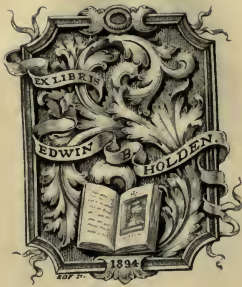




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LETTERS  
OF  
EDWARD HENRY



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LETTERS

TO

LEIGH HUNT

VOL. II.

*a*



LETTERS  
FROM  
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY  
TO  
J. H. LEIGH HUNT

Edited by Thomas J. Wise

*IN TWO VOLUMES*

VOL. II.

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LETTERS.

REVUE

...

LETTERS TO LEIGH HUNT.

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LETTER XV.

---

FIRENZE.

*November 13th, 1819.*

[*Saturday.*]

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[HELLEY].

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

*To Leigh Hunt, Esq.*

LETTER XVI.  

---

FLORENCE.

*November, 1819.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Two letters, both bearing date Oct. 20, arrived 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 Man-

chester 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 seduced by it; although the Greek plays, and some of the ideal

\* *Peter Bell the Third*.

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[HELLEY].

*To Leigh Hunt, Esq.*

LETTER XVII.

---

FLORENCE.

*December 23rd, 1819.*[*Thursday.*]

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 enclosures, it would not be welcome to you—whatever I might send.

We have just received all your *Examiners* up to October 27th. I admire and approve most highly of those on religion; there is one very

long one that especially pleases me. Added days and years and hours add to my disapprobation of this odious superstition, and to my gratitude to any who like you break for ever its ever-gathering bubble.

What a state England is in! But you will never write politics. But I wish then that you would write a paper in the *Examiner* on the actual state of the country, and what under all the circumstances of the conflicting passions and interests of men, we are to expect:—Not what we ought to expect, or what if so and so were to happen we might expect: but what, as things are, there is reason to believe will come; and send it me for my information. Every word a man has to say is valuable to the public now; and thus you will at once gratify your friend, nay instruct and either exhilarate him, or force him to be resigned; and awaken the minds of the people.

I have no spirits to write what I do not know whether you will care much about.—I know well that if I were in great misery, poverty, &c., you would think of nothing else but how to amuse and relieve me.—You omit me if I am prosperous. You are like Jesus who said he came to heal the sick, when they reproached him for feasting with *publicans* and sinners.

I could laugh if I found a joke in order to put you in good humour with me after my scolding—in good humour enough to write to us. I suppose we shall soon have to fight in England!

Affectionate love from all to all. This ought not only to be the vale of a letter, but a superscription over the gate of Life.

Your sincere friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

I send you a *Sonnet*. I do not

expect you to publish it—but you may shew it to whom you please.

[*Addressed outside.*]

*Private.*

*Leigh Hunt, Esq.*

*“Examiner” Office,*

*19 Catharine Street,*

*London.*

*Angleterre.*

LETTER XVIII.

---

PISA.

*April 5th, 1820.**[Wednesday.]*

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

You may conceive the surprise and sorrow with which I hear both from you and Bessy, whom I wrote to for the purpose of having some information about your money affairs, that you have undergone all the torments which your letter describes. When I reflect too that I began for you what I was unable to finish, and that having intended to set you free, I left you in the midst of those accumulating perplexities from which you must have

suffered so dreadfully, these regrets touch me personally. But your letter persuades me that things will go on better, and meanwhile I may see you.

There is one subject connected with the actual state of my financial imbecility about which I wish your assistance. I believe the bills for my piano and for yours came due this year. Of course you know that in the question of a just debt I am totally incapable of taking advantage of my residence abroad, and especially in a debt so contracted. But I have not the money to pay it instantly. Could you solicit for me a renewal of it? Of course the Pianoforte maker is afraid of the ultimate payment, or I would do anything he requires to assure him of it further. And I would consent to make him any compensation he chose for the delay; and if he will accept nothing of that kind, will do my best when it is in my power to make him



no loser by his forbearance. I forget how this affair was arranged, but if I rightly recollect it was through Novello's mediation. I cannot but be anxious to stand well in the estimation of so excellent and friendly a person as Novello, and I should therefore consider it as a special act of friendship in you to explain this business, and arrange it for me without loss of time.

We are living here very considerably within our income, on which we have unfortunately heavy claims which I will take another occasion of explaining. But if we go on as now we shall soon get up. We have pleasant apartments on the Arno, at the top of a house, where we just begin to feel our strength, for we have been cooped up in narrow rooms all this severe winter, and I have been irritated to death for the want of a study. I have done nothing therefore until this month, and now we begin our accustomed literary occupations.

We see no one but an Irish lady and her husband, who are settled here. She is everything that is amiable and wise ; and he is very agreeable. You will think it my fate either to find or to imagine some lady of 45, very unprejudiced and philosophical, who has entered deeply into the best and selectest spirit of the age ; with enchanting manners, and a disposition rather to like me, in every town that I inhabit. But certainly such this lady is.

We shall remain in Pisa until June, when we migrate to the Baths of Lucca ; and after that our destination is uncertain. Much stress is laid upon a still more southern climate for my health, which has suffered dreadfully this winter ; and if I could believe that Spain would be effectual, I might possibly be tempted to make a voyage thither, on account of the glorious events of which it is at this moment,

the theatre. You know my passion for a republic, or anything which approaches it.

I am extremely curious to see your tragedy. It appears to me that you excell in the power of delineating passion ; and, what is more necessary, of connecting and developing it. This latter part of a dramatic writer's business is to me an incredible effort ; if I have in any degree succeeded, I shall have at least earned the applause. But to you this is easy. As to your being out of conceit with your tragedy, I assure myself that it is only the effect of criticism upon the nerves. At all events the moment it is printed send it to me. Meanwhile I am curious to hear what you think of mine.\* I am afraid the subject will not please you, but at least you will read my justification of it in the preface. I lay much

\* *The Cenci*, printed in Italy in 1819, and dedicated to Leigh Hunt.

stress upon that argument against a diversity of opinion to be produced by works of imagination. The very Theatre rejected it with expressions of the greatest insolence. I feel persuaded that they must have guessed at the author. But about all this I don't much care. But of all that I have lately sent, *Prometheus* is my favourite.

We hear that there is no chance of seeing you in Italy—and yet how much you would enjoy it—and how much we should enjoy your society! For you should come to Rome, which is the metropolis of taste and memory still,—and we would see the fine pictures and statues together, and the ruins, things greater than I can give you a conception of.

For the present adieu. Write to me especially about your affairs, and whether they proceed in the same good train.

Adieu.—Mary desires her love to you all.

Your affectionate,

P. B. S[HELLEY].

I don't remember if I acknowledged the receipt of *Robin Hood*—no more did you of *Peter Bell*. There's tit for tat! I thought the introductory verses very pretty, but I think you diluted yourself by the measure you chose. Then Thornton's *esquisse de la legislation*, from which no doubt both Bentham and Boccacio have plagiarised all their discourses, accommodating them to the notions of the vulgar. Then on my side is the letter to Carlisle, in which I must tell you I was considerably interested.

[Addressed outside.]

Leigh Hunt, Esq.,

13, Mortimer Terrace,

Kentish Town—near London,

Inglaterra.

LETTER XIX.

---

PISA.

*May 1st, 1820.*[*Monday.*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In a few days after the arrival of this letter you may expect a visit from the Gisbornes, who are now on the point of setting out to England. The lady you will think delightful, if you take the trouble to make her talk to you. I received your welcome letter, and the most welcome praises of my book \* which it contained. I confess I did not expect it to be so successful with you, or with anyone, although it was written with a certain view to popularity, a view to which I sacrificed my

\* *The Cenci.*

own peculiar notions in a certain sort by treating of any subject, the basis of which is moral error. That you and that a few chosen judges should approve of it is however the chief aim of my ambition, and outweighs the censure of "a whole theatre of others." I shall be anxious to see the passage in the *Examiner* about my book, but I confess that I derive a more sincere satisfaction from your private opinion, when I know that no friendship could induce you to soften any disapprobation you might feel.—As to \*\*\*\*\* I am afraid his demerits are very heavy: they must have been so before *you* could have perceived them. I should like to know how he has behaved, though I strongly suspect what the affair is. [*Paper torn.*]

And in fact they are all rogues. It is less the character of the individual than the situation in which he is placed



which determines him to be honest or dishonest ; perhaps we ought to regard an honest bookseller, or an honest seller of anything else in the present state of human affairs, as a kind of Jesus Christ. The system of society as it exists at present must be overthrown from the foundations with all its superstructure of maxims and of forms before we shall find anything but disappointment in our intercourse with any but a few select spirits. This remedy does not seem to be one of the easiest. But the generous few are not the less held to tend with all their efforts towards it. If faith is a virtue in any case it is so in politics rather than religion ; as having a power of producing that a belief in which is at once a prophecy and a cause. So far the preacher.—The Gisbornes stay in London about six weeks, and I have asked Hogg to come and see me in Italy ; so possibly he will return with them.



I dare not hope that you will add yourself to the party. I tried to get your *Decameron*, &c., at Leghorn and Pisa to send with them, but was unsuccessful. It is to be had at Florence, and will be sent with some vases destined for Horace Smith; these vases are copies from the antique in alabaster, and I think will please you.\* I wish to ask you if you know of any bookseller who would like to publish a little volume of *popular songs* wholly political, and destined to awaken and direct the imagination of the reformers. I see you smile, but answer my question. Of the politics of the day you never speak—I only see a Paris paper in English filled with extracts from the *Courier*.—I suppose you know that my tragedy has been republished in Paris in English.†

\* These vases are now in the possession of Mr. Round, of Brighton, who married a daughter of Horace Smith.

† There seems no reason to doubt that Shelley was labouring under a misapprehension in imagining *The*

[*Written by Mary Shelley.*]

Do you know that you might write much longer letters if [you] wrote closer—besides at the top of each page you leave a full inch. As you are so much accustomed to this way of writing that you could not easily break yourself of it, suppose when you came to the end of your paper you turned it topsy turvy and interlined it all the way.—I wish Marianne could write, but how can she? Bessy might; her last letter was *6th of January*.

Ever yours,

M. W. S[HELLEY].

The Gisbornes will bring a little present for Marianne. I wish it had been more valuable or useful, [but did] not like letting you see friends from us without anything from us.

*Cenci* to have been "republished" in Paris. Probably some copies of the original edition, printed in Italy, were on sale there.

LETTER XX.

---

PISA.

*August 26th, 1821.*[*Sunday.*]

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 (Lord Byron) 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 or other it was never brought to bear. There can be no doubt that the profits of any scheme in which you and Lord Byron engage, must, from various yet coöperating reasons, be very great. As to myself, I am for the present only a sort of link between you and him until you can know each other, and effectuate the arrangements; since (to entrust you with a secret which for your sake I withhold from Lord Byron), nothing would induce me to share in the profits, and still less in the

\* *The Liberal.*

borrowed splendour of such a partnership. You and he, in different manner, would be equal, and would bring in a different manner, but in the same proportion, equal stock 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 one would never receive an obligation in the worldly sense of the word. And I am as jealous for my friend as for myself. I, as you know, have not it; but I suppose that at last I shall make up an impudent face and ask Horace

Smith to add to the many obligations he has conferred on me—I know I only need 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 effort.

I am full of thoughts and plans, and should do something if the feeble and irritable frame which encloses 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 praise of *Prometheus Unbound*; and, what you will not agree with him in, censure of the *Cenci*. Certainly if

*Marino Faliero* is a drama, *Cenci* is not. But that between ourselves.

Lord Byron is reformed as far as gallantry goes, and lives with a beautiful and sentimental Italian Lady (the Countess Guiccioli), who is as much attached to him as may be. I trust greatly to his intercourse with you for his creed to become as pure as he thinks his conduct is. He has many generous and exalted qualities, but the canker of aristocracy wants to be cut out—and something, God knows, wants to be cut out of us all—except perhaps you!

An Italian impromptu of mine.—  
Correct the language if there should be errors, and do what you will with it.

## BUONA NOTTE.

Buona Notte ! Buona Notte ! come mai

La notte sia buona senza te ?

Non dimmi buona notte ; che tu sai

La notte sa star buona da per se.

Mala Notte, sola notte, senza speme,  
Equella quando Lilla m' abbandona ;  
I cuori che si batton' insieme  
Fanno sempre, senza dir, la notte buona.

Quanto male buona notte si suona  
Con sospiri e parole interrotte !—  
Il modo di aven la notte buona  
E mai non di dir la buona notte.

[P. B. SHELLEY.]

[*Addressed outside.*]

*Leigh Hunt, Esq.,*

*Vale of Health,*

*Hampstead,*

*London.*

*Angleterre.*



## LETTER XXI.

PISA.

*October 6th, 1821.*[*Saturday.*]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I wrote yesterday evening in haste to your brother, imagining that you must have set off, and wishing to reassure him on the subject of money.— I write again to-day, because I find that yesterday was not post day, and I am in hopes that this letter may arrive in time enough.—First of all then,—welcome, and thanks, and take our love and anxious wishes for the companions of your journey.—Secondly, let me advise you upon one or two things.—

You would do well to come by sea instead of crossing France at this season of the year,—and if you do cross France by no means venture to pass the Alps so late, but go directly from Paris to Marseilles, and embark at that town for Leghorn, which is within two hours' drive of Pisa. But it would be far better to embark at London for Leghorn direct. At this season, westerly and north-westerly winds may be expected to prevail, and although the usual average passage is three weeks, I know a person who made it in twelve days.—It were of use if you could bring your beds, and by no means neglect to put up your linen, knives and forks, spoons or any other matter of that kind, as it will make a material difference in your expenses here. In case you come by sea bring all the furniture you can,—and if you come by France *send* your beds, your piano, &c., but not tables,

chairs, &c.—because freightage is not paid by weight but by room.—Address your packages to the care of Mr. Guebhard, Merchant, Leghorn. In addition—write exactly *when* we are to expect you. This is of the last consequence as to cheapness, because it is necessary we should make some arrangement about your lodgings; and tell us what furniture you have, and whether any.

Lord Byron is expected every day, and I know will be delighted to hear of your coming.—He has a fine palace and will have a splendid establishment here: that's the sort of thing he likes. Hogg will be inconsolable at your departure. I wish you could bring him with you—he will say that I am like Lucifer who has seduced the third part of the starry flock.

If the letter arrives in time pray bring me a perfect copy of the *Indicator* and a copy of Clarke's *Queen Mab*.

—I have little hopes that this letter will reach you.

All good spirits be your guide.

Your most affectionate

S[HELLEY].

LETTER XXII.

---

PISA.

*January 25th, 1822*[*Friday.*]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I send you by return of post £150, within 30 or 40 of what I had contrived to scrape together. How I am to assemble the constituents of such a sum again I do not at present see; but do not be disheartened,—we will all put our shoulders to the wheel. Let me not speak of my own disappointment, which, great as it is in not seeing you here, is all swallowed up in sympathy with your present situation. Our anxiety during the continuance of the succession of tempests which one

morning seemed to rain lightnings into Pisa, and amongst others struck the palace adjoining Lord Byron's, and turned the Arno into a raging sea, was, as you may conceive, excessive; and our first relief was your letter from Ramsgate. Between the interval of that and your letter of *December 28*, we were in daily expectation of your arrival. Yesterday arrived that dated *January 6*.

Lord Byron has assigned you a portion of his palace, and Mary and I had occupied ourselves in furnishing it. Everything was already provided except bedding, which could have been got in a moment, and which we thought it possible you might bring with you. We had hired a woman cook of the country for you, who is still with us. Lord B[ Byron ] had kindly insisted upon paying the upholsterer's bill, with that sort of unsuspecting goodness which makes it infinitely difficult to ask him

for more. Past circumstances between Lord B[ Byron ] and me render it *impossible* that I should accept any supply from him for my own use, or that I should ask it for yours if the contribution could be supposed in any manner to relieve me, or to do what I could otherwise have done. It is true that I cannot, but how is he to be assured of this?

One thing strikes me as *possible*. I am at present writing the drama of *Charles the First*, a play which, if completed according to my present idea, will hold a higher rank than the *Cenci* as a work of art. Would no bookseller give me £150 or £200 for the copyright of this play? You know best how my writings sell, whether at all or not: after they failed of making the sort of impression on men that I expected, I have never until now thought it worth while to inquire. The question is now interesting to me, inasmuch as the re-

putation depending on their sale might induce a bookseller to give me such a sum for this play. Write to Allman, your bookseller, tell him what I tell you of *Charles the First*, and do not delay a post. I have a parcel of little poems also, the *Witch of Atlas*, and some translations of Homer's Hymns, the copyright of which I must sell. I offered the *Charles the First* to Ollier, and you had better write at the same time to learn his terms. Of course you will not delay a post in this.

The evils of your remaining in England are inconceivably great if you ultimately determine upon Italy; and in the latter case, the best thing you can do is, without waiting for the spring, to set sail with the very first ship you can. Debts, responsibilities, and expenses will enmesh you round about if you delay, and force you back into that circle from which I made a push to draw you. The winter,



generally, is not a bad time for sailing, but only that period which you selected, and another when the year approaches to the vernal equinox. You avoided—and if you must still delay, will still avoid—the halcyon days of the Mediterranean. There is no serious danger in a cargo of gunpowder, hundreds of ships navigate these electrical seas with that freight without risk. Marianne would have been benefited, and would still benefit exceedingly, by the Elysian temperature of the Mediterranean.

Poor Marianne ! how much I feel for her, and with what anxiety I expect your news of her health ! Were it not for the cursed necessity of finding money, all considerations would be swallowed up in the thought of her ; and I should be delighted to think that she had obtained this interval of repose which now perplexes and annoys me.

Pray tell me in answer to this letter, unless you answer it in person, what

arrangement you have made about the receipt of a regular income from the profits of the *Examiner*. You ought not to leave England without having the assurance of an independence in this particular ; as many difficulties have presented themselves to the plan imagined by Lord Byron, which I depend upon you for getting rid of. And if there is time to write before you set off, pray tell me if Ollier has published *Hellas*, and what effect was produced by *Adonais*. My faculties are shaken to atoms, and torpid. I can write nothing ; and if *Adonais* had no success, and excited no interest, what incentive can I have to write ? As to reviews, don't give Gifford, or his associate Hazlitt, a stripe the more for my sake. The man must be enviably happy whom reviews can make miserable. I have neither curiosity, interest, pain, nor pleasure in anything, good or evil, they can say of me. I feel only a

slight disgust, and a sort of wonder that they presume to write my name. Send me your satire when it is printed. I began once a *Satire upon Satire*, which I meant to be very severe; it was full of *small knives*, in the use of which practice would soon have made me very expert.\*

[*Postscript by Mary Shelley.*]

DEAREST CHILDREN,

I fill up a little empty space of blank paper with many wishes, regrets, and &c.'s. Stay no longer, I beseech you, in your cloud-environed isle, as cloudy for the soul as for the rest of it. Even friends are only to be seen through a murky mist, which will not be under the bright sky of dear Italy. My poor Marianne will get well, and you all be light-hearted and happy. Come quickly.

Affectionately yours,

MARY S[HELLEY].

\* Lady Shelley possesses a fragment of manuscript, as yet unpublished, which appears to be a portion of the *Satire* in question.

LETTER XXIII.

---

LEGHORN.

*February 23rd, 1822.*[*Saturday.*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have only a single instant to tell you that I cannot cash Lord Byron's bills for you . . . of the £250, who will pay you on Lady Day. It was better to wait a week or so, than lose so enormous a percentage. I have written to Brookes to pay you this, while I keep Lord Byron's bills to answer my engagements, and send you this. The additional 36 pounds which shall be sent in a few posts you must lose upon, but that is of less moment.

Remember it is Brookes and Co.,

Chancery Lane.—Do not apply for payment before the 25<sup>th</sup>.

I'll write next post.—Kindest love to Marianne, and pray don't delay in letting me hear how you are all getting on.—

*The signature to this letter has been cut out with scissors, which causes several words on the first page to be missing. The seal remains unbroken.*

[Addressed outside.]

Leigh Hunt, Esq.,  
Plymouth,  
Devonshire.

Angleterra.

## LETTER XXIV.

PISA.

*March 2nd, 1822.*[*Saturday.*]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

My last two letters have, I fear, given you some uneasiness, or at least inflicted that portion of it which I felt in writing them. The aspect of affairs has somewhat changed since the date of that in which I expressed a repugnance to a continuance of intimacy with Lord Byron, so close as that which now exists ; at least, it has changed so far as regards you and the intended journal. He expresses again the greatest eagerness to undertake it, and proceed with it, as well as the

greatest confidence in you as his associate. He is for ever dilating upon his impatience of your delay, and his disappointment at your not having already arrived. He renews his expressions of disregard for the opinion of those who advised him against this alliance with you, and I imagine it will be no very difficult task to execute that which you have assigned me—to keep him in heart with the project until your arrival. Meanwhile, let my last letters, as far as they regard Lord Byron, be as if they had not been written. Particular circumstances, or rather, I should say, particular dispositions in Lord Byron's character, render the close and exclusive intimacy with him in which I find myself intolerable to me; thus much, my best friend, I will confess and confide to you. No feelings of my own shall injure or interfere with what is now nearest to them—your interest, and I will take care to

preserve the little influence I may have over this Proteus in whom such strange extremes are reconciled, until we meet—which we now must, at all events, soon do.

Lord Byron shewed me your letter to him, which arrived with mine yesterday. How shall I thank you for your generous and delicate defence and explanation of my motives? I fear no misinterpretation from you, and from anyone else I despise and defy it.

So you think I can make nothing of Charles the First; *Tanto peggio*. Indeed, I have written nothing for this two months: a slight circumstance gave a new train to my ideas, and shattered the fragile edifice when half built. What motives have I to write? I *had* motives, and I thank the God of my own heart they were totally different from those of the other apes of humanity who make mouths in the glass of time. But what are *those*



motives now? The only inspiration of an ordinary kind I could descend to acknowledge would be the earning £100 for you; and that it seems I cannot.

Poor Marianne, how ill she seems to have been! Give my best love to her, and tell her I hope she is better, and that I know as soon as she can resolve to set sail, that she will be better. Your rooms are still ready for you at Lord Byron's. I am afraid they will be rather hot in the summer; they were delightful winter rooms. My post [MS. illegible] must be transformed by your delay into a *paulo post futurum*.

Lord Byron begs me to ask you to send the enclosed letter to London in an inclosure, stating when you mean to sail, and in what ship. It is addressed to the wife of his valet Fletcher, who wishes to come out to join him under your protection, and, I need not tell you to promise her safety and

comfort. . . . All happiness attend you, my best friend, and believe that I am watching over your interests with the vigilance of painful affection. Mary will write next post.

Adieu.

Yours, S[HELLEY].

LETTER XXV.

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PISA.

*April 10th, 1822.*[*Wednesday.*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I write in the firm hope and persuasion that you have already set sail, and that this letter will undergo the lingering and obscure revelations of those which are directed by people who return from a voyage round the world by Cape Horn, to those who are set off on a voyage round the world by the Cape of Good Hope.

You will, I hope, have received the £220 from Brookes before this; as well as my order upon them, which I *think* I sent to you. It is of no

consequence whether I did or not, as Brookes have orders to pay this sum to you, and would have done so even without your application—though it was quite right to take this precaution.

Lord Byron has the greatest anxiety for your arrival, and is now always urging me to press you to depart. I know that you need no spur. I said what I thought with regard to Lord Byron, nor would I have breathed a syllable of my feelings in any ear but yours; but with you, I would, and I may think aloud. Perhaps time has corrected me, and I am become, like those whom I formerly condemned, misanthropical and suspicious. If so, do you cure me; nor should I wonder, for if friendship is the medicine of such diseases I may well say that mine have been long neglected—and how deep the wounds have been, you partly know, and partly can conjecture. Certain it is, that Lord Byron has made

me bitterly feel the inferiority which the world has presumed to place between us, and which subsists no where in reality but in our own talents, which are not our own but Nature's—or in our rank, which is not our own but Fortune's.

I will tell you more of this when we meet. I did not wrong in carrying this jealousy of my Lord Byron into his loan to you, or rather to me; and you in the superiority of a wise and tranquil nature have well corrected and justly reprov'd me. And plan your account with finding much in me to correct and to reprove. Alas, how am I fallen from the boasted purity in which you knew me once exulting!

How is poor Marianne? My anxiety for *her* is greater than for any of you, and I dread the consequences of the English winter from which she could not escape! Give my most affectionate love to her, and tell her we will soon

get her well here. Write before you set off. Your house is still ready for you. We are obliged to go into the country both for mine and Mary's health, to whom the sea air is necessary ; but the moment I hear of your arrival, I shall set off, if already in the country, and join you.

Yours affectionately and ever,

P. B. S[HELLEY].

[Addressed outside.]

*Leigh Hunt, Esq.,*

*Stonehouse,*

*Plymouth,*

*Devon.*

*Anghilterre.*

LETTER XXVI.

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LERICI.

*June 19th, 1822.*[*Wednesday.*]

My DEAREST FRIEND,

I write to you on the chance that you may not have left Genoa before my letter can reach you. Your letter was sent to Pisa, and thence forwarded here, or I should probably have ventured to meet you at Genoa ; but the chances are now so much diminished of finding you, that I will not run the risk of the delay of seeing you that would be caused by our missing each other on the way. I shall therefore set off for Leghorn the moment I hear you have sailed.

We now inhabit a white house, with arches, near the town of Lerici, in the gulf of Spezia. The Williamses are with us. Williams is one of the best fellows in the world; and Jane his wife a most delightful person, whom we all agree is the exact antitype of the lady I described in *The Sensitive Plant*, though this must have been a *pure anticipated cognition*, as it was written a year before I knew her. I wish you need not pass Lerici, which I fear you will do; cast your eye on the white house, and think of us.

A thousand welcomes, my best friend, to this divine country; high mountains and seas no longer divide those whose affections are united. We have much to think of and talk of when we meet at Leghorn; but the final result of our plans will be peace to you, and to me a greater degree of consolation than has been permitted me since we met. My best love to



Marianne, whose illness will soon disappear with the causes of it. If any circumstance *should* make you stop at Lerici, imagine the delightful surprise.

Poor Mary, who sends you a thousand loves, has been seriously ill. She is still too unwell to rise from the sofa, and must take great care of herself for some time, or she would come with us to Leghorn. Lord Byron is in *villeggiatura*, near Leghorn; and you will meet besides with a Mr. Trelawny, a wild but kind-hearted seaman.

Give me the earliest intelligence of your motions.

[P. B. SHELLEY.]



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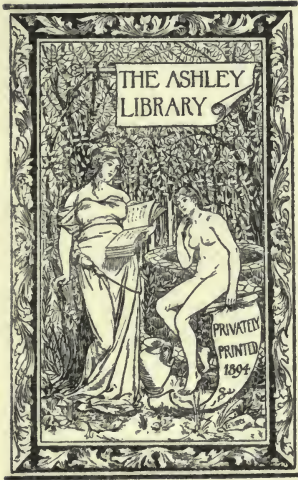
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