JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS

SHELLEY

John Addington Symonds

Shelley

EAN 8596547224051

DigiCat, 2022
Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info

Table of Contents

PREFACE.

Table of Contents

This sketch of Shelley's life was written in the summer of 1878. Since then Professor Dowden's *Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley* (2 vols., Kegan Paul, Trench, and Co., 1886) has been given to the world. In that exhaustive work many important documents belonging to the poet's heirs have been freely used for the first time. Professor Dowden has thus been able to elucidate some hitherto obscure points in Shelley's history, and to settle several doubtful questions. It is not probable that much more will be added in the future to our knowledge of his life.

Upon the appearance of Professor Dowden's biography, I was anxious to rewrite those portions of my book which required modification by the light of authentic papers now at length communicated to the public. My references to the Shelley archives (pp. 81 and 83) in particular required correction.

This, however, would have involved a disproportionate derangement of the stereotype plates. I am therefore obliged to content myself with minor alterations. These are of three kinds. In the present volume I have introduced such verbal changes as could be made upon the plates. I have also enclosed some passages in brackets, indicating thereby that I should prefer to omit these altogether. Finally, I have recast the narrative of Shelley's separation from his first wife (pp. 79-83), and have placed this in an Appendix, to which I earnestly call the attention of my readers.

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

DAVOS PLATZ, *February 1887*.

LIST OF AUTHORITIES.

Table of Contents

1. The Poetical and Prose Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, edited by Mrs. Shelley. Moxon, 1840, 1845. 1 vol.

2. The Poetical Works, edited by Harry Buxton Forman. Reeves and Turner, 1876-7. 4 vols.

3. The Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, edited by W. M. Rossetti. Moxon, 1870. 2 vols.

4. Hogg's Life of Shelley. Moxon, 1858. 2 vols.

5. Trelawny's Records of Shelley, Byron, and the Author Pickering, 1878. 2 vols.

6. Shelley Memorials, edited by Lady Shelley. Smith and Elder. 1 vol.

7. Medwin's Life of Shelley. Newby, 1847. 2 vols.

8. Shelley's Early Life, by D. F. McCarthy. Chatto and Windus. 1 vol.

9. Leigh Hunt's Autobiography. Smith and Elder.

10. W. M. Rossetti's Life of Shelley, included in the edition above cited, No. 3.

11. Shelley, a Critical Biography, by G. B. Smith. David Douglas, 1877.

12. Relics of Shelley, edited by Richard Garnett. Moxon, 1862.

13. Peacock's Articles on Shelley in *Fraser's Magazine*, 1858 and 1860.

14. Shelley in Pall Mall, by R. Garnett, in *Macmillan's Magazine*, June, 1860.

15. Shelley’s Last Days, by R. Garnett, in the *Fortnightly Review*, June, 1878.

16. Two Lectures on Shelley, by W. M. Rossetti, in the *University Magazine*, February and March, 1878.

17. The Prose Works of P. B. Shelley, edited by H. B. Forman. Reeves and Turner, 1880. 4 vols.

18. Shelley, a Poem, etc., by James Thomson. Printed for private circulation at the Chiswick Press, 1884.

19. The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley, by Edward Dowden, LL.D. Kegan Paul, Trench, and Co., 1886. 2 vols.

CHAPTER I.

Table of Contents

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD.

It is worse than useless to deplore the irremediable; yet no man, probably, has failed to mourn the fate of mighty poets, whose dawning gave the promise of a glorious day, but who passed from earth while yet the light that shone in them was crescent. That the world should know Marlowe and Giorgione, Raphael and Mozart, only by the products of their early manhood, is indeed a cause for lamentation, when we remember what the long lives of a Bach and Titian, a Michelangelo and Goethe, held in reserve for their maturity and age. It is of no use to persuade ourselves, as some have done, that we possess the best work of men untimely slain. Had Sophocles been cut off in his prime, before the composition of *Œdipus*; had Handel never merged the fame of his forgotten operas in the immortal music of his oratorios; had Milton been known only by the poems of his youth, we might with equal plausibility have laid that flattering unction to our heart. And yet how shallow would have been our optimism, how fallacious our attempt at consolation. There is no denying the fact that when a young Marcellus is shown by fate for one brief moment, and withdrawn before his spring-time has brought forth the fruits of summer, we must bow in silence to the law of waste that rules inscrutably in nature.

Such reflections are forced upon us by the lives of three great English poets of this century. Byron died when he was thirty-six, Keats when he was twenty-five, and Shelley when

he was on the point of completing his thirtieth year. Of the three, Keats enjoyed the briefest space for the development of his extraordinary powers. His achievement, perfect as it is in some poetic qualities, remains so immature and incomplete that no conjecture can be hazarded about his future. Byron lived longer and produced more than his brother poets. Yet he was extinguished when his genius was still ascendant, when his “swift and fair creations” were issuing like worlds from an archangel’s hands. In his case we have perhaps only to deplore the loss of masterpieces that might have equalled, but could scarcely have surpassed, what we possess. Shelley’s early death is more to be regretted. Unlike Keats and Byron he died by a mere accident. His faculties were far more complex, and his aims were more ambitious than theirs. He therefore needed length of years for their co-ordination; and if a fuller life had been allotted him, we have the certainty that from the discords of his youth he would have wrought a clear and lucid harmony.

These sentences form a somewhat gloomy prelude to a biography. Yet the student of Shelley’s life, the sincere admirer of his genius, is almost forced to strike a solemn key-note at the outset. We are not concerned with one whose “little world of man” for good or ill, was perfected, but with one whose growth was interrupted just before the synthesis of which his powers were capable, had been accomplished.

August 4, 1792, is one of the most memorable dates in the history of English literature. On this day Percy Bysshe Shelley was born at Field Place, near Horsham, in the county

of Sussex. His father, named Timothy, was the eldest son of Bysshe Shelley, Esquire, of Goring Castle, in the same county. The Shelley family could boast of great antiquity and considerable wealth. Without reckoning earlier and semi-legendary honours, it may here be recorded that it is distinguished in the elder branch by one baronetcy dating from 1611, and by a second in the younger dating from 1806. In the latter year the poet's grandfather received this honour through the influence of his friend the Duke of Norfolk. Mr. Timothy Shelley was born in the year 1753, and in 1791 he married Elizabeth, daughter of Charles Pilfold, Esquire, a lady of great beauty, and endowed with fair intellectual ability, though not of a literary temperament. The first child of this marriage was the poet, named Bysshe in compliment to his grandfather, the then living head of the family, and Percy because of some remote connexion with the ducal house of Northumberland. Four daughters, Elizabeth, Mary, Hellen, and Margaret, and one son, John, who died in the year 1866, were the subsequent issue of Mr. Timothy Shelley's marriage. In the year 1815, upon the death of his father, he succeeded to the baronetcy, which passed, after his own death, to his grandson, the present Sir Percy Florence Shelley, as the poet's only surviving son.

Before quitting, once and for all, the arid region of genealogy, it may be worth mentioning that Sir Bysshe Shelley by his second marriage with Miss Elizabeth Jane Sydney Perry, heiress of Penshurst, became the father of five children, the eldest son of whom assumed the name of Shelley-Sidney, received a baronetcy, and left a son, Philip Charles Sidney, who was created Lord De l'Isle and Dudley.

Such details are not without a certain value, inasmuch as they prove that the poet, who won for his ancient and honourable house a fame far more illustrious than titles can confer, was sprung from a man of no small personal force and worldly greatness. Sir Bysshe Shelley owed his position in society, the wealth he accumulated, and the honours he transmitted to two families, wholly and entirely to his own exertions. Though he bore a name already distinguished in the annals of the English landed gentry, he had to make his own fortune under conditions of some difficulty. He was born in North America, and began life, it is said, as a quack doctor. There is also a legend of his having made a first marriage with a person of obscure birth in America. Yet such was the charm of his address, the beauty of his person, the dignity of his bearing, and the vigour of his will, that he succeeded in winning the hands and fortunes of two English heiresses; and, having begun the world with nothing, he left it at the age of seventy-four, bequeathing 300,000*l.* in the English Funds, together with estates worth 20,000*l.* a year to his descendants.

Percy Bysshe Shelley was therefore born in the purple of the English squirearchy; but never assuredly did the old tale of the swan hatched with the hen’s brood of ducklings receive a more emphatic illustration than in this case. Gifted with the untameable individuality of genius, and bent on piercing to the very truth beneath all shams and fictions woven by society and ancient usage, he was driven by the circumstances of his birth and his surroundings into an exaggerated warfare with the world’s opinion. His too frequent tirades against—

The Queen of Slaves,
The hood-winked Angel of the blind and dead,
Custom,—

owed much of their asperity to the early influences brought to bear upon him by relatives who prized their position in society, their wealth, and the observance of conventional decencies, above all other things.

Mr. Timothy Shelley was not what the world calls a bad man; but he was everything which the poet's father ought not to have been. As member for the borough of Shoreham, he voted blindly with his party; and that party looked to nothing beyond the interests of the gentry and the pleasure of the Duke of Norfolk. His philosophy was limited to a superficial imitation of Lord Chesterfield, whose style he pretended to affect in his familiar correspondence, though his letters show that he lacked the rudiments alike of logic and of grammar. His religious opinions might be summed up in Clough's epigram:—

At church on Sunday to attend
Will serve to keep the world your friend.

His morality in like manner was purely conventional, as may be gathered from his telling his eldest son that he would never pardon a *mésalliance*, but would provide for as many illegitimate children as he chose to have. For the rest, he appears to have been a fairly good landlord, and a not unkind father, sociable and hospitable, somewhat vain and occasionally odd in manner, but qualified for passing muster with the country gentlemen around him. In the capacity to

understand a nature which deviated from the ordinary type so remarkably as Shelley's, he was utterly deficient; and perhaps we ought to regard it as his misfortune that fate made him the father of a man who was among the greatest portents of originality and unconventionality that this century has seen. Toward an ordinary English youth, ready to sow his wild oats at college, and willing to settle at the proper age and take his place upon the bench of magistrates, Sir Timothy Shelley would have shown himself an indulgent father; and it must be conceded by the poet's biographer that if Percy Bysshe had but displayed tact and consideration on his side, many of the misfortunes which signalized his relations to his father would have been avoided.

Shelley passed his childhood at Field Place, and when he was about six years old began to be taught, together with his sisters, by Mr. Edwards, a clergyman who lived at Warnham. What is recorded of these early years we owe to the invaluable communications of his sister Hellen. The difference of age between her and her brother Bysshe obliges us to refer her recollections to a somewhat later period—probably to the holidays he spent away from Sion House and Eton. Still, since they introduce us to the domestic life of his then loved home, it may be proper to make quotations from them in this place. Miss Shelley tells us that her brother "would frequently come to the nursery, and was full of a peculiar kind of pranks. One piece of mischief, for which he was rebuked, was running a stick through the ceiling of a low passage to find some new chamber, which could be made effective for some flights of

his vivid imagination." He was very much attached to his sisters, and used to entertain them with stories, in which "an alchemist, old and grey, with a long beard," who was supposed to abide mysteriously in the garret of Field Place, played a prominent part. "Another favourite theme was the 'Great Tortoise,' that lived in Warnham Pond; and any unwonted noise was accounted for by the presence of this great beast, which was made into the fanciful proportions most adapted to excite awe and wonder." To his friend Hogg, in after-years, Shelley often spoke about another reptile, no mere creature of myth or fable, the "Old Snake," who had inhabited the gardens of Field Place for several generations. This venerable serpent was accidentally killed by the gardener's scythe; but he lived long in the poet's memory, and it may reasonably be conjectured that Shelley's peculiar sympathy for snakes was due to the dim recollection of his childhood's favourite. Some of the games he invented to please his sisters were grotesque, and some both perilous and terrifying. "We dressed ourselves in strange costumes to personate spirits or fiends, and Bysshe would take a fire-stove and fill it with some inflammable liquid and carry it flaming into the kitchen and to the back door." Shelley often took his sisters for long country rambles over hedge and fence, carrying them when the difficulties of the ground or their fatigue required it. At this time "his figure was slight and beautiful,—his hands were models, and his feet are treading the earth again in one of his race; his eyes too have descended in their wild fixed beauty to the same person. As a child, I have heard that his skin was like snow, and bright ringlets covered his head." Here is a little

picture which brings the boy vividly before our eyes: “Bysshe ordered clothes according to his own fancy at Eton, and the beautifully fitting silk pantaloons, as he stood as almost all men and boys do, with their coat-tails near the fire, excited my silent though excessive admiration.”

When he was ten years of age, Shelley went to school at Sion House, Brentford, an academy kept by Dr. Greenlaw, and frequented by the sons of London tradesmen, who proved but uncongenial companions to his gentle spirit. It is fortunate for posterity that one of his biographers, his second cousin Captain Medwin, was his schoolfellow at Sion House; for to his recollections we owe some details of great value. Medwin tells us that Shelley learned the classic languages almost by intuition, while he seemed to be spending his time in dreaming, now watching the clouds as they sailed across the school-room window, and now scribbling sketches of fir-trees and cedars in memory of Field Place. At this time he was subject to sleep-walking, and, if we may credit this biographer, he often lost himself in reveries not far removed from trance. His favourite amusement was novel-reading; and to the many “blue books” from the Minerva press devoured by him in his boyhood, we may ascribe the style and tone of his first compositions. For physical sports he showed no inclination. “He passed among his schoolfellows as a strange and unsocial being; for when a holiday relieved us from our tasks, and the other boys were engaged in such sports as the narrow limits of our prison-court allowed, Shelley, who entered into none of them, would pace backwards and forwards—I think I see him now—along the southern wall,

indulging in various vague and undefined ideas, the chaotic elements, if I may say so, of what afterwards produced so beautiful a world."

Two of Shelley's most important biographical compositions undoubtedly refer to this period of his boyhood. The first is the passage in the Prelude to *Laon and Cythna* which describes his suffering among the unsympathetic inmates of a school—

> Thoughts of great deeds were mine, dear Friend, when first
> The clouds which wrap this world from youth did pass.
> I do remember well the hour which burst
> My spirit's sleep: a fresh May-dawn it was,
> When I walked forth upon the glittering grass,
> And wept, I knew not why; until there rose
> From the near school-room, voices, that, alas!
> Were but one echo from a world of woes—
> The harsh and grating strife of tyrants and of foes.
>
> And then I clasped my hands and looked around—
> —But none was near to mock my streaming eyes,
> Which poured their warm drops on the sunny ground —
> So without shame I spake:—"I will be wise,
> And just, and free, and mild, if in me lies
> Such power, for I grow weary to behold
> The selfish and the strong still tyrannize
> Without reproach or check." I then controlled
> My tears, my heart grew calm, and I was meek and

bold.

And from that hour did I with earnest thought
Heap knowledge from forbidden mines of lore,
Yet nothing that my tyrants knew or taught
I cared to learn, but from that secret store
Wrought linkèd armour for my soul, before
It might walk forth to war among mankind.
Thus power and hope were strengthened more and more
Within me, till there came upon my mind
A sense of loneliness, a thirst with which I pined.

The second is a fragment on friendship preserved by Hogg. After defining that kind of passionate attachment which often precedes love in fervent natures, he proceeds: “I remember forming an attachment of this kind at school. I cannot recall to my memory the precise epoch at which this took place; but I imagine it must have been at the age of eleven or twelve. The object of these sentiments was a boy about my own age, of a character eminently generous, brave, and gentle; and the elements of human feeling seemed to have been, from his birth, genially compounded within him. There was a delicacy and a simplicity in his manners, inexpressibly attractive. It has never been my fortune to meet with him since my school-boy days; but either I confound my present recollections with the delusions of past feelings, or he is now a source of honour and utility to every one around him. The tones of his voice were so soft and winning, that every word pierced into my heart; and their pathos was so deep, that in listening to him

the tears have involuntarily gushed from my eyes. Such was the being for whom I first experienced the sacred sentiments of friendship." How profound was the impression made on his imagination and his feelings by this early friendship, may again be gathered from a passage in his note upon the antique group of Bacchus and Ampelus at Florence. "Look, the figures are walking with a sauntering and idle pace, and talking to each other as they walk, as you may have seen a younger and an elder boy at school, walking in some grassy spot of the play-ground with that tender friendship for each other which the age inspires."

These extracts prove beyond all question that the first contact with the outer world called into activity two of Shelley's strongest moral qualities—his hatred of tyranny and brutal force in any form, and his profound sentiment of friendship. The admiring love of women, which marked him no less strongly, and which made him second only to Shakespere in the sympathetic delineation of a noble feminine ideal, had been already developed by his deep affection for his mother and sisters. It is said that he could not receive a letter from them without manifest joy.

"Shelley," says Medwin, "was at this time tall for his age, slightly and delicately built, and rather narrow-chested, with a complexion fair and ruddy, a face rather long than oval. His features, not regularly handsome, were set off by a profusion of silky brown hair, that curled naturally. The expression of his countenance was one of exceeding sweetness and innocence. His blue eyes were very large and prominent. They were at times, when he was abstracted, as he often was in contemplation, dull, and as it

were, insensible to external objects; at others they flashed with the fire of intelligence. His voice was soft and low, but broken in its tones,—when anything much interested him, harsh and immodulated; and this peculiarity he never lost. He was naturally calm, but when he heard of or read of some flagrant act of injustice, oppression, or cruelty, then indeed the sharpest marks of horror and indignation were visible in his countenance.”

Such as the child was, we shall find the man to have remained unaltered through the short space of life allowed him. Loving, innocent, sensitive, secluded from the vulgar concerns of his companions, strongly moralized after a peculiar and inborn type of excellence, drawing his inspirations from Nature and from his own soul in solitude, Shelley passed across the stage of this world, attended by a splendid vision which sustained him at a perilous height above the kindly race of men. The penalty of this isolation he suffered in many painful episodes. The reward he reaped in a measure of more authentic prophecy, and in a nobler realization of his best self, than could be claimed by any of his immediate contemporaries.

CHAPTER II.

Table of Contents

ETON AND OXFORD.

In 1804 Shelley went from Sion House to Eton. At this time Dr. Goodall was headmaster, and Shelley's tutor was a Mr. Bethel, "one of the dullest men in the establishment." At Eton Shelley was not popular either with his teachers or his elder school-fellows, although the boys of his own age are said to have adored him. "He was all passion," writes Mrs. Shelley, "passionate in his resistance to an injury, passionate in his love:" and this vehemence of temperament he displayed by organizing a rebellion against fagging, which no doubt won for him the applause of his juniors and equals. It was not to be expected that a lad intolerant of rule and disregardful of restriction, who neglected punctuality in the performance of his exercises, while he spent his leisure in translating half of Pliny's history, should win the approbation of pedagogues. At the same time the inspired opponent of the fagging system, the scorner of games and muscular amusements, could not hope to find much favour with such martinets of juvenile convention as a public school is wont to breed. At Eton, as elsewhere, Shelley's uncompromising spirit brought him into inconvenient contact with a world of vulgar usage, while his lively fancy invested the commonplaces of reality with dark hues borrowed from his own imagination. Mrs. Shelley says of him, "Tamed by affection, but unconquered by blows, what chance was there that Shelley should be happy at a public school?" This sentence probably contains the pith of

what he afterwards remembered of his own school life, and there is no doubt that a nature like his, at once loving and high-spirited, had much to suffer. It was a mistake, however, to suppose that at Eton there were any serious blows to bear, or to assume that laws of love which might have led a spirit so gentle as Shelley's, were adapted to the common stuff of which the English boy is formed. The latter mistake Shelley made continually throughout his youth; and only the advance of years tempered his passionate enthusiasm into a sober zeal for the improvement of mankind by rational methods. We may also trace at this early epoch of his life that untamed intellectual ambition—that neglect of the immediate and detailed for the transcendental and universal—which was a marked characteristic of his genius, leading him to fly at the highest while he overleaped the facts of ordinary human life. "From his earliest years," says Mrs. Shelley, "all his amusements and occupations were of a daring, and in one sense of the term, lawless nature. He delighted to exert his powers, not as a boy, but as a man; and so with manly powers and childish wit, he dared and achieved attempts that none of his comrades could even have conceived. His understanding and the early development of imagination never permitted him to mingle in childish plays; and his natural aversion to tyranny prevented him from paying due attention to his school duties. But he was always actively employed; and although his endeavours were prosecuted with puerile precipitancy, yet his aim and thoughts were constantly directed to those great objects which have employed the thoughts of the greatest among men; and though his studies were not

followed up according to school discipline, they were not the less diligently applied to." This high-soaring ambition was the source both of his weakness and his strength in art, as well as in his commerce with the world of men. The boy who despised discipline and sought to extort her secrets from nature by magic, was destined to become the philanthropist who dreamed of revolutionizing society by eloquence, and the poet who invented in *Prometheus Unbound* forms of grandeur too colossal to be animated with dramatic life.

A strong interest in experimental science had been already excited in him at Sion House by the exhibition of an orrery; and this interest grew into a passion at Eton. Experiments in chemistry and electricity, of the simpler and more striking kind, gave him intense pleasure—the more so perhaps because they were forbidden. On one occasion he set the trunk of an old tree on fire with a burning glass: on another, while he was amusing himself with a blue flame, his tutor came into the room and received a severe shock from a highly-charged Leyden jar. During the holidays Shelley carried on the same pursuits at Field Place. "His own hands and clothes," says Miss Shelley, "were constantly stained and corroded with acids, and it only seemed too probable that some day the house would be burned down, or some serious mischief happen to himself or others from the explosion of combustibles." This taste for science Shelley long retained. If we may trust Mr. Hogg's memory, the first conversation which that friend had with him at Oxford, consisted almost wholly of an impassioned monologue from Shelley on the revolution to be wrought by science in all realms of thought. His imagination was

fascinated by the boundless vistas opened to the student of chemistry. When he first discovered that the four elements were not final, it gave him the acutest pleasure: and this is highly characteristic of the genius which was always seeking to transcend and reach the life of life withdrawn from ordinary gaze. On the other hand he seems to have delighted in the toys of science, playing with a solar microscope, and mixing strangest compounds in his crucibles, without taking the trouble to study any of its branches systematically. In his later years he abandoned these pursuits. But a charming reminiscence of them occurs in that most delightful of his familiar poems, the *Letter to Maria Gisborne*.

While translating Pliny and dabbling in chemistry, Shelley was not wholly neglectful of Etonian studies. He acquired a fluent, if not a correct, knowledge of both Greek and Latin, and astonished his contemporaries by the facility with which he produced verses in the latter language. His powers of memory were extraordinary, and the rapidity with which he read a book, taking in seven or eight lines at a glance, and seizing the sense upon the hint of leading words, was no less astonishing. Impatient speed and indifference to minutiæ were indeed among the cardinal qualities of his intellect. To them we may trace not only the swiftness of his imaginative flight, but also his frequent satisfaction with the somewhat less than perfect in artistic execution.

That Shelley was not wholly friendless or unhappy at Eton may be gathered from numerous small circumstances. Hogg says that his Oxford rooms were full of handsome leaving books, and that he was frequently visited by old

Etonian acquaintances. We are also told that he spent the 40*l.* gained by his first novel, *Zastrozzi*, on a farewell supper to eight school-boy friends. A few lines, too, might be quoted from his own poem, the *Boat on the Serchio*, to prove that he did not entertain a merely disagreeable memory of his school life.[1] Yet the general experience of Eton must have been painful; and it is sad to read of this gentle and pure spirit being goaded by his coarser comrades into fury, or coaxed to curse his father and the king for their amusement. It may be worth mentioning that he was called “the Atheist” at Eton; and though Hogg explains this by saying that “the Atheist” was an official character among the boys, selected from time to time for his defiance of authority, yet it is not improbable that Shelley’s avowed opinions may even then have won for him a title which he proudly claimed in after-life. To allude to his boyish incantations and nocturnal commerce with fiends and phantoms would scarcely be needful, were it not that they seem to have deeply tinged his imagination. While describing the growth of his own genius in the *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*, he makes the following reference to circumstances which might otherwise be trivial:—

> While yet a boy, I sought for ghosts, and sped
> Thro’ many a listening chamber, cave, and ruin,
> And starlight wood, with fearful steps pursuing
> Hopes of high talk with the departed dead.
> I call’d on poisonous names with which our youth is fed,
> I was not heard, I saw them not—
> When, musing deeply on the lot

Of life, at that sweet time when winds are wooing
All vital things that wake to bring
News of birds and blossoming,—
Sudden, thy shadow fell on me;
I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ecstasy!

Among his friends at Windsor was one whose name will always be revered by Shelley's worshippers; for he alone discerned the rare gifts of the strange and solitary boy, and Shelley loved him. Dr. Lind was an old man, a physician, and a student of chemistry. Shelley spent long hours at his house, conversing with him, and receiving such instruction in philosophy and science as the grey-haired scholar could impart. The affection which united them must have been of no common strength or quality; for when Shelley lay ill of a fever at Field Place, and had conceived the probably ill-founded notion that his father intended to place him in a mad-house, he managed to convey a message to his friend at Eton, on the receipt of which Dr. Lind travelled to Horsham, and by his sympathy and skill restored the sick boy's confidence. It may incidentally be pointed out that this story, credited as true by Lady Shelley in her Memorials, shows how early an estrangement had begun between the poet and his father. We look, moreover, vainly for that mother's influence which might have been so beneficial to the boy in whom "love and life were twins, born at one birth." From Dr. Lind Shelley not only received encouragement to pursue his chemical studies; but he also acquired the habit of corresponding with persons unknown to him, whose opinions he might be anxious to discover or dispute. This habit, as we shall see in the sequel,

determined Shelley’s fate on two important occasions of his life. In return for the help extended to him at Eton, Shelley conferred undying fame on Dr. Lind; the characters of Zonaras in *Prince Athanase*, and of the hermit in *Laon and Cythna*, are portraits painted by the poet of his boyhood’s friend.

The months which elapsed between Eton and Oxford were an important period in Shelley’s life. At this time a boyish liking for his cousin, Harriet Grove, ripened into real attachment; and though there was perhaps no formal engagement between them, the parents on both sides looked with approval on their love. What it concerns us to know about this early passion, is given in a letter from a brother of Miss Grove. “Bysshe was at that time (just after leaving Eton) more attached to my sister Harriet than I can express, and I recollect well the moonlight walks we four had at Strode and also at St. Irving’s; that, I think was the name of the place, then the Duke of Norfolk’s, at Horsham.” For some time after the date mentioned in this letter, Shelley and Miss Grove kept up an active correspondence; but the views he expressed on speculative subjects soon began to alarm her. She consulted her mother and her father, and the engagement was broken off. The final separation does not seem to have taken place until the date of Shelley’s expulsion from Oxford; and not the least cruel of the pangs he had to suffer at that period, was the loss of one to whom he had given his whole heart unreservedly. The memory of Miss Grove long continued to haunt his imagination, nor is there much doubt that his first unhappy marriage was contracted while the wound remained