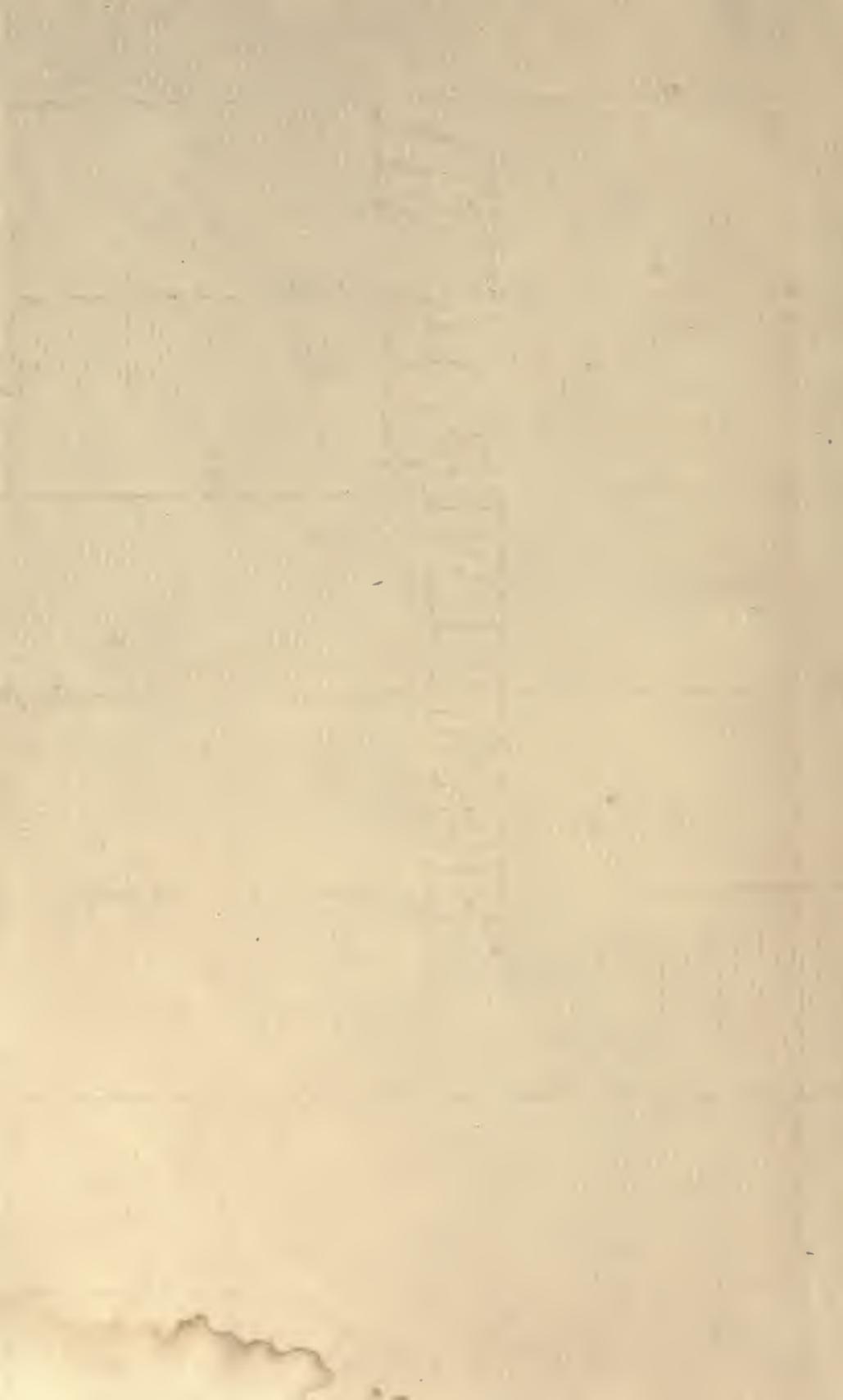


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R. Ingersoll



SHELLEY'S NOTES ON SCULPTURES &c.

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*NOTES ON SCULPTURES IN ROME AND
FLORENCE TOGETHER WITH A LU-
CIANIC FRAGMENT AND A CRITI-
CISM OF PEACOCK'S POEM "RHO-
DODAPHNE" BY PERCY BYSSHE
SHELLEY EDITED BY HARRY BUX-
TON FORMAN.*



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P R E F A C E.

OF the following Notes on Sculptures in Rome and Florence, though only eight were given in the *Essays &c.* (1840), eleven have already appeared in print. The rest are from a MS. Note-book, the order of which is here preserved in preference to that adopted by Medwin in *The Shelley Papers* and followed by Mrs. Shelley. In the preface to the 1840 collection, Mrs. Shelley says of certain of the Fragments, "Small portions of these and other Essays were published by Captain Medwin in a newspaper. Generally speaking, his extracts are incorrect and incomplete. I must except the Essay on Love, and Remarks on some of the Statues of the Gallery of Florence, however, as they appeared there, from the blame of these defects." My own impression is that the reason for this exception was negative, that Mrs. Shelley had not the original Note-books by her. Medwin was notoriously incapable of perfect accuracy; but beyond the results of that incapacity, we discern in the versions given by him, and generally adopted implicitly by Mrs.

Shelley, signs of tampering, as any student of Shelley will judge by noting the variations given in the following pages. The variations between *The Shelley Papers* and the *Essays*, in regard to the eight Notes printed in both, affect only five words and some dozen and a half stops, as far as I can find; and only one change is other than the printer would be likely to make. Medwin says (*Shelley Papers*, page 55), "Shelley, while at Florence, passed much of his time in the gallery, where, after his severe mental labours, his imagination reposed and luxuriated amid the divine creations of the Greeks. The Niobe, the Venus Anadyomene, the group of Bacchus and Ampelus, were the subjects of his inexhaustible and insatiable admiration. On these I have heard him expatiate with all the eloquence of poetic enthusiasm. He had made ample notes on the wonders of art in this gallery, from which, on my leaving Pisa, he allowed me to make extracts, far surpassing in eloquence anything Winkelman has left on this subject." In his life of Shelley (Vol. I, page 351), Medwin records that these notes were "thrown off in the gallery, in a burst of enthusiasm." He does not say that he made extracts from a similar Note-book on statues at Rome; but most likely he did; and the two books were probably continuous; as the Notes at the opening of the book in my possession are Roman, and those on the Arch of Titus and the Laocoön, given by Medwin, are of course also Roman. For convenience of identification, the particular printed sources are indicated in separate foot-notes in this volume. All the Notes on Sculptures not so distinguished are from the MS. book.

The Elysian Fields is printed from a MS. in Shelley's writing, so headed, in my possession; I presume it belongs to about the same period as the Marlow Pamphlets. In a letter dated the 20th of January, 1821 (*Shelley Memorials*, page 136), Shelley thus refers to a paper by Archdeacon Hare in *Ollier's Literary Miscellany*: "I was immeasurably amused by the quotation from Schlegel, about the way in which the popular faith is destroyed—first the Devil, then the Holy Ghost, then God the Father. I had written a Lucianic essay to prove the same thing." Mr. Rossetti (*Poetical Works*, 1878, Vol. I, page 150) thinks the reference is to the *Essay on Devils*, withdrawn after being prepared for publication with the *Essays, Letters &c.* (1840), and never yet published. It does not seem to me certain that Shelley alludes to that essay; but I feel pretty confident that *The Elysian Fields* is a portion of a Lucianic epistle—from some Englishman of political eminence, dead before 1820, to, perhaps, the Princess Charlotte. The exposition foreshadowed in the final paragraph might well have included a view of the decay of popular belief. Those who are intimately familiar with the political history and literature of England will probably be able to identify the person represented. It is not unlikely to be Charles Fox, judging from the juxtaposition of his name, in the *Address to the Irish People*, with sentiments much the same as those set forth in the third paragraph of *The Elysian Fields*. Compare that paragraph with the relative passage in the *Address* as reprinted by Mr. MacCarthy (*Shelley's Early Life*, page 198).

In writing to Peacock on the 20th of April, 1818, Shelley says, "You tell me nothing of *Rhododaphne*, a book from which, I confess, I expected extraordinary success." Mr. Rossetti (*Poetical Works*, 1878, Vol. I, page 150) mentions as a minor work of 1818, "now perhaps lost," a criticism by Shelley of that poem; and I presume it was written in the early part of the year. It seems to have been meant for a newspaper or magazine article, and sent to Leigh Hunt, among whose papers it was found by Mr. Townshend Mayer—not, unfortunately, quite complete. It was either dictated to or transcribed by Mrs. Shelley; but the MS., mainly in her writing, has been carefully revised and interpolated by Shelley. It is headed, in review fashion, *Rhododaphne or the Thessalian Spell: a Poem—Hookhams*. That book though published anonymously in 1818, is acknowledged in the *Collected Works of Thomas Love Peacock*, published in 1875, in three volumes, by Messrs. R. Bentley & Sons.

H. BUXTON FORMAN.

38, MARLBOROUGH HILL,
ST. JOHN'S WOOD, December 1879.

NOTES ON SCULPTURES IN ROME
AND FLORENCE.

NOTES ON SCULPTURES IN ROME AND FLORENCE.

ROME.

I.

THE ARCH OF TITUS.¹

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 licence of a barbarous and enraged soldiery, are imaged in the distance. The

¹ *The Arch of Titus* appeared in *The Athenæum* for the 29th of September, 1832, and afterwards in *The Shelley Papers*. Mrs. Shelley reprinted it (*Essays &c.*, 1840, Vol. II, p. 208), as a note to a passage about the same arch in a letter to Peacock. We may presume that

this and the Laocoön Note were copied by Medwin from a Notebook which Shelley used in Rome; and they must of course have preceded the three Notes which in the book in my possession precede the Florentine series.

foreground is occupied by a procession of the victors, bearing in their profane hands the holy candlesticks and the tables of shewbread, and the sacred instruments of the eternal worship of the Jews. On the opposite side, the reverse of this sad picture, Titus is represented standing in a chariot drawn by four horses, crowned with laurel, and surrounded by the tumultuous numbers of his triumphant army, and the magistrates, and priests, and generals, and philosophers, dragged in chains beside his wheels. Behind him stands a Victory eagle-winged.

The arch is now mouldering into ruins, and the imagery almost erased by the lapse of fifty generations. Beyond this obscure monument of Hebrew desolation, is seen the tomb of the Destroyer's family, now a mountain of ruins.

The Flavian amphitheatre has become a habitation for owls and dragons. The power, of whose possession it was once the type, and of whose departure it is now the emblem, is become a dream and a memory. Rome is no more than Jerusalem.

II.

THE LAOCOÖN.¹

The subject of the Laocoön is a disagreeable one, but whether we consider the grouping, or the execution,

¹ Surely Mrs. Shelley would have given this Note had the Roman Note-book of her husband not been lost or mislaid. We are indebted for it to Medwin, who printed it in Vol. I, pp. 352-4 of his *Life of Shelley*. It is essential to take Shelley's praises of this group

literally and no more: it will then be observed that the excellences dwelt upon are mainly technical,—the "execution," the "grouping," the "anatomical fidelity and force." Note the significant qualification at p. 34, at the close of the Note on two Statues of Marsyas.

nothing that remains to us of antiquity can surpass it. It consists of a father and his two sons. Byron thinks that Laocoön's anguish is absorbed in that of his children, that a mortal's agony is blending with an immortal's patience. Not so. Intense physical suffering, against which he pleads with an upraised countenance of despair, and appeals with a sense of its injustice, seems the predominant and overwhelming emotion, and yet there is a nobleness in the expression, and a majesty that dignifies torture.

We now come to his children.¹ Their features and attitudes indicate the excess of the filial love and devotion that animates them, and swallows up all other feelings. In the elder of the two, this is particularly observable. His eyes are fixedly bent on Laocoön—his whole soul is with—is a part of that of his father. His arm extended towards him, not for protection, but from a wish as if instinctively to afford it, absolutely speaks. Nothing can be more exquisite than the contour of his form and face, and the moulding of his lips, that are half open, as if in the act of—not uttering any unbecoming complaint, or prayer or lamentation, which he is conscious are alike useless—but addressing words of consolatory tenderness to his unfortunate parent. The intensity of his bodily torments is only expressed by the uplifting of his right foot, which he is vainly and impotently attempting to extricate from the grasp of the mighty folds in which it is entangled.

In the younger child, surprise, pain, and grief seem to contend for mastery. He is not yet arrived at an age

¹ This mode of transition seems suspiciously unlike Shelley.

when his mind has sufficient self-possession, or fixedness of reason, to analyse the calamity that is overwhelming himself and all that is dear to him. He is sick with pain and horror. We almost seem to hear his shrieks. His left hand is on the head of the snake, that is burying its fangs in his side, and the vain and fruitless attempt he is making to disengage it, increases the effect. Every limb, every muscle, every vein of Laocoön expresses, with the fidelity of life, the working of the poison, and the strained girding round of the inextricable folds, whose tangling sinuosities are too numerous and complicated to be followed. No chisel has ever displayed with such anatomical fidelity and force, the projecting muscles of the arm, whose hand clenches the neck of the reptile, almost to strangulation, and the mouth of the enormous asp, and his terrible fangs widely displayed, in a moment to penetrate and meet within its victim's heart, make the spectator of this miracle of sculpture turn away with shuddering and awe, and doubt the reality of what he sees.

III.

VASA BORGHESE A PARIGI.

A Bronze cast of the Bas relief—a bacchanalian subject—a beautiful reference to Unity. Bacchus with a countenance of calm and majestic beauty surrounded by the tumultuous figures whom the whirlwinds of his Deity are tossing into all attitudes, like the sun in the midst of his planets; power calm amid confusion.—He leans on a Woman with a lyre within her arms, on whom he looks with grand yet gentle love. On one side is a Silenus who has let fall the cup and hangs heavily his vine-crowned head, supported by another Bacchanal. The

contrast between the flowing robe which wraps the lower part of his form, and the soft but more defined outline of the leg of the Bacchanal who supports him, is in the true harmony of Art.

IV.

A BRONZE.

A child riding on a swan with a dart in his hand.

V.

A BACCHANAL

in a state of priapism, holding a lion's skin in one hand, and a flaming torch in the other, with his muscles starting through his skin, and his hair dishevelled.

VI.

AN ACCOUCHEMENT; A BAS RELIEF.¹

[PROBABLY THE SIDES OF A SARCOPHAGUS.]

The lady is lying on a couch, supported by a young woman, and looking extremely exhausted and thin; her hair is flowing² about her shoulders, and she is half-covered with drapery which falls over the couch.

Her tunic is exactly like a shift, 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

¹ So headed in the MS. note-book. Medwin and Mrs. Shelley headed it "A Bas-relief probably the Sides of a Sarcophagus"; and Medwin added a remark that "this bas-relief is not antique. It is of the Cinquecento." He first gave this Note in *The Athenæum* for the

22nd of September, 1832; and it was re-printed in *The Shelley Papers* and the *Essays, Letters &c.*

² In previous editions, *extremely exhausted; her dishevelled hair is floating; in the next line on for over; and in the next but one chemise for shift.*

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 old woman¹ 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 conclusion² that it was a correct thing to do. Behind is another old woman of the most ludicrous ugliness, crying I suppose, with her hands crossed upon her neck. There is a young woman also lamenting. To the left of the couch a woman³ is sitting on the ground, nursing the child, which is swaddled.⁴ Behind her is a woman⁵ who appears to be in the act of rushing in, with dishevelled hair and violent gestures, and in one hand either⁶ a whip or a thunderbolt. She is probably some emblematic person, whose⁷ personification would be a key to the whole. What they are all wailing at, I don't⁸ know; whether the lady is dying, or the father has ordered⁹ 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 or¹⁰ second scene of the drama

¹ In previous editions, *matron*.

² Medwin and Mrs. Shelley read, *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.*

³ In previous editions, *nurse*.

⁴ In previous editions, *dandling the child in her arms, and wholly occupied in so doing. The infant is swaddled.*

⁵ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley read *female*.

⁶ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley read *brandishing* instead of *either*.

⁷ In previous editions, *This is probably some emblematic person, the messenger of death, or a fury, whose &c.*

⁸ In former editions, *I know not*.

⁹ We read *directed* for *ordered* in other editions.

¹⁰ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley printed *in the* instead of *or*.

tells the story of the presentation of the child to its father. An old nurse has it in her¹ arms, and with professional and mysterious officiousness is holding it out to the father.² The father, a middle-aged and very respectable-looking man, perhaps not married above nine months, is looking with the wonder of a bachelor upon the strange little being which once was himself; his hands are clasped, and his brow wrinkled up with a kind of inexperienced wonder, and he has gathered up between his arms the folds of his cloke, an emblem of the gathering up of all his faculties to understand so unusual a circumstance.

An old man is standing behind³ him, probably his own father, with some curiosity and much tenderness in his looks, and around are collected a host of his relations, of whom the youngest seem the most unconcerned.⁴ It is altogether an admirable piece quite in the spirit of the comedies of Terence,⁵ though I confess I am totally at a loss to comprehend the cause of all that tumult visible in the first scene.

VII.

A MERCURY.

A bronze Mercury standing on the wind.

¹ In previous editions *An old man has it in his.*

² The rest of this paragraph varies considerably from the chastened text of Medwin: "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."

³ In former editions *beside.*

⁴ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley here read of *whom the youngest, a handsome girl, seems the least concerned.*

⁵ In previous editions the final confession is wanting.

VIII.

AN OX.

A most admirable ox in bronze.¹

IX.

AN URN.

An urn whose ansæ are formed of the horned faces of Ammonian Jove, and oversculptured with labyrinth work of leaves and flowers and buds and strange looking insects, and a tablet with this inscription

ΤΩΝ ΑΓΑΘΩΝ Η ΜΝΗΜΗ ΑΕΙ ΘΑΛΗΣ.

“The memory of the good is ever green.”

And art thou then forgotten?

X.

VIEW FROM THE PITTI GARDENS.²

You see below, Florence a smokeless city, its domes and spires occupying the vale; and beyond to the right the Apennines, whose base extends even to the walls,³ and whose summits were intersected with ashen-coloured clouds. The green vallies of these mountains which gently unfold themselves upon the plain, and the interven-

¹ This note is followed in the MS. Note-book by one on the Demon of Socrates—a memorandum of a thought which would seem to have occurred to Shelley while in the Gallery among the statues.

² Not from the Boboli Gardens, as stated by Medwin in introducing

this sketch (Life of Shelley, Vol. I, p. 314). His transcript appears to have been at least as careless as usual. I have only noted the more significant variations.

³ Medwin omits the rest of this sentence, to *clouds*, and, further on, the words *now full with the winter rains*.

ing hills covered with vineyards and olive plantations are occupied by the villas which are as it were another city; a Babylon of palaces and gardens. In the midst of the picture rolls the Arno, now full with the winter rains, through woods, and bounded by the aerial snow and summits of the Lucchese Apennines. On the left¹ a magnificent buttress of lofty craggy hills, overgrown with wilderness, juts out in many shapes over a lovely vale, and approaches the walls of the city. Cascini and Ville² occupy the pinnacles and the abutments of those hills, over which is seen at intervals the ætherial mountain line³ hoary with snow and intersected by clouds. The vale below is covered with cypress groves whose obeliskine forms of intense green pierce the grey shadow of the wintry hill that overhangs⁴ them.—The cypresses too of the garden form a magnificent foreground of accumulated verdure; pyramids of dark leaves and shining cones⁵ rising out of a mass, beneath which were cut like caverns recesses which conducted into walks.—The Cathedral with its grey marble Campanile and the other domes and spires of Florence were at our feet.⁷

XI.

VICTORY.

Lips of wisdom and arch yet sublime tenderness, a simple yet profound expression of . . .

¹ In Medwin's version, *snowy heights of the Apennines. On the right &c.*

² Not *Cascini and other villages*, as in Medwin's book.

³ Medwin gives *aerial mountains*.

⁴ Not *overlooks*, as printed by Medwin.

⁵ Medwin reads *pyramids of dark*

green and omits leaves and shining cones.

⁶ The final sentence is omitted in Medwin's version.

⁷ Between this Note and the next in the MS. Note-book occur the following poetic jottings:—

His love and sympathy, his boyish love
His enmity with Life
His admiration of the hidden energies.

XII.

A BOY.¹

A graceful boy with the skin of a wild beast hanging on his shoulders and a bunch of grapes in his hand. He is crowned with a vine wreath and buds and grapes: the legs are modern, and the face has not an antique but it expresses cheerful and earnest . . .

XIII.

A PRIESTESS.

The drapery beautifully expressed, the face bad.

XIV.

AN ATHLETE.

(Curse these fig leaves; why is a round tin thing more decent than a cylindrical marble one?) An exceedingly fine statue—full of graceful strength; the countenance full of sweetness and strength. Its attitude with a staff lifted in one hand and some in the other, expresses serene dignity and power; a personification in the firmness and lightness of its form of that perfection of manhood when the will can be freely communicated to every fibre of the body. The muscles are represented how differently from a statue since anatomy has corrupted it.

XV.

A POMONA.

A woman in the act of lightly advancing—much care

¹ The word *Staircase* is written above this Note in the MS. Note-book: how far the description of the statues on the staircase extends, I do not know.

has been taken to render the effect of the drapery as thrown back by the wind of her motion.

XVI.

AN ATHLETE

in every respect different from and inferior to the first.

XVII.

AN URANIA

holding a globe in one hand and compasses in the other : her countenance though not of the highest beauty, is beautiful : her drapery drawn closely round shews the conformation of her left side and falls in graceful folds over the right arm.

XVIII.

A VESTAL.

Probably a portrait. This face, which represented a real person, denotes an admirable disposition and mind, and is not beautiful but wise and gentle although with some mixture of severity. Her office might have contributed to this expression.

XIX.

A VENUS GENITRIX.

Remarkable for the voluptuous effect of her finely proportioned form being seen through the folds of a drapery, the original of which must have been the

“woven wind” of Chios. There is a softness in the attitude and upper part of the statue—the restoration of the arms and hand truly hideous.

XX.

A CALLIOPE.

Half modern—the drapery rather coarse.

XXI.

A HERCULES ON AN EMBLEMATIC BASE.

The arms probably restored, for the right hand especially is in villainous proportion.

XXII.

A MUSE.

A statue they call the Muse Polyhymnia—poor Muse—the head which may be a misapplication is of the family likeness of those shrewish and evil-minded Roman women of rank with the busts of whom the Capitol overflows. The form otherwise is too thin and spare for the ideal beauty in which the Muses were clothed. The drapery is very remarkable and very admirable; it is arranged in such large and unrestrained folds as the motions and the shape of a living form naturally forces a form into.

XXIII.

MERCURY.

Another glorious creature of the Greeks. His coun-

tenance expresses an imperturbable and god-like self-possession; he seems in the enjoyment of delight which nothing can destroy. His figure nervous yet light, expresses the animation of swiftness emblemed by the plumes of his sandalled feet. Every muscle and nerve of his frame has tranquil and energetic life.

XXIV.

A VENUS

with villanous modern arms—this figure is rather too slight and weak—the body is correctly but feebly expressed.

XXV.

ANOTHER VENUS.

A very insipid person in the usual insipid attitude of this lady. The body and hips and where the lines of the fade into the thighs is exquisitely imagined and executed.

XXVI.

AN APOLLO¹

with his serpent crawling round a trunk of laurel on which his quiver is suspended. It probably was, when complete, magnificently beautiful. The restorer of the head and arms following the indications² of the muscles of the right side, has lifted the right arm, as if

¹The Note on an Apollo appeared in *The Athenæum* for the 22nd of September, 1832, and was reprinted in *The Shelley Papers* and in Mrs. Shelley's volumes of 1840. In all these cases it was unsuspectingly

given with the following opening—*with serpents twining round a wreath of laurel on which the quiver is suspended.*

² In former editions, *indication*.

in triumph¹ at the success of an arrow; imagining to imitate the Lycian Apollo, or that² so finely described by Apollonius Rhodius when the dazzling radiance of his beautiful limbs suddenly³ shone over the dark Euxine.

XXVII.

ANOTHER APOLLO.

In every respect a coarse statue, with a goose or swan who has got the end of his pallium in his bill. Seen on one side the intense energy and god-like animation of those limbs, the spirit which seems as if it would not be contained.

XXVIII.

A CUPID.

Apparently part of a group—as in laughing defiance of those which are lost. It seeks to express what cannot be expressed in sculpture—the coarser and more violent effects of comic feeling cannot be seized by this art. Tenderness, sensibility, enthusiasm, terror, poetic inspiration the profound, the beautiful, Yes.

XXIX.

BACCHUS AND AMPELUS.⁴

Less beautiful than that in the royal collection of

¹ In former editions, *the arm, as in triumph.*

² Not *in that*, as printed by Medwin and Mrs. Shelley.

³ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley omit *suddenly*, and add after *Euxine* what seems a revised transfer from the next note: *The action, energy, and godlike animation of those limbs speak a spirit which seems as if it could not be consumed.* The intention was apparently to contrast

the coarse statue with the great work seen beside it.

⁴ This Note also would hardly have been omitted by Mrs. Shelley had it been at hand. Medwin gave it, not in *The Shelley Papers*, but in the *Life* (Vol. I, pp. 355-6). His version is apparently much manipulated. The opening comparison is omitted, and he starts with the improbable form of words, *Look! the figures are walking &c.*

Naples and yet infinitely lovely. The figures are walking as it were with a sauntering and idle pace, and talking to each other as they walk, and this is expressed in the motions of their delicate and flowing¹ forms. One arm of Bacchus rests on the shoulder of Ampelus, and the other, the fingers being gently curved as with the burning² spirit which animates their flexible joints, is gracefully thrown forward corresponding with the advance of the opposite leg. He has sandals and buskins clasped with two serpent heads, and his leg is cinctured with their skins. He is crowned with vine leaves laden with their crude fruit, and the crisp leaves fall as with the inertness of a lithe and faded leaf over his rich and over-hanging hair,³ which gracefully divided on his forehead falls in delicate wreaths upon his neck and breast.⁴ Ampelus with a beast skin⁵ over his shoulder holds a cup in his right hand, and with his left half embraces the waist of Bacchus.⁶ Just as you may have seen (yet how seldom from their dissevering and tyrannical institutions do you see) a younger and an elder boy at school walking in some remote grassy spot of their play-ground with that tender friendship towards each other which has so much of love.⁷—The countenance of Bacchus is sublimely sweet and lovely, taking a shade of gentle and playful tenderness from the arch looks of Ampelus, whose cheerful face turned towards him, expresses the suggestions of some droll and merry device. It has a divine and

¹ Not *glowing* as in Medwin's version.

² Not *living* as printed by Medwin.

³ Medwin reads *hang with the inertness of a faded leaf over his neck and massy, profuse, down-hanging hair.*

⁴ In Medwin's version, *wreaths on each side his neck, and curls upon*

the breast.

⁵ Medwin reads *a young lion's or lynx's skin.*

⁶ Medwin reads *encircles Bacchus,* and omits the interesting parenthesis just below.

⁷ Medwin reads *for the other that the age inspires.* I notice he constantly has *that* for Shelley's *which.*

supernatural beauty, as one who walks through the world untouched by its corruptions,¹ its corrupting cares; it looks like one who unconsciously yet with delight confers pleasure and peace.² The flowing fulness and roundness of the breast and belly, whose lines fading into each other, are continued with a gentle motion as it were to the utmost extremity of his limbs. Like some fine strain of harmony which flows round the soul and enfolds it, and leaves it in the soft astonishment of a satisfaction, like the pleasure of love with one whom we most love, which having taken away desire, leaves pleasure, sweet pleasure. The countenance of the Ampelus is in every respect inferior; it has a rugged and unreprieved appearance; but the Bacchus is immortal beauty.

XXX.

A BACCHANTE WITH A LYNX.

The effect of the wind partially developing her young and delicate form upon the light and floating drapery, and the aerial motion of the lower part of her limbs are finely imagined. But the inanimate expression of her countenance and the position of her arms are at enmity with these indications.

XXXI.

APOLLO WITH A SWAN.

The arms restored. The same expression of passionate

¹ Medwin omits *its corruptions*, and *yet with delight* in the next line.

² Instead of the remainder of this Note, Medwin has the following:

“The countenance of Ampelus is in some

respects boyish and inferior, that of Bacchus expresses an imperturbable and god-like self-possession—he seems in the enjoyment of a calm delight, that nothing can destroy. His is immortal beauty.”

and enthusiastic tenderness seems to have created the intense and sickening beauty, by which it is expressed, the same radiance of beauty, arising from lines only less soft and more sublimely flowing than those of Bacchus. This has some resemblance with the Apollo of the Capitol.

XXXII.

LEDA.

A dull thing.

XXXIII.

VENUS ANADYOMENE.¹

She seems to have just issued from the bath, and yet to be animated² 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 never-ending continuity³ of sweetness. Her face expresses a breathless yet passive and innocent voluptuousness without affectation, without doubt;⁴ it is at once desire and enjoyment and the pleasure arising from both.—Her lips which are without the sublimity of lofty and impetuous passion like

or⁵ the grandeur of enthusiastic imagination like the Apollo of the Capitol, or an union⁶ of both like the

¹ So headed in the Note-book, not *On the Venus, called Anadyomene* as in former editions. This Note appeared in *The Athenæum* for the 22nd of September 1832, before being printed in *The Shelley Papers* and the *Essays, Letters &c.*

² In former editions *has issued and is animated.*

³ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley read *irruosity.*

⁴ Instead of the words *without affectation, without doubt,* and the whole of the sentence following, Medwin and Mrs. Shelley have simply *free from affectation.*

⁵ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley disguise the incompleteness by eliminating *like and or.*

⁶ Not *the union* as in previous editions.

Apollo Belvedere, have the tenderness of arch yet pure and affectionate desire, and the mode in which the ends are drawn in yet opened by the smile which 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 then¹ declension of the bone over the eye, and prolongs itself to the cheek in that mode which expresses simple and tender feelings.

The neck is full and swollen as with the respiration² of delight, and flows with gentle curves into her perfect form.

Her form is indeed perfect. She is half sitting on 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 embued.³ The mode in which the lines of the curved back flow into and around the thighs, and the wrinkled muscles of the belly, wrinkled by the attitude, is truly astonishing. The attitude of her arms which are lovely beyond imagination, is natural, unaffected and unforced.⁴ This perhaps is the finest personification of Venus, the

¹ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley read *thin* for *then*, and, after *eye*. omit *and prolongs itself to the cheek*, substituting *in the mode* for *in that mode*.

² Not *panting as with the aspiration*, as in former editions.

³ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley read *animated* for *embued*, omit the whole of the next sentence, down to *astonishing*, and open the sentence after with *The position of the arms*.

⁴ In previous editions, *easy*.

Deity of superficial desire, in all antique statuary. Her¹ pointed and pear-like bosom ever virgin—the virgin Mary might have this beauty, but alas ! poor girl, she has all the pain and none of the pleasure.

THIRD DAY.²

XXXIV.

A STATUE OF MINERVA.

The arm restored. The head is of the very highest beauty. It has a close helmet, from which the hair delicately parted on the forehead, half escapes. The face uplifted³ 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 the jaw,⁴ which is, in living beings, the seat of the expression of a simplicity and integrity of nature. Her face uplifted⁵ to Heaven is animated with a profound, sweet and impassioned melancholy, with an earnest, fervid and disinterested pleading against some vast and inevitable wrong : it is the joy and the poetry of sorrow, making grief beautiful, and giving to that nameless feeling which from the imperfection of language we call pain, but which is not all pain, those feelings which make⁶ not only the possessor but the

¹ Instead of this closing sentence Medwin and Mrs Shelley have "Her pointed and pear-like person, ever virgin, and her attitude modesty itself."

² So in the Note-book, where however, there is nothing to shew the division between first day and second day. Medwin and Mrs. Shelley head this Note *The Minerva* and omit *The arm restored*. The Note appeared in *The Athenæum* for the

22nd of September, 1832, before its issue in *The Shelley Papers* and the *Essays* &c.

³ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley read *attitude for face uplifted*.

⁴ In previous editions *mouth for the jaw*.

⁵ In previous editions, *up-raised*.

⁶ Not *through a feeling which makes*, as in former editions : that must surely be Medwin's way of perfecting Shelley's work.

spectator of it prefer it to what is called pleasure, in which all is not pleasure. It is difficult to think that the 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 Divinities¹ (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, as Wisdom which as Minerva it may be supposed to emblem, pleading² earnestly with Power, and invested with the expression of that grief because it must ever plead so vainly. An owl is sitting at her feet.³ 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 an altar, the subject of the reliefs of which are⁴ in a spirit wholly the reverse. It was probably an altar to Bacchus, possibly a funerary urn. It has this inscription: D. M. M. ULPIUS. TERPNUS. FECIT. SIBI ET ULPIÆ SECUNDILLÆ LIBERTÆ. B. M.⁵ Under the festoons of fruits and flowers at the corners of the altar with the skulls of goats and in the middle with an inverted flower suspended from a

¹ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley have instead of *Divinities*, the words *characters of their Gods*.

² In former editions we read *It is, indeed, divine. Wisdom (which Minerva may be supposed to emblem,) is pleading &c.*

³ This sentence was not given by Medwin and Mrs. Shelley.

⁴ In previous editions, *a pedestal, the subject of whose reliefs is.*

⁵ The sentence with the inscription was not given by Medwin and Mrs. Shelley.

twisted stem are sculptured in moderate relief four¹ figures of Mænads under the inspiration of the God. Nothing can be imagined² more wild and terrible than their gestures, touching as they do upon the verge of distortion, in which their fine limbs and lovely forms are thrown. There is nothing however that exceeds the possibility of Nature, although it borders on its utmost line.

The tremendous spirit of superstition aided by drunkenness and 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 bear³ the ever-changing trunk of a water-spout, as the torrent of a mountain river whirls the leaves in⁴ its full eddies. Their hair loose and floating seems caught in the tempest of their own tumultuous motion, their heads are thrown back leaning with a strange inanity⁵ upon their necks, and looking up to Heaven, while they totter and stumble even in the energy of their tempestuous dance. One—perhaps Agave⁶ with the head of Pentheus, has a human head in one hand and in the other a great knife; another⁷ has a spear with its pine cone, which was their thyrsus; another dances with mad voluptuousness; the fourth is dancing to a kind of tambourine.

¹ In previous editions *flowers that grace the pedestal, the corners of which are ornamented with the skulls of goats, are sculptured some figures &c.* The filling of the blank with *grace the pedestal* is little calculated to inspire confidence in the genuineness of the text of Medwin.

² In former editions, *conceived*.

³ Not *have*, as given by Medwin and Mrs. Shelley.

⁴ In former editions, *whirls the*

autumnal leaves resistlessly along in &c.

⁵ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley read *delirium* instead of *inanity*.

⁶ In previous editions we read, *One represents Agave with the head of Pentheus*, and the words *has a human head* are left out.

⁷ In former editions, *a second*; in the next line, *the Thyrsus*; and in the next but one *beating for dancing to*.

This was indeed a monstrous superstition only capable of existing in Greece because there alone¹ 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 once violated by it, sustained² a deep injury little analogous to its effects upon the Greeks who turned all things, superstition, prejudice, murder, madness—to Beauty.

XXXV.

A TRIPOD.

Said to be dedicated to Mars—three winged figures with emblematic instruments.

XXXVI.

A FAUN.

A pretty thing but little remarkable. A lynx is slyly peeping round the stem covered with vines on which he leans and gnawing the grapes.

XXXVII.

A GANYMEDE.

A statue of surpassing beauty. One of the Eagle's wings is half-enfolded round him and one of his arms is

¹ In previous editions we read, *a monstrous superstition, even in Greece, where it was alone, &c.*

² In Medwin's and Mrs. Shelley's editions, *were violated by it, and sustained &c.*

placed round the Eagle and his delicate hand lightly touches the wing; the other holds what I imagine to be a representation of the thunder. These hands and fingers are so delicate and light that it seems as if the spirit of pleasure, of light, life and beauty that lives in them half lifted them, and deprived them of the natural weight of mortal flesh. The roundness and fulness of the flowing perfection of his form is strange and rare. The attitude and form of the legs and the relation borne to each other by his light and delicate feet is peculiarly beautiful. The calves of the legs almost touching each other, one foot is placed on the ground, a little advanced before the other which is raised, the knee being a little bent as those who are slightly, but slightly fatigued with standing. The face though innocent and pretty has no ideal beauty. It expresses inexperience and gentleness and innocent wonder, such as might be imagined in a rude and lovely shepherd-boy and no more.

XXXVIII.

A VENUS.

A beautiful Venus, sculptured with great accuracy but without the feeling and the soft and flowing proportions of the Anadyomene. It has great perfection and beauty of form; it is a most admirable piece of sculpture, but hard, angular and with little of the lithe suppleness or light of life.

XXXIX.

A TORSO OF FAUNUS.

(Why I don't know.) The sculpture remarkably good.

XL.

TWO STATUES OF MARSYAS.

Two of those hideous St. Sebastians¹ of Antiquity opposite each other,—Marsyas: one looks as if he had been flayed, and the other as if he was going to be flayed. This is one of the few abominations of the Greek religion. This is as bad as the everlasting damnation and hacking and hewing between them of Joshua and Jehovah. And is it possible that there existed in the same imagination the idea of that tender and sublime and poetic and life-giving Apollo and of the author of this deed as the same person?² It would be worse than confounding Jehovah and Jesus in the same Trinity, which to those who believe in the divinity of the latter is a pretty piece of blasphemy in any intelligible sense of the word. As to the sculpture of these pieces, it is energetic, especially that of the one already flayed, and moderate. If he knew as much as the moderns about anatomy, which I hope to God he did not, he, at least, abstained from taking advantage of his subject for making the same absurd display of it. These great artists abstained from overstepping in this particular, except in some cases, as perhaps in the Laocoön, what Shakespeare calls the modesty of nature.

¹ Shelley was not, it would seem, as familiar with the history of the Christian Martyrs as with the mythology of the Greeks, or he would of course have written "Two of those hideous St. Bartholomews." One would think, however, that he must have seen so many pictures in Italy of both martyrdoms that, even if he did not, as he would not, study them much, the slip in

this case could scarcely be other than a slip of the pen.

² Students of mythology will doubtless answer No. This variable and contradictory creation was the offspring of many imaginations; and no single imagination worth the name mixed up these two particular conceptions as an article of religious belief.

XLI.

THETIS.

Thetis on a sea-horse—the face far from idealism seems to be a real face of much energy and goodness. She sits on the curved back of the monster, and holds in one hand something like a sponge, in the other the ears of the head of the sharp beast.¹

XLII.

HYGIEIA.

An Hygieia with a serpent. A resemblance of the famous Dis—a copy. The forms are soft and flowing but not the most perfect proportion. The head and countenance is of great beauty. There is the serene sweetness of expectation, the gathered firm and yet the calm and gentle lip.

XLIII.

JUPITER.

A Jupiter in every respect of a very ordinary character.

XLIV.

A MINERVA.

Evidently a production of very great antiquity.

¹ It was doubtless intended to erase some words here.

XLV.

A JUNO.¹

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 in their beauty.² Fine lips are never wholly bad, and never belong to the expression of emotions completely³ 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 of it which descends from the right⁴ shoulder is admirably imagined.

XLVI.

A WOUNDED SOLDIER.

An unknown figure. His arms are folded within his mantle.—His countenance which may be a portrait is sad but gentle.

XLVII.

A YOUTH.

A youth playing on a lyre—one arm and leg is a restoration and there is no appearance of the head or arm belonging to it. The body and the right leg are of the most consummate beauty. It may or may not be an Apollo.

¹ Medwin first gave this Note in *The Athenæum* for the 22nd of September, 1832. Like the others so given, it was reprinted in *The Shelley Papers and Essays, Letters &c.*

² Medwin and Mrs. Shelley omit

in their beauty, and begin the next sentence thus—With fine lips a person is.

³ In previous editions, *wholly.*

⁴ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley read, *a skirt, as it descends from the left shoulder.*

XLVIII.

THE FIGURE OF A YOUTH SAID TO BE APOLLO.

It was difficult to conceive anything more delicately beautiful than the Ganymede; but the spirit-like lightness, the softness, the flowing perfection of these forms, surpass it. The countenance though exquisite lovely and gentle is not divine. There is a womanish vivacity of winning yet passive happiness and yet a boyish inexperience exceedingly delightful. Through the limbs there seems to flow a spirit of life which gives them lightness. Nothing can be more perfectly lovely than the legs and the union of the feet with the ancles, and the fading away of the lines of the feet to the delicate extremities. It is like a spirit even in dreams. The neck is long yet full and sustains the head with its profuse and knotted hair as if it needed no sustaining.

XLIX.

AN ÆSCULAPIUS.

A Statue of Æsculapius—the same as in the Borghese Gardens in the temple there.

L.

AN ÆSCULAPIUS.

A Statue of Æsculapius far superior. It is leaning forward upon a knotty staff imbraked and circled by a viper,—with a bundle of plants in one hand and the other with the forefinger in an attitude of instruction. The majestic head, its thick beard and profuse hair bound

by a fillet leans forward, and the gentle smile of its benevolent lips seems a commentary on his instructions. The upper part of the figure with the exception of the right shoulder is naked, but the rest to the feet is involved in drapery, whose folds flow from the point where the staff confines them sustaining the left arm.

LI.

OLINTHUS

(as they call a youth seated). Another of those sweet and gentle figures of adolescent youth in which the Greeks delighted.

LII.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

A Statue of Marcus Aurelius which is rather without faults than with beauties.

LIII.

BACCHUS AND AMPELUS.

A lovely group.

LIV.

LEDA:

Leda with a very ugly face. I should be a long time before I should make love with her.

LV.

A MUSE.

A most hideous thing they call a Muse—evidently the production of some barbarian and of a barbarous age.

LVI.

AN OLD CUIRASS

with all the frogs and fringe complete—a fine piece of antique dandyism.

LVII.

A BACCHUS BY MICHAEL ANGELO.¹

The countenance of this figure is the most revolting mistake of the spirit and meaning of Bacchus. It looks drunken, brutal, and 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 merely² as a piece of workmanship, it has great merits. The arms are executed in the most perfect³ and manly beauty; the body is conceived with great energy,⁴ and the lines which describe

¹ So headed in the Note-book, but *Michael Angelo's Bacchus* in former editions.

² In former editions, *only*.

³ Not in a style of the most perfect, &c., as in previous editions.

⁴ In Medwin's and Mrs. Shelley's

editions we read from here as follows—*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.*

the sides and thighs, and the manner in which they mingle into one another are of the highest order of boldness and beauty. It wants as a work of art unity and simplicity; as a representation of the Greek Deity of Bacchus it wants every thing.

LVIII.

SLEEP.

A remarkable figure of Sleep as a winged child supine on a lion's skin, sleeping on its great half unfolded wing of black *obsidian* stone. One hand is lightly placed on a horn, with which it might be supposed to call together its wandering dreams, the horn of dreams, and in the other a seedy poppy. The hardness of the stone does not permit the arriving at any great expression.

LIX.

COPY OF THE LAOCOÖN.

An admirable copy of the Laocoön in which is expressed with fidelity the agony of the poison and the straining round of the angry serpents. The left hand child seems sick with agony and horror, and the vain and feeble attempt he makes to disentangle himself from its grasp increases the effect. (See Rome.¹)

¹ This is of course a reference to the missing Note-book from which Medwin seems to have copied the Note on the Laocoön standing second in this series. See pp. vi. and 12.

LX.

THE NIOBE.¹

This figure is probably the most consummate personification of loveliness with regard to its countenance, as that of the Apollo of the Vatican is with regard to its entire form, that remains to us of Greek Antiquity. It is a colossal figure; the size of a work of art rather adds to its beauty, because it allows the spectator the choice of a greater number of points of view, in which to catch a greater number of the infinite modes of expression of which any form approaching ideal beauty is necessarily composed, of a mother in the act of sheltering from some divine and inevitable peril, the last, we will² imagine, of her surviving children.

The child³ terrified we may conceive at the strange destruction of all its kindred, has fled to its mother, and⁴ hiding its head in the folds of her robe and casting up⁵

¹ The Note on the Niobe appeared in *The Athenæum* for the 15th of September, 1832, and afterwards in *The Shelley Papers* and Mrs. Shelley's volumes of 1840. It seems to have been very considerably edited by Medwin, the opening being rendered thus :

"Of all that remains to us of Greek antiquity, this figure is perhaps the most consummate personification of loveliness, with regard to its countenance, as that of the Venus of the Tribune is with regard to its entire form of woman. It is colossal: the size adds to its value;"

and after the words *points of view*, we read *and affords him a more analytical one*. Further on there is, in Medwin's text, a period after *composed*; and a new sentence is begun with the words, *It is the*

figure. In fact we are to read *It is a colossal figure ... of a mother in the act &c.*, the remarks on size in sculpture being parenthetical. Had Shelley used his rough note for one of the noble letters to Peacock, or for any literary purpose, he would doubtless have made it read more smoothly; but his roughest work never fails to convey a perfectly clear sense, and is of course preferable to Medwin's smoothest.

² In former editions, *may*.

³ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley put *little creature for child*.

⁴ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley alter the construction by inserting *is* here.

⁵ In previous editions, *back* instead of *up*.

one arm as in a passionate appeal for defence from her,¹ where it never before could have been sought in vain, seems in the marble to have scarcely suspended the motion of her terror; as though conceived to be yet in the act of arrival. The child² is clothed in a thin tunic of delicatest woof, and her hair is gathered³ on her head into a knot, probably by that mother whose care will never gather 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 defending⁴ her from what reason knows to be inevitable. The right⁵—as the restorer of it has rightly comprehended, is gathering up her child to her and with a like instinctive gesture is encouraging by its gentle pressure the child to believe that it can give security.—The countenance which is the consummation of feminine majesty and loveliness, beyond which the imagination scarcely doubts that it can conceive anything, that⁶ master-piece 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

¹ Former editions omit *from her*, and the sentence ends with a period at *vain*, the subtle passage from *seems in the marble to arrival* being left out.

² Medwin and Mrs. Shelley have *She* for *The child*.

³ In former editions, *fastened* for *gathered*, and *fasten* in the next line instead of *gather*. As an utterance contemporary with *The Cenci* this passage is peculiarly interesting. (Compare Act V, Scene IV (Vol. II, p. 131 of my edition):

Here, mother, tie
My girdle for me, and bind up this hair
In any simple knot; aye, that does well.
And yours I see is coming down. How
often

Have we done this for one another; now
We shall not do it any more. My Lord,
We are quite ready. Well, 'tis very well.

Even the tragic resignation of the close corresponds with Shelley's piercing criticism of this group.

⁴ In former editions, *shielding*.

⁵ This passage is rendered thus by Medwin and Mrs. Shelley:

“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, &c.”

⁶ This is not a fresh sentence as in former editions.

as if despair and beauty had combined and produced nothing but the sublime loveliness¹ 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 protection² 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—deep³ 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 emotion.⁴

Every thing is swallowed up in sorrow.—Her countenance in assured expectation of the arrow piercing its victim⁵ in her embrace, is fixed on her omnipotent enemy. The⁶ pathetic beauty of the mere expression of her tender and serene despair, which is yet so profound and so incapable of being ever worn away, is beyond any effect of sculpture.—As soon as the arrow shall have pierced her

¹ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley read *sublimity* instead of *sublime loveliness*.

² In previous editions, *an asylum*.

³ The additional word *remediless* is here inserted in previous editions.

⁴ Not *emotions*, as given by Medwin and Mrs. Shelley, who insert after *sorrow* in the next line, *she is all tears*.

⁵ In previous editions, *its last victim*.

⁶ This sentence is replaced in *The Athenæum* and *The Shelley Papers* by the following :

“The pathetic beauty of the expression of her tender, and inexhaustible, and unquenchable despair, is beyond the effect of sculpture.”

Mrs. Shelley followed this, merely inserting *any other* before *sculpture*,—conjecturally, I presume, for the words are not in the Note-book.

last child, the fable that she was dissolved¹ into a fountain of tears, will be but a feeble emblem of the sadness of despair,² in which the years of her remaining life, we feel, must flow away.

It is difficult to speak of the beauty of her countenance, or to make intelligible in words the forms from which³ such astonishing loveliness results. The head, resting somewhat backward, upon the full and flowing contour of the neck, is 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 altogether broad⁴ and the features conceived with the daring harmony⁵ of a sense of power. In this respect it resembles the careless majesty which Nature stamps upon those rare master-pieces of her creation, harmonizing 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 that clear and tender beauty which is 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 strings⁶ of that which makes music within my thoughts, and which

¹ In previous editions, *shall pierce her last tie upon earth, that fable that she was turned into stone, or dissolved &c.*

² Medwin and Mrs. Shelley read *hopelessness* for *despair* and insert *few and evil* before *years*.

³ Previous editions read *from what* instead of *the forms from which*.

⁴ In former editions, *of an oval*

fulness.

⁵ Medwin and Mrs. Shelley omit the word *harmony*.

⁶ Instead of *the strings &c.* as in the text, former editions have *the chords that make music in our thoughts, of that which shakes with astonishment even the most superficial*. The final sentence is omitted.

shakes with astonishment my most superficial faculties. Compare for this effect the countenance as seen in front and as seen from under the left arm, moving to the right and towards the statue, until the line of the forehead shall coincide with that of the wrist.

THE ELYSIAN FIELDS,

A LUCIANIC FRAGMENT.

THE ELYSIAN FIELDS.

I AM not forgetful in this dreary scene of the country which whilst I lived in the upper air, it was my whole aim to illustrate and render happy. Indeed, although immortal, we are not exempted from the enjoyments and the sufferings of mortality. We sympathize in all the proceedings of mankind, and we experience joy or grief in all intelligence from them, according to our various opinions and views. Nor do we resign those opinions, even those which the grave¹ has utterly refuted. Frederic of Prussia has lately arrived amongst us, and persists in maintaining that "death is an eternal sleep," to the great discomfiture of Philip the Second of Spain; who on the furies refusing to apply the torture, expects the roof of Tartarus to fall upon his head, and laments that at least in his particular instance the doctrine should be false.—Religion is more frequently the subject of discussion among the departed dead, than any other topic, for we know as little which mode of faith is true as you do. Every one maintains the doctrine he maintained on

¹ Cancelled reading, *even when the grave.*

Earth, and accommodates the appearances which surround us to his peculiar tenets.—

I am one of those who esteeming political science capable of certain conclusions, have ever preferred it to these airy speculations, which when they assume an empire over the passions of mankind render them so mischievous and unextinguishable, that they subsist even among the dead. The art of employing the power entrusted to you for the benefit of those who entrust it, is something more definite, and subject as all its details must ever be to innumerable limitations and exceptions arising out of the change in the habits, opinions of mankind, is the noblest, and the greatest, and the most universal of all. It is not as a queen, but as a human being that this science must be learned; the same discipline which contributes to domestic happiness and individual distinction secures true welfare and genuine glory to a nation.—

You will start, I do not doubt, to hear the language of philosophy. You will have been informed that those who approach sovereigns with warnings that they have duties to perform, that they are elevated above the rest of mankind simply to prevent their tearing one another to pieces, and for the purpose of putting into effect all practical equality and justice, are insidious traitors who devise their ruin. But if the character which I bore on earth should not reassure you,¹ it would be well to recollect the circumstances under which you will ascend the throne of England, and what is the spirit of the times.

¹ After *reassure you* there is a cancelled reading in the MS—*you recollect yourself, & if the preju-*

dices of the age have not deprived you of all that learning.

There are better examples to emulate than those who have only refrained from depraving or tyrannizing over their subjects, because they remembered the fates of Pisistratus¹ and Tarquin. If² generosity and virtue should have dominion over your actions, my lessons can hardly be needed; but if the discipline³ of a narrow education may have extinguished all thirst of genuine excellence, all desire of becoming illustrious for the sake of the illustriousness of the actions which I would incite you to perform. Should you be thus—and no pains have been spared to make you so—make your account with holding your crown on this condition: of deserving it alone. And that this may be evident⁴ I will expose to you the state in which the nation will be found at your accession, for the very dead know more than the counsellors by whom you will be surrounded.

The English nation does not, as has been imagined, inherit freedom from its ancestors. Public opinion rather than positive institution maintains it⁵ in whatever portion it may now possess, which is⁶ in truth the acquirement of their own incessant struggles. As yet the gradations by which this freedom has advanced have been contested step by step.

¹ *Pisistratus* is probably a slip for the sons of *Pisistratus*.

² Cancelled reading, *But if these motives.*

³ Cancelled readings, *lessons for discipline; and is to prevent for may have extinguished* in the next line.

⁴ Cancelled reading, *evident to you.*

⁵ In the MS. *them* is struck out in favour of *it*.

⁶ Cancelled readings, *and this has been, and in the same line conquest for acquirement.*

ON PEACOCK'S "RHODODAPHNE."

ON "RHODODAPHNE,
OR
THE THESSALIAN SPELL,"

A POEM BY THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

RHODODAPHNE is a poem of the most remarkable character, and the nature of the subject no less than the spirit in which it is written forbid us to range it under any of the classes of modern literature.¹ It is a Greek and Pagan poem. In sentiment and scenery it is essentially antique. There is a strong *religio loci* throughout which almost compels us to believe that the author wrote from the dictation of a voice heard from some Pythian cavern in the solitudes where Delphi stood. We are transported to the banks of the Peneus and linger under the crags of Tempe, and see the water lilies floating on

¹ Shelley is not the only poet who has thought well of *Rhododaphne*. Edgar Allan Poe in his *Marginalia* (Mr. J. H. Ingram's edition, Edinburgh, 1874-5, Vol. III, p. 443) has this laconic criticism:—

"'Rhododaphne' (who wrote it?) is brimful of music:—e.g.

By living streams, in sylvan shades,
Where wind and wave symphonious make
Rich melody, the youths and maids
No more with choral music wake
Lone echo from her tangled brake."

In these lines, the opening of Canto III, the right reading is *winds and waves* in line 2, and *Sweet* for *Rich* in line 3.

the stream. We sit with Plato by old Ilissus under the sacred Plane tree among the sweet scent of flowering willows; and above there is the nightingale of Sophocles in the ivy of the pine, who is watching the sunset so that it may dare to sing; it is the radiant evening of a burning day, and the smooth hollow whirlpools of the river are overflowing with the aerial gold of the level sunlight. We stand in the marble temples of the Gods, and see their sculptured forms gazing and almost breathing around. We are led forth from the frequent pomp of sacrifice into the solitude of mountains and forests where Pan, "the life, the intellectual soul of grove and stream,"¹ yet lives and yet is worshipped. We visit the solitudes of Thessalian magic, and tremble with new wonder to hear statues speak and move and to see the shaggy changelings minister to their witch queen with the shape of beasts and the reason of men, and move among the animated statues² who people her enchanted palaces and gardens. That wonderful overflowing of fancy the *Syria Dea* of Lucian, and the impassioned and elegant pantomime of Apuleius, have contributed to this portion of the poem. There is here, as in the songs of ancient times, music and dancing and the luxury of voluptuous delight. The Bacchanalians toss on high their leaf-inwoven hair, and the tumult and fervour of the chase is depicted; we hear its clamour gathering among the woods, and she who impels it is so graceful and so fearless that we are charmed—and it needs no feeble spell to see nothing of the agony and blood of that royal sport.

¹ These words are quoted, not quite accurately, from Canto III of *Rhododaphne*, pp. 48—9:

The streams no sedge-crowned Genii roll
From bounteous urn: great Pan is dead
The life, the intellectual soul

Of vale, and grove, and stream, has fled
For ever with the creed sublime
That nursed the Muse of earlier time.

² Cancelled MS. reading, *forms* for *statues*.

This it is to be a scholar ; this it is to have read Homer and Sophocles and Plato.

Such is the scenery and the spirit of the tale. The story itself presents a more modern aspect, being made up of combinations of human passion which seem to have been developed since the Pagan system has been outworn. The poem opens in a strain of elegant but less powerful versification than that which follows. It is descriptive of the annual festival of Love¹ at his temple in Thespia. Anthemion is among the crowd of votaries ; a youth from the banks of Arcadian Ladon :

The flower of all Arcadia's youth
 Was he : such form and face, in truth,
 As thoughts of gentlest maidens seek
 In their day-dreams : soft glossy hair
 Shadowed his forehead, snowy-fair,
 With many a hyacinthine cluster :
 Lips, that in silence seemed to speak,
 Were his, and eyes of mild blue lustre :
 And even the paleness of his cheek,
 The passing trace of tender care,
 Still shewed how beautiful it were
 If its own natural bloom were there.—CANTO I, p. 11.

He comes to offer his vows at the shrine for the recovery of his mistress Calliroë, who is suffering under some strange, and as we are led to infer, magical disease. As he presents his wreath of flowers at the altar they are suddenly withered up. He looks and there is standing near him a woman of exquisite beauty who gives him another wreath which he places on the altar and it does not wither. She turns to him and bids him wear a

The word *Uranian* before *Love* stands cancelled in the MS.

flower which she presents, saying, with other sweet words—

Some meet for once and part for aye,
Like thee and me, and scarce a day
Shall each by each remembered be :
But take the flower I give to thee,
And till it fades remember me.—CANTO I, p. 22.

As Anthemion passes from the temple among the sports and dances of the festival "with vacant eye"

————— the trains
Of youthful dancers round him float,
As the musing bard from his sylvan seat
Looks on the dance of the noontide heat,
Or the play of the watery flowers, that quiver
In the eddies of a lowland river.—CANTO II, p. 29.

He there meets an old man who tells him that the flower he wears is the profane laurel-rose which grows in Larissa's unholy gardens, that it is impious to wear it in the temple of Love, and that he, who has suffered evils which he dares not tell from Thessalian enchantments, knows that the gift of this flower is a spell only to be dissolved by invoking his natal genius and casting the flower into some stream with the caution of not looking upon it after he has thrown it away. Anthemion obeys his direction, but so soon as he has¹

* * * * *

¹ A portion of the MS. is here wanting. Probably it contained little more than an abstract of the movement of the third and fourth Cantos, illustrated by extracts, as the next fragment begins with a quotation from the fifth Canto. It will be useful to supply here the thread of the story. As soon as Anthemion has thrown the flower into the water he hears a sudden cry, Calliroë's voice :

He turned to plunge into the tide,
But all again was still:
The sun upon the surface bright
Poured his last line of crimson light,
Half-sunk behind the hill :

But through the solemn plane-trees past
The pinions of a mightier blast,
And in its many-sounding sweep,
Among the foliage broad and deep,
Aërial voices seemed to sigh,
As if the spirits of the grove
Mourned in prophetic sympathy
With some disastrous love.—

CANTO II, pp. 43—4.

Canto III shews Anthemion, on his way back to Thespia, repelled by sounds of revelry, and seeking solitude by "Aganippe's fountain-wave." Musing on Calliroë, he hears music, prelusive to the appearance of the "radiant maid" whom he had met in the Thespian temple : he learns that her name is

— round his neck
 Are closely twined the silken rings
 Of Rhododaphne's glittering hair,
 And round him her bright arms she flings,
 And cinctured thus in loveliest bands
 The charmed waves in safety bear
 The youth and the enchantress fair
 And leave them on the golden sands.—

CANTO V, pp. 110—11.

They now find themselves on a lonely moor on which stands a solitary cottage—ruined and waste; this scene is transformed by Thessalian magic to a palace surrounded by magnificent gardens. Anthemion enters the hall of the palace where, surrounded by sculptures of divine workmanship, he sees the earthly image of Uranian Love.

Rhododaphne, and receives her declarations of love. She utters the words

These lips are mine; the spells have won them,
 Which round and round thy soul I twine;
 And be the kiss I print upon them
 Poison to all lips but mine!—

CANTO III, pp. 66—7.

Stung by the thought of Calliroë, he escapes this time from the encircling arms of Rhododaphne. The fourth Canto sets forth that "magic and mystery" have been chased away by Reason; but the poet adds

Yet deem not so. The Power of Spells
 Still lingers on the earth, but dwells
 In deeper folds of close disguise,
 That baffle Reason's searching eyes:
 Nor shall that mystic Power resign
 To Truth's cold sway his webs of guile,
 Till woman's eyes have ceased to shine,
 And woman's lips have ceased to smile,
 And woman's voice has ceased to be
 The earthly soul of melody.—

CANTO IV, pp. 72—3.

This is introductory to the working of the spell. Seeking Calliroë, he finds her recovered, rejoices with her one evening, kisses her, and sees her fade and at once become as one dead. Fleeing along the shore, he is seized by pirates (Canto V), on board whose ship he is set beside

a maiden similarly snatched away, who turns out to be Rhododaphne. By her incantations she raises a storm; the boat is wrecked, and Anthemion is borne to shore by the magic of Rhododaphne. Such is the portion of the poem that the missing leaves of the MS. doubtless epitomize. Shelley would scarcely have failed to quote the following description of Rhododaphne preparing for the storm:

She rose, and loosed her radiant hair,
 And raised her golden lyre in air.
 The lyre, beneath the breeze's wings,
 As if a spirit swept the strings,
 Breathed airy music, sweet and strange,
 In many a wild phantastic change.
 Most like a daughter of the Sun
 She stood: her eyes all radiant shone
 With beams unutterably bright;
 And her long tresses, loose and light,
 As on the playful breeze they rolled,
 Flamed with rays of burning gold.—

CANTO V, p. 105.

The extract with which the next leaf of the MS. opens is the conclusion of Canto V; and the paragraph beginning with *They now find themselves* epitomizes Canto VI. At the opening of the paragraph there is a cancelled reading, *The scene in which they now find themselves is then described.*

Plato says, with profound allegory, that Love is not itself beautiful, but seeks the possession of beauty; this idea seems embodied in the deformed dwarf who bids, with a voice as from a trumpet, Anthemion enter. After feast and music the natural result of the situation of the lovers¹ is related by the poet to have place.

The last Canto relates the enjoyments and occupations of the lovers; and we are astonished to discover that any thing can be added to the gardens of Armida and Alcina, and the Bower of Bliss: the following description among many of a Bacchanalian dance is a remarkable instance of a fertile and elegant imagination.²

Oft, 'mid those palace-gardens fair,
 The beauteous nymph (her radiant hair
 With mingled oak and vine-leaves crowned)
 Would grasp the thyrsus ivy-bound,
 And fold, her festal vest around,
 The Bacchic nebris, leading thus
 The swift and dizzy thiasus:
 And as she moves, in all her charms,
 With springing feet and flowing arms,
 'Tis strange in one fair shape to see
 How many forms of grace can be.
 The youths and maids, her beauteous train,
 Follow fast in sportive ring,
 Some the torch and mystic cane,
 Some the vine-bough, brandishing;
 Some, in giddy circlets fleeting,
 The Corybantic timbrel beating:
 Maids, with silver flasks advancing,
 Pour the wine's red-sparkling tide,
 Which youths, with heads recumbent dancing,
 Catch in goblets as they glide:

¹ Cancelled reading, *their situation.*

² Cancelled reading, *is worthy remark.*

All upon the odorous air
 Lightly toss their leafy hair,
 Ever singing, as they move,
 — "Io Bacchus! son of Jove!"¹—

CANTO VII, pp. 148—50.

¹ There must have been another leaf or two of the MS. The last leaf I have ends without completing the extract; and I have added the final couplet. Doubtless Shelley followed his friend's narrative to the catastrophe,—the slaying of Rhododaphne by Uranian Love, who, as he sends his shaft into her breast, exclaims

With impious spells hast thou profaned
 My altars; and all-ruling Jove,
 Though late, yet certain, has unchained
 The vengeance of Uranian Love!—

CANTO VII, p. 150.

How Anthemion finds himself with

the dead Rhododaphne near Calliroë's door, how Calliroë comes out, the spell of her trance being broken, to greet her lover, Shelley doubtless told in few words, and perhaps concluded with verses that must have commended themselves to him—

But when the maid Anthemion led
 To where her beauteous rival slept
 The long last sleep, on earth disspread,
 And told her tale, Calliroë wept
 Sweet tears for Rhododaphne's doom;
 For in her heart a voice was heard:
 —"Twas for Anthemion's love she
 erred!"—

CANTO VII, pp. 165—6.

THE END.

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