; for the day of retribution will arrive. But the poor Eloise need not [**I-194**] tremble; the victims of your detested cunning need not fear that day: no!—then will the cause of the broken-hearted be avenged by Him to whom their wrongs cry for redress.

Within a few miles of Geneva, Nempere possessed a country-house: thither did he persuade Eloise to go with him; "For," said he, "though I cannot come to St. Irvyne's, yet my friend will live with me."

"Yes, indeed I will," replied Eloise; for, whatever she might feel when he was absent, in his presence she felt insensibly softened, and a sentiment nearly approaching to love would, at intervals, take possession of her soul. Yet was it by no means an easy task to lure Eloise from the paths of virtue; it is true she knew but little, nor was the expansion of her mind such as might justify the exultations of a fiend at a triumph over her virtue; yet was it that very timid, simple innocence which prevented Eloise from understanding to what the deep-laid sophistry of her false friend tended; and, not understanding it, she could not be influenced by its arguments. Besides, the principles and morals of Eloise were such as could not *easily* be shaken by the allurements which temptation might throw out to her unsophisticated

innocence.

"Why," said Nempere, "are we taught to believe that the union of two who love each other is wicked, unless authorized by certain rites and ceremonials, which certainly cannot change the tenour of sentiments which it is destined that these two people should entertain of each other?"

"It is, I suppose," answered Eloise, calmly, "because God has willed it so; besides," continued she, blushing at she knew not what, "it would——

"And is then the superior and towering soul of Eloise subjected to sentiments and prejudices so stale and vulgar as these?" interrupted Nempere indignantly. "Say, Eloise, do not you think it an insult to [**I-195**] two souls, united to each other in the irrefragable covenants of love and congeniality, to promise, in the sight of a Being whom they know not, that fidelity which is certain otherwise?"

"But I do know that Being!" cried Eloise, with warmth; "and when I cease to know him, may I die! I pray to him every morning, and, when I kneel at night, I thank him for the mercy which he has shown to a poor friendless girl like me! He is the protector of the friendless, and I love and adore him!"

"Unkind Eloise! how canst thou call thyself friendless? Surely, the adoration of two beings unfettered by restraint, must be most acceptable!—But, come, Eloise, this conversation is nothing to the purpose: I see we both think alike, although the *terms* in which we express our sentiments are different. Will you sing to me, dear Eloise?" Willingly did Eloise fetch her harp; she wished not to scrutinize what was passing in her mind, but, after a short prelude, thus began:—

Song.

I.

Ah! faint are her limbs, and her footstep is weary,
Yet far must the desolate wanderer roam;
Though the tempest is stern, and the mountain is dreary,
She must quit at deep midnight her pitiless home.
I see her swift foot dash the dew from the whortle,
As she rapidly hastes to the green grove of myrtle;
And I hear, as she wraps round her figure the kirtle,
"Stay thy boat on the lake,—dearest Henry, I come."

II.

High swell'd in her bosom the throb of affection
As lightly her form bounded over the lea,
And arose in her mind every dear recollection;
"I come, dearest Henry, and wait but for thee."
How sad, when dear hope every sorrow is soothing,
When sympathy's swell the soft bosom is moving,
And the mind the mild joys of affection is proving,
Is the stern voice of fate that bids happiness flee!

[**I-196**]

III.

Oh! dark lower'd the clouds on that horrible eve,

And the moon dimly gleam'd through the tempested air;
Oh! how could fond visions such softness deceive?
Oh! how could false hope rend a bosom so fair?
Thy love's pallid corse the wild surges are laving,
O'er his form the fierce swell of the tempest is raving;
But, fear not, parting spirit; thy goodness is saving,
In eternity's bowers, a seat for thee there.

"How soft is that strain!" cried Nempere, as she concluded.

"Ah!" said Eloise, sighing deeply: "'tis a melancholy song; my poor brother wrote it, I remember, about ten days before he died. 'Tis a gloomy tale concerning him; he ill deserved the fate he met. Some future time I will tell it you; but now, 'tis very late.—Good-night."

Time passed, and Nempere, finding that he must proceed more warily, attempted no more to impose upon the understanding of Eloise by such palpably baseless arguments; yet, so great and so unaccountable an influence had he gained on her unsuspecting soul, that ere long, on the altar of vice, pride, and malice, was immolated the innocence of the spotless Eloise. Ah, ye proud! in the severe consciousness of unblemished reputation, in the fallacious opinion of the world, why turned ye away, as if fearful of contamination, when yon poor frail one drew near? See the tears which steal adown her cheek!—*She* has repented, *ye* have not!

And thinkest thou, libertine, from a principle of depravity—thinkest thou that thou hast raised thyself to the level of Eloise, by trying to sink her to thine own?—No!—Hopest thou that thy curse has passed away unheeded or unseen? The God whom thou hast insulted has marked thee!—In the everlasting tablets of heaven, is thine offence written!—but poor Eloise's crime is [**I-197**] obliterated by the mercy of Him, who knows the innocence of her heart.

* * * * * *

Yes—thy sophistry hath prevailed, Nempere!—'tis but blackening the memoir of thine offences! Hark! what shriek broke upon the enthusiastic silence of twilight? 'Twas the fancied scream of one who loved Eloise long ago, but now is—dead. It warns thee—alas! 'tis unavailing!!—'Tis fled, but not for ever.

It is evening; the moon, which rode in cloudless and unsullied majesty, in the leaden-coloured east, hath hidden her pale beams in a dusky cloud, as if blushing to contemplate a scene of so much wickedness.

'Tis done; and amidst the vows of a transitory delirium of pleasure, regret, horror, and misery, arise! they shake their Gorgon locks at Eloise! appalled she shudders with affright, and shrinks from the contemplation of the consequences of her imprudence. Beware, Eloise! —a precipice, a frightful precipice yawns at thy feet! advance yet a step further, and thou perishest! No, give not up thy religion—it is that alone which can support thee under the miseries, with which imprudence has so darkly marked the progress of thine existence!

[**I-198**]

CHAPTER X.

The elements respect their Maker's seal!
Still like the scathed pine-tree's height,
Braving the tempests of the night,
Have I 'scaped the bickering flame.
Like the scathed pine, which a monument stands

Of faded grandeur, which the brands
Of the tempest-shaken air
Have riven on the desolate heath;
Yet it stands majestic even in death,
And rears its wild form there.

Wandering Jew.

YET, in an attitude of attention, Wolfstein was fixed, and, gazing upon Ginotti's countenance, awaited his narrative.

"Wolfstein," said Ginotti, "the circumstances which I am about to communicate to you are, many of them, you may think, trivial; but I must be minute, and, however the recital may excite your astonishment, suffer me to proceed without interruption."

Wolfstein bowed affirmatively—Ginotti thus proceeded:—

"From my earliest youth, before it was quenched by complete satiation, *curiosity,* and a desire of unveiling the latent mysteries of nature, was the passion by which all the other emotions of my mind were intellectually organized. This desire first led me to cultivate, and with success, the various branches of learning which led to the gates of wisdom. I then applied myself to the cultivation of philosophy, and the éclât with which I pursued it, exceeded my most sanguine expectations. *Love* I cared not for; and wondered why men perversely sought to ally themselves with weakness. Natural philosophy at last became the peculiar science to which I directed my eager inquiries; thence was I led into a train of labyrinthic meditations. I thought [**I-199**] of *death*—I shuddered when I reflected, and shrank in horror from the idea, *selfish and self-interested* as I was, of entering a new existence to which I was a stranger. I must either dive into the recesses of futurity, or I must not, I cannot die. 'Will not this nature—will not the *matter* of which it is composed—exist to all eternity? Ah! I know it will; and, by the exertions of the energies with which nature has gifted me, well I know it shall.' This was my opinion at that time: I then believed that there existed no God. Ah! at what an exorbitant price have I bought the conviction that there is one!!! Believing that priestcraft and superstition were all the religion which *man* ever practised, it could not be supposed that I thought there existed supernatural beings of any kind. I believed *nature* to be self-sufficient and excelling; I supposed not, therefore, that there could be anything beyond nature.

"I was now about seventeen: I had dived into the depths of metaphysical calculations. With sophistical arguments had I convinced myself of the non-existence of a First Cause, and, by every combined modification of the essences of matter, had I apparently proved that no existences could possibly be, unseen by human vision. I had lived, hitherto, completely for myself; I cared not for others; and, had the hand of fate swept from the list of the living every one of my youthful associates, I should have remained immoved and fearless. I had not a friend in the world;—I cared for nothing but *self*. Being fond of calculating the effects of poison, I essayed one, which I had composed, upon a youth who had offended me; he lingered a month, and then expired in agonies the most terrific. It was returning from his funeral, which all the students of the college where I received my education (Salamanca) had attended, that a train of the strangest thought pressed upon my mind. I feared, more than ever, now, to die; and, although I had no right to form hopes or expectations [**I-200**] for longer life than is allotted to the rest of mortals, yet did I think it were possible to protract existence. And why, reasoned I with myself, relapsing into melancholy, why am I to suppose that these muscles or fibres are made of stuff more durable than those of other men? I have no right to suppose otherwise than that, at the end of the time allotted by nature, for the existence of the atoms which compose my being, I must, like all other men, perish, perhaps everlastingly. Here, in the bitterness of my heart, I cursed that nature and chance which I believed in; and,

in a paroxysmal frenzy of contending passions, cast myself, in desperation, at the foot of a lofty ash-tree, which reared its fantastic form over a torrent which dashed below.

"It was midnight; far had I wandered from Salamanca; the passions which agitated my brain, almost to delirium, had added strength to my nerves, and swiftness to my feet; but, after many hours' incessant walking, I began to feel fatigued. No moon was up, nor did one star illume the hemisphere. The sky was veiled by a thick covering of clouds; and, to my heated imagination, the winds, which in stern cadence swept along the night-scene, whistled tidings of death and annihilation. I gazed on the torrent, foaming beneath my feet; it could scarcely be distinguished through the thickness of the gloom, save at intervals, when the white-crested waves dashed at the base of the bank on which I stood. 'Twas then that I contemplated self-destruction; I had almost plunged into the tide of death, had rushed upon the unknown regions of eternity, when the soft sound of a bell from a neighbouring convent, was wafted in the stillness of the night. It struck a chord in unison with my soul; it vibrated on the secret springs of rapture. I thought no more of suicide, but, reseating myself at the root of the ash-tree, burst into a flood of tears;—never had I wept [**I-201**] before; the sensation was new to me; it was inexplicably pleasing. I reflected by what rules of science I could account for it: *there* philosophy failed me. I acknowledged its inefficacy; and, almost at *that* instant, allowed the existence of a superior and beneficent *Spirit,* in whose image is made the soul of man; but quickly chasing these ideas, and, overcome by excessive and unwonted fatigue of mind and body, I laid my head upon a jutting projection of the tree, and, forgetful of every thing around me, sank into a profound and quiet slumber. Quiet, did I say? No—It was not quiet. I dreamed that I stood on the brink of a most terrific precipice, far, far above the clouds, amid whose dark forms which lowered beneath, was seen the dashing of a stupendous cataract: its roarings were borne to mine ear by the blast of night. Above me rose, fearfully embattled and rugged, fragments of enormous rocks, tinged by the dimly gleaming moon; their loftiness, the grandeur of their misshapen proportions, and their bulk, staggering the imagination; and scarcely could the mind itself scale the vast loftiness of their aërial summits. I saw the dark clouds pass by, borne by the impetuosity of the blast, yet felt no wind myself. Methought darkly gleaming forms rode on their almost palpable prominences.

"Whilst thus I stood, gazing on the expansive gulf which yawned before me, methought a silver sound stole on the quietude of night. The moon became as bright as polished silver, and each star sparkled with scintillations of inexpressible whiteness. Pleasing images stole imperceptibly upon my senses, when a ravishingly sweet strain of dulcet melody seemed to float around. Now it was wafted nearer, and now it died away in tones to melancholy dear. Whilst I thus stood enraptured, louder swelled the strain of seraphic harmony; it vibrated on my inmost soul, and a mysterious softness lulled each impetuous passion to repose. I [**I-202**] gazed in eager anticipation of curiosity on the scene before me; for a mist of silver radiance rendered every object but myself imperceptible; yet was it brilliant as the noon-day sun. Suddenly, whilst yet the full strain swelled along the empyrean sky, the mist in one place seemed to dispart, and through it, to roll clouds of deepest crimson. Above them, and seemingly reclining on the viewless air, was a form of most exact and superior symmetry. Rays of brilliancy, surpassing expression, fell from his burning eye, and the emanations from his countenance tinted the transparent clouds below with silver light. The phantasm advanced towards me; it seemed then, to my imagination, that his figure was borne on the sweet strain of music which filled the circumambient air. In a voice which was fascination itself, the being addressed me, saying, 'Wilt thou come with me? wilt thou be mine?' I felt a decided wish never to be his. 'No, no,' I unhesitatingly cried, with a feeling which no language can either explain or describe. No sooner had I uttered these words, than methought a sensation of deadly horror chilled my sickening frame; an earthquake rocked the precipice beneath my feet; the beautiful being vanished; clouds, as of chaos, rolled around, and from their dark masses flashed incessant meteors. I heard a deafening noise on every side; it appeared like

the dissolution of nature; the blood-red moon, whirled from her sphere, sank beneath the horizon. My neck was grasped firmly, and, turning round in an agony of horror, I beheld a form more hideous than the imagination of man is capable of portraying, whose proportions, gigantic and deformed, were seemingly blackened by the inerasible traces of the thunderbolts of God; yet in its hideous and detestable countenance, though seemingly far different, I thought I could recognize that of the lovely vision: 'Wretch!' it exclaimed, in a voice of exulting thunder; 'saidst thou that thou [**I-203**] wouldst not be mine? Ah! thou art mine beyond redemption; and I triumph in the conviction, that no power can ever make thee otherwise. Say, art thou willing to be mine?' Saying this, he dragged me to the brink of the precipice: the contemplation of approaching death frenzied my brain to the highest pitch of horror. 'Yes, yes, I am thine,' I exclaimed. No sooner had I pronounced these words than the visionary scene vanished, and I awoke. But even when awake, the contemplation of what I had suffered, whilst under the influence of sleep, pressed upon my disordered fancy; my intellect, wild with unconquerable emotions, could fix on no one particular point to exert its energies; they were strained beyond their power of exerting.

"Ever, from that day, did a deep-corroding melancholy usurp the throne of my soul. At last, during the course of my philosophical inquiries, I ascertained the method by which *man* might exist for ever, and it was connected with my dream. It would unfold a tale of too much horror to trace, in review, the circumstances as then they occurred; suffice it to say, that I became acquainted that a *superior* being really exists: and ah! how dear a price have I paid for the knowledge! To one man alone, Wolfstein, may I communicate this secret of immortal life: then must I forego *my* claim to it,—and oh! with what pleasure shall I forego it! To you I bequeath the secret; but first you must swear that if . . . . you wish God may . . . ."

"I swear," cried Wolfstein, in a transport of delight; burning ecstasy revelled through his veins; pleasurable coruscations were emitted from his eyes. "I swear," continued he; "and if ever . . . . . may God . . . ."

"Needless were it for me," continued Ginotti, "to expatiate further upon the *means* which I have used [**I-204**] to become master over your every action; that will be sufficiently explained when you have followed my directions. Take," continued Ginotti, "——— and ——— and ———; mix them according to the directions which this book will communicate to you. Seek, at midnight, the ruined abbey near the castle of St. Irvyne, in France; and there —I need say no more—there you will meet with me."

CHAPTER XI.

THE varying occurrences of time and change, which bring anticipation of better days, brought none to the hapless Eloise. Nempere now having gained the point which his villainy had projected, felt little or no attachment left for the unhappy victim of his baseness; he treated her indeed most cruelly, and his unkindness added greatly to the severity of her afflictions. One day, when, weighed down by the extreme asperity of her woes, Eloise sat leaning her head on her hand, and mentally retracing, in sickening and mournful review, the concatenated occurrences which had led her to become what she was, she sought to change the bent of her ideas, but in vain. The feelings of her soul were but exacerbated by the attempt to quell them. Her dear brother's death, that brother so tenderly beloved, added a sting to her sensations. Was there any one on earth to whom she was now attracted by a wish of pouring in the friend's bosom ideas and feelings indefinable to any one else? Ah, no! that friend existed not; never, never more would she know such a friend. Never did she really love any one; and now had she sacrificed her conviction of right and wrong to a man who neither [**I-205**] knew how to appreciate her excellence, nor was adequate to excite other sensation than of terror and dread.

Thus were her thoughts engaged, when Nempere entered the apartment, accompanied by a gentleman, whom he unceremoniously announced as the Chevalier Mountfort, an Englishman of rank, and his friend. He was a man of handsome countenance and engaging manners. He conversed with Eloise with an ill-disguised conviction of his own superiority, and seemed indeed to assert, as it were, a right of conversing with her; nor did Nempere appear to dispute his apparent assumption. The conversation turned upon music; Mountfort asked Eloise her opinion; "Oh!" said Eloise, enthusiastically, "I think it sublimes the soul to heaven; I think it is, of all earthly pleasures, the most excessive. Who, when listening to harmoniously-arranged sounds of music, exists there, but must forget his woes, and lose the memory of every earthly existence in the ecstatic emotions which it excites? Do you not think so, Chevalier?" said she; for the liveliness of his manner enchanted Eloise, whose temper, naturally elastic and sprightly, had been damped as yet by misery and seclusion. Mountfort smiled at the energetic avowal of her feelings; for, whilst she yet spoke, her expressive countenance became irradiated by the emanation of sentiment.

"Yes," said Mountfort, "it is indeed powerfully efficient to excite the interests of the soul; but does it not, by the very act of resuscitating the feelings, by working upon the, perhaps, long dead chords of secret and enthusiastic rapture, awaken the powers of grief as well as pleasure?"

"Ah! it may do both," said Eloise, sighing.

He approached her at that instant. Nempere arose, as if intentionally, and left the room. Mountfort pressed her hand to his heart with earnestness: he kissed it, and then resigning it, said, "No, no, spotless untainted [**I-206**] Eloise; untainted even by surrounding depravity: not for worlds would I injure you. Oh! I can conceal it no longer—will conceal it no longer—Nempere is a villain."

"Is he?" said Eloise, apparently resigned, *now,* to the severest shocks of fortune: "then, then indeed I know not with whom to seek an asylum. Methinks all are villains."

"Listen then, injured innocence, and reflect in whom thou hast confided. Ten days ago, in the gaminghouse at Geneva, Nempere was present. He engaged in play with me, and I won of him considerable sums. He told me that he could not pay me now, but that he had a beautiful girl, whom he would give to me, if I would release him from the obligation. 'Est elle une fille de joie?' I inquired. 'Oui, et de vertu praticable.' This quieted my conscience. In a moment of licentiousness, I acceded to his proposal; and, as money is almost valueless to me, I tore the bond for three thousand zechins: but did I think that an angel was to be sacrificed to the degraded avarice of the being to whom her fate was committed? By heavens, I will this moment seek him—upbraid him with his inhuman depravity,—and——" "Oh! stop, stop," cried Eloise, "do not seek him; all, all is well—I will leave him. Oh! how I thank you, stranger, for this unmerited pity to a wretch who is, alas! too conscious that she deserves it not."—"Ah! you deserve every thing," interrupted the impassioned Mountfort; "you deserve paradise. But leave this perjured villain; and do not say, unkind fair-one, that you have no friend: indeed, you have a most warm, disinterested friend in me."—"Ah! but," said Eloise, hesitatingly, "what will the——"

"World say," she was about to have added; but the conviction of having so lately and so flagrantly violated every regard to its opinion—she only sighed. "Well," [**I-207**] continued Mountfort, as if not perceiving her hesitation; "you will accompany me to a cottage ornée, which I possess at some little distance hence? Believe that your situation shall be treated with the deference which it requires; and, however I may have yielded to habitual licentiousness, I have too much honour to disturb the sorrows of one who is a victim to that of another." Licentious and free as had been the career of Mountfort's life, it was by no means the result

of a nature naturally prone to vice; it had been owing to the unchecked sallies of an imagination not sufficiently refined. At the desolate situation of Eloise, however, every good propensity in his nature urged him to take compassion on her. His heart, originally susceptible of the finest feelings, was touched, and he really and sincerely—yes, a libertine, but not one from principle, sincerely meant what he said.

"Thanks, generous stranger," said Eloise, with energy; "indeed I *do* thank you." For not yet had acquaintance with the world sufficiently bidden Eloise distrust the motives of its disciples. "I accept your offer, and only hope that my compliance may not induce you to regard me otherwise than I am."

"Never, never can I regard you as other than a suffering angel," replied the impassioned Mountfort. Eloise blushed at what the energetic force of Mountfort's manner assured her was not intended as a compliment.

"But may I ask my generous benefactor, *how, where,* and *when* am I to be released?"

"Leave that to me," returned Mountfort: "be ready to-morrow night at ten o'clock. A chaise will wait beneath."

Nempere soon entered; their conversation was uninterrupted, and the evening passed away uninteresting and slow.

Swiftly fled the intervening hours, and fast advanced [**I-208**] the moment when Eloise was about to try, again, the compassion of the world. Night came, and Eloise entered the chaise; Mountfort leaped in after her. For awhile her agitation was excessive. Mountfort at last succeeded in calming her; "Why, my dearest Ma'am'selle," said he, "why will you thus needlessly agitate yourself? I *swear* to hold your honour far dearer than my own life; and my companion ——"

"What companion?" Eloise interrupted him, inquiringly.

"Why," replied he, "a friend of mine, who lives at my cottage; he is an Irishman, and so *very* moral, and so averse to every species of *gaieté de cœur,* that you need be under no apprehensions. In short, he is a love-sick swain, without ever having found what he calls a *congenial* female. He wanders about, writes poetry, and, in short, is much *too sentimental* to occasion you any alarm on that account. And, I assure you,' added he, assuming a more serious tone, "although I may not be quite so far gone in romance, yet I have feelings of honour and humanity which teach me to respect your sorrows as my own."

"Indeed, indeed I believe you, generous stranger; nor do I think that you *could* have a friend whose principles are dishonourable."

Whilst yet she spoke, the chaise stopped, and Mountfort springing from it, handed Eloise into his habitation. It was neatly fitted up in the English taste.

"Fitzeustace," said Mountfort to his friend, "allow me to introduce you to Madame Eloise de ——" Eloise blushed, as did Fitzeustace.

"Come," said Fitzeustace, to conquer *mauvaise honte,* "supper is ready, and the lady doubtlessly fatigued."

Fitzeustace was finely formed, yet there was a languor which pervaded even his whole figure: his eyes were dark and expressive, and as, occasionally, they met [**I-209**] those of Eloise, gleamed with excessive brilliancy, awakened doubtlessly by curiosity and interest. He said but little during supper, and left to his more vivacious friend the whole of Eloise's conversation, who, animated at having escaped a persecutor, and one she hated, displayed

extreme command of social powers. Yes, once again was Eloise vivacious: the sweet spirit of social intercourse was not dead within,—that spirit which illumes even slavery, which makes its horrors less terrific, and is not annihilated in the dungeon itself.

At last arrived the hour of retiring.—Morning came.

The cottage was situated in a beautiful valley. The odorous perfume of roses and jasmine wafted on the zephyr's wing, the flowery steep which rose before it, and the umbrageous loveliness of the surrounding country, rendered it a spot the most fitted for joyous seclusion. Eloise wandered out with Mountfort and his friend to view it; and so accommodating was her spirit, that, ere long, Fitzeustace became known to her as familiarly as if they had been acquainted all their lives.

Time fled on, and each day seemed only to succeed the other purposely to vary the pleasures of this delightful retreat. Eloise sung in the summer evenings, and Fitzeustace, whose taste for music was most exquisite, accompanied her on his oboe.

By degrees the society of Fitzeustace, to which before she had preferred Mountfort's, began to be more interesting. He insensibly acquired a power over the heart of Eloise, which she herself was not aware of. She involuntarily almost sought his society; and when, which frequently happened, Mountfort was absent at Geneva, her sensations were indescribably ecstatic in the society of his friend. She sat in mute, in silent rapture, listening to the notes of his oboe, as they floated on [**I-210**] the stillness of evening: she feared not for the future, but, as it were, in a dream of rapturous delight, supposed that she must ever be as now—happy; not reflecting that, were he who caused that happiness absent, it would exist no longer.

Fitzeustace madly, passionately doted on Eloise; in all the energy of incontaminated nature, he sought but the happiness of the object of his whole affections. He sought not to investigate the causes of his woe; sufficient was it for him to have found one who could *understand,* could *sympathize in,* the feelings and sensations which every child of nature, whom the world's refinements and luxury have not vitiated, must feel,—that affection, that contempt of selfish gratification, which every one, whose soul towers at all above the multitude, must acknowledge. He destined Eloise, in his secret soul, for his own. He resolved to die—he wished to live with her; and would have purchased one instant's happiness for her with ages of hopeless torments to be inflicted on himself. He loved her with passionate and excessive tenderness: were he absent from her but a moment, he would sigh with love's impatience for her return; yet he feared to avow his flame, lest this, perhaps, baseless dream of rapturous and enthusiastic happiness might fade;—then, indeed, Fitzeustace felt that he must die.

Yet was Fitzeustace mistaken: Eloise loved him with all the tenderness of innocence; she confided in him unreservedly; and, though unconscious of the nature of the love she felt for him, returned each enthusiastically energetic prepossession of his towering mind with ardour excessive and unrestrained. Yet did Fitzeustace suppose that she loved him not. Ah! why did he think so?

Late one evening, Mountfort had gone to Geneva, and Fitzeustace wandered with Eloise towards that spot which Eloise selected as their constant evening ramble [**I-211**] on account of its superior beauty. The tall ash and oak, in mingled umbrage, sighed far above their heads; beneath them were walks, artificially cut, yet imitating nature. They wandered on, till they came to a pavilion which Mountfort had caused to be erected. It was situated on a piece of land entirely surrounded by water, yet peninsulated by a rustic bridge which joined it to the walk.

Hither, urged mechanically, for their thoughts were otherwise employed, wandered Eloise and Fitzeustace. Before them hung the moon in cloudless majesty; her orb was reflected by every movement of the crystalline water, which, agitated by the gentle zephyr, rolled tranquilly. Heedless yet of the beauties of nature, the loveliness of the scene, they entered the pavilion.

Eloise convulsively pressed her hand on her forehead.

"What is the matter, my dearest Eloise?" inquired Fitzeustace, whom awakened tenderness had thrown off his guard.

"Oh! nothing, nothing; but a momentary faintness. It will soon go off; let us sit down."

They entered the pavilion.

"'Tis nothing but drowsiness," said Eloise, affecting gaiety; "'twill soon go off. I sate up late last night; that I believe was the occasion."

"Recline on this sofa, then," said Fitzeustace, reaching another pillow to make the couch easier; "and I will play some of those Irish tunes which you admire so much."

Eloise reclined on the sofa, and Fitzeustace, seated on the floor, began to play; the melancholy plaintiveness of his music touched Eloise; she sighed, and concealed her tears in her handkerchief. At length she sunk into a profound sleep: still Fitzeustace continued playing, noticing not that she slumbered. He now perceived [**I-212**] that she spoke, but in so low a tone, that he knew she slept.

He approached. She lay wrapped in sleep; a sweet and celestial smile played upon her countenance, and irradiated her features with a tenfold expression of etheriality. Suddenly the visions of her slumbers appeared to have changed; the smile yet remained, but its expression was melancholy; tears stole gently from under her eyelids:—she sighed.

Ah! with what eagerness of ecstasy did Fitzeustace lean over her form! He dared not speak, he dared not move; but pressing a ringlet of hair which had escaped its band, to his lips, waited silently.

"Yes, yes; I think—it may——" at last she muttered; but so confusedly, as scarcely to be distinguishable.

Fitzeustace remained rooted in rapturous attention, listening.

"I thought, I thought he looked as if he could love me," scarcely articulated the sleeping Eloise. "Perhaps, though he may not love me, he may allow me to love him.—Fitzeustace!"

On a sudden, again were changed the visions of her slumbers; terrified she started from sleep, and cried, "Fitzeustace!"

CHAPTER XII.

For love is heaven, and heaven is love.

Lay of the Last Minstrel.

NEEDLESS were it to expatiate on their transports; they loved each other, and that is enough for those who have felt like Eloise and Fitzeustace.

One night, rather later indeed than it was Mountfort's [**I-213**] custom to return from Geneva, Eloise and Fitzeustace sat awaiting his arrival. At last it was too late any longer even to expect him; and Eloise was about to bid Fitzeustace good-night, when a knock at the door aroused them. Instantly, with a hurried and disordered step, his clothes stained with blood, his countenance convulsed and pallid as death, in rushed Mountfort.

An involuntary exclamation of surprise burst from the terrified Eloise.

"What—what is the matter?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing!" answered Mountfort, in a tone of hurried, yet desperate agony. The wildness of his looks contradicted his assertions. Fitzeustace, who had been inquiring whether he was wounded, on finding that he was not, flew to Eloise.

"Oh! go, go!" she exclaimed. "Something, I am convinced, is wrong. Tell me, dear Mountfort, what it is—in pity tell me."

"Nempere is dead!" replied Mountfort, in a voice of deliberate desperation; then, pausing for an instant, he added in an under tone: "And the officers of justice are in pursuit of me. Adieu, Eloise!—Adieu, Fitzeustace! You know I must part with you—you know how unwillingly. My address is at—London.—Adieu!—once again adieu!"

Saying this, as by a convulsive effort of despairing energy, he darted from the apartment, and, mounting a horse which stood at the gate, swiftly sped away. Fitzeustace well knew the impossibility of his longer stay; he did not seem surprised, but sighed.

"Ah! well I know," said Eloise, violently agitated, "I well know myself to be the occasion of these misfortunes. Nempere sought for me; the generous Mountfort would not give me up; and now is he compelled to fly—perhaps may not even escape with life. Ah! I fear it is destined that every friend must suffer in the fatality which environs me. Fitzeustace!" she [**I-214**] uttered this with such tenderness, that, almost involuntarily, he clasped her hand, and pressed it to his bosom, in the silent, yet expressive enthusiasm of love. "Fitzeustace! you will not likewise desert the poor isolated Eloise?"

"Say not isolated, dearest love. Can, can you fear my love, whilst your Fitzeustace exists? Say, adored Eloise, shall we *now* be united, *never, never* to part again? Say, will you consent to our immediate union?

"Know you not," exclaimed Eloise, in a low, faltering voice, "know you not that I *have been* another's?"

"Oh! suppose me not," interrupted the impassioned Fitzeustace, "the slave of such vulgar and narrow-minded prejudice. Does the frightful vice and ingratitude of Nempere sully the spotless excellence of my Eloise's soul? No, no,—that must ever continue uncontaminated by the frailty of the body in which it is enshrined. It must rise superior to the earth: 'tis that which I adore, Eloise. Say, say, was *that* Nempere's?"

"Oh! no, never!" cried Eloise, with energy. "Nothing but *fear* was Nempere's."

"Then why say you that ever you were *his?*" said Fitzeustace, reproachfully. "You never *could* have been his, destined as you were for mine, from the first instant the particles composing the soul which I adore, were assimilated by the God whom I worship."

"Indeed, believe me, dearest Fitzeustace, I love you, far beyond anything existing—indeed, existence were valueless, unless enjoyed with you!"

Eloise, though a *something* prevented her from avowing them, *felt* the enthusiastic and sanguine ideas of Fitzeustace to be true: her soul, susceptible of the most exalted virtue and expansion, though cruelly nipped in its growth, thrilled with delight unexperienced before, when she found a being who could understand and perceive the truth of her feelings, and indeed *anticipate* them, as did Fitzeustace; and *he,* while gazing [**I-215**] on the index of that soul, which associated with his, and animated the body of Eloise, but for him, felt delight, which, glowing and enthusiastic as had been his picture of happiness, he never expected to know. His dark and beautiful eye gleamed with tenfold lustre; his every nerve, his every pulse, confessed the awakened consciousness, that *she,* on whom his soul had doted, ever since he acknowledged the existence of his intellectuality, was present before him.

A short space of time passed, and Eloise gave birth to the son of Nempere. Fitzeustace cherished it with the affection of a father; and, when occasionally he necessarily must be absent from the apartment of his beloved Eloise, his whole delight was to gaze on the child, and trace in its innocent countenance the features of the mother who was so beloved by him.

Time no longer dragged heavily to Eloise and Fitzeustace: happy in the society of each other, they wished nor wanted other joys; united by the laws of their God, and assimilated by congeniality of sentiment, they supposed that each succeeding month must be like this, must pass like this, in the full satiety of every innocent union of mental enjoyment. While thus the time sped in rapturous succession of delight, autumn advanced.

The evening was late, when, at the usual hour, Eloise and Fitzeustace took the way to their beloved pavilion. Fitzeustace was unusually desponding, and his ideas for futurity were marked by the melancholy of his mind. Eloise in vain attempted to soothe him; the contention of his mind was but too visible. She led him to the pavilion. They entered it. The autumnal moon had risen; her dimly-gleaming orb, scarcely now visible, was shrouded in the darkness of the atmosphere: like the spirit of the spotless ether, which shrinks from the obtrusive gaze of man, she hung behind a leaden-coloured cloud. The wind in low and melancholy [**I-216**] whispering sighed among the branches of the towering trees; the melody of the nightingale, which floated upon its dying cadences, alone broke on the solemnity of the scene. Lives there, whose soul experiences no degree of delight, is susceptible of no gradations of feelings, at change of scenery? Lives there, who can listen to the cadence of the evening zephyr, and not acknowledge, in his mind, the sensations of celestial melancholy which it awakens? for, if he does, his life were valueless, his death were undeplored. Ambition, avarice, ten thousand mean, ignoble passions, had extinguished within him that soft, but indefinable sen-sorium of unallayed delight, with which his soul, whose susceptibility is not destroyed by the demands of selfish appetite, thrills exultingly, and wants but the union of another, of whom the feelings are in unison with his own, to constitute almost insupportable delight.

Let Epicureans argue, and say, "There is no pleasure but in the gratification of the senses." Let them enjoy their own opinion; I want not *pleasure,* when I can enjoy *happiness*. Let Stoics say, "Every idea that there are fine feelings, is weak; he who yields to them is even weaker." Let those too, wise in their own conceit, indulge themselves in sordid and degrading hypotheses; let them suppose human nature capable of no influence from any thing but materiality; so long as I enjoy the innocent and *congenial* delight, which it were needless to define to those who are strangers to it, I am satisfied.

"Dear Fitzeustace," said Eloise, "tell me what afflicts you; why are you so melancholy? —Do not we mutually love, and have we not the unrestrained enjoyment of each other's society?"

Fitzeustace sighed deeply; he pressed Eloise's hand. "Why does my dearest Eloise suppose that I am unhappy?" The tone of his voice was tremulous, and a deadly settled paleness dwelt on his cheek.

[**I-217**]

"Are you not unhappy, then, Fitzeustace?"

"I know I ought not to be so," he replied, with a faint smile;—he paused—"Eloise," continued Fitzeustace, "I know I ought not to grieve, but you will, perhaps, pardon me when I say, that a father's curse, whether from the prejudice of education, or the innate consciousness of its horror, agitates my mind. I cannot leave you, I cannot go to England; and will you then leave your country, Eloise, to accommodate me? No, I do not, I ought not to expect it."

"Oh! with pleasure; what is country? what is everything without you? Come, my love, dismiss these fears, we yet may be happy."

"But before we go to England, before my father will see us, it is necessary that we should be married—nay, do not start, Eloise; I view it in the light that you do: I consider it an human institution, and incapable of furnishing that bond of union by which alone can intellect be conjoined; I regard it as but a chain, which, although it keeps the body bound, still leaves the soul unfettered: it is not so with love. But still, Eloise, to those who think like us, it is at all events harmless; it is but yielding to the prejudices of the world wherein we live, and procuring moral expediency, at a slight sacrifice of what we conceive to be right."

"Well, well, it shall be done, Fitzeustace," resumed Eloise; "but take the assurance of *my* promise that I cannot love you more."

They soon agreed on a point of, in their eyes, so trifling importance, and arriving in England, tasted that happiness, which love and innocence alone can give. Prejudice may triumph for awhile, but virtue will be eventually the conqueror.

[**I-218**]

CONCLUSION.

IT was night—all was still: not a breeze dared to move, not a sound to break the stillness of horror. Wolfstein has arrived at the village near which St. Irvyne stood; he has sped him to the château, and has entered the edifice; the garden door was open, and he entered the vaults.

For a time, the novelty of his situation, and the painful recurrence of past events, which, independently of his own energies, would gleam upon his soul, rendered him too much confused to investigate minutely the recesses of the cavern. Arousing himself, at last, however, from this momentary suspension of faculty, he paced the vaults in eager desire for the arrival of midnight. How inexpressible was his horror when he fell on a body which appeared motionless and without life! He raised it in his arms, and, taking it to the light, beheld, pallid in death, the features of Megalena. The laugh of anguish which had convulsed her expiring frame, still played around her mouth, as a smile of horror and despair; her hair was loose and wild, seemingly gathered in knots by the convulsive grasp of dissolution. She moved not; his soul was nerved by almost superhuman powers; yet the ice of despair chilled his burning brain. Curiosity, resistless curiosity, even in a moment such as this, reigned in his bosom. The body of Megalena was breathless, and yet no visible cause could be assigned for her death. Wolfstein dashed the body convulsively on the earth, and, wildered by the suscitated energies of his soul almost to madness, rushed into the vaults.

Not yet had the bell announced the hour of mid-night. Wolfstein sate on a projecting mass of stone; his frame trembled with a burning anticipation of what was about to occur; a thirst of knowledge scorched [**I-219**] his soul to madness; yet he stilled his wild energies,—yet he awaited in silence the coming of Ginotti. At last the bell struck; Ginotti came; his step was rapid, and his manner wild; his figure was wasted almost to a skeleton, yet it retained its loftiness and grandeur; still from his eye emanated that indefinable expression which ever made Wolfstein shrink appalled. His cheek was sunken and hollow, yet was it flushed by the hectic of despairing exertion. "Wolfstein," he said, "Wolfstein, part is past—the hour of agonizing horror is past; yet the dark and icy gloom of desperation braces this soul to fortitude;—but come, let us to business." He spoke, and threw his mantle on the ground. "I am blasted to endless torment," muttered the mysterious. "Wolfstein, dost thou deny thy Creator?"—"Never, never."—"Wilt thou not?"—"No, no,—anything but that."

Deeper grew the gloom of the cavern. Darkness almost visible seemed to press around them; yet did the scintillations which flashed from Ginotti's burning gaze dance on its bosom. Suddenly a flash of lightning hissed through the lengthened vaults; a burst of frightful thunder seemed to convulse the universal fabric of nature; and, borne on the pinions of hell's sulphurous whirlwind, he himself, the frightful prince of terror, stood before them. "Yes," howled a voice superior to the bursting thunder-peal; "yes, thou shalt have eternal life, Ginotti." On a sudden Ginotti's frame mouldered to a gigantic skeleton, yet two pale and ghastly flames glared in his eyeless sockets. Blackened in terrible convulsions, Wolfstein expired; over him had the power of hell no influence. Yes, endless existence is thine, Ginotti—a dateless and hopeless eternity of horror.

* * * * * *

Ginotti is Nempere. Eloise is the sister of Wolfstein. Let then the memory of these victims to hell and malice [**I-220**] live in the remembrance of those who can pity the wanderings of error; let remorse and repentance expiate the offences which arise from the delusion of the passions, and let endless life be sought from Him who alone can give an eternity of happiness.

[**I-221**]

AN ADDRESS,

to the

IRISH PEOPLE.

BY PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

ADVERTISEMENT.

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, summarily pointing out the evils of that 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 associations conducted with peaceable firmness, being earnestly recommended, as means for embodying that unanimity and firmness, which must finally be successful.

Dublin:

1812.

Price—5d.

[**I-223**]

AN ADDRESS TO THE IRISH PEOPLE.↩

FELLOW MEN,—I am not an Irishman, yet I can feel for you. I hope there are none among you who will read this address with prejudice or levity, because it is made by an Englishman; indeed, I believe there are not. The Irish are a brave nation. They have a heart of liberty in their breasts, but they are much mistaken if they fancy that a stranger cannot have as warm a one. Those are my brothers and my countrymen who are unfortunate. I should like to know what there is in a man being an Englishman, a Spaniard, or a Frenchman that makes him worse or better than he really is. He was born in one town, you in another, but that is no reason why he should not feel for you, desire your benefit, or be willing to give you some advice, which may make you more capable of knowing your own interest, or acting so as to secure it. There are many Englishmen who cry down the Irish, and think it answers their ends to revile all that belongs to Ireland: but it is not because these men are Englishmen that they maintain such opinions, but because they wish to get money, and titles, and power. They would act in this manner to whatever country they might belong, until mankind is much altered for the better, which reform, I hope, will one day be effected. I address you, then, as my brothers and my fellow-men, for I should wish to see the Irishman who, if England was persecuted as Ireland is, who, if France [**I-224**] was persecuted as Ireland is, who, if any set of men that helped to do a public service, were prevented from enjoying its benefits as Irishmen are—I should like to see the man, I say, who would see these misfortunes, and not attempt to succour the sufferers when he could, just that I might tell him that he was no Irishman, but some bastard mongrel bred up in a court, or some coward fool who was a democrat to all above him, and an aristocrat to all below him. I think there are few true Irishmen who would not be ashamed of such a character, still fewer who possess it. I know that there are some, not among you, my friends, but among your enemies, who, seeing the title of this piece, will take it up with a sort of hope that it may recommend violent measures,

and thereby disgrace the cause of freedom, that the warmth of an heart desirous that liberty should be possessed equally by all, will vent itself in abuse on the enemies of liberty, bad men who deserve the contempt of the good, and ought not to excite their indignation to the harm of their cause. But these men will be disappointed—I know the warm feelings of an Irishman sometimes carries him beyond the point of prudence. I do not desire to root out, but to moderate this honourable warmth. This will disappoint the pioneers of oppression, and they will be sorry that through this address nothing will occur which can be twisted into any other meaning but what is calculated to fill you with that moderation which they have not, and make you give them that toleration which they refuse to grant to you. You profess the Roman Catholic religion which your fathers professed before you. Whether it is the best religion or not, I will not here inquire: all religions are good which make men good; and the way that a person ought to prove that his method of worshipping God is best, is for himself to be better than all other men. But we will consider what your religion was in old times and what it is now; you may say it is not a fair way for [**I-225**] me to proceed as a Protestant, but I am not a Protestant nor am I a Catholic, and therefore not being a follower of either of these religions, I am better able to judge between them. A Protestant is my brother, and a Catholic is my brother. I am happy when I can do either of them a service, and no pleasure is so great to me than that which I should feel if my advice could make men of any professions of faith, wiser, better, and happier.

The Roman Catholics once persecuted the Protestants, the Protestants now persecute the Roman Catholics. Should we think that one is as bad as the other? No, you are not answerable for the faults of your fathers any more than the Protestants are good for the goodness of their fathers. I must judge of people as I see them; the Irish Catholics are badly used. I will not endeavour to hide from them their wretchedness; they would think that I mocked at them if I should make the attempt. The Irish Catholics now demand for themselves and proffer for others unlimited toleration, and the sensible part among them, which I am willing to think constitutes a very large portion of their body, know that the gates of Heaven are open to people of every religion, provided they are good. But the Protestants, although they may think so in their hearts, which certainly, if they think at all, they must seem to act as if they thought that God was better pleased with them than with you; they trust the reins of earthly government only to the hands of their own sect. In spite of this, I never found one of them impudent enough to say that a Roman Catholic, or a Quaker, or a Jew, or a Mahometan, if he was a virtuous man, and did all the good in his power, would go to Heaven a bit the slower for not subscribing to the thirty-nine articles—and if he should say so, how ridiculous in a foppish courtier not six feet high to direct the spirit of universal harmony in what manner to conduct the affairs of the universe!

[**I-226**]

The Protestants say that there was a time when the Roman Catholics burnt and murdered people of different sentiments, and that their religious tenets are now as they were then. This is all very true. You certainly worship God in the same way that you did when these barbarities took place, but is that any reason that you should now be barbarous? There is as much reason to suppose it as to suppose that because a man's greatgrandfather, who was a Jew, had been hung for sheep-stealing, that I, by believing the same religion as he did, must certainly commit the same crime. Let us then see what the Roman Catholic religion has been. No one knows much of the early times of the Christian religion until about three hundred years after its beginning; two great Churches, called the Roman and the Greek Churches, divided the opinions of men. They fought for a very long time—a great many words were wasted, and a great deal of blood shed.

This, as you may suppose, did no good. Each party, however, thought they were doing God a service, and that he would reward them. If they had looked an inch before their noses, they might have found that fighting and killing men, and cursing them and hating them, was the very worst way for getting into favour with a Being who is allowed by all to be best pleased with deeds of love and charity. At last, however, these two religions entirely separated, and the popes reigned like kings and bishops at Rome, in Italy. The Inquisition was set up, and in the course of one year 30,000 people were burnt in Italy and Spain for entertaining different opinions from those of the pope and the priests. There was an instance of shocking barbarity which the Roman Catholic clergy committed in France by order of the pope. The bigoted monks of that country, in cold blood, in one night massacred 80,000 Protestants; this was done under the authority of the Pope, and there was only one Roman Catholic bishop [**I-227**] who had virtue enough to refuse to help. The vices of monks and nuns in their convents were in those times shameful. People thought that they might commit any sin, however monstrous, if they had money enough to prevail upon the priests to absolve them. In truth, at that time the priests shamefully imposed upon the people; they got all the power into their own hands; they persuaded them that a man could not be entrusted with the care of his own soul, and by cunningly obtaining possession of their secrets, they became more powerful than kings, princes, dukes, lords, or ministers. This power made them bad men; for although rational people are very good in their natural state, there are now, and ever have been, very few whose good dispositions despotic power does not destroy. I have now given a fair description of what your religion was; and, Irishmen, my brothers, will you make your friend appear a liar, when he takes upon himself to say for you that you are not now what the professors of the same faith were in times of yore? Do I speak false when I say that the Inquisition is the object of your hatred? Am I a liar if I assert that an Irishman prizes liberty dearly, that he will preserve that right, and if it be wrong, does not dream that money can give to a priest, or the talking of another man erring like himself, can in the least influence the judgment of the eternal God? I am not a liar if I affirm in your name, that you believe a Protestant equally with yourself to be worthy of the kingdom of Heaven, if he be equally virtuous, that you will treat men as brethren wherever you may find them, and that difference of opinion in religious matters shall not, does not, in the least on your part obstruct the most perfect harmony on every other subject. Ah! no, Irishmen, I am not a liar. I seek your confidence, not that I may betray it, but that I may teach you to be happy and wise and good. If you will not repose any trust in me I shall lament; but I will do [**I-228**] everything in my power that is honourable, fair, and open to gain it. Some teach you that others are heretics, that you alone are right; some teach that rectitude consists in religious opinions, without which no morality is good. Some will tell you that you ought to divulge your secrets to one particular set of men. Beware, my friends, how you trust those who speak in this way. They will, I doubt not, attempt to rescue you from your present miserable state, but they will prepare a worse. It will be out of the frying-pan into the fire. Your present oppressors, it is true, will then oppress you no longer, but you will feel the lash of a master a thousand times more bloodthirsty and cruel. Evil designing men will spring up who will prevent you thinking as you please—will burn you if you do not think as they do. There are always bad men who take advantage of hard times. The monks and priests of old were very bad men; take care no such abuse your confidence again. You are not blind to your present situation; you are villanously treated; you are badly used. That this slavery shall cease, I will venture to prophesy. Your enemies dare not to persecute you longer, the spirit of Ireland is bent, but it is not broken, and that they very well know. But I wish your views to embrace a wider scene—I wish you to think for your children and your children's children; to take great care (for it all rests with you) that whilst one tyranny is destroyed, another more terrible and fierce does not spring up. Take care then of smooth-faced impostors, who talk indeed of freedom, but who will cheat you into slavery. Can there be worse slavery than the depending for the safety of your soul on the will of another man? Is one man more favoured than another by God? No,

certainly, they are all favoured according to the good they do, and not according to the rank and profession they hold. God values a poor man as much as a priest, and has given him a soul as much to himself. The worship that a kind [**I-229**] Being must love is that of a simple affectionate heart, that shows its piety in good works, and not in ceremonies, or confessions, or burials, or processions, or wonders. Take care then that you are not led away. Doubt everything that leads you not to charity, and think of the word "heretic" as a word which some selfish knave invented for the ruin and misery of the world, to answer his own paltry and narrow ambition. Do not inquire if a man be a heretic, if he be a Quaker, a Jew, or a Heathen; but if he be a virtuous man, if he loves liberty and truth, if he wish the happiness and peace of human kind. If a man be ever so much a believer and love not these things, he is a heartless hypocrite, a rascal, and a knave. Despise and hate him as ye despise a tyrant and a villain. Oh, Ireland! thou emerald of the ocean, whose sons are generous and brave, whose daughters are honourable and frank and fair, thou art the isle on whose green shores I have desired to see the standard of liberty erected—a flag of fire—a beacon at which the world shall light the torch of Freedom!

We will now examine the Protestant religion. Its origin is called the Reformation. It was undertaken by some bigoted men who showed how little they understood the spirit of reform by burning each other. You will observe that these men burnt each other, indeed they universally betrayed a taste for destroying, and vied with the chiefs of the Roman Catholic religion in not only hating their enemies, but those men who least of all were their enemies, or anybody's enemies. Now do the Protestants or do they not hold the same tenets as they did when Calvin burnt Servetus? They swear that they do. We can have no better proof. Then with what face can the Protestants object to Catholic Emancipation on the plea that Catholics once were barbarous; when their own establishment is liable to the very same objections, on the very same grounds? I think this is a specimen of [**I-230**] barefaced intoleration, which I had hoped would not have disgraced this age; this age, which is called the age of reason, of thought diffused, of virtue acknowledged, and its principles fixed—oh! that it may be so. I have mentioned the Catholic and Protestant religions more to show that any objection to the toleration of the one forcibly applies to the non-permission of the other, or rather to show that there is no reason why both might not be tolerated; why every religion, every form of thinking might not be tolerated. But why do I speak of *toleration?* This word seems to mean that there is some merit in the person who tolerates: he has this merit, if it be one, of refraining to do an evil act, but he will share the merit with every other peaceable person who pursues his own business, and does not hinder another of his rights. It is not a merit to tolerate, but it is a crime to be intolerant: it is not a merit in me that I sit quietly at home without murdering any one, but it is a crime if I do so. Besides, no act of a national representation can make anything wrong which was not wrong before; it cannot change virtue and truth, and for a very plain reason: because they are unchangeable. An Act passed in the British Parliament to take away the rights of Catholics to act in that assembly, does not really take them away. It prevents them from doing it by force. This is in such cases the last and only efficacious way. But force is not the test of truth: they will never have recourse to violence who acknowledge no other rule of behaviour but virtue and justice.

The folly of persecuting men for their religion will appear if we examine it. Why do we persecute them? to make them believe as we do. Can anything be more barbarous or foolish? For, although we may make them say they believe as we do, they will not in their hearts do any such thing, indeed they cannot; this devilish method can only make them false hypocrites. For what is [**I-231**] belief? We cannot believe just what we like, but only what we think to be true; for you cannot alter a man's opinion by beating or burning, but by persuading him that what you think is right, and this can only be done by fair words and reason. It is ridiculous to call a man a heretic because he thinks differently from you; he might as well call you one. In the same sense the word orthodox is used; it signifies "to think

rightly," and what can be more vain, presumptuous in any man or any set of men, to put themselves so out of the ordinary course of things as to say—"What we think is right, no other people throughout the world have opinions anything like equal to ours." Anything short of unlimited toleration, and complete charity with all men, on which you will recollect that Jesus Christ principally insisted, is wrong, and for this reason. What makes a man to be a good man? Not his religion, or else there could be no good men in any religion but one, when yet we find that all ages, countries, and opinions have produced them. Virtue and wisdom always so far as they went produced liberty or happiness long before any of the religions now in the world had ever [been] heard of. The only use of a religion that ever I could see, is to make men wiser and better; so far as it does this it is a good one. Now, if people are good, and yet have sentiments differing from you, then all the purposes are answered which any reasonable man could want, and whether he thinks like you or not is of too little consequence to employ means which must be disgusting and hateful to candid minds; nay, they cannot approve of such means. For, as I have before said, you cannot believe or disbelieve what you like—perhaps some of you may doubt this, but just try. I will take a common and familiar instance. Suppose you have a friend of whom you wish to think well; he commits a crime which proves to you that he is a bad man. It is very painful to you to think ill of him, and you would still [**I-232**] think well of him if you could. But, mark the word, you *cannot* think well of him, not even to secure your own peace of mind can you do so. You try, but your attempts are vain. This shows how little power a man has over his belief, or rather, that he cannot believe what he does not think true. And what shall we think now? What fools and tyrants must not those men be who set up a particular religion, say that this religion alone is right, and that everyone who disbelieves it ought to be deprived of certain rights which are really his, and which would be allowed him if he believed. Certainly if you cannot help disbelief, it is not any fault in you. To take away a man's rights and privileges, to call him a heretic, or to think worse of him, when at the same time you cannot help owning that he has committed no fault, is the grossest tyranny and intoleration. From what has been said I think we may be justified in concluding that people of all religions ought to have an equal share in the State, that the words heretic and orthodox were invented by a vain villain, and have done a great deal of harm in the world, and that no person is answerable for his belief whose actions are virtuous and moral, that the religion is best whose members are the best men, and that no person can help either his belief or disbelief. Be in charity with all men. It does not therefore signify what your religion *was,* or what the Protestant religion *was,* we must consider them as we find them. What are they *now?* Yours is not intolerant; indeed, my friends, I have ventured to pledge myself for you that it is not. You merely desire to go to Heaven in your own way, nor will you interrupt fellow travellers, although the road which you take may not be that which they take. Believe me that goodness of heart and purity of life are things of more value in the eye of the Spirit of Goodness, than idle earthly ceremonies and things which may have anything but charity for their object. And is it for the first or the [**I-233**] last of these things that you or the Protestants contend? It is for the last. Prejudiced people indeed are they who grudge to the happiness and comfort of your souls things which can do harm to no one. They are not compelled to share in these rites. Irishmen! knowledge is more extended than in the early period of your religion, people have learned to think, and the more thought there is in the world, the more happiness and liberty will there be:—men begin now to think less of idle ceremonies and more of realities. From a long night have they risen, and they can perceive its darkness. I know no men of thought and learning who do not consider the Catholic idea of purgatory much nearer the truth than the Protestant one of eternal damnation. Can you think that the Mahometans and the Indians, who have done good deeds in this life, will not be rewarded in the next? The Protestants believe that they will be eternally damned, at least they swear that they do. I think they appear in a better light as perjurers than believers in a falsehood so hurtful and uncharitable as this. I propose unlimited toleration, or rather the destruction both of toleration and intoleration. The act permits certain people to worship God

after such a manner, which, in fact, if not done, would as far as in it lay prevent God from hearing their address. Can we conceive anything more presumptuous, and at the same time more ridiculous, than a set of men granting a licence to God to receive the prayers of certain of his creatures? Oh, Irishmen! I am interested in your cause; and it is not because you are Irishmen or Roman Catholics that I feel with you and feel for you; but because you are men and sufferers. Were Ireland at this moment peopled with Brahmins, this very same Address would have been suggested by the same state of mind. You have suffered not merely for your religion, but some other causes which I am equally desirous of remedying. The Union of England with Ireland has withdrawn the Protestant [**I-234**] aristocracy and gentry from their native country, and with these their friends and connexions. Their resources are taken from this country, although they are dissipated in another; the very poor people are most infamously oppressed by the weight of burden which the superior ranks lay upon their shoulders. I am no less desirous of the reform of these evils (with many others) than for the Catholic Emancipation.

Perhaps you all agree with me on both these subjects, We now come to the method of doing these things. I agree with the Quakers so far as they disclaim violence, and trust their cause wholly and solely to its own truth. If you are convinced of the truth of your cause, trust wholly to its truth; if you are not convinced, give it up. In no case employ violence; the way to liberty and happiness is never to transgress the rules of virtue and justice. Liberty and happiness are founded upon virtue and justice; if you destroy the one you destroy the other. However ill others may act, this will be no excuse for you if you follow their example; it ought rather to warn you from pursuing so bad a method. Depend upon it, Irishmen, your cause shall not be neglected. I will fondly hope that the schemes for your happiness and liberty, as well as those for the happiness and liberty of the world, will not be wholly fruitless. One secure method of defeating them is violence on the side of the injured party. If you can descend to use the same weapons as your enemy, you put yourself on a level with him on this score: you must be convinced that he is on these grounds your superior. But appeal to the sacred principles of virtue and justice, then how is he awed into nothing! How does truth show him in his real colours, and place the cause of toleration and reform in the clearest light! I extend my view not only to you as Irishmen, but to all of every persuasion, of every country. Be calm, mild, deliberate, patient; recollect [**I-235**] that you can in no measure more effectually forward the cause of reform than by employing your leisure time in reasoning or the cultivation of your minds. Think and talk and discuss: the only subjects you ought to propose are those of happiness and liberty. Be free and be happy, but first be wise and good. For you are not all wise or good. You are a great and a brave nation, but you cannot yet be all wise or good. You may be at some time, and then Ireland will be an earthly paradise. You know what is meant by a mob. It is an assembly of people who, without foresight or thought, collect themselves to disapprove of by force any measure which they dislike. An assembly like this can never do anything but harm; tumultuous proceedings must retard the period when thought and coolness will produce freedom and happiness, and that to the very people who make the mob. But if a number of human beings, after thinking of their own interests, meet together for any conversation on them, and employ resistance of the mind, not resistance of the body, these people are going the right way to work. But let no fiery passions carry them beyond this point. Let them consider that in some sense the whole welfare of their countrymen depends on their prudence, and that it becomes them to guard the welfare of others as their own. Associations for purposes of violence are entitled to the strongest disapprobation of the real reformist. Always suspect that some knavish rascal is at the bottom of things of this kind, waiting to profit by the confusion. All secret associations are also bad. Are you men of deep designs, whose deeds love darkness better than light? Dare you not say what you think before any man? Can you not meet in the open face of day in conscious innocence? Oh, Irishmen, ye can! Hidden arms, secret meetings, and designs violently to separate England from Ireland are all very bad. I do not mean to say [**I-236**] the

very end of them is bad; the object you have in view may be just enough, whilst the way you go about it is wrong—may be calculated to produce an opposite effect. Never do evil that good may come; always think of others as well as yourself, and cautiously look how your conduct may do good or evil, when you yourself shall be mouldering in the grave. Be fair, open, and you will be terrible to your enemies. A friend cannot defend you, much as he may feel for your sufferings, if you have recourse to methods of which virtue and justice disapprove. No cause is in itself so dear to liberty as yours. Much depends on you; far may your efforts spread either hope or despair: do not then cover in darkness wrongs at which the face of day and the tyrants who bask in its warmth ought to blush. Wherever has violence succeeded? The French Revolution, although undertaken with the best intentions, ended ill for the people, because violence was employed. The cause which they vindicated was that of truth, but they gave it the appearance of a lie by using methods which will suit the purposes of liars as well as their own. Speak boldly and daringly what you think; an Irishman was never accused of cowardice, do not let it be thought possible that he is a coward. Let him say what he thinks; a lie is the basest and meanest employment of men: leave lies and secrets to courtiers and lordlings. Be open, sincere, and single-hearted. Let it be seen that the Irish votaries of Freedom dare to speak what they think; let them resist oppression, not by force of arms, but by power of mind and reliance on truth and justice. Will any be arraigned for libel —will imprisonment or death be the consequences of this mode of proceeding? Probably not. But if it were so? Is danger frightful to an Irishman who speaks for his own liberty and the liberty of his wife and children? No; he will steadily persevere, and sooner shall pensioners cease to vote with [**I-237**] their benefactors than an Irishman swerve from the path of duty. But steadily persevere in the system above laid down, its benefits will speedily be manifested. Persecution may destroy some, but cannot destroy all, or nearly all; let it do its will. Ye have appealed to truth and justice, show the goodness of your religion by persisting in a reliance on these things, which must be the rules even of the Almighty's conduct. But before this can be done with any effect, habits of Sobriety, Regularity, and Thought must be entered into, and firmly resolved upon.

My warm-hearted friends who meet together to talk of the distresses of your countrymen until social chat induces you to drink rather freely, as ye have felt passionately, so reason coolly. Nothing hasty can be lasting; lay up the money with which you usually purchase drunkenness and ill-health to relieve the pains of your fellow sufferers. Let your children lisp of freedom in the cradle—let your deathbed be the school for fresh exertions—let every street of the city and field of the country be connected with thoughts which liberty has made holy. Be warm in your cause, yet rational and charitable and tolerant—never let the oppressor grind you into justifying his conduct by imitating his meanness.

Many circumstances, I will own, may excuse what is called rebellion, but no circumstances can ever make it good for your cause, and however honourable to your feelings, it will reflect no credit on your judgments. It will bind you more closely to the block of the oppressor, and your children's children, whilst they talk of your exploits, will feel that you have done them injury instead of benefit.

A crisis is now arriving which shall decide your fate. The King of Great Britain has arrived at the evening of his days. He has objected to your emancipation; he has been inimical to you; but he will in a certain time be no [**I-238**] more. The present Prince of Wales will then be king. It is said that he has promised to restore you to freedom: your real and natural right will, in that case, be no longer kept from you. I hope he has pledged himself to this act of justice, because there will then exist some obligation to bind him to do right. Kings are but too apt to think little as they should do: they think everything in the world is made for them; when the truth is, that it is only the vices of men that make such people necessary, and they have no other right of being kings but in virtue of the good they do.

The benefit of the governed is the origin and meaning of government. The Prince of Wales has had every opportunity of knowing how he ought to act about Ireland and liberty. That great and good man Charles Fox, who was your friend and the friend of freedom, was the friend of the Prince of Wales. He never flattered nor disguised his sentiments, but spoke them *openly* on every occasion, and the Prince was the better for his instructive conversation. He saw the truth, and he believed it. Now I know not what to say; his staff is gone, and he leans upon a broken reed; his present advisers are not like Charles Fox, they do not plan for liberty and safety, not for the happiness, but for the glory of their country; and what, Irishmen, is the glory of a country divided from their happiness? It is a false light hung out by the enemies of freedom to lure the unthinking into their net. Men like these surround the Prince, and whether or no he has really promised to emancipate you—whether or no he will consider the promise of a Prince of Wales binding to a King of England, is yet a matter of doubt. We cannot at least be quite certain of it: on this you cannot certainly rely. But there are men who, wherever they find a tendency to freedom, go there to increase, support, and regulate that tendency. These men, who join to a rational disdain of danger a practice of speaking the [**I-239**] truth, and defending the cause of the oppressed against the oppressor—these men see what is right and will pursue it. On such as these you may safely rely: they love you as they love their brothers; they feel for the unfortunate, and never ask whether a man is an Englishman or an Irishman, a catholic, a heretic, a christian, or a heathen, before their hearts and their purses are opened to feel with their misfortunes and relieve their necessities: such are the men who will stand by you for ever. Depend then not upon the promises of princes, but upon those of virtuous and disinterested men: depend not upon force of arms or violence, but upon the force of the truth of the rights which you have to share equally with others, the benefits and the evils of government.

The crisis to which I allude as the period of your emancipation is not the death of the present King, or any circumstance that has to do with kings, but something that is much more likely to do you good: it is the increase of virtue and wisdom which will lead people to find out that force and oppression are wrong and false; and this opinion, when it once gains ground, will prevent government from severity. It will restore those rights which Government has taken away. Have nothing to do with force or violence, and things will safely and surely make their way to the right point. The Ministers have now in Parliament a very great majority, and the Ministers are against you. They maintain the falsehood that, were you in power, you would prosecute [5]and burn, on the plea that you once did so. They maintain many other things of the same nature. They command the majority of the House of Commons, or rather the part of that assembly who receive pensions from Government or whose relatives receive them. These men of course are against you, because their employers are. But the sense of the country is not against you; the people of England [**I-240**] are not against you—they feel warmly for you—in some respects they feel with you. The sense of the English and of their governors is opposite—there must be an end of this; the goodness of a Government consists in the happiness of the governed. If the governed are wretched and dissatisfied, the government has failed in its end. It wants altering and mending. It will be mended, and a reform of English government will produce good to the Irish—good to all human kind, excepting those whose happiness consists in others' sorrows, and it will be a fit punishment for these to be deprived of their devilish joy. This I consider as an event which is approaching, and which will make the beginning of our hopes for that period which may spread wisdom and virtue so wide as to leave no hole in which folly or villany may hide themselves. I wish you, O Irishmen, to be as careful and thoughtful of your interests as are your real friends. Do not drink, do not play, do not spend any idle time, do not take everything that other people say for granted—there are numbers who will tell you lies to make their own fortunes: you cannot more certainly do good to your own cause than by defeating the intentions of these men. Think, read, and talk; let your own condition and that of your wives and children fill your minds; disclaim all manner of alliance with violence:

meet together if you will, but do not meet in a mob. If you think and read and talk with a real wish of benefiting the cause of truth and liberty, it will soon be seen how true a service you are tendering, and how sincere you are in your professions; but mobs and violence must be discarded. The certain degree of civil and religious liberty which the usage of the English Constitution allows, is such as the worst of men are entitled to, although you have it not; but that liberty which we may one day hope for, wisdom and virtue can alone give you a right to enjoy. This wisdom and this virtue I recommend on every account that you [**I-241**] should *instantly begin* to practise. Lose not a day, not an hour, not a moment. Temperance, sobriety, charity, and independence will give you virtue; and reading, talking, thinking, and searching will give you wisdom; when you have those things you may defy the tyrant. It is not going often to chapel, crossing yourselves, or confessing that will make you virtuous; many a rascal has attended regularly at mass, and many a good man has never gone at all. It is not paying priests or believing in what they say that makes a good man, but it is doing good actions or benefiting other people; this is the true way to be good, and the prayers and confessions and masses of him who does not these things are good for nothing at all. Do your work regularly and quickly: when you have done, think, read, and talk; do not spend your money in idleness and drinking, which so far from doing good to your cause, will do it harm. If you have anything to spare from your wife and children, let it do some good to other people, and put them in a way of getting wisdom and virtue, as the pleasure that will come from these good acts will be much better than the headache that comes from a drinking bout. And never quarrel between each other; be all of one mind as nearly as you can; do these things, and I will promise you liberty and happiness. But if, on the contrary of these things, you neglect to improve yourselves, continue to use the word heretic, and demand from others the toleration which you are unwilling to give, your friends and the friends of liberty will have reason to lament the death-blow of their hopes. I expect better things from you: it is for yourselves that I fear and hope. Many Englishmen are prejudiced against you; they sit by their own firesides, and certain rumours artfully spread are ever on the wing against you. But these people who think ill of you and of your nation are often the very men who, if they had better information, would feel for [**I-242**] you most keenly. Wherefore are these reports spread? How do they begin? They originate from the warmth of the Irish character, which the friends of the Irish nation have hitherto encouraged rather than repressed; this leads them in those moments, when their wrongs appear so clearly, to commit acts which justly excite displeasure. They begin therefore from yourselves, although falsehood and tyranny artfully magnify and multiply the cause of offence. Give no offence.

I will for the present dismiss the subject of the Catholic Emancipation; a little reflection will convince you that my remarks are just. Be true to yourselves, and your enemies shall not triumph. I fear nothing, if charity and sobriety mark your proceedings. Everything is to be dreaded—you yourselves will be unworthy of even a restoration to your rights, if you disgrace the cause, which I hope is that of truth and liberty, by violence; if you refuse to others the toleration which you claim for yourselves. But this you will not do. I rely upon it, Irishmen, that the warmth of your character will be shown as much in union with Englishmen and what are called heretics, who feel for you and love you, as in avenging your wrongs, or forwarding their annihilation. It is the heart that glows and not the cheek. The firmness, sobriety, and consistence of your outward behaviour will not at all show any hardness of heart, but will prove that you are determined in your cause, and are going the right way to work. I will repeat that virtue and wisdom are necessary to true happiness and liberty. The Catholic Emancipation, I consider, is certain. I do not see that anything but violence and intolerance among yourselves can leave an excuse to your enemies for continuing your slavery. The other wrongs under which you labour will probably also soon be done away. You will be rendered equal to the people of England in their rights and privileges, and will be in all respects, so far [**I-243**] as concerns the State, as happy. And now, Irishmen, another and a more wide prospect opens to my view. I cannot avoid, little as it may appear to have

anything to do with your present situation, to talk to you on the subject. It intimately concerns the well-being of your children and your children's children, and will perhaps more than anything prove to you the advantage and necessity of being thoughtful, sober, and regular; of avoiding foolish and idle talk, and thinking of yourselves as of men who are able to be much wiser and happier than you now are; for habits like these will not only conduce to the successful putting aside your present and immediate grievances, but will contain a seed which in future times will spring up into the tree of liberty, and bear the fruit of happiness.

There is no doubt but the world is going wrong, or rather that it is very capable of being much improved. What I mean by this improvement is, the inducement of a more equal and general diffusion of happiness and liberty. Many people are very rich and many are very poor. Which do you think are happiest? I can tell you that neither are happy, so far as their station is concerned. Nature never intended that there should be such a thing as a poor man or a rich one. Being put in an unnatural situation, they can neither of them be happy, so far as their situation is concerned. The poor man is born to obey the rich man, though they both come into the world equally helpless and equally naked. But the poor man does the rich no service by obeying him—the rich man does the poor no good by commanding him. It would be much better if they could be prevailed upon to live equally like brothers—they would ultimately both be happier. But this can be done neither to-day nor to-morrow; much as such a change is to be desired, it is quite impossible. Violence and folly in this, as in the other case, would only put off the period of its event. [**I-244**] Mildness, sobriety, and reason are the effectual methods of forwarding the ends of liberty and happiness.

Although we may see many things put in train during our life-time, we cannot hope to see the work of virtue and reason finished now; we can only lay the foundation for our posterity. Government is an evil; it is only the thoughtlessness and vices of men that make it a necessary evil. When all men are good and wise, government will of itself decay. So long as men continue foolish and vicious, so long will government, even such a government as that of England, continue necessary in order to prevent the crimes of bad men. Society is produced by the wants, government by the wickedness, and a state of just and happy equality by the improvement and reason of man. It is in vain to hope for any liberty and happiness without reason and virtue, for where there is no virtue there will be crime, and where there is crime there must be government. Before the restraints of government are lessened, it is fit that we should lessen the necessity for them. Before government is done away with, we must reform ourselves. It is this work which I would earnestly recommend to you. O Irishmen, Reform Yourselves, and I do not recommend it to you particularly because I think that you most need it, but because I think that your hearts are warm and your feelings high, and you will perceive the necessity of doing it more than those of a colder and more distant nature.

I look with an eye of hope and pleasure on the present state of things, gloomy and incapable of improvement as they may appear to others. It delights me to see that men begin to think and to act for the good of others. Extensively as folly and selfishness have predominated in this age, it gives me hope and pleasure at least to see that many know what is right. Ignorance and vice commonly go together: he that would do good must be wise. [**I-245**] A man cannot be truly wise who is not truly virtuous. Prudence and wisdom are very different things. The prudent man is he who carefully consults for his own good: the wise man is he who carefully consults for the good of others.

I look upon Catholic Emancipation and the restoration of the liberties and happiness of Ireland, so far as they are compatible with the English Constitution, as great and important events. I hope to see them soon. But if all ended here, it would give me little pleasure. I should still see thousands miserable and wicked; things would still be wrong. I regard then the accomplishment of these things as the road to a greater reform, that reform after which virtue and wisdom shall have conquered pain and vice—when no government will be wanted

but that of your neighbour's opinion. I look to these things with hope and pleasure, because I consider that they will certainly happen, and because men will not then be wicked and miserable. But I do not consider that they will or can immediately happen; their arrival will be gradual, and it all depends upon yourselves how soon or how late these great changes will happen. If all of you to-morrow were virtuous and wise, government which to-day is a safeguard, would then become a tyranny. But I cannot expect a rapid change. Many are obstinate and determined in their vice, whose selfishness makes them think only of their own good, when in fact the best way even to bring that about is to make others happy. I do not wish to see things changed now, because it cannot be done without violence, and we may assure ourselves that none of us are fit for any change, however good, if we condescend to employ force in a cause which we think right. Force makes the side that employs it directly wrong, and as much as we may pity we cannot approve the headstrong and intolerant zeal of its adherents.

[**I-246**]

Can you conceive, O Irishmen! a happy state of society—conceive men of every way of thinking living together like brothers? The descendant of the greatest prince would then be entitled to no more respect than the son of a peasant. There would be no pomp and no parade; but that which the rich now keep to themselves would then be distributed among the people. None would be in magnificence, but the superfluities then taken from the rich would be sufficient when spread abroad to make every one comfortable. No lover would then be false to his mistress, no mistress could desert her lover. No friend would play false; no rents, no debts, no taxes, no frauds of any kind would disturb the general happiness: good as they would be, wise as they would be, they would be daily getting better and wiser. No beggars would exist, nor any of those wretched women who are now reduced to a state of the most horrible misery and vice by men whose wealth makes them villainous and hardened; no thieves or murderers, because poverty would never drive men to take away comforts from another when he had enough for himself. Vice and misery, pomp and poverty, power and obedience, would then be banished altogether. It is for such a state as this, Irishmen, that I exhort you to prepare. "A camel shall as soon pass through the eye of a needle, as a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven." This is not to be understood literally. Jesus Christ appears to me only to have meant that riches have generally the effect of hardening and vitiating the heart; so has poverty. I think those people then are very silly, and cannot see one inch beyond their noses, who say that human nature is depraved; when at the same time wealth and poverty, those two great sources of crime, fall to the lot of a great majority of people; and when they see that people in moderate circumstances are always most wise and good. People say that poverty is no evil; they have never felt [**I-247**] it, or they would not think so; that wealth is necessary to encourage the arts—but are not the arts very inferior things to virtue and happiness?—the man would be very dead to all generous feelings who would rather see pretty pictures and statues than a million free and happy men.

It will be said that my design is to make you dissatisfied with your present condition, and that I wish to raise a Rebellion. But how stupid and sottish must those men be who think that violence and uneasiness of mind have anything to do with forwarding the views of peace, harmony, and happiness. They should know that nothing was so well fitted to produce slavery, tyranny, and vice as the violence which is attributed to the friends of liberty, and which the real friends of liberty are the only persons who disdain. As to your being dissatisfied with your present condition, anything that I may say is certainly not likely to increase that dissatisfaction. I have advanced nothing concerning your situation but its real case; but what may be proved to be true. I defy any one to point out a falsehood that I have uttered in the course of this Address. It is impossible but the blindest among you must see that everything is not right. This sight has often pressed some of the poorest among you to

take something from the rich man's store by violence, to relieve his own necessities. I cannot justify, but I can pity him. I cannot pity the fruits of the rich man's intemperance. I suppose some are to be found who will justify him. This sight has often brought home to a day-labourer the truth which I wish to impress upon you that all is not right. But I do not merely wish to convince you that our present state is bad, but that its alteration for the better depends on your own exertions and resolutions.

But he has never found out the method of mending it who does not first mend his own conduct, and then prevail [**I-248**] upon others to refrain from any vicious habits which they may have contracted, much less does the poor man suppose that wisdom as well as virtue is necessary, and that the employing his little time in reading and thinking, is really doing all that he has in his power to do towards the state, when pain and vice shall perish altogether.

I wish to impress upon your minds that without virtue or wisdom there can be no liberty or happiness; and that temperance, sobriety, charity, and independence of soul will give you virtue, as thinking, inquiring, reading, and talking will give you wisdom. Without the first the last is of little use, and without the last the first is a dreadful curse to yourselves and others.

I have told you what I think upon this subject, because I wish to produce in your minds an awe and caution necessary, before the happy state of which I have spoken can be introduced. This cautious awe is very different from the prudential fear which leads you to consider yourself as the first object, as, on the contrary, it is full of that warm and ardent love for others that burns in your hearts, O Irishmen! and from which I have fondly hoped to light a flame that may illumine and invigorate the world.

I have said that the rich command and the poor obey, and that money is only a kind of sign which shows that according to government the rich man has a right to command the poor man, or rather that the poor man, being urged by having no money to get bread, is forced to work for the rich man, which amounts to the same thing. I have said that I think all this very wrong, and that I wish the whole business was altered. I have also said that we can expect little amendment in our own time, and that we must be contented to lay the foundation of liberty and happiness by virtue and wisdom. This, then, shall be my work; let this be yours, Irishmen. Never shall that glory fail, which I am anxious that you shall deserve—the [**I-249**] glory of teaching to a world the first lessons of virtue and wisdom.

Let poor men still continue to work. I do not wish to hide from them a knowledge of their relative condition in society, I esteem it next [to] impossible to do so. Let the work of the labourer, of the artificer—let the work of every one, however employed, still be exerted in its accustomed way. The public communication of this truth ought in no manner to impede the established usages of society, however it is fitted in the end to do them away. For this reason it ought not to impede them, because if it did, a violent and unaccustomed and sudden sensation [6]would take place in all ranks of men, which would bring on violence and destroy the possibility of the event of that which in its own nature must be gradual, however rapid, and rational however warm. It is founded on the reform of private men, and without individual amendment it is vain and foolish to expect the amendment of a state or government. I would advise them, therefore, whose feelings this Address may have succeeded in affecting (and surely those feelings which charitable and temperate remarks excite can never be violent and intolerant), if they be, as I hope, those whom poverty has compelled to class themselves in the lower orders of society, that they will as usual attend to their business and the discharge of those public or private duties which custom has ordained. Nothing can be more rash and thoughtless than to show in ourselves singular instances of any particular doctrine before the general mass of the people are so convinced by the reasons of the doctrine, that it will be no longer singular. That reasons as well as feelings may help the establishment of happiness and liberty, on the basis of wisdom and virtue, be our aim and

intention. Let us not be led into any means which are unworthy of this end, nor, as [**I-250**] so much depends upon yourselves, let us cease carefully to watch over our conduct, that when we talk of reform it be not objected to us, that reform ought to begin at home. In the interval that public or private duties and necessary labours allow, husband your time so that you may do to others and yourselves the most real good. To improve your own minds is to join these two views; conversation and reading are the principal and chief methods of awaking the mind to knowledge and goodness. Reading or thought will principally bestow the former of these —the benevolent exercise of the powers of the mind in communicating useful knowledge will bestow an habit of the latter; both united will contribute so far as lies in your individual power to that great reform which will be perfect and finished the moment every one is virtuous and wise. Every folly refuted, every bad habit conquered, every good one confirmed, are so much gained in this great and excellent cause.

To begin to reform the government is immediately necessary, however good or bad individuals may be; it is the more necessary, if they are eminently the latter, in some degree to palliate or do away the cause, as political institution has even [7]the greatest influence on the human character, and is that alone which differences the Turk from the Irishman.

I write now not only with a view for Catholic Emancipation, but for universal emancipation; and this emancipation complete and unconditional, that shall comprehend every individual of whatever nation or principles, that shall fold in its embrace all that think and all that feel: the Catholic cause is subordinate, and its success preparatory to this great cause, which adheres to no sect but society, to no cause but that of universal happiness, to no party but the people. I desire Catholic Emancipation, but I desire not to stop here; and I hope [**I-251**] there are few, who having perused the preceding arguments, will not concur with me in desiring a complete, a lasting, and a happy amendment. That all steps, however good and salutary, which may be taken, all reforms consistent with the English constitution that may be effectuated, can only be subordinate and preparatory to the great and lasting one which shall bring about the peace, the harmony, and the happiness of Ireland, England, Europe, the World. I offer merely an outline of that picture which your own hopes may gift with the colours of reality.

Government will not allow a peaceable and reasonable discussion of its principles by any association of men who assemble for that express purpose. But have not human beings a right to assemble to talk upon what subject they please? Can anything be more evident than that as government is only of use as it conduces to the happiness of the governed, those who are governed have a right to talk on the efficacy of the safeguard employed for their benefit? Can any topic be more interesting or useful than one discussing how far the means of government is or could be made in a higher degree effectual to producing the end? Although I deprecate violence, and the cause which depends for its influence on force, yet I can by no means think that assembling together merely to talk of how things go on—I can by no means think that societies formed for talking on any subject, however Government may dislike them, come in any way under the head of force or violence—I think that associations conducted in the spirit of sobriety, regularity, and thought, are one of the best and most efficient of those means which I would recommend for the production of happiness, liberty, and virtue.

Are you slaves or are you men? If slaves, then crouch to the rod and lick the feet of your oppressors; glory [in] your shame; it will become you, if brutes, to act [**I-252**] according to your nature. But you are men: a real man is free, so far as circumstances will permit him. Then firmly yet quietly resist. When one cheek is struck, turn the other to the insulting coward. You will be truly brave: you will resist and conquer. The discussion of any subject is a right that you have brought into the world with your heart and tongue. Resign your heart's blood before you part with this inestimable privilege of man. For it is fit that the governed should inquire into the proceedings of government, which is of no use the moment it is

conducted on any other principle but that of safety. You have much to think of. Is war necessary to your happiness and safety? The interests of the poor gain nothing from the wealth or extension of a nation's boundaries, they gain nothing from glory, a word that has often served as a cloak to the ambition or avarice of statesmen. The barren victories of Spain, gained in behalf of a bigoted and tyrannical government, are nothing to them. The conquests in India, by which England has gained glory indeed, but a glory which is not more honourable than that of Buonaparte, are nothing to them. The poor purchase this glory and this wealth at the expense of their blood and labour and happiness and virtue. They die in battle for this infernal cause. Their labour supplies money and food for carrying it into effect; their happiness is destroyed by the oppression they undergo; their virtue is rooted out by the depravity and vice that prevail throughout the army, and which under the present system are perfectly unavoidable. Who does not know that the quartering of a regiment on any town will soon destroy the innocence and happiness of its inhabitants? The advocates for the happiness and liberty of the great mass of the people, who pay for war with their lives and labour, ought never to cease writing and speaking until nations see, as they must feel, the folly of fighting and killing each other in uniform for [**I-253**] nothing at all. Ye have much to think of. The state of your representation in the House, which is called the collective representation of the country, demands your attention.

It is horrible that the lower classes must waste their lives and liberty to furnish means for their oppressors to oppress them yet more terribly. It is horrible that the poor must give in taxes what would save them and their families from hunger and cold;—it is still more horrible that they should do this to furnish further means of their own abjectedness and misery. But what words can express the enormity of the abuse that prevents them from choosing representatives with authority to inquire into the manner in which their lives and labour, their happiness and innocence, are expended, and what advantages result from their expenditure which may counterbalance so horrible and monstrous an evil? There is an outcry raised against amendment; it is called innovation and condemned by many unthinking people who have a good fire and plenty to eat and drink. Hard-hearted or thoughtless beings, how many are famishing whilst you deliberate, how many perish to contribute to your pleasures? I hope that there are none such as these native Irishmen, indeed I scarcely believe that there are.

Let the object of your associations (for I conceal not my approval of assemblies conducted with regularity, *peaceableness,* and thought for any purpose) be the amendment of these abuses, it will have for its object universal emancipation, liberty, happiness, and virtue. There is yet another subject, "the Liberty of the Press." The liberty of the Press consists in a right to publish any opinion on any subject which the writer may entertain. The Attorney-General in 1793, on the trial of Mr. Percy, said, "I never will dispute the right of any man fully to discuss topics respecting Government, and honestly to point out what he may consider a proper [**I-254**] remedy of grievances." The liberty of the Press is placed as a sentinel to alarm us when any attempt is made on our liberties. It is this sentinel, oh, Irishmen, whom I now awaken! I create to myself a freedom which exists not. There is no liberty of the Press for the subjects of British government.

It is really ridiculous to hear people yet boasting of this inestimable blessing, when they daily see it successfully muzzled and outraged by the lawyers of the Crown, and by virtue of what are called *ex officio* informations. Blackstone says, that "if a person publishes what is improper, mischievous, or illegal, he must take the consequences of his own temerity." And Lord Chief Baron Comyns defines libel as "a contumely, or reproach, published to the defamation of the Government, of a magistrate, or of a private person." Now I beseech you to consider the words mischievous, improper, illegal, contumely, reproach, or defamation. May they not make that mischievous or improper which they please? Is not law with them as clay

in the potter's hand? Do not the words contumely, reproach, or defamation express all degrees and forces of disapprobation? It is impossible to express yourself displeased at certain proceedings of Government, or the individuals who conduct it, without uttering a reproach. We cannot honestly point out a proper remedy of grievances with safety, because the very mention of these grievances will be reproachful to the personages who countenance them; and therefore will come under a definition of libel. For the persons who thus directly or indirectly undergo reproach, will say for their own sakes that the exposure of their corruption is mischievous and improper; therefore the utterer of the reproach is a fit subject for three years' imprisonment. Is there anything like the liberty of the Press in restrictions so positive yet pliant as these? The little freedom which we enjoy in this most important [**I-255**] point comes from the clemency of our rulers, or their fear lest public opinion, alarmed at the discovery of its enslaved state, should violently assert a right to extension and diffusion. Yet public opinion may not always be so formidable; rulers may not always be so merciful or so timid; at any rate, evils, and great evils, do result from the present system of intellectual slavery, and you have enough to think of if this grievance alone remained in the constitution of society. I will give but one instance of the present state of our Press.

A countryman of yours is now confined in an English gaol. His health, his fortune, his spirits suffer from close confinement. The air which comes through the bars of a prison-grate does not invigorate the frame nor cheer the spirits. But Mr. Finnerty, much as he has lost, yet retains the fair name of truth and honour. He was imprisoned for persisting in the truth. His judge told him on his trial that truth and falsehood were indifferent to the law, and that if he owned the publication, any consideration whether the facts that it related were well or ill-founded, was totally irrelevant. Such is the libel law; such the liberty of the Press—there is enough to think of. The right of withholding your individual assent to war, the right of choosing delegates to represent you in the assembly of the nation, and that of freely opposing intellectual power to any measure of Government of which you may disapprove, are, in addition to the indifference with which the Legislative and the Executive power ought to rule their conduct towards professors of every religion, enough to think of.

I earnestly desire peace and harmony:—peace, that whatever wrongs you may have suffered, benevolence and a spirit of forgiveness should mark your conduct towards those who have persecuted you:—harmony, that among yourselves may be no divisions, that Protestants and Catholics unite in a common interest, and [**I-256**] that whatever be the belief and principles of your countryman and fellow sufferer, you desire to benefit his cause at the same time that you vindicate your own. Be strong and unbiassed by selfishness or prejudice —for, Catholics, your religion has not been spotless, crimes in past ages have sullied it with a stain, which let it be your glory to remove. Nor, Protestants, hath your religion always been characterized by the mildness of benevolence which Jesus Christ recommended. Had it anything to do with the present subject I could account for the spirit of intolerance which marked both religions; I will, however, only adduce the fact, and earnestly exhort you to root out from your own minds everything which may lead to uncharitableness, and to reflect that yourselves as well as your brethren may be deceived. Nothing on earth is infallible. The priests that pretend to it are wicked and mischievous impostors; but it is an imposture which every one more or less assumes who encourages prejudice in his breast against those who differ from him in opinion, or who sets up his own religion as the only right and true one, when no one is so blind as not to see that every religion is right and true which makes men beneficent and sincere. I therefore earnestly exhort both Protestants and Catholics to act in brotherhood and harmony, never forgetting because the Catholics alone are heinously deprived of religious rights, that the Protestants and a certain rank of people of every persuasion, share with them all else that is terrible, galling, and intolerable in the mass of political grievance.

In no case employ violence or falsehood. I cannot too often or too vividly endeavour to impress upon your minds that these methods will produce nothing but wretchedness and slavery—that they will at the same time rivet the fetters with which ignorance and oppression bind you to abjectness, and deliver you over to a tyranny which shall render you incapable of renewed efforts. [**I-257**] Violence will immediately render your cause a bad one. If you believe in a providential God, you must also believe that he is a good one. And it is not likely a merciful God would befriend a bad cause. Insincerity is no less hurtful than violence; those who are in the habit of either, would do well to reform themselves. A lying bravo will never promote the good of his country—he cannot be a good man. The courageous and sincere may, at the same time, successfully oppose corruption, by uniting their voice with that of others, or individually raise up intellectual opposition to counteract the abuses of Government and society. In order to benefit yourselves and your country to any extent, habits of sobriety, regularity, and thought are previously so necessary that, without these preliminaries, all that you have done falls to the ground. You have built on sand; secure a good foundation, and you may erect a fabric to stand for ever—the glory and the envy of the world.

I have purposely avoided any lengthened discussion on those grievances to which your hearts are, from custom and the immediate interest of the circumstances, probably most alive at present. I have not, however, wholly neglected them. Most of all have I insisted on their instant palliation and ultimate removal; nor have I omitted a consideration of the means which I deem most effectual for the accomplishment of this great end. How far you will consider the former worthy of your adoption, so far shall I deem the latter probable and interesting to the lovers of human kind. And I have opened to your view a new scene—does not your heart bound at the bare possibility of your posterity possessing that liberty and happiness of which, during our lives, powerful exertions and habitual abstinence may give us a foretaste? Oh! if your hearts do not vibrate at such as this, then ye are dead and cold—ye are not men.

I now come to the application of my principles, the [**I-258**] conclusion of my Address; and, O Irishmen, whatever conduct ye may feel yourselves bound to pursue, the path which duty points to lies before me clear and unobscured. Dangers may lurk around it, but they are not the dangers which lie beneath the footsteps of the hypocrite or temporizer.

For I have not presented to you the picture of happiness on which my fancy doats as an uncertain meteor to mislead honourable enthusiasm, or blindfold the judgment which makes virtue useful. I have not proposed crude schemes, which I should be incompetent to mature, or desired to excite in you any virulence against the abuses of political institution; where I have had occasion to point them out, I have recommended moderation whilst yet I have earnestly insisted upon energy and perseverance; I have spoken of peace, yet declared that resistance is laudable; but the intellectual resistance which I recommend, I deem essential to the introduction of the millennium of virtue, whose period every one can, so far as he is concerned, forward by his own proper power. I have not attempted to show that the Catholic claims, or the claims of the people to a full representation in Parliament, or any of these claims to real rights, which I have insisted upon as introductory to the ultimate claim of *all,* to universal happiness, freedom and equality; I have not attempted, I say, to show that these can be granted consistently with the spirit of the English Constitution; [8]this is a point which I do not feel myself inclined to discuss, and which I consider foreign to my subject. But I have shown that these claims have for their basis truth and justice, which are immutable, and [**I-259**] which in the ruin of governments shall rise like a phœnix from their ashes.

Is any one inclined to dispute the possibility of a happy change in society? Do they say that the nature of man is corrupt, and that he was made for misery and wickedness? Be it so. Certain as are opposite conclusions, I will concede the truth of this for a moment. What are

the means which I take for melioration? Violence, corruption, rapine, crime? Do I do evil that good may come? I have recommended peace, philanthropy, wisdom. So far as my arguments influence, they will influence to these; and if there is any one *now* inclined to say that "private vices are public benefits," and that peace, philanthropy, and wisdom will, if once they gain ground, ruin the human race, he may revel in his happy dreams; though were *I* this man I should envy Satan's hell. The wisdom and charity of which I speak are the *only* means which I will countenance for the redress of your grievances and the grievances of the world. So far as they operate, I am willing to stand responsible for their evil effects. I expect to be accused of a desire for renewing in Ireland the scenes of revolutionary horror which marked the struggles of France twenty years ago. But it is the renewal of that unfortunate era which I strongly deprecate, and which the tendency of this Address is calculated to obviate. For can burthens be borne for ever, and the slave crouch and cringe the while? Is misery and vice so consonant to man's nature that he will hug it to his heart? But when the wretched one in bondage beholds the emancipation near, will he not endure his misery awhile with hope and patience, then spring to his preserver's arms, and start into a man?

It is my intention to observe the effect on your minds, O Irishmen, which this Address, dictated by the fervency of my love and hope, will produce. I have come [**I-260**] to this country to spare no pains where expenditure may purchase you real benefit. The present is a crisis which of all others is the most valuable for fixing the fluctuation of public feeling; as far as my poor efforts may have succeeded in fixing it to virtue, Irishmen, so far shall I esteem myself happy. I intend this Address as introductory to another. The organization of a society whose institution shall serve as a bond to its members for the purposes of virtue, happiness, liberty, and wisdom, by the means of intellectual opposition to grievances, would probably be useful. For the formation of such society I avow myself anxious.

Adieu, my friends! May every sun that shines on your green island see the annihilation of an abuse, and the birth of an embryon of melioration! Your own hearts—may they become the shrines of purity and freedom, and never may smoke to the Mammon of unrighteousness ascend from the unpolluted altar of their devotion!

No. 7, Lower Sackville

POSTSCRIPT.

I have now been a week in Dublin, during which time I have endeavoured to make myself more accurately acquainted with the state of the public mind on those great topics of grievances which induced me to select Ireland as a theatre, the widest and fairest, for the operations of the determined friend of religious and political freedom.

The result of my observations has determined me to propose an association for the purposes of restoring Ireland to the prosperity which she possessed before the Union Act; and the religious freedom which the involuntariness of faith ought to have taught all monopolists [**I-261**] of Heaven long, long ago, that every one had a right to possess.

For the purpose of obtaining the emancipation of the Catholics from the penal laws that aggrieve them, and a repeal of the Legislative Union Act, and grounding upon the remission of the church-craft and oppression, which caused these grievances; *a plan of amendment and regeneration in the moral and political state of society, on a comprehensive and systematic philanthropy which shall be sure though slow in its projects: and as it is without the rapidity and danger of revolution, so will it be devoid of the time-servingness of temporizing reform*—which in its deliberate capacity, having investigated the state of the Government of England, shall oppose those parts of it, by intellectual force, which will not bear the touchstone of reason.

For information respecting the principles which I possess, and the nature and spirit of the association which I propose, I refer the reader to a small pamphlet, which I shall publish on the subject in the course of a few days.

I have published the above Address (written in England) in the cheapest possible form, and have taken pains that the remarks which it contains should be intelligible to the most uneducated minds. Men are not slaves and brutes because they are poor; it has been the policy of the thoughtless or wicked of the higher ranks (as a proof of the decay of which policy I am happy to see the rapid success of a comparatively enlightened system of education) to conceal from the poor the truths which I have endeavoured to teach them. In doing so I have but translated my thoughts into another language; and, as language is only useful as it communicates ideas, I shall think my style so far good as it is successful as a means to bring about the end which I desire on any occasion to accomplish.

[**I-262**]

A Limerick paper, which I suppose professes to support certain *loyal* and *John Bullish* principles of freedom, has, in an essay for advocating the liberty of the Press, the following clause: "For lawless licence of discussion never did we advocate, nor do we now." What is lawless licence of discussion? Is it not as indefinite as the words *contumely, reproach, defamation,* that allow at present such latitude to the outrages that are committed on the free expression of individual sentiment? Can they not see that what is rational will stand by its reason, and what is true stand by its truth, as all that is foolish will fall by its folly, and all that is false be controverted by its own falsehood? Liberty gains nothing by the reform of politicians of this stamp, any more than it gains from a change of Ministers in London. What at present is contumely and defamation, would at the period of this Limerick amendment be "lawless licence of discussion," and such would be the mighty advantage which this doughty champion of liberty proposes to effect.

I conclude with the words of Lafayette, a name endeared by its peerless bearer to every lover of the human race, "For a nation to love liberty it is sufficient that she knows it, to be free it is sufficient that she wills it."

[**I-263**]

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 accomplish its regeneration.

by

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

Dublin:

PRINTED BY I. ETON, WINETAVERN STREET.

[1812.]

[**I-265**]

PROPOSALS FOR AN ASSOCIATION, ETC,↩

> I propose an Association which shall have for its immediate objects Catholic Emancipation and the Repeal of the Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland; and grounding on the removal of these grievances, an annihilation or palliation of whatever moral or political evil it may be within the compass of human power to assuage or eradicate.

MAN cannot make occasions, but he may seize those that offer. None are more interesting to philanthropy than those which excite the benevolent passions, that generalize and expand private into public feelings, and make the hearts of individuals vibrate not merely for themselves, their families, and their friends, but for posterity, *for a people;* till their country becomes the world, and their family the sensitive creation.

A recollection of the absent, and a taking into consideration the interests of those unconnected with ourselves, is a principal source of that feeling which generates occasions wherein a love for human kind may become eminently useful and active. Public topics of fear and hope, such as sympathize with general grievance, or hold out hopes of general amendment, are those on which the philanthropist would dilate with the warmest feeling; because these are accustomed to place individuals at a distance from self; for in proportion as he is absorbed in public feeling, so will a consideration of his proper benefit be generalized. In proportion as he feels with or for a nation or a world, so will man consider himself less as that centre to which we are but too prone to believe that every line of human concern does or ought to converge.

[**I-266**]

I should not here make the trite remark that selfish motive biasses, brutalizes, and degrades the human mind, did it not thence follow, that to seize those occasions wherein the opposite spirit predominates, is a duty which Philanthropy imperiously exacts of her votaries;

that occasions like these are the proper ones for leading mankind to their own interest by awakening in their minds a love for the interest of their fellows. A plant that grows in every soil, though too often it is choked by tares before its lovely blossoms are expanded. Virtue produces pleasure, it is as the cause to the effect; I feel pleasure in doing good to my friend, because I love him. I do not love him for the sake of that pleasure.

I regard the present state of the public mind in Ireland to be one of those occasions which the ardent votary of the religion of Philanthropy dare not leave unseized. I perceive that the public interest is excited, I perceive that individual interest has, in a certain degree, quitted individual concern to generalize itself with universal feeling. Be the Catholic Emancipation a thing of great or of small misfortune, [9]be it a means of adding happiness to four millions of people, or a reform which will only give honour to a few of the higher ranks, yet a benevolent and disinterested feeling has gone abroad, and I am willing that it should never subside. I desire that means should be taken with energy and expedition in this important yet fleeting crisis, to feed the unpolluted flame at which nations and ages may light the torch of Liberty and Virtue!

It is my opinion that the claims of the Catholic inhabitants of Ireland, if gained to-morrow, would in a very small degree aggrandize their liberty and happiness. The disqualifications principally affect the higher orders of the Catholic persuasion, these would principally be benefited by their removal. Power and wealth do not [**I-267**] benefit, but injure, the cause of virtue and freedom. I am happy, however, at the near approach of this emancipation, because I am inimical to all disqualifications for opinion. It gives me pleasure to see the approach of this enfranchisement, not for the good which it will bring with it, but because it is a sign of benefits approaching, a prophet of good about to come; and therefore do I sympathize with the inhabitants of Ireland in this great cause; a cause which though in its own accomplishment will add not one comfort to the cottager, will snatch not one from the dark dungeon, will root not out one vice, alleviate not one pang, yet it is the foreground of a picture, in the dimness of whose distance I behold the lion lay down with the lamb, and the infant play with the basilisk. For it supposes the extermination of the eyeless monster Bigotry, whose throne has tottered for two hundred years. I hear the teeth of the palsied beldame Superstition chatter, and I see her descending to the grave! Reason points to the open gates of the Temple of Religious Freedom, Philanthropy kneels at the altar of the common God! There, wealth and poverty, rank and abjectness, are names known but as memorials of past time: meteors which play over the loathsome pool of vice and misery, to warn the wanderer where dangers lie. Does a God rule this illimitable universe? Are you thankful for his beneficence—do you adore his wisdom—do you hang upon his altar the garland of your devotion? Curse not your brother, though he hath enwreathed with his flowers of a different hue; the purest religion is that of Charity, its loveliness begins to proselyte the hearts of men. The tree is to be judged of by its fruit. I regard the admission of the Catholic claims and the Repeal of the Union Act as blossoms of that fruit which the summer sun of improved intellect and progressive virtue is destined to mature.

[**I-268**]

I will not pass unreflected on the Legislative Union of Great Britain and Ireland, nor will I speak of it as a grievance so tolerable or unimportant in its own nature as that of Catholic disqualification. The latter affects few, the former affects thousands. The one disqualifies the rich from power, the other impoverishes the peasant, adds beggary to the city, famine to the country, multiplies abjectedness, whilst misery and crime play into each other's hands under its withering auspices. I esteem, then, the annihilation of this second grievance to be something more than a mere sign of coming good. I esteem it to be in itself a substantial benefit. The aristocracy of Ireland—(for much as I may disapprove other distinctions than those of virtue and talent, I consider it useless, hasty, and violent, not for the present to

acquiesce in their continuance)—the aristocracy of Ireland suck the veins of its inhabitants and consume the blood in England. I mean not to deny the unhappy truth that there is much misery and vice in the world. I mean to say that Ireland shares largely of both.—England has made her poor; and the poverty of a rich nation will make its people very desperate and wicked.

I look forward, then, to the redress of both these grievances; or rather, I perceive the state of the public mind, that precedes them as the crisis of beneficial innovation. The latter I consider to be the cause of the former, as I hope it will be the cause of more comprehensively beneficial amendments. It forms that occasion which should energetically and quickly be occupied. The voice of the whole human race; their crimes, their miseries, and their ignorance, invoke us to the task. For the miseries of the Irish poor, exacerbated by the union of their country with England, are not peculiar to themselves. England, the whole civilized world, with few exceptions, is either sunk in disproportioned abjectness, or raised to unnatural elevation. The repeal of the Union [**I-269**] Act will place Ireland on a level, so far as concerns the well-being of its poor, with her sister nation. Benevolent feeling has gone out in this country in favour of the happiness of its inhabitants; may this feeling be corroborated, methodized, and continued! May it never fail! But it will not be kept alive by each citizen sitting quietly by his own fireside, and saying that things are going on well, because the rain does not beat on *him,* because *he* has books and leisure to read them, because *he* has money and is at liberty to accumulate luxuries to *himself*. Generous feeling dictates no such sayings. When the heart recurs to the thousands who have no liberty and no leisure, it must be rendered callous by long contemplation of wretchedness, if after such recurrence it can beat with contented evenness. Why do I talk thus? Is there anyone who doubts that the present state of politics and morals is wrong? They say, Show us a safe method of improvement. There is no safer than the corroboration and propagation of generous and philanthropic feeling, than the keeping continually alive a love for the human race, than the putting in train causes which shall have for their consequences virtue and freedom; and, because I think that individuals acting singly, with whatever energy, can never effect so much as a society, I propose that all those whose views coincide with those that I have avowed, who perceive the state of the public mind in Ireland, who think the present a fit opportunity for attempting to fix its fluctuations at Philanthropy, who love all mankind, and are willing actively to engage in its cause, or passively to endure the persecutions of those who are inimical to its success; I propose to these to form an association for the purposes, first, of debating on the propriety of whatever measures may be agitated; and secondly, for carrying, by united or individual exertion, such measures into effect when determined on. That it should be an [**I-270**] association for discussing [10]knowledge and virtue throughout the poorer classes of society in Ireland, for co-operating with any enlightened system of education; for discussing topics calculated to throw light on any methods of alleviation of moral and political evil, and, as far as lays in its power, actively interesting itself, in whatever occasions may arise for benefiting mankind.

When I mention Ireland, I do not mean to confine the influence of the association to this or to any other country, but for the time being. Moreover, I would recommend that this association should attempt to form others, and to actuate them with a similar spirit; and I am thus indeterminate in my description of the association which I propose, because I conceive that an assembly of men meeting to do all the good that opportunity will permit them to do, must be in its nature as indefinite and varying as the instances of human vice and misery that precede, occasion, and call for its institution.

As political institution and its attendant evils constitute the majority of those grievances which philanthropists desire to remedy, it is probable that existing Governments will frequently become the topic of their discussions, the results of which may little coincide with

the opinions which those who profit by the supineness of human belief desire to impress upon the world. It is probable that this freedom may excite the odium of certain well-meaning people, who pin their faith upon their grandmother's apron-string. The minority in number are the majority in intellect and power. The former govern the latter, though it is by the sufferance of the latter that this originally delegated power is exercised. This power is become hereditary, and hath ceased to be necessarily united with intellect.

It is certain, therefore, that any questioning of established principles would excite the abhorrence and opposition [**I-271**] of those who derived power and honour (such as it is) from their continuance.

As the association which I recommend would question those principles (however they may be hedged in with antiquity and precedent) which appeared ill adapted for the benefit of human kind, it would probably excite the odium of those in power. It would be obnoxious to the Government, though nothing would be farther from the views of associated philanthropists than attempting to subvert establishments forcibly, or even hastily. Aristocracy would oppose it, whether oppositionists or ministerialists (for philanthropy is of no party), because its ultimate views look to a subversion of all factitious distinctions, although from its immediate intentions I fear that aristocracy can have nothing to dread. The priesthood would oppose it, because a union of Church and State—contrary to the principles and practice of Jesus, contrary to that equality which he fruitlessly endeavoured to teach mankind—is, of all institutions that from the rust of antiquity are called venerable, the least qualified to stand free and cool reasoning, because it least conduces to the happiness of human kind; yet, did either the minister, the peer, or the bishop know their true interest, instead of that virulent opposition which some among them have made to freedom and philanthropy, they would rejoice and co-operate with the diffusion and corroboration of those principles that would remove a load of paltry equivocation, paltrier grandeur, and of wigs that crush into emptiness the brains below them, from their shoulders; and, by permitting them to reassume the degraded and vilified title of man, would preclude the necessity of mystery and deception, would bestow on them a title more ennobling, and a dignity which, though it would be without the gravity of an ape, would possess the ease and consistency of a man.

For the reasons above alleged, falsely, prejudicedly, and [**I-272**] narrowly, will those very persons whose ultimate benefit is included in the general good, whose promotion is the essence of a philanthropic association, will they persecute those who have the best intentions towards them, malevolence towards none.

I do not, therefore, conceal that those who make the favour of Government the sunshine of their moral day, confide in the political creed-makers of the hour, are willing to think things that are rusty and decayed venerable, and are uninquiringly satisfied with evils as these are, because they find them established and unquestioned as they do sunlight and air when they come into existence; that they had better not even think of philanthropy. I conceal not from them that the discountenance which Government will show to such an association as I am desirous to establish will come under their comprehensive definition of danger: that virtue, and any assembly instituted under its auspices, demands a voluntariness on the part of its devoted individuals, to sacrifice personal to public benefit; and that it is possible that a party of beings associated for the purposes of disseminating virtuous principles, may, considering the ascendency which long custom has conferred on opposite motives to action, meet with inconveniences that may amount to personal danger. These considerations are, however, to the mind of the philanthropist, as is a drop to an ocean; they serve by their possible existence as tests whereby to discover the really virtuous man from him who calls himself a patriot for dishonourable and selfish purposes. I propose then, to such as think with me, a Philanthropic Association, in spite of the danger that may attend the attempt. I do not

this beneath the shroud of mystery and darkness. I propose not an Association of Secrecy. Let it [be?] open as the beam of day. Let it rival the sunbeam in its stainless purity, as in the extensiveness of its effulgence.

[**I-273**]

I disclaim all connexion with insincerity and concealment. The latter implies the former, as much as the former stands in need of the latter. It is a very latitudinarian system of morality that permits its professor to employ bad means for any end whatever. Weapons which vice *can* use are unfit for the hands of virtue. Concealment implies falsehood; it is bad, and can therefore never be serviceable to the cause of philanthropy.

I propose therefore that the association shall be established and conducted in the open face of day, with the utmost possible publicity. It is only vice that hides itself in holes and corners, whose effrontery shrinks from scrutiny, whose cowardice

> lets "I *dare not*" wait upon "I would,"
> Like the poor cat i' th' adage. [11]

But the eye of virtue, eagle-like, darts through the undazzling beam of eternal truth, and from the undiminished fountain of its purity gathers wherewith to vivify and illuminate a universe.

I have hitherto abstained from inquiring whether the association which I recommend be or be not consistent with the English Constitution. And here it is fit briefly to consider what a constitution is.

Government can have no rights, it is a delegation for the purpose of securing them to others. Man becomes a subject of government, not that he may be in a worse, but that he may be in a better state than that of unorganized society. The strength of government is the happiness of the governed. All government existing for the happiness of others is just only so far as it exists by their consent, and useful only so far as it operates to their well-being. Constitution is to government what government is to law. Constitution may, in this view of the subject, be defined to be not merely something constituted [**I-274**] for the benefit of any nation or class of people, but something constituted by themselves for their own benefit. The nations of England and Ireland have no constitution, because at no one time did the individuals that compose them constitute a system for the general benefit. If a system determined on by a very few, at a great length of time; if Magna Charta, the Bill of Rights, and other usages for whose influence the improved state of human knowledge is rather to be looked to than any system which courtiers pretend to exist, and perhaps believe to exist—a system whose spring of agency they represent as something secret, undiscoverable, and awful as the law of nature; if these make a constitution, then England has one. But if (as I have endeavoured to show they do not) a constitution is something else, then the speeches of kings or commissioners, the writings of courtiers, and the journals of Parliament, which teem with its glory, are full of political cant, exhibit the skeleton of national freedom, and are fruitless attempts to hide evils in whose favour they cannot prove an alibi. As, therefore, in the true sense of the expression, the spot of earth on which we live is destitute of constituted government, it is impossible to offend against its principles, or to be with justice accused of wishing to subvert what has no real existence. If a man was accused of setting fire to a house, which house never existed, and from the nature of things could not have existed, it is impossible that a jury in their senses would find him guilty of arson. The English Constitution then could not be offended by the principles of virtue and freedom. In fact, the manner in which the Government of England has varied since its earliest establishment, proves that its present form is the result of a progressive accommodation to existing principles. It has been a continual struggle for liberty on the part of the people, and an

uninterrupted attempt at tightening [**I-275**] the reins of oppression, and encouraging ignorance and imposture, by the oligarchy to whom the first William parcelled out the property of the aborigines at the conquest of England by the Normans. I hear much of its being a tree so long growing which to cut down is as bad as cutting down an oak where there are no more. But the best way, on topics similar to these, is to tell the plain truth, without the confusion and ornament of metaphor. I call expressions similar to these, political cant, which, like the songs of "Rule Britannia" and "God save the King," are but abstracts of the caterpillar creed of courtiers, cut down to the taste and comprehension of a mob; the one to disguise to an alehouse politician the evils of that devilish practice of war, and the other to inspire among clubs of all descriptions a certain feeling which some call loyalty and others servility. A Philanthropic Association has nothing to fear from the English Constitution, but it may expect danger from its government. So far, however, from thinking this an argument against its institution, establishment, and augmentation, I am inclined to rest much of the weight of the cause which my duties call upon me to support, on the very fact that government forcibly interferes when the opposition that is made to its proceedings is profoundly and undeniably nothing but intellectual. A good cause may be shown to be good, violence instantly renders bad what might before have been good. "Weapons that falsehood can use are unfit for the hands of truth"—truth can reason, and falsehood cannot.

A political or religious system may burn and imprison those who investigate its principles; but it is an invariable proof of their falsehood and hollowness. Here there is another reason for the necessity of a Philanthropic Association, and I call upon any fair and rational opponent to controvert the argument which it contains; for there is no one who even calls himself a philanthropist [**I-276**] that thinks personal danger or dishonour terrible in any other light than as it affects his usefulness.

Man has a heart to feel, a brain to think, and a tongue to utter. The laws of his moral as of his physical nature are immutable, as is everything of nature; nor can the ephemeral institutions of human society take away those rights, annihilate or strengthen the duties that have for their basis the imperishable relations of his constitution.

Though the Parliament of England were to pass a thousand bills, to inflict upon those who determined to utter their thoughts a thousand penalties, it could not render that criminal which was in its nature innocent before the passing of such bills.

Man has a right to feel, to think, and to speak, nor can any acts of legislature destroy that right. He will feel, he must think, and he *ought* to give utterance to those thoughts and feelings with the readiest sincerity and the strictest candour. A man must have a right to do a thing before he can have a duty; this right must permit before his duty can enjoin him to any act. Any law is bad which attempts to make it criminal to do what the plain dictates within the breast of every man tell him that he ought to do.

The English Government permits a fanatic to assemble any number of persons to teach them the most extravagant and immoral systems of faith; but a few men meeting to consider its own principles are marked with its hatred and pursued by its jealousy.

The religionist who agonizes the death-bed of the cottager, and, by picturing the hell which hearts black and narrow as his own alone could have invented, and which exists but in their cores, spreads the uncharitable doctrines which devote *heretics* to eternal torments, and represents heaven to be what earth is, a monopoly in the hands of certain favoured ones whose merit consists in slavishness, whose success is the reward of sycophancy. [**I-277**] Thus much is permitted, but a public inquiry that involves any doubt of their rectitude into the principles of government is not permitted. When Jupiter and a countryman were one day walking out, conversing familiarly on the affairs of earth, the countryman listened to Jupiter's

assertions on the subject for some time in acquiescence, at length, happening to hint a doubt, Jupiter threatened him with his thunder. “Ah, ah,” says the countryman, “now, Jupiter, I know that you are wrong; you are always wrong when you appeal to your thunder.” The essence of virtue is disinterestedness. Disinterestedness is the quality which preserves the character of virtue distinct from that of either innocence or vice. This, it will be said, is mere assertion. It is so: but it is an assertion whose truth, I believe, the hearts of philanthropists are disinclined to deny. Those who have been convinced by their grandam of the doctrine of an original hereditary sin, or by the apostles of a degrading philosophy of the necessary and universal selfishness of man, cannot be philanthropists. Now, as an action, or a motive to action, is only virtuous so far as it is disinterested, or partakes (I adopt this mode of expression to suit the taste of some) of the nature of generalized self-love, then reward or punishment, attached even by omnipotence to any action, can in no wise make it either good or bad.

It is no crime to act in contradiction to an English judge or an English legislator, but it is a crime to transgress the dictates of a monitor which feels the spring of every motive, whose throne is the human sensorium, whose empire the human conduct. Conscience is a government before which all others sink into nothingness; it surpasses, and, where it can act, supersedes all other, as nature surpasses art, as God surpasses man.

In the preceding pages, during the course of an investigation of the possible objections which might be urged [**I-278**] by philanthropy to an association such as I recommend, as I have rather sought to bring forward than conceal my principles, it will appear that they have their origin from the discoveries in the sciences of politics and morals which preceded and occasioned the revolutions of America and France. It is with openness that I confess, nay, with pride I assert, that they are so. The names of Paine and Lafayette will outlive the p[o]etic aristocracy of an expatriated Jesuit, [12]as the executive of a bigoted policy will die before the disgust at the sycophancy of their eulogists can subside.

It will be said, perhaps, that much as principles such as these may appear marked on the outside with peace, liberty, and virtue, that their ultimate tendency is to a Revolution, which, like that of France, will end in bloodshed, vice, and slavery. I must offer, therefore, my thoughts on that event, which so suddenly and so lamentably extinguished the overstrained hopes of liberty which it excited. I do not deny that the Revolution of France was occasioned by the literary labours of the encyclopædists. When we see two events together, in certain cases, we speak of one as the cause, the other the effect. We have no other idea of cause and effect but that which arises from necessary connexion; it is, therefore, still doubtful whether D’Alembert, Boulanger, Condorcet, and other celebrated characters, were the causes of the overthrow of the ancient monarchy of France. Thus much is certain, that they contributed greatly to the extension and diffusion of knowledge, and that knowledge is incompatible with slavery. The French nation was bowed to the dust by ages of uninterrupted despotism. They were plundered and insulted by a succession of oligarchies, each more bloodthirsty and unrelenting than the foregoing. In a state like this her soldiers learned to fight for Freedom on the plains of America, whilst at this very [**I-279**] conjuncture a ray of science burst through the clouds of bigotry that obscured the moral day of Europe. The French were in the lowest state of human degradation, and when the truth, unaccustomed to their ears, that they were men and equals, was promulgated, they were the first to vent their indignation on the monopolizers of earth, because they were most glaringly defrauded of the immunities of nature.

Since the French were furthest removed by the sophistications of political institution from the genuine condition of human beings, they must have been most unfit for that happy state of equal law which proceeds from consummated civilization, and which demands habits of the strictest virtue before its introduction.

The murders during the period of the French Revolution, and the despotism which has since been established, prove that the doctrines of philanthropy and freedom were but shallowly understood. Nor was it until after that period that their principles became clearly to be explained, and unanswerably to be established.

Voltaire was the flatterer of kings, though in his heart he despised them—so far has he been instrumental in the present slavery of his country. Rousseau gave licence by his writings to passions that only incapacitate and contract the human heart—so far hath he prepared the necks of his fellow-beings for that yoke of galling and dishonourable servitude which at this moment it bears. Helvetius and Condorcet established principles; but if they drew conclusions, their conclusions were unsystematical, and devoid of the luminousness and energy of method. They were little understood in the Revolution. But this age of ours is not stationary. Philosophers have not developed the great principles of the human mind that conclusions from them should be unprofitable and impracticable. We are in a state of continually progressive improvement. One truth that has been discovered [**I-280**] can never die, but will prevent the revivification of its apportioned opposite falsehood. By promoting truth and discouraging its opposite—the means of philanthropy are principally to be forwarded. Godwin wrote during the Revolution of France, and certainly his writings were totally devoid of influence with regard to its purposes. Oh! that they had not! In the Revolution of France were engaged men whose names are inerasable from the records of Liberty. Their genius penetrated with a glance the gloom and glare which Church-craft and State-craft had spread before the imposture and villany of their establishments. They saw the world. Were they men? Yes! They felt for it! They risked their lives and happiness for its benefit! Had there been more of those men, France would not now be a beacon to warn us of the hazard and horror of Revolutions, but a pattern of society rapidly advancing to a state of perfection, and holding out an example for the gradual and peaceful regeneration of the world. I consider it to be one of the effects of a Philanthropic Association to assist in the production of such men as these, in an extensive development of those germs of excellence whose favourite soil is the cultured garden of the human mind.

Many well-meaning persons may think that the attainment of the good which I propose as the ultimatum of philanthropic exertion is visionary and inconsistent with human nature; they would tell me not to make people happy for fear of overstocking the world, and to permit those who found dishes placed before them on the table of partial nature to enjoy their superfluities in quietness, though millions of wretches crowded around but to pick a morsel, [13]which morsel was still refused to the prayers of agonizing famine.

I cannot help thinking this an evil, nor help endeavouring, by the safest means that I can devise, to palliate [**I-281**] at present, and in fine to eradicate, this evil. War, vice, and misery are undeniably bad, they embrace all that we can conceive of temporal and eternal evil. Are we to be told that these are remediless, because the earth would, in case of their remedy, be overstocked? That the rich are still to glut, that the ambitious are still to plan, that the fools whom these knaves mould, are still to murder their brethren and call it glory, and that the poor are to pay with their blood, their labour, their happiness, and their innocence for the crimes and mistakes which the hereditary monopolists of earth commit? Rare sophism! How will the heartless rich hug thee to their bosoms, and lull their conscience into slumber with the opiate of thy reconciling dogmas!

But when the philosopher and philanthropist contemplates the universe, when he perceives existing evils that admit of amendment, and hears tell of other evils, which, in the course of sixty centuries, may again derange the system of happiness which the amendment is calculated to produce, does he submit to prolong a positive evil, because, if that were eradicated, after a millennium of 6000 years (for such space of time would it take to people the earth) another evil would take place?

To how contemptible a degradation of grossest credulity will not prejudice lower the human mind! We see in winter that the foliage of the trees is gone, that they present to the view nothing but leafless branches—we see that the loveliness of the flower decays, though the root continues in the earth. What opinion should we form of that man who, when he walked in the freshness of the spring, beheld the fields enamelled with flowers, and the foliage bursting from the buds, should find fault with this beautiful order, and murmur his contemptible discontents because winter must come, and the landscape be robbed of its beauty for a while again? Yet this man is Mr. Malthus. Do we not see that the laws of nature [**I-282**] perpetually act by disorganization and reproduction, each alternately becoming cause and effect. The analogies that we can draw from physical to moral topics are of all others the most striking.

Does anyone yet question the possibility of inducing radical reform of moral and political evil? Does he object, from that impossibility, to the association which I propose, which I frankly confess to be one of the means whose instrumentality I would employ to attain this reform. Let them look to the methods which I use. Let me put my object out of their view and propose their own, how would they accomplish it? By diffusing virtue and knowledge, by promoting human happiness. Palsied be the hand, for ever dumb be the tongue that would by one expression convey sentiments differing from these: I will use no bad means for any end whatever. Know then, ye philanthropists—to whatever profession of faith, or whatever determination of principles, chance, reason, or education may have conducted you—that the endeavours of the truly virtuous necessarily converge to one point, though it be hidden from them what point that is; they all labour for one end, and that controversies concerning the nature of that end serve only to weaken the strength which for the interest of virtue should be consolidated.

The diffusion of true and virtuous principles (for in the first principles of morality *none* disagree) will produce the best of possible terminations.

I invite to an Association of Philanthropy those, of whatever ultimate expectations, who will employ the same means that I employ; let their designs differ as much as they may from mine, I shall rejoice at their cooperation: because, if the ultimatum of my hopes be founded on the unity of truth, I shall then have auxiliaries in its cause, and if it be false I shall rejoice that means are not neglected for forwarding that which is true.

[**I-283**]

The accumulation of evil which Ireland has for the last twenty years sustained, and considering the unremittingness of its pressure I may say patiently sustained; the melancholy prospect which the unforeseen conduct of the Regent of England holds out of its continuance, demands of every Irishman whose pulses have not ceased to throb with the life-blood of his heart, that he should individually consult, and unitedly determine on some measures for the liberty of his countrymen. That those measures should be pacific though resolute, that their movers should be calmly brave and temperately unbending, though the whole heart and soul should go with the attempt, is the opinion which my principles command me to give.

And I am induced to call an association such as this occasion demands, an Association of Philanthropy, because good men ought never to circumscribe their usefulness by any name which denotes their exclusive devotion to the accomplishment of its signification.

When I began the preceding remarks, I conceived that on the removal of the restrictions from the Regent a ministry less inimical than the present to the interests of liberty would have been appointed. I am deceived, and the disappointment of the hopes of freedom on this subject affords an additional argument towards the necessity of an Association.

I conclude these remarks, which I have indited principally with a view of unveiling my principles, with a proposal for an Association for the purposes of Catholic Emancipation, a repeal of the Union Act, and grounding upon the attainment of these objects a reform of whatever moral or political evil may be within its compass of human power to remedy.

Such as are favourably inclined towards the institution would highly gratify the Proposer if they would personally communicate with him on this important subject; [**I-284**] by which means the plan might be matured, errors in the Proposer's original system be detected, and a meeting for the purpose convened with that resolute expedition which the nature of the present crisis demands.

No. 7, Lower Sackville Street.

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.↩

I.

Government has no rights; it is a delegation from several individuals for the purpose of securing their own. It is therefore just, only so far as it exists by their consent, useful only so far as it operates to their well-being.

II.

If these individuals think that the form of government which they or their forefathers constituted is ill adapted to produce their happiness, they have a right to change it.

III.

Government is devised for the security of Rights. The rights of man are liberty, and an equal participation of the commonage of Nature.

IV.

As the benefit of the governed is, or ought to be, the origin of government, no men can have any authority that does not expressly emanate from *their* will.

V.

Though all governments are not so bad as that of Turkey, yet none are so good as they might be. The majority of every country have a right to perfect their government. The minority should not disturb them; [**I-285**] they ought to secede, and form their own system in their own way.

VI.

All have a right to an equal share in the benefits and burdens of Government. Any disabilities for opinion imply, by their existence, bare-faced tyranny on the side of Government, ignorant slavishness on the side of the governed.

VII.

The rights of man, in the present state of society, are only to be secured by some degree of coercion to be exercised on their violator. The sufferer has a right that the degree of coercion employed be as slight as possible.

VIII.

It may be considered as a plain proof of the hollowness of any proposition if power be used to enforce instead of reason to persuade its admission. Government is never supported by fraud until it cannot be supported by reason.

IX.

No man has a right to disturb the public peace by personally resisting the execution of a law, however bad. He ought to acquiesce, using at the same time the utmost powers of his reason to promote its repeal.

X.

A man must have a right to act in a certain manner, before it can be his duty. He may, before he ought.

XI.

A man has a right to think as his reason directs; it is a duty he owes to himself to think with freedom, that he may act from conviction.

[**I-286**]

XII.

A man has a right to unrestricted liberty of discussion. Falsehood is a scorpion that will sting itself to death.

XIII.

A man has not only a right to express his thoughts, but it is his duty to do so.

XIV.

No law has a right to discourage the practice of truth. A man ought to speak the truth on every occasion. A duty can never be criminal; what is not criminal cannot be injurious.

XV.

Law cannot make what is in its nature virtuous or innocent to be criminal, any more than it can make what is criminal to be innocent. Government cannot make a law; it can only pronounce that which was the law before its organization; viz., the moral result of the imperishable relations of things.

XVI.

The present generation cannot bind their posterity: the few cannot promise for the many.

XVII.

No man has a right to do an evil thing that good may come.

XVIII.

Expediency is inadmissible in morals. Politics are only sound when conducted on principles of morality: they are, in fact, the morals of nations.

XIX.

Man has no right to kill his brother. It is no excuse that he does so in uniform: he only adds the infamy of servitude to the crime of murder.

[**I-287**]

XX.

Man, whatever be his country, has the same rights in one place as another—the rights of universal citizenship.

XXI.

The government of a country ought to be perfectly indifferent to every opinion. Religious differences, the bloodiest and most rancorous of all, spring from partiality.

XXII.

A delegation of individuals, for the purpose of securing their rights, can have no undelegated power of restraining the expression of their opinion.

XXIII.

Belief is involuntary; nothing involuntary is meritorious or reprehensible. A man ought not to be considered worse or better for his belief.

XXIV.

A Christian, a Deist, a Turk, and a Jew, have equal rights: they are men and brethren.

XXV.

If a person's religious ideas correspond not with your own, love him nevertheless. How different would yours have been had the chance of birth placed you in Tartary or India!

XXVI.

Those who believe that Heaven is, what earth has been, a monopoly in the hands of a favoured few, would do well to reconsider their opinion; if they find that it came from their priest or their grandmother, they could not do better than reject it.

[**I-288**]

XXVII.

No man has a right to be respected for any other possessions but those of virtue and talents. Titles are tinsel, power a corruptor, glory a bubble, and excessive wealth a libel on its possessor.

XXVIII.

No man has a right to monopolise more than he can enjoy; what the rich give to the poor, whilst millions are starving, is not a perfect favour, but an imperfect right.

XXIX.

Every man has a right to a certain degree of leisure and liberty, because it is his duty to attain a certain degree of knowledge. He may, before he ought.

XXX.

Sobriety of body and mind is necessary to those who would be free; because, without sobriety, a high sense of philanthropy cannot actuate the heart, nor cool and determined courage execute its dictates.

XXXI.

The only use of government is to repress the vices of man. If man were to-day sinless, to-morrow he would have a right to demand that government and all its evils should cease.

Man! thou whose rights are here declared, be no longer forgetful of the loftiness of thy destination. Think of thy rights, of those possessions which will give thee virtue and wisdom, by which thou mayest arrive at happiness and freedom. They are declared to thee by one who knows thy dignity, for every hour does his heart swell with honourable pride in the contemplation of what thou mayest attain—by one who is not forgetful of thy degeneracy, for every moment brings home to him the bitter conviction of what thou art.

Awake!—arise!—or be for ever fallen.

[**I-289**]

A

REFUTATION

of

DEISM:

in

A DIALOGUE.

ΣΥΝΕΤΟΙΣΙΝ.

London:

PRINTED BY SCHULZE AND DEAN,

13, Poland Street.

1814.

[**I-291**]

A REFUTATION OF DEISM↩

PREFACE.

The object of the following Dialogue is to prove that the system of Deism is untenable. It is attempted to shew that there is no alternative between Atheism and Christianity; that the evidences of the Being of a God are to be deduced from no other principles than those of Divine Revelation.

The Author endeavours to shew how much the cause of natural and revealed Religion has suffered from [**I-292**] the mode of defence adopted by Theosophistical Christians. How far he will accomplish what he proposed to himself, in the composition of this Dialogue, the world will finally determine.

The mode of printing this little work may appear too expensive, either for its merits or its length. However inimical this practice confessedly is, to the general diffusion of knowledge, yet it was adopted in this instance with a view of excluding the multitude from the abuse of a mode of reasoning, liable to misconstruction on account of its novelty.

[**I-293**]

EUSEBES AND THEOSOPHUS.

Eusebes.

O THEOSOPHUS, I have long regretted and observed the strange infatuation which has blinded your understanding. It is not without acute uneasiness that I have beheld the progress of your audacious scepticism trample on the most venerable institutions of our forefathers, until it has rejected the salvation which the only begotten Son of God deigned to proffer in person to a guilty and unbelieving world. To this excess, then, has the pride of the human understanding at length arrived? To measure itself with Omniscience! To scan the intentions

of Inscrutability!

You can have reflected but superficially on this awful and important subject. The love of paradox, an affectation of singularity, or the pride of reason has seduced you to the barren and gloomy paths of infidelity. Surely you have hardened yourself against the truth with a spirit of coldness and cavil.

Have you been wholly inattentive to the accumulated evidence which the Deity has been pleased to attach to the revelation of his will? The antient books in which the advent of the Messiah was predicted, the miracles by which its truth has been so conspicuously confirmed, the martyrs who have undergone every variety of torment in attestation of its veracity? You seem to require mathematical demonstration in a case which admits of no more than strong moral probability. Surely the merit of that [**I-294**] faith which we are required to repose in our Redeemer would be thus entirely done away. Where is the difficulty of according credit to that which is perfectly plain and evident? How is he entitled to a recompense who believes what he cannot disbelieve?

When there is satisfactory evidence that the witnesses of the Christian miracles passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, and consented severally to be racked, burned, and strangled, in testimony of the truth of their account, will it be asserted that they were actuated by a disinterested desire of deceiving others? That they were hypocrites for no end but to teach the purest doctrine that ever enlightened the world, and martyrs without any prospect of emolument or fame? The sophist, who gravely advances an opinion thus absurd, certainly sins with gratuitous and indefensible pertinacity.

The history of Christianity is itself the most indisputable proof of those miracles by which its origin was sanctioned to the world. It is itself one great miracle. A few humble men established it in the face of an opposing universe. In less than fifty years an astonishing multitude was converted, as Suetonius, [14]Pliny, [15]Tacitus, [16]and Lucian attest; and shortly afterwards thousands who had boldly overturned the altars, slain the priests and burned the temples of Paganism, were loud in demanding the recompense of martyrdom from the hands of the infuriated heathens. Not until three centuries after the [**I-295**] coming of the Messiah did his holy religion incorporate itself with the institutions of the Roman Empire, and derive support from the visible arm of fleshly strength. Thus long without any assistance but that of its Omnipotent author, Christianity prevailed in defiance of incredible persecutions, and drew fresh vigour from circumstances the most desperate and unpromising. By what process of sophistry can a rational being persuade himself to reject a religion, the original propagation of which is an event wholly unparalleled in the sphere of human experience?

The morality of the Christian religion is as original and sublime, as its miracles and mysteries are unlike all other portents. A patient acquiescence in injuries and violence; a passive submission to the will of sovereigns; a disregard of those ties by which the feelings of humanity have ever been bound to this unimportant world; humility and faith, are doctrines neither similar nor comparable to those of any other system. [17]Friendship, patriotism, and magnanimity; the heart that is quick in sensibility, the hand that is inflexible in execution; genius, learning and courage, are qualities which have engaged the admiration of mankind, but which we are taught by Christianity to consider as splendid and delusive vices.

I know not why a Theist should feel himself more inclined to distrust the historians of Jesus Christ than those of Alexander the Great. What do the tidings of redemption contain which render them peculiarly obnoxious to discredit? It will not be disputed that a revelation of the Divine will is a benefit to mankind. [18]It will not be asserted that even under the

Christian revelation, we have too clear a solution of the vast enigma of the Universe, too satisfactory a justification of the attributes [**I-296**] of God. When we call to mind the profound ignorance in which, with the exception of the Jews, the philosophers of antiquity were plunged; when we recollect that men, eminent for dazzling talents and fallacious virtues, Epicurus, Democritus, Pliny, Lucretius, [19]Euripides, and innumerable others, dared publicly to avow their faith in Atheism with impunity, and that the Theists, Anaxagoras, Pythagoras and Plato, vainly endeavoured by that human reason, which is truly incommensurate to so vast a purpose, to establish among philosophers the belief in one Almighty God, the creator and preserver of the world; when we recollect that the multitude were grossly and ridiculously idolatrous, and that the magistrates, if not Atheists, regarded the being of a God in the light of an abstruse and uninteresting speculation; [20]when we add to these considerations a remembrance of the wars and the oppressions, which about the time of the advent of the Messiah, desolated the human race, is it not more credible that the Deity actually interposed to check the rapid progress of human deterioration, than that he permitted a specious and pestilent imposture to seduce mankind into the labyrinth of a deadlier superstition? Surely the Deity has not created man immortal, and left him for ever in ignorance of his glorious destination. If the Christian Religion is false, I see not upon what foundation our belief in a moral governor of the universe, or our hopes of immortality can rest.

Thus then the plain reason of the case, and the suffrage of the civilized world, conspire with the more indisputable [**I-297**] suggestions of faith, to render impregnable that system which has been so vainly and so wantonly assailed. Suppose, however, it were admitted that the conclusions of human reason and the lessons of worldly virtue should be found, in the detail, incongruous with Divine Revelation; by the dictates of which would it become us to abide? Not by that which errs whenever it is employed, but by that which is incapable of error: not by the ephemeral systems of vain philosophy, but by the word of God, which shall endure for ever.

Reflect, O Theosophus, that if the religion you reject be true, you are justly excluded from the benefits which result from a belief in its efficiency to salvation. Be not regardless, therefore, I entreat you, of the curses so emphatically heaped upon infidels by the inspired organs of the will of God: the fire which is never quenched, the worm that never dies. I dare not think that the God in whom I trust for salvation, would terrify his creatures with menaces of punishment which he does not intend to inflict. The ingratitude of incredulity is, perhaps, the only sin to which the Almighty cannot extend his mercy without compromising his justice. How can the human heart endure, without despair, the mere conception of so tremendous an alternative? Return, I entreat you, to that tower of strength which securely overlooks the chaos of the conflicting opinions of men. Return to that God who is your creator and preserver, by whom alone you are defended from the ceaseless wiles of your eternal enemy. Are human institutions so faultless that the principle upon which they are founded may strive with the voice of God? Know that faith is superior to reason, in as much as the creature is surpassed by the Creator; and that whensoever they are incompatible, the suggestions of the latter, not those of the former, are to be questioned.

Permit me to exhibit in their genuine deformity the [**I-298**] errors which are seducing you to destruction. State to me with candour the train of sophisms by which the evil spirit has deluded your understanding. Confess the secret motives of your disbelief; suffer me to administer a remedy to your intellectual disease. I fear not the contagion of such revolting sentiments: I fear only lest patience should desert me before you have finished the detail of your presumptuous credulity.

Theosophus.

I am not only prepared to confess, but to vindicate my sentiments. I cannot refrain, however, from premising, that in this controversy I labour under a disadvantage from which you are exempt. You believe that incredulity is immoral, and regard him as an object of suspicion and distrust whose creed is incongruous with your own. But truth is the perception of the agreement or disagreement of ideas. I can no more conceive that a man who perceives the disagreement of any ideas should be persuaded of their agreement, than that he should overcome a physical impossibility. The reasonableness or the folly of the articles of our creed is therefore no legitimate object of merit or demerit; our opinions depend not on the will, but on the understanding.

If I am in error (and the wisest of us may not presume to deem himself secure from all illusion) that error is the consequence of the prejudices by which I am prevented, of the ignorance by which I am incapacitated from forming a correct estimation of the subject. Remove those prejudices, dispel that ignorance, make truth apparent, and fear not the obstacles that remain to be encountered. But do not repeat to me those terrible and frequent curses, by whose intolerance and cruelty I have so often been disgusted in the perusal of your sacred books. Do not tell me that the All-Merciful will punish me for the conclusions of that reason by which he has thought fit to [**I-299**] distinguish me from the beasts that perish. Above all, refrain from urging considerations drawn from reason, to degrade that which you are thereby compelled to acknowledge as the ultimate arbiter of the dispute. Answer my objections as I engage to answer your assertions, point by point, word by word.

You believe that the only and ever-present God begot a Son whom he sent to reform the world, and to propitiate its sins; you believe that a book, called the Bible, contains a true account of this event, together with an infinity of miracles and prophecies which preceded it from the creation of the world. Your opinion that these circumstances really happened appears to me, from some considerations which I will proceed to state, destitute of rational foundation.

To expose all the inconsistency, immorality and false pretensions which I perceive in the Bible, demands a minuteness of criticism at least as voluminous as itself. I shall confine myself, therefore, to the confronting of your tenets with those primitive and general principles which are the basis of all moral reasoning.

In creating the Universe, God certainly proposed to himself the happiness of his creatures. It is just, therefore, to conclude that he left no means unemployed, which did not involve an impossibility, to accomplish this design. In fixing a residence for this image of his own Majesty, he was doubtless careful that every occasion of detriment, every opportunity of evil, should be removed. He was aware of the extent of his powers, he foresaw the consequences of his conduct, and doubtless modelled his being consentaneously with the world of which he was to be the inhabitant, and the circumstances which were destined to surround him.

The account given by the Bible has but a faint concordance with the surmises of reason concerning this event.

[**I-300**]

According to this book, God created Satan, who, instigated by the impulses of his nature, contended with the Omnipotent for the throne of Heaven. After a contest for the empire, in which God was victorious, Satan was thrust into a pit of burning sulphur. On man's creation, God placed within his reach a tree whose fruit he forbade him to taste, on pain of death; permitting Satan, at the same time, to employ all his artifice to persuade this innocent and wondering creature to transgress the fatal prohibition.

The first man yielded to this temptation; and to satisfy Divine Justice the whole of his posterity must have been eternally burned in hell, if God had not sent his only Son on earth, to save those few whose salvation had been foreseen and determined before the creation of the world.

God is here represented as creating man with certain passions and powers, surrounding him with certain circumstances, and then condemning him to everlasting torments because he acted as omniscience had foreseen, and was such as omnipotence had made him. For to assert that the Creator is the author of all good, and the creature the author of all evil, is to assert that one man makes a straight line and a crooked one, and that another makes the incongruity. [21]

Barbarous and uncivilized nations have uniformly adored, under various names, a God of which themselves were the model: revengeful, blood-thirsty, grovelling and capricious. The idol of a savage is a demon that delights in carnage. The steam of slaughter, the dissonance of groans, the flames of a desolated land, are the offerings which he deems acceptable, and his innumerable votaries throughout the world have made it a point of duty to worship him to his taste. [22]The Phenicians, the Druids and the Mexicans have immolated hundreds at the shrines of their divinity, and the high and holy name [**I-301**] of God has been in all ages the watchword of the most unsparing massacres, the sanction of the most atrocious perfidies.

But I appeal to your candour, O Eusebes, if there exist a record of such grovelling absurdities and enormities so atrocious, a picture of the Deity so characteristic of a demon as that which the sacred writings of the Jews contain. I demand of you, whether as a conscientious Theist you can reconcile the conduct which is attributed to the God of the Jews with your conceptions of the purity and benevolence of the divine nature.

The loathsome and minute obscenities to which the inspired writers perpetually descend, the filthy observances which God is described as personally instituting, [23]the total disregard of truth and contempt of the first principles of morality, manifested on the most public occasions by the chosen favourites of Heaven, might corrupt, were they not so flagitious as to disgust.

When the chief of this obscure and brutal horde of assassins asserts that the God of the Universe was enclosed in a box of shittim wood, [24]"two feet long and three feet wide," [25]and brought home in a new cart, I smile at the impertinence of so shallow an imposture. But it is blasphemy of a more hideous and unexampled nature to maintain that the Almighty God expressly commanded Moses to invade an unoffending nation; and, on account of the difference of their worship, utterly to destroy every human being it contained, to murder every infant and unarmed man in cold blood, to massacre the captives, to rip up the matrons, and to retain the maidens [**I-302**] alone for concubinage and violation. [26]At the very time that philosophers of the most enterprising benevolence [**I-303**] were founding in Greece those institutions which have rendered it the wonder and luminary of the world, am I required to believe that the weak and wicked king of an obscure and barbarous nation, a murderer, a traitor and a tyrant, was the man after God's own heart? A wretch, at the thought of whose unparalleled enormities the sternest soul must sicken in dismay! An unnatural monster, who sawed his fellow beings in sunder, harrowed them to fragments under harrows of iron, chopped them to pieces with axes, and burned them in brick-kilns, because they bowed before a different, and less bloody idol than his own. It is surely no perverse conclusion of an infatuated understanding that the God of the Jews is not the benevolent author of this beautiful world.

The conduct of the Deity in the promulgation of the Gospel, appears not to the eye of reason more compatible with his immutability and omnipotence than the history of his actions under the law accords with his benevolence.

You assert that the human race merited eternal reprobation because their common father had transgressed the divine command, and that the crucifixion of the Son of God was the only sacrifice of sufficient efficacy to satisfy eternal justice. But it is no less inconsistent with justice and subversive of morality that millions should be responsible for a crime which they had no share in committing, than that, if they had really committed it, the crucifixion of an innocent being could absolve them from moral turpitude. *Ferretne ulla civitas latorem istiusmodi legis, ut condemnaretur filius, aut nepos, si pater aut avus deliquisset?* Certainly this is a mode of legislation peculiar to a state of savageness and anarchy; this is the irrefragable logic of tyranny and imposture.

[**I-304**]

The supposition that God has ever supernaturally revealed his will to man at any other period than the original creation of the human race, necessarily involves a compromise of his benevolence. It assumes that he withheld from mankind a benefit which it was in his power to confer. That he suffered his creatures to remain in ignorance of truths essential to their happiness and salvation. That during the lapse of innumerable ages, every individual of the human race had perished without redemption, from an universal stain which the Deity at length descended in person to erase. That the good and wise of all ages, involved in one common fate with the ignorant and wicked, have been tainted by involuntary and inevitable error which torments infinite in duration may not avail to expiate.

In vain will you assure me with amiable inconsistency that the mercy of God will be extended to the virtuous, and that the vicious will alone be punished. The foundation of the Christian Religion is manifestly compromised by a concession of this nature. A subterfuge thus palpable plainly annihilates the necessity of the incarnation of God for the redemption of the human race, and represents the descent of the Messiah as a gratuitous display of Deity, solely adapted to perplex, to terrify and to embroil mankind.

It is sufficiently evident that an omniscient being never conceived the design of reforming the world by Christianity. Omniscience would surely have foreseen the inefficacy of that system, which experience demonstrates not only to have been utterly impotent in restraining, but to have been most active in exhaling the malevolent propensities of men. During the period which elapsed between the removal of the seat of empire to Constantinople in 328, and its capture by the Turks in 1453, what salutary influence did Christianity exercise upon that world which it was intended to enlighten? Never before was [**I-305**] Europe the theatre of such ceaseless and sanguinary wars; never were the people so brutalized by ignorance and debased by slavery.

I will admit that one prediction of Jesus Christ has been indisputably fulfilled. *I come not to bring peace upon earth, but a sword*. Christianity indeed has equalled Judaism in the atrocities, and exceeded it in the extent of its desolation. Eleven millions of men, women, and children, have been killed in battle, butchered in their sleep, burned to death at public festivals of sacrifice, poisoned, tortured, assassinated, and pillaged in the spirit of the Religion of Peace, and for the glory of the most merciful God.

In vain will you tell me that these terrible effects flow not from Christianity, but from the abuse of it. No such excuse will avail to palliate the enormities of a religion pretended to be divine. A limited intelligence is only so far responsible for the effects of its agency as it foresaw, or might have foreseen them; but Omniscience is manifestly chargeable with all the consequences of its conduct. Christianity itself declares that the worth of the tree is to be

determined by the quality of its fruit. The extermination of infidels; the mutual persecutions of hostile sects; the midnight massacres and slow burning of thousands, because their creed contained either more or less than the orthodox standard, of which Christianity has been the immediate occasion; and the invariable opposition which philosophy has ever encountered from the spirit of revealed religion, plainly show that a very slight portion of sagacity was sufficient to have estimated at its true value the advantages of that belief to which some Theists are unaccountably attached.

You lay great stress upon the originality of the Christian system of morals. If this claim be just, either your religion must be false, or the Deity has willed that opposite modes of conduct should be pursued by mankind at [**I-306**] different times, under the same circumstances; which is absurd.

The doctrine of acquiescing in the most insolent despotism; of praying for and loving our enemies; of faith and humility, appears to fix the perfection of the human character in that abjectness and credulity which priests and tyrants of all ages have found sufficiently convenient for their purposes. It is evident that a whole nation of Christians (could such an anomaly maintain itself a day) would become, like cattle, the property of the first occupier. It is evident that ten highwaymen would suffice to subjugate the world if it were composed of slaves who dared not to resist oppression.

The apathy to love and friendship, recommended by your creed, would, if attainable, not be less pernicious. This enthusiasm of anti-social misanthropy, if it were an actual rule of conduct, and not the speculation of a few interested persons, would speedily annihilate the human race. A total abstinence from sexual intercourse is not perhaps enjoined, but is strenuously recommended, [27]and was actually practised to a frightful extent by the primitive Christians. [28]

The penalties inflicted by that monster Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, on the pleasures of unlicensed love, are so iniquitously severe, that no modern legislator could have affixed them to the most atrocious crimes. [29]This cold-blooded and hypocritical ruffian cut his son's throat, strangled his wife, murdered his father-in-law and his brother-in-law, and maintained at his court a set of [**I-307**] blood-thirsty and bigoted Christian Priests, one of whom was sufficient to excite the one half of the world to massacre the other.

I am willing to admit that some few axioms of morality, which Christianity has borrowed from the philosophers of Greece and India, dictate, in an unconnected state, rules of conduct worthy of regard; but the purest and most elevated lessons of morality must remain nugatory, the most probable inducements to virtue must fail of their effect, so long as the slightest weight is attached to that dogma which is the vital essence of revealed religion.

Belief is set up as the criterion of merit or demerit; a man is to be judged not by the purity of his intentions but by the orthodoxy of his creed; an assent to certain propositions, is to outweigh in the balance of Christianity the most generous and elevated virtue.

But the intensity of belief, like that of every other passion, is precisely proportioned to the degrees of excitement. A graduated scale, on which should be marked the capabilities of propositions to approach to the test of the senses, would be a just measure of the belief which ought to be attached to them: and but for the influence of prejudice or ignorance this invariably *is* the measure of belief. That is believed which is apprehended to be true, nor can the mind by any exertion avoid attaching credit to an opinion attended with overwhelming evidence. Belief is not an act of volition, nor can it be regulated by the mind: it is manifestly incapable therefore of either merit or criminality. The system which assumes a false criterion of moral virtue, must be as pernicious as it is absurd. Above all, it cannot be divine, as it is impossible that the Creator of the human mind should be ignorant of its primary powers.

The degree of evidence afforded by miracles and prophecies in favour of the Christian Religion is lastly to be considered.

[I-308]

Evidence of a more imposing and irresistible nature is required in proportion to the remoteness of any event from the sphere of our experience. Every case of miracles is a contest of opposite improbabilities, whether it is more contrary to experience that a miracle should be true, or that the story on which it is supported should be false: whether the immutable laws of this harmonious world should have undergone violation, or that some obscure Greeks and Jews should have conspired to fabricate a tale of wonder.

The actual appearance of a departed spirit would be a circumstance truly unusual and portentous; but the accumulated testimony of twelve old women that a spirit had appeared is neither unprecedented nor miraculous.

It seems less credible that the God whose immensity is uncircumscribed by space, should have committed adultery with a carpenter's wife, than that some bold knaves or insane dupes had deceived the credulous multitude. [30]We have perpetual and mournful experience of the latter: the former is yet under dispute. History affords us innumerable examples of the possibility of the one: Philosophy has in all ages protested against the probability of the other.

Every superstition can produce its dupes, its miracles, and its mysteries; each is prepared to justify its peculiar tenets by an equal assemblage of portents, prophecies and martyrdoms.

Prophecies, however circumstantial, are liable to the same objection as direct miracles: it is more agreeable to experience that the historical evidence of the prediction really having preceded the event pretended to be foretold should be false, or that a lucky conjuncture of events should have justified the conjecture of the prophet, than that God should communicate to a man the discernment **[I-309]** of future events. [31]I defy you to produce more than one instance of prophecy in the Bible, wherein the inspired writer speaks so as to be understood, wherein his prediction has not been so unintelligible and obscure as to have been itself the subject of controversy among Christians.

That one prediction which I except is certainly most explicit and circumstantial. It is the only one of this nature which the Bible contains. Jesus himself here predicts his own arrival in the clouds to consummate a period of supernatural desolation, before the generation which he addressed should pass away. [32]Eighteen hundred years have past, and no such event is pretended to have happened. This single plain prophecy, thus conspicuously false, may serve as a criterion of those which are more vague and indirect, and which apply in an hundred senses to an hundred things.

Either the pretended predictions in the Bible were meant to be understood, or they were not. If they were, why is there any dispute concerning them: if they were not, wherefore were they written at all? But the God of Christianity spoke to mankind in parables, that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

[I-310]

The Gospels contain internal evidence that they were not written by eye-witnesses of the event which they pretend to record. The Gospel of St. Matthew was plainly not written until some time after the taking of Jerusalem, that is, at least forty years after the execution of Jesus Christ: for he makes Jesus say that *upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias whom ye slew between the altar and the temple*. [33]Now Zacharias, son of Barachias, was assassinated between the altar and the temple by a faction of zealots, during

the siege of Jerusalem. [34]

You assert that the design of the instances of supernatural interposition which the Gospel records was to convince mankind that Jesus Christ was truly the expected Redeemer. But it is as impossible that any human sophistry should frustrate the manifestation of Omnipotence, as that Omniscience should fail to select the most efficient means of accomplishing its design. Eighteen centuries have passed and the tenth part of the human race have a blind and mechanical belief in that Redeemer, without a complete reliance on the merits of whom, their lot is fixed in everlasting misery: surely if the Christian system be thus dreadfully important its Omnipotent author would have rendered it incapable of those abuses from which it has never been exempt, and to which it is subject in common with all human institutions, he would not have left it a matter of ceaseless cavil or complete indifference to the immense majority of mankind. Surely some more conspicuous evidences of its authenticity would have been afforded than driving out devils, drowning pigs, curing blind men, animating a dead body, and turning water into wine. Some theatre worthier of the transcendent event, than Judea, would have been chosen, some historians more adapted by [**I-311**] their accomplishments and their genius to record the incarnation of the immutable God. The humane society restores drowned persons; every empiric can cure every disease; drowning pigs is no very difficult matter, and driving out devils was far from being an original or an unusual occupation in Judea. Do not recite these stale absurdities as proofs of the Divine origin of Christianity.

If the Almighty has spoken, would not the Universe have been convinced? If he had judged the knowledge of his will to have been more important than any other science to mankind, would he not have rendered it more evident and more clear?

Now, O Eusebes, have I enumerated the general grounds of my disbelief of the Christian Religion.—I could have collated its Sacred Writings with the Brahminical record of the early ages of the world, and identified its institutions with the antient worship of the Sun. I might have entered into an elaborate comparison of the innumerable discordances which exist between the inspired historians of the same event. Enough however has been said to vindicate me from the charge of groundless and infatuated scepticism. I trust therefore to your candour for the consideration, and to your logic for the refutation, of my arguments.

Eusebes.

I will not dissemble, O Theosophus, the difficulty of solving your general objections to Christianity, on the grounds of human reason. I did not assist at the councils of the Almighty when he determined to extend his mercy to mankind, nor can I venture to affirm that it exceeded the limits of his power to have afforded a more conspicuous or universal manifestation of his will.

But this is a difficulty which attends Christianity in common with the belief in the being and attributes of [**I-312**] God. This whole scheme of things might have been, according to our partial conceptions, infinitely more admirable and perfect. Poisons, earthquakes, disease, war, famine and venomous serpents; slavery and persecution are the consequences of certain causes, which according to human judgment might well have been dispensed with an arranging the economy of the globe.

Is this the reasoning which the Theist will choose to employ? Will he impose limitations on that Deity whom he professes to regard with so profound a veneration? Will he place his God between the horns of a logical dilemma which shall restrict the fulness either of his power or his bounty?

Certainly he will prefer to resign his objections to Christianity, than pursue the reasoning upon which they are found, to the dreadful conclusions of cold and dreary Atheism.

I confess that Christianity appears not unattended with difficulty to the understanding which approaches it with a determination to judge its mysteries by reason. I will ever [35]confess that the discourse, which you have just delivered, ought to unsettle any candid mind engaged in a similar attempt. The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.

But if I succeed in convincing you that reason conducts to conclusions destructive of morality, happiness, and the hope of futurity, and inconsistent with the very existence of human society, I trust that you will no longer confide in a director so dangerous and faithless.

I require you to declare, O Theosophus, whether you would embrace Christianity or Atheism, if no other systems of belief shall be found to stand the touchstone of enquiry.

[**I-313**]

Theosophus.

I do not hesitate to prefer the Christian system, or indeed any system of religion, however rude and gross, to Atheism. Here we truly sympathize; nor do I blame, however I may feel inclined to pity, the man who in his zeal to escape this gloomy faith, should plunge into the most abject superstition.

The Atheist is a monster among men. Inducements, which are omnipotent over the conduct of others, are impotent for him. His private judgment is his criterion of right and wrong. He dreads no judge but his own conscience, he fears no hell but the loss of his self-esteem. He is not to be restrained by punishments, for death is divested of its terror, and whatever enters into his heart to conceive, that will he not scruple to execute. *Iste non timet omnia providentem et cogitantem, et animadvertentem, et omnia ad se pertinere putantem, curiosum et plenum negotii Deum.*

This dark and terrible doctrine was surely the abortion of some blind speculator's brain; some strange and hideous perversion of intellect, some portentous distortion of reason. There can surely be no metaphysician sufficiently bigoted to his own system to look upon this harmonious world, and dispute the necessity of intelligence; to contemplate the design and deny the designer; to enjoy the spectacle of this beautiful Universe and not feel himself instinctively persuaded to gratitude and adoration. What arguments of the slightest plausibility can be adduced to support a doctrine rejected alike by the instinct of the savage and the reason of the sage?

I readily engage, with you, to reject reason as a faithless guide, if you can demonstrate that it conducts to Atheism. So little, however, do I mistrust the dictates of reason, concerning a supreme Being, that I promise, in the event of your success, to subscribe the wildest and most monstrous creed which you can devise. I will call credulity, [**I-314**] faith; reason, impiety; the dictates of the understanding shall be the temptations of the Devil, and the wildest dreams of the imagination, the infallible inspirations of Grace.

Eusebes.

Let me request you then to state, concisely, the grounds of your belief in the being of a God. In my reply I shall endeavour to controvert your reasoning, and shall hold myself acquitted by my zeal for the Christian religion, of the blasphemies which I must utter in the progress of my discourse.

Theosophus.

I will readily state the grounds of my belief in the being of a God. You can only have remained ignorant of the obvious proofs of this important truth, from a superstitious reliance upon the evidence afforded by a revealed religion. The reasoning lies within an extremely narrow compass; *quicquid enim nos vel meliores vel beatiores facturum est, aut in aperto, aut in proximo posuit natura*.

From every design we justly infer a designer. If we examine the structure of a watch, we shall readily confess the existence of a watch-maker. No work of man could possibly have existed from all eternity. From the contemplation of any product of human art, we conclude that there was an artificer who arranged its several parts. In like manner, from the marks of design and contrivance exhibited in the Universe, we are necessitated to infer a designer, a contriver. If the parts of the Universe have been designed, contrived, and adapted, the existence of a God is manifest.

But design is sufficiently apparent. The wonderful adaptation of substances which act to those which are acted upon; of the eye to light, and of light to the eye; of the ear to sound, and of sound to the ear; of every object of sensation to the sense which it impresses prove that neither blind chance, nor undistinguishing necessity [**I-315**] has brought them into being. The adaptation of certain animals to certain climates, the relation borne to each other by animals and vegetables, and by different tribes of animals; the relation, lastly, between man and the circumstances of his external situation are so many demonstrations of Deity.

All is order, design, and harmony, so far as we can descry the tendency of things, and every new enlargement of our views, every new display of the material world, affords a new illustration of the power, the wisdom and the benevolence of God.

The existence of God has never been the topic of popular dispute. There is a tendency to devotion, a thirst for reliance on supernatural aid inherent in the human mind. Scarcely any people, however barbarous, have been discovered, who do not acknowledge with reverence and awe the supernatural causes of the natural effects which they experience. They worship, it is true, the vilest and most inanimate substances, but they firmly confide in the holiness and power of these symbols, and thus own their connexion with what they can neither see nor perceive.

If there is motion in the Universe, there is a God. [36]The power of beginning motion is no less an attribute of mind than sensation or thought. Wherever motion exists it is evident that mind has operated. The phenomena of the Universe indicate the agency of powers which cannot belong to inert matter.

Every thing which begins to exist must have a cause: every combination, conspiring to an end, implies intelligence.

Eusebes.

Design must be proved before a designer can be inferred. The matter in controversy is the existence of design in the Universe, and it is not permitted to assume the contested [**I-316**] premises and thence infer the matter in dispute. Insidiously to employ the words contrivance, design, and adaptation before these circumstances are made apparent in the Universe, thence justly inferring a contriver, is a popular sophism against which it behoves us to be watchful.

To assert that motion is an attribute of mind, that matter is inert, that every combination is the result of intelligence is also an assumption of the matter in dispute.

Why do we admit design in any machine of human contrivance? Simply because innumerable instances of machines having been contrived by human art are present to our mind, because we are acquainted with persons who could construct such machines; but if,

having no previous knowledge of any artificial contrivance, we had accidentally found a watch upon the ground, we should have been justified in concluding that it was a thing of Nature, that it was a combination of matter with whose cause we were unacquainted, and that any attempt to account for the origin of its existence would be equally presumptuous and unsatisfactory.

The analogy which you attempt to establish between the contrivances of human art, and the various existences of the Universe, is inadmissible. We attribute these effects to human intelligence, because we know beforehand that human intelligence is capable of producing them. Take away this knowledge, and the grounds of our reasoning will be destroyed. Our entire ignorance, therefore, of the Divine Nature leaves this analogy defective in its most essential point of comparison.

What consideration remains to be urged in support of the creation of the Universe by a supreme Being? Its admirable fitness for the production of certain effects, that wonderful consent of all its parts, that universal harmony by whose changeless laws innumerable systems of worlds perform their stated revolutions, and the blood [**I-317**] is driven through the veins of the minutest animalcule that sports in the corruption of an insect's lymph: on this account did the Universe require an intelligent Creator, because it exists producing invariable effects, and inasmuch as it is admirably organised for the production of these effects, so the more did it require a creative intelligence.

Thus have we arrived at the substance of your assertion, "That whatever exists, producing certain effects, stands in need of a Creator, and the more conspicuous is its fitness for the production of these effects, the more certain will be our conclusion that it would not have existed from eternity, but must have derived its origin from an intelligent creator."

In what respect then do these arguments apply to the Universe, and not apply to God? From the fitness of the Universe to its end you infer the necessity of an intelligent Creator. But if the fitness of the Universe, to produce certain effects, be thus conspicuous and evident, how much more exquisite fitness to his end must exist in the Author of this Universe? If we find great difficulty from its admirable arrangement in conceiving that the Universe has existed from all eternity, and to resolve this difficulty suppose a Creator, how much more clearly must we perceive the necessity of this very Creator's creation whose perfections comprehend an arrangement far more accurate and just.

The belief of an infinity of creative and created Gods, each more eminently requiring an intelligent author of his being than the foregoing, is a direct consequence of the premises which you have stated. The assumption that the Universe is a design, leads to a conclusion that there are [an] infinity of creative and created Gods, which is absurd. It is impossible indeed to prescribe limits to learned error, when Philosophy relinquishes experience and feeling for speculation.

[**I-318**]

Until it is clearly proved that the Universe was created, we may reasonably suppose that it has endured from all eternity. In a case where two propositions are diametrically opposite, the mind believes that which is less incomprehensible: it is easier to suppose that the Universe has existed from all eternity, than to conceive an eternal being capable of creating it. If the mind sinks beneath the weight of one, is it an alleviation to increase the intolerability of the burthen?

A man knows, not only that he now is, but that there was a time when he did not exist; consequently there must have been a cause. But we can only infer, from effects, causes exactly adequate to those effects. There certainly is a generative power which is effected by

particular instruments; we cannot prove that it is inherent in these instruments, nor is the contrary hypothesis capable of demonstration. We admit that the generative power is incomprehensible, but to suppose that the same effects are produced by an eternal Omnipotent and Omniscient Being, leaves the cause in the same obscurity, but renders it more incomprehensible.

We can only infer from effects causes exactly adequate to those effects. An infinite number of effects demand an infinite number of causes, nor is the philosopher justified in supposing a greater connexion or unity in the latter, than is perceptible in the former. The same energy cannot be at once the cause of the serpent and the sheep; of the blight by which the harvest is destroyed, and the sunshine by which it is matured; of the ferocious propensities by which man becomes a victim to himself, and of the accurate judgment by which his institutions are improved. The spirit of our accurate and exact philosophy is outraged by conclusions which contradict each other so glaringly.

The greatest, equally with the smallest motions of the Universe, are subjected to the rigid necessity of inevitable [**I-319**] laws. These laws are the unknown causes of the known effects perceivable in the Universe. Their effects are the boundaries of our knowledge, their names the expressions of our ignorance. To suppose some existence beyond, or above them, is to invent a second and superfluous hypothesis to account for what has already been accounted for by the laws of motion and the properties of matter. I admit that the nature of these laws is incomprehensible, but the hypothesis of a Deity adds a gratuitous difficulty, which so far from alleviating those which it is adduced to explain, requires new hypotheses for the elucidation of its own inherent contradictions.

The laws of attraction and repulsion, desire and aversion, suffice to account for every phenomenon of the moral and physical world. A precise knowledge of the properties of any object, is alone requisite to determine its manner of action. Let the mathematician be acquainted with the weight and volume of a cannon ball, together with the degree of velocity and inclination with which it is impelled, and he will accurately delineate the course it must describe, and determine the force with which it will strike an object at a given distance. Let the influencing motive, present to the mind of any person be given, and the knowledge of his consequent conduct will result. Let the bulk and velocity of a comet be discovered, and the astronomer, by the accurate estimation of the equal and contrary actions of the centripetal and centrifugal forces, will justly predict the period of its return.

The anomalous motions of the heavenly bodies, their unequal velocities and frequent aberrations, are corrected by that gravitation by which they are caused. The illustrious Laplace has shewn that the approach of the Moon to the Earth, and the Earth to the Sun, is only a secular equation of a very long period, which has its maximum and minimum. The system of the Universe then is upheld solely by physical powers. The necessity of matter [**I-320**] is the ruler of the world. It is vain philosophy which supposes more causes than are exactly adequate to explain the phenomena of things. *Hypotheses non fingo: quicquid enim ex phænomenis non deducitur, hypothesis vocanda est; et hypotheses vel metaphysicæ, vel physicæ, vel qualitatum occultarum, seu mechanicæ, in philosophiâ locum non habent.*

You assert that the construction of the animal machine, the fitness of certain animals to certain situations, the connexion between the organs of perception and that which is perceived; the relation between everything which exists, and that which tends to preserve it in its existence, imply design. It is manifest that if the eye could not see, nor the stomach digest, the human frame could not preserve its present mode of existence. It is equally certain, however, that the elements of its composition, if they did not exist in one form, must exist in another; and that the combinations which they would form, must so long as they endured, derive support for their peculiar mode of being from their fitness to the

circumstances of their situation.

It by no means follows, that because a being exists, performing certain functions, he was fitted by another being to the performance of these functions. So rash a conclusion would conduct, as I have before shewn, to an absurdity; and it becomes infinitely more unwarrantable from the consideration that the known laws of matter and motion, suffice to unravel, even in the present imperfect state of moral and physical science, the majority of those difficulties which the hypothesis of a Deity was invented to explain.

Doubtless no disposition of inert matter, or matter deprived of qualities, could ever have composed an animal, a tree, or even a stone. But matter deprived of qualities, is an abstraction, concerning which it is impossible to form an idea. Matter, such as we behold it, [**I-321**] is not inert. It is infinitely active and subtile. Light, electricity, and magnetism are fluids not surpassed by thought itself in tenuity and activity: like thought they are sometimes the cause and sometimes the effect of motion; and, distinct as they are from every other class of substances with which we are acquainted, seem to possess equal claims with thought to the unmeaning distinction of immateriality.

The laws of motion and the properties of matter suffice to account for every phenomenon, or combination of phenomena exhibited in the Universe. That certain animals exist in certain climates, results from the consentaneity of their frames to the circumstances of their situation: let these circumstances be altered to a sufficient degree, and the elements of their composition must exist in some new combination no less resulting than the former from those inevitable laws by which the Universe is governed.

It is the necessary consequence of the organization of man, that his stomach should digest his food: it inevitably results also from his gluttonous and unnatural appetite for the flesh of animals that his frame be diseased and his vigour impaired; but in neither of these cases is adaptation of means to end to be perceived. Unnatural diet, and the habits consequent upon its use are the means, and every complication of frightful disease is the end, but to assert that these means were adapted to this end by the Creator of the world, or that human caprice can avail to traverse the precautions of Omnipotence, is absurd. These are the consequences of the properties of organized matter; and it is a strange perversion of the understanding to argue that a certain sheep was created to be butchered and devoured by a certain individual of the human species, when the conformation of the latter, as is manifest to the most superficial student of comparative anatomy, [**I-322**] classes him with those animals who feed on fruits and vegetables. [37]

The means by which the existence of an animal is sustained, requires a designer in no greater degree than the existence itself of the animal. If it exists, there must be means to support its existence. In a world where *omne mutatur nihil interit,* no organized being can exist without a continual separation of that substance which is incessantly exhausted, nor can this separation take place otherwise than by the invariable laws which result from the relations of matter. We are incapacitated only by our ignorance from referring every phenomenon, however unusual, minute or complex, to the laws of motion and the properties of matter; and it is an egregious [**I-323**] offence against the first principles of reason to suppose an immaterial creator of the world, *in quo omnia moventur sed sine mutuâ passione:* which is equally a superfluous hypothesis in the mechanical philosophy of Newton, and a useless excrescence on the inductive logic of Bacon.

What then is this harmony, this order which you maintain to have required for its establishment, what it needs not for its maintenance, the agency of a supernatural intelligence? Inasmuch as the order visible in the Universe requires one cause, so does the disorder whose operation is not less clearly apparent, demand another. Order and disorder are

no more than modifications of our own perceptions of the relations which subsist between ourselves and external objects, and if we are justified in inferring the operation of a benevolent power from the advantages attendant on the former, the evils of the latter bear equal testimony to the activity of a malignant principle, no less pertinacious in inducing evil out of good, than the other is unremitting in procuring good from evil.

If we permit our imagination to traverse the obscure regions of possibility, we may doubtless imagine, according to the complexion of our minds, that disorder may have a relative tendency to unmingled good, or order be relatively replete with exquisite and subtile evil. To neither of these conclusions, which are equally presumptuous and unfounded, will it become the philosopher to assent. Order and disorder are expressions denoting our perceptions of what is injurious or beneficial to ourselves, or to the beings in whose welfare we are compelled to sympathize by the similarity of their conformation to our own. [38]

A beautiful antelope panting under the fangs of a tiger, a defenceless ox, groaning beneath the butcher's axe, is a spectacle which instantly awakens compassion in a virtuous [**I-324**] and unvitiated breast. Many there are, however, sufficiently hardened to the rebukes of justice and the precepts of humanity, as to regard the deliberate butchery of thousands of their species, as a theme of exultation and a source of honour, and to consider any failure in these remorseless enterprises as a defect in the system of things. The criteria of order and disorder are as various as those beings from whose opinions and feelings they result.

Populous cities are destroyed by earthquakes, and desolated by pestilence. Ambition is everywhere devoting its millions to incalculable calamity. Superstition, in a thousand shapes, is employed in brutalizing and degrading the human species, and fitting it to endure without a murmur the oppression of its innumerable tyrants. All this is abstractedly neither good nor evil, because good and evil are words employed to designate that peculiar state of our own perceptions, resulting from the encounter of any object calculated to produce pleasure or pain. Exclude the idea of relation, and the words good and evil are deprived of import.

Earthquakes are injurious to the cities which they destroy, beneficial to those whose commerce was injured by their prosperity, and indifferent to others which are too remote to be affected by their influence. Famine is good to the corn-merchant, evil to the poor, and indifferent to those whose fortunes can at all times command a superfluity. Ambition is evil to the restless bosom it inhabits, to the innumerable victims who are dragged by its ruthless thirst for infamy, to expire in every variety of anguish, to the inhabitants of the country it depopulates, and to the human race whose improvement it retards; it is indifferent with regard to the system of the Universe, and is good only to the vultures and the jackalls that track the conqueror's career, and to the worms who feast in security on the desolation of his progress. It is manifest that we cannot reason with respect to the universal system [**I-325**] from that which only exists in relation to our own perceptions.

You allege some considerations in favour of a Deity from the universality of a belief in his existence.

The superstitions of the savage, and the religion of civilized Europe appear to you to conspire to prove a first cause. I maintain that it is from the evidence of revelation alone that this belief derives the slightest countenance.

That credulity should be gross in proportion to the ignorance of the mind which it enslaves, is in strict consistency with the principles of human nature. The idiot, the child, and the savage, agree in attributing their own passions and propensities [39]to the inanimate substances by which they are either benefited or injured. The former become Gods and the latter Demons; hence prayers and sacrifices, by the means of which the rude Theologian imagines that he may confirm the benevolence of the one, or mitigate the malignity of the

other. He has averted the wrath of a powerful enemy by supplications and submission; he has secured the assistance of his neighbour by offerings; he has felt his own anger subside before the entreaties of a vanquished foe, and has cherished gratitude for the kindness of another. Therefore does he believe that the elements will listen to his vows. He is capable of love and hatred towards his fellow beings, and is variously impelled by those principles to benefit or injure them. The source of his error is sufficiently obvious. When the winds, the waves and the atmosphere, act in such a manner as to thwart or forward his designs, he attributes to them the same propensities of whose existence within himself he is conscious when he is instigated by benefits to kindness, or by injuries to revenge. The bigot of the woods can form no conception of beings possessed of properties differing from his own: it requires, [**I-326**] indeed, a mind considerably tinctured with science, and enlarged by cultivation to contemplate itself, not as the centre and model of the Universe, but as one of the infinitely various multitude of beings of which it is actually composed.

There is no attribute of God which is not either borrowed from the passions and powers of the human mind, or which is not a negation. Omniscience, Omnipotence, Omnipresence, Infinity, Immutability, Incomprehensibility, and Immateriality, are all words which designate properties and powers peculiar to organised beings, with the addition of negations, by which the idea of limitation is excluded. [40]

That the frequency of a belief in God (for it is not universal) should be any argument in its favour, none to whom the innumerable mistakes of men are familiar, will assert. It is among men of genius and science that Atheism alone is found, but among these alone is cherished an hostility to those errors, with which the illiterate and vulgar are infected.

How small is the proportion of those who really believe in God, to the thousands who are prevented by their occupations from ever bestowing a serious thought upon the subject, and the millions who worship butterflies, bones, feathers, monkeys, calabashes and serpents. The word God, like other abstractions, signifies the agreement of certain propositions, rather than the presence of any idea. If we found our belief in the existence of God on the universal consent of mankind, we are duped by the most palpable of sophisms. The word God cannot mean at the same time an ape, a snake, a bone, a calabash, a Trinity, and a Unity. Nor can that belief be accounted universal against which men of powerful intellect and spotless virtue have in every age protested. [**I-327**] *Non pudet igitur physicum, id est speculatorem venatoremque naturæ, ex animis consuetudine imbutis petere testimonium veritatis?*

Hume has shewn, to the satisfaction of all philosophers, that the only idea which we can form of causation is derivable [41]from the constant conjunction of objects, and the consequent inference of one from the other. We denominate that phenomenon the cause of another which we observe with the fewest exceptions to precede its occurrence. Hence it would be inadmissible to deduce the being of a God from the existence of the Universe; even if this mode of reasoning did not conduct to the monstrous conclusion of an infinity of creative and created Gods, each more eminently requiring a Creator than its predecessor.

If Power [42]be an attribute of existing substance, substance could not have derived its origin from power. One thing cannot be at the same time the cause and the effect of another. —The word power expresses the capability of any thing to be or act. The human mind never hesitates to annex the idea of power to any object of its experience. To deny that power is the attribute of being, is to deny that being can be. If power be an attribute of substance, the hypothesis of a God is a superfluous and unwarrantable assumption.

Intelligence is that attribute of the Deity, which you hold to be most apparent in the Universe. Intelligence is only known to us as a mode of animal being. We cannot conceive intelligence distinct from sensation and perception, which are attributes to organized bodies.

To assert that God is intelligent, is to assert that he has ideas; and Locke has proved that ideas result from sensation. Sensation can exist only in an organized body, [**I-328**] an organised body is necessarily limited both in extent and operation. The God of the rational Theosophis is a vast and wise animal.

You have laid it down as a maxim that the power of beginning motion is an attribute of mind as much as thought and sensation.

Mind cannot create, it can only perceive. Mind is the recipient of impressions made on the organs of sense, and without the action of external objects we should not only be deprived of all knowledge of the existence of mind, but totally incapable of the knowledge of any thing. It is evident, therefore, that mind deserves to be considered as the effect, rather than the cause of motion. The ideas which suggest themselves too are prompted by the circumstances of our situation, these are the elements of thought, and from the various combinations of these our feelings, opinions, and volitions inevitably result.

That which is infinite necessarily includes that which is finite. The distinction therefore between the Universe, and that by which the Universe is upheld, is manifestly erroneous. To devise the word God, that you may express a certain portion of the universal system, can answer no good purpose in philosophy: In the language of reason, the words God and Universe are synonymous. *Omnia enim per Dei potentiam facta sunt, imo, quia naturæ potentia nulla est nisi ipsa Dei potentia, artem est nos catemus Dei potentiam non intelligere quatenus causas naturales ignoramus; adeoque stultè ad eandam Dei potentiam recurritur, quando rei alicujus, causam naturalem, sive est, ipsam Dei potentiam ignoramus*. [43]

Thus from the principles of that reason to which you so rashly appealed as the ultimate arbiter of our dispute, have I shewn that the popular arguments in favour of the [**I-329**] being of a God are totally destitute of colour. I have shewn the absurdity of attributing intelligence to the cause of those effects which we perceive in the Universe, and the fallacy which lurks in the argument from design. I have shewn that order is no more than a peculiar manner of contemplating the operation of necessary agents, that mind is the effect, not the cause of motion, that power is the attribute, not the origin of Being. I have proved that we can have no evidence of the existence of a God from the principles of reason.

You will have observed, from the zeal with which I have urged arguments so revolting to my genuine sentiments, and conducted to a conclusion in direct contradiction to that faith which every good man must eternally preserve, how little I am inclined to sympathise with those of my religion who have pretended to prove the existence of God by the unassisted light of reason. I confess that the necessity of a revelation has been compromised by treacherous friends to Christianity, who have maintained that the sublime mysteries of the being of a God and the immortality of the soul are discoverable from other sources than itself.

I have proved that on the principles of that philosophy to which Epicurus, Lord Bacon, Newton, Locke and Hume were addicted, the existence of God is a chimera.

The Christian Religion then, alone, affords indisputable assurance that the world was created by the power, and is preserved by the Providence of an Almighty God, who, in justice has appointed a future life for the punishment of the vicious and the remuneration of the virtuous.

Now, O Theosophus, I call upon you to decide between Atheism and Christianity; to declare whether you will pursue your principles to the destruction of the bonds of civilized society, or wear the easy yoke of that religion which proclaims “peace upon earth, good-will to all men.”

[**I-330**]

Theosophus.

I am not prepared at present, I confess, to reply clearly to your unexpected arguments. I assure you that no considerations, however specious, should seduce me to deny the existence of my Creator.

I am willing to promise that if, after mature deliberation, the arguments which you have advanced in favour of Atheism should appear incontrovertible, I will endeavour to adopt so much of the Christian scheme as is consistent with my persuasion of the goodness, unity, and majesty of God.

[**I-331**]

HISTORY

OF

A SIX WEEKS' TOUR

THROUGH

A PART OF FRANCE,

SWITZERLAND, GERMANY, AND HOLLAND:

WITH LETTERS

DESCRIPTIVE OF

A SAIL ROUND THE LAKE OF GENEVA, AND OF

THE GLACIERS OF CHAMOUNI.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY T. HOOKHAM, JUN.

OLD BOND STREET;

AND C. AND J. OLLIER,

WELBECK STREET.

1817.

[**I-332**]

HISTORY OF A SIX WEEK'S TOUR↩

[*The two following Letters were addressed by* Shelley *to* Thomas Love Peacock. *The remainder of the little volume was written by* Mrs. Shelley.]

[**I-333**]

To T. P. Esq.

MELLERIE—CLARENS—CHILLON—VEVAI—LAUSANNE.

Montalegre, near Coligni. Geneva,
July 12th, 1816.

IT is nearly a fortnight since I have returned from Vevai. This journey has been on every account delightful, but 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. 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 boatmen 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 [**I-334**] 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. 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 forbear 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 [**I-335**] 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, chesnut, 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 [**I-336**] the clouds hard and high; then thunder showers, and wind shifting to every quarter; then a warm 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 apologized 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 Mellerie, 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 Mellerie, before the present inn was built, and when the accommodations were those of the most [**I-337**] 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 nation. A Bourbon dared not even to have remembered 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, and as fragrant. Probably the village derives its name from this production. Mellerie is the well-known scene of St. Preux's visionary exile; but Mellerie is indeed enchanted ground, were Rousseau no magician. Groves of pine, chesnut, 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 Mellerie, 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 [**I-338**] 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 know 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.

St. Gingoux is even more beautiful than Mellerie; 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 become deeper and more extensive; the chesnut 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 [**I-339**] the mouth of the Rhone. We went between the mountains and the lake, under groves of mighty chesnut 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 chesnut 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 plain 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. In the midst of the plain rises a little isolated hill, on which the white spire of a church peeps from among the tufted chesnut-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 waterfalls 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 [**I-340**] 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 Héloise, 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. Mellerie, the Castle of Chillon, Clarens, the mountains of La Valais and Savoy, present themselves 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 800 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 as 1670. At the commencement of the Reformation, and indeed long after that period, this dungeon was the receptacle of those who shook, or who denied [**I-341**] 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 has been the delight of man to exercise over man. It was indeed one of those many tremendous fulfilments which render the "pernicies humani generis" of the great Tacitus, so solemn and irrefragable a prophecy. The 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 terrassed 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 had actual existence. In the evening we walked thither. 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 [**I-342**] 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 chesnut. We gathered roses on the terrace, in the feeling that they might be the posterity of some planted by Julia's hand. We sent their dead and withered leaves to the absent.

We went again to the "bosquet de Julie," and found that 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.

[**I-343**]

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 [**I-344**] to such a thing, than now that Julie and Clarens, Lausanne and the Roman empire, compelled me to a contrast between Rousseau and Gibbon.

When we returned, in the only interval of sunshine 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 Mellerie, 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.

S.

TO T. P. ESQ.

ST. MARTIN—SERVOZ—CHAMOUNI—MONTANVERT—MONT BLANC.

Hôtel de Londres, Chamouni,
July 22nd, 1816.

Whilst you, my friend, are engaged in securing a home for us, we are wandering in search of recollections to 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 [**I-345**] of what we have done or seen since the morning of the 20th, when we left Geneva.

We commenced our intended journey to Chamouni at half-past eight in the morning. We passed through the champain country, which extends from Mont Salêve to the base of the higher Alps. The country is sufficiently fertile, covered with corn-fields 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 swoln by the rains, flows constantly to the right of the road.

As we approached Bonneville through an avenue composed of a beautiful species of drooping poplar, we observed that the corn-fields 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 Mellerie with forests of intermingled pine and chesnut. 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 [**I-346**] 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 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 to 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. [**I-347**] 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 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 [**I-348**] 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 the 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. I never knew—I never imagined what 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 madness. 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 [**I-349**] 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 6000 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 of the burst of smothered thunder rolling above; yet there was something earthly 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 de Boisson* 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.

[**I-350**]

July 24.

Yesterday morning we went to the source of the Arveiron. 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 Arveiron, 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 Boisson. 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 net-work of frosted silver. These 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 [**I-351**] 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 mountain, enormous rocks, and immense accumulations of sand and stones. 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, scattering ruin. I saw one of these rocks which had 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 Boisson, 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 [**I-352**] 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 or admiration. This is a part of the subject more mournful 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 valley is 950 toises, or 7600 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 our journey, when we returned, wet through.

Chamouni, July 25th.

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 [**I-353**] 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.

On all sides precipitous mountains, the abodes of unrelenting frost, surround this vale: their sides are banked 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. It 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 12 or 15 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 sky. 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 same. The echo of rocks, or of the ice and snow which fall from their overhanging precipices, or roll from their aerial summits, [**I-354**] scarcely ceases for one moment. One 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***, C***, 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 28th.

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 sunset 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. Michel, 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 forth among the Alps. It continued falling many days, spreading, with the shock and thunder of its ruin, consternation into the neighbouring vales. In the evening [**I-355**] we arrived at St. Martin. The 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 colonize 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 at Lucerne, that they were occasionally found in the forests which surround that lake. Adieu.

S.

[**I-357**]

A Proposal

FOR PUTTING

REFORM TO THE VOTE

THROUGHOUT THE KINGDOM.

BY THE HERMIT OF MARLOW.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR C. AND J. OLLIER,

3, WELBECK STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE;

By C. H. Reynell, 21, *Piccadilly.*

1817.

[**I-359**]

A PROPOSAL FOR PUTTING REFORM TO THE VOTE↩

A GREAT question is now agitating in this nation, which no man or party of men is competent to decide; indeed there are no materials of evidence which can afford a foresight of the result. Yet on its issue depends whether we are to be slaves or free men.

It is needless to recapitulate all that has been said about Reform. Every one is agreed that the House of Commons is not a representation of the people. The only theoretical question that remains is, whether the people ought to legislate for themselves, or be governed by laws and impoverished by taxes originating in the edicts of an assembly which represents somewhat less than a thousandth part of the entire community. I think they ought not to be so taxed and governed. An hospital for lunatics is the only theatre where we can conceive so mournful a comedy to be exhibited as this mighty nation now exhibits: a single person bullying and swindling a thousand of his comrades out of all they possessed in the world, and then trampling and spitting upon them, though he were the most contemptible and degraded of mankind, and they had strength in their arms and courage in their hearts. Such a parable realized in political society is a spectacle worthy of the utmost indignation and abhorrence.

The prerogatives of Parliament constitute a sovereignty which is exercised in contempt of the People, and it is in strict consistency with the laws of human [**I-360**] nature that it should have been exercised for the People's misery and ruin. Those whom they despise, men instinctively seek to render slavish and wretched, that their scorn may be secure. It is the object of the Reformers to restore the People to a sovereignty thus held in their contempt. It is my object, or I would be silent now.

Servitude is sometimes voluntary. Perhaps the People choose to be enslaved; perhaps it is their will to be degraded and ignorant and famished; perhaps custom is their only God, and they its fanatic worshippers will shiver in frost and waste in famine rather than deny that idol, perhaps the majority of this nation decree that they will not be represented in Parliament, that they will not deprive of power those who have reduced them to the miserable condition in which they now exist. It is *their* will—it is their own concern. If such be their decision, the champions of the rights and the mourners over the errors and calamities of man, must retire

to their homes in silence, until accumulated sufferings shall have produced the effect of reason.

The question now at issue is, whether the majority of the adult individuals of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland desire or no a complete representation in the Legislative Assembly.

I have no doubt that such is their will, and I believe this is the opinion of most persons conversant with the state of the public feeling. But the fact ought to be formally ascertained before we proceed. If the majority of the adult population should solemnly state their desire to be, that the representatives whom they might appoint should constitute the Commons House of Parliament, there is an end to the dispute. Parliament would then be required, not petitioned, to prepare some effectual plan for carrying the general will into effect; and if Parliament should then refuse, the consequences [**I-361**] of the contest that might ensue would rest on its presumption and temerity. Parliament would have rebelled against the People then.

If the majority of the adult population shall, when seriously called upon for their opinion, determine on grounds, however erroneous, that the experiment of innovation by Reform in Parliament is an evil of greater magnitude than the consequences of misgovernment to which Parliament has afforded a constitutional sanction, then it becomes us to be silent; and we should be guilty of the great crime which I have conditionally imputed to the House of Commons, if after unequivocal evidence that it was the national will to acquiesce in the existing system we should, by partial assemblies of the multitude, or by any party acts, excite the minority to disturb this decision.

The first step towards Reform is to ascertain this point. For which purpose I think the following plan would be effectual:—

That a Meeting should be appointed to be held at the *Crown and Anchor* Tavern on the ——of——, to take into consideration the most effectual measures for ascertaining whether or no, a Reform in Parliament is the will of the majority of the individuals of the British Nation.

That the most eloquent and the most virtuous and the most venerable among the Friends of Liberty, should employ their authority and intellect to persuade men to lay aside all animosity and even discussion respecting the topics on which they are disunited, and by the love which they bear to their suffering country conjure them to contribute all their energies to set this great question at rest—whether the Nation desires a Reform in Parliament or no?

That the friends of Reform, residing in any part of the country, be earnestly entreated to lend perhaps their last and the decisive effort to set their hopes and [**I-362**] fears at rest; that those who can should go to London, and those who cannot, but who yet feel that the aid of their talents might be beneficial, should address a letter to the Chairman of the Meeting, explaining their sentiments: let these letters be read aloud, let all things be transacted in the face of day. Let Resolutions, of an import similar to those that follow be proposed.

1. That those who think that it is the duty of the People of this nation to exact such a Reform in the Commons House of Parliament, as should make that House a complete representation of their will, and that the People have a right to perform this duty, assemble here for the purpose of collecting evidence as to how far it is the will of the majority of the People to acquit themselves of this duty, and to exercise this right.

2. That the population of Great Britain and Ireland be divided into three hundred distinct portions, each to contain an equal number of inhabitants, and three hundred persons be commissioned, each personally to visit every individual within the district named in his commission, and to inquire whether or no that individual is willing to sign the declaration contained in the third Resolution, requesting him to annex to his signature any explanation or exposure of his sentiments which he might choose to place on record. That the following Declaration be proposed for signature:—

3. That the House of Commons does not represent the will of the People of the British Nation; we the undersigned therefore declare, and publish, and our signatures annexed shall be evidence of our firm and solemn conviction that the liberty, the happiness, and the majesty of the great nation to which it is our boast to belong, have been brought into danger and suffered to decay through the corrupt and inadequate manner in which Members are chosen to sit in the Commons [**I-363**] House of Parliament; we hereby express, before God and our country, a deliberate and unbiassed persuasion, that it is our duty, if we shall be found in the minority in this great question, incessantly to petition; if among the majority, to require and exact that that House should originate such measures of Reform as would render its Members the actual Representatives of the Nation.

4. That this Meeting shall be held day after day, until it determines on the whole detail of the plan for collecting evidence as to the will of the nation on the subject of a Reform in Parliament.

5. That this Meeting disclaims any design, however remote, of lending their sanction to the revolutionary and disorganizing schemes which have been most falsely imputed to the Friends of Reform, and declares that its object is purely constitutional.

6. That a subscription be set on foot to defray the expenses of this Plan.

In the foregoing proposal of Resolutions, to be submitted to a National Meeting of the Friends of Reform, I have purposely avoided detail. If it shall prove that I have in any degree afforded a hint to men who have earned and established their popularity by personal sacrifices and intellectual eminence such as I have not the presumption to rival, let it belong to them to pursue and develop all suggestions relating to the great cause of liberty which has been nurtured (I am scarcely conscious of a metaphor) with their very sweat, and blood, and tears: some have tended it in dungeons, others have cherished it in famine, all have been constant to it amidst persecution and calumny, and in the face of the sanctions of power:—so accomplish what ye have begun.

I shall mention therefore only one point relating to the practical part of my Proposal. Considerable expenses, according to my present conception, would be [**I-364**] necessarily incurred: funds should be created by subscription to meet these demands. I have an income of a thousand a year, on which I support my wife and children in decent comfort, and from which I satisfy certain large claims of general justice. Should any plan resembling that which I have proposed be determined on by you, I will give £100, being a tenth part of one year's income, towards its object; and I will not deem so proudly of myself, as to believe that I shall stand alone in this respect, when any rational and consistent scheme for the public benefit shall have received the sanction of those great and good men who have devoted themselves for its preservation.

A certain degree of coalition among the sincere Friends of Reform, in whatever shape, is indispensable to the success of this proposal. The friends of Universal or of Limited Suffrage, of Annual or Triennial Parliaments, ought to settle these subjects on which they disagree, when it is known whether the Nation desires that measure on which they are all agreed. It is trivial to discuss what species of Reform shall have place, when it yet remains a question

whether there will be any Reform or no.

Meanwhile, nothing remains for me but to state explicitly my sentiments on this subject of Reform. The statement is indeed quite foreign to the merits of the Proposal in itself, and I should have suppressed it until called upon to subscribe such a requisition as I have suggested, if the question which it is natural to ask, as to what are the sentiments of the person who originates the scheme, could have received in any other manner a more simple and direct reply. It appears to me that Annual Parliaments ought to be adopted as an immediate measure, as one which strongly tends to preserve the liberty and happiness of the Nation; it would enable men to cultivate those energies on which the performance of the political duties belonging to the [**I-365**] citizen of a free state as the rightful guardian of its prosperity essentially depends; it would familiarize men with liberty by disciplining them to an habitual acquaintance with its forms. Political institution is undoubtedly susceptible of such improvements as no rational person can consider possible, so long as the present degraded condition to which the vital imperfections in the existing system of government has reduced the vast multitude of men, shall subsist. The securest method of arriving at such beneficial innovations, is to proceed gradually and with caution; or in the place of that order and freedom which the Friends of Reform assert to be violated now, anarchy and despotism will follow. Annual Parliaments have my entire assent. I will not state those general reasonings in their favour which Mr. Cobbett and other writers have already made familiar to the public mind.

With respect to Universal Suffrage, I confess I consider its adoption, in the present unprepared state of public knowledge and feeling, a measure fraught with peril. I think that none but those who register their names as paying a certain small sum in *direct taxes* ought at present to send Members to Parliament. The consequences of the immediate extension of the elective franchise to every male adult, would be to place power in the hands of men who have been rendered brutal and torpid and ferocious by ages of slavery. It is to suppose that the qualities belonging to a demagogue are such as are sufficient to endow a legislator. I allow Major Cartwright's arguments to be unanswerable; abstractedly it is the right of every human being to have a share in the government. But Mr. Paine's arguments are also unanswerable; a pure republic may be shown, by inferences the most obvious and irresistible, to be that system of social order the fittest to produce the happiness and promote the genuine eminence of man. Yet nothing can less consist [**I-366**] with reason, or afford smaller hopes of any beneficial issue, than the plan which should abolish the regal and the aristocratical branches of our constitution, before the public mind, through many gradations of improvement, shall have arrived at the maturity which can disregard these symbols of its childhood.

[**I-367**]

"WE PITY THE PLUMAGE, BUT FORGET

THE DYING BIRD."

an

ADDRESS to the PEOPLE

on

The Death of the Princess Charlotte.

by

The Hermit of Marlow.

[**I-369**]

AN ADDRESS, &c.↩

I. THE Princess Charlotte is dead. She no longer moves, nor thinks, nor feels. She is as inanimate as the clay with which she is about to mingle. It is a dreadful thing to know that she is a putrid corpse, who but a few days since was full of life and hope; a woman young, innocent, and beautiful, snatched from the bosom of domestic peace, and leaving that single vacancy which none can die and leave not.

II. Thus much the death of the Princess Charlotte has in common with the death of thousands. How many women die in childbed and leave their families of motherless children and their husbands to live on, blighted by the remembrance of that heavy loss? How many women of active and energetic virtues; mild, affectionate, and wise, whose life is as a chain of happiness and union, which once being broken, leaves those whom it bound to perish, have died, and have been deplored with bitterness, which is too deep for words? Some have perished in penury or shame, and their orphan baby has survived, a prey to the scorn and neglect of strangers. Men have watched by the bedside of their expiring wives, and have gone mad when the hideous death-rattle was heard within the throat, regardless of the rosy child sleeping in the lap of the unobservant nurse. The countenance of the physician had been read by the stare of this distracted husband, till the legible despair sunk into his heart. All this has been and is. You walk with a merry heart through [**I-370**] the streets of this great city, and think not that such are the scenes acting all around you. You do not number in your thought the mothers who die in childbed. It is the most horrible of ruins:—In sickness, in old age, in battle, death comes as to his own home; but in the season of joy and hope, when life should succeed to life, and the assembled family expects one more, the youngest and the best beloved, that the wife, the mother—she for whom each member of the family was so dear to one another, should die!—Yet thousands of the poorest poor, whose misery is aggravated by what cannot be spoken now, suffer this. And have they no affections? Do not their hearts beat in their bosoms, and the tears gush from their eyes? Are they not human flesh and blood? Yet none weep for them—none mourn for them—none when their coffins are carried to the grave (if indeed the parish furnishes a coffin for all) turn aside and moralize upon the sadness they have left behind.

III. The Athenians did well to celebrate, with public mourning, the death of those who had guided the republic with their valour and their understanding, or illustrated it with their genius. Men do well to mourn for the dead; it proves that we love something beside

ourselves; and he must have a hard heart who can see his friend depart to rottenness and dust, and speed him without emotion on his voyage to "that bourne whence no traveller returns." To lament for those who have benefited the State, is a habit of piety yet more favourable to the cultivation of our best affections. When Milton died it had been well that the universal English nation had been clothed in solemn black, and that the muffled bells had tolled from town to town. The French nation should have enjoined a public mourning at the deaths of Rousseau and Voltaire. We cannot truly grieve for every one who dies beyond the circle of those [**I-371**] especially dear to us; yet in the extinction of the objects of public love and admiration, and gratitude, there is something, if we enjoy a liberal mind, which has departed from within that circle. It were well done also, that men should mourn for any public calamity which has befallen their country or the world, though it be not death. This helps to maintain that connexion between one man and another, and all men considered as a whole, which is the bond of social life. There should be public mourning when those events take place which make all good men mourn in their hearts,—the rule of foreign or domestic tyrants, the abuse of public faith, the wresting of old and venerable laws to the murder of the innocent, the established insecurity of all those, the flower of the nation, who cherish an unconquerable enthusiasm for public good. Thus, if Horne Tooke and Hardy had been convicted of high treason, it had been good that there had been not only the sorrow and the indignation which would have filled all hearts, but the external symbols of grief. When the French Republic was extinguished, the world ought to have mourned.

IV. But this appeal to the feelings of men should not be made lightly, or in any manner that tends to waste, on inadequate objects, those fertilizing streams of sympathy, which a public mourning should be the occasion of pouring forth. This solemnity should be used only to express a wide and intelligible calamity, and one which is felt to be such by those who feel for their country and for mankind; its character ought to be universal, not particular.

V. The news of the death of the Princess Charlotte, and of the execution of Brandreth, Ludlam, and Turner, arrived nearly at the same time. If beauty, youth, innocence, amiable manners, and the exercise of the [**I-372**] domestic virtues could alone justify public sorrow when they are extinguished for ever, this interesting Lady would well deserve that exhibition. She was the last and the best of her race. But there were thousands of others equally distinguished as she, for private excellences, who have been cut off in youth and hope. The accident of her birth neither made her life more virtuous nor her death more worthy of grief. For the public she had done nothing either good or evil; her education had rendered her incapable of either in a large and comprehensive sense. She was born a Princess; and those who are destined to rule mankind are dispensed with acquiring that wisdom and that experience which is necessary even to rule themselves. She was not like Lady Jane Grey, or Queen Elizabeth, a woman of profound and various learning. She had accomplished nothing, and aspired to nothing, and could understand nothing respecting those great political questions which involve the happiness of those over whom she was destined to rule. Yet this should not be said in blame, but in compassion: let us speak no evil of the dead. Such is the misery, such the impotence of royalty—Princes are prevented from the cradle from becoming anything which may deserve that greatest of all rewards next to a good conscience, public admiration and regret.

VI. The execution of Brandreth, Ludlam, and Turner is an event of quite a different character from the death of the Princess Charlotte. These men were shut up in a horrible dungeon for many months, with the fear of a hideous death and of everlasting hell thrust before their eyes; and at last were brought to the scaffold and hung. They too had domestic affections, and were remarkable for the exercise of private virtues. Perhaps their low station permitted the growth of those affections in a degree not consistent [**I-373**] with a more exalted rank. They had sons, and brothers, and sisters, and fathers, who loved them, it should

seem, more than the Princess Charlotte could be loved by those whom the regulations of her rank had held in perpetual estrangement from her. Her husband was to her as father, mother, and brethren. Ludlam and Turner were men of mature years, and the affections were ripened and strengthened within them. What these sufferers felt shall not be said. But what must have been the long and various agony of their kindred may be inferred from Edward Turner, who, when he saw his brother dragged along upon the hurdle, shrieked horribly and fell in a fit, and was carried away like a corpse by two men. How fearful must have been their agony, sitting in solitude on that day when the tempestuous voice of horror from the crowd, told them that the head so dear to them was severed from the body! Yes—they listened to the maddening shriek which burst from the multitude: they heard the rush of ten thousand terror-stricken feet, the groans and the hootings which told them that the mangled and distorted head was then lifted into the air. The sufferers were dead. What is death? Who dares to say that which will come after the grave? [44]Brandreth was calm, and evidently believed that the consequences of our errors were limited by that tremendous barrier. Ludlam and Turner were full of fears, lest God should plunge them in everlasting fire. Mr. Pickering, the clergyman, was evidently anxious that Brandreth should not by a false confidence lose the single opportunity of reconciling himself with the Ruler of the future world. None knew what death was, or could know. Yet these men were presumptuously thrust into that unfathomable gulf, by other men, who knew as little and who reckoned not the present or the future sufferings [**I-374**] of their victims. Nothing is more horrible than that man should for any cause shed the life of man. For all other calamities there is a remedy or a consolation. When that Power through which we live ceases to maintain the life which it has conferred, then is grief and agony, and the burthen which must be borne: such sorrow improves the heart. But when man sheds the blood of man, revenge, and hatred, and a long train of executions, and assassinations, and proscriptions is perpetuated to remotest time.

VII. Such are the particular, and some of the general considerations depending on the death of these men. But, however deplorable, if it were a mere private or customary grief, the public as the public should not mourn. But it is more than this. The events which led to the death of those unfortunate men are a public calamity. I will not impute blame to the jury who pronounced them guilty of high treason, perhaps the law requires that such should be the denomination of their offence. Some restraint ought indeed to be imposed on those thoughtless men who imagine they can find in violence a remedy for violence, even if their oppressors had tempted them to this occasion of their ruin. They are instruments of evil, not so guilty as the hands that wielded them, but fit to inspire caution. But their death, by hanging and beheading, and the circumstances of which it is the characteristic and the consequence, constitute a calamity such as the English nation ought to mourn with an unassuageable grief.

VIII. Kings and their ministers have in every age been distinguished from other men by a thirst for expenditure and bloodshed. There existed in this country, until the American war, a check, sufficiently feeble and pliant indeed, to this desolating propensity. Until America proclaimed itself a Republic, England was [**I-375**] perhaps the freest and most glorious nation subsisting on the surface of the earth. It was not what is to the full desirable that a nation should be, but all that it can be, when it does not govern itself. The consequences, however, of that fundamental defect soon became evident. The government which the imperfect constitution of our representative assembly threw into the hands of a few aristocrats, improved the method of anticipating the taxes by loans, invented by the ministers of William III., until an enormous debt had been created. In the war against the Republic of France, this policy was followed up, until now, the *mere interest* of the public debt amounts to more than twice as much as the lavish expenditure of the public treasure, for maintaining the standing army, and the royal family, and the pensioners, and the placemen. The effect of this debt is to produce such an unequal distribution of the means of living, as saps the foundation of social union and civilized life. It creates a double aristocracy, instead of one

which was sufficiently burthensome before, and gives twice as many people the liberty of living in luxury and idleness on the produce of the industrious and the poor. And it does not give them this because they are more wise and meritorious than the rest, or because their leisure is spent in schemes of public good, or in those exercises of the intellect and the imagination, whose creations ennoble or adorn a country. They are not like the old aristocracy, men of pride and honour, *sans peur et sans tache,* but petty peddling slaves, who have gained a right to the title of public creditors, either by gambling in the funds, or by subserviency to government, or some other villainous trade. They are not the "Corinthian capital of polished society," but the petty and creeping weeds which deface the rich tracery of its sculpture. The effect of this system is, that the day labourer gains no more now by working sixteen hours a day than he gained before by [**I-376**] working eight. I put the thing in its simplest and most intelligible shape. The labourer, he that tills the ground and manufactures cloth, is the man who has to provide, out of what he would bring home to his wife and children, for the luxuries and comforts of those whose claims are represented by an annuity of forty-four millions a year levied upon the English nation. Before, he supported the army and the pensioners, and the royal family, and the landholders; and this is a hard necessity to which it was well that he should submit. Many and various are the mischiefs flowing from oppression, but this is the representative of them all—namely, that one man is forced to labour for another in a degree not only not necessary to the support of the subsisting distinctions among mankind, but so as by the excess of the injustice to endanger the very foundations of all that is valuable in social order, and to provoke that anarchy which is at once the enemy of freedom, and the child and the chastiser of misrule. The nation, tottering on the brink of two chasms, began to be weary of a continuance of such dangers and degradations, and the miseries which are the consequence of them; the public voice loudly demanded a free representation of the people. It began to be felt that no other constituted body of men could meet the difficulties which impend. Nothing but the nation itself dares to touch the question as to whether there is any remedy or no to the annual payment of forty-four millions a year, beyond the necessary expenses of State, for ever and for ever. A nobler spirit also went abroad, and the love of liberty, and patriotism, and the self-respect attendant on those glorious emotions, revived in the bosoms of men. The government had a desperate game to play.

IX. In the manufacturing districts of England discontent and disaffection had prevailed for many years; [**I-377**] this was the consequence of that system of double aristocracy produced by the causes before mentioned. The manufacturers, the helots of luxury, are left by this system famished, without affections, without health, without leisure or opportunity for such instruction as might counteract those habits of turbulence and dissipation, produced by the precariousness and insecurity of poverty. Here was a ready field for any adventurer who should wish, for whatever purpose, to incite a few ignorant men to acts of illegal outrage. So soon as it was plainly seen that the demands of the people for a free representation must be conceded if some intimidation and prejudice were not conjured up, a conspiracy of the most horrible atrocity was laid in train. It is impossible to know how far the higher members of the government are involved in the guilt of their infernal agents. It is impossible to know how numerous or how active they have been, or by what false hopes they are yet inflaming the untutored multitude to put their necks under the axe and into the halter. But thus much is known, that so soon as the whole nation lifted up its voice for parliamentary reform, spies were sent forth. These were selected from the most worthless and infamous of mankind, and dispersed among the multitude of famished and illiterate labourers. It was their business if they found no discontent to create it. It was their business to find victims, no matter whether right or wrong. It was their business to produce upon the public an impression, that if any attempt to attain national freedom, or to diminish the burthens of debt and taxation under which we groan, were successful, the starving multitude would rush in, and confound all orders and distinctions, and institutions and laws, in common ruin. The inference with which

they were required to arm the ministers was, that despotic power ought to be eternal. To produce this salutary impression, they betrayed some innocent [**I-378**] and unsuspecting rustics into a crime whose penalty is a hideous death. A few hungry and ignorant manufacturers, seduced by the splendid promises of these remorseless blood-conspirators, collected together in what is called rebellion against the State. All was prepared, and the eighteen dragoons assembled in readiness, no doubt, conducted their astonished victims to that dungeon which they left only to be mangled by the executioner's hand. The cruel instigators of their ruin retired to enjoy the great revenues which they had earned by a life of villainy. The public voice was overpowered by the timid and the selfish, who threw the weight of fear into the scale of public opinion, and Parliament confided anew to the executive government those extraordinary powers which may never be laid down, or which may be laid down in blood, or which the regularly constituted assembly of the nation must wrest out of their hands. Our alternatives are a despotism, a revolution, or reform.

X. On the 7th of November, Brandreth, Turner, and Ludlam ascended the scaffold. We feel for Brandreth the less, because it seems he killed a man. But recollect who instigated him to the proceedings which led to murder. On the word of a dying man, Brandreth tells us, that "Oliver *brought him to this*"—that, "*but for* Oliver *he would not have been there*." See, too, Ludlam and Turner, with their sons, and brothers, and sisters, how they kneel together in a dreadful agony of prayer. Hell is before their eyes, and they shudder and feel sick with fear, lest some unrepented or some wilful sin should seal their doom in everlasting fire. With that dreadful penalty before their eyes—with that tremendous sanction for the truth of all he spoke, Turner exclaimed loudly and distinctly, *while the executioner was putting the rope round his neck,* "this is all Oliver and the Government." What more he might have said we know not, because the [**I-379**] chaplain prevented any further observations. Troops of horse, with keen and glittering swords, hemmed in the multitudes collected to witness this abominable exhibition. "When the stroke of the axe was heard, there was a burst of horror from the crowd. [45]The instant the head was exhibited, there was a tremendous shriek set up, and the multitude ran violently in all directions, as if under the impulse of sudden frenzy. Those who resumed their stations, groaned and hooted." It is a national calamity, that we endure men to rule over us, who sanction for whatever ends a conspiracy which is to arrive at its purpose through such a frightful pouring forth of human blood and agony. But when that purpose is to trample upon our rights and liberties for ever, to present to us the alternatives of anarchy and oppression, and triumph when the astonished nation accepts the latter at their hands, to maintain a vast standing army, and add year by year to a public debt, which already, they know, cannot be discharged; and which, when the delusion that supports it fails, will produce as much misery and confusion through all classes of society as it has continued to produce of famine and degradation to the undefended poor; to imprison and calumniate those who may offend them at will; when this, if not the purpose, is the effect of that conspiracy, how ought we not to mourn?

XI. Mourn then people of England. Clothe yourselves in solemn black. Let the bells be tolled. Think of mortality and change. Shroud yourselves in solitude and the gloom of sacred sorrow. Spare no symbol of universal grief. Weep—mourn—lament. Fill the great city—fill the boundless fields with lamentation and the echo of groans. A beautiful Princess is dead:—she who should have been the Queen of her beloved nation, and whose posterity should have ruled it for [**I-380**] ever. She loved the domestic affections, and cherished arts which adorn, and valour which defends. She was amiable and would have become wise, but she was young, and in the flower of youth the destroyer came. Liberty is dead. Slave! I charge thee disturb not the depth and solemnity of our grief by any meaner sorrow. If One has died who was like her that should have ruled over this land, like Liberty, young, innocent, and lovely, know that the power through which that one perished was God, and that it was a private grief. But *man* has murdered Liberty, and whilst the life was ebbing from its wound, there

descended on the heads and on the hearts of every human thing, the sympathy of an universal blast and curse. Fetters heavier than iron weigh upon us, because they bind our souls. We move about in a dungeon more pestilential than damp and narrow walls, because the earth is its floor and the heavens are its roof. Let us follow the corpse of British Liberty slowly and reverentially to its tomb: and if some glorious Phantom should appear, and make its throne of broken swords and sceptres and royal crowns trampled in the dust, let us say that the Spirit of Liberty has arisen from its grave and left all that was gross and mortal there, and kneel down and worship it as our Queen.

[**I-381**]

LETTERS TO LEIGH HUNT. [46] ↩

Letter I.

Lyons, *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.

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 upon them which I found difficult to supply. I have read *Foliage:*—with most of the poems I was 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 pity that *glib* 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 on the subject. Give my love to Marianne and her sister, and [**I-382**] 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 all 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.

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, I have not been idle. My Prometheus is finished, and I am also on the eve of completing another work, 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 [47]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 it is too long. It was composed last year at Este; two of the characters you will recognize; the third is also in some degree a painting from nature, but, with regard to time and place, ideal. You will find the little piece, I think, in some degree consistent with your own ideas of the manner in which poetry ought to [**I-383**] 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 vulgar idioms. 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 base 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 all 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 do not 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 will stick to one. Your kind expressions about my Eclogue [48]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.

* * * * * *

Most affectionately yours,

P. B. Shelley.

[**I-384**]

Livorno, *September* 3*rd,* 1819.

My dear Friend,— At length has arrived Ollier's parcel, and with it the portrait. What a delightful present! It is almost yourself, and we sate talking with it, and of it, all the evening. . . . . It is a great pleasure to us to possess it, a pleasure in a time of need; coming to us when there are few others. How we wish it were you, and not your picture! How I wish we were with you!

This parcel, you know, and all its letters, are now a year old; some older. There are all kinds of dates, from March to August, 1818, and "your date," to use Shakespeare's expression, "is better in a pie or a pudding, than in your letter." "Virginity," Parolles says,—but letters are the same thing in another shape.

With it came, too, Lamb's Works. I have looked at none of the other books yet. What a lovely thing is his "Rosamond Gray!" how much knowledge of the sweetest and deepest part of our nature 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. But 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 forms 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 on the common notion that he equals, and in some respects exceeds [**I-385**] 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 Sistine Chapel, seems to me deficient in beauty and majesty, both in the conception and the execution. 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,—where, the spirit coming over the sea in a boat, like Mars rising from the 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 Shakespeare?

As to Michael Angelo's *Moses*—but you have seen a cast of that in England.—I write these things, Heaven knows why!

I have written something and finished it, [49]different from any thing 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 Christian, Jew, 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 will make Ollier enclose what you know would most 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. [**I-386**] 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.

Ever your affectionate,

P. B. S.

My love to Marianne and Bessy, and Thornton too, and Percy, &c., and if you could imagine any way in which I could be useful to them here, tell me. I will inquire about the Italian chalk. You have no idea of the pleasure this portrait gives us.

Firenze, *Nov.* 13, 1819.

My dear Friend,— Yesterday morning Mary brought me a little boy. 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 this is a great relief and a great comfort to me, amongst all my misfortunes, past, present, and to come.

Since I last wrote to you, some circumstances have occurred, not necessary to explain by letter, which make my pecuniary condition a very difficult 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, Bessie, and all the children. Poor Mary begins (for the first time) to look a little consoled. [**I-387**] For we have spent, as you may imagine, a miserable five months.

Good-bye, my dear Hunt,
Your affectionate friend,

P. B. S.

I have had no letter from you for a *month*.

Florence, *Nov.* 23*rd,* 1819.

My dear Hunt,—*Why* don't you write to us? I was preparing to send 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 enclosures, it would not be welcome to you, whatever I might send.

What a state England is in! But you will never write politics. I don't wonder;—but I wish, then, that you would write a paper in "The Examiner," on the actual state of the country, and what, under all the 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 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 resigned,—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, &c., you would think of nothing else but how to amuse and relieve me. You omit me if I am prosperous.

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. * * * * * Affectionate [**I-388**] 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 don't expect you to publish it; but you may show it to whom you please.

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 recovered.

You do not tell me whether you have received my lines on the Manchester affair. They are of the exoteric species, 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 "Mask of Anarchy."

I am sorry to hear that you have employed yourself in translating "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 [**I-389**] 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 the belief that what I would 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 of the original as is seen in my translation, not the translation itself. * * * * *

I think I have 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 return from Italy. I fear that in England things will be carried violently by the rulers, and that 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 I can get in politics, for ever aspiring to something more. I am one of those whom nothing will fully satisfy, but who am ready to be partially satisfied, by 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.

[**I-390**]

Pisa, *August* 26*th,* 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 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."

He proposes that you should come and go shares with him and me, in a periodical work, 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 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 to myself, I am, for the present, only a sort of link between you and him, until you can know each other and effectuate the arrangement; 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 stocks of reputation and success; do not 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 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 [**I-391**] 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 it not; but I suppose that at last I shall 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 poem such as the "Nymphs," with no great access of effort. 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 then that I should do great things. Before 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," and what you will not agree with him in, censure of the "Cenci." Certainly if "Marino Faliero" is a dream, the "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, 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 qualties, but the canker of aristocracy wants to be cut out.

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[**I-393**]

THE SHELLEY PAPERS↩

THE COLISEUM.
A FRAGMENT.[50]

AT the hour of noon, on the feast of the Passover, an old man, accompanied by a girl, apparently his daughter, entered the Coliseum at Rome. They immediately passed through the Arena, and seeking a solitary chasm among the arches of the southern part of the ruin, selected a fallen column for their seat, and clasping each other's hands, sate as in silent contemplation of the scene. But the eyes of the girl were fixed upon her father's lips, and his countenance, sublime and sweet, but motionless as some Praxitelean image of the greatest of poets, filled the silent air with smiles, not reflected from external forms.

It was the great feast of the Resurrection, and the whole native population of Rome, together with all the foreigners who flock from all parts of the earth to contemplate its celebration, were assembled round the Vatican. The most awful religion of the world went forth surrounded by emblazonry of mortal greatness, and mankind had assembled to wonder at and worship [**I-394**] the creations of their own power. No straggler was to be met with in the streets and grassy lanes which led to the Coliseum. The father and daughter had sought this spot immediately on their arrival.

A figure, only visible at Rome in night or solitude, and then only to be seen amid the desolated temples of the Forum, or gliding among the weed-grown galleries of the Coliseum, crossed their path. His form, which, though emaciated, displayed the elementary outlines of exquisite grace, was enveloped in an ancient chlamys, which half concealed his face; his snow-white feet were fitted with ivory sandals, delicately sculptured in the likeness of two female figures, whose wings met upon the heel, and whose eager and half-divided lips seemed quivering to meet. It was a face, once seen, never to be forgotten. The mouth and the moulding of the chin resembled the eager and impassioned tenderness of the statues of Antinous; but instead of the effeminate sullenness of the eye, and the narrow smoothness of the forehead, shone an expression of profound and piercing thought; the brow was clear and open, and his eyes deep, like two wells of crystalline water which reflect the all-beholding heavens. Over all was spread a timid expression of womanish tenderness and hesitation, which contrasted, yet intermingled strangely, with the abstracted and fearless character that predominated in his form and gestures.

He avoided, in an extraordinary degree, all communication with the Italians, whose language he seemed scarcely to understand, but was occasionally seen to converse with some accomplished foreigner, whose gestures and appearance might attract him amid his solemn haunts. He spoke Latin, and especially Greek, with fluency, and with a peculiar but sweet accent; he had apparently acquired a knowledge of the northern languages of Europe. There was no circumstance connected with him that gave the least intimation of his [**I-395**] country, his origin, or his occupation. His dress was strange, but splendid and solemn. He was forever alone. The literati of Rome thought him a curiosity, but there was something in his manner unintelligible but impressive, which awed their obtrusions into distance and silence. The countrymen, whose path he rarely crossed, returning by starlight from their market at Campo Vaccino, called him, with that strange mixture of religious and historical ideas so common in Italy, *Il Diavolo di Bruto*.

Such was the figure which interrupted the contemplations, if they were so engaged, of the strangers, by addressing them in the clear, and exact, but unidiomatic phrases of their native language:—"Strangers, you are two; behold the third in this great city, to whom alone the spectacle of these mighty ruins is more delightful than the mockeries of a superstition which destroyed them."

"I see nothing," said the old man.

"What do you here, then?"

"I listen to the sweet singing of the birds, and the sound of my daughter's breathing composes me like the soft murmur of water—and I feel the sun-warm wind—and this is pleasant to me."

"Wretched old man, know you not that these are the ruins of the Coliseum?"—

"Alas! stranger," said the girl, in a voice like mournful music, "speak not so—he is blind."—

The stranger's eyes were suddenly filled with tears, and the lines of his countenance became relaxed. "Blind!" he exclaimed, in a tone of suffering, which was more than an apology; and seated himself apart on a flight of shattered and mossy stairs which wound up among the labyrinths of the ruin.

"My sweet Helen," said the old man, "you did not tell me that this was the Coliseum."

"How should I tell you, dearest father, what I knew [**I-396**] not? I was on the point of inquiring the way to that building, when we entered this circle of ruins, and, until the stranger accosted us, I remained silent, subdued by the greatness of what I see."

"It is your custom, sweetest child, to describe to me the objects that gave you delight. You array them in the soft radiance of your words, and whilst you speak I only feel the infirmity which holds me in such dear dependence, as a blessing. Why have you been silent now?"

"I know not—first the wonder and pleasure of the sight, then the words of the stranger, and then thinking on what he had said, and how he had looked—and now, beloved father, your own words."

"Well, tell me now, what do you see?"

"I see a great circle of arches built upon arches, and shattered stones lie around, that once made a part of the solid wall. In the crevices, and on the vaulted roofs, grow a multitude of shrubs, the wild olive and the myrtle—and intricate brambles, and entangled weeds and plants I never saw before. The stones are immensely massive, and they jut out one from the other. There are terrible rifts in the wall, and broad windows through which you see the blue heaven. There seems to be more than a thousand arches, some ruined, some entire, and they are all immensely high and wide. Some are shattered, and stand forth in great heaps, and the underwood is tufted on their crumbling summits. Around us lie enormous columns, shattered and shapeless—and fragments of capitals and cornice, fretted with delicate sculptures."—

"It is opened to the blue sky?" said the old man.

"Yes. We see the liquid depth of heaven above through the rifts and the windows; and the flowers, and the weeds, and the grass and creeping moss, are nourished by its unforbidden rain. The blue sky is above—the wide, bright, blue sky—it flows through the [**I-397**] great rents on high, and through the bare boughs of the marble rooted fig-tree, and through the

leaves and flowers of the weeds, even to the dark arcades beneath. I see—I feel its clear and piercing beams fill the universe, and impregnate the joy-inspiring wind with life and light, and casting the veil of its splendour over all things—even me. Yes, and through the highest rift the noonday waning moon is hanging, as it were, out of the solid sky, and this shows that the atmosphere has all the clearness which it rejoices me that you feel."

"What else see you?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing?"

"Only the bright-green mossy ground, speckled by tufts of dewy clover-grass that run into the interstices of the shattered arches, and round the isolated pinnacles of the ruin."

"Like the lawny dells of soft short grass which wind among the pine forests and precipices in the Alps of Savoy?"

"Indeed, father, your eye has a vision more serene than mine."

"And the great wrecked arches, the shattered masses of precipitous ruin, overgrown with the younglings of the forest, and more like chasms rent by an earthquake among the mountains, than like the vestige of what was human workmanship—what are they?"

"Things awe-inspiring and wonderful."

"Are they not caverns such as the untamed elephant might choose, amid the Indian wilderness, wherein to hide her cubs; such as, were the sea to overflow the earth, the mightiest monsters of the deep would change into their spacious chambers?"

"Father, your words image forth what I would have expressed, but, alas! could not."

"I hear the rustling of leaves, and the sound of [**I-398**] waters—but it does not rain,—like the fast drops of a fountain among woods."

"It falls from among the heaps of ruin over our heads—it is, I suppose, the water collected in the rifts by the showers."

"A nursling of man's art, abandoned by his care, and transformed by the enchantment of Nature into a likeness of her own creations, and destined to partake their immortality! Changed into a mountain cloven with woody dells, which overhang its labyrinthine glades, and shattered into toppling precipices. Even the clouds, intercepted by its craggy summit, feed its eternal fountains with their rain. By the column on which I sit, I should judge that it had once been crowned by a temple or a theatre, and that on sacred days the multitude wound up its craggy path to spectacle or the sacrifice——It was such itself! [51]Helen, what sound of wings is that?"

[**I-399**]

"It is the wild pigeons returning to their young. Do you not hear the murmur of those that are brooding in their nests?"

"Ay, it is the language of their happiness. They are as happy as we are, child, but in a different manner. They know not the sensations which this ruin excites within us. Yet it is pleasure to them to inhabit it; and the succession of its forms as they pass, is connected with associations in their minds, sacred to them, as these to us. The internal nature of each being is surrounded by a circle, not to be surmounted by his fellows; and it is this repulsion which constitutes the misfortune of the condition of life. But there is a circle which comprehends, as

well as one which mutually excludes all things which feel. And, with respect to man, his public and his private happiness consists in diminishing the circumference which includes those resembling himself, until they become one with him, and he with them. It is because we enter into the meditations, designs and destinies of something beyond ourselves, that the contemplation of the ruins of human power excites an elevating sense of awfulness and beauty. It is therefore, that the ocean, the glacier, the cataract, the tempest, the volcano, have each a spirit which animates the extremities of our frame with tingling joy. It is therefore, that the singing of birds, and the motion of leaves, the sensation of the odorous earth beneath, and the freshness of the living wind around, is sweet. And this is Love. This is the religion of eternity, whose votaries have been exiled from among the multitude of mankind. O, Power!" cried the old man, lifting his sightless eyes towards the undazzling sun, "thou which interpenetratest all things, and without which this glorious world were a blind and formless chaos, Love, Author of Good, God, King, Father! Friend of these thy worshippers! Two solitary hearts invoke thee, may they be divided never! If the [**I-400**] contentions of mankind have been their misery; if to give and seek that happiness which thou art, has been their choice and destiny; if, in the contemplation of these majestic records of the power of their kind, they see the shadow and the prophecy of that which thou mayst have decreed that he should become; if the justice, the liberty, the loveliness, the truth, which are thy footsteps, have been sought by them, divide them not! It is thine to unite, to eternize; to make outlive the limits of the grave those who have left among the living, memorials of thee. When this frame shall be senseless dust, may the hopes, and the desires, and the delights which animate it now, never be extinguished in my child; even as, if she were borne into the tomb, my memory would be the written monument of all her nameless excellencies!"

The old man's countenance and gestures, radiant with the inspiration of his words, sunk, as he ceased, into more than its accustomed calmness, for he heard his daughter's sobs, and remembered that he had spoken of death,—"My father, how can I outlive you?" said Helen.

"Do not let us talk of death," said the old man, suddenly changing his tone. "Heraclitus, indeed, died at my age, and if I had so sour a disposition, there might be some danger. But Democritus reached a hundred and twenty, by the mere dint of a joyous and unconquerable mind. He only died at last, because he had no gentle and beloved ministering spirit, like my Helen, for whom it would have been his delight to live. You remember his gay old sister requested him to put off starving himself to death until she had returned from the festival of Ceres; alleging, that it would spoil her holiday if he refused to comply, as it was not permitted to appear in the procession immediately after the death of a relation; and how good-temperedly the sage acceded to her request."

[**I-401**]

The old man could not see his daughter's grateful smile, but he felt the pressure of her hand by which it was expressed.—"In truth," he continued, "that mystery, death, is a change which neither for ourselves nor for others is the just object of hope or fear. We know not if it be good or evil, we only know, it is. The old, the young, may alike die; no time, no place, no age, no foresight exempts us from death, and the chance of death. We have no knowledge, if death be a state of sensation, of any precaution that can make those sensations fortunate, if the existing series of events shall not produce that effect. Think not of death, or think of it as something common to us all. It has happened," said he, with a deep and suffering voice, "that men have buried their children."

"Alas! then, dearest father, how I pity you. Let us speak no more."

They rose to depart from the Coliseum, but the figure which had first accosted them interposed itself:—"Lady," he said, "if grief be an expiation of error, I have grieved deeply for the words which I spoke to your companion. The men who anciently inhabited this spot, and those from whom they learned their wisdom, respected infirmity and age. If I have rashly violated that venerable form, at once majestic and defenceless, may I be forgiven?"

"It gives me pain to see how much your mistake afflicts you," she said; "if you can forget, doubt not that we forgive."

"You thought me one of those who are blind in spirit," said the old man, "and who deserve, if any human being can deserve, contempt and blame. Assuredly, contemplating this monument as I do, though in the mirror of my daughter's mind, I am filled with astonishment and delight; the spirit of departed generations seems to animate my limbs, and circulate through all the fibres of my frame. Stranger, if I have [**I-402**] expressed what you have ever felt, let us know each other more."

"The sound of your voice, and the harmony of your thoughts, are delightful to me," said the youth, "and it is a pleasure to see any form which expresses so much beauty and goodness as your daughter's; if you reward me for my rudeness, by allowing me to know you, my error is already expiated, and you remember my ill words no more. I live a solitary life, and it is rare that I encounter any stranger with whom it is pleasant to talk; besides, their meditations, even though they be learned, do not always agree with mine; and, though I can pardon this difference, they cannot. Nor have I ever explained the cause of the dress I wear, and the difference which I perceive between my language and manners, and those with whom I have intercourse. Not but that it is painful to me to live without communion with intelligent and affectionate beings. You are such, I feel."

CRITICAL NOTICES OF THE SCULPTURE IN THE FLORENCE GALLERY. [52]

On the Niobe.

OF all that remains to us of Greek antiquity, this figure is perhaps the most consummate personification of loveliness, with regard to its countenance, as that of the Venus of the Tribune is with regard to its entire form of woman. It is colossal; the size adds to its value; because it allows to the spectator [**I-403**] the choice of a greater number of points of view, and affords him a more analytical one, in which to catch a greater number of the infinite modes of expression, of which any form approaching ideal beauty is necessarily composed. It is the figure of a mother in the act of sheltering, from some divine and inevitable peril, the last, we may imagine, of her surviving children.

The little creature, terrified, as we may conceive, at the strange destruction of all its kindred, has fled to its mother and is hiding its head in the folds of her robe, and casting back one arm, as in a passionate appeal for defence, where it never before could have been sought in vain. She is clothed in a thin tunic of delicate woof; and her hair is fastened on her head into a knot, probably by that mother whose care will never fasten it again. Niobe is enveloped in profuse drapery, a portion of which the left hand has gathered up, and is in the act of extending it over the child in the instinct of shielding her from what reason knows to be inevitable. The right (as the restorer has properly imagined,) is drawing up her daughter to her: and with that instinctive gesture, and by its gentle pressure, is encouraging the child to believe that it can give security. The countenance of Niobe is the consummation of feminine majesty and loveliness, beyond which the imagination scarcely doubts that it can conceive anything.

That masterpiece of the poetic harmony of marble expresses other feelings. There is embodied a sense of the inevitable and rapid destiny which is consummating around her, as if it were already over. It seems as if despair and beauty had combined, and produced nothing but the sublimity of grief. As the motions of the form expressed the instinctive sense of the possibility of protecting the child, and the accustomed and affectionate assurance that she would find an asylum within her arms, so reason and imagination speak in the countenance the certainty that no mortal defence is of avail. [**I-404**] There is no terror in the countenance, only grief—deep, remediless grief. There is no anger:—of what avail is indignation against what is known to be omnipotent? There is no selfish shrinking from personal pain—there is no panic at supernatural agency—there is no adverting to herself as herself: the calamity is mightier than to leave scope for such emotions.

Everything is swallowed up in sorrow: she is all tears; her countenance, in assured expectation of the arrow piercing its last victim in her embrace, is fixed on her omnipotent enemy. The pathetic beauty of the expression of her tender, and inexhaustible, and unquenchable despair, is beyond the effect of sculpture. As soon as the arrow shall pierce her last tie upon earth, the fable that she was turned into stone, or dissolved into a fountain of tears, will be but a feeble emblem of the sadness of hopelessness, in which the few and evil years of her remaining life, we feel, must flow away.

It is difficult to speak of the beauty of the countenance, or to make intelligible in words, from what such astonishing loveliness results.

The head, resting somewhat backward upon the full and flowing contour of the neck, is as in the act of watching an event momently to arrive. The hair is delicately divided on the forehead, and a gentle beauty gleams from the broad and clear forehead, over which its strings are drawn. The face is of an oval fulness, and the features conceived with the daring of a sense of power. In this respect it resembles the careless majesty which Nature stamps upon the rare masterpieces of her creation, harmonising them as it were from the harmony of the spirit within. Yet all this not only consists with, but is the cause of the subtlest delicacy of clear and tender beauty—the expression at once of innocence and sublimity of soul—of purity and strength—of all that which touches the most removed and [**I-405**] divine of the chords that make music in our thoughts—of that which shakes with astonishment even the most superficial.

The Minerva.

The head is of the highest beauty. It has a close helmet, from which the hair delicately parted on the forehead, half escapes. The attitude gives entire effect to the perfect form of the neck, and to that full and beautiful moulding of the lower part of the face and mouth, which is in living beings the seat of the expression of a simplicity and integrity of nature. Her face, upraised to heaven, is animated with a profound, sweet, and impassioned melancholy, with an earnest, and fervid, and disinterested pleading against some vast and inevitable wrong. It is the joy and poetry of sorrow making grief beautiful, and giving it that nameless feeling which, from the imperfection of language, we call pain, but which is not all pain, though a feeling which makes not only its possessor, but the spectator of it, prefer it to what is called pleasure, in which all is not pleasure. It is difficult to think that this head, though of the highest ideal beauty, is the head of Minerva, although the attributes and attitude of the lower part of the statue certainly suggest that idea. The Greeks rarely, in their representations of the characters of their gods,—unless we call the poetic enthusiasm of Apollo a mortal passion,—expressed the disturbance of human feeling; and here is deep and impassioned grief animating a divine countenance. It is, indeed, divine. Wisdom (which Minerva may be supposed to emblem,) is pleading earnestly with Power,—and invested with the expression of that grief, because it must ever plead so vainly. The drapery of the statue, the gentle beauty of

the feet, and the grace of the attitude, are what may be seen in many other statues [**I-406**] belonging to that astonishing era which produced it; such a countenance is seen in few.

This statue happens to be placed on a pedestal, the subject of whose relief is in a spirit wholly the reverse. It was probably an altar to Bacchus—possibly a funeral urn. Under the festoons of fruits and flowers that grace the pedestal, the corners of which are ornamented with the skulls of goats, are sculptured some figures of Mænads under the inspiration of the god. Nothing can be conceived more wild and terrible than their gestures, touching, as they do, the verge of distortion, into which their fine limbs and lovely forms are thrown. There is nothing, however, that exceeds the possibility of nature, though it borders on its utmost line.

The tremendous spirit of superstition, aided by drunkenness, producing something beyond insanity, seems to have caught them in its whirlwinds, and to bear them over the earth, as the rapid volutions of a tempest have the ever-changing trunk of a waterspout, or as the torrent of a mountain river whirls the autumnal leaves resistlessly along in its full eddies. The hair, loose and floating, seems caught in the tempest of their own tumultuous motion; their heads are thrown back, leaning with a strange delirium upon their necks, and looking up to heaven whilst they totter and stumble even in the energy of their tempestuous dance.

One represents Agave with the head of Pentheus in one hand, and in the other a great knife; a second has a spear with its pine cone, which was the Thyrsus; another dances with mad voluptuousness; the fourth is beating a kind of tambourine.

This was indeed a monstrous superstition, even in Greece, where it was alone capable of combining ideal beauty and poetical and abstract enthusiasm with the wild errors from which it sprung. In Rome it had a more familiar, wicked, and dry appearance; it was not suited to the severe and exact apprehensions of the [**I-407**] Romans, and their strict morals were violated by it, and sustained a deep injury, little analogous to its effects upon the Greeks, who turned all things—superstition, prejudice, murder, madness—to beauty.

On the Venus called Anadyomine.

She has just issued from the bath, and yet is animated with the enjoyment of it.

She seems all soft and mild enjoyment, and the curved lines of her fine limbs flow into each other with a never-ending sinuosity of sweetness. Her face expresses a breathless, yet passive and innocent voluptuousness, free from affectation. Her lips, without the sublimity of lofty and impetuous passion, the grandeur of enthusiastic imagination of the Apollo of the Capitol, or the union of both, like the Apollo Belvidere, have the tenderness of arch, yet pure and affectionate desire, and the mode of which the ends of the mouth are drawn in, yet lifted or half-opened, with the smile that for ever circles round them, and the tremulous curve into which they are wrought by inextinguishable desire, and the tongue lying against the lower lip, as in the listlessness of passive joy, express love, still love.

Her eyes seem heavy and swimming with pleasure, and her small forehead fades on both sides into that sweet swelling and thin declension of the bone over the eye, in the mode which expresses simple and tender feelings.

The neck is full, and panting as with the aspiration of delight, and flows with gentle curves into her perfect form.

Her form is indeed perfect. She is half-sitting and half-rising from a shell, and the fulness of her limbs, and their complete roundness and perfection, do not diminish the vital energy with which they seem to be [**I-408**] animated. The position of the arms, which are lovely beyond imagination, is natural, unaffected, and easy. This, perhaps, is the finest personification of Venus, the deity of superficial desire, in all antique statuary. Her pointed

and pear-like person, ever virgin, and her attitude modesty itself.

A Bas-relief.

Probably the sides of a Sarcophagus.

The lady is lying on a couch, supported by a young woman, and looking extremely exhausted; her dishevelled hair is floating about her shoulder, and she is half-covered with drapery that falls on the couch.

Her tunic is exactly like a chemise, only the sleeves are longer, coming half way down the upper part of the arm. An old wrinkled woman, with a cloak over her head, and an enormously sagacious look, has a most *professional* appearance, and is taking hold of her arm gently with one hand, and with the other is supporting it. I think she is feeling her pulse. At the side of the couch sits a woman as in grief, holding her head in her hands. At the bottom of the bed is another matron tearing her hair, and in the act of screaming out most violently, which she seems, however, by the rest of her gestures, to do with the utmost deliberation, as having come to the resolution, that it was a correct thing to do so. Behind her is a gossip of the most ludicrous ugliness, crying, I suppose, or praying, for her arms are crossed upon her neck. There is also a fifth setting up a wail. To the left of the couch a nurse is sitting on the ground dangling the child in her arms, and wholly occupied in so doing. The infant is swaddled. Behind her is a female who appears to be in the act of rushing in with dishevelled hair and violent gesture, and in one hand brandishing a whip or a thunder-bolt. This is [**I-409**] probably some emblematic person, the messenger of death, or a fury, whose personification would be a key to the whole. What they are all wailing at, I know not; whether the lady is dying, or the father has directed the child to be exposed; but if the mother be not dead, such a tumult would kill a woman in the straw in these days.

The other compartment, in the second scene of the drama, tells the story of the presentation of the child to its father. An old man has it in his arms, and with professional and mysterious officiousness is holding it out to the father. The father, a middle-aged and very respectable-looking man, perhaps not long married, is looking with the admiration of a bachelor on his first child, and perhaps thinking, that he was once such a strange little creature himself. His hands are clasped, and he is gathering up between his arms the folds of his cloak, an emblem of his gathering up all his faculties to understand the tale the gossip is bringing.

An old man is standing beside him, probably his father, with some curiosity, and much tenderness in his looks. Around are collected a host of his relations, of whom the youngest, a handsome girl, seems the least concerned. It is altogether an admirable piece, quite in the spirit of the comedies of Terence. [53]

Michael Angelo's Bacchus.

The countenance of this figure is a most revolting mistake of the spirit and meaning of Bacchus. It looks drunken, brutal, narrow-minded, and has an expression of dissoluteness the most revolting. The lower part of the figure is stiff, and the manner in which the shoulders are united to the breast, and the neck to the head, abundantly inharmonious. It is altogether without [**I-410**] unity, as was the idea of the deity of Bacchus in the conception of a Catholic. On the other hand, considered only as a piece of workmanship, it has many merits. The arms are executed in a style of the most perfect and manly beauty. The body is conceived with great energy, and the manner in which the lines mingle into each other, of the highest boldness and truth. It wants unity as a work of art—as a representation of Bacchus it wants everything.

A Juno.

A statue of great merit. The countenance expresses a stern and unquestioned severity of dominion, with a certain sadness. The lips are beautiful—susceptible of expressing scorn—but not without sweetness. With fine lips a person is never wholly bad, and they never belong to the expression of emotions wholly selfish—lips being the seat of imagination. The drapery is finely conceived, and the manner in which the act of throwing back one leg is expressed, in the diverging folds of the drapery of the left breast fading in bold yet graduated lines into a skirt, as it descends from the left shoulder, is admirably imagined.

An Apollo,

with serpents twining round a wreath of laurel on which the quiver is suspended. It probably was, when complete, magnificently beautiful. The restorer of the head and arms, following the indication of the muscles of the right side, has lifted the arm, as in triumph, at the success of an arrow, imagining to imitate the Lycian Apollo in that, so finely described by Apollonius Rhodius, when the dazzling radiance of his beautiful limbs shone over the dark Euxine. The action, energy, and godlike animation of these limbs speak a spirit which seems as if it could not be consumed.

[**I-411**]

ARCH OF TITUS. [54]

ON the inner compartment of the Arch of Titus, is sculptured in deep relief, the desolation of a city. On one side, the walls of the Temple, split by the fury of conflagration, hang tottering in the act of ruin. The accompaniments of a town taken by assault, matrons and virgins and children and old men gathered into groups, and the rapine and licence of a barbarous and enraged soldiery, are imaged in the distance. The foreground is occupied by a procession of the victors, bearing in their profane hands the holy candlesticks and the tables of shewbread, and the sacred instruments of the eternal worship of the Jews. On the opposite side, the reverse of this sad picture, Titus is represented standing in a chariot drawn by four horses, crowned with laurel, and surrounded by the tumultuous numbers of his triumphant army, and the magistrates, and priests, and generals, and philosophers, dragged in chains beside his wheels. Behind him stands a Victory eagle-winged.

The arch is now mouldering into ruins, and the imagery almost erased by the lapse of fifty generations. Beyond this obscure monument of Hebrew desolation, is seen the tomb of the Destroyer's family, now a mountain of ruins.

The Flavian amphitheatre has become a habitation for owls and dragons. The power, of whose possession it was once the type, and of whose departure it is now the emblem, is become a dream and a memory. Rome is no more than Jerusalem.

[**I-412**]

REMARKS ON "MANDEVILLE" AND MR. GODWIN. [55]

THE author of "Mandeville" is one of the most illustrious examples of intellectual power of the present age. He has exhibited that variety and universality of talent which distinguishes him who is destined to inherit lasting renown, from the possessors of temporary celebrity. If his claims were to be measured solely by the accuracy of his researches into ethical and political science, still it would be difficult to name a contemporary competitor. Let us make a deduction of all those parts of his moral system which are liable to any possible controversy, and consider simply those which only to allege is to establish, and which belong to that most important class of truths which he that announces to mankind seems less to teach than to

recall.

"Political Justice" is the first moral system explicitly founded upon the doctrine of the negativeness of rights and the positiveness of duties,—an obscure feeling of which has been the basis of all the political liberty and private virtue in the world. But he is also the author of "Caleb Williams"; and if we had no record of a mind, but simply some fragment containing the conception of the character of Falkland, doubtless we should say, "This is an extraordinary mind, and undoubtedly was capable of the very sublimest enterprises of thought."

St. Leon and Fleetwood are moulded with somewhat inferior distinctness, in the same character of a union of delicacy and power. The Essay on Sepulchres has all the solemnity and depth of passion which belong to a mind that sympathises, as one man with his friend in the interest of future ages, in the concerns of the vanished generations of mankind.

It may be said with truth, that Godwin has been [**I-413**] treated unjustly by those of his countrymen, upon whose favour temporary distinction depends. If he had devoted his high accomplishments to flatter the selfishness of the rich, or enforced those doctrines on which the powerful depend for power, they would, no doubt, have rewarded him with their countenance, and he might have been more fortunate in that sunshine than Mr. Malthus or Dr. Paley. But the difference would have been as wide as that which must for ever divide notoriety from fame. Godwin has been to the present age in moral philosophy what Wordsworth is in poetry. The personal interest of the latter would probably have suffered from his pursuit of the true principles of taste in poetry, as much as all that is temporary in the fame of Godwin has suffered from his daring to announce the true foundations of minds, if servility, and dependence, and superstition, had not been too easily reconcileable with his species of dissent from the opinions of the great and the prevailing. It is singular that the other nations of Europe should have anticipated, in this respect, the judgment of posterity; and that the name of Godwin and that of his late illustrious and admirable wife, should be pronounced, even by those who know but little of English literature, with reverence and admiration; and that the writings of Mary Wollstonecraft should have been translated, and universally read, in France and Germany, long after the bigotry of faction has stifled them in our own country.

"Mandeville" is Godwin's last production. In interest it is perhaps inferior to "Caleb Williams." There is no character like Falkland, whom the author, with that sublime casuistry which is the parent of toleration and forbearance, persuades us personally to love, whilst his actions must for ever remain the theme of our astonishment and abhorrence. Mandeville challenges our compassion, and no more. His errors arise from an [**I-414**] immutable necessity of internal nature, and from much constitutional antipathy and suspicion, which soon spring up into hatred and contempt, and barren misanthropy, which, as it has no root in genius or virtue, produces no fruit uncongenial with the soil wherein it grew. Those of Falkland sprang from a high, though perverted conception of human nature, from a powerful sympathy with his species, and from a temper which led him to believe that the very reputation of excellence should walk among mankind unquestioned and unassailed. So far as it was a defect to link the interest of the tale with anything inferior to Falkland, so is Mandeville defective. But the varieties of human character, the depth and complexity of human motive,—those sources of the union of strength and weakness—those powerful sources of pleading for universal kindness and toleration,—are just subjects for illustration and development in a work of fiction; as such, "Mandeville" yields in interest and importance to none of the productions of the author. The events of the tale flow like the stream of fate, regular and irresistible, growing at once darker and swifter in their progress: there is no surprise, no shock: we are prepared for the worst from the very opening of the scene, though we wonder whence the author drew the shadows which render the moral darkness, every

instant more fearful, at last so appalling and so complete. The interest is awfully deep and rapid. To struggle with it, would be the gossamer attempting to bear up against the tempest. In this respect it is more powerful than "Caleb Williams"; the interest of "Caleb Williams" being as rapid, but not so profound, as that of "Mandeville." It is a wind that tears up the deepest waters of the ocean of mind.

The language is more rich and various, and the expressions more eloquently sweet, without losing that energy and distinctness which characterize "Political [**I-415**] Justice" and "Caleb Williams." The moral speculations have a strength, and consistency, and boldness, which has been less clearly aimed at in his other works of fiction. The pleadings of Henrietta to Mandeville, after his recovery from madness, in favour of virtue and of benevolent energy, compose, in every respect, the most perfect and beautiful piece of writing of modern times. It is the genuine doctrine of "Political Justice," presented in one perspicacious and impressive river, and clothed in such enchanting melody of language, as seems, not less than the writings of Plato, to realize those lines of Milton:

> How charming is divine philosophy—
> Not harsh and crabbed—
> But musical as is Apollo's lute!

Clifford's talk, too, about wealth, has a beautiful, and readily to be disentangled intermixture of truth and error. Clifford is a person, who, without those characteristics which usually constitute the sublime, is sublime from the mere excess of loveliness and innocence. Henrietta's first appearance to Mandeville, at Mandeville House, is an occurrence resplendent with the sunrise of life; it recalls to the memory many a vision—or perhaps but one—which the delusive exhalations of unbaffled hope have invested with a rose-like lustre as of morning, yet unlike morning—a light which, once extinguished, never can return. Henrietta seems at first to be all that a susceptible heart imagines in the object of its earliest passion. We scarcely can see her, she is so beautiful. There is a mist of dazzling loveliness which encircles her, and shuts out from the sight all that is mortal in her transcendent charms. But the veil is gradually undrawn, and she "fades into the light of common day." Her actions, and even her sentiments, do not correspond to the elevation of her speculative opinions, and the fearless sincerity which should be the accompaniment of truth and virtue. But [**I-416**] she has a divided affection, and she is faithful there only where infidelity would have been self-sacrifice. Could the spotless Henrietta have subjected her love to Clifford, to the vain and insulting accident of wealth and reputation, and the babbling of a miserable old woman, and yet have proceeded unshrinking to her nuptial feast from the expostulations of Mandeville's impassioned and pathetic madness? It might be well in the author to show the foundations of human hope thus overthrown, for his picture might otherwise have been illumined with one gleam of light. It was his skill to enforce the moral, "that all things are vanity," and "that the house of mourning is better than the house of feasting"; and we are indebted to those who make us feel the instability of our nature, that we may lay the knowledge (which is its foundation) deep, and make the affections (which are its cement) strong. But one regrets that Henrietta,—who soared far beyond her contemporaries in her opinions, who was so beautiful that she seemed a spirit among mankind,—should act and feel no otherwise than the least exalted of her sex; and still more, that the author, capable of conceiving something so admirable and lovely, should have been withheld, by the tenour of the fiction which he chose, from executing it in its full extent. It almost seems in the original conception of the character of Henrietta, that something was imagined too vast and too uncommon to be realized; and the feeling weighs like disappointment on the mind. But these objections, considered with reference to the close of the story, are extrinsical.

The reader's mind is hurried on as he approaches the end with breathless and accelerated impulse. The noun *smorfia* comes at last, and touches some nerve which jars the inmost soul, and grates, as it were, along the blood; and we can scarcely believe that that grin which must accompany Mandeville to his grave, is not stamped upon our own visage.

[**I-417**]

ON "FRANKENSTEIN." [56]

THE novel of "Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus," is undoubtedly, as a mere story, one of the most original and complete productions of the day. We debate with ourselves in wonder, as we read it, what could have been the series of thoughts—what could have been the peculiar experiences that awakened them—which conduced, in the author's mind, to the astonishing combinations of motives and incidents, and the startling catastrophe, which compose this tale. There are, perhaps, some points of subordinate importance, which prove that it is the author's first attempt. But in this judgment, which requires a very nice discrimination, we may be mistaken; for it is conducted throughout with a firm and steady hand. The interest gradually accumulates and advances towards the conclusion with the accelerated rapidity of a rock rolled down a mountain. We are led breathless with suspense and sympathy, and the heaping up of incident on incident, and the working of passion out of passion. We cry "hold, hold! enough!"—but there is yet something to come; and, like the victim whose history it relates, we think we can bear no more, and yet more is to be borne. Pelion is heaped on Ossa, and Ossa on Olympus. We climb Alp after Alp, until the horizon is seen blank, vacant, and limitless; and the head turns giddy, and the ground seems to fail under our feet.

This novel rests its claim on being a source of powerful and profound emotion. The elementary feelings of the human mind are exposed to view; and those who are accustomed to reason deeply on their origin and tendency will, perhaps, be the only persons who can sympathize, to the full extent, in the interest of the actions which are their result. But, founded on nature as they are, there is perhaps no reader, who can endure [**I-418**] anything beside a new love-story, who will not feel a responsive string touched in his inmost soul. The sentiments are so affectionate and so innocent—the characters of the subordinate agents in this strange drama are clothed in the light of such a mild and gentle mind—the pictures of domestic manners are of the most simple and attaching character: the father's is irresistible and deep. Nor are the crimes and male-volence of the single Being, though indeed withering and tremendous, the offspring of any unaccountable propensity to evil, but flow irresistibly from certain causes fully adequate to their production. They are the children, as it were, of Necessity and Human Nature. In this the direct moral of the book consists; and it is perhaps the most important, and of the most universal application, of any moral that can be enforced by example. Treat a person ill, and he will become wicked. Requite affection with scorn;—let one being be selected, for whatever cause, as the refuse of his kind—divide him, a social being, from society, and you impose upon him the irresistible obligations—male-volence and selfishness. It is thus that, too often in society, those who are best qualified to be its benefactors and its ornaments, are branded by some accident with scorn, and changed, by neglect and solitude of heart, into a scourge and a curse.

The Being in "Frankenstein" is, no doubt, a tremendous creature. It was impossible that he should not have received among men that treatment which led to the consequences of his being a social nature. He was an abortion and an anomaly; and though his mind was such as its first impressions framed it, affectionate and full of moral sensibility, yet the circumstances of his existence are so monstrous and uncommon, that, when the consequences of them became developed in action, his original goodness was gradually turned into inextinguishable misanthropy and revenge. The scene [**I-419**] between the Being and the blind De Lacey in

the cottage, is one of the most profound and extraordinary instances of pathos that we ever recollect. It is impossible to read this dialogue,—and indeed many others of a somewhat similar character,—without feeling the heart suspend its pulsations with wonder, and the "tears stream down the cheeks." The encounter and argument between Frankenstein and the Being on the sea of ice, almost approaches, in effect, to the expostulation of Caleb Williams with Falkland. It reminds us, indeed, somewhat of the style and character of that admirable writer, to whom the author has dedicated his work, and whose productions he seems to have studied.

There is only one instance, however, in which we detect the least approach to imitation; and that is the conduct of the incident of Frankenstein's landing in Ireland. The general character of the tale, indeed, resembles nothing that ever preceded it. After the death of Elizabeth, the story, like a stream which grows at once more rapid and profound as it proceeds, assumes an irresistible solemnity, and the magnificent energy and swiftness of a tempest.

The churchyard scene, in which Frankenstein visits the tombs of his family, his quitting Geneva, and his journey through Tartary to the shores of the Frozen Ocean, resemble at once the terrible reanimation of a corpse and the supernatural career of a spirit. The scene in the cabin of Walton's ship—the more than mortal enthusiasm and grandeur of the Being's speech over the dead body of his victim—is an exhibition of intellectual and imaginative power, which we think the reader will acknowledge has seldom been surpassed.

[**I-420**]

ON THE REVIVAL OF LITERATURE. [57]

IN the fifteenth century of the Christian era, a new and extraordinary event roused Europe from her lethargic state, and paved the way to her present greatness. The writings of Dante in the thirteenth, and of Petrarch in the fourteenth, were the bright luminaries which had afforded glimmerings of literary knowledge to the almost benighted traveller toiling up the hill of Fame. But on the taking of Constantinople, a new and sudden light appeared: the dark clouds of ignorance rolled into distance, and Europe was inundated by learned monks, and still more by the quantity of learned manuscripts which they brought with them from the scene of devastation. The Turks settled themselves in Constantinople, where they adopted nothing but the vicious habits of the Greeks: they neglected even the small remains of its ancient learning, which, filtered and degenerated as it was by the absurd mixture of Pagan and Christian philosophy, proved, on its retirement to Europe, the spark which spread gradually and successfully the light of knowledge over the world.

Italy, France, and England,—for Germany still remained many centuries less civilized than the surrounding countries,—swarmed with monks and cloisters. Superstition, of whatever kind, whether earthly or divine, has hitherto been the weight which clogged man to earth, and prevented his genius from soaring aloft amid its native skies. The enterprises, and the effects of the human mind, are something more than stupendous: the works of nature are material and tangible: we have a half insight into their kind, and in many instances we predict their effects with certainty. But mind seems to govern the world without visible or substantial means. Its birth is unknown; its action and influence unperceived; and its being seems eternal. [**I-421**] To the mind both humane and philosophical, there cannot exist a greater subject of grief, than the reflection of how much superstition has retarded the progress of intellect, and consequently the happiness of man.

The monks in their cloisters were engaged in trifling and ridiculous disputes: they contented themselves with teaching the dogmas of their religion, and rushed impatiently forth to the colleges and halls, where they disputed with an acrimony and meanness little befitting

the resemblance of their pretended holiness. But the situation of a monk is a situation the most unnatural that bigotry, proud in the invention of cruelty, could conceive; and their vices may be pardoned as resulting from the wills and devices of a few proud and selfish bishops, who enslaved the world that they might live at ease.

The disputes of the schools were mostly scholastical; it was the discussion of words, and had no relation to morality. Morality,—the great means and end of man,—was contained, as they affirmed, in the extent of a few hundred pages of a certain book, which others have since contended were but scraps of martyrs' last dying words, collected together and imposed on the world. In the refinements of the scholastic philosophy, the world seemed in danger of losing the little real wisdom that still remained as her portion; and the only valuable part of their disputes was such as tended to develop the system of the Peripatetic Philosophers. Plato, the wisest, the profoundest, and Epicurus, the most humane and gentle among the ancients, were entirely neglected by them. Plato interfered with their peculiar mode of thinking concerning heavenly matters; and Epicurus, maintaining the rights of man to pleasure and happiness, would have afforded a seducing contrast to their dark and miserable code of morals. It has been asserted, that these holy men solaced their lighter moments in a contraband worship of Epicurus and [**I-422**] profaned the philosophy which maintained the rights of all by a selfish indulgence of the rights of a few. Thus it is: the laws of nature are invariable, and man sets them aside that he may have the pleasure of travelling through a labyrinth in search of them again.

Pleasure, in an open and innocent garb, by some strange process of reasoning, is called vice; yet man (so closely is he linked to the chains of necessity—so irresistibly is he impelled to fulfil the end of his being,) must seek her at whatever price: he becomes a hypocrite, and braves damnation with all its pains.

Grecian literature,—the finest the world has ever produced,—was at length restored: its form and mode we obtained from the manuscripts which the ravages of time, of the Goths, and of the still more savage Turks, had spared. The burning of the library at Alexandria was an evil of importance. This library is said to have contained volumes of the choicest Greek authors.

A SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT BY JURIES.
A FRAGMENT.[58]

GOVERNMENT, as it now subsists, is perhaps an engine at once the most expensive and inartificial that could have been devised as a remedy for the imperfections of society. Immense masses of the product of labour are committed to the discretion of certain individuals for the purpose of executing its intentions, or interpreting its meaning. These have not been consumed, but wasted, in the principal part of the past history of political society.

Government may be distributed into two parts:—First, the fundamental—that is, the permanent forms, which regulate the deliberation or the action of the whole; from which it results that a state is democratical, [**I-423**] or aristocratical, or despotic, or a combination of all these principles.

And Secondly—the necessary or accidental—that is, those that determine, *not* the forms according to which the deliberation or the action of the mass of the community is to be regulated, but the opinions or moral principles which are to govern the particular instances of such action or deliberation. These may be called, with little violence to the popular acceptation of those terms, Constitution, and Law: understanding by the former, the collection of those written institutions or traditions which determine the individuals who are to exercise, in a nation, the discretionary right of peace and war, of death or imprisonment,

fines and penalties, and the imposition and collection of taxes, and their application, thus vested in a king, or an hereditary senate, or in a representative assembly, or in a combination of all; and by the latter, the mode of determining those opinions, according to which the constituted authorities are to decide on any action; for law is either a collection of opinions expressed by individuals without constitutional authority, or the decision of a constitutional body of men, the opinion of some or all of whom it expresses—and no more.

To the former, or constitutional topics, this treatise has no direct reference. Law may be considered, simply—an opinion regulating political power. It may be divided into two parts —General Law, or that which relates to the external and integral concerns of a nation, and decides on the competency of a particular person or collection of persons to discretion in matters of war and peace—the assembling of the representative body—the time, place, manner, form, of holding judicial courts, and other concerns enumerated before, and in reference to which this community is considered as a whole;—and Particular Law, or that which decides upon contested claims of property, which punishes or [**I-424**] restrains violence and fraud, which enforces compacts, and preserves to every man that degree of liberty and security, the enjoyment of which is judged not to be inconsistent with the liberty and security of another.

To the former, or what is here called general law, this treatise has no direct reference. How far law, in its general form or constitution, as it at present exists in the greater part of the nations of Europe, may be affected by inferences from the ensuing reasonings, it is foreign to the present purpose to inquire—let us confine our attention to particular law, or law strictly so termed.

The only defensible intention of law, like that of every other human institution, is very simple and clear—the good of the whole. If law is found to accomplish this object very imperfectly, that imperfection makes no part of the design with which men submit to its institution. Any reasonings which tend to throw light on a subject hitherto so dark and intricate, cannot fail, if distinctly stated, to impress mankind very deeply, because it is a question in which the life and property and liberty and reputation of every man are vitally involved.

For the sake of intelligible method, let us assume the ordinary distinctions of law, those of civil and criminal law, and of the objects of it, private and public wrongs. The author of these pages ought not to suppress his conviction, that the principles on which punishment is usually inflicted are essentially erroneous; and that, in general, ten times more is apportioned to the victims of law, than is demanded by the welfare of society, under the shape of reformation or example. He believes that, although universally disowned, the execrable passion of vengeance, exasperated by fear, exists as a chief source among the secret causes of this exercise of criminal justice. He believes also, that in questions of property, there is a vague but most effective [**I-425**] favouritism in courts of law and among lawyers, against the poor to the advantage of the rich—against the tenant in favour of the landlord—against the creditor in favour of the debtor; thus enforcing and illustrating that celebrated maxim, against which moral science is a perpetual effort: *To whom much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more*.

But the present purpose is, not the exposure of such mistakes as actually exist in public opinion, but an attempt to give to public opinion its legitimate dominion, and an uniform and unimpeded influence to each particular case which is its object.

When law is once understood to be no more than the recorded opinion of men, no more than the apprehensions of individuals on the reasoning of a particular case, we may expect that the sanguinary or stupid mistakes which disgrace the civil and criminal jurisprudence of

civilized nations will speedily disappear. How long, under its present sanctions, do not the most exploded violations of humanity maintain their ground in courts of law, after public opinion has branded them with reprobation; sometimes even until by constantly maintaining their post under the shelter of venerable names, they out-weary the very scorn and abhorrence of mankind, or subsist unrepealed and silent, until some check, in the progress of human improvement, awakens them, and that public opinion, from which they should have received their reversal, is infected by their influence. Public opinion would never long stagnate in error, were it not fenced about and frozen over by forms and superstitions. If men were accustomed to reason, and to hear the arguments of others, upon each particular case that concerned the life, or liberty, or property, or reputation of their peers, those mistakes, which at present render these possessions so insecure to all but those who enjoy enormous [**I-426**] wealth, never could subsist. If the administration of law ceased to appeal from the common sense, or the enlightened minds of twelve contemporary *good and true men,* who should be the peers of the accused, or, in cases of property, of the claimant, to the obscure records of dark and barbarous epochs, or the precedents of what venal and enslaved judges might have decreed to please their tyrants, or the opinion of any man or set of men who lived when bigotry was virtue, and passive obedience that discretion which is the better part of valour,—all those mistakes now fastened in the public opinion, would be brought at each new case to the * * * * * * * * * * * *

ON LOVE. [59]

WHAT is Love? Ask him who lives what is life; ask him who adores what is God.

I know not the internal constitution of other men, nor even of thine whom I now address. I see that in some external attributes they resemble me, but when, misled by that appearance, I have thought to appeal to something in common and unburthen my inmost soul to them, I have found my language misunderstood, like one in a distant and savage land. The more opportunities they have afforded me for experience, the wider has appeared the interval between us, and to a greater distance have the points of sympathy been withdrawn. With a spirit ill-fitted to sustain such proof, trembling and feeble through its tenderness, I have everywhere sought, and have found only repulse and disappointment.

Thou demandest what is Love. It is that powerful attraction towards all we conceive, or fear, or hope [**I-427**] beyond ourselves, when we find within our own thoughts the chasm of an insufficient void, and seek to awaken in all things that are, a community with what we experience within ourselves. If we reason we would be understood; if we imagine we would that the airy children of our brain were born anew within another's; if we feel we would that another's nerves should vibrate to our own, that the beams of their eyes should kindle at once and mix and melt into our own; that lips of motionless ice should not reply to lips quivering and burning with the heart's best blood:—this is Love. This is the bond and the sanction which connects not only man with man, but with every thing which exists. We are born into the world, and there is something within us, which from the instant that we live, more and more thirsts after its likeness. It is probably in correspondence with this law that the infant drains milk from the bosom of its mother; this propensity develops itself with the development of our nature. We dimly see within our intellectual nature, a miniature as it were of our entire self, yet deprived of all that we condemn or despise, the ideal prototype of every thing excellent and lovely that we are capable of conceiving as belonging to the nature of man. Not only the portrait of our external being, but an assemblage of the minutest particles of which our nature is composed [60] : a mirror whose surface reflects only the forms of purity and brightness: a soul within our own soul that describes a circle around its proper Paradise, which pain and sorrow and evil dare not overleap. To this we eagerly refer all sensations, thirsting that they should resemble and correspond with it. The discovery of its antitype; the meeting with an understanding capable of clearly estimating our own; an

imagination which [**I-428**] should enter into and seize upon the subtle and delicate peculiarities which we have delighted to cherish and unfold in secret, with a frame, whose nerves, like the chords of two exquisite lyres, strung to the accompaniment of one delightful voice, vibrate with the vibrations of our own; and a combination of all these in such proportion as the type within demands: this is the invisible and unattainable point to which Love tends; and to attain which, it urges forth the powers of man to arrest the faintest shadow of that, without the possession of which, there is no rest nor respite to the heart over which it rules. Hence in solitude, or that deserted state when we are surrounded by human beings and yet they sympathize not with us, we love the flowers, the grass, the waters, and the sky. In the motion of the very leaves of spring, in the blue air, there is then found a secret correspondence with our heart. There is eloquence in the tongueless wind, and a melody in the flowing brooks and the rustling of the reeds beside them, which by their inconceivable relation to something within the soul awaken the spirits to dance of breathless rapture, and bring tears of mysterious tenderness to the eyes, like the enthusiasm of patriotic success, or the voice of one beloved singing to you alone. Sterne says that if he were in a desert he would love some cypress. So soon as this want or power is dead, man becomes a living sepulchre of himself, and what yet survives is the mere husk of what once he was.

End of Vol. I.↩

Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co.

Edinburgh & London

Endnotes to Volume 1↩

[2] Taken almost word for word from the poem of Lachin y Gair in Byron's *Hours of Idleness*. Newark, 1807, p. 130.—Ed.

[3] These two lines are taken *verbatim* from Byron's *Hours of Idleness*.—Ed.

[4] See vol. iii., p. 91.

[5] [Persecute?]

[6] [Cessation?]

[7] [Ever?]

[8] The excellence of the Constitution of Great Britain appears to me to be its indefiniteness and versatility, whereby it may be unresistingly accommodated to the progression of wisdom and virtue. Such accommodation I desire; but I wish for the cause before the effect.

[9] Query, a misprint for *importance?*

[10] Query, *diffusing?*

[11] Macbeth, act i. sc. 7.

[12] See *Mémoires de Jacobinisme,* par l'Abbé Baruel.

[13] See Malthus on *Population*.

[14] *Judæi, impulsore Chresto, turbantes, facile comprimuntur.—Suet. in Tib.*

Affecti suppliciis Christiani, genus hominum superstitionis novæ et maleficæ.—Id. in Nerone.

[15] *Multi omnis ætatis utriusque sexus etiam; neque enim civitates tantum, sed vicos etiam et agros superstitionis istius contagio pervagata est.—Plin. Epist.*

[16] Tacit. Annal L. xv., Sect. xlv.

[17] See the *Internal Evidence of Christianity;* see also Paley's Evidences, Vol. II., p. 27.

[18] Paley's Evidences, Vol. I., p. 3.

[19] Plin. Nat. His. Cap. de Deo., Euripides, Bellerophon, Frag. xxv.

Hunc igitur terrorem animi, tenebrasque necesse est
Non radii solis, neque lucida tela diei
Discutient, sed naturæ species ratioque:
Principium hinc cujus nobis exordia sumet,
Nullam rem nihilo gigni divinitus unquam.

Luc. de Rer. Nat. Lib. 1 [*v.* 147-151].

[20] See Cicero de Natura Deorum.

[21] Hobbes.

[22] See Preface to Le Bon Sens.

[23] See Hosea, chap. i., chap. ix. Ezekiel, chap. iv., chap. xvi., chap. xxiii. Heyne, speaking of the opinions entertained of the Jews by ancient poets and philosophers, says:—*Meminit quidem superstitionis Judaicæ Horatius, verum ut eam risu exploderet.—Heyn. ad Virg. Poll. in Arg.*

[24] I. Sam. chap. v., 8.

[25] Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads.

[26] Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel,* Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, *and stay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour.* And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people on that day twenty-three thousand men.—*Exodus* xxxii., 26.

And they warred against the Midianites, as the Lord commanded Moses; and they slew all the males. And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods. And they burned all their huts wherein they dwelt, and all their goodly castles, with fire. And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes of the congregation, went forth to meet them without the camp. And Moses was [wroth] with the officers of the host, with the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle. And Moses said unto them, *Have ye saved all the women alive?* behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord. *Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women-children, that have not known a man by lying with him,* keep alive for yourselves.—*Numbers* xxxi., 7-18.

And we utterly destroyed them, as we did unto Sihon, king of Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women, and children of every city.—*Deut.* iii., 6.

And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and ass, with the edge of the sword.—*Joshua.*

So Joshua fought against Debir, and utterly destroyed all the souls that were therein: he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord God of Israel commanded.—*Joshua,* chap. x.

And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and took it. And he brought forth the people therein, and *put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and made them pass through the brick kiln; this did he also unto all the children of Ammon.—II. Sam.* xii., 29.

[27] Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote to me; it is good for a man not to touch a woman.

I say, therefore, to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry; it is better to marry than burn.—*I. Cor.* chap. vii.

[28] *See* Gibbon's "Decline and Fall," vol. ii., p. 210.

[29] Ibid. Vol. ii., p. 269.

[30] See Paley's Evidences. Vol. i. chap. 1.

[31] See the Controversy of Bishop Watson and Thomas Paine.—Paine's Criticism on the xixth chapter of Isaiah.

[32] Immediately after the tribulation of these days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angel with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. *Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, until all these things be fulfilled.—Matt*. chap. xxiv.

[33] See Matthew, chap. xxiii. v. 35.

[34] Josephus.

[35] [Qy.? *even*.]

[36] See Dugald Stewart's Outlines of Moral Philosophy, and Paley's Natural Theology.

[37] See Cuvier Leçons d'Anat. Comp. tom. iii. p. 169, 373, 448, 465, 480. Rees' Cyclopædia, Art. Man.

> Ουκ αιδεισθε τους ἡμερους καρπους αἱματι και φονῳ μιγνυοντες; αλλὰ δράκοντας ἀγρίους καλεῖτε καὶ παρδάλεις καὶ λέοντας, αὐτοὶ δὲ μιαιφονεῖτε εἰς ὠμότητα καταλιπόντες ἐκείνοις οὐδέν. Ἐκείνοις μὲν γὰρ ὁ φόνος τροφὴ, ὑμῖν δε ὄψον ἐστίν.
>
> Ὅτι γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνθρώπῳ κατὰ φύσιν τὸ σαρκοφαγεῖν, πρῶτον μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν σωμάτων δηλοῦται τῆς κατασκευῆς. Οὐδενὶ γὰρ ἔοικε τὸ ἀνθρώπου σῶμα τῶν ἐπὶ σαρκοφαγίᾳ γεγονότων, οὐ γρυπότης χείλους, οὐκ ὀξύτης ὄνυχος, οὐ τραχύτης ὀδόντων πρόσεστιν, οὐ κοιλίας εὐτονία καὶ πνεύματος θερμότης, τρέψαι καὶ κατεργάσασθαι δυνατὴ τό βαρὺ καὶ κρεῶδες. Ἀλλ' αὐτόθεν ἡ φύσις τῇ λειότητι τῶν ὀδόντων, καὶ τῇ σμικρότητι τοῦ στόματος, καὶ τῇ μαλακότητι τῆς γλώσσης, καὶ τῇ πρὸς πέψιν ἀμβλύτητι τοῦ πνεύματος, ἐξόμνυται τὴν σαρκοφαγίαν. Εἰ δὲ λέγεις, πεφυκέναι σεαυτὸν ἐπὶ τοιαύτην ἐδωδὴν, ὅ βούλει φαγεῖν, πρῶτος αὐτὸς ἀπόκτεινον· ἀλλ' αὐτὸς, διὰ σεαυτοῦ, μὴχρησάμενος κοπίδι, μηδὲ τυμπάνῳ τινὶ μηδὲ πελέκει· ἀλλὰ, ὡς λύκοι καὶ ἄρκτοι, καὶ λεόντες αὐτόι ὡς ἐσθίουσι φονευούσιν, ἄνελε δήγματι βοῦν, ἤ σώματι σῦν, ἤ ἄρνα ἤ λαγὼον διάῤῥηξον, καὶ φάγε προσπεσῶν ἔτι ζῶντος ὡς ἐκεῖνα.
>
> Πλουτ. περὶ Σαρκοφαγ. Λογ. β.

[The same passage is quoted in the Notes to Queen Mab (Vol. iii. p. 359-360).]

[38] See Godwin's Political Justice, Vol. i. p. 449.

[39] See Southey's History of Brazil, p. 255.

[40] See Le Systeme de la Nature: this book is one of the most eloquent vindications of Atheism.

[41] [Printed *deniable*.]

[42] For a very profound disquisition on this subject, see Sir William Drummond's Academical Questions, chap. i. p. 1.

[43] Spinosa. Tract. Theologico.-Pol., chap. i. p. 14. [Quoted also in the Notes to Queen Mab (Vol. iii. p. 328).]

[44] "Your death has eyes in his head—mine is not painted so."

Cymbeline.

[45] These expressions are taken from *The Examiner,* Sunday Nov. 9th.—*Author's Note*.

[46] Originally printed by Leigh Hunt in his work on *Lord Byron and some of his Contemporaries,* 1828; afterwards included by Mrs. Shelley in her collection of Shelley's *Letters from Abroad*.—Ed.

[47] Julian and Maddalo.

[48] Rosalind and Helen.

[49] The Cenci.

[50] Imperfectly printed in *The Shelley Papers,* 1833: first printed correctly and completely in the two-volume edition of Shelley's Essays and Letters, edited by Mrs. Shelley.

[51] Nor does a recollection of the use to which it may have been destined interfere with these emotions. Time has thrown its purple shadow athwart this scene, and no more is visible than the broad and everlasting character of human strength and genius, that pledge of all that is to be admirable and lovely in ages yet to come. Solemn temples, where the senate of the world assembled, palaces, triumphal arches, and cloud-surrounded columns, loaded with the sculptured annals of conquest and domination—what actions and deliberations have they been destined to enclose and commemorate? Superstitious rites, which in their mildest form, outrage reason, and obscure the moral sense of mankind; schemes for wide-extended murder, and devastation, and misrule, and servitude; and, lastly, these schemes brought to their tremendous consummations, and a human being returning in the midst of festival and solemn joy, with thousands and thousands of his enslaved and desolated species chained behind his chariot, exhibiting, as titles to renown, the labour of ages, and the admired creations of genius, overthrown by the brutal force, which was placed as a sword within his hand, and,—contemplation fearful and abhorred! —he himself a being capable of the gentlest and best emotions, inspired with the persuasion that he has done a virtuous deed! We do not forget these things. . . .

[52] From *The Shelley Papers,* 1833. A facsimile of the title-page of this little volume, edited by Captain Medwin, has already been given in the third volume of Shelley's Poetical Works—Ed.

[53] This bas-relief is not antique. It is of the Cinquecento.

[54] From *The Shelley Papers,* 1833.

[55] From *The Shelley Papers,* 1833.

[56] From *The Shelley Papers,* 1833.

[57] From *The Shelley Papers,* 1833.

[58] From *The Shelley Papers,* 1833.

[59] Printed in The Keepsake, Lond. 1829.

[60] These words are ineffectual and metaphorical. Most words are so,—no help!

THE PROSE WORKS OF PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY VOLUME II

THE PROSE WORKS

OF

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

FROM THE ORIGINAL EDITIONS

EDITED, PREFACED, AND ANNOTATED

BY

RICHARD HERNE SHEPHERD

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

LONDON
CHATTO & WINDUS
1906

[**II-i**]

A DEFENCE OF POETRY.

ACCORDING to one mode of regarding those two classes of mental action, which are called reason and imagination, the former may be considered as mind contemplating the relations borne by one thought to another, however produced; and the latter, as mind acting upon those thoughts so as to colour them with its own light, and composing from them, as from elements, other thoughts, each containing within itself the principle of its own integrity. The one is the τὸ ποιειν, or the principle of synthesis, and has for its object those forms which are common to universal nature and existence itself; the other is the τὸ λογιζειν, or principle of analysis, and its action regards the relations of things simply as relations; considering thoughts, not in their integral unity, but as the algebraical representations which conduct to certain general results. Reason is the enumeration of quantities already known; imagination is the perception of the value of those quantities, both separately and as a whole. Reason respects the differences, and imagination the similitudes of things. Reason is to imagination as the instrument to the agent, as the body to the spirit, as the shadow to the substance.

Poetry, in a general sense, may be defined to be "the expression of the imagination:" and poetry is connate [**II-2**] with the origin of man. Man is an instrument over which a series of external and internal impressions are driven, like the alternations of an ever-changing wind over an Æolian lyre, which move it by their motion to ever-changing melody. But there is a principle within the human being, and perhaps within all sentient beings, which acts otherwise than in a lyre, and produces not melody alone, but harmony, by an internal adjustment of the sounds and motions thus excited to the impressions which excite them. It is as if the lyre could accommodate its chords to the motions of that which strikes them, in a determined proportion of sound; even as the musician can accommodate his voice to the sound of the lyre. A child at play by itself will express its delight by its voice and motions; and every inflexion of tone and gesture will bear exact relation to a corresponding antitype in the pleasurable impressions which awakened it; it will be the reflected image of that impression; and as the lyre trembles and sounds after the wind has died away, so the child seeks, by prolonging in its voice and motions the duration of the effect, to prolong also a consciousness of the cause. In relation to the objects which delight a child, these expressions are what poetry is to higher objects. The savage (for the savage is to ages what the child is to years) expresses the emotions produced in him by surrounding objects in a similar manner; and language and gesture, together with plastic or pictorial imitation, become the image of the combined effect of those objects and his apprehension of them. Man in society, with all his passions and his pleasures, next becomes the object of the passions and pleasures of man; an additional class of emotions produces an augmented treasure of expression; and language, gesture, and the imitative arts become at once the representation and the medium, the pencil and the picture, the chisel and the statue, the chord and the harmony. The social sympathies, or those laws [**II-3**] from which as from its elements society results, begin to develop themselves from the moment that two human beings coexist; the future is contained within the present as the plant within the seed; and equality, diversity, unity, contrast, mutual dependence, become the principles alone capable of affording the motives according to which the will of a social being is determined to action, inasmuch as he is social; and constitute pleasure in sensation, virtue in sentiment, beauty in art, truth in reasoning, and love in the intercourse of kind. Hence men, even in the infancy of society, observe a certain order in their words and actions, distinct from that of the objects and the impressions represented by them, all expression being subject to the laws of that from which it proceeds. But let us dismiss those more general considerations which might involve an inquiry into the principles of society itself, and restrict our view to the manner in which the imagination is expressed upon its forms.

In the youth of the world, men dance and sing and imitate natural objects, observing in these actions, as in all others, a certain rhythm or order. And, although all men observe a similar, they observe not the same order, in the motions of the dance, in the melody of the song, in the combinations of language, in the series of their imitations of natural objects. For there is a certain order or rhythm belonging to each of these classes of mimetic representation, from which the hearer and the spectator receive an intenser and purer pleasure than from any other: the sense of an approximation to this order has been called taste by modern writers. Every man in the infancy of art, observes an order which approximates more or less closely to that from which this highest delight results: but the diversity is not sufficiently marked, as that its gradations should be sensible, except in those instances where the predominance of this faculty of approximation to the beautiful [**II-4**] (for so we may be permitted to name the relation between this highest pleasure and its cause) is very great. Those in whom it exists to excess are poets, in the most universal sense of the word; and the pleasure resulting from the manner in which they express the influence of society or nature upon their own minds, communicates itself to others, and gathers a sort of reduplication from the community. Their language is vitally metaphorical; that is, it marks the before unapprehended relations of things and perpetuates their apprehension, until words, which

represent them, become, through time, signs for portions or classes of thought, instead of pictures of integral thoughts; and then, if no new poets should arise to create afresh the associations which have been thus disorganised, language will be dead to all the nobler purposes of human intercourse. These similitudes or relations are finely said by Bacon to be "the same footsteps of nature impressed upon the various subjects of the world;" [2] —and he considers the faculty which perceives them as the storehouse of axioms common to all knowledge. In the infancy of society every author is necessarily a poet, because language itself is poetry; and to be a poet is to apprehend the true and the beautiful, in a word, the good which exists in the relation subsisting, first between existence and perception, and secondly between perception and expression. Every original language near to its source is in itself the chaos of a cyclic poem: the copiousness of lexicography and the distinctions of grammar are the works of a later age, and are merely the catalogue and the form of the creations of poetry.

But poets, or those who imagine and express this indestructible order, are not only the authors of language and of music, of the dance, and architecture, and statuary, and painting; they are the institutors of laws and [**II-5**] the founders of civil society, and the inventors of the arts of life, and the teachers, who draw into a certain propinquity with the beautiful and the true, that partial apprehension of the agencies of the invisible world which is called religion. Hence all original religions are allegorical or susceptible of allegory, and, like Janus, have a double face of false and true. Poets, according to the circumstances of the age and nation in which they appeared, were called, in the earlier epochs of the world, legislators or prophets: a poet essentially comprises and unites both these characters. For he not only beholds intensely the present as it is, and discovers those laws according to which present things ought to be ordered, but he beholds the future in the present, and his thoughts are the germs of the flower and the fruit of latest time. Not that I assert poets to be prophets in the gross sense of the word, or that they can foretell the form as surely as they foreknow the spirit of events: such is the pretence of superstition, which would make poetry an attribute of prophecy, rather than prophecy an attribute of poetry. A poet participates in the eternal, the infinite, and the one; as far as relates to his conceptions, time and place and number are not. The grammatical forms which express the moods of time, and the difference of persons, and the distinction of place, are convertible with respect to the highest poetry without injuring it as poetry; and the choruses of Æschylus, and the book of Job, and Dante's *Paradiso,* would afford, more than any other writings, examples of this fact, if the limits of this essay did not forbid citation. The creations of sculpture, painting, and music, are illustrations still more decisive.

Language, colour, form, and religious and civil habits of action, are all the instruments and materials of poetry; they may be called poetry by that figure of speech which considers the effect as a synonym of the cause. But poetry in a more restricted sense expresses those [**II-6**] arrangements of language, and especially metrical language, which are created by that imperial faculty, whose throne is curtained within the invisible nature of man. And this springs from the nature itself of language, which is a more direct representation of the actions and passions of our internal being, and is susceptible of more various and delicate combinations, than colour, form, or motion, and is more plastic and obedient to the control of that faculty of which it is the creation. For language is arbitrarily produced by the imagination, and has relation to thoughts alone; but all other materials, instruments, and conditions of art, have relations among each other, which limit and interpose between conception and expression. The former is as a mirror which reflects, the latter as a cloud which enfeebles, the light of which both are mediums of communication. Hence the fame of sculptors, painters, and musicians, although the intrinsic powers of the great masters of these arts may yield in no degree to that of those who have employed language as the hieroglyphic of their thoughts, has never equalled that of poets in the restricted sense of the term; as two performers of equal skill will produce unequal effects from a guitar and a harp. The fame of

legislators and founders of religion, so long as their institutions last, alone seems to exceed that of poets in the restricted sense; but it can scarcely be a question, whether, if we deduct the celebrity which their flattery of the gross opinions of the vulgar usually conciliates, together with that which belonged to them in their higher character of poets, any excess will remain.

We have thus circumscribed the word poetry within the limits of that art which is the most familiar and the most perfect expression of the faculty itself. It is necessary, however, to make the circle still narrower, and to determine the distinction between measured and unmeasured language; for the popular division [**II-7**] into prose and verse is inadmissible in accurate philosophy.

Sounds as well as thoughts have relation both between each other and towards that which they represent, and a perception of the order of those relations has always been found connected with a perception of the order of the relations of thought. Hence the language of poets has ever affected a sort of uniform and harmonious recurrence of sound, without which it were not poetry, and which is scarcely less indispensable to the communication of its influence, than the words themselves, without reference to that peculiar order. Hence the vanity of translation; it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its colour and odour, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower—and this is the burthen of the curse of Babel.

An observation of the regular mode of the recurrence of harmony in the language of poetical minds, together with its relation to music, produced metre, or a certain system of traditional forms of harmony and language. Yet it is by no means essential that a poet should accommodate his language to this traditional form, so that the harmony, which is its spirit, be observed. The practice is indeed convenient and popular, and to be preferred, especially in such composition as includes much action: but every great poet must inevitably innovate upon the example of his predecessors in the exact structure of his peculiar versification. The distinction between poets and prose-writers is a vulgar error. The distinction between philosophers and poets has been anticipated. Plato was essentially a poet—the truth and splendour of his imagery, and the melody of his language, are the most intense that it is possible to conceive. He rejected the harmony of the epic, [**II-8**] dramatic, and lyrical forms, because he sought to kindle a harmony in thoughts divested of shape and action, and he forbore to invent any regular plan of rhythm which would include, under determinate forms, the varied pauses of his style. Cicero sought to imitate the cadence of his periods, but with little success. Bacon was a poet. [3]His language has a sweet and majestic rhythm, which satisfies the sense, no less than the almost superhuman wisdom of his philosophy satisfies the intellect; it is a strain which distends, and then bursts the circumference of the reader's mind, and pours itself forth together with it into the universal element with which it has perpetual sympathy. All the authors of revolutions in opinion are not only necessarily poets as they are inventors, nor even as their words unveil the permanent analogy of things by images which participate in the life of truth; but as their periods are harmonious and rhythmical, and contain in themselves the elements of verse; being the echo of the eternal music. Nor are those supreme poets, who have employed traditional forms of rhythm on account of the form and action of their subjects, less capable of perceiving and teaching the truth of things, than those who have omitted that form. Shakespeare, Dante, and Milton (to confine ourselves to modern writers) are philosophers of the very loftiest power.

A poem is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth. There is this difference between a story and a poem, that a story is a catalogue of detached facts, which have no other connexion than time, place, circumstance, cause, and effect; the other is the creation of actions according to the unchangeable forms of human nature, as existing in the mind of the

Creator, which is itself the image of all other minds. The one is partial, and applies only to a definite period of time, and a certain [**II-9**] combination of events which can never again recur; the other is universal, and contains within itself the germ of a relation to whatever motives or actions have place in the possible varieties of human nature. Time, which destroys the beauty and the use of the story of particular facts, stripped of the poetry which should invest them, augments that of poetry, and for ever develops new and wonderful applications of the eternal truth which it contains. Hence epitomes have been called the moths of just history; they eat out the poetry of it. A story of particular facts is as a mirror which obscures and distorts that which should be beautiful: poetry is a mirror which makes beautiful that which is distorted.

The parts of a composition may be poetical, without the composition as a whole being a poem. A single sentence may be considered as a whole, though it may be found in the midst of a series of unassimilated portions; a single word even may be a spark of inextinguishable thought. And thus all the great historians, Herodotus, Plutarch, Livy, were poets; and although the plan of these writers, especially that of Livy, restrained them from developing this faculty in its highest degree, they made copious and ample amends for their subjection, by filling all the interstices of their subjects with living images.

Having determined what is poetry, and who are poets, let us proceed to estimate its effects upon society.

Poetry is ever accompanied with pleasure: all spirits upon which it falls open themselves to receive the wisdom which is mingled with its delight. In the infancy of the world, neither poets themselves nor their auditors are fully aware of the excellence of poetry: for it acts in a divine and unapprehended manner, beyond and above consciousness; and it is reserved for future generations to contemplate and measure the mighty cause and effect in all the strength and splendour of [**II-10**] their union. Even in modern times, no living poet ever arrived at the fulness of his fame; the jury which sits in judgment upon a poet, belonging as he does to all time, must be composed of his peers: it must be empannelled by time from the selectest of the wise of many generations. A poet is a nightingale, who sits in darkness and sings to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds; his auditors are as men entranced by the melody of an unseen musician, who feel that they are moved and softened, yet know not whence or why. The poems of Homer and his contemporaries were the delight of infant Greece; they were the elements of that social system which is the column upon which all succeeding civilisation has reposed. Homer embodied the ideal perfection of his age in human character; nor can we doubt that those who read his verses were awakened to an ambition of becoming like to Achilles, Hector, and Ulysses: the truth and beauty of friendship, patriotism, and persevering devotion to an object, were unveiled to their depths in these immortal creations: the sentiments of the auditors must have been refined and enlarged by a sympathy with such great and lovely impersonations, until from admiring they imitated, and from imitation they identified themselves with the objects of their admiration. Nor let it be objected, that these characters are remote from moral perfection, and that they are by no means to be considered as edifying patterns for general imitation. Every epoch, under names more or less specious, has deified its peculiar errors; Revenge is the naked idol of the worship of a semibarbarous age; and Self-deceit is the veiled image of unknown evil, before which luxury and satiety lie prostrate. But a poet considers the vices of his contemporaries as the temporary dress in which his creations must be arrayed, and which cover without concealing the eternal proportions of their beauty. An epic or dramatic personage is understood to wear [**II-11**] them around his soul, as he may the ancient armour or modern uniform around his body; whilst it is easy to conceive a dress more graceful than either. The beauty of the internal nature cannot be so far concealed by its accidental vesture, but that the spirit of its form shall communicate itself to the very disguise, and indicate the shape it hides from the manner in which it is worn.

A majestic form and graceful motions will express themselves through the most barbarous and tasteless costume. Few poets of the highest class have chosen to exhibit the beauty of their conceptions in its naked truth and splendour; and it is doubtful whether the alloy of costume, habit, &c., be not necessary to temper this planetary music for mortal ears.

The whole objection, however, of the immorality of poetry rests upon a misconception of the manner in which poetry acts to produce the moral improvement of man. Ethical science arranges the elements which poetry has created, and propounds schemes and proposes examples of civil and domestic life: nor is it for want of admirable doctrines that men hate, and despise, and censure, and deceive, and subjugate one another. But poetry acts in another and diviner manner. It awakens and enlarges the mind itself by rendering it the receptacle of a thousand unapprehended combinations of thought. Poetry lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world, and makes familiar objects be as if they were not familiar; it reproduces all that it represents, and the impersonations clothed in its Elysian light stand thenceforward in the minds of those who have once contemplated them, as memorials of that gentle and exalted content which extends itself over all thoughts and actions with which it coexists. The great secret of morals is love; or a going out of our own nature, and an identification of ourselves with the beautiful which exists in thought, action, or person, not our own. A man, to be greatly good, must imagine [**II-12**] intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own. The great instrument of moral good is the imagination; and poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the cause. Poetry enlarges the circumference of the imagination by replenishing it with thoughts of ever new delight, which have the power of attracting and assimilating to their own nature all other thoughts, and which form new intervals and interstices whose void for ever craves fresh food. Poetry strengthens the faculty which is the organ of the moral nature of man, in the same manner as exercise strengthens a limb. A poet therefore would do ill to embody his own conceptions of right and wrong, which are usually those of his place and time, in his poetical creations, which participate in neither. By this assumption of the inferior office of interpreting the effect, in which perhaps after all he might acquit himself but imperfectly, he would resign a glory in the participation of the cause. There was little danger that Homer, or any of the eternal poets, should have so far misunderstood themselves as to have abdicated this throne of their widest dominion. Those in whom the poetical faculty, though great, is less intense, as Euripides, Lucan, Tasso, Spenser, have frequently affected a moral aim, and the effect of their poetry is diminished in exact proportion to the degree in which they compel us to advert to this purpose.

Homer and the cyclic poets were followed at a certain interval by the dramatic and lyrical poets of Athens, who flourished contemporaneously with all that is most perfect in the kindred expressions of the poetical faculty; architecture, painting, music, the dance, sculpture, philosophy, and we may add, the forms of civil life. For although the scheme of Athenian society was deformed by many imperfections which the poetry existing in chivalry and Christianity has erased from the habits [**II-13**] and institutions of modern Europe; yet never at any other period has so much energy, beauty and virtue, been developed; never was blind strength and stubborn form so disciplined and rendered subject to the will of man, or that will less repugnant to the dictates of the beautiful and the true, as during the century which preceded the death of Socrates. Of no other epoch in the history of our species have we records and fragments stamped so visibly with the image of the divinity in man. But it is poetry alone, in form, in action, and in language, which has rendered this epoch memorable above all others, and the storehouse of examples to everlasting time. For written poetry existed at that epoch simultaneously with the other arts, and it is an idle inquiry to demand which gave and which received the light, which all, as from a common focus, have scattered over the darkest periods of succeeding time. We know no more of cause and effect than a constant conjunction of events: poetry is ever found to co-exist with whatever other arts

contribute to the happiness and perfection of man. I appeal to what has already been established to distinguish between the cause and the effect.

It was at the period here adverted to, that the drama had its birth; and however a succeeding writer may have equalled or surpassed those few great specimens of the Athenian drama which have been preserved to us, it is indisputable that the art itself never was understood or practised according to the true philosophy of it, as at Athens. For the Athenians employed language, action, music, painting, the dance, and religious institutions, to produce a common effect in the representation of the highest idealisms of passion and of power; each division in the art was made perfect in its kind by artists of the most consummate skill, and was disciplined into a beautiful proportion and unity one towards the other. On the modern stage a few only of the elements capable [**II-14**] of expressing the image of the poet's conception are employed at once. We have tragedy without music and dancing; and music and dancing without the highest impersonations of which they are the fit accompaniment, and both without religion and solemnity. Religious institution has indeed been usually banished from the stage. Our system of divesting the actor's face of a mask, on which the many expressions appropriated to his dramatic character might be moulded into one permanent and unchanging expression, is favourable only to a partial and inharmonious effect; it is fit for nothing but a monologue, where all the attention may be directed to some great master of ideal mimicry. The modern practice of blending comedy with tragedy, though liable to great abuse in point of practice, is undoubtedly an extension of the dramatic circle; but the comedy should be as in King Lear, universal, ideal, and sublime. It is perhaps the intervention of this principle which determines the balance in favour of King Lear against the Œdipus Tyrannus or the Agamemnon, or, if you will, the trilogies with which they are connected; unless the intense power of the choral poetry, especially that of the latter, should be considered as restoring the equilibrium. King Lear, if it can sustain this comparison, may be judged to be the most perfect specimen of the dramatic art existing in the world; in spite of the narrow conditions to which the poet was subjected by the ignorance of the philosophy of the drama which has prevailed in modern Europe. Calderon, in his religious Autos, has attempted to fulfil some of the high 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 [**II-15**] superstition for the living impersonations of the truth of human passions.

But I digress.—The connexion of scenic exhibitions with the improvement or corruption of the manners of men, has been universally recognised: in other words, the presence or absence of poetry, in its most perfect and universal form, has been found to be connected with good and evil in conduct or habit. The corruption which has been imputed to the drama as an effect, begins, when the poetry employed in its constitution ends: I appeal to the history of manners whether the periods of the growth of the one and the decline of the other have not corresponded with an exactness equal to any example of moral cause and effect.

The drama at Athens, or wheresoever else it may have approached to its perfection, ever co-existed with the moral and intellectual greatness of the age. The tragedies of the Athenian poets are as mirrors in which the spectator beholds himself, under a thin disguise of circumstance, stript of all but that ideal perfection and energy which every one feels to be the internal type of all that he loves, admires, and would become. The imagination is enlarged by a sympathy with pains and passions so mighty, that they distend in their conception the capacity of that by which they are conceived, the good affections are strengthened by pity, indignation, terror and sorrow; and an exalted calm is prolonged from the satiety of this high exercise of them into the tumult of familiar life: even crime is disarmed of half its horror and

all its contagion by being represented as the fatal consequence of the unfathomable agencies of nature; error is thus divested of its wilfulness; men can no longer cherish it as the creation of their choice. In the drama of the highest order there is little food for censure or hatred; it teaches rather self-knowledge and self-respect. Neither the eye nor the mind can see itself, [**II-16**] unless reflected upon that which it resembles. The drama, so long as it continues to express poetry, is a prismatic and many-sided mirror, which collects the brightest rays of human nature and divides and reproduces them from the simplicity of these elementary forms, and touches them with majesty and beauty, and multiplies all that it reflects, and endows it with the power of propagating its like wherever it may fall.

But in periods of the decay of social life, the drama sympathises with that decay. Tragedy becomes a cold imitation of the form of the great masterpieces of antiquity, divested of all harmonious accompaniment of the kindred arts; and often the very form misunderstood, or a weak attempt to teach certain doctrines, which the writer considers as moral truths; and which are usually no more than specious flatteries of some gross vice or weakness, with which the author, in common with his auditors, are infected. Hence what has been called the classical and domestic drama. Addison's "Cato" is a specimen of the one; and would it were not superfluous to cite examples of the other! To such purposes poetry cannot be made subservient. Poetry is a sword of lightning, ever unsheathed, which consumes the scabbard that would contain it. And thus we observe that all dramatic writings of this nature are unimaginative in a singular degree; they affect sentiment and passion, which, divested of imagination, are other names for caprice and appetite. The period in our own history of the grossest degradation of the drama is the reign of Charles II., when all forms in which poetry had been accustomed to be expressed became hymns to the triumph of kingly power over liberty and virtue. Milton stood alone illuminating an age unworthy of him. At such periods the calculating principle pervades all the forms of dramatic exhibition, and poetry ceases to be expressed upon them. Comedy loves its ideal universality: wit succeeds to humour; we laugh from self-complacency [**II-17**] and triumph, instead of pleasure; malignity, sarcasm, and contempt succeed to sympathetic merriment; we hardly laugh, but we smile. Obscenity, which is ever blasphemy against the divine beauty in life, becomes, from the very veil which it assumes, more active if less disgusting: it is a monster for which the corruption of society for ever brings forth new food, which it devours in secret.

The drama being that form under which a greater number of modes of expression of poetry are susceptible of being combined than any other, the connexion of poetry and social good is more observable in the drama than in whatever other form. And it is indisputable that the highest perfection of human society has ever corresponded with the highest dramatic excellence; and that the corruption or the extinction of the drama in a nation where it has once flourished, is a mark of a corruption of manners, and an extinction of the energies which sustain the soul of social life. But, as Macchiavelli says of political institutions, that life may be preserved and renewed, if men should arise capable of bringing back the drama to its principles. And this is true with respect to poetry in its most extended sense: all language, institution and form require not only to be produced but to be sustained: the office and character of a poet participates in the divine nature as regards providence, no less than as regards creation.

Civil war, the spoils of Asia, and the fatal predominance first of the Macedonian, and then of the Roman arms, were so many symbols of the extinction or suspension of the creative faculty in Greece. The bucolic writers, who found patronage under the lettered tyrants of Sicily and Egypt, were the latest representatives of its most glorious reign. Their poetry is intensely melodious; like the odour of the tuberose, it overcomes and sickens the spirit with excess of sweetness; whilst the poetry of the preceding age was as a meadow-gale [**II-18**] of June, which mingles the fragrance of all the flowers of the field, and adds a

quickening and harmonising spirit of its own which endows the sense with a power of sustaining its extreme delight. The bucolic and erotic delicacy in written poetry is correlative with that softness in statuary, music, and the kindred arts, and even in manners and institutions, which distinguished the epoch to which I now refer. Nor is it the poetical faculty itself, or any misapplication of it, to which this want of harmony is to be imputed. An equal sensibility to the influence of the senses and the affections is to be found in the writings of Homer and Sophocles: the former, especially, has clothed sensual and pathetic images with irresistible attractions. The superiority in these to succeeding writers consists in the presence of those thoughts which belong to the inner faculties of our nature, not in the absence of those which are connected with the external: their incomparable perfection consists in a harmony of the union of all. It is not what the erotic poets have, but what they have not, in which their imperfection consists. It is not inasmuch as they were poets, but inasmuch as they were not poets, that they can be considered with any plausibility as connected with the corruption of their age. Had that corruption availed so as to extinguish in them the sensibility to pleasure, passion, and natural scenery, which is imputed to them as an imperfection, the last triumph of evil would have been achieved. For the end of social corruption is to destroy all sensibility to pleasure; and, therefore, it is corruption. It begins at the imagination and the intellect as at the core, and distributes itself thence as a paralysing venom, through the affections into the very appetites, until all become a torpid mass in which hardly sense survives. At the approach of such a period, poetry ever addresses itself to those faculties which are the last to be destroyed, and its voice is heard, like the footsteps of Astræa, [**II-19**] departing from the world. Poetry ever communicates all the pleasure which men are capable of receiving: it is ever still the light of life; the source of whatever of beautiful or generous or true can have place in an evil time. It will readily be confessed that those among the luxurious citizens of Syracuse and Alexandria, who were delighted with the poems of Theocritus, were less cold, cruel, and sensual than the remnant of their tribe. But corruption must utterly have destroyed the fabric of human society before poetry can ever cease. The sacred links of that chain have never been entirely disjoined, which descending through the minds of many men is attached to those great minds, whence as from a magnet the invisible effluence is sent forth, which at once connects, animates, and sustains the life of all. It is the faculty which contains within itself the seeds at once of its own and of social renovation. And let us not circumscribe the effects of the bucolic and erotic poetry within the limits of the sensibility of those to whom it was addressed. They may have perceived the beauty of those immortal compositions, simply as fragments and isolated portions: those who are more finely organised, or born in a happier age, may recognise them as episodes to that great poem, which all poets, like the co-operating thoughts of one great mind, have built up since the beginning of the world.

The same revolutions within a narrower sphere had place in ancient Rome; but the actions and forms of its social life never seem to have been perfectly saturated with the poetical element. The Romans appear to have considered the Greeks as the selectest treasuries of the selectest forms of manners and of nature, and to have abstained from creating in measured language, sculpture, music, or architecture, any thing which might bear a particular relation to their own condition, whilst it should bear a general one to the universal constitution of the world. But we judge from partial evidence, and [**II-20**] we judge perhaps partially. Ennius, Varro, Pacuvius, and Accius, all great poets, have been lost. Lucretius is in the highest, and Virgil in a very high sense, a creator. The chosen delicacy of expressions of the latter are as a mist of light which conceal from us the intense and exceeding truth of his conceptions of nature. Livy is instinct with poetry. Yet Horace, Catullus, Ovid, and generally the other great writers of the Virgilian age, saw man and nature in the mirror of Greece. The institutions also, and the religion of Rome, were less poetical than those of Greece, as the shadow is less vivid than the substance. Hence poetry in Rome seemed to follow, rather than accompany, the perfection of political and domestic society.

The true poetry of Rome lived in its institutions; for whatever of beautiful, true, and majestic, they contained, could have sprung only from the faculty which creates the order in which they consist. The life of Camillus, the death of Regulus; the expectation of the senators, in their godlike state, of the victorious Gauls; the refusal of the republic to make peace with Hannibal, after the battle of Cannæ, were not the consequences of a refined calculation of the probable personal advantage to result from such a rhythm and order in the shows of life, to those who were at once the poets and the actors of these immortal dramas. The imagination beholding the beauty of this order, created it out of itself according to its own idea; the consequence was empire, and the reward everlasting fame. These things are not the less poetry, *quia carent vate sacro*. They are the episodes of that cyclic poem written by Time upon the memories of men. The Past, like an inspired rhapsodist, fills the theatre of everlasting generations with their harmony.

At length the ancient system of religion and manners had fulfilled the circle of its evolutions. And the world would have fallen into utter anarchy and darkness, but [**II-21**] that there were found poets among the authors of the Christian and chivalric systems of manners and religion, who created forms of opinion and action never before conceived; which, copied into the imaginations of men, became as generals to the bewildered armies of their thoughts. It is foreign to the present purpose to touch upon the evil produced by these systems: except that we protest, on the ground of the principles already established, that no portion of it can be attributed to the poetry they contain.

It is probable that the poetry of Moses, Job, David, Solomon, and Isaiah, had produced a great effect upon the mind of Jesus and his disciples. The scattered fragments preserved to us by the biographers of this extraordinary person are all instinct with the most vivid poetry. But his doctrines seem to have been quickly distorted. At a certain period after the prevalence of a system of opinions founded upon those promulgated by him, the three forms into which Plato had distributed the faculties of mind underwent a sort of apotheosis, and became the object of the worship of the civilised world. Here it is to be confessed that "Light seems to thicken," and

> "The crow makes wing to the rooky wood,
> Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,
> And night's black agents to their preys do rouse." [4]

But mark how beautiful an order has sprung from the dust and blood of this fierce chaos! how the world, as from a resurrection, balancing itself on the golden wings of knowledge and of hope, has reassumed its yet unwearied flight into the heaven of time. Listen to the music, unheard by outward ears, which is as a ceaseless and invisible wind, nourishing its everlasting course with strength and swiftness.

[**II-22**]

The poetry in the doctrines of Jesus, and the mythology and institutions of the Celtic conquerors of the Roman empire, outlived the darkness and the convulsions connected with their growth and victory, and blended themselves in a new fabric of manners and opinion. It is an error to impute the ignorance of the dark ages to the Christian doctrines or the predominance of the Celtic nations. Whatever of evil their agencies may have contained sprang from the extinction of the poetical principle, connected with the progress of despotism and superstition. Men, from causes too intricate to be here discussed, had become insensible and selfish: their own will had become feeble, and yet they were its slaves, and thence the slaves of the will of others: but fear, avarice, cruelty, and fraud, characterised a race amongst whom no one was to be found capable of *creating* in form, language, or institution. The moral anomalies of such a state of society are not justly to be charged upon any class of

events immediately connected with them, and those events are most entitled to our approbation which could dissolve it most expeditiously. It is unfortunate for those who cannot distinguish words from thoughts, that many of these anomalies have been incorporated into our popular religion.

It was not until the eleventh century that the effects of the poetry of the Christian and chivalric systems began to manifest themselves. The principle of equality had been discovered and applied by Plato in his Republic, as the theoretical rule of the mode in which the materials of pleasure and of power, produced by the common skill and labour of human beings, ought to be distributed among them. The limitations of this rule were asserted by him to be determined only by the sensibility of each, or the utility to result to all. Plato, following the doctrines of Timæus and Pythagoras, taught also a moral and intellectual system of doctrine, comprehending at once the past, the present, and the future condition [**II-23**] of man. Jesus divulged the sacred and eternal truths contained in these views to mankind, and Christianity, in its abstract purity, became the exoteric expression of the esoteric doctrines of the poetry and wisdom of antiquity. The incorporation of the Celtic nations with the exhausted population of the south, impressed upon it the figure of the poetry existing in their mythology and institutions. The result was a sum of the action and reaction of all the causes included in it; for it may be assumed as a maxim that no nation or religion can supersede any other without incorporating into itself a portion of that which it supersedes. The abolition of personal and domestic slavery, and the emancipation of women from a great part of the degrading restraints of antiquity, were among the consequences of these events.

The abolition of personal slavery is the basis of the highest political hope that it can enter into the mind of man to conceive. The freedom of women produced the poetry of sexual love. Love became a religion, the idols of whose worship were ever present. It was as if the statues of Apollo and the Muses had been endowed with life and motion, and had walked forth among their worshippers; so that earth became peopled by the inhabitants of a diviner world. The familiar appearance and proceedings of life became wonderful and heavenly, and a paradise was created as out of the wrecks of Eden. And as this creation itself is poetry, so its creators were poets; and language was the instrument of their art: "Galeotto fù il libro, e chi lo scrisse." The Provençal Trouveurs, or inventors, preceded Petrarch, whose verses are as spells, which unseal the inmost enchanted fountains of the delight which is in the grief of love. It is impossible to feel them without becoming a portion of that beauty which we contemplate: it were superfluous to explain how the gentleness and elevation of mind connected with these [**II-24**] sacred emotions can render men more amiable, more generous and wise, and lift them out of the dull vapours of the little world of self. Dante understood the secret things of love even more than Petrarch. His *Vita Nuova* is an inexhaustible fountain of purity of sentiment and language: it is the idealised history of that period, and those intervals of his life which were dedicated to love. His apotheosis to Beatrice in Paradise, and the gradations of his own love and her loveliness, by which as by steps he feigns himself to have ascended to the throne of the Supreme Cause, is the most glorious imagination of modern poetry. The acutest critics have justly reversed the judgment of the vulgar, and the order of the great acts of the "Divina Commedia," in the measure of the admiration which they accord to the Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. The latter is a perpetual hymn of everlasting love. Love, which found a worthy poet in Plato alone of all the ancients, has been celebrated by a chorus of the greatest writers of the renovated world; and the music has penetrated the caverns of society, and its echoes still drown the dissonance of arms and superstition. At successive intervals, Ariosto, Tasso, Shakespeare, Spenser, Calderon, Rousseau, and the great writers of our own age, have celebrated the dominion of love, planting as it were trophies in the human mind of that sublimest victory over sensuality and force. The true relation borne to each other by the sexes into which human kind is distributed, has become less misunderstood; and if the error which confounded diversity with inequality of the powers of the two sexes has been

partially recognised in the opinions and institutions of modern Europe, we owe this great benefit to the worship of which chivalry was the law, and poets the prophets.

The poetry of Dante may be considered as the bridge thrown over the stream of time, which unites the modern [**II-25**] and ancient world. The distorted notions of invisible things which Dante and his rival Milton have idealised, are merely the mask and the mantle in which these great poets walk through eternity enveloped and disguised. It is a difficult question to determine how far they were conscious of the distinction which must have subsisted in their minds between their own creeds and that of the people. Dante at least appears to wish to mark the full extent of it by placing Riphæus, whom Virgil calls *justissimus unus,* in Paradise, and observing a most poetical caprice in his distribution of rewards and punishments. And Milton's poem contains within itself a philosophical refutation of that system of which, by a strange and natural antithesis, it has been a chief popular support. Nothing can exceed the energy and magnificence of the character of Satan as expressed in "Paradise Lost." It is a mistake to suppose that he could ever have been intended for the popular personification of evil. Implacable hate, patient cunning, and a sleepless refinement of device to inflict the extremest anguish on an enemy, these things are evil; and, although venial in a slave, are not to be forgiven in a tyrant; although redeemed by much that ennobles his defeat in one subdued, are marked by all that dishonours his conquest in the victor. Milton's Devil as a moral being is as far superior to his God, as one who perseveres in some purpose which he has conceived to be excellent in spite of adversity and torture, is to one who in the cold security of undoubted triumph inflicts the most horrible revenge upon his enemy, not from any mistaken notion of inducing him to repent of a perseverance in enmity, but with the alleged design of exasperating him to deserve new torments. Milton has so far violated the popular creed (if this shall be judged to be a violation) as to have alleged no superiority of moral virtue to his god over his devil. And this bold neglect of a direct moral purpose is the most [**II-26**] decisive proof of the supremacy of Milton's genius. He mingled as it were the elements of human nature as colours upon a single palette, and arranged them in the composition of his great picture according to the laws of epic truth, that is, according to the laws of that principle by which a series of actions of the external universe and of intelligent and ethical beings is calculated to excite the sympathy of succeeding generations of mankind. The Divina Commedia and Paradise Lost have conferred upon modern mythology a systematic form; and when change and time shall have added one more superstition to the mass of those which have arisen and decayed upon the earth, commentators will be learnedly employed in elucidating the religion of ancestral Europe, only not utterly forgotten because it will have been stamped with the eternity of genius.

Homer was the first and Dante the second epic poet: that is, the second poet, the series of whose creations bore a defined and intelligible relation to the knowledge and sentiment and religion of the age in which he lived, and of the ages which followed it: developing itself in correspondence with their development. For Lucretius had limed the wings of his swift spirit in the dregs of the sensible world; and Virgil, with a modesty that ill became his genius, had affected the fame of an imitator, even whilst he created anew all that he copied; and none among the flock of mock-birds, though their notes are sweet, Apollonius Rhodius, Quintus Calaber, Smyrnæus, Nonnus, Lucan, Statius, or Claudian, have sought even to fulfil a single condition of epic truth. Milton was the third epic poet. For if the title of epic in its highest sense be refused to the Æneid, still less can it be conceded to the Orlando Furioso, the Gerusalemme Liberata, the Lusiad, or the Fairy Queen.

Dante and Milton were both deeply penetrated with the ancient religion of the civilised world; and its spirit [**II-27**] exists in their poetry probably in the same proportion as its forms survived in the unreformed worship of modern Europe. The one preceded and the other followed the Reformation at almost equal intervals. Dante was the first religious reformer,

and Luther surpassed him rather in the rudeness and acrimony, than in the boldness of his censures, of papal usurpation. Dante was the first awakener of entranced Europe; he created a language, in itself music and persuasion, out of a chaos of inharmonious barbarisms. He was the congregator of those great spirits who presided over the resurrection of learning; the Lucifer of that starry flock which in the thirteenth century shone forth from republican Italy, as from a heaven, into the darkness of the benighted world. His very words are instinct with spirit; each is as a spark, a burning atom of inextinguishable thought; and many yet lie covered in the ashes of their birth, and pregnant with a lightning which has yet found no conductor. All high poetry is infinite; it is as the first acorn, which contained all oaks potentially. Veil after veil may be undrawn, and the inmost naked beauty of the meaning never exposed. A great poem is a fountain for ever overflowing with the waters of wisdom and delight; and after one person and one age has exhausted all of its divine effluence which their peculiar relations enable them to share, another and yet another succeeds, and new relations are ever developed, the source of an unforeseen and an unconceived delight.

The age immediately succeeding to that of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, was characterised by a revival of painting, sculpture, and architecture. Chaucer caught the sacred inspiration, and the superstructure of English literature is based upon the materials of Italian invention.

But let us not be betrayed from a defence into a critical history of poetry and its influence on society. Be it enough to have pointed out the effects of poets, in [**II-28**] the large and true sense of the word, upon their own and all succeeding times.

But poets have been challenged to resign the civic crown to reasoners and mechanists, on another plea. It is admitted that the exercise of the imagination is most delightful, but it is alleged that that of reason is more useful. Let us examine, as the grounds of this distinction, what is here meant by utility. Pleasure or good, in a general sense, is that which the consciousness of a sensitive and intelligent being seeks, and in which, when found, it acquiesces. There are two kinds of pleasure, one durable, universal, and permanent; the other transitory and particular. Utility may either express the means of producing the former or the latter. In the former sense, whatever strengthens and purifies the affections, enlarges the imagination, and adds spirit to sense, is useful. But a narrower meaning may be assigned to the word utility, confining it to express that which banishes the importunity of the wants of our animal nature, the surrounding men with security of life, the dispersing the grosser delusions of superstition, and the conciliating such a degree of mutual forbearance among men as may consist with the motives of personal advantage.

Undoubtedly the promoters of utility, in this limited sense, have their appointed office in society. They follow the footsteps of poets, and copy the sketches of their creations into the book of common life. They make space, and give time. Their exertions are of the highest value, so long as they confine their administration of the concerns of the inferior powers of our nature within the limits due to the superior ones. But while the sceptic destroys gross superstitions, let him spare to deface, as some of the French writers have defaced, the eternal truths charactered upon the imaginations of men. Whilst the mechanist abridges, and the political economist combines, labour, let them beware that their [**II-29**] speculations, for want of correspondence with those first principles which belong to the imagination, do not tend, as they have in modern England, to exasperate at once the extremes of luxury and want. They have exemplified the saying, “To him that hath, more shall be given; and from him that hath not, the little that he hath shall be taken away.” [5]The rich have become richer, and the poor have become poorer; and the vessel of the state is driven between the Scylla and Charybdis of anarchy and despotism. Such are the effects which must ever flow from an unmitigated exercise of the calculating faculty.

It is difficult to define pleasure in its highest sense; the definition involving a number of apparent paradoxes. For, from an inexplicable defect of harmony in the constitution of human nature, the pain of the inferior is frequently connected with the pleasures of the superior portions of our being. Sorrow, terror, anguish, despair itself, are often the chosen expressions of an approximation to the highest good. Our sympathy in tragic fiction depends on this principle; tragedy delights by affording a shadow of that pleasure which exists in pain. This is the source also of the melancholy which is inseparable from the sweetest melody. The pleasure that is in sorrow is sweeter than the pleasure of pleasure itself. And hence the saying, "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of mirth." [6]Not that this highest species of pleasure is necessarily linked with pain. The delight of love and friendship, the ecstasy of the admiration of nature, the joy of the perception and still more of the creation of poetry, is often wholly unalloyed.

The production and assurance of pleasure in this highest sense is true utility. Those who produce and preserve this pleasure are poets or poetical philosophers.

[**II-30**]

The exertions of Locke, Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau, [7]and their disciples, in favour of oppressed and deluded humanity, are entitled to the gratitude of mankind. Yet it is easy to calculate the degree of moral and intellectual improvement which the world would have exhibited, had they never lived. A little more nonsense would have been talked for a century or two; and perhaps a few more men, women, and children, burnt as heretics. We might not at this moment have been congratulating each other on the abolition of the Inquisition in Spain. But it exceeds all imagination to conceive what would have been the moral condition of the world if neither Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Calderon, Bacon, nor Milton, had ever existed; if Raphael and Michael Angelo had never been born; if the Hebrew poetry had never been translated; if a revival of the study of Greek literature had never taken place; if no monuments of ancient sculpture had been handed down to us; and if the poetry of the religion of the ancient world had been extinguished together with its belief. The human mind could never, except by the intervention of these excitements, have been awakened to the invention of the grosser sciences, and that application of analytical reasoning to the aberrations of society, which it is now attempted to exalt over the direct expression of the inventive and creative faculty itself.

We have more moral, political, and historical wisdom than we know how to reduce into practice; we have more scientific and economical knowledge than can be accommodated to the just distribution of the produce which it multiplies. The poetry, in these systems of thought, is concealed by the accumulation of facts and [**II-31**] calculating processes. There is no want of knowledge respecting what is wisest and best in morals, government, and political economy, or at least what is wiser and better than what men now practise and endure. But we let "*I dare not* wait upon *I would,* like the poor cat in the adage." We want the creative faculty to imagine that which we know; we want the generous impulse to act that which we imagine; we want the poetry of life: our calculations have outrun conception; we have eaten more than we can digest. The cultivation of those sciences which have enlarged the limits of the empire of man over the external world, has, for want of the poetical faculty, proportionally circumscribed those of the internal world; and man, having enslaved the elements, remains himself a slave. To what but a cultivation of the mechanical arts in a degree disproportioned to the presence of the creative faculty, which is the basis of all knowledge, is to be attributed the abuse of all invention for abridging and combining labour, to the exasperation of the inequality of mankind? From what other cause has it arisen that the discoveries which should have lightened, have added a weight to the curse imposed on Adam? Poetry, and the principle of Self, of which money is the visible incarnation, are the God and Mammon of the world.

The functions of the poetical faculty are twofold; by one it creates new materials of knowledge, and power, and pleasure; by the other it engenders in the mind a desire to reproduce and arrange them according to a certain rhythm and order, which may be called the beautiful and the good. The cultivation of poetry is never more to be desired than at periods when, from an excess of the selfish and calculating principle, the accumulation of the materials of external life exceed the quantity of the power of assimilating them to the internal laws of human nature. The body has then become too unwieldy for that which animates it.

[**II-32**]

Poetry is indeed something divine. It is at once the centre and circumference of knowledge; it is that which comprehends all science, and that to which all science must be referred. It is at the same time the root and blossom of all other systems of thought; it is that from which all spring, and that which adorns all; and that which, if blighted, denies the fruit and the seed, and withholds from the barren world the nourishment and the succession of the scions of the tree of life. It is the perfect and consummate surface and bloom of all things; it is as the odour and the colour of the rose to the texture of the elements which compose it, as the form and splendour of unfaded beauty to the secrets of anatomy and corruption. What were virtue, love, patriotism, friendship,—what were the scenery of this beautiful universe which we inhabit; what were our consolations on this side of the grave—and what were our aspirations beyond it, if poetry did not ascend to bring light and fire from those eternal regions where the owl-winged faculty of calculation dare not ever soar? Poetry is not like reasoning, a power to be exerted according to the determination of the will. A man cannot say, "I will compose poetry." The greatest poet even cannot say it; for the mind in creation is as a fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness; this power arises from within, like the colour of a flower which fades and changes as it is developed, and the conscious portions of our nature are unprophetic either of its approach or its departure. Could this influence be durable in its original purity and force, it is impossible to predict the greatness of the results; but when composition begins, inspiration is already on the decline, and the most glorious poetry that has ever been communicated to the world is probably a feeble shadow of the original conceptions of the poet. I appeal to the greatest poets of the present day, whether it is not an error to assert that [**II-33**] the finest passages of poetry are produced by labour and study. The toil and the delay recommended by critics can be justly interpreted to mean no more than a careful observation of the inspired moments, and an artificial connexion of the spaces between their suggestions, by the intertexture of conventional expressions; a necessity only imposed by the limitedness of the poetical faculty itself: for Milton conceived the Paradise Lost as a whole before he executed it in portions. We have his own authority also for the muse having "dictated" to him the "unpremeditated song." And let this be an answer to those who would allege the fifty-six various readings of the first line of the Orlando Furioso. Compositions so produced are to poetry what mosaic is to painting. The instinct and intuition of the poetical faculty is still more observable in the plastic and pictorial arts: a great statue or picture grows under the power of the artist as a child in the mother's womb; and the very mind which directs the hands in formation, is incapable of accounting to itself for the origin, the gradations, or the media of the process.

Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds. We are aware of evanescent visitations of thought and feeling, sometimes associated with place or person, sometimes regarding our own mind alone, and always arising unforeseen and departing unbidden, but elevating and delightful beyond all expression: so that even in the desire and the regret they leave, there cannot but be pleasure, participating as it does in the nature of its object. It is as it were the interpenetration of a diviner nature through our own; but its footsteps are like those of a wind over the sea, which the morning calm erases, and

whose traces remain only, as on the wrinkled sand which paves it. These and corresponding conditions of being are experienced principally by those of the most delicate sensibility and the most enlarged imagination; and the [**II-34**] state of mind produced by them is at war with every base desire. The enthusiasm of virtue, love, patriotism, and friendship, is essentially linked with such emotions; and whilst they last, self appears as what it is, an atom to a universe. Poets are not only subject to these experiences as spirits of the most refined organisation, but they can colour all that they combine with the evanescent hues of this ethereal world; a word, a trait in the representation of a scene or a passion, will touch the enchanted chord, and reanimate, in those who have ever experienced those emotions, the sleeping, the cold, the buried image of the past. Poetry thus makes immortal all that is best and most beautiful in the world; it arrests the vanishing apparitions which haunt the interlunations of life, and veiling them, or in language or in form, sends them forth among mankind, bearing sweet news of kindred joy to those with whom their sisters abide—abide, because there is no portal of expression from the caverns of the spirit which they inhabit into the universe of things. Poetry redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man.

Poetry turns all things to loveliness; it exalts the beauty of that which is most beautiful, and it adds beauty to that which is most deformed; it marries exultation and horror, grief and pleasure, eternity and change; it subdues to union, under its light yoke, all irreconcilable things. It transmutes all that it touches, and every form moving within the radiance of its presence is changed by wondrous sympathy to an incarnation of the spirit which it breathes: its secret alchemy turns to potable gold the poisonous waters which flow from death through life; it strips the veil of familiarity from the world, and lays bare the naked and sleeping beauty, which is the spirit of its forms.

All things exist as they are perceived; at least in relation to the percipient.

[**II-35**]

> "The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven." [8]

But poetry defeats the curse which binds us to be subjected to the accident of surrounding impressions. And whether it spreads its own figured curtain, or withdraws life's dark veil from before the scene of things, it equally creates for us a being within our being. It makes us the inhabitant of a world to which the familiar world is a chaos. It reproduces the common universe of which we are portions and percipients, and it purges from our inward sight the film of familiarity which obscures from us the wonder of our being. It compels us to feel that which we perceive, and to imagine that which we know. It creates anew the universe, after it has been annihilated in our minds by the recurrence of impressions blunted by reiteration. It justifies the bold and true word of Tasso: *Non merita nome di creatore, se non Iddio ed il Poeta*.

A poet, as he is the author to others of the highest wisdom, pleasure, virtue and glory, so he ought personally to be the happiest, the best, the wisest, and the most illustrious of men. As to his glory, let time be challenged to declare whether the fame of any other institutor of human life be comparable to that of a poet. That he is the wisest, the happiest, and the best, inasmuch as he is a poet, is equally incontrovertible: the greatest poets have been men of the most spotless virtue, of the most consummate prudence, and, if we would look into the interior of their lives, the most fortunate of men: and the exceptions, as they regard those who possessed the poetic faculty in a high yet inferior degree, will be found on consideration to confirm rather than destroy the rule. Let us for a moment stoop to the arbitration of popular breath, and usurping and uniting in our own persons the incompatible characters of accuser, witness, [**II-36**] judge and executioner, let us decide without trial, testimony, or form, that

certain motives of those who are "there sitting where we dare not soar," are reprehensible. Let us assume that Homer was a drunkard, that Virgil was a flatterer, that Horace was a coward, that Tasso was a madman, that Bacon was a speculator, that Raphael was a libertine, that Spenser was a poet laureate. It is inconsistent with this division of our subject to cite living poets, but posterity has done ample justice to the great names now referred to. Their errors have been weighed and found to have been dust in the balance; if their sins "were as scarlet, they are now white as snow:" they have been washed in the blood of the mediator and redeemer, time. Observe in what a ludicrous chaos the imputations of real or fictitious crime have been confused in the contemporary calumnies against poetry and poets; consider how little is, as it appears—or appears, as it is, look to your own motives, and judge not, lest ye be judged.

Poetry, as has been said, differs in this respect from logic, that it is not subject to the control of the active powers of the mind, and that its birth and recurrence have no necessary connexion with the consciousness or will. It is presumptuous to determine that these are the necessary conditions of all mental causation, when mental effects are experienced insusceptible of being referred to them. The frequent recurrence of the poetical power, it is obvious to suppose, may produce in the mind a habit of order and harmony correlative with its own nature and with its effects upon other minds. But in the intervals of inspiration, and they may be frequent without being durable, a poet becomes a man, and is abandoned to the sudden reflux of the influences under which others habitually live. But as he is more delicately organised than other men, and sensible to pain and pleasure, both his own and that of others, in a degree unknown to them, he will avoid the one and [**II-37**] pursue the other with an ardour proportioned to this difference. And he renders himself obnoxious to calumny, when he neglects to observe the circumstances under which these objects of universal pursuit and flight have disguised themselves in one another's garments.

But there is nothing necessarily evil in this error, and thus cruelty, envy, revenge, avarice, and the passions purely evil, have never formed any portion of the popular imputations on the lives of poets.

I have thought it most favourable to the cause of truth to set down these remarks according to the order in which they were suggested to my mind, by a consideration of the subject itself, instead of observing the formality of a polemical reply; but if the view which they contain be just, they will be found to involve a refutation of the arguers against poetry, so far at least as regards the first division of the subject. I can readily conjecture what should have moved the gall of some learned and intelligent writers who quarrel with certain versifiers; I, like them, confess myself unwilling to be stunned by the Theseids of the hoarse Codri of the day. Bavius and Mævius undoubtedly are, as they ever were, insufferable persons. But it belongs to a philosophical critic to distinguish rather than confound.

The first part of these remarks has related to poetry in its elements and principles: and it has been shown, as well as the narrow limits assigned them would permit, that what is called poetry in a restricted sense, has a common source with all other forms of order and of beauty, according to which the materials of human life are susceptible of being arranged, and which is poetry in an universal sense.

The second part will have for its object an application of these principles to the present state of the cultivation of poetry, and a defence of the attempt to idealise the modern forms of manners and opinions, and compel them into a subordination to the imaginative and creative [**II-38**] faculty. For the literature of England, an energetic development of which has ever preceded or accompanied a great and free development of the national will, has arisen as it were from a new birth. In spite of the low-thoughted envy which would undervalue contemporary merit, our own will be a memorable age in intellectual achievements, and we

live among such philosophers and poets as surpass beyond comparison any who have appeared since the last national struggle for civil and religious liberty. The most unfailing herald, companion, and follower of the awakening of a great people to work a beneficial change in opinion or institution, is poetry. At such periods there is an accumulation of the power of communicating and receiving intense and impassioned conceptions respecting man and nature. The persons in whom this power resides may often, as far as regards many portions of their nature, have little apparent correspondence with that spirit of good of which they are the ministers. But even whilst they deny and abjure, they are yet compelled to serve, the power which is seated on the throne of their own soul. It is impossible to read the compositions of the most celebrated writers of the present day without being startled with the electric life which burns within their words. They measure the circumference and sound the depths of human nature with a comprehensive and all-penetrating spirit, and they are themselves perhaps the most sincerely astonished at its manifestations; for it is less their spirit than the spirit of the age. Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration; the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present; the words which express what they understand not; the trumpets which sing to battle and feel not what they inspire; the influence which is moved not, but moves. Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.

[**II-39**]

ESSAY ON THE LITERATURE, THE ARTS, AND THE MANNERS OF THE ATHENIANS.
A Fragment.↩

THE period which intervened between the birth of Pericles and the death of Aristotle, is undoubtedly, whether considered in itself, or with reference to the effects which it has produced upon the subsequent destinies of civilised man, the most memorable in the history of the world. What was the combination of moral and political circumstances which produced so unparalleled a progress during that period in literature and the arts;—why that progress, so rapid and so sustained, so soon received a check, and became retrograde,—are problems left to the wonder and conjecture of posterity. The wrecks and fragments of those subtle and profound minds, like the ruins of a fine statue, obscurely suggest to us the grandeur and perfection of the whole. Their very language—a type of the understandings of which it was the creation and the image—in variety, in simplicity, in flexibility, and in copiousness, excels every other language of the western world. Their sculptures are such as we, in our presumption, assume to be the models of ideal truth and beauty, and to which [**II-40**] no artist of modern times can produce forms in any degree comparable. Their paintings, according to Pliny and Pausanias, were full of delicacy and harmony; and some even were powerfully pathetic, so as to awaken, like tender music or tragic poetry, the most overwhelming emotions. We are accustomed to conceive the painters of the sixteenth century, as those who have brought their art to the highest perfection, probably because none of the ancient paintings have been preserved. For all the inventive arts maintain, as it were, a sympathetic connexion between each other, being no more than various expressions of one internal power, modified by different circumstances, either of an individual, or of society; and the paintings of that period would probably bear the same relation as is confessedly borne by the sculptures to all succeeding ones. Of their music we know little; but the effects which it is said to have produced, whether they be attributed to the skill of the composer, or the sensibility of his audience, are far more powerful than any which we experience from the music of our own times; and if, indeed, the melody of their compositions were more tender and delicate, and inspiring, than the melodies of some modern European nations, their superiority in this art must have been something wonderful, and wholly beyond conception.

Their poetry seems to maintain a very high, though not so disproportionate a rank, in the comparison. Perhaps Shakespeare, from the variety and comprehension of his genius, is to be considered, on the whole, as the greatest individual mind, of which we have specimens remaining. Perhaps Dante created imaginations of greater loveliness and energy than any that are to be found in the ancient literature of Greece. Perhaps nothing has been discovered in the fragments of the Greek lyric poets equivalent to the sublime and chivalric sensibility of Petrarch.—But, as [**II-41**] a poet, Homer must be acknowledged to excel Shakespeare in the truth, the harmony, the sustained grandeur, the satisfying completeness of his images, their exact fitness to the illustration, and to that to which they belong. Nor could Dante, deficient in conduct, plan, nature, variety, and temperance, have been brought into comparison with these men, but for those fortunate isles, laden with golden fruit, which alone could tempt any one to embark in the misty ocean of his dark and extravagant fiction.

But, omitting the comparison of individual minds, which can afford no general inference, how superior was the spirit and system of their poetry to that of any other period! So that, had any other genius equal in other respects to the greatest that ever enlightened the world, arisen in that age, he would have been superior to all, from this circumstance alone—that his conceptions would have assumed a more harmonious and perfect form. For it is worthy of

observation, that whatever the poets of that age produced is as harmonious and perfect as possible. If a drama, for instance, were the composition of a person of inferior talent, it was still homogeneous and free from inequalities; it was a whole, consistent with itself. The compositions of great minds bore throughout the sustained stamp of their greatness. In the poetry of succeeding ages the expectations are often exalted on Icarian wings, and fall, too much disappointed to give a memory and a name to the oblivious pool in which they fell.

In physical knowledge Aristotle and Theophrastus had already—no doubt assisted by the labours of those of their predecessors whom they criticise—made advances worthy of the maturity of science. The astonishing invention of geometry, that series of discoveries which have enabled man to command the elements and foresee future events, before the subjects of his ignorant wonder, and which have opened as it were the doors of the [**II-42**] mysteries of nature, had already been brought to great perfection. Metaphysics, the science of man's intimate nature, and logic, or the grammar and elementary principles of that science, received from the latter philosophers of the Periclean age a firm basis. All our more exact philosophy is built upon the labours of these great men, and many of the words which we employ in metaphysical distinctions were invented by them to give accuracy and system to their reasonings. The science of morals, or the voluntary conduct of men in relation to themselves or others, dates from this epoch. How inexpressibly bolder and more pure were the doctrines of those great men, in comparison with the timid maxims which prevail in the writings of the most esteemed modern moralists! They were such as Phocion, and Epaminondas, and Timoleon, who formed themselves on their influence, were to the wretched heroes of our own age.

Their political and religious institutions are more difficult to bring into comparison with those of other times. A summary idea may be formed of the worth of any political and religious system, by observing the comparative degree of happiness and of intellect produced under its influence. And whilst many institutions and opinions, which in ancient Greece were obstacles to the improvement of the human race, have been abolished among modern nations, how many pernicious superstitions and new contrivances of misrule, and unheard-of complications of public mischief, have not been invented among them by the ever-watchful spirit of avarice and tyranny!

The modern nations of the civilised world owe the progress which they have made—as well in those physical sciences in which they have already excelled their masters, as in the moral and intellectual inquiries, in which, with all the advantage of the experience of the latter, it can scarcely be said that they have yet [**II-43**] equalled them,—to what is called the revival of learning; that is, the study of the writers of the age which preceded and immediately followed the government of Pericles, or of subsequent writers, who were, so to speak, the rivers flowing from those immortal fountains. And though there seems to be a principle in the modern world, which, should circumstances analogous to those which modelled the intellectual resources of the age to which we refer, into so harmonious a proportion, again arise, would arrest and perpetuate them, and consign their results to a more equal, extensive, and lasting improvement of the condition of man—though justice and the true meaning of human society are, if not more accurately, more generally understood; though perhaps men know more, and therefore are more, as a mass, yet this principle has never been called into action, and requires indeed a universal and an almost appalling change in the system of existing things. The study of modern history is the study of kings, financiers, statesmen, and priests. The history of ancient Greece is the study of legislators, philosophers, and poets; it is the history of men, compared with the history of titles. What the Greeks were, was a reality, not a promise. And what we are and hope to be, is derived, as it were, from the influence and inspiration of these glorious generations.

Whatever tends to afford a further illustration of the manners and opinions of those to whom we owe so much, and who were perhaps, on the whole, the most perfect specimens of humanity of whom we have authentic record, were infinitely valuable. Let us see their errors, their weaknesses, their daily actions, their familiar conversation, and catch the tone of their society. When we discover how far the most admirable community ever framed was removed from that perfection to which human society is impelled by some active power within each bosom to aspire, how great ought to [**II-44**] be our hopes, how resolute our struggles! For the Greeks of the Periclean age were widely different from us. It is to be lamented that no modern writer has hitherto dared to show them precisely as they were. Barthélemi cannot be denied the praise of industry and system; but he never forgets that he is a Christian and a Frenchman. Wieland, in his delightful novels, makes indeed a very tolerable Pagan, but cherishes too many political prejudices, and refrains from diminishing the interest of his romances by painting sentiments in which no European of modern times can possibly sympathise. There is no book which shows the Greeks precisely as they were; they seem all written for children, with the caution that no practice or sentiment, highly inconsistent with our present manners, should be mentioned, lest those manners should receive outrage and violation. But there are many to whom the Greek language is inaccessible, who ought not to be excluded by this prudery from possessing an exact and comprehensive conception of the history of man; for there is no knowledge concerning what man has been and may be, from partaking of which a person can depart, without becoming in some degree more philosophical, tolerant, and just.

One of the chief distinctions between the manners of ancient Greece and modern Europe, consisted in the regulations and the sentiments respecting sexual intercourse. Whether this difference arises from some imperfect influence of the doctrines of Jesus, who alleges the absolute and unconditional equality of all human beings, or from the institutions of chivalry, or from a certain fundamental difference of physical nature existing in the Celts, or from a combination of all or any of these causes acting on each other, is a question worthy of voluminous investigation. The fact is, that the modern Europeans have in this circumstance, and in the abolition of slavery, made an improvement the [**II-45**] most decisive in the regulation of human society; and all the virtue and the wisdom of the Periclean age arose under other institutions, in spite of the diminution which personal slavery and the inferiority of women, recognised by law and opinion, must have produced in the delicacy, the strength, the comprehensiveness, and the accuracy of their conceptions, in moral, political, and metaphysical science, and perhaps in every other art and science.

The women, thus degraded, became such as it was expected they would become. They possessed, except with extraordinary exceptions, the habits and the qualities of slaves. They were probably not extremely beautiful; at least there was no such disproportion in the attractions of the external form between the female and male sex among the Greeks, as exists among the modern Europeans. They were certainly devoid of that moral and intellectual loveliness with which the acquisition of knowledge and the cultivation of sentiment animates, as with another life of overpowering grace, the lineaments and the gestures of every form which they inhabit. Their eyes could not have been deep and intricate from the workings of the mind, and could have entangled no heart in soul-enwoven labyrinths.

Let it not be imagined that because the Greeks were deprived of its legitimate object, they were incapable of sentimental love; and that this passion is the mere child of chivalry and the literature of modern times. This object or its archetype forever exists in the mind, which selects among those who resemble it that which most resembles it; and instinctively fills up the interstices of the imperfect image, in the same manner as the imagination moulds and completes the shapes in clouds, or in the fire, into the resemblances of whatever form, animal, building, &c., happens to be present to it. Man is in his wildest state a social being: a

certain [**II-46**] degree of civilisation and refinement ever produces the want of sympathies still more intimate and complete; and the gratification of the senses is no longer all that is sought in sexual connexion. It soon becomes a very small part of that profound and complicated sentiment, which we call love, which is rather the universal thirst for a communion not only of the senses, but of our whole nature, intellectual, imaginative and sensitive, and which, when individualised, becomes an imperious necessity, only to be satisfied by the complete or partial, actual or supposed fulfilment of its claims. This want grows more powerful in proportion to the development which our nature receives from civilisation, for man never ceases to be a social being. The sexual impulse, which is only one, and often a small part of those claims, serves, from its obvious and external nature, as a kind of type or expression of the rest, a common basis, an acknowledged and visible link. Still it is a claim which even derives a strength not its own from the accessory circumstances which surround it, and one which our nature thirsts to satisfy. To estimate this, observe the degree of intensity and durability of the love of the male towards the female in animals and savages; and acknowledge all the duration and intensity observable in the love of civilised beings beyond that of savages to be produced from other causes. In the susceptibility of the external senses there is probably no important difference.

Among the ancient Greeks the male sex, one half of the human race, received the highest cultivation and refinement: whilst the other, so far as intellect is concerned, were educated as slaves, and were raised but few degrees in all that related to moral or intellectual excellence above the condition of savages. The gradations in the society of man present us with slow improvement in this respect. The Roman women held a higher [**II-47**] consideration in society, and were esteemed almost as the equal partners with their husbands in the regulation of domestic economy and the education of their children. The practices and customs of modern Europe are essentially different from and incomparably less pernicious than either, however remote from what an enlightened mind cannot fail to desire as the future destiny of human beings.

[**II-48**]

ON THE SYMPOSIUM, OR PREFACE TO THE BANQUET OF PLATO.
A Fragment.↩

THE dialogue entitled "The Banquet," was selected by the translator as the most beautiful and perfect among all the works of Plato. [9]He despairs of having communicated to the English language any portion of the surpassing graces of the composition, or having done more than present an imperfect shadow of the language and the sentiment of this astonishing production.

Plato is eminently the greatest among the Greek philosophers, and from, or, rather, perhaps through him, from his master Socrates, have proceeded those emanations of moral and metaphysical knowledge, on which a long series and an incalculable variety of popular superstitions have sheltered their absurdities [**II-49**] from the slow contempt of mankind. Plato exhibits the rare union of close and subtle logic with the Pythian enthusiasm of poetry, melted by the splendour and harmony of his periods into one irresistible stream of musical impressions, which hurry the persuasions onward, as in a breathless career. His language is that of an immortal spirit, rather than a man. Bacon is, perhaps, the only writer who, in these particulars, can be compared with him: his imitator, Cicero, sinks in the comparison into an ape mocking the gestures of a man. His views into the nature of mind and existence are often obscure, only because they are profound; and though his theories respecting the government of the world, and the elementary laws of moral action, are not always correct, yet there is scarcely any of his treatises which do not, however stained by puerile sophisms, contain the most remarkable intuitions into all that can be the subject of the human mind. His excellence consists especially in intuition, and it is this faculty which raises him far above Aristotle, whose genius, though vivid and various, is obscure in comparison with that of Plato.

The dialogue entitled the "Banquet," is called Ερωτικος, or a Discussion upon Love, and is supposed to have taken place at the house of Agathon, at one of a series of festivals given by that poet, on the occasion of his gaining the prize of tragedy at the Dionysiaca. The account of the debate on this occasion is supposed to have been given by Apollodorus, a pupil of Socrates, many years after it had taken place, to a companion who was curious to hear it. This Apollodorus appears, both from the style in which he is represented in this piece, as well as from a passage in the Phædon, to have been a person of an impassioned and enthusiastic disposition; to borrow an image from the Italian painters, he seems to have been the St. John of the Socratic group. The drama (for so the lively distinction of [**II-50**] character and the various and well-wrought circumstances of the story almost entitle it to be called) begins by Socrates persuading Aristodemus to sup at Agathon's, uninvited. The whole of this introduction affords the most lively conception of refined Athenian manners.

[**II-51**]

THE BANQUET.

TRANSLATED FROM PLATO

[**II-52**]

THE PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE

APOLLODORUS
A FRIEND OF APOLLODORUS
GLAUCO
ARISTODEMUS
SOCRATES
AGATHON
PHÆDRUS
PAUSANIAS
ERYXIMACHUS
ARISTOPHANES
DIOTIMAALCIBIADES

[**II-53**]

apollodorus.

I THINK that the subject of your inquiries is still fresh in my memory; for yesterday, as I chanced to be returning home from Phaleros, one of my acquaintance, seeing me before him, called out to me from a distance, jokingly, "Apollodorus, you Phalerian, will you not wait a minute?"—I waited for him, and as soon as he overtook me, "I have just been looking for you, Apollodorus," he said, "for I wished to hear what those discussions were on Love, which took place at the party, when Agathon, Socrates, Alcibiades, and some others, met at supper. Some one who heard it from Phœnix, the son of Philip, told me that you could give a full account, but he could relate nothing distinctly himself. Relate to me, then, I entreat you, all the circumstances. I know you are a faithful reporter of the discussions of your friends; but, first tell me, were you present at the party or not?"

"Your informant," I replied, "seems to have given you no very clear idea of what you wish to hear, if he thinks that these discussions took place so lately as that I could have been of the party."—"Indeed, I thought [**II-54**] so," replied he.—"For how," said I, "O Glauco! could I have been present? Do you not know that Agathon has been absent from the city many years? But, since I began to converse with Socrates, and to observe each day all his words and actions, three years are scarcely past. Before this time I wandered about wherever it might chance, thinking that I did something, but being in truth, a most miserable wretch, not less than you are now, who believe that you ought to do anything rather than practise the love of wisdom."—"Do not cavil," interrupted Glauco, "but tell me, when did this party take place?"

"Whilst we were yet children," I replied, "when Agathon first gained the prize of tragedy, and the day after that on which he and the chorus made sacrifices in celebration of their success."—"A long time ago, it seems. But who told you all the circumstances of the discussion? Did you hear them from Socrates himself?" "No, by Jupiter! But the same person from whom Phœnix had his information, one Aristodemus, a Cydathenean,—a little man who always went about without sandals. He was present at this feast, being, I believe, more than any of his contemporaries, a lover and admirer of Socrates. I have questioned Socrates

concerning some of the circumstances of his narration, who confirms all that I have heard from Aristodemus."—"Why, then," said Glauco, "why not relate them, as we walk, to me? The road to the city is every way convenient, both for those who listen and those who speak."

Thus as we walked I gave him some account of those discussions concerning Love; since, as I said before, I remember them with sufficient accuracy. If I am required to relate them also to you, that shall willingly be done; for, whensoever either I myself talk of philosophy, or listen to others talking of it, in addition to the improvement which I conceive there arises from such conversation, I am delighted beyond measure; [**II-55**] but whenever I hear your discussions about moneyed men and great proprietors, I am weighed down with grief, and pity you, who, doing nothing, believe that you are doing something. Perhaps you think that I am a miserable wretch; and, indeed, I believe that you think truly. I do not think, but well know, that you are miserable.

Companion.

You are always the same, Apollodorus—always saying some ill of yourself and others. Indeed, you seem to me to think every one miserable except Socrates, beginning with yourself. I do not know what could have entitled you to the surname of the "Madman," for, I am sure, you are consistent enough, for ever inveighing with bitterness against yourself and all others, except Socrates.

Apollodorus.

My dear friend, it is manifest that I am out of my wits from this alone—that I have such opinion as you describe concerning myself and you.

Companion.

It is not worth while, Apollodorus, to dispute now about these things; but do what I entreat you, and relate to us what were these discussions.

Apollodorus.

They were such as I will proceed to tell you. But let me attempt to relate them in the order which Aristodemus observed in relating them to me. He said that he met Socrates washed, and, contrary to his usual custom, sandalled, and having inquired whither he went so gaily dressed, Socrates replied, "I am going to sup [**II-56**] at Agathon's; yesterday I avoided it, disliking the crowd, which would attend at the prize sacrifices then celebrated; to-day I promised to be there, and I made myself so gay, because one ought to be beautiful to approach one who is beautiful. But you, Aristodemus, what think you of coming uninvited to supper?"—"I will do," he replied, "as you command."—"Follow, then, that we may, by changing its application, disarm that proverb which says, *To the feasts of the good, the good come uninvited*. Homer, indeed, seems not only to destroy, but to outrage the proverb; for, describing Agamemnon as excellent in battle, and Menelaus but a faint-hearted warrior, he represents Menelaus as coming uninvited to the feast of one better and braver than himself." —Aristodemus hearing this, said, "I also am in some danger, Socrates, not as you say, but according to Homer, of approaching like an unworthy inferior, the banquet of one more wise and excellent than myself. Will you not, then, make some excuse for me? for I shall not confess that I came uninvited, but shall say that I was invited by you."—"As we walk together," said Socrates, "we will consider together what excuse to make—but let us go."

Thus discoursing, they proceeded. But, as they walked, Socrates, engaged in some deep contemplation, slackened his pace, and, observing Aristodemus waiting for him, he desired him to go on before. When Aristodemus arrived at Agathon's house he found the door open, and it occurred somewhat comically, that a slave met him at the vestibule, and conducted him where he found the guests already reclined. As soon as Agathon saw him, "You arrive just in

time to sup with us, Aristodemus," he said; "if you have any other purpose in your visit, defer it to a better opportunity. I was looking for you yesterday, to invite you to be of our party; I could not find you anywhere. But how is it that you do not bring Socrates with you?"

[**II-57**]

But he turning round, and not seeing Socrates behind him, said to Agathon, "I just came hither in his company, being invited by him to sup with you."—"You did well," replied Agathon, "to come; but where is Socrates?"—"He just now came hither behind me; I myself wonder where he can be."—"Go and look, boy," said Agathon, "and bring Socrates in; meanwhile, you, Aristodemus, recline there near Eryximachus." And he bade a slave wash his feet that he might recline. Another slave, meanwhile, brought word that Socrates had retired into a neighbouring vestibule, where he stood, and, in spite of his message, refused to come in.—"What absurdity you talk," cried Agathon, "call him, and do not leave him till he comes."—"Leave him alone, by all means," said Aristodemus, "it is customary with him sometimes to retire in this way and stand wherever it may chance. He will come presently, I do not doubt; do not disturb him."—"Well, be it as you will," said Agathon; "as it is, you boys, bring supper for the rest; put before us what you will, for I resolved that there should be no master of the feast. Consider me, and these, my friends, as guests, whom you have invited to supper, and serve them so that we may commend you."

After this they began supper, but Socrates did not come in. Agathon ordered him to be called, but Aristodemus perpetually forbade it. At last he came in, much about the middle of supper, not having delayed so long as was his custom. Agathon (who happened to be reclining at the end of the table, and alone,) said, as he entered, "Come hither, Socrates, and sit down by me; so that by the mere touch of one so wise as you are, I may enjoy the fruit of your meditations in the vestibule; for, I well know, you would not have departed till you had discovered and secured it."

Socrates having sat down as he was desired, replied, "It would be well, Agathon, if wisdom were of such a [**II-58**] nature, as that when we touched each other, it would overflow of its own accord, from him who possesses much to him who possesses little; like the water in two chalices, which will flow through a flock of wool from the fuller into the emptier, until both are equal. If wisdom had this property, I should esteem myself most fortunate in reclining near to you. I should thus soon be filled, I think, with the most beautiful and various wisdom. Mine, indeed, is something obscure, and doubtful, and dreamlike. But yours is radiant, and has been crowned with amplest reward; for, though you are yet so young, it shone forth from you, and became so manifest yesterday, that more than thirty thousand Greeks can bear testimony to its excellence and loveliness."—"You are laughing at me, Socrates," said Agathon, "but you and I will decide this controversy about wisdom by and bye, taking Bacchus for our judge. At present turn to your supper."

After Socrates and the rest had finished supper, and had reclined back on their couches, and the libations had been poured forth, and they had sung hymns to the god, and all other rites which are customary had been performed, they turned to drinking. Then Pausanias made this kind of proposal. "Come, my friends," said he, "in what manner will it be pleasantest for us to drink? I must confess to you that, in reality, I am not very well from the wine we drank last night, and I have need of some intermission. I suspect that most of you are in the same condition, for you were here yesterday. Now, consider how we shall drink most easily and comfortably."

"'Tis a good proposal, Pausanias," said Aristophanes, "to contrive, in some way or other, to place moderation in our cups. I was one of those who were drenched last night."—Eryximachus, the son of Acumenius, hearing this, said: "I am of your opinion; I only wish to

know one thing—whether Agathon is in the humour [**II-59**] for hard drinking?"—"Not at all," replied Agathon; "I confess that I am not able to drink much this evening."—"It is an excellent thing for us," replied Eryximachus, "I mean myself, Aristodemus, Phædrus, and these others, if you who are such invincible drinkers, now refuse to drink. I ought to except Socrates, for he is capable of drinking everything, or nothing; and whatever we shall determine will equally suit him. Since, then, no one present has any desire to drink much wine, I shall perhaps give less offence if I declare the nature of drunkenness. The science of medicine teaches us that drunkenness is very pernicious: nor would I choose to drink immoderately myself, or counsel another to do so, especially if he had been drunk the night before."—"Yes," said Phædrus, the Myrinusian, interrupting him, "I have been accustomed to confide in you, especially in your directions concerning medicine; and I would now willingly do so, if the rest will do the same." All then agreed that they would drink at this present banquet not for drunkenness, but for pleasure.

"Since, then," said Eryximachus, "it is decided that no one shall be compelled to drink more than he pleases, I think that we may as well send away the flute-player to play to herself; or, if she likes, to the women within. Let us devote the present occasion to conversation between ourselves, and if you wish, I will propose to you what shall be the subject of our discussion." All present desired and entreated that he would explain.—"The exordium of my speech," said Eryximachus, "will be in the style of the Menalippe of Euripides, for the story which I am about to tell belongs not to me, but to Phædrus. Phædrus has often indignantly complained to me, saying—'Is it not strange, Eryximachus, that there are innumerable hymns and pæans composed for the other gods, but that not one of the many poets who spring up in the world have ever composed a verse in honour of Love, who is such and so great a god? Nor [**II-60**] any one of those accomplished sophists, who, like the famous Prodicus, have celebrated the praise of Hercules and others, have ever celebrated that of Love; but what is more astonishing, I have lately met with the book of some philosopher, in which salt is extolled on account of its utility, and many other things of the same nature are in like manner celebrated with elaborate praise. That so much serious thought is expended on such trifles, and that no man has dared to this day to frame a hymn in honour of Love, who being so great a deity, is thus neglected, may well be sufficient to excite my indignation.'

"There seemed to me some justice in these complaints of Phædrus; I propose, therefore, at the same time for the sake of giving pleasure to Phædrus, and that we may on the present occasion do something well and befitting us, that this God should receive from those who are now present the honour which is most due to him. If you agree to my proposal, an excellent discussion might arise on the subject. Every one ought, according to my plan, to praise Love with as much eloquence as he can. Let Phædrus begin first, both because he reclines the first in order, and because he is the father of the discussion."

"No one will vote against you, Eryximachus," said Socrates, "for how can I oppose your proposal, who am ready to confess that I know nothing on any subject but love? Or how can Agathon, or Pausanias, or even Aristophanes, whose life is one perpetual ministration to Venus and Bacchus? Or how can any other whom I see here? Though we who sit last are scarcely on an equality with you; for if those who speak before us shall have exhausted the subject with their eloquence and reasonings, our discourses will be superfluous. But in the name of Good Fortune, let Phædrus begin and praise Love." The whole party agreed to what Socrates said, and entreated Phædrus to begin.

[**II-61**]

What each then said on this subject, Aristodemus did not entirely recollect, nor do I recollect all that he related to me; but only the speeches of those who said what was most worthy of remembrance. First, then, Phædrus began thus:—

"Love is a mighty deity, and the object of admiration, both to Gods and men, for many and for various claims; but especially on account of his origin. For that he is to be honoured as one of the most ancient of the gods, this may serve as a testimony, that Love has no parents, nor is there any poet or other person who has ever affirmed that there are such. Hesiod says, that first 'Chaos was produced; then the broad-bosomed Earth, to be a secure foundation for all things; then Love.' He says that after Chaos these two were produced, the Earth and Love. Parmenides, speaking of generation, says:—'But he created Love before any of the gods.' Acusileus agrees with Hesiod. Love, therefore, is universally acknowledged to be among the oldest of things. And in addition to this, Love is the author of our greatest advantages; for I cannot imagine a greater happiness and advantage to one who is in the flower of youth than an amiable lover, or to a lover, than an amiable object of his love. For neither birth, nor wealth, nor honours, can awaken in the minds of men the principles which should guide those who from their youth aspire to an honourable and excellent life, as Love awakens them. I speak of the fear of shame, which deters them from that which is disgraceful; and the love of glory, which incites to honourable deeds. For it is not possible that a state or private person should accomplish, without these incitements, anything beautiful or great. I assert, then, that should one who loves be discovered in any dishonourable action, or tamely enduring insult through cowardice, he would feel more anguish and shame if observed by the object of his passion, than if he were observed by his father, or [**II-62**] his companions, or any other person. In like manner, among warmly attached friends, a man is especially grieved to be discovered by his friend in any dishonourable act. If, then, by any contrivance, a state or army could be composed of friends bound by strong attachment, it is beyond calculation how excellently they would administer their affairs, refraining from anything base, contending with each other for the acquirement of fame, and exhibiting such valour in battle as that, though few in numbers, they might subdue all mankind. For should one friend desert the ranks or cast away his arms in the presence of the other, he would suffer far acuter shame from that one person's regard, than from the regard of all other men. A thousand times would he prefer to die, rather than desert the object of his attachment, and not succour him in danger.

"There is none so worthless whom Love cannot impel, as it were by a divine inspiration, towards virtue, even so that he may through this inspiration become equal to one who might naturally be more excellent; and, in truth, as Homer says: The God breathes vigour into certain heroes—so Love breathes into those who love, the spirit which is produced from himself. Not only men, but even women who love, are those alone who willingly expose themselves to die for others. Alcestis, the daughter of Pelias, affords to the Greeks a remarkable example of this opinion; she alone being willing to die for her husband, and so surpassing his parents in the affection with which love inspired her towards him, as to make them appear, in the comparison with her, strangers to their own child, and related to him merely in name; and so lovely and admirable did this action appear, not only to men, but even to the Gods, that, although they conceded the prerogative of bringing back the spirit from death to few among the many who then performed excellent and honourable deeds, yet, delighted with this [**II-63**] action, they redeemed her soul from the infernal regions: so highly do the Gods honour zeal and devotion in love. They sent back indeed Orpheus, the son of Œagrus, from Hell, with his purpose unfulfilled, and, showing him only the spectre of her for whom he came, refused to render up herself. For Orpheus seemed to them, not as Alcestis, to have dared die for the sake of her whom he loved, and thus to secure to himself a perpetual intercourse with her in the regions to which she had preceded him, but like a cowardly musician, to have contrived to descend alive into Hell; and, indeed, they appointed as a punishment for his cowardice, that he should be put to death by women.

"Far otherwise did they reward Achilles, the son of Thetis, whom they sent to inhabit the islands of the blessed. For Achilles, though informed by his mother that his own death would ensue upon his killing Hector, but that if he refrained from it he might return home and die in old age, yet preferred revenging and honouring his beloved Patroclus; not to die for him merely, but to disdain and reject that life which he had ceased to share. Therefore the Greeks honoured Achilles beyond all other men, because he thus preferred his friend to all things else.

"On this account have the Gods rewarded Achilles more amply than Alcestis; permitting his spirit to inhabit the islands of the blessed. Hence do I assert that Love is the most ancient and venerable of deities, and most powerful to endow mortals with the possession of happiness and virtue, both whilst they live and after they die."

Thus Aristodemus reported the discourse of Phædrus; and after Phædrus, he said that some others spoke, whose discourses he did not well remember. When they had ceased, Pausanias began thus:—

"Simply to praise Love, O Phædrus, seems to me too bounded a scope for our discourse. If Love were [**II-64**] one, it would be well. But since Love is not one, I will endeavour to distinguish which is the Love whom it becomes us to praise, and having thus discriminated one from the other, will attempt to render him who is the subject of our discourse the honour due to his divinity. We all know that Venus is never without Love; and if Venus were one, Love would be one; but since there are two Venuses, of necessity also must there be two Loves. For assuredly are there two Venuses; one, the eldest, the daughter of Uranus, born without a mother, whom we call the Uranian; the other younger, the daughter of Jupiter and Dione, whom we call the Pandemian;—of necessity must there also be two Loves, the Uranian and Pandemian companions of these goddesses. It is becoming to praise all the Gods, but the attributes which fall to the lot of each may be distinguished and selected. For any particular action whatever in itself is neither good nor evil; what we are now doing—drinking, singing, talking, none of these things are good in themselves, but the mode in which they are done stamps them with its own nature; and that which is done well, is good, and that which is done ill, is evil. Thus, not all love, nor every mode of love is beautiful, or worthy of commendation, but that alone which excites us to love worthily. The Love, therefore, which attends upon Venus Pandemos is, in truth, common to the vulgar, and presides over transient and fortuitous connexions, and is worshipped by the least excellent of mankind. The votaries of this deity seek the body rather than the soul, and the ignorant rather than the wise, disdaining all that is honourable and lovely, and considering how they shall best satisfy their sensual necessities. This Love is derived from the younger goddess, who partakes in her nature both of male and female. But the attendant on the other, the Uranian, whose nature is entirely masculine, is the Love who inspires us with affection, [**II-65**] and exempts us from all wantonness and libertinism. Those who are inspired by this divinity seek the affections of those who are endowed by nature with greater excellence and vigour both of body and mind. And it is easy to distinguish those who especially exist under the influence of this power, by their choosing in early youth as the objects of their love those in whom the intellectual faculties have begun to develop. For those who begin to love in this manner seem to me to be preparing to pass their whole life together in a community of good and evil, and not ever lightly deceiving those who love them, to be faithless to their vows. There ought to be a law that none should love the very young; so much serious affection as this deity enkindles should not be doubtfully bestowed; for the body and mind of those so young are yet unformed, and it is difficult to foretell what will be their future tendencies and power. The good voluntarily impose this law upon themselves, and those vulgar lovers ought to be compelled to the same observance, as we deter them with all the power of the laws from the love of free matrons. For these are the persons whose shameful actions embolden those who

observe their importunity and intemperance to assert, that it is dishonourable to serve and gratify the objects of our love. But no one who does this gracefully and according to law, can justly be liable to the imputation of blame.

"Not only friendship, but philosophy and the practice of the gymnastic exercises, are represented as dishonourable by the tyrannical governments under which the barbarians live. For I imagine it would little conduce to the benefit of the governors, that the governed should be disciplined to lofty thoughts and to the unity and communion of steadfast friendship, of which admirable effects the tyrants of our own country have also learned that Love is the author. For the love of Harmodius and Aristogiton, strengthened into a firm friendship, [**II-66**] dissolved the tyranny. Wherever, therefore, it is declared dishonourable in any case to serve and benefit friends, that law is a mark of the depravity of the legislator, the avarice and tyranny of the rulers, and the cowardice of those who are ruled. Wherever it is simply declared to be honourable without distinction of cases, such a declaration denotes dulness and want of subtlety of mind in the authors of the regulation. Here the degrees of praise or blame to be attributed by law are far better regulated; but it is yet difficult to determine the cases to which they should refer.

"It is evident, however, for one in whom passion is enkindled, it is more honourable to love openly than secretly; and most honourable to love the most excellent and virtuous, even if they should be less beautiful than others. It is honourable for the lover to exhort and sustain the object of his love in virtuous conduct. It is considered honourable to attain the love of those whom we seek, and the contrary shameful; and to facilitate this attainment, opinion has given to the lover the permission of acquiring favour by the most extraordinary devices, which if a person should practise for any purpose besides this, he would incur the severest reproof of philosophy. For if any one desirous of accumulating money, or ambitious of procuring power, or seeking any other advantage, should, like a lover seeking to acquire the favour of his beloved, employ prayers and entreaties in his necessity, and swear such oaths as lovers swear, and sleep before the threshold, and offer to subject himself to such slavery as no slave even would endure; he would be frustrated of the attainment of what he sought, both by his enemies and friends, these reviling him for his flattery, those sharply admonishing him, and taking to themselves the shame of his servility. But there is a certain grace in a lover who does all these things, so that he alone may do them without dishonour. It is commonly said that the Gods accord pardon to the [**II-67**] lover alone if he should break his oath, and that there is no oath by Venus. Thus, as our law declares, both gods and men have given to lovers all possible indulgence.

"The affair, however, I imagine, stands thus: As I have before said, love cannot be considered in itself as either honourable or dishonourable: if it is honourably pursued, it is honourable; if dishonourably, dishonourable: it is dishonourable basely to serve and gratify a worthless person; it is honourable honourably to serve a person of virtue. That Pandemic lover who loves rather the body than the soul is worthless, nor can be constant and consistent, since he has placed his affections on that which has no stability. For as soon as the flower of the form, which was the sole object of his desire, has faded, then he departs and is seen no more; bound by no faith nor shame of his many promises and persuasions. But he who is the lover of virtuous manners is constant during life, since he has placed himself in harmony and desire with that which is consistent with itself.

"These two classes of persons we ought to distinguish with careful examination, so that we may serve and converse with the one and avoid the other; determining, by that inquiry, by what a man is attracted, and for what the object of his love is dear to him. On the same account it is considered as dishonourable to be inspired with love at once, lest time should be wanting to know and approve the character of the object. It is considered dishonourable to be captivated by the allurements of wealth and power, or terrified through injuries to yield up

the affections, or not to despise in the comparison with an unconstrained choice all political influence and personal advantage. For no circumstance is there in wealth or power so invariable and consistent, as that no generous friendship can ever spring up from amongst them. We have an opinion with respect to [**II-68**] lovers which declares that it shall not be considered servile or disgraceful, though the lover should submit himself to any species of slavery for the sake of his beloved. The same opinion holds with respect to those who undergo any degradation for the sake of virtue. And also it is esteemed among us, that if any one chooses to serve and obey another for the purpose of becoming more wise or more virtuous through the intercourse that might thence arise, such willing slavery is not the slavery of a dishonest flatterer. Through this we should consider in the same light a servitude undertaken for the sake of love as one undertaken for the acquirement of wisdom or any other excellence, if indeed the devotion of a lover to his beloved is to be considered a beautiful thing. For when the lover and the beloved have once arrived at the same point, the province of each being distinguished; the one able to assist in the cultivation of the mind and in the acquirement of every other excellence; the other yet requiring education, and seeking the possession of wisdom; then alone, by the union of these conditions, and in no other case, is it honourable for the beloved to yield up the affections to the lover. In this servitude alone there is no disgrace in being deceived and defeated of the object for which it was undertaken, whereas every other is disgraceful, whether we are deceived or no.

"On the same principle, if any one seeks the friendship of another, believing him to be virtuous, for the sake of becoming better through such intercourse and affection, and is deceived, his friend turning out to be worthless, and far from the possession of virtue; yet it is honourable to have been so deceived. For such a one seems to have submitted to a kind of servitude, because he would endure anything for the sake of becoming more virtuous and wise; a disposition of mind eminently beautiful.

[**II-69**]

"This is that Love who attends on the Uranian deity, and is Uranian; the author of innumerable benefits both to the state and to individuals, and by the necessity of whose influence those who love are disciplined into the zeal of virtue. All other loves are the attendants on Venus Pandemos. So much, although unpremeditated, is what I have to deliver on the subject of love, O Phædrus."

Pausanias having ceased (for so the learned teach me to denote the changes of the discourse), Aristodemus said that it came to the turn of Aristophanes to speak; but it happened that, from repletion or some other cause, he had an hiccough which prevented him; so he turned to Eryximachus, the physician, who was reclining close beside him, and said—"Eryximachus, it is but fair that you should cure my hiccough, or speak instead of me until it is over."—"I will do both," said Eryximachus; "I will speak in your turn, and you, when your hiccough has ceased, shall speak in mine. Meanwhile, if you hold your breath some time, it will subside. If not, gargle your throat with water; and if it still continue, take something to stimulate your nostrils, and sneeze; do this once or twice, and even though it should be very violent it will cease."—"Whilst you speak," said Aristophanes, "I will follow your directions."—Eryximachus then began:—

"Since Pausanias, beginning his discourse excellently, placed no fit completion and development to it, I think it necessary to attempt to fill up what he has left unfinished. He has reasoned well in defining love as of a double nature. The science of medicine, to which I have addicted myself, seems to teach me that the love which impels towards those who are beautiful, does not subsist only in the souls of men, but in the bodies also of those of all other living beings which are produced upon earth, and, in a word, in all things which are. So wonderful and mighty is this divinity, and so widely is [**II-70**] his influence extended over all

divine and human things! For the honour of my profession, I will begin by adducing a proof from medicine. The nature of the body contains within itself this double love. For that which is healthy and that which is diseased in a body differ and are unlike: that which is unlike loves and desires that which is unlike. Love, therefore, is different in a sane and in a diseased body. Pausanias has asserted rightly that it is honourable to gratify those things in the body which are good and healthy, and in this consists the skill of the physician; whilst those which are bad and diseased ought to be treated with no indulgence. The science of medicine, in a word, is a knowledge of the love affairs of the body, as they bear relation to repletion and evacuation; and he is the most skilful physician who can trace those operations of the good and evil love, can make the one change places with the other, and attract love into those parts from which he is absent, or expel him from those which he ought not to occupy. He ought to make those things which are most inimical, friendly, and excite them to mutual love. But those things are most inimical which are most opposite to each other; cold to heat, bitterness to sweetness, dryness to moisture. Our progenitor, Æsculapius, as the poets inform us, (and indeed I believe them,) through the skill which he possessed to inspire love and concord in these contending principles, established the science of medicine.

"The gymnastic arts and agriculture, no less than medicine, are exercised under the dominion of this God. Music, as any one may perceive who yields a very slight attention to the subject, originates from the same source; which Heraclitus probably meant, though he could not express his meaning very clearly in words, when he says, 'One though apparently differing, yet so agrees with itself, as the harmony of a lyre and a bow.' It is great absurdity to say that a harmony differs, and [**II-71**] can exist between things whilst they are dissimilar; but probably he meant that from sounds which first differed, like the grave and the acute, and which afterwards agreed, harmony was produced according to musical art. For no harmony can arise from the grave and the acute whilst yet they differ. But harmony is symphony: symphony is, as it were, concord. But it is impossible that concord should subsist between things that differ, so long as they differ. Between things which are discordant and dissimilar there is then no harmony. A rhythm is produced from that which is quick, and that which is slow, first being distinguished and opposed to each other, and then made accordant; so does medicine, no less than music, establish a concord between the objects of its art, producing love and agreement between adverse things.

"Music is then the knowledge of that which relates to love in harmony and system. In the very system of harmony and rhythm, it is easy to distinguish love. The double love is not distinguishable in music itself; but it is required to apply it to the service of mankind by system and harmony, which is called poetry, or the composition of melody; or by the correct use of songs and measures already composed, which is called discipline; then one can be distinguished from the other, by the aid of an extremely skilful artist. And the better love ought to be honoured and preserved for the sake of those who are virtuous, and that the nature of the vicious may be changed through the inspiration of its spirit. This is that beautiful Uranian love, the attendant on the Uranian muse: the Pandemian is the attendant of Polyhymnia; to whose influence we should only so far subject ourselves, as to derive pleasure from it without indulging to excess; in the same manner as, according to our art, we are instructed to seek the pleasures of the table, only so far as we can enjoy them without the consequences of disease. In music, therefore, and [**II-72**] in medicine, and in all other things, human and divine, this double love ought to be traced and discriminated; for it is in all things.

"Even the constitution of the seasons of the year is penetrated with these contending principles. For so often as heat and cold, dryness and moisture, of which I spoke before, are influenced by the more benignant love, and are harmoniously and temperately intermingled with the seasons, they bring maturity and health to men, and to all the other animals and

plants. But when the evil and injurious love assumes the dominion of the seasons of the year, destruction is spread widely abroad. Then pestilence is accustomed to arise, and many other blights and diseases fall upon animals and plants: and hoar frosts, and hails, and mildew on the corn, are produced from that excessive and disorderly love, with which each season of the year is impelled towards the other; the motions of which and the knowledge of the stars, is called astronomy. All sacrifices, and all those things in which divination is concerned (for these things are the links by which is maintained an intercourse and communion between the Gods and men), are nothing else than the science of preservation and right government of Love. For impiety is accustomed to spring up, so soon as any one ceases to serve the more honourable Love, and worship him by the sacrifice of good actions; but submits himself to the influences of the other, in relation to his duties towards his parents, and the Gods, and the living, and the dead. It is the object of divination to distinguish and remedy the effects of these opposite loves; and divination is therefore the author of the friendship of Gods and men, because it affords the knowledge of what in matters of love is lawful or unlawful to men.

"Thus every species of love possesses collectively a various and vast, or rather universal power. But love which incites to the acquirement of its objects [**II-73**] according to virtue and wisdom, possesses the most exclusive dominion, and prepares for his worshippers the highest happiness through the mutual intercourse of social kindness which it promotes among them, and through the benevolence which he attracts to them from the Gods, our superiors.

"Probably in thus praising Love, I have unwillingly omitted many things; but it is your business, O Aristophanes, to fill up all that I have left incomplete; or, if you have imagined any other mode of honouring the divinity: for I observe your hiccough is over."

"Yes," said Aristophanes, "but not before I applied the sneezing. I wonder why the harmonious construction of our body should require such noisy operations as sneezing; for it ceased the moment I sneezed."—"Do you not observe what you do, my good Aristophanes?" said Eryximachus; "you are going to speak, and you predispose us to laughter, and compel me to watch for the first ridiculous idea which you may start in your discourse, when you might have spoken in peace."—"Let me unsay what I have said, then," replied Aristophanes, laughing. "Do not watch me, I entreat you; though I am not afraid of saying what is laughable (since that would be all gain, and quite in the accustomed spirit of my muse), but lest I should say what is ridiculous."—"Do you think to throw your dart, and escape with impunity, Aristophanes? Attend, and what you say be careful you maintain; then, perhaps, if it pleases me, I may dismiss you without question."

"Indeed, Eryximachus," proceeded Aristophanes, "I have designed that my discourse should be very different from yours and that of Pausanias. It seems to me that mankind are by no means penetrated with a conception of the power of Love, or they would have built sumptuous temples and altars, and have established magnificent [**II-74**] rites of sacrifice in his honour; he deserves worship and homage more than all the other Gods, and he has yet received none. For Love is of all the Gods the most friendly to mortals; and the physician of those wounds, whose cure would be the greatest happiness which could be conferred upon the human race. I will endeavour to unfold to you his true power, and you can relate what I declare to others.

"You ought first to know the nature of man, and the adventures he has gone through; for his nature was anciently far different from that which it is at present. First, then, human beings were formerly not divided into two sexes, male and female; there was also a third, common to both the others, the name of which remains, though the sex itself has disappeared. The androgynous sex, both in appearance and in name, was common both to male and female; its name alone remains, which labours under a reproach.

"At the period to which I refer, the form of every human being was round, the back and the sides being circularly joined, and each had four arms and as many legs; two faces fixed upon a round neck, exactly like each other; one head between the two faces; four ears, and everything else as from such proportions it is easy to conjecture. Man walked upright as now, in whatever direction he pleased; but when he wished to go fast he made use of all his eight limbs, and proceeded in a rapid motion by rolling circularly round,—like tumblers, who, with their legs in the air, tumble round and round. We account for the production of three sexes by supposing that, at the beginning, the male was produced from the sun, the female from the earth; and that sex which participated in both sexes, from the moon, by reason of the androgynous nature of the moon. They were round, and their mode of proceeding was round, from the similarity which must needs subsist between them and their parent.

[**II-75**]

"They were strong also, and had aspiring thoughts. They it was who levied war against the Gods; and what Homer writes concerning Ephialtus and Otus, that they sought to ascend heaven and dethrone the Gods, in reality relates to this primitive people. Jupiter and the other Gods debated what was to be done in this emergency. For neither could they prevail on themselves to destroy them, as they had the giants, with thunder, so that the race should be abolished; for in that case they would be deprived of the honours of the sacrifices which they were in the custom of receiving from them; nor could they permit a continuance of their insolence and impiety. Jupiter, with some difficulty having desired silence, at length spoke. 'I think,' said he, 'I have contrived a method by which we may, by rendering the human race more feeble, quell the insolence which they exercise, without proceeding to their utter destruction. I will cut each of them in half; and so they will at once be weaker and more useful on account of their numbers. They shall walk upright on two legs. If they show any more insolence, and will not keep quiet, I will cut them up in half again, so they shall go about hopping on one leg.'

"So saying, he cut human beings in half, as people cut eggs before they salt them, or as I have seen eggs cut with hairs. He ordered Apollo to take each one as he cut him, and turn his face and half his neck towards the operation, so that by contemplating it he might become more cautious and humble; and then, to cure him, Apollo turned the face round, and drawing the skin upon what we now call the belly, like a contracted pouch, and leaving one opening, that which is called the navel, tied it in the middle. He then smoothed many other wrinkles, and moulded the breast with much such an instrument as the leather-cutters use to smooth the skins upon the block. He left only a few wrinkles in the belly, near the navel, to serve as a record [**II-76**] of its former adventure. Immediately after this division, as each desired to possess the other half of himself, these divided people threw their arms around and embraced each other, seeking to grow together; and from this resolution to do nothing without the other half, they died of hunger and weakness: when one half died and the other was left alive, that which was thus left sought the other and folded it to its bosom; whether that half were an entire woman (for we now call it a woman) or a man; and thus they perished. But Jupiter, pitying them, thought of another contrivance. In this manner is generation now produced, by the union of male and female; so that from the embrace of a man and woman the race is propagated.

"From this period, mutual love has naturally existed between human beings; that reconciler and bond of union of their original nature, which seeks to make two one, and to heal the divided nature of man. Every one of us is thus the half of what may be properly termed a man, and like a pselta cut in two, is the imperfect portion of an entire whole, perpetually necessitated to seek the half belonging to him.

"Such as I have described is ever an affectionate lover and a faithful friend, delighting in that which is in conformity with his own nature. Whenever, therefore, any such as I have described are impetuously struck, through the sentiment of their former union, with love and desire and the want of community, they are unwilling to be divided even for a moment. These are they who devote their whole lives to each other, with a vain and inexpressible longing to obtain from each other something they know not what; for it is not merely the sensual delights of their intercourse for the sake of which they dedicate themselves to each other with such serious affection; but the soul of each manifestly thirsts for, from the other, something which there are no words to describe, and divines that which it seeks, and traces [**II-77**] obscurely the footsteps of its obscure desire. If Vulcan should say to persons thus affected, 'My good people, what is it that you want with one another?' And if, while they were hesitating what to answer, he should proceed to ask, 'Do you not desire the closest union and singleness to exist between you, so that you may never be divided night or day? If so, I will melt you together, and make you grow into one, so that both in life and death ye may be undivided. Consider, is this what you desire? Will it content you if you become that which I propose?' We all know that no one would refuse such an offer, but would at once feel that this was what he had ever sought; and intimately to mix and melt and to be melted together with his beloved, so that one should be made out of two.

"The cause of this desire is, that according to our original nature, we were once entire. The desire and the pursuit of integrity and union is that which we all love. First, as I said, we were entire, but now we have been dwindled through our own weakness, as the Arcadians by the Lacedemonians. There is reason to fear, if we are guilty of any additional impiety towards the Gods, that we may be cut in two again, and may go about like those figures painted on the columns, divided through the middle of our nostrils, as thin as lispæ. On which account every man ought to be exhorted to pay due reverence to the Gods, that we may escape so severe a punishment, and obtain those things which Love, our general and commander, incites us to desire; against whom let none rebel by exciting the hatred of the Gods. For if we continue on good terms with them, we may discover and possess those lost and concealed objects of our love; a good-fortune which now befalls to few.

"I assert, then, that the happiness of all, both men and women, consists singly in the fulfilment of their love, and in that possession of its objects by which we [**II-78**] are in some degree restored to our ancient nature. If this be the completion of felicity, that must necessarily approach nearest to it, in which we obtain the possession and society of those whose natures most intimately accord with our own. And if we would celebrate any God as the author of this benefit, we should justly celebrate Love with hymns of joy; who, in our present condition, brings good assistance in our necessity, and affords great hopes, if we persevere in piety towards the Gods, that he will restore us to our original state, and confer on us the complete happiness alone suited to our nature.

"Such, Eryximachus, is my discourse on the subject of Love; different indeed from yours, which I nevertheless entreat you not to turn into ridicule, that we may not interrupt what each has separately to deliver on the subject."

"I will refrain at present," said Eryximachus, "for your discourse delighted me. And if I did not know that Socrates and Agathon were profoundly versed in the science of love affairs, I should fear that they had nothing new to say, after so many and such various imaginations. As it is, I confide in the fertility of their geniuses."—"Your part of the contest, at least, was strenuously fought, Eryximachus," said Socrates, "but if you had been in the situation in which I am, or rather shall be, after the discourse of Agathon, like me, you would then have reason to fear, and be reduced to your wits' end."—"Socrates," said Agathon, "wishes to confuse me with the enchantments of his wit, sufficiently confused already with the expectation I see in the assembly in favour of my discourse."—"I must have lost my

memory, Agathon," replied Socrates, "if I imagine that you could be disturbed by a few private persons, after having witnessed your firmness and courage in ascending the rostrum with the actors, and in calmly reciting your compositions in the presence of so great an assembly as that which decreed you the [**II-79**] prize of tragedy."—"What then, Socrates," retorted Agathon, "do you think me so full of the theatre as to be ignorant that the judgment of a few wise is more awful than that of a multitude of others, to one who rightly balances the value of their suffrages?"—"I should judge ill indeed, Agathon," answered Socrates, "in thinking you capable of any rude and unrefined conception, for I well know that if you meet with any whom you consider wise, you esteem such alone of more value than all others. But we are far from being entitled to this distinction, for we were also of that assembly, and to be numbered among the rest. But should you meet with any who are really wise, you would be careful to say nothing in their presence which you thought they would not approve—is it not so?"—"Certainly," replied Agathon.—"You would not then exercise the same caution in the presence of the multitude in which they were included?"—"My dear Agathon," said Phædrus, interrupting him, "if you answer all the questions of Socrates, they will never have an end; he will urge them without conscience so long as he can get any person, especially one who is so beautiful, to dispute with him. I own it delights me to hear Socrates discuss; but at present, I must see that Love is not defrauded of the praise, which it is my province to exact from each of you. Pay the God his due, and then reason between yourselves if you will."

"Your admonition is just, Phædrus," replied Agathon, "nor need any reasoning I hold with Socrates impede me: we shall find many future opportunities for discussion. I will begin my discourse then; first having defined what ought to be the subject of it. All who have already spoken seem to me not so much to have praised Love, as to have felicitated mankind on the many advantages of which that deity is the cause; what he is, the author of these great benefits, none have yet declared. There is one mode alone of celebration which [**II-80**] would comprehend the whole topic, namely, first to declare what are those benefits, and then what he is who is the author of those benefits, which are the subject of our discourse. Love ought first to be praised, and then his gifts declared. I assert, then, that although all the Gods are immortally happy, Love, if I dare trust my voice to express so awful a truth, is the happiest, and most excellent, and the most beautiful. That he is the most beautiful is evident; first, O Phædrus, from this circumstance, that he is the youngest of the Gods; and, secondly, from his fleetness, and from his repugnance to all that is old; for he escapes with the swiftness of wings from old age; a thing in itself sufficiently swift, since it overtakes us sooner than there is need; and which Love, who delights in the intercourse of the young, hates, and in no manner can be induced to enter into community with. The ancient proverb, which says that like is attracted by like, applies to the attributes of Love. I concede many things to you, O Phædrus, but this I do not concede, that Love is more ancient than Saturn and Jupiter. I assert that he is not only the youngest of the Gods, but invested with everlasting youth. Those ancient deeds among the Gods recorded by Hesiod and Parmenides, if their relations are to be considered as true, were produced not by Love, but by Necessity. For if Love had been then in Heaven, those violent and sanguinary crimes never would have taken place; but there would ever have subsisted that affection and peace, in which the Gods now live, under the influence of Love.

"He is young, therefore, and being young is tender and soft. There were need of some poet like Homer to celebrate the delicacy and tenderness of Love. For Homer says, that the goddess Calamity is delicate, and that her feet are tender. 'Her feet are soft,' he says, 'for she treads not upon the ground, but makes her path upon the heads of men.' He gives as an evidence of [**II-81**] her tenderness, that she walks not upon that which is hard, but that which is soft. The same evidence is sufficient to make manifest the tenderness of Love. For Love walks not upon the earth, nor over the heads of men, which are not indeed very soft; but he dwells within, and treads on the softest of existing things, having established his habitation

within the souls and inmost nature of Gods and men; not indeed in all souls—for wherever he chances to find a hard and rugged disposition, there he will not inhabit, but only where it is most soft and tender. Of needs must he be the most delicate of all things, who touches lightly with his feet only the softest parts of those things which are the softest of all.

"He is then the youngest and the most delicate of all divinities; and in addition to this, he is, as it were, the most moist and liquid. For if he were otherwise, he could not, as he does, fold himself around everything, and secretly flow out and into every soul. His loveliness, that which Love possesses far beyond all other things, is a manifestation of the liquid and flowing symmetry of his form; for between deformity and Love there is eternal contrast and repugnance. His life is spent among flowers, and this accounts for the immortal fairness of his skin; for the winged Love rests not in his flight on any form, or within any soul the flower of whose loveliness is faded, but there remains most willingly where is the odour and radiance of blossoms, yet unwithered. Concerning the beauty of the God, let this be sufficient, though many things must remain unsaid. Let us next consider the virtue and power of Love.

"What is most admirable in Love is, that he neither inflicts nor endures injury in his relations either with Gods or men. Nor if he suffers any thing does he suffer it through violence, nor doing any thing does he act it with violence, for Love is never even touched with [**II-82**] violence. Every one willingly administers every thing to Love; and that which every one voluntarily concedes to another, the laws, which are the kings of the republic, decree that is just for him to possess. In addition to justice, Love participates in the highest temperance; for if temperance is defined to be the being superior to and holding under dominion pleasures and desires; then Love, than whom no pleasure is more powerful, and who is thus more powerful than all persuasions and delights, must be excellently temperate. In power and valour Mars cannot contend with Love: the love of Venus possesses Mars; the possessor is always superior to the possessed, and he who subdues the most powerful must of necessity be the most powerful of all.

"The justice and temperance and valour of the God have been thus declared;—there remains to exhibit his wisdom. And first, that, like Eryximachus, I may honour my own profession, the God is a wise poet; so wise that he can even make a poet one who was not before: for every one, even if before he were ever so undisciplined, becomes a poet as soon as he is touched by Love;—a sufficient proof that Love is a great poet, and well skilled in that science according to the discipline of music. For what any one possesses not, or knows not, that can he neither give nor teach another. And who will deny that the divine poetry, by which all living things are produced upon the earth, is not harmonised by the wisdom of Love? Is it not evident that Love was the author of all the arts of life with which we are acquainted, and that he whose teacher has been Love, becomes eminent and illustrious, whilst he who knows not Love, remains forever unregarded and obscure? Apollo invented medicine, and divination, and archery, under the guidance of desire and Love; so that Apollo was the disciple of Love. Through him the Muses discovered the arts of literature, and Vulcan that of moulding brass, and Minerva the loom, and [**II-83**] Jupiter the mystery of the dominion which he now exercises over gods and men. So were the Gods taught and disciplined by the love of that which is beautiful; for there is no love towards deformity.

"At the origin of things, as I have before said, many fearful deeds are reported to have been done among the Gods, on account of the dominion of Necessity. But so soon as this deity sprang forth from the desire which forever tends in the universe towards that which is lovely, then all blessings descended upon all living things, human and divine. Love seems to me, O Phædrus, a divinity the most beautiful and the best of all, and the author to all others of the excellencies with which his own nature is endowed. Nor can I restrain the poetic enthusiasm which takes possession of my discourse, and bids me declare that Love is the

divinity who creates peace among men, and calm upon the sea, the windless silence of storms, repose and sleep in sadness. Love divests us of all alienation from each other, and fills our vacant hearts with overflowing sympathy; he gathers us together in such social meetings as we now delight to celebrate, our guardian and our guide in dances, and sacrifices, and feasts. Yes, Love, who showers benignity upon the world, and before whose presence all harsh passions flee and perish; the author of all soft affections; the destroyer of all ungentle thoughts; merciful, mild; the object of the admiration of the wise, and the delight of gods; possessed by the fortunate, and desired by the unhappy, therefore unhappy because they possess him not; the father of grace, and delicacy, and gentleness, and delight, and persuasion, and desire; the cherisher of all that is good, the abolisher of all evil; our most excellent pilot, defence, saviour and guardian in labour and in fear, in desire and in reason; the ornament and governor of all things human and divine; the best, the loveliest; in whose footsteps every one ought to follow, celebrating him excellently in song, and [**II-84**] bearing each his part in that divinest harmony which Love sings to all things which live and are, soothing the troubled minds of Gods and men. This, O Phædrus, is what I have to offer in praise of the divinity; partly composed, indeed, of thoughtless and playful fancies, and partly of such serious ones as I could well command."

No sooner had Agathon ceased, than a loud murmur of applause arose from all present; so becomingly had the fair youth spoken, both in praise of the God, and in extenuation of himself. Then Socrates, addressing Eryximachus, said, "Was not my fear reasonable, son of Acumenus? Did I not divine what has, in fact, happened,—that Agathon's discourse would be so wonderfully beautiful, as to preoccupy all interest in what I should say?"—"You, indeed, divined well so far, O Socrates," said Eryximachus, "that Agathon would speak eloquently, but not that, therefore, you would be reduced to any difficulty."—"How, my good friend, can I or any one else be otherwise than reduced to difficulty, who speak after a discourse so various and so eloquent, and which otherwise had been sufficiently wonderful, if, at the conclusion, the splendour of the sentences, and the choice selection of the expressions, had not struck all the hearers with astonishment; so that I, who well know that I can never say anything nearly so beautiful as this, would, if there had been any escape, have run away for shame. The story of Gorgias came into my mind, and I was afraid lest in reality I should suffer what Homer describes; and lest Agathon, scanning my discourse with the head of the eloquent Gorgias, should turn me to stone for speechlessness. I immediately perceived how ridiculously I had engaged myself with you to assume a part in rendering praise to love, and had boasted that I was well skilled in amatory matters, being so ignorant of the manner in which it is becoming to render him [**II-85**] honour, as I now perceive myself to be. I, in my simplicity, imagined that the truth ought to be spoken concerning each of the topics of our praise, and that it would be sufficient, choosing those which are the most honourable to the God, to place them in as luminous an arrangement as we could. I had, therefore, great hopes that I should speak satisfactorily, being well aware that I was acquainted with the true foundations of the praise which we have engaged to render. But since, as it appears, our purpose has been, not to render Love his due honour, but to accumulate the most beautiful and the greatest attributes of his divinity, whether they in truth belong to it or not, and that the proposed question is not how Love ought to be praised, but how we should praise him most eloquently, my attempt must of necessity fail. It is on this account, I imagine, that in your discourses you have attributed everything to Love, and have described him to be the author of such and so great effects as, to those who are ignorant of his true nature, may exhibit him as the most beautiful and the best of all things. Not, indeed, to those who know the truth. Such praise has a splendid and imposing effect, but as I am unacquainted with the art of rendering it, my mind, which could not foresee what would be required of me, absolves me from that which my tongue promised. Farewell, then, for such praise I can never render.

"But if you desire, I will speak what I feel to be true; and that I may not expose myself to ridicule, I entreat you to consider that I speak without entering into competition with those who have preceded me. Consider, then, Phædrus, whether you will exact from me such a discourse, containing the mere truth with respect to Love, and composed of such unpremeditated expressions as may chance to offer themselves to my mind."—Phædrus and the rest bade him speak in the manner which he judged most befitting.—"Permit me, [**II-86**] then, O Phædrus, to ask Agathon a few questions, so that, confirmed by his agreement with me, I may proceed."—"Willingly," replied Phædrus, "ask."—Then Socrates thus began:—

"I applaud, dear Agathon, the beginning of your discourse, where you say we ought first to define and declare what Love is, and then his works. This rule I particularly approve. But, come, since you have given us a discourse of such beauty and majesty concerning Love, you are able, I doubt not, to explain this question, whether Love is the love of something or nothing? I do not ask you of what parents Love is; for the inquiry, of whether Love is the love of any father or mother, would be sufficiently ridiculous. But if I were asking you to describe that which a father is, I should ask, not whether a father was the love of any one, but whether a father was the father of any one or not; you would undoubtedly reply, that a father was the father of a son or daughter; would you not?"—"Assuredly."—"You would define a mother in the same manner?"—"Without doubt."—"Yet bear with me, and answer a few more questions, for I would learn from you that which I wish to know. If I should inquire, in addition, is not a brother, through the very nature of his relation, the brother of some one?"—"Certainly."—"Of a brother or sister, is he not?"—"Without question."—"Try to explain to me then the nature of Love; Love is the love of something or nothing?"—"Of something, certainly."

"Observe and remember this concession. Tell me yet farther, whether Love desires that of which it is the Love or not?"—"It desires it, assuredly."—"Whether possessing that which it desires and loves, or not possessing it, does it desire and love?"—"Not possessing it, I should imagine."—"Observe now, whether it does not appear, that, of necessity, desire desires that which it wants and does not possess, and no longer [**II-87**] desires that which it no longer wants: this appears to me, Agathon, of necessity to be; how does it appear to you?"—"It appears so to me also."—"Would any one who was already illustrious, desire to be illustrious; would any one already strong, desire to be strong? From what has already been conceded, it follows that he would not. If any one already strong, should desire to be strong; or any one already swift, should desire to be swift; or any one already healthy, should desire to be healthy, it must be concluded that they still desired the advantages of which they already seemed possessed. To destroy the foundation of this error, observe, Agathon, that each of these persons must possess the several advantages in question, at the moment present to our thoughts, whether he will or no. And, now, is it possible that those advantages should be at that time the objects of his desire? For, if any one should say, being in health, 'I desire to be in health;' being rich, 'I desire to be rich, and thus still desire those things which I already possess;' we might say to him, 'You, my friend, possess health, and strength, and riches; you do not desire to possess now, but to continue to possess them in future; for, whether you will or no, they now belong to you. Consider then, whether, when you say that you desire things present to you, and in your own possession, you say anything else than that you desire the advantages to be for the future also in your possession.' What else could he reply?"—"Nothing, indeed."—"Is not Love, then, the love of that which is not within its reach, and which cannot hold in security, for the future, those things of which it obtains a present and transitory possession?"—"Evidently."—"Love, therefore, and everything else that desires anything, desires that which is absent and beyond his reach, that which it has not, that which is not itself, that which it wants; such are the things of which there are desire and love?"—"Assuredly."

"Come," said Socrates, "let us review your concessions. Is Love anything else than the love first of something; and, secondly, of those things of which it has need?"—"Nothing."—"Now, remember of those things you said in your discourse, that Love was the love—if you wish I will remind you. I think you said something of this kind, that all the affairs of the gods were admirably disposed through the love of the things which are beautiful; for, there was no love of things deformed; did you not say so?"—"I confess that I did."—"You said what was most likely to be true, my friend; and if the matter be so, the love of beauty must be one thing, and the love of deformity another."—"Certainly."—"It is conceded, then, that Love loves that which he wants but possesses not?"—"Yes, certainly."—"But Love wants and does not possess beauty?"—"Indeed it must necessarily follow."—"What, then! call you that beautiful which has need of beauty and possesses not?"—"Assuredly no."—"Do you still assert, then, that Love is beautiful, if all that we have said be true?"—"Indeed, Socrates," said Agathon, "I am in danger of being convicted of ignorance, with respect to all that I then spoke."—"You spoke most eloquently, my dear Agathon; but bear with my questions yet a moment. You admit that things which are good are also beautiful?"—"No doubt."—"If Love, then, be in want of beautiful things, and things which are good are beautiful, he must be in want of things which are good?"—"I cannot refute your arguments, Socrates."—"You cannot refute truth, my dear Agathon: to refute Socrates is nothing difficult.

"But I will dismiss these questionings. At present let me endeavour, to the best of my power, to repeat to you, on the basis of the points which have been agreed upon between me and Agathon, a discourse concerning Love, which I formerly heard from the prophetess Diotima, who was profoundly skilled in this and many [**II-89**] other doctrines, and who, ten years before the pestilence, procured to the Athenians, through their sacrifices, a delay of the disease; for it was she who taught me the science of things relating to Love.

"As you well remarked, Agathon, we ought to declare who and what is Love, and then his works. It is easiest to relate them in the same order as the foreign prophetess observed when, questioning me, she related them. For I said to her much the same things that Agathon has just said to me—that Love was a great deity, and that he was beautiful; and she refuted me with the same reasons as I have employed to refute Agathon, compelling me to infer that he was neither beautiful nor good, as I said.—'What then,' I objected, 'O Diotima, is Love ugly and evil?'—'Good words, I entreat you,' said Diotima; 'do you think that every thing which is not beautiful, must of necessity be ugly?'—'Certainly.'—'And everything that is not wise, ignorant? Do you not perceive that there is something between ignorance and wisdom?'—'What is that?'—'To have a right opinion or conjecture. Observe, that this kind of opinion, for which no reason can be rendered, cannot be called knowledge; for how can that be called knowledge, which is without evidence or reason? Nor ignorance, on the other hand; for how can that be called ignorance which arrives at the persuasion of that which it really is? A right opinion is something between understanding and ignorance.'—I confessed that what she alleged was true.—'Do not then say,' she continued, 'that what is not beautiful is of necessity deformed, nor what is not good is of necessity evil; nor, since you have confessed that Love is neither beautiful nor good, infer, therefore, that he is deformed or evil, but rather something intermediate.'

" 'But,' I said, 'love is confessed by all to be a great God.'—'Do you mean, when you say all, all those who know, or those who know not, what they say?'—'All [**II-90**] collectively.'—'And how can that be, Socrates?' said she laughing; 'how can he be acknowledged to be a great God, by those who assert that he is not even a God at all?'—'And who are they?' I said—'You for one, and I for another.'—'How can you say that, Diotima?'—'Easily,' she replied, 'and with truth; for tell me, do you not own that all the Gods are beautiful and happy? or will you presume to maintain that any God is

otherwise?'—'By Jupiter, not I!'—'Do you not call those alone happy who possess all things that are beautiful and good?'—'Certainly.'—'You have confessed that Love, through his desire for things beautiful and good, possesses not those materials of happiness.'—'Indeed such was my concession.'—But how can we conceive a God to be without the possession of what is beautiful and good?'—'In no manner, I confess.'—'Observe, then, that you do not consider Love to be a God.'—'What, then,' I said, 'is Love a mortal?'—'By no means.'—'But what, then?'—'Like those things which I have before instanced, he is neither mortal nor immortal, but something intermediate.'—'What is that, O Diotima?'—'A great dæmon, Socrates; and everything dæmoniacal holds an intermediate place between what is divine and what is mortal.'

" 'What is his power and nature?' I inquired.—'He interprets and makes a communication between divine and human things, conveying the prayers and sacrifices of men to the Gods, and communicating the commands and directions concerning the mode of worship most pleasing to them, from Gods to men. He fills up that intermediate space between these two classes of beings, so as to bind together, by his own power, the whole universe of things. Through him subsist all divination, and the science of sacred things as it relates to sacrifices, and expiations, and disenchantments, and prophecy, and magic. The divine nature cannot immediately [**II-91**] communicate with what is human, but all that intercourse and converse which is conceded by the Gods to men, both whilst they sleep and when they wake, subsists through the intervention of Love; and he who is wise in the science of this intercourse is supremely happy, and participates in the dæmoniacal nature; whilst he who is wise in any other science or art, remains a mere ordinary slave. These dæmons are, indeed, many and various, and one of them is Love.'

" 'Who are the parents of Love?' I inquired.—'The history of what you ask,' replied Diotima, 'is somewhat long; nevertheless I will explain it to you. On the birth of Venus the Gods celebrated a great feast, and among them came Plenty, the son of Metis. After supper, Poverty, observing the profusion, came to beg, and stood beside the door. Plenty being drunk with nectar, for wine was not yet invented, went out into Jupiter's garden, and fell into a deep sleep. Poverty wishing to have a child by Plenty, on account of her low estate, lay down by him, and from his embraces conceived Love. Love is, therefore, the follower and servant of Venus, because he was conceived at her birth, and because by nature he is a lover of all that is beautiful, and Venus was beautiful. And since Love is the child of Poverty and Plenty, his nature and fortune participate in that of his parents. He is for ever poor, and so far from being delicate and beautiful, as mankind imagine, he is squalid and withered; he flies low along the ground, and is homeless and unsandalled; he sleeps without covering before the doors, and in the unsheltered streets; possessing thus far his mother's nature, that he is ever the companion of want. But, inasmuch as he participates in that of his father, he is for ever scheming to obtain things which are good and beautiful; he is fearless, vehement, and strong; a dreadful hunter, for ever weaving some new contrivance; exceedingly cautious and prudent, and full of resources; he is also, [**II-92**] during his whole existence, a philosopher, a powerful enchanter, a wizard, and a subtle sophist. And, as his nature is neither mortal nor immortal, on the same day when he is fortunate and successful, he will at one time flourish, and then die away, and then, according to his father's nature, again revive. All that he acquires perpetually flows away from him, so that Love is never either rich or poor, and holding for ever an intermediate state between ignorance and wisdom. The case stands thus;—no God philosophises or desires to become wise, for he is wise; nor, if there exist any other being who is wise, does he philosophise. Nor do the ignorant philosophise, for they desire not to become wise; for this is the evil of ignorance, that he who has neither intelligence, nor virtue, nor delicacy of sentiment, imagines that he possesses all those things sufficiently. He seeks not, therefore, that possession, of whose want he is not aware.'—'Who, then, O Diotima,' I inquired, 'are philosophers, if they are neither the ignorant nor the wise?'—'It is evident,

even to a child, that they are those intermediate persons, among whom is Love. For Wisdom is one of the most beautiful of all things; Love is that which thirsts for the beautiful, so that Love is of necessity a philosopher, philosophy being an intermediate state between, ignorance and wisdom. His parentage accounts for his condition, being the child of a wise and well provided father, and of a mother both ignorant and poor.

" 'Such is the dæmoniacal nature, my dear Socrates; nor do I wonder at your error concerning Love, for you thought, as I conjecture from what you say, that Love was not the lover but the beloved, and thence, well concluded that he must be supremely beautiful; for that which is the object of Love must indeed be fair, and delicate, and perfect, and most happy; but Love inherits, as I have declared, a totally opposite nature.'—'Your words have persuasion in them, O stranger,' [**II-93**] I said; 'be it as you say. But this Love, what advantages does he afford to men?'—'I will proceed to explain it to you, Socrates. Love being such and so produced as I have described, is, indeed, as you say, the love of things which are beautiful. But if any one should ask us, saying: O Socrates and Diotima, why is Love the love of beautiful things? Or, in plainer words, what does the lover of that which is beautiful, love in the object of his love, and seek from it?'—'He seeks,' I said, interrupting her, 'the property and possession of it.'—'But that,' she replied, 'might still be met with another question, What has he, who possesses that which is beautiful?'—'Indeed, I cannot immediately reply.'—'But, if changing the beautiful for good, any one should inquire,—I ask, O Socrates, what is that which he who loves that which is good, loves in the object of his love?'—'To be in his possession,' I replied.—'And what has he, who has the possession of good?'—'This question is of easier solution, he is happy.'—'Those who are happy, then, are happy through the possession; and it is useless to inquire what he desires, who desires to be happy; the question seems to have a complete reply. But do you think that this wish and this love are common to all men, and that all desire that that which is good should be for ever present to them?'—'Certainly, common to all.'—'Why do we not say then, Socrates, that every one loves? if, indeed, all love perpetually the same thing? But we say that some love, and some do not.'—'Indeed I wonder why it is so.'—'Wonder not,' said Diotima, 'for we select a particular species of love, and apply to it distinctively, the appellation of that which is universal.'——

" 'Give me an example of such a select application.'—'Poetry; which is a general name signifying every cause whereby anything proceeds from that which is not, into that which is; so that the exercise of every [**II-94**] inventive art is poetry, and all such artists poets. Yet they are not called poets, but distinguished by other names; and one portion or species of poetry, that which has relation to music and rhythm, is divided from all others, and known by the name belonging to all. For this is alone properly called poetry, and those who exercise the art of this species of poetry, poets. So with respect to Love. Love is indeed universally all that earnest desire for the possession of happiness and that which is good; the greatest and the subtlest love, and which inhabits the heart of every living being; but those who seek this object through the acquirement of wealth, or the exercise of the gymnastic arts, or philosophy, are not said to love, nor are called lovers; one species alone is called love, and those alone are said to be lovers, and to love, who seek the attainment of the universal desire through one species of love, which is peculiarly distinguished by the name belonging to the whole. It is asserted by some, that they love, who are seeking the lost half of their divided being. But I assert, that Love is neither the love of half nor of the whole, unless, my friend, it meets with that which is good; since men willingly cut off their own hands and feet, if they think that they are the cause of evil to them. Nor do they cherish and embrace that which may belong to themselves, merely because it is their own; unless, indeed, any one should choose to say, that that which is good is attached to his own nature and is his own, whilst that which is evil is foreign and accidental; but love nothing but that which is good. Does it not appear so to you?'—'Assuredly.'—'Can we then simply affirm that men love that which is good?'—

'Without doubt.'—'What, then, must we not add, that, in addition to loving that which is good, they love that it should be present to themselves?'—'Indeed that must be added.'—'And not merely that it should be present, but that it should ever be present?'—'This also must be added.'

[**II-95**]

" 'Love, then, is collectively the desire in men that good should be for ever present to them.'—'Most true.'—'Since this is the general definition of Love, can you explain in what mode of attaining its object, and in what species of actions, does Love peculiarly consist?'—'If I knew what you ask, O Diotima, I should not have so much wondered at your wisdom, nor have sought you out for the purpose of deriving improvement from your instructions.'—'I will tell you,' she replied: 'Love is the desire of generation in the beautiful, both with relation to the body and the soul.'—'I must be a diviner to comprehend what you say, for, being such as I am, I confess that I do not understand it.'—'But I will explain it more clearly. The bodies and the souls of all human beings are alike pregnant with their future progeny, and when we arrive at a certain age, our nature impels us to bring forth and propagate. This nature is unable to produce in that which is deformed, but it can produce in that which is beautiful. The intercourse of the male and female in generation, a divine work, through pregnancy and production, is, as it were, something immortal in mortality. These things cannot take place in that which is incongruous; for that which is deformed is incongruous, but that which is beautiful is congruous with what is mortal and divine. Beauty is, therefore, the fate, and the Juno Lucina to generation. Wherefore, whenever that which is pregnant with the generative principle, approaches that which is beautiful, it becomes transported with delight, and is poured forth in overflowing pleasure, and propagates. But when it approaches that which is deformed it is contracted by sadness, and being repelled and checked, it does not produce, but retains unwillingly that with which it is pregnant. Wherefore, to one pregnant, and, as it were, already bursting with the load of his desire, the impulse towards that which is beautiful is intense, on account of the great pain of retaining that which he has conceived. [**II-96**] Love, then, O Socrates, is not as you imagine the love of the beautiful.'—'What, then?'—'Of generation and production in the beautiful.'—'Why then of generation?'—'Generation is something eternal and immortal in mortality. It necessarily, from what has been confessed, follows, that we must desire immortality together with what is good, since Love is the desire that good be for ever present to us. Of necessity Love must also be the desire of immortality.'

"Diotima taught me all this doctrine in the discourse we had together concerning Love; and, in addition, she inquired, 'What do you think, Socrates, is the cause of this love and desire? Do you not perceive how all animals, both those of the earth and of the air, are affected when they desire the propagation of their species, affected even to weakness and disease by the impulse of their love; first, longing to be mixed with each other, and then seeking nourishment for their offspring, so that the feeblest are ready to contend with the strongest in obedience to this law, and to die for the sake of their young, or to waste away with hunger, and do or suffer anything so that they may not want nourishment. It might be said that human beings do these things through reason, but can you explain why other animals are thus affected through love?'—I confessed that I did not know.—'Do you imagine yourself,' said she, 'to be skilful in the science of Love, if you are ignorant of these things?'—'As I said before, O Diotima, I come to you, well knowing how much I am in need of a teacher. But explain to me, I entreat you, the cause of these things, and of the other things relating to Love.'—'If,' said Diotima, 'you believe that Love is of the same nature as we have mutually agreed upon, wonder not that such are its effects. For the mortal nature seeks, so far as it is able, to become deathless and eternal. But it can only accomplish this desire by generation, which for ever leaves another new in place [**II-97**] of the old. For,

although each human being be severally said to live, and be the same from youth to old age, yet, that which is called the same, never contains within itself the same things, but always is becoming new by the loss and change of that which it possessed before; both the hair and the flesh, and the bones, and the entire body.

" 'And not only does this change take place in the body, but also with respect to the soul. Manners, morals, opinions, desires, pleasures, sorrows, fears; none of these ever remain unchanged in the same persons; but some die away, and others are produced. And, what is yet more strange is, that not only does some knowledge spring up, and another decay, and that we are never the same with respect to our knowledge, but that each several object of our thoughts suffers the same revolution. That which is called meditation, or the exercise of memory, is the science of the escape or departure of memory; for, forgetfulness is the going out of knowledge; and meditation, calling up a new memory in the place of that which has departed, preserves knowledge; so that, though for ever displaced and restored, it seems to be the same. In this manner every thing mortal is preserved: not that it is constant and eternal, like that which is divine; but that in the place of what has grown old and is departed, it leaves another new like that which it was itself. By this contrivance, O Socrates, does what is mortal, the body and all other things, partake of immortality; that which is immortal, is immortal in another manner. Wonder not, then, if every thing by nature cherishes that which was produced from itself, for this earnest Love is a tendency towards eternity.'

"Having heard this discourse, I was astonished, and asked, 'Can these things be true, O wisest Diotima?' And she, like an accomplished sophist, said, 'Know well, O Socrates, that if you only regard that love of [**II-98**] glory which inspires men, you will wonder at your own unskilfulness in not having discovered all that I now declare. Observe with how vehement a desire they are affected to become illustrious and to prolong their glory into immortal time, to attain which object, far more ardently than for the sake of their children, all men are ready to engage in many dangers, and expend their fortunes, and submit to any labours and incur any death. Do you believe that Alcestis would have died in the place of Admetus, or Achilles for the revenge of Patroclus, or Codrus for the kingdom of his posterity, if they had not believed that the immortal memory of their actions, which we now cherish, would have remained after their death? Far otherwise; all such deeds are done for the sake of ever-living virtue, and this immortal glory which they have obtained; and inasmuch as any one is of an excellent nature, so much the more is he impelled to attain this reward. For they love what is immortal.

" 'Those whose bodies alone are pregnant with this principle of immortality are attracted by women, seeking through the production of children what they imagine to be happiness and immortality and an enduring remembrance; but they whose souls are far more pregnant than their bodies, conceive and produce that which is more suitable to the soul. What is suitable to the soul? Intelligence, and every other power and excellence of the mind; of which all poets, and all other artists who are creative and inventive, are the authors. The greatest and most admirable wisdom is that which regulates the government of families and states, and which is called moderation and justice. Whosoever, therefore, from his youth feels his soul pregnant with the conception of these excellences, is divine; and when due time arrives, desires to bring forth; and wandering about, he seeks the beautiful in which he may propagate what he has conceived; for there is no generation in [**II-99**] that which is deformed; he embraces those bodies which are beautiful rather than those which are deformed, in obedience to the principle which is within him, which is ever seeking to perpetuate itself. And if he meets, in conjunction with loveliness of form, a beautiful, generous, and gentle soul, he embraces both at once, and immediately undertakes to educate this object of his love, and is inspired with an overflowing persuasion to declare what is virtue, and what he ought to be who would attain to its possession, and what are the duties which it exacts. For, by the intercourse with, and as it were, the very touch of that which is beautiful, he brings forth and

produces what he had formerly conceived; and nourishes and educates that which is thus produced together with the object of his love, whose image, whether absent or present, is never divided from his mind. So that those who are thus united are linked by a nobler community and a firmer love, as being the common parents of a lovelier and more endearing progeny than the parents of other children. And every one who considers what posterity Homer and Hesiod, and the other great poets, have left behind them, the sources of their own immortal memory and renown, or what children of his soul Lycurgus has appointed to be the guardians, not only of Lacedæmon, but of all Greece; or what an illustrious progeny of laws Solon has produced, and how many admirable achievements, both among the Greeks and Barbarians, men have left as the pledges of that love which subsisted between them and the beautiful, would choose rather to be the parent of such children than those in a human shape. For divine honours have often been rendered to them on account of such children, but on account of those in human shape, never.

" 'Your own meditation, O Socrates, might perhaps have initiated you in all these things which I have already taught you on the subject of Love. But those [**II-100**] perfect and sublime ends to which these are only the means, I know not that you would have been competent to discover. I will declare them, therefore, and will render them as intelligible as possible: do you meanwhile strain all your attention to trace the obscure depth of the subject. He who aspires to love rightly, ought from his earliest youth to seek an intercourse with beautiful forms, and first to make a single form the object of his love, and therein to generate intellectual excellences. He ought, then, to consider that beauty in whatever form it resides is the brother of that beauty which subsists in another form; and if he ought to pursue that which is beautiful in form, it would be absurd to imagine that beauty is not one and the same thing in all forms, and would therefore remit much of his ardent preference towards one, through his perception of the multitude of claims upon his love. In addition, he would consider the beauty which is in souls more excellent than that which is in form. So that one endowed with an admirable soul, even though the flower of the form were withered, would suffice him as the object of his love and care, and the companion with whom he might seek and produce such conclusions as tend to the improvement of youth; so that it might be led to observe the beauty and the conformity which there is in the observation of its duties and the laws, and to esteem little the mere beauty of the outward form. He would then conduct his pupil to science, so that he might look upon the loveliness of wisdom; and that contemplating thus the universal beauty, no longer would he unworthily and meanly enslave himself to the attractions of one form in love, nor one subject of discipline or science, but would turn towards the wide ocean of intellectual beauty, and from the sight of the lovely and majestic forms which it contains, would abundantly bring forth his conceptions in philosophy; until, strengthened and confirmed, he should at [**II-101**] length steadily contemplate one science, which is the science of this universal beauty.

" 'Attempt, I entreat you, to mark what I say with as keen an observation as you can. He who has been disciplined to this point in Love, by contemplating beautiful objects gradually, and in their order, now arriving at the end of all that concerns Love, on a sudden beholds a beauty wonderful in its nature. This is it, O Socrates, for the sake of which all the former labours were endured. It is eternal, unproduced, indestructible; neither subject to increase nor decay: not, like other things, partly beautiful and partly deformed; not at one time beautiful and at another time not; not beautiful in relation to one thing and deformed in relation to another; not here beautiful and there deformed; not beautiful in the estimation of one person and deformed in that of another; nor can this supreme beauty be figured to the imagination like a beautiful face, or beautiful hands, or any portion of the body, nor like any discourse, nor any science. Nor does it subsist in any other that lives or is, either in earth, or in heaven, or in any other place; but it is eternally uniform and consistent, and monoeidic with itself. All other things are beautiful through a participation of it, with this condition, that although they

are subject to production and decay, it never becomes more or less, or endures any change. When any one, ascending from a correct system of Love, begins to contemplate this supreme beauty, he already touches the consummation of his labour. For such as discipline themselves upon this system, or are conducted by another beginning to ascend through these transitory objects which are beautiful, towards that which is beauty itself, proceeding as on steps from the love of one form to that of two, and from that of two, to that of all forms which are beautiful; and from beautiful forms to beautiful habits and institutions, and from institutions to beautiful doctrines; [**II-102**] until, from the meditation of many doctrines, they arrive at that which is nothing else than the doctrine of the supreme beauty itself, in the knowledge and contemplation of which at length they repose.

" 'Such a life as this, my dear Socrates,' exclaimed the stranger Prophetess, 'spent in the contemplation of the beautiful, is the life for men to live; which if you chance ever to experience, you will esteem far beyond gold and rich garments, and even those lovely persons whom you and many others now gaze on with astonishment, and are prepared neither to eat nor drink so that you may behold and live for ever with these objects of your love! What then shall we imagine to be the aspect of the supreme beauty itself, simple, pure, uncontaminated with the intermixture of human flesh and colours, and all other idle and unreal shapes attendant on mortality; the divine, the original, the supreme, the monoeidic beautiful itself? What must be the life of him who dwells with and gazes on that which it becomes us all to seek? Think you not that to him alone is accorded the prerogative of bringing forth, not images and shadows of virtue, for he is in contact not with a shadow but with reality; with virtue itself, in the production and nourishment of which he becomes dear to the Gods, and if such a privilege is conceded to any human being, himself immortal.'

"Such, O Phædrus, and my other friends, was what Diotima said. And being persuaded by her words, I have since occupied myself in attempting to persuade others, that it is not easy to find a better assistant than Love in seeking to communicate immortality to our human natures. Wherefore I exhort every one to honour Love; I hold him in honour, and chiefly exercise myself in amatory matters, and exhort others to do so; and now and ever do I praise the power and excellence of Love, in the best manner that I can. Let this discourse, if it pleases you, Phædrus, be considered as an [**II-103**] encomium of Love; or call it by what other name you will."

The whole assembly praised his discourse, and Aristophanes was on the point of making some remarks on the allusion made by Socrates to him in a part of his discourse, when suddenly they heard a loud knocking at the door of the vestibule, and a clamour as of revellers, attended by a flute-player.—"Go, boys," said Agathon, "and see who is there: if they are any of our friends, call them in; if not, say that we have already done drinking."—A minute afterwards, they heard the voice of Alcibiades in the vestibule excessively drunk and roaring out:—"Where is Agathon? Lead me to Agathon!"—The flute-player, and some of his companions then led him in, and placed him against the door-post, crowned with a thick crown of ivy and violets, and having a quantity of fillets on his head.—"My friends," he cried out, "hail! I am excessively drunk already, but I'll drink with you, if you will. If not, we will go away after having crowned Agathon, for which purpose I came. I assure you that I could not come yesterday, but I am now here with these fillets round my temples, that from my own head I may crown his who, with your leave, is the most beautiful and wisest of men. Are you laughing at me because I am drunk? Ay, I know what I say is true, whether you laugh or not. But tell me at once whether I shall come in, or no. Will you drink with me?"

Agathon and the whole party desired him to come in, and recline among them; so he came in, led by his companions. He then unbound his fillets that he might crown Agathon, and though Socrates was just before his eyes, he did not see him, but sat down by Agathon, between Socrates and him, for Socrates moved out of the way to make room for him. When

he sat down, he embraced Agathon and crowned him; and Agathon desired the slaves to untie his sandals, that he might [**II-104**] make a third, and recline on the same couch. "By all means," said Alcibiades, "but what third companion have we here?" And at the same time turning round and seeing Socrates, he leaped up and cried out:—"O Hercules! what have we here? You, Socrates, lying in ambush for me wherever I go! and meeting me just as you always do, when I least expected to see you! And, now, what are you come here for? Why have you chosen to recline exactly in this place, and not near Aristophanes, or any one else who is, or wishes to be ridiculous, but have contrived to take your place beside the most delightful person of the whole party?"—"Agathon," said Socrates, "see if you cannot defend me. I declare my friendship for this man is a bad business: from the moment that I first began to know him I have never been permitted to converse with, or so much as look upon any one else. If I do, he is so jealous and suspicious that he does the most extravagant things, and hardly refrains from beating me. I entreat you to prevent him from doing anything of that kind at present. Procure a reconciliation: or, if he perseveres in attempting any violence, I entreat you to defend me."—"Indeed," said Alcibiades, "I will not be reconciled to you; I shall find another opportunity to punish you for this. But now," said he, addressing Agathon, "lend me some of those fillets, that I may crown the wonderful head of this fellow, lest I incur the blame, that having crowned you, I neglected to crown him who conquers all men with his discourses, not yesterday alone as you did, but ever."

Saying this he took the fillets, and having bound the head of Socrates, and again having reclined, said: "Come, my friends, you seem to be sober enough. You must not flinch, but drink, for that was your agreement with me before I came in. I choose as president, until you have drunk enough—myself. Come, Agathon, if you have got a great goblet, fetch it out. But no [**II-105**] matter, that wine-cooler will do; bring it, boy!" And observing that it held more than eight cups, he first drank it off, and then ordered it to be filled for Socrates, and said:—"Observe, my friends, I cannot invent any scheme against Socrates, for he will drink as much as any one desires him, and not be in the least drunk." Socrates, after the boy had filled up, drank it off; and Eryximachus said:—"Shall we then have no conversation or singing over our cups, but drink down stupidly, just as if we were thirsty?" And Alcibiades said: "Ah, Eryximachus, I did not see you before; hail, you excellent son of a wise and excellent father!"—"Hail to you also," replied Eryximachus, "but what shall we do?"—"Whatever you command, for we ought to submit to your directions; a physician is worth a hundred common men. Command us as you please."—"Listen then," said Eryximachus, "before you came in, each of us had agreed to deliver as eloquent a discourse as he could in praise of Love, beginning at the right hand; all the rest of us have fulfilled our engagement; you have not spoken, and yet have drunk with us: you ought to bear your part in the discussion; and having done so, command what you please to Socrates, who shall have the privilege of doing so to his right-hand neighbour, and so on to the others."—"Indeed, there appears some justice in your proposal, Eryximachus, though it is rather unfair to induce a drunken man to set his discourse in competition with that of those who are sober. And, besides, did Socrates really persuade you that what he just said about me was true, or do you not know that matters are in fact exactly the reverse of his representation? For I seriously believe that, should I praise in his presence, be he god or man, any other beside himself, he would not keep his hands off me. But I assure you, Socrates, I will praise no one beside yourself in your presence."

"Do so, then," said Eryximachus, "praise Socrates [**II-106**] if you please."—"What," said Alcibiades, "shall I attack him, and punish him before you all?"—"What have you got into your head now," said Socrates, "are you going to expose me to ridicule, and to misrepresent me? Or what are you going to do?"—"I will only speak the truth; will you permit me on this condition?"—"I not only permit, but exhort you to say all the truth you know," replied Socrates. "I obey you willingly," said Alcibiades, "and if I advance anything untrue, do you, if you please, interrupt me, and convict me of misrepresentation, for I would never willingly

speak falsely. And bear with me if I do not relate things in their order, but just as I remember them, for it is not easy for a man in my present condition to enumerate systematically all your singularities.

"I will begin the praise of Socrates by comparing him to a certain statue. Perhaps he will think that this statue is introduced for the sake of ridicule, but I assure you that it is necessary for the illustration of truth. I assert, then, that Socrates is exactly like those Silenuses that sit in the sculptors' shops, and which are carved holding flutes or pipes, but which, when divided in two, are found to contain withinside the images of the gods. I assert that Socrates is like the satyr Marsyas. That your form and appearance are like these satyrs', I think that even you will not venture to deny; and how like you are to them in all other things, now hear. Are you not scornful and petulant? If you deny this, I will bring witnesses. Are you not a piper, and far more wonderful a one than he? For Marsyas, and whoever now pipes the music that he taught, for that music which is of heaven, and described as being taught by Marsyas, enchants men through the power of the mouth. For if any musician, be he skilful or not, awakens this music, it alone enables him to retain the minds of men, and from the divinity of its nature makes evident those who are in want of the gods and initiation. [**II-107**] You differ only from Marsyas in this circumstance, that you effect without instruments, by mere words, all that he can do. For when we hear Pericles, or any other accomplished orator, deliver a discourse, no one, as it were, cares any thing about it. But when any one hears you, or even your words related by another, though ever so rude and unskilful a speaker, be that person a woman, man or child, we are struck and retained, as it were, by the discourse clinging to our mind.

"If I was not afraid that I am a great deal too drunk, I would confirm to you by an oath the strange effects which I assure you I have suffered from his words, and suffer still; for when I hear him speak, my heart leaps up far more than the hearts of those who celebrate the Corybantic mysteries; my tears are poured out as he talks, a thing I have seen happen to many others beside myself. I have heard Pericles and other excellent orators, and have been pleased with their discourses, but I suffered nothing of this kind; nor was my soul ever on those occasions disturbed and filled with self-reproach, as if it were slavishly laid prostrate. But this Marsyas here has often affected me in the way I describe, until the life which I lead seemed hardly worth living. Do not deny it, Socrates, for I well know that if even now I chose to listen to you, I could not resist, but should again suffer the same effects. For, my friends, he forces me to confess that while I myself am still in want of many things, I neglect my own necessities, and attend to those of the Athenians. I stop my ears, therefore, as from the Syrens, and flee away as fast as possible, that I may not sit down beside him and grow old in listening to his talk. For this man has reduced me to feel the sentiment of shame, which I imagine no one would readily believe was in me; he alone inspires me with remorse and awe. For I feel in his presence my incapacity of refuting what he says, or of refusing to do that which he directs; but when I [**II-108**] depart from him, the glory which the multitude confers overwhelms me. I escape, therefore, and hide myself from him, and when I see him I am overwhelmed with humiliation, because I have neglected to do what I have confessed to him ought to be done; and often and often have I wished that he were no longer to be seen among men. But if that were to happen, I well know that I should suffer far greater pain; so that where I can turn, or what I can do with this man, I know not. All this have I and many others suffered from the pipings of this satyr.

"And observe, how like he is to what I said, and what a wonderful power he possesses. Know that there is not one of you who is aware of the real nature of Socrates; but since I have begun, I will make him plain to you. You observe how passionately Socrates affects the intimacy of those who are beautiful, and how ignorant he professes himself to be; appearances in themselves excessively Silenic. This, my friends, is the external form with

which, like one of the sculptured Sileni, he has clothed himself; for if you open him, you will find within admirable temperance and wisdom. For he cares not for mere beauty, but despises more than any one can imagine all external possessions, whether it be beauty or wealth, or glory, or any other thing for which the multitude felicitates the possessor. He esteems these things and us who honour them, as nothing, and lives among men, making all the objects of their admiration the playthings of his irony. But I know not if any one of you have ever seen the divine images which are within, when he has been opened and is serious. I have seen them, and they are so supremely beautiful, so golden, so divine, and wonderful, that everything which Socrates commands surely ought to be obeyed, even like the voice of a God.

"At one time we were fellow-soldiers, and had our mess together in the camp before Potidæa. Socrates [**II-109**] there overcame not only me, but every one beside, in endurance of toils: when, as often happens in a campaign, we were reduced to few provisions, there were none who could sustain hunger like Socrates; and when we had plenty, he alone seemed to enjoy our military fare. He never drank much willingly, but when he was compelled he conquered all even in that to which he was least accustomed; and what is most astonishing, no person ever saw Socrates drunk either then or at any other time. In the depth of winter (and the winters there are excessively rigid,) he sustained calmly incredible hardships; and amongst other things, whilst the frost was intolerably severe, and no one went out of their tents, or if they went out, wrapt themselves up carefully, and put fleeces under their feet, and bound their legs with hairy skins, Socrates went out only with the same cloak on that he usually wore, and walked barefoot upon the ice; more easily, indeed, than those who had sandalled themselves so delicately: so that the soldiers thought that he did it to mock their want of fortitude. It would indeed be worth while to commemorate all that this brave man did and endured in that expedition. In one instance he was seen early in the morning, standing in one place wrapt in meditation; and as he seemed not to be able to unravel the subject of his thoughts, he still continued to stand as inquiring and discussing within himself, and when noon came, the soldiers observed him, and said to one another—'Socrates has been standing there thinking, ever since the morning.' At last some Ionians came to the spot, and having supped, as it was summer, bringing their blankets, they lay down to sleep in the cool; they observed that Socrates continued to stand there the whole night until morning, and that, when the sun rose, he saluted it with a prayer and departed.

"I ought not to omit what Socrates is in battle. For in that battle after which the generals decreed to me [**II-110**] the prize of courage, Socrates alone of all men was the saviour of my life, standing by me when I had fallen and was wounded, and preserving both myself and my arms from the hands of the enemy. On that occasion I entreated the generals to decree the prize, as it was most due, to him. And this, O Socrates, you cannot deny, that the generals wishing to conciliate a person of my rank, desired to give me the prize, you were far more earnestly desirous than the generals that this glory should be attributed not to yourself, but me.

"But to see Socrates when our army was defeated and scattered in flight at Delius, was a spectacle worthy to behold. On that occasion I was among the cavalry, and he on foot, heavily armed. After the total rout of our troops, he and Laches retreated together; I came up by chance, and seeing them, bade them be of good cheer, for that I would not leave them. As I was on horseback, and therefore less occupied by a regard of my own situation, I could better observe than at Potidæa the beautiful spectacle exhibited by Socrates on this emergency. How superior was he to Laches in presence of mind and courage! Your representation of him on the stage, O Aristophanes, was not wholly unlike his real self on this occasion, for he walked and darted his regards around with a majestic composure, looking tranquilly both on his friends and enemies; so that it was evident to every one, even from

afar, that whoever should venture to attack him would encounter a desperate resistance. He and his companion thus departed in safety; for those who are scattered in flight are pursued and killed, whilst men hesitate to touch those who exhibit such a countenance as that of Socrates even in defeat.

"Many other and most wonderful qualities might well be praised in Socrates; but such as these might singly be attributed to others. But that which is unparalleled in Socrates, is, that he is unlike, and above comparison, [**II-111**] with all other men, whether those who have lived in ancient times, or those who exist now. For it may be conjectured, that Brasidas and many others are such as was Achilles. Pericles deserves comparison with Nestor and Antenor; and other excellent persons of various times may, with probability, be drawn into comparison with each other. But to such a singular man as this, both himself and his discourses are so uncommon, no one, should he seek, would find a parallel among the present or the past generations of mankind; unless they should say that he resembled those with whom I lately compared him, for, assuredly, he and his discourses are like nothing but the Silen and the Satyrs. At first I forgot to make you observe how like his discourses are to those Satyrs when they are opened, for, if any one will listen to the talk of Socrates, it will appear to him at first extremely ridiculous; the phrases and expressions which he employs, fold around his exterior the skin, as it were, of a rude and wanton Satyr. He is always talking about great market-asses, and brass-founders, and leather-cutters, and skin-dressers; and this is his perpetual custom, so that any dull and unobservant person might easily laugh at his discourse. But if any one should see it opened, as it were, and get within the sense of his words, he would then find that they alone of all that enters into the mind of man to utter, had a profound and persuasive meaning, and that they were most divine; and that they presented to the mind innumerable images of every excellence, and that they tended towards objects of the highest moment, or rather towards all that he who seeks the possession of what is supremely beautiful and good need regard as essential to the accomplishment of his ambition.

"These are the things, my friends, for which I praise Socrates."

Alcibiades having said this, the whole party burst into a laugh at his frankness, and Socrates said, "You [**II-112**] seem to be sober enough, Alcibiades, else you would not have made such a circuit of words, only to hide the main design for which you made this long speech, and which, as it were carelessly, you just throw in at the last; now, as if you had not said all this for the mere purpose of dividing me and Agathon? You think that I ought to be your friend, and to care for no one else. I have found you out; it is evident enough for what design you invented all this Satyrical and Silenic drama. But, my dear Agathon, do not let his device succeed. I entreat you to permit no one to throw discord between us."—"No doubt," said Agathon, "he sat down between us only that he might divide us; but this shall not assist his scheme, for I will come and sit near you."—"Do so," said Socrates, "come, there is room for you by me."—"Oh, Jupiter!" exclaimed Alcibiades, "what I endure from that man! He thinks to subdue every way; but, at least, I pray you, let Agathon remain between us."—"Impossible," said Socrates, "you have just praised me; I ought to praise him sitting at my right hand. If Agathon is placed beside you, will he not praise me before I praise him? Now, my dear friend, allow the young man to receive what praise I can give him. I have a great desire to pronounce his encomium."—"Quick, quick, Alcibiades," said Agathon, "I cannot stay here, I must change my place, or Socrates will not praise me."—Agathon then arose to take his place near Socrates.

He had no sooner reclined than there came in a number of revellers—for some one who had gone out had left the door open—and took their places on the vacant couches, and everything became full of confusion; and no order being observed, every one was obliged to drink a great quantity of wine. Eryximachus, and Phædrus, and some others, said Aristodemus, went home to bed; that, for his part, he went to sleep on his couch, and slept

long and soundly—the nights [**II-113**] were then long—until the cock crew in the morning. When he awoke he found that some were still fast asleep, and others had gone home, and that Aristophanes, Agathon, and Socrates had alone stood it out, and were still drinking out of a great goblet which they passed round and round. Socrates was disputing between them. The beginning of their discussion Aristodemus said that he did not recollect, because he was asleep; but it was terminated by Socrates forcing them to confess, that the same person is able to compose both tragedy and comedy, and that the foundations of the tragic and comic arts were essentially the same. They, rather convicted than convinced, went to sleep. Aristophanes first awoke, and then, it being broad daylight, Agathon. Socrates, having put them to sleep, went away, Aristodemus following him, and coming to the Lyceum he washed himself, as he would have done anywhere else, and after having spent the day there in his accustomed manner, went home in the evening.

[**II-114**]

ION; OR, OF THE ILIAD.↩

Translated from Plato.

Socrates *and* Ion.

Socrates.

HAIL to thee, O Ion! from whence returnest thou amongst us now?—from thine own native Ephesus?

Ion.

No, Socrates; I come from Epidaurus and the feasts in honour of Æsculapius.

Socrates.

Had the Epidaurians instituted a contest of rhapsody in honour of the God?

Ion.

And not in rhapsodies alone; there were contests in every species of music.

Socrates.

And in which did you contend? And what was the success of your efforts?

Ion.

I bore away the first prize at the games, O Socrates.

Socrates.

Well done! You have now only to consider how you shall win the Panathenæa.

Ion.

That may also happen, God willing.

Socrates.

Your profession, O Ion, has often appeared to me an enviable one. For, together with the nicest care of your person, and the most studied elegance of dress, it imposes upon you the necessity of a familiar [**II-115**] acquaintance with many and excellent poets, and especially with Homer, the most admirable of them all. Nor is it merely because you can repeat the verses of this great poet, that I envy you, but because you fathom his inmost thoughts. For he is no rhapsodist who does not understand the whole scope and intention of the poet, and is not capable of interpreting it to his audience. This he cannot do without a full comprehension of the meaning of the author he undertakes to illustrate; and worthy, indeed, of envy are those who can fulfil these conditions.

Ion.

Thou speakest truth, O Socrates. And, indeed, I have expended my study particularly on this part of my profession. I flatter myself that no man living excels me in the interpretation of Homer; neither Metrodorus of Lampsacus, nor Stesimbrotus the Thasian, nor Glauco, nor any other rhapsodist of the present times can express so many various and beautiful thoughts upon Homer as I can.

Socrates.

I am persuaded of your eminent skill, O Ion. You will not, I hope, refuse me a specimen of it?

Ion.

And, indeed, it would be worth your while to hear me declaim upon Homer. I deserve a golden crown from his admirers.

Socrates.

And I will find leisure some day or other to request you to favour me so far. At present, I will only trouble you with one question. Do you excel in explaining Homer alone, or are you conscious of a similar power with regard to Hesiod and Archilochus?

Ion.

I possess this high degree of skill with regard to Homer alone, and I consider that sufficient.

Socrates.

Are there any subjects upon which Homer and Hesiod say the same things?

Ion.

Many, as it seems to me.

Socrates.

Whether do you demonstrate these things better in Homer or Hesiod?

[**II-116**]

Ion.

In the same manner, doubtless; inasmuch as they say the same words with regard to the same things.

Socrates.

But with regard to those things in which they differ;—Homer and Hesiod both treat of divination, do they not?

Ion.

Certainly.

Socrates.

Do you think that you or a diviner would make the best exposition, respecting all that these poets say of divination, both as they agree and as they differ?

Ion.

A diviner probably.

Socrates.

Suppose you were a diviner, do you not think that you could explain the discrepancies of those poets on the subject of your profession, if you understand their agreement?

Ion.

Clearly so.

Socrates.

How does it happen then that you are possessed of skill to illustrate Homer, and not Hesiod, or any other poet in an equal degree? Is the subject-matter of the poetry of Homer different from all other poets'? Does he not principally treat of war and social intercourse, and of the distinct functions and characters of the brave man and the coward, the professional and private person, the mutual relations which subsist between the Gods and men; together with the modes of their intercourse, the phænomena of Heaven, the secrets of Hades, and the origin of Gods and heroes? Are not these the materials from which Homer wrought his poem?

Ion.

Assuredly, O Socrates.

Socrates.

And the other poets, do they not treat of the same matter?

Ion.

Certainly: but not like Homer.

Socrates.

How! Worse?

Ion.

Oh! far worse.

Socrates.

Then Homer treats of them better than they?

[**II-117**]

Ion.

Oh! Jupiter!—how much better!

Socrates.

Amongst a number of persons employed in solving a problem of arithmetic, might not a person know, my dear Ion, which had given the right answer?

Ion.

Certainly.

Socrates.

The same person who had been aware of the false one, or some other?

Ion.

The same, clearly.

Socrates.

That is, some one who understood arithmetic?

Ion.

Certainly.

Socrates.

Among a number of persons giving their opinions on the wholesomeness of different foods, whether would one person be capable to pronounce upon the rectitude of the opinions of those who judged rightly, and another on the erroneousness of those which were incorrect, or would the same person be competent to decide respecting them both?

Ion.

The same, evidently.

Socrates.

What would you call that person?

Ion.

A physician.

Socrates.

We may assert then, universally, that the same person who is competent to determine the truth, is competent also to determine the falsehood of whatever assertion is advanced on the same subject; and, it is manifest, that he who cannot judge respecting the falsehood, or unfitness of what is said upon a given subject, is equally incompetent to determine upon its truth or beauty?

Ion.

Assuredly.

Socrates.

The same person would then be competent or incompetent for both?

Ion.

Yes.

Socrates.

Do you not say that Homer and the other poets, and among them Hesiod and Archilochus, speak of the same things, but unequally; one better and the other worse?

[**II-118**]

Ion.

And I speak truth.

Socrates.

But if you can judge of what is well said by the one, you must also be able to judge of what is ill said by another, inasmuch as it expresses less correctly.

Ion.

It should seem so.

Socrates.

Then, my dear friend, we should not err if we asserted that Ion possessed a like power of illustration respecting Homer and all other poets; especially since he confesses that the same person must be esteemed a competent judge of all those who speak on the same subjects; inasmuch as those subjects are understood by him when spoken of by one, and the subject-matter of almost all the poets is the same.

Ion.

What can be the reason then, O Socrates, that when any other poet is the subject of conversation I cannot compel my attention, and I feel utterly unable to declaim anything worth talking of, and positively go to sleep? But when any one makes mention of Homer, my mind applies itself without effort to the subject; I awaken as if it were from a trance, and a profusion of eloquent expressions suggest themselves involuntarily?

Socrates.

It is not difficult to suggest the cause of this, my dear friend. You are evidently unable to declaim on Homer according to art and knowledge; for did your art endow you with this faculty, you would be equally capable of exerting it with regard to any other of the poets. Is not poetry, as an art or a faculty, a thing entire and one?

Ion.

Assuredly.

Socrates.

The same mode of consideration must be admitted with respect to all arts which are severally one and entire. Do you desire to hear what I understand by this, O Ion?

Ion.

Yes, by Jupiter, Socrates, I am delighted with listening to you wise men.

Socrates.

It is you who are wise, my dear Ion; you rhapsodists, actors, and the authors of the poems you [**II-119**] recite. I, like an unprofessional and private man, can only speak the truth. Observe how common, vulgar, and level to the comprehension of any one, is the question which I now ask relative to the same consideration belonging to one entire art. Is not painting an art whole and entire?

Ion.

Certainly.

Socrates.

Did you ever know a person competent to judge of the paintings of Polygnotus, the son of Aglaophon, and incompetent to judge of the production of any other painter; who, on the supposition of the works of other painters being exhibited to him, was wholly at a loss, and very much inclined to go to sleep, and lost all faculty of reasoning on the subject; but when his opinion was required of Polygnotus, or any one single painter you please, awoke, paid attention to the subject, and discoursed on it with great eloquence and sagacity?

Ion.

Never, by Jupiter!

Socrates.

Did you ever know any one very skilful in determining the merits of Dædalus, the son of Metion, Epius, the son of Panopus, Theodorus the Samian, or any other great sculptor, who was immediately at a loss, and felt sleepy the moment any other sculptor was mentioned?

Ion.

I never met with such a person certainly.

Socrates.

Nor, do I think, that you ever met with a man professing himself a judge of poetry and rhapsody, and competent to criticise either Olympus, Thamyris, Orpheus, or Phemius of Ithaca, the rhapsodist, who, the moment he came to Ion the Ephesian, felt himself quite at a loss, and utterly incompetent to judge whether he rhapsodised well or ill.

Ion.

I cannot refute you, Socrates, but of this I am conscious to myself: that I excel all men in the copiousness and beauty of my illustrations of Homer, as all who have heard me will confess, and with respect to other poets, I am deserted of this power. It is for [**II-120**] you to consider what may be the cause of this distinction.

Socrates.

I will tell you, O Ion, what appears to me to be the cause of this inequality of power. It is that you are not master of any art for the illustration of Homer, but it is a divine influence which moves you, like that which resides in the stone called magnet by Euripides, and Heraclea by the people. For not only does this stone possess the power of attracting iron rings, but it can communicate to them the power of attracting other rings; so that you may see sometimes a long chain of rings, and other iron substances, attached and suspended one to the other by this influence. And as the power of the stone circulates through all the links of this series, and attaches each to each, so the Muse, communicating through those whom she has first inspired, to all others capable of sharing in the inspiration, the influence of that first enthusiasm, creates a chain and a succession. For the authors of those great poems which we admire, do not attain to excellence through the rules of any art, but they utter their beautiful melodies of verse in a state of inspiration, and, as it were, *possessed* by a spirit not their own. Thus the composers of lyrical poetry create those admired songs of theirs in a state of divine insanity, like the Corybantes, who lose all control over their reason in the enthusiasm of the sacred dance; and, during this supernatural possession, are excited to the rhythm and harmony which they communicate to men. Like the Bacchantes, who, when possessed by the God, draw honey and milk from the rivers, in which, when they come to their senses, they find nothing but simple water. For the souls of the poets, as poets tell us, have this peculiar ministration in the world. They tell us that these souls, flying like bees from flower to flower, and wandering over the gardens and the meadows, and the honey-flowing fountains of the Muses, return to us laden [**II-121**] with the sweetness of melody; and arrayed as they are in the plumes of rapid imagination, they speak truth. For a Poet is indeed a thing ethereally light, winged, and sacred, nor can he compose anything worth calling poetry until he becomes inspired, and, as it were, mad, or whilst any reason remains in him. For whilst a man retains any portion of the thing called reason, he is utterly incompetent to produce poetry or to vaticinate. Thus, those who declaim various and beautiful poetry upon any subject, as for instance upon Homer, are not enabled to do so by art or study; but every rhapsodist or poet, whether dithyrambic, encomiastic, choral, epic, or iambic, is excellent in proportion to the extent of his participation in the divine influence, and the degree in which the Muse itself has descended on him. In other respects, poets may be sufficiently ignorant and incapable. For they do not compose according to any art which they have acquired, but from the impulse of the divinity within them; for did they know any rules of criticism according to which they could compose beautiful verses upon one subject, they would be able to exert the same faculty with respect to all or any other. The God seems purposely to have deprived all poets, prophets, and soothsayers of every particle of reason and understanding, the better to adapt them to their employment as his ministers and interpreters; and that we, their auditors, may acknowledge that those who write so beautifully, are possessed, and address us, inspired by the God. Tynnicus the Chalcidean, is a manifest proof of this, for he never before composed any poem worthy to be remembered; and yet, was the

author of that Pæan which everybody sings, and which excels almost every other hymn, and which he himself acknowledges to have been inspired by the Muse. And, thus, it appears to me that the God proves beyond a doubt, that these transcendent poems are not human as the work of men, but divine as coming from the God. Poets [**II-122**] then are the interpreters of the divinities—each being possessed by some one deity; and to make this apparent, the God designedly inspires the worst poets with the sublimest verse. Does it seem to you that I am in the right, O Ion?

Ion.

Yes, by Jupiter! My mind is enlightened by your words, O Socrates, and it appears to me that great poets interpret to us through some divine election of the God.

Socrates.

And do not you rhapsodists interpret poets?

Ion.

We do.

Socrates.

Thus you interpret the interpreters?

Ion.

Evidently.

Socrates.

Remember this, and tell me; and do not conceal that which I ask. When you declaim well, and strike your audience with admiration; whether you sing of Ulysses rushing upon the threshold of his palace, discovering himself to the suitors, and pouring his shafts out at his feet; or of Achilles assailing Hector; or those affecting passages concerning Andromache, or Hecuba, or Priam, are you then self-possessed? or, rather, are you not rapt and filled with such enthusiasm by the deeds you recite, that you fancy yourself in Ithaca or Troy, or wherever else the poem transports you?

Ion.

You speak most truly, Socrates, nor will I deny it; for, when I recite of sorrow my eyes fill with tears; and, when of fearful or terrible deeds, my hair stands on end, and my heart beats fast.

Socrates.

Tell me, Ion, can we call him in his senses, who weeps while dressed in splendid garments, and crowned with a golden coronal, not losing any of these things? and is filled with fear when surrounded by ten thousand friendly persons, not one among whom desires to despoil or injure him?

Ion.

To say the truth, we could not.

Socrates.

Do you often perceive your audience moved also?

[**II-123**]

Ion.

Many among them, and frequently. I, standing on the rostrum, see them weeping, with eyes fixed earnestly on me, and overcome by my declamation. I have need so to agitate them; for if they weep, I laugh, taking their money; if they should laugh, I must weep, going without it.

Socrates.

Do you not perceive that your auditor is the last link of that chain which I have described as held together through the power of the magnet? You rhapsodists and actors are the middle links, of which the poet is the first—and through all these the God influences whichever mind he selects, as they conduct this power one to the other; and thus, as rings from the stone, so hangs a long series of chorus-dancers, teachers, and disciples from the Muse. Some poets are influenced by one Muse, some by another; we call them possessed, and this word really expresses the truth, for they are held. Others, who are interpreters, are inspired by the first links, the poets, and are filled with enthusiasm, some by one, some by another; some by Orpheus, some by Musæus, but the greater number are possessed and inspired by Homer. You, O Ion, are influenced by Homer. If you recite the works of any other poet, you get drowsy, and are at a loss what to say; but when you hear any of the compositions of that poet you are roused, your thoughts are excited, and you grow eloquent;—for what you say of Homer is not derived from any art or knowledge, but from divine inspiration and possession. As the Corybantes feel acutely the melodies of him by whom they are inspired, and abound with verse and gesture for his songs alone, and care for no other; thus, you, O Ion, are eloquent when you expound Homer, and are barren of words with regard to every other poet. And this explains the question you asked, wherefore Homer, and no other poet, inspires you with eloquence. It is that you are thus excellent in your praise, not through science but from divine inspiration.

[**II-124**]

Ion.

You say the truth, Socrates. Yet, I am surprised that you should be able to persuade me that I am possessed and insane when I praise Homer. I think I shall not appear such to you when you hear me.

Socrates.

I desire to hear you, but not before you have answered me this one question. What subject does Homer treat best? for, surely, he does not treat all equally.

Ion.

You are aware that he treats of every thing.

Socrates.

Does Homer mention subjects on which you are ignorant?

Ion.

What can those be?

Socrates.

Does not Homer frequently dilate on various arts—on chariot-driving, for instance? if I remember the verses I will repeat them.

Ion.

I will repeat them, for I remember them.

Socrates.

Repeat what Nestor says to his son Antilochus, counselling him to be cautious in turning, during the chariot-race at the funeral games of Patroclus.

***Ion* (*repeats*).**

Αὐτὸς δὲ κλινθῆναι εὐπλέκτῳ ἐνὶ δίφρῳ
Ἧκ' ἐπ' ἀριστερὰ τοῖιν ἀτὰρ τὸν δεξιὸν ἵππον
Κένσαι ὁμοκλήσας, εἶξαί τέ οἱ ἡνία χερσίν.
Ἐν νύσσῃ δέ τοι ἵππος ἀριστερὸς ἐγχριμφθήτω,
Ὡς ἄν τοι πλήμνη γε δοάσσεται ἄκρον ἱκέσθαι
Κύκλου ποιητοῖο· λίθου δ' ἀλέασθαι ἐπαυρεῖν.

Il. ψ. 335.

Socrates.

Enough. Now, O Ion, would a physician or a charioteer be the better judge as to Homer's sagacity on this subject?

Ion.

Of course, a charioteer.

Socrates.

Because he understands the art—or from what other reason?

Ion.

From his knowledge of the art.

Socrates.

For one science is not gifted with the power of judging of another—a steersman, for instance, does not understand medicine?

[**II-125**]

Ion.

Without doubt.

Socrates.

Nor a physician, architecture?

Ion.

Of course not.

Socrates.

Is it not thus with every art? If we are adepts in one, we are ignorant of another. But first, tell me, do not all arts differ one from the other?

Ion.

They do.

Socrates.

For you, as well as I, can testify that when we say an art is the knowledge of one thing, we do not mean that it is the knowledge of another.

Ion.

Certainly.

Socrates.

For, if each art contained the knowledge of all things, why should we call them by different names? we do so that we may distinguish them one from the other. Thus, you as well as I, know that these are five fingers; and if I asked you whether we both meant the same thing or another, when we speak of arithmetic—would you not say the same?

Ion.

Yes.

Socrates.

And tell me, when we learn one art we must both learn the same things with regard to it; and other things if we learn another?

Ion.

Certainly.

Socrates.

And he who is not versed in an art, is not a good judge of what is said or done with respect to it?

Ion.

Certainly not.

Socrates.

To return to the verses which you just recited, do you think that you or a charioteer would be better capable of deciding whether Homer had spoken rightly or not?

Ion.

Doubtless a charioteer.

Socrates.

For you are a rhapsodist, and not a charioteer?

Ion.

Yes.

Socrates.

And the art of reciting verses is different from that of driving chariots?

Ion.

Certainly.

[II-126]

Socrates.

And if it is different, it supposes a knowledge of different things?

Ion.

Certainly.

Socrates.

And when Homer introduces Hecamede, the concubine of Nestor, giving Machaon a posset to drink, and he speaks thus:—

Οἴνῳ πραμνείῳ, φησίν· ἐπὶ δ' αἴγειον κνῆ τυρὸν
Κνήστι χαλκείῃ· παρὰ δὲ κρόμιον ποτῷ ὄψον.

Il. λ'. 639.

does it belong to the medical or rhapsodical art, to determine whether Homer speaks rightly on this subject?

Ion.

The medical.

Socrates.

And when he says—

Ἡ δὲ μολυβδαίνῃ ἰκέλη ἐς βυσσὸν ἵκανεν,
Ἥ τε κατ' ἀγραύλοιο βοὸς κέρας ἐμμεμαυῖα
Ἔρχεται ὠμηστῇσι μετ' ἰχθύσι πῆμα φέρουσα.

Il. ώ. 80.

does it belong to the rhapsodical or the piscatorial art, to determine whether he speaks rightly or not?

Ion.

Manifestly to the piscatorial art.

Socrates.

Consider whether you are not inspired to make some such demand as this to me:—Come, Socrates, since you have found in Homer an accurate description of these arts, assist me also in the inquiry as to his competence on the subject of soothsayers and divination; and how far he speaks well or ill on such subjects; for he often treats of them in the Odyssey, and especially when he introduces Theoclymenus the Soothsayer of the Melampians, prophesying to the Suitors:—

Δαίμονι, τί κακὸν τόδε πάσχετε; νυκτὶ μὲν ὑμέων
Εἰλύαται κεφαλαί τε προσωπά τε νέρθε τε γυῖα,
[**II-127**]
Οἰμωγὴ δὲ δέδηε, δεδάκρυνται δὲ παρειαί.
Εἰδώλων τε πλέον πρόθυρον, πλείη δὲ καὶ αὐλὴ
Ἰεμένων ἔρεβόςδε ὑπὸ ζόφον· ἠέλιος δὲ
Οὐρανοῦ ἐξαπόλωλε, κακὴ δ' επδέδρομεν ἀχλύς.

Odyss. υ. 351.

Often too in the Iliad, as at the battle at the walls; for he there says—

Ὄρνις γάρ σφιν ἐπῆλθε περησέμεναι μεμαῶσιν,
Αἰετὸς ὑψιπέτης, ἐπ' ἀριστερὰ λαὸν ἐέργων,
Φοινήεντα δράκοντα φέρων ὀνύχεσσι πέγωρον,
Ζωὸν, ἔτ' ἀσπαίροντα· καὶ οὔπω λήθετο χάρμης.
Κόψε γὰρ αὐτὸν ἔχοντα κατὰ στῆθος παρὰ δειρὴν,

Ἰδνωθεὶς ὀπίσω. ὁ δ' ἀπὸ ἕθεν ἦκε χαμάζε
Ἀλγήσας ὀδύνῃσι, μέσῳ δ' ἐγκάββαλ' ὁμίλῳ·
Αὐτὸς δὲ κλάγξας ἕπετο πνοιῇς ἀνέμοιο.

Il. μ'.

I assert, it belongs to a soothsayer both to observe and to judge respecting such appearances as these.

Ion.

And you assert the truth, O Socrates.

Socrates.

And you also, my dear Ion. For we have in our turn recited from the Odyssey and the Iliad, passages relating to vaticination, to medicine and the piscatorial art; and as you are more skilled in Homer than I can be, do you now make mention of whatever relates to the rhapsodist and his art; for a rhapsodist is competent above all other men to consider and pronounce on whatever has relation to his art.

Ion.

Or with respect to everything else mentioned by Homer.

Socrates.

Do not be so forgetful as to say everything. A good memory is particularly necessary for a rhapsodist.

Ion.

And what do I forget?

Socrates.

Do you not remember that you admitted [**II-128**] the art of reciting verses was different from that of driving chariots?

Ion.

I remember.

Socrates.

And did you not admit that being different, the subjects of its knowledge must also be different?

Ion.

Certainly.

Socrates.

You will not assert that the art of rhapsody is that of universal knowledge; a rhapsodist may be ignorant of some things.

Ion.

Except, perhaps, such things as we now discuss, O Socrates.

Socrates.

What do you mean by *such* subjects, besides those which relate to other arts? And with which among them do you profess a competent acquaintance, since not with all?

Ion.

I imagine that the rhapsodist has a perfect knowledge of what it is becoming for a man to speak—what for a woman; what for a slave, what for a free man; what for the ruler, what for him who is governed.

Socrates.

How! do you think that a rhapsodist knows better than a pilot what the captain of a ship in a tempest ought to say?

Ion.

In such a circumstance I allow that the pilot would know best.

Socrates.

Has the rhapsodist or the physician the clearest knowledge of what ought to be said to a sick man?

Ion.

In that case the physician.

Socrates.

But you assert that he knows what a slave ought to say?

Ion.

Certainly.

Socrates.

To take for example, in the driving of cattle; a rhapsodist would know much better than the herdsman what ought to be said to a slave engaged in bringing back a herd of oxen run wild?

Ion.

No, indeed.

[**II-129**]

Socrates.

But what a woman should say concerning spinning wool?

Ion.

Of course not.

Socrates.

He would know, however, what a man, who is a general, should say when exhorting his troops?

Ion.

Yes; a rhapsodist would know that.

Socrates.

How! is rhapsody and strategy the same art?

Ion.

I know what it is fitting for a general to say.

Socrates.

Probably because you are learned in war, O Ion. For if you are equally expert in horsemanship and playing on the harp, you would know whether a man rode well or ill. But if I should ask you which understands riding best, a horseman or a harper, what would you answer?

Ion.

A horseman, of course.

Socrates.

And if you knew a good player on the harp, you would in the same way say that he understood harp-playing and not riding?

Ion.

Certainly.

Socrates.

Since you understand strategy, you can tell me which is the most excellent, the art of war or rhapsody?

Ion.

One does not appear to me to excel the other.

Socrates.

One is not better than the other, say you? Do you say that tactics and rhapsody are two arts or one?

Ion.

They appear to me to be the same.

Socrates.

Then a good rhapsodist is also a good general.

Ion.

Of course.

Socrates.

And a good general is a good rhapsodist?

Ion.

I do not say that.

Socrates.

You said that a good rhapsodist was also a good general.

Ion.

I did.

Socrates.

Are you not the best rhapsodist in Greece?

Ion.

By far, O Socrates.

Socrates.

And you are also the most excellent general among the Greeks?

Ion.

I am. I learned the art from Homer.

Socrates.

How is it then, by Jupiter, that being both the best general and the best rhapsodist among us, you continually go about Greece rhapsodising, and never lead our armies? Does it seem to you that the Greeks greatly need golden-crowned rhapsodists, and have no want of generals?

Ion.

My native town, O Socrates, is ruled by yours, and requires no general for her wars;—and neither will your city nor the Lacedemonians elect me to lead their armies—you think your own generals sufficient.

Socrates.

My good Ion, are you acquainted with Apollodorus the Cyzicenian?

Ion.

Who do you mean?

Socrates.

He whom, though a stranger, the Athenians often elected general; and Phanosthenes the Andrian, and Heraclides the Clazomenian, all foreigners, but whom this city has chosen, as being great men, to lead its armies, and to fill other high offices. Would not, therefore, Ion the Ephesian be elected and honoured if he were esteemed capable? Were not the Ephesians originally from Athens, and is Ephesus the least of cities? But if you spoke true, Ion, and praise Homer according to art and knowledge, you have deceived me,—since you declared that you were learned on the subject of Homer, and would communicate your knowledge to me—but you have disappointed me, and are far from keeping your word. For you will not explain in what you are so excessively clever, though I greatly desire to learn; but, as various as Proteus, you change from one thing to another, and to escape at last, you disappear in the form of a general, without disclosing your Homeric wisdom. If, therefore, you possess the learning which you promised to expound on the subject of Homer, you [**II-131**] deceive me and are false. But if you are eloquent on the subject of this Poet, not through knowledge, but by inspiration, being possessed by him, ignorant the while of the wisdom and beauty you display, then I allow that you are no deceiver. Choose then whether you will be considered false or inspired?

Ion.

It is far better, O Socrates, to be thought inspired.

Socrates.

It is better both for you and for us, O Ion, to say that you are the inspired, and not the learned, eulogist of Homer.

[**II-132**]

MENEXENUS, OR THE FUNERAL ORATION.
A Fragment.↩

Socrates *and* Menexenus.

Socrates.

WHENCE comest thou, O Menexenus? from the forum?

Menexenus.

Even so; and from the senate-house.

Socrates.

What was thy business with the senate? Art thou persuaded that thou hast attained to that perfection of discipline and philosophy, from which thou mayest aspire to undertake greater matters? Wouldst thou, at thine age, my wonderful friend, assume to thyself the government of us who are thine elders, lest thy family should at any time fail in affording us a protector?

Menexenus.

Thou, O Socrates, shouldst permit and counsel me to enter into public life. I would earnestly endeavour to fit myself for the attempt. If otherwise, I would abstain. On the present occasion, I went to the senate-house, merely from having heard that the senate was about to elect one to speak concerning those who [**II-133**] are dead. Thou knowest that the celebration of their funeral approaches?

Socrates.

Assuredly. But whom have they chosen?

Menexenus.

The election is deferred until to-morrow; I imagine that either Dion or Archinus will be chosen.

Socrates.

In truth, Menexenus, the condition of him who dies in battle is, in every respect, fortunate and glorious. If he is poor, he is conducted to his tomb with a magnificent and honourable funeral, amidst the praises of all; if even he were a coward, his name is included in a panegyric pronounced by the most learned men; from which all the vulgar expressions, which unpremeditated composition might admit, have been excluded by the careful labour of leisure; who praise so admirably, enlarging upon every topic remotely or immediately connected with the subject, and blending so eloquent a variety of expressions, that, praising in every manner the state of which we are citizens, and those who have perished in battle, and the ancestors who preceded our generation, and ourselves who yet live, they steal away our spirits as with enchantment. Whilst I listen to their praises, O Menexenus, I am penetrated with a very lofty conception of myself, and overcome by their flatteries. I appear to myself immeasurably more honourable and generous than before, and many of the strangers who are accustomed to accompany me, regard me with additional veneration, after having heard these relations; they seem to consider the whole state, including me, much more worthy of admiration, after they have been soothed into persuasion by the orator. The opinion thus inspired of my own majesty will last me more than three days sometimes, and the penetrating melody of the words descends through the ears into the mind, and clings to it; so

that it is often three or four days before I come to my senses sufficiently to perceive in what part of the world I am, or succeed in persuading myself [**II-134**] that I do not inhabit one of the islands of the blessed. So skilful are these orators of ours.

Menexenus.

Thou always laughest at the orators, O Socrates. On the present occasion, however, the unforeseen election will preclude the person chosen from the advantages of a preconcerted speech: the speaker will probably be reduced to the necessity of extemporising.

Socrates.

How so, my good friend? Every one of the candidates has, without doubt, his oration prepared; and if not, there were little difficulty, on this occasion, of inventing an unpremeditated speech. If, indeed, the question were of Athenians, who should speak in the Peloponnesus; or of Peloponnesians, who should speak at Athens, an orator who would persuade and be applauded, must employ all the resources of his skill. But to the orator who contends for the approbation of those whom he praises, success will be little difficult.

Menexenus.

Is that thy opinion, O Socrates?

Socrates.

In truth it is.

Menexenus.

Shouldst thou consider thyself competent to pronounce this oration, if thou shouldst be chosen by the senate?

Socrates.

There would be nothing astonishing if I should consider myself equal to such an undertaking. My mistress in oratory was perfect in the science which she taught, and had formed many other excellent orators, and one of the most eminent among the Greeks, Pericles, the son of Xantippus.

Menexenus.

Who is she? Assuredly thou meanest Aspasia.

Socrates.

Aspasia, and Connus the son of Metrobius, the two instructors. From the former of these I learned rhetoric, and from the latter music. There would be nothing wonderful if a man so educated should be capable of great energy of speech. A person who should have been instructed in a manner totally different from me; who should have learned rhetoric from Antiphon the [**II-135**] son of Rhamnusius, and music from Lampses, would be competent to succeed in such an attempt as praising the Athenians to the Athenians.

Menexenus.

And what shouldst thou have to say, if thou wert chosen to pronounce the oration?

Socrates.

Of my own, probably nothing. But yesterday I heard Aspasia declaim a funeral oration over these same persons. She had heard, as thou sayest, that the Athenians were about to choose an orator, and she took the occasion of suggesting a series of topics proper for such an orator to select; in part extemporaneously, and in part such as she had already prepared. I

think it probable that she composed the oration by interweaving such fragments of oratory as Pericles might have left.

Menexenus.

Rememberest thou what Aspasia said?

Socrates.

Unless I am greatly mistaken. I learned it from her; and she is so good a school-mistress, that I should have been beaten if I had not been perfect in my lesson.

Menexenus.

Why not repeat it to me?

Socrates.

I fear lest my mistress be angry, should I publish her discourse.

Menexenus.

O, fear not. At least deliver a discourse; you will do what is exceedingly delightful to me, whether it be of Aspasia or any other. I entreat you to do me this pleasure.

Socrates.

But you will laugh at me, who, being old, attempt to repeat a pleasant discourse.

Menexenus.

O no, Socrates; I entreat you to speak, however it may be.

Socrates.

I see that I must do what you require. In a little while, if you should ask me to strip naked and dance, I shall be unable to refuse you, at least, if we are alone. Now, listen. She spoke thus, if I recollect, beginning with the dead, in whose honour the oration is supposed to have been delivered.

[**II-136**]

FRAGMENTS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF PLATO.↩

I. BUT it would be almost impossible to build your city in such a situation that it would need no imposts?—Impossible.—Other persons would then be required, who might undertake to conduct from another city those things of which they stood in need?—Certainly. —But the merchant who should return to his own city, without any of those articles which it needed, would return empty-handed. It will be necessary, therefore, not only to produce a sufficient supply, but such articles, both in quantity and in kind, as may be required to remunerate those who conduct the imports. There will be needed then more husbandmen, and other artificers, in our city. There will be needed also other persons who will undertake the conveyance of the imports and the exports, and these persons are called merchants. If the commerce which these necessities produce is carried on by sea, other persons will be required who are accustomed to nautical affairs. And, in the city itself, how shall the products of each man's labour be transported from one to another; those products, for the sake of the enjoyment and the ready distribution of which, they were first induced to institute a civil society?—By selling and buying, surely.—A market [**II-137**] and money, as a symbol of exchange, arises out of this necessity?—Evidently.—When the husbandman, or any other artificer, brings the produce of his labours to the public place, and those who desire to barter their produce for it do not happen to arrive exactly at the same time, would he not lose his time, and the profit of it, if he were to sit in the market waiting for them?—Assuredly.—But, there are persons, who, perceiving this, will take upon themselves the arrangement between the buyer and the seller. In constituted civil societies, those who are employed on this service, ought to be the infirm, and unable to perform any other; but, exchanging on one hand for money, what any person comes to sell, and giving the articles thus bought for a similar equivalent to those who might wish to buy.

II. Description of a frugal enjoyment of the goods of the world.

III. But with this system of life some are not contented. They must have beds and tables, and other furniture. They must have scarce ointments and perfumes, women, and a thousand superfluities of the same character. The things which we mentioned as sufficient, houses, and clothes, and food, are not enough. Painting and mosaic-work must be cultivated, and works in gold and ivory. The society must be enlarged in consequence. This city, which is of a healthy proportion, will not suffice, but it must be replenished with a multitude of persons, whose occupations are by no means indispensable. Huntsmen and mimics, persons whose occupation it is to arrange forms and colours, persons whose trade is the cultivation of the more delicate arts, poets and their ministers, rhapsodists, actors, dancers, manufacturers of all kinds of instruments and schemes of female dress, and an immense crowd of other ministers to pleasure and necessity. Do [**II-138**] you not think we should want schoolmasters, tutors, nurses, hair-dressers, barbers, manufacturers and cooks? Should we not want pig-drivers, which were not wanted in our more modest city, in this one, and a multitude of others to administer to other animals, which would then become necessary articles of food,—or should we not?—Certainly we should.—Should we not want physicians much more, living in this manner than before? The same tract of country would no longer provide sustenance for the state. Must we then not usurp from the territory of our neighbours, and then we should make aggressions, and so we have discovered the origin of war; which is the principal cause of the greatest public and private calamities.—C. xi.

IV. And first, we must improve upon the composers of fabulous histories in verse, to compose them according to the rules of moral beauty; and those not composed according to the rules must be rejected; and we must persuade mothers and nurses to teach those which we approve to their children, and to form their minds by moral fables, far more than their bodies by their hands.—Lib. ii.

V.: ON THE DANGER OF THE STUDY OF ALLEGORICAL COMPOSITION (IN A LARGE SENSE) FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

For a young person is not competent to judge what portions of a fabulous composition are allegorical and what literal; but the opinions produced by a literal acceptation of that which has no meaning, or a bad one, except in an allegorical sense, are often irradicable.—Lib. ii.

VI.—God then, since he is good, cannot be, as is vulgarly supposed, the cause of all things; he is the [**II-139**] cause, indeed, of very few things. Among the great variety of events which happen in the course of human affairs, evil prodigiously overbalances good in everything which regards men. Of all that is good there can be no other cause than God; but some other cause ought to be discovered for evil, which should never be imputed as an effect to God.—L. ii.

VII.—Plato's doctrine of punishment, as laid down [here], is refuted by his previous reasonings.

VIII.—: THE UNCHANGEABLE NATURE OF GOD.

Do you think that God is like a vulgar conjuror, and that he is capable for the sake of effect, of assuming, at one time, one form, and at another time, another? Now, in his own character, converting his proper form into a multitude of shapes, now deceiving us, and offering vain images of himself to our imagination? Or do you think that God is single and one, and least of all things capable of departing from his permanent nature and appearance?

IX.—: THE PERMANENCY OF WHAT IS EXCELLENT.

But everything, in proportion as it is excellent, either in art or nature, or in both, is least susceptible of receiving change from any external influence.

X.—: AGAINST SUPERSTITIOUS TALES.

Nor should mothers terrify their children by these fables, that Gods go about in the night-time, resembling strangers, in all sorts of forms: at once blaspheming the Gods and rendering their children cowardly.

[**II-140**]

XI.—: THE TRUE ESSENCE OF FALSEHOOD AND ITS ORIGIN.

Know you not that, that which is truly false, if it may be permitted me so to speak, all, both gods and men detest?—How do you mean?—Thus: No person is willing to falsify in matters of the highest concern to himself concerning those matters, but fears, above all things, lest he should accept falsehood.—Yet, I understand you not.—You think that I mean something profound. I say that no person is willing in his own mind to receive or to assert a falsehood, to be ignorant, to be in error, to possess that which is not true. This is truly to be called falsehood, this ignorance and error in the mind itself. What is usually called falsehood, or deceit in words, is but a voluntary imitation of what the mind itself suffers in the involuntary possession of that falsehood, an image of later birth, and scarcely, in a strict and

complete sense, deserving the name of falsehood.—Lib. ii.

XII.—: AGAINST A BELIEF IN HELL.

If they are to possess courage, are not those doctrines alone to be taught, which render death least terrible? Or do you conceive that any man can be brave who is subjected to a fear of death? that he who believes the things that are related of hell, and thinks that they are truth, will prefer in battle, death to slavery, or defeat?—Lib. iii.—*Then follows a criticism on the poetical accounts of hell.*

XIII.—: ON GRIEF.

We must then abolish the custom of lamenting and commiserating the deaths of illustrious men. Do we assert that an excellent man will consider it anything [**II-141**] dreadful that his intimate friend, who is also an excellent man, should die?—By no means (*an excessive refinement*). He will abstain then from lamenting over his loss, as if he had suffered some great evil?—Surely.—May we not assert in addition, that such a person as we have described suffices to himself for all purposes of living well and happily, and in no manner needs the assistance or society of another? that he would endure with resignation the destitution of a son, or a brother, or possessions, or whatever external adjuncts of life might have been attached to him? and that, on the occurrence of such contingencies, he would support them with moderation and mildness, by no means bursting into lamentations, or resigning himself to despondence?—Lib. iii.

Then he proceeds to allege passages of the poets in which opposite examples were held up to approbation and imitation.

XIV.—: THE INFLUENCE OF EARLY CONSTANT IMITATION.

Do you not apprehend that imitations, if they shall have been practised and persevered in from early youth, become established in the habits and nature, in the gestures of the body, and the tones of the voice, and lastly, in the intellect itself?—C. iii.

XV.—: ON THE EFFECT OF BAD TASTE IN ART.

Nor must we restrict the poets alone to an exhibition of the example of virtuous manners in their compositions, but all other artists must be forbidden, either in sculpture, or painting, or architecture, to employ their skill upon forms of an immoral, unchastened, monstrous, or illiberal type, either in the forms of living beings, or [**II-142**] in architectural arrangements. And the artist capable of this employment of his art, must not be suffered in our community, lest those destined to be guardians of the society, nourished upon images of deformity and vice, like cattle upon bad grass, gradually gathering and depasturing every day a little, may ignorantly establish one great evil composed of these many evil things, in their minds.—C. iii.

The monstrous figures called Arabesques, however in some of them is to be found a mixture of a truer and simpler taste, which are found in the ruined palaces of the Roman Emperors, bear, nevertheless, the same relation to the brutal profligacy and killing luxury which required them, as the majestic figures of Castor and Pollux, and the simple beauty of the sculpture of the frieze of the Parthenon, bear to the more beautiful and simple manners of the Greeks of that period. With a liberal interpretation, a similar analogy might be extended into literary composition.

XVI.—: AGAINST THE LEARNED PROFESSIONS.

What better evidence can you require of a corrupt and pernicious system of discipline in a state, than that not merely persons of base habits and plebeian employments, but men who pretend to have received a liberal education, require the assistance of lawyers and physicians, and those too who have attained to a singular degree (so desperate are these diseases of body and mind) of skill. Do you not consider it an abject necessity, a proof of the deepest degradation, to need to be instructed in what is just or what is needful, as by a master and a judge, with regard to your personal knowledge and suffering?

What would Plato have said to a priest, such as his office is in modern times?—C. iii.

[II-143]

XVII.—: ON MEDICINE.

Do you not think it an abject thing to require the assistance of the medicinal art, not for the cure of wounds, or such external diseases as result from the accidents of the seasons (επητειην), but on account of sloth and the superfluous indulgences which we have already condemned; this being filled with wind and water, like holes in earth, and compelling the elegant successors of Æsculapius to invent new names, flatulences, and catarrhs, &c., for the new diseases which are the progeny of your luxury and sloth?—L. iii.

XVIII.—: THE EFFECT OF THE DIETETIC SYSTEM.

Herodicus being pædotribe (παιδοτρίβης, *Magister palæstræ*), and his health becoming weak, united the gymnastic with the medical art, and having condemned himself to a life of weariness, afterwards extended the same pernicious system to others. He made his life a long death. For humouring the disease, mortal in its own nature, to which he was subject, without being able to cure it, he postponed all other purposes to the care of medicating himself, and through his whole life was subject to an access of his malady, if he departed in any degree from his accustomed diet, and by the employment of this skill, dying by degrees, he arrived at an old age.—L. iii.

Æsculapius never pursued these systems, nor Machaon or Podalirius. They never undertook the treatment of those whose frames were inwardly and thoroughly diseased, so to prolong a worthless existence, and bestow on a man a long and wretched being, during which they might generate children in every respect the inheritors of their infirmity.—L. iii.

[II-144]

XIX.—: AGAINST WHAT IS FALSELY CALLED "KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD."

A man ought not to be a good judge until he be old; because he ought not have acquired a knowledge of what injustice is, until his understanding has arrived at maturity: not apprehending its nature from a consideration of its existence in himself; but having contemplated it distinct from his own nature in that of others, for a long time, until he shall perceive what an evil it is, not from his own experience and its effects within himself, but from his observations of them as resulting in others. Such a one were indeed an honourable judge, and a good; for he who has a good mind, is good. But that judge who is considered so wise, who having himself committed great injustice, is supposed to be qualified for the detection of it in others, and who is quick to suspect, appears keen, indeed, as long as he associates with those who resemble him; because, deriving experience from the example afforded by a consideration of his own conduct and character, he acts with caution; but when he associates with men of universal experience and real virtue, he exposes the defects resulting from such experience as he possesses, by distrusting men unreasonably and mistaking true virtue, having no example of it within himself with which to compare the

appearances manifested in others: yet, such a one finding more associates who are virtuous than such as are wise, necessarily appears, both to himself and others, rather to be wise than foolish.—But we ought rather to search for a wise and good judge; one who has examples within himself of that upon which he is to pronounce.—C. iii.

XX.—Those who use gymnastics unmingled with music become too savage, whilst those who use music unmingled with gymnastics, become more delicate than is befitting.

[**II-145**]

ON A PASSAGE IN CRITO.↩

[*Prefatory note by Mrs. Shelley.*]

> It is well known that when Socrates was condemned to death, his friends made arrangements for his escape from prison and his after security; of which he refused to avail himself, from the reason, that a good citizen ought to obey the laws of his country. On this Shelley makes the following remarks—

THE reply is simple,

Indeed, your city cannot subsist, because the laws are no longer of avail. For how can the laws be said to exist, when those who deserve to be nourished in the Prytanea at the public expense, are condemned to suffer the penalties only due to the most atrocious criminals; whilst those against, and to protect from whose injustice, the laws were framed, live in honour and security? I neither overthrow your state, nor infringe your laws. Although you have inflicted an injustice on me, which is sufficient, according to the opinions of the multitude, to authorise me to consider you and me as in a state of warfare; yet, had I the power, so far from inflicting any revenge, I would endeavour to overcome you by benefits. All that I do at present is, that which the peaceful traveller would do, who, caught by robbers in a forest, escapes from them whilst they are engaged in the division of the spoil. And this I do, when it would not only be indifferent, [**II-146**] but delightful to me to die, surrounded by my friends, secure of the inheritance of glory, and escaping, after such a life as mine, from the decay of mind and body which must soon begin to be my portion should I live. But I prefer the good, which I have it in my power yet to perform.

Such are the arguments which overturn the sophism placed in the mouth of Socrates by Plato. But there are others which prove that he did well to die.

[**II-147**]

THE ASSASSINS.
A Fragment of a Romance.↩

CHAPTER I.

JERUSALEM, goaded on to resistance by the incessant usurpations and insolence of Rome, leagued together its discordant factions to rebel against the common enemy and tyrant. Inferior to their foe in all but the unconquerable hope of liberty, they surrounded their city with fortifications of uncommon strength, and placed in array before the temple a band rendered desperate by patriotism and religion. Even the women preferred to die, rather than survive the ruin of their country. When the Roman army approached the walls of the sacred city, its preparations, its discipline, and its numbers, evinced the conviction of its leader, that he had no common barbarians to subdue. At the approach of the Roman army, the strangers withdrew from the city.

Among the multitudes which from every nation of the East had assembled at Jerusalem, was a little congregation of Christians. They were remarkable neither for their numbers nor their importance. They contained among them neither philosophers nor poets. Acknowledging no laws but those of God, they modelled their [**II-148**] conduct towards their fellow-men by the conclusions of their individual judgment on the practical application of these laws. And it was apparent from the simplicity and severity of their manners, that this contempt for human institutions had produced among them a character superior in singleness and sincere self-apprehension to the slavery of pagan customs and the gross delusions of antiquated superstition. Many of their opinions considerably resembled those of the sect afterwards known by the name of Gnostics. They esteemed the human understanding to be the paramount rule of human conduct; they maintained that the obscurest religious truth required for its complete elucidation no more than the strenuous application of the energies of mind. It appeared impossible to them that any doctrine could be subversive of social happiness which is not capable of being confuted by arguments derived from the nature of existing things. With the devoutest submission to the law of Christ, they united an intrepid spirit of inquiry as to the correctest mode of acting in particular instances of conduct that occur among men. Assuming the doctrines of the Messiah concerning benevolence and justice for the regulation of their actions, they could not be persuaded to acknowledge that there was apparent in the divine code any prescribed rule whereby, for its own sake, one action rather than another, as fulfilling the will of their great Master, should be preferred.

The contempt with which the magistracy and priesthood regarded this obscure community of speculators, had hitherto protected them from persecution. But they had arrived at that precise degree of eminence and prosperity which is peculiarly obnoxious to the hostility of the rich and powerful. The moment of their departure from Jerusalem was the crisis of their future destiny. Had they continued to seek a precarious refuge in a city of the Roman empire, this persecution would not have [**II-149**] delayed to impress a new character on their opinions and their conduct; narrow views, and the illiberality of sectarian patriotism, would not have failed speedily to obliterate the magnificence and beauty of their wild and wonderful condition.

Attached from principle to peace, despising and hating the pleasures and the customs of the degenerate mass of mankind, this unostentatious community of good and happy men fled to the solitudes of Lebanon. To Arabians and enthusiasts the solemnity and grandeur of these desolate recesses possessed peculiar attractions. It well accorded with the justice of their conceptions on the relative duties of man towards his fellow in society, that they should

labour in unconstrained equality to dispossess the wolf and the tiger of their empire, and establish on its ruins the dominion of intelligence and virtue. No longer would the worshippers of the God of Nature be indebted to a hundred hands for the accommodation of their simple wants. No longer would the poison of a diseased civilization embrue their very nutriment with pestilence. They would no longer owe their very existence to the vices, the fears, and the follies of mankind. Love, friendship, and philanthropy, would now be the characteristic disposers of their industry. It is for his mistress or his friend that the labourer consecrates his toil; others are mindful, but he is forgetful, of himself. "God feeds the hungry ravens, and clothes the lilies of the fields, and yet Solomon in all his glory is not like to one of these."

Rome was now the shadow of her former self. The light of her grandeur and loveliness had passed away. The latest and the noblest of her poets and historians had foretold in agony her approaching slavery and degradation. The ruins of the human mind, more awful and portentous than the desolation of the most solemn temples, threw a shade of gloom upon her golden palaces which the brutal vulgar could not see, but which [**II-150**] the mighty felt with inward trepidation and despair. The ruins of Jerusalem lay defenceless and uninhabited upon the burning sands; none visited, but in the depth of solemn awe, this accursed and solitary spot. Tradition says that there was seen to linger among the scorched and shattered fragments of the temple, one being, whom he that saw dared not to call man, with clasped hands, immoveable eyes, and a visage horribly serene. Not on the will of the capricious multitude, nor the constant fluctuations of the many and the weak, depends the change of empires and religions. These are the mere insensible elements from which a subtler intelligence moulds its enduring statuary. They that direct the changes of this mortal scene breathe the decrees of their dominion from a throne of darkness and of tempest. The power of man is great.

After many days of wandering, the Assassins pitched their tents in the valley of Bethzatanai. For ages had this fertile valley lain concealed from the adventurous search of man, among mountains of everlasting snow. The men of elder days had inhabited this spot. Piles of monumental marble and fragments of columns that in their integrity almost seemed the work of some intelligence more sportive and fantastic than the gross conceptions of mortality, lay in heaps beside the lake, and were visible beneath its transparent waves. The flowering orange-tree, the balsam, and innumerable odoriferous shrubs, grew wild in the desolated portals. The fountain tanks had overflowed, and amid the luxuriant vegetation of their margin, the yellow snake held its unmolested dwelling. Hither came the tiger and the bear to contend for those once domestic animals who had forgotten the secure servitude of their ancestors. No sound, when the famished beast of prey had retreated in despair from the awful desolation of this place, at whose completion he had assisted, but the shrill cry of the stork, and the flapping of his heavy wings from the [**II-151**] capital of the solitary column, and the scream of the hungry vulture baffled of its only victim. The lore of ancient wisdom was sculptured in mystic characters on the rocks. The human spirit and the human hand had been busy here to accomplish its profoundest miracles. It was a temple dedicated to the god of knowledge and of truth. The palaces of the Caliphs and the Cæsars might easily surpass these ruins in magnitude and sumptuousness: but they were the design of tyrants and the work of slaves. Piercing genius and consummate prudence had planned and executed Bethzatanai. There was deep and important meaning in every lineament of its fantastic sculpture. The unintelligible legend, once so beautiful and perfect, so full of poetry and history, spoke, even in destruction, volumes of mysterious import, and obscure significance.

But in the season of its utmost prosperity and magnificence, art might not aspire to vie with nature in the valley of Bethzatanai. All that was wonderful and lovely was collected in this deep seclusion. The fluctuating elements seemed to have been rendered everlastingly permanent in forms of wonder and delight. The mountains of Lebanon had been divided to

their base to form this happy valley; on every side their icy summits darted their white pinnacles into the clear blue sky, imaging, in their grotesque outline, minarets, and ruined domes, and columns worn with time. Far below, the silver clouds rolled their bright volumes in many beautiful shapes, and fed the eternal springs, that, spanning the dark chasms like a thousand radiant rainbows, leaped into the quiet vale, then, lingering in many a dark glade among the groves of cypress and of palm, lost themselves in the lake. The immensity of these precipitous mountains with their starry pyramids of snow, excluded the sun, which overtopped not, even in its meridian, their overhanging rocks. But a more heavenly and serener light was reflected from their icy mirrors, which, [**II-152**] piercing through the many-tinted clouds, produced lights and colours of inexhaustible variety. The herbage was perpetually verdant, and clothed the darkest recesses of the caverns and the woods.

Nature, undisturbed, had become an enchantress in these solitudes; she had collected here all that was wonderful and divine from the armoury of her omnipotence. The very winds breathed health and renovation, and the joyousness of youthful courage. Fountains of crystalline water played perpetually among the aromatic flowers, and mingled a freshness with their odour. The pine boughs became instruments of exquisite contrivance, among which every varying breeze waked music of new and more delightful melody. Meteoric shapes, more effulgent than the moonlight, hung on the wandering clouds, and mixed in discordant dance around the spiral fountains. Blue vapours assumed strange lineaments under the rocks and among the ruins, lingering like ghosts with slow and solemn step. Through a dark chasm to the east, in the long perspective of a portal glittering with the unnumbered riches of the subterranean world, shone the broad moon, pouring in one yellow and unbroken stream her horizontal beams. Nearer the icy region, autumn and spring held an alternate reign. The sere leaves fell and choked the sluggish brooks; the chilling fogs hung diamonds on every spray; and in the dark cold evening the howling winds made melancholy music in the trees. Far above, shone the bright throne of winter, clear, cold, and dazzling. Sometimes there was seen the snow-flakes to fall before the sinking orb of the beamless sun, like a shower of fiery sulphur. The cataracts, arrested in their course, seemed, with their transparent columns, to support the dark-browed rocks. Sometimes the icy whirlwind scooped the powdery snow aloft, to mingle with the hissing meteors, and scatter spangles through the rare and rayless atmosphere.

Such strange scenes of chaotic confusion and harrowing [**II-153**] sublimity, surrounding and shutting in the vale, added to the delights of its secure and voluptuous tranquillity. No spectator could have refused to believe that some spirit of great intelligence and power had hallowed these wild and beautiful solitudes to a deep and solemn mystery.

The immediate effect of such a scene, suddenly presented to the contemplation of mortal eyes, is seldom the subject of authentic record. The coldest slave of custom cannot fail to recollect some few moments in which the breath of spring or the crowding clouds of sunset, with the pale moon shining through their fleecy skirts, or the song of some lonely bird perched on the only tree of an unfrequented heath, has awakened the touch of nature. And they were Arabians who entered the valley of Bethzatanai; men who idolized nature and the God of nature; to whom love and lofty thoughts, and the apprehensions of an uncorrupted spirit, were sustenance and life. Thus securely excluded from an abhorred world, all thought of its judgment was cancelled by the rapidity of their fervid imaginations. They ceased to acknowledge, or deigned not to advert to, the distinctions with which the majority of base and vulgar minds control the longings and struggles of the soul towards its place of rest. A new and sacred fire was kindled in their hearts and sparkled in their eyes. Every gesture, every feature, the minutest action, was modelled to beneficence and beauty by the holy inspiration that had descended on their searching spirits. The epidemic transport communicated itself through every heart with the rapidity of a blast from heaven. They were

already disembodied spirits; they were already the inhabitants of paradise. To live, to breathe, to move, was itself a sensation of immeasurable transport. Every new contemplation of the condition of his nature brought to the happy enthusiast an added measure of delight, and impelled to every organ, where mind is [**II-154**] united with external things, a keener and more exquisite perception of all that they contain of lovely and divine. To love, to be beloved, suddenly became an insatiable famine of his nature, which the wide circle of the universe, comprehending beings of such inexhaustible variety and stupendous magnitude of excellence appeared too narrow and confined to satiate.

Alas, that these visitings of the spirit of life should fluctuate and pass away! That the moments when the human mind is commensurate with all that it can conceive of excellent and powerful, should not endure with its existence and survive its most momentous change! But the beauty of a vernal sunset, with its overhanging curtains of empurpled could, is rapidly dissolved, to return at some unexpected period, and spread an alleviating melancholy over the dark vigils of despair.

It is true the enthusiasm of overwhelming transport which had inspired every breast among the Assassins is no more. The necessity of daily occupation and the ordinariness of that human life, the burthen of which it is the destiny of every human being to bear, had smothered, not extinguished, that divine and eternal fire. Not the less indelible and permanent were the impressions communicated to all; not the more unalterably were the features of their social character modelled and determined by its influence.

CHAPTER II.

Rome had fallen. Her senate-house had become a polluted den of thieves and liars; her solemn temples, the arena of theological disputants, who made fire and sword the missionaries of their inconceivable beliefs. The city of the monster Constantine, symbolising, in the consequences of its foundation, the wickedness and [**II-155**] weakness of his successors, feebly imaged with declining power the substantial eminence of the Roman name. Pilgrims of a new and mightier faith crowded to visit the lonely ruins of Jerusalem, and weep and pray before the sepulchre of the Eternal God. The earth was filled with discord, tumult, and ruin. The spirit of disinterested virtue had armed one-half of the civilised world against the other. Monstrous and detestable creeds poisoned and blighted the domestic charities. There was no appeal to natural love, or ancient faith, from pride, superstition, and revenge.

Four centuries had passed thus terribly characterised by the most calamitous revolutions. The Assassins, meanwhile, undisturbed by the surrounding tumult, possessed and cultivated their fertile valley. The gradual operation of their peculiar condition had matured and perfected the singularity and excellence of their character. That cause, which had ceased to act as an immediate and overpowering excitement, became the unperceived law of their lives, and sustenance of their natures. Their religious tenets had also undergone a change, corresponding with the exalted condition of their moral being. The gratitude which they owed to the benignant Spirit by which their limited intelligences had not only been created but redeemed, was less frequently adverted to, became less the topic of comment or contemplation; not, therefore, did it cease to be their presiding guardian, the guide of their inmost thoughts, the tribunal of appeal for the minutest particulars of their conduct. They learned to identify this mysterious benefactor with the delight that is bred among the solitary rocks, and has its dwelling alike in the changing colours of the clouds and the inmost recesses of the caverns. Their future also no longer existed, but in the blissful tranquillity of the present. Time was measured and created by the vices and the miseries of men, between whom and the happy [**II-156**] nation of the Assassins there was no analogy nor comparison. Already had their eternal peace commenced. The darkness had passed away from the open

gates of death.

The practical results produced by their faith and condition upon their external conduct were singular and memorable. Excluded from the great and various community of mankind, these solitudes became to them a sacred hermitage, in which all formed, as it were, one being, divided against itself by no contending will or factious passions. Every impulse conspired to one end, and tended to a single object. Each devoted his powers to the happiness of the other. Their republic was the scene of the perpetual contentions of benevolence; not the heartless and assumed kindness of commercial man, but the genuine virtue that has a legible superscription in every feature of the countenance, and every motion of the frame. The perverseness and calamities of those who dwelt beyond the mountains that encircled their undisturbed possessions, were unknown and unimagined. Little embarrassed by the complexities of civilised society, they knew not to conceive any happiness that can be satiated without participation, or that thirsts not to reproduce and perpetually generate itself. The path of virtue and felicity was plain and unimpeded. They clearly acknowledged, in every case, that conduct to be entitled to preference which would obviously produce the greatest pleasure. They could not conceive an instance in which it would be their duty to hesitate, in causing, at whatever expense, the greatest and most unmixed delight.

Hence arose a peculiarity which only failed to germinate in uncommon and momentous consequences, because the Assassins had retired from the intercourse of mankind, over whom other motives and principles of conduct than justice and benevolence prevail. It would be a difficult matter for men of such a sincere and [**II-157**] simple faith, to estimate the final results of their intentions, among the corrupt and slavish multitude. They would be perplexed also in their choice of the means, whereby their intentions might be fulfilled. To produce immediate pain or disorder for the sake of future benefit, is consonant, indeed, with the purest religion and philosophy, but never fails to excite invincible repugnance in the feelings of the many. Against their predilections and distastes an Assassin, accidentally the inhabitant of a civilised community, would wage unremitting hostility from principle. He would find himself compelled to adopt means which they would abhor, for the sake of an object which they could not conceive that he should propose to himself. Secure and self-enshrined in the magnificence and pre-eminence of his conceptions, spotless as the light of heaven, he would be the victim among men of calumny and persecution. Incapable of distinguishing his motives, they would rank him among the vilest and most atrocious criminals. Great, beyond all comparison with them, they would despise him in the presumption of their ignorance. Because his spirit burned with an unquenchable passion for their welfare, they would lead him, like his illustrious master, amidst scoffs, and mockery, and insult, to the remuneration of an ignominious death.

Who hesitates to destroy a venomous serpent that has crept near his sleeping friend, except the man who selfishly dreads lest the malignant reptile should turn its fury on himself? And if the poisoner has assumed a human shape, if the bane be distinguished only from the viper's venom by the excess and extent of its devastation, will the saviour and avenger here retract and pause, entrenched behind the superstition of the indefeasible divinity of man? Is the human form, then, the mere badge of a prerogative for unlicensed wickedness and mischief? Can the power derived from the weakness of the oppressed, or the ignorance [**II-158**] of the deceived, confer the right in security to tyrannise and defraud?

The subject of regular governments, and the disciple of established superstition, dares not to ask this question. For the sake of the eventual benefit, he endures what he esteems a transitory evil, and the moral degradation of man disquiets not his patience. But the religion of an Assassin imposes other virtues than endurance, when his fellow-men groan under tyranny, or have become so bestial and abject that they cannot feel their chains. An Assassin believes that man is eminently man, and only then enjoys the prerogatives of his privileged

condition, when his affections and his judgment pay tribute to the God of Nature. The perverse, and vile, and vicious—what were they? Shapes of some unholy vision, moulded by the spirit of Evil, which the sword of the merciful destroyer should sweep from this beautiful world. Dreamy nothings; phantasms of misery and mischief, that hold their death-like state on glittering thrones, and in the loathsome dens of poverty. No Assassin would submissively temporise with vice, and in cold charity become a pander to falsehood and desolation. His path through the wilderness of civilized society would be marked with the blood of the oppressor and the ruiner. The wretch, whom nations tremblingly adore, would expiate in his throttling grasp a thousand licensed and venerable crimes.

How many holy liars and parasites, in solemn guise, would his saviour arm drag from their luxurious couches, and plunge in the cold charnel, that the green and many-legged monsters of the slimy grave might eat off at their leisure the lineaments of rooted malignity and detested cunning. The respectable man—the smooth, smiling, polished villain, whom all the city honours; whose very trade is lies and murder; who buys his daily bread with the blood and tears of men, would [**II-159**] feed the ravens with his limbs. The Assassin would cater nobly for the eyeless worms of earth, and the carrion fowls of heaven.

Yet here, religion and human love had imbued the manners of those solitary people with inexpressible gentleness and benignity. Courage and active virtue, and the indignation against vice, which becomes a hurrying and irresistible passion, slept like the imprisoned earthquake, or the lightning shafts that hang in the golden clouds of evening. They were innocent, but they were capable of more than innocence; for the great principles of their faith were perpetually acknowledged and adverted to; nor had they forgotten, in this uninterrupted quiet, the author of their felicity.

Four centuries had thus worn away without producing an event. Men had died, and natural tears had been shed upon their graves, in sorrow that improves the heart. Those who had been united by love had gone to death together, leaving to their friends the bequest of a most sacred grief, and of a sadness that is allied to pleasure. Babes that hung upon their mothers' breasts had become men; men had died; and many a wild luxuriant weed that overtopped the habitations of the vale, had twined its roots around their disregarded bones. Their tranquil state was like a summer sea, whose gentle undulations disturb not the reflected stars, and break not the long still line of the rainbow hues of sunrise.

CHAPTER III.

Where all is thus calm, the slightest circumstance is recorded and remembered. Before the sixth century had expired one incident occurred, remarkable and strange. A young man, named Albedir, wandering, [**II-160**] in the woods, was startled by the screaming of a bird of prey, and, looking up, saw blood fall, drop by drop, from among the intertwined boughs of a cedar. Having climbed the tree, he beheld a terrible and dismaying spectacle. A naked human body was impaled on the broken branch. It was maimed and mangled horribly; every limb bent and bruised into frightful distortion, and exhibiting a breathing image of the most sickening mockery of life. A monstrous snake had scented its prey from among the mountains—and above hovered a hungry vulture. From amidst this mass of desolated humanity, two eyes, black and inexpressibly brilliant, shone with an unearthly lustre. Beneath the bloodstained eye-brows their steady rays manifested the serenity of an immortal power, the collected energy of a deathless mind, spell-secured from dissolution. A bitter smile of mingled abhorrence and scorn distorted his wounded lip—he appeared calmly to observe and measure all around—self-possession had not deserted the shattered mass of life.

The youth approached the bough on which the breathing corpse was hung. As he approached, the serpent reluctantly unwreathed his glittering coils, and crept towards his dark and loathsome cave. The vulture, impatient of his meal, fled to the mountain, that re-echoed with his hoarse screams. The cedar branches creaked with their agitating weight, faintly, as the dismal wind arose. All else was deadly silent.

At length a voice issued from the mangled man. It rattled in hoarse murmurs from his throat and lungs—his words were the conclusion of some strange mysterious soliloquy. They were broken, and without apparent connexion, completing wide intervals of inexpressible conceptions.

"The great tyrant is baffled, even in success. Joy! joy! to his tortured foe! Triumph to the worm whom he tramples under his feet! Ha! His suicidal hand [**II-161**] might dare as well abolish the mighty frame of things! Delight and exultation sit before the closed gates of death!—I fear not to dwell beneath their black and ghastly shadow. Here thy power may not avail! Thou createst—'tis mine to ruin and destroy.—I was thy slave—I am thy equal, and thy foe.—Thousands tremble before thy throne, who, at my voice, shall dare to pluck the golden crown from thine unholy head!" He ceased. The silence of noon swallowed up his words. Albedir clung tighter to the tree—he dared not for dismay remove his eyes. He remained mute in the perturbation of deep and creeping horror.

"Albedir!" said the same voice, "Albedir! in the name of God, approach. He that suffered me to fall, watches thee;—the gentle and merciful spirits of sweet human love delight not in agony and horror. For pity's sake approach, in the name of thy good God, approach, Albedir!" The tones were mild and clear as the responses of Æolian music. They floated to Albedir's ear like the warm breath of June that lingers in the lawny groves, subduing all to softness. Tears of tender affection started into his eyes. It was as the voice of a beloved friend. The partner of his childhood, the brother of his soul, seemed to call for aid, and pathetically to remonstrate with delay. He resisted not the magic impulse, but advanced towards the spot, and tenderly attempted to remove the wounded man. He cautiously descended the tree with his wretched burthen, and deposited it on the ground.

A period of strange silence intervened. Awe and cold horror were slowly succeeding to the softer sensations of tumultuous pity, when again he heard the silver modulations of the same enchanting voice. "Weep not for me, Albedir! What wretch so utterly lost, but might inhale peace and renovation from this paradise! I am wounded, and in pain; but having found a refuge in this seclusion, and a friend in you, I am worthier of envy [**II-162**] than compassion. Bear me to your cottage secretly: I would not disturb your gentle partner by my appearance. She must love me more dearly than a brother. I must be the playmate of your children; already I regard them with a father's love. My arrival must not be regarded as a thing of mystery and wonder. What, indeed, but that men are prone to error and exaggeration, is less inexplicable, than that a stranger, wandering on Lebanon, fell from the rocks into the vale? Albedir," he continued, and his deepening voice assumed awful solemnity, "in return for the affection with which I cherish thee and thine, thou owest this submission."

Albedir implicitly submitted; not even a thought had power to refuse its deference. He reassumed his burthen, and proceeded towards the cottage. He watched until Khaled should be absent, and conveyed the stranger into an apartment appropriated for the reception of those who occasionally visited their habitation. He desired that the door should be securely fastened, and that he might not be visited until the morning of the following day.

Albedir waited with impatience for the return of Khaled. The unaccustomed weight of even so transitory a secret hung on his ingenuous and unpractised nature, like a blighting, clinging curse. The stranger's accents had lulled him to a trance of wild and delightful

imagination. Hopes, so visionary and aerial, that they had assumed no denomination, had spread themselves over his intellectual frame, and, phantoms as they were, had modelled his being to their shape. Still his mind was not exempt from the visitings of disquietude and perturbation. It was a troubled stream of thought, over whose fluctuating waves unsearchable fate seemed to preside, guiding its unforeseen alternations with an inexorable hand. Albedir paced earnestly the garden of his cottage, revolving every circumstance attendant on the incident of the day. He re-imaged with intense [**II-163**] thought the minutest recollections of the scene. In vain—he was the slave of suggestions not to be controlled. Astonishment, horror, and awe—tumultuous sympathy, and a mysterious elevation of soul, hurried away all activity of judgment, and overwhelmed, with stunning force, every attempt at deliberation or inquiry.

His reveries were interrupted at length by the return of Khaled. She entered the cottage, that scene of undisturbed repose, in the confidence that change might as soon overwhelm the eternal world, as disturb this inviolable sanctuary. She started to behold Albedir. Without preface or remark, he recounted with eager haste the occurrences of the day. Khaled's tranquil spirit could hardly keep pace with the breathless rapidity of his narration. She was bewildered with staggering wonder even to hear his confused tones, and behold his agitated countenance.

CHAPTER IV.

On the following morning Albedir arose at sunrise, and visited the stranger. He found him already risen, and employed in adorning the lattice of his chamber with flowers from the garden. There was something in his attitude and occupation singularly expressive of his entire familiarity with the scene. Albedir's habitation seemed to have been his accustomed home. He addressed his host in a tone of gay and affectionate welcome, such as never fails to communicate by sympathy the feelings from which it flows.

"My friend," said he, "the balm of the dew of our vale is sweet; or is this garden the favoured spot where the winds conspire to scatter the best odours they can find? Come, lend me your arm awhile, I feel very [**II-164**] weak." He motioned to walk forth, but, as if unable to proceed, rested on the seat beside the door. For a few moments they were silent, if the interchange of cheerful and happy looks is to be called silence. At last he observed a spade that rested against the wall. "You have only one spade, brother," said he; "you have only one, I suppose, of any of the instruments of tillage. Your garden ground, too, occupies a certain space which it will be necessary to enlarge. This must be quickly remedied. I cannot earn my supper of to-night, nor of tomorrow; but thenceforward, I do not mean to eat the bread of idleness. I know that you would willingly perform the additional labour which my nourishment would require; I know, also, that you would feel a degree of pleasure in the fatigue arising from this employment, but I shall contest with you such pleasures as these, and such pleasures as these alone." His eyes were somewhat wan, and the tone of his voice languid as he spoke.

As they were thus engaged, Khaled came towards them. The stranger beckoned to her to sit beside him, and taking her hands within his own, looked attentively on her mild countenance. Khaled inquired if he had been refreshed by sleep. He replied by a laugh of careless and inoffensive glee; and placing one of her hands within Albedir's, said, "If this be sleep, here in this odorous vale, where these sweet smiles encompass us, and the voices of those who love are heard—if these be the visions of sleep, sister, those who lie down in misery shall arise lighter than the butterflies. I came from amid the tumult of a world, how different from this! I am unexpectedly among you, in the midst of a scene such as my imagination never dared to promise. I must remain here—I must not depart." Khaled, recovering from the admiration and astonishment caused by the stranger's words and manner,

assured him of the happiness which she should feel in such an addition to [**II-165**] her society. Albedir, too, who had been more deeply impressed than Khaled by the event of his arrival, earnestly reassured him of the ardour of the affection with which he had inspired them. The stranger smiled gently to hear the unaccustomed fervour of sincerity which animated their address, and was rising to retire, when Khaled said, "You have not yet seen our children, Maimuna and Abdallah. They are by the water-side, playing with their favourite snake. We have only to cross yonder little wood, and wind down a path cut in the rock that overhangs the lake, and we shall find them beside a recess which the shore makes there, and which a chasm, as it were, among the rocks and woods, encloses. Do you think you could walk there?" "To see your children, Khaled? I think I could, with the assistance of Albedir's arm, and yours."—So they went through the wood of ancient cypress, intermingled with the brightness of many-tinted blooms, which gleamed like stars through its romantic glens. They crossed the green meadow, and entered among the broken chasms, beautiful as they were in their investiture of odoriferous shrubs. They came at last, after pursuing a path which wound through the intricacies of a little wilderness, to the borders of the lake. They stood on the rock which overhung it, from which there was a prospect of all the miracles of nature and of art which encircled and adorned its shores. The stranger gazed upon it with a countenance unchanged by any emotion, but, as it were, thoughtfully and contemplatingly. As he gazed, Khaled ardently pressed his hand, and said, in a low yet eager voice, "Look, look, lo there!" He turned towards her, but her eyes were not on him. She looked below—her lips were parted by the feelings which possessed her soul—her breath came and went regularly but inaudibly. She leaned over the precipice, and her dark hair hanging beside her face, gave relief to its fine lineaments, animated by such love as exceeds utterance. The [**II-166**] stranger followed her eyes, and saw that her children were in the glen below; then raising his eyes, exchanged with her affectionate looks of congratulation and delight. The boy was apparently eight years old, the girl about two years younger. The beauty of their form and countenance was something so divine and strange, as overwhelmed the senses of the beholder like a delightful dream, with insupportable ravishment. They were arrayed in a loose robe of linen, through which the exquisite proportions of their form appeared. Unconscious that they were observed, they did not relinquish the occupation in which they were engaged. They had constructed a little boat of the bark of trees, and had given it sails of interwoven feathers, and launched it on the water. They sat beside a white flat stone, on which a small snake lay coiled, and when their work was finished, they arose and called to the snake in melodious tones, so that it understood their language. For it unwreathed its shining circles and crept to the boat, into which no sooner had it entered than the girl loosened the band which held it to the shore, and it sailed away. Then they ran round and round the little creek, clapping their hands, and melodiously pouring out wild sounds, which the snake seemed to answer by the restless glancing of his neck. At last a breath of wind came from the shore, and the boat changed its course, and was about to leave the creek, which the snake perceived and leaped into the water, and came to the little children's feet. The girl sang to it, and it leaped into her bosom, and she crossed her fair hands over it, as if to cherish it there. Then the boy answered with a song, and it glided from beneath her hands and crept towards him. While they were thus employed, Maimuna looked up, and seeing her parents on the cliff, ran to meet them up the steep path that wound around it; and Abdallah, leaving his snake, followed joyfully.

[**II-167**]

ON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH.
A Fragment.↩

THE first law which it becomes a Reformer to propose and support, at the approach of a period of great political change, is the abolition of the punishment of death.

It is sufficiently clear that revenge, retaliation, atonement, expiation, are rules and motives, so far from deserving a place in any enlightened system of political life, that they are the chief sources of a prodigious class of miseries in the domestic circles of society. It is clear that however the spirit of legislation may appear to frame institutions upon more philosophical maxims, it has hitherto, in those cases which are termed criminal, done little more than palliate the spirit, by gratifying a portion of it; and afforded a compromise between that which is best;—the inflicting of no evil upon a sensitive being, without a decisively beneficial result in which he should at least participate;—and that which is worst; that he should be put to torture for the amusement of those whom he may have injured, or may seem to have injured.

Omitting these remoter considerations, let us inquire what *Death* is; that which is applied as a measure of transgressions of indefinite shades of distinction, so [**II-168**] soon as they shall have passed that degree and colour of enormity, with which it is supposed no inferior infliction is commensurate.

And first, whether death is good or evil, a punishment or a reward, or whether it be wholly indifferent, no man can take upon himself to assert. That that within us which thinks and feels, continues to think and feel after the dissolution of the body, has been the almost universal opinion of mankind, and the accurate philosophy of what I may be permitted to term the modern Academy, by showing the prodigious depth and extent of our ignorance respecting the causes and nature of sensation, renders probable the affirmative of a proposition, the negative of which it is so difficult to conceive, and the popular arguments against which, derived from what is called the atomic system, are proved to be applicable only to the relation which one object bears to another, as apprehended by the mind, and not to existence itself, or the nature of that essence which is the medium and receptacle of objects.

The popular system of religion suggests the idea that the mind, after death, will be painfully or pleasurably affected according to its determinations during life. However ridiculous and pernicious we must admit the vulgar accessories of this creed to be, there is a certain analogy, not wholly absurd, between the consequences resulting to an individual during life from the virtuous or vicious, prudent or imprudent, conduct of his external actions, to those consequences which are conjectured to ensue from the discipline and order of his internal thoughts, as affecting his condition in a future state. They omit, indeed, to calculate upon the accidents of disease, and temperament, and organisation, and circumstance, together with the multitude of independent agencies which affect the opinions, the conduct, and the happiness of individuals, and produce determinations of the will, and modify the judgment, so as to produce [**II-169**] effects the most opposite in natures considerably similar. These are those operations in the order of the whole of nature, tending, we are prone to believe, to some definite mighty end, to which the agencies of our peculiar nature are subordinate; nor is there any reason to suppose, that in a future state they should become suddenly exempt from that subordination. The philosopher is unable to determine whether our existence in a previous state has affected our present condition, and abstains from deciding whether our present condition would affect us in that which may be future. That, if we continue to exist, the manner of our existence will be such as no inferences nor

conjectures, afforded by a consideration of our earthly experience, can elucidate, is sufficiently obvious. The opinion that the vital principle within us, in whatever mode it may continue to exist, must lose that consciousness of definite and individual being which now characterises it, and become a unit in the vast sum of action and of thought which disposes and animates the universe, and is called God, seems to belong to that class of opinion which has been designated as indifferent.

To compel a person to know all that can be known by the dead, concerning that which the living fear, hope, or forget; to plunge him into the pleasure or pain which there awaits him; to punish or reward him in a manner and in a degree incalculable and incomprehensible by us; to disrobe him at once from all that intertexture of good and evil with which Nature seems to have clothed every form of individual existence, is to inflict on him the doom of death.

A certain degree of pain and terror usually accompany the infliction of death. This degree is infinitely varied by the infinite variety in the temperament and opinions of the sufferers. As a measure of punishment, strictly so considered, and as an exhibition, which, by its known effects on the sensibility of the sufferer, is intended to [**II-170**] intimidate the spectators from incurring a similar liability, it is singularly inadequate.

Firstly,—Persons of energetic character, in whom, as in men who suffer for political crimes, there is a large mixture of enterprise, and fortitude, and disinterestedness, and the elements, though misguided and disarranged, by which the strength and happiness of a nation might have been cemented, die in such a manner, as to make death appear not evil, but good. The death of what is called a traitor, that is, a person who, from whatever motive, would abolish the government of the day, is as often a triumphant exhibition of suffering virtue, as the warning of a culprit. The multitude, instead of departing with a panic-stricken approbation of the laws which exhibited such a spectacle, are inspired with pity, admiration and sympathy; and the most generous among them feel an emulation to be the authors of such flattering emotions, as they experience stirring in their bosoms. Impressed by what they see and feel, they make no distinction between the motives which incited the criminals to the actions for which they suffer, or the heroic courage with which they turned into good that which their judges awarded to them as evil, or the purpose itself of those actions, though that purpose may happen to be eminently pernicious. The laws in this case lose that sympathy, which it ought to be their chief object to secure, and in a participation of which, consists their chief strength in maintaining those sanctions by which the parts of the social union are bound together, so as to produce, as nearly as possible, the ends for which it is instituted.

Secondly—persons of energetic character, in communities not modelled with philosophical skill to turn all the energies which they contain to the purposes of common good, are prone also to fall into the temptation of undertaking, and are peculiarly fitted for despising the perils attendant upon consummating, the most enormous crimes. Murder, rapes, extensive schemes of plunder, [**II-171**] are the actions of persons belonging to this class; and death is the penalty of conviction. But the coarseness of organisation, peculiar to men capable of committing acts wholly selfish, is usually found to be associated with a proportionate insensibility to fear or pain. Their sufferings communicate to those of the spectators, who may be liable to the commission of similar crimes, a sense of the lightness of that event, when closely examined, which at a distance, as uneducated persons are accustomed to do, probably they regarded with horror. But a great majority of the spectators are so bound up in the interests and the habits of social union that no temptation would be sufficiently strong to induce them to a commission of the enormities to which this penalty is assigned. The more powerful, the richer among them,—and a numerous class of little tradesmen are richer and more powerful than those who are employed by them, and the employer, in general, bears this relation to the employed,—regard their own wrongs as, in some degree, avenged, and their own rights secured by this punishment, inflicted as the

penalty of whatever crime. In cases of murder or mutilation, this feeling is almost universal. In those, therefore, whom this exhibition does not awaken to the sympathy which extenuates crime and discredits the law which restrains it, it produces feelings more directly at war with the genuine purposes of political society. It excites those emotions which it is the chief object of civilisation to extinguish for ever, and in the extinction of which alone there can be any hope of better institutions than those under which men now misgovern one another. Men feel that their revenge is gratified, and that their security is established, by the extinction and the sufferings of beings, in most respects resembling themselves; and their daily occupations constraining them to a precise form in all their thoughts, they come to connect inseparably the idea of their own advantage with that of the death and torture [**II-172**] of others. It is manifest that the object of sane polity is directly the reverse; and that laws founded upon reason, should accustom the gross vulgar to associate their ideas of security and of interest with the reformation, and the strict restraint, for that purpose alone, of those who might invade it.

The passion of revenge is originally nothing more than an habitual perception of the ideas of the sufferings of the person who inflicts an injury, as connected, as they are in a savage state, or in such portions of society as are yet undisciplined to civilisation, with security that that injury will not be repeated in future. This feeling, engrafted upon superstition and confirmed by habit, at last loses sight of the only object for which it may be supposed to have been implanted, and becomes a passion and a duty to be pursued and fulfilled, even to the destruction of those ends to which it originally tended. The other passions, both good and evil, Avarice, Remorse, Love, Patriotism, present a similar appearance; and to this principle of the mind over-shooting the mark at which it aims, we owe all that is eminently base or excellent in human nature; in providing for the nutriment or the extinction of which consists the true art of the legislator. [10]

[**II-173**]

Nothing is more clear than that the infliction of punishment in general, in a degree which the reformation and the restraint of those who transgress the laws does not render indispensable, and none more than death, confirms all the inhuman and unsocial impulses of men. It is almost a proverbial remark, that those nations in which the penal code has been particularly mild, have been distinguished from all others by the rarity of crime. But the example is to be admitted to be equivocal. A more decisive argument is afforded by a consideration of the universal connexion of ferocity of manners, and a contempt of social ties, with the contempt of human life. Governments which derive their institutions from the existence of circumstances of barbarism and violence, with some rare exceptions perhaps, are bloody in proportion as they are despotic, and form the manners of their subjects to a sympathy with their own spirit.

The spectators who feel no abhorrence at a public execution, but rather a self-applauding superiority, and a sense of gratified indignation, are surely excited to the most inauspicious emotions. The first reflection of such a one is the sense of his own internal and actual worth, as preferable to that of the victim, whom circumstances have led to destruction. The meanest wretch is impressed with a sense of his own comparative merit. He is one of those on whom the tower of Siloam fell not—he is such a one as Jesus found not in all Samaria, who, in his own soul, throws the first stone at the woman taken in adultery. The popular religion of the country takes its designation from that illustrious person whose beautiful sentiment I have quoted. Any one who has stript from the doctrines of this person the veil of familiarity, will perceive how adverse their spirit is to feelings of this nature.

[**II-174**]

ON LIFE.↩

LIFE and the world, or whatever we call that which we are and feel, is an astonishing thing. The mist of familiarity obscures from us the wonder of our being. We are struck with admiration at some of its transient modifications, but it is itself the great miracle. What are changes of empires, the wreck of dynasties, with the opinions which supported them; what is the birth and the extinction of religious and of political systems, to life? What are the revolutions of the globe which we inhabit, and the operations of the elements of which it is composed, compared with life? What is the universe of stars, and suns, of which this inhabited earth is one, and their motions, and their destiny, compared with life? Life, the great miracle, we admire not, because it is so miraculous. It is well that we are thus shielded by the familiarity of what is at once so certain and so unfathomable, from an astonishment which would otherwise absorb and overawe the functions of that which is its object.

If any artist, I do not say had executed, but had merely conceived in his mind the system of the sun, and the stars, and planets, they not existing, and had painted to us in words, or upon canvas, the spectacle now afforded by the nightly cope of heaven, and illustrated it by the wisdom of astronomy, great would be our admiration. Or had he imagined the scenery of this earth, the [**II-175**] mountains, the seas, and the rivers; the grass, and the flowers, and the variety of the forms and masses of the leaves of the woods, and the colours which attend the setting and the rising sun, and the hues of the atmosphere, turbid or serene, these things not before existing, truly we should have been astonished, and it would not have been a vain boast to have said of such a man, "Non merita nome di creatore, se non Iddio ed il Poeta." [11]But now these things are looked on with little wonder, and to be conscious of them with intense delight is esteemed to be the distinguishing mark of a refined and extraordinary person. The multitude of men care not for them. It is thus with Life—that which includes all.

What is life? Thoughts and feelings arise, with or without our will, and we employ words to express them. We are born, and our birth is unremembered, and our infancy remembered but in fragments; we live on, and in living we lose the apprehension of life. How vain is it to think that words can penetrate the mystery of our being! Rightly used they may make evident our ignorance to ourselves; and this is much. For what are we? Whence do we come? and whither do we go? Is birth the commencement, is death the conclusion of our being? What is birth and death?

The most refined abstractions of logic conduct to a view of life, which, though startling to the apprehension, is, in fact, that which the habitual sense of its repeated combinations has extinguished in us. It strips, as it were, the painted curtain from this scene of things. I confess that I am one of those who am unable to refuse my assent to the conclusions of those philosophers who assert that nothing exists but as it is perceived.

It is a decision against which all our persuasions struggle, and we must be long convicted before we can be convinced that the solid universe of external things is "such stuff as dreams are made of." The shocking [**II-176**] absurdities of the popular philosophy of mind and matter, its fatal consequences in morals, and their violent dogmatism concerning the source of all things, had early conducted me to materialism. This materialism is a seducing system to young and superficial minds. It allows its disciples to talk, and dispenses them from thinking. But I was discontented with such a view of things as it afforded; man is a being of high aspirations, "looking both before and after," whose "thoughts wander through eternity," disclaiming alliance with transience and decay; incapable of imagining to himself annihilation; existing but in the future and the past; being, not what he is, but what he has

been and shall be. Whatever may be his true and final destination, there is a spirit within him at enmity with nothingness and dissolution. This is the character of all life and being. Each is at once the centre and the circumference; the point to which all things are referred, and the line in which all things are contained. Such contemplations as these, materialism and the popular philosophy of mind and matter alike forbid; they are only consistent with the intellectual system.

It is absurd to enter into a long recapitulation of arguments sufficiently familiar to those inquiring minds, whom alone a writer on abstruse subjects can be conceived to address. Perhaps the most clear and vigorous statement of the intellectual system is to be found in Sir William Drummond's Academical Questions. After such an exposition, it would be idle to translate into other words what could only lose its energy and fitness by the change. Examined point by point, and word by word, the most discriminating intellects have been able to discern no train of thoughts in the process of reasoning, which does not conduct inevitably to the conclusion which has been stated.

What follows from the admission? It establishes no new truth, it gives us no additional insight into our hidden nature, neither its action nor itself. Philosophy, [**II-177**] impatient as it may be to build, has much work yet remaining as pioneer for the overgrowth of ages. It makes one step towards this object; it destroys error, and the roots of error. It leaves, what it is too often the duty of the reformer in political and ethical questions to leave, a vacancy. It reduces the mind to that freedom in which it would have acted, but for the misuse of words and signs, the instruments of its own creation. By signs, I would be understood in a wide sense, including what is properly meant by that term, and what I peculiarly mean. In this latter sense, almost all familiar objects are signs, standing, not for themselves, but for others, in their capacity of suggesting one thought which shall lead to a train of thoughts. Our whole life is thus an education of error.

Let us recollect our sensations as children. What a distinct and intense apprehension had we of the world and of ourselves! Many of the circumstances of social life were then important to us which are now no longer so. But that is not the point of comparison on which I mean to insist. We less habitually distinguished all that we saw and felt, from ourselves. They seemed, as it were, to constitute one mass. There are some persons who, in this respect, are always children. Those who are subject to the state called reverie, feel as if their nature were dissolved into the surrounding universe, or as if the surrounding universe were absorbed into their being. They are conscious of no distinction. And these are states which precede, or accompany, or follow an unusually intense and vivid apprehension of life. As men grow up this power commonly decays, and they become mechanical and habitual agents. Thus feelings and then reasonings are the combined result of a multitude of entangled thoughts, and of a series of what are called impressions, planted by reiteration.

The view of life presented by the most refined deductions of the intellectual philosophy, is that of [**II-178**] unity. Nothing exists but as it is perceived. The difference is merely nominal between those two classes of thought, which are vulgarly distinguished by the names of ideas and of external objects. Pursuing the same thread of reasoning, the existence of distinct individual minds, similar to that which is employed in now questioning its own nature, is likewise found to be a delusion. The words *I, you, they,* are not signs of any actual difference subsisting between the assemblage of thoughts thus indicated, but are merely marks employed to denote the different modifications of the one mind.

Let it not be supposed that this doctrine conducts to the monstrous presumption that I, the person who now write and think, am that one mind. I am but a portion of it. The words *I,* and *you,* and *they* are grammatical devices invented simply for arrangement, and totally devoid of the intense and exclusive sense usually attached to them. It is difficult to find terms adequate

to express so subtle a conception as that to which the Intellectual Philosophy has conducted us. We are on that verge where words abandon us, and what wonder if we grow dizzy to look down the dark abyss of how little we know!

The relations of *things* remain unchanged, by whatever system. By the word *things* is to be understood any object of thought, that is, any thought upon which any other thought is employed, with an apprehension of distinction. The relations of these remain unchanged; and such is the material of our knowledge.

What is the cause of life? that is, how was it produced, or what agencies distinct from life have acted or act upon life? All recorded generations of mankind have wearily busied themselves in inventing answers to this question; and the result has been,—Religion. Yet, that the basis of all things cannot be, as the popular philosophy alleges, mind, is sufficiently evident. Mind, [**II-179**] as far as we have any experience of its properties, and beyond that experience how vain is argument! cannot create, it can only perceive. It is said also to be the cause. But cause is only a word expressing a certain state of the human mind with regard to the manner in which two thoughts are apprehended to be related to each other. If any one desires to know how unsatisfactorily the popular philosophy employs itself upon this great question, they need only impartially reflect upon the manner in which thoughts develop themselves in their minds. It is infinitely improbable that the cause of mind, that is, of existence, is similar to mind.

[**II-180**]

ON A FUTURE STATE.↩

IT has been the persuasion of an immense majority of human beings in all ages and nations that we continue to live after death,—that apparent termination of all the functions of sensitive and intellectual existence. Nor has mankind been contented with supposing that species of existence which some philosophers have asserted; namely, the resolution of the component parts of the mechanism of a living being into its elements, and the impossibility of the minutest particle of these sustaining the smallest diminution. They have clung to the idea that sensibility and thought, which they have distinguished from the objects of it, under the several names of spirit and matter, is, in its own nature, less susceptible of division and decay, and that, when the body is resolved into its elements, the principle which animated it will remain perpetual and unchanged. Some philosophers—and those to whom we are indebted for the most stupendous discoveries in physical science, suppose, on the other hand, that intelligence is the mere result of certain combinations among the particles of its objects; and those among them who believe that we live after death, recur to the interposition of a supernatural power, which shall overcome the tendency inherent in all material combinations, to dissipate and be absorbed into other forms.

Let us trace the reasonings which in one and the other have conducted to these two opinions, and endeavour [**II-181**] to discover what we ought to think on a question of such momentous interest. Let us analyse the ideas and feelings which constitute the contending beliefs, and watchfully establish a discrimination between words and thoughts. Let us bring the question to the test of experience and fact; and ask ourselves, considering our nature in its entire extent, what light we derive from a sustained and comprehensive view of its component parts, which may enable us to assert, with certainty, that we do or do not live after death.

The examination of this subject requires that it should be stript of all those accessory topics which adhere to it in the common opinion of men. The existence of a God, and a future state of rewards and punishments, are totally foreign to the subject. If it be proved that the world is ruled by a Divine Power, no inference necessarily can be drawn from that circumstance in favour of a future state. It has been asserted, indeed, that as goodness and justice are to be numbered among the attributes of the Deity, he will undoubtedly compensate the virtuous who suffer during life, and that he will make every sensitive being, who does not deserve punishment, happy for ever. But this view of the subject, which it would be tedious as well as superfluous to develop and expose, satisfies no person, and cuts the knot which we now seek to untie. Moreover, should it be proved, on the other hand, that the mysterious principle which regulates the proceedings of the universe, is neither intelligent nor sensitive, yet it is not an inconsistency to suppose at the same time, that the animating power survives the body which it has animated, by laws as independent of any supernatural agent as those through which it first became united with it. Nor, if a future state be clearly proved, does it follow that it will be a state of punishment or reward.

By the word death, we express that condition in which natures resembling ourselves apparently cease to [**II-182**] be that which they were. We no longer hear them speak, nor see them move If they have sensations and apprehensions, we no longer participate in them. We know no more than that those external organs, and all that fine texture of material frame, without which we have no experience that life or thought can subsist, are dissolved and scattered abroad. The body is placed under the earth, and after a certain period there remains no vestige even of its form. This is that contemplation of inexhaustible melancholy, whose

shadow eclipses the brightness of the world. The common observer is struck with dejection of the spectacle. He contends in vain against the persuasion of the grave, that the dead indeed cease to be. The corpse at his feet is prophetic of his own destiny. Those who have preceded him, and whose voice was delightful to his ear; whose touch met his like sweet and subtle fire; whose aspect spread a visionary light upon his path—these he cannot meet again. The organs of sense are destroyed, and the intellectual operations dependent on them have perished with their sources. How can a corpse see or feel? its eyes are eaten out, and its heart is black and without motion. What intercourse can two heaps of putrid clay and crumbling bones hold together? When you can discover where the fresh colours of the faded flower abide, or the music of the broken lyre, seek life among the dead. Such are the anxious and fearful contemplations of the common observer, though the popular religion often prevents him from confessing them even to himself.

The natural philosopher, in addition to the sensations common to all men inspired by the event of death, believes that he sees with more certainty that it is attended with the annihilation of sentiment and thought. He observes the mental powers increase and fade with those of the body, and even accommodate themselves to the most transitory changes of our physical nature. [**II-183**] Sleep suspends many of the faculties of the vital and intellectual principle; drunkenness and disease will either temporarily or permanently derange them. Madness or idiotcy may utterly extinguish the most excellent and delicate of those powers. In old age the mind gradually withers; and as it grew and was strengthened with the body, so does it together with the body sink into decrepitude. Assuredly these are convincing evidences that so soon as the organs of the body are subjected to the laws of inanimate matter, sensation, and perception, and apprehension, are at an end. It is probable that what we call thought is not an actual being, but no more than the relation between certain parts of that infinitely varied mass, of which the rest of the universe is composed, and which ceases to exist so soon as those parts change their position with regard to each other. Thus colour, and sound, and taste, and odour exist only relatively. But let thought be considered as some peculiar substance, which permeates, and is the cause of, the animation of living beings. Why should that substance be assumed to be something essentially distinct from all others, and exempt from subjection to those laws from which no other substance is exempt? It differs, indeed, from all other substances, as electricity, and light, and magnetism, and the constituent parts of air and earth, severally differ from all others. Each of these is subject to change and to decay, and to conversion into other forms. Yet the difference between light and earth is scarcely greater than that which exists between life, or thought, and fire. The difference between the two former was never alleged as an argument for the eternal permanence of either, in that form under which they first might offer themselves to our notice. Why should the difference between the two latter substances be an argument for the prolongation of the existence of one and not the other, when the existence of both has arrived at their apparent termination? To [**II-184**] say that fire exists without manifesting any of the properties of fire, such as light, heat, &c., or that the principle of life exists without consciousness, or memory, or desire, or motive, is to resign, by an awkward distortion of language, the affirmative of the dispute. To say that the principle of life *may* exist in distribution among various forms, is to assert what cannot be proved to be either true or false, but which, were it true, annihilates all hope of existence after death, in any sense in which that event can belong to the hopes and fears of men. Suppose, however, that the intellectual and vital principle differs in the most marked and essential manner from all other known substances; that they have all some resemblance between themselves which it in no degree participates. In what manner can this concession be made an argument for its imperishability? All that we see or know perishes and is changed. Life and thought differ indeed from everything else. But that it survives that period, beyond which we have no experience of its existence, such distinction and dissimilarity affords no shadow of proof, and nothing but our own desires could have led us to conjecture or imagine.

Have we existed before birth? It is difficult to conceive the possibility of this. There is, in the generative principle of each animal and plant, a power which converts the substances by which it is surrounded into a substance homogeneous with itself. That is, the relation between certain elementary particles of matter undergo a change, and submit to new combinations. For when we use the words *principle, power, cause,* &c., we mean to express no real being, but only to class under those terms a certain series of co-existing phenomena; but let it be supposed that this principle is a certain substance which escapes the observation of the chemist and anatomist. It certainly *may be;* though it is sufficiently unphilosophical to allege the possibility of an opinion as a proof of its truth. Does it see, hear, feel, before [**II-185**] its combination with those organs on which sensation depends? Does it reason, imagine, apprehend, without those ideas which sensation alone can communicate? If we have not existed before birth; if, at the period when the parts of our nature on which thought and life depend, seem to be woven together, they are woven together; if there are no reasons to suppose that we have existed before that period at which our existence apparently commences, then there are no grounds for supposition that we shall continue to exist after our existence has apparently ceased. So far as thought and life is concerned, the same will take place with regard to us, individually considered, after death, as had place before our birth.

It is said that it is possible that we should continue to exist in some mode totally inconceivable to us at present. This is a most unreasonable presumption. It casts on the adherents of annihilation the burthen of proving the negative of a question, the affirmative of which is not supported by a single argument, and which, by its very nature, lies beyond the experience of the human understanding. It is sufficiently easy, indeed, to form any proposition, concerning which we are ignorant, just not so absurd as not to be contradictory in itself, and defy refutation. The possibility of whatever enters into the wildest imagination to conceive is thus triumphantly vindicated. But it is enough that such assertions should be either contradictory to the known laws of nature, or exceed the limits of our experience, that their fallacy or irrelevancy to our consideration should be demonstrated. They persuade, indeed, only those who desire to be persuaded.

This desire to be for ever as we are; the reluctance to a violent and unexperienced change, which is common to all the animated and inanimate combinations of the universe, is, indeed, the secret persuasion which has given birth to the opinions of a future state.

SPECULATIONS ON METAPHYSICS.↩

[**II-186**]

I.: THE MIND.

I. IT is an axiom in mental philosophy, that we can think of nothing which we have not perceived. When I say that we can think of nothing, I mean, we can imagine nothing, we can reason of nothing, we can remember nothing, we can foresee nothing. The most astonishing combinations of poetry, the subtlest deductions of logic and mathematics, are no other than combinations which the intellect makes of sensations according to its own laws. A catalogue of all the thoughts of the mind, and of all their possible modifications, is a cyclopædic history of the universe.

But, it will be objected, the inhabitants of the various planets of this and other solar systems; and the existence of a Power bearing the same relation to all that we perceive and are, as what we call a cause does to what we call effect, were never subjects of sensation, and yet the laws of mind almost universally suggest, according to the various disposition of each, a conjecture, a persuasion, or a conviction of their existence. The reply is simple; these thoughts are also to be included in the catalogue of existence; they are modes in which thoughts are combined; the objection only adds force to the conclusion, that beyond the limits of perception and thought nothing can exist.

[**II-187**]

Thoughts, or ideas, or notions, call them what you will, differ from each other, not in kind, but in force. It has commonly been supposed that those distinct thoughts which affect a number of persons, at regular intervals, during the passage of a multitude of other thoughts, which are called *real,* or *external objects,* are totally different in kind from those which affect only a few persons, and which recur at irregular intervals, and are usually more obscure and indistinct, such as hallucinations, dreams, and the ideas of madness. No essential distinction between any one of these ideas, or any class of them, is founded on a correct observation of the nature of things, but merely on a consideration of what thoughts are most invariably subservient to the security and happiness of life; and if nothing more were expressed by the distinction, the philosopher might safely accommodate his language to that of the vulgar. But they pretend to assert an essential difference, which has no foundation in truth, and which suggests a narrow and false conception of universal nature, the parent of the most fatal errors in speculation. A specific difference between every thought of the mind is, indeed, a necessary consequence of that law by which it perceives diversity and number; but a generic and essential difference is wholly arbitrary. The principle of the agreement and similarity of all thoughts, is, that they are all thoughts; the principle of their disagreement consists in the variety and irregularity of the occasions on which they arise in the mind. That in which they agree, to that in which they differ, is as everything to nothing. Important distinctions, of various degrees of force, indeed, are to be established between them, if they were, as they may be, subjects of ethical and œconomical discussion; but that is a question altogether distinct.

By considering all knowledge as bounded by perception, whose operations may be indefinitely combined, [**II-188**] we arrive at a conception of Nature inexpressibly more magnificent, simple and true, than accords with the ordinary systems of complicated and partial consideration. Nor does a contemplation of the universe, in this comprehensive and synthetical view, exclude the subtlest analysis of its modifications and parts.

A scale might be formed, graduated according to the decrees of a combined ratio of intensity, duration, connexion, periods of recurrence, and utility, which would be the standard, according to which all ideas might be measured, and an uninterrupted chain of nicely shadowed distinctions would be observed, from the faintest impression on the senses, to the most distinct combination of those impressions; from the simplest of those combinations, to that mass of knowledge which, including our own nature, constitutes what we call the universe.

We are intuitively conscious of our own existence, and of that connexion in the train of our successive ideas, which we term our identity. We are conscious also of the existence of other minds; but not intuitively. Our evidence, with respect to the existence of other minds, is founded upon a very complicated relation of ideas, which it is foreign to the purpose of this treatise to anatomise. The basis of this relation is, undoubtedly, a periodical recurrence of masses of ideas, which our voluntary determinations have, in one peculiar direction, no power to circumscribe or to arrest, and against the recurrence of which they can only imperfectly provide. The irresistible laws of thought constrain us to believe that the precise limits of our actual ideas are not the actual limits of possible ideas; the law, according to which these deductions are drawn, is called analogy; and this is the foundation of all our inferences, from one idea to another, inasmuch as they resemble each other.

[**II-189**]

We see trees, houses, fields, living beings in our own shape, and in shapes more or less analogous to our own. These are perpetually changing the mode of their existence relatively to us. To express the varieties of these modes, we say, *we move, they move;* and as this motion is continual, though not uniform, we express our conception of the diversities of its course by—*it has been, it is, it shall be*. These diversities are events or objects, and are essential, considered relatively to human identity, for the existence of the human mind. For if the inequalities, produced by what has been termed the operations of the external universe, were levelled by the perception of our being, uniting, and filling up their interstices, motion and mensuration, and time, and space; the elements of the human mind being thus abstracted, sensation and imagination cease. Mind cannot be considered pure.

I.—: WHAT METAPHYSICS ARE. ERRORS IN THE USUAL METHODS OF CONSIDERING THEM.

We do not attend sufficiently to what passes within ourselves. We combine words, combined a thousand times before. In our minds we assume entire opinions; and in the expression of those opinions, entire phrases, when we would philosophise. Our whole style of expression and sentiment is infected with the tritest plagiarisms. Our words are dead, our thoughts are cold and borrowed.

Let us contemplate facts; let us, in the great study of ourselves, resolutely compel the mind to a rigid consideration of itself. We are not content with conjecture, and inductions, and syllogisms, in sciences regarding external objects. As in these, let us also, in considering the phenomena of mind, severely collect those facts which cannot be disputed. Metaphysics will thus possess this conspicuous advantage over every other science, that [**II-190**] each student, by attentively referring to his own mind, may ascertain the authorities, upon which any assertions regarding it are supported. There can thus be no deception, we ourselves being the depositaries of the evidence of the subject which we consider.

Metaphysics may be defined as an inquiry concerning those things belonging to, or connected with, the internal nature of man.

It is said that mind produces motion; and it might as well have been said, that motion produces mind.

II.—: DIFFICULTY OF ANALYSING THE HUMAN MIND.

If it were possible that a person should give a faithful history of his being, from the earliest epochs of his recollection, a picture would be presented such as the world has never contemplated before. A mirror would be held up to all men in which they might behold their own recollections, and, in dim perspective, their shadowy hopes and fears,—all that they dare not, or that daring and desiring, they could not expose to the open eyes of day. But thought can with difficulty visit the intricate and winding chambers which it inhabits. It is like a river whose rapid and perpetual stream flows outwards;—like one in dread who speeds through the recesses of some haunted pile, and dares not look behind. The caverns of the mind are obscure, and shadowy; or pervaded with a lustre, beautifully bright indeed, but shining not beyond their portals. If it were possible to be where we have been, vitally and indeed—if, at the moment of our presence there, we could define the results of our experience,—if the passage from sensation to reflection—from a state of passive perception to voluntary contemplation, were not so dizzying and so tumultuous, this attempt would be less difficult.

[**II-191**]

III.—: HOW THE ANALYSIS SHOULD BE CARRIED ON.

Most of the errors of philosophers have arisen from considering the human being in a point of view too detailed and circumscribed. He is not a moral, and an intellectual,—but also, and pre-eminently, an imaginative being. His own mind is his law; his own mind is all things to him. If we would arrive at any knowledge which should be serviceable from the practical conclusions to which it leads, we ought to consider the mind of man and the universe as the great whole on which to exercise our speculations. Here, above all, verbal disputes ought to be laid aside, though this has long been their chosen field of battle. It imports little to inquire whether thought be distinct from the objects of thought. The use of the words *external* and *internal,* as applied to the establishment of this distinction, has been the symbol and the source of much dispute. This is merely an affair of words, and as the dispute deserves, to say, that when speaking of the objects of thought, we indeed only describe one of the forms of thought—or that, speaking of thought, we only apprehend one of the operations of the universal system of beings.

IV.—: CATALOGUE OF THE PHENOMENA OF DREAMS, AS CONNECTING SLEEPING AND WAKING.

I. Let us reflect on our infancy, and give as faithfully as possible a relation of the events of sleep.

And first I am bound to present a faithful picture of my own peculiar nature relatively to sleep. I do not doubt that were every individual to imitate me, it would be found that among many circumstances peculiar to their individual nature, a sufficiently general resemblance [**II-192**] would be found to prove the connexion existing between those peculiarities and the most universal phenomena. I shall employ caution, indeed, as to the facts which I state, that they contain nothing false or exaggerated. But they contain no more than certain elucidations of my own nature; concerning the degree in which it resembles, or differs from, that of others, I am by no means accurately aware. It is sufficient, however, to caution the reader against drawing general inferences from particular instances.

I omit the general instances of delusion in fever or delirium, as well as mere dreams considered in themselves. A delineation of this subject, however inexhaustible and interesting, is to be passed over.

What is the connexion of sleeping and of waking?

II. I distinctly remember dreaming three several times, between intervals of two or more years, the same precise dream. It was not so much what is ordinarily called a dream; the single image, unconnected with all other images, of a youth who was educated at the same school with myself, presented itself in sleep. Even now, after the lapse of many years, I can never hear the name of this youth, without the three places where I dreamed of him presenting themselves distinctly to my mind.

III. In dreams, images acquire associations peculiar to dreaming; so that the idea of a particular house, when it recurs a second time in dreams, will have relation with the idea of the same house, in the first time, of a nature entirely different from that which the house excites, when seen or thought of in relation to waking ideas.

IV. I have beheld scenes, with the intimate and unaccountable connexion of which with the obscure parts of my own nature, I have been irresistibly impressed. [**II-193**] I have beheld a scene which has produced no unusual effect on my thoughts. After the lapse of many years I have dreamed of this scene. It has hung on my memory, it has haunted my thoughts, at intervals, with the pertinacity of an object connected with human affections. I have visited this scene again. Neither the dream could be dissociated from the landscape, nor the landscape from the dream, nor feelings, such as neither singly could have awakened, from both. But the most remarkable event of this nature, which ever occurred to me, happened five years ago at Oxford. I was walking with a friend, in the neighbourhood of that city, engaged in earnest and interesting conversation. We suddenly turned the corner of a lane, and the view, which its high banks and hedges had concealed, presented itself. The view consisted of a windmill, standing in one among many plashy meadows, inclosed with stone walls; the irregular and broken ground, between the wall and the road on which we stood; a long low hill behind the windmill, and a grey covering of uniform cloud spread over the evening sky. It was that season when the last leaf had just fallen from the scant and stunted ash. The scene surely was a common scene; the season and the hour little calculated to kindle lawless thought; it was a tame uninteresting assemblage of objects, such as would drive the imagination for refuge in serious and sober talk, to the evening fireside, and the dessert of winter fruits and wine. The effect which it produced on me was not such as could have been expected. I suddenly remembered to have seen that exact scene in some dream of long. [12]
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[**II-194**]

FRAGMENTS.
SPECULATIONS ON MORALS.↩

I.—: PLAN OF A TREATISE ON MORALS.

THAT great science which regards nature and the operations of the human mind, is popularly divided into Morals and Metaphysics. The latter relates to a just classification, and the assignment of distinct names to its ideas; the former regards simply the determination of that arrangement of them which produces the greatest and most solid happiness. It is admitted that a virtuous or moral action is that action which, when considered in all its accessories and consequences, is fitted to produce the highest pleasure to the greatest number of sensitive beings. The laws according to which all pleasure, since it cannot be equally felt by all sensitive beings, ought to be distributed by a voluntary agent, are reserved for a separate chapter.

The design of this little treatise is restricted to the development of the elementary principles of morals. As far as regards that purpose, metaphysical science will be treated merely so far as a source of negative truth; whilst morality will be considered as a science, respecting which we can arrive at positive conclusions.

The misguided imaginations of men have rendered the ascertaining of what *is not true,* the principal direct [**II-195**] service which metaphysical science can bestow upon moral science. Moral science itself is the doctrine of the voluntary actions of man, as a sentient and social being. These actions depend on the thoughts in his mind. But there is a mass of popular opinion, from which the most enlightened persons are seldom wholly free, into the truth or falsehood of which it is incumbent on us to inquire, before we can arrive at any firm conclusions as to the conduct which we ought to pursue in the regulation of our own minds, or towards our fellow-beings; or before we can ascertain the elementary laws, according to which these thoughts, from which these actions flow, are originally combined.

The object of the forms according to which human society is administered, is the happiness of the individuals composing the communities which they regard, and these forms are perfect or imperfect in proportion to the degree in which they promote this end.

This object is not merely the quantity of happiness enjoyed by individuals as sensitive beings, but the mode in which it should be distributed among them as social beings. It is not enough, if such a coincidence can be conceived as possible, that one person or class of persons should enjoy the highest happiness, whilst another is suffering a disproportionate degree of misery. It is necessary that the happiness produced by the common efforts, and preserved by the common care, should be distributed according to the just claims of each individual; if not, although the quantity produced should be the same, the end of society would remain unfulfilled. The object is in a compound proportion to the quantity of happiness produced, and the correspondence of the mode in which it is distributed, to the elementary feelings of man as a social being.

The disposition in an individual to promote this object is called virtue; and the two constituent parts of virtue, [**II-196**] benevolence and justice, are correlative with these two great portions of the only true object of all voluntary actions of a human being. Benevolence is the desire to be the author of good, and justice the apprehension of the manner in which good ought to be done.

Justice and benevolence result from the elementary laws of the human mind.

CHAPTER I.: ON THE NATURE OF VIRTUE.

Sect. 1. General View of the Nature and Objects of Virtue.—2. The Origin and Basis of Virtue, as founded on the Elementary Principles of Mind.—3. The Laws which flow from the nature of Mind regulating the application of those principles to human actions.—4. Virtue, a possible attribute of man.

We exist in the midst of a multitude of beings like ourselves, upon whose happiness most of our actions exert some obvious and decisive influence.

The regulation of this influence is the object of moral science.

We know that we are susceptible of receiving painful or pleasurable impressions of greater or less intensity and duration. That is called good which produces pleasure; that is called evil which produces pain. These are general names, applicable to every class of causes, from which an overbalance of pain or pleasure may result. But when a human being is the active instrument of generating or diffusing happiness, the principle through which it is most effectually instrumental to that purpose, is called virtue. And benevolence, or the desire to be the author of good, united with justice, or an apprehension of the manner in which that good is to be done, constitutes virtue.

[**II-197**]

But, wherefore should a man be benevolent and just? The immediate emotions of his nature, especially in its most inartificial state, prompt him to inflict pain, and to arrogate dominion. He desires to heap superfluities to his own store, although others perish with famine. He is propelled to guard against the smallest invasion of his own liberty, though he reduces others to a condition of the most pitiless servitude. He is revengeful, proud, and selfish. Wherefore should he curb these propensities?

It is inquired for what reason a human being should engage in procuring the happiness, or refrain from producing the pain of another? When a reason is required to prove the necessity of adopting any system of conduct, what is it that the objector demands? He requires proof of that system of conduct being such as will most effectually promote the happiness of mankind. To demonstrate this, is to render a moral reason. Such is the object of Virtue.

A common sophism, which, like many others, depends on the abuse of a metaphorical expression to a literal purpose, has produced much of the confusion which has involved the theory of morals. It is said that no person is bound to be just or kind, if, on his neglect, he should fail to incur some penalty. Duty is obligation. There can be no obligation without an obliger. Virtue is a law, to which it is the will of the lawgiver that we should conform; which will we should in no manner be bound to obey, unless some dreadful punishment were attached to disobedience. This is the philosophy of slavery and superstition.

In fact, no person can be *bound* or *obliged,* without some power preceding to bind and oblige. If I observe a man bound hand and foot, I know that some one bound him. But if I observe him returning self-satisfied from the performance of some action, by which he has been the willing author of extensive benefit, I do not infer that the anticipation of hellish agonies, [**II-198**] or the hope of heavenly reward, has constrained him to such an act. [13]* * * *

It remains to be stated in what manner the sensations which constitute the basis of virtue originate in the human mind; what are the laws which it receives there; how far the principles of mind allow it to be an attribute of a human being; and, lastly, what is the probability of persuading mankind to adopt it as a universal and systematic motive of conduct.

There is a class of emotions which we instinctively avoid. A human being, such as is man considered in his origin, a child a month old, has a very imperfect consciousness of the existence of other natures resembling itself. All the energies of its being are directed to the extinction of the pains with which it is perpetually assailed. At length it discovers that it is surrounded by natures susceptible of sensations similar to its own. It is very late before children attain to this knowledge. If a child observes, without emotion, its nurse or its mother suffering acute pain, it is attributable rather to ignorance than insensibility. So soon as the accents and gestures, significant of pain, are referred to the feelings which they express, they awaken in the mind of the beholder a desire that they should cease. Pain is thus apprehended to be evil for its own sake, without any other necessary reference to the mind by which its existence is perceived, than such as is indispensable to its perception. The tendencies of our original sensations, indeed, all have for their object the preservation of our individual being. But these are passive [**II-199**] and unconscious. In proportion as the mind acquires an active power, the empire of these tendencies becomes limited. Thus an infant, a savage, and a solitary beast, is selfish, because its mind is incapable of receiving an accurate intimation of the nature of pain as existing in beings resembling itself. The inhabitant of a highly civilised community will more acutely sympathise with the sufferings and enjoyments of others, than the inhabitant of a society of a less degree of civilisation. He who shall have cultivated his intellectual powers by familiarity with the highest specimens of poetry and philosophy, will usually sympathise more than one engaged in the less refined functions of manual labour. Every one has experience of the fact, that to sympathise with the sufferings of another, is to enjoy a transitory oblivion of his own.

The mind thus acquires, by exercise, a habit, as it were, of perceiving and abhorring evil, however remote from the immediate sphere of sensations with which that individual mind is conversant. Imagination or mind employed in prophetically imaging forth its objects, is that faculty of human nature on which every gradation of its progress, nay, every, the minutest, change, depends. Pain or pleasure, if subtly analysed, will be found to consist entirely in prospect. The only distinction between the selfish man and the virtuous man is, that the imagination of the former is confined within a narrow limit, whilst that of the latter embraces a comprehensive circumference. In this sense, wisdom and virtue may be said to be inseparable, and criteria of each other. Selfishness is the offspring of ignorance and mistake; it is the portion of unreflecting infancy, and savage solitude, or of those whom toil or evil occupations have blunted or rendered torpid; disinterested benevolence is the product of a cultivated imagination, and has an intimate connexion with all the arts which add ornament, or dignity, or power, or stability [**II-200**] to the social state of man. Virtue is thus entirely a refinement of civilised life; a creation of the human mind; or, rather, a combination which it has made, according to elementary rules contained within itself, of the feelings suggested by the relations established between man and man.

All the theories which have refined and exalted humanity, or those which have been devised as alleviations of its mistakes and evils, have been based upon the elementary emotions of disinterestedness, which we feel to constitute the majesty of our nature. Patriotism, as it existed in the ancient republics, was never, as has been supposed, a calculation of personal advantages. When Mutius Scævola thrust his hand into the burning coals, and Regulus returned to Carthage, and Epicharis sustained the rack silently, in the torments of which she knew that she would speedily perish, rather than betray the conspirators to the tyrant; [14]these illustrious persons certainly made a small estimate of their private interest. If it be said that they sought posthumous fame; instances are not wanting in history which prove that men have even defied infamy for the sake of good. But there is a great error in the world with respect to the selfishness of fame. It is certainly

possible that a person should seek distinction as a medium of personal gratification. But the love of fame is frequently no more than a desire that the feelings of others should confirm, illustrate, and sympathise with, our own. In this respect it is allied with all that draws us out of ourselves. It is the "last infirmity of noble minds." Chivalry was likewise founded on the theory of self-sacrifice. Love possesses so extraordinary a power over the human heart, only because disinterestedness is united with the natural propensities. These propensities themselves are comparatively impotent in cases where the imagination of pleasure to be given, as well as to be [**II-201**] received, does not enter into the account. Let it not be objected that patriotism, and chivalry, and sentimental love, have been the fountains of enormous mischief. They are cited only to establish the proposition that, according to the elementary principles of mind, man is capable of desiring and pursuing good for its own sake.

JUSTICE.

The benevolent propensities are thus inherent in the human mind. We are impelled to seek the happiness of others. We experience a satisfaction in being the authors of that happiness. Everything that lives is open to impressions of pleasure and pain. We are led by our benevolent propensities to regard every human being indifferently with whom we come in contact. They have preference only with respect to those who offer themselves most obviously to our notice. Human beings are indiscriminating and blind; they will avoid inflicting pain, though that pain should be attended with eventual benefit; they will seek to confer pleasure without calculating the mischief that may result. They benefit one at the expense of many.

There is a sentiment in the human mind that regulates benevolence in its application as a principle of action. This is the sense of justice. Justice, as well as benevolence, is an elementary law of human nature. It is through this principle that men are impelled to distribute any means of pleasure which benevolence may suggest the communication of to others, in equal portions among an equal number of applications. If ten men are shipwrecked on a desert island, they distribute whatever subsistence may remain to them into equal portions among themselves. If six of them conspire to deprive the remaining four of their share, their conduct is termed unjust.

[**II-202**]

The existence of pain has been shown to be a circumstance which the human mind regards with dissatisfaction, and of which it desires the cessation. It is equally according to its nature to desire that the advantages to be enjoyed by a limited number of persons should be enjoyed equally by all. This proposition is supported by the evidence of indisputable facts. Tell some ungarbled tale of a number of persons being made the victims of the enjoyments of one, and he who would appeal in favour of any system which might produce such an evil to the primary emotions of our nature, would have nothing to reply. Let two persons, equally strangers, make application for some benefit in the possession of a third to bestow, and to which he feels that they have an equal claim. They are both sensitive beings; pleasure and pain affect them alike.

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CHAPTER II.

It is foreign to the general scope of this little treatise to encumber a simple argument by controverting any of the trite objections of habit or fanaticism. But there are two; the first, the basis of all political mistake, and the second, the prolific cause and effect of religious error, which it seems useful to refute.

First, it is inquired, "Wherefore should a man be benevolent and just?" The answer has been given in the preceding chapter.

If a man persists to inquire why he ought to promote the happiness of mankind, he demands a mathematical or metaphysical reason for a moral action. The absurdity of this scepticism is more apparent, but not less real, than the exacting a moral reason for a mathematical or metaphysical fact. If any person should refuse to admit that all the radii of a circle are of equal [**II-203**] length, or that human actions are necessarily determined by motives, until it could be proved that these radii and these actions uniformly tended to the production of the greatest general good, who would not wonder at the unreasonable and capricious association of his ideas?

The writer of a philosophical treatise may, I imagine, at this advanced era of human intellect, be held excused from entering into a controversy with those reasoners, if such there are, who would claim an exemption from its decrees in favour of any one among those diversified systems of obscure opinion respecting morals, which, under the name of religions, have in various ages and countries prevailed among mankind. Besides that if, as these reasoners have pretended, eternal torture or happiness will ensue as the consequence of certain actions, we should be no nearer the possession of a standard to determine what actions were right and wrong, even if this pretended revelation, which is by no means the case, had furnished us with a complete catalogue of them. The character of actions as virtuous or vicious would by no means be determined alone by the personal advantage or disadvantage of each moral agent individually considered. Indeed, an action is often virtuous in proportion to the greatness of the personal calamity which the author willingly draws upon himself by daring to perform it. It is because an action produces an overbalance of pleasure or pain to the greatest number of sentient beings, and not merely because its consequences are beneficial or injurious to the author of that action, that it is good or evil. Nay, this latter consideration has a tendency to pollute the purity of virtue, inasmuch as it consists in the motive rather than in the consequences of an action. A person who should labour for the happiness of mankind lest he should be tormented eternally in Hell, would with [**II-204**] reference to that motive possess as little claim to the epithet of virtuous, as he who should torture, imprison, and burn them alive, a more usual and natural consequence of such principles, for the sake of the enjoyments of Heaven.

My neighbour, presuming on his strength, may direct me to perform or to refrain from a particular action; indicating a certain arbitrary penalty in the event of disobedience within his power to inflict. My action, if modified by his menaces, can in no degree participate in virtue. He has afforded me no criterion as to what is right or wrong. A king, or an assembly of men, may publish a proclamation affixing any penalty to any particular action, but that is not immoral because such penalty is affixed. Nothing is more evident than that the epithet of virtue is inapplicable to the refraining from that action on account of the evil arbitrarily attached to it. If the action is in itself beneficial, virtue would rather consist in not refraining from it, but in firmly defying the personal consequences attached to its performance.

Some usurper of supernatural energy might subdue the whole globe to his power; he might possess new and unheard of resources for induing his punishments with the most terrible attributes of pain. The torments of his victims might be intense in their degree, and protracted to an infinite duration. Still the "will of the lawgiver" would afford no surer criterion as to what actions were right or wrong. It would only increase the possible virtue of those who refuse to become the instruments of his tyranny.

II.—: MORAL SCIENCE CONSISTS IN CONSIDERING THE DIFFERENCE, NOT THE RESEMBLANCE, OF PERSONS.

The internal influence, derived from the constitution of the mind from which they flow, produces that peculiar [**II-205**] modification of actions, which makes them intrinsically good or evil.

To attain an apprehension of the importance of this distinction, let us visit, in imagination, the proceedings of some metropolis. Consider the multitude of human beings who inhabit it, and survey, in thought, the actions of the several classes into which they are divided. Their obvious actions are apparently uniform: the stability of human society seems to be maintained sufficiently by the uniformity of the conduct of its members, both with regard to themselves and with regard to others. The labourer arises at a certain hour, and applies himself to the task enjoined him. The functionaries of government and law are regularly employed in their offices and courts, The trader holds a train of conduct from which he never deviates. The ministers of religion employ an accustomed language, and maintain a decent and equable regard. The army is drawn forth, the motions of every soldier are such as they were expected to be; the general commands, and his words are echoed from troop to troop. The domestic actions of men are, for the most part, undistinguishable one from the other, at a superficial glance. The actions which are classed under the general appellation of marriage, education, friendship, &c., are perpetually going on, and to a superficial glance, are similar one to the other.

But, if we would see the truth of things, they must be stripped of this fallacious appearance of uniformity. In truth, no one action has, when considered in its whole extent, any essential resemblance with any other. Each individual, who composes the vast multitude which we have been contemplating, has a peculiar frame of mind, which, whilst the features of the great mass of his actions remain uniform, impresses the minuter lineaments with its peculiar hues. Thus, whilst his life, as a whole, is like the lives of other men, in detail it is most unlike; and the more subdivided the actions become, that is, [**II-206**] the more they enter into that class which have a vital influence on the happiness of others and his own, so much the more are they distinct from those of other men.

> "Those little nameless unremember'd acts
> Of kindness and of love," [15]

as well as those deadly outrages which are inflicted by a look, a word—or less—the very refraining from some faint and most evanescent expression of countenance; these flow from a profounder source than the series of our habitual conduct, which, it has been already said, derives its origin from without. These are the actions, and such as these, which make human life what it is, and are the fountains of all the good and evil with which its entire surface is so widely and impartially overspread; and though they are called minute, they are called so in compliance with the blindness of those who cannot estimate their importance. It is in the due appreciating the general effects of their peculiarities, and in cultivating the habit of acquiring decisive knowledge respecting the tendencies arising out of them in particular cases, that the most important part of moral science consists. The deepest abyss of these vast and multitudinous caverns, it is necessary that we should visit.

This is the difference between social and individual man. Not that this distinction is to be considered definite, or characteristic of one human being as compared with another; it denotes rather two classes of agency, common in a degree to every human being. None is exempt, indeed, from that species of influence which affects, as it were, the surface of his being, and gives the specific outline to his conduct. Almost all that is ostensible submits to that legislature created by the general representation of the past feelings of mankind—imperfect as it is from a variety of causes, as it [**II-207**] exists in the government, the religion, and domestic habits. Those who do not nominally, yet actually, submit to the same power. The external features of their conduct, indeed, can no more escape it, than the clouds

can escape from the stream of the wind; and his opinion, which he often hopes he has dispassionately secured from all contagion of prejudice and vulgarity, would be found, on examination, to be the inevitable excrescence of the very usages from which he vehemently dissents. Internally all is conducted otherwise; the efficiency, the essence, the vitality of actions, derives its colour from what is no ways contributed to from any external source. Like the plant, which while it derives the accident of its size and shape from the soil in which it springs, and is cankered, or distorted, or inflated, yet retains those qualities which essentially divide it from all others; so that hemlock continues to be poison, and the violet does not cease to emit its odour in whatever soil it may grow.

We consider our own nature too superficially. We look on all that in ourselves with which we can discover a resemblance in others; and consider those resemblances as the materials of moral knowledge. It is in the differences that it actually consists.

[**II-208**]

GHOST STORIES.↩

Geneva, Sunday, 18*th August* 1816.

SEE Apollo's Sexton, [16]who tells us many mysteries of his trade. We talk of Ghosts. Neither Lord Byron nor M. G. L. 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, 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 [**II-209**] 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.

I.

A young man who had taken orders, had just been presented with a living, on the death of the incumbent. It was in the Catholic part of Germany. He arrived at the parsonage on a Saturday night; it was summer, and waking about three o'clock in the morning, and it [**II-210**] being broad day, he saw a venerable-looking man, but with an aspect exceedingly melancholy, sitting at a desk in the window, reading, and two beautiful boys standing near him, whom he regarded with looks of the profoundest grief. Presently he rose from his seat, the boys followed him, and they were no more to be seen. The young man, much troubled, arose, hesitating whether he should regard what he had seen as a dream, or a waking phantasy. To divert his dejection, he walked towards the church, which the sexton was already employed in preparing for the morning service. The first sight that struck him was a portrait, the exact resemblance of the man whom he had seen sitting in his chamber. It was the custom in this district to place the portrait of each minister, after his death, in the church.

He made the minutest inquiries respecting his predecessor, and learned that he was universally beloved, as a man of unexampled integrity and benevolence; but that he was the prey of a secret and perpetual sorrow. His grief was supposed to have arisen from an attachment to a young lady, with whom his situation did not permit him to unite himself. Others, however, asserted, that a connexion did subsist between them, and that even she occasionally brought to his house two beautiful boys, the offspring of their connexion.—Nothing further occurred until the cold weather came, and the new minister desired a fire to be lighted in the stove of the room where he slept. A hideous stench arose from the stove as soon as it was lighted, and, on examining it, the bones of two male children were found within.

II.

Lord Lyttelton and a number of his friends were joined during the chase by a stranger. He was excellently mounted, and displayed such courage, or, [**II-211**] rather so much desperate rashness, that no other person in the hunt could follow him. The gentlemen, when the chase was concluded, invited the stranger to dine with them. His conversation was something of a wonderful kind. He astonished, he interested, he commanded the attention of the most inert. As night came on, the company, being weary, began to retire one by one, much later than the usual hour: the most intellectual among them were retained latest by the stranger's fascination. As he perceived that they began to depart, he redoubled his efforts to retain them. At last, when few remained, he entreated them to stay with him; but all pleaded the fatigue of a hard day's chase, and all at last retired. They had been in bed about an hour, when they were awakened by the most horrible screams, which issued from the stranger's room. Every one rushed towards it. The door was locked. After a moment's deliberation they burst it open, and found the stranger stretched on the ground, writhing with agony, and weltering in blood. On their entrance he arose, and collecting himself, apparently with a strong effort, entreated them to leave him—not to disturb him, that he would give every possible explanation in the morning. They complied. In the morning, his chamber was found vacant, and he was seen no more.

III.

Miles Andrews, a friend of Lord Lyttelton, was sitting one night alone when Lord Lyttelton came in, and informed him that he was dead, and that this was his ghost which he saw before him. Andrews pettishly told him not to play any ridiculous tricks upon him, for he was not in a temper to bear them. The ghost then departed. In the morning Andrews asked his servant at what hour Lord Lyttelton had arrived. The servant [**II-212**] said he did not know that he had arrived, but that he would inquire. On inquiry it was found that Lord Lyttelton had not arrived, nor had the door been opened to any one during the whole night. Andrews sent to Lord Lyttelton, and discovered, that he had died precisely at the hour of the apparition.

IV.

A gentleman on a visit to a friend who lived on the skirts of an extensive forest in the east of Germany, lost his way. He wandered for some hours among the trees, when he saw a light at a distance. On approaching it, he was surprised to observe, that it proceeded from the interior of a ruined monastery. Before he knocked he thought it prudent to look through the window. He saw a multitude of cats assembled round a small grave, four of whom were letting down a coffin with a crown upon it. The gentleman, startled at this unusual sight, and imagining that he had arrived among the retreats of fiends or witches, mounted his horse and rode away with the utmost precipitation. He arrived at his friend's house at a late hour, who had sat up for him. On his arrival his friend questioned as to the cause of the traces of trouble

visible in his face. He began to recount his adventure, after much difficulty, knowing that it was scarcely possible that his friends should give faith to his relation. No sooner had he mentioned the coffin with a crown upon it, than his friend's cat, who seemed to have been lying asleep before the fire, leaped up, saying—"Then I am the King of the Cats!" and scrambled up the chimney, and was seen no more.

Thursday, 29th August.—We depart from Geneva, at nine in the morning. The Swiss are very slow [**II-213**] drivers; besides which we have Jura to mount; we, therefore, go 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 Dole, after a various day.

Saturday, 31st.—From Dole 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, 2d.—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, 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, 3d.—We saw the palace and gardens of Versailles and le Grand et Petit Trianon. They surpass [**II-214**] Fontainebleau. The gardens are full of statues, vases, fountains, and colonnades. In all that essentially belongs to a garden they are extraordinarily deficient. The 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. There was 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'Opera, 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 [**II-215**] 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 toward Havre, 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 arrive at Havre, and wait for the packet—wind contrary.

FRAGMENT FROM JOURNAL.

Thursday, March 26, 1818.

In a brief journal I kept at that time, I find a few pages in Shelley's handwriting, descriptive of the passage over the mountains of Les Eschelles.

—[*Note by Mrs. Shelley.*]

March 26, Thursday.—We travel towards the mountains, and begin to enter the valleys of the Alps. The [**II-216**] 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 trellised 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 Eschelles, 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 Pont 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, &c., into the dominions of the King of Sardinia. All such books are burned.

After dinner we ascended Les Eschelles, 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 side, and almost shut out the sky. The scene is like that described in the Prometheus [**II-217**] 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 Chambéry, continued as beautiful; though marked with somewhat of a softer character than before; we arrived a little after nightfall.

LETTERS FROM ITALY.↩

[**II-221**]

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 [**II-222**] 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 Melanie 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 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 &c. for revision.

Adieu.—Always faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

[**II-223**]

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. I have but just received yours dated the 2d—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 desertion. Time flows on, places are changed; friends 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 any thing I ever beheld in beauty, with the exception of the arbutus islands of Killarney. It is long and narrow, and has the appearance 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 chesnut forests (the eating chesnuts, on which the inhabitants [**II-224**] 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 villas here. 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. But 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 court-yard. 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 semi-circular precipice, overshadowed by profound forests of chesnut. 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, [**II-225**] 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 stayed 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. It is 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 any thing 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 forever 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 those 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. [**II-226**] 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 *Fasio,* 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 pension, which is very reasonable in respect of price, and when we get into a ménage 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, &c., 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 crisis. 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 [**II-227**] 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. The cleanliness and comfort of the inns is something quite English. The country is beautifully cultivated; and altogether, if you can, as one ought always to do, find your happiness in yourself, it is a most delightful and commodious place to live in.

Adieu.—Your affectionate friend,

P. B. S.

TO THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

Milan, April 30*th,* 1818.

My dear Peacock,

I write, simply to tell you, to direct your next letters, Poste Restante, Pisa. We have engaged a 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 Mediterranean, with which it communicates by the river Arno. We shall pass by Piacenza, Parma, Bologna, the Apennines, and Florence, 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 [**II-228**] 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.

TO THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

Livorno, 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 them, though sometimes somewhat circuitously, yet always securely.

We left Milan on the first of May, and travelled across the Apennines to Pisa. This part of the Apennine 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 depth of the Apennines; the scenery surrounding this village is very fine.

We have made some acquaintance with a very amiable [**II-229**] and acccomplished 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-bye, 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.

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.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE

(Leghorn).

Bagni di Lucca, July 10*th,* 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 delightful 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, [**II-230**] have revisited us here. I am employed just now, having little better to do, in translating into my fainting 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 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 noon 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 [**II-231**] these things, that, when the fire-flies go out, the low-flying owl may see her way home.

Remember me kindly to the Machinista.

With the sentiment of impatience until we see you again in the autumn,

I am, yours most sincerely,

P. B. Shelley.

TO WILLIAM GODWIN.

Bagni di Lucca, July 25*th,* 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 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 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. [**II-232**] 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, 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 C*** dance. I do not know whether they refrain from philosophy or protestantism.

I hear that poor Mary's book 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.

[**II-233**]

If you should have anything to send us—and, I assure you, anything relating to England is interesting to us—commit it to the care of Ollier the bookseller, or P***—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 MRS. SHELLEY

(Bagni di Lucca).

Florence, Thursday, 11 *o'clock.*
(20*th August,* 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. * * * * * * Yesterday's journey, performed in a one-horse cabriolet, almost without springs, over a rough road, was excessively fatiguing. *** 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 [**II-234**] seen among the olive copses. As we 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 of 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 ever saw. 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 chesnut woods, and then the blue and misty pine forests, which invest the aerial 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, [**II-235**] 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. 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 malaria fever, caught in the Pontine Marshes, a week or two since; and I conceded to ***'s entreaties—and to *your* absent suggestions, and omitted the opportunity, although I have no great faith in such species of contagion. It is 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 ear—and I do not always find zanzariere. How is Willmouse and little Clara? They must be kissed for me—and you must particularly remember to speak my name to William, 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 Shakespeare wrote a word of it.

[**II-236**]

TO MRS. SHELLEY

(Bagni di Lucca).

Venice,Sunday morning.
(*August* 23*rd,* 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.

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. This man, it seems, was one of Lord Byron's gondolieri. No sooner had we arrived at the inn, than the waiter began talking about him—said, that he frequented Mrs. H.'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. These gondolas are the most beautiful and convenient boats in the world. 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 light. 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 [**II-237**] 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. The 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. We were all this while safe and comfortable. Well, adieu, dearest: I shall, as Miss Byron says, [17]resume the pen in the evening.

Sunday Night, 5 *o'clock in the Morning*.

Well, I will try to relate everything in its order.

* * * * *

At three o'clock I called on Lord Byron: he was delighted to see me.

He took me in his gondola 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 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. When we returned to his palace—which,

* * * (*The letter is here torn*.)

The Hoppners are the most amiable people I ever knew. They are much attached to each other, and [**II-238**] have a nice little boy, seven months old. Mr. H. 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. H. has hazel eyes and sweet looks.

(*Paper torn*.)

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, where I shall be waiting in the utmost 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 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 can show. We shall at least be saved the trouble of introduction, and have formed acquaintance with a lady who is so good, so beautiful, so angelically mild, that were she as wise too, she would be quite a ***. Her eyes are like a reflection of yours. Her manners are like yours when you know and like a person.

[**II-239**]

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. Clara cannot recollect me.

TO MRS. SHELLEY

(*I Cappuccini—Este*).

Padua, mezzogiorno.
(*Sept*. 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. [18]to come for some days, and shall meet you, if I do not write anything in the mean time, at Padua, on Thursday morning. C. 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 [**II-240**] 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, which might be bad for the babe, and take the time, when she would at least sleep great part of the time. C. will return with the return carriage, and I shall meet you, or send to you at Padua.

Meanwhile remember Charles the First—and do you be prepared to bring at least *some* of Myrra 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.

Adieu, my dearest love—remember Charles I. and Myrra. 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." Shakespeare was only a human being.

Adieu till Thursday. Your ever affectionate

P. B. S.

[**II-241**]

TO THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

Este, October 8, 1818.

My dear Peacock,

I have not written to you, I think, for six weeks. But 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 left the Baths of Lucca, I think, the day after I wrote to you—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 verdigris 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 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. The gondolas themselves [**II-242**] 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 speak. 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, insult these miserable people. I had no conception of the excess to which avarice, cowardice, superstition, ignorance, passionless lust, and all the inexpressible brutalities which degrade human nature, could be carried, until I had passed a few days at Venice.

We have been living this last month near the little [**II-243**] town from which I date this letter, in a very pleasant villa which has been lent to us, and we are now on the point of proceeding to Florence, Rome, and Naples—at which last city we shall spend the winter, and return northwards in the spring. Behind us here are the Euganean hills, not so beautiful as those of the Bagni di Lucca, with Arquà, where Petrarch's house and tomb are religiously

preserved and visited. At the end of our garden is an extensive Gothic castle, now the habitation of owls and bats, where the Medici family resided before they came to Florence. We see before us the wide flat plains of Lombardy, in which we see the sun and moon rise and set, and the evening star, and all the golden magnificence of autumnal clouds. But I reserve wonder for Naples.

I have been writing—and indeed have just finished the first act of a lyric and classical drama, to be called "Prometheus Unbound." Will you tell me what there is in Cicero about a drama supposed to have been written by Æschylus under this title?

I ought to say that I have just read Malthus in a French translation. Malthus is a very clever man, and the world would be a great gainer if it would seriously take his lessons into consideration, if it were capable of attending seriously to anything but mischief—but what on earth does he mean by some of his inferences?

Yours ever faithfully,

P. B. S.

I will write again from Rome and Florence—in better spirits, and to more agreeable purpose, I hope. You saw those beautiful stanzas in the fourth canto [19]about the Nymph Egeria. Well, I did not whisper a word about nympholepsy: I hope you acquit me—and I hope you will not carry delicacy so far as to let this suppress anything nympholeptic.

[**II-244**]

TO THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

Ferrara, Nov. 8*th,* 1818.

My dear Peacock,

We left Este yesterday on our journey towards Naples. The roads were particularly bad; we have, therefore, accomplished only two days' journey, of eighteen and twenty-four miles each, and you may imagine that our horses must be tolerably good ones, to drag our carriage, with five people and heavy luggage, through deep and clayey roads. The roads are, however, good during the rest of the way.

The country is flat, but intersected by lines of wood, trellised with vines, whose broad leaves are now stamped with the redness of their decay. Every here and there one sees people employed in agricultural labours, and the plough, the harrow, or the cart, drawn by long teams of milk-white or dove-coloured oxen of immense size and exquisite beauty. This, indeed, might be the country of Pasiphaes. In one farm-yard I was shown sixty-three of these lovely oxen, tied to their stalls, in excellent condition. A farm-yard in this part of Italy is somewhat different from one in England. First, the house, which is large and high, with strange-looking unpainted window-shutters, generally closed, and dreary beyond conception. The farm-yard and out-buildings, however, are usually in the neatest order. The threshing-floor is not under cover, but like that described in the Georgics, usually flattened by a broken column, and neither the mole, nor the toad, nor the ant, can find on its area a crevice for their dwelling. Around it, at this season, are piled the stacks of the leaves and stalks of Indian corn, which has lately been threshed and dried upon its surface. At a little distance are vast heaps of many-coloured zucchi or pumpkins, some of enormous size, piled as winter food for the hogs. There are [**II-245**] turkeys, too, and fowls wandering about, and two or three dogs, who bark with a sharp hylactism. The people who are occupied with the care of these things seem neither ill-clothed nor ill-fed, and the blunt incivility of their manners has an English air with it, very discouraging to those who are accustomed to the impudent and polished lying of

the inhabitants of the cities. I should judge the agricultural resources of this country to be immense, since it can wear so flourishing an appearance, in spite of the enormous discouragements which the various tyranny of the governments inflicts on it. I ought to say that one of the farms belongs to a Jew banker at Venice, another Shylock.—We arrived late at the inn where I now write; it was once the palace of a Venetian nobleman, and is now an excellent inn. To-morrow we are going to see the sights of Ferrara.

No. 9.

We have had heavy rain and thunder all night; and the former still continuing, we went in the carriage about the town. We went first to look at the cathedral, but the beggars very soon made us sound a retreat; so, whether, as it is said, there is a copy of a picture of Michael Angelo there or no, I cannot tell. At the public library we were more successful. This is, indeed, a magnificent establishment, containing, as they say, 160,000 volumes. We saw some illuminated manuscripts of church music, with the verses of the psalms interlined between the square notes, each of which consisted of the most delicate tracery, in colours inconceivably vivid. They belonged to the neighbouring convent of Certolda, and are three or four hundred years old; but their hues are as fresh as if they had been executed yesterday. The tomb of Ariosto occupies one end of the largest saloon of which the library is composed; it is formed of various marbles, surmounted [**II-246**] by an expressive bust of the poet, and subscribed with a few Latin verses, in a less miserable taste than those usually employed for similar purposes. But the most interesting exhibitions here, are the writings, &c., of Ariosto and Tasso, which are preserved, and were concealed from the undistinguishing depredations of the French with pious care. There is the arm-chair of Ariosto, an old plain wooden piece of furniture, the hard seat of which was once occupied by, but has now survived its cushion, as it has its master. I could fancy Ariosto sitting in it; and the satires in his own handwriting which they unfold beside it, and the old bronze inkstand, loaded with figures, which belonged also to him, assists 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 [**II-247**] 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 what 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 Alfonso'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 might 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.

[**II-248**]

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 Doge's 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 rivetted, 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.

Adieu.—You will hear from me again before I arrive at Naples.

Yours, ever sincerely,

P. B. S.

[**II-249**]

TO THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

Bologna, Monday, *Nov.* 9*th,* 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 common-place 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 one you remember. I remember, however, an interesting

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 and sweetness. The hair is parted on the forehead, [**II-250**] and 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 a pale aerial 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. I do 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 [**II-251**] execution of it, of seeing that monotonous and agonised form for ever exhibited in one prescriptive attitude of torture. But the 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 a 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 chesnut 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 [**II-252**] Bolognese, who, though certainly very inferior to Guido, is yet 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 delicacy and aerial 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 of 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 chesnut 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 [**II-253**] 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, Carracci, Albano, Guercino, Elisabetta 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 wrapt a corpse a month or two. It had a yellow, putrefied, 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.

[**II-254**]

Enough of pictures. I saw the place where Guido and his mistress, Elisabetta 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."

Nov. 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 Shakespeare can be produced and reproduced for ever. But how evanescent are paintings, and must 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 [**II-255**] 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.

TO THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

Rome, November 20*th,* 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 [**II-256**] masses of wave-worn precipice, 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, 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 precipices. About four miles from Fossombrone, the 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 heaven-cleaving pinnacles and black crags overhanging one another, stood at length defined in the light of day. The road runs parallel to the river, at a considerable [**II-257**] height, and is carried through the mountain by a vaulted cavern. The 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 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 the Velino. The glaciers of Montanvert and the source of the Arveiron is the grandest spectacle I ever saw. This 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, makes 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 ever-moving 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, [**II-258**] 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 feathery 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 [**II-259**] 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.

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 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; * * * * an ordinary Englishman cannot approach them. Well, Lord Byron 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 [**II-260**] 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 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 before. 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 copse-wood 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 [**II-261**] 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 state. 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 [**II-262**] 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 sun-warm 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 Raphael, for my return. About a fortnight ago I left Rome, and Mary and C——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 increased. 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 [**II-263**] 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. This 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 of humanity. We have a lodging divided from the 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, [20]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;" 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.

We set off an hour after sunrise one radiant morning in a little boat; there was not a cloud in the sky, nor a [**II-264**] 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 intense. We passed Posilipo, and came first to the eastern point of the bay of Puzzoli, which is within the great bay of Naples, and which again encloses 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 Nisida 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 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 Sibyl), 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 [**II-265**] 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 Novo, 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," [21]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 C—— 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 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 [**II-266**] 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 the fountains of liquid fire, are rolled forth forever. The 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 bituminous vapour, which is hurled up, fold after fold, into the sky with a deep hollow sound, and fiery stones are rained down from its darkness, and a black shower of ashes fell even where we sat. The lava, like the glacier, creeps on perpetually, with a crackling sound as of suppressed fire. There are several springs of lava; and in one place it gushes 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 the rivers of lava; it is about twenty feet in breadth and ten in height; and [**II-267**] 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 fire became more beautiful. We were, as it were, surrounded 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 C——. 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. C—— 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 this 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, [**II-268**] 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.

TO THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

Naples, Jan. 26*th,* 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, Castlereagh, after having dug their grave, stands with his spade in his hand, evidently doubting whether he will not be forced to occupy it himself. [**II-269**] 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 in different. 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 and things, 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 characterizes 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. At Rome, 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 harmonizing the contending creeds by which mankind have been ruled. Far from [**II-270**] me is such an attempt, and I shall be 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.

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 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. [**II-271**] 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. There 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 story, and the apartments, though not large, are very lofty. A great advantage results from this, 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. Their private expenses were comparatively moderate; the 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 [**II-272**] 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 and 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; its 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 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, [**II-273**] 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 sat, 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 sunshining 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 [**II-274**] 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 inclosing the ruins of an enormous temple. It is built on the edge of the hill overlooking the sea. △ 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 inclose a space of three miles. On each side of the road beyond the gate are built the tombs. How 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 incloses 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 funeral office. The higher reliefs represent, one a nautical subject, and the other a Bacchanalian one. Within the cell stand the cinerary urns, sometimes one, sometimes more. It is 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. [**II-275**] 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.

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!

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 have received your letter indicating that you are removing to London. I am very much interested in the subject of this change, and beg you [**II-276**] 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 Spain. A ship came in twelve days 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 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 [22]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.

[**II-277**]

TO THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

Rome, March 23*d,* 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 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. On 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. At 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. And 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 [**II-278**] will ask, of the Apollo, the Gladiator, the Venus of the Capitol? What of the Apollo di Belvedere, the Laocoon? What of Raffaelle 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. These consist of six enormous chambers, above 200 feet in height, and each inclosing 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 aerial 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 * * 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 the 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 [**II-279**] 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, 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 wild 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 copsewood, you come to a little mossy lawn, surrounded by the wild shrubs; it is overgrown with anemones, 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, [**II-280**] 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 expense 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 [**II-281**] 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 perfect. 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 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 of defeat. There are three arches, whose roofs are panelled with fretwork, and their sides adorned with similar reliefs. 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 [**II-282**] 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 whole air with a radiant mist, which at noon is thronged with innumerable rainbows. 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 [**II-283**] 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 see. 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 [**II-284**] 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 Raphael, 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 nature. The reins no longer exist, but the position of their hands and the sustained and calm command of their regard, seem to require no mechanical aid to enforce obedience. The countenances at so great a height are 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, [**II-285**] 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 shew-knowledge about it—"the common stuff of the earth." By-the-bye, 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. This I 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 lips. Within this arch are two panelled [**II-286**] 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 in 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.

TO THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

Rome, April 6*th,* 1819.

My dear Peacock,

I sent you yesterday a long letter, all about antique Rome, which you had better keep for some leisure day. I received yours, and one of Hunt's, yesterday.—So, you know the B——s? I could not help considering Mrs. B., when I knew her, as the most admirable specimen of a human being I had ever seen. Nothing earthly ever appeared to me 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 * * * and his wife—where were they? C * * *, 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. B——'s understanding and affections, to be quite sincere and constant.

[**II-287**]

I am all anxiety about your I. H. affair. There are few 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 England. 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 lively? 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 savages—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.

[**II-288**]

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 Sistine 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 Raffaelle 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 parti-coloured 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 could if we desired it, and I am certain that we should find it insupportable. The manners of the rich English are wholly insupportable, and they assume pretences 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. [**II-289**] That mischievous Cobbett has divided and weakened the interest of the popular party, so that the factions that prey upon our country have been able to coalesce to its exclusion. The N——s 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, [23]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 [**II-290**] appreciate. Still, I shall return some fine morning, out of pure weakness of heart.

My dear Peacock, most faithfully yours,

P. B. Shelley.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE

(Leghorn).

Rome, April 6th, 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. 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, beside ourselves. But 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 [**II-291**] 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:

᾽Εξένθοις, Γαλάτεια, καὶ ἐξενθοῖσα λάθοιο,
Ὥσπερ ἐγὼ νῦν ᾧδε καθήμενος, οἴκαδ᾽ ἀπενθεῖν.

Most sincerely yours,

P. B. Shelley.

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, [24]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——, 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 known in Italy, and, in my conception, eminently dramatic. [25]I have taken some pains to make my play fit for representation, and those who have already seen [**II-292**] 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;" [26]that the interest of its plot is incredibly greater and more real; and that there is nothing beyond what the multitude are contented to believe 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, [**II-293**] 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 any one 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, if 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 else should get hold of it, as the story, which now exists only 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.

Of course, you will not show the manuscript to any one—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.

[**II-294**]

TO LEIGH HUNT. [27]

Livorno, Sept. 27*th,* 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 first 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 yet 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 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, Raffaelle 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 [**II-295**] genius. Energy, 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 Dante and Petrarch. 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, which might do some good to the common narrow-minded conceptions of love,—"Bocca bacciata non perde ventura; anzi rinnuova, come fa la luna"?

We expect Mary to be confined towards the end of October. The birth of a child will probably retrieve 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, as regarded the imagined cause of the universe—"Mind cannot create, it can only perceive." Ask him if he remembers having written it. 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 told me that the Quarterly are going to review me. I [**II-296**] suppose it will be a pretty , [28]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 P.; if you ask him for it he will show it you. I think it will please you.

Whilst I went to Florence, Mary wrote, but I did not see her letter.—Well, good b'ye. Next Monday I shall write to you from Florence. Love to all.

Most affectionately your friend,

P. B. S.

TO MRS. GISBORNE.

Florence, October 13*th or* 14*th,* 1819.

My dear Friend,

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—if you will accept so humble a metaphor—is for ever scratching at the door of your absence.

About Henry and the steam-engine [29]I am in torture [**II-297**] 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 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 common-place 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 [**II-298**] 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 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 overpersuaded 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 * * * 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 C—— as the winds happen to blow; and C——, 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 [**II-299**] facilitation, should any such be needed, for the steam-boat. I have yet seen little of Florence. The gallery I have a design of studying piece-meal; one of my chief objects 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 Cencis, 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 Peacock, 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.

TO HENRY REVELEY.

Florence, Oct. 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 [**II-300**] them—I like coin from the mint—though it may be a little rough at the edges;—clipping is penal according to our statute.

In the first place listen to a reproach; you ought to have sent me an acknowledgment of my last billet. I am 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 in 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. You 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 over-balance the advantage arising from the free communication of ideas. 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 [**II-301**] 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.

TO MR. AND MRS. 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 [**II-302**] 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——, 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.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

Florence, Nov. 6, 1819.

My dear Friends,

I have just finished a letter of five sheets on Carlile's affair, [30]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 [**II-303**] 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 public creditor. They will confiscate the estates of their 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 [**II-304**] 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. How 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, that 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 Cascini 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.

[**II-305**]

TO MRS. GISBORNE.

Florence, Nov. 16, 1819.

Madonna,

I have been lately voyaging in a sea without my pilot, and although my sail has often been torn, my boat become leaky, and the log lost, I have yet sailed in a kind of way from island to island; some of craggy and mountainous 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 Amon 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 Amon's action in the basest [**II-306**] point of view—he is a prejudiced savage, acting what he abhors, and abhorring that which is the unwilling party to his crime.

Adieu, Madonna, yours truly,

P. B. S.

I transcribe you a passage from the Cisma de Ingalaterra—spoken by "Carlos, Embaxador de Francia, enamorado de Ana Bolena." Is there anything in Petrarch finer than the second stanza?

> Porque apenas el Sol se coronaba

de nueva luz en la estacion primeva,
quando yo en sus umbrales adoraba
segundo Sol en abreviada esfera;
la noche apenas tremula baxaba,
à solos mis deseos lisonjera,
quando un jardin, republica de flores,
era tercero fiel de mis amores.

Alli, el silencio de la noche fria,
el jazmin, que en las redes se enlazava,
el cristal de la fuente que corria,
el arroyo que à solas murmurava,
El viento que en las hojas se movia,
el Aura que en las flores respirava;
todo era amor'; què mucho, si en tal calma,
aves, fuentes, y flores tienen alma!

No has visto providente y oficiosa,
mover el ayre iluminada aveja,
que hasta beber la purpura a la rosa
ya se acerca cobarde, y ya se alexa?
No has visto enamorada mariposa,
dar cercos a la luz, hasta que dexa,
en monumento facil abrasadas
las alas de color tornasoladas?

Assi mi amor, cobarde muchos dias,
tornos hizo a la rosa y a 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 lleguè a la rosa.

[**II-307**]

TO MR. JOHN GISBORNE.

Florence, Nov. 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 civilized 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 civilization 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. [31]

[**II-308**]

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 my kindest thanks for his most interesting [**II-309**] letter, and bid him expect one from me by the next post.

Mary and the babe continue well.—Last night we had a magnificent thunder-storm, with claps that shook the house like an earthquake. Both Mary and C——unite with me in kindest remembrances to all.

Most faithfully yours obliged,

P. B. S.

TO HENRY REVELEY.

Florence, Nov. 17*th,* 1819.

My dear Henry,

I was exceedingly interested by your letter, and I cannot but thank you for overcoming the inaptitude of a long disuse at my request, for my pleasure. It is a great thing done, the successful casting of the cylinder—may it be a happy auspice for what is to follow! I hope, in a few posts, to remit the necessary money for the completion. Meanwhile, are not those portions of the work which can be done without expense, saving time in their progress? Do you think you lose much money or time by this delay?

All that you say of the alteration in the form of the boat strikes me, though one of the multitude in this respect, as improvement. I long to get aboard her, and be an unworthy partaker in the glory of the astonishment of the Livornese, when she returns from her cruise round Melloria. When do you think she will be fit for sea?

Your volcanic description of the birth of the cylinder is very characteristic of you, and of it. [32]One might [**II-310**] 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 this 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. C—— left us a week ago, not without many lamentations, as all true lovers pay on such occasions. He is [**II-311**] to write me an account of the Trieste steam-boat, which I will transmit to you.

Mrs. Shelley and Miss C—— return you their kindest salutations, with interest.

Most affectionately yours,

P. B. S.

TO HENRY REVELEY.

Florence, 18*th Dec.,* 1819.

My dear Henry,

You see, as I said, it only amounts to delay, all this abominable entanglement. I send you 484 dollars, or 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 account. I write to Messrs. Ward to pay you.

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.

Every body here is talking of a steam-ship 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 [**II-312**] resisted the temptation. Ask them, entreat them, from me, to appoint some early day. We have a bed and room, and every thing prepared.

I write in great haste, as you may see. Ever believe me, my dear Henry, your attached friend,

P. B. S.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

Florence, Dec. 23*d,* 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 steamboat 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 [**II-313**] mind were not imprisoned within a mind, 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.

TO MR. JOHN GISBORNE.

Florence, Jan. 25*th,* 1820.

My dear Sir,

We have suddenly taken the determination to avail ourselves of this lovely weather to approach you as far as Pisa. I need not assure you—unless my malady should violently return—you will see me at Leghorn.

We *embark;* and I promise myself the delight of the sky, 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 till 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.

[**II-314**]

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

Pisa, Feb. 9*th,* 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 right-angled 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.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

Pisa, April 23, 1820.

My dear Friends,

We were 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 [**II-315**] 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.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

(London).

Pisa, May 26*th,* 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 now most anxiously waiting for a reply—until which I will

say nothing, nor [**II-316**] 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 your 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 chesnut 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 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 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 [**II-317**] 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——, if any one 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 steam-boat 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.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE

(London).

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 considerations of *my* interest, or any retrospect to the source from which the funds were supplied, modify your decision as to returning [**II-318**] 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 expense between Italy and London; and if you have any trust in the justice of my moral sense, and believe that in what concerns true honour and virtuous conduct in life, I am an experienced counsellor, you will not hesitate—these things being equal—to accept this proposal. The opposition I made, while you were in Italy, to the abandonment of the steam-boat project, was founded, you well know, on the motives which have influenced everything that ever has guided, or ever will guide, anything that I can do or say respecting you. I thought it against Henry's interest. I think it now against his interest that he and you should abandon your prospects in England. As to us—we are uncertain people, who are chased by the spirits of our destiny from purpose to purpose, like clouds by the wind.

There is one thing more to be said. If you decide to remain in England, assuredly it would be foolish to return. 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, 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 [**II-319**] 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. It was the depth with which I felt this truth, which impelled me to incite him to this adventure of the steamboat.

TO MRS. SHELLEY

(Leghorn).

Casa Silva,
Sunday morning, July, 1820.

My dear Love,

I believe I shall have taken a very pleasant and spacious 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. T—— 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. I neither believe that, nor do I fear that the consequences will be so immediately destructive to the existing forms of social order. Money will be delayed, and the exchange reduced very low, and my annuity and ****, 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. T—— will be lulled into security, while the slow progress of things is still flowing on, after this affair of the Queen may appear to be blown over. There are bad news from Palermo: the soldiers resisted the people, [**II-320**] 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 free. 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 purpose to leave Leghorn. *** is very unhappy at the idea of T.'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 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 for forty sequins for three months—a good bargain, and a very good house as things go—this is about thirteen sequins a month. Tomorrow I go to look over the inventory; expect me therefore on Tuesday morning.

[**II-321**]

TO MRS. SHELLEY

(Bagni di San Giuliano).

Casa Ricci [*Leghorn*],
Sept. 1*st,* 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 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.

[**II-322**]

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "QUARTERLY REVIEW." [33]

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 attacks. The wretch who wrote it has doubtless the additional reward of a consciousness of his motives, besides the thirty guineas a sheet, or whatever it is that you pay him. 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 any one, 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 Endymion is a poem considerably [**II-323**] 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 a 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 have afterwards attained high literary eminence. Look at book ii. line 833, &c., 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 [**II-324**] evidently in careless despair. I have desired my bookseller to send you a copy, and allow me to solicit your especial 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.

* * * * * * *

TO MR. JOHN GISBORNE

(at 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 any thing 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. Henry will also tell you how much, and how whimsically, he alarmed me last night.

[**II-325**]

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.

TO HENRY REVELEY.

Pisa, Tuesday, 1 *o'clock,*
April 17*th,* 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 so 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 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. G., and—heaven knows what.

[**II-326**]

TO HENRY REVELEY.

Pisa, April 19*th* [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. G—— 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 ever truly,

S.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

Bagni, Tuesday Evening,
(*June* 5*th,* 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 [**II-327**] 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, &c.

* * * * *

My unfortunate box! it contained a chaos of the elements of Charles I. If the idea of the *creator* 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.

TO MR. 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. [34]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.

[**II-328**]

As it is, I have finished my Elegy; [35]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, &c., 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. H. S. [36]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.

[**II-329**]

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

Bagni, Friday Night,
(*July* 13*th,* 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, —ἑκατόμβιοι 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.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

Bagni, July 19*th* [1821].

My dearest Friends,

I am fully repaid for the painful emotions from which some verses of my poem sprung, 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 [**II-330**] 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.

TO MRS. SHELLEY

(Bagni di Pisa).

Lione Bianco, Florence,
(*Tuesday, August* 1*st,* 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 write from Paris. I spent three hours this morning principally in the contemplation of the Niobe, [**II-331**] 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.'s 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. 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 prepared for my return.

Your ever affectionate

S.

TO MRS. SHELLEY

(Bagni di Pisa).

Bologna, Agosto 6 [1821].

Dearest mine,

I am at Bologna, and the caravella is ordered for Ravenna. I have been detained, by having made an embarrassing and inexplicable arrangement, more than [**II-332**] 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 me about, 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 Williams's. 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.

TO MRS. SHELLEY.

Ravenna, August 7, 1821.

My dearest Mary,

I arrived last night at ten o'clock, and sat up talking with Lord Byron until five this morning. I then went to 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, [**II-333**] and lives a life totally the reverse of that which he led at Venice. He has a permanent sort of liaison with Contessa Giuccioli, 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 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.

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 patronize 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 [**II-334**] 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 countenance of man may never meet me more.

* * * * 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.

TO MRS. SHELLEY.

8*th 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 my letter gave you pain, but it was necessary to look the affair in the [**II-335**] 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.

* * * * *

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. The 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 sea shore 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 Lord Byron'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 [**II-336**] 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 story 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 story 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 twenty-four columns of the finest marble, with an altar of jasper, and four columns of jasper and [**II-337**] 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 mure*. 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 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:—Lord Byron gets up at two, breakfasts; we talk, read, &c., 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.

Lord Byron is greatly improved in every respect. In genius, in temper, in moral views, in health, in happiness. The connexion with la Guiccioli has been an inestimable benefit to him. He lives in considerable splendour, but within his income, which is now about £4000 a year, £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 [**II-338**] 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 Switzerland—a 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 Lord Byron's friend and confidant, and acquiesces perfectly in her connexion with him) wish to go to Switzerland; as Lord Byron says, merely from the novelty of the pleasure of travelling. Lord Byron 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. But it 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 the 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 [**II-339**] 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 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 assertor 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. Moore 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. I 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. How [**II-340**] is 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. I 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 C. 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 sposo. How are the Williamses, and Williams especially? Give my very kindest love to them.

Lord Byron 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 1200 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 δυσσὲβὲς—μετὰ μὲν πλείονα τίκτει, σφετέρᾳ δ' ἐίκοτα γεννᾷ. 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.

[**II-341**]

TO MRS. SHELLEY.

Saturday—Ravenna Aug. 11, 1821].

My dear Mary,

You will be surprised to hear that Lord Byron 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, &c., 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. [37]One would think that Lord Byron 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 [**II-342**] 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 Lord Byron'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 Lord Byron's, express to Florence.

I write this in haste.—Yours most affectionately,

S.

TO MRS. SHELLEY.

Ravenna, Tuesday, August 14*th,* 1821.

My dearest Love,

I accept your kind present of your picture, and wish 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 Lord Byron should come to Tuscany, and, if possible, Pisa; but more of that to-morrow.

Your faithful and affectionate

S.

TO MRS. SHELLEY.

Ravenna, Wednesday Aug. 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 [**II-343**] 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 Lord Byron'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 [**II-344**] 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 Fust. 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 a 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 Lord Byron, 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. Lord Byron speaks with great kindness and interest of you, and seems to wish to see you.

[**II-345**]

Ravenna, Thursday.

I have received your letter with that to 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 panders and accomplices to slander, for the Hoppners had exacted from Lord Byron that these accusations should be concealed from *me*. 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 he 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 [**II-346**] extreme beauty and fitness of the place, should we decide on Florence, might well overbalance the objection of your deaf visitor. One 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 Williamses 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 custom. The —— are there, and as far as solid affairs are concerned, are my friends. * * * 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 flood-gates of the world. I would read no reviews, and talk with no authors. If I dared trust my imagination, it would tell me that there are one or two chosen companions beside yourself whom I should desire. But to this I would not listen—where two or three are gathered together, the devil is among 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 [**II-347**] 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 sources 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.

TO HORATIO SMITH.

Pisa, Sept. 14*th,* 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 [**II-348**] 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 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 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 [**II-349**] 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? [38] —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; [**II-350**] 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.

TO MR. JOHN GISBORNE.

Pisa, 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 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 conjunction 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 any thing [**II-351**] 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. in sending them to Leghorn, you would do me an especial favour; but do not buy me Calderon, Faust, or Kant, as H. S. [39]promises to send them me from Paris, where I suppose you had not time to procure them. Any other books you or Henry 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 flesh 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."

[**II-352**]

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 evidence of the influence of successful evil and tyranny. What Godwin is, compared to Plato and Bacon, we well know; but compared with these miserable sciolists, he is a vulture to a worm.

I read the Greek dramatists and Plato for ever. You 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, and read there. I have read, since I saw you, the "Jungfrau 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.

TO MR. 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 [**II-353**] 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."

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, [**II-354**] should say Goethe 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 our 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 Goethe 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 [**II-355**] of the "Nouvelle Héloïse"? Goethe, 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 the First," 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 desirable, till you are free. You see how liberal I am of advice; but you know the motives that suggest it. What is Henry about, and how are his prospects? Tell him that some adventurers

are engaged upon a steam-boat at Leghorn, to make the *trajet* we projected. I hope he is charitable [**II-356**] 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 postages, &c., 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. —— 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——, 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.

TO —— [40]

Pisa, April 11*th,* 1822.

My dear ——,

I have, as yet, received neither the * * *, 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; [**II-357**] 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.

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 Byron'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 Byron much good advice about public opinion, &c., 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 benefitting Lord Byron, without degrading me. I think 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 [**II-358**] 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 that 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? 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 — —, believe me,

Faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

TO MRS. SHELLEY

(at Spezzia).

[*Lerici, Sunday, April* 28*th,* 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 [**II-359**] *impiccio,* great as is my anxiety to see you.—How are you, my best love? How have you sustained the trials of the journey? Answer me this question, and how my little babe and C * * * 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 place 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 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.

Ever yours,

S.

TO HORATIO 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 overcivilised 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 [**II-360**] of Spezzia. I do not write; I

have lived too long near Lord Byron, and the sun has extinguished the glowworm; 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*l*. 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 3 or 400*l*.—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*l*. 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.

[**II-361**]

TO — — [41]

Lerici, June 29*th,* 1822.

My dear — —,

* * * * *

* * * * *

Pray thank Moore for his obliging message. I wish I could as easily convey my sense of his genius and character. I should have written to him on the subject of my late letter, but that I doubted how far I was justified in doing so; although, indeed, Lord Byron made no secret of his communication to me. It seems to me that things have now arrived at such a crisis as requires every man plainly to utter his sentiments on the inefficacy of the existing religion, no less than political systems, for restraining and guiding mankind. Let us see the truth, whatever that may be. The destiny of man can scarcely be so degraded, that he was born only to die; and if such should be the case, delusions, especially the gross and preposterous ones of the existing religion, can scarcely be supposed to exalt it. If every man said what he thought, it could not subsist a day. But all, more or less, subdue themselves to the element that surrounds them, and contribute to the evils they lament by the hypocrisy that springs from them.

England appears to be in a desperate condition, Ireland still worse; and no class of those who subsist on the public labour will be persuaded that *their* claims on it must be diminished. But the government must content itself with less in taxes, the landholder must submit to receive less rent, and the fundholder a [**II-362**] diminished interest, or they will all get nothing. I once thought to study these affairs, and write or act in them. I am glad that my good genius said, *refrain*. I see little public virtue, and I foresee that the contest will be one of

blood and gold, two elements which, however much to my taste in my pockets and my veins, I have an objection to out of them.

Lord Byron continues at Leghorn, and has just received from Genoa a most beautiful little yacht, which he caused to be built there. He has written two new cantos of "Don Juan," but I have not seen them. I have just received a letter from Hunt, who has arrived at Genoa. As soon as I hear that he has sailed, I shall weigh anchor in my little schooner, and give him chase to Leghorn, when I must occupy myself in some arrangements for him with Lord Byron. Between ourselves, I greatly fear that this alliance will not succeed; for I, who could never have been regarded as more than the link of the two thunderbolts, 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
Affectionate friend,

P. B. Shelley.

[**II-363**]

TO MRS. 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.

TO MRS. 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 Byron 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 [**II-364**] 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 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 was changed to 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 the scheme of a journal, for which every arrangement has been made. 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 [**II-365**] 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.

[**II-369**]

MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS AND LETTERS.↩

A LETTER

to

LORD ELLENBOROUGH,

Occasioned by the Sentence which he passed on

M^{R}. D. I. EATON,

As Publisher of

The Third part of Paine's Age of Reason

Deorum offensa, Diis curæ.

> —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. Globe, July 2.

[**II-370**]

A LETTER TO LORD ELLENBOROUGH

[**II-371**]

ADVERTISEMENT.

> *I have waited impatiently for these last four months, in the hopes that some pen, fitter for the important task, would have spared me the perilous pleasure of becoming the champion of an innocent man.—This may serve as an excuse for delay, to those who think that I have let pass the aptest opportunity, but it is not to be supposed that in four short months the public indignation, raised by Mr. Eaton's unmerited suffering, can have subsided.*

[**II-372**]

[**II-373**]

LETTER.

My Lord,

As the station to which you have been called by your country is important, so much the more awful is your 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 his offence. The inquisitor when he burns an obstinate 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 animadversions 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.

[**II-374**]

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 common place contempt to a defence of plain and simple sincerity? Lastly, when the prejudices of the jury, as Christians, were strongly and unfairly inflamed [42]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 [43]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 enquiry is one which religion never has forgiven. Implicit faith and fearless enquiry 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 modern discoveries 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 [**II-375**] ultimately be controverted by its own falsehood. That which is true needs but publicity to be acknowledged. 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," [44]except when it has power, and then, as it was a coward, it is a tyrant; but the eagle-eye of truth darts through the undazzling sunbeam of the immutable and just, gathering thence 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 is 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 which you have passed must likewise suffice, in this 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 power. Do you think to please the God you worship by this exhibition of your zeal? [**II-376**] If so, the Demon to whom some nations offer human hecatombs is less barbarous than the Deity of civilized 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 unconnected with volition. They are the apprehension of the 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 precisely 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 heretico comburendo' has 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 freedom. Under a government which, whilst it infringes the very right of thought and speech, boasts of permitting the liberty of the press; in a civilized and enlightened country, a man is pilloried and imprisoned because he is a Deist, and no one raises his voice in the indignation [**II-377**] 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, authorize 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 any thing 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 to answer them by argument, proceeded to repress the activity 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 [**II-378**] 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 beginning to end, a fable and imposture, [45]that the Apostles were liars and deceivers. He denied the miracles, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.—He did so, and the Attorney General denied the propositions which he asserted, and asserted those which he denied. What singular conclusion is deducible from this fact? None, but that the Attorney General and Mr. Eaton sustained two opposite opinions. 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 are 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 a 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 [**II-379**] association.—This duty in similar situations must be precisely the same in all ages and nations.—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 who merely 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, not the inspirations of the Deity, have engendered.

Moral qualities are such as only a human being can possess. 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 [**II-380**] being qualities incompatible with any *possible* definition of his nature. It may here be 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 possess. A bear is not perfect except he is rough, a tyger is not perfect if he be not voracious, an elephant is not perfect if otherwise than docile. How *deep* an argument must that not be which proves that the Deity is as rough as a bear, as voracious as a tyger, and as docile as an elephant! 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 these 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.

[**II-381**]

Socrates was poisoned because he dared to combat the degrading superstitions in which his countrymen were educated. Not long after his death, Athens recognized 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 bigotted 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 that the crucifixion of Jesus was a supernatural event, and 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, 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 disprove it, must 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 predecessor, 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 [**II-382**] opinion that, as like other systems it has arisen and augmented, so like them it will decay and perish; that, as violence and falsehood, 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, and that men will then 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-evident excellence and fitness, the preceding analogy would be inadmissible. We should never speculate upon 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 organization, and relative situations, must remain acknowledged 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 [**II-383**] 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 opened 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 giving 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 honorable 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. [**II-384**] 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 effects of known causes; but, when an enlightened age and nation signalizes 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 [**II-385**] 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 not the universe 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 satisfaction to itself? If, lastly, its truth *cannot* be demonstrated, 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 or reflection. This man would assert what is demonstrably incorrect;—he would promulgate a false opinion. Yet, would he therefore deserve pillory [**II-386**] 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 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 hopes 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, &c.

[**II-387**]

PRINCE ALEXY HAIMATOFF. [46]

[*Memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff*. Translated from the original Latin MSS. under the immediate inspection of the Prince. By John Brown, Esq. Pp. 236, 12mo. Hookham, 1814.] [47]

IS the suffrage of mankind the legitimate criterion of intellectual energy? Are complaints of the aspirants to literary fame to be considered as the honourable disappointment of neglected genius, or the sickly impatience of a dreamer miserably self deceived? the most illustrious ornaments of the annals of the human race have been stigmatised by the contempt and abhorrence of entire communities of man; but this injustice arose out of some temporary superstition, some partial interest, some national doctrine: a glorious redemption awaited their remembrance. There is indeed, nothing so remarkable in the contempt of the ignorant for the enlightened: the vulgar pride of folly delights to triumph upon mind. This is an intelligible process: the infamy or ingloriousness that can be thus [**II-388**] explained detracts nothing from the beauty of virtue or the sublimity of genius. But what does utter obscurity express? if the public do not advert even in censure to a performance, has that performance already received its condemnation?

The result of this controversy is important to the ingenuous critic. His labours are indeed miserably worthless if their objects may invariably be attained before their application. He should know the limits of his prerogative. He should not be ignorant, whether it is his duty to promulgate the decisions of others, or to cultivate his taste and judgment, that he may be enabled to render a reason for his own.

Circumstances the least connected with intellectual nature have contributed, for a certain period, to retain in obscurity the most memorable specimens of human genius. The author refrains perhaps from introducing his production to the world with all the pomp of empirical bibliopolism. A sudden tide in the affairs of men may make the neglect or contradiction of some insignificant doctrine a badge of obscurity and discredit: those even who are exempt from the action of these absurd predilections are necessarily in an indirect manner affected by their influence. It is perhaps the product of an imagination daring and undisciplined: the majority of readers ignorant and disdaining toleration refuse to pardon a neglect of common rules; their canons of criticism are carelessly infringed, it is less religious than a charity sermon, less methodical and cold than a French tragedy, where all the unities are preserved: no excellencies, where prudish cant and dull regularity are absent, can preserve it from the contempt and abhorrence of the multitude. It is evidently not difficult to imagine an instance in which the most elevated genius shall be recompensed with neglect. Mediocrity alone seems unvaryingly to escape rebuke and obloquy, it accommodates its attempts to the spirit [**II-389**] of the age which has produced it, and adopts with mimic effrontery the cant of the day and hour for which alone it lives.

We think that "the Memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff" deserves to be regarded as an example of the fact by the frequency of which criticism is vindicated from the imputation of futility and impertinence. We do not hesitate to consider this fiction as the product of a bold and original mind. We hardly remember ever to have seen surpassed the subtle delicacy of imagination, by which the manifest distinctions of character and form are seized and pictured in colours that almost make nature more beautiful than herself. The vulgar observe no resemblances or discrepancies, but such as are gross and glaring. The science of mind to which history, poetry, biography serve as the materials, consists in the discernment of shades and distinctions where the unenlightened discover nothing but a shapeless and unmeaning mass. The faculty for this discernment distinguishes genius from dulness. There are passages in the production before us which afford instances of just and rapid intuition belonging only to intelligences that possess this faculty in no ordinary degree. As a composition the book is far from faultless. Its abruptness and angularities do not appear to have received the slightest polish or correction. The author has written with fervour, but has disdained to revise at leisure. These errors are the errors of youth and genius and the fervid impatience of sensibilities impetuously disburthening their fulness. The author is proudly negligent of connecting the incidents of his tale. It appears more like the recorded day dream of a poet, not unvisited by the sublimest and most lovely visions, than the tissue of a romance skilfully interwoven for the purpose of maintaining the interest of the reader, and conducting his sympathies by dramatic gradations to the denoûment. It is, what it professes to be, a memoir, not a novel. [**II-390**] Yet its claims to the former appellation are established, only by the impatience and inexperience of the author, who, possessing in an eminent degree, the higher qualifications of a a novelist, we had almost said a poet, has neglected the number by which that success would probably have been secured, which, in this instance, merits of a far nobler stamp have unfortunately failed to acquire. Prince Alexy is by no means an unnatural, although no common character. We think we can discern his counterpart in Alfieri's delineation of himself. The same propensities, the same ardent devotion to his purposes, the same chivalric and unproductive attachment to unbounded liberty, characterises both. We are inclined to doubt whether the author has not attributed to his hero the doctrines of universal philanthropy in a spirit of profound and almost unsearchable irony: at least he appears biassed by no peculiar principles, and it were perhaps an insoluble inquiry whether any, and if any, what moral truth he designed to illustrate by his tale. Bruhle, the tutor of Alexy, is a character delineated with consummate skill; the power of intelligence and virtue over external deficiencies is forcibly exemplified. The calmness, patience and magnanimity of this singular man, are truly rare and admirable: his disinterestedness, his equanimity, his irresistible gentleness, form a finished and delightful portrait. But we cannot regard his commendation to his pupil to indulge in promiscuous concubinage without horror and detestation. The author appears to deem the loveless intercourse of brutal appetite a venial offence against delicacy and virtue! he asserts that a transient connexion with a cultivated female may contribute to form the heart without essentially vitiating the sensibilities. It is our duty to protest against so pernicious and disgusting an opinion. No man can rise pure from the poisonous embraces of a prostitute, or sinless from the desolated hopes of a confiding heart. Whatever may be the [**II-391**] claims of chastity, whatever the advantages of simple and pure affections, these ties, these benefits, are of equal obligation to either sex. Domestic relations depend for their integrity upon a complete reciprocity of duties. But the author himself has in the adventure of the Sultana, Debesh-Sheptuti, afforded a most impressive and tremendous allegory of the cold-blooded and malignant selfishness of sensuality.

We are incapacitated by the unconnected and vague narrative from forming an analysis of the incidents: they would consist indeed, simply of a catalogue of events, and which, divested of the aërial tinge of genius, might appear trivial and common. We shall content ourselves, therefore, with selecting some passages calculated to exemplify the peculiar powers of the author. The following description of the simple and interesting Rosalie is in the highest style

of delineation:—

> "Her hair was unusually black, she truly had raven locks, the same glossiness, the same varying shade, the same mixture of purple and sable for which the plumage of the raven is remarkable, were found in the long elastic tresses depending from her head and covering her shoulders. Her complexion was dark and clear: the colours which composed the brown that dyed her smooth skin, were so well mixed, that not one blot, not one varied tinge, injured its brightness, and when the blush of animation or of modesty flushed her cheek, the tint was so rare, that could a painter have dipped his pencil in it, that single shade would have rendered him immortal. The bone above her eye was sharp, and beautifully curved; much as I have admired the wonderful properties of curves, I am convinced that their most stupendous properties collected would fall far short of that magic line. The eyebrow was pencilled with extreme nicety; in the centre it consisted of the deepest shade of black, at the edges it was hardly perceptible, and no man could have been hardy enough to have attempted to define the precise spot at which it ceased: in short the velvet drapery of the eyebrow was only to be rivalled by the purple of the long black eyelashes that terminated the ample curtain. Rosalie's eyes were large and full; they appeared at a distance uniformly [**II-392**] dark, but upon close inspection the innumerable strokes of various hues of infinite fineness and endless variety, drawn in concentric circles behind the pellucid crystal, filled the mind with wonder and admiration, and could only be the work of infinite power directed by infinite wisdom."

Alexy's union with Aür-Ahebeh the Circassian slave is marked by circumstances of deep pathos, and the sweetest tenderness of sentiment. The description of his misery and madness at her death deserves to be remarked as affording evidence of an imagination vast, profound and full of energy.

> "Alexy, who gained the friendship, perhaps the love of the native Rosalie: the handsome Haimatoff, the philosophic Haimatoff, the haughty Haimatoff, Haimatoff the gay, the witty, the accomplished, the bold hunter, the friend of liberty, the chivalric lover of all that is feminine, the hero, the enthusiast: see him now, that is he, mark him! he appears in the shades of evening, he stalks as a spectre, he has just risen from the damps of the charnel-house; see, the dews still hang on his forehead. He will vanish at cock-crowing, he never heard the song of the lark, nor the busy hum of men; the sun's rays never warmed him, the pale moonbeam alone shows his unearthly figure, which is fanned by the wing of the owl, which scarce obstructs the slow flight of the droning beetle, or of the drowsy bat. Mark him! he stops, his lean arms are crossed on his bosom; he is bowed to the earth, his sunken eye gazes from its deep cavity on vacuity, as the toad skulking in the corner of a sepulchre, peeps with malignity through the circumambient gloom. His cheek is hollow; the glowing tints of his complexion, which once resembled the autumnal sunbeam on the autumnal beech, are gone, the cadaverous yellow, the livid hue, have usurped their place, the sable honours of his head have perished, they once waved in the wind like the jetty pinions of the raven, the skull is only covered by the shrivelled skin, which the rook views wistfully, and calls to her young ones. His gaunt bones start from his wrinkled garments, his voice is deep, hollow, sepulchral; it is the voice which wakes the dead, he has long held converse with the departed. He attempts to walk he knows not whither, his legs totter under him, he falls, the boys hoot him, the dogs bark at him, he hears them not, he sees them not.—Rest there, Alexy, it beseemeth thee, thy bed is the grave, thy bride is the worm, yet once thou stoodest [**II-393**] erect, thy cheek was flushed with joyful ardour, thy eye blazing told what thy head conceived, what thy heart felt, thy limbs were vigour and activity, thy bosom expanded with pride, ambition, and desire, every nerve thrilled to feel, every muscle swelled to execute.
>
> "Haimatoff, the blight has tainted thee, thou ample roomy web of life, whereon were traced the gaudy characters, the gay embroidery of pleasure, how has the moth battened on thee; Haimatoff, how has the devouring flame scorched the plains, once yellow with the harvest! the simoon, the parching breath of the

> desert, has swept over the laughing plains, the carpet of verdure rolled away at its approach, and has bared amid desolation. Thou stricken deer, thy leather coat, thy dappled hide hangs loose upon thee, it was a deadly arrow, how has it wasted thee, thou scathed oak, how has the red lightning drank thy sap: Haimatoff, Haimatoff, eat thy soul with vexation. Let the immeasurable ocean roll between thee and pride: you must not dwell together," p. 129.

The episode of Viola is affecting, natural, and beautiful. We do not ever remember to have seen the unforgiving fastidiousness of family honour more awfully illustrated. After the death of her lover, Viola still expects that he will esteem, still cherishes the delusion that he is not lost to her for ever.

> "She used frequently to go to the window to look for him, or walk in the Park to meet him, but without the least impatience, at his delay. She learnt a new tune, or a new song to amuse him, she stood behind the door to startle him as he entered, or disguised herself to surprise him."

The character of Mary, deserves, we think, to be considered as the only complete failure in the book. Every other female whom the author has attempted to describe is designated by an individuality peculiarly marked and true. They constitute finished portraits of whatever is eminently simple, graceful, gentle, or disgustingly atrocious and vile. Mary alone is the miserable parasite of fashion, the tame slave of drivelling and drunken folly, the cold-hearted coquette, the lying [**II-394**] and meretricious prude. The means employed to gain this worthless prize corresponds exactly with its worthlessness. Sir Fulke Hildebrand is a strenuous Tory, Alexy, on his arrival in England professes himself inclined to the principles of the Whig party, finding that the Baronet had sworn that his daughter should never marry a Whig, he sacrifices his principles and with inconceivable effrontery thus palliates his apostasy and falsehood.

> "The prejudices of the Baronet were strong in proportion as they were irrational. I resolved rather to humour than to thwart them. I contrived to be invited to dine in company with him; I always proposed the health of the minister, I introduced politics and defended the Tory party in long speeches, I attended clubs and public dinners of that interest. I do not know whether this conduct was justifiable; it may certainly be excused when the circumstances of my case are duly considered. I would tear myself in pieces if I suspected that I could be guilty of the slightest falsehood or prevarication; (see Lord Chesterfield's Letters for the courtier-like distinction between simulation and dissimulation,) but there was nothing of that sort here. I was of no party, consequently, I could not be accused of deserting any one. I did not defend the injustice of any body of men, I did not detract from the merits of any virtuous character. I praised what was laudable in the Tory party, and blamed what was reprehensible in the Whigs: I was silent with regard to whatever was culpable in the former or praiseworthy in the latter. The stratagem was innocent which injured no one, and which promoted the happiness of two individuals, especially of the most amiable woman the world ever knew."

An instance of more deplorable perversity of the human understanding we do not recollect ever to have witnessed. It almost persuades us to believe that scepticism or indifference concerning certain sacred truths may occasionally produce a subtlety of sophism, by which the conscience of the criminal may be bribed to overlook his crime.

Towards the conclusion of this strange and powerful performance it must be confessed that *aliquando bonus* [**II-395**] *dormitat Homerus*. The adventure of the Eleutheri, [48]although the sketch of a profounder project, is introduced and concluded with unintelligible abruptness. Bruhle dies, purposely as it should seem that his pupil may renounce the romantic sublimity of his nature, and that his inauspicious union and prostituted

character might be exempt from the censure of violated friendship. Numerous indications of profound and vigorous thought are scattered over even the most negligently compacted portions of the narrative. It is an unweeded garden where nightshade is interwoven with sweet jessamine, and the most delicate spices of the east peep over struggling stalks of rank and poisonous hemlock.

In the delineation of the more evanescent feelings and uncommon instances of strong and delicate passion we conceive the author to have exhibited new and unparalleled powers. He has noticed some peculiarities of female character with a delicacy and truth singularly exquisite. We think that the interesting subject of sexual relations requires for its successful development the application of a mind thus organised and endowed. Yet even here how great the deficiencies; this mind must be pure from the fashionable superstitions of gallantry, must be exempt from the sordid feelings which with blind idolatry worship the image and blaspheme the deity, reverence the type, and degrade the reality of which it is an emblem.

We do not hesitate to assert that the author of this volume is a man of ability. His great though indisciplinable energies and fervid rapidity of conception [**II-396**] embody scenes and situations, and passions affording inexhaustible food for wonder and delight. The interest is deep and irresistible. A moral enchanter seems to have conjured up the shapes of all that is beautiful and strange to suspend the faculties in fascination and astonishment.

[**II-399**]

BIBLIOGRAPHY ARRANGED IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF THE PUBLISHED WRITINGS IN VERSE AND PROSE OF PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SHELLEY.

1810.

ZASTROZZI. A Romance. By P. B. S. London: Printed for G. Wilkie and J. Robinson, 57 Paternoster Row. 1810. 12mo, pp. 252.

——That their God
May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works—This would surpass
Common revenge, —*Paradise Lost*.

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. 410, pp. 29.

1811.

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. 12mo, pp. 236.

A POETICAL ESSAY ON THE EXISTING STATE OF THINGS. 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 & Co., and all other Booksellers. 1811.

And Famine at her bidding wasted wide
The Wretched Land, till in the Public way,
Promiscuous where the dead and dying lay,
Dogs fed on human bones in the open light of day.

—*Curse of Kehama*.

THE NECESSITY OF ATHEISM. Worthing: Printed by E. & W. Phillips. Sold in London and Oxford. [1811.] 8vo, pp. 13.

Quod clarâ et perspicuâ demonstratione careat
pro vero habere mens omnino nequis humana.

—*Bacon de Augment. Scient*.

[**II-400**]

ORIGINAL POETRY. By Victor and Cazire. London: J. J. Stockdale, 41 Pall Mall. 1811. Royal 8vo, pp. 64.

1812.

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. [1812.] Small 8vo, pp. 23.

Deorum offensa, Diis curæ.

—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. Globe, July* 2.

An Address to the Irish People. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. Dublin. 1812. Price 5d. 8vo, pp. 22.

Advertisement.—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, summarily pointing out the evils of that 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 associations conducted with peaceable firmness, being earnestly recommended, as means for embodying that unanimity and firmness, which must finally be successful.

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 accomplish its regeneration. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. Dublin: Printed by I. Eton, Winetavern Street. [1812.] 8vo, pp. 18.

1813.

Queen Mab. A Philosophical Poem. With Notes. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. London: Printed by P. B. Shelley, 23 Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square. 1813. Crown 8vo, pp. 240.

Ecrasez L'Infame!

Correspondence de Voltaire.

Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante
Trita solo; juvat integros accedere fonteis;
Atque haurire: juratque novos decerpere flores.
* * * * * *
Unde prius nulli velarint tempora musæ.
Primum quod magnis doceo de rebus; et arctis
Religionum animos nodio exsolvere pergo.—*Lucret.* lib. iv.

Δος που στῶ, καὶ κοσμος κινησω. —*Archimedes.*

[**II-401**]

A Vindication of Natural Diet. Being one in a Series of Notes to Queen Mab, a Philosophical Poem. London: Printed for J. Callow, Medical Bookseller, Crown Court, Princes Street, Soho, by Smith & Davy, Queen Street, Seven Dials. 1813. Price 1s. 6d. 12mo, pp. 43.

Ιαπετιονιδη, παντων περι μηδεα ειδωσ,
Χαιρεισ μεν πυρ κλεψασ, και εμασ φρενασ ηπεροπευσασ;
Σοιτ' αυτω μεγα πημα και ανδρασιν εσσομενοισι.
Τοισ δ'εγω αντι πυροσ δωσω κακον, ω κεν απαντεσ
Τερπωνται κατα θυμον, εον κακον αμφαγαπωντεσ.

—ΗΣΙΩΔ. *Op. et Dies.* i. 54.

1814.

A Refutation of Deism. In a Dialogue. London: Printed by Schulze & Dean, 13 Poland Street. 1814. 8vo, pp. v. 101.

1816.

ALASTOR; or, The Spirit of Solitude, and other Poems. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. London: Printed for Baldwin, Cradock, & Joy, Paternoster Row, and Carpenter & Son, Old Bond Street, by S. Hamilton, Weybridge, Surrey. 1816. Fcp. 8vo, pp. 101.

1817.

A PROPOSAL FOR PUTTING REFORM TO THE VOTE THROUGHOUT THE KINGDOM. By the Hermit of Marlow. London: Printed for C. & J. Ollier, 3 Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square, by C. H. Reynell, 21 Piccadilly. 1817. 8vo, pp. 13.

AN ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE ON THE DEATH OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE. By the Hermit of Marlow. [1817.]

"We Pity the Plumage, but forget the Dying Bird."

No copy of the original edition, apparently limited to twenty copies, is known to exist. A facsimile reprint, reprinted for Thomas Rodd, 2 Great Newport Street, 8vo, pp. 16, was issued not later than 1843, and is still procurable.

HISTORY OF A SIX WEEKS' TOUR THROUGH A PART OF FRANCE, SWITZERLAND, GERMANY, AND HOLLAND. With Letters descriptive of a Sail round the Lake of Geneva, and of the Glaciers of Chamouni. London: Published by [**II-402**] T. Hookham, Jun., Old Bond Street, and C. & J. Ollier, Welbeck Street. 1817. Fcp. 8vo, pp. vi. 183.

1818.

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. London: Printed for Sherwood, Neely, & Jones, Paternoster Row, and C. & J. Ollier, Welbeck Street, by B. M'Millan, Bow Street, Covent Garden. 1818. 8vo, pp. xxxii. 270.

ΔΟΣ ΠΟΥ ΣΤΩ ΚΑΙ ΚΟΣΜΟΝ ΚΙΝΗΣΩ.

—*Archimedes*.

THE REVOLT OF ISLAM. A Poem, in Twelve Cantos. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. London: Printed for C. & J. Ollier, Welbeck Street, by B. M'Millan, Bow Street, Covent Garden. 1818. 8vo, pp. xxxii. 270.

1819.

ROSALIND AND HELEN. A Modern Eclogue; with other Poems. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. London: Printed for C. & J. Ollier, Vere Street, Bond Street. 1819. 8vo, pp. 92.

THE CENCI. A Tragedy, in Five Acts. By Percy B. Shelley. Italy: Printed for C. & J. Ollier, Vere Street, Bond Street, London. 1819. 8vo, pp. xiv. 104.

THE CENCI. A Tragedy in Five Acts. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. Second edition. London: C. & J. Ollier, Vere Street, Bond Street. 1821. 8vo, pp. xviii. 104.

1820.

PROMETHEUS UNBOUND. A Lyrical Drama in Four Acts, with other Poems. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. London: C. & J. Ollier, Vere Street, Bond Street. 1820. 8vo, pp. 222.

Audisne hæc, amphiaræ, sub terram abdite?

ŒDIPUS TYRANNUS; or, Swellfoot the Tyrant. A Tragedy in Two Acts. Translated from the Original Doric. London: Published for the Author, by J. Johnston, 98 Cheapside, and sold by all Booksellers. 1820. 8vo, pp. 39.

——— Choose Reform or civil-war,
When thro' thy streets, instead of hare with dogs,
A Consort-Queen shall hunt a King with hogs,
Riding on the IONIAN MINOTAUR.

[**II-403**]

1821.

ADONAIS. An Elegy on the Death of John Keats, Author of Endymion, Hyperion, &c. By Percy B. Shelley. Pisa: With the types of Didot. 1821. 4to, pp. 25.

Αστήρ τρὶν μὲν ἐλαμπες ενι ζῶοισιν εῶος.
Νυν δε θανῶν, λαμπεις ἕσπερος εν φθίμενοις.—*Plato.*

EPIPSYCHIDION. Verses addressed to the Noble and Unfortunate Lady Emilia V——, now imprisoned in the Convent of——. London: C. & J. Ollier, Vere Street, Bond Street. 1821. 8vo, pp. 31.

L'anima amante si slancia fuori del creato, e si crea nel infinito un Mondo tutto per essa, diverso assai da questo oscuro e pauroso baratro.

Her own words.

1822.

HELLAS. A Lyrical Drama. By Percy B. Shelley. London: Charles and James Ollier, Vere Street, Bond Street. 1822. 8vo, pp. xii. 60.

ΜΛΝΤΙΣ ΕΙΜ' ΕΣΘΛΩΝ ἈΓΩΝΩΝ. —*Odip. Colon.*

The last work published by Shelley himself. The remainder are posthumous publications.

POSTHUMOUS PUBLICATIONS.

POSTHUMOUS POEMS OF PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY. London: Printed for John and Henry L. Hunt, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden. 1824. 8vo, pp. xii. 415.

In nobil sangue vita umile e queta,
Ed in alto intelletto un puro core;
Frutto senile in sul giovenil fiore,
E in aspetto pensoso anima lieta.—*Petrarca.*

THE MASQUE OF ANARCHY. A Poem. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. Now first published, with a Preface by Leigh Hunt. London: Edward Moxon, 64 New Bond Street. 1832. Fcp. 8vo, pp. xxx. 47.

Hope is strong:
Justice and Truth their winged child have found.—*Revolt of Islam.*

[**II-404**]

THE SHELLEY PAPERS. Memoir of Percy Bysshe Shelley, by T. Medwin, Esq., and Original Poems and Papers, by Percy Bysshe Shelley. Now first collected. London: Whittaker, Treacher, & Co. 1833. 18mo, pp. viii. 180.

Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations and Fragments. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. Edited by Mrs. Shelley. In two volumes. London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street. 1840. Crown 8vo, pp. xxxii. 320, viii. 360.

Relics of Shelley. Edited by Richard Garnett. London: Edward Moxon & Co., Dover Street. 1862. Fcp. 8vo, pp. xvi. 191.

"Sing again, with your dear voice revealing
A tone
Of some world far from ours,
Where music and moonlight and feeling
Are one."

Contents.—(Preface)—Prologue to Hellas (with note)—The Magic Plant (with note)—Orpheus (with note)—Scene from Tasso (with note)—Fiordispina (with note)—To his Genius—Love, Hope, Desire, and Fear—Lines ("We meet not as we parted")—Lines written in the Bay of Lerici—Fragments of the Adonais (with notes)—Translation of the First Canzone of Dante's Convito.

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Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co.

Edinburgh & London

Endnotes to Volume 2↩

[2] *De Augment. Scient.,* cap. 1., lib. iii.

[3] See the *Filum Labyrinthi,* and the Essay on Death particularly.

[4] [Macbeth, act iii. scene 2.]

[5] A misquotation of Mark iv. 25.—Ed.

[6] A misquotation of Ecclesiastes vii. 2.—Ed.

[7] Although Rousseau has been thus classed, he was essentially a poet. The others, even Voltaire, were mere reasoners. [*Author's note.*]

[8] [Paradise Lost, Book 1. l. 254-5.]

[9] The Republic, though replete with considerable errors of speculation, is, indeed, the greatest repository of important truths of all the works of Plato. This, perhaps, is because it is the longest. He first, and perhaps last, maintained that a state ought to be governed, not by the wealthiest, or the most ambitious, or the most cunning, but by the wisest; the method of selecting such rulers, and the laws by which such a selection is made, must correspond with and arise out of the moral freedom and refinement of the people.

[10] The savage and the illiterate are but faintly aware of the distinction between the future and the past; they make actions belonging to periods so distinct, the subjects of similar feelings; they live only in the present, or in the past as it is present. It is in this that the philosopher excels one of the many; it is this which distinguishes the doctrine of philosophic necessity from fatalism; and that determination of the will, by which it is the active source of future events, from that liberty or indifference, to which the abstract liability of irremediable actions is attached, according to the notions of the vulgar.

This is the source of the erroneous excesses of Remorse and Revenge; the one extending itself over the future, and the other over the past; provinces in which their suggestions can only be the sources of evil. The purpose of a resolution to act more wisely and virtuously in future, and the sense of a necessity of caution in repressing an enemy, are the sources from which the enormous superstitions implied in the words cited have arisen.

[11] *Vide supra,* p. 35.—Ed.

[12] *Here I was obliged to leave off, overcome by thrilling horror.*—This remark closes this fragment, which was written in 1815. I remember well his coming to me from writing it, pale and agitated, to seek refuge in conversation from the fearful emotions it excited.—[*Note by Mrs. Shelley.*]

[13] A leaf of manuscript is wanting here, manifestly treating of self-love and disinterestedness.—[*Note by Mrs. Shelley.*]

[14] Tacitus.

[15] Wordsworth, *Tintern Abbey.*—Ed.

[16] Matthew Gregory Lewis—so named in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. When Lewis first saw Lord Byron, he asked him earnestly,—"Why did you call me Apollo's sexton?" The noble poet found it difficult to reply to this categorical species of reproof.

The above stories have, some of them, appeared in print; but, as a ghost story depends entirely on the mode in which it is told, I think the reader will be pleased to read these, written by Shelley, fresh from their relation by Lewis.—[*Note by Mrs. Shelley.*]

[17] *i.e.,* Harriet Byron, in Richardson's novel of *Sir Charles Grandison*.—Ed.

[18] Clara, born at Marlow, Sept. 3, 1817.—Ed.

[19] Of *Childe Harold*.—Ed.

[20] The ancient name of Ischia.—[*Note by Mrs. Shelley.*]

[21]

> [Est locus exciso penitus demersus hiatu,
> Parthenopem inter, magnæque Dicarchidos arva,
> Cocytia perfusus aqua, nam spiritus, extra
> Qui furit, effusus funesto spargitur æstu, &c.
>
> [Petronii Arbitri *Satyricon*.]

[22] A Swiss girl whom we had engaged as nursery-maid two years before, at Geneva.—[*Note by Mrs. Shelley.*]

[23] Rosalind and Helen.

[24] We had lost our eldest, and, at that time, only child, the preceding month at Rome.—[*Note by Mrs. Shelley.*]

[25] This refers of course (as the sequel shows still more fully) to *The Cenci*.—Ed.

[26] Coleridge's tragedy of *Remorse,* performed at Drury Lane in 1813.—Ed.

[27] Only a mutilated fragment of this letter was published by Leigh Hunt: it is accordingly given here as printed for the first time in its entirety by Mrs. Shelley.—Ed.

[28] The word here left blank was either illegible in the manuscript; or, what is more probable, Mrs. Shelley, for whatever reason, designedly withheld it.—Ed.

[29] Shelley set on foot the building of a steam-boat, 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. An unforeseen complication of circumstances caused the design to be abandoned, when already far advanced towards completion.—[*Note by Mrs. Shelley.*]

An extract from a letter of Mrs. Gisborne to Mrs. Shelley is perhaps necessary to explain further some portion of Shelley's letter:—

"Now, I will tell you the news of the steam-boat. 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, &c. We have procured the wood for the frame from the shipbuilder 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. I have 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 mean time, he sends his best love to his good friends, patron and patroness."

[30] A letter (to Leigh Hunt) on the Trial of Richard Carlile for publishing Paine's *Age of Reason,* intended for insertion in the *Examiner.*—Ed.

[31] "I subjoin here," says Mrs. Shelley, "a fragment of a letter, I know not to whom addressed:—

"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, or in 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 miserable inadequacy. Tacitus, or Livius, or Herodotus, 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 Goethe, Schiller, Wieland, &c. The 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."

[32] The passage in Mr. Reveley's letter referred to by Shelley was as follows:—

"*Friday,* 12*th Nov.*

"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 enough to be drawn up

till to-morrow afternoon; but, to judge from all appearances, I expect them to be perfect.

"*Saturday,* 13*th Nov.*

"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 sæcula sæculorum*. 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."

[33] This letter was never sent.—[*Note by Mrs. Shelley.*]

[34] John Keats.

[35] Adonais.

[36] Horace Smith.

[37] *Memoirs of a Greek* [by Thomas Hope], 3 vols. Murray, 1819.—Ed.

[38] *Amarynthus the Nympholept,* by Horace Smith.—Ed.

[39] Horace Smith (see previous letter, *supra,* p. 349).—Ed.

[40] For reasons which will appear in the sequel, Mrs. Shelley concealed the name of Shelley's correspondent in this letter and the following one of June 29, 1822, under the initials "To C. T.;" but it appears from the original autographs, which have been preserved, that these two letters were addressed to Horatio Smith.—Ed.

[41] To Horatio Smith. The opening paragraph, omitted by Mrs. Shelley, has been found, on reference to the original autograph, to refer to the pecuniary embarrassments of her father, William Godwin, alluded to in the previous letter.—Ed.

[42] See the Attorney General's speech.

[43] By Mr. Fox's bill (1791) Juries are, in cases of libel, judges both of the law and the fact.

[44] Shakespeare.

[45] See the Attorney General's Speech.

[46] From *The Critical Review,* December 1814, vol. vi. pp. 566-574.

[47] This pseudonymous romance, as wild in its conception and execution as Shelley's own romances of *Zastrozzi* and *St. Irvyne,* was the work of Shelley's college-friend and biographer, Thomas Jefferson Hogg. To Professor Dowden of Dublin, Shelley's latest biographer, is due the credit of disinterring and drawing public attention to Shelley's curious critical notice of it.—Ed.

[48] From Edinburgh, Nov. 26, 1813. Shelley had written to Hogg:—"Your novel is now printed. Write more like this. Delight us again with a character so natural and energetic as Alexy: 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." (See Hogg's Life of Shelley, vol. ii. p. 481.)—Ed.