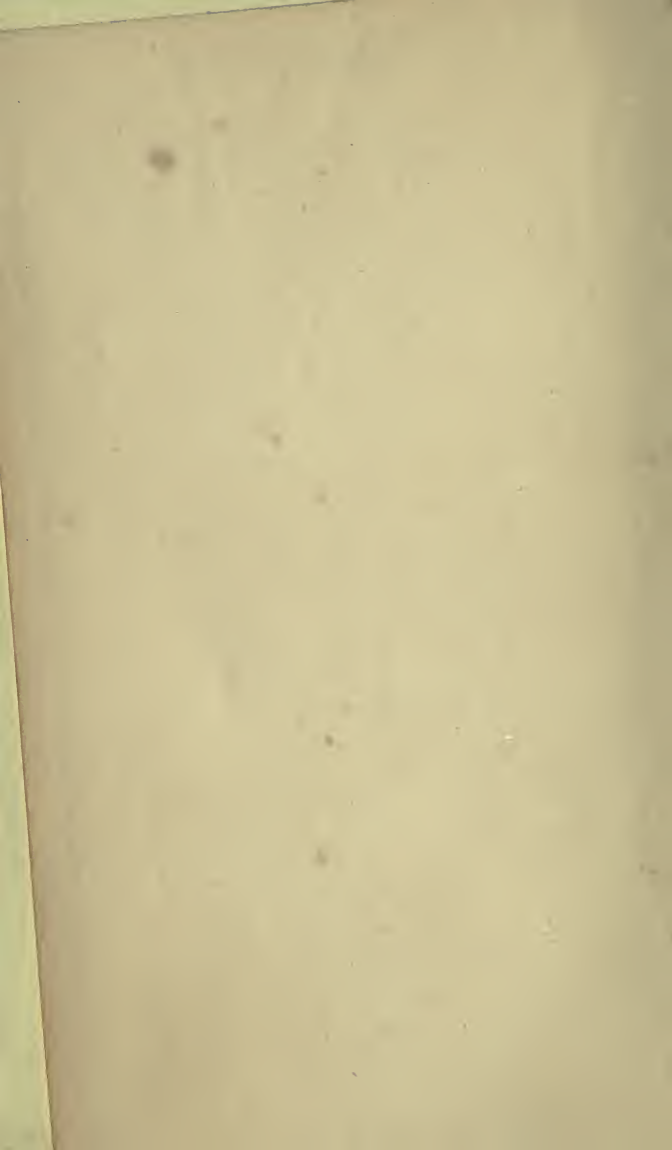




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ESSAYS, LETTERS FROM ABROAD,

TRANSLATIONS AND FRAGMENTS.

“The Poet, it is true, is the son of his time; but pity for him if he is its pupil, or even its favourite! Let some beneficent deity snatch him when a suckling from the breast of his mother, and nurse him with the milk of a better time; that he may ripen to his full stature beneath a distant Grecian sky. And having grown to manhood, let him return, a foreign shape, into his century; not however to delight it by his presence, but dreadful like the son of Agamemnon, to purify it.”—SCHILLER.

Charles Aldrich

ESSAYS,

LETTERS FROM ABROAD,

TRANSLATIONS AND FRAGMENTS.

BY PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

EDITED BY MRS. SHELLEY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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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.

PREFACE.

NOTHING can be more unpresuming than this little volume. It contains the account of some desultory visits by a party of young people to scenes which are now so familiar to our countrymen, that few facts relating to them can be expected to have escaped the many more experienced and exact observers, who have sent their journals to the press. In fact, they have done little else than arrange the few materials which an imperfect journal, and two or three letters to their friends in England afforded. They regret, since their little History is to be offered to the public, that these materials were not more copious and complete. This is a just topic of censure to those who are less inclined to be amused than to condemn. Those whose youth has been passed as theirs (with what success it imports not) in pursuing, like the swallow, the inconstant summer of delight and beauty which invests this visible world, will perhaps find some entertainment in following the author, with her husband and friend, on foot, through part of France and Switzerland, and in sailing with her down the castled Rhine, through scenes beautiful in themselves, but which, since she

visited them, a great poet has clothed with the freshness of a diviner nature. They will be interested to hear of one who has visited Meillerie, and Clarens, and Chillon, and Vevai—classic ground, peopled with tender and glorious imaginations of the present and the past.

They have perhaps never talked with one who has beheld, in the enthusiasm of youth, the glaciers, and the lakes, and the forests, and the fountains of the mighty Alps. Such will perhaps forgive the imperfections of their narrative for the sympathy which the adventures and feelings which it recounts, and a curiosity respecting scenes already rendered interesting and illustrious, may excite.

JOURNAL.

It is now nearly three years since this journey took place, and the journal I then kept was not very copious ; but I have so often talked over the incidents that befel us, and attempted to describe the scenery through which we passed, that I think few occurrences of any interest will be omitted.

We left London, July 28th, 1814, on a hotter day than has been known in this climate for many years. I am not a good traveller, and this heat agreed very ill with me, till, on arriving at Dover, I was refreshed by a sea-bath. As we very much wished to cross the Channel with all possible speed, we would not wait for the packet of the following day (it being then about four in the afternoon) but hiring a small boat, resolved to make the passage the same evening, the seamen promising us a voyage of two hours.

The evening was most beautiful ; there was but little wind, and the sails flapped in the flagging breeze : the moon rose, and night came on, and with the night a slow, heavy swell, and a fresh breeze, which soon produced a sea so violent as to toss the boat very much. I was dreadfully sea-sick, and as is usually my custom when thus affected, I slept during the

greater part of the night, awaking only from time to time to ask where we were, and to receive the dismal answer each time—"Not quite half way."

The wind was violent and contrary; if we could not reach Calais, the sailors proposed making for Boulogne. They promised only two hours' sail from shore, yet hour after hour passed, and we were still far distant, when the moon sunk in the red and stormy horizon, and the fast-flashing lightning became pale in the breaking day.

We were proceeding slowly against the wind, when suddenly a thunder-squall struck the sail, and the waves rushed into the boat: even the sailors acknowledged that our situation was perilous; but they succeeded in reefing the sail;—the wind was now changed, and we drove before the gale directly to Calais. As we entered the harbour I awoke from a comfortless sleep, and saw the sun rise broad, red, and cloudless over the pier.

FRANCE.

EXHAUSTED with sickness and fatigue, I walked over the sand with my companions to the hotel. I heard for the first time the confused buzz of voices speaking a different language from that to which I had been accustomed; and saw a costume very unlike that worn on the opposite side of the Channel; the women with high caps and short jackets; the men with earrings; ladies walking about with high bonnets or *coiffures* lodged on the top of the head, the hair dragged up underneath, without any stray curls to decorate the

temples or cheeks. There is, however, something very pleasing in the manners and appearance of the people of Calais, that prepossesses you in their favour. A national reflection might occur, that when Edward III. took Calais, he turned out the old inhabitants, and peopled it almost entirely with our own countrymen; but, unfortunately, the manners are not English.

We remained during that day and the greater part of the next at Calais: we had been obliged to leave our boxes the night before at the English custom-house, and it was arranged that they should go by the packet of the following day, which, detained by contrary wind, did not arrive until night. S*** and I walked among the fortifications on the outside of the town; they consisted of fields where the hay was making. The aspect of the country was rural and pleasant.

On the 30th of July, about three in the afternoon, we left Calais, in a cabriolet drawn by three horses. To persons who had never before seen anything but a spruce English chaise and post-boy, there was something irresistibly ludicrous in our equipage. Our cabriolet was shaped somewhat like a post-chaise, except that it had only two wheels, and consequently there were no doors at the sides; the front was let down to admit the passengers. The three horses were placed abreast, the tallest in the middle, who was rendered more formidable by the addition of an unintelligible article of harness, resembling a pair of wooden wings fastened to his shoulders; the harness was of rope; and the postilion, a queer, upright little fellow with a long pigtail, *craquéed* his whip, and

clattered on, while an old forlorn shepherd with a cocked hat gazed on us as we passed.

The roads are excellent, but the heat was intense, and I suffered greatly from it. We slept at Boulogne the first night, where there was an ugly but remarkably good-tempered *femme-de-chambre*. This made us, for the first time, remark the difference which exists between this class of persons in France and in England. In the latter country they are prudish, and if they become in the least degree familiar, they are impudent. The lower orders in France have the easiness and politeness of the most well-bred English; they treat you unaffectedly as their equal, and consequently there is no scope for insolence.

We had ordered horses to be ready during the night, but we were too fatigued to make use of them. The man insisted on being paid for the whole post. *Ah! madame*, said the *femme-de-chambre*, *pensez-y; c'est pour dédommager les pauvres chevaux d'avoir perdu leur doux sommeil*. A joke from an English chambermaid would have been quite another thing.

The first appearance that struck our English eyes was the want of enclosures; but the fields were flourishing with a plentiful harvest. We observed no vines on this side Paris.

The weather still continued very hot, and travelling produced a very bad effect upon my health; my companions were induced by this circumstance to hasten the journey as much as possible; and accordingly we did not rest the following night, and the next day, about two, arrived in Paris.

In this city there are no hotels where you can reside as long or as short a time as you please, and we were obliged to engage apartments at an hotel for a week. They were dear, and not very pleasant. As usual, in France, the principal apartment was a bed-chamber; there was another closet with a bed, and an ante-chamber, which we used as a sitting-room.

The heat of the weather was excessive, so that we were unable to walk except in the afternoon. On the first evening we walked to the gardens of the Tuileries; they are formal and uninteresting, in the French fashion, the trees cut into shapes, and without any grass. I think the Boulevards infinitely more pleasant. This street nearly surrounds Paris, and is eight miles in extent; it is very wide, and planted on either side with trees. At one end is a superb cascade which refreshes the senses by its continual splashing: near this stands the gate of St. Denis, a beautiful piece of sculpture. I do not know how it may at present be disfigured by the Gothic barbarism of the conquerors of France, who were not contented with retaking the spoils of Napoleon, but, with impotent malice, destroyed the monuments of their own defeat. When I saw this gate, it was in its splendour, and made you imagine that the days of Roman greatness were transported to Paris.

After remaining a week in Paris, we received a small remittance that set us free from a kind of imprisonment there, which we found very irksome. But how should we proceed? After talking over and rejecting many plans, we fixed on one eccentric

enough, but which, from its romance, was very pleasing to us. In England we could not have put it in execution without sustaining continual insult and impertinence; the French are far more tolerant of the vagaries of their neighbours. We resolved to walk through France; but as I was too weak for any considerable distance, and as C—— could not be supposed to be able to walk as far as S—— each day, we determined to purchase an ass, to carry our portmanteau and one of us by turns.

Early, therefore, on Monday, August 8th, S—— and C—— went to the ass market, and purchased an ass, and the rest of the day, until four in the afternoon, was spent in preparations for our departure; during which, Madame l'hôtesse paid us a visit, and attempted to dissuade us from our design. She represented to us that a large army had been recently disbanded, that the soldiers and officers wandered idle about the country, and that *les dames seroient certainement enlevées*. But we were proof against her arguments, and packing up a few necessaries, leaving the rest to go by the diligence, we departed in a *fiacre* from the door of the hotel, our little ass following.

We dismissed the coach at the barrier. It was dusk, and the ass seemed totally unable to bear one of us, appearing to sink under the portmanteau, although it was small and light. We were, however, merry enough, and thought the leagues short. We arrived at Charenton about ten.

Charenton is prettily situated in a valley, through

which the Seine flows, winding among banks variegated with trees. On looking at this scene, C—— exclaimed, “Oh! this is beautiful enough; let us live here.” This was her exclamation on every new scene, and as each surpassed the one before, she cried, “I am glad we did not stay at Charenton, but let us live here.”

Finding our ass useless, we sold it before we proceeded on our journey, and bought a mule for ten napoleons. About nine o'clock we departed. We were clad in black silk. I rode on the mule, which carried also our portmanteau; S—— and C—— followed, bringing a small basket of provisions. At about one we arrived at Gros-Bois, where, under the shade of trees, we ate our bread and fruit, and drank our wine, thinking of Don Quixote and Sancho.

The country through which we passed was highly cultivated, but uninteresting; the horizon scarcely ever extended beyond the circumference of a few fields, bright and waving with the golden harvest. We met several travellers; but our mode, although novel, did not appear to excite any curiosity or remark. This night we slept at Guignes, in the same room and beds in which Napoleon and some of his generals had rested during the late war. The little old woman of the place was highly gratified in having this little story to tell, and spoke in warm praise of the Empress Josephine and Marie Louise, who had at different times passed on that road.

As we continued our route, Provins was the first place that struck us with interest. It was our stage

of rest for the night; we approached it at sunset. After having gained the summit of a hill, the prospect of the town opened upon us as it lay in the valley below; a rocky hill rose abruptly on one side, on the top of which stood a ruined citadel, with extensive walls and towers; lower down, but beyond, was the cathedral, and the whole formed a scene for painting. After having travelled for two days through a country perfectly without interest, it was a delicious relief for the eye to dwell again on some irregularities and beauty of country. Our fare at Provins was coarse, and our beds uncomfortable, but the remembrance of this prospect made us contented and happy.

We now approached scenes that reminded us of what we had nearly forgotten, that France had lately been the country in which great and extraordinary events had taken place. Nogent, a town we entered about noon the following day, had been entirely desolated by the Cossacs. Nothing could be more entire than the ruin which these barbarians had spread as they advanced; perhaps they remembered Moscow and the destruction of the Russian villages; but we were now in France, and the distress of the inhabitants, whose houses had been burned, their cattle killed, and all their wealth destroyed, has given a sting to my detestation of war, which none can feel who have not travelled through a country pillaged and wasted by this plague, which, in his pride, man inflicts upon his fellow.

We quitted the great route soon after we had left Nogent, to strike across the country to Troyes. About

six in the evening we arrived at St.-Aubin, a lovely village embosomed in trees; but, on a nearer view, we found the cottages roofless, the rafters black, and the walls dilapidated;—a few inhabitants remained. We asked for milk—they had none to give; all their cows had been taken by the Cossacs. We had still some leagues to travel that night, but we found that they were not post leagues, but the measurement of the inhabitants, and nearly double the distance. The road lay over a desert plain, and, as night advanced, we were often in danger of losing the track of wheels, which was our only guide. Night closed in, and we suddenly lost all trace of the road; but a few trees, indistinctly seen, seemed to indicate the position of a village. About ten we arrived at Trois-Maisons, where, after a supper on milk and sour bread, we retired to rest on wretched beds: but sleep is seldom denied, except to the indolent; and after the day's fatigue, although my bed was nothing more than a sheet spread upon straw, I slept soundly until the morning was considerably advanced.

S—— had hurt his ankle so considerably the preceding evening, that he was obliged, during the whole of the following day's journey, to ride on our mule. Nothing could be more barren and wretched than the tract through which we now passed; the ground was chalky and uncovered even by grass, and where there had been any attempts made towards cultivation, the straggling ears of corn discovered more plainly the barren nature of the soil. Thousands of insects which were of the same white colour as the road, infested our

path; the sky was cloudless, and the sun darted its rays upon us, reflected back by the earth, until I nearly fainted under the heat. A village appeared at a distance, cheering us with a prospect of rest. It gave us new strength to proceed; but it was a wretched place, and afforded us but little relief. It had been once large and populous, but now the houses were roofless, and the ruins that lay scattered about, the gardens covered with the white dust of the torn cottages, the black burnt beams, and squalid looks of the inhabitants, presented in every direction the melancholy aspect of devastation. One house, a *cabaret*, alone remained; we were here offered plenty of milk, stinking bacon, sour bread, and a few vegetables, which we were to dress for ourselves.

As we prepared our dinner in a place so filthy, that the sight of it alone was sufficient to destroy our appetite, the people of the village collected around us, squalid with dirt, their countenances expressing everything that is disgusting and brutal. They seemed, indeed, entirely detached from the rest of the world, and ignorant of all that was passing in it. There is much less communication between the various towns of France than in England. The use of passports may easily account for this: these people did not know that Napoleon was deposed; and when we asked why they did not rebuild their cottages, they replied, that they were afraid that the Cossacs would destroy them again upon their return. Echemine (the name of this village) is in every respect the most disgusting place I ever met with.

Two leagues beyond, on the same road, we came to the village of Pavillon,—so unlike Echemine, that we might have fancied ourselves in another quarter of the globe; here everything denoted cleanliness and hospitality; many of the cottages were destroyed, but the inhabitants were employed in repairing them. What could occasion so great a difference?

Still our road lay over this tract of uncultivated country, and our eyes were fatigued by observing nothing but a white expanse of ground, where no bramble or stunted shrub adorned its barrenness. Towards evening we reached a small plantation of vines: it appeared like one of those islands of verdure that are met with in the midst of the sands of Libya, but the grapes were not yet ripe. S—— was totally incapable of walking, and C—— and I were very tired before we arrived at Troyes.

We rested here for the night, and devoted the following day to a consideration of the manner in which we should proceed. S——'s sprain rendered our pedestrianism impossible. We accordingly sold our mule, and bought an open *voiture*, that went on four wheels, for five napoleons, and hired a man with a mule, for eight more, to convey us to Neufchâtel in six days.

The suburbs of Troyes were destroyed, and the town itself dirty and uninviting. I remained at the inn writing letters, while S—— and C—— arranged this bargain and visited the cathedral of the town; and the next morning we departed in our *voiture* for Neufchâtel. A curious instance of French vanity

occurred on leaving this town. Our *voiturier* pointed to the plain around, and mentioned, that it had been the scene of a battle between the Russians and the French. "In which the Russians gained the victory?"—"Ah, no, madame," replied the man, "the French are never beaten."—"But how was it then," we asked, "that the Russians had entered Troyes soon after?"—"Oh, after having been defeated, they took a circuitous route, and thus entered the town."

Vandevres is a pleasant town, at which we rested during the hours of noon. We walked in the grounds of a nobleman, laid out in the English taste, and terminated in a pretty wood; it was a scene that reminded us of our native country. As we left Vandevres the aspect of the country suddenly changed; abrupt hills, covered with vineyards, intermixed with trees, inclosed a narrow valley, the channel of the Aube. The view was interspersed by green meadows, groves of poplar and white willow, and spires of village churches, which the Cossacs had yet spared. Many villages, ruined by the war, occupied the most romantic spots.

In the evening we arrived at Bar-sur-Aube, a beautiful town, placed at the opening of the vale where the hills terminate abruptly. We climbed the highest of these, but scarce had we reached the top, when a mist descended upon everything, and the rain began to fall: we were wet through before we could reach our inn. It was evening, and the laden clouds made the darkness almost as deep as that of midnight; but in the west an unusually brilliant and fiery redness

occupied an opening in the vapours, and added to the interest of our little expedition: the cottage lights were reflected in the tranquil river, and the dark hills behind, dimly seen, resembled vast and frowning mountains.

As we quitted Bar-sur-Aube, we at the same time bade a short farewell to hills. Passing through the towns of Chaumont, Langres (which was situated on a hill, and surrounded by ancient fortifications) Champlitte, and Gray, we travelled for nearly three days through plains, where the country gently undulated, and relieved the eye from a perpetual flat, without exciting any peculiar interest. Gentle rivers, their banks ornamented by a few trees, stole through these plains, and a thousand beautiful summer insects skimmed over the streams. The third day was a day of rain, and the first that had taken place during our journey. We were soon wet through, and were glad to stop at a little inn to dry ourselves. The reception we received here was very unprepossessing, the people still kept their seats round the fire, and seemed very unwilling to make way for the dripping guests. In the afternoon, however, the weather became fine, and at about six in the evening we entered Besançon.

Hills had appeared in the distance during the whole day, and we had advanced gradually towards them, but were unprepared for the scene that broke upon us as we passed the gate of this city. On quitting the walls, the road wound underneath a high precipice; on the other side, the hills rose more gradually, and the green valley that intervened between them was watered by a

pleasant river; before us arose an amphitheatre of hills covered with vines, but irregular and rocky. The last gate of the town was cut through the precipitous rock that arose on one side, and in that place jutted into the road.

This approach to mountain scenery filled us with delight; it was otherwise with our *voiturier*: he came from the plains of Troyes, and these hills so utterly scared him, that he in some degree lost his reason. After winding through the valley, we began to ascend the mountains which were its boundary: we left our *voiture*, and walked on, delighted with every new view that broke upon us.

When we had ascended the hills for about a mile and a half, we found our *voiturier* at the door of a wretched inn, having taken the mule from the *voiture*, and obstinately determined to remain for the night at this miserable village of Mort. We could only submit, for he was deaf to all we could urge, and to our remonstrances only replied, *Je ne puis plus*.

Our beds were too uncomfortable to allow a thought of sleeping in them: we could only procure one room, and our hostess gave us to understand that our *voiturier* was to occupy the same apartment. It was of little consequence, as we had previously resolved not to enter the beds. The evening was fine, and after the rain the air was perfumed by many delicious scents. We climbed to a rocky seat on the hill that overlooked the village, where we remained until sunset. The night was passed by the kitchen fire in a wretched manner, striving to catch a few moments of sleep,

which were denied to us. At three in the morning we pursued our journey.

Our road led to the summit of the hills that environ Besançon. From the top of one of these we saw the whole expanse of the valley filled with a white undulating mist, which was pierced like islands by the piny mountains. The sun had just risen, and a ray of red light lay upon the waves of this fluctuating vapour. To the west, opposite the sun, it seemed driven by the light against the rocks in immense masses of foaming cloud, until it became lost in the distance, mixing its tints with the fleecy sky.

Our *voiturier* insisted on remaining two hours at the village of Noè, although we were unable to procure any dinner, and wished to go on to the next stage. I have already said, that the hills scared his senses, and he had become disobliging, sullen, and stupid. While he waited, we walked to the neighbouring wood: it was a fine forest, carpeted beautifully with moss, and in various places overhung by rocks, in whose crevices young pines had taken root, and spread their branches for shade to those below; the noon heat was intense, and we were glad to shelter ourselves from it in the shady retreats of this lovely forest.

On our return to the village, we found, to our extreme surprise, that the *voiturier* had departed nearly an hour before, leaving word that he expected to meet us on the road. S——'s sprain rendered him incapable of much exertion; but there was no remedy, and we proceeded on foot to Maison-Neuve, an *auberge*, four miles and a half distant.

At Maison-Neuve the man had left word that he should proceed to Pontarlier, the frontier town of France, six leagues distant, and that, if we did not arrive that night, he should the next morning leave the *voiture* at an inn, and return with the mule to Troyes. We were astonished at the impudence of this message, but the boy of the inn comforted us by saying, that by going on a horse by a cross-road, where the *voiture* could not venture, he could easily overtake and intercept the *voiturier*, and accordingly we despatched him, walking slowly after. We waited at the next inn for dinner, and in about two hours the boy returned. The man promised to wait for us at an *auberge* two leagues further on. S——'s ankle had become very painful, but we could procure no conveyance, and as the sun was nearly setting, we were obliged to hasten on. The evening was most beautiful, and the scenery lovely enough to beguile us of our fatigue: the horned moon hung in the light of sunset, that threw a glow of unusual depth of redness over the piny mountains and the dark deep valleys which they inclosed; at intervals in the woods were beautiful lawns interspersed with picturesque clumps of trees, and dark pines overshadowed our road.

In about two hours we arrived at the promised termination of our journey. We found, according to our expectation, that M. le Voiturier had pursued his journey with the utmost speed. We were enabled, however, to procure here a rude kind of cart, S—— being unable to walk. The moon became yellow, and hung low, close to the woody horizon. Every now and

then sleep overcame me, but our vehicle was too rude and rough to permit its indulgence. I looked on the stars—and the constellations seemed to weave a wild dance, as the visions of slumber invaded the domains of reality. In this manner we arrived late at Pontarlier, where we found our driver, who blundered out many falsehoods for excuses; and thus ended the adventures of that day.

SWITZERLAND.

ON passing the French barrier, a surprising difference may be observed between the opposite nations that inhabit either side. The Swiss cottages are much cleaner and neater, and the inhabitants exhibit the same contrast. The Swiss women wear a great deal of white linen, and their whole dress is always perfectly clean. This superior cleanliness is chiefly produced by the difference of religion: travellers in Germany remark the same contrast between the Protestant and Catholic towns, although they be but a few leagues separate.

The scenery of this day's journey was divine, exhibiting piny mountains, barren rocks, and spots of verdure surpassing imagination. After descending for nearly a league between lofty cliffs, covered with pines, and interspersed with green glades, where the grass is short, and soft, and beautifully verdant, we arrived at the village of St. Sulpice.

The mule had latterly become very lame, and the man so disobliging, that we determined to engage a

horse for the remainder of the way. Our *voiturier* had anticipated us; without, in the least, intimating his intention to us, he had determined to leave us at this village, and taken measures to that effect. The man we now engaged was a Swiss, a cottager of the better class, who was proud of his mountains and his country. Pointing to the glades that were interspersed among the woods, he informed us that they were very beautiful, and were excellent pasture; that the cows thrived there, and consequently produced excellent milk, from which the best cheese and butter in the world were made.

The mountains after St. Sulpice became loftier and more beautiful. We passed through a narrow valley between two ranges of mountains, clothed with forests, at the bottom of which flowed a river, from whose narrow bed on either side the boundaries of the vale arose precipitously. The road lay about half way up the mountain, which formed one of the sides, and we saw the overhanging rocks above us, and below, enormous pines, and the river, not to be perceived but from its reflection of the light of heaven, far beneath. The mountains of this beautiful ravine are so little asunder, that in time of war with France an iron chain is thrown across it. Two leagues from Neuchâtel we saw the Alps: range after range of black mountains are seen extending one before the other, and far behind all, towering above every feature of the scene, the snowy Alps. They were a hundred miles distant, but reach so high in the heavens that they look like those accumulated clouds of dazzling white that

arrange themselves on the horizon during summer. Their immensity staggers the imagination, and so far surpasses all conception, that it requires an effort of the understanding to believe that they indeed form a part of the earth.

From this point we descended to Neufchâtel, which is situated in a narrow plain, between the mountains and its immense lake, and presents no additional aspect of peculiar interest.

We remained the following day at this town, occupied in a consideration of the step it would now be advisable for us to take. The money we had brought with us from Paris was nearly exhausted, but we obtained about 38*l.*, in silver, upon discount, from one of the bankers of the city, and with this we resolved to journey towards the lake of Uri, and seek, in that romantic and interesting country, some cottage where we might dwell in peace and solitude. Such were our dreams, which we should probably have realised, had it not been for the deficiency of that indispensable article money, which obliged us to return to England.

A Swiss, whom S—— met at the post-office, kindly interested himself in our affairs, and assisted us to hire a *voiture* to convey us to Lucerne, the principal town of the lake of that name, which is connected with the lake of Uri. This man was imbued with the spirit of true politeness, and endeavoured to perform real services, and seemed to regard the mere ceremonies of the affair as things of very little value. On the 21st August, we left Neufchâtel; our Swiss friend accompanied us a little way out of the town. The journey

to Lucerne occupied rather more than two days. The country was flat and dull, and, excepting that we now and then caught a glimpse of the divine Alps, there was nothing in it to interest us. Lucerne promised better things, and as soon as we arrived (August 23rd) we hired a boat, with which we proposed to coast the lake until we should meet with some suitable habitation, or perhaps, even going to Altorf, cross Mont St. Gothard, and seek in the warm climate of the country to the south of the Alps an air more salubrious, and a temperature better fitted for the precarious state of S——'s health, than the bleak region to the north. The lake of Lucerne is encompassed on all sides by high mountains that rise abruptly from the water;—sometimes their bare fronts descend perpendicularly, and cast a black shade upon the waves;—sometimes they are covered with thick wood, whose dark foliage is interspersed by the brown bare crags on which the trees have taken root. In every part where a glade shows itself in the forest it appears cultivated, and cottages peep from among the woods. The most luxuriant islands, rocky, and covered with moss, and bending trees, are sprinkled over the lake. Most of these are decorated by the figure of a saint in wretched wax-work.

The direction of this lake extends at first from east to west, then turning a right angle, it lies from north to south; this latter part is distinguished in name from the other, and is called the lake of Uri. The former part is also nearly divided midway, where the jutting land almost meets, and its craggy sides cast a

deep shadow on the little strait through which you pass. The summits of several of the mountains that inclose the lake to the south are covered by eternal glaciers; of one of these, opposite Brunen, they tell the story of a priest and his mistress, who flying from persecution, inhabited a cottage at the foot of the snows. One winter night an avalanche overwhelmed them, but their plaintive voices are still heard in stormy nights, calling for succour from the peasants.

Brunen is situated on the northern side of the angle which the lake makes, forming the extremity of the lake of Lucerne. Here we rested for the night, and dismissed our boatmen. Nothing could be more magnificent than the view from this spot. The high mountains encompassed us, darkening the waters; at a distance on the shores of Uri, we could perceive the chapel of Tell, and this was the village where he matured the conspiracy which was to overthrow the tyrant of his country; and indeed, this lovely lake, these sublime mountains, and wild forests, seemed a fit cradle for a mind aspiring to high adventure and heroic deeds. Yet we saw no glimpse of his spirit in his present countrymen. The Swiss appeared to us then, and experience has confirmed our opinion, a people slow of comprehension and of action; but habit has made them unfit for slavery, and they would, I have little doubt, make a brave defence against any invader of their freedom.

Such were our reflections, and we remained until late in the evening on the shores of the lake, conversing, enjoying the rising breeze, and contemplating

with feelings of exquisite delight the divine objects that surrounded us.

The following day was spent in a consideration of our circumstances, and in contemplation of the scene around us. A furious *vent d'Italie* (south wind) tore up the lake, making immense waves, and carrying the water in a whirlwind high in the air, when it fell like heavy rain into the lake. The waves broke with a tremendous noise on the rocky shores. This conflict continued during the whole day, but it became calmer towards the evening. S—— and I walked on the banks, and sitting on a rude pier, S—— read aloud the account of the Siege of Jerusalem from Tacitus.

In the meantime we endeavoured to find a habitation, but could only procure two unfurnished rooms in an ugly big house, called the Château. These we hired at a guinea a month, had beds moved into them, and the next day took possession. But it was a wretched place, with no comfort or convenience. It was with difficulty that we could get any food prepared: as it was cold and rainy, we ordered a fire—they lighted an immense stove which occupied a corner of the room; it was long before it heated, and when hot, the warmth was so unwholesome, that we were obliged to throw open our windows to prevent a kind of suffocation; added to this, there was but one person in Brunen who could speak French, a barbarous kind of German being the language of this part of Switzerland. It was with difficulty, therefore, that we could get our most ordinary wants supplied. Our amusement meanwhile was writing. S—— com-

menced a romance on the subject of the Assassins, and I wrote to his dictation.

Our immediate inconveniences led us to a more serious consideration of our situation. At one time we proposed crossing Mont St. Gothard into Italy; but the 28*l.* which we possessed, was all the money that we could count upon with any certainty, until the following December. S——'s presence in London was absolutely necessary for the procuring any further supply. What were we to do? we should soon be reduced to absolute want. Thus, after balancing the various topics that offered themselves for discussion, we resolved to return to England.

Having formed this resolution, we had not a moment for delay: our little store was sensibly decreasing, and 28*l.* could hardly appear sufficient for so long a journey. It had cost us sixty to cross France from Paris to Neufchâtel; but we now resolved on a more economical mode of travelling. Water conveyances are always the cheapest, and fortunately we were so situated, that by taking advantage of the rivers of the Reuss and Rhine, we could reach England without travelling a league on land. This was our plan; we should travel eight hundred miles, and was this possible on so small a sum? but there was no other alternative, and indeed S—— only knew how very little we had to depend upon.

We departed the next morning for the town of Lucerne. It rained violently during the first part of our voyage, but towards its conclusion the sky became clear, and the sun-beams dried and cheered us. We

saw again, and for the last time, the rocky shores of this beautiful lake, its verdant isles, and snow-capt mountains.

We landed at Lucerne, and remained in that town the following night, and the next morning (August 28th) departed in the *diligence par eau* for Loffenberg, a town on the Rhine, where the falls of that river prevented the same vessel from proceeding any further. Our companions in this voyage were of the meanest class, smoked prodigiously, and were exceedingly disgusting. After having landed for refreshment in the middle of the day, we found, on our return to the boat, that our former seats were occupied; we took others, when the original possessors angrily, and almost with violence, insisted upon our leaving them. Their brutal rudeness to us, who did not understand their language, provoked S—— to knock one of the foremost down: he did not return the blow, but continued his vociferations until the boatmen interfered, and provided us with other seats.

The Reuss is exceedingly rapid, and we descended several falls, one of more than eight feet. Most of the passengers landed at this point, to re-embark when the boat had descended into smooth water—the boatmen advised us to remain on board. There is something very delicious in the sensation, when at one moment you are at the top of a fall of water, and before the second has expired you are at the bottom, still rushing on with the impulse which the descent has given. The waters of the Rhone are blue, those of the Reuss are of a deep green. I should think that

there must be something in the beds of these rivers, and that the accidents of the banks and sky cannot alone cause this difference.

Sleeping at Dettingen, we arrived the next morning at Loffenberg, where we engaged a small canoe to convey us to Mumph. I give these boats this Indian appellation, as they were of the rudest construction—long, narrow, and flat-bottomed: they consisted merely of straight pieces of deal board, unpainted, and nailed together with so little care, that the water constantly poured in at the crevices, and the boat perpetually required emptying. The river was rapid, and sped swiftly, breaking as it passed on innumerable rocks just covered by the water: it was a sight of some dread to see our frail boat winding among the eddies of the rocks, which it was death to touch, and when the slightest inclination on one side would instantly have overset it.

We could not procure a boat at Mumph, and we thought ourselves lucky in meeting with a return *cabriolet* to Rheinfelden; but our good fortune was of short duration: about a league from Mumph the *cabriolet* broke down, and we were obliged to proceed on foot. Fortunately we were overtaken by some Swiss soldiers, who were discharged and returning home; they carried our box for us as far as Rheinfelden, when we were directed to proceed a league farther to a village where boats were commonly hired. Here, although not without some difficulty, we procured a boat for Basle, and proceeded down a swift river, while evening came on, and the air was bleak and comfortless.

Our voyage was, however, short, and we arrived at the place of our destination by six in the evening.

GERMANY.

BEFORE we slept, S—— had made a bargain for a boat to carry us to Mayence, and the next morning, bidding adieu to Switzerland, we embarked in a boat laden with merchandise, but where we had no fellow-passengers to disturb our tranquillity by their vulgarity and rudeness. The wind was violently against us, but the stream, aided by a slight exertion from the rowers, carried us on; the sun shone pleasantly, S—— read aloud to us Mary Wollstonecraft's Letters from Norway, and we passed our time delightfully.

The evening was such as to find few parallels in beauty; as it approached, the banks, which had hitherto been flat and uninteresting, became exceedingly beautiful. Suddenly the river grew narrow, and the boat dashed with inconceivable rapidity round the base of a rocky hill covered with pines; a ruined tower, with its desolated windows, stood on the summit of another hill that jutted into the river; beyond, the sunset was illuminating the distant mountains and clouds, casting the reflection of its rich and purple hues on the agitated river. The brilliance and contrasts of the colours on the circling whirlpools of the stream, was an appearance entirely new and most beautiful; the shades grew darker as the sun descended below the horizon, and after we had landed, as we walked to our inn round a beautiful bay, the full moon arose with

divine splendour, casting its silver light on the before purpled waves.

The following morning we pursued our journey in a slight canoe, in which every motion was accompanied with danger; but the stream had lost much of its rapidity, and was no longer impeded by rocks; the banks were low, and covered with willows. We passed Strasburgh, and the next morning it was proposed to us that we should proceed in the *diligence par eau*, as the navigation would become dangerous for our small boat.

There were only four passengers besides ourselves; three of these were students of the Strasburgh university: Schwitz, a rather handsome, good-tempered young man; Hoff, a kind of shapeless animal, with a heavy, ugly, German face; and Schneider, who was nearly an idiot, and on whom his companions were always playing a thousand tricks: the remaining passengers were a woman and an infant.

The country was uninteresting, but we enjoyed fine weather, and slept in the boat in the open air without any inconvenience. We saw on the shores few objects that called forth our attention, if I except the town of Mannheim, which was strikingly neat and clean. It was situated at about a mile from the river, and the road to it was planted on each side with beautiful acacias. The last part of this voyage was performed close under land, as the wind was so violently against us, that, even with all the force of a rapid current in our favour, we were hardly permitted to proceed. We were told (and not without reason) that we ought

to congratulate ourselves on having exchanged our canoe for this boat, as the river was now of considerable width, and tossed by the wind into large waves. The same morning a boat, containing fifteen persons, in attempting to cross the water, had upset in the middle of the river, and every one in it perished. We saw the boat turned over, floating down the stream. This was a melancholy sight, yet ludicrously commented on by the *batelier*; almost the whole stock of whose French consisted in the word *seulement*. When we asked him what had happened, he answered, laying particular emphasis on this favourite dissyllable, *C'est seulement un bateau, qui était seulement renversé, et tous les peuples sont seulement noyés.*

Mayence is one of the best fortified towns in Germany. The river, which is broad and rapid, guards it to the east, and the hills for three leagues around exhibit signs of fortifications. The town itself is old, the streets narrow, and the houses high: the cathedral and towers of the town still bear marks of the bombardment which took place in the revolutionary war.

We took our place in the *diligence par eau* for Cologne, and the next morning (September 4th) departed. This conveyance appeared much more like a mercantile English affair than any we had before seen; it was shaped like a steam-boat, with a cabin and a high deck. Most of our companions chose to remain in the cabin; this was fortunate for us, since nothing could be more horribly disgusting than the lower order of smoking, drinking Germans who travelled

with us; they swaggered and talked, and got tipsy, and, what was hideous to English eyes, kissed one another; there were, however, two or three merchants of a better class, who appeared well-informed and polite.

The part of the Rhine, down which we now glided, is that so beautifully described by Lord Byron in his third canto of *Childe Harold*. We read these verses with delight, as they conjured before us these lovely scenes with truth and vividness of painting, and with the exquisite addition of glowing language and a warm imagination. We were carried down by a dangerously rapid current, and saw on either side of us hills covered with vines and trees, craggy cliffs crowned by desolate towers, and wooded islands, where picturesque ruins peeped from behind the foliage, and cast the shadows of their forms on the troubled waters, which distorted without deforming them. We heard the songs of the vintagers, and if surrounded by disgusting Germans, the sight was not so replete with enjoyment as I now fancy it to have been; yet memory, taking all the dark shades from the picture, presents this part of the Rhine to my remembrance as the loveliest paradise on earth.

We had sufficient leisure for the enjoyment of these scenes, for the boatmen, neither rowing nor steering, suffered us to be carried down by the stream, and the boat turned round and round as it descended.

While I speak with disgust of the Germans who travelled with us, I should, in justice to these borderers, record, that at one of the inns here we saw

the only pretty woman we met with in the course of our travels. She is what I should conceive to be a truly German beauty; grey eyes, slightly tinged with brown, and expressive of uncommon sweetness and frankness. She had lately recovered from a fever, and this added to the interest of her countenance, by adorning it with an appearance of extreme delicacy.

On the following day we left the hills of the Rhine, and found that, for the remainder of our journey, we should move sluggishly through the flats of Holland: the river also winds extremely, so that, after calculating our resources, we resolved to finish our journey in a land diligence. Our water conveyance remained that night at Bonn, and that we might lose no time, we proceeded post the same night to Cologne, where we arrived late; for the rate of travelling in Germany seldom exceeds a mile and a half an hour.

Cologne appeared an immense town, as we drove through street after street to arrive at our inn. Before we slept, we secured places in the diligence, which was to depart next morning for Clèves.

Nothing in the world can be more wretched than the travelling in this German diligence: the coach is clumsy and comfortless, and we proceeded so slowly, stopping so often, that it appeared as if we should never arrive at our journey's end. We were allowed two hours for dinner, and two more were wasted in the evening while the coach was being changed. We were then requested, as the diligence had a greater demand for places than it could supply, to proceed in a *cabriolet* which was provided for us. We readily

consented, as we hoped to travel faster than in the heavy diligence; but this was not permitted, and we jogged on all night behind this cumbrous machine. In the morning when we stopped, we for a moment indulged a hope that we had arrived at Clèves, which was at the distance of five leagues from our last night's stage; but we had only advanced three leagues in seven or eight hours, and had yet eight miles to perform. However, we first rested about three hours at this stage, where we could not obtain breakfast or any convenience, and at about eight o'clock we again departed, and with slow, although far from easy travelling, faint with hunger and fatigue, we arrived by noon at Clèves.

HOLLAND.

TIRED by the slow pace of the diligence, we resolved to post the remainder of the way. We had now, however, left Germany, and travelled at about the same rate as an English post-chaise. The country was entirely flat, and the roads so sandy, that the horses proceeded with difficulty. The only ornaments of this country are the turf fortifications that surround the towns. At Nimeguen we passed the flying-bridge, mentioned in the letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montague. We had intended to travel all night, but at Triel, where we arrived at about ten o'clock, we were assured that no post-boy was to be found who would proceed at so late an hour, on account of the robbers who infested the roads. This was an obvious

imposition; but as we could procure neither horses nor driver, we were obliged to sleep here.

During the whole of the following day the road lay between canals, which intersect this country in every direction. The roads were excellent, but the Dutch have contrived as many inconveniences as possible. In our journey of the day before, we had passed by a windmill, which was so situated with regard to the road, that it was only by keeping close to the opposite side, and passing quickly, that we could avoid the sweep of its sails.

The roads between the canals were only wide enough to admit of one carriage, so that when we encountered another we were obliged sometimes to back for half a mile, until we should come to one of the drawbridges which led to the fields, on which one of the *cabriolets* was backed, while the other passed. But they have another practice, which is still more annoying: the flax when cut is put to soak under the mud of the canals, and then placed to dry against the trees which are planted on either side of the road; the stench that it exhales, when the beams of the sun draw out the moisture, is scarcely endurable. We saw many enormous frogs and toads in the canals; and the only sight which refreshed the eye by its beauty was the delicious verdure of the fields, where the grass was as rich and green as that of England, an appearance not common on the Continent.

Rotterdam is remarkably clean: the Dutch even wash the outside brickwork of their houses. We remained here one day, and met with a man in a very

unfortunate condition : he had been born in Holland, and had spent so much of his life between England, France, and Germany, that he had acquired a slight knowledge of the language of each country, and spoke all very imperfectly. He said that he understood English best, but he was nearly unable to express himself in that.

On the evening of the 8th of September we sailed from Rotterdam, but contrary winds obliged us to remain nearly two days at Marsluys, a town about two leagues from Rotterdam. Here our last guinea was expended, and we reflected with wonder that we had travelled eight hundred miles for less than thirty pounds, passing through lovely scenes, and enjoying the beauteous Rhine, and all the brilliant shows of earth and sky, perhaps more, travelling as we did, in an open boat, than if we had been shut up in a carriage, and passed on the road under the hills. During our stay at Marsluys, S—— continued his Romance.

The captain of our vessel was an Englishman, and had been a king's pilot. The bar of the Rhine a little below Marsluys is so dangerous, that without a very favourable breeze, none of the Dutch vessels dare attempt its passage ; but although the wind was a very few points in our favour, our captain resolved to sail, and although half repentant before he had accomplished his undertaking, he was glad and proud when, triumphing over the timorous Dutchmen, the bar was crossed, and the vessel safe in the open sea. It was in truth an enterprise of some peril ; a heavy gale had

prevailed during the night, and although it had abated since the morning, the breakers at the bar were still exceedingly high. Through some delay, which had arisen from the ship having got aground in the harbour, we arrived half an hour after the appointed time. The breakers were tremendous, and we were informed that there was the space of only two feet between the bottom of the vessel and the sands. The waves, which broke against the sides of the ship with a terrible shock, were quite perpendicular, and even sometimes overhanging in the abrupt smoothness of their sides. Shoals of enormous porpoises were sporting with the utmost composure amidst the troubled waters.

We safely passed this danger, and after a navigation unexpectedly short, arrived at Gravesend on the morning of the 13th of September, the third day after our departure from Marsluys.

M. S.

LETTERS,

WRITTEN DURING A RESIDENCE OF THREE MONTHS IN THE ENVIRONS
OF GENEVA, IN THE SUMMER OF THE YEAR 1816.

LETTER I.

Hôtel de Sécheron, Geneva, May 17, 1816.

WE arrived at Paris on the 8th of this month, and were detained two days for the purpose of obtaining the various signatures necessary to our passports, the French government having become much more circumspect since the escape of Lavalette. We had no letters of introduction, or any friend in that city, and were therefore confined to our hotel, where we were obliged to hire apartments for the week, although when we first arrived, we expected to be detained one night only; for in Paris there are no houses where you can be accommodated with apartments by the day.

The manners of the French are interesting, although less attractive, at least to Englishmen, than before the last invasion of the Allies: the discontent and sullenness of their minds perpetually betrays itself. Nor is it wonderful that they should regard the subjects of a government which fills their country with hostile

garrisons, and sustains a detested dynasty on the throne, with an acrimony and indignation of which that government alone is the proper object. This feeling is honourable to the French, and encouraging to all those of every nation in Europe who have a fellow feeling with the oppressed, and who cherish an unconquerable hope that the cause of liberty must at length prevail.

Our route after Paris, as far as Troyes, lay through the same uninteresting tract of country which we had traversed on foot nearly two years before; but on quitting Troyes we left the road leading to Neufchâtel, to follow that which was to conduct us to Geneva. We entered Dijon on the third evening after our departure from Paris, and passing through Dôle, arrived at Poligny. This town is built at the foot of Jura, which rises abruptly from a plain of vast extent. The rocks of the mountain overhang the houses. Some difficulty in procuring horses detained us here until the evening closed in, when we proceeded, by the light of a stormy moon, to Champagnolles, a little village situated in the depth of the mountains. The road was serpentine and exceedingly steep, and was overhung on one side by half-distinguished precipices, whilst the other was a gulf, filled by the darkness of the driving clouds. The dashing of the invisible streams announced to us that we had quitted the plains of France, as we slowly ascended, amidst a violent storm of wind and rain, to Champagnolles, where we arrived at twelve o'clock, the fourth night after our departure from Paris.

The next morning we proceeded, still ascending

among the ravines and valleys of the mountain. The scenery perpetually grows more wonderful and sublime : pine forests of impenetrable thickness and untrodden, nay, inaccessible expanse, spread on every side. Sometimes the dark woods descending, follow the route into the valleys, the distorted trees struggling with knotted roots between the most barren clefts ; sometimes the road winds high into the regions of frost, and then the forests become scattered, and the branches of the trees are loaded with snow, and half of the enormous pines themselves buried in the wavy drifts. The spring, as the inhabitants informed us, was unusually late, and indeed the cold was excessive ; as we ascended the mountains, the same clouds which rained on us in the valleys poured forth large flakes of snow thick and fast. The sun occasionally shone through these showers, and illuminated the magnificent ravines of the mountains, whose gigantic pines were some laden with snow, some wreathed round by the lines of scattered and lingering vapour ; others darting their spires into the sunny sky, brilliantly clear and azure.

As the evening advanced, and we ascended higher, the snow which we had beheld whitening the overhanging rocks, now encroached upon our road, and it snowed fast as we entered the village of Les Rousses, where we were threatened by the apparent necessity of passing the night in a bad inn and dirty beds. For, from that place there are two roads to Geneva ; one by Nion, in the Swiss territory, where the mountain route is shorter, and comparatively easy at that time of the year, when the road is for several leagues covered

with snow of an enormous depth; the other road lay through Gex, and was too circuitous and dangerous to be attempted at so late an hour in the day. Our passport, however, was for Gex, and we were told that we could not change its destination; but all these police laws, so severe in themselves, are to be softened by bribery, and this difficulty was at length overcome. We hired four horses, and ten men to support the carriage, and departed from Les Rousses at six in the evening, when the sun had already far descended, and the snow, pelting against the windows of our carriage, assisted the coming darkness to deprive us of the view of the lake of Geneva and the far-distant Alps.

The prospect around, however, was sufficiently sublime to command our attention—never was scene more awfully desolate. The trees in these regions are incredibly large, and stand in scattered clumps over the white wilderness; the vast expanse of snow was chequered only by these gigantic pines, and the poles that marked our road: no river nor rock-encircled lawn relieved the eye, by adding the picturesque to the sublime. The natural silence of that uninhabited desert contrasted strangely with the voices of the men who conducted us, who, with animated tones and gestures, called to one another in a *patois* composed of French and Italian, creating disturbance, where, but for them, there was none.

To what a different scene are we now arrived! To the warm sunshine, and to the humming of sun-loving insects. From the windows of our hotel we see the lovely lake, blue as the heavens which it reflects, and

sparkling with golden beams. The opposite shore is sloping, and covered with vines, which, however, do not so early in the season add to the beauty of the prospect. Gentlemen's seats are scattered over these banks, behind which rise the various ridges of black mountains, and towering far above, in the midst of its snowy Alps, the majestic Mont Blanc, highest and queen of all. Such is the view reflected by the lake; it is a bright summer scene without any of that sacred solitude and deep seclusion that delighted us at Lucerne.

We have not yet found out any very agreeable walks, but you know our attachment to water excursions. We have hired a boat, and every evening, at about six o'clock, we sail on the lake; which is delightful, whether we glide over a glassy surface or are speeded along by a strong wind. The waves of this lake never afflict me with that sickness that deprives me of all enjoyment in a sea voyage; on the contrary, the tossing of our boat raises my spirits and inspires me with unusual hilarity. Twilight here is of short duration, but we at present enjoy the benefit of an increasing moon, and seldom return until ten o'clock, when, as we approach the shore, we are saluted by the delightful scent of flowers and new-mown grass, and the chirp of the grasshoppers, and the song of the evening birds.

We do not enter into society here, yet our time passes swiftly and delightfully. We read Latin and Italian during the heats of noon, and when the sun declines we walk in the garden of the hotel, looking

at the rabbits, relieving fallen cockchaffers, and watching the motions of a myriad of lizards, who inhabit a southern wall of the garden. You know that we have just escaped from the gloom of winter and of London; and coming to this delightful spot during this divine weather, I feel as happy as a new-fledged bird, and hardly care what twig I fly to, so that I may try my new-found wings. A more experienced bird may be more difficult in its choice of a bower; but, in my present temper of mind, the budding flowers, the fresh grass of spring, and the happy creatures about me that live and enjoy these pleasures, are quite enough to afford me exquisite delight, even though clouds should shut out Mont Blanc from my sight. Adieu!

M. S.

LETTER II.

COLIGNY—GENEVA—PLAINPALAIS.

Campagne Chapuis, near Coligny, 1st June.

You will perceive from my date that we have changed our residence since my last letter. We now inhabit a little cottage on the opposite shore of the lake, and have exchanged the view of Mont Blanc and her snowy *aiguilles* for the dark frowning Jura, behind whose range we every evening see the sun sink, and darkness approaches our valley from behind the Alps, which are then tinged by that glowing rose-like hue which is observed in England to attend on the clouds of an autumnal sky when daylight is almost gone.

The lake is at our feet, and a little harbour contains our boat, in which we still enjoy our evening excursions on the water. Unfortunately we do not now enjoy those brilliant skies that hailed us on our first arrival to this country. An almost perpetual rain confines us principally to the house; but when the sun bursts forth it is with a splendour and heat unknown in England. The thunder storms that visit us are grander and more terrific than I have ever seen before. We watch them as they approach from the opposite side of the lake, observing the lightning play among the clouds in various parts of the heavens, and dart in jagged figures upon the piny heights of Jura, dark with the shadow of the overhanging cloud, while perhaps the sun is shining cheerily upon us. One night we *enjoyed* a finer storm than I had ever before beheld. The lake was lit up—the pines on Jura made visible, and all the scene illuminated for an instant, when a pitchy blackness succeeded, and the thunder came in frightful bursts over our heads, amid the darkness.

But while I still dwell on the country around Geneva, you will expect me to say something of the town itself: there is nothing, however, in it that can repay you for the trouble of walking over its rough stones. The houses are high, the streets narrow, many of them on the ascent, and no public building of any beauty to attract your eye, or any architecture to gratify your taste. The town is surrounded by a wall, the three gates of which are shut exactly at ten o'clock, when no bribery (as in France) can open

them. To the south of the town is the promenade of the Genevese, a grassy plain planted with a few trees, and called Plainpalais. Here a small obelisk is erected to the glory of Rousseau, and here (such is the mutability of human life) the magistrates, the successors of those who exiled him from his native country, were shot by the populace, during that revolution which his writings mainly contributed to mature, and which, notwithstanding the temporary bloodshed and injustice with which it was polluted, has produced enduring benefits to mankind, which all the chicanery of statesmen, nor even the great conspiracy of kings, can entirely render vain. From respect to the memory of their predecessors, none of the present magistrates ever walk in Plainpalais. Another Sunday recreation for the citizens is an excursion to the top of Mont Salève. This hill is within a league of the town, and rises perpendicularly from the cultivated plain. It is ascended on the other side, and I should judge from its situation that your toil is rewarded by a delightful view of the course of the Rhone and Arve, and of the shores of the lake. We have not yet visited it.

There is more equality of classes here than in England. This occasions a greater freedom and refinement of manners among the lower orders than we meet with in our own country. I fancy the haughty English ladies are greatly disgusted with this consequence of republican institutions, for the Genevese servants complain very much of their *scolding*, an exercise of the tongue, I believe, perfectly

unknown here. The peasants of Switzerland may not however emulate the vivacity and grace of the French. They are more cleanly, but they are slow and inapt. I know a girl of twenty who, although she had lived all her life among vineyards, could not inform me during what month the vintage took place, and I discovered she was utterly ignorant of the order in which the months succeed one to another. She would not have been surprised if I had talked of the burning sun and delicious fruits of December, or of the frosts of July. Yet she is by no means deficient in understanding.

The Genevese are also much inclined to puritanism. It is true that from habit they dance on a Sunday, but as soon as the French government was abolished in the town, the magistrates ordered the theatre to be closed, and measures were taken to pull down the building.

We have latterly enjoyed fine weather, and nothing is more pleasant than to listen to the evening song of the vine-dressers. They are all women, and most of them have harmonious although masculine voices. The theme of their ballads consists of shepherds, love, flocks, and the sons of kings who fall in love with beautiful shepherdesses. Their tunes are monotonous, but it is sweet to hear them in the stillness of evening, while we are enjoying the sight of the setting sun, either from the hill behind our house or from the lake.

Such are our pleasures here, which would be greatly increased if the season had been more favourable, for

they chiefly consist in such enjoyments as sunshine and gentle breezes bestow. We have not yet made any excursion in the environs of the town, but we have planned several, when you shall hear again of us; and we will endeavour, by the magic of words, to transport the ethereal part of you to the neighbourhood of the Alps, and mountain streams, and forests, which, while they clothe the former, darken the latter with their vast shadows. Adieu! M. S.

LETTER III.

To T. P., Esq.

MEILLERIE—CLARENS—CHILLON—VEVAI—LAUSANNE.

Montalegre, near Coligni, Geneva, July 12th.

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 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 ninepins. 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 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 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 over head,

and continued after the cloud had dispersed, “*Diespiter per pura tonantes egit equos:*” a phenomenon which certainly had no influence on me, corresponding with that which it produced on Horace.

The appearance of the inhabitants of Evian is more wretched, diseased and poor, than I ever recollect to have seen. The contrast indeed between the subjects of the King of Sardinia and the citizens of the independent republics of Switzerland, affords a powerful illustration of the blighting mischiefs of despotism, within the space of a few miles. They have mineral waters here, *eaux savonneuses*, they call them. In the evening we had some difficulty about our passports, but so soon as the syndic heard my companion’s rank and name, he apologised for the circumstance. The inn was good. During our voyage, on the distant height of a hill, covered with pine-forests, we saw a ruined castle, which reminded me of those on the Rhine.

We left Evian on the following morning, with a wind of such violence as to permit but one sail to be carried. The waves also were exceedingly high, and our boat so heavily laden, that there appeared to be some danger. We arrived, however, safe at Meillerie, after passing with great speed mighty forests which overhung the lake, and lawns of exquisite verdure, and mountains with bare and icy points, which rose immediately from the summit of the rocks, whose bases were echoing to the waves.

We here heard that the Empress Maria Louisa had slept at Meillerie,—before the present inn was built, and when the accommodations were those of the most

wretched village,—in remembrance of St. Preux. How beautiful it is to find that the common sentiments of human nature can attach themselves to those who are the most removed from its duties and its enjoyments, when Genius pleads for their admission at the gate of Power. To own them was becoming in the Empress, and confirms the affectionate praise contained in the regret of a great and enlightened 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. Meillerie is the well-known scene of St. Preux's visionary exile; but Meillerie is indeed enchanted ground, were Rousseau no magician. Groves of pine, 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 Meillerie, sailing close to the banks, whose magnificence

augmented with the turn of every promontory. But we congratulated ourselves too soon: the wind gradually increased in violence, until it blew tremendously; and, as it came from the remotest extremity of the lake, produced waves of a frightful height, and covered the whole surface with a chaos of foam. One of our boatmen, who was a dreadfully stupid fellow, persisted in holding the sail at a time when the boat was on the point of being driven under water by the hurricane. On discovering his error, he let it entirely go, and the boat for a moment refused to obey the helm; in addition, the rudder was so broken as to render the management of it very difficult; one wave fell in, and then another. My companion, an excellent swimmer, took off his coat, I did the same, and we sat with our arms crossed, every instant expecting to be swamped. The sail was, however, again held, the boat obeyed the helm, and still in imminent peril from the immensity of the waves, we arrived in a few minutes at a sheltered port, in the village of St. Gingoux.

I felt in this near prospect of death a mixture of sensations, among which terror entered, though but subordinately. My feelings would have been less painful had I been alone; but I knew that my companion would have attempted to save me, and I was overcome with humiliation, when I thought that his life might have been risked to preserve mine. When we arrived at St. Gingoux, the inhabitants, who stood on the shore, unaccustomed to see a vessel as frail as ours, and fearing to venture at all on such a sea,

exchanged looks of wonder and congratulation with our boatmen, who, as well as ourselves, were well pleased to set foot on shore.

St. Gingoux is even more beautiful than Meillerie ; the mountains are higher, and their loftiest points of elevation descend more abruptly to the lake. On high, the aerial summits still cherish great depths of snow in their ravines, and in the paths of their unseen torrents. One of the highest of these is called Roche de St. Julien, beneath whose pinnacles the forests 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 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 perpendicular and caverned rocks. I gathered in these meadows a nosegay of such flowers as I never saw in England, and which I thought more beautiful for that rarity.

On my return, after breakfast, we sailed for Clarens, determining first to see the three mouths of the Rhone, and then the Castle of Chillon; the day was fine, and the water calm. We passed from the blue waters of the lake over the stream of the Rhone, which is rapid even at a great distance from its confluence with

the lake ; the turbid waters mixed with those of the lake, but mixed with them unwillingly. (See *Nouvelle Héloïse, Lettre 17, Part 4.*) I read Julie all day ; an overflowing, as it now seems, surrounded by the scenes which it has so wonderfully peopled, of sublimest genius, and more than human sensibility. Meillerie, the Castle of Chillon, Clarens, the mountains of La Valais and Savoy, present themselves 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 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 "perniciis 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 terraced road, looking towards these mountains which I now behold; nay, treading on the ground where I now tread. From the window of our lodging our landlady pointed out "le bosquet de Julie." At least the inhabitants of this village are impressed with an idea, that the persons of that romance 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 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 Julie'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.

We sailed from Clarens to Vevai. Vevai is a town more beautiful in its simplicity than any I have ever seen. Its market-place, a spacious square interspersed with trees, looks directly upon the mountains of Savoy and La Valais, the lake, and the valley of the Rhone. It was at Vevai that Rousseau conceived the design of Julie.

From Vevai we came to Ouchy, a village near Lausanne. The coasts of the Pays de Vaud, though full of villages and vineyards, present an aspect of tranquillity and peculiar beauty which well compensates for the solitude which I am accustomed to admire. The hills are very high and rocky, crowned and interspersed with woods. Waterfalls echo from the cliffs, and shine afar. In one place we saw the traces of two rocks of immense size, which had fallen from the mountain behind. One of these lodged in a room where a young woman was sleeping, without injuring her. The vineyards were utterly destroyed in its path, and the earth torn up.

The rain detained us two days at Ouchy. We,

however, visited Lausanne, and saw Gibbon's house. We were shown the decayed summer-house where he finished his History, and the old acacias on the terrace, from which he saw Mont Blanc, after having written the last sentence. There is something grand and even touching in the regret which he expresses at the completion of his task. It was conceived amid the ruins of the Capitol. The sudden departure of his cherished and accustomed toil must have left him, like the death of a dear friend, sad and solitary.

My companion gathered some acacia leaves to preserve in remembrance of him. I refrained from doing so, fearing to outrage the greater and more sacred name of Rousseau; the contemplation of whose imperishable creations had left no vacancy in my heart for mortal things. Gibbon had a cold and unimpassioned spirit. I never felt more inclination to rail at the prejudices which cling to such a thing, than now that Julie and Clarens, Lausanne and the Roman Empire, compelled me to 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 Meillerie, shone through the yellow fire.

On Saturday the 30th of June we quitted Ouchy, and after two days of pleasant sailing arrived on Sunday evening at Montalegre.

LETTER IV.

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, 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 Salève 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 swollen 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 Meillerie 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 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. 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, 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, 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 in the sound, that told us it could not be thunder. Our guide hastily pointed out to us a part of the mountain opposite, from whence the sound came. It was an avalanche. We saw the smoke of its path among the rocks, and continued to hear at intervals the bursting of its fall. It fell on the bed of a torrent, which it displaced, and presently we saw its tawny-

coloured waters also spread themselves over the ravine, which was their couch.

We did not, as we intended, visit the *Glacier des Bossons* to-day, although it descends within a few minutes' walk of the road, wishing to survey it at least when unfatigued. We saw this glacier, which comes close to the fertile plain, as we passed. Its surface was broken into a thousand unaccountable figures: conical and pyramidal crystallisations, more than fifty feet in height, rise from its surface, and precipices of ice, of dazzling splendour, overhang the woods and meadows of the vale. This glacier winds upwards from the valley, until it joins the masses of frost from which it was produced above, winding through its own ravine like a bright belt flung over the black region of pines. There is more in all these scenes than mere magnitude of proportion: there is a majesty of outline; there is an awful grace in the very colours which invest these wonderful shapes—a charm which is peculiar to them, quite distinct even from the reality of their unutterable greatness.

July 24.

Yesterday morning we went to the source of the 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 forest 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 water-falls, whose ravines they usurped and filled.

In the evening, I went with Ducrée, my guide, the only tolerable person I have seen in this country, to visit the glacier of Bossons. This glacier, like that of Montanvert, comes close to the vale, overhanging the green meadows and the dark woods with the dazzling whiteness of its precipices and pinnacles, which are like spires of radiant crystal, covered with a 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 hardest plant refuses to grow; if even, as in some extraordinary instances, it should recede after its progress has once commenced. The glaciers perpetually move onward, at the rate of a foot each day, with a motion that commences at the spot where, on the boundaries of perpetual congelation, they are produced by the freezing of the waters which arise

from the partial melting of the eternal snows. They drag with them from the regions whence they derive their origin, all the ruins of the 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 Bossons, presents the most vivid image of desolation that it is possible to conceive. No one dares to approach it; for the enormous pinnacles of ice which perpetually fall, are perpetually reproduced. The pines of the forest, which bound it at one extremity, are overthrown and shattered, to a wide extent, at its base. There is something inexpressibly dreadful in the aspect of the few branchless trunks, which, nearest to the ice rifts, still stand in the uprooted soil. The meadows perish, overwhelmed with sand and stones. Within this last year, these glaciers have advanced three hundred feet into the valley. Saussure, the naturalist, says, that they have their periods of increase and decay: the people of the country hold an opinion entirely different; but as I judge, more probable. It is agreed by all, that the snow on the summit of Mont Blanc and the neighbouring mountains perpetually augments, and that ice, in the form of glaciers, subsists without melting in the valley of Chamouni during its transient and variable summer. If the snow

which produces this glacier must augment, and the heat of the valley is no obstacle to the perpetual existence of such masses of ice as have already descended into it, the consequence is obvious; the glaciers must augment and will subsist, at least until they have overflowed this vale.

I will not pursue Buffon's sublime but gloomy theory—that this globe which we inhabit will, at some future period, be changed into a mass of frost by the encroachments of the polar ice, and of that produced on the most elevated points of the earth. Do you, who assert the supremacy of Ahriman, imagine him throned among these desolating snows, among these palaces of death and frost, so sculptured in this their terrible magnificence by the adamantine hand of necessity, and that he casts around him, as the first essays of his final usurpation, avalanches, torrents, rocks, and thunders, and above all these deadly glaciers, at once the proof and symbols of his reign;—add to this, the degradation of the human species—who, in these regions, are half deformed or idiotic, and most of whom are deprived of anything that can excite interest or admiration. This is 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 of 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 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 twelve or fifteen feet from the surface of the mass, which is intersected by long gaps of unfathomable depth, the ice of whose sides is more beautifully azure than the 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, 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 sunlight intervened between the showers, and the blue sky shone between the accumulated clouds of snowy whiteness which brought them; the dazzling mountains sometimes glittered through a chasm of the clouds above our heads, and all the charm of its grandeur remained. We repassed *Pont Pellisier*, a wooden bridge over the Arve, and the ravine of the Arve. We repassed the pine forests which overhang the defile, the château of St. Michael; a haunted ruin, built on the edge of a precipice, and shadowed over by the eternal forest. We repassed the vale of Servoz, a vale more beautiful, because more luxuriant, than that of Chamouni. Mont Blanc forms one of the sides of this vale also, and the other is inclosed by an irregular amphitheatre of enormous mountains, one of which is in ruins, and fell fifty years ago into the higher part of the valley: the smoke of its fall was seen in Piedmont, and people went from Turin to investigate whether a volcano had not burst 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 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 colonise in my garden in England, and to permit you to make what choice you please from them. They are companions which the Celandine—the classic Celandine, need not despise; they are as wild and more daring than he, and will tell him tales of things even as touching and sublime as the gaze of a vernal poet.

Did I tell you that there are troops of wolves among these mountains? In the winter they descend into the valleys, which the snow occupies six months of the year, and devour everything that they can find out of doors. A wolf is more powerful than the fiercest and strongest dog. There are no bears in these regions. We heard, when we were at Lucerne, that they were occasionally found in the forests which surround that lake. Adieu. S.

JOURNAL.

Geneva, Sunday, 18th August, 1816.

SEE Apollo's Sexton,* 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 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

* Mr. G. 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.—*M. S.*

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 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 LYTTLETON and a number of his friends were joined during the chase by a stranger. He was excellently mounted, and displayed such courage, or, 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 in 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 Lyttleton, was sitting one night alone when Lord Lyttleton 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 Lyttleton had arrived. The servant said he did not know that he had arrived, but that he would enquire. On inquiry it was found that Lord Lyttleton had not arrived, nor had the door been opened to any one during the whole night. Andrews sent to Lord Lyttleton, 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 sate 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 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 Dôle, after a various day.

Saturday, 31st.—From Dôle we go to Rouvray, where we sleep. We pass through Dijon; and, after Dijon, take a different route than that which we followed on the two other occasions. The scenery has some beauty and singularity in the line of the moun-

tains which surround the Val de Suzon. Low, yet precipitous hills, covered with vines or woods, and with streams, meadows, and poplars, at the bottom.

Sunday, September 1st.—Leave Rouvray, pass Auxerre, where we dine; a pretty town, and arrive, at two o'clock, at Villeneuve le Guiard.

Monday, 2nd.—From Villeneuve le Guiard, we arrive at Fontainebleau. The scenery around this palace is wild and even savage. The soil is full of rocks, apparently granite, which, on every side, break through the ground. The hills are low, but precipitous and rough. The valleys, equally wild, are shaded by forests. In the midst of this wilderness stands the palace. Some of the apartments equal in magnificence anything that I could conceive. The roofs are fretted with gold, and the canopies of velvet. From Fontainebleau we proceed to Versailles, in the route towards Rouen. We arrive at Versailles at nine.

Tuesday, 3rd.—We saw the palace and gardens of Versailles and le Grand et Petit Trianon. They surpass Fontainebleau. The gardens are full of statues, vases, fountains, and colonnades. In all that essentially belongs to a garden they are extraordinarily deficient. 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'Opéra, where are now preserved the portraits of the kings. There was the race of the house of Orleans, with the exception of Egalité, all extremely handsome. There was Madame de Maintenon, and beside her a beautiful little girl, the daughter of La Vallière. The pictures had been hidden during the Revolution. We saw the Library of Louis XVI. The librarian had held some place in the ancient court near Marie-Antoinette. He returned

with the Bourbons, and was waiting for some better situation. He showed us a book which he had preserved during the Revolution. It was a book of paintings, representing a tournament at the Court of Louis XIV. ; and it seemed that the present desolation of France, the fury of the injured people, and all the horrors to which they abandoned themselves, stung by their long sufferings, flowed naturally enough from expenditures so immense, as must have been demanded by the magnificence of this tournament. The vacant rooms of this palace imaged well the hollow show of monarchy. After seeing these things we departed 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. S.

LETTERS FROM ITALY.

LETTERS FROM ITALY.

LETTER I.

TO LEIGH HUNT, Esq.

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 sympathise in the change. Indeed, before I left London, my spirits were as feeble as my health, and I had demands on them which I found it difficult to supply. I have read “Foliage:” with most of the poems I am already familiar. What a delightful poem the “Nymphs” is!

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 upon the subject.

Give my love to Marianne and her sister, and tell Marianne she defrauded me of a kiss by not waking me when she went away, and that, as I have no better mode of conveying it, I must take the best, and ask you to pay the debt. When shall I see you again? Oh, that it might be in Italy! I confess that the thought of how long we may be divided makes me very melancholy. Adieu, my dear friends. Write soon.

Ever most affectionately yours,

P. B. S.*

* 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 Echelles: "March 26, Thursday. We travel towards the mountains, and begin to enter the valleys of the Alps. The country becomes covered again with verdure and cultivation, and white châteaux 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 Echelles, a village at the foot of the mountain of the same name, the boundaries of France and Savoy. Before this we had been stopped at 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 Chambéry, to be submitted to the censor; a

LETTER II.

To T. L. P., Esq.

Milan, April, 1818.

MY DEAR P.—Behold us arrived 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

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 Echelles, winding along a road cut through perpendicular rocks, of immense elevation, by Charles Emanuel, Duke of Savoy, in 1582. The rocks, which cannot be less than a thousand feet in perpendicular height, sometimes overhang the road on each side, and almost shut out the sky. The scene is like that described in the Prometheus of Æschylus. Vasts 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 in 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 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 night-fall.”

to live. With what delight did I hear the woman, who conducted us to see the triumphal arch of Augustus at Susa, speak the clear and complete language of Italy, though half unintelligible to me, after that nasal and abbreviated cacophony of the French! A ruined arch of magnificent proportions in the Greek taste, standing in a kind of road of green lawn, overgrown with violets and primroses, and in the midst of stupendous mountains, and a *blonde* woman, of light and graceful manners, something in the style of Fuseli's Eve, were the first things we met in Italy.

This city is very agreeable. We went to the opera last night—which is a most splendid exhibition. The opera itself was not a favourite, and the singers very inferior to our own. But the ballet, or rather a kind of melodrame or pantomimic drama, was the most splendid spectacle I ever saw. We have no Miss 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.

LETTER III.

To T. L. P., Esq.

Milan, April 20, 1818.

MY DEAR P.—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 2nd—and when you will receive mine written from this city somewhat later than the same date, I cannot know. I am sorry to hear that you have been obliged to remain at Marlow; a certain degree of society being almost a necessity of life, particularly as we are not to see you this summer in Italy. But this, I suppose, must be as it is. I often revisit Marlow in thought. The curse of this life is, that whatever is once known, can never be unknown. You inhabit a spot, which before you inhabit it, is as indifferent to you as any other spot upon earth, and

when, persuaded by some necessity, you think to leave it, you leave it not; it clings to you—and with memories of things, which, in your experience of them, gave no such promise, revenges your 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 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 semicircular 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, which seem to pierce the sky. Above you, from among the clouds, as it were, descends a waterfall of immense size, broken by the woody rocks into a thousand channels to the lake. On the other side is

seen the blue extent of the lake and the mountains, speckled with sails and spires. The apartments of the Pliniana are immensely large, but ill-furnished and antique. The terraces, which overlook the lake, and conduct under the shade of such immense laurel-trees as deserve the epithet of Pythian, are most delightful. We staid at Como two days, and have now returned to Milan, waiting the issue of our negotiation about a house. Como is only six leagues from Milan, and its mountains are seen from the cathedral.

This cathedral is a most astonishing work of art. 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 seemed 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 its stained glass and massy granite columns overloaded with antique figures, and the silver lamps, that burn for ever under the canopy of black cloth beside the brazen altar and the marble fretwork of the dome, give it the aspect of some gorgeous sepulchre. There is one solitary spot among 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. But, you will say, I have no dramatic talent; very true, in a certain sense; but I have taken the resolution to see what kind of a tragedy a person without dramatic talent could write. It shall be better morality than Fazio, and better poetry than Bertram, at least. You tell me nothing of Rhododaphne, a book from which, I confess, I expected extraordinary success.

Who lives in my house at Marlow now, or what is to be done with it? I am seriously persuaded that the situation was injurious to my health, or I should be tempted to feel a very absurd interest in who is to be its next possessor. The expense of our journey here has been very considerable—but we are now living at the hotel here, in a kind of Pension, which is very reasonable in respect of price, and when we get into a menage of our own, we have every reason to expect that we shall experience something of the boasted cheapness of Italy. The finest bread, made of a sifted flour, the whitest and the best I ever tasted, is only *one English penny* a pound. All the necessaries of life bear a proportional relation to this. But then the luxuries, tea, &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 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.

* These impressions of Shelley, with regard to the Italians, formed in ignorance and with precipitation, became altogether altered after a longer stay in Italy. He quickly discovered the extraordinary intelligence and genius of this wonderful people, amidst the ignorance in which they are carefully kept by their rulers, and the vices, fostered by a religious system, which these same rulers have used as their most successful engine.

LETTER IV.

To T. L. P., Esq.

Milan, April 30th, 1818.

MY DEAR P.,—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 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.

LETTER V.

To T. L. P., Esq.

Livorno, June 5th, 1818.

MY DEAR P.,—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 1st 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 and accomplished lady, Mrs. Gisborne, who is the sole attraction in this most unattractive of cities. We had no idea of spending a month here, but she has made it even agreeable. We shall see something of Italian society at the Bagni di Lucca, where the most fashionable people resort.

When you send my parcel—which, by-the-by, I should request you to direct to Mr. Gisborne—I wish you could contrive to enclose the two last parts of Clarke's Travels, relating to Greece, and belonging to Hookham. You know I subscribe there still—and I have determined to take the Examiner here. You would, therefore, oblige me, by sending it weekly, after having read it yourself, to the same direction, and so clipped, as to make as little weight as possible.

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.

LETTER VI.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE (LEGIORN).

Bagni di Lucca, July 10th, 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, have revisited us here. I am employed just now, having little better to do, in translating into my faint and inefficient periods, the divine eloquence of Plato's Symposium; only as an exercise, or, perhaps, to give Mary some idea of the manners and feelings of the Athenians—so different on many subjects from that of any other community that ever existed.

We have almost finished Ariosto—who is entertaining 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 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.

LETTER VII.

To WILLIAM GODWIN, Esq.

Bagni di Lucca, July 25th, 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. 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 [*your Answer to*] 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.

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.

LETTER VIII.

TO MRS. SHELLEY (BAGNI DI LUCCA).

*Florence, Thursday, 11 o'Clock,
20th 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 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 aërial Apennines, that fade in the distance. I have seldom seen a city so lovely at first sight as Florence.

We shall travel hence within a few hours, with the speed of the post, since the distance is 190 miles, and we are to do it in three days, besides the half day,

which is somewhat more than sixty miles a-day. We have now got a comfortable carriage and two mules, and, thanks to Paolo, have made a very decent bargain, comprising everything, to Padua. I should say we had delightful fruit for breakfast—figs, very fine—and peaches, unfortunately gathered before they were ripe, whose smell was like what one fancies of the wakening of Paradise flowers.

Well, my dearest Mary, are you very lonely? Tell me truth, my sweetest, do you ever cry? I shall hear from you once at Venice, and once on my return here. If you love me you will keep up your spirits—and, at all events, tell me truth about it; for, I assure you, I am not of a disposition to be flattered by your sorrow, though I should be by your cheerfulness; and, above all, by seeing such fruits of my absence as were produced when we were at Geneva. 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 that Shakspeare wrote a word of it.

LETTER IX.

TO MRS. SHELLEY (BAGNI DI LUCCA).

Venice, Sunday morning.

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 B.’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 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, 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 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 inespessibili 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.

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.

LETTER X.

TO MRS. SHELLEY (I CAPPUCINI—ESTE).

Padua, mezzogiorno.

MY BEST MARY,—I found at Mount Selice a favourable opportunity for going to Venice, where I shall try to make some arrangement for you and little Ca. to come for some days, and shall meet you, if I do not write anything in the 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 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. Léon, begins with this proud and true sentiment—“There is nothing which the human mind can conceive, which it may not execute.” Shakspeare was only a human being.

Adieu till Thursday.—Your ever affectionate

P. B. S.

LETTER XI.

To T. L. P., Esq.

Este; October 8, 1818.

MY DEAR P.,—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 verdigrise 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 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 worst 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 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 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.

LETTER XII.

To T. L. P., Esq.

Ferrara; Nov. 8th, 1818.

MY DEAR P.,—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 farmyard I was shown sixty-three of these lovely oxen, tied to their stalls, in excellent condition. A farmyard 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 zucche or pumpkins, some of enormous size, piled as winter food for the hogs. There are 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. Tomorrow we are going to see the sights of Ferrara.

Nov. 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 Certosa, 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 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 interlined, particularly towards the end, with numerous corrections. The hand-writing 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.

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 damp. In the darkest corner is a mark in the wall where the chains were riveted, which bound him hand and foot. After some time, at the instance of some Cardinal, his friend, the Duke, allowed his victim a fire-place; 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 network 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.

LETTER XIII.

To T. L. P., Esq.

Bologna; Monday, Nov. 9th, 1818.

MY DEAR P.,—I have seen a quantity of things here — churches, palaces, statues, fountains, and

* These penitents ask alms, to be spent in masses for the souls in purgatory.
M. S.

pictures ; and my brain is at this moment like a portfolio of an architect, or a print-shop, or a commonplace-book. I will try to recollect something of what I have seen ; for, indeed, it requires, if it will obey, an act of volition. First, we went to the cathedral, which contains nothing remarkable, except a kind of shrine, or rather a marble canopy, loaded with sculptures, and supported on four marble columns. We went then to a palace—I am sure I forget the name of it—where we saw a large gallery of pictures. Of course, in a picture gallery you see three hundred pictures you forget, for 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 harmonise in majesty

and sweetness. The hair is parted on the forehead, 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 aërial orange, like the tints of latest sunset; it does not seem painted around and beyond the figure, but everything seems to have absorbed, and to have been penetrated by its hues. 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 fore-ground, coloured, as it were, in the hues of human life, and full of strength and elegance. Round him lie the Philistines in all the attitudes of death. One prone, with the slight convulsion of pain just passing from his forehead, whilst on his lips and chin death lies as heavy as sleep. Another leaning on his arm, with his hand, white and motionless, hanging out beyond. In the distance, more dead bodies; and, still further beyond, the blue sea and the blue mountains, and one white and tranquil sail.

There is a *Murder of the Innocents*, also, by Guido, finely coloured, with much fine expression—but the subject is very horrible, and it seemed deficient in strength—at least, you require the highest ideal energy, the most poetical and exalted conception of the subject, to reconcile you to such a contemplation. There was a *Jesus Christ crucified*, by the same, very fine. One gets tired, indeed, whatever may be the conception and execution of it, of seeing that monotonous and agonised form for ever exhibited in one prescriptive attitude of torture. 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 dullness in the expression of her face; her eyes are almost closed; her lip depressed; there is a serious, and even a heavy relaxation, as it were, of all the muscles which are called into action by ordinary emotions: but it is only as if the spirit of love, almost insupportable from its intensity, were brooding over and weighing down the soul, or whatever it is, without which the material frame is inanimate and inexpressive.

There is another painter here, called Franceschini, a Bolognese, who, though certainly very inferior to Guido, is 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 aërial loveliness; their eyes are all bright with innocence and love; their lips scarce divided by some gentle and sweet emotion. His winged children are the loveliest ideal beings ever created by the

human mind. These are generally, whether in the capacity of Cherubim or Cupid, accessories to the rest of the picture; and the underplot of their lovely and infantine play is something almost pathetic, from the excess of its unpretending beauty. One of the best of his pieces is an Annunciation of the Virgin:—the Angel is beaming in beauty; the Virgin, soft, retiring, and simple.

We saw, besides, one picture of Raphael—St. Cecilia: this is in another and higher style; you forget that it is a picture as you look at it; and yet it is most unlike any of those things which we call reality. It is of the inspired and ideal kind, and seems to have been conceived and executed in a similar state of feeling to that which produced among the ancients those perfect specimens 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 imagine, has just ceased to sing, for the four figures that surround her evidently point, by their attitudes, towards her; particularly St. John, who, with a tender yet impassioned gesture, bends his countenance towards her, languid with the

depth of his emotion. At her feet lie various instruments of music, broken and unstrung. Of the colouring I do not speak; it eclipses Nature, yet it has all her truth and softness.

We saw some pictures of Domenichino, Caracci, Albano, Guercino, 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 wrapped a corpse a month or two. It had a yellow, putrified, ghastly hue, which it cast on all the objects around, so that the hands and face of the Carthusian and his companion were jaundiced by this sepulchral glimmer. Why write books against religion, when we may hang up such pictures? But the world either will not or cannot see. The gloomy effect of this was softened, and, at the same time, its

sublimity diminished, by the figure of the Virgin and Child in the sky, looking down with admiration on the monk, and a beautiful flying figure of an angel.

Enough of pictures. I saw the place where Guido and his mistress, Elizabetta Sirani, were buried. This lady was poisoned at the age of twenty-six, by another lover, a rejected one of course. Our guide said she was very ugly, and that we might see her portrait to-morrow.

Well, good-night, for the present. "To-morrow to fresh fields and pastures new."

Nov. 16.

To-day we first went to see those divine pictures of Raffael and Guido again, and then rode up the mountains, behind this city, to visit a chapel dedicated to the Madonna. It made me melancholy to see that they had been varnishing and restoring some of these pictures, and that even some had been pierced by the French bayonets. These are symptoms of the mortality of man, and, perhaps, few of his works are more evanescent than paintings. Sculpture retains its freshness for twenty centuries—the Apollo and the Venus are as they were. But books are perhaps the only productions of man coeval with the human race. Sophocles and Shakspeare can be produced and reproduced for ever. But how evanescent are paintings! and must necessarily be. Those of Zeuxis and Apelles are no more; and perhaps they bore the same relation to Homer and Æschylus, that those of Guido and Raffael bear to Dante and Petrarch. There is one refuge from the despondency of this

contemplation. The material part, indeed, of their works must perish, but they survive in the mind of man, and the remembrances connected with them are transmitted from generation to generation. The poet embodies them in his creations; the systems of philosophers are modelled to gentleness by their contemplation; opinion, that legislator, is infected with their influence; men become better and wiser; and the unseen seeds are perhaps thus sown, which shall produce a plant more excellent even than that from which they fell. But all this might as well be said or thought at Marlow as Bologna.

The chapel of the Madonna is a very pretty Corinthian building—very beautiful indeed. It commands a fine view of these fertile plains, the many-folded Apennines, and the city. I have just returned from a moonlight walk through Bologna. It is a city of colonnades, and the effect of moonlight is strikingly picturesque. There are two towers here—one 400 feet high—ugly things, built of brick, which lean both different ways; and with the delusion of moonlight shadows, you might almost fancy that the city is rocked by an earthquake. They say they were built so on purpose; but I observe in all the plain of Lombardy the church towers lean.

Adieu.—God grant you patience to read this long letter, and courage to support the expectation of the next. Pray part them from the *Cobbetts* on your breakfast table—they may fight it out in your mind.

Yours ever, most sincerely,

P. B. S.

LETTER XIV.

To T. L. P., Esq.

Rome, November 20th, 1818.

MY DEAR P.,—Behold me in the capital of the vanished world! But I have seen nothing except St. Peter's and the Vatican, overlooking the city in the mist of distance, and the Dogana, where they took us to have our luggage examined, which is built between the ruins of a temple to Antoninus Pius. The Corinthian columns rise over the dwindled palaces of the modern town, and the wrought cornice is changed on one side, as it were, to masses of wave-worn precipices, which overhang you, far, far on high.

I take advantage of this rainy evening, and before Rome has effaced all other recollections, to endeavour to recall the vanished scenes through which we have passed. We left Bologna, I forget on what day, and passing by Rimini, Fano, and Foligno, along the Via Flaminia and Terni, have arrived at Rome after ten days' somewhat tedious, but most interesting journey. The most remarkable things we saw were the Roman excavations in the rock, and the great waterfall of Terni. Of course you have heard that there are a Roman bridge and a triumphal arch at Rimini, and in what excellent taste they are built. The bridge is not unlike the Strand bridge, 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 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, made five or six other cataracts, each fifty or a hundred feet high, which exhibit, on a smaller scale, and with beautiful and sublime variety, the same appearances. But words (and far less could painting) will not express it. Stand upon the brink of the platform of cliff, which is directly opposite. You see the 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, and it is lost below; not in the black rocks which gird it around, but in its own foam and spray, in the cloudlike 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 pyramidal 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 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.

LETTER XV.

To T. L. P., Esq.

Naples, December 22, 1818.

MY DEAR P.,—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, L. B. is familiar with the lowest sort of these women, the people his gondolieri pick up in the streets. He associates with wretches who seem almost to have lost the gait and physiognomy of man, and who do not scruple to avow practices which are not only not named, but I believe seldom even conceived in England. He says he disapproves, but he endures. He is heartily and deeply discontented with himself; and contemplating in the distorted mirror of his own thoughts 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 copsewood overshadows you as you wander through its labyrinths, and the wild weeds of this climate of flowers bloom under your feet. The arena is covered with grass, and pierces, like the skirts of a natural plain, the chasms of the broken arches around. But a small part of the exterior circumference remains—it is exquisitely light and beautiful; and the effect of the perfection of its architecture, adorned with ranges of Corinthian pilasters, supporting a bold cornice, is such as to diminish the effect of its greatness. The interior is all ruin. I can scarcely believe that when encrusted with Dorian marble and ornamented by columns of Egyptian granite, its effect could have been so sublime and so impressive as in its present 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 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 Raffael, 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 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, for ever changing, yet for ever the same, and encompassed by the mountainous island of Capreaë, the lofty peaks which overhang Salerno, and the woody hill of Posilipo, whose promontories hide from us Misenum and the lofty isle Inarime,* 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

* The ancient name of Ischia.

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 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 Niside 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 Baia, 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 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 Dicaearchæa, where there are the columns remaining of a temple to Serapis, and the wreck of an enormous amphitheatre, changed, like the Coliseum, into a natural hill of the overteeming vegetation. Here also is the Solfatara, of which there is a poetical description in the Civil War of Petronius, beginning—"Est locus," and in which the verses of the poet are infinitely finer than what he describes, for it is not a very curious place. After seeing these things we returned by moonlight to Naples in our boat. What colours there were in the sky, what radiance in the

evening star, and how the moon was encompassed by a light unknown to our regions!

Our next excursion was to Vesuvius. We went to Resina in a carriage, where Mary and I mounted mules, and 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 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 a 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 for ever. 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 rushes precipitously over a high crag, rolling down the half-molten rocks and its own overhanging waves; a cataract of quivering fire. We approached the extremity of one of the rivers of lava; it is about twenty feet in breadth and ten in height; and as the inclined plain 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 Capreaë 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, 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 P——.,

Affectionately your friend,

P. B. S.

LETTER XVI.

To T. L. P., Esq.

Naples, Jan. 26th, 1819.

MY DEAR P.,—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. Your news about the bank-note trials is excellent good. Do I not recognise in it the influence of Cobbett? You don't tell me what occupies Parliament. I know you will laugh at my demand, and assure me that it is indifferent. Your pamphlet I want exceedingly to see. Your calculations in the letter are clear, but require much oral explanation. You know I am an infernal arithmetician. If none but me had contemplated "*lucentemque globum lunæ, Titaniaque astra,*" the world would yet have doubted whether they were many hundred feet higher than the mountain tops.

In my accounts of pictures 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 characterises those who differ from ordinary men, and those who can perceive it would not buy enough to pay the printer. Besides, I keep no journal, and the only records of my voyage will be the letters I send you. The bodily fatigue of standing for hours in galleries exhausts me ; I believe that I don't see half that I ought, on that account. And then we know nobody ; and the common Italians are so sullen and stupid, it's impossible to get information from them. 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 harmonising the contending creeds by which mankind have been ruled. Far from 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. 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 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 harmonised 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, surrounded by lofty porticos of fluted columns, some broken, some entire, their entablatures strewed under them. The temple of Jupiter, of Venus, and another temple, the Tribunal, and the Hall of Public Justice, with their forests of lofty columns, surround the Forum. Two pedestals or altars of an enormous size, (for, whether they supported equestrian statues, or were the altars of the temple of Venus, before which they stand, the guide could not tell,) occupy the lower end of the Forum. At the upper end, supported on an elevated platform, stands the temple of Jupiter. Under the colonnade of its portico we sate, and pulled out our oranges, and figs, and bread, and medlars, (sorry fare, you will say,) and rested to eat. Here was a magnificent spectacle. Above and between the multitudinous shafts of the sun-shining columns was seen the sea, reflecting the purple heaven of noon above it, and supporting, as it were, on its line the dark lofty mountains of Sorrento, of a blue inexpres- sibly deep, and tinged towards their summits with streaks of new-fallen snow. Between was one small green island. To the right was Capreæ, Inarime, Prochyta, and Misenum. Behind was the single summit of Vesuvius, rolling forth volumes of thick white smoke, whose foam-like column was sometimes

darted into the clear dark sky, and fell in little streaks along the wind. Between Vesuvius and the nearer mountains, as through a chasm, was seen the main line of the loftiest Apennines, to the east. The day was radiant and warm. Every now and then we heard the subterranean thunder of Vesuvius; its distant deep peals seemed to shake the very air and light of day, which interpenetrated our frames, with the sullen and tremendous sound. This scene was what the Greeks beheld (Pompeii, you know, was a Greek city). They lived in harmony with nature; and the interstices of their incomparable columns were portals, as it were, to admit the spirit of beauty which animates this glorious universe to visit those whom it inspired. If such is Pompeii, what was Athens? What scene was exhibited from the Acropolis, the Parthenon, and the temples of Hercules, and Theseus, and the Winds? The islands and the Ægean sea, the mountains of Argolis, and the peaks of Pindus and Olympus, and the darkness of the Bœotian forests interspersed?

From the Forum we went to another public place; a triangular portico, half enclosing the ruins of an enormous 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 stand 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 funereal 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. 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, “*properes est una*”—to prevent there ever being anything admirable in the world. Fortunately Plato is of my opinion; and I had rather err with Plato than be right with Horace.

At this moment I received your letter, indicating that you are removing to London. I am very much interested in the subject of this change, and beg you would write me all the particulars of it. You will be able now to give me perhaps a closer insight into the politics of the times than was permitted you at Marlow. Of H—— I have a very slight opinion. There are

rumours here of a revolution in 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 *ὑμενοποιος*—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* 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.

* A Swiss girl whom we had engaged as nursery-maid two years before, at Geneva.

LETTER XVII.

To T. L. P. Esq.

Rome, March, 23rd, 1819.

MY DEAR P.,—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 will ask, of the Apollo, the Gladiator, the Venus of the Capitol? What of the Apollo di Belvedere, the Laocoön? What of Raffael and Guido? These things are best spoken of when the mind has drunk in the spirit of their forms; and little indeed can I, who must devote no more than a few months to the contemplation of them, hope to know or feel of their profound beauty.

I think I told you of the Coliseum, and its impressions on me on my first visit to this city. The next most considerable relic of antiquity, considered as a ruin, is the Thermæ of Caracalla. These consist of six enormous chambers, above 200 feet in height, and each enclosing a vast space like that of a field. There are, in addition, a number of towers and labyrinthine recesses, hidden and woven over by the wild growth of weeds and ivy. Never was any desolation more sublime and lovely. The perpendicular wall of ruin is cloven into steep ravines filled up with flowering shrubs, whose thick twisted roots are knotted in the rifts of the stones. At every step the 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 travel-

ling 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 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 laurestinus, whose white blossoms are just developed, the white fig, and a thousand nameless plants sown by the wandering winds. These woods are intersected on every side by paths, like sheep-tracks through the copse-wood of steep mountains, which wind to every part of the immense labyrinth. From the midst rise those pinnacles and masses, themselves like mountains, which have been seen from below. In one place you wind

along a narrow strip of weed-grown ruin: on one side is the immensity of earth and sky, on the other a narrow chasm, which is bounded by an arch of enormous size, fringed by the many-coloured foliage and blossoms, and supporting a lofty and irregular pyramid, overgrown like itself with the all-prevailing vegetation. Around rise other crags and other peaks, all arrayed, and the deformity of their vast desolation softened down, by the undecaying investiture of nature. Come to Rome. It is a scene by which expression is overpowered; which words cannot convey. Still further, winding up one half of the shattered pyramids, by the path through the blooming copsewood, you come to a little mossy lawn, surrounded by the wild shrubs; it is overgrown with anemonies, wall-flowers, and violets, whose stalks pierce the starry moss, and with radiant blue flowers, whose names I know not, and which scatter through the air the divinest odour, which, as you recline under the shade of the ruin, produces sensations of voluptuous faintness, like the combinations of sweet music. The paths still wind on, threading the perplexed windings, other labyrinths, other lawns, and deep dells of wood, and lofty rocks, and terrific chasms. When I tell you that these ruins cover several acres, and that the paths above penetrate at least half their extent, your imagination will fill up all that I am unable to express of this astonishing scene.

I speak of these things not in the order in which I visited them, but in that of the impression which they made on me, or perhaps chance directs. The ruins of

the ancient Forum are so far fortunate that they have not been walled up in the modern city. They stand in an open, lonesome place, bounded on one side by the modern city, and the other by the Palatine Mount, covered with shapeless masses of ruin. The tourists tell you all about these things, and I am afraid of stumbling on their language when I enumerate what is so well known. There remain eight granite columns of the Ionic order, with their entablature, of the temple of Concord, founded by Camillus. I fear that the immense 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 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 moon light, through this scene. The elms are just budding, and the warm spring winds bring unknown odours, all sweet, from the country. I see the radiant Orion

through the mighty columns of the temple of Concord, and the mellow fading light softens down the modern buildings of the Capitol, the only ones that interfere with the sublime desolation of the scene. On the steps of the Capitol itself, stand two colossal statues of Castor and Pollux, each with his horse, finely executed, though far inferior to those of Monte Cavallo, the cast of one of which you know we saw together in London. This walk is close to our lodging, and this is my evening walk.

What shall I say of the modern city? Rome is yet the capital of the world. It is a city of palaces and temples, more glorious than those which any other city contains, and of ruins more glorious than they. Seen from any of the eminences that surround it, it exhibits domes beyond domes, and palaces, and colonnades interminably, even to the horizon; interspersed with patches of desert, and mighty ruins which stand girt by their own desolation, in the midst of the fanes of living religions and the habitations of living men, in sublime loneliness. St. Peter's is, as you have heard, the loftiest building in Europe. Externally it is inferior in architectural beauty to St. Paul's, though not wholly devoid of it; internally it exhibits littleness on a large scale, and is in every respect opposed to antique taste. You know my propensity to admire; and I tried to persuade myself out of this opinion—in vain; the more I see of the interior of St. Peter's, the less impression as a whole does it produce on me. I cannot even think it lofty, though its dome is considerably higher than any hill within fifty miles of London;

and when one reflects, it is an astonishing monument of the daring energy of man. Its colonnade is wonderfully fine, and there are two fountains, which rise in spire-like columns of water to an immense height in the sky, and falling on the porphyry vases from which they spring, fill the 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 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 than a fountain; gushing out from masses of rock, with a gigantic figure of Neptune; and below are two river gods, checking two winged horses, struggling up from among the rocks and waters. The whole is not ill conceived nor executed; but you know not how delicate the imagination becomes by dieting with antiquity day after day! The only things that sustain the comparison are Raffael, Guido, and Salvator Rosa.

The fountain on the Quirinal, or rather the group formed by the statues, obelisk and the fountain, is, however, the most admirable of all. From the Piazza Quirinale, or rather Monte Cavallo, you see the boundless ocean of domes, spires, and columns, which

is the City, Rome. On a pedestal of white marble rises an obelisk of red granite, piercing the blue sky. Before it is a vast basin of porphyry, in the midst of which rises a column of the purest water, which collects into itself all the overhanging colours of the sky, and breaks them into a thousand prismatic hues and graduated shadows—they fall together with its dashing water-drops into the outer basin. The elevated situation of this fountain produces, I imagine, this effect of colour. On each side, on an elevated pedestal, stand the statues of Castor and Pollux, each in the act of taming his horse; which are said, but I believe wholly without authority, to be the work of Phidias and Praxiteles. These figures combine the irresistible energy with the sublime and perfect loveliness supposed to have belonged to their divine 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, and overlooking the city of Rome, surrounded by the light and the music of that crystalline fountain, no cast can communicate.

These figures were found at the Baths of Constantine; but, of course, are of remote antiquity. I do not acquiesce, however, in the practice of attributing to Phidias, or Praxiteles, or Scopas, or some great master,

any admirable work that may be found. We find little of what remained, and perhaps the works of these were such as greatly surpassed all that we conceive of most perfect and admirable in what little has escaped the *deluge*. If I am too jealous of the honour of the Greeks, our masters and creators, the gods whom we should worship,—pardon me.

I have said what I feel without entering into any critical discussions of the *ruins* of Rome, and the mere outside of this inexhaustible mine of thought and feeling. Hobhouse, Eustace, and Forsyth, will tell all the show-knowledge about it,—“the common stuff of the earth.” By-the-by, 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 alto-relievos, one

representing a train of people bearing in procession the instruments of Jewish worship, among which is the holy candlestick with seven branches; on the other, Titus standing on a quadriga, with a winged Victory. The grouping of the horses, and the beauty, correctness, and energy of their delineation, is remarkable, though they are much destroyed.*

LETTER XVIII.

To T. L. P., Esq.

Rome, April 6th, 1819.

MY DEAR P.,—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,

* Shelley left another description of this ruin:—"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 conflagrations, 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 license 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 bats. 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."

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.

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 common-places which escape from them, before they cease to be dangerous. The only inferior part are the eyes, which, though good and gentle, want the mazy depth of colour behind colour, with which the intellectual women of England and Germany entangle the heart in soul-inwoven labyrinths.

This is holy-week, and Rome is quite full. The Emperor of Austria is here, and Maria Louisa is coming. On their journey through the other cities of

Italy, she was greeted with loud acclamations, and *vivas* of Napoleon. Idiots and slaves! Like the frogs in the fable, because they are discontented with the log, they call upon the stork, who devours them. Great festas, and magnificent funzioni here—we cannot get tickets to all. There are five thousand strangers in Rome, and only room for five hundred, at the celebration of the famous Miserere, in the Sixtine chapel, the only thing I regret we shall not be present at. After all, Rome is eternal; and were all that *is* extinguished, that which *has been*, the ruins and the sculptures, would remain, and Raffael and Guido be alone regretted.

In the Square of St. Peter's there are about three hundred fettered criminals at work, hoeing out the weeds that grow between the stones of the pavement. Their legs are heavily ironed, and some are chained two by two. They sit in long rows, hoeing out the weeds, dressed in 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

pretensions which they would not venture upon in their own country. I am yet ignorant of the event of Hobhouse's election. I saw the last numbers were—Lamb, 4200; and Hobhouse, 3900—14th day. There is little hope. That mischievous Cobbett has divided and weakened the 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-by, have you seen Ollier? I never hear from him, and am ignorant whether some verses I sent him from Naples, entitled, I think, "Lines on the Euganean hills," have reached him in safety or not. As to the Reviews, I suppose there is nothing but abuse; and this is not hearty or sincere enough to amuse me. As to the poem now printing,* I lay no stress on it one way or the other. The concluding lines are natural.

I believe, my dear P., 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

* Rosalind and Helen.

or hear of me, except, I think, on the whole, five individuals, as a rare prodigy of crime and pollution, whose look even might infect. This is a large computation, and I don't think I could mention more than three. Such is the spirit of the English abroad as well as at home.*

Few compensate, indeed, for all the rest, and if I were *alone* I should laugh; or if I were rich enough to do all things, which I shall never be. Pity me for my absence from those social enjoyments which England might afford me, and which I know so well how to appreciate. Still, I shall return some fine morning, out of pure weakness of heart.

My dear P., most faithfully yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

LETTER XIX.

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,

* These expressions show how keenly Shelley felt the calumnies heaped on him during his life. The very exaggeration of which he is guilty, is a clue to much of his despondency. His seclusion from society resulted greatly from his extreme ill health, and his dislike of strangers and numbers, as well as the system of domestic economy which his lavish benevolence forced us to restrict within narrow bounds. In justice to our countrymen, I must mention that several distinguished for intellectual eminence, among them, Frederic Earl of Guildford, and Sir William Drummond, called on him at Rome. Accident at the time prevented him from cultivating their acquaintance—the death of our son, and our subsequent

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 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

retirement at Pisa, shut us out still more from the world. I confess that the insolence of some of the more vulgar among the travelling English, rendered me anxious that Shelley should be more willing to extend his acquaintance among the better sort, but his health was an insuperable bar.

of Polypheme in Theocritus, to all the friends I wish to see, and you especially:

Ἐξένθοις, Γαλάτεια, καὶ ἐξενθοῖσα λάθοιο,
 Ὡσπερ ἐγὼ νῦν φῶδε καθήμενος, οἴκαδ' ἀπενθεῖν.*

Most sincerely yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

LETTER XX.

To T. L. P., Esq.

Livorno, July, 1819.

MY DEAR P.—We still remain, and shall remain nearly two months longer, at Livorno. Our house is a melancholy one,† 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. I have taken some pains to make my play fit for representation, and those who have already seen it judge favourably. It is written without any of the peculiar feelings and opinions which characterise my other compositions; I having attended simply to

Come, O Galatea; and having come, forget, as do I, now sitting here, to return home.

† We had lost our eldest, and, at that time, only child, the preceding month at Rome.

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;" 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, 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.

LETTER XXI.

To LEIGH HUNT, Esq.

Livorno, August 15th, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—How good of you to write to us so often, and such kind letters! But it is like lending 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 consider 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,‡ to give to Ollier for publication, but *without my name*. P. 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

* The sudden death of William Shelley, then our only child, which happened in Rome, 6th June, 1819.

† The Cenci.

‡ Julian and Maddalo.

recognise ; and the third is also in some degree a painting from nature, but, with respect to time and place, ideal. You will find the little piece, I think, in some degree consistent with your own ideas of the manner in which poetry ought to be written. I have employed a certain familiar style of language to express the actual way in which people talk with each other, whom education and a certain refinement of sentiment have placed above the use of 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 bare conceptions, and therefore equally unfit for poetry. Not that the familiar style is to be admitted in the treatment of a subject wholly ideal, or in that part of any subject which relates to common life, where the passion, exceeding a certain limit, touches the boundaries of that which is ideal. Strong passion expresses itself in metaphor, borrowed from objects alike remote or near, and casts over all the shadow of its own greatness. But what am I about? If my grandmother sucks eggs, was it I who taught her?

If *you* would really correct the proofs, I need not trouble P., 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 that will stick to one. Your kind expressions about my Eclogue gave me great pleasure ;

indeed, my great stimulus in writing, is to have the approbation of those who feel kindly towards me. The rest is mere duty. I am also delighted to hear that you think of us and form fancies about us. We cannot yet come home.

Most affectionately yours,
P. B. SHELLEY.

LETTER XXII.

To LEIGH HUNT, Esq.

Livorno, Sept. 8th, 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 sat talking with it, and of it, all the evening. It is a great pleasure to us to possess it, a pleasure in 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, and “your date,” to use Shakspeare's expression, “is better in a pie or a pudding, than in your letter.”—“Virginité,” 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 “Rosamund Gray!” How much knowledge of the sweetest and deepest parts 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 P. 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 that of the latter. Yet, I saw the famous works of Raffaele, whom I agree with the whole world in thinking the finest painter. With respect to Michael Angelo I dissent, and think with astonishment and indignation of the common notion that he equals, and, in some respects, exceeds Raffaele. 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 Raffaele, or even much inferior artists. His famous painting in the Sixtine Chapel seems to me deficient in beauty and majesty, both in the conception and the execution. He has been called the Dante of painting; but if we find some of the gross and strong outlines which are employed in the 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 Shakspeare?

As to Michael Angelo's *Moses*—but you have a cast of that in England. I write these things, heaven knows why!

I have written something and finished it, different from anything else, and a new attempt for me; and I mean to dedicate it to you. I should not have done so without your approbation, but I asked your picture last night, and it smiled assent. If I did not think it in some degree worthy of you, I would not make you a public offering of it. I expect to have to write to you soon about it. If Ollier is not turned Jew, Christian, or become infected with *the Murrain*, he will publish it. Don't let him be frightened, for it is nothing which, by any courtesy of language, can be termed either moral or immoral.

Mary has written to Marianne for a parcel, in which I beg you 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. 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 enquire about the Italian chalk. You have no idea of the pleasure this portrait gives us.

LETTER XXIII.

TO LEIGH HUNT, Esq.

Livorno, Sept. 27th, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—We are now on the point of leaving this place for Florence, where we have taken pleasant apartments for six months, which brings us to the 1st of April, the season at which new flowers and new thoughts spring forth upon the earth and in the mind. What is then our destination is yet undecided. I have not 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, Raffaele and Michael Angelo drew the light and the harmony of their inspiration. When the second-rate poets of Italy wrote, the corrupting blight of tyranny was already hanging on every bud of genius. 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 rinnova, 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 suppose it will be a pretty
 , 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.

LETTER XXIV.

TO MRS. GISBORNE.

Florence, October 13th or 14th, 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 unfortunate 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.* I am in

* 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. Unfortunately, an unforeseen complication of circumstances caused the design to be abandoned, when already far advanced towards completion.

I insert a letter from Mrs. Gisborne, which will explain some portion of this letter:—

“MY DEAREST MRS. SHELLEY,—I began to feel a little uneasy at not hearing from you by Wednesday’s post; you may judge, therefore, with how much pleasure I received your friendly lines, informing me of your safe arrival, and good state of health, and that of Mr. Shelley. A little agitation of the nerves is a trifling evil, and was to be expected after such a tremendous journey for you at such a time; yet you could not refrain from two little innocent quizzes, notwithstanding your hand trembling. I confess I dreaded the consequences when I saw the carriage drive off on the rough road. Did you observe that foolish dog Oscar, running by your side, waving his long slender tail? Giuseppe was obliged to catch him up in his arms to stop his course; he continued for several days at dinner-time to howl piteously, and to scratch with all his might at the door of your abandoned house. What a forlorn house! I cannot bear to look at it. My last letter from Mr. Gisborne is dated the 4th; he has been seriously indisposed ever since his first attack; he suffers now a return of his cough, which he can only mitigate by taking quantities of opium. I do not expect to see him till the end of the week. You see that he was not the person to undertake a land-journey to England by abominable French diligences. (What says C. to the words *abominable* and *French*?) I think he might have suffered less in a foot journey, pursued leisurely *e a suo comodo*. All’s well that ends well! Mr. G. gives a shocking account of Marseilles; he seems to think Tuscany a

torture until this money comes from London, though I am sure that it will and must come; unless, indeed, my banker has broke, and then it will be my loss, not Henry's—a little delay will mend the matter. I would then write instantly 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

delightful country, compared to what he has seen of France. I remarked, in one of your letters, the account you give of your travelling with a French voiturier, so unlike the obligingness we have always experienced from our Italian vetturini; we have found them ever ready to sacrifice themselves and their horses, sooner than do an uncivil thing, and distressed beyond measure at our determination of going sometimes for miles on foot, though, at the same time, their beasts might scarcely have been able to drag the vehicle without us. This is in favour of the Italians; God knows there is enough to be said against them.

“Now, I will tell you the news of the 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 ship-builder on credit, so that Frankfort can go on with his work; but I am sorry to say, that from this time the general progress of the work will be retarded for want of cash. The boilers might now be going on contemporaneously with the casting, but I know that at present there is no remedy for this evil. Every person concerned is making exertions, and is in a state of anxiety to see the quick result of this undertaking. 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, and begs his kind remembrance to Miss C.—I remain, with sincere affection for you all,

“Ever yours,

“M. G.”

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 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 over-persuaded you and Henry; it is best that you should all live together, without any more solitary attempts; it is best that this one attempt should have been made, otherwise, perhaps, one thing which is best might not have occurred; and it is best that we should think all this for the best, even though it is not; because Hope, as Coleridge says, is a solemn duty, which we owe alike to ourselves and to the world—a worship to the spirit of good within, which requires, before it sends that inspiration forth, which impresses its likeness

upon all that it creates, devoted and disinterested homage.

A different scene is this from that in which you made the chief character of our changing drama. We see no one, as usual. Madame M * * * 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*l.*, from what mistake remains to be explained, has not yet arrived, and the banker here is going to advance me 50*l.*, on my bill at three months—all additional 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 Cenci, which are at the printer's, to England, by the next ship. I forgot it in the hurry of departure.—I have just heard from P., 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.

LETTER XXV.

TO HENRY REVELEY, Esq.

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 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 for soliciting your correspondence, and that flowing from your own mind, and clothed in your own words, is, that you may begin to accustom to discipline yourself in the only practice of life in which you appear deficient. 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 overbalance 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 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.*

LETTER XXVI.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

Florence, Oct. 28th, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—I receive this morning the strange and unexpected news, that my bill of 200*l.* has been returned to Mr. Webb protested. Ultimately this can be nothing but delay, as I have drawn from

my banker's hands so much as to leave them still in possession of 80*l.*, and this I positively know, and can prove by documents. By return of post, for I have not only written to my banker, but to private friends, no doubt Henry will be enabled to proceed. Let him meanwhile do all that can be done.

Meanwhile, to save time, could not money be obtained temporarily, at Livorno, from Mr. W——, 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.

LETTER XXVII.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

Florence, Nov. 6th, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—I have just finished a letter of five sheets on Carlile's affair, and am in hourly expectation of Mary's confinement: you will imagine an excuse for my silence.

I forbear to address you, as I had designed, on the subject of your income as a public creditor of the English government, as it seems you have not the

exclusive management of your funds; and the peculiar circumstances of the delusion are such that none but a very few persons will ever be brought to see its instability but by the experience of loss. If I were to convince you, Henry would probably be unable to convince his uncle. In vindication, however, of what I have already said, allow me to turn your attention to England at this *hour*.

In order to meet the national expenses, or rather that some approach towards meeting them might seem to be made, a tax of 3,000,000*l.* was imposed. The first consequence of this has been a *defalcation* in the revenue at the rate of 3,600,000*l.* 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 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*l.* to 150*l.*, and then 100*l.*, 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 for ever 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-Calderonising 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.

LETTER XXVIII.

To LEIGH HUNT, Esq.

Firenze, Nov. 13th, 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 that 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 painful one. The physicians absolutely forbid my travelling to England in the winter, but I shall probably pay you a visit in the spring. With what pleasure, among all the other sources of regret and discomfort with which England abounds for me, do I *think* of looking on the original of that kind and earnest face, which is now opposite Mary's bed. It will be the only thing which Mary will envy me, or will need to envy me, in that journey, for I shall come alone. Shaking hands with you is worth all the trouble; the rest is clear loss.

I will tell you more about myself and my pursuits in my next letter.

Kind love to Marianne, Bessy, and all the children. Poor Mary begins (for the first time) to look a little consoled; for we have spent, as you may imagine, a miserable five months.

Good-bye, my dear Hunt.

Your affectionate friend, P. B. S.

I have had no letter from you *for a month*.

LETTER XXIX.

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 Amnon and Tamar is perfectly tremendous. Well may Calderon say in the person of the former—

Si sangre sin fuego hiere,
que fara sangre con fuego ?

Incest is, like many other incorrect things, a very poetical circumstance. It may be the excess of love or hate. It may be the defiance of everything for the sake of another, which clothes itself in the glory of the highest heroism ; or it may be that cynical rage which, confounding the good and the bad in existing opinions, breaks through them for the purpose of rioting in selfishness and antipathy. Calderon, following the Jewish historians, has represented Amnon's action in the basest point of view—he is a 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 estación 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 officiosa,
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.

LETTER XXX.

To JOHN GISBORNE, Esq.

Florence, Nov. 16th, 1819.

MY DEAR SIR,—I envy you the first reading of Theocritus. Were not the Greeks a glorious people? What is there, as Job says of the Leviathan, like unto them? If the army of Nicias had not been defeated under the walls of Syracuse; if the Athenians had, acquiring Sicily, held the balance between Rome and Carthage, sent garrisons to the Greek colonies in the south of Italy, Rome might have been all that its intellectual condition entitled it to be, a tributary, not the conqueror of Greece; the Macedonian power would never have attained to the dictatorship of the civilised states of the world. Who knows whether, under the steady progress which philosophy and social institutions would have made, (for, in the age to which I refer, their progress was both rapid and secure) among a people of the most perfect physical organisation—whether the Christian religion would have arisen, or the barbarians have overwhelmed the wrecks of civilisation which had survived the conquest and tyranny of the Romans? What then should we have been? As it is, all of us who are worth anything, spend our manhood in unlearning the follies, or expiating the mistakes, of our youth. We are stuffed full of prejudices; and our natural passions are so managed, that if we restrain them we grow intolerant

and precise, because we restrain them not according to reason, but according to error; and if we do not restrain them, we do all sorts of mischief to ourselves and others. Our imagination and understanding are alike subjected to rules the most absurd;—so much for Theocritus and the Greeks.*

In spite of all your arguments, I wish your money were out of the funds. This middle course which you

* I subjoin here a fragment of a letter, I know not to whom addressed: it is to a woman—which shows how, worshipping as Shelley did the spirit of the literature of ancient Greece, he considered that this could be found only in its original language, and did not consider that time wasted which a person who had pretensions, intellectual culture, and enthusiasm, spent in acquiring them.

“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 inspiring 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 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 un instructive 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.”

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 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.

LETTER XXXI.

To HENRY REVELEY, Esq.

Florence, Nov. 17th, 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.* One might

* I insert the extract alluded to from Mr. Reveley's letter:—

“Friday, 12th Nov.

“The event is now passed—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, 13th 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.

“With kindest salutations to Mrs. Shelley and Miss C.,

“I remain, most truly,

“Your obliged friend, and devoted servant,

“HENRY W. REVELEY.”

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 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.

LETTER XXXII.

To LEIGH HUNT, Esq.

Florence, Nov. 23, 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 circumstances of the conflicting passions and interests of men, we are to expect. Not what we ought to expect, nor 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 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.

LETTER XXXIII.

TO LEIGH HUNT, Esq.

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 wrapt in flannel petticoats, and we get on with him as we can. He is small, healthy, and pretty. Mary is recovering rapidly. Marianne, I hope, is quite well.

You do not tell me whether you have received my lines on the Manchester affair. 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 "Masque of Anarchy." *

I am sorry to hear that you have employed yourself in translating the "Aminta," though I doubt not it will be a just and beautiful translation. You ought to write Amintas. You ought to exercise your fancy in the perpetual creation of new forms of gentleness and beauty.

With respect to translation, even *I* will not be

* Peter Bell the Third.

seduced by it ; although the Greek plays, and some of the ideal dramas of Calderon (with which I have lately, and with inexpressible wonder and delight, become acquainted), are perpetually tempting me to throw over their perfect and glowing forms the grey veil of my own words. And you know me too well to suspect that I refrain from a belief that what I could substitute for them would deserve the regret which yours would, if suppressed. I have confidence in my moral sense alone ; but that is a kind of originality. I have only translated the Cyclops of Euripides, when I could absolutely do nothing else ; and the Symposium of Plato, which is the delight and astonishment of all who read it ; I mean the original, or so much of the original as is seen in my translation, not the translation itself.

I think I have had an accession of strength since my residence in Italy, though the disease itself in the side, whatever it may be, is not subdued. Some day we shall all return from Italy. I fear that in England things will be carried violently by the rulers, and they will not have learned to yield in time to the spirit of the age. The great thing to do is to hold the balance between popular impatience and tyrannical obstinacy ; to inculcate with fervour both the right of resistance and the duty of forbearance. You know my principles incite me to take all the good I can get in politics, for ever aspiring to something more. I am one of those whom nothing will fully satisfy, but who are ready to be partially satisfied in all that is practicable. We shall see.

Give Bessy a thousand thanks from me for writing

out in that pretty neat hand your kind and powerful defence. Ask what she would like best from Italian land. We mean to bring you all something; and Mary and I have been wondering what it shall be. Do you, each of you, choose.

Adieu, my dear friend.

Yours affectionately ever,

P. B. S.

LETTER XXXIV.

TO HENRY REVELEY, Esq.

Florence, 18th 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*l*. 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.

Everybody 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 resisted the temptation. Ask them, entreat them, from me, to appoint some early day. We have a bed and room, and everything prepared.

I write in great haste, as you may see. Ever believe me, my dear Henry,

Your attached friend,

P. B. S.

LETTER XXXV.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

Florence, Dec. 23rd, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—I suffered more pain than it would be manly to confess, or than you can easily conceive, from that wretched uncertainty about the money. At last, however, it is certain that you will encounter no further check in the receiving supplies, and a weight is taken from my spirits, which, in spite of many other causes of discomfort, makes itself known to have been a heavy load, by the lightness which I now feel in writing to you.

So the steam-boat will take three months to finish? The vernal equinox will be over by that time, and the

early wakening of the year have paved the Mediterranean with calm. Among other circumstances to regret in this delay, it is so far well that our first cruise will be made in serene weather.

I send you enclosed a mandate for 396 francesconi, which is what M. Torlonia incorrectly designates a hundred pounds—but as we count in the money of the country, that need make no difference to us.

I have just finished an additional act to “Prometheus,” which Mary is now transcribing, and which will be enclosed for your inspection before it is transmitted to the bookseller. I am engaged in a political work—I am busy enough, and if the faculties of my mind were not imprisoned within a 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.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO JOHN GISBORNE, Esq.

Florence, 25th Jan., 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.

REMARKS ON SOME OF THE STATUES IN THE
GALLERY OF FLORENCE.

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 a woman. It is colossal: the size adds

to its value; because it allows the spectator 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. 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 any other 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 momentarily 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 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, through 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 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 reliefs 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 the 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 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 ANADYOMENE.

She has just issued from the bath, and is yet 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 in 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 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 shoulders, 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 dandling 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 thunderbolt. This is 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.

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 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 on 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 limbs shone over the Euxine. The action, energy, and godlike animation of these limbs, speak a spirit which seems as if it could not be consumed.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

Pisa, 9th Feb., 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.

LETTER XXXVIII.

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 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.

LETTER XXXIX.

TO JOHN GISBORNE, Esq. (LONDON.)

Pisa, May 26th, 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 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 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

* Baths of natural warm springs, distant four miles from Pisa, and called indifferently Bagni di Pisa, and Bagni di San Giuliano.

Ariadne, after Theseus had left her—unless I had been Bacchus.

Affectionately and anxiously yours,

P. B. S.

LETTER XL.

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 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*l.* and 200*l.*, 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 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 steam-boat.

LETTER XLI.

TO MRS. SHELLEY (LEGHORN).

*Casa Silva,**Sunday morning, 20th July, 1821.*

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, 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.

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. To-morrow I go to look over the inventory; expect me therefore on Tuesday morning.

Sunday evening.

LETTER XLII.

TO MRS. SHELLEY (BAGNI DI SAN GIULIANO).

[Leghorn], Casa Ricci, Sept. 1st, 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.

LETTER XLIII.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "QUARTERLY REVIEW."

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 the *Endymion* is a poem considerably defective, and that, perhaps, it deserved as much censure as the pages of your Review record against it; but, not to mention that there is 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 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.

* * * * *

(This letter was never sent.)

LETTER XLIV.

TO JOHN GISBORNE, Esq. (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 anything of the same kind. The Odyssey is sweet, but there is nothing like this.

I am bathing myself in the light and odour of the flowery and starry Autos. I have read them all more than once. Henry will tell you how much I am in love with Pacchiani. I suffer from my disease considerably. Henry will also tell you, how much, and how whimsically, he alarmed me last night.

My kindest remembrances to Mrs. Gisborne, and best wishes for your health and happiness.

Faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

I have a new Calderon coming from Paris.

LETTER XLV.

TO HENRY REVELEY, Esq.

Pisa, Tuesday, 1 o'clock, 17th April, 1821.

MY DEAR HENRY,—Our ducking last night has added fire, instead of quenching the nautical ardour which produced it; and I consider it a good omen in any enterprise, that it begins in evil; as being more probable that it will end in good. I hope *you* have not suffered from it. I am rather feverish, but very well as to the side, whence I expected the worst consequences. I send you directions for the complete equipment of our boat, since you have 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.

LETTER XLVI.

TO HENRY REVELEY, Esq.

Pisa, April 19th.

MY DEAR HENRY,—The rulloek, 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.

LETTER XLVII.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

Bagni, Tuesday Evening, (June 5th, 1821).

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—We anxiously expect your arrival at the Baths ; but as I am persuaded that you will spend as much time with us as you can save from your necessary occupations before your departure, I will forbear to vex you with importunity. My health does not permit me to spend many hours from home. I have been engaged these last days in composing a poem on the death of Keats, which will shortly be finished ; and I anticipate the pleasure of reading it to you, as some of the very few persons who will be interested in it and understand it. It is a highly-wrought *piece of art*, and perhaps better, in point of composition, than anything I have written.

I have obtained a purchaser for some of the articles of your three lists, a catalogue of which I sub-join. 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.

LETTER XLVIII.

To JOHN GISBORNE, Esq.

Pisa; Saturday, (June 16th, 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.*

* The following is the account alluded to :—

“ *Wednesday, 13th Jan., 1821.*

“ MY DEAREST FRIENDS,—I have this moment received a letter from Mr. Finch, which contains some circumstances relative to Keats. I would not delay communicating them to you, and I hope to be in time for the Procaccino, though it is already half-past twelve. I hope Mr. S. received my long despatch a few days since.

“ Ever yours, J. G.”

“ I hasten to communicate to you what I know about the latter period and closing scene of the pilgrimage of the original poet from whose works, hitherto unseen by me, you have favoured me with such a beautiful quotation. Almost despairing of his case, he left his native shores by sea, in a merchant vessel for Naples, where he arrived, having received no benefit during the passage, and brooding over the most melancholy and mortifying reflections; and nursing a deeply-rooted disgust to life and to the world, owing to having been infamously treated by the very persons whom his generosity had rescued from want and woe. He journeyed from Naples to Rome, and occupied, at the latter place, lodgings which I had, on former occasions, more than once inhabited. Here he soon took to his bed, from which he never rose more. His passions were always violent, and his sensibility most keen. It is extraordinary that, proportionally as his strength of body declined, these acquired fresh vigour; and his temper at length became so outrageously violent, as to injure himself, and annoy every one around him. He eagerly wished for death. After leaving England, I believe that he seldom courted the muse. He was accompanied by a friend of mine, Mr. Severn, a young painter, who will, I think, one day be the Coryphæus of the English school. He left all, and sacrificed every prospect, to accompany and watch over his friend Keats. For many weeks previous to his death, he would see no one but Mr. Severn, who had almost risked his own life, by unwearied attendance upon his friend, who rendered his situation doubly unpleasant by the violence of his passions exhibited even towards him, so much, that he might be judged insane. His intervals of remorse, too, were poignantly bitter. I believe that Mr. Severn, the heir of what little

I do not think that if I had seen it before, I could have composed my poem. The enthusiasm of the imagination would have overpowered the sentiment.

As it is, I have finished my *Elegy*; and this day I send it to the press at Pisa. You shall have a copy the moment it is completed. I think it will please you. I have dipped my pen in consuming fire for his destroyers; otherwise the style is calm and solemn.

Pray, when shall we see you? Or are the streams of Helicon less salutary than sea-bathing for the nerves? Give us as much as you can before you go to England, and rather divide the term than not come soon.

Mrs. — wishes that none of the books, desk, &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 logger-heads about it. H. S. gives me this account. You may imagine how much I am amused. For the sake

Keats left behind him at Rome, has only come into possession of very few manuscripts of his friend. You will be pleased with the information that the poetical volume, which was the inseparable companion of Keats, and which he took for his most darling model in composition, was, the *Minor Poems of Shakspeare.*”

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.

LETTER XLIX.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

Bagni; Friday night, (July 13th, 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 exchange for the arms of Diomed,—*ἐκατόμβιοι 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.

LETTER L.

TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

Bagni, July 19th.

MY DEAREST FRIENDS,—I am fully repaid for the painful emotions from which some verses of my poem sprang, by your sympathy and approbation—which is all the reward I expect—and as much as I desire. It is not for me to judge whether, in the high praise your feelings assign me, you are right or wrong. The poet and the man are two different natures; though they exist together, they may be unconscious of each other, and incapable of deciding on each other's powers and efforts by any reflex act. The decision of the cause, whether or no *I* am a poet, is removed from the present time to the hour when our posterity shall assemble; but the court is a very severe one, and I fear that the verdict will be, "Guilty—death!"

I shall be with you on the first summons. I hope that the time you have reserved for us, "this bank and shoal of time," is not so short as you once talked of.

In haste, most affectionately yours,

P. B. S.

LETTER LI.

· TO MRS. SHELLEY, (BAGNI DI PISA.)

*Tuesday, Lione Bianco, Florence,
(August 1st, 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, 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 I 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.

LETTER LII.

TO MRS. SHELLEY, (BAGNI DI PISA.)

Bologna, Agosto 6.

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 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.

LETTER LIII.

TO MRS. SHELLEY.

Ravenna, August 7 1821.

MY DEAREST MARY,—I arrived last night at ten o'clock, and sate up talking with Lord Byron until five this morning. I then went to sleep, and now awake at eleven, and having despatched my breakfast

as quick as possible, mean to devote the interval until twelve, when the post departs, to you.

Lord Byron is very well, and was delighted to see me. He has in fact completely recovered his health, and lives a life totally the reverse of that which he led at Venice. He has a permanent sort of liaison with Contessa Guiccioli, who is now at Florence, and seems from her letters to be a very amiable woman. She is waiting there until something shall be decided as to their emigration to Switzerland or stay in Italy; which is yet undetermined on either side. She was compelled to escape from the Papal territory in great haste, as measures had already been taken to place her in a convent, where she would have been unrelentingly confined for life. The oppression of the marriage contract, as existing in the laws and opinions of Italy, though less frequently exercised, is far severer than that of England. I tremble to think of what poor Emilia is destined to.

Lord Byron had almost destroyed himself in Venice: his state of debility was such that he was unable to digest any food, he was consumed by hectic fever, and would speedily have perished, but for this attachment, which has reclaimed him from the excesses into which he threw himself from carelessness and pride, rather than taste. Poor fellow! he is now quite well, and immersed in politics and literature. He has given me a number of the most interesting details on the former subject, but we will not speak of them in a letter. Fletcher 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 patronise a system of criticism fit for the production of mediocrity, and although all his fine poems and passages have been produced in defiance of this system, yet I recognise the pernicious effects of it in the Doge of Venice; and it will cramp and limit his future efforts however great they may be, unless he gets rid of it. I have read only parts of it, or rather he himself read them to me, and gave me the plan of the whole.

Lord Byron has also told me of a circumstance that shocks me exceedingly; because it exhibits a degree of desperate and wicked malice for which I am at a loss to account. When I hear such things my patience and my philosophy are put to a severe proof, whilst I refrain from seeking out some obscure hiding-place, where the countenance of man may never meet me more.

* * * Imagine my despair of good, imagine how is it 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.

LETTER LIV.

TO MRS. SHELLEY.

Thursday, 8th August.

MY DEAREST MARY,—I wrote to you yesterday, and I begin another letter to-day, without knowing exactly when I can send it, as I am told the post only goes once a week. I dare say the subject of the latter half of my letter gave you pain, but it was necessary to look the affair in the face, and the only satisfactory answer to the calumny must be given by you, and could be given by you alone. This is evidently the source of the violent denunciations of the Literary Gazette, in themselves contemptible enough, and only to be regarded as effects, which show us their cause, which until we put off our mortal nature, we never despise—that is, the belief of persons who have known and seen you, that you are guilty of crimes.

* * * * *

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 seashore with pine forests, which have followed the retrocession of the Adriatic, and the roots of which are actually washed by its waves. The level of the sea and of this tract of country correspond so nearly, that a ditch dug to a few feet in depth, is immediately filled up with sea-water. All the ancient buildings have been choked up to the height of from five to twenty feet by the deposit of the sea, and of the inundations, which are frequent in the winter. I went in L. B.'s carriage, first to the Chiesa San Vitale, which is certainly one of the most ancient churches in Italy. It is a rotunda, supported upon buttresses and pilasters of white marble; the ill effect of which is somewhat relieved by an interior row of columns. The dome is very high and narrow. The whole church, in spite of the elevation of the soil, is very high for its breadth, and is of a very peculiar and striking construction. In the section of one of the large tables of marble with which the church is lined, they showed me the *perfect figure*, as perfect as if it had been painted, of a capuchin friar, which resulted merely from the shadings and the position of the stains in the marble. This is what may be called a pure anticipated cognition of a Capuchin.

I then went to the Tomb of Theodosius, which has now been dedicated to the Virgin, without, however, any change in its original appearance. It is about a

mile from the present city. This building is more than half overwhelmed by the elevated soil, although a portion of the lower 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 giallo antico, supporting the roof of the tabernacle, which are said to be of immense value. It is something like that church (I forget the name of it)

we saw at Rome, fuore delle mura.* I suppose the Emperor stole these columns, which seem not at all to belong to the place they occupy. Within the city, near the church of San Vitale, there is to be seen the tomb of the Empress Galla Placidia, daughter of Theodosius the Great, together with those of her husband Constantius, her brother Honorius and her son Valentinian—all Emperors. The tombs are massy cases of marble, adorned with rude and tasteless sculpture of lambs, and other Christian emblems, with scarcely a trace of the antique. It seems to have been one of the first effects of the Christian religion to destroy the power of producing beauty in art. These tombs are placed in a sort of vaulted chamber, wrought over with rude mosaic, which is said to have been built in 1300. I have yet seen no more of Ravenna.

Friday.

We ride out in the evening, through the pine forests which divide this city from the sea. Our way of life is this, and I have accommodated myself to it without much difficulty:—L. B. gets up at two, breakfasts; we talk, read, &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.

L. B. is greatly improved in every respect. In genius, in temper, in moral views, in health, in happi-

* San Paolo fuore delle mura—burnt down, and its beautiful columns calcined by the fire, in 1823—now rebuilt.

ness. 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*l.* a-year; 100*l.* of which he devotes to purposes of charity. He has had mischievous passions, but these he seems to have subdued, and he is becoming what he should be, a virtuous man. The interest which he took in the politics of Italy, and the actions he performed in consequence of it, are subjects not fit to be *written*, but are such as will delight and surprise you. He is not yet decided to go to 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 L. B.'s friend and confidant, and acquiesces perfectly in her connexion with him,) wish to go to Switzerland, as L. B. says, merely from the novelty of the pleasure of travelling. L. B. prefers Tuscany or Lucca, and is trying to persuade them to adopt his views. He has made *me* write a long letter to her to engage her to remain—an odd thing enough for an utter stranger to write on subjects of the utmost delicacy to his friend's mistress. But it seems destined that I am always to have some active part in every body's affairs whom I approach. I have set down in lame Italian, the strongest reasons I can think of against the Swiss emigration—to tell you truth, I should be very glad to accept, as my fee, his establishment in Tuscany. Ravenna is a miserable place; the

people are barbarous and wild, and their language the most infernal patois that you can imagine. He would be, in every respect, better among the Tuscans. I am afraid he would not like Florence, on account of the English there. There is Lucca, Florence, Pisa, Siena, and I think nothing more. What think you of Prato, or Pistoia, for him?—no Englishman approaches those towns; but I am afraid no house could be found good enough for him in that region.

He has read to me one of the unpublished cantos of Don Juan, which is astonishingly fine. It sets him not only above, but far above, all the poets of the day—every word is stamped with immortality. I despair of rivalling Lord Byron, as well 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 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 Williams's, and Williams especially? Give my very kindest love to them.

Lord B. has here splendid apartments in the house of his mistress's husband, who is one of the richest men in Italy. *She* is divorced, with an allowance of 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 δυσσεβὲς—μετὰ μὲν πλείονα τίκτει, σφετέρᾳ δείκοτα γενναί. 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.

LETTER LV.

TO MRS. SHELLEY.

Saturday—Ravenna.

MY DEAR MARY,—You will be surprised to hear that L. B. 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." One would think

that L. B. had taken his idea of the three last cantos of Don Juan from this book. That, of course, has nothing to do with the merit of this latter, poetry having nothing to do with the invention of facts. It is a very powerful, and very entertaining novel, and a faithful picture, they say, of modern Greek manners. I have read L. B.'s Letter to Bowles: some good things—but he ought not to write prose criticism.

You will receive a long letter, sent with some of L. B.'s, express to Florence. I write this in haste.

Yours most affectionately,

S.

LETTER LVI.

TO MRS. SHELLEY.

Ravenna, Tuesday, Aug. 15th, 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 L. B. should come to

Tuscany, and, if possible, Pisa; but more of that to-morrow.

Your faithful and affectionate S.

LETTER LVII.

TO MRS. SHELLEY.

Wednesday, Ravenna.

MY DEAREST LOVE,—I write, though I doubt whether I shall not arrive before this letter; as the post only leaves Ravenna once a week, on Saturdays, and as I hope to set out to-morrow evening by the courier. But as I must necessarily stay a day at Florence, and as the natural incidents of travelling may prevent me from taking my intended advantage of the couriers, it is probable that this letter will arrive first. Besides, as I will explain, I am not *yet* quite my own master. But that by and by. I do not think it necessary to tell you of my impatience to return to you and my little darling, or the disappointment with which I have prolonged my absence from you. I am happy to think that you are not quite alone.

Lord Byron is still decided upon Tuscany: and such is his impatience, that he has desired me—as if I should not arrive in time—to write to you to inquire for the best unfurnished palace in Pisa, and to enter upon a treaty for it. It is better not to be on the Lung' Arno; but, in fact, there is no such hurry, and as I shall see you so soon, it is not worth while to trouble yourself about it.

I told you I had written by L. B.'s desire to la Guiccioli, to dissuade her and her family from Switzerland. Her answer is this moment arrived, and my representation seems to have reconciled them to the unfitness of that step. At the conclusion of a letter, full of all the fine things she says she has heard of me, is this request, which I transcribe:—"Signore—*la vostra bontà mi fa ardita di chiedervi un favore—me lo accorderete voi? Non partite da Ravenna senza Milord.*" Of course, being now, by all the laws of knighthood, captive to a lady's request, I shall only be at liberty on *my parole*, until Lord Byron is settled at Pisa. I shall reply, of course, that the *boon* is granted, and that if her lover is reluctant to quit Ravenna, after I have made arrangements for receiving him at Pisa, I am bound to place myself in the same situation as now, to assail him with importunities to rejoin her. Of this there is, fortunately, no need; and I need not tell you there is no fear that this chivalric submission of mine to the great general laws of antique courtesy, against which I never rebel, and which is my religion, should interfere with my quick returning, and long remaining with you, dear girl.

I have seen Dante's tomb, and worshipped the sacred spot. The building and its accessories are comparatively modern, but, the urn itself, and the tablet of marble, with his portrait in relief, are evidently of equal antiquity with his death. The countenance has all the marks of being taken from his own; the lines are strongly marked, far more than the portraits, which, however, it resembles; except,

indeed, the eye, which is half-closed, and reminded me of Pacchiani. It was probably taken after death. I saw the library, and some specimens of the earliest illuminated printing from the press of *Faust*. They are on vellum, and of an execution little inferior to that of the present day.

We ride out every evening as usual, and practise pistol-shooting at a pumpkin; and I am not sorry to observe that I approach towards my noble friend's exactness of aim. The water here is villanous, and I have suffered tortures; but I now drink nothing but alcalescent water, and am much relieved. I have the greatest trouble to get away; and L. B., as a reason for my stay, has urged that, without either me or the Guiccioli, he will certainly fall into his old habits. I then talk, and he listens to reason; and I earnestly hope that he is too well aware of the terrible and degrading consequences of his former mode of life to be in danger from the short interval of temptation that will be left him. L. B. speaks with great kindness and interest of you, and seems to wish to see you.

Thursday, Ravenna.

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 wished to send the letter himself, and indeed this adds weight to your representations. Have you seen the article in the *Literary Gazette* on me? They evidently allude to some story of this kind—however cautious the Hoppners have been in preventing the calumniated person from asserting his justification, you know too much of the world not to be certain that this was the utmost limit of their caution. So much for nothing.

Lord Byron is immediately coming to Pisa. He will set off the moment I can get him a house. Who would have imagined this? Our first thought ought to be ——, our second our own plans. The hesitation in your letter about Florence has communicated itself to me; although I hardly see what we can do about Horace Smith, to whom our attentions are so due, and would be so useful. If I do not arrive before this long scrawl, write something to Florence to decide me. I shall certainly, not without strong reasons, at present *sign* the agreement for the old codger's house; although the extreme beauty and fitness of the place, should we decide on Florence, might well overbalance the objection of your deaf

visitor. 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 Williams's would probably be induced to stay there if we did; Hunt would certainly stay, at least this winter, near us, should he emigrate at all; Lord Byron and his Italian friends would remain quietly there; and Lord Byron has certainly a great regard for us—the regard of such a man is worth—*some* of the tribute we must pay to the base passions of humanity in any intercourse with those within their circle; he is better worth it than those on whom we bestow it from mere 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 floodgates 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 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.

LETTER LVIII.

To LEIGH HUNT, Esq.

Pisa, August 26th, 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 for myself, I am, for the present, only a sort of link between you and him, until you can know each other, and effectuate the 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 to aspire to. I am, and I desire to be, nothing.

I did not ask Lord Byron to assist me in sending a remittance for your journey; because there are men, however excellent, from whom we would never receive an obligation, in the worldly sense of the word; and I am as jealous for my friend as for myself; but I suppose that I shall at last make up an impudent face, and ask Horace Smith to add to the many obligations he has conferred on me. I know I need only ask.

I think I have never told you how very much I like your "Amyntas;" it almost reconciles me to translations. In another sense I still demur. You might have written another such poem as the "Nymphs," with no great access of efforts. I am full of thoughts and plans, and should do something, if the feeble and irritable frame which incloses it was willing to obey the spirit. I fancy that then I should do great things. 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 drama, "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 qualities, but the canker of aristocracy wants to be cut out.

LETTER LIX.

TO HORATIO SMITH, Esq.

Pisa, Sept. 14th, 1821.

MY DEAR SMITH,—I cannot express the pain and disappointment with which I learn the change in your plans, no less than the afflicting cause of it. Florence will no longer have any attractions for me this winter, and I shall contentedly sit down in this humdrum Pisa, and refer to hope and to chance the pleasure I had expected from your society this winter. What shall I do with your packages, which have now, I believe, all arrived at Guebhard's at Leghorn? Is it not possible that a favourable change in Mrs. Smith's health might produce a corresponding change in your determinations, and would it, or would it not, be premature to forward the packages to your present residence, or to London? I will pay every possible attention to your instructions in this regard.

I had marked down several houses in Florence, and

one especially on the Arno, a most lovely place, though they asked rather more than perhaps you would have chosen to pay—yet nothing approaching to an English price.—I do not yet entirely give you up.—Indeed, I should be sorry not to hope that Mrs. Smith's state of health would not 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 with the dramatic power of human nature, will soon enable him to soften down the severe and unharmonising traits of his "Marino Faliero." I think you know Lord Byron personally, or is it your brother? If the latter, I know that he wished particularly to be introduced to you, and that he will sympathise, in some degree, in this great disappointment which I feel in the change, or, as I yet hope, in the prorogation of your plans.

I am glad you like "Adonais," and, particularly, that you do not think it metaphysical, which I was afraid it was. I was resolved to pay some tribute of sympathy to the unhonoured dead, but I wrote, as usual, with a total ignorance of the effect that I should produce.—I have not yet seen your pastoral drama; if you have a copy, could you favour me with it? It will be six months before I shall receive it from England. I have heard it spoken of with high praise, and I have the greatest curiosity to see it.

The Gisbornes promised to buy me some books in Paris, and I had asked you to be kind enough to advance them what they might want to pay for them. I cannot conceive why they did not execute this little commission for me, as they knew how very much I wished to receive these books by the same conveyance as the filtering-stone. Dare I ask you to do me the favour to buy them? *A complete edition of the works of Calderon*, and the French translation of Kant, a German Faust, and to add the Nympholept?—I am indifferent as to a little more or less expense, so that I may have them immediately. I will send you

an order on Paris for the amount, together with the thirty-two francs you were kind enough to pay for me.

All public attention is now centred on the wonderful revolution in Greece. I dare not, after the events of last winter, hope that slaves can become freemen so cheaply; yet I know one Greek of the highest qualities, both of courage and conduct, the Prince Mavrocordato, and if the rest be like him, all will go well.—The news of this moment is, that the Russian army has orders to advance.

Mrs. S. unites with me in the most heartfelt regret,

And I remain, my dear Smith,

Most faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

If you happen to have brought a copy of Clarke's edition of *Queen Mab* for me, I should like very well to see it.—I really hardly know what this poem is about. I am afraid it is rather rough.

LETTER LX.

To JOHN GISBORNE, Esq.

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 anything of my friend, of her and of human nature, will hereafter have plenty of leisure and opportunity to repent her rashness. Lord Byron is, however, quite cured of his gross habits, as far as habits; the perverse ideas on which they were formed, are not yet eradicated.

We have furnished a house at Pisa, and mean to make it our head-quarters. I shall get all my books out, and entrench myself like a spider in a web. If you can assist P. in sending them to Leghorn, you would do me an especial favour; but do not buy me Calderon, Faust, or Kant, as H. S. 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 *συγγενοί*, and even they, it seems, are inclined to approximate me to the circle of a servant girl and her sweetheart. But I intend to write a Symposium of my own to set all this right.

I am just finishing a dramatic poem, called *Hellas*, upon the contest now raging in Greece—a sort of imitation of the *Persæ* of Æschylus, full of lyrical poetry. I try to be what I might have been, but am not successful. I find that (I dare say I shall quote wrong,)—

“Den herrlichsten, den sich der Geist emprängt
Drängt immer fremd und fremder Stoff sich an.”

The Edinburgh review lies. Godwin's answer to Malthus is victorious and decisive; and that it should not be generally acknowledged as such, is full evidence of the influence of successful evil and tyranny. What Godwin is, compared to Plato and Lord 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.

LETTER LXI.*

To J. SEVERN, Esq.

Pisa, November 29th, 1821.

DEAR SIR,—I send you the elegy on poor Keats—and I wish it were better worth your acceptance. You will see, by the preface, that it was written before I could obtain any particular account of his last moments; all that I still know, was communi-

* The original of this letter is in the possession of the Rev. T. Wilkinson.

cated to me by a friend who had derived his information from Colonel Finch; I have ventured to express, as I felt, the respect and admiration which *your* conduct towards him demands.

In spite of his transcendent genius, Keats never was, nor ever will be, a popular poet; and the total neglect and obscurity in which the astonishing remnants of his mind still lie, was hardly to be dissipated by a writer, who, however he may differ from Keats in more important qualities, at least resembles him in that accidental one, a want of popularity.

I have little hope, therefore, that the poem I send you will excite any attention, nor do I feel assured that a critical notice of his writings would find a single reader. But for these considerations, it had been my intention to have collected the remnants of his compositions, and to have published them with a life and criticism.—Has he left any poems or writings of whatsoever kind, and in whose possession are they? Perhaps you would oblige me by information on this point.

Many thanks for the picture you promise me: I shall consider it among the most sacred relics of the past.

For my part, I little expected, when I last saw Keats at my friend Leigh Hunt's, that I should survive him.

Should you ever pass through Pisa, I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you, and of cultivating an acquaintance into something pleasant, begun under such melancholy auspices.

Accept, my dear sir, the assurances of my sincere esteem, and believe me,

Your most sincere and faithful servant,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Do you know Leigh Hunt? I expect him and his family *here* every day.

LETTER LXII.

To JOHN GISBORNE, Esq.

Pisa, April 10, 1822.

MY DEAR GISBORNE,—I have received *Hellas*, which is prettily printed, and with fewer mistakes than any poem I ever published. Am I to thank you for the revision of the press? or who acted as midwife to this last of my orphans, introducing it to oblivion, and me to my accustomed failure? May the cause it celebrates be more fortunate than either! Tell me how you like *Hellas*, and give me your opinion freely. It was written without much care, and in one of those few moments of enthusiasm which now seldom visit me, and which make me pay dear for their visits. I know what to think of *Adonais*, but what to think of those who confound it with the many bad poems of the day, I know not.

I have been reading over and over again *Faust*, and always with sensations which no other composition excites. It deepens the gloom and augments the rapidity of ideas, and would therefore seem to me an unfit study for any person who is a prey to the

reproaches of memory, and the delusions of an imagination not to be restrained. And yet the pleasure of sympathising with emotions known only to few, although they derive their sole charm from despair, and the scorn of the narrow good we can attain in our present state, seems more than to ease the pain which belongs to them. Perhaps all discontent with the *less* (to use a Platonic sophism,) supposes the sense of a just claim to the *greater*, and that we admirers of Faust are on the right road to Paradise. Such a supposition is not more absurd, and is certainly less demoniacal, than that of Wordsworth, where he says—

“This earth,
Which is the world of all of us, and where
We find our happiness, or not at all.”

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 singularity between Faust and this drama, and if I were to acknowledge Coleridge's distinction, 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 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 I.*; but although the poetry succeeded very well, I cannot seize on the conception of the subject as a whole, and seldom now touch the canvas. You know I don't think much about Reviews, nor of the fame they give, nor that they take away. It is absurd in any Review to criticise *Adonais*, and still more to pretend that the verses are bad. *Prometheus* was never intended for more than five or six persons.

And how are you getting on? Do your plans still want success? Do you regret Italy? or anything that Italy contains? And in case of an entire failure in your expectations, do you think of returning here? You see the first blow has been made at funded property:—do you intend to confide and invite a second? You would already have saved something per cent., if you had invested your property in Tuscan land. The next best thing would be to invest it in English, and reside upon it. I tremble for the consequences, to you personally, from a prolonged confidence in the funds. Justice, policy, the hopes of the nation and renewed institutions, demand your ruin, and I, for one, cannot bring myself to desire what is in itself 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 steamboat at Leghorn, to make the *trajet* we projected. I hope he is charitable enough to pray that they may succeed better than we did.

Remember me most affectionately to Mrs. Gisborne, to whom, as well as to yourself, I consider that this letter is written. How is she, and how are you all in health ? And pray tell me, what are your plans of life, and how Henry succeeds, and whether he is married or not ? How can I send you such small sums as you may want for 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.

LETTER LXIII.

To —, Esq.

Pisa, April 11th, 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; 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 B.'s servants wounded the fellow dangerously with a pitchfork. He is now, however, recovering, and the echo of the affair will be heard long after the original report has ceased.

Lord Byron has read me one or two letters of Moore to him,* in which Moore speaks with great kindness of

* For Mr. Moore's account of this incident, and his own feelings and opinions on the subject—those imputed to him by Shelley being purely conjectural—see Moore's *Life of Byron*, Vol. II. p. 584, first edition.

me ; and of course I cannot but feel flattered by the approbation of a man, my inferiority to whom I am proud to acknowledge.—Amongst other things, however, Moore, after giving Lord B. much good advice about public opinion, &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 benefiting Lord B., 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 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.

LETTER LXIV.

TO MRS. SHELLEY, (AT SPEZZIA.)

[*Lerici, Sunday, April 28th, 1822.*]

DEAREST MARY,—I am this moment arrived at Lerici, where I am necessarily detained, waiting the furniture, which left Pisa last night at midnight ; and as the sea has been calm, and the wind fair, I may expect them every moment. It would not do to leave affairs here in an *impiccio*, great as is my 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.

LETTER LXV.

To HORATIO SMITH, Esq. (VERSAILLES.)

Lerici, May, 1822.

MY DEAR SMITH,—It is some time since I have heard from you ; are you still at Versailles ? Do you

* I insert a few extracts from the Journal of Williams, as affording a picture of Shelley's habits during these last months of his life. How full he was of hope, life and love, when lost to us for ever !

“ Sunday, April 28th.

“ Fine. Arrive at Lerici at 1 o'clock—the harbour-master called. Not a house to be had. On our telling him we had brought our furniture, his face lengthened considerably, for he informed us that the dogana would amount to 300*l.* English, at least. Dined, and resolved on sending our

still cling to France, and prefer the arts and conveniences of that over-civilised country to the beautiful

things back without unloading—in fact, found ourselves in a devil of a mess. S. wrote to Mary, whom we heard was at Spezzia.

“ *Monday, 29th.*

“ Cloudy. Accompanied the harbour-master to the chief of the customs at Spezzia. Found him exceedingly polite, and willing to do all that lay in his power to assist us. He will, therefore, take on himself to allow the furniture to come on shore when the boats arrive, and then consider our house as a sort of depôt, until further leave from the Genoa government. Returned to Lerici somewhat calmed. Heard from Mary at Sarzana, that she had concluded for Casa Magni—but for ourselves no hope.

“ *Wednesday, May 1st.*

“ Cloudy, with rain. Came to Casa Magni after breakfast; the Shelleys having contrived to give us rooms. Without them, heaven knows what we should have done. Employed all day putting the things away. All comfortably settled by four. Passed the evening in talking over our folly and our troubles.

“ *Thursday, May 2d.*

“ Cloudy, with intervals of rain. Went out with Shelley in the boat—fish on the rocks—bad sport. Went in the evening after some wild ducks—saw nothing but sublime scenery, to which the grandeur of a storm greatly contributed.

“ *Friday, May 3d.*

“ Fine. The captain of the port dispatched a vessel for Shelley’s boat. Went to Lerici with S., being obliged to market there; the servant having returned from Sarzana without being able to procure anything.

“ *Saturday, May 4th.*

“ Fine. Went fishing with Shelley. No sport. Loitered away the whole day. In the evening tried the rocks again, and had no less than thirty baits taken off by the small fish. Returned late—a heavy swell getting up. I think if there are no tides in the Mediterranean, that there are strong currents, on which the moon, both at the full and at the change, has a very powerful effect; the swell this evening is evidently caused by her influence, for it is quite calm at sea.

“ *Sunday, May 5th.*

“ Fine. Kept awake the whole night by a heavy swell, which made a noise on the beach like the discharge of heavy artillery. Tried with Shelley to launch the small flat-bottomed boat through the surf; we succeeded in pushing it through, but shipped a sea on attempting to land. Walk to Lerici along the beach, by a winding path on the mountain’s side. Delightful evening—the scenery most sublime.

“ *Monday, May 6th.*

“ Fine. Some heavy drops of rain fell to-day, without a cloud being

nature and mighty remains of Italy? As to me, like Anacreon's swallow, I have left my Nile, and have taken

visible. Made a sketch of the western side of the bay. Read a little. Walked with Jane up the mountain.

"After tea, walking with Shelley on the terrace, and observing the effect of moonshine on the waters, he complained of being unusually nervous, and stopping short, he grasped me violently by the arm, and stared stedfastly on the white surf that broke upon the beach under our feet. Observing him sensibly affected, I demanded of him if he were in pain? But he only answered, by saying, 'There it is again—there!' He recovered after some time, and declared that he saw, as plainly as he then saw me, a naked child, (*the child of a friend, who had lately died,*) rise from the sea, and clap its hands as in joy, smiling at him. This was a trance that it required some reasoning and philosophy entirely to awaken him from, so forcibly had the vision operated on his mind. Our conversation, which had been at first rather melancholy, led to this; and my confirming his sensations, by confessing that I had felt the same, gave greater activity to his ever-wandering and lively imagination.

"*Sunday, May 12th.*

"Cloudy and threatening weather. Wrote during the morning. Mr. Maglian, (*harbour-master at Lerici*), called after dinner, and while walking with him on the terrace, we discovered a strange sail coming round the point of Porto Venere, which proved at length to be Shelley's boat. She had left Genoa on Thursday, but had been driven back by prevailing bad winds. A Mr. Heslop and two English seamen brought her round, and they speak most highly of her performances. She does, indeed, excite my surprise and admiration. Shelley and I walked to Lerici, and made a stretch off the land to try her, and I find she fetches whatever she looks at. In short, we have now a perfect plaything for the summer.

"*Monday, May 13th.*

"Rain during night in torrents—a heavy gale of wind from S.W. and a surf running heavier than ever; at 4 gale unabated, violent squalls. Walked to Lerici with Shelley and went on board. Called on M. Maglian, and found him anxiously awaiting the moment of a third child's birth. In the evening an electric arch forming in the clouds announces a heavy thunder-storm, if the wind lulls. Distant thunder—gale increases—a circle of foam surrounds the bay—dark, rainy, and tempestuous, with flashes of lightning at intervals, which give us no hope of better weather. The learned in these things say, that it generally lasts three days when once it commences as this has done. We all feel as if we were on board ship—and the roaring of the sea brings this idea to us even in our beds.

"*Tuesday, May 14th.*

"Clear weather, and the breeze greatly moderated; contrary to all the expectations and the prophecies of these would-be sailors—these weather-wise landmen. While dressing this morning I saw the boat, under easy sail, bearing on and off land. At 9 we took her down, under

up my summer quarters here, in a lonely house, close by the sea-side, surrounded by the soft and sublime

top-sails and flying jib, to Spezzia ; and, after tacking round some of the craft there, returned to Lerici in an hour and a half—a distance, they say, of four leagues. On our return, we were hailed by a servant of Count S——, a minister of the Emperor of Austria, who sent desiring to have a sail ; but before he could get on board, the wind had lulled into a perfect calm, and we only got into the swell, and made him sick.

“ *Wednesday, May 15th.*

“ Fine and fresh breeze in puffs from the land. Jane and Mary consent to take a sail. Run down to Porto Venere and beat back at 1 o'clock. The boat sailed like a witch. After the late gale the water is covered with purple nautili, or as the sailors call them, ‘ Portuguese men-of-war.’ After dinner, Jane accompanied us to the point of the Magra ; and the boat beat back in wonderful style.

“ *Saturday, May 18th.*

“ Fine fresh breeze. Sailed with Shelley to the outer island, and find that there is another small one beyond, which we have named the Sirens’ rock. This name was chosen in consequence of hearing, at the time we were beating to windward to weather it, a sort of murmuring, which, as if by magic, seemed to proceed from all parts of our boat, now on the sea, now here, now there. At length we found that a very small rope (or cord rather) had been fastened to steady the peak when the boat was at anchor, and being drawn extremely tight with the weight of the sail, it vibrated as the wind freshened. Being on the other tack as we approached, it ceased, and again as we stood off it recommenced its song. The Sirens’ island was well named ; for standing in close to observe it, from a strong current setting towards it, the boat was actually attracted so close, that we had only time to tack, and save ourselves from its alluring voice.

“ *Wednesday, May 22nd.*

“ Fine, after a threatening night. After breakfast Shelley and I amused ourselves with trying to make a boat of canvas and reeds, as light and as small as possible—she is to be eight and a half feet long, and four and a half broad.

“ *Sunday, May 26th.*

“ Cloudy. Rose at six, and went with Shelley and Maglian to Massa. The landing-place, or rather the beach, which is about three miles from the town, affords no kind of shelter, but where there is a continued sea running. A little to the left of the second gun-battery, is a shelf running parallel to the beach, at the termination of which five feet water may be had. This shelf is indicated by the shortness and frequency of the surf, and the deep water by a partial cessation of it. It is necessary before any effort is made to work her in—to send a strong stern-fast on shore for this purpose, as the current of the Magra sets forcibly to the eastward, and sweeps her suddenly into the surf beyond. We dined at Massa, and

scenery of the gulf of Spezzia. I do not write ; I have lived too long near Lord Byron, and the sun has

left it again at ten minutes past four, with a strong westerly wind straight in our teeth. This wind (the Ponente as it is called), always sends a damp vapour from the sea, which gathers into watery clouds on the mountain tops, and generally sinks with the sun, but strengthens as he declines. To the landing-place it is said to be fifteen miles to Lerici. We left the latter place at a little past eight and arrived at eleven, and returned in seven hours.

“ Thursday, June 6th.

“Calm. Left Villa Magni, at five, on our way to Via Reggio. At eight the wind sprung up, baffling in all directions but the right one. At eleven we could steer our course ; but at one it fell calm, and left us like a log on the water, but four miles to windward of Massa. We remained there till six ; the thunder-clouds gathering on the mountains around, and threatening to burst in squalls ; heat excessive. At seven rowed into Massa beach—but on attempting to land we were opposed by the guard, who told us that the head person of the fort (of two rusty guns) being at Festa, that, as he was not able to read, we must wait till the former arrived. Not willing to put up with such treatment, Shelley told him at his peril to detain us, when the fellow brought down two old muskets, and we prepared our pistols, which he no sooner saw we were determined to use, than he called our servant to the beach, and desiring him to hold the paper about a yard from him, he suffered two gentlemen who were bathing near the place to explain who and what we were. Upon this, the fellow's tone changed from presumption to the most cowardly fawning, and we proceeded to Massa unmolested. Slept at Massa, about three miles inland.

“ Friday, June 7th.

“Left Massa at half-past five—a dead calm, the atmosphere hot and oppressive. At eight a breeze sprung up, which enabled us to lie up to Magra Point. Beat round the point and reached home at half-past two.

“ Wednesday, June 12th.

“Launched the little boat, which answered our wishes and expectations. She is 86 lbs. English weight, and stows easily on board. Sailed in the evening, but were becalmed in the offing, and left there with a long ground-swell, which made Jane little better than dead. Hoisted out our little boat and brought her on shore. Her landing attended by the whole village.

“ Thursday, June 13th.

“Fine. At nine, saw a vessel between the straits of Porto Venere, like a man-of-war brig. She proved to be the Bolivar, with Roberts and Trelawny on board, who are taking her round to Livorno. On meeting them we were saluted by six guns. Sailed together to try the vessels—in speed no chance with her, but I think we keep as good a wind. She is the most beautiful craft I ever saw, and will do more for her size.

extinguished the glow-worm; for I cannot hope, with St. John, that "*the light came into the world, and the world knew it not.*"

The object of my present letter is, however, a request, and as it concerns that most odious of all subjects, money, I will put it in the shortest shape—Godwin's law-suit, he tells us, is decided against him; and he is adjudged to pay 400*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 300*l.* 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

She costs Lord Byron 750*l.* clear off and ready for sea, with provisions and conveniences of every kind.

"*Wednesday, June 19th.*

"Fine. The swell continues, and I am now the more persuaded that the moon influences the tides here, particularly the new moon, on the first week before she makes her appearance. Took the ballast out and hauled the boat on the beach. Cleaned and greased her.

"*Thursday, June 20th.*

"Fine. Shelley hears from Hunt that he is arrived at Genoa, having sailed from England on the 13th May.

"*Saturday, June 22d.*

"Calm. Heat overpowering, but in the shade refreshed by the sea-breeze. At seven launched our boat with all her ballast in. She floats three inches lighter than before. This difference is caused, I imagine, by her planks having dried while on shore.

"*Thursday, June 27th.*

"Fine. The heat increases daily, and prayers are offering for rain. At Parma it is now so excessive, that the labourers are forbidden to work in the fields after ten and before five, fearful of an epidemic."

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.

LETTER LXVI.

To —.

Lerici, June 29th, 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 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.

LETTER LXVII.

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

“Monday, July 1st.

* “Calm and clear. Rose at 4 to get the top-sails altered. At 12 a fine breeze from the westward tempted us to weigh for Leghorn. At 2 stretched across to Lerici to pick up Roberts; and at half-past found ourselves in the offing, with a side wind. At half-past 9 arrived at Leghorn—a run of forty-five to fifty miles in seven hours and a half.

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.

Anchored astern the Bolivar, from which we procured cushions and made up for ourselves a bed on board, not being able to get on shore after sunset, on account of the health-office being shut at that hour.

“ Tuesday, 2nd.

“ Fine weather. We heard this morning that the Bolivar was about to sail for Genoa, and that Lord Byron was quitting Tuscany, on account of Count Gambia’s family having again been exiled thence. This, on reaching the shore, I found really to be the case; for they had just left the police-office, having there received the order. Met Lord Byron at Dunn’s, and took leave of him. Was introduced to Mr. Leigh Hunt, and called on Mrs. Hunt. Shopped and strolled about all day. Met Lieutenant Marsham, of the Rochefort, an old school-fellow and shipmate.

“ Wednesday, 3rd.

“ Fine strong sea-breeze.

“ Thursday, 4th.

“ Fine. Processions of priests and religiosi have for several days been active in their prayers for rain; but the gods are either angry, or nature is too powerful.”

LETTER LXVIII.

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 B. wishes to sell her, but I imagine would prefer ready money. I have as yet made no inquiries about houses near Pugnano—I have no moment of time to spare from Hunt's affairs; I am detained unwillingly here, and you will probably see Williams in the boat before me,—but that will be decided to-morrow.

Things are in the worst possible situation with respect to poor Hunt. I find Marianne in a desperate state of health, and on our arrival at Pisa sent for Vaccà. He decides that her case is hopeless, and that although it will be lingering, must inevitably end fatally. This decision he thought proper to communicate to Hunt; indicating at the same time, with great judgment and precision, the treatment necessary to be observed for availing himself of the chance of his being deceived. This intelligence has extinguished the last spark of poor Hunt's spirits, low enough before. The children are 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 him the copyright of the *Vision of Judgment* for the first number. This offer, if sincere, is *more* than enough to set up the journal, and, if sincere, will set everything right.

How are you, my best Mary? Write especially how is your health and how your spirits are, and whether you are not more reconciled to staying at Lerici, at least during the summer.

You have no idea how I am hurried and occupied;

I have not a moment's leisure, but will write by next post.

Ever, dearest Mary,

Yours affectionately,

S.

I have found the translation of the Symposium.

THE END.

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