

ministry. After the accession of Lord John Russell to power in 1846 he was appointed master of the mint. Being desirous, on account of his wife's health, to obtain diplomatic employment abroad, he was in 1850 appointed minister at the court of Tuscany. He died somewhat suddenly of gout at Florence on May 23, 1851.

See *Memoirs of Richard Lalor Sheil*, by W. Torrens M'Cullagh (2 vols., 1855).

SHEKEL. In the system of Babylonian and Assyrian weights the talent (called in Heb. כִּיקָר, kikkar) consisted of 60 mana (Heb. מָנֶה, maneh) or minas, and the latter again of sixty shekels (Heb. שֶׁקֶל). For the values of these weights see NUMISMATICS, vol. xvii. p. 631, where it is also explained that the Phœnicians and Hebrews modified the system and reckoned only 50 shekels to the maneh, at all events in applying the names to money, *i. e.*, to the precious metals,¹ and that the weight of their silver shekel was also probably modified for convenience of interchange between the gold and silver standard. The silver shekels of the Maccabees (NUMISMATICS, p. 650) have a maximum weight of about 224 grains, and correspond to the Phœnician tetradrachm (four drams). Hence in Matt. xvii. 24 the temple tax of half a shekel is called the didrachm (2 drams). In 2 Sam. xiv. 26 we read of shekels "after the king's weight," *i. e.*, according to the Assyrian standard, which is called "royal" on weights found at Nineveh. The Hebrews divided the shekel into twenty parts, each of which was a gerah (גֵּרָה).

SHELBURNE, EARL OF. See LANSDOWNE, MARQUIS OF.

SHELD-DRAKE, or, as commonly spelt in its contracted form, **SHELDRAKE**, a word whose derivation² has been much discussed, one of the most conspicuous birds of the Duck tribe, *Anatida*, called, however, in many parts of England the "Burrow-Duck" from its habits presently to be mentioned, and in some districts by the almost obsolete name of "Bergander" (Dutch, *Berg-eende*, Germ. *Bergente*), a word used by Turner in 1544.

The Sheldrake is the *Anas tadorna*³ of Linnaeus, and the *Tadorna cornuta* or *T. vulpanser* of modern ornithology, a bird somewhat larger and of more upright stature than an ordinary Duck, having its bill, with a basal fleshy protuberance (whence the specific term *cornuta*), pale red, the head and upper neck very dark glossy green, and beneath that a broad white collar, succeeded by a still broader belt of bright bay extending from the upper back across the upper breast. The outer scapulars, the primaries, a median abdominal stripe, which dilates at the vent, and a bar at the tip of the middle tail-quills are black; the inner secondaries and the lower tail-coverts are grey; and the *speculum* or wing-spot is a rich bronzed-green. The rest of the plumage is pure white, and the legs are flesh-coloured. There is little external difference between the sexes, the female being only somewhat smaller and less brightly coloured. The Sheldrake frequents the sandy coasts of nearly the whole of Europe and North Africa, extending across Asia to India, China, and Japan, generally keeping in pairs and sometimes penetrating to favourable inland localities. The nest is always made under cover, usually in a rabbit-hole among sand-hills, and in the Frisian Islands the people supply this bird with artificial burrows, taking large toll of it in eggs and down. Barbary, south-eastern Europe, and Central Asia are inhabited by an allied

¹ See Exod. xxxviii. 25, where there are 3000 shekels in the talent.

² Ray in 1674 (*Engl. Words*, p. 76) gave it from the local "sheld" (=particoloured), which, applied to animals, as a horse or a cat, still survives in East Anglia. This opinion is not only suitable but is confirmed by the bird's Old Norse name *Skjöldungr*, from *Skjöldar*, primarily a patch, and now commonly bestowed on a piebald horse, just as *Skjaldar* (Cleasby's *Isl. Diet.*, *sub voce*), from the same source, is a particoloured cow. But some scholars interpret *Skjöldungr* by the secondary meaning of *Skjöldar*, a shield, asserting that it refers to "the shield-like band across the breast" of the bird. If they be right the proper spelling of the English word would be "Shield-drake," as some indeed have it. A third suggested meaning, from the Old Norse *Skjól*, shelter, is philologically to be rejected, but, if true, would refer to the bird's habit, described in the text, of breeding under cover.

³ This is the Latinized form of the French *Tadorne*, first published by Belon (1555), a word on which Littré throws no light except to state that it has a southern variant *Tardone*.

species of more inland range and very different coloration, the *T. casarca* or *Casarca*⁴ *rutila* of ornithologists, the Ruddy Sheldrake of English authors—for it has several times strayed to the British Islands,—and the "Brahminy Duck" of Anglo-Indians, who find it resorting in winter, whether by pairs or by thousands, to their inland waters. This species is of an almost uniform bay colour all over, except the quill-feathers of the wings and tail, and (in the male) a ring round the neck, which are black, while the wing-coverts are white and the *speculum* shines with green and purple; the bill and legs are dark-coloured.⁵ A species closely resembling the last, but with a grey head, *T. cana*, inhabits South Africa, while in some of the islands of the Malay Archipelago, and in the northern parts of Australia, there is a fourth species, *T. radjah*, which almost equals the true Sheldrake in its brightly contrasted plumage, but yet wants some of the lively colours the latter displays—its head, for instance, being white instead of dark green. Further to the southward in Australia occurs another species of more sombre colours, the *T. tadornoides*; and New Zealand is the home of a sixth species, *T. variegata*, still less distinguished by bright hues. In the last two the plumage of the sexes differs not inconsiderably, but all are believed to have essentially the same habits as the *T. cornuta*.⁶

It is not without a purpose that these different species are here particularized. Sheldrakes will, if attention be paid to their wants, breed freely in captivity, crossing if opportunity be given them with other species, and an incident therewith connected possesses an importance hardly to be overrated by the philosophical naturalist, though it seems not to have met with the attention it deserves. In the Zoological Society's gardens in the spring of 1859 a male of *T. cornuta* mated with a female of *T. cana*, and, as will have been inferred from what has been before stated, these two species differ greatly in the colouring of their plumage. The young of their union, however, presented an appearance wholly unlike that of either parent, and an appearance which can hardly be said, as has been said (*P. Z. S.*, 1859, p. 442), to be "a curious combination of the colours of the two." Both sexes of this hybrid have been admirably portrayed by Mr Wolf (*tom. cit.*, Aves, pl. 158); and, strange to say, when these figures are compared with equally faithful portraits by the same master (*op. cit.*, 1864, pls. 18, 19) of the Australian and New Zealand species, *T. tadornoides* and *T. variegata*, it will at once be seen that the hybrids present an appearance almost midway between the two species last named—species which certainly had nothing to do with their production. The only explanation of this astounding fact seems to be that afforded by the principle of "reversion," as set forth by Mr Darwin, and illustrated by him from examples of certain breeds of Doves, domestic Fowls, and Ducks (*Anim. and Pl. under Domestication*, i. pp. 197–200, ii. p. 40), as well as, in the matter of domestic Fowls, by Mr Cambridge Phillips (*Zoologist*, 1884, p. 331). It is a perfectly fair hypothesis that the existing animals of New Zealand and Australia retain more of their ancestral character than do those of countries in which we may suppose the struggle for life to have been fiercer and the action of natural selection stronger. Why it is so we cannot say, yet experiment proves that the most widely different breeds of Pigeons and other poultry, when crossed, produce offspring that more resembles the ancestral wild species from which the domesticated forms have sprung than it resembles either of the immediate parents. This mysterious agency is known as

⁴ Bonaparte was pleased in 1838 to separate this species from the genus *Tadorna*, but neither he nor any of his successors has shewn any good reason for doing so.

⁵ Jerdon (*B. India*, iii. p. 783) tells of a Hindu belief that once upon a time two lovers were transformed into birds of this species, and that they or their descendants are condemned to pass the night on the opposite banks of a river, whence they unceasingly call to one another: "Charkwa, shall I come?" "No, Charkwi." "Charkwi, shall I come?" "No, Charkwa." As to how, under these circumstances, the race is perpetuated the legend is silent.

⁶ The *Anas scutellata* of the Indo-Malay countries is by several authorities considered to be a *Tadorna*, but this view is denied by others, among them by Mr Hume (*Stray Feathers*, viii. p. 158).

the principle of "reversion," and the example just cited proves that the same effect is produced in species as well as in "races,"—indicating the essential identity of both,—the only real difference being that "species" are more differentiated than are "races," or that the distinction between them, instead of being (as many writers, some of the first repute, have maintained) qualitative, is merely quantitative, or one of degree.¹

The genus *Tadorna*, as shewn by its tracheal characters, seems to be most nearly related to *Chenaloper*, containing the bird so well known as the Egyptian Goose, *C. egyptiaca*, and an allied species, *C. jubata*, from South America. For the same reason the genus *Plectropterus*, composed of the Spur-winged Geese of Africa, and perhaps the Australian *Anseranas* and the Indian and Ethiopian *Sarcidiornis*, also appear to belong to the same group, which should be reckoned rather to the Anatine than to the Anserine section of the *Anatide*. (A. N.)

SHELLEY, MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT (1797–1851), the second wife of the poet **SHELLEY** (*q. v.*), born in London, August 30, 1797 (see vol. x. p. 717), deserves some notice on her own account, as a writer of romance, chiefly imaginative. When she was in Switzerland with Shelley and Byron in 1816 (see below), a proposal was made that various members of the party should write a romance or tale dealing with the supernatural. The result of this project was that Mrs Shelley wrote *Frankenstein*, Byron the beginning of a narrative about a vampire, and Dr Polidori, Byron's physician, a tale named *The Vampyre*, the authorship of which used frequently in past years to be attributed to Byron himself. *Frankenstein*, published in 1818, when Mrs Shelley was at the utmost twenty-one years old, is a very remarkable performance for so young and inexperienced a writer; its main idea is that of the formation and vitalization, by a deep student of the secrets of nature, of an adult man, who, entering the world thus under unnatural conditions, becomes the terror of his species, a half-involuntary criminal, and finally an outcast whose sole resource is self-immolation. This romance was followed by others: *Valperga, or the Life and Adventures of Castruccio, Prince of Lucca* (1823), an historical tale written with a good deal of spirit, and readable enough even now; *The Last Man* (1826), a fiction of the final agonies of human society owing to the universal spread of a pestilence,—this is written in a very stilted style, but bears some traces of the imagination which fashioned *Frankenstein*; *The Fortunes of Perkin Warbeck* (1830); *Lodore* (1835); and *Falkner* (1837). Besides these novels there was the *Journal of a Six Weeks' Tour* (the tour of 1814 mentioned below), which is published in conjunction with Shelley's prose-writings; also *Rambles in Germany and Italy in 1840–42–43* (which shows an observant spirit, capable of making some true forecasts of the future), and various miscellaneous writings. After the death of Shelley, for whom she had a deep and even enthusiastic affection, marred at times by defects of temper, Mrs Shelley in the autumn of 1823 returned to London. At first the earnings of her pen were her only sustenance; but after a while Sir Timothy Shelley made her an allowance, which would have been withdrawn if she had persisted in a project of writing a full biography of her husband. She was a loving and careful mother, and shared the prosperous fortunes of her son, when, upon the death of Sir Timothy in 1844, he succeeded to the baronetcy. She died in February 1851.

SHELLEY, PERCY BYSSHE (1792–1822), was born on

¹ It is further worthy of remark that the young of *T. variegata* when first hatched closely resemble those of *T. casarca*, and when the former assume their first plumage they resemble their father more than their mother (*P. Z. S.*, 1866, p. 150).

4th August 1792, at Field Place, near Horsham, Sussex. He was the eldest child of Timothy Shelley, M.P. for Shoreham, by his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Charles Pilfold, of Effingham, Surrey. Mr Timothy Shelley became in 1815 Sir Timothy Shelley, Bart., upon the decease of his father Bysshe, who was created a baronet in 1806. This Bysshe Shelley was born in Christ Church, Newark, North America, and married two heiresses, the former, the mother of Timothy, being Mary Catherine, heiress of the Rev. Theobald Michell, of Hershham. He was a handsome man of enterprising and remarkable character, accumulated a vast fortune, built Castle Goring, and lived in sullen and penurious retirement in his closing years. None of his talent seems to have descended to Timothy, who, except for being of a rather oddly self-assertive character, was undistinguishable from the ordinary run of commonplace country squires. The mother of the poet is described as beautiful, and a woman of good abilities, but not with any literary turn; she was an agreeable letter-writer. The branch of the Shelley family to which the poet Percy Bysshe belonged traces its pedigree to Henry Shelley, of Worminghurst, Sussex, who died in 1623. Beyond that point the genealogical record is not clear; yet no substantial doubt exists that these Worminghurst or Castle Goring Shelleys are of the same stock as the Michelgrove Shelleys, who trace up to Sir William Shelley, judge of the common pleas under Henry VII., thence to a member of parliament in 1415, and to the reign of Edward I., or even to the epoch of the Norman Conquest. The Worminghurst branch was a family of credit, but not of distinction, until its fortunes culminated under the above-named Sir Bysshe.

In the character of Percy Bysshe Shelley three qualities become early manifest, and may be regarded as innate: impressionableness or extreme susceptibility to external and internal impulses of feeling; a lively imagination or erratic fancy, blurring a sound estimate of solid facts; and a resolute repudiation of outer authority or the despotism of custom. These qualities were highly developed in his earliest manhood, were active in his boyhood, and no doubt made some show even on the borderland between childhood and infancy. At the age of six he was sent to a day school at Warnham, kept by the Rev. Mr Edwards; at ten to Sion House School, Brentford, of which the principal was Dr Greenlaw, while the pupils were mostly sons of local tradesmen; at twelve (or immediately before that age, 29th July 1804) to Eton. The headmaster of Eton, up to nearly the close of Shelley's sojourn in the school, was Dr Goodall, a mild disciplinarian; it is therefore a mistake to suppose that Percy (unless during his very brief stay in the lower school) was frequently flagellated by the formidable Dr Keate, who only became headmaster after Goodall. Shelley was a shy, sensitive, mopish sort of boy from one point of view,—from another a very unruly one, having his own notions of justice, independence, and mental freedom; by nature gentle, kindly, and retiring,—under provocation dangerously violent. He resisted the odious fagging system, exerted himself little in the routine of school-learning, and was known both as "Mad Shelley" and as "Shelley the Atheist." Some writers try to show that an Eton boy would be termed atheist without exhibiting any propensity to atheism, but solely on the ground of his being mutinous. However, as Shelley was a declared atheist a good while before attaining his majority, a shrewd suspicion arises that, if Etonians dubbed him atheist, they had some relevant reason for doing so.

Shelley entered University College, Oxford, in April 1810, returned thence to Eton, and finally quitted the school at midsummer, and commenced residence in Oxford

in October. Here he met a young Durham man, Thomas Jefferson Hogg, who had preceded him in the university by a couple of months; the two youths at once struck up a warm and intimate friendship. Shelley had at this time a love for chemical experiment, as well as for poetry, philosophy, and classical study, and was in all his tastes and bearing an enthusiast. Hogg was not in the least an enthusiast, rather a cynic, but he also was a steady and well-read classical student. In religious matters both were sceptics, or indeed decided anti-Christians; whether Hogg, as the senior and more informed disputant, pioneered Shelley into strict atheism, or whether Shelley, as the more impassioned and unflinching speculator, outran the easy-going jeering Hogg, is a moot point; we incline to the latter opinion. Certain it is that each egged on the other by perpetual disquisition on abstruse subjects, conducted partly for the sake of truth and partly for that of mental exertion, without on either side any disposition to bow to authority or stop short of extreme conclusions. The upshot of this habit was that Shelley and Hogg, at the close of some five months of happy and uneventful academic life, got expelled from the university. Shelley—for he alone figures as the writer of the "little syllabus," although there can be no doubt that Hogg was his confidant and coadjutor throughout—published anonymously a pamphlet or flysheet entitled *The Necessity of Atheism*, which he sent round, or intended to send round, to all sorts of people as an invitation or challenge to discussion. It amounted to saying that neither reason nor testimony is adequate to establish the existence of a deity, and that nothing short of a personal individual self-revelation of the deity would be sufficient. The college authorities heard of the pamphlet, somehow identified Shelley as its author, and summoned him before them—"our master, and two or three of the fellows." The pamphlet was produced, and Shelley was required to say whether he had written it or not. The youth declined to answer the question, and was expelled by a written sentence, ready drawn up. Hogg was next summoned, with a result practically the same. The precise details of this transaction have been much controverted; the best evidence is that which appears on the college records, showing that both Hogg and Shelley (Hogg is there named first) were expelled for "contumaciously refusing to answer questions," and for "repeatedly declining to disavow" the authorship. Thus they were dismissed as being mutineers against academic authority, in a case pregnant with the suspicion—not the proof—of atheism; but how the authorities could know beforehand that the two undergraduates would be contumacious and stiff against disavowal, so as to give warrant for written sentences ready drawn up, is nowhere explained. Possibly the sentences were worded without ground assigned, and would only have been produced *in terrorem* had the young men proved more malleable. The date of this incident was 25th March 1811.

Shelley and Hogg came up to London, where Shelley was soon left alone, as his friend went to York to study conveyancing. Percy and his incensed father did not at once come to terms, and for a while he had no resource beyond pocket-money saved up by his sisters (four in number altogether) and sent round to him, sometimes by the hand of a singularly pretty school-fellow, Miss Harriet Westbrook, daughter of a retired and moderately opulent hotel-keeper. Shelley, especially in early youth, had a somewhat "priggish" turn for moralizing and argumentation, and a decided mania for proselytizing; his school-girl sisters, and their little Methodist friend Miss Westbrook, aged between fifteen and sixteen, must all be enlightened and converted to anti-Christianity. He there-

fore cultivated the society of Harriet, calling at the house of her father, and being encouraged in his assiduity by her much older sister Eliza. Harriet not unnaturally fell in love with him; and he, though not it would seem at any time ardently in love with her, dallied along the flowery pathway which leads to sentiment and a definite courtship. This was not his first love-affair; for he had but a very few months before been courting his cousin Miss Harriet Grove, who, alarmed at his heterodoxies, finally broke off with him—to his no small grief and perturbation at the time. It is averred, and seemingly with truth, that Shelley never indulged in any sensual or dissipated amour; and, as he advances in life, it becomes apparent that, though capable of the passion of love, and unusually prone to regard with much effusion of sentiment women who interested his mind and heart, the mere attraction of a pretty face or an alluring figure left him unenthralled. After a while Percy was reconciled to his father, revisited his family in Sussex, and then stayed with a cousin in Wales. Hence he was recalled to London by Miss Harriet Westbrook, who wrote complaining of her father's resolve to send her back to her school, in which she was now regarded with repulsion as having become too apt a pupil of the atheist Shelley. He replied counselling resistance. "She wrote to say" (these are the words of Shelley in a letter to Hogg, dating towards the end of July 1811) "that resistance was useless, but that she would fly with me, and threw herself upon my protection." Shelley therefore returned to London, where he found Harriet agitated and wavering; finally they agreed to elope, travelled in haste to Edinburgh, and there, according to the law of Scotland, became husband and wife on 28th August. Shelley, it should be understood, had by this time openly broken, not only with the dogmas and conventions of Christian religion, but with many of the institutions of Christian polity, and in especial with such as enforce and regulate marriage; he held—with William Godwin and some other theorists—that marriage ought to be simply a voluntary relation between a man and a woman, to be assumed at joint option and terminated at the after-option of either party. If therefore he had acted upon his personal conviction of the right, he would never have wedded Harriet, whether by Scotch, English, or any other law; but he waived his own theory in favour of the consideration that in such an experiment the woman's stake, and the disadvantages accruing to her, are out of all comparison with the man's. His conduct therefore was so far entirely honourable; and, if it derogated from a principle of his own (a principle which, however contrary to the morality of other people, was and always remained matter of genuine conviction on his individual part), this was only in deference to a higher and more imperious standard of right.

Harriet Shelley was not only beautiful; she was amiable, accommodating, adequately well educated and well bred. She liked reading, and her reading was not strictly frivolous. But she could not (as Shelley said at a later date) "feel poetry and understand philosophy." Her attractions were all on the surface; there was (to use a common phrase) "nothing particular in her." For nearly three years Shelley and she led a shifting sort of life upon an income of £400 a year, one-half of which was allowed (after his first severe indignation at the *mésalliance* was past) by Mr Timothy Shelley, and the other half by Mr Westbrook. The spouses left Edinburgh for York and the society of Hogg; broke with him upon a charge made by Harriet, and evidently fully believed by Shelley at the time, that, during a temporary absence of his upon business in Sussex, Hogg had tried to seduce her (this quarrel was entirely made up at the end of about a year); moved off

to Keswick in Cumberland, coupled with the company of Southey, and some hospitality from the duke of Norfolk, who, as chief magnate in the Shoreham region of Sussex, was at pains to reconcile the father and his too unfilial heir; sailed thence to Dublin, where Shelley was eager, and in some degree prominent, in the good cause of Catholic emancipation, conjoined with repeal of the union; crossed to Wales, and lived at Nant-Gwillt, near Rhayader, then at Lymouth in Devonshire, then at Tanyrallt in Carnarvonshire. All this was between September 1811 and February 1813. At Lymouth an Irish servant of Shelley's was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for distributing and posting up printed papers, bearing no printer's name, of an inflammatory or seditious tendency—being a *Declaration of Rights* composed by the youthful reformer, and some verses of his named *The Devil's Walk*. At Tanyrallt Shelley was (to trust his own and Harriet's account, confirmed by the evidence of Miss Westbrook, the elder sister, who continued an inmate in most of their homes) attacked on the night of 26th February by an assassin who fired three pistol-shots. The motive of the attack was undefined; the fact of its occurrence was generally disbelieved, both at the time and by subsequent inquirers. To analyse the possibilities and probabilities of the case would lead us too far; we can only say that we rank with the decided sceptics. Shelley was full of wild unpractical notions; he dosed himself with laudanum as a palliative to spasmodic pains; he was given to strange assertions and romancing narratives (several of which might properly be specified here but for want of space), and was not incapable of conscious fibbing. His mind no doubt oscillated at times along the line which divides sanity from insane delusion. It is difficult to suppose that he simply invented such a monstrous story to serve a purpose. The very enormity of the story tends to dissuade us from thinking so, and the purpose alleged seems disproportionately small—that of decamping from Tanyrallt ere creditors should become too pressing. Indeed, we decisively reject this supposed motive. On the other hand, nothing could be traced to corroborate Shelley's assertion. This was at any rate the break-up of the residence at Tanyrallt; the Shelleys revisited Ireland, and then settled for a while in London. Here, in June 1813, Harriet gave birth to her daughter Ianthe Eliza (she married a Mr Esdaile, and died in 1876). Here also Shelley brought out his first poem of any importance, *Queen Mab*; it was privately printed, as its exceedingly aggressive tone in matters of religion and morals would not allow of publication.

The speculative sage whom Shelley especially revered was William Godwin, the author of *Political Justice* and of the romance *Caleb Williams*; in 1796 he had married Mary Wollstonecraft, authoress of *The Rights of Woman*, who died shortly after giving birth, on 30th August 1797, to a daughter Mary. With Godwin Shelley had opened a volunteered correspondence late in 1811, and he had known him personally since the winter which closed 1812. Godwin was then a bookseller, living with his second wife, who had been a Mrs Clairmont; there were four other inmates of the household, two of whom call for some mention here—Fanny Wollstonecraft, the daughter of the authoress and Mr Imlay, and Claire, the daughter of Mrs Clairmont. Fanny committed suicide in October 1816, being, according to some accounts which remain unverified, hopelessly in love with Shelley; Claire was closely associated with all his subsequent career. It was towards May 1814 that Shelley first saw Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin as a grown-up girl (she was well on towards seventeen); he instantly fell in love with her, and she with him. Just before this, 24th March, Shelley had remarried Harriet in London, though with no obviously cogent

motive for doing so; but, on becoming enamoured of Mary, he seems to have rapidly made up his mind that Harriet should not stand in the way. She was at Bath while he was in London, and for a while she heard nothing of him. They had, however, met again in London and come to some sort of understanding before the final crisis arrived,—Harriet remonstrating and indignant, but incapable of effective resistance,—Shelley sick of her companionship, and bent upon gratifying his own wishes, which as we have already seen were not at odds with his avowed principles of conduct. For some months past there had been bickerings and misunderstandings between him and Harriet, aggravated by the now detested presence of Miss Westbrook in the house; more than this cannot be said, for no more is at present known. It is certain, however, that evidence exists which, while not plainly proving any grave wrongdoing on Harriet's part, exculpates Shelley from the charge of having separated from her without what appeared to himself sufficient cause. The upshot came on 28th July, when Shelley aided Mary to elope from her father's house, Claire Clairmont deciding to accompany them. They crossed to Calais, and proceeded across France into Switzerland. Godwin and his wife were greatly incensed. Though he and Mary Wollstonecraft had entertained and avowed bold opinions regarding the marriage-bond, similar to Shelley's own, and had in their time acted upon these opinions, it is not clearly made out that Mary Godwin had ever been encouraged by paternal influence to think or do the like. Shelley and she chose to act upon their own likings and responsibility,—he disregarding any claim which Harriet had upon him, and Mary setting at nought her father's authority. Both were prepared to ignore the law of the land and the rules of society.

The three young people returned to London in September. In the following January Sir Bysshe Shelley died, and Percy became the immediate heir to the entailed property inherited by his father Sir Timothy. This entailed property seems to have been worth £6000 per annum, or little less. There was another very much larger property which Percy might shortly before have secured to himself, contingently upon his father's death, if he would have consented to put it upon the same footing of entail; but this he resolutely refused to do, on the professed ground of his being opposed upon principle to the system of entail; therefore, on his grandfather's death the larger property passed wholly away from any interest which Percy might have had in it, in use or in expectancy. He now came to an understanding with his father as to the remaining entailed property; and, giving up certain future advantages, he received henceforth a regular income of £1000 a year. Out of this he assigned £200 a year to Harriet, who had given birth in November to a son, Charles Bysshe (he died in 1826). Shelley, and Mary as well, were on moderately good terms with Harriet, seeing her from time to time. His peculiar views as to the relations of the sexes appear markedly again in his having (so it is alleged) invited Harriet to return to his and Mary's house as a domicile; of course this curious arrangement did not take effect. Shelley and Mary (who was naturally always called Mrs Shelley) now settled at Bishopgate, near Windsor Forest; here he produced his first excellent poem, *Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude*, which was published soon afterwards along with a few others. In May 1816 the pair left England for Switzerland, together with Miss Clairmont, and their own infant son William. They went straight to Sécheron, near Geneva; Lord Byron, whose separation from his wife had just then taken place, arrived there immediately afterwards. A great deal of controversy has lately arisen as to the motives and incidents of this foreign sojourn.

The clear fact is that Miss Clairmont, who had a fine voice and some inclination for the stage, had seen Byron, as connected with the management of Drury Lane theatre, early in the year, and an amorous intrigue had begun between them in London. *Prima facie* it seems quite reasonable to suppose that she had explained the facts to Shelley or to Mary, or to both, and had induced them to convoy her to the society of Byron abroad; were this finally established as the fact, it would show no inconsistency of conduct, or breach of his own code of sexual morals, on Shelley's part. On the other hand it is asserted that documentary evidence of an irrefragable kind exists showing that Shelley and Mary were totally ignorant of the amour shortly before they went abroad. Whether or not they knew of it while they and Claire were in daily intercourse with Byron, and housed close by him on the shore of the Lake of Geneva, may be left unargued. The three returned to London in September 1816, Byron remaining abroad; and in January 1817 Miss Clairmont gave birth to his daughter named Allegra. The return of the Shelleys was closely followed by two suicides,—first that of Fanny Woilstonecraft (already referred to), and second that of Harriet Shelley, who on 9th November drowned herself in the Serpentine. The latest stages of the lovely and ill-starred Harriet's career have never been very explicitly recorded. It seems that she formed a connexion with some gentleman from whom circumstances or desertion separated her, that her habits became intemperate, and that she was treated with contumelious harshness by her sister during an illness of their father. She had always had a propensity (often laughed at in earlier and happier days) to the idea of suicide, and she now carried it out in act—possibly without anything which could be regarded as an extremely cogent predisposing motive, although the total weight of her distresses, accumulating within the past two years and a half, was beyond question heavy to bear. Shelley, then at Bath, hurried up to London when he heard of Harriet's death, giving manifest signs of the shock which so terrible a catastrophe had produced on him. Some self-reproach must no doubt have mingled with his affliction and dismay; yet he does not appear to have considered himself gravely in the wrong at any stage in the transaction, and it is established that in the train of quite recent events which immediately led up to Harriet's suicide he had borne no part.

This was the time when Shelley began to see a great deal of Leigh Hunt, the poet and essayist, editor of *The Examiner*; they were close friends, and Hunt did something (hardly perhaps so much as might have been anticipated) to uphold the reputation of Shelley as a poet—which, we may here say once for all, scarcely obtained any public acceptance or solidity during his brief lifetime. The death of Harriet having removed the only obstacle to a marriage with Mary Godwin, the wedding ensued on 30th December 1816, and the married couple settled down at Great Marlow in Buckinghamshire. Their tranquillity was shortly disturbed by a Chancery suit set in motion by Mr Westbrook, who asked for the custody of his two grandchildren, on the ground that Shelley had deserted his wife and intended to bring up his offspring in his own atheistic and anti-social opinions. Lord Chancellor Eldon delivered judgment towards 26th March 1817. He held that Shelley, having avowed condemnable principles of conduct, and having fashioned his own conduct to correspond, and being likely to inculcate the same principles upon his children, was unfit to have the charge of them. He therefore assigned this charge to Mr and Miss Westbrook, and appointed as their immediate curator Dr Hume, an orthodox army-physician, who was Shelley's own nominee. The poet had to pay for the maintenance

of the children a sum which stood eventually at £120 per annum; if it was at first (as generally stated) £200, that was no more than what he had previously allowed to Harriet. This is the last incident of marked importance in the perturbed career of Shelley; the rest relates to the history of his mind, the poems which he produced and published, and his changes of locality in travelling. In March 1818, after an illness which he regarded (rightly or wrongly) as a dangerous pulmonary attack, Shelley, with his wife, their two infants William and Clara, and Miss Clairmont and her baby Allegra, went off to Italy, in which country the whole short remainder of his life was passed. Allegra was soon sent on to Venice, to her father Byron, who, ever since parting from Miss Clairmont in Switzerland, showed a callous and unfeeling determination to see and know no more about her. In 1818 the Shelleys—mostly, not always, with Miss Clairmont in their company—were in Milan, Leghorn, the Bagni di Lucca, Venice and its neighbourhood, Rome, and Naples; in 1819 in Rome, the vicinity of Leghorn, and Florence (both their infants were now dead, but a third was born late in 1819, the present baronet, Sir Percy Florence Shelley); in 1820 in Pisa, the Bagni di Pisa (or di San Giuliano), and Leghorn; in 1821 in Pisa and with Byron in Ravenna; in 1822 in Pisa and on the Bay of Spezia, between Lerici and San Terenzio. The incidents of this period are but few, and of no great importance apart from their bearing upon the poet's writings. In Leghorn he knew Mr and Mrs Gisborne, the latter a once intimate friend of Godwin; she taught Shelley Spanish, and he was eager to promote a project for a steamer to be built by her son by a former marriage, the young engineer Henry Reveley; it would have been the first steamer to navigate the Gulf of Lyons. In Pisa he formed a sentimental intimacy with the Contessina Emilia Viviani, a girl who was pining in a convent pending her father's choice of a husband for her; this impassioned but vague and fanciful attachment—which soon came to an end, as Emilia's character developed less favourably in the eyes of her Platonic adorer—produced the transcendental love-poem of *Epipsychidion* in 1821. In Ravenna the scheme of the quarterly magazine *The Liberal* was concerted by Byron and Shelley, the latter being principally interested in it with a view to benefiting Leigh Hunt by such an association with Byron. In Pisa Byron and Shelley were very constantly together, having in their company at one time or another Captain Medwin (cousin and schoolfellow of Shelley, and one of his biographers), Lieutenant and Mrs Williams, to both of whom our poet was very warmly attached, and Captain Trelawny, the adventurous and romantic-natured seaman who has left important and interesting reminiscences of this period. Byron admired very highly the generous, unworldly, and enthusiastic character of Shelley, and set some value on his writings; Shelley half-worshipped Byron as a poet, and was anxious, but in some conjunctures by no means able, to respect him as a man. In Pisa he knew also Prince Alexander Mavrocordato, one of the pioneers of Grecian insurrection and freedom; the glorious cause fired Shelley, and he wrote the drama of *Hellas* (1821).

The last residence of Shelley was the Casa Magni, a bare and exposed dwelling on the Gulf of Spezia. He and his wife, with the Williamses, went there at the end of April 1822, to spend the summer, which proved an arid and scorching one. Shelley and Williams, both of them insatiably fond of boating, had a small schooner named the "Don Juan" built at Genoa after a design which Williams had procured from a naval friend, and which was the reverse of safe. They received her on 12th May, found her rapid and alert, and on 1st July started in her to

Leghorn, to meet Leigh Hunt, whose arrival in Italy had just been notified. After doing his best to set things going comfortably between Byron and Hunt, Shelley returned on board with Williams on 8th July. It was a day of dark, louring, stifling heat. Trelawny took leave of his two friends, and about half-past six in the evening found himself startled from a doze by a frightful turmoil of storm. The "Don Juan" had by this time made Via Reggio; she was not to be seen, though other vessels which had sailed about the same time were still discernible. Shelley, Williams, and their only companion, a sailor-boy, perished in the squall. The exact nature of the catastrophe was from the first regarded as somewhat disputable, but it is only of late years (1875) that it has been keenly debated. The condition of the "Don Juan" when recovered did not favour any assumption that she had capsized in a heavy sea—rather that she had been run down by some other vessel, a felucca or fishing-smack. In the absence of any counter-evidence this would be supposed to have occurred by accident; but a rumour, not strictly verified and certainly not refuted, exists that an aged Italian seaman on his deathbed confessed that he had been one of the crew of the fatal felucca, and that the collision was intentional, as the men had plotted to steal a sum of money supposed to be on the "Don Juan," in charge of Lord Byron. In fact there was a moderate sum there, but Byron had neither embarked nor intended to embark. This may perhaps be the true account of the tragedy; at any rate Trelawny, the best possible authority on the subject, accepted it as true. He it was who laboriously tracked out the shore-washed corpses of Shelley and Williams, and who undertook the burning of them, after the ancient Greek fashion, on the shore near Via Reggio, on the 15th and 16th of August. The great poet's ashes were then collected, and buried in the new Protestant cemetery in Rome. He was, at the time of his untimely death, within a month of completing the thirtieth year of his age—a surprising example of rich poetic achievement for so young a man.

The character of Shelley can be considered according to two different standards of estimation. We can estimate the original motive forces in his character; or we can form an opinion of his actions, and thence put a certain construction upon his personal qualities. We will first try the latter method. It cannot be denied by his admirers and eulogists, and is abundantly clear to his censurers, that his actions were in some considerable degree abnormal, dangerous to the settled basis of society, and marked by headstrong and undutiful presumption. But it is remarkable that, even among the censurers of his conduct, many persons are none the less impressed by the beauty of his character; and this leads us back to our first point—the original motive forces in that. Here we find enthusiasm, fervour, courage (moral and physical), an unbounded readiness to act upon what he considered right principle, however inconvenient or disastrous the consequences to himself, sweetness and indulgence towards others, extreme generosity, and the principle of love for humankind in abundance and superabundance. He respected the truth, such as he conceived it to be, in spiritual or speculative matters, and respected no construction of the truth which came to him recommended by human authority. No man had more hatred or contempt of custom and prescription; no one had a more authentic or vivid sense of universal charity. The same radiant enthusiasm which appeared in his poetry as idealism stamped his speculation with the conception of perfectibility and his character with loving emotion.

In person Shelley was attractive, winning, and almost beautiful; but not to be called handsome. His height was nearly 5 feet 11; he was slim, agile, and strong, with something of a stoop; his complexion brilliant, his hair abundant and wavy, dark-brown but early beginning to grizzle; the eyes, deep-blue in tint, had been termed "stag-eyes"—large, fixed, and beaming. His voice was wanting in richness and suavity—high-pitched, and tending to the screechy; his general aspect, though extremely variable according as his mood of mind and his expression shifted, was on the whole uncommonly juvenile.

From this necessarily very slight account of the life of Shelley we pass to a consideration—and this too must be equally slender—of his works in poetry. If we except Goethe (and for convenience sake leaving out of count any living writers, whose ultimate value

cannot at present be assessed), we consider Shelley to be the supreme poet of the new era which, beginning with the French Revolution, remains continuous into our own day. Lord Byron and Victor Hugo come the nearest to Shelley, in poetic stature, and each of them might for certain reasons be even preferred to him; Wordsworth also has his numerous champions. The grounds on which we set Shelley highest of all are mainly three. He excels all his competitors in ideality, he excels them in music, and he excels them in importance. By importance we here mean the direct import of the work performed, its controlling power over the reader's thought and feeling, the contagious fire of its white-hot intellectual passion, and the long reverberation of its appeal. Shelley is emphatically the poet of the future. In his own day an alien in the world of mind and invention, and in our day scarcely yet a denizen of it, he appears destined to become, in the long vista of years, an informing presence in the innermost shrine of human thought. Shelley appeared at the time when the sublime frenzies of the French revolutionary movement had exhausted the elasticity of men's thought—at least in England—and had left them flaccid and stolid; but that movement prepared another in which revolution was to assume the milder guise of reform, conquering and to conquer. Shelley was its prophet. As an iconoclast and an idealist he took the only position in which a poet could advantageously work as a reformer. To outrage his contemporaries was the condition of leading his successors to triumph and of personally triumphing in their victories. Shelley had the temper of an innovator and a martyr; and in an intellect wondrously poetical he united speculative keenness and humanitarian zeal in a degree for which we might vainly seek his precursor. We have already named ideality as one of his leading excellences. This Shelleian quality combines, as its constituents, sublimity, beauty, and the abstract passion for good. It should be acknowledged that, while this great quality forms the chief and most admirable factor in Shelley's poetry, the defects which go along with it mar his work too often—producing at times vagueness, unreality, and a pomp of glittering indistinctness, in which excess of sentiment welters amid excess of words. This blemish affects the long poems much more than the pure lyrics; in the latter the rapture, the music, and the emotion are in exquisite balance, and the work has often as much of delicate simplicity as of fragile and flower-like perfection.

In the course of our biographical narrative we have mentioned a few, but only a few, of Shelley's writings; we must now give some curt account of others. Of his early work prior to *Queen Mab*—such romances as *Zastrozzi* and *St Irvyne*, such verse as the *Fragments of Margaret Nicholson*—we can only here say that they are rubbish. *Alastor* was succeeded (1817) by *The Revolt of Islam*, a poem of no common length in the Spenserian stanza, preaching bloodless revolution; it is amazingly fine in parts, but as a whole somewhat long-drawn and exhausting. This transcendental epic (for such it may be termed) was at first named *Laon and Cythna, or the Revolution of the Golden City*, and the lovers of the story were then brother and sister as well as lovers—an experiment upon British endurance which the publishers would not connive at. The year 1818 produced *Rosalind and Helen*, a comparatively weak poem, and *Julian and Maddalo*, a very strong one—demonstrating in Shelley a singular power of seeing ordinary things with directness, and at once figuring them as reality and transfiguring them into poetry. The next year, 1819, was his culmination, producing as it did the grand tragedy of *The Cenci* and the sublime ideal drama *Prometheus Unbound*, which we have no hesitation in calling his masterpiece. It embodies, in forms of surpassing imagination and beauty, Shelley's deepest and most daring conceptions. Prometheus, the human mind, has invested with the powers proper to himself Jupiter the god of heaven, who thereupon chains and torments Prometheus and oppresses mankind; in other words, the anthropomorphic god of religion is a creation of the human mind, and both the mind of man and man himself are enslaved as long as this god exercises his delegated but now absolute power. Prometheus, who is from of old wedded to Asia, or Nature, protests against and anathematizes the usurper enthroned by himself. At last the anathema takes effect. Eternity, Demogorgon, dismisses Jupiter to unending nothingness. Prometheus is at once unbound, the human mind is free; he is reunited to his spouse Nature, and the world of man passes from thralldom and its degradation into limitless progression, or (as the phrase goes) perfectibility, moral and material. This we regard as in brief the argument of *Prometheus Unbound*. It is closely analogous to the argument of the juvenile poem *Queen Mab*, but so raised in form and creative touch that, whereas to write *Queen Mab* was only to be an ambitious and ebullient tyro, to invent *Prometheus Unbound* was to be the poet of the future. *The Witch of Atlas* (1820) appears to us the most perfect work among all Shelley's longer poems, though it is neither the deepest nor the most interesting. It may be rated as a pure exercise of roving imagination—guided, however, by an intense sense of beauty, and by its author's exceeding fineness of nature.